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The Balsall Heath Local History Society was founded in 1979 with the aim of promoting interest in our local history. We feel pride in our area and value its strengths – past and present. To meet our aims we work with local schools and community groups organising exhibitions and events. We have also produced several publications. We are a registered charity and rely on grants and donations to achieve our aims. For more information on our work, or to volunteer and help, please contact us.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES



The past was revealed when the current owners of 532 Moseley Road took down the sign for replacement. Underneath and exposed for a few weeks is an old Moseley General Stores sign! The trading business has changed there over the years, but it will always be best associated with being a butchers, due to the ever present cow's head over the side entrance.

A quick look at old Trade Directories shows that in 1971 it was Bradley Ltd (butchers). Back in 1935 it was another butchers – F.W. Wright. In 1896 and 1912 it was Samuel Adkins who had it, also a butcher. This asks the question of when, then, was it ever Moseley General Stores? The answer would seem to be at some point after 1971 – perhaps somebody out there will know?



THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOUR

The lovely picture below is of 530 Moseley Road which, for the most part, has always been a grocers. For a long period from the 1930's it was owned by Arthur Marshall who sold tea, coffee and "provisions". The side entrance to 532 is clear in this picture which was taken sometime in the 1950's or 60's.



DOWN WILLIAM EDWARD STREET

Below is Court 11 in 1965. A stark view with what looks to be a tin bath hanging up on the line



1973 Advert
(right)

PORTRAIT & COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY also COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHY WEDDINGS	
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Photo Copy Service & Negative Making	
49 Longmore Street, Birmingham, 12. Telephone CAL 1285	147 HIGH STREET, SMETHWICK.

BALSALL HEATH AT WAR: 14th NOVEMBER 1914

The below report, from the Birmingham Daily Mail, is fairly typical of early news reports of men at the front. A reasonably positive article fitting in with the general feeling in the country (if not among the armed forces) that the war might be over fairly soon – if not by Christmas as was originally thought.

Thomas Lett was living at 1 Hanley Street in 1911 with his widower father William Henry. William was running a business making clogs from the premises while Thomas was a rubber worker. Thomas was 26 or 27 when he married Kate Laight in 1914. He survived the war.

WOUNDED WHEN CARRYING A DESPATCH.

BALSALL HEATH MAN'S NARRATIVE.

Private Thomas Alfred Lett, of the 2nd Battalion Worcester Regiment, of 41, Cleveland Road, Balsall Heath, has returned home from hospital at Plymouth after being wounded in the left leg at Ypres. Describing how he came to be wounded Lett stated that after being in the trenches at Bruges for ten days his battalion was transferred to Ypres, and reached there on October 21st. About midday he was sent with a despatch from the trenches to the artillery, which were stationed about 2,500 yards to the rear. On the way he passed a farm house, and a German sniper concealed there "got" him in the leg. He fired two shots at the sniper, but could not say whether he hit him. In any case the man could not get away, as he was between the British lines. Lett was really thinking more about the despatch with which he had been entrusted than the sniper, and despite his wound he managed to reach the artillery and deliver the message. He was afterwards sent to hospital at Boulogne, and then transferred to Plymouth.

NEXT MEETING

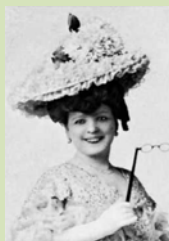
Thursday 18th December 7:30

The Venture

(Malvern Street by the farm)

Marie Lloyd Returns!

by Lisa Jayne Smith



AN EVENING OF MUSIC HALL ENTERTAINMENT!

Can it be really be the most wonderful time of the year again? Put aside card writing and present wrapping for one night and come out for an entertaining evening. Lisa visited a few years ago with her Music Hall tribute featuring Marie Lloyd (above right). She returns to us this Christmas with a revised show. For this meeting only the admission charge is as follows:-

MEMBERS: £4.00 VISITORS: £5.00

BALSALL HEATH AT WAR: 29th SEPTEMBER 1914

The home-front was already proving hard as this notice in the Birmingham Daily Mail clearly shows.

HOMES FOR HUNGRY CHILDREN.

"I have arranged with a teacher of Clifton Road Council Schools, Balsall Heath (writes Mr. S. A. White, of 30, Woodstock Road, Moseley), to send me during the coming winter months one hungry child each mid-day. I arrange to have one child for a week. If there are others in the district of Auderton Park Road and Church Road who will do likewise, and they will hand me their names and addresses, I will compile a list and forward same to schools. I have already found four volunteers but think there should be no difficulty in arranging for 40."

SECOND HAND NEWS

An enquiry has been received for information about a second-hand dealers at 144 Balsall Heath Road who were there from 1946 to 1972. The premises originally traded as Charles W. Jackson but at some point it changed to Jackson Brothers.

The shop lies on the stretch of Balsall Heath Road between the junctions with Cox Street West and Upper Cox Street. Neighbouring shops at that time include Midland Bank (126), Maison Bobbies hairdressers (132), Prescott Cutler Ltd Turf Accountants (140), Holder and Bishop Tool Makers (166) and the Co-Op (178).

If anyone has any pictures of this stretch of shops, or indeed remembers the Jackson family, we would like to hear from you.



Co-Op on Balsall Heath Road