

**KITLEY HOUSE & ESTATE STAFF, YEALMPTON, DEVON**  
**TALL FAMILY LIVING AT KITLEY QUAY COTTAGE,**  
**KITLEY LODGE and**  
**OLD MOTHER HUBBARD'S COTTAGE, YEALMPTON**  
**1871 - 1916**

by Delyse and Martyn Upton

Our ancestor Joel Tall (my son Martyn's great, great Grandfather) was born in 1828 at Yealmpton and died 31 January 1911 age 83. He is buried in Yealmpton churchyard with his wife Elizabeth, who was also born in the Yealmpton area in 1827 and died 8 July 1916 aged 89.

In the 1871 census Joel, Elizabeth, their six children including twins and Elizabeth's mother were first recorded as living at Kitley Quay Cottage where they lived for at least 20 years. Joel worked as a general labourer and his wife was a housemaid later housekeeper in Kitley House. (Delyse was told by her Father, Stewart Joel Tall, Joel's Grandson, that Joel's work was mainly dealing with the shore and lake areas and he was known as a Water Bailiff, the cottage being in a prime position for that work).

Several members of their family also worked at Kitley:

In 1871 their son William 22 was a labourer on the Estate and daughter Elizabeth age 17 was a stillroom maid and in 1881 age 27 she was a domestic servant.

In 1881 son Joel James (later Stewart Tall's Father) was a mason.

In 1891 daughter Janet 24 was a cook and Mary Dorothy 25 a dressmaker.

After Joel died, his widow Elizabeth lived at Kitley Lodge (1911 census) as lodge-keeper aged 85, together with daughter Jane.

After leaving Kitley Lodge, Elizabeth and Jane lived in what is now known as Old Mother Hubbard's Cottage, Yealmpton, until Elizabeth died there in 1916 of 'old age' as in the death certificate. Stewart Tall as a child visited his Grandmother at that cottage with his parents between 1905-1913 and wanted to re-visit and was photographed in 1979 (page 4). He died later that year. As mentioned in the Kitley House Hotel and Restaurant illustrated pamphlet, the cottage appeared to be used for (retired) housekeepers and was so called following the rhyme's popularity.

In total, according to census records alone, the Tall family members worked in Kitley House and Estate collectively for between 80 and 100 years.

The photographs of Joel Tall when he was in his 80s, outside his cottage with two boys on horseback (page 2) and a separate photo of the cottage shown page 3, from our family album, were probably taken late 1890s/early 1900s. At this time Joel's youngest boys were then adult, so it was not them on the horses. We have seen the photos found in the housekeepers cupboard at Kitley, but do not recognise any of the people.



Joel Tall at Kitley Quay Cottage late 1800s/early 1900s.

My husband Frank and I visited Kitley House for a celebration meal in November 2014 with Martyn who was visiting from Australia where he lives, and following some research Martyn suspected that the ruin down by the Estate's shoreline described in the Kitley pamphlet as a 'quarry cottage' ruin might be Kitley Quay Cottage. We were allowed access and were able to compare not only the horizon line of the fields on the other side of the river Yealm, but also a few distinctive stones and the outline of the building with our photo of the cottage from the Tall family album.

It can be seen that even the clump of dark trees (probably evergreens) near the wood on the right of the field is still there. The doorway (one of two) in the centre right of the photos has a distinctive stone (2) with a ridge across the centre shown in the close-up, which was compared together with the shapes of the adjoining stones, and they all have the same ridges and placements shown below numbered 1 - 7 in both the old photo and the one taken by us.

All of which confirmed that the ruin was indeed that of Kitley Quay Cottage our ancestor's home!

It has been a real joy and an exciting time for us both to have identified the cottage and seen the surroundings in which our ancestors worked and lived.

Being able to fill in some more of the history of the people who worked in Kitley House and Estate for you is also very satisfying. We hope you enjoy reading about our family.

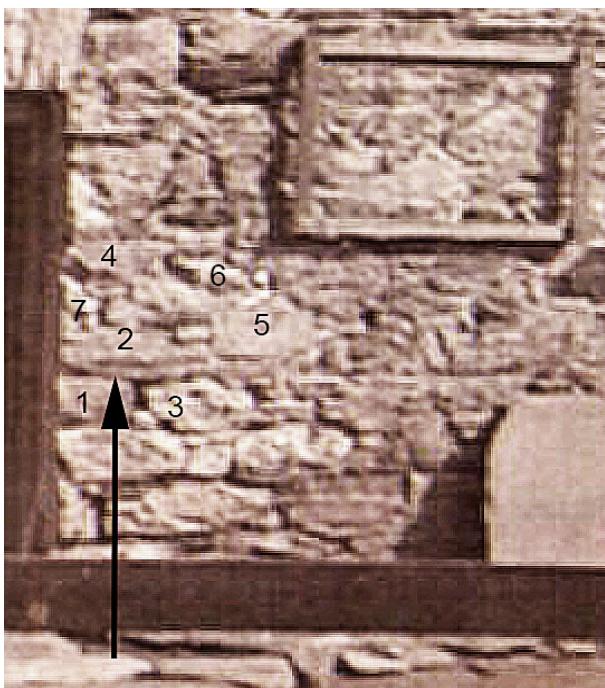
January 2015.  
Delyse and Martyn Upton



Kitley Quay Cottage



Kitley Quay Cottage ruin 2014 and the doorway stone comparisons.





Kitley Quay Cottage ruins SW section showing later alterations. (Access to beach through old fireplace area)



Martyn Upton at entrance to Kitley Cottage ruins

28/NOV/2014