

## "WHEATLEY 1939-1955 APPROX<sup>1</sup>

**"AS I REMEMBER" by Ernie Pullen**

*"Please follow map"*

Let's start at the Great Milton turn off and head towards Wheatley Village and on the old A40 main road you will find ALDENS farm, still in existence today. Next you will travel over the river THAME and you will find the BRIDGE HOTEL which is now the HARVESTER RESTAURANT. Further on there are petrol pumps and a workshop belonging to the WELLS BROTHERS and this is where the ASDA STORES petrol pumps now stand. Next is ALLEN'S Cafe where the HONDA garage is now, but in between times a gentleman by the name of GEOFF LAFFORD had his garage and pumps on that site. Further along is COLLETS Garage which is now PLAISTOWS Coaches. Next the PLOUGH Pub whose Landlord was MR.GEORGE and his wife. Continue along the main road and on your right is the LAST CHANCE COFFEE BAR, which was an old railway carriage standing on railway sleepers, and it was a stopping off place for long distance lorry drivers. Further along you will find BILL TOMBS grocery shop on your right but like many places and things this has long gone. Next was where the local pig killer lived, a MR.CHARLIE SHORTER, but houses now stand where he resided. Next is the TRIANGLE STORES and shop owned by MR and MRS GEORGE, which today is a Residential home.

Retrace your steps now back to the junction of the A40 and the OLD LONDON ROAD and travel along behind the LAST CHANCE COFFEE BAR. (I forgot to mention that this is now where THE WHYVALE Garden Centre is). Keep going and you will come across the OLD COUNTY COUNCIL YARD where the local FIRE STATION is now. Next is the WILLOWDENE CAFE and Guest house which today belongs to WILSONS TRANSPORT. On your left between there and the Triangle and after the Second World War, at various times was a workshop and joinery that BILL NIXEY had. His wood yard supplied the local community with blocks / firewood and bean sticks when required. BILL is still living in Wheatley but long retired.

Continue up onto the A40 main road and veer left into Church Road. At that junction is the KINGS ARMS PUB whose landlady was JENNY HILL, ably assisted by her husband. Next on your right is TURNERS CYCLE SHOP and behind TURNERS MOTORS, which is still there today dealing in sports cars. On the left is the DOCTORS SURGERY and the local doctor's name was ORCHARD. From what I remember he had a charge of 2/6, 5/-, or 7/6 in old money, or as we would say 12¼p, 25p, and 37½p in today's money. Almost everyone considered him a fine doctor and an understanding person. Further along on your right is BATES CYCLE SHOP, but now long gone as a business premises. Continue along Church Road and on the left is BILL BERRY'S Greengrocery and Fish and Chip Shop, followed by the BLACKSMITHS which was well served by MR SHELDON and his mate MR SLAYMAKER. On the opposite side of the road is the C of E Church, and in my younger days the Vicar was MR BRISTOW. Further along on the left is DODDS BAKERY which has long since finished as a bakery shop, but has been used for a few businesses since. The BIG

SCHOOL (7-14 years) is on the other side of the road where I was duly educated, and like many more I finished there in 1946 on a Friday and started work the following Monday. I worked across the road at BAX'S GARAGE AND MACHINE SHOP AND TAXI SERVICE, where I remained for four years until the papers came inviting me into the services. The RAF became my choice and it was therefore "bye bye" to Wheatley for a while.

Cross over the crossroads and on your right stands the ROUND HOUSE, which in years gone by was the local 'lock up' where the drunks and bad boys had the pleasure of sobering up with a night inside.

Over the other side of the road is the GRANARY CHURCH which is still in use today. A little further along at the junction with Westfield Road you come face to face with the SUN PUB who's Landlord was MR.HINTON.

Bearing left to the junction of the HIGH STREET glance across to the right and you will see the RED LION PUB. A great character by the name of JOE MOSS was the Landlord, and when we were around 14-15 years of age he would shut us in and lock us in the spare room for shandy and crisps!

