

Springstone House, The Street. Owners and Occupants c.1830- 2021

With emphasis on William Wood Wiseman (1810 – 1885)

This is the history of Springstone House. Currently its address is 27, Dewsbury Road, Ossett but formerly it has been known as The Street, Upper Street or Streetside. Springstone House was listed by Historic England in May 1988.

An entry in an 1830 Trade Directory records **John Sanderson Archer**, a solicitor of Spring Stone House, The Street, Ossett. A further entry was for Joseph Archer, *Gent* who was his father.

In 1822 an earlier Trade Directory recorded that "*Archer John S., attorney, attends at the Bull Inn Wakefield, Fri. and the Man and Saddle Dewsbury, Wed.*" The absence of a reference to Spring Stone House in 1822, but its presence in 1830, might give reason to conclude that the House was built between 1822 and 1830; this is twenty years or so earlier than hitherto thought.

In 1840 the Electoral Roll recorded "*self occupier*" John Sanderson Archer, solicitor, at his abode "*Springstone House in Paleside, Ossett*".



Above: Spring Stone House, The Street, Ossett built in the mid/late 1820's.

John Sanderson Archer was born in Ossett , the first child and elder son of whitesmith Joseph Archer (1767- 1849) and Ann Sanderson, both of Ossett, who married at All Saints Church Dewsbury on 14th November 1793. John Sanderson Archer was baptized at Ossett Old Church (Holy Trinity) on 19th September 1795. He died on 18th August 1840 and was buried at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton. This was the year that first records him as the *self occupier* of Springstone House although it is likely that he lived at, and most probably built, the House some years earlier. As it was Springstone House was to be his home for the rest of his short life when he died in tragic circumstances aged 44 years of age.

His pregnant wife, Margaret (nee Halliley) was left a widow with two children, Mary and William, both born in Ossett in 1827 and 1828 respectively. William was baptised at Ossett Holy Trinity

Church. Five months after the death of John Sanderson Archer the daughter he would never see, Margaret Sanderson Archer, was born on 18th January 1841 and baptized at Wakefield All Saints Church on 20th March 1841. By this time widow Margaret Archer (nee Halliley) had removed to Westgate Common, Wakefield.

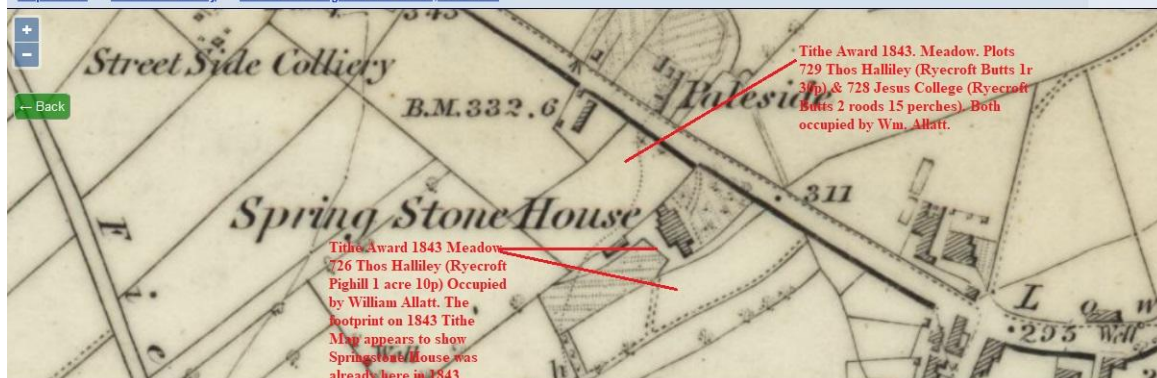
AWFULLY SUDDEN DEATH.—On Thursday afternoon week, about two o'clock, John Sanderson Archer, Esq., solicitor, of Ossett, drove in his gig to the Royal Hotel, in Dewsbury, to take up Mr. Oldroyd, solicitor, of Dewsbury, with him, as they were going further together on some business. Mr. Archer alighted a moment until Mr. O. got his top coat, when on getting into the passage of the hotel, Mr. A. was seized with a fit of apoplexy and dropped down. Surgical aid was immediately procured, but it was of no use, the vital spark being gone. Mr A. was about 45 years of age.

Above: Report of John Sanderson Archer's death. York Herald 22nd August 1840

Life went on at the newly built Springstone House, Upper Street, Ossett and in June 1841 it was tenanted by two twenty year old recently qualified solicitors, William Allott and Joseph Haxby, a 15 year old attorney's clerk, Henry Grey, and two servants. In the same year Pigot's Trade Directory recorded Allatt(sic) & Haxby as Attorneys of Spring Stone House Ossett.

