

## THE OLD BAKEHOUSE



Above is The Old Bakehouse as it is today. The owner, from documents he has, believes it was built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Censuses from before that time indicate that there was a 'baker' and therefore presumably a bakery on this site or very nearby. Whether any of the previous building was incorporated or used in any way is now difficult to establish, though it seems likely.



This photograph from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century shows that the house was originally thatched. The main door, rather unusually, well to one side, was in the same place then as now. It might look as though it was originally two cottages, but there is no indication of another entrance door further to the right. The person in the photo is almost certainly Jesse Houghton, recorded as 'baker' in the 1901 census.

A major disaster occurred in March 1906, when a fire developed in the thatched roof and caused extensive damage to the house, particularly to the upstairs rooms. The local newspaper report of the incident states that although the damage to the house was severe, the bakehouse survived. So where was the bakehouse exactly? The present owner has never found any trace of ovens. However there was once a building at the back, built against the rear wall and no longer visible, which could have been the bakehouse. In the photograph below, looking through the now empty window on the

right, it is possible to make out, at the back of the house, a portion of sloping roof and a wall which appears to be intact. Maybe this was where the actual baking took place.



What is also very interesting about this photograph is that it clearly shows a difference between the left and right-hand portions of the house which is not clear on the previous picture. As stated above, it cannot be proved at present but perhaps it was the right-hand part that was built in 1860, while the left-hand part had been the baker's house and workplace for some time, maybe the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The fact that the main door is so far over to the left would perhaps indicate that that it was originally just the doorway to the original cottage on the left.

After the fire, the house was restored and it now looks as though the façade of the left-hand side was rebuilt to fit in with the right-hand side.

Further changes have been made since then. There is a circular window to the right of the door and an extension at the back. The windows have recently been replaced, but they are sash windows and wood, and so are in keeping.

The photograph below, from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century shows a large new window to the left of the door. It must post-date the restoration after the 1906 fire. This view of the village street is largely unchanged since that time. It also highlights the fact that The Old Bakehouse, with its long ironstone frontage, forms an important part of the village street scene.

The house is in private hands and the present owners have been there for over twenty years, trying to modernise while keeping the spirit of the house as far as possible.



This view must date from before the first world war but after the fire of 1906. The large window this side of the door has since been replaced with a smaller circular window.

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