

The Builders of Bromsgrove

Jenny Townshend

Stone Masons

Historically the geology around Bromsgrove dictated the building materials available to the craftsmen. In 1774 John Lacy wrote that there were 'in divers places in the parish Quarries for stone, but mostly on each side of the Worcester Road in Bumford yield', the remains of which can be seen today at Hill Top and at Rock Hill. Stone was also quarried in Barntgreen, Burcot, Finstall, Worms Ash and near Monsieus Hall, on the Kidderminster Road. According to the Tithe plan there were three Quarry pieces, five Quarry closes and a Quarry meadow in the parish in the 1840s. The sandstone was quarried locally to build St John's church and must have been used down the centuries to build walls and chimneys and the foundations of timber framed houses, to raise the timbers up from the damp earth.

We have no records of the men who worked these quarries, apart from the mentions in John Talbot's account books for Grafton manor. In 1568 when the building work began **Robert Bullyn**, his son and a labourer, Hawke, were paid for getting stone from the quarry for two days at 10d a day. The men helping the masons, some of whom were named, were generally paid 7d a day.

Who were the men who built with stone? The main craftsmen were masons who were often also brick-makers or brick-layers. It is difficult to know how many of these men there were as we only know of their existence from deeds, parish registers and wills. Some of the masons were referred to as free-masons. From the 14th century a freemason was a skilled mason who was free to move from place to place. (The term today has quite a different connotation: the Freemasons fraternity was not established until 1717.)

The first of these masons was **Stephen Merryman**, who lived in Upton Warren. He died in 1583 and left a will and inventory which tells us a little about how he lived. He leased land and farmed a few sheep, cows, poultry and pigs. A creative man he possibly played the lute and gittorne which were in his house at the time of his death. He left his son his bow and arrows, and his house and a tenement to his wife, Margery. In total his inventory amounted to £18 15s 10d. (Probate 7 June 1583)

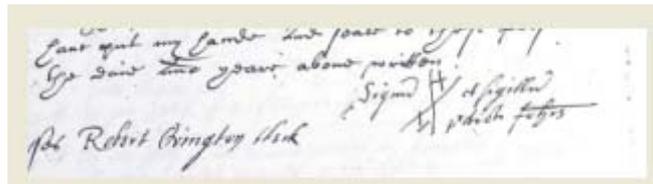
In December 1568 he was working for John Talbot at Grafton. He was paid for 15 days of work hewing stone for the chimney in the Great Chamber and hewing a door place into the chamber over the buttery and cleaving down windows. For this he was paid 5d a day. In July he worked for 22 days hewing stone for doors and windows at 6d a day 'finding him meat & drink'.

From a second account book dated 1576 we know that building work was still going on at Grafton. In December Stephen Merriman, the free-mason, was paid £4 towards his work for hewing the stone and 19 shillings to pay the quarrymen for digging 'two hundred of stone'. We do not know where this quarry was, but it was probably quite close and may have been at Hill Top or the Forelands site at the top of Rock Hill. During that year Merriman was still at work, getting and sawing stone at the quarry, finishing windows and laying paving. **John Lloyd** was paid 8d for one day's work for paving and serving the masons. These men are not well documented and would probably have been too poor to leave a will.

The earliest will of a Bromsgrove free-mason is that of **William Bodle** of Shepley, near Lickey End, north of Burcot (Probate 17 February 1598/9). Unfortunately only part of his inventory exists with no mention of his work tools, although he lived in a very comfortable home.

The Journal of Sir Edward Pytts (1588-1618) refers to **John Chance** freemason of Bromsgrove. He was contracted by Sir Edward to be his chief mason and was to be paid £10 a year with meat, drink and washing, until the work was finished. He was surveyor of work and was responsible for the restoration and new building of Kyre Manor (near Tenbury Wells). His work can also be seen at Grafton Manor. His name appears in the Elizabethan Estate book of 1569. Anthony Reeve, a Bromsgrove quarryman was also contracted by Sir Edward to dig stone in Kyre Park at 1d per foot.

John Chance of Shepley, died in 1617 (Probate 27 February 1617/8) and referred to himself a mason on his will. The overseers of his inventory called him a free-mason. Apart from stating that he was a mason, there is no evidence on John Chance's will or inventory to suggest that he was working at the time of his death. No mention is made of any tools of his trade but he did have a large number of animals: horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, ducks, hens and items of husbandry. He was probably engaged in dairy farming when he died as he had 48 cheeses and two gallons of salt butter in his house. He curiously left to his beneficiaries "the one half" of each item of goods, chattels and leases, left on his will and inventory. He did not sign his name on the will but made a mark with straight lines. Could this mark have also been his masons mark?



