

The Old Crown, Wheatley

Background information from various sources

The Old Crown is one of the oldest buildings to survive in the village of Wheatley. It is suggested that the crown referred to in the name is the badge of Richard II. A representation can be seen in a carving in the stone set into the wall above the lower entrance to the barn and dated 173?

In earlier centuries Wheatley was an important staging post at the junction of the road from London to the West and North to the midlands. As a coaching inn, The Old Crown serviced traffic on this route. Coaches passed through the gated arch (of which the original oak doors remain in place), and the barn was a stable. Other early inns in the village included The White Hart and The George, with known records dating back to 1588. The George (in the High Street) is the only other building with a gated arch in the village.

Recorded history

The first record of the Crown Inn of Wheatley is a reference in 1544 to the **Subsidy Roll of 1524 -5** in which one Robert Antony was said to have paid to Willyam Foster, the petit collector, the sum of £5.2.6 as "Ynkeeper, most likely of The Crown". The **Bullington Hundred Court Roll of 1595-1611** describes The Crown as being renowned for its stables.

Other early references to The Crown include records such as **Constables Accounts** where it is noted that in **1764 -78**: on 31 December 1765, Robert Shaw of The Crown paid rates of £21.0.0. On 2 November 1772, Richard Griffin of The Crown paid £1.10.0 for a potters kiln. William Whorwood Adeane esq. presided over a court held at The Crown in 1774.

Vestry Minute Book 1829-35: A meeting was held at The Crown on 15 December 1831, concerned with maintenance of the turnpike and employment of the redundant poor by means of spade husbandry. Minutes of meetings were recorded on 20 January 1831, 30 January and 1 February 1832.

On 8 October 1832 an Open Vestry was held in the Crown Inn to arrange the letting of clothing to the poor and maintenance and repair of the turnpike road (now the A40) and on 26 Mar., 1835 an Open Vestry was held at the Crown Inn to elect the Churchwarden and Overseers and a management committee for the turnpike road.

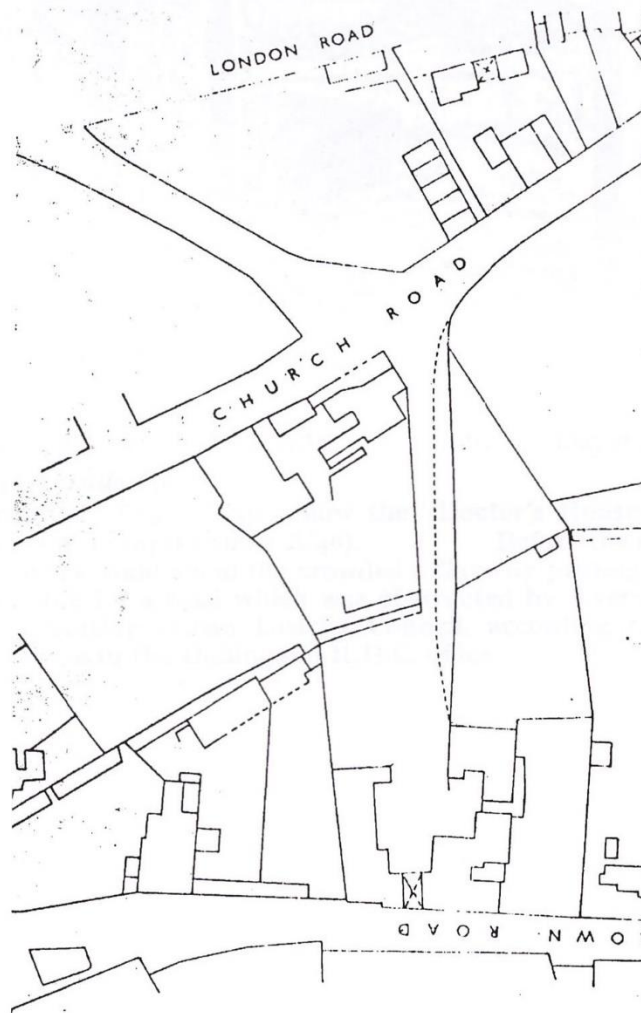
Diary of Rev. E. Elton 1850-84: First Vicar of Wheatley who records staying at the Crown Inn on his arrival in the village on 21 February 1851. On 6 November 1867 he dined at the Crown where a meeting on Wheatley Protection of Property was held! The

Reverend Elton presided over annual dinners of various village benefit societies, some of which had club rooms in the Old Crown.

Mary Gardner was recorded as the victualer of The Crown in **1852** which was described as a Commercial Inn and Posting House.

James Sheppard was the publican of The Crown in **1899**.

The Crown was isolated by re-routing of the turnpike in 1789, and in an attempt to retain trade, the Crown Tap was constructed on the main road. This is now the Doctor's House on Church Road. A view of the Crown Tap through the arch is featured in the Wheatley Historical Records published in 1956. The Old Crown trading as a pub operated by Halls Oxford Brewery until **1938** and has been occupied as a private dwelling since then.



Land Registry Plan of 1967 showing the road connecting Church Road with Crown Road passing under the arch.

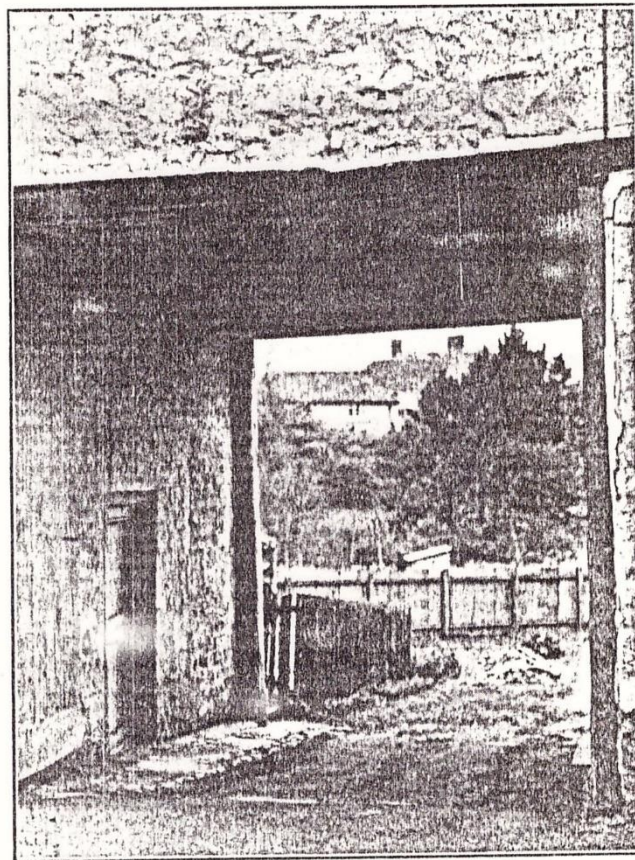
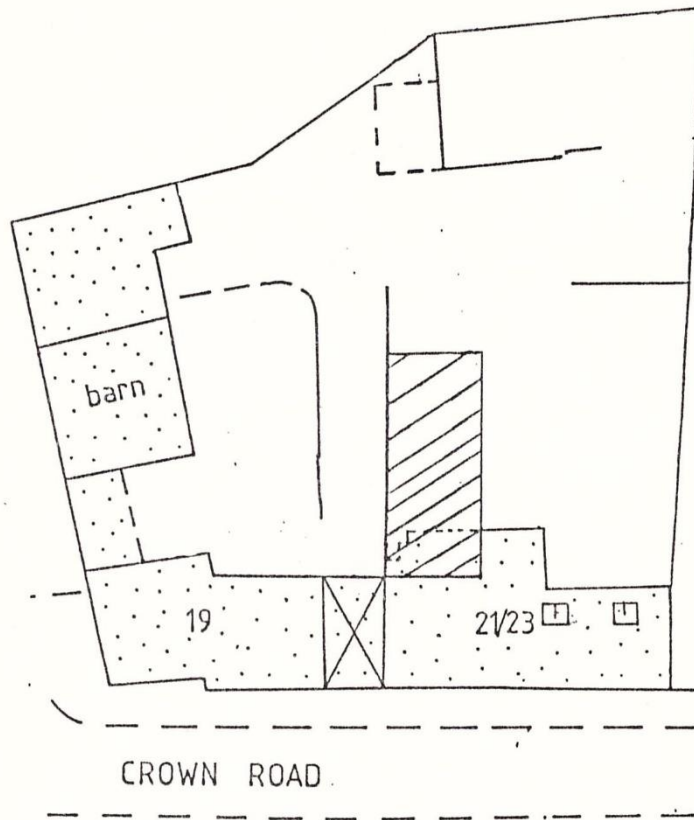


Plate 61. THE 'CROWN' ARCHWAY. Photo: *Oxford Mail*. Block: *Wine and Spirits Trade Record*.

View towards the 'Crown Tap' (now the 'Doctor's House') whence coaches could regain the New Turnpike (now A.40). Before the construction of the New Turnpike coaches could avoid the crowded village by passing south of Wheatley and past the windmill by a road which was obstructed by Avery's yard to the annoyance of the Wheatley Urban District Council, according to entries in those volumes which survive in the Bullingdon R.D.C. office.