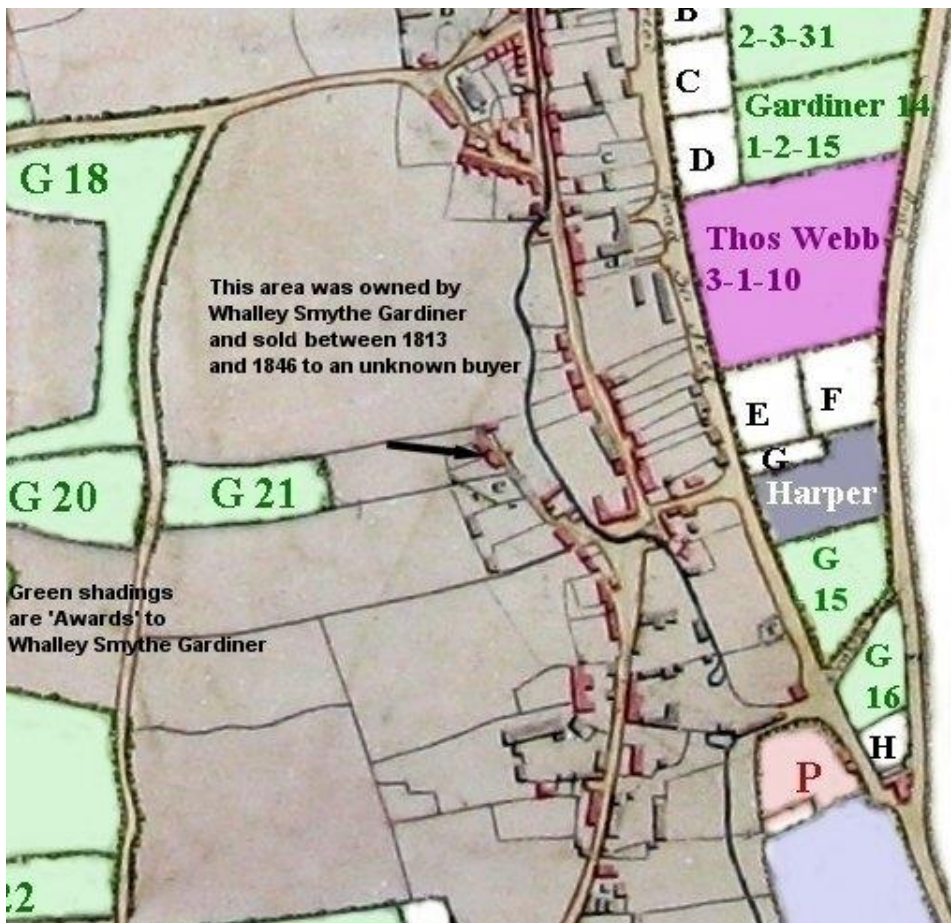


Information relating to numbers 5 & 7 Farm Close Lane, Wheatley  
(from deeds in possession of Mrs Best of no.7)  
With additions and maps from Michael Heaton 2019

The name Farm Close for this property appears in a conveyance of 31 March 1952. It applied to the area occupied by both houses and included the old orchard subsequently developed as the Beech Road extension in the 1960s. The total land was then stated as 1 acre, 6 poles. Ever since 1794 the deeds refer to “a close of pasture ground” as part of the property, and in a deed of 1806 Stile Cottage is shown on the south as being bounded on the south by Farm Close. However, on the Wheatley enclosure map of 1809 in his Wheatley Records, Dr Hassall shows Farm Close to the east of what is now Mulberry Drive. An extract of this map shows the 2 cottages which were there in 1813 (arrow and text added) with Stile Cottage evident ‘above’ these on the map. Ownerships of the greyed areas are not known, other than that shown as owned by Whalley Smythe Gardiner (probably about 11-12 acres) as evidenced by the partial break-up of his estate between 1813 and 1846.



In 1813, Farm Close Lane did not extend any further west than it does today, but perhaps the plot which was to the west (top of the map shown) and which was owned by Whalley Smythe Gardiner (but which was landlocked being surrounded by other owners) formed the basis of a holding served by the original (farm) house, and maybe part of the larger 57-acre farm holding of William Davis.

#### The deeds

The first deed of which there is trace in these documents is a conveyance from Edward and Agnes Newport to Thomas Lee on 30 April 1697. The property then passed from Lee to Richard Piddington on 1 June 1700, and from him to Valentine Wakelin on 29 September 1702. The Wakelins appear to have been in possession until 9 May 1787, when a second generation of them sold the property to Francis Poollin. However, its extent is not stated until the first full deed, dated 29 October 1794, when Francis Poollin sold what was evidently part of it to John and William Davis; but the mists of the past are still obscure.

The property sold for £60 in 1794 consisted of:

- 2 cottages, outhouses, gardens and appurtenances
- 1.5 acre close of land adjoining



bought the existing College Farm adjacent to the Chequers.

George Farthing was a bootmaker and all three were still there in 1927. the sisters are still remembered in the village: Miss Russell as a pleasant, if somewhat potty, lady. As they grew very old, their neighbours in The Croft used to send their daughter in to see they were all right from time to time, and to provide increasingly necessary assistance with basic chores. Number 7 was now occupied by W. Smith, and the widow Jones had been replaced across the lane by W. Putt, who figures as a boot-repairer in Gardner's Directory for 1852. Mrs Farthing died in 1931 at the age of 91, and her husband at about the same time. Miss Russell was moved to the Public Assistance Institution in Thame and died at Woodstock shortly afterwards. The executors acting on her behalf sold the three cottages to Mrs E. M. Hughes, wife of Leonard Hughes, for £890 On 9 November 1931. On 31 March 1952 Mrs Hughes sold numbers 5 & 7 to Mr J. W. E. Wills and on 10 August 1954 the cottage formerly occupied by W. Putt and since then by Mr Edwards, to the owners of Stile Cottage.

Number 7 was by now tenanted by Mr and Mrs Wood. Mr Wills sold number 7 to the Woods in December 1954 and number 5 and the orchard to Mrs Vallance in April 1955. From Mrs Vallance number 5 passed to Mrs Gisborne and the orchard to developers in about 1960. Colonel and Mrs Hugh Toye bought number 5 from Mrs Gisborne's trustees on 16 September 1969. Mrs Wood died at the end of 1969 and number 7 was bought by the present owners early in 1970.

### Summary

The construction of the roof and look of the place argues that the basic, four roomed house with front door and staircase in the middle, was the house occupied by the Wakelins in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and hence built before the first deed of which there is evidence, Newport to Lee in 1697, and which sold by Poollin to Davis in 1812. It is clear from the roof and from the walls that the rooms containing the kitchens and bathrooms, which run at a slight angle to the basic Wakelin house, and under which there was a small cellar, were a 19<sup>th</sup> century addition, probably 1808 because of the datestone (IED) at the west end of the basic house, and because there were two houses there by 1813.

The original Wakelin house must have contained two, not four, rooms. This latter explanation is supported by Mr Wills's discoveries when he was renovating the house in 1952-4, which indicated that the house had been made in three parts.

Poollin (Pullen is still a village name) and Davis were considerable citizens and figure on a petition to the bishop Oxford at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. (p.82 of Dr Hassall's book).