

Tonight's topic is the area known as

‘Oaks Nook’

Ainsworth

The dictionary describes a 'nook' as –

a recess, or a 'secluded retreat'

The name **Oaks Nook** implies that this may once have been a secluded spot in a large wooded area.

Today the area contains far fewer trees and is home to a cluster of 18th century historic buildings including the 300 year old Presbyterian Chapel.

The Chapel is regarded by many as a hidden gem. This little altered chapel with its mullioned windows and fine interior is an important example of an early nonconformist chapel, in an attractive burial ground.

The special character and historic interest of this area puts it at the heart of the Ainsworth Village Conservation Area.



A stone delph
or quarry

1835 Tithe map



1850s

How old is this area of the village?

I have read many times that “Oaks Nook” is an ancient part of the village.

The earliest documented mention of Oaks Nook that I have found is in the Presbyterian Chapel deeds dated 1715. Here it states that the new building is to be erected in an area of Ainsworth known as ‘**Oakes Nooke**’.

So the area was already called Oaks Nook well before 1715.

Section of Chapel trust deed 1715

Summe

made the Nineteenth # # # # # day of March # # in the year
 Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith &c. **Between** Robert Aspinwall of Lin-
 coll Daniel Hamor William Kirkman Junr Thomas Kirkman John Kirkman and John Bradley all of them of
 the County of Lancashire heretofore granted or released or mentioned to be granted or released And that he is minded an
 is lately Erected and Built by several Protestants Dissenting from the Church of England upon the said parcel of
 of the Summ of Three pounds Four Money of Great Britain to him in hand paid at or before the Sealing and Soli-
 in Kirkman and John Bradley his Receipt whereof is hereby Acknowledged And for divers other good Consideration
 Grant Alion Bargain Sell Enfeoffed Release and Confirm unto them the said Thomas Baron William Kirkman
 in before and hereafter mentioned by virtue of one Indenture of Bargain and Sale thereof to them made for the Com-
 The said Edifice and Building newly Erected as aforesaid And all that parcel of Land with the Appurtenances ther-
 toin whose or portion of Land is hereby called and known by the Name of the Oaker-Moore The Indenture
 And will be divided from the same by a Wall of Stone or Brick The said Wall to be
 other Gates passages Entries Easements Liberties profits and hereditaments to the said new Erected Edifice and the
 Estate Right Title Interest Demand whatsoever of him the said Robert Aspinwall of in and unto the
 or released or mentioned or made to be hereby granted or released with their Appurtenances unto them the said
 To the Use and behoofe of them the said Robert Aspinwall Thomas Baron William Kirkman Junr John Aspinwall
 in the several and respective Trusts and Confidences and to and for the particular Intents and purposes herein
 mas Baron William Kirkman Junr John Aspinwall Daniel Hamor William Kirkman Junr Thomas Kirkman
 hereafter Donvert Imploy and Dispose of The said Edifice and Building newly Erected as aforesaid and the said

The relatively small area known as **Oaks Nook** contains no less than **8 Listed buildings**, although some of them are grouped together under a single listing. Let's take a look at them and I will share with you what I have learned about them over the last 20 odd years that I have lived in Oaks Nook.

The buildings are -

The Presbyterian Chapel 1715 - grade 2*,

The Duke William Inn 1737 - grade 2,

The Duke William stables – grade 2

The Old Stables 1768 - grade 2,

Hooks Cottage 1773 - grade 2.

Can anyone tell me the other 3 'listed buildings' ?