The first premises in the HIGH STREET is the BUTCHER/SLAUGHTER HOUSE, but I can't remember a slaughter house myself. BOB DUNGEY'S shop is next and when you entered, the bell on the back of the door almost deafened you swinging around on its spring. On the opposite side of the road was the Village Green and next to that the MANOR HOUSE, well preserved by the HASSEL family who still reside there today. Further along lived MR ALLEN the miikman, who very often was delivering milk at three in the morning (a very unusual thing in those days). Opposite is HIDES BAKERY, the HAIRDRESSERS, and then WALDES CAFE and TAXI Business owned by PETER WALDE. Today the Taxi business is still going but the shop now deals in wool and suchlike. On the other side of the road is the RAILWAY TAVERN whose Landlord was MR QUELCH, and then the PAPER SHOP (MR.ARKLE). At the junction SAM'S THE BUTCHERS is on one corner and GOSTICKS STORES AND BAKERY on the opposite corner. A little further along is the KING AND QUEEN PUB whose Landlord was BERNARD PERKINS. Next is FREDDY NASH'S CYCLE SHOP where everyone had their radio battery/accumulators recharged for 6d. (2<sup>1</sup>Xp present money). BAX'S GROCERY SHOP is next, which today is OXFORD HOUSE LANGUAGE SCHOOL, followed by The WHITE HART PUB whose Landlord was first MR.HIGHFIELD and then ARTHUR VALE. Continue to the MERRY BELLS Village Hail. Opposite is WHITES BUTCHERS, the DENTIST and then the UNDERTAKERS (MR.CHAPMAN the owner). Return to the other side and HARRIS STORES is another grocers. A little further along on the left is The POST OFFICE with MRS.SLATTER in charge.

We now come to the square with the CHAPEL on one corner which is now the UNITED REFORM CHURCH. Over on the corner of Friday Lane was BOB GREEN'S sweet shop (long gone).

Keep heading towards CROWN ROAD and on your left is JACK WASHINGTONS farm which is now built on. followed by the CROWN PUB, but unfortunately I can remember very little about this. Just across the road upon the bank lived MR.STURGESS, one of

the local cobblers. Keep going up the hill of Crown Road and at the summit you'll find BELL'S FARM on your right. Today the farm stands on what we knew as Jackies Hill and the farm is owned by MR.GREAVES.

Further on and on your left is GIBBARDS FARM (long gone). The grounds of Mr. Gibbard covered what is now Anson Close. Ambrose Rise, Miller Road, Leyshon Road, Cullum Road Estate.

OXONION STORES (now closed) was originally owned by the late MR.PARIS and his ground ran alongside the stream that goes from Crown Road into Ambrose Rise and incorporated the Close at the top of Ambrose Rise.

Continue down what was known as MUDDY LANE and is now ROMAN ROAD, and the last thing on the journey at this end of Wheatley is TURNERS PIG FARM. Before the farm was Wheatley's football ground immediately after the Second World War.

Continue over the railway crossing and you arrive at our local swimming baths - the River Thame - where we used to learn swimming, and it also saved washing when you went home!

Retrace your steps now back into the Village and start at the bottom of Station Road and start going up towards 'Ladder Hill'. First was HATHAWAYS BUILDERS on your left, and opposite the RAILWAY HOTEL whose Landlords that I remember were MR. WEBSTER, then GEORGE HUMPHRIES and then EDDIE RATCLIFFE. Over the other side of the road was the RAILWAY STATION and AVERY'S COAL YARD, and adjacent to the station was AVERY'S SAWMILL. BILL THOMBS also had a COAL YARD just above the Railway Hotel, near the long gone railway bridge. A little further along on the right hand side TRINDERS FARM stood up on the bank. Just beyond there turn right into Windmill Lane and along to the Old Windmill that looks gracefully down over the Village.

Return to Ladder Hill and proceed towards Cuddesdon and Garsington and you will find 'Combe Wood' the last thing in that direction.

Go back into the top of the Village and continue along the Littleworth Road where you will find the BOY'S CLUB, Wheatley Cricket Pitch, and opposite EDDIE HARRIS the milkman with his pony and trap. Last but not least is THE BRICK KILN owned by a gentleman by the name of CLAY COOPER.

That is the end of the journey - I hope you enjoyed it and find it interesting.