

Abraham Clay - Blacksmith



Abraham Clay outside the forge
[Family collection]

Abraham Clay was born in 1868 at Ashley near Market Drayton. He was blacksmith to the 4th Duke of Sutherland and was reputedly the last blacksmith employed on the Trentham estate. Abraham worked at the estate smithy on Park Drive, where he would have been continually busy with the estate's working horses. He also made railings and gates for the perimeter of the grounds of Trentham Hall, plus the metal seats and the children's swings within the gardens. He married Martha Pitchford in Newcastle under Lyme in 1888. They had three children Gertrude Kate in 1890, Abraham in 1892 and George Farrington in 1903, who died when he was four. Three generations of the Clay family lived at 27 Longton Road in Ash Green.

During World War One Abraham helped to train recruits to shoe horses for the front. The Trentham Estate Monthly Report for January 1916 stated that: *The smithy in the estate yard is being used as a training school for farriery [blacksmith] recruits, as arranged with the authorities of the Northern Army Division Command. The rent is ten shillings per week.*



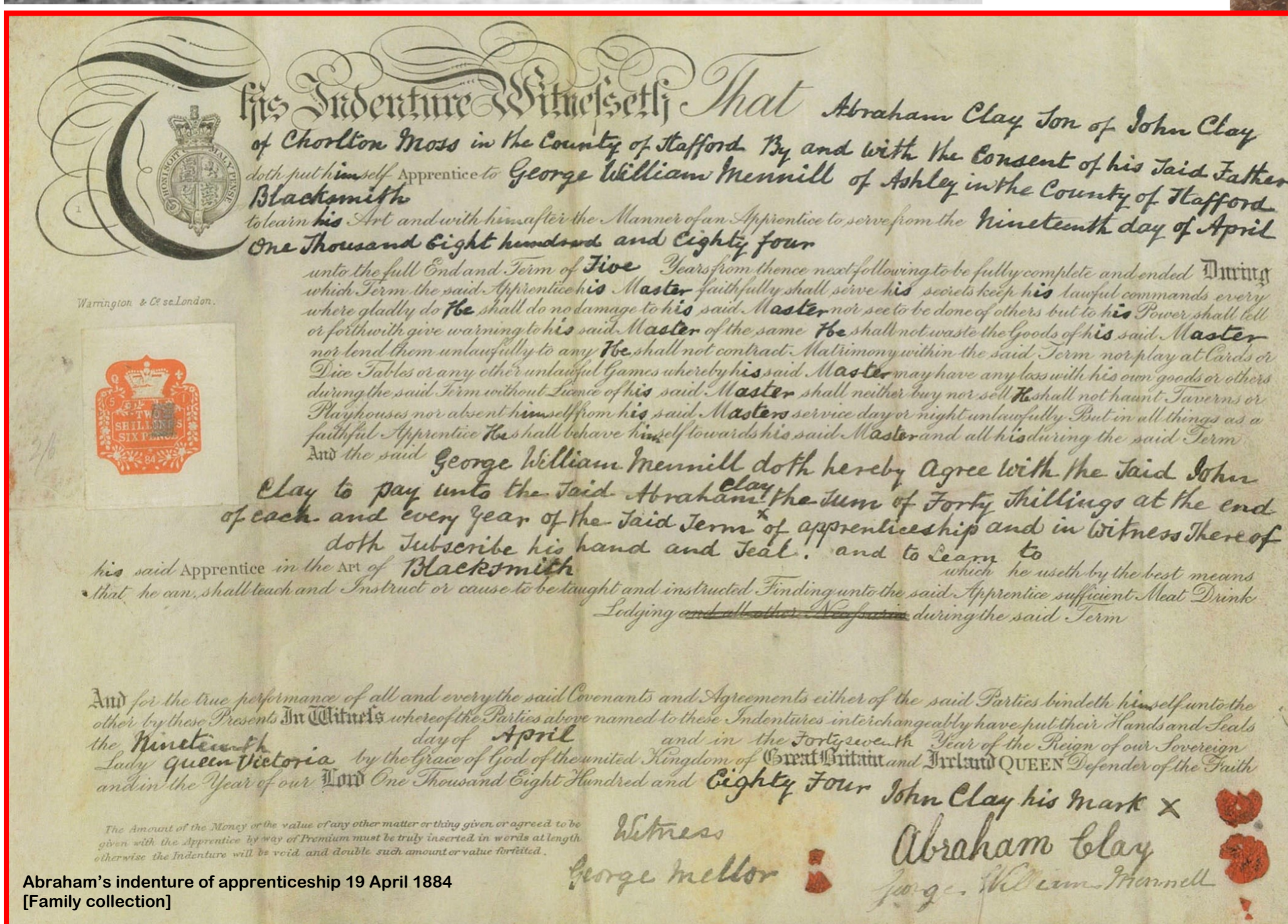
Estate smithy in Park Drive
[Photo: Lovatt collection, courtesy of Stoke on Trent City Archives]



Shoeing horses at a forge at a Remount Depot.
Photo: Imperial War Museum © IWM (Q 54346)



Martha Clay outside 27 Longton Road
[Family collection]



Abraham's indenture of apprenticeship 19 April 1884
[Family collection]



Martha Clay and grandson Vic in the garden
of 27 Longton Road [Family collection]