3 Listed box tombs

1731 chest tomb Rev. Peter Seddon, 1773 chest tombs to Peter Baron, Samuel Baron



The oldest building in *Oaks Nook* is the 1715 Presbyterian Chapel



Chapel after being extended in 1773

The acorn over the entrance porch

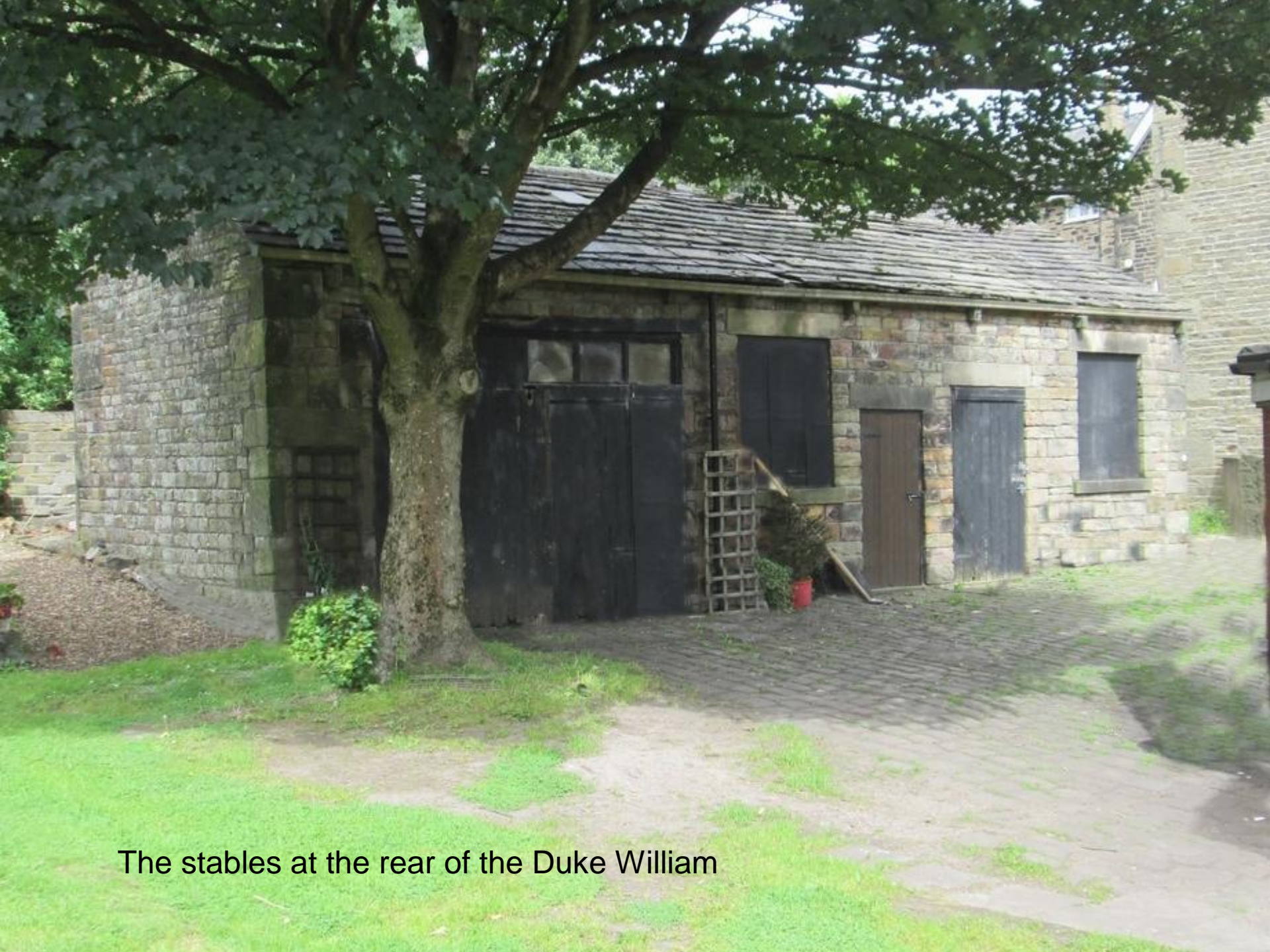




The Chapel as it looks today



The Duke William coaching Inn, erected 1737



The stables at the rear of the Duke William

The Duke William Inn was built in 1737 when George the II, the last Monarch to lead his troops into battle, was on the throne.

His second living son, William, then sixteen years of age and his parents favourite, had been made Duke of Cumberland some 10 years earlier (1726).



Apparently he was esteemed by the owners of the new hostelry, who named it after him.

It was a splendid choice, for in later years he became an eminent soldier though he was also said to be proud and unforgiving and proud of war for its own sake.

William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721- 65)

