

**A HISTORY OF THREE LOCAL
BLACKSMITH SHOPS IN –
COLEORTON
SWANNINGTON
GRIFFYDAM**



BY SAMUEL T STEWART - 2020

The Village Blacksmith

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1807-1882

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands,
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long;
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

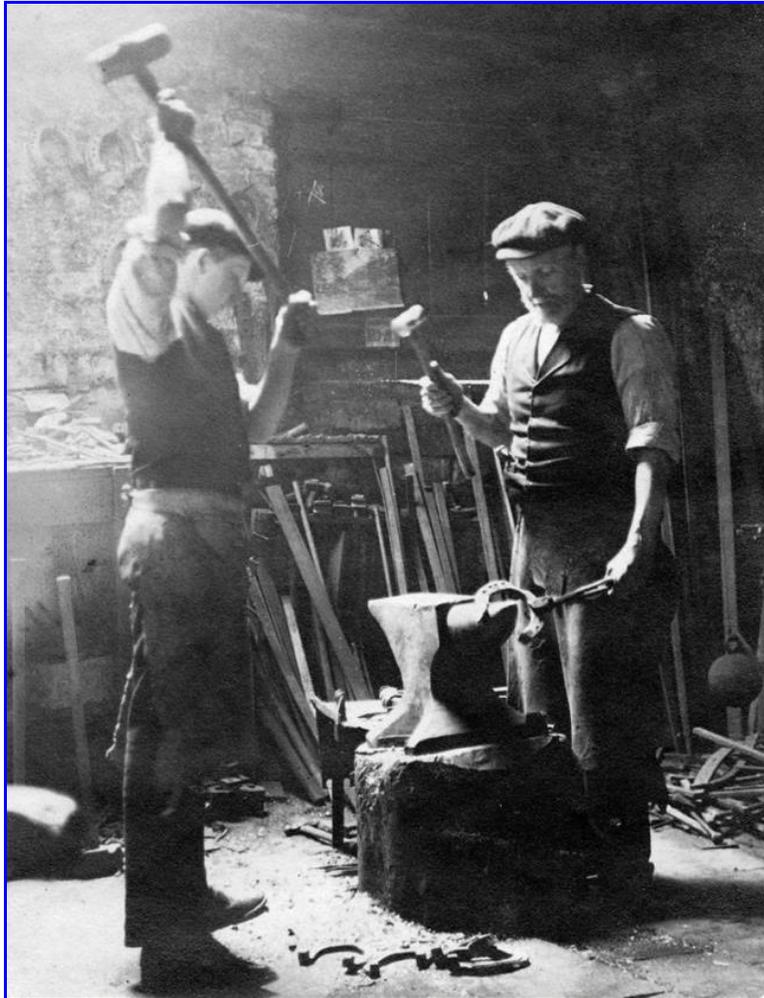
He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,

Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.



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THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP - COLEORTON

Preston's Lane was clearly named after *at least* three generations of Preston Blacksmiths who had their Smithy just as you entered the lane from the Upper Moor road on the north side. They did most of their work for the Beaumont Estate including wrought iron work for St. Mary's Church, making farming implements, general repairs around the estate and shoeing horses, which are only a few examples, some of which can be transcribed from extracts of the Beaumont estate account books included later.

The Coleorton 1842 Tithing Map register describes plot 347 which equates to 254 on the following 1885 map as – **House, garden and Blacksmith's Shop**. It is known from surviving estate records, shown later, that the Prestons' were Blacksmiths in Coleorton as far back as 1820 and it is quite likely that the Smithy was in the same place throughout their time in Coleorton.



FAMILY TREE INFORMATION

William Preston (1774-1827) and Mary Platts (1780-1824) were married at St. Mary's Church, Coleorton on 27th December 1803. Mary was born in Coleorton, so presumably William, who was not born in Coleorton, moved there prior to 1803 (see out of wedlock birth), and is recorded in Beaumont Estate records, examples of which follow, as being a Blacksmith in Coleorton by 1820. However, it is likely he was operating as a Blacksmith in Coleorton before that date. Both William and Mary Preston are buried in St. Mary's churchyard, Coleorton.