The mark of John Chance, freemason 1618

After John Chance, there are no wills or inventories of masons until the last three decades of the century. This suggests that generally masons were not wealthy men.

Six masons are named in St John's parish registers covering the period 1616 to 1696. On 15th May 1650, a Thomas Chance of Catshill, mason, was buried, and later in the decade on 17th January 1659, Thomas Chance of the Stonehouse. It is possible that all these Chances were members of the same family.

When Eleanor Chance died in 1669 (Probate 26 February 1669/70) she had recently had a house 'reared and sett up and as yet not finished' in Shepley. She requested that her daughter Anne "errect build and sett up one sufficient and substantial stack of chimnies with stone and brick in or adjoining to the house".

In 1680 another mason, **John Bate** a resident of Catshill, took a parish apprentice, Sarah Eckles. It would seem that the Bate family, like the Chances, were masons throughout the century. **William Bate** was mentioned in the Quarter Session Rolls of 1640 and **Nicholas Bate** in the parish register in 1654, both as masons.

John Holliman, mason, left an inventory in 1673 (Probate 21 August 1673). He had no tools of his trade to leave apart from a pair of compasses. The house he rented was small - hall, chamber over the hall, a coploft and a buttery, but he was not a poor man, his estate being valued at £47

11s 10d. Unusually he had a rapier and a belt amongst his personal possessions. In 1727 another **John Holliman**, mason, owned three properties in St Johns Street, which he had purchased from Francis Laughher. One of these was the White Lion formerly the Red Lion, and a tenement in Grope Lane (now Little Lane). (BA5439 Ref.261.91 Box4)

In 1684, **William Crowe**, mason, died. His home had four rooms including a shop. On his inventory were stone axes, tools, bellows, an anvil and in his will a quarry, close and barn, three houses with a pump and a close called Upper Close. He bequeathed to William Crowe his son as follows: "the house hee now dwelleth in and both the two rooms thereunto belonging with a passage out at the back dore having the upper part of the garden". He also left his best stone axes to his son John, but William and John were to equally share the rest of his tools, bellows and the quarry, and close. His estate amounted to £11 15s 10d. (Probate 3 May 1684)

When William's son, William, died in 1698, the two rooms were again referred to; he was still living in the small accommodation of hall-house and room over the hall. He left pick axes and tools of his trade, but his widow must have found life a hard struggle, because a letter from Samuel Smart, an attorney, to a Mr. Moore referred to widow Crowe as "a poor creature with her many children who want for bread often", and he hoped that her affairs would be dealt with quickly to enable her to make use of what her husband had bequeathed to her. William's inventory was only worth £9 1s 6d. (Probate 12 November 1698)

The last mason to leave an inventory in the 17th century was **John Harrison** (1693). He left the tools of his trade worth seven shillings and two houses in Worcester Street, to be divided between his five sons. His house was small - a hall-house, hall house chamber, a buttery chamber and a buttery. His inventory was valued at only £9 18s 10d. (Probate 6 April 1693)

Another **John Harrison**, also a mason had four tenements in Bromsgrove, the leases of which were worth £20 when he died in 1703. His inventory shows that he left two grave stones and a dial when he died worth £2 6s 8d. His working tools were worth £1 6s 8d and his estate was valued at £38 1s 8d. A witness to his will was fellow mason Samuel Richards. (22 October 1703)

The **Richards family** was another family of masons and builders. They were responsible for building in Alvechurch but Samuel came to Bromsgrove possibly to take advantage of the building boom in Bromsgrove in the 18th century. He lived near the corner of St Johns Street and Hanover Street in a modest house. His inventory gives an idea of his house, a kitchen, cellar, brewhouse and workshop with a room next to it and three rooms over them and a garret.

Masons were also the architect of the building they made and often travelled for work, we know that John Chance the local freemason who died in 1617 worked on Grafton Manor and also Kyre Park near Tenbury Wells. It is possible that **Samuel Richards** was about to travel, as he made his will in 1717 but did not die until 1740. He left his 15 houses, including the one he lived in, to his wife Sarah. It is possible that he had built the houses, which were on the corner of Hanover Street and St Johns Street and later became known as Oakum Bay. His working tools were worth £1 10s and his total estate was worth £84 19s. (Probate 19 November 1740)

When his wife made her will in 1752 she described herself as the widow of Samuel, a bricklayer. She mentioned the houses her husband had left her in his will. It would seem that he had built more houses in the intervening years as his widow left 22 houses, including the one she lived in and one which was occupied by another mason, **Michael Jordan**. (Probate 20 July 1753)

