

## **TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: LITTLE BUDWORTH**

### **THE RED LION INN**



*The Red Lion* inn has been in existence for some two hundred years and occupies a residential site whose history probably stretches back to medieval times.

Before the public house came into being two cottages with their respective garden plots, occupied the site. The first reference is dated 20 November 1731 when John Parsons took on a lease from the lord of the manor, the Earl of Shrewsbury, of these two plots of land that were once part of a parcel of lands known as 'Oulton's Tenement'.<sup>i</sup> In all the two plots contained twenty perches of land and the lease cost John Parsons a £8 6s 8d down payment and an annual rent of 3s 4d. The lease was to last for the lifetimes of himself, his brother Hugh Parsons and nephew John Parsons. Three-life leases, as they were known, were standard practice on old estates in Cheshire from the middle of the sixteenth century until the nineteenth century. A tenant would purchase the lease for the lives of three named individuals, often children or other close relations, for a nominal price known as the 'fine' and for a set annual rent. When a 'name' died the lease holder or his survivors could add another life thus keeping the tenancy within the family for generations. On the death of the tenant a 'heriot' (his best animal or goods) was sometimes payable by the successor and this was so here to the value of 3s 4d.

The next tenant was Edward Bromley who had his first lease on the property in October 1741 and then renewed it in January 1778 for the lifetimes of his sixty-two years old wife, Mary (formerly Parsons), Margaret, wife of John Bradshaw, and her son John, aged ten years. By this time the rent was 15s and the heriot was still payable at the same value.<sup>ii</sup>

The two-cottage site only became a public house in the 1790s. At this time, and since at least the 1720s, there was another public house or inn called '*The Bear's Paw*', previously '*The Church Stile*', which was located in the building which still stands today alongside the church

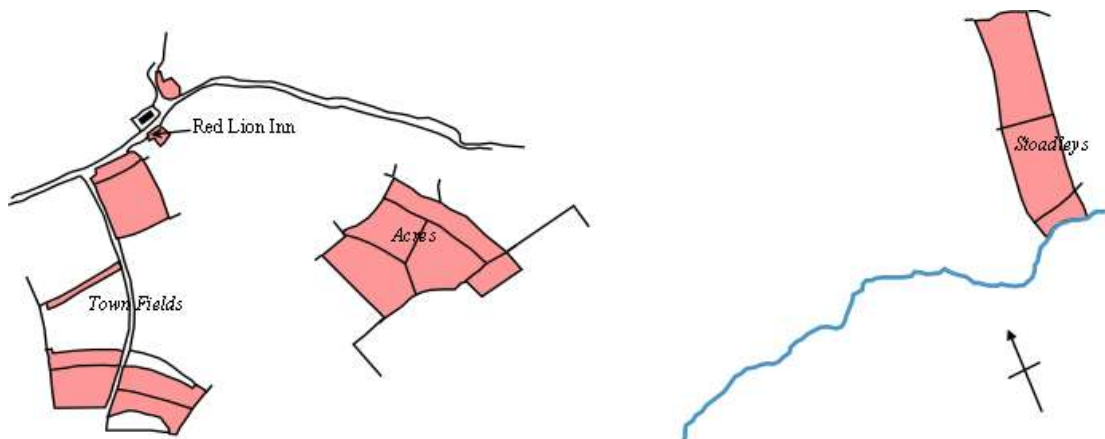
## TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: LT. BUDWORTH

gate. The last licensee, there until 1834, was William Rutter, a member of a family which goes back in Little Budworth at least as far as the Elizabethan period.

From 1797 until his death in 1828 Samuel Rutter was the licensee of *The Red Lion* and was probably related to William Rutter the licensee of *The Bear's Paw*. Samuel was followed by a Martha Rutter who was born in 1796, who will be either Samuel's daughter or daughter-in-law: which ever, she eventually, in 1839, married John Bayley.

In 1841 John Bayley and Martha were the publicans.<sup>iii</sup> Living with the couple were Martha's two girls and two boys named Elizabeth, Martha, George and James Rutter (had she been married or were they illegitimate?) who were then aged between fifteen and ten years of age, and also another thirteen years old boy named William Bayley – John's son by his first marriage to Maria who died in 1837.

During the mid-nineteenth century, and probably for some time earlier, *The Red Lion* was a farm house as well as a public house. From here the occupant farmed fifteen fields to the south and south-east of the village. In 1839 Martha Rutter leased just over 12 acres from the Earl of Shrewsbury and a Sarah Rutter (Martha's mother) leased a further 12 acres which she sub-let to John Bayley. When John and Martha married it seems that these holdings were consolidated and by the 1860s Bayley farmed a little over 34 acres and also occupied a building and a yard on the corner of the lane opposite the church.<sup>iv</sup>



The fields associated with the Red Lion Inn, Little Budworth, in the nineteenth century

Ten years later John Bayley and his wife, who was several years older, were still at the inn.<sup>v</sup> They still lived with the three step-children two of whom were not mentioned in the earlier census: the eldest Alice was married to a butcher and had the surname White and the second, Richard, now twenty-two, was employed as a butcher, perhaps at his brother-in-law's premises. James Rutter was also listed as before but no mention of Elizabeth, Martha and George who had probably got married and left home. A grand-daughter named Ann Rutter was also listed. At this time the Bayleys had three teenage servants, two girls and a boy, living with them.

