

The Tale of 18 High Street, Barton upon Humber

I was asked by Kay Newton who, along with her husband Robert runs the Butchery and Delicatessen business at 18 High Street in Barton, if I could find out a little history of the shop they currently own. The deeds were not available so this left census returns, trade directories and local publications as my main source of information for this challenge.

I actually worked backwards in my research from the present day to the 1841 census when the trail went cold. From this date back things were more difficult to prove, but still not impossible to surmise. To make things easier I shall describe my findings in chronological order starting from 1841, with a slight detour into the 18th century. I have also noted the uses of the surrounding buildings to ensure the correct continuity of number 18 High Street. Also, although not recorded here to save space, in my actual research I have used the police station (when built) as an anchor point to ensure I had the correct buildings.

The earliest record I could associate with the current 18 High Street was William Ashton who was 60 years old and living independently (on his own means). This was taken from the 1841 census. Next door to the west (current number 20) was Martha Hudson aged 85, again living independently. Next door to the east (current number 16) was Sarah Goy aged 35, again living independently; then came Ann Walkden (current number 14) aged 45, again living independently; and finally came James Raby (current number 12) who was aged 30 and was a maltster. James Raby is important in this research as he lived in the same property for many years (as we shall see) and was instrumental in locating the buildings in question before and after the police station was built. It is clear from the entries in the 1841 census that these buildings were high-status. This does pose a problem though. If the buildings were already occupied in 1841 they must have been built earlier. Early trade directories rarely listed anyone other than tradesmen so to solve this puzzle I had to look at the actual fabric of the building. This building is three-storied and was (reportedly) built by William Mackrill, the builder and brick maker, in the late 1700s along with the three-storied building at the corner of Burgate and Marsh Lane. In 1788 Williams' brother Benjamin, who was also a builder and brick maker, bought the properties along George Street from the George Inn northwards, and rebuilt them. My feeling is William probably did the same as his brother by buying the existing building at the current 14 to 18 High Street to rebuild it. My reasons for this conclusion are twofold. Firstly, throughout Britain during the 18th and 19th centuries it was popular for wealthy land owners and merchants to re-front their properties as a sign of their wealth. When you look at the side of the building (number 14) it is quite clear the bricks at the front of the building are bigger than those running down the side (see fig: 1). This would suggest that at the very least they have been re-fronted at some time. Secondly, and more importantly, the size of the bricks used at the side of the building, and at the rear, are only around 2" thick (see fig: 2). An Act of Parliament was passed in 1725 to set the minimum brick size to 2.5". This would suggest the bricks are either old stock, they are reused, or the building dates from at least 1725. To consider the three points separately; firstly bricks were in high demand at this time as many of the houses in Barton were being rebuilt from the old mud and stud construction so it is highly unlikely there would have been any old stocks of bricks, especially that old; secondly as the Mackrill's were brick makers it is highly unlikely they would want to use old bricks when they had a plentiful supply of their own; this leaves the third option of the building dating from at least 1725 as the likeliest scenario. It is possible though that William Mackrill was responsible for converting an existing two-storied building into a three-storied building as the current roof does not look like it could have supported a thatched roof, something an early building would probably have had.



Fig: 1 The join between the front of 14 to 18 High Street and the side. The difference in brick sizes is very clear, indicating this is not just a different style of bricklaying (which is popular in many houses in the area) but a different phase of building.



Fig: 2 This image shows clearly the size of the bricks running down the side of the building (inches to the left and centimetres to the right). Bricks of this size indicate an early build.

Now we will return to our trip forward in time. In 1842 James Raby was still living at (current) number 12 High Street. Next to James still lived Ann Walkden at (current) number 14 but next to her, at (current) number 16, now lived William Morley. William Morley was an auctioneer and he also ran the Post Office from here through to at least 1861. William must have moved in here sometime during 1841. In a trade directory of 1841 he was recorded as the Post Master at his High Street premises, with the post from around the country arriving in an afternoon. Prior to 1841 William Morley ran the Post Office from his old premises in Old Market Lane (George Street and King Street area). Next door to William, at (current) number 18, was his son William Lawson Morley who, like his father, was an auctioneer. Living along with William Lawson was his wife Sarah Ann. William Lawson was also a relieving officer. Relieving Officers were employed to receive applications for relief and make payments if approved. They could also issue orders to admit people to the workhouse. Finally Martha Hudson still lived at (current) number 20.