Masons not only moved away for work but also to Bromsgrove. In 1722 **Ashton James**, born in Great Malvern, moved to Bromsgrove and worked as a journeyman mason for five years. In 1727 he was known as a bricklayer. In 1757 his son **Harrison James** returned to Bromsgrove after working away in Sutton, Warwickshire as a bricklayer. (The Poor Law & Settlement Documents of the Parish Church of St. John Baptist Bromsgrove Worcestershire. BMSGH)

In 1728 **John Wood** of Walsall, a nailer and brickmaker moved to Bromsgrove when he was 24 and hired himself out to make bricks by the thousand for the summer half of the year and nails for the other half of the year, when he also dug clay. This demonstrates the seasonal nature of building, which depends on good weather. In the 1821 census a **Jonathan Pinfield**, bricklayer, was living in Holy Lane (Church street) near **James Pinfield** who was described as a nailer. Was this another example of seasonal work?

The name which occurs the most often in wills for masons in the 18th century is that of Pinfield, nearly all called John. At the beginning of the century **Richard** (Probate 21 July 1705) and **Thomas Pinfield** (Probate 21 January 1716/17), both masons, died intestate both leaving only a small amount. Jonathan, who made his will in 1735, had sons called **John and Jonathan**. All his working tools were left to his two sons. The working tools and a tumbril belonging to the trade were worth £4. Son Jonathan was left a close at Hill Top which his father had purchased from Robert Broadhurst. Son John was to have the liberty to carry away the stone from the Quarry in the close, paying his brother Jonathan 4d a load. In the quarry there was stone 'got' worth 5s at the time of his death. From his inventory we can see that he was also a brick-maker as he had a brick kiln and tiles and died a successful man, leaving £109 8s. (Probate 21 January 1741/2)

From 1750 there are no inventories of masons and the wills that do exist tell us very little about the working lives of the men involved. There are references to masons in deeds but these are only found by chance. There is a deed made in 1751 which refers Bungay Lake Lane and to **Richard Newey**, mason, who is allowed to get stone from the upper end of the Lineage, next to the cottage without payment to John Ingram of Bewdley. (BA 11768)

Although occupations are not usually given in parish registers in the 18th century, in 1753 the vicar recorded occupations and this continued for over 20 years. During this period there were 21 masons named in the burial registers and seven brick-makers. From these registers we can see that trades were carried on by the same families over the years. The Pinfield family were masons and bricklayers through-out the century.

In the 1811 census there are two masons living in Worcester Street and one, **Jonathan Pinfield** in the Strand. As these men are named along with their occupations it is likely that they were masters rather than labourers. Many of the labourers do not have their occupations given in the 1811 census but one who was living in Worcester Street, **James Wall**, had been receiving poor relief, with his wife and four children, all under six, in 1806. They received 17s in all. His employer was Mr **William Lewis**, a mason, who also lived in Worcester Street. In 1821 he was still living in Worcester Street along with seven other masons but William Lewis had died in 1817, leaving a will. He owned seven dwelling houses in Worcester Street which had out buildings and two shops adjoining, which he may have built. (Probate 21 October 1817)

By 1821 the masons were living in Worcester Street and in the yards behind the street, in the Strand. This indicates that the social standing of the masons was not great as it once had been, as by this date this is where the poorer sort were living. The only mason in the Strand on the 1821 census was **William Buggins**, in Ellins Yard. He was to become known as a builder and the

grandfather of John Cotton, the architect. In 1822 **William Cotton** (John's father) was described as a builder in Worcester Street.

The only builder recorded in the 1821 census is **William Duncombe** whose property was in the High Street near the Kings Head (now Dorothy Perkins). In 1828 he was leaving Bromsgrove and his household furniture and stock was sold at auction, which was advertised in the Birmingham Gazette.

**TO BUILDERS, CABINET-MAKERS, &c.
STOCK in TRADE, HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, and
Effects, at Bromsgrove.**

TO be SOLD by AUCTION, on the premises, by T. WARD, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the 18th, 19th, and 20th days of June, 1828, all the valuable Stock in Trade, excellent and modern Household Furniture and other Effects, the property of Mr. W. Duncombe, in the High-street, Bromsgrove, who is leaving the town.

Including twenty-five capital well made sash and casement windows, glazed and unglazed; thirty-five paneled and other doors; five five-barred gates; an excellent counter, with mahogany top and thirty-seven drawers, twelve feet long; a log of mahogany; Memel timber, seasoned mahogany, oak, elm, and other boards, planks, poles and quartering, battens, scaffolding, odd timber in great variety, ladders, wheelbarrows, grindstone, CAST IRON CRAB, iron pullies, four tarpaulings, iron hay racks, &c. Also a bay half-bred Horse, three suits of gears, STRONG TIMBER CARRIAGE, two carts, and a truck, forty lots of brass and ironmongery goods.

