

Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to the memory of Fred and Ursula Lennhoff who devoted their lives to helping young people and to giving them a better chance in life, and also to the people of Harmer Hill and the surrounding area in grateful recognition of the kindness, generosity and tolerance which they extended to many generations of Shotton boys.

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to all those people who have contributed to the production of this booklet. In particular I would like to thank Peter Fox and Michael and Dee Watson, current residents of Shotton Hall whose interest motivated me to research the Shotton Hall estate and who have provided both information and photographs; other current residents who have also assisted; former staff of Shotton Hall School especially John Lampen and Owen Booker, past headmasters; former pupils especially Edwin Thorpe of Wem; The Royal Archives for permission to reproduce the picture of the Marquis of Cambridge and Queen Mary; Marion Armitage for permission to reproduce the drawing of her father Fred Lennhoff; Derek M Walley for his help in dating the Wilding postcards of Shotton; Sandy Bullimore for proofreading the text; Martin Eliff for help with the Yuille family; Shropshire Archives for permission for reproduce the maps and for their general support; contributors to the Geograph website and lastly but not least Peter Saunders who drove me to Shotton Hall and Myddle on several occasions and took many of the photographs. If I have omitted anyone who helped, please forgive me and accept my thanks.

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The Whatmore Family History blog which features stories, family trees and pictures about the Whatmore and related families is at www.family-tree.co.uk/familyblogs/bessie

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Introduction

Shotton Hall is a medium sized mansion, located in the township of Shotton in the parish of Myddle in Shropshire. It is some six miles north of Shrewsbury on the Ellesmere Road. On approaching the village of Harmer Hill, the road divides – the left fork continuing to Ellesmere, the right hand fork going to Wem. Taking the right hand fork, one turns almost immediately right into Shotton Lane. Shotton Hall is about a hundred yards along the lane on the left hand side. A little further along on the right hand side of the lane is Shotton Farm with Rabbit Hill beyond.



*Extract from Robert Baugh's Map of Shropshire 1808
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The ancient township of Shotton included both what is now the Shotton Hall estate and Shotton Farm on the other side of the lane. The current house at Shotton Farm, according to the survey undertaken by the Department of the Environment was built in the mid to late 18th century with late nineteenth century additions. Watkin Watkins, however, refers to building both a new hall at Shotton and a house for the tenant. This must have been between 1792 and 1811. Perhaps, then, the DOE survey has given Shotton Farm too early a date and it was in fact erected by Watkin Watkins. (1767 – 1849).

We are perhaps justified in thinking that prior to the time of Watkin Watkins, references to 'Shotton Farm' refer to a single estate consisting of what is now Shotton Hall and Shotton Farm with the house being the old Shotton Hall. Presumably two farms were created when the house was built at Shotton Farm. Bagshaw's Directory for 1851 (see below) states that 'in the last few years the two farms [i.e Shotton Hall and Shotton Farm] have been united.' In 1851 both farms belonged to Colonel Watkins. By the 1960s and probably much earlier, the estates had again been split – probably when Shotton Hall came to be regarded as a 'country house'. In the 1960s Shotton Farm was owned by the Mayall family of Lea Hall and it is still owned by this family today. A description of Shotton Farm is provided towards the end of this booklet.

Today, Shotton Hall has the appearance of a large Victorian house with battlemented bay windows opening onto a large lawn with extensive views to the east bounded by the Wrekin and the ridge on which stands the town of Wellington

To the rear of the house, and attached to it by a much later extension, is a two storey sandstone wing of some antiquity. Attached to this, and at right angles to it, is a brick built dwelling house. Beyond are various outbuildings.

The extensive grounds are bounded to the west by a high brick wall beyond which is a row of enormous pine trees and a lane. To the north and east the grounds are bounded by fields. To the south along Shotton Lane, the boundary is formed by a large stone wall which eventually becomes a fence. Beside this wall and fence lies ornamental woodland within which is a small ornamental pond and water channel.

My interest in Shotton Hall stems from the five years I spent there as a pupil in the 1960s when it was a boarding school, and a period of years later on when I served as Secretary to the Board of Trustees who ran the school in its latter days.

These notes are not intended to be a history of the school, but of the Shotton Hall estate from earliest times down to the present day.