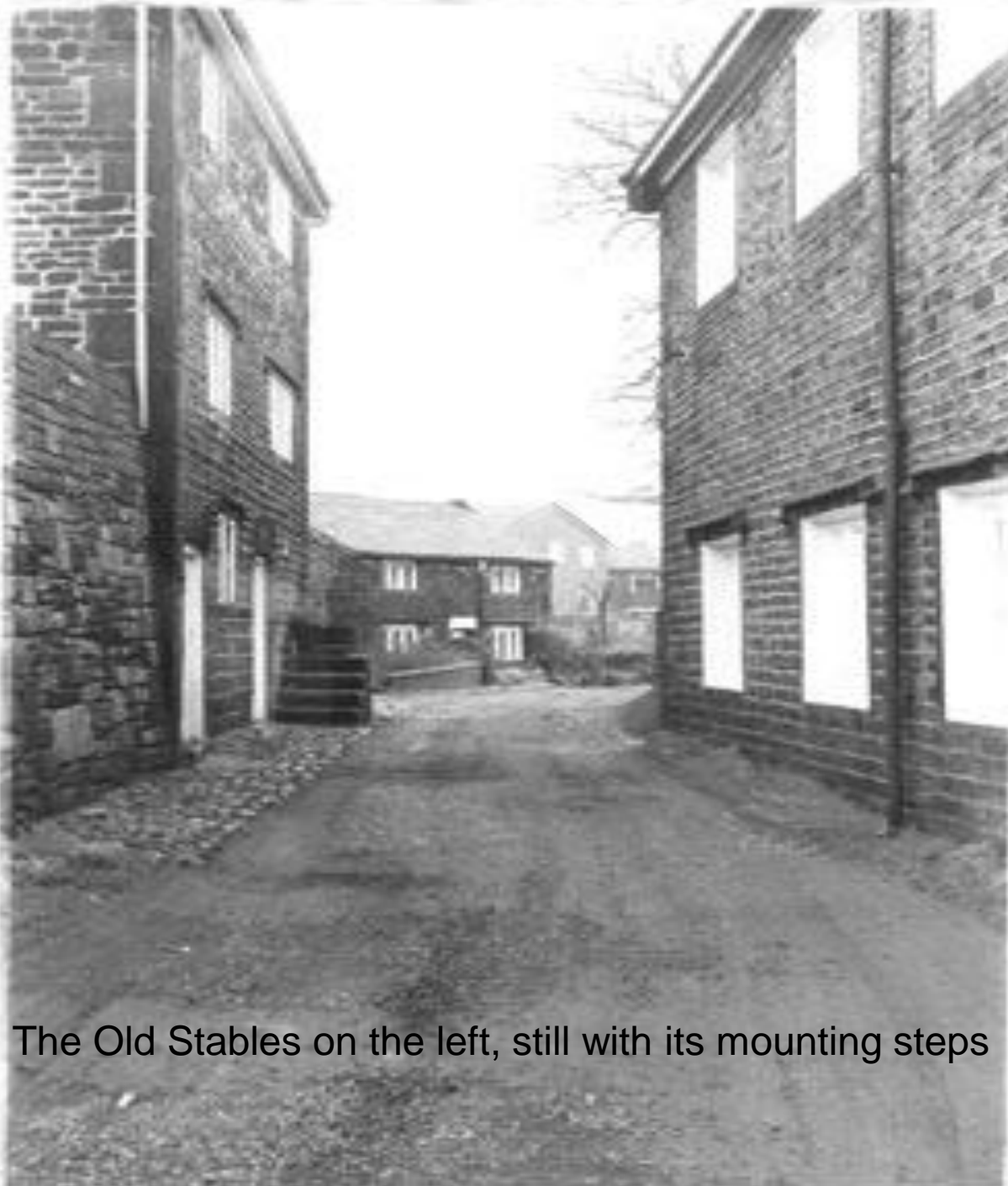
Hailed as a hero after his defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie's Scottish rebels at Culloden Moor, on the 17th April 1746. However, he became far less popular when tales of his soldiers treatment of the Scots after the battle reached English ears and earned him the name of “**Butcher Cumberland**”.

A flower was named after him to mark his success at Culloden. In England it is known as the Sweet William; it is a fragrant plant named by the King after Culloden.

In Scotland the name 'Stinking Billy' was applied to a weed by the Highland Scots - it is Ragwort which is smelly and poisonous to horses. They are different plants with different names but relate to the same battle and the same person - the **Duke of Cumberland**.



The Old stables, erected by the Chapel Trustees in 1768



The Old Stables on the left, still with its mounting steps

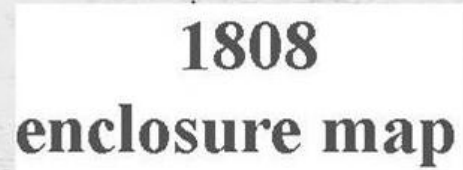
This article appeared in “The Journal”, Friday 3rd October 1924

Built in 1768 in this little corner of the World known as **Oaks Nook**, one of the oldest parts of the village.

It was as a place where worshippers that had travelled some distance could have a meal, which they generally brought with them, before heading off back home. The congregation in the old days came from miles round the district, from Little Lever, Walshaw, Bury, Bolton and from places further a field, including many farms on the Harwood and Affetside hills.

It was not uncommon either for worshippers to come on horseback and attached to the building are mounting steps. The ground floor was formerly the stable where visitors stalled their horses during a service.

It was next used as a **school** (shown on 1808 map).





Unitarian day school - Class photograph

This article appeared in “The Journal”, Friday 3rd October 1924 (continued)

In 1884, a **Liberal Club** was formed in the village and the old stables building was taken over from the Trustees of the Chapel at a nominal rent. The next phase of the old building was that of a **social club** for the Sunday school. Then around 1919 a **Liberal club** was again formed and the old building taken over.

In 1924 the building became a **Reform club**.

The old stone steps leading up to the middle floor that are worn with the feet of countless departed villagers. The reading and games rooms are in the middle storey and a large billiards room is in the top storey.

The village in winter time is made more pleasant by this old club and on a cold winter night it is pleasant after a days work to turn into the well-lighted, comfortable rooms.



Old stables building from the rear before being converted into a dwelling



The greatly extended Old Stables, as it is today



1965 - Hooks Cottage, built by farmer Nathan Brooks in 1773



Hooks cottage Late 1980s. Note – the chimneys have been removed.



Hooks cottage as it is today, with one new chimney

B
N♣A
1773



A section of the deeds for Hooks cottage

Abstract of title of the devisees in trust under the will of Nathaniel Brooks late of Ainsworth in the county of Lancaster farmer — deceased, to a plot of land and premises situate in Ainsworth aforesaid —

7th 23rd December 1775 — Indentures of Lease and Release the latter being made between Robert Andrews of Rivington in the county of Lancaster Esquire of the one part and Nathaniel Brooks of Ainsworth in the said county Chapman of the other part —

Stamp 3rd Dec.
4 3rd Dec.