Among the Furniture will be found a set of Spanish mahogany dining tables, sideboard, sarcophagus wine cooler, sofa, pair of pier bookcases, sandwich and butler's trays, Brussels carpets, goose feather beds, sets of mahogany and painted chairs, pier and swing glasses, barrel organ, and numerous other valuable effects.

The whole will be described in catalogues, to be had in due time at the Inns in the neighbourhood, and of the Auctioneer, Bromsgrove.

▪▪▪ The sale will commence precisely at eleven each morning.

Birmingham Gazette, 9th June 1828

There is a reference to two houses at Quarry Close, Hill Top, Shurnell Field in 1832. One of the properties was built by Thomas Cartledge, gent. for himself and was known as Stone house or Stone cottage at the Rockhill Turnpike. (BA 5439 Ref. 261.91/ 8)

Brick makers and Brick layers

Masons could also be brick makers or brick layers, so it is difficult to know how many of these men there were, as we only know of their existence from deeds, parish registers and wills. There are very few wills for brick-makers in the 17th century and it would seem that there were few brick buildings in Bromsgrove in the early part of the century. In the second half of the century brick was used more readily and brick buildings begin to appear in the town.

In 1609 a brick layer, **Thomas Tylt**, died and left a will and inventory (Probate 8 April 1609). At this early date bricks were not used much in house building and no reference to bricks is found in his inventory, although he did own loose boards and ladders. Building was a seasonal trade and Thomas Tylt seems to have been involved in farming and his wife and two daughters in spinning of wool and tow, there being two large and three small wheels in the house, along with yarn and six yards of woollen cloth. Eleanor Cookes (Probate 15 July 1671) had some bricks but there are no other references to bricks in inventories although there are two references to tiles and lime. Lime was used in mortar and it is thought that the infill panels of the frame walls were lime washed.

From the Parish registers we find **John Larrimer** was a bricklayer in 1627 and **John Smith** a brickmaker in 1686. Bricks were being used for prestigious buildings, such as Grafton Manor. Bricks became more widely used towards the latter end of the century as the clay could be dug locally and bricks provided a cheap and easy method of building.

Although there is a tiler, **William Smith** (1602), in the parish registers, the only probate reference to a 'roofer' is **Gerrot Osborne** (1 October 1687), a thatcher. Thatched roofs are few and far between in Bromsgrove now, one of the main reasons being the fire risk they present. For this reason the roofs of the town houses would have been replaced over the years with tiles. Gerrot owned thatching tools along with a garden rake, hedgebill, three shepickes, two pairs of garden shears, " 2 turfin iorns and a pillin iorn."

Carpenters

In the 17th century wood was found in and around most people's houses. It was used for fuel, to make furniture, to build with, to eat off and in some cases to eat with. Timber is mentioned in the inventories of **Thomas Fownes** (Probate 9 January 1604/5), who had timber for building and of **John Croe** (Probate 13 October 1604) who owed John Horton £3 for timber and stone. **William Kymberley** (Probate 25 January 1611/12) of Whitford had new timber to make mill ends as well as sawed boards, great timber, ploughtimber and axel trees. The widow Jane Hobday alias Lacy had sawed and unsawed timber in a barn in St. John Street in 1666 (Probate 9 March 1665/66).

When **Eleanor Chance** died in 1670 (Probate 26 February 1669/70) she had recently had a house 'reared and sett up and as yet not finished' in Shepley. She requested that her daughter Anne "errect build and sett up one sufficient and substantial stack of chimnies with stone and brick in or adjoining to the house structure". Another request to build was made by Roger Dipple (Probate 20 January 1680/81). He wanted his son to build a 16 ft square barn of three bays behind his house in Town where Ann Chellingworth was living.

In a region where most of the houses, cottages and barns were of timber-framed construction the carpenter was also a designer and supervisor of building teams. Some joiners specialised in the precision work of furniture making, these were usually town tradesmen.

There are wills and inventories of 12 carpenters, the greatest number dating from the 1620s. **Roger Darbey** (Probate 24 July 1628) of Chadwich was probably an old man when he died, his tools were old and his estate only worth 36s. Many of the carpenters were also farmers, owning or renting land on which to graze their animals. Thomas Wheler (Probate 10 May 1604) of Burcot farmed on some scale, with six oxen and more than 60 sheep as well as cattle, horses, pigs and poultry. His estate amounted to £122 7s 8d.