William Preston (1804-1880), son of the above William Preston (1774-1827), became a Blacksmith in Coleorton (marked by asterisk on the following table), and presumably worked alongside his father, till his death in 1827. He was the second of six children born to William Preston and Mary Platts and his siblings were Elizabeth 1802 (*born out of wedlock*), Mary 1810, Thomas 1814, Sarah and Jane who were both born in 1817.

William Preston and Mary Platt's son Thomas (b.1814) married Harriet Tugby in 1833 in Whitwick. He also became a blacksmith. Between 1841 and 1851, he moved to Dunchurch where he is described as a "Blacksmith Journeyman". He then moved to Willesden, Middlesex, where he was described as a "Farrier", which mainly involved the shoeing of horses.

William Preston (1804-1880) married Jane Gough, also of Coleorton in August 1825. William and Jane apparently had eleven children, Thomas 1826, Mary 1828, William 1829, Jane Ann 1831, Sarah 1833/34, Amelia 1835-1838, Sarah 1837, Fanny 1840, Charles Edward 1841, Elizabeth 1844 and Amelia 1846.

By 1851, William's son Thomas (b.1826) joined his father William (b.1804) as a Blacksmith in Preston's Lane, along with his second son William (b.1829). Thomas was also listed as "Parish Clerk"

By 1861, Thomas (b. 1826) had left Coleorton and the family business. In 1871, he is listed as a blacksmith, living in Moira. So, in 1861, three people were working in the business – Father William (b.1804) with his two son William (b.1829, d. 31.7.1866), and Charles Edward (b.1841). William (b.1829) is buried in St. Mary's churchyard.

By 1871, there are now just two Coleorton Blacksmiths, father William (b.1804) and his son Charles Edward (b.1841). Charles Edward (b.1841) had married Elizabeth Weston who was born in Swannington in 1840. They had eight children – John William 1865, Charles Edward 1866, Elizabeth 1869, Jane 1871, Frances Sarah 1873, Amelia 1875, Maud Mary 1878, and Edith Ann 1880.

In 1871 Charles Edward and his wife Elizabeth with two children are living with William senior (b.1804) in Preston's Lane. William senior died in 1880.

The Preston's Coleorton line then continues on through Charles Edward (b.1841), who continues the family business following the death of his father in 1880, and is living in 1880 in the aforesaid cottage with his family and two sisters, Jane and Fanny.

By 1881, Charles and Elizabeth's son John William was sixteen years of age and working with his father as a blacksmith's striker as was his son Charles Edward junior aged 15.

By 1891, John William had left the family business and was living in Leicester Road, Ashby and was given as a Journeyman Blacksmith. By 1901, he had moved to Barnby in the Willows, Nottinghamshire where he was still a blacksmith. In 1911 he was living at 2, William Street, Newark, Notts and still Blacksmithing. His death was recorded in January 1924 in Basford, Notts.

In 1891, Charles Edward senior (aged 56) was still living at the family home and his son Charles Edward (aged 24) was still working with him but now promoted to the title of blacksmith.

In 1901, both Charles Edward senior and junior were still both running the family Blacksmithing business.

By 1911, young Charles Edwards had left the family business and was living at Modal Farm, Shenley, Herts, where he was listed as an estate blacksmith. His father died in 1914. However, prior to 1939 (maybe when his father died), Charles Edward had apparently returned back to Coleorton as he was shown in the register to be living on The Moor as a retired blacksmith. It is not possible to be certain whether Charles Edward the younger or his father was the last Blacksmith to be running a Blacksmith's Shop in Coleorton, but it was certainly one of them.

The "Smithy" is not shown on the 1923 O/S map so it was obviously demolished prior to that.

