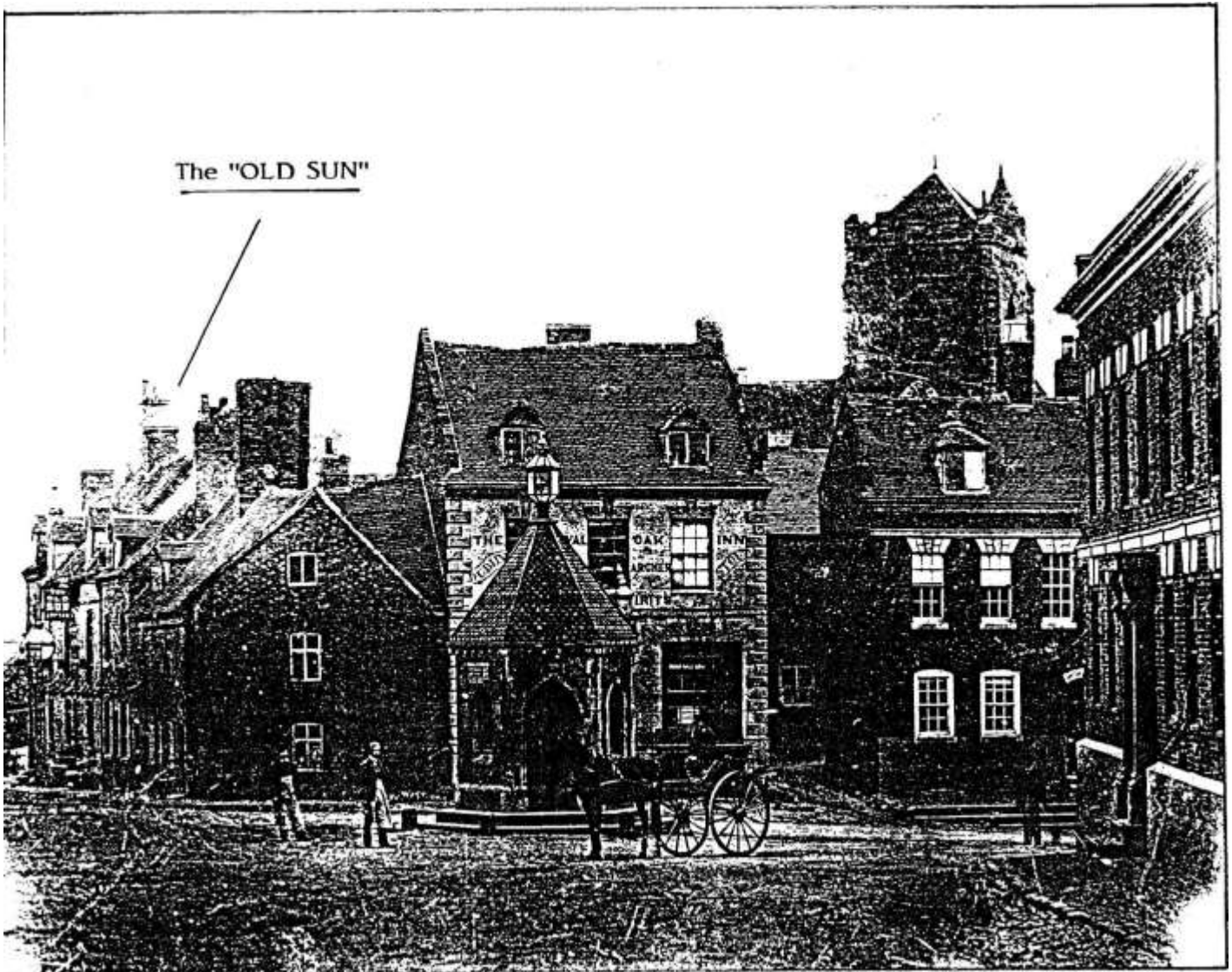


THE OLD SUN PUBLIC HOUSE

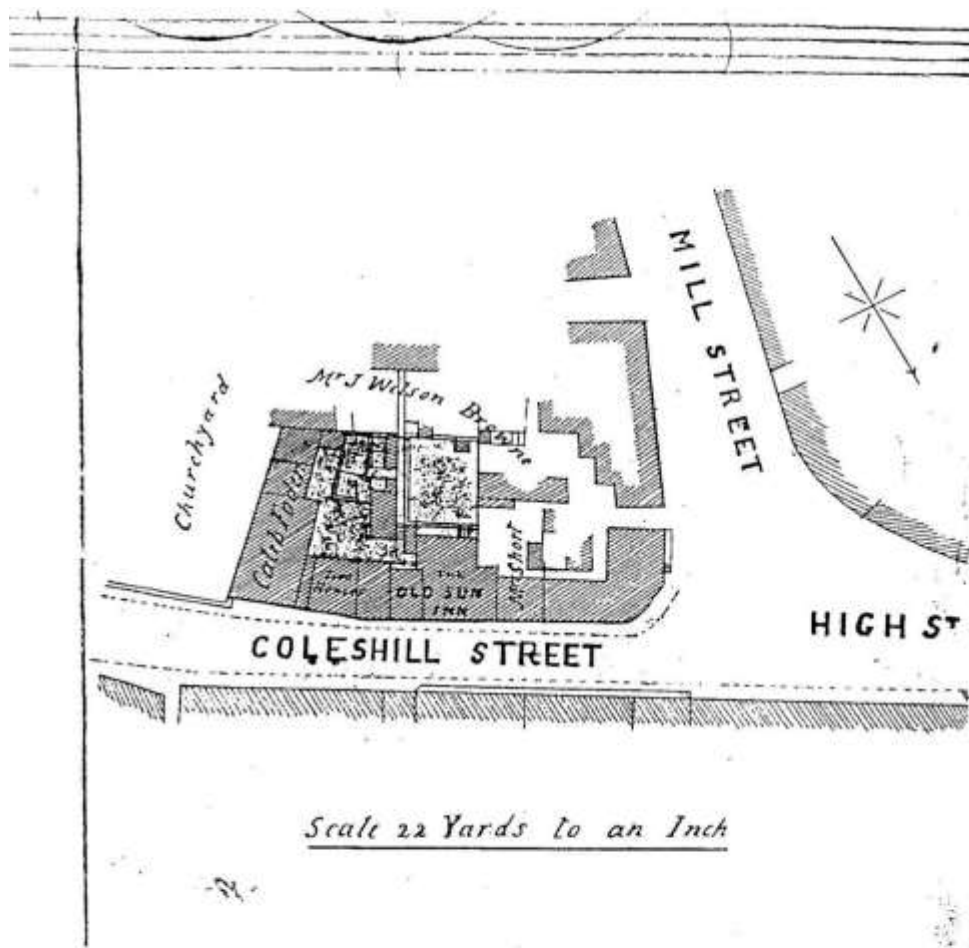
By KATE KENDALL

The "Old Sun" stood in Coleshill Street near to the churchyard. The plan of 1875 shows it surrounded on three sides by houses and yards.

The ownership of the Old Sun from 1794 can be traced in a series of deeds at Sutton Library from 1794, which refer to the "Old Sun and two adjoining buildings" - these deeds passed to the Corporation when the property was purchased to create Vesey Gardens. The deeds refer back to 1646, when William Hall conveyed the property to William Penne, William Wiley and others; in 1703 it came to Adrian Cockersall, and stayed in the Cockersall family until it was sold in 1751 to Abraham Outon, and appears to have been a farmhouse. The frontage to Coleshill Street was then developed, as Abraham Outon's will of 1771 refers to the two newly built dwellings next door. His children inherited it, and it came in 1809 to his grandson Thomas Alldridge, who was an innkeeper. However, it was heavily mortgaged, (for £250 at one time) but the sale of his interest in the



Coleshill Street, 1887 (Sir Benjamin Stone) Sutton Library photo SC 200



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Plan included in the conveyance Goodwin - Holbeche, 23 April 1875 (reduced)

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adjoining properties enabled him to pay off the remaining £150. In his will, dated 1819, it is referred to as "The Sun public house", and was bequeathed to his son William. The next mention of the Sun is incidental, in 1844, when Thomas Betts is given as the occupier in a deed relating to another property. It then came into the ownership of William Goodwin, innkeeper, (who also owned "The Hawthorn Bush" (later the Beggars Bush), in whose will dated 1869 it was bequeathed to his son Joseph, together with the two adjoining houses which William had purchased. Thomas Vincent Holbeche purchased it from Goodwin in 1875 for £1050, and in 1890 leased it to The Holt Brewery, Holt Street, Birmingham, for an annual rent of £65.