Two years later the 1843 Ossett Tithe Award shows the footprint of Springstone House on its map and records the owner of the land upon which the House then stood as Thomas Halliley of Westgate Common Wakefield; the tenant of that land and Springstone House was also a solicitor, William Allott (1812-1875). In 1844 William Allott was recorded at his rented abode "Spring Stone House, Ossett Street". Allott also had other freehold and copyhold houses and premises "occupied by shoemaker John Spurr and others".

In 1849 the Ordnance Survey (O.S.) undertook its first map survey of Ossett and in 1854 it published the earliest O.S. map of Ossett. The map included Spring Stone House aside the Wakefield to Halifax Turnpike Road convenient for travellers and businessmen for the direct link to Wakefield to the east and Dewsbury to the west. This stretch of road has, over time, been known as The Street, Street Side, Upper Street and Paleside. There was and is only one Springstone House.



Above; Spring Stone House named on the 1849 surveyed O.S. map of Ossett published in 1854.

On Census day 1851 Springstone House appears to have been uninhabited; William Allott had removed to Alverthorpe. Perhaps the unexpected death of John Sanderson Archer in 1840 had led to delays in unraveling his estate. Was Springstone House empty because it was up for sale ?

Were there any potential candidates for its acquisition?

Dr. William Wood Wiseman M.R.C.S., L.S.A. London 1833, was born in Sandal Magna, Wakefield on 28th January 1810 and by 1834 he was a practicing surgeon in Ossett. He married Mary Greaves of the wealthy Ossett woollen manufacturing family on 21st September 1837 at Sandal Magna St. Helen's Church. A first child, Elizabeth, was born in 1839 and by 1841, William his wife Mary and daughter Elizabeth were living in Ossett at a "*Town*" address.

By 1851 the Wiseman family had moved to a larger dwelling at Ossett "*Town Knowl*" (Dale Street). By this time William and Mary's family comprised Elizabeth (born 1839), Mary Agnes (1841), Matilda Jane (1843), John Greaves (1846), William Henry (1848) and Emily Gertrude (1850). All of the children were born in Ossett and were described as "*scholars at home*". The 1851 Wiseman household also included William's 30 year old sister, Hannah, described as a "*Lady*", a governess, an 18 year old pupil and two servants. All told there were thirteen residents in the 1851 "*Town Knowl*" Wiseman household; it was clear that as the children grew the Wiseman family would require a much larger dwelling.

The 1853 Electoral Roll records Ossett Surgeon, William Wood Wiseman (1810-1885) as the "*self occupier*" of Springstone House, Ossett Street Side indicating that by this time he had acquired the dwelling. It later transpired that Dr. Wiseman had also acquired other land from John Sanderson Archer. So it was that Springstone House became home to Dr. William Wood Wiseman and his G.P.'s practice until his death there on 10th July 1885.

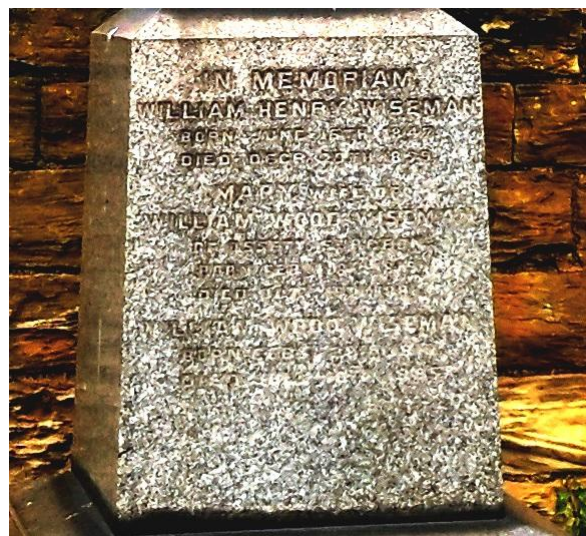
The couple had their last child, Alice Blanche, in 1858. Sadly their younger son, William Henry, died in 1860, aged just twelve years. He was buried at South Ossett Christ Church on 3rd January 1860 when the burial ceremony was conducted by the Reverend Thomas Lee.

In 1861 William's and Mary's five daughters were living with their parents at Springstone House whilst their only surviving son, John Greaves (after his maternal grandfather) Wiseman, aged fifteen was elsewhere, perhaps at school. By 1871, their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, had married, their only surviving son, John Greaves Wiseman, also a surgeon was living at Dearden Street with his sister as housekeeper, leaving William Wood and his wife Mary with their remaining three daughters living at Springstone House. The household was complete with two visitors and two servants.