In 1847 the police station was built giving another important reference point in my research. By 1849 the only change in residents in the properties in question was at (current) number 20. George Tinn, a surgeon, had moved here with his wife Ann. From 1850 William Lawson Morley had become a fire & office insurance agent (for Norwich Union and Royal Exchange) and the High Bailiff to the County Court for Barton, and at (current) number 14 Lieutenant Robert Lee Stephens had moved in. Recorded in the census of 1851 were; at (current) number 20 was George Tinn the surgeon aged 52, along with his wife Ann aged 55; at (current) number 18 was William Lawson Morley the auctioneer aged 32, along with his wife Sarah Ann aged 32; at (current) number 16 was William Morley the auctioneer aged 61, along with his wife Elizabeth aged 54; at (current) number 14 was Robert Stephens of the Royal Navy aged 55; and at (current) number 12 lived James Raby the maltster aged 44, along with his wife Elizabeth. In the 1850s James served as a Surveyor of Highways. A Surveyor of Highways was employed to monitor the condition of the local roads and arrange for their repair.

Things remained pretty static through to the next census, apart from William Lawson Morley adding stone merchant to his list of trades, presumably owning one of the quarries on the outskirts of the town. Recorded in the census of 1861 were; at (current) number 20 was Ann Tinn a private resident aged 61, still classed as married so presumably her husband was away at the time of the

census; at (current) number 18 was William Lawson Morley, High Bailiff of the County Court for Barton and auctioneer, aged 42, and his wife Sarah Ann; at (current) number 16 was William Morley, auctioneer and postmaster, now aged 71 and still living with his wife (with 'Post Office' actually marked on the census return against Williams' name); at (current) number 14 was Eliza Horling, aged 51 and an annuitant (someone who receives an annual pension); and at (current) number 12 was our old friend James Raby, the maltster aged 54, and his wife Elizabeth. Interestingly around this time money was raised in the town for the restoration of St. Peter's church. William Lawson Morley gave £1 1s to the fund, as did Alexander Stamp (who we shall meet very soon). Mr Raby (who may have been James) gave £5 to the cause, again showing the high-status of the people living in this area at the time.

By 1868 things had changed quite dramatically (as dramatic as people moving house can get!). At (current) number 20 lived Alexander Stamp the builder, who possibly bought the property with some of the £807 15s he was paid for the aforementioned restoration of St. Peter's church. By now both Williams may well have died because at (current) number 18 lived Sarah Ann Morley with two of her children and a servant, and nothing was recorded at (current) number 16 at all. In 1863 the post office was recorded as being run by Henry William Ball from the High Street. It is possible Henry was running the Post Office from its current location after the death of William Morley senior, before moving it to his premises on Market Lane shortly after. At (current) number 14 lived Mrs Wolsey, a private resident, and at (current) number 12 lived James Raby, but by now he was a corn and seed merchant. William Lawson Morley must have still been alive in 1865 because in his capacity of Chief Bailiff of the County Court for Barton he brought a charge against William Shepherdson of Barrow for assault against Thomas Lovell whilst Thomas was removing property from William Shepherson's house when acting as a bailiff.

Recorded in the census of 1871 were; at (current) number 20 was Alexander Stamp the builder aged 61, along with his wife Elizabeth aged 53; at (current) number 18 was Sarah Ann Morley, annuitant aged 51; at (current) number 16 was George Sewell a machinist foreman aged 29; at (current) number 14 was Eliza Wolsey aged 61; and at (current) number 12 was our final recording of James Raby, the 62 year old corn merchant who had served me well during the early years of my research. It is amusing to note that throughout all of the census returns James has appeared in, his age rarely went up by ten years at a time. He must have had his reasons for reporting a particular age at a particular time, but I doubt we shall ever know them. It is also interesting to note that in the Return of Owners of Land for Lincolnshire in 1873 James Raby was recorded as owning 78 acres 3 roods and 13 perches of land with a gross estimated rental of £112 and 10s.