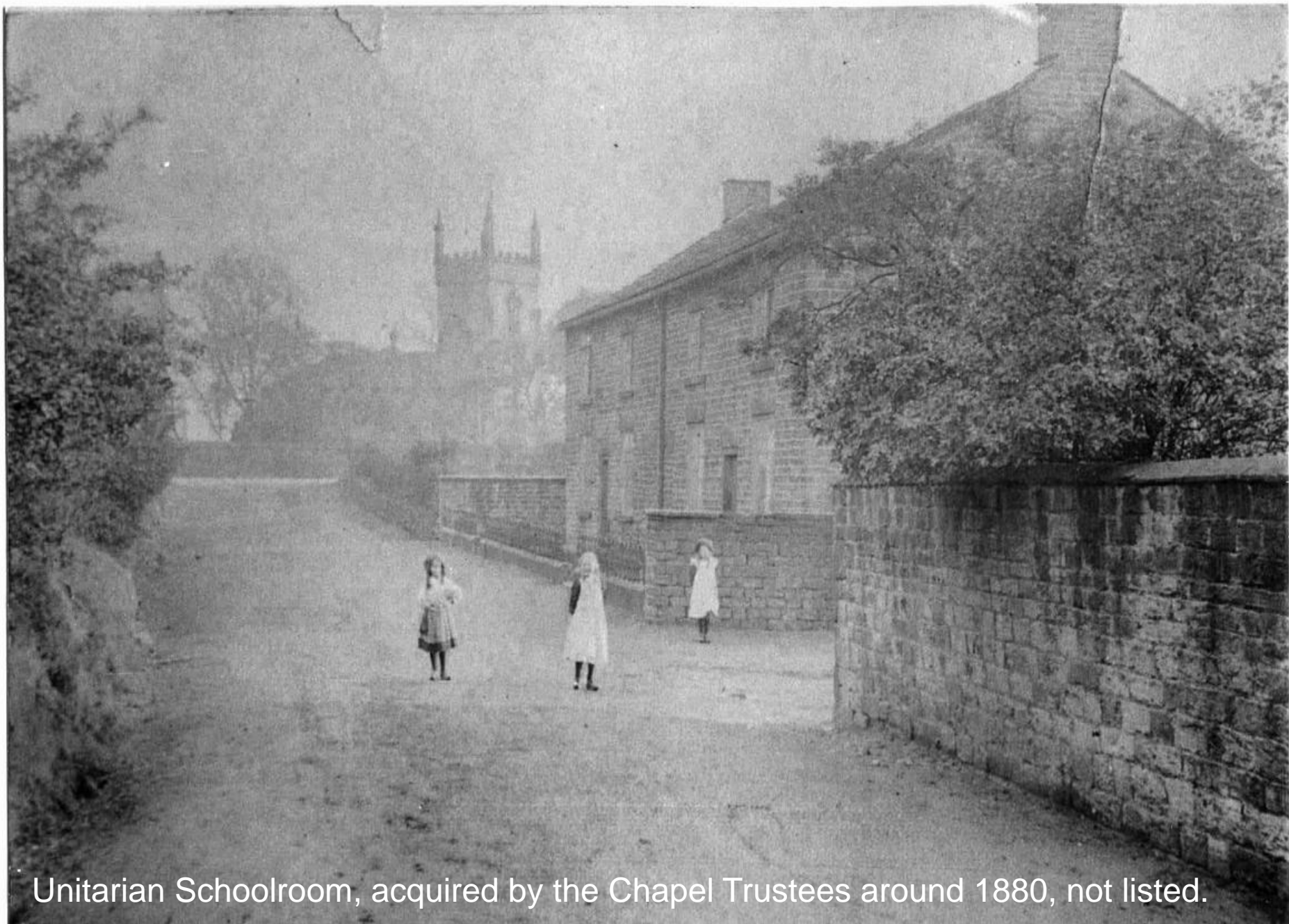
After reciting an Indenture of lease bearing date on or about the first day of July 1773 made between the said Robert Andrews of the one part — and the said Nathaniel Brooks of the other part, whereby the said Robert Andrews, for the considerations therein mentioned, did demise lease set and to farm let unto the said Nathaniel Brooks his executors administrators assigns.

The plot piece or parcel of land situate lying and being in Ainsworth aforesaid and thereafter particularly described, for the term of 999 years to commence as therein mentioned. Under the yearly rent of six shillings payable at the said

is this
4 in the
piston

The Unitarian Schoolroom on Knowsley Road was once a row of 4 cottages.

It was purchased by the Chapel Trustees in the early 1880s and converted into a Sunday school hall, complete with a stage.



Unitarian Schoolroom, acquired by the Chapel Trustees around 1880, not listed.

The Ainsworth Choral Society

BEG TO ANNOUNCE THAT THEY WILL GIVE A

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERT,

IN THE

UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM,

AINSWORTH, ON

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1st, 1883.

