

FIVELANDS HOUSE, Moseley Road



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The Five Lands was the name of a 7-acre meadow owned by the Blayney family, and this house, together with its neighbours on either side, was built on the Turnpike Road to Alcester, near to the Toll Gate which existed at the top of Park Hill until 1872. The name recalls Saxon days when the open-field system of land tenure existed; the meadow presumably was formed by amalgamating five neighbouring strips of land.

The house is believed to have been built between 1830 and 1840. It is of rather plain late Georgian style. A symmetrical front elevation supports a slated roof with interesting arcaded chimney stacks and a moulded stucco band to flat eaves. The sash windows are divided into small panes and have flat gauged brick arches over and stucco sills. The glazed front door has a plain rectangular fanlight, probably not as built. The unobtrusive entrance surround is of panelled pilasters supporting a small cornice. There is an old extension on the north side, also at the rear with a large bay window and three-light sash window over. The large modern extension on the south side is on the site of former stables.

The early history of the house is obscure, but it is one of the 33 residences in Moseley listed in 1854 as being occupied by the gentry. On the north side was Park House, and on the south side Arnold House, at one time a boys' school; both are now demolished. In 1871 Thomas Bickley lived at Park House and by 1881 he was the occupant of Fivelands House. He seems to have been the father of the local historian W.H. Bickley of Trafalgar Road.

In 1890 the occupant was Dr. Charles Edward Gosling, a surgeon. The only thing we have found out about him was that he left a skeleton in one of the cupboards. Dr. Gosling seems to have been there until 1928, when the house was taken by the Griffiths family, who lived on the premises and ran a veterinary practice, which still continues.

The interior of the house is much altered but the dining room is worthy of note, being of good proportions, with restrained plaster enrichments and having an interesting ingled fireplace with three small semi-headed windows above the mantel, glazed with leaded lights. This feature may not be original.

The house today is home to the Fivelands Veterinary Centre.