

ROSE COTTAGES ABBOTSKERSWELL



On Stoneman's Hill, or Buckpitt's Hill or Priory Lane or Nunnery Lane, even Slade Lane (the choice is yours) stand a group of cottages known today as Rose Cottages; it is a slightly ragged line of cottages quite obviously built at different times, but they have real charm. As the early 20th century photograph above shows, there are three distinct roof lines. They are part of the many buildings in Abbotskerswell that have listed status and this gives us a good description of their likely original nature, although they have been greatly changed over their long history. Today they are described as Nos. 1-3, but there have been seven cottages on the site at various times.



Rose Cottages 1 & 2

These are believed to have been built in the 18th or 19th century as one house. They are described in their Grade 2 listing as a storey dwelling with "stucco walls with joint lining. Slurried slate roof hipped to right, gabled to left". They had two main rooms at the front with a central entrance stair hall and probably with rear service rooms forming double depth plan. They have brick chimney stacks on the end. The listing also suggests they were probably divided into two cottages in the late C19. Shame they did not look at the village Tithe Map of 1839, shown right, which

reveals they were two cottages by that time!

Rose Cottage 3

This is a much more complicated story and the listing suggests it was originally a farmhouse and probably C16. This was the part that is to the left, with the highest roof, and is described as "rendered rubble and cobwalls ... Gabled ended roof to main block is slate at the front, [with] two rendered rubble stacks to main block; one axial and one projecting from left gable end with offsets. Similar lateral stack at side of left-hand wing." It seems likely that it was originally a three room house with a through-passage and a room on the left; this was possibly open to the roof with central hearth being a hall. When timbers were renovated in the roof in the 1970s they were found to be blackened. The back room had a ceiling but the hall and inner room had ceilings added in the mid C17, when the chimney stacks were probably built. At this time the central part of Rose Cottages was built and also a wing added. The building was two storey with an attic on the left-hand end of the front block. The house was divided into four cottages before 1839, and it was probably then that the roof was raised to create the attic.

There are a number of interesting original features, such as windows with hood moulds, a number of doors featuring ovolo-moulded (quarter moulded) wood lintels, one with a jewel and carved rosette stop. The two gabled wings at the rear project outwards, with a late C19 'outshut' (roofed section) in between. The listing



describes features inside such as the lower room having “a chamfered longitudinal beam with ogee stops, according to the owner the concealed joists are also decorated. Probably late C17 plaster cornice partially survives in this room.”

From the early 19th century until the 1970s No.3 became four cottages, as will be described later, and there was also another separate house to the rear, which was No. 7. In No. 3 many alterations have damaged much of the original interior, when the four cottages were linked, to create a single dwelling; other features were also lost. Whilst this house may basically be a late-medieval hall house, its many substantial additions made in the C17, and the features surviving from this period, make it very interesting and suggest that it was evidently one of the more important farmhouses in the village.

The Cottages

The **1839 Tithe Map** gives a great deal of detail about the cottages, which were all owned by Thomas Elliott, and the detail is clear on the 1880 OS Map shown here. Nos. 1 & 2 are the first block, 3 & 6 in the next and 4 & 5 to the left hand end. The building to the rear with odd shape at its top right corner was No. 7.

No. 1: the remodelling of the original cottage created No. 1, having an entrance on the side and a single window at the front with windows to the side and rear, nicely still in the sash sliding style. It would probably have had three bedrooms before one was created as a bathroom.

No. 2: was created using the original entrance, but with rooms to the left of it, with a front view. The blocking of one of the windows at the front indicates that space was created for both houses upstairs.

No. 3: to fully appreciate the modern No. 3's past it is worth looking at the separate floor plans, as this shows how the four cottages we set out for much of 'No. 3's' life. It is also worth noting how the plans reveal that it was easy for 3 & 6 to be let to one family and the same for 4 & 5, as these had access doors between them. Whilst the local authority preservation officers might not agree, what makes 'No. 3' so interesting today is that for much of its life it was four cottages, and it tells the life of working people in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thankfully the recent renovation has tried to keep this element of the building evident. The porched front door leads to a corridor with No. 3 off to the right, with two downstairs rooms, and an outshut (made into a kitchen in the 1950s) at the back. Upstairs one bedroom led to a second, rear one and a set of stairs led to the attic,



In the 50s Mr Tett put the hot water heater in and Mrs Tett did ironing by plugging in to the light socket.