Chart of Preston Blacksmiths from William Preston (b. 1774):-
 (The true birth date is recorded under the born column, as there can be a conflict with the ages recorded in the census as often people did not know their true age)

Year	Name	Born	Occupation	Age	R/ship
1820	William Preston	1774	Blacksmith	46 in 1820	Father
(Blacksmith in Coleorton by 1820)					
1841	William Preston	1804	Blacksmith	35	Son *
1851	William Preston	1804	Blacksmith	46	Son *
	Thomas Preston	1826	Blacksmith & Parish Clerk	25	G/Son
	William Preston	1829	Blacksmith	20	G/Son
1861	William Preston	1804	Blacksmith	53	Son *
	William Preston	1829	Blacksmith	30	G/Son
	Charles E Preston	1841	Blacksmith	18	G/Son
1871	William Preston	1804	Blacksmith	63	Son *
	Charles E Preston	1841	Blacksmith	28	G/Son
1881	Charles E Preston	1841	Blacksmith	38	G/Son
	John W Preston	1865	Blacksmith's Striker	16	GGSon
	Charles E Preston	1866	Blacksmith's Striker	15	GGSon
1891	Charles E Preston	1841	Blacksmith	48	G/Son
	Charles E Preston	1866	Blacksmith	24	GGSon
1901	Charles E Preston	1841	Blacksmith	56	G/Son
	Charles E Preston	1866	Blacksmith	34	GGSon

**THE WILLIAM PRESTON WHO FEATURES IN THE FOLLOWING
 NEWSPAPER ARTICLES WAS BORN 1804 AND DIED 1880 AND IS
 MARKED WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE PRECEDING LIST**

DERBY DAILY TELEGRAPH – SEPTEMBER 9TH 1879

William Preston of Coleorton, blacksmith, John Toone of Swannington, butcher; Charles Jackson of Coleorton, grocer and Thomas Rouse of Swannington, blacksmith, were all charged by James Brewitt, the inspector of weights and measures, with having weights and steelyards in their possession which were unjust. – Fined 10s. 6d. each and costs.

Samuel Mackett (Machett?), of Coleorton, Shopkeeper, who did not appear, was fined £1. 1s. and costs for having in his possession nine weights which were not verified and stamped by the inspector.

LEICESTER CHRONICLE

19th January 1828 – County sessions

The Epiphany Quarter Sessions for this county commenced at the Castle, on Tuesday, when the following prisoners were severally arraigned before Charles Godfrey Mundy, Esq, chairman, and a bench of Magistrates.

WILLIAM WILLIAMSON and **WILLIAM ROBERTS** for stealing two couple of fowls, the property of **William Preston** of Coleorton, on the 14th September, were found guilty, and sentenced to be imprisoned six months hard labour, and to be once privately whipped.- The fowls seem to have been stolen by the prisoners with an idea that they had the right to take them because the parish

officers would not find them work. (*this was a standard excuse which can be found in many other cases*)

The stealing of William Preston's two fowls cost the defendants six months hard labour and a private whipping. Amazing !!!!

THE LEICESTER MAIL

Saturday July 6th 1867

Ashby de la Zouch Petty Sessions, Saturday.- Before the Rev J.M. Echelaz and H.E. Smith Esq

Frederick Crowson, of Coleorton, charged William and Charles Preston, father and son, with assaulting him, on the 21st ult. The complainant said that on the above day he was returning to work, and had to cross defendant's field, where there is a footpath. As he was proceeding along a cart rut, Charles Preston came up and accused him of treading down the mowing grass. He then dragged him across the field to his father, who struck him with the thick end of his whip. – Charlotte Crowson, mother of complainant, deposed to examining her son's back, and found a large substance upon it which had been caused by a severe thrashing. The magistrates ordered defendants to pay 15s 9d each including the costs.

THE LEICESTER JOURNAL

Friday 20th September 1872

Ashby-de-la-Zouch Petty Sessions, September 14th. Before the Rev. J. M. Echalaz, Major Mowbray, and H. E. Smith Esq.

