

**VERNACULAR BUILDINGS RESEARCH
HENLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL GROUP**

Parish/County: Henley-on-Thames, Oxon
Street and House name:
No. 21 Friday Street

Owners: James & Morag
Lambert
Ruth Gibson
Date: 19.7.09 & June 2010

Listing grade and entry text: **Gd II** Part of a terrace comprising 17 – 29 Friday Street
C17 range of terraced cottages. Painted brick wall on flint base with projecting stringcourse at 1st floor. Ground floor windows have transom and mullions, some C.19 casements, some repro. leaded lights. Plank doors with small, bracketed flat hoods.



17 – 29 Friday Street c. 1940



No. 21 Friday Street 2010

Known History: No. 21 is part of Gravett's Charity cottages, given to the Henley Corporation in 1624 by William Gravett. Formerly two houses and a malthouse, much altered and extended at the back in c.1744. Benjamin Bradshaw was the builder¹ who turned the existing structures into 6 cottages. Although some demolition may have taken place, i.e. the malthouse? and the front walls were replaced by brick work, enough timber framing of the earlier, documented buildings *late in possession of Widow Simmons*² remain, to show that Bradshaw did not *pull down the old houses and malt house, being run to ruin, and build new houses in their stead* as he had been instructed to do by the Corporation.

N.B The above Listing Entry is not correct and should read: 18th C. fronts to earlier, partly timber framed buildings, as the recording and documentary evidence shows.

Census Returns for 1851- 1881 show that Eliz. Collins ran a marine store there; confirmed by Street Directories for 1883 – 1887. The 1901 Census has Phoebe Harris, 2 daughters and lodger George Denton, a chimney sweep living there.

¹ ORO, BOR3/A/V/BM/8 f.121 (Henley Borough Assembly Minutes 1722-99) Benjamin Bradshaw granted a new lease for the 6 tenements in Friday St. which he hath now built in place of the 2 old houses and malt house in the possession of the Widow Simmons with appurtenances for £ 6 and chance to renew for two further terms of 11 years at a rent of £9

² Ibid f.115

By 1910 Mrs. E. Cresswell ran apartments and refreshment rooms from No. 21, but very likely together with No. 23/25, as she and her husband (chimney sweep) and sons are entered there in the 1901 Census Returns. John Cresswell is still shown in the 1910-1922 Trade Directories as chimney sweep at No. 23/25. The White Lion, PH at Nos. 23/25 had ceased trading by 1890.

Summary: No. 21 is the 4th bay in the group formed by 17-21 Friday Street. It shares the dividing wall with No. 19 and the large, heavily sloping tie beam is visible in both cottages. Unfortunately, little other framing is exposed in the front section of the house apart from three narrow studs in the east ground floor wall and in the rear/south wall at first floor level. The use of cross shaped, side hung casements instead of vertical sashes in the 18th C. shows that fashionable and more expensive fenestration was not considered necessary for these Corporation owned cottages. The insertion of stacks to heat 3 rooms and a serviceable staircase were much more essential for future tenants. Bradshaw, far from pulling down the old houses, as he had been instructed, retained much of the existing buildings; their framing is particularly well preserved at No.17 and No. 23/25 (long wall braces, wind braces and a smoke bay).

Nos. 19, 21 and 29 display fewer early features³. Both share existing gable walls with neighbouring buildings, and it is possible that they represent additions to the earlier buildings, thereby creating the C 18th terrace.

Map ref., date of 1st map, type of plot.: Shown on First O.S map of 1878 as 6 units. The plots run back to a boundary at the back of the Hart Street burgage plots, determined by the line of the town ditch (now underground).

Plan form/position in street: Built on the north side of Friday Street, parallel to it and of single depth with later rear extension at right angles. This contains the stack, kitchen and staircase, turning the buildings into a double pile structure. (No 19 has the same rear extension, but No. 17 has an earlier, timber framed rear wing of prob. 16th C. date)

Description of the building: The front elevation is brick built with a brick & flint plinth and brick plat band; the rear wall is mostly flint with brick window and door surrounds. Both walls are very substantial measuring some 40 cm. All masonry is now painted, but the black & white 1940s photograph shows the original 18th C. brickwork of the front elevation well.

