

Hello Heritage...

The Explosives Grocer With A Property Empire

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Atkins shop - near the Stone House, Main Street

Atkins Shop, The Firs

Thomas Atkins 1824-1891 was a Polesworth born miner and railway worker who became a superb businessman at his Swannington shop.

He gave his daughter, Maria, a farm in Main Street (Loretto, opposite the village hall) when she married Frederick Walker in 1875.

On the 27th September 1892 there was a double wedding at St George's Church between the Atkins family and the Richards family, their neighbours across the road in Manor Farm—Charles Atkins married Emma Richards and Thomas Richards married Annie Atkins.



Fountain Inn - Main Street, Swannington

Fountain Inn

In the 1870s the Atkins family bought The Fountain, which was originally a colliery manager's house with a weighbridge next to the Califat tramway.

Charles Atkins 1858-1945 was a cartridge maker at the Bradleys powder house. He lived in Ivanhoe House, opposite The Fountain.

Charles and his wife moved to newly built Brook House, next to The Fountain, where his brother William 1862-1939 lived. William assisted his brother Thomas in Atkins shop.



Powder House at the Bradleys - The powder house in Limby Hall Lane - by Jenny Palmer

The Powder Houses

Son, Thomas Atkins 1850-1926 became an explosives agent for the British Dynamite Company and sold explosives to mines and quarries. He succeeded his father as a grocer.

In August 1877 Ashby Magistrates gave Thomas permission to erect a factory to fill blasting powder cartridges which were sold to miners. Thomas stored 20,000lb of explosives on his farm and 200lb in his workshop.

There were powder houses at Limby Hall Lane (The Bradleys), Sandpits Lane and Church Lane (Potato Lane Bridge). They had thick walls and flimsy roofs so that any explosion would go upwards.



Jolly Colliers - Thornborough Road, part of Swannington until 1936

Jolly Colliers

The Atkins family owned the Jolly Colliers in September 1907 when Coalville and district public houses were surveyed for the magistrates. It was a tied house for Marston, Thompson and Evershed for beers and stouts. The premises included a smoke room, parlour, tap room and club room.

In April 1936 the Thornborough area of Swannington was transferred to Coalville Urban District Council.

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