

The Shrubberies, 46 Newbold Road

This property which is currently the subject of a planning application to demolish the existing building and erect 13 new houses in the grounds, was built sometime between 1852 and 1857.¹ It adjoins, but was not part of, a scheme devised by the Chesterfield Benefit Building Society in the late 1860s to develop an estate of middle-class houses on land between Newbold Road and West Street, on the edge of the existing built-up area. Until this period, the land was in agricultural use.

Chesterfield Benefit Building Society's Newbold Road Estate

Freehold land societies were popular between 1840 and 1870. They generally had a political basis in that they were established to enable more people to become entitled to vote by becoming freeholders. One such society was the Chesterfield Benefit Building Society, established in 1855 to provide a safe means of investment for members' savings, to lend money on mortgage for the purchase or erection of private houses, and to obtain allotments of freehold land on which such houses could be built.² In 1859 the society was reported to be building a new road near the Recreation Ground on Saltergate,³ which would become Queen Street. A year later the purchase of the 'Newbold Road estate' was discussed at the society's annual meeting.⁴ This comprised the land later developed as Cross Street, West Street,

¹ Cf. *White's Dir. Sheffield* (1852); *White's Dir. Derby*. (1857).

² *Derb. Courier*, 9 June 1855.

³ *Derb. Courier*, 7 May 1859. The Recreation Ground, at the western end of Saltergate, later became the home of Chesterfield FC.

⁴ *Derb. Courier*, 30 June 1860.

Gladstone Road and Cobden Road. Building plots on these streets were offered for sale by auction in 64 lots in August 1867,⁵ and at the annual meeting in June 1868 the directors reported that the society had made a profit of £970 on the sale of the land comprising Gladstone Road, Cross Street, Compton street and West Street; sites for houses on Cobden Road had by this date already been sold.⁶ Plans for the three later roads on this estate, each 36 ft wide with a 24 ft carriageway and two 6 ft causeways, were submitted to the local board in August 1867.⁷ The highway surveyor recommended in May 1870 that Cobden Road, Gladstone Road, Cross Street and Compton Street should be adopted once the building society had agreed to throw them open to public use.⁸ This was later agreed by the town council.⁹ West Street would already have been part of the public highway when the building society sold plots on the eastern side of the road for housing.

Cobden Road was named in memory of Richard Cobden (1804–65), the Liberal MP; W.E. Gladstone (1809–98) became prime minister as head of a Liberal government for the first time in 1868. The choice probably reflects the political outlook of the directors of the building society. Compton Street was presumably named from the duke of Devonshire's Compton Place estate in Eastbourne (Sussex).

The earliest reference found to the sale of building land on Cobden Road dates from December 1865, when a plot of 877 square yards was advertised.¹⁰ The following June there

⁵ *Derb. Courier*, 24 Aug. 1867.

⁶ *Derb. Courier*, 20 June 1868.

⁷ *Derb. Times*, 17 Aug. 1867.

⁸ *Derb. Times*, 14 May 1870.

⁹ *Derb. Courier*, 6 Aug. 1870.

¹⁰ *Derb. Courier*, 30 Dec. 1865.

were enough residents in the new road to form a five-a-side cricket team which played a match against a team from St Mary's Catholic school.¹¹ Tenders for building houses on Cobden Road were advertised in 1867 by two local architects, Walter Hanstock and Samuel Rollinson.¹² In July that year Miss Clifford opened a 'ladies' seminary' (i.e. a small private girls' school) in a house on Cobden Road.¹³

The 1876 large-scale Ordnance Survey map¹⁴ shows that most of both sides of Cobden Road had been built up by that date, as had rather less of Gladstone Road. Cross Street (which then extended only as far as its junction with Cobden Road), West Street and Compton Street were fully developed. The two latter roads and the south side of Cross Street were lined with lower middle-class semi-detached houses; Cobden Road and Gladstone Road were divided into larger plots on which bigger houses were built. The largest plots of all were those on either side of the junction of these two roads with Newbold Road, which were clearly designed for high-status detached villas in extensive gardens. To the south, the middle sections of both roads were intended for smaller detached houses, and the southern sections (nearest Cross Street) were developed with semi-detached houses, but somewhat larger than those on Cross Street, West Street and Compton Street. The houses on the four largest plots at the northern end of Cobden Road and Gladstone Road would have been numbered in Newbold Road, but also had side or rear access from one of the other roads.