CONDUCTOR ... Mr. WM. HOLT. PIANIST ... Mr. JOSH. LEES. of Bury.

PROGRAMME.

GLEE.....	"Eng and"— <i>J. L. Hatton</i>	CHOIR
PIANO SOLO.....	Mr. JOSH. LEES
SONG.....	"The Owl"— <i>J. R. Thomas</i>	Mr. W. FOLT
TRIO.....	"Excelsior"— <i>Miss M. Lindsay</i>	Miss BESSIE HAYES, Messrs. J. H. HAYES and T. H. PARKS
DUET.....
GLEE.....	"Since first I saw your face"— <i>Thos. Ford</i>	CHOIR
SONG.....	"Thy voice is near"— <i>W. T. Wrighton</i>	Mr. T. H. PARKS
DUET.....	"The Flower Gatherers"— <i>Misses SARAH TOOTILL & ANNIE HORROCKS</i>	
SONG.....	"The King of the Forest Glade"— <i>F. L. L.</i>	

GLEE.....	"Since first I saw your face"— <i>Thos. Ford</i>	CHOIR
SONG.....	"Thy voice is near"— <i>W. T. Wrighton</i>	Mr. T. H. PARKS
DUET.....	"The Flower Gatherers"—Misses SARAH TOOTHILL & ANNIE HORROCKS	
SONG.....	"The King of the Forest Glade"— <i>E. J. Loder</i>	Mr. ROBERT HOLT
GLEE.....	"The Dawn of Day"— <i>Samuel Reay</i>	CHOIR

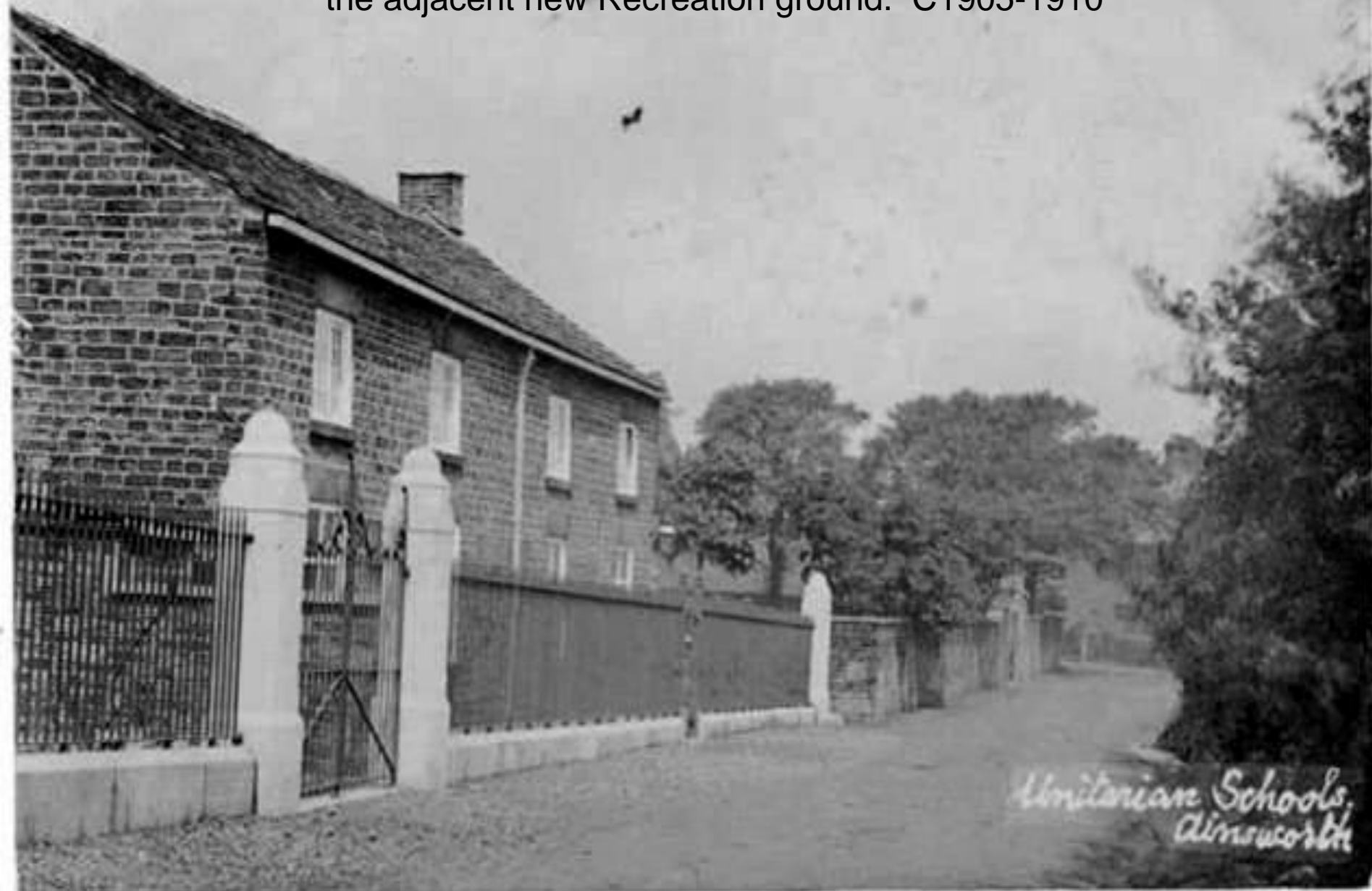
INTERVAL.

