

Madeley Hall No.7

Madeley Hall was built about the year 1700. It is a large brick house of five bays with two storeys and dormers in the hipped roof. The mellow brick-work with keystones and stone lintels gives the impression of a typical 'Queen Anne' mansion. The house formerly stood in an old fashioned garden and a broad flight of stone steps led from a central path up to the terrace around the house.

The principal rooms are lined with 18th century oak panelling, and have solid brass door furniture, probably contemporary with the house.

The original kitchen contained a fine old fire-grate with double knobbed standards and an old turnspit that was worked by a dog running round inside a wheel.

Like many other large houses Madeley Hall has various ghost stories connected with it, one of which records frequent appearances of a "little old lady with poke bonnet and little silk shawl, carrying a flat candlestick," who was supposed to be a member of the Yate family.

The house was probably built by the Ashwoods, a long established Madeley family. The house was originally the centre of a large farm of about 180 acres. In 1770 Dorothy Ashwood married Henry Hawley and by a marriage settlement of the following



year the property passed to the Hawley family of Leybourne Grange, Kent. It remained in their ownership until 1848 when Sir Joseph Henry Hawley sold Madeley Hall and the farm to Joseph Yate, whose family, as tenants and agents of the Hawleys' estate had already lived at the Hall for the greater part of a century. In the 1860's Joseph Yate sold much of the land to the Ferridays who lived at Upper House.

In 1893 Joseph Yate died leaving a son, Walter Henry, and a daughter, Louisa Ann, neither of whom married. During the period when Joseph Yate and his children owned the Hall it became quite heavily mortgaged. In 1912, on the death of Walter Henry Yate, a cousin who had a residual interest in the estate began to buy up the mortgage. Col. Charles Edward Yate, M.P. for Melton Mowbray, was a retired Indian soldier and administrator of some distinction, and he was later created a baronet. In 1914 he became owner of the Hall, and he settled there from his retirement from Parliament in the 1920's until his death in 1940. The property then passed to his



nephew Lt. Col. V.A.C. Yate, M.C., who sold it in 1946 to Wenlock Borough Council.

Nearby is the Old Hall Barn, which has for many years provided a venue for social events in Madeley. Beside it is the site of an old horse-drawn threshing engine, nowadays known as the cock pit. It is likely that the building was in fact used for both these purposes and that the circular area where the horse used to walk round to operate the threshing machinery was later used as a cock pit. This area is now being partially enclosed and the barn improved and repaired so that it can continue to be used as a meeting place in Madeley.

Madeley Hall is listed as a grade II building in the Department of the Environment's list of buildings of special historic and architectural interest. It is now owned by the Wekin District Council, the successor authority to Wenlock Borough Council. The house and coach house have recently been converted to provide flats for elderly people, and some new accommodation has been built in the grounds.