¹¹ *Derb. Times*, 16 June 1866. The Cobden Road club (now with eight players) played a match against the United Chesterfield club the following year (*ibid.*, 6 July 1867).

¹² *Derb. Times*, 23 March, 6 July 1867.

¹³ *Derb. Times*, 27 July 1867.

¹⁴ Sheets *Derb.* XXV.2 and XXV.6 of the 1:2500 scale map.

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The Ordnance Survey map of 1876 shows the property known as The Shrubberies as a pair of large semi-detached houses, standing on a plot backing onto the gardens at the rear of first two houses on the east side of Cobden Road. The two houses fronting Newbold Road, known in this period as Victoria Villas, rather than The Shrubberies, were not part of the building society scheme but were built privately. The name Victoria Villas may have been changed to The Shrubberies as there was a Victoria Villa nearby on Fairfield Road. The site of the houses and gardens at 46 Newbold Road formed the northern end of a broad strip of land extending from Newbold Road south to the footpath which continued the line of Cross Street south-eastwards.¹⁵ In 1876 the plot still retained a slight S-bend, indicating its origin as a group of consolidated strips in the medieval open fields of Chesterfield and Newbold. The pair of semi-detached houses was served by a single driveway from Newbold Road and by a lane running between The Shrubberies and the first two houses on Cobden Road. This would have provided rear access to all four houses and to others further along Cobden Road. The two houses fronting Newbold Road appear to have shared the large front garden.

The earliest references yet found to the name The Shrubberies occur in 1878–82, when Mrs Ireland was advertising for servants.¹⁶ She and her husband, Charles Prowett Ireland, a colliery agent after whom the Staveley Company's Ireland colliery was named, were enumerated in the 1881 census, when they were both in their sixties, as living in one of two houses named as Victoria Villas.¹⁷ C.P. Ireland died in April 1883¹⁸ and in September the

¹⁵ OS 1:2500 map, Derb. XXV.2 (1876 edn), no. 8.

¹⁶ *Derb. Times*, 30 Nov. 1878, 17 Jan. 1880, 12 Aug. 1882.

¹⁷ TNA, RG 11/3432, f. 59.

¹⁸ Cal. Grants (1883). He left personal estate valued at £270.

contents of his house was sold.¹⁹ The other house named Victoria Villas (i.e. the other half of The Shrubberies) was occupied in 1881 by a solicitor, Frederick Theodore C. Black, then aged 28, together with his wife and two servants.²⁰ Black died in his early thirties in 1884, when his address was given as The Shrubberies.²¹ The Blacks' house was then advertised to let, when it was said to have been put into excellent condition at considerable expense by the previous tenant.²² In 1886 Alexander Farquharson, a Unitarian minister, was living at The Shrubberies, when he stood for election to Chesterfield school board.²³ Two years later a surgeon named W.S. Symes moved from The Shrubberies to St Mary's Gate and his house was advertised to let.²⁴ In 1889 William Forster Mills and his wife were living at the same address, although the family left the district the same year.²⁵ In 1891 Joseph Edward Clayton, one of the principals of the local tannery business founded c.1840 by his father, was resident at The Shrubberies.²⁶ Confusingly, the house was enumerated as 47 Newbold Road in the census of 1891 (and the two houses immediately to the south, the modern nos. 44 and 42, were then nos. 45 and 43, the latter also known as Newbold Lodge).²⁷

¹⁹ *Derb. Courier*, 8 Sept. 1883.

²⁰ TNA, RG 11/3432, f. 59.

²¹ *Derb. Times*, 7 April 1884.

²² *Derb. Times*, 17 Sept. 1884.

²³ *Derb. Times*, 16 Jan. 1886.

²⁴ *Derb. Times*, 10, 17 Nov. 1888

²⁵ *Derb. Times*, 13 March, 12 June 1889.

²⁶ *Derb. Times*, 24 Jan., 31 Oct. 1891.

²⁷ TNA, RG 12/2761, f. 90. In 1881 nos. 44 and 42 also appear as nos. 45 (Crossfield Villa) and 43 (Newbold Lodge) (RG 11/3432, f. 59).