PIANO DUET.....	"Hallelujah Chorus"— <i>Handel</i>	Messrs. R. HOLT & WM. ALDRED
GLEE.....	"The Gipsy's Life"— <i>Edwin Flood</i>	CHOIR
SONG.....	"The Flying Dutchman"— <i>John Parry</i>	Mr. ROBT. HOLT
TRIO.....	"Fair Flora Decks"— <i>Danby</i>	Miss EMILY BROOKS, Messrs. T. H. PARKS and WM. HOLT
SONG.....	"Simon the Cellarer"— <i>John L. Hutton</i>	Mr. J. H. HAYES
GLEE.....	"Here in Cool Grot"— <i>Lord Mornington</i>	CHOIR
SONG.....	"Little Mr. Binks"— <i>H. Walker</i>	Mr. T. H. PARKS
DUET.....	"Angels are Watching Us"— <i>Stephen Glover</i>	Misses MARIA & EMILY BROOKS
SONG.....	"There are kind Hearts everywhere"— <i>J. R. Thomas</i>	Mr. ROBT. YATES
GLEE.....	"Now by Day's Retiring Lamp"— <i>Bishop</i>	CHOIR
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.		

DOORS OPEN AT 7, TO COMMENCE AT 7.30.

Admission: Sixpence and Threepence. A few Reserved Seats, One Shilling.

The Schoolroom with new railings and stone pillars to match
the adjacent new Recreation ground. C1905-1910



*Unitarian Schools,
Ainsworth*



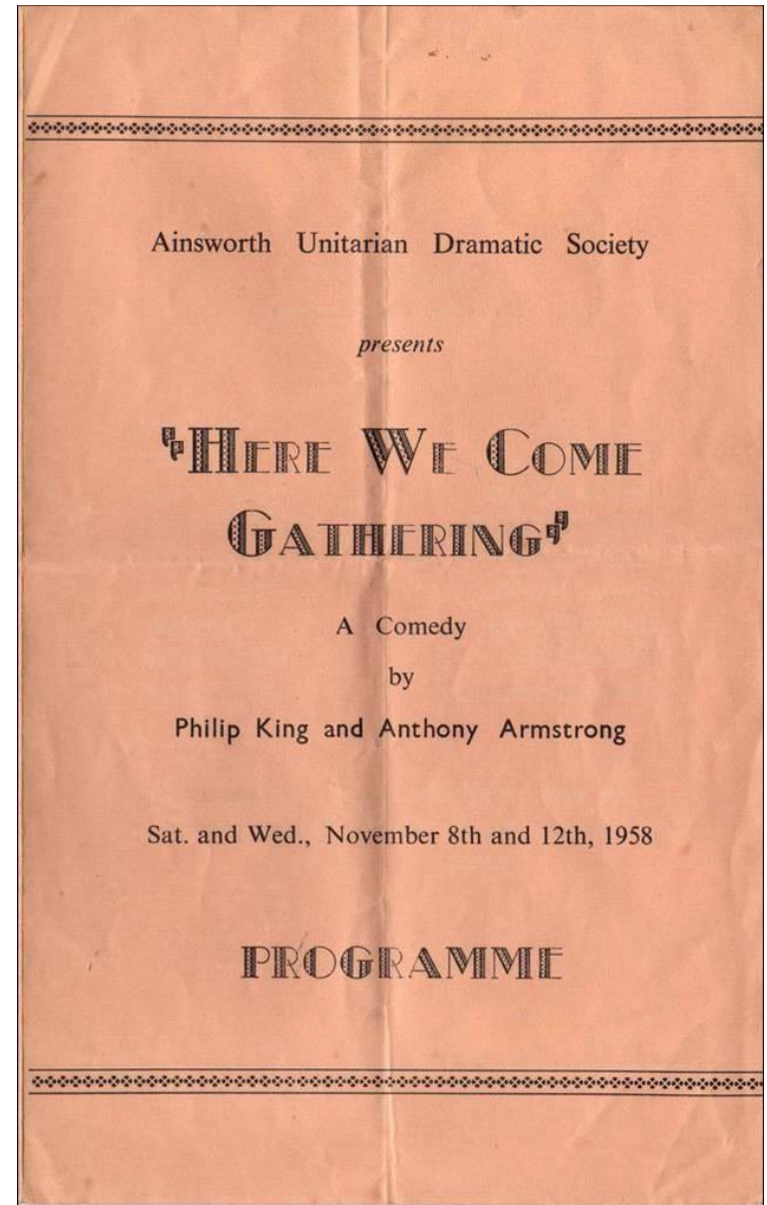
DAK'S NOOK AINSWORTH

Late 1920s – mid 1930s

A10507.

