



All Change on the High Street

Heritage Open Days
Organised by Salisbury
Civic Society

Shop 6 **Greenfields Gunsmiths** 21 Milford Street, Black Horse Chequer

The building

21 Milford street and 13 Brown street are two storey buildings with brick outer walls and tiled roof mainly 17th and 18th century. 21 and its neighbour 23 however go back considerably further in time. They occupy the site of the much earlier Bolehall, an important medieval building. Part of the current roof is believed to derive from the old Bolehall roof.

The Bolehall was one of the oldest documented domestic buildings in the city. It was around 113 feet long by 75 feet deep and ran parallel to Milford street. In 1319 the city coroner, Philip Aubyn whose house it was, transferred the tenement known as the Bolehall to Henry Borry who became mayor in 1323. John Buterlegh, a draper and collector of Customs and Subsidy was associated with the Bolehall by 1390s and it is suggested that he remained associated with it until the mid 15th Century. At his death in 1396 it passed to John Camel, a grocer and by 1400 it was lived in by Alice Camel, his widow and one of the highest tax paying citizens of the city.

It seems that the site of the hall was subsequently divided into two and in a plan by Peniston in 1850 was occupied as two dwelling houses, with 21 using part of the old Bolehall, labelled by Peniston 'late Burden's dwelling house'. While the ground and upper floors have been substantially changed the attics of 21 include massive collar beams and pairs of collared rafters, thought to be from the original hall. For safety reasons the upper floor and attic space is not available for viewing.

History of more recent use

From 1875 the building at 21 housed a pawnbroker and furnisher (Sewell's) for over 30 years, followed in the mid 1920s by Wigley Chase who made and sold boots and shoes. From 1935 it was occupied by Garnet White, shoe repairers until Greenfields Guns took the premises over in 1971 where they remain to this day. In 2019 they took over the premises known as 21B and the combined building was substantially restored and refurbished. In the 50 years before Greenfields took over 21B it was a ladies lingerie shop, Just Jane (now to be found at 7 St Johns Street), then a toy shop (Medleys) and a ladies clothes shop (Tuppence Coloured, followed by The Frock Shop) and then briefly the Zoo nightclub. Now it is part of Greenfields. Recent restoration work to the whole building has revealed some original features which can be seen on the ground floor.

