

Information relating to Stile Cottage, Farm Close Lane, abstracted
from deeds in the possession of Mr and Mrs Jensen.

The first document is an attested copy of a conveyance from Thos Harper, yeoman, of Wheatley, son of Thos Harper lately deceased, of a considerable property, for £200, to Mr S. Leaver on 2 October 1805. The property included a malthouse, and a cottage in the garden thereof. This cottage had been occupied as far back as 1750 by the widowed mother of Thos Harper I, Mrs Alice Harper, and on her death by Thos Harper I himself. When he died, Thos Harper II sold the whole property to Samuel Leaver. Alice Harper's cottage was now occupied by Richard Hart.

On 26 December 1806 Leaver sold the cottage, now divided into two and occupied by Elizabeth Burnham and Richard Hickman, to James and Joseph Lovridge; and less than a year later the Lovridges bought two more pieces of Leaver's ground. The cottage property was now:

the cottage divided into two
garden adjoining, measuring 46 ft from Farm Close Lane to the brook on the west side,
85 ft from the lane to the brook on the east, 50 ft along the brook to the north, and
38 ½ ft along Farm Close Lane itself.
one piece of ground 41 yds N to S, 11 yds at the E and 15 yds at the W ends.
one piece of ground adjoining the existing garden, 7½ yds E to W and 13 yds N to S.

On the death of Joseph Lovridge in June 1851, his widow Eleanor and son Moses became entitled to the cottage and garden, and half of the two extra pieces of land. The other half presumably passed via James Lovridge of whom there is no further trace in the deeds. Without measuring it all up, however, it seems a reasonable supposition that Eleanor and Moses now owned more or less the present area of Stile Cottage garden. The cottages were now occupied by Thos Kelson and James Yeatman

On 10 July 1856 the property passed, via a mortgage to Stephen Jones, to William Lovelock, grocer (1843) and postmaster (1856). Between 1856 and 1879 when the next sale took place, Lovelock demolished and rebuilt one of the two cottages. In 1879 they were occupied by Chas Sheppard and Mrs Thorpe and on 13 January of that year they were sold for £200 to John Johnson, yeoman.

Johnson died on 14 October 1894, less than a month after making his will. By this time the cottage was again one cottage, occupied by Richard Clements, and it is described as adjoining a cottage owned by Philip Town, who then owned 5 and 7 Farm Close lane. This cottage had been occupied by the Widow Jane Jones and then by W. Putt, who figures in the Oxfordshire Directory as a shoemaker as far back as 1852. Town himself lived in No 5 and had gathered the properties together (5, 7, and Putts cottage) in the 1850s. On 10 July 1895 Johnson's heirs sold 'Alice Harper's' cottage to Charles Elderfield, shepherd. Elderfield seems to have lived in the cottage and on his death his widow married Charles Clements, postal telegraph worker.

On 18 April 1907 the Clements sold to Thomas Parsons, labourer. (As will be seen from the next conveyance, dated 1925, Parsons had become a contractor's foreman, and was now Thomas Henry Parsons). Parsons sold the cottage to Miss Dorothy Rose Holness of Crown Rd on 15 January 1925 for £160. The cottage was occupied by Albert Hillsdon, and he was still there when Miss Holness (since 1 August 1927 Mrs Jeffs), sold for £200 to Mrs E. L. Hedges of Chilton, Thame.

In due course Mrs Hedges came to live in what was now called Style Cottage. She had married Hedges late in life and when she died intestate on 14 May 1944, the cottage passed to her nephew & niece (or son and daughter by a first husband), E. T. Day and his sister. These sold Style Cottage to F.A.de Luc on 19 April 1952. De Luc was an interior decorator. On 10 August 1954 he bought Putts Cottage from Mrs E. M. Hughes for £65; this was described as having been 'formerly in the occupation of Mr Edwards' and it is of interest that Dr Hassall's book contains a drawing of the 'hovel' in the garden of No 7, as the place where Edwards used to keep his rabbits. De Luc did not buy the hovel or the land adjoining and this was subsequently acquired by the owners of No 7, Mr & Mrs Wood.

De Luc incorporated Putt's Cottage into the rest of Style Cottage, renamed it Stile Cottage, and on 30 May 1958 sold it to its present owners.