The recent renovation of the attic revealed some of the original features such as the lath and plaster work.

created as a bedroom in the 1960s.

No. 4: the entrance was off the passage at the side which led into a single room downstairs and two upstairs, one of which was over the passageway. Later a door was knocked through from the passage meaning that Nos. 3 & 4 could be used as one cottage.



No. 5: this cottage was at the back of No. 4, again with a door off the side path, and had two rooms downstairs and two bedrooms, one leading off the other, on the first floor.

No. 6: at the rear of the property was a door into No. 6, which had two rooms downstairs with a staircase leading off the rear room (this was removed, probably in the 1970s), up to two bedrooms. No. 6's doorway is shown in the photograph on the left, with No. 5 to its right.

No. 7; at the rear of Nos. 1-6 stood No. 7, formerly a baker's cottage. It was to the left of the bread ovens, shown on page 3. It was still inhabited in 1930 but was derelict by 1935. Mr Tett pulled it down in the 1950s, as it was unsafe, and it made way for a garage that he built using the stone from the cottage.



Herman and Olive Skinner lived in No. 5 from the late 1940s and are shown in front of Nos. 6 & 7.

The Residents

The earliest known occupants of the cottages are listed in the **1839 Tithe Apportionment** document and are listed below, although it would appear that several are being joined together at this time, which was often the case. Although the Census began in 1801 it is not until 1861 that the detail is clear enough to use. The **Censuses from 1861 to 1911** make it very

1 & 2	Edward Pack
3 & 6	Henry Clinnick
4 & 5	John Dolton
7	Thomas Ferris

clear that most of the time Rose Cottages were let as seven separate dwellings. However, the problem with the Census information is that it is only as good as the Enumerator who gathered and recorded it. The

names used for 'Rose Cottages' in the Census returns are shown in the chart below.

1861	Rose Cottage, 1-6 Elm Cottages	1891	9-15 North Street
1871	1-3 Elm Cottage, Tree Cottage x 3	1900	2-3 Rose Cottages, 1-5 Ellicots Court
1881	1-7 Elm Cottages	1911	1-7 Rose Cottages

They appear to be an odd mix of local advice (the Census was taken orally until 1911), sloppiness in the case of 1891 (when the Enumerator gave the village four made-up road names North, South, East and West) presumably for his convenience and speed. It is further confused by the fact that it is often not clear in what order the cottages are listed so being exact about who lived in each is difficult. What we do know is that the infamous John Lee lived with his family in No. 3, village blacksmith Fred Prowse lived in Rose Cottages for over 20 years, as did James Cheriton. Samuel Farley, whose occupation is known to be a baker, lived here and one of the fascinating parts of the cottage's recent renovation has been the excavation of the remains of No.7 which revealed a set of bread ovens, shown above, meaning this is probably the earliest known bakers in the village.



Using the Census, and also some guess work/deduction, the chart below shows the residents.

1911	1901	1891	1881	1871	1861
1 Rose Cottage William Perkins	1 Rose Cottage William Elliott	9 North Street James Cheriton	1 Elm Cottage James Cheriton	3 Elm Cottage James Cheriton	V L Rose Cottage William Key
2 Rose Cottage Geoffrey Bradford	2 Rose Cottage John Davis	10 North Street John Emmett	2 Elm Cottage John Tibbs	2 Elm Cottage John Chudley	6 Elm Cottage Walter Wilson
3 Rose Cottage Fred Prowse	1 Ellicots Court Fred Prowse	11 North Street William Gilpin	3 Elm Cottage Sam Vernicombe	1 Elm Cottage Richard Payne	5 Elm Cottage Thomas Stentiford
4 Rose Cottage Francis Honey	2 Ellicots Court Elizabeth Cheriton	13 North Street Harry Hawkins	6 Elm Cottage Harry Hawkins	Tree Cottage Joseph Venning	4 Elm Cottage Edward Wannacot
5 Rose Cottage Thomas Webber	3 Ellicots Court John Emmett	12 North Street Elizabeth Cowell	4 Elm Cottage John Lee	Tree Cottage Empty	3 Elm Cottage Edward Pack
6 Rose Cottage George Hart	4 Ellicots Court Geoffrey Hart	14 North Street Thomas Smith	7 Elm Cottage John Cann	Tree Cottage John Cann	2 Elm Cottage John Lee
7 Rose Cottage Tom Coombe	5 Ellicots Court Robert Hole	15 North Street Fred Prowse	5 Elm Cottage John Lee Jnr	Tree Cottage John Lee	1 Elm Cottage John Lee Jnr

