

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

Parish/County: Henley-on-Thames, Oxon
Street and House name:
59 Friday Street

Owner: Mr P & Mrs E. Mumby
Tel No: 578556
Ruth Gibson
Date: 15.10.09

Listing grade and entry text: Gd II

Late 18th-early 19th C. Terrace of three cottages.
Included for group value.



No. 57 No. 59 No .61



West gable adjoining passageway

Known History: The group must have been built by a developer as a three-cottage terrace to let during the time when there was much demand for labourer s accommodation in the town. The 1901 Census Returns confirm that a worker, who was a coal carter lived at 59 with his wife. They were Frederick and Margaret Cresswell. The group was still in one ownership in 1918 when it was sold by Ernest Barton to A.E.Daniells. Mr and Mrs Mumby bought No. 59 in 1991/92.

Map ref., date of 1st map, type of plot. Shown on 1878, First OS map of Henley, as a terrace with communal garden, bounded by a wall on the south side probably the walled garden of the Rectory and a wall on the west side. The latter is part of a long passageway ending at the south side of the Rectory grounds. On the east side the terrace adjoins a small medieval building, of which only a wing, now No. 63 Friday Street, survives. It is possible that the c. 1800 brick-built terrace here under consideration was built on the ground once occupied by the missing medieval hall without which this wing could not have functioned.

There are several references in the Henley Rentals, Bridge Rent Books and Hughes work in the 18th century to properties, one of them called Divitos House adjoining Parsonage Gateway , also called Parson s Lane and Rectory Gateway . This presumably refers to the passageway between Nos. 53/51 and 57/59/61, clearly shown on the 1878 First OS Map as leading to the south side of the Rectory gardens. The names of Benjamin and William Bradshaw are mentioned from 1745 to 1804 with regard to several messuages on the north side of Friday Street,i.e. two messuages next to Parsonage Gateway (1751). Unfortunately, we don t know to which side of the gateway they refer, but the two messuages leased to Bradshaw by the corporation could have been a property on each side of the gate way. No. 51/53 certainly was

one house, i.e., one message, before it was subdivided into two cottages, and Nos. 57-61 also probably occupy the site of a larger building.

Plan form/position in street: The terrace runs parallel to the street and is of double pile plan, i.e there are two rooms to each floor. The roof, which spans the whole depth of the building, is of a shallow pitch. The brick and flint west gable is visible from the gate way.

Description of the building: No 69 occupies the centre of the terrace. It is brick built, in Flemish bond; the bricks have all the marks of being hand made; they are of slightly uneven sizes but generally 2 ½ . The house has a front door and one adjoining window and a further first floor one; all with cambered brick arches above. The windows are horizontally sliding sash windows (or Yorkshire sash windows) with small glazing bars, probably original to the building, the 6-panel door replaces a plank door.

Roof shape, chimneys and covering: The roof slope is shallow and not suitable for tiles. It would have been covered with slates originally being brought by barge from the Welsh slate quarries. Unfortunately the slates have been replaced with concrete tiles. There is a 6-flue stack located between Nos 57 and 59, three flues serving each house heating the two ground floor rooms and the front bedroom.

Ground Floor lay out: (see architect s plans, 2008) The principal living room is accessed directly from the street with a fire place on the west side. The kitchen is slightly smaller and located at the back; the turned staircase on the east side of the kitchen gives access to the first floor. A later, narrow single storey rear extension for a bathroom was added, probably in the 20th century, as the 1878 map shows no rear extensions, but small outbuildings in the communal yard, which may have been washhouses and/or privies. A further small rear garden/breakfast room has been added in 2008.



Front room with brick fire place with timber mantle beam



View of rear elevations of Nos 61 & 59 with 2008 rear extension on r.h. side



Ledge and plank kitchen door with long, round ended strap hinges, probably machine-made replacements. These were in use throughout the 18th and much of the 19th centuries.

The three main planks of the door are 22 cm or 8 1/2 wide. All have a small bead moulding down one edge, a very popular jointing method in the 18th and 19th centuries (See Linda Hall, *Period House Fixtures & Fittings* p.37)

First Floor: There is a small landing at the head of the stairs which gives access to the two bedrooms. In both partition walls to the adjoining houses of the terrace at Nos 57 and 61 some studwork has been uncovered indicating that walls between houses were not of solid brick construction but probably of studs, laths and plaster.



Top left: First floor dividing wall between Nos. 59 and 61. Timber rail retains evidence of former lap joints for upright studs of a lath and plaster wall.

Top right: Bedroom ledge and plank door with beading and a round end strap hinge, the strong taper is a typical 18th C. type. However, the simple chamfer of the timber ledges indicates a 19th C. date.

Below: Door latch to bedroom; of simple design, but hand crafted, it has an upright latch holder and ends in a narrow taper with an unusual oval end.

Attic: Roof structure trusses, special features if any: The narrow rafters are placed on end and supported by purlins and collar of slight scantling. The roof structure lacks traditional carpentry details by which to date it. It would have been adequate to support the low pitch roof whatever the original covering but shows that traditional carpentry skills were no longer used in its construction.

Conclusion: This short terrace fits into the small-scale building activities of the first half of the 19th century seen in many parts of the town which made use of modest plots to build houses for the influx of workers into the town. Friday Street houses appear to have been particularly prone to being either converted to small cottages or replaced by new dwellings. This may have been the case here. The 1901 Census Return shows that Frederick Cresswell, a coal carman (carter) lived there with his wife; next door at 57 was Arthur Cresswell, with wife and child, probably his son, also a worker carrying coal.

The wide, shallow roof indicates the initial use of slates, which only became cheap enough for modest dwellings from c.1800 onwards once canals and pound locks had made river transport accessible for heavy loads.