Most of the carpenters owned wood as would be expected. It was often in or around the house. **Anthony Cartwright** (Probate 14 February 1619/20) had 100 boards at 3s4d and **William Cooke** had sawed boards and trestles valued at 13s4d (Probate 17 May 1620). Edward Waters bequeathed £3 worth of timber, consisting of "rayle, Browkin board and ponchions". Rails, broken boards and ponchions were all used in house building, ponchions being timber supports such as door frames. The total value of his timber and tools was £5.

Carpenters tools are often not listed but **Humphrey Wherley**, (Probate 27 May 1641), had two axes, four hatchets and four wedges with other tools. These wedges were used to split timber into planks. This method of producing planks was quicker than sawing and although long lengths

could not be split accurately the resulting lengths were stronger. Wedges were sometimes driven with a beetle, a heavy headed tool used from crushing or beating.

Thomas Wheler, (Probate 10 May 1604), had six augers for making holes in the wood as jointed furniture and framed buildings were pegged together. He also had a block saw, chisel and spoke-shave. The saws most often mentioned are blocksaws although **Ralph Parr** (Probate 18 January 1661/2), yeoman, had a framing saw and handsaw. The cutler, Martin Cotterell, had six long saws for sale worth £1 and **Richard Cullobyne** (Probate 8 March 1610/11) husbandman, had a 'wyppe' saw worth 2s and a 'wymble'. **Martin Cottrell** also had four dozen 'whimble' bits in stock worth 10 pence. **John Higgins**, weaver, owned a variety of tools, including augers and wimbrels. (Probate 7 October 1604) A wimble is a type of brace or auger, used with a bit to bore holes.

The only reference to a twybill is in the inventory of **Johane Cartwright**, widow (Probate 24 January 1623/4). It belonged to her late husband **Anthony**, a carpenter (Probate 14 February 1619/20), along with two axes, a square, a framing saw and three wedges. The twybill was a large flat bladed tool rather like a large chisel. It was used without a handle by carpenters when the job, perhaps a beam to be jointed, was lying on the ground and could not be raised.

Another worker with wood was **Henry Warrall** (Probate 20 July 1631) he was a 'lattesmaker'. In the 17th century glass was still an expensive commodity and lattice windows were made using crossed laths of wood, without glass. Henry was followed in his craft by his son, Thomas, to whom he left all his timber 'about the house' worth £3. Henry was not a wealthy man leaving an estate of only £14 11s 2d.

Carpenters were important when buildings were made from timber, but they were not an affluent group in the 18th century and therefore did not leave a significant paper trail. Very few carpenters left wills, there are only two, both in the 1740s. One of these, **Robert Butler**, left 11 houses, gardens and orchards in 1744: four to his son Samuel, three to his daughter Sarah and four to his other daughter Betty. (Probate 20 April 1745) From 1754 to 1778 there were 12 carpenters buried but only one left a will, **Joseph Harrison** in 1778 (Probate 28 February 1778)

In 1752 **William Parker**, a turner, wrote his will. He left his four properties to his four sons. Son William got the house and backhouse and half the garden by the brick kiln, with the liberty of the wood pile and the use of the pig alley in the season. Son Joseph got the house, shop and half the garden by the brick kiln (Probate 22 December 1753). It is possible that these houses were in Worcester Street. Hill Lane was known as Brick Kiln Turnpike in the 1811 census.

In the Great Universal Directory of 1792 **Samuel Butler** is listed as a carpenter and joiner. Two other turners are listed, **Richard Parker** who was also a chair maker (his father had property near the brick kiln) and Norris Walker, who was also a brush maker.

The parish burial registers mention 24 carpenters, three sawyers and three turners in the period between 1750 and 1770. Some of these entries were for the wives and children of the craftsmen. Again there were some families whose names repeat, the Butlers and the Heaths. In 1821 the joiners can be seen to be living in Worcester Street although there were two in St Johns Street and two in the High Street.

In the second half of the century there were two timber merchants that we know of, **James Steward** who owned the Red Lion in Worcester Street and John Wright who left a will in 1781 (Probate 9 July 1781).

Plumbers and Glaziers

Plumbers made water cisterns, guttering and rainwater heads from sheet lead and lead pipes cast in moulds. Lead was known to give off fumes which were harmful to health and plumbers apprentices were encouraged to wash well after work. Glaziers were usually plumbers as they worked in lead, creating lead gutters to hold the glass.

