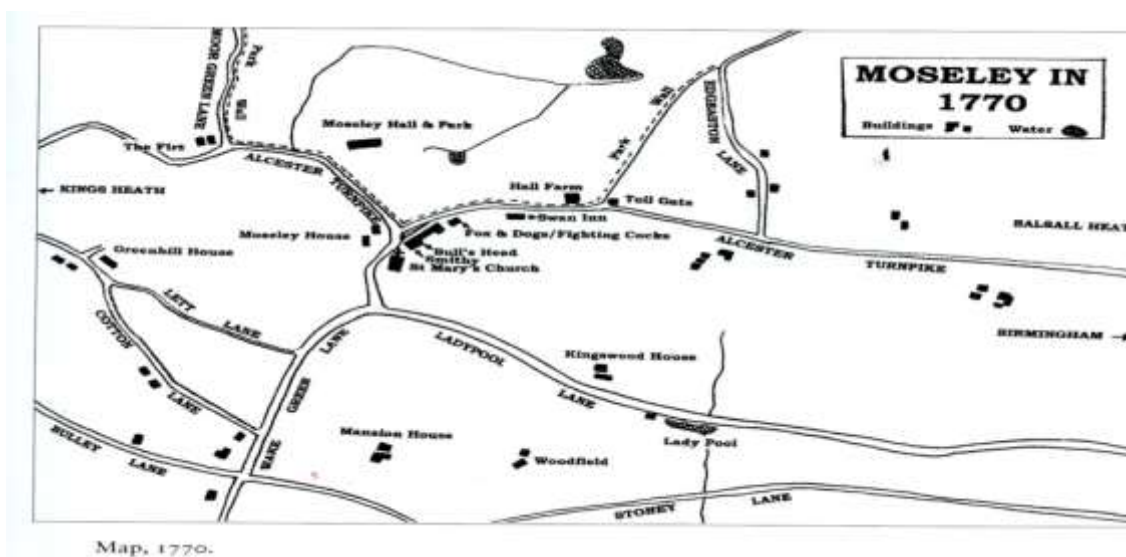


Moseley Hall

The first Moseley Hall was built by the Grevis (or Greaves) family who came onto the scene in the fifteenth century and built up land holdings in the area over time. Sir Richard Grevis was a favourite of James I, High Sheriff of Worcestershire and Lord of the Manors of Yardley and Solihull. He built a residence on the site of the current hall, enclosed land around as a deer park and began a planting scheme. There was possibly an earlier Grevis house, Moseley Hall, where Victoria Parade is today, a large half-timbered farm-house near the present entrance to Moseley Park of which remnants were demolished in 1842 during the Taylor ownership. Developing their Moseley property was expensive for the Grevis family and may have contributed to their undoing. They suffered considerable financial difficulties and gradually holdings were mortgaged and sold.



Map, 1770.

The Dovecote, the Cow-house and the Ice-house are all that remain of the 1776 buildings now. The Dovecote and Cow-house were part of South Farm and were both built of red brick early in the eighteenth century. The Dovecote is an octagonal three- storeyed construction and the cow-house is two-storeyed. By about 1840 the dovecote was encased in another building, as improvements in animal husbandry and the decline in eating pigeon meat reduced its importance. The lowest part became pigsties and the cow-house was used as a forage store.

