

West End Cottage, Shrivenham

Historical information by Neil B. Maw



Shrivenham Heritage Society is grateful to the current owners of this property, Phillip and Freda Garrahan, (2021) for allowing us sight of their documentation that has greatly assisted the understanding of the history of this part of the village and the sale of Barrington Estate property.

The documents that make up the deeds for this property