There are references to glaziers in the accounts of John Talbot of Grafton manor. The house was being extensively altered in 1568. The glazier came in December to repair old broken windows and to glaze the new ones. Four pounds of solder was bought for him to repair the leading. In January the great chamber was glazed. Linseed, rosin and chalk were bought for him so that he could stop the rain and wind from beating in. In December 1576 the glazier was paid for 63¼ feet of glass at 8d per foot for John Talbot's closet and over 31 feet for Katherine's closet. Amphlet the glazier in Worcester was paid for Normandy glass (7d per ft), Burgundy glass (6d per ft) and Rheinisch glass (4dper ft) for the nursery. This glass was imported and must have come up the Seven to Worcester from Bristol.

The will and inventory of a glazier, **Thomas Cookes**, is dated 1670. At the time of his death his wife was expecting their first child. He was an educated man in that he could read, he owned a Bible and two small books. His house was the typical town house of hall, shop and buttery with rooms over. In the shop he had his tools, a vice, lead and glass worth £3. He stored glass with two crates in the coploft. Although his house was modest he owned eight candlesticks, three brass, three tin, one pewter and unusually one of glass. Perhaps he displayed it in his shop window as an advertisement of his trade! His whole estate came to £29 13s. (Probate 4 June 1670)

Only three more glaziers are known of in the 17th century, **Charles Perks** who was indicted for assaulting **William Ashwell** in 1613, **James Best** a glazier in 1633 and **Edward Hart** who was buried in 1653. It would seem that glazed windows were very much a feature of 17th century Bromsgrove. Window glass was not normally appraised, but in the inventory of **Martin Cottrell**, cutler, in 1622 we find "glass in the windows and latices - 13s 4d" (Probate 28 September 1622). Only two other inventories list panes of glass.

The first reference to a glazier and plumber in the 18th century is in the will of **Thomas Brittan** (Probate 22 April 1707). He had lived in the High Street (now near Nationwide). His working tools were listed on his inventory.

	£	s	d
In ye Shopp two old Vices & lead moulds	04	70	00
Working Tables and Cutting Boards	00	04	07
In ye workhouse pigg iron and glass	13	00	00
Book Debts good and bad	31	15	00
Total	75	04	10

His son William, who died in 1748, was also a plumber and although he had no inventory his will tells us he owned property in Bromsgrove and Belbroughton. (Probate 25 November 1751)

Another family of metal workers and plumbers was the **Brooke family**. William Brooke was a brass founder and bell caster, his found yard being behind the Mitre near the Stourbridge Road. He carried on the business of the late Richard Sanders who had had a found yard further down the High Street. His business was inherited by later generations of Brookes, John (Probate 23 November 1768) and William (Probate 11 May 1804) who became plumbers & glaziers. In 1803 William Brooke wrote his will and the five tenements that William senior had owned in 1743 had increased to 14 tenements. William (1803) had also built a new cellar with a room over it at his own house in the High Street. In 1811 the business was in the hands of Mary Brookes, widow, an inventory was made of her holdings. (Probate 18 October 1825)

Smiths

Much of the small ironwork used by builders would have been made locally. Bromsgrove nails were used in the rebuilding of Grafton manor in 1568. During the 17th century there was more specialisation in the metal trades and ironmongers and cutlers left wills. By 1684 there was a locksmith, **William Wilkes** from Lydiate Ash, Chadwich, who had locksmith's tools valued at £3 which puts him in the smaller category of locksmith, although he still had an inventory of £107 and possessed leasehold estates including land at Stoney Lane, Bromsgrove and 'Burrowhill,' Feckenham. Since he also owned animals and grew crops he, like most other rural smiths, would have been a small time farmer.

Another Bromsgrove locksmith was **Thomas Hill** of Shepley, who died in 1684. He was also a blacksmith, and owned a tenement and buildings in Burcot as well as lands and tenements in Shepley and Padstone (The Strand). A blacksmith was still working in the village until recent times, the forge being used at present as craft workshops. Thomas Hill bequeathed: "All my shop tooles and implements belonging to my trade of a blacksmith" to his grandson **Daniel Newey, John Newey**. **John Newey**, a nailer of Shepley, died in 1686. Two other locksmiths were living in Bromsgrove in 1690. **Job Dickins**, having taken on a bonded apprentice in 1680, lived in Chadwich, and **Richard Taylor** lived in the Town Yield. (Bromsgrove Poll Tax. BMSGH)

By the end of the 18th century Bromsgrove was one of the main producers of nails in the region and in 1820 there were six nail-ironmongers in the town. The nail trade had been growing rapidly. There were also three ironmongers with premises in the High Street. **John Dipple** had a shop in what became Holland & Barrett, next to Clegg's Entry. **Samuel Hedges**, another ironmonger in the High Street advertised locks, bolts, hinges and tools amongst his other household goods for sale on his bill head. There were seven smiths listed in *Lewis's Trade Directory* of 1820. These men were busy making and repairing tools as well as shoeing horses and making small metal items which were sold by the ironmongers.