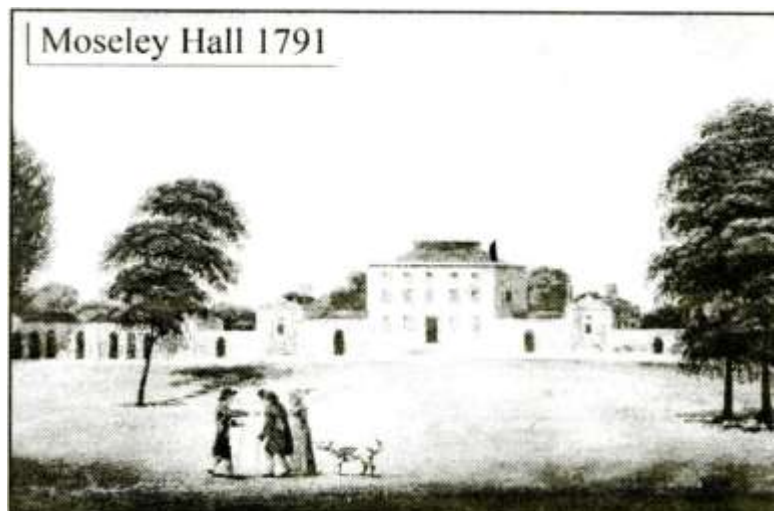
The Dovecote



In 1933 the decision was made to demolish the very dilapidated buildings, but they were saved by a petition and in 1939 restoration plans were in place. However, work did not begin until 1981 and the Moseley Society took over the administration of the buildings and developed garden surroundings and opened the buildings in the summer to the public. The Ice-house, sited on the other side of Moseley Hall Park, was cleared of rubbish by the Moseley Society and is regularly open to the public.

Moseley Hall and Estate was bought in 1764 for £9,000 by John Taylor of Bordesley Park, a very wealthy, successful manufacturer of buttons and small gilded or japanned objects such as snuff boxes, that is, a manufacturer of 'toys'. His factory was in Union Street, Birmingham. He made a fortune of over £200,000 and was on friendly terms with other pioneer Midland industrialists like Matthew Boulton.

John Taylor never lived at Moseley Hall; it was an investment as he had a town house, 65 High Street, Birmingham, and country properties in Bordesley and Bishop's Itchington near Southam. He let Moseley Hall to family and friends.



His son, John Taylor II, inherited Moseley Hall in 1775. He added banking to his manufacturing interests, founding Taylor & Lloyd's Bank. It is not known how Taylor and Lloyd became acquainted, but both lived in Bordesley and the 'Welsh Road' along which the Lloyds drove cattle from the Welsh Marches passed close to Bishop's Itchington. Later the Lloyds became prosperous millers and ironmasters. John Taylor II was a magistrate and the Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire.

Moseley Hall, by now probably falling into disrepair, was torn down in 1776. John Taylor II built a new stone hall on more or less the same site as the present one, costing £6,000. The entrance gates were still those of the old hall and were almost opposite the Fighting Cocks Inn. A winding drive led down the hill, bent left to cross the stream then rose diagonally left. This drive remained in use until 1904. John Taylor II surrounded the park with a wall. He continued to reside at Bordesley Hall, letting the new mansion. His last tenant was Dowager Countess Lady Carhampton.

This Moseley Hall was destroyed in July 1791 by a mob from Birmingham during the Priestley Riots, who were angered by a banquet held to celebrate the 'Fall of the Bastille'. John Taylor was a Dissenter and probably friendly with some of the group concerned, but he was not at the banquet nor indeed was he in the Birmingham area. The mob was loosely under the control of the local Tories, 'who were bent on having a go at Quakers (like the Lloyds) and Unitarians (like the Taylors)' for alleged Republican sympathies. The old and blind Dowager Countess of Carhampton, the tenant at the time, was treated kindly by the mob. Both the first and second John Taylors were absentee landowners and Dissenters.



John Taylor in about 1750.

John Taylor II claimed £3,839.5s.4d in damages before a special jury at the Worcestershire Lent Assizes in 1792, but was only awarded £2,700. He re-built Moseley Hall in 1792-6 to a design by architect John Stanbridge of Warwick. This is the building we see today, though James Taylor added an east wing in 1838. The hall was in the medieval-style and drawings of 1802 and 1830, show

it was brick-free and in a herringbone timber style with gabled wings of a later period on both flanks. It was tiled, had three stone chimney-clusters and out buildings and at the rear flowed the Moseley Brook. Humphrey Repton is reputed to have landscaped the park.

John Taylor II lived in this new Moseley Hall until died in 1814. In 1804 he bought the rights of the manor of Kings Norton from the crown. He was on the early 1809s committee to build a National School for Moseley, which opened in 1828, and was built on land leased from James Taylor.