Rate books, usually a useful source of information, do not distinguish the Old Sun from other houses, but information from the census returns and directories is as follows:-

1861 census
 William and Jane Betts, both aged 34, and their three children William, Thomas, and Hany, 4, 3 and 2.
 Three servants - Emma Ludford, 23; William Franklin, 17 and Mary Duell, 13, all born in Sutton except Mary, who was from Westbury in Buckinghamshire.

1871 census
 Henry and Maria Foden aged 35 and 37, their four children and three servants

Licencees of the Old Sun

1835 Alice Aldridge
1836 - 44 No record.
1845 Wilkins
1846 - 7 No record
1848 - 55 John Aldridge
1856 - 60 No record
1861 - 68 William Betts
1869 - 71 Henry Foden
1872 Maria Foden
1873 No record
1874 - 78 Charles Kemp
1879 No record
1880 - 87 James Pittman
1888 Thomas Smith
1892 Frederick Careless
1893 - 4 No record
1895 - 8 Gunnell
1899 No record
1900 Edward Martin and Richard Clay
1901 - 4 Enoch Tidmarsh
1905 - 6 No record
1907 - 10 Henry Stephens
1911 - 17 William Smith
1918 - 21 George Forrest
1922 Francis Brown
1923 William Price
1924 Alfred Marson and J.S.Oldrey
1925 William Selwyn Morrall
1926 - 8 Edwin Philip Noble
1929 - 30 William Henry Billings
1931 Minton Toddington
1932 Clarence Daft
1933 - 6 Alfred Pilkington
1937 Claude Pilkington



Sutton Coldfield News Photo, 21.1.1975

In the mid-18th century the Holbeche family lived opposite the Old Sun, which consequently gets a mention in the *Holbeche Diary*: "Who kept the Old Sun before William Betts I do not know. I do know that Betts must have been a very popular host, for in the pre-railway days his house was a great meeting-place for Birmingham tradesmen who on Sundays drove their wives in gay bonnets, to take the Sutton air. They came in smart dog-carts drawn by fast trotting ponies of a type not now met with." The Old Sun was demolished in 1938 to make way for Vesey Gardens, along with all the surrounding houses, outhouses, yards and gardens.