

Bakers Cottage, 35 Brook St – House History

The earliest reference is in James Shrubbs' will of 1810, when he left the cottage as part of his estate to his widow Mary and his other heirs – John Shrub (farmer), Joshua Aldridge (farmer), Ann Aldridge (nee Shrub), Edward Shrub (innkeeper), James Shrub (farmer of Long Wittenham), Henry Shrub (farmer), Jane Shrub (spinster) and Walter Frederick Shrub (farmer of Long Wittenham).

In 1831, the estate was managed in trust by Richard Costar (innkeeper of the Crown) and leased to William Woodbridge, a baker of Bensington, for a sum of 5s per annum. At this time, the occupant was Mary Parker (widow of John parker) and the communal well shared with neighbours John Adams & James Allcock. The value was £62.

In 1842, William W took out a mortgage for £100 to buy with James Green & Richard Mark Brown named as the lenders. It would seem that James Hoare (a wheelwright) was then resident, with Ralph Whichelow and Abel Skinner as neighbours.

William Woodbridge died on 17th November 1865, and under his will (made a week before), he left all his estate to his wife Martha, and then when she died to Mrs Ralph Hutchings (his niece) and then to Ralph Hutchings. Ralph made a will in 1879, appointing executors (William Littleboy of Preston Crowmarsh, William Bartholomew Goodey of Bensington and Thomas Field of Bensington) and with instructions for the estate to be sold on his death.

Plainly a man of some substance – he owned at least 3 other properties in Littleworth - Ralph H died in November 1881. The Title Abstract of 1882 was made for the purpose of selling, and the property was duly sold in March 1882 to William Strainge, a butcher of Bensington for £65. It seems as if Isaac Mitchell was then resident.

Mr & Mrs Chesterton had the property in 1987, buying from Mr Green, and Mr & Mrs David Cook bought the property c 1995.

Dave Rushton. V1. 17.3.2010