The ground floor windows are cross shaped with transoms and mullions and the first-floor ones are side hung casements, unusual in front elevations for 18th C. houses, more often found at the back once sash windows had come in.

The front roof is steep with gable ends and formerly probably ran uninterrupted from No. 19 21, but now has a fire wall in the loft. The rear roof is of a much lower pitch and has a hipped end (the same as that of No. 19). The rafters of the front bay are of substantial scantling and measure 5 by 3 (12.5 cm by 7.5 cm). The visible gable end on the east side has a wide collar, supported by mostly narrow struts with laths and plaster between them forming the wall up to collar height. Beyond this appears to be a gap with two rafters visible, apparently creating a small roof extension up to the west gable of No. 23. No original purlins are visible, but close inspection of this roof space was not possible, as the floor joists are hidden under insulation material. Additional rafters have been inserted over the back where the rear extension joins on the north side.

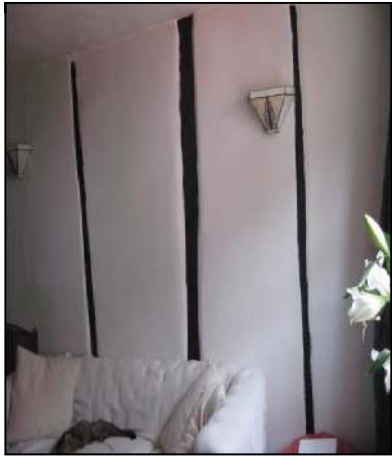
³ No. 29 uses the long, two-bay west side wall of No. 31 to support its own framing (see drawing in Report 54/1989.) No 27 has not yet been accessed.



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<p>Hipped C.18th kitchen extension. Note 3-flue stack</p>	<p>View of the front roof, looking east towards No. 23/25 - with gap visible behind the collar</p>
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The front room. This is accessed directly from the street via a step of some 23 cm above street level (was there a cellar?). The brick lined fireplace with timber lintel is located in the back wall. The central transverse joist consists of an approximately 26 cm wide timber with rounded side, which still allows us to see the sapwood edge of the tree from which it was cut. There are three narrow studs of between 5 - 10 cm width visible in the east wall. All other wall and ceiling timbers are hidden. The square panel timbers forming the west wall are only visible in No. 19 (see report 54/1989). The small size scantling and method of construction represents a very late phase of timber framing, only used for internal walls and not meant to be seen.



<p>Ground floor front room, north wall with 1.06 m wide and 0.58 m deep FP</p>	<p>East wall with three narrow studs</p>
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The **rear room/kitchen** was an essential addition to the one-bay front. Here all ceiling as well as wall timbers are exposed; most are of slight and uneven scantling. The turned staircase is also accessed from the rear kitchen. The former kitchen fireplace, at the back of the living room one, has been blocked in.



Rear bay with turned staircase



and central axial beam with uneven joists

The **First-Floor** landing is reached by the 18th C. turned staircase rising from the kitchen in the rear bay. There are a small bedroom and bathroom in the rear wing. The landing wall on the west side is constructed from narrow scantling studs and a diagonal timber and forms the shared boundary wall between Nos.19 & 21⁴.

From the landing 2 further steps access the main, front bedroom. Here the heavily slanting tie beam, also seen and recorded in No. 19, is exposed. It has been strengthened by the addition of a post and diagonal bracing timber and is supported on the south front by the brick wall (see drawing) . Unfortunately, no timbers are visible in the east wall to see whether there are any signs of an original tie beam in that location and the view in the attic of the tie beam is obscured by the insulation layers.

There are three timber studs in the rear/north wall of the bedroom located between the masonry of the stack and the bedroom door, which may be all that remains of the original back wall, or it may be part of the C 18th work, as narrow, often re-used timbers were much utilized at that time.



East first floor side wall of the landing in the rear extension

Conclusion: Probably built in the mid C 18th as an infill cottage between the earlier 15th/16th houses at No. 17 and 23-25. Similar late framing details are evident at No. 29 (27 remains to be explored).

⁴ See survey drawing of No. 19, eastern Truss, in Report 54/1989