John Charvill (*licensee of Beaumont Arms in Rotten Row – part of Thringstone Parish*) of Thringstone, licensed victualler, was charged with having on the 3rd September, kept his house open for the sale of intoxicating liquors after the hour of eleven at night. Mr. Haxby prosecuted on behalf of the police, and Mr. Wilson appeared for the defendant. P.C. Corner said at half-past eleven on the night in question he visited defendant's house, and found the landlord and twelve men in the bar, some were sitting and some were standing. There were both spirits and ale where they were. He told defendant he should report him. He followed him to the door, and said he hoped he should not. P. S. Fardell gave corroborating evidence. The defendant and his wife were called by Mr. Wilson to prove that no drink was drawn after eleven o'clock.

Fined £2 and costs, or one month's imprisonment - George Percival (bricklayer), William Crabtree (carpenter), and George Marriott (collier), all of Worthington; Charles Preston (blacksmith), Wm. Peters (footman), John Berkin and Wm. Cuthbert, all of Coleorton; and John Litherland, of Packington (blacksmith), severally pleaded guilty to being found on the said John Charvill's premises on the day and time aforesaid. **Fined 1s each and costs.**

EXAMPLES OF PRESTON ACCOUNTS FOR SMITHY WORK
CARRIED OUT ON THE BEAUMONT ESTATE

Blacksmith's Account

commencing Dec. 1820 £ s d

<p>8.10.8⁸ 1820 Dec. 30⁸</p>	<p>Aut. Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 8 10 8</p>
<p>1821 Jan. 21. E4.3.3²</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 2 6 10 Aut.</p>
<p>March 15⁸</p>	<p>Paid Mr. Varley his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 6 1 6 Aut.</p>
<p>July 31⁸</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 1 16 5² Aut.</p>
<p>March 16. E10.16.16⁸</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 4 15 4 Aut.</p>
<p>May 1. E5.0.6⁸</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 5 " 6² Aut.</p>
<p>June 9. E7.11.11⁸</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 3 19 10 Aut.</p>
<p>30⁸ E7.11.11⁸</p>	<p>Paid W^m Preston his bill for Smiths work</p>	<p>} 3 12 1 Aut.</p>

Carried forward £

1821

July 23rd Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's

4 16 4

July 26th Paid Mr. Parley his bill for Dr. Do

6 14 -

Sept. 29th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month ending

3 1 5 1/2

Sept. 28th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month ending Aug. 1st

1 3 -

Sept. 24th Paid Mr. Parley his bill for Smith's work

7 10 3

Sept. 28th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month ending Sept. 1821

9 5 -

Oct. 1st Paid Dr. Parley his bill for Oct. 1821

6 12 8 1/2

Oct. 1st Paid Dr. Parley his bill for Oct. 1821

2 5 6

Oct. 1st Paid Dr. Parley his bill for Oct. 1821

19 2 1/2

Nov. 9th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month of Nov.

4 2 2 1/2

Nov. 30th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month of Feb. 1822

4 1 3

April 27th Paid Wm Preston his bill for Smith's work for the month of March 1822

4 19 8

Carried forward L

1822

May 18th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of April 1822

3 - 3

July 19th Paid Mr. Parley bill for Smith's work

11 2 1

Aug. 20th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of May 1822

3 3 -

Sept. 11th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of June 1822

11 16 8 1/2

Sept. 26th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of July 1822

26 7 9 1/2

Sept. 28th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of August 1822

3 13 8

Nov. 30th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of Sept. 1822

6 14 5

Jan. 30th Paid Wm Preston bill for Smith's work for the month of Oct. 1822

18 11

Carried forward L

10 15 9 1/2

Carried forward L

10 15 9 1/2

November 1826		£	s	d
11 th	Pd. Wm. Preston, bill for Smiths work at the Hall and on the Estate for the Month of Oct. 1826	0	2	3½
	£	0	2	3½
December, 1826.		£	s	d
2 nd	Pd. W. Preston, bill for Smiths work at the Hall and on the Estate for the Month of November 1826	4	18	0½
	£	4	18	0½
January 1827				
6 th	Pd. Wm. Preston bill for Smiths work for the Month of Dec. 1826	7	17	8½
23 rd	Pd. Tho. Farley bill for Smiths work done on the Estate	4	6	9
	£	12	1	5½
February 1827.				
3 rd	Pd. Wm. Preston Bill for Smiths work for the Month of Jan. 1827	1	18	6
	£	1	18	6