References in Documentary Records

The Masons of Bromsgrove

John Stephens	Grafton	1568	Estate book
Henry Harding	Grafton	1568	Estate book
Henry Hardich	Grafton	1568	Estate book
Stephen Merryman	Upton Warren	1582	will
William Bodle	Bromsgrove	1598	will
John Chance	Bromsgrove	1617	will
William Bate	Bromsgrove	1640	Quarter sessions
Thomas Chance	Catshill	1650	Parish Regs.
Nicholas Bate	Bromsgrove	1654	Parish Regs.
Thomas Chance	Stonehouse	1659	Parish Regs.
John Holliman	Bromsgrove	1678	will
John Bate	Catshill	1680	Parish Apprenticeship
William Crowe	Bromsgrove	1684	will
John Crowe	Bromsgrove	1684	son of William Crowe
John Harrison	Bromsgrove	1693	will
William Crowe	Bromsgrove	1698	will
John Harrison	Bromsgrove	1703	will
Richard Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1705	inventory
Thomas Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1717	burial
Ashton James	Bromsgrove	1727	settlement journeyman mason
Edward Heath	Bromsgrove	1728	will
John Holliman	Bromsgrove	1728	will
Joseph Lees	Bromsgrove	1731	will
John Banks	Bromsgrove	1732	will
Samuel Richards	Bromsgrove	1740	will
Jonathan Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1741	will
Jonathan Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1751	administration

From St John's burial registers showing masons or their wives and children

William Lewis	Bromsgrove	1754	
John Butler	Bromsgrove	1757	
Philip Hawkes	Bromsgrove	1757	burial
Gabriel Gilbert	Bromsgrove	1759	
Richard Durling	Bromsgrove	1761	
Edward Holliman	Bromsgrove	1761	burial
Jonathan Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1762	burial
John Pinfield	Bromsgrove	176	burial will
Benjamin Wright	Bromsgrove	1764	
Michael Jordan	Bromsgrove	1765	
John Archer	Bromsgrove	1767	
Thomas Jones	Bromsgrove	1767	
John Chellingworth	not of this P	1770	
John Jones	Bromsgrove	1771	
Richard Durnel	Bromsgrove	1771	

William Jones	Bromsgrove	1772	burial
Thomas Hoakes	Bromsgrove	1772	burial stone cutter
Joseph Jones	Bromsgrove	1773	burial
Joseph Lines	Bromsgrove	1773	
William Lines	Bromsgrove	1774	burial
John Bate	Bromsgrove	1774	burial
William Hill	Bromsgrove	1774	burial
James Archer	Bromsgrove	1776	will mason/stonecutter
William Churchman	Bromsgrove	1777	burial
John Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1790	will labourer
John Pinfield	Bromsgrove	1791	administration
John Jones	Bromsgrove	1799	will
Edward Grove	Wildmoor	1811	will

1811 Census Bromsgrove only occupations for craftsmen given, not labourers.

Jonathan Wall	Worcester St	stone mason	
Jonathan Pinfield	The Strand	stone mason	
William Lewis	Worcester St	stone mason	1817 will

1821 Census Bromsgrove

William Buggins The Strand mason bricklayer & plasterer emp. 1 man
 2 masons in Parkers yard & Lichfield's yard in the town.
 6 masons in Worcester Street
 1 mason in Sidemore

Brick kilns and Brick makers of Bromsgrove

Bricklayers.

Thomas Harries	Grafton Estate papers	1568.
Thomas Crowe	“ “ “	“
Robert Juggins	“ “ “	“

Thomas Tylt	Bromsgrove	1604	will.
John Larrimer	Bromsgrove	1627	parish reg.

Ashton James	brick layer	1727	Settlement from Great Malvern
John Wood	brick maker & nailer	1728	Settlement from Walsall
Harrison James	brick maker	1757	Settlement from Sutton, Warwicks.

Entries from the burial registers of St John's 1753 to 1774 referring to brick makers

John Hayward	brick man	burial	1721
Joseph Chellingworth	brick maker		1754 Will 1755
Thomas Wakeman	brick maker		1761 1763 1766 1767
Joseph Dowler	brick maker		1765
Samuel Green	brick maker	burial	1766
Elisha Beddall	brick maker		1767
James Green	brick maker		1769
Henry Chellingworth	brick maker		1769

Henry Chellingworth brick maker & malster 1792 Great Universal Directory

Jonathan Pinfield	mason	1741/2	Inv. Brick kiln
William Parker	turner	1753	Will Brick kiln near Worcester St.