For many years the Ainsworth Unitarian Dramatic Society also used the building and stage for their various plays.

These were the days before television and the productions often attracted large audiences.





One of the many stage sets used over the years



The Merchant of Venice

Next we will look at the site of the Old Red Lion and adjoining cottages.

The site also housed a stable, brew house and smithy.



The 1779 Old Red Lion and cottages

the said Mary Hall & her heirs

A section of deeds for the Red Lion and 5 cottages

All that Beerhouse called the "Red Lion" is
situate at Cokes Nook Ainsworth nr Rury
ad^d with the brewhouse stable & Coal house
tho belong then occ^{py}d by Mr. Chas Auderton
as tenant shop

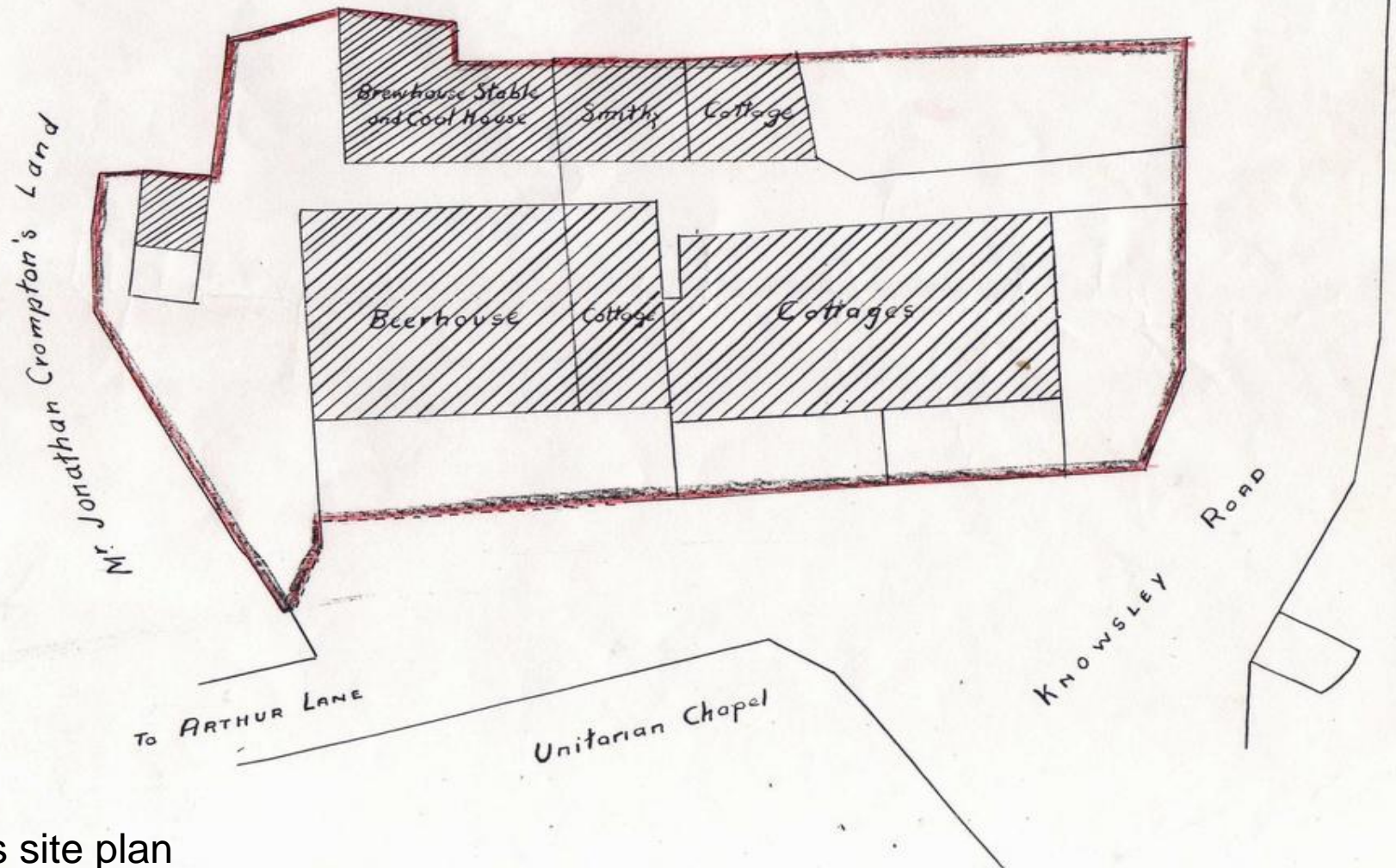
And also all those 5 Cottages ady^g the
sd Beerhouse & pres then occupied by Mr Wm
Taylor & ors as tenants shop

To^gr with the land forming the sites of the sd
Beerhouse Cottages & pres & belong^g th^o which
sd h^ots were more parlarly delineated & desc^d
in the plan sh^of drawn on those presents & sh^own
edged red.