W^m Preston

Blacksmith's Account

for
Month of July 1837

1837		£	s	d
July	a new picking forks on mending one			3
	a new hay fork	1	6	
6	4 steys for gat iron for nut hook	12	1	
	4 dogs 5 lb	2	1	
	2 pins an ribets an plat	1	6	
8	a wrench an ayth stick			1
	3 steys 2 lock plat a hook for gat 60	1	5	
		<u>£</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>
				<u>2</u>

1840 Brought over	£ 2	12
Decr a new Dung fork	" 1	9
19 new teething marks	" 2	6
a new socket to hedge knife	" 7	6
sharpening and overhau	" "	" 8
ing's pecks	" "	" 8
a new Dung Drag	" "	" 6
a new Dung fork	" 2	6
sharpening 2 forks	" 2	6
and pulling on end	" "	" 8
holtering fork for	" "	" 8
icing	" "	" 6
22 a new socket to	" "	" 8
rake	" "	" 8
mending two forks	" 2	"
a new plate for	" "	"
hoe	" 1	6
repairing 2 pecks	" "	4
	£ 3	3
	7	

1840 Brought up	£ 3	3
Decr 2 pair of hooks and	" "	"
bands and screw pins	" "	"
3 latches and catches	" "	"
and cam latches	" "	"
23 etc	" 9	7
4 staples 2 hasps	" 1	"
a ring and staple	" "	3
2 shears 2 tucks	" 1	2
24 mending fire shov	" "	9
mending bole	" "	"
repairing lock for	" "	"
brickyard	" "	6
4 rivets, sharped	" 1	"
roughing horse and	" "	"
sharpening 2 pecks	" "	6
29 2 links in spoke	" "	"
chain	" "	6
3 shears 2 rivets	£ 2	4
stealed	£ 4	2
	2	2

1845	Brought over	£ 0 0		
May 3	4 false links	" " 8-	1845	Brought up
	a plate on lock	" " 6-	May 8	2 plates on lock
	Sharpening brick Drusser	" " 2	9	repairing 2 locks
	repairing 2 Pair of shears	" " "	12	new teething rake and
	and grinding	" " 2	14	mending rake head
	a spring latch and 3 staples	" " 1		4 shoes
6	a new pair of horns on	" " "		1 link 2 rings and mending
	scupper for Brick yard	" " 1 4-		ing bolts in turns for
	Cleaning smother jacks	" " 3 6-		planks
	repairing tile mould	" " 6-	15	2 shoes 1 remove
	13 books 3 staples	" " 1 4		2 books for Bands
7	a new floor for chimney 8th	" " 4		a thumbbit for Door
	repairing chisels	" " 3	16	repairing books and staples
	32 staples	" " 2 8-		a weather for Doug pin 1/2
	Sharpening Brick Drusser	" " 2	20	13 staples and sharpening pick
	a lock staple and re	" " "		1 shoe 4 removes
	pairing lock	" " 6		2 new turns 2 books 2 rings
	£ " 18 7			2 links 2 staples for planks
				£ 1 11 1/2

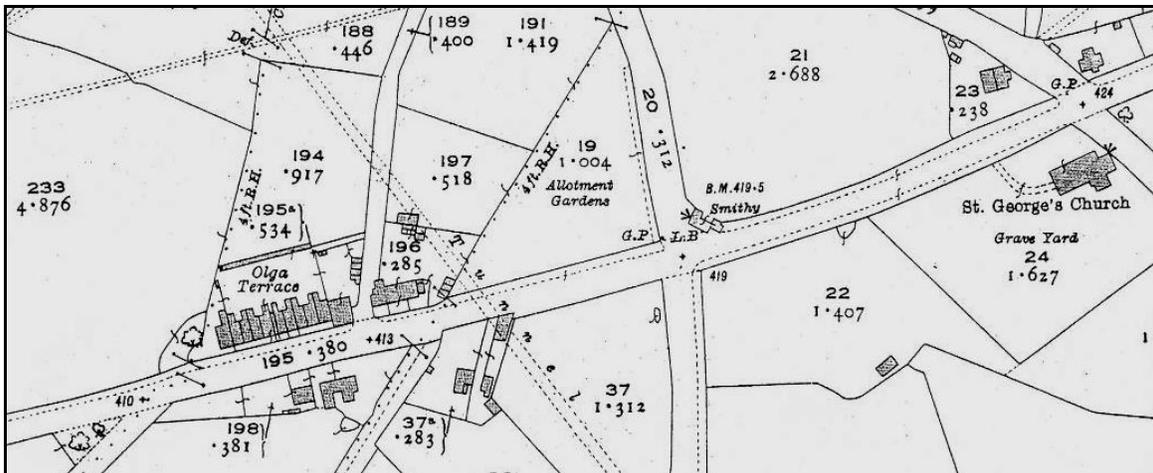
THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP - SWANNINGTON