In readiness no doubt for a step change in his life, William Wood Wiseman wrote his Will in 1879 and by 1881 he had retired from his Practice albeit remaining to live at Springstone House with his wife, Mary, two daughters Mary Agnes and Matilda Jane and the customary two servants. William's wife of forty four years died in October 1881 and was buried at Ossett Holy Trinity Church on 24th October. Mary was 62 years of age. Her death was to be too much for William Wood Wiseman to

bear and he died at Springstone House on 10th July 1885 and was buried at Ossett Holy Trinity Church on July 24th 1885, aged 75 years.

The Family Memorial remains there to this day and bears the names of their younger son, William Henry Wiseman (1847-1859) alongside his mother Mary Wiseman (1819-1881) and father William Wood Wiseman (1810-1885).



Above: Photographs of the Wiseman Memorial at Holy Trinity Church courtesy of Joan Smith

In his 1879 Will, William Wood Wiseman made reference to Springstone House and other land and property purchased by himself from John Archer. He left Springstone House to his only surviving son **John Greaves Wiseman** (1845-1934) a Physician & Surgeon who in 1881 was living at Wesley Street . He was 35 years of age, unmarried and like his father a General Practitioner; he was not living alone having a servant, a cook and a coachman for company. His life too was soon to change.

Since adulthood John Greaves Wiseman had lived at Springstone House only intermittently but in 1891 he was living there with his newly married wife, Bertha Maud Thomas. In December 1888 John Greaves Wiseman had married widow Bertha Maud Thomas (nee Drayson) at St Mary's Episcopal Church Glasgow. Bertha was the widow of Dr. Owen Roberts Thomas who died in 1884, just a year after the birth of their only child Cyril Leonard Ross Thomas to whom John Greaves Wiseman was to be step father. The couple had a housemaid.

Bertha Maud Drayson was born in Uckfield Sussex in 1854 and had history. She was the daughter of Henry Edwin Drayson and one of eleven children. Bertha Maud also had fifteen Drayson aunts and

uncles including Alfred Wilkes Drayson (1827–1901) who was an English army officer, author and astronomer. He was a Theosophist and a personal friend of Arthur Conan Doyle who, it is said, used some of Alfred’s characteristics to model Conan Doyle’s villain Professor Moriarty.

In any event history suggests that the relationship between John Greaves Wiseman and Bertha Maud may have left something to be desired. Their whereabouts in 1901 are unknown and perhaps they were overseas seeking her father, Henry Edwin Drayson who, it is said, died “abroad”. In 1902 & 1904 John Greaves Wiseman was recorded as living at The Queen, Bath Road, Bournemouth.

By 1904 John Greaves Wiseman had sold Springstone House to building contractor **Francis Hey Whitlow Denholm** (1857-1926) who was recorded living there in that year. We probably need to look no further for the builder of the “ late C19 or early C20 wings” of Springstone House and the naming of the adjacent Denholme Drive (originally Denholm Drive), built post 1905.



Springstone House July 2000 Copyright IoE Mr John Ulrick. Source Historic England Archive

John Greaves Wiseman was 60 years of age in 1905 and appears to have left Ossett forever and headed south where he spent the rest of his life. Bertha Maud Wiseman of Beach Lodge, Southsea made her Will on May 18th 1905.

Elsewhere in 1911 Bertha Maud Wiseman was living at Finchley Road London with her son Cyril Leonard Ross Thomas, an assistant master at local public University College School. In the same year 1911 John Greaves Wiseman was living at “Stranraer”, St. Peters Road St Margaret’s on Thames Twickenham.

Bertha Maud Wiseman of 35 Lyncroft Gardens, Hampstead, Middlesex went to her grave in 1928 protesting, even in her Will, that she was the “wife of John Greaves Wiseman”. Her effects, £599 4s

1d (equivalent in 2020 values, £34,842) were left to Cyril Roberts Ross Thomas, her son from her first marriage.

John Greaves Wiseman died at "Stranraer", St. Peters Road St Margaret's on Thames, Twickenham, on 2nd May 1934, aged 88 years. After leaving bequests to his friends and servants the remainder of his estate was devised to his two spinster nieces, Agnes Mary Ralph Kenny and Gertrude Muriel Ralph Kenny. The total of his effects were £44815 12s 6d. (equivalent in 2020 values, £3.28m)

By 1904 Scottish born Francis Hey Whitlow Denholm is recorded as being in occupation of Springstone House and his youngest son was born in Ossett in that and the following year. Since that time the House has been occupied less by its owners and much more by a rich variety of middle class tenants. All life was here. The 1910 Valuation confirms Mr. Denholm's earlier ownership and in 1905 Mr. Bright Hepworth, a rag merchant appears to have been the first of his tenants.