And to^gr with the rights &c.

Plan

PLAN referred to

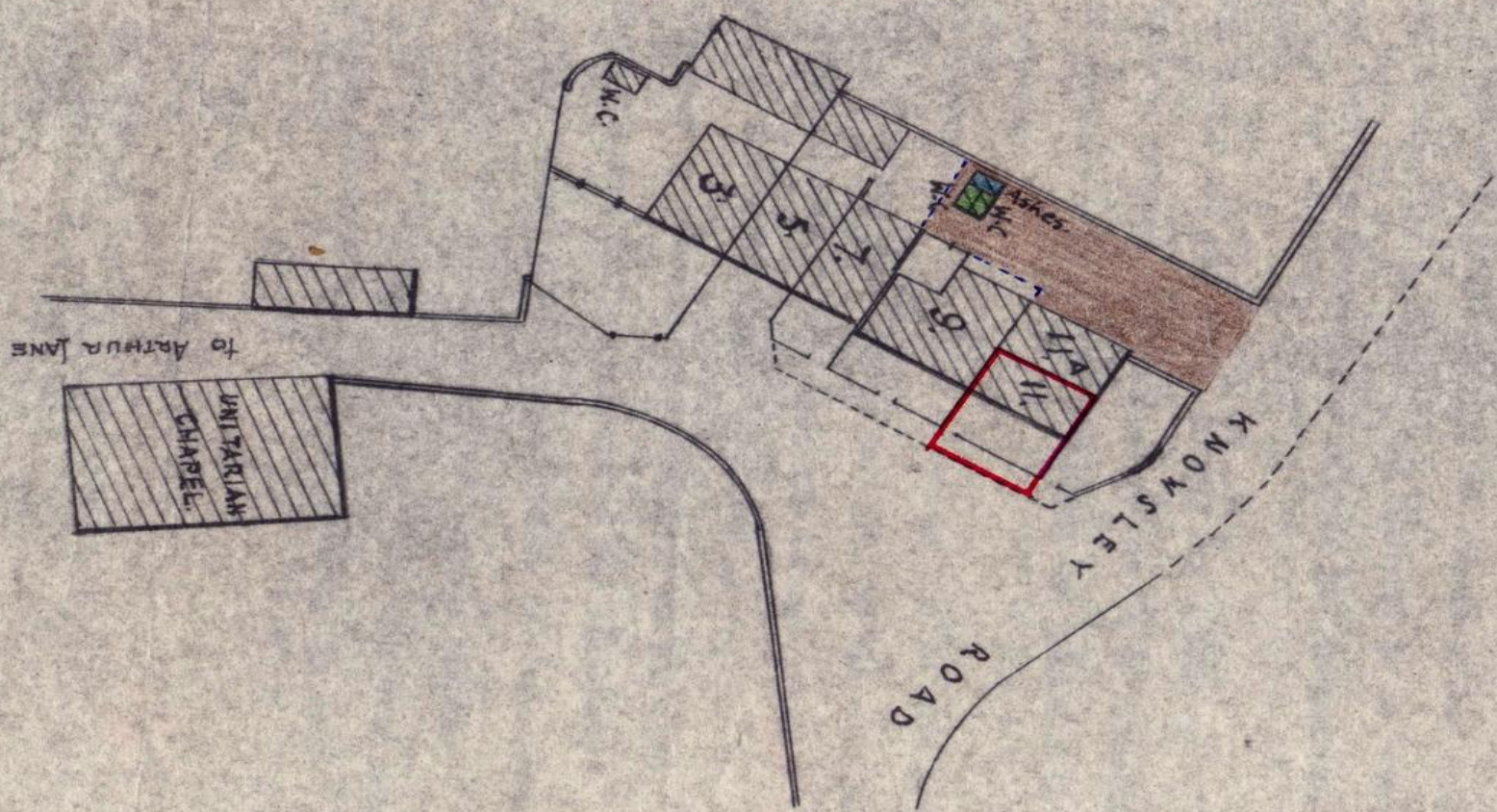


1880s site plan



A later photo, possibly 1940s. Hooks cottage is the middle property.

SCALE: 41.66 feet to one inch.



A 1950s site plan, prior to the demolition/site clearance work.



The dormer bungalow built on the site of the Red Lion

During the demolition and construction of the bungalow a well was discovered on site. It was covered by a large stone slab that once had an old water pump fixed to it.

An incident whilst using the well, led to the discovery of a large underground cellar with a stone vaulted roof, leading off the well (which is in the rear garden of the bungalow).



A similar set up to what was discovered on site, minus the pump.



Cellar entrance door

In the cellar looking at an
underground passageway
filled in with rubble from the
demolished properties







In the cellar looking at the dividing wall
with the well on the other side of the wall.



Looking down the well, the water is a long way down!



So, could this cellar be the oldest 'building' in Oaks Nook?

Why is there no mention of it in the Red Lion's deeds or
site plans?

Was it constructed for the Red Lion or did it have a far
older purpose?