

‘Chepstow’, Main Street, Willerby



‘Chepstow’, 57-59 Main Street, Willerby

Photo: 2023

Why would a house on Main Street in Willerby, East Yorkshire, be named ‘Chepstow’? Curiosity as to how this property became named after a historic town in Monmouthshire has led to this interesting house history.

Of course, the practice of naming one’s home was, and still is, very common. It began long ago with the English gentry naming the properties on their estates and was based on who the property belonged to or where it was located. Gradually, the practice of naming property percolated down to the general population with home owners naming their houses based on the most prominent and cherished features of their property and land such as Rose Cottage, The Willows and Red Tiles. In more modern times the inspiration for the name of a property sometimes comes from the view it overlooks, for example, Meadow View, Ocean Vista or even Railway View. Some home owners name their house after areas of beauty or places where they have had wonderful experiences such as Snowdon, Buttermere and Santorini. Although still very popular, the naming of houses has become less prevalent since the numbering of houses began and, although this practice came into force by Act of Parliament in the mid-1700s, the numbering system did not gather pace in Willerby until the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In early-20th century-Willerby, the naming of properties by their owners was still commonplace and some houses on Main Street still retain the original names given by their early owners. ‘Chepstow’ is one such property, although nowadays the postman knows it more prosaically as numbers 57 and 59 Main Street.



When was the House Built?

It may be helpful to start with a couple of maps. The first of these shows a map of the centre of the village of Willerby following the Enclosure Act of 1796. This shows the



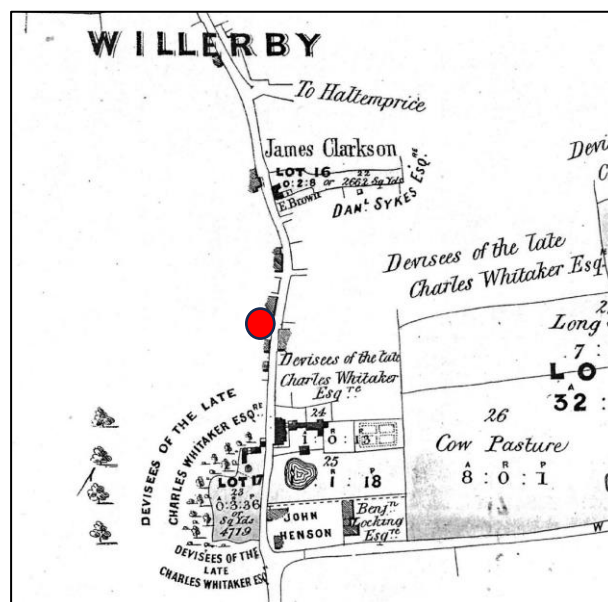
Enclosure Map 1796: Main Street running N to S through the centre of the map. Plot 97 owned by Mr. Brown is where 'Chepstow' would eventually be located.

by a Mr. Brown and is shown as Plot 97, more or less in the centre of the above map. The identity of Mr. Brown has not been discovered, although it was probably Edward Brown of Skirlaugh, cordwainer, who owned various properties in Willerby around this time including three cottages on Well Lane.

An 1868 map (right) shows that much of the land and property in the village was owned by Charles Whittaker who, although he died in 1850 was held by his trustees for up to two decades. However, the plot on which 'Chepstow' now stands was possibly held by Edward Brown and his heirs for many years until it was eventually acquired in the late 1800s by Arthur Egginton of South Ella Hall.

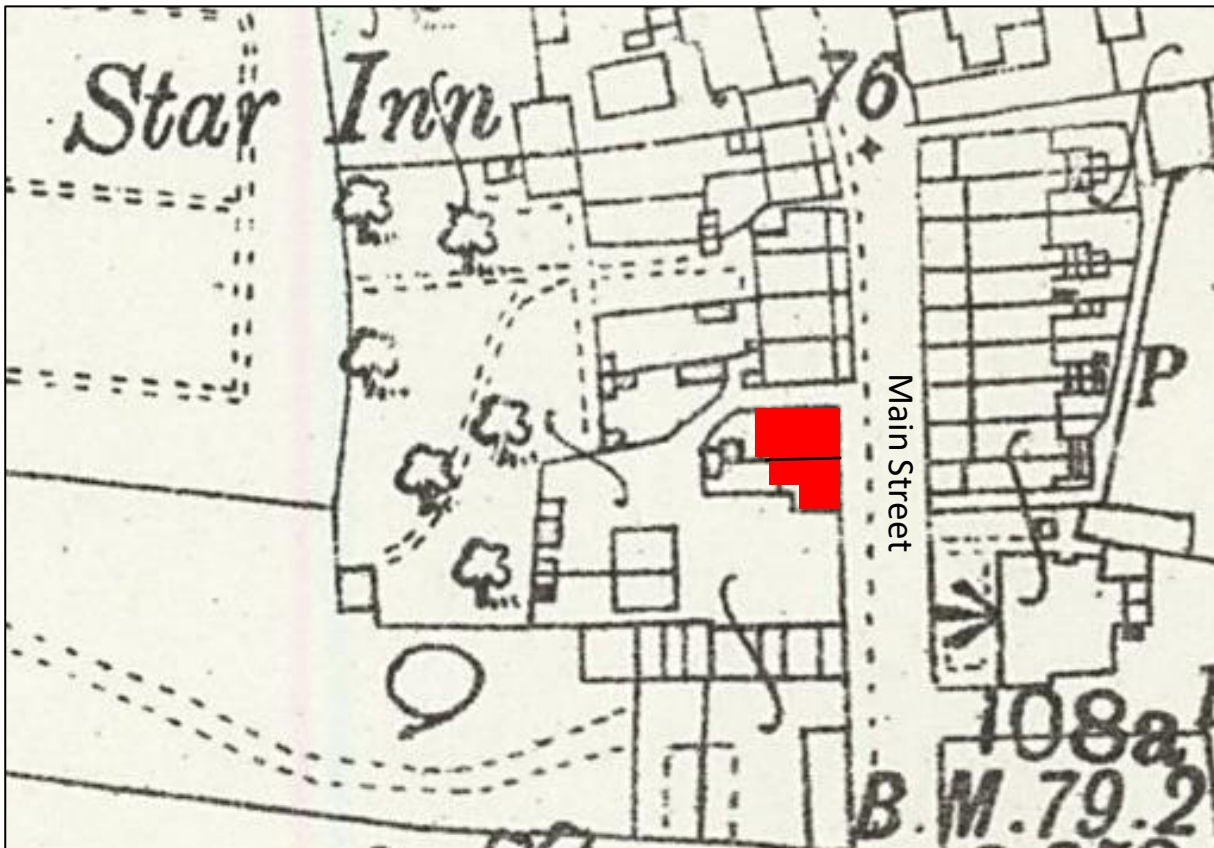
ownership of various buildings and plots of land in the village. It shows the major property owners in the village were the Williamson family. William Williamson and James S. Williamson were related and, on his death, much of the former's property was inherited by the latter. In turn, when James S. Williamson died in 1819, his property in Willerby passed to his nephew, Charles Whittaker. The latter's name will crop up again shortly.