Hill Lane was called Brick kiln Lane in the 1811 census

John Lacy 1764 will Brick kiln Close Bromsgrove.

Thatchers

Gerrot Osbourne	will 1687
Thomas Garret	will 1718

Carpenters and Joiners of Bromsgrove

Carpenters and joiners at Grafton 1568 - 1577.

Glover	carpenter		
Thomas Wall	carpenter of Chaddersley	Corbett.	
John Bowers	carpenter) brothers.	
Ralph Bowers	carpenter)	
Richard Baggeley	carpenter		
Thomas Flavell	carpenter		
William Newton	carpenter		
John Smythe	joiner		
Chaundler	master joiner	1568	
Thomas Fenton	carpenter	1571	will
Thomas Wheler	carpenter	1604	will
Richard Johnson	carpenter	1606	inventory
Anthony Cartwright	carpenter	1619/20	will
William Cooke	[joiner]	1620	will
John Rodway	[joiner]	1621	will
Edward Waters	joiner	1625	will
Robert Paltrom	carpenter	1626	will
Roger Darby	[carpenter]	1628	will
Henry Warrall	'lettes maker'	1631	will
Humphrey Wherley	carpenter	1641	will
Thomas Wright	carpenter	1646	will

Names from the burial registers of St John's church. The burials are of wives and children of the below named unless stated.

Samuel Heeks	joiner	1720	burial
Thomas Bourne	tuger	1734	also will
Thomas Fownes	carpenter	1740	also will
Robert Butler	carpenter	1745	also will
William Parker	turner	1753	also will
Joseph Southern	carpenter	1753 & 1767	
Benjamin Heath	carpenter	1754	
Gilbert Butler	carpenter	1754	burial
George Green	carpenter	1754 & 1757	
Josiah Rutter	carpenter	1755	burial

John Harwood	carpenter	1756 & 1763
Richard Chester	carpenter	1757
John Heath	carpenter	1757
William Wallis	sawyer	1757 burial
Richard Parker	turner	1757 & 1771
Joseph Heath	carpenter	1758 & 1761
John Woods	carpenter	1760
Charles Everton	sawyer	1760 & 1763
Richard Jew	carpenter	1760
Thomas Leyton	turner	1760
Joseph Wardale	sawyer	1761
Richard Wright	carpenter	1762
Thomas Hunt	carpenter	1762
William Rea	sawyer	1763
Thomas Davis	carpenter	1763 burial
Edward Richards	carpenter	1763
William Price	carpenter	1765
Charles Rutter	carpenter	1766 burial
William Pierson	carpenter	1766
Samuel Inston	carpenter	1766 burial
John Cotterell	turner	1767
Joseph Beresford	carpenter	1767 burial
Richard Ellis	carpenter	1768 burial
Thomas Heath	carpenter	1768 burial
John Banner	carpenter	1768
Job Dickens	carpenter	1768 burial
Benjamin Southall	carpenter	1769
John Rutter	sawyer	1769
Joshua Heath	carpenter	1770
John Wheeley	carpenter	1770
James Johnson	carpenter	1770
William Rea	sawyer	1770 burial
Henry Heeks	carpenter	1771
Robert Nail	carpenter	1772
Joseph Harrison	carpenter	1778 also will

Glaziers and Plumbers

Two glaziers from Bromley	Grafton Estate Papers	1568
George Lytelar	Grafton Estate Papers	1568
Richard Jurye.	Grafton Estate Papers	1568
Richard Robinson	Grafton Estate Papers	1568
Henry Skerratt	Grafton Estate Papers	1568.
Amphlett of Worcester	Grafton Estate papers	1576
Charles Perkes Bromsgrove	Quarter Sessions	1613
James Best, Bromsgrove	Quarter Sessions	1633.
Edward Hart, Bromsgrove	Parish Reg. burial	1653
Thomas Cookes, Bromsgrove	will	1670
Thomas Brittan Bromsgrove	will	1707
John Brittan Bromsgrove	will	1737

William Wainwright Bromsgrove	Parish Reg.	1757
John Brooke Bromsgrove	will	1768
William Brooke Bromsgrove	will	1774
William Brooke plumber & glazier	Great Universal Dir.	1792
William Brooke plumber	will	1804

Gilder and carver, John Davyes of Worcester. Grafton 1568.

Painter, Thomas Clarkson 1769/70

Plasterers.

John Lloyd.	Grafton Estate Papers	1577.
John Palmer.	Grafton Estste Papers	1577
Two Fortunes.	Grafton Estate Papers	1568.