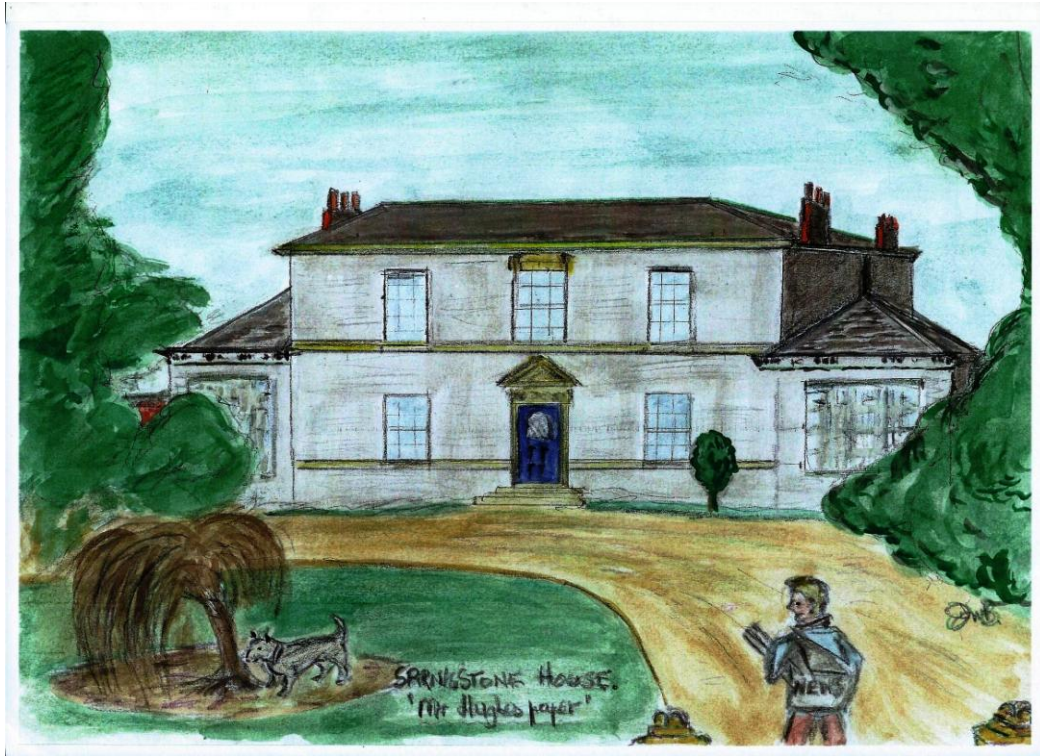
In 1911 Francis Denholm rented Springstone House to two families who between them comprised thirteen men, women and children. The tenants were Paddington born Thomas Float, a railway traffic agent, and Dundee born William Hield, a carpet yarn merchant. By 1913-14 George Herbert Wood (Ossett Shoddy manufacturer) and William Muir Oddie (chartered accountant and Ossett Borough Treasurer) were in occupation. Mr Oddie remained at Springstone House until at least 1928 when he could be contacted at Springstone House on the telephone by ringing "Ossett 1". He later moved to live at Inwood House, Benton Hill, Horbury where he died in 1940.

Francis Hey Whitlow Denholm died at Halifax on 28th January 1926 and was buried on 1st February. He was 68 years of age. He left nine surviving children including seven sons, one of whom was by his first marriage.

By 1939 four tenant families were occupying Springstone House; Mabel Herbert (a secondary school teacher at Ossett Grammar School between 1922 and 1948), Joseph Ellis (Joiner & Undertaker), Geoffrey T Auty (Weaving Shed Manager& Special Constable)) and James B. Tonkin (a Minister of Religion with the Unitarian Church who had moved from a living at The Parsonage, Lydgate, Fulstone. In this year then Springstone House was home to nine persons; three couples, husband and wife, and the unmarried Mabel Herbert. None of the occupants had children; Springstone House in 1939 was adults only.

By 1961 Springstone House was home to four occupants by the names of Leslie Garforth, William J Hughes, Ann Battye and Jeffrey Booth. William J. Hughes is known to have been a teacher of history at Ossett Grammar School between 1947 and 1970, and maybe longer.

Its days of being a dwelling were numbered and in January 2002 Springstone House was acquired by Bushel & Company Ltd of Scotland Farm, Dry Drayton, Cambridgeshire who remain the owners (2021). Shortly after 2002 it was occupied by Carclo plc, a technology-led plastics business with global, integrated capabilities and operations. In 2021 Springstone House continues to be the registered office of Carclo plc.



Sketch of Springstone House by Douglas Brammer entitled "Mr Hughes' paper"

This sketch shows the grand house at the junction of the A638 and Springstone Avenue and records a young Douglas Brammer on his early morning paper round. He is about to deliver a newspaper to a resident of Springstone House, Mr Hughes, who was also a teacher of history at Ossett Grammar School. He taught Douglas and they knew each other rather well.

Alan Howe
August 2021