**A FOCAL POINT FOR THE VILLAGERS OF PEGGS GREEN, GRIFFYDAM,
SWANNINGTON AND COLEORTON**

**THE FOLLOWING IS BASED AROUND AN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO
THE COALVILLE TIMES IN 1951**



EDGAR MEE AT WORK



Section of 1923 O/S map showing location of The Blacksmith's Shop (Smithy) in the centre

The "Blacksmith's Shop", which was situated to the East of Swannington Island (known as Peggy Island when the author was a youngster), on the opposite side to St. George's Church, was a landmark known by everyone in the community. You even told the midland red bus driver on the C76 for example, that you were getting off at the "Blacksmith's Shop" when you purchased your bus ticket. People of that era would also recall the stop further down on Nottingham road, which was always known as Morley's cross roads, because it was adjacent to where the Morleys' lived.

Reputedly built in the 1700's, the original "Smithy" served the local area for a couple of centuries until it was demolished for a road widening scheme, and a new one was built. In the 1950's, and for many years before, Mr. Edgar Mee was the blacksmith, and rightly proud of the shop and its traditions; he can be seen at work in the preceding photograph. The Mee family, including Edgar, his father and grandfather had operated the shop for over a century (from c.1850)

Edgar's grandfather, Joseph Mee, apparently came from Griffydham to take over the shop, after, so it was said, that the previous owner had been "transported" for stealing iron. See the article on the Blacksmith in Griffydham where Joseph Mee worked before moving to Peggs Green.

Mr. Mee explained that his ancestor's did things in exactly the way he was doing them in 1950 and he expected that the need for shoeing of horses would continue and outlive his own ability to provide that service. One of the main changes Mr. Mee had experienced over his ancestors was the arrival of electricity. There wasn't any need to employ a man to work the furnace bellows or do the striking as this was now automated, with the bellows being replaced by an electric blower. Acetylene welding etc had arrived by this time, but the actual method of shoeing of horses had changed little. Some of the actual shoes were then purchased ready made, but some were still made completely from bar iron.

In earlier days, before the arrival of farm machinery such as tractors which replaced horses, there was sufficient work to have a blacksmith in nearly every village, and they could be found in Worthington, Coleorton, Newbold, Swannington, Thringstone and Belton for example. Many of these closed down due to the introduction of farm machinery and the closure of local coal mines which also provided work. The gradual closure of all of these left Mr. Mee as the only surviving blacksmith in the area, which enabled him to continue in business.

Things are not what they used to be Mr. Mee explained, as he remembered when there was often a row of horses from the cross-roads to the shop waiting to be shod. Another highlight was the lighting of fires outside when the iron "hooping" of cart wheels needed to be carried out, The

hoops were heated in the fire to make them expand before fitting to the wheels. These were then quenched in water to cause contraction of the iron hoops thereby providing a tight fit. There was a lot of work to do on the Coleorton Beaumont estate which necessitated him travelling to different farms to carry out the work on site. He recalled that in his grandfather's day a horse could be completely shod for 2s 4d., but in 1950, the price was between 12s. and 16s. and this was according to the size of the horse; clearly a cart horse would be more expensive. Mr. Mee explained that there was an art in shoeing a horse, and without the careful handling of the horse it was quite easy to get kicked. He said that "his life long contact with horses bred in him a love for them, and he and his family had kept as many as three or four horses at a time, for sheer pleasure in their possession".