Things remained pretty constant through the next few years, apart from Alexander Stamp becoming an inspector of nuisances (someone employed to inspect for such things as bad sanitary conditions, obstructing roads or footpaths and inspecting privies) and the disappearance of James Raby. The census of 1881 did throw up some changes however. Recorded at (current) number 20 was Elizabeth Stamp, a builder aged 63, presumably signifying the death of her husband Alexander who was not recorded after this date; at (current) number 18 was Sarah Ann Morley, annuitant aged 61; at (current) number 16 was William Thomas Gooseman a vet aged 27; at (current) number 14 was Mary Ann Raby, who may have been related to James and Elizabeth who previously lived at (current) number 12, but as they never had any children recorded in the census returns I currently cannot say; and no one was recorded at (current) number 12. A trade directory of 1882 however recorded Henry Wilson, a solicitor, at (current) number 12, but by 1885 William John Bygott, a tailor, was recorded there.

There were a few changes by the time of the next census. The return of 1891 recorded at (current) number 20 William Thomas Gooseman, the 37 year old vet who up to 1889 was living at (current) number 16. Along with William was his wife Alice, his two sons and a daughter. One of these

sons we shall meet later. Why William Thomas Gooseman decided to move from (current) number 16 to (current) number 20 is, and will probably remain, a mystery. The houses must be pretty much identical, except for the land at the rear. The erection of the Temperance Hall (Assembly Rooms) in 1843 cut into the gardens of all the houses up to and including (current) number 16 and this may have been the deciding factor in Williams' move. At (current) number 18 Sarah Ann Morley was living on her own means and by now had reached the grand old age of 73; at (current) number 16 lived George Bell, a 58 year old retired farmer; at (current) number 14 lived Francis Oldman, aged 62 and living on her own means; and at (current) number 12 was William John Bygott, the 33 year old tailor, hatter and clothier we met a few years previous.

The 1901 census is currently the last one available to view (without spending a fortune online) and again marked the end of another era with the disappearance of the Morley name from the listings. Recorded at number 20 (they were numbered in the modern way by now) was William Thomas Gooseman the vet; number 18 was unoccupied after the (presumed) death of Mrs Sarah Ann Morley, who was recorded here in a trade directory of 1900 making her around 82 years old; 67 year old George Bell still lived at number 16; at number 14 lived George Winship, a 49 year old brick and tile maker; and number 12 was unoccupied, William John Bygott being last recorded here in a trade directory of 1892. From this point on there are only trade directories to guide us, but as they now generally mark property numbers the task is a little easier. By 1905 George White had moved into 18 High Street and recorded at number 12 was Ada Ellis, a draper, who prior to this date was recorded on King Street. By 1909 however, Ada Ellis had moved into 18 High Street in the place of George White, and John Cooper had moved into number 12 from his premises further along High Street. There is a picture of Ada Ellis' business at number 12 High Street (not 16 & 18 as reported) in the *Images of England Barton upon Humber* book. At this time it was also called Bradford House.

The next big change in living and trading arrangements came in 1922. On this date at number 20 resided William Robert Gooseman, a teacher of singing. William Robert was the son of William Thomas and his wife Alice. Ada Ellis had expanded her business and now owned both number 18 and 16, although whether she lived in one and traded from the other, or lived above both and traded from both is unknown. There was nothing recorded for number 14 from now on until around 1967. This didn't mean it was empty, just whoever was living or trading from here didn't see the need or didn't have the means to advertise in a trade directory. Finally at number 12 John Cooper was still trading as a tailor, but by now was also a tax collector, and miss Nellie Cooper was trading as a confectioner from the same address. In 1930 John Jason Wood took over number 12 from John Cooper and he, like John before him, was a tailor. 1937 was the last trade directory I could view for Barton before the second world war and at this date at number 20 lived William Robert Gooseman, still teaching singing; Ada Ellis, who by now was aged around 64 years, still traded at number 18 and 16; again nothing was recorded for number 14; and at number 12 John Jason Wood was still in the tailoring business.