By using the **Voters Registers 1919-1959** the more recent occupants can also be traced and this shows a number of people who suffered losses in World War 1, such as Fred Norton who lost a brother, Philippa Coombe whose husband was killed and Jessie Cornish whose husband was killed but married again to Albert Stoneman and they brought up her two children in No. 4.

1919	1929 & 1930	1935	1945	1949	1959
1 Rose Cottage Philippa Coombe	1 Rose Cottage Victor Palmer	1 Rose Cottage Fred Preston	1 Rose Cottage Fred Preston	1 Rose Cottage Fred Preston	1 Rose Cottage George Chaplin
2 Rose Cottage George Maddicott	2 Rose Cottage Fred Norton	2 Rose Cottage Fred Norton	2 Rose Cottage George Skinner	2 Rose Cottage George Skinner	2 Rose Cottage Leonard Holland
3 Rose Cottage Henry Langler	3 Rose Cottage Sydney Dennis	3 Rose Cottage William Wickens	3 Rose Cottage William Wickens	3 Rose Cottage William Wickens	3 Rose Cottage Ernest Tett
4 Rose Cottage William Eyles	4 Rose Cottage Albert Stoneman	4 Rose Cottage Albert Stoneman	4 Rose Cottage Albert Stoneman	4 Rose Cottage Fred Austen	4 Rose Cottage Graham Tett
5 Rose Cottage George Brimecombe	5 Rose Cottage Gertrude Webber	5 Rose Cottage Albert Quintrell	5 Rose Cottage Olive Skinner	5 Rose Cottage Olive Skinner	5 Rose Cottage Clifford Uren
6 Rose Cottage Empty	6 Rose Cottage Henry Langler	6 Rose Cottage Mary Langler	6 Rose Cottage Thomas Coombe	6 Rose Cottage Thomas Coombe	6 Rose Cottage Laurence Daniell
7 Rose Cottage William Perkins	7 Rose Cottage William Tucker	7 Rose Cottage Derelict	7 Rose Cottage Derelict	7 Rose Cottage Derelict	7 Rose Cottage Demolished

Another factor worth considering is how many people were living in the cottages; again using the Census we learn the following. The sum in the chart below is adults+children = total.

Date	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5	No. 6	No. 7
1901	3+0 = 3	2+2 = 4	4+1 = 5	1+1 = 2	2+3 = 5	2+4 = 6	3+3 = 6
1911	3+0 = 3	2+1 = 3	4+0 = 4	2+8 = 10	5+0 = 5	2+2 = 4	3+2 = 5

In the yard at the back stand two features of life from a different time to our own. The outside toilets, known as privies, and wash house for Nos. 4-7 were still in use when Mr Tett sold the cottages to Mr McCallum in April 1971; bathrooms were only added later when Mr & Mrs Grindell bought 'No 3' in December 1971. Another is the well that was used for water into the 20th century. It is an interesting design as it is a walk in one, rather than the well hoist type. Both of these features will remain after the renovation.

Rose Cottages are a wonderful window into the life of working people and their families in Abbotskerswell. AbbPast are delighted that their present owner and renovator has given us privileged access to the cottages and the chance to show them to the village. It is brilliant that this excellent and sensitive renovation has retained all the cottages' interesting and historical features and protects the assets for future generations.



This photograph, showing 3 & 4 Rose Cottages and Home Cottage, seems to be earlier than the one on page 1, as there are two trees on the bank and the gas lamp, shown earlier, is not on this one. The lamps were erected in 1896, the same year as the elm tree in The Square, just visible to the left, blew down.