Apparently, the 1914-18 War was a rushed period at the shop. Mechanisation of farms was in its early stages, and the clip clop of hooves on the roads became even less with the introduction of cars, buses and lorries. Indeed, Mr. Mee well remembered rushing out of the shop to see the first cars pass by: never dreaming that they would in time, oust the horse-drawn traffic from the roads.

The vicinity of the "Blacksmith's Shop" has undergone changes, too. Mr. Mee remembered St. George's Church during the incumbencies of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Pearson and he recalled "Kirby's Windmill", which used to stand on the corner near the church. Houses were few and far between at that time. The demolition of his old shop was made necessary by the vast increase in fast moving traffic, and its dangerous proximity to the corner, but it destroyed an old-world atmosphere which had become a meeting place for all and sundry. Its structure served as a shelter from wind and rain whilst men chatted and regaled each other with well worn tales. The new building filled Mr. Mee's business requirements admirably, but the friendliness and familiarity of its predecessor was gone.

THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP – GRIFFYDAM

The “Post office Trade Directory of 1855” records that Joseph Mee was a Blacksmith at Griffydam. This is interesting from the point of view that he was the grandfather of Edgar Mee who was running the Blacksmith's Shop at Swannington in the 1950s (see the preceding feature).

Edgar related in his interview with the Coalville Times that his grandfather Joseph came to run the Blacksmith's Shop at Swannington from Griffydam in the 1850's when the current Blacksmith had been “transported” for stealing iron.

In the Peggs Green 1851 census, Joseph Mee is living with his family on Froggat's Lane. During the turnpike road era, Froggats Lane (an extension of the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike road) ran from Tugby's Lane along the now Nottingham Road and down what is now known as Storden Lane. His profession is given as a Blacksmith, and presumed to be working at the blacksmith's shop described below, prior to moving to the one at Swannington.

An old resident of the village described a rather strange shaped building, which was used as a “Blacksmith's Shop” on the north end of what was known as “Rose Cottage” shown in the following photograph. The same property is marked **B** on the following 1903 O/S map and the strange shaped extension can be clearly seen on the end of the cottage. The property was directly opposite the horse stables belonging to the Waggon & Horses which are marked **A** on the map. The Waggon & Horses is marked **C**.

Wagons would have continually broken down, with the horses losing shoes whilst travelling up *Nickerson's* (slang for *Nicklinson*) Hill on the Rempstone Turnpike Road. The horses that were stabled at the Wagon & Horses could well have been used to assist in helping to pull the wagons weighing up to 4 tons up the steep hill. Other stables for horses presumably used for farm work as well, were situated at the back of the Inn. In the sale documents of 1927 they had stabling for up to seven horses. We know a building was on the site of the Waggon & Horses in 1802, and this raises the question as to whether it was a coaching Inn at one time?

There is no blacksmith recorded in the 1851 census at Griffydam, but in 1861 (after Joseph Mee had left to go to Swannington) John Massey, aged 41, is listed as a blacksmith living with his wife Zilpha (47) and family members. No further records have been found of a blacksmith residing in Griffydam, until the September 1939 registration document lists George W Hyman and his son living at “Rose Cottage”. The father's occupation is given as a “Shoeing Smith” and he was also a Special Contable. He was born on 7th May 1887. On the 1911 census he is listed as living on Derby Road, Ashby de la Zouch with his occupation given as “Blacksmith”.



Extract from the 1903 O/S map



The photograph above was taken in the 1950's when Mrs. Richardson lived at the property. It was unfortunately demolished to make way for a later road modification scheme. The stables opposite had also been demolished by the time the photograph was taken.



In the old photograph above, taken c.1895, the building on the RH side is the Waggon & Horses, The cottage in the centre is marked **D** on the preceding map and the edge of the building on the LH side was part of the Blacksmith's Shop extension to the cottage.

We do not have any history on the thatched cottage in the centre at the time of writing,