However, in 1796, the plot on which 'Chepstow' would eventually be built was owned



Map 1868: Main Street, indicating that much of the land in the village was owned by Charles Whittaker. The red dot marks the approximate, future location of 'Chepstow'.

An Ordnance Survey map published in 1890, but surveyed in 1888, shows the location of what appears to be two properties on the site occupied by 'Chepstow'.



OS Map published 1890 showing the location (in red) of the house(s) that became 'Chepstow'

There is an orchard behind the property and this, at least partially, survived for over a century. The terrace of houses on the opposite site of Main Street was known as Glencoe Villas (now 60-76 Main Street) and the larger building to the south of Glencoe Villas is the property which is now the Willerby and Kirk Ella Parish Institute, incorporating Willerby Library.

In 1898, a plot which 'Chepstow' shared with other adjacent properties was sold by Arthur Egginton to John Henry Elsom, a nurseryman and builder of 32 Park Road, Hull (later of Lawn Villa, Cottingham). Details of the plot involved in the transaction can be found below:

Memorial of Indenture of Conveyance

Date: First day of June 1898

Parties: Arthur Egginton of the City and County of Kingston upon Hull, Banker of the one part and John Henry Elsom of the same city and county, Nurseryman of the other part.

Description of Lands: All those nine (formerly ten and previously eleven) cottages or tenements with the site of a blacksmith's shop and the several outbuildings garths and gardens belonging to the same situate lying on and being in Willerby in the East Riding of the County of York formerly in the several tenures and occupations of Messieurs Green, Smith, Fletcher and others but afterwards of Mrs. Elizabeth Firth

and others and now of Elizabeth Firth, F _____ Solomon, Joseph Burman, Elizabeth Stephenson, William Firth, Seth Stephenson, William Allott, Jane Kent and William Oliver which said cottages and hereditaments abut on the Town Street of Willerby aforesaid on the East, of property formerly of Charles Whittaker Esq. and Mr. Hunter and now of Richard Willows and _____ on the West, on property formerly of George Richardson on the North, and on property of the said Charles Whittaker and now or late of Richard Willows on the South and containing by recent measurement two roods nine perches or thereabouts. All which said hereditaments and premises are more particularly delineated and described in the map or plan thereof enclosed on these presents whereon they are edged in red.

Witnesses: Herbert Fras Lowe, Solicitor, Hull witness to of the execution by the said Arthur Egginton

R. Gale Middlemiss, Solicitor, Hull

Witness to the execution the said John Henry Elsom¹

The plot in question referred to in the above as being 'edged in red' is show in the transcribed plan below:



Plan of plot conveyed by Arthur Egginton to John Henry Elsom in 1898 – not to scale. (* Chepstow)

However, Elsom only held on to the property for two years before he sold it to Arthur William Tranmer, a pork butcher, formerly of Cottingham.

¹ East Yorkshire Registry of Deeds 1898, Volume 1, Page 84, No. 81

The following Indenture of Conveyance provides details of the transaction and is similar in content to the earlier agreement between Elsom and Arthur Egginton two years earlier.

Memorial of an Indenture of Conveyance for registration²

Date: 1st day of March 1900

Parties JOHN HENRY ELSOM of the City and County of Kingston upon Hull,
Nurseryman, of the one part and
ARTHUR WILLIAM TRANMER of Willerby in the East Riding of the County of York, Pork
Butcher, of the other part.

Description of Lands ALL THOSE nine (formerly ten and previously eleven) cottages or tenements with the site of a blacksmith's shop and the several outbuildings, garths and gardens belonging to the same respectively situate lying and being at Willerby in the East Riding of the County of York formerly in the tenures and occupations of Messieurs Green, Smith, Fletcher and others but afterwards of Mrs. Elizabeth Firth and others and now or late of Elizabeth Firth, F. Solomon, Joseph Burman, Elizabeth Stephenson, William Firth, Seth Stephenson, William Allott, Jane Kent and William Oliver which said cottages and hereditaments abut on the Town Street of Willerby aforesaid on the East, on property formerly of Charles Whittaker Esquire and Mr. Hunter and now of [*blank*] on the West, on property formerly of the said Charles Whittaker on the North and now or late of Richard Willows on the South, and containing by recent admeasurement two roods nine perches³ or thereabouts all which said hereditaments and premises are more particularly delineated and described in the map or plan thereof drawn on a certain Indenture bearing the date first day of June one thousand eight hundred and ninety eight and made between Arthur Egginton on the one part and the said John Henry Elsom of the other part and being the Conveyance of the said hereditaments and premises to the said John Henry Elsom and thereon edged red.