An advertisement for a house to let at The Shrubberies in 1893 listed the accommodation as comprising three reception rooms, four bedrooms and a bathroom,²⁸ which must refer to one of the semi-detached halves of the property. Either part or all was to let again in 1897, when the existing tenant was named as Mr Clench.²⁹ Rollinson & Son of 13 Corporation Street (who were estate managers as well as architects) were advertising The Shrubberies to let in 1898–1900,³⁰ and there was a contents sale at the property in September that year, following Mrs Oliphant's removal from the district.³¹

In 1901 one of the two houses (and the only one enumerated in the census as The Shrubberies, since the other half of the property was described as 47 Newbold Road) was occupied by two teachers named Maria Louise Wilkes and Alice Stevens (aged 40 and 39 respectively). They were joint owners of Chesterfield high school for girls, which they had established in 1892 at East Bank on Sheffield Road. The music teacher and kindergarten teacher at the school were lodging with them.³² According to the recollections of the second mistress at the high school, recorded in 1932 when she retired after 26 years' service, Miss Wilkes had originally conducted a school at The Shrubberies, which moved to East Bank in 1892, when it became known as the high school.³³ The idea that the school was ever held at The Shrubberies seems to be mistaken, since in 1891 both Miss Wilkes and Miss Stevens

²⁸ *Derb. Times*, 15 March 1893.

²⁹ *Derb. Times*, 13 Oct. 1897.

³⁰ *Derb. Times*, 18 May 1898, 19 Aug. 1899; *Derb. Courier*, 25 Sept. 1900.

³¹ *Derb. Courier*, 22 Sept. 1900.

³² TNA, RG 13/3248, f. 142; *Chesterfield Girls High School: St Helena School. A Brief History* (1991), 6–10.

³³ *Derb. Times*, 30 July 1932.

were teaching in Birmingham and lodging together at 11 Calthorpe Road in Edgbaston.³⁴ The following year they appear to have acquired a school in Chesterfield belonging to a Miss Walton and transferred it to East Bank, retaining her services as kindergarten teacher, and named it Chesterfield high school for girls. It was this school that the county council acquired in 1906 and transferred five years later to very fine new buildings on Sheffield Road, officially opened in September 1911. Miss Wilkes herself died in December 1910.³⁵

At some date, possibly shortly after Miss Wilkes's death, The Shrubberies was converted into a single residence and extended by the building of a wing running north from the older part of the building, thus creating the L-shaped structure which stands on the site today. Perhaps at the same time, the grounds were extended on the east by the absorption of a strip of land which had remained unbuilt upon when the adjoining house (44 Newbold Road) was built on the next plot to the east.³⁶

By 1920, when The Shrubberies appears definitely to have become a single property, it was the home of Alfred Glossop (1865–1945), a Chesterfield solicitor and town councillor.³⁷ Mr and Mrs Glossop were resident there in 1935, when their elder son Alfred William Compton Glossop, also a solicitor, married a daughter of Mr and Mrs John Robinson of Somersall, one of the branches of the family that owned Robinson & Sons Ltd,³⁸ and in 1939, when part of the house was occupied by another elderly Chesterfield solicitor, Maynard Sandys Brodhurst, who had his own maid, cook-housekeeper and nurse living with him. The

³⁴ TNA, RG 12/2359, f. 107.

³⁵ *Derb. Courier*, 27 Dec. 1910; *Chesterfield Girls' High School*, 9–10.

³⁶ The additional land was OS 1:2500 map, *Derb. XXV.2* (1876 edn), no. 9.

³⁷ *Derb. Times*, 30 Oct. 1920.

³⁸ *Derb. Times*, 19 April 1935.

Glossops, whose younger son Norman Howard Granville was still at home, had one maid.³⁹ Brodhurst, who was in partnership for many years with Mansfeldt Heron Humbolt in the firm of Shipton, Hallewell & Co. of 23 West Bars, died in November 1939, aged 75, when his address was given as Newbold Gate, Chesterfield.⁴⁰ Alfred Glossop died in May 1945, aged 79, leaving a widow, two sons and a daughter. His elder son was then a prisoner of the Japanese; his younger son was continuing the family firm of W. & A. Glossop of Holywell Street (Alfred having been in practice with his brother William); and his daughter Mary Anice was married to a Sheffield solicitor who was serving with the Army in Germany. Glossop, who was interred in the family vault at Wingerworth after a funeral service at the Unitarian chapel in Elder Yard, left effects valued at £43,318.⁴¹

The Shrubberies later passed into the hands of the National Health Service.

³⁹ TNA, RG 101/ 5895G/010/21.

⁴⁰ *Derb. Times*, 24 Nov. 1939; Cal. Grants (1940). Brodhurst, who was John Hallewell's nephew, left effects valued at £17,565.

⁴¹ *Derb. Times*, 11 May 1945; Cal. Grants (1946).