We have to jump forward quite a few years to 1965 for the next directory I could find. I am sure there are people who can remember the years between 1937 and 1965, unfortunately I am not one of them as it was all before I was born.

In 1965 at number 20 was Valeries children's wear. At number 18 was C. R. Sempers the butcher and game dealer. This is the first recorded butcher I can find at 18 High Street but in truth 18 High Street could have become a butcher's shop any time from 1937 to 1965 and indeed is believed to have been taken over by Charlie Sempers in the early 1940s. This would suggest that Charlie Sempers acquired the premises from Ada Ellis, especially as Ada was around 64 years old in 1937. There was nothing recorded at number 16 and 14 in 1965, and at number 12, for a couple of years only, was the Scunthorpe Co-operative Society. It is interesting to note that number 16 did not pass

to the same new owner as number 18, even though they were both owned by Ada Ellis before the war. This would suggest they were kept as two separate premises throughout Ada's ownership.

By 1967 C. R. Sempers had added 'and son' to his title but was still trading as a family butcher at number 18 High Street. At number 20 was Barbara's dressmaking alterations and tailoring repairs, there was nothing recorded at number 16, Mrs E Evans the fruiterer and florist had moved into number 14 and the Co-op was still trading from number 12 at this time. C. R. Sempers & son continued here to around 1979 before Ken (the '& son') took over the business. At this time J Clipson the gents hairdresser was at number 20, G Bartram the fruiterer and greengrocer was at number 16, number 14 had nothing recorded and Charles W. Day & Son, the gentlemen's outfitter, had moved into number 12, keeping up a long tradition of tailoring from this building (apart from the Co-op) stretching as far back as 1885, and almost back to our good friend James Raby were it not for Henry Wilson.

Around 1985 R Welch took over the butchers business at 18 High Street before finally, by 1997, 18 High Street became the now familiar R. D. Newton Butchers and Delicatessen. Barton Discount Centre was (and still is) at number 20, Smith & Walkers Opticians was (and still is) at number 16, at number 14 was Pharaohs Video Library and at number 12 was (and still is) Charles W. Day & Son.

It is amazing the amount of history packed into one building (or the few on the corner of High Street and Queen Street) and it is very likely that the history goes much further back, but without the deeds it will be difficult to trace. During this journey we have cast doubt on the assumed age of the actual building, found an early post office, met James Raby who thankfully liked his house so much he stayed there for at least 30 years, come across the possible death of father and son within the space of a few years, met Ada Ellis who outgrew her first premises within about four years, and met numerous other people going about their daily business.



Fig: 3 14 to 20 High Street today. Notice every shop has an extension to the front, something which almost definitely did not exist in their early life. It is clear from this picture that the roof structure would probably not support thatching and must have been replaced at some point, possibly by William Mackrill.

Timeline of 18 High Street	
Date Range	Name
Pre 1725	The bricks would strongly suggest a date for the building around or prior to this date despite the closeness of the mansion of the Long family.
Late 1700s or early 1800s	The probably rebuild of the building by William Mackrill.
>1840	Owners and occupiers unknown.
1841	William Ashton.
>1841 - 1863	William Lawson & Sarah Ann Morley.
1863 - 1900	Sarah Ann Morley.
<1905	George White.
<1909 - 1937>	Ada Ellis.
<around 1940 - 1979>	C. R. Sempers.
<1980 - 1985>	K. Sempers.
<1985 - 1997>	R Welch.
<1997 - present	R. D. Newton.

I am sure there are many people in Barton who will remember 18 High Street during 1937 and 1965 and I would love to hear from you to help fill in the gaps, or correct any errors. I can be contacted via email at webmaster@inbarton.co.uk. I would also love to see any pictures of this building that anyone may have or hear from anyone who has any general stories of this area (or indeed Barton as a whole).

Darren Stockdale