

## 16<sup>th</sup> Century

Queen Elizabeth must have passed through Wheatley on her way to Rycote from Oxford at the close of August 1566. She again went by Wheatley, on the same journey, on Thursday, September 28th, 1592. Some of the buildings existing today were standing when the Queen paid these two visits. The Manor House was certainly built, although it was enlarged and improved in 1601.

(Falkener's History of Oxfordshire).

## 17th Century

During the Spring of 1646 the garrison of Oxford held the city for the King (Charles I). On May 11th Fairfax demanded its surrender, and on Wednesday, June 24th, in a drenching rain, the garrison marched out, 5000 strong. They passed through Wheatley on their way to Thame.

In July 1665 the fellows of St. John's College, Oxford, about twenty in number, walked out to Wheatley. Here they met the body of Archbishop Laud, brought from Allhallows, Barking, in London, on a four-wheeled litter drawn by four horses. They walked before the coffin into Oxford.

Laud was beheaded on January 10th 1644, but it was not until after the Restoration that his friends were permitted to bury his body under the altar in the chapel of St. John's College, Oxford.

(Falkener's History of Oxfordshire).

## 18th Century

On Monday, June 14th or Tuesday June 15th in 1784? Boswell could not remember which, he and Dr Johnson dined in a house, now the property of Mr. Williamson, in Crown Road. It was then occupied by William Mickle, the Scottish poet, who translated the "Lusiad" of the Portuguese poet Camoens into English verse. Mickle was supposed by some to be the author of the song "There's nae luck about the house". He is buried in the churchyard at Forest Hill. Boswell described Wheatley as "a very pretty country place a few miles from Oxford."

(From Boswell's Life of Johnson).

An account of the 18th Century church and of the foundation of Congregationalism in the village will be found under the heading of Ecclesiastical history of Wheatley.

## 19th Century

At the beginning of the 19th century a good deal of the Common land in and around Wheatley was enclosed and re-allotted. "An Act of Parliament was made and passed in the 49th year of the reign of His Majesty King George III entitled "An Act for enclosing lands in the hamlet and chapelry of Wheatley in the parish of Cuddesdon in the County of Oxford." John and Richard Davis were appointed commissioners for valuing, dividing, allotting and enclosing the open and Common fields, Common pastures, Common and waste grounds in Wheatley in lieu of their rights and interests in and over a certain forest called Shotover in the said County of Oxford."

This could not be done without the consent of the occupiers, and in the case of church lands the permission of the bishop. A plan was drawn up and public roads and certain private footpaths confirmed. The commissioners directed that "Sufficient and convenient stiles and gates be put up."

The chief allotments were made to Sir James Gardener and the Lord Bishop of Oxford

and among others made was one to the Poor of Wheatley. In the case of penalties and fines, half was given to the Chapel Wardens and overseers of Wheatley for the benefit of the poor.

The 19th Century saw many changes. In 1854 Wheatley was formed into a civil parish. In 1857 it was constituted a district under the Public Health Act of 1848 and governed by a Local Board of Health. This board covered in the open brook which had run down the High Street and served as a common sewer, as it continued to do until 1905, when the Thames Conservancies compelled the Urban District Council to undertake a system of drainage and purify the brook. Mr. Gunn of High Street, Wheatley, is among those who still remember the open brook, and he has described, for the W.I. how it ran from Miss Dale's house to Vale Brook Cottage crossed at intervals by stepping stones.

The local Government Act of 1894 established an Urban District Council. The urban district includes an area of 990 acres.