Witnesses R. Gale Middlemiss of Hull, Solicitor

Witness to the Execution by John Henry Elsom⁴ and Arthur William Tranmer

Registered Sixth day of March 1900 at 10 in the forenoon

In order to purchase the property, Arthur William Tranmer obtained a mortgage provided by Samuel Ridsdale⁵, a retired blacksmith, of South Street, Cottingham (formerly of Skidby). From the sequence of events that followed, it is apparent that Arthur William Tranmer occupied the house on his newly acquired 'estate' that, as we shall see, he was shortly to name 'Chepstow'.

² East Riding of Yorkshire – Register of Deeds, Vol 19, Page 191, No. 184

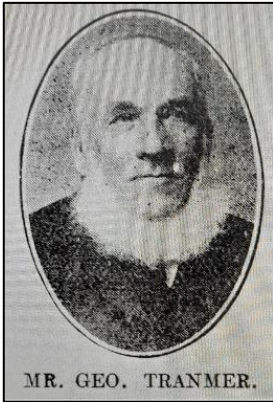
³ 2250 square metres/2700 square yards/just over ½ acre. About the size of four tennis courts or a quarter of the size of a football pitch.

⁴ John Henry Elsom listed in 1892 Bulmer's Directory as Nurseryman, Park Grove; h 32 Park Road, Hull.

⁵ East Riding of Yorkshire Register of Deeds, Vol 19, Page 192, No. 185.

Arthur William Tranmer (1876 – 1950)

Arthur William Tranmer was born in Cottingham in 1876, the son of George Tranmer and Sarah Hatfield who married in Cottingham on 10th October 1857. Census returns indicate George and Sarah Tranmer had nine children (five sons and three daughters⁶), Arthur William being the youngest. Although George had started his



working life as a waggoner, he later became a pork butcher having married into the Hatfield family who were pig breeders. Apart from the eldest son, John Richard (1861 – 1940), who became a Primitive Methodist minister, all the other sons became butchers, following their father's chosen profession.

By 1891, George Tranmer senior had retired and one or more of his sons had taken over his pork butcher's business in Cottingham. However, Arthur William being the youngest seems to have served out his apprenticeship in the trade with a John Marshall, butcher, of 112 Fountain Road, Hull. From this address in September 1896, Arthur was advertising in the Hull Daily Mail for "a smart youth for butchering". However, by March 1900, Arthur was in Willerby acquiring property to establish his own business.

Why Chepstow?

Now we come to the question that was the starting point for this investigation. A reasonable hypothesis was that there may have been a connection between a former resident of 'Chepstow' and the eponymous town in Monmouthshire. This seemed more likely than the naming of the house simply being a random choice.

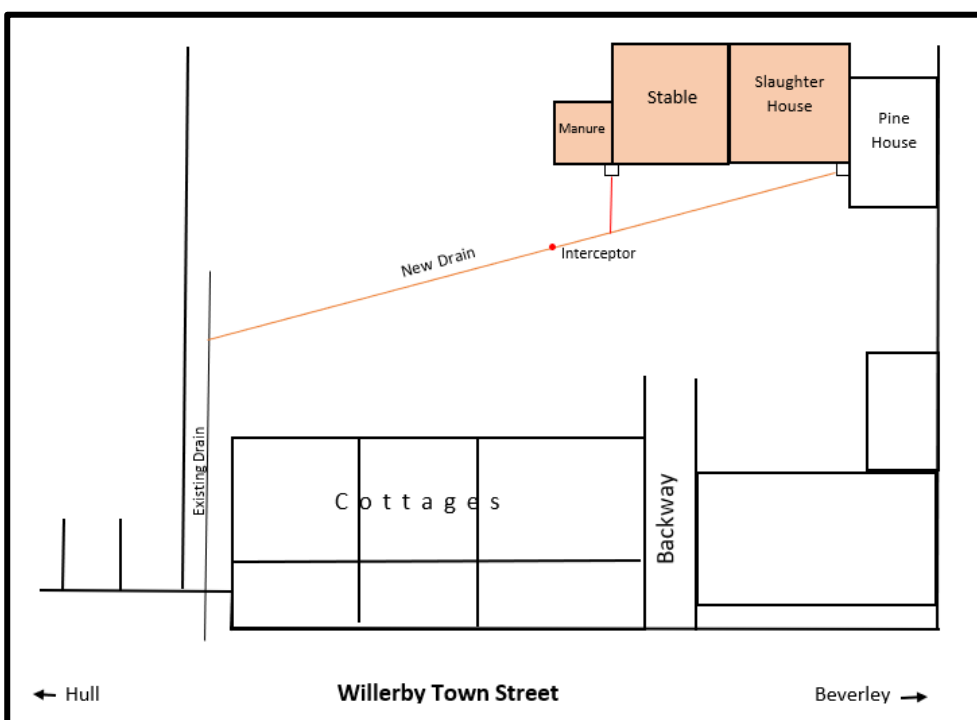
As the house was built during the late Victorian era (as were many other houses on Main Street), an initial search of the 1901 census for Willerby was made. This revealed that, in fact, there were two families on Main Street with connections to Monmouthshire – the Masons⁷ and the Tranmers. The census records that Arthur William Tranmer, Pork Butcher, aged 25, born in Cottingham, was married to Alice Elizabeth Tranmer, aged 20. Alice was born in Chepstow, Monmouth, Wales. At this stage, they had one daughter, Ellen, aged 19 months.

⁶ The sons were, Thomas (1865 -1893), Andrew Wray (1866 – 1930), George (c1873 – 1937), Charles Hatfield (1874 – 1962) and Arthur William 1876 – 1950). The three daughters were Jemima (1858 – 1937), Ellen (1863 – 1931) and Sarah Jane (1870 -1953)

⁷ The Masons also had strong links to Monmouthshire. These were with Llandogo, a village some miles north of Chepstow. William Mason was born in Huntingdonshire, but his wife, Ann, and his two eldest children were born in Llandogo, Monmouthshire. Information gained from census records, suggests that the family lived in Monmouthshire for a number of years in the late 1860s before eventually moving to East Yorkshire in the mid-1870s. It is possible that there was some close connection between the Masons and the Tranmers.

