

MEMORIES OF OVERTON

The High Street

For hundreds of years Overton High Street was the commercial centre of the village. In a time when few local people travelled far, everything that they required could be purchased in the village, from boots, to clothes, food, or hardware.

The Market Hall stood between Quinta House and the present butchers shop. It was set up in 1830 by voluntary subscription at the instigation of a committee of residents who also elected a "Mayor" of Overton on condition he entertained them to dinner. The first Mayor was Mr W. Edge but the arrangement only lasted a few years.



The market hall was 61½ feet long by 12 ¼ feet deep. It was supported on the far side by a wall and on the street side by iron pillars, two of the pillars bearing the inscription "W Edge 1830". The photograph shows a butchers stall in the Market Hall, but it was long enough for about 6 stalls.

The Market Hall came to an end with the coming of the railway to Overton, when local produce could move easily to

Ellesmere to Wrexham to be sold. An enquiry held in 1890 led to the Market Hall being sold. A portion of the site was dedicated to public use i.e. the present pavement, and the rest sold (presumably to Quinta House) and the income invested to help the poor inhabitants of Overton by adding to the 'Flannel Charity'.



At the end of the nineteenth century the large shop to the right of the Market Hall was run by Lewis Evans as a General Drapery Establishment and Milliners. As well as his family and two servants, there was also a resident dressmaker and draper's assistant living above the shop.

In the 1920s the shop became Metcalfes, a grocers and general store. The household and china department was adjoining and connected, and is now the Butchers shop. After being run by three generations of the Metcalfe family the shop was sold in the late 1980s.

In the 1880s the Publican of the White Horse was John Roberts and on his early death his



widow Elizabeth Roberts took over with her servant, Annie Coffin. They employed an ostler and the yard and stables were the focus of a carting business. Accounts show the transport of goods, parcels and luggage for village residents to and from the station. In about 1904 large parts of the building were destroyed by a disastrous fire. The White Horse was then rebuilt as we see it today. Many remember the landlord in the 1930s and 40s, Mr Andrews and his parrot that

talked and hung in a cage outside the back door.



Henry Milner Hughes was the chemist at the chemist shop in High Street, Overton from 1880 to 1883 when he died of TB aged only 27 years.

This photo was taken during those 3 years, and shows him in the long white apron at the door of the shop, and his wife at the front door of the house. The sign says "Hughes, Chemist, Druggist and Family Grocer"



The White Cottage next door was lived in for many years in the 20th century by the Woolley family. In 1891 the head of the household there was Sarah Rodenhurst, described as a 'Huxter', a type of hawker.

From the 1884 the Chemist shop was run by Mr Francis Fitzjohn who had a wife Mary, and three children. He was followed as chemist by George Knox Mawr, who later moved his business to High Street, Wrexham. He was the father of Ronnie Knox Mawr, author and Judge.

Next door lived Miss Ann Goodhall who had "apartments to let". This is now called Bank House and up to about 1980 the Midland Bank operated from the front room.



In the 1930s an old lady lived in Church Cottage. She is remembered by those who were children at that time as she sold lemonade to them for a 1d from the small window that can still be seen. The cottage was thatched up till the 1930s when a fire destroyed the thatch.



On the opposite side of the street in 1901 the Corner Shop was run by Henry Williams, Grocer and Draper. By 1915 he had moved the business to the left hand side of what is the present Post Office.

The business was then run by Auguste Onckelinx, a Belgian WWI refugee who set up a motor and bicycle repair shop, with petrol pumps. He also ran a taxi service known locally as Onkys. The business was later moved to what is now Wason's in Salop Road.



Further along from the Corner Shop in 1901 was Allan Taylor who was a watchmaker which then became Mrs Jones's ladies clothing shop. And next to that was a greengrocers run by Mary Ann Jones, which then became Hamlington's sweet shop, next door to Ern and Blanche Haynes shoe shop.



In 1901 Henry Scragg grocer and bootmaker, occupied the premises of the present Post Office. His wife Mary Ellen Scragg was stationer and newsagent, their daughter Ethel was draper's assistant, and their daughter Magdalene was Post Office Clerk.