By 1871 John Bayley had died leaving seventy-five years old Martha to run the business.<sup>vi</sup> She was assisted by her grand-daughters Fanny and Martha Rutter, both in their early twenties. At the time of the census there were two lodgers both of whom were working in the area as land surveyors. Martha still farmed in the village for living with her she had a seventeen years old servant who was described as an 'agricultural servant' and in Kelly's *Directory of Cheshire* for 1878 she is described as the licensee and a farmer. Martha remained at the house until she died in 1879 aged eighty-six.

## TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: LT. BUDWORTH

Ten years later the public house was in the hands of Fanny Rutter, then aged thirty-four, old Martha's grand-daughter.<sup>vii</sup> Assisting her as a barmaid was a relation named Elizabeth Rutter, who eventually became licensee of *The Fox and Barrel*. Fanny eventually married William Worsley, a man from the Warrington area who was thirteen years older than she, in fact as Fanny Worsley she paid the £59 rent to the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1890<sup>viii</sup>.

In 1891 *The Red Lion* was described as being 'a good house with good accommodation'. It had two stables with six stalls and four bedrooms for travellers and could provide refreshments for twenty.<sup>ix</sup> This may indeed have been true as it was a regular place for Manchester people to stay when holidaying in the Cheshire countryside during the First World War. The licensee in 1891 was William Worsley who lived with his daughter Fanny and two servants.<sup>x</sup>

In 1901 William Worsley, then aged 68 years, and Fanny are recorded as living in the public house with their adult daughter, a servant a visitor.<sup>xi</sup> In 1906 William is listed in the trade directory for that year as both publican and farmer.<sup>xii</sup> Eight years later the directory says that *The Red Lion* catered for 'pleasure, picnic and fishing parties'.<sup>xiii</sup> Following William's death in 1916 Fanny continued in the pub until she died in 1921 aged seventy-nine. The rent payable was then £35 a year.

For about 125 years *The Red Lion* had been in the hands of one family – the Rutters – albeit by descent through a couple of daughters who married a Bayley and a Worsley during that time.

In 1917 the Shrewsbury estates sold *The Red Lion* to Sir Philip Egerton of Oulton Hall: the farm land (that which Bayley had farmed all those years before), apart from an arable field of 1¾ acres, was not included as it was part of a separate lot.<sup>xiv</sup> At that time the property was described as having inside a dining or club room, a bar, parlour, tap room, kitchen, cellar, pantry, larder, and six bedrooms and outside two stores and a pig pen with a 'large and plentiful garden'. Adjoining the house was two-stall stable and a coach house. Across the road, on the corner of Well Lane the tenant had a number of farm buildings: a two-bay cart house, a two-stall stable, a barn, shippon for twelve animals, a calf pen with a granary over it, a hen house, three shippons each for six cows and three shippons for nine, a loose box and a mixing house. It seems that these buildings and the plot of land on which they stood were sold separately.

When John Goodwin was granted the tenancy in 1934 the rent was £20 a year.

In 1941 the inn was purchased by Frederic Robinson & Co. Ltd.

Tradition has it that Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be executed in the United Kingdom, slept here. Her lover, and eventual victim, was the racing car driver David Blakely who visited the circuit on 2 April 1955 and was shot dead by Ellis eight days later on Easter Sunday: she was executed at Holloway on 13 July 1955.

## TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: LT. BUDWORTH

### Licensees

Samuel Rutter	1797 - 1828	Thomas Davies	1946 - 1950
Martha Rutter	1828 - 1840	Jack Smith	1950 - 1952
John Bayley	1840 - 1864	John Hockenhull	1952 - 1963
Martha Bayley	1864 - 1879	Elsie Hockenhull	1963 - 1966
Fanny Rutter (Worsley)	1879 - 1921	Daniel Thornton	1966 - 1974
Thomas Maddock	1921 - 1926	Wilfred Bradley	1974 - 1988
John Spencer	1926 - 1934	Malcolm Wright	1988 - ????
John Goodwin	1934 - 1944	???	
Dorothy Vickers	1944 - 1946	John Phoenix	2010 -

[The above list of licensees is based on A.J.McGregor's *The Licensees of the Public Houses of Vale Royal*, published in 1990.]

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<sup>i</sup> Cheshire Record Office (CRO): DSH 60/8

<sup>ii</sup> CRO: Mf 397

<sup>iii</sup> 1841 Census returns

<sup>iv</sup> CRO: DSH 299/25

<sup>v</sup> 1861 Census returns

<sup>vi</sup> 1871 Census returns

<sup>vii</sup> 1881 Census returns

<sup>viii</sup> CRO: DSH 299/27

<sup>ix</sup> CRO: Acc L 1018

<sup>x</sup> 1891 Census returns

<sup>xi</sup> 1901 Census returns

<sup>xii</sup> Kelly's *Trade Directory of Cheshire*, 1906

<sup>xiii</sup> Kelly's *Trade Directory of Cheshire*, 1914

<sup>xiv</sup> CRO: DSH 299/27