His Widow lived at Moseley Hall and then his second son James Taylor, described in 1842 as 'having a manly open expression of manner peculiarly striking'. He enjoyed business and often visited Messrs Taylor & Lloyd, a 'most respectable and well-constructed establishment'. He was not a Dissenter like his father and grandfather before him, but was a member of the Church England. He was personally presented to the new Queen in 1837 at a royal levee. He was a captain in the Queen's Own Worcestershire Yeomanry and often entertained the troops at Moseley Hall, especially on the annual Waterloo Day banquet on the lawns and at the dance later.

James Arthur Taylor became Conservative MP for East Worcestershire Parliamentary Division in 1841 and was involved in commerce and agriculture, supporting the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, on the Corn Laws. In 1843 James Taylor was the main landowner in Moseley with around 938 acres.

After the death of James Taylor in 1852, no more Taylors lived at Moseley Hall. Moseley Hall was then occupied by William Dawes and then in 1884 Richard Cadbury rented the Hall, opening the hall in 1887 for Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations. In 1890 Richard Cadbury bought Moseley Hall, in total 22 acres, for £16,450 from the Taylor Estate. In 1891, he presented it to Birmingham Town Council, with a generous endowment, as Moseley Hall Convalescent Hospital for Children. He had consulted John Henry Lloyd, his friend and honorary secretary of the Children's Hospital, who encouraged him in this enterprise and secured him the cooperation of the Children's Hospital.

After hospitals were absorbed into the NHS in 1948 Moseley Hall specialised as a hospital for children's ear, nose and throat surgery. During 1967 to 1968 the hospital was closed for 18 months whilst a new ward block was constructed and then re-opened as a geriatric unit with a formal opening in 1970.



After the railway through the village was completed in 1840 the old village gradually became a residential suburb of Birmingham. The Taylors took advantage of the demand for housing, carving roads off the edge of their lands. Park Hill was first, followed by Chantry Road and Salisbury Road and then Reddings, Moorcroft and Amesbury Roads.

Building Salisbury Road, named after the then Prime Minister, which was cut through in 1896, meant filling in one of the two greater ponds. There were fears that Taylor land not involved would be bought up for houses and the open space and the remaining pool would be lost. A small consortium of local businessmen formed Moseley Park & Pool Estate Company and leased about 14 acres around the Great Pool for 40 years. A new park was laid out and opened by Austin Chamberlain. Members of the syndicate built their houses in Salisbury and Chantry Roads. The freehold of the Moseley Park was bought in 1958 for £3,500.



Moseley Pool 2013

Between 1880 and 1910 hundreds of sites were let by the Taylor Estate on Building Leases with 99 year terms and, at the turn of the century, a wood was cut down to enable the building of the Victoria Parade row of shops, which opened in 1901. The gates and lodges of Moseley Hall had to be removed, but the main entrance continued to go through an archway in the Parade and cross over Salisbury Road. The Salisbury Road access was abandoned in 1904 and the only entrance then to the Hall was by a new drive leaving Alcester Road just south of South Farm buildings.

During the late nineteenth century, before the pool was severed from the grand old mansion by Salisbury Road and the Victoria Parade of shops, Moseley Hall was the main venue for ice skating. Admission was charged and half the money raised went to charity as in the case of a Sunday in February 1895 when £12 5s 6d went to relieve the distressed of the district. There were mishaps such as when the ice gave way beneath a lady in January 1895. Thankfully she was saved.



The Ice House 2012: A Local History Group Tour of Moseley Park

Sources

Fairn, A., *A History of Moseley*, pp. 29, 41, 50, 54 and 55

Gilbert C., *The Moseley Trail (Trail 8)*, (Birmingham: John Goodman & Sons, 1986), pp. 22, 23, 24 and 26

Hewston, N., *The History of Moseley Village*, (Chalford: Amberley Publishing, 2009), pp. 17, 38, 39 and 40

Innes, J., *The History of Moseley Hall* (Published by Moseley Hall Hospital and Moseley Local History Group: 1991), pp. 13, 14, 19, 23, 26, 30 and 31

The Listed Buildings of Moseley, a Moseley Local History Society Publication, (Birmingham: Additional Curates Society, 1989), pp. 5 and 6