

Windmill history

The two windmills are clearly shown on the Stanley map of 1811



The existing Mill

Richard Lambourn was the owner in 1808 when he mortgaged the 'wind corn mill' to John Chapman for £200. This mortgage was assigned on 28 December 1811 to Mr and Mrs Searsbrook.

Possession passed to William Lambourn on 20 June 1820 at which time he increased the mortgage with Thomas Searsbrook to £250. This mill sat on land owned by Sir Whalley Smythe Gardiner, which had passed down to trustees, these being Thomas Lister Parker and Rev. Streyntsham. On 13 December 1827 this land had the mill on it and a 'newly erected messuage', and this land, together with a c 2 acre parcel of land 'enclosed by William Lambourn, was sold by these trustees for 5 shillings to William Lambourn. Now owning the land (some 2 acres) and the mill, he mortgaged it to William Andrews for £420 on 20 January 1828.

According to the Directory in 1854, Thomas Way was the miller

On 14 June 1857, George Cripps bought this from William Lambourn for £150 subject to the existing mortgage of £420. On 3 September 1874, this mortgage was transferred, now in the sum of £600, to the trustees of the Liberator Permanent Building and Investment Society ('Liberator'). Repayment was to be by 144 monthly payments of £6 6s. 0d.

Cripps defaulted on the repayments, and 'Liberator' took a first hit of £150 by selling the property on 10 May 1878 to Thomas Dugard of Wheatley and Edwin Walton of Bell Street, Darlaston for £450 plus a 'premium of £54 (total of £504). The monthly repayments were to be £4 14s. 6d. Thomas Dugard was described as an Oxford color (*sic*) manufacturer. It seems from other references that grinding ochre was then the main role of the windmill as Rev. Edward Elton referred to it in 1870 and there were two people noted as involved in the ochre business in the 1881 census. This business had ceased before 1900.

Again the repayments were defaulted so, on 2 February 1881, 'Liberator' sold the property to Cripps for £300, having lost half of their initial investment. Cripps did a good deal!

George Cripps died on 2 January 1900. The probate of his Will shows that his estate was valued at £330 and his Will left all his property to his widow Ellen Cripps.

The Post Mill

On 8 August 1806, John Sheldon of Shotover bought the mill from John Parish of Littleworth for £525 but he sold it on 23 May 1807, when its capacity was described as eight loads of wheat, to John Stacey for £405. This did not include the ground on which it sat, which was described as being of 1 rood, 20 perches and 14 feet (this land had belonged to Hewitt Fysh of Fenchurch Street and Samuel Palmer of Bourton-on-Water). This was sold to John Stacey on 29 September 1809 for 5 shillings.

On 20 November 1824, John Stacey raised a mortgage of £160 from James Brazier.

On 28 November 1846, the post mill was advertised for sale by auction. It is not known if it was sold. It burnt down in 1875.

1846 28 November Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette

For Sale by Private Contract,
TWO LEASEHOLD MODERN BUILT
DWELLING HOUSES,
(LAND TAX REDEEMED).

EACH containing 2 sitting rooms, 3 bed rooms, washhouse, and cellar, with large garden at the back, situate on the south side of Observatory Street, producing together £29 per annum. Price £280, or if sold separately, £140 each.

The only annual outgoing is a very small quit rent.

For further particulars apply to Mr. R. Pike, auctioneer and estate agent, 2, Saint Aldate's Street, Oxford.

Rich MEADOW LAND and POST WINDMILL at Wheatley, near Oxford, and COTTAGE and GARDEN, at Littleworth, near Wheatley, all Freehold, Tithe Free, and exonerated from Land Tax.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
By Messrs. SMITH and KING,
At the King and Queen Inn, in Wheatley, on Thursday next, the 3rd day of Dec. at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Lot 1.—A remarkably rich FREEHOLD MEADOW, called "Ireland's Meadow," in the parish of Wheatley adjoining the River Thame, containing about Four Acres, more or less; together with a FREEHOLD POST WINDMILL, well situate on the hill above Wheatley, having two pairs of excellent Stones, Dressing Mill, Jogging Screen, and all necessary machinery, with nearly a quarter of an acre of good Land surrounding the same.

Lot 2.—A FREEHOLD COTTAGE & GARDEN, at Littleworth, near Wheatley.

For further particulars apply at the auctioneers' office, Oxford; W. Brunner, Esq., solicitor, Oxford; or Mr. Stacy, of Wheatley, the proprietor, who will show the property.