Henry Williams and family had moved to these premises before this photograph was taken in 1915.

The right hand side of what is the present Post Office was the Haberdashery and Wool Shop run by Mrs Mabel Stewart.



To the right half of the present Post Office in 1910 was the home of Reuben Holt, painter, glazier & plumber. He was also Church Warden and secretary of the Flower Show. This house was then lived in by the Lindsey's, whose son made an early wireless for Major Peel.

Next door was the Bakers and Grocers, in 1901 run by William Wright and his family. The sign outside the shop advertised refreshments and accommodation for cyclists. His daughter Ivy, who became Mrs Price, carried the business on.

Next door was the home of Job Evans, a Merchant Tailor; later in the 1950s to become Knaptons, the butchers.

At the end of the street is Pendas House, sometimes known as Penthouse or The Pendise. In the later half of the nineteenth century Joseph Duckworth lived there and his daughter Charlotte Shone, and granddaughter Sarah Probert. The household included servants. In the 1940s and 50s Mrs Florence Burgess lived there, remembered by the American

soldiers in the village in WWII for the wonderful cakes which she provided for the Cocoa Rooms Refreshment Rooms.



Quinta House was built in the 1900s and in the early twentieth century it was lived in by William Jones who was Land Agent for the Bryn y Pys Estate. His cook was Amelia Edwards and his housemaid Emily Gwillam.

In 1924 it was rented by Dr. W.M. Casper and his family, with gardener and a governess for his daughter Mary. His practice was also in the house and the dining room also served as the waiting room. The family and the medical practice were later to move to Overton Hall.

<p>REUBEN HOLT, PLUMBER, GLAZIER, AND DECORATOR, OVERTON.</p>	<p>L. EVANS' General Drapery, Millinery, Dressmaking, Men's and Boys' Ready-Made Clothing Establishment.</p> <p>Dress Materials, Prints, Galsteas, Shirtings, Shawls, Jackets, Capes, Macintoshes, Hosiery, Gloves; Ladies' and Children's Underclothing; Corsets, Umbrellas; Ladies' and Children's Hats, Flowers, Friseurs, Hair Caps, Fall Nets, Hair Nets; Tricots, Hosiery and Crews' socks, Calicoes, and other makes; Furnish, Furnacecloths, Blankets, Shirts, Quilts, Towels, Glass Cloths, Dusters, Corsets, Oil Cloths, Handkerchiefs, Door Mats, Sewing Machines, etc., Sewing Machines, etc., etc. Toys, Photo Frames, Vases, Dolls, Baskets, Brushes, Combs, Brooches, Sticks, Fancy Articles suitable for Presents, Tin Trunks, etc., etc. Bedsteads, Floor and Feather Beds, and Mattresses to order. Ready-Made Clothing, also Men's and Boys' Clothing made to order.</p> <p>Agent for FULLER'S DYE WORKS. Branch Shop, BANGOR-IS-Y-COED.</p> <p>The Two Shops will be closed on Thursday's at 3 o'clock throughout the year.</p>
<p>SAMUEL EDWARDS, BAKER, Grocer & Provision Dealer, OVERTON.</p> <p>Agent for Spinner's "Charming" Tea, 60, Strand, London. It consists of the finest and rarest Teas grown in India and China.</p> <p>Sold at 2/8 per lb.</p>	<p>FITZJOHN, CHEMIST, GROCER, AND SEEDSMAN, OVERTON.</p>
<p>HENRY WILLIAMS, <i>Draper, Grocer, and Provision Merchant,</i> Corn and Flour Dealer, Sædsman, etc., High Street and Willow Street, OVERTON.</p>	<p>WILLIAM WRIGHT, <i>Baker and Confectioner,</i> <i>Grocer, Provision Dealer,</i> HIGH STREET, OVERTON.</p>
<p>ALL GOODS SOLD AT LOWEST PRICE FOR CASH.</p>	<p>N.B.—Schools and Picnic Parties Supplied on the most reasonable terms.</p>

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