

BRADWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER No 40 June 2024

Up-coming events

You are reminded that for our meeting at 8 pm on Tuesday 18th of June in the Methodist Hall the session is to be in your hands. It will be good therefore if you continued thinking of something that is in the foremost of your thoughts that you would like to devote 10 min describing to us.

Success of the April Coffee Morning at St Barnabas

We can now confirm that the BHS has received a payment of £354 from St Barnabas raised in respect of the Saturday coffee morning held in April.. We are greatly indebted to the church members for their efforts on our behalf and to you for all the help you gave.

Tales of Old Smalldale

Part 2 : Charity Andrew and Joshua Evans

In Part 1 of this series mention was made of the mysterious happenings in the house on Smalldale called Ashcroft. Immediately below Ashcroft was a group of cottages now referred to as The Rockery, but in earlier times as at least two cottages Rockery Cottage and the lower Oak Cottage (there is still an oak tree in the front garden of The Rockery). One of the more remarkable of the owner/occupiers of this group was

Charity Andrew as she is identified in the 1843 Tithe Map and Apportionment. Another was her son-in-law Joshua Evans.

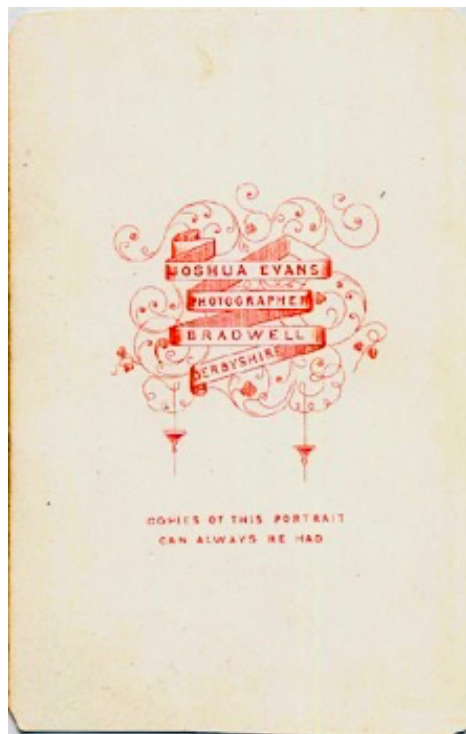
Charity was born in 1802 to parents John and Hannah Wilson in Thornhill and was baptised that year in St Peter's Church, Hope. This is where in November 1837 she married James Andrew who was a farmer. James made an appearance in the 1841 census but by the August of that year he was dead. In 1851 Charity Andrew was still living on Smalldale as head of house and dressmaker. Also in the house were her three children Hannah (13), Robert (11) and Jemima (9). Charity remarried in 1854 when her new husband was William Greaves. William had been baptised in Hathersage in 1793 but had been born in Hope that year. In 1851 the unmarried William is shown as living with his younger brother Alexander and their address is given as 'Eccles' and both men are described as farmers. William Greaves died in 1859 leaving Charity once more as a widow. In 1861 Charity Greaves is again shown as living on Smalldale. The house of which Charity was the head was quite an extensive one. Her 21 year-old son Robert Andrew now a wheelwright and daughter Hannah (23) were both living there. By this time Hannah had married Joshua Evans whose occupation was that of optician (maker of optical instruments such as telescopes). Their son Alwin Wilson Evans and therefore Charity's grandson was just 11 months old. Charity was now described as being a retired farmer – from William Greaves 13 acres at Eccles? Charity died in 1867.

The further career of Joshua Evans has been described in the Bradwell News For May 2012 and is reproduced here.

In Bradwell Ancient and Modern Seth Evans tells us that in about 1850 Isaac Barber established a manufactory of telescopes, opera glasses and possibly camera lenses at the top of Smithy Hill. One of his apprentices was Stephen Evans (Seth's father). In about 1862 Stephen and his brothers Isaac and Joshua set up their own manufactory in Smalldale, describing themselves as Opticians. Evans Bros was established in Cob Castle an old hat factory that had belonged to their uncle William Evans, a hat-maker. Joshua Evans, who had married Hannah Andrew in 1859, established himself as a photographer sometime in the 1860s working from the High Peak Photographic Studios. This move may have been influenced by the return of his cousin Frederick Barber from London to Sheffield in the middle 1860s where he had opened his own photographic studio. Some of Joshua Evans' fine portraits from that decade can still be found. These include one of Joshua's mother Sarah (née Barber), two of his brothers, Stephen and Maurice (not shown here) and a group of scythe-bearing haymakers. The portrait of Stephen Evans must have been taken shortly before his early death in 1866. Joshua also produced an impressive looking *carte de visite*. It seems likely that a combination of Stephen Evans' death and the advances being made in optical manufactory elsewhere led to the demise of Evans Bros by the end of the decade, Joshua and Hannah moved to Sheffield and in the 1881 census Joshua's occupation is shown as manager of an 'Oil and Colour Warehouse'. By 1901 Joshua and Hannah had returned to Bradwell now living in 'Bridgend,' when his job description was as an 'Oil and Colour dealer'. Joshua died on 19 October 1907.



Sarah Evans (née Barber)



Carte de visite



Stephen Evans



Scythe-bearing haymakers