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Exploring the Market Place: past and present

Heritage Open Days
Organised by Salisbury
Civic Society

W Carter and Son

3 to 5 Minster Street

This long established business, which began in 1817, occupies part of this lovely building. The Carter family own the building which has changed little since the 19th century. The two gabled timbered front has three stories, is jettied on two floors, has moulded posts and projecting windows. A 19th century shop front extends across numbers 3 and 5 Minster Street.

History

Unusually there exists an almost complete record of the owners and occupiers of the building for the past 400 years.

In the late 15th century a 14th century building was replaced by a two range timber framed house for a wealthy merchant. From 1574 to 1599 it was owned by William Eaton, Gentleman. The Hall had a massive stone fireplace. In 1611 the house, comprising cellar, shop, hall, chambers and two cock lofts was leased by Robert Homes, a mayor who was famous for falling drunk into the gutter! A careful inventory was made of all the removable objects such as window glass and door bolts. From 1615 to 1688 the house was leased by a shoemaker, Richard Mason and then by his descendants, also shoemakers, Masons and Coopers.

In 1680 the building was divided into two to accommodate a Cooper nephew. In 1741 the two parts were bought and reunited by Samuel Falconer, together with the Haunch of Venison, next door. It passed through the family till they fell on hard times. In 1815 the building was sold in two parts again and tenanted. In 1817 William Carter, born in 1793 and a clock and watchmaker from London, moved to Salisbury and opened his watchmaker business in Number 3 which he subsequently bought in 1853. Thus began Salisbury's oldest established family business which continues to this day. His son followed him into the business and Number 5 was purchased by his son, also William Carter in 1876. The shop front was then built across both parts. William Holderness Carter, the first William Carter's grandson, became a partner in the business in 1891.

In 1894 Percy Holmes began working in the business as an apprentice. In 1926 he was asked to become a partner with Bessie Carter. Stanley Holmes started working in the business in 1934. The Holmes family took over the business completely in the early 1940's. Stan's sons Brian and Tad joined the business when they left school in the 1960s and took the business on in 2006 when their father passed away. Sebastian Salt, a family friend, joined the business in 2010 and in 2011 became Director and Part owner along with Brian's daughter, Paulette Newman. Sebastian's wife Charlotte joined the business in 2014. Today the business is run by Sebastian Salt, Paulette Newman and Sebastian's wife Charlotte. They consider themselves privileged to have looked after the City's silverware for over 60 years.