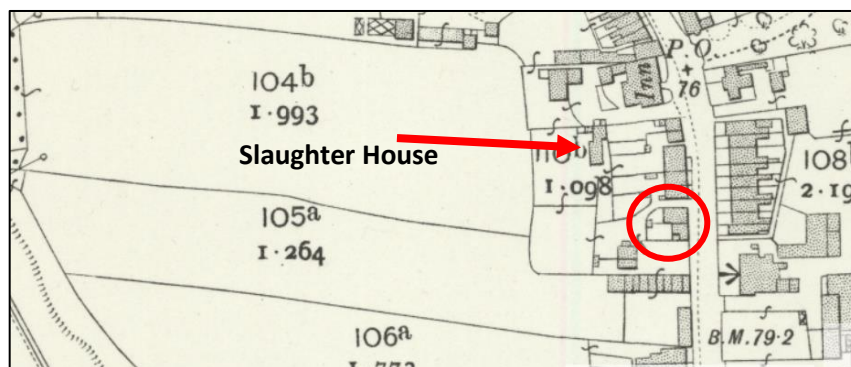
They also had a visitor staying with them on the day of the census. She was Jane West, aged 20, also born in Chepstow. As Alice Tranmer's maiden name was West, it seems certain that Jane was a relative, possibly her sister, a cousin or a niece. The 1901 census only lists a 'household number' (in this case 80), which makes the exact location of the house on Main Street difficult to pinpoint. Nevertheless, it appears to have been in the close vicinity of the house under investigation. When an elderly resident in Main Street remembered that Tranmer, the Pork Butcher, had his shop at the house called 'Chepstow', this provided the necessary evidence that this was the same house as that under investigation.

On the 2nd October 1900, Arthur Tranmer applied for planning permission to erect a slaughter house on the plot he had acquired a few months earlier. The diagram below shows the extent of the plans.



Representation of building plan for proposed slaughter house at Willerby⁸

A map dated c1905 shows that, by this time, the slaughter house buildings had been constructed and would have been in use.



Map (c1905) showing area behind 'Chepstow' (circled) including slaughter house.

⁸ East Riding Archives ref. RDSC/6/2/1/183

In 2022, an elderly resident of Willerby, whose memories go back to the 1940s, distinctly remembered 'Chepstow' being located on a smallholding on which pigs and chickens were kept. The building of a slaughter house on the premises strongly suggests that Arthur Tranmer already kept pigs on this plot from the early 1900s to support his business as a pork butcher. There were also apple trees growing on the plot, the fruit of which was, probably, used to supplement the diet of the pigs.

Once Arthur and Alice had settled down in Willerby, they began to have a family. Ellen (known as Nelly) was their first daughter, born in 1901. Arthur George (known as George) was their first and eldest son, born in 1902. Following on came two further daughters, Alice Georgina (b. 1905) and Mabel Annie (b. 1908) and a son, Robert (b. 1912). Sadly, the youngest daughter, Alice Georgina, died in 1915 at the age of 10 years.

George Tranmer (1831-1909)

In early 1909, Arthur Tranmer's father, George, died, and the following obituary illustrates his deeply held religious beliefs and family's commitment to the church:

By the death of Mr. George Tranmer, of Cottingham, in the Hull Seventh Circuit, another link with the origin of the Connexion has been broken. Twenty years old when the Venerable William Clowes⁹ was called to his reward, our brother was born February 12th, 1831, twelve years after Mr. Clowes came to mission Hull. It was not until six years after the departure of the apostle of Primitive Methodism that he fully surrendered himself to Christ. He then joined the Church and as Sunday School teacher and subsequently as class leader rendered great service. Mrs. Tranmer shared with him an ever-deepening interest in the prosperity of the Church, hospitality being ungrudgingly offered to the preachers. The chapel becoming too small for the Society Brother Tranmer with other trustees purchased a new site and erected a much larger sanctuary, schoolroom, and class rooms, and acted for many years as chapel steward. For twenty years he was an efficient member of the Cottingham School Board, and by his uprightness, spiritual fervour, and diligent attention to all his duties won the respect of all. Representing his circuit at the District Synod he took the chair at the public meeting on the Monday evening. His eldest son is one of our most efficient ministers in the Leeds District; another son is society steward at Cottingham, and most of the large family are connected with the church. Our brother's interest in the cause lasted till the end, though for some years he was unable to take his wonted active share in the work. His last illness was brief and painful, but his confidence in his Redeemer was strong. Surrounded by most of his family he passed away February 2nd, 1909, within a few days of attaining seventy-eight years. Revs. P.J. Fisher and W.J. Hemp conducted the funeral service, and the writer, who knew our departed brother forty-eight years, gave an address. A large company followed his remains to the cemetery, where his mortal body was laid to rest until the resurrection morn.¹⁰

⁹ William Clowes (1780–1851) was one of the founders of Primitive Methodism in the early 19th century.

¹⁰ Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine (1909) by Rev. Francis Rudd

By 1921, the Tranmer family had been established in Willerby for over twenty years and they are recorded in the census of that year.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Please read the Instructions and Examples shown on the back, and then fill up the Schedule carefully and in Ink.

Do not fill up the back of the form.

NAME and SURNAMES	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Household	AGE	SEX	MARRIAGE or CIVIL STATUS	BIRTHPLACE and NATIONALITY	PERSONAL OCCUPATION		OCCUPATION and EMPLOYMENT		Place of Work	Number and ages of all living children and step children under 16 years of age, whether enumerated on this schedule or not, i.e., whether residing as members of this household or elsewhere.
						(1) If working for an employer state the name and business of the employer (person, firm, company or public body) or, if at present out of work, of last employer, giving "date of work," or "date of leaving."	(2) If working on own account and not employing persons for the purpose of business, write "Own business."				
Arthur W. Tranmer	Head	45	M	Married	Yorkshire	Employer	Employer	At Home	2	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100	
Ellen Tranmer	Wife	40	F	Married	Yorkshire	Domestic	Domestic	At Home	1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100	
George Tranmer	Son	15	M	Single	Yorkshire	Employer	Employer	At Home	1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100	
Mabel Tranmer	Daughter	12	F	Single	Yorkshire	Domestic	Domestic	At Home	1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100	
Robert Tranmer	Son	8	M	Single	Yorkshire	Domestic	Domestic	At Home	1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100	

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: Arthur W. Tranmer
 (Head of Household, Master of Establishment or other person responsible for making the return.)

1921 Census 'Chepstow', Main Street, Willerby

The census shows the two youngest members of the family, Mabel and Robert, were pupils at the local school (probably St. Andrew's School, Kirk Ella) with the older two, Ellen and George, assisting with their father's business. Although George is primarily described as 'Gardener', the entry is annotated, 'helping father'.

In addition to breeding pigs, Arthur Tranmer also kept chickens. During the 1920s, and probably for longer, he maintained a brood of Australorps and regularly advertised their eggs for sale in the local paper. Australorps are described as "a delightful, quiet bird to have in your flock. They are not flighty or noisy, are cold-hardy, make good flock-mates, and lay an abundance of delicious eggs." At least they would not be waking the Tranmer's neighbours early in the morning!



Australorp chicken.

Although the family were staunch Methodists, as a boy and young man, George Tranmer, the eldest son, was a member of the choir at St. Andrew's Church, Kirk Ella, the local, Anglican parish church. The photograph below was taken by the south door of the church, perhaps following one of three occasions when Kirk Ella won first place at the Howden Choir Festival between 1915 and 1920. The photograph shows Canon Foord, Vicar of Kirk Ella, and Arthur Fox, the organist and choirmaster, with fourteen boys. Amongst them is George Tranmer although, unfortunately, he cannot be positively identified.



The Rev. Canon James Foord, Vicar of Kirk Ella and Mr. Arthur Fox, Organist and Choirmaster, with choristers, Harry Adamson, Herbert Camp, Edward Davey, Wilfred Firth, Claude Grant, Norman Grant, Herbert Hurst, Roland Hodgson, Cyril Swan, Ben Slight, Percy Slight, George Tranmer and Donald Warwick – not in order of appearance. The fourteenth boy cannot be recalled, but John Smith, K. Luther, George Fox and Eric Sharman were on probation in the choir in 1916 when it is thought this photograph was taken.

By 1939, Chepstow had acquired a number. It was 57 Main Street¹¹. The National Registration that took place in September of that year (see below) shows that only two of the Tranmer children were still living at home. George is there and is registered as a “Pork Butcher’s Assistant”. An annotation has his full name, Arthur George Tranmer. No doubt, he was known as George to avoid confusion with his father. A second annotation, in a different hand, indicates that George’s sister, Mabel, subsequently changed her surname to Levesconte. In fact, Mabel married Albert Harold Levesconte (b.1906, Monmouthshire) in 1940. Prior to her marriage, Mabel had been involved in the running of Kirk Ella Brownie Pack (she was Tawny Owl) who met in the schoolroom at Willerby Methodist Church. Mabel and her husband lived in Bournemouth for many years and she died there in 1994 at the age of 85 years.

Ellen, George’s elder sister, married William Botterell Hyde at Kirk Ella in 1930. They were living next door at 61 Main Street in 1939. William’s occupation was ‘Sexton, gravedigging’. It is probable that by this time they had two children, although confirmation of this is not possible as their entries on the record have been redacted¹². Ellen died in 1970 at the age of 69 years.

¹¹ At that time, it appears there was no 59 Main Street as next door was 61 Main Street.

¹² These are the records of individuals who were born less than 100 years ago and whose death has not been registered. Their names are redacted to protect their privacy should they still be alive.

E.D. Letter Code		JBFU		Borough, U.D. or R.D.		Haltwhistle U.D. (Part)		Registration District and Sub-district		520-4	
ADDRESS.	SCHEDULE.		SURNAME AND OTHER NAMES.	O. V. S. P. or I.	M. or F.	BIRTH.		S. M. W. or D.	PERSONAL OCCUPATION		
	No.	Sub. No.				Day.	Year.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
43 Main St. Willerby	24	1	Rayment George H	-	M	22 Jan	01	M	Road sweeper, Haltwhistle Council		
"		2	Rayment Eva	-	F	14 Dec	07	M	Unpaid domestic duties		
53 " "	25	1	Whitcliffe Emily	-	F	12 Oct	64	W	Elementary School Teacher - retired		
55 Main St. Willerby	26	1	Hodgson James	-	M	2 Nov	58	M	Shipwright - retired		
"		2	Hodgson Annie	-	F	10 Dec	58	M	Unpaid domestic duties		
"		3	Hodgson Albert	-	M	12 Dec	89	S	Riding school Master (Horse)		
57 Main St. Willerby	27	1	Tranmer Arthur W	-	M	14 Mar	76	M	Pork Butcher		
"		2	Tranmer Alice	-	F	16 July	80	M	Unpaid domestic duties		
"	310	3	Tranmer George	-	M	15 Nov	02	S	Pork Butchers Assistant		
"	M	4	Tranmer Mabel	-	F	16 July	08	S	Unpaid domestic duties		
61 Main St. Willerby	28	1	Hyde Ellen	-	F	21 Feb	01	M	Unpaid domestic duties		
"		2	Hyde William B	-	M	27 Aug	01	M	Sixth grave digging - heavy work		
This record is officially closed.											
This record is officially closed.											
63 Main St. Willerby	29	1	Grant Eliza J.	-	F	7 June	85	S	Unpaid Domestic Duties Householder		
"		2	Grant Henry	-	M	11 Nov	59	S	Gardener - retired		
"		3	Wilson Florence A	-	F	11 April	07	S	Domestic Servant		

1939 National Registration – 43 to 63 Main Street, Willerby.

The fact that there appeared to be no 59 Main Street in 1939 may indicate that the Tranmer's business occupied both of the premises which appear on the 1890 map of Willerby. We will see, later, that by 1984 at the latest, 59 Main Street had been reinstated and that 'Chepstow' was, by then, two distinct properties.

In July 1944, Alice Tranmer passed away shortly after her 64th birthday. Following a funeral service at St. Andrew's Church she was laid to rest in Mill Lane Cemetery. Alice was joined just under six years later by her husband, Arthur William, who died on 26th July 1950 at the age of 74 years. Their epitaph reads as follows:

In loving memory of ALICE E. the beloved and unselfish wife of
ARTHUR W. TRANMER, died 22nd July 1944, aged 64 years. At rest.
Also ARTHUR WILLIAM TRANMER her beloved husband, died May 26th 1950.
Reunited

The family business was inherited by George who was also granted probate following his father's death. As the caption below states, on his death, Arthur William Tranmer left £2909. This was not a fortune but, nevertheless, a worthy legacy from a lifetime of dedication and hard work.

TRANMER Arthur William of 57 Main-street Willerby York-shire died 26 May 1950 Probate London 16 September to Arthur George Tranmer pork butcher. Effects £2909 0s. 11d.

Charles Hatfield Tranmer

Only a few weeks before the death of Arthur William Tranmer, there was another, tragic death in the family when one of his nephews, Charles Hatfield Tranmer, was killed in a road accident. On 28th March 1950, the Hull Daily Mail carried the details:

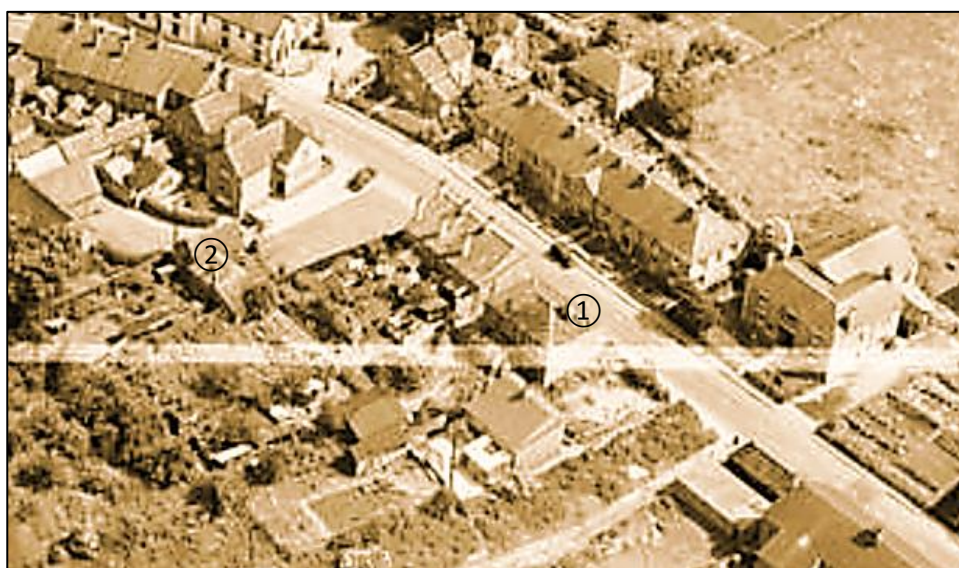
HULL ACCOUNTANT KILLED GREAT NORTH ROAD CRASH CHARLES TRANMER, a well-known Hull accountant, of 118 Beverley Road, Kirkella, and partner in the firm of Tranmer and Raine (Accountants), King Edward Street, was killed in a motor smash on the Great North Road, near Thirsk.

Charles Tranmer was 41 years of age and left a wife (Lena) and two sons (John and Paul). He had been the organist at Cottingham Methodist Church which reopened only a few days after his death following a rebuilding project:

CHURCH REBUILT AT COTTINGHAM Over 70 Methodists attended the reopening of Cottingham Methodist Church, which was preceded by an open-air service in the forecourt of the newly reconstructed church in the village. The church was opened by Mr. F. Harland, who had been present at the opening of the original church, as a boy, over 70 years ago. Mr Harland led the way into the church, where a service of dedication was performed, with a sermon by the Rev Arthur J. Howitt. There was a note of sadness in the proceedings in the absence of the organist. C. H. Tranmer, who was killed in road accident a few days ago. The recital was given, in his place, by Mr V. Waterhouse. *Hull Daily Mail, Monday 3 April 1950, page 6*

Charles Hatfield Tranmer was laid to rest in Tranby Lane Cemetery, Anlaby. The headstone on the family grave reads:

‘Sacred to the memory of Charles Hatfield Tranmer beloved husband of Lena and dear father of John and Paul, accidentally killed 27th March 1950 aged 41 years. Lena Rose Tranmer a dear wife and mother died 12th October 1999 aged 87 years. United again in the love of God. “I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”’



Aerial photograph 1950 showing 'Chepstow' (1) and slaughter house (2)

George Tranmer continued to run the family business until the 1970s and is well-remembered in the 21st century by some of the older residents of Main Street and residents of Willerby, more generally. Apart from the daily routine of running a butcher's shop, George had a number of interests. He had a great love of classical music and owned a collection of records including, what has been said to be his favourite, Handel's Water Music. These he played on a wind-up gramophone which, his great-nephew, Paul Tranmer, recalls, on occasions he would take by taxi to his parent's house in Cottingham to entertain the wider family.

From 1927 to 1973, George Tranmer also kept a diary in which he recorded all kinds of local sayings, stories and songs. Although the diary itself seems to have been lost, a selection of its contents were preserved by Renton Heathcote in his "Anlaby: The History of a Yorkshire Village" and these are reproduced in the Appendix.

Arthur George Tranmer died on 24th January 1979 at the age of 76 years. It appears that George Tranmer never married and after his death there was no member of the family to carry on the business. As his probate listing below indicates, he died a relatively wealthy man with nearly £20,000 to his name.

TRANMER, Arthur George of 57 Main St Willerby North
Humberside died 24 January 1979 Probate Leeds 5 March
£19810 791400314R

Following the death of George Tranmer, his property changed hands and from the early 1980s was occupied by the offices of M. Livingstone and Company, Estate Agents, owned and run by Morton Livingstone. An advertisement placed in the Hull Daily Mail in October 1984 lists the address of the company as 59 Main Street, although subsequent adverts show the address of the estate agents as 57 Main Street or, simply, Chepstow House. It appears he started out at the former address and moved to the latter in the mid-1980s. In 1992, his wife, Julie, started a beauty therapy business on the upper floor of 57 Main Street. For many years, the unit next door at 59 Main Street was rented out to a ladies' hairdressing business.

In January 1995, Morton Livingstone died suddenly at the wheel of his car. His death was mourned not only by his family but also by many other members of the community as the following piece from the Hull Daily Mail attests:

WELL-KNOWN North Humberside kidney transplant patient and campaigner Morton Livingstone has died. Tributes have flooded in for 45-year-old Mr Livingstone who died suddenly at the wheel of his car. It is understood he was taken ill and stopped at the roadside where he was discovered. Mr Livingstone who had a successful kidney transplant operation just over 10 years ago was a founder member of the national Kidney Federation and of the Humberside Kidney Patients' Association. He also set up the St James's Kidney Patients' Association in Leeds. Estate agent Mr Livingstone of

Main Street, Willerby, leaves his wife Julie and three-year-old daughter Lucinda. Mr Livingstone told friends he waited until he had a successful kidney transplant before settling down to a family. Today his family was too distressed to talk but a Hull doctor who has had Mr Livingstone on his lists for almost 20 years, Dr Malcolm Farr, who will be speaking at Mr Livingstone's funeral service on Sunday said: "He was not only a patient but also a friend" During his time on the executive of the National Kidney Federation, Mr Livingstone went to Westminster to appeal to MPs and peers for better treatment of kidney patients. Ill health forced him to resign a couple of months ago from his third term of office as chairman of the Association. Secretary of the association, Mrs Rosemary Barlow, described Mr Livingstone as a "real gentleman" A funeral service is being held tomorrow at the Ella Street Cemetery at 2pm.¹³

A memorial event to celebrate the life of Morton Livingstone was held in late April 1995 at the Grange Park Hotel in Willerby at which several warm tributes were given by his friends.



Beauty Therapy Unlimited, 57 Main Street (date unknown)

After the death of her husband, Julie Livingstone moved her beauty business downstairs in 57 Main Street following the closure of the estate agency. She continued this business, known as Beauty Therapy Unlimited, until 2015 when it closed after 23 years.

When the lease expired on 59 Main Street, the proprietor of the ladies' hairdressing business, which had continued there for a number of

years, vacated the premises and became a mobile hairdresser.

Since then, 57 Main Street has been taken over by DS Researchers, described as Hull's only dedicated heir hunting firm. It specialises in administering estates where no Will has been left, known as Intestate law, but also handles testate estates, where there is a Will with named beneficiaries. An associated company, Probate and Estate Administration Ltd. now occupies 59 Main Street.

The slaughter house that Arthur William Tranmer had built around 1900 was demolished in the early 1980s and our story ends with the house, Chepstow Cottage, 61a Main Street, that now occupies its former site.

¹³ Hull Daily Mail, Saturday 7th January 1995, page 5

Chepstow Cottage, 61a Main Street

An early employee of M. Livingstone & Co., Phil Lavin, remembered that in the early 1980s, the slaughter house behind the premises on Main Street, although by then disused, was still in existence. However, in 1983, this was demolished and a new, residential property was built on its footprint. This house has become known as Chepstow Cottage or 61a Main Street.

An early owner of Chepstow Cottage, perhaps the first, was Robert Mays. He was the owner of a nightclub on George Street in Hull, known initially as Club 1795, and in December 1992 applied “to sell by retail intoxicating liquor of all descriptions for consumption on the premises.” The club eventually became known as ‘The Room’ and proved a popular venue with the young people of Hull. One unusual function of the club was that it housed the Hull branch of the Laurel and Hardy fan club who used to meet there on weekday nights to watch films on a large projection screen.

In 1997, Robert Mays moved on and Chepstow Cottage was purchased by Ian Hetherington who lived there with his family until 2020. In 2005, Ian Hetherington was appointed as a director of Marantec UK, a company specialising in the manufacture of remote openers for garage doors. Prior to this, he had been Sales Director at The Garage Door Company. In 2020, he removed to Doncaster where he joined Thermo Secure UK Limited, a company specialising in metal doors and windows.

In 2020, Chepstow Cottage was purchased by Peter Bottomley, the present owner. When a contractor was clearing part of the garden to build a patio, many beer bottles and lemonade bottles were found buried. Most of the beer bottles were from Hull Brewery. It is probable that these had been discarded from The Star which is situated on adjacent land. The contractor also reported that on a previous occasion, they had been asked to clear the garden to lay a lawn and they removed a lot of apple trees. It was thought that the trees would have been on Arthur Tranmer’s earlier smallholding and perhaps the remnant of the earlier orchard.

Acknowledgements

In addition to the information from East Riding Archives in Beverley and multiple internet sources, many other individuals have contributed to this story. These include Rene Atkinson, Peter Bottomley, Richard Eglen and staff at DS Researchers, Phil Lavin, Janet Marshall, Margaret McGlashan, Sharon Sampson (Willerby Library) and Paul Tranmer (son of Charles Hatfield Tranmer). I hope I have not left anyone out.

Francis Davies, August 2023

Appendix

Sayings and songs transcribed by Arthur George Tranmer (1902-1979), Pork Butcher of Willerby.

General sayings

Never believe nowt you hear and only half you see.

Sooner or later, you'll meet a man as clever as yourself.

If 'ifs' and 'ands' were pots and pans, there'd be no work for any of us.

A clear conscience is worth more as you get older.

Everything has its drawbacks.

More rain, more rist.

Fair weather isn't always best.

Break eggs with a stick – another way of saying new brooms sweep clean.

He made as much fuss as a hen with one chick.

You'll never see young chicks bring grub to an old hen.

You can't catch old birds with chaff.

You could not be better served in a cookshop.

It's freezing as hard as Hell's back kitchen floor.

Every dog has its day.

After dinner rest a while, after supper walk a mile.

We aren't going to empty our cupboards to fill another folk's privy.

It stinks like a fummat.¹⁴

As blind as a moudie.¹⁵

The howling of a dog is a portend of death.

It's lucky to have a black cat, but unlucky to meet one.

The best time to gather mushrooms is the second quarter of the moon after heavy rain.

¹⁴ A polecat

¹⁵ A mole

Local songs

When I was a lad

When I was a lad among my father's horses
In the merry month of the merry, merry May.
There's a horse in here, there's a horse in there
Here's a horse, there's a horse
There's a horse in here, there's a horse in there
Come along with me boys, come along with me
Down to my father's farmyard.

When I was a lad among my father's (*here the singer neighs like a horse*)
In the merry month of the merry, merry May.
There's a (*neigh*) in here, there's a (*neigh*) in there
Here's a (*neigh*), there's a (*neigh*)
There's a (*neigh*) in here, there's a (*neigh*) in there
Come along with me boys, come along with me
Down to my father's farmyard.

When I was a lad among my father's cows.....

When I was a lad among my father's sheep.....

When I was a lad among my father's pigs.....

An Acre of Land

Me fayther's bowt and acre of land
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy.
Me fayther's bowt and acre of land
And a bunch of holly green ivy.

He plu'd wi' an old plu sock¹⁶
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy.
He plu'd wi an old plu sock
And a bunch of holly green ivy.

He sew it doon wi' carraway seeds
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy,

He harrered down wi' a bramble bush,
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy,

¹⁶ Plu sock = plough share

He reaped wi' a leg of a louse,
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy,

He led it yam on the back of a louse,
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy,

The load it broke the louse's back,
Sing hey, sing hoy, sing ivy,

Working the Land

Now cum me lucky lads if yu want ti larn to plu,
Cum ti local farmer and he'll show you hoo.
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.
For if it right what Ah heerd 'im say,
He wants yu to plu fower acre ivery day.
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.

Now cum me lucky lads if yu want ti larn to harrer,
Cum ti local farmer and ye'' be very soon be narrer.
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.
For if it right what Ah heerd 'im say,
He wants yu ti harrer forty acres ivery day
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.

Now we've some horses and they're very thin,
You can count ivery rib they have in their skin.
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.
They're bobby knocker kneed and yers swung in back¹⁷
And yu larn 'im to go wi a whoo gee back,
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.

Noo we've a cook, a vary good cook,
An' the pies that she makes are as hard as bricks'
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.
There's pies as hard as iron, and pies soft as bran
And they rattle inn yer guts like an old tin pan,
With a fol diddle i do follow diddle dey.

¹⁷ Swung in back = back strain through overloading and underfeeding

Cock Robin is Dead

Cock Robin is dead an' is laid in his grave,
Laid in his grave, laid in his grave.
Cock Robin is dead an' is laid in his grave,
E, E, I, I laid in his grave.
There grew an old apple tree over his head,
Over his head, over his head.
There grew an old apple tree over his head,
E, E, I, I over his head.

There came a big wind and blew them all down,
Blew them all down, blew them all down.
There came a big wind and blew them all down,
E, E, I, I blew them all down.
There came an old woman and picked them all up,
Picked them all up, picked them all up.
There came an old woman and picked them all up,
E, E, I, I picked them all up.

Cock Robin got up and gave her a knock
Gave her a knock, gave her a knock.
Cock Robin got up and gave her a knock
E, E, I, I gave her a knock.
It sent the old woman rickety rock
Rickety rock, rickety rock,
It sent the old woman rickety rock
E, E, I, I rickety rock.

Local Weather Sayings

If the weather follows the sun from east to west – fine weather
If the wind goes against the sun from east to west – rough weather
If grass grows green in January – cold spring
If the sun shines before mid-day on Candlemas Day¹⁸ – half the winter to come.
Fogs in March – frosts in May
Spring is not here until you can cover twelve daisies with one foot

¹⁸ Candlemas Day is 2nd February, exactly 40 days (inclusive) after Christmas on December 25th. The Mosaic law stated that 40 days was the period of purification after the birth of a child, and so the presentation took place 40 days after Jesus was born.

If rhubarb seeds early May – cold summer
If a crow perches on a dead branch and the rest of the tree is alive – wet day
Moon rides like a boat – holds up the rain
Moon over end – out tumbles the rain
Wind in the east – no good to man or beast
If rabbits feed early afternoon – wet night
If cat lays with its back to the fire – cold night
The higher rooks build their nests, the warmer the spring
When swallows fly low – rainy afternoon.

Superstition

When George Tranmer was a lad, Canon Foord (Vicar of Kirk Ella) told him that when he first came to the parish¹⁹, anyone going on a journey at night near the cross-roads at Riplingham Road and Great Gutter Lane, known in those days as Four Cross Roads, wore sprigs of oak, ash, hawthorn or elderberry in the form of a cross as protection against evil spirits.

Many thanks to Renton Heathcote for preserving these entries in George Tranmer's diary in his book, *Anlaby: The History of an East Yorkshire Village 867-2000*, pages 261-263.

¹⁹ Canon James Foord was Vicar of Kirk Ella from 1878 to 1932