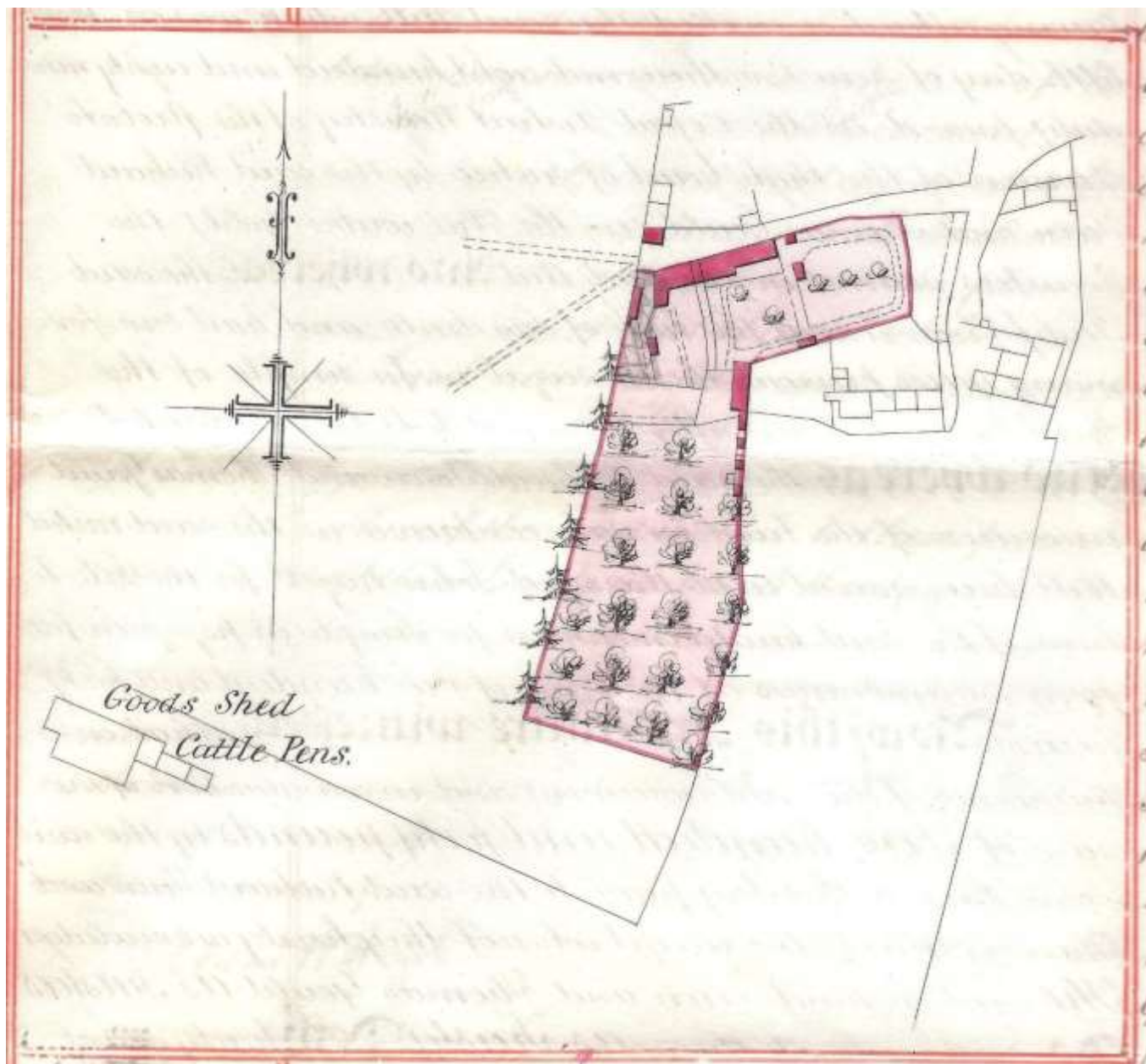




Plate 48. COTTAGE INTERIOR OF MEDIEVAL HALL AND BOWER TYPE. Drawing : Lady Floud. Block : *Oxford Mail*.

A child was born on the shelf which forms the bower in mid-19th century. The late Mr. Frederick Edwards kept rabbits in the hall which was 12 ft. wide and slightly longer. A similar cottage condemned at Littleworth was demolished without record. Its beams were of unsquared willow.