

The Green

In 1813 Gardiner was allotted pieces of former common land in lieu of right which he claimed (unwarrantedly) to have over the manorial waste. These lay each side of the Littleworth Road and formed the Green (Lot 7 15 acres 0 rods 34 perches) and the Little Green (1 acre 1 rod 30 perches). The former was bought by the Shotover estate and was sold for a County Secondary School (later used for the Primary School).

The Little Green found its way into the ownership of the Rose family, possibly in the mid to late 1840s when the remnants of the Gardiner estate finally found their way into other ownerships. They used this area for grazing and calving livestock before these went to their slaughterhouse on the other side of High Street and thence to their butchery business. Their ownership in 1910 included numbers 4 and 6 High Street.

In 1925 one of the Rose brothers conveyed this holding to another family member, see record 1291. 4 High Street was then occupied by Mr Grundell and 6 High Street was Mr Gomm. It is believed that very soon after this, the holding including the two houses were sold to Herbert Munt, who was a market gardener. He was the owner of many houses in Wheatley including 11, 13 and 15 Bell Lane, bought by his wife from the Chillingworth estate for £263 in 1908, see records 1140 and 1156; 60 Church Road see record 708; Kiln House, 11 Westfield Road, see record 770; and Rock Cottage, 6 Westfield Road although record 767 does not confirm this ownership.

In due course in 1938, ownership of the green passed to Herbert Munt's daughter Daisy who had married Ernest Tame in 1928. They had a daughter, Margaret, who was born in 1933 while the family were living at 4 High Street. Margaret remembers pigs being kept on the green. Herbert Munt had 12 Westfield Road built in the later 1930s and the family moved here from 4 High Street, using the extensive land for the market garden business. 6 High Street was sold in 1954 to Mrs R. F. L. Matthews (record 1291), and, probably, 4 High Street was sold in 1958 to Mrs Heckman.

The Tame family also used the green as part of their market garden business, which extended to livestock and pigs being kept on this. In order to do so, the green was walled in at both the High Street and Littleworth frontages. After the school had been built in the later 1940s on the land the other side of Littleworth Road (the land was donated by the Shotover Estate), the school children kept breaking down these walls so as to create a short cut from the school back to the village.

In the late 1950s or early 1960s, the Bullingdon Rural District Council served a compulsory notice order (CPO) on the Tame family, and forced its sale based on its market garden value. The Council then built or enabled the building of the houses which are found today (2020). Apparently a Mr Emden attempted, without success, to keep this as a green area.

Margaret Tame married Laurie Dodd, who owned the bakery in Church Road, and they lived in Thame. Circa 1990, they moved back (he died c. 2000) into 12 Westfield, which had presumably been let out, and she still lives here in 2020.

In conclusion, the 'green' was not in communal or village ownership after it was allotted to the Gardiners in 1813, albeit the grounds for this allotment were unsound. Other than the Gardiners, no one in the village profited from the development of housing in the 1960s. On the contrary, the Council, using CPO powers much wielded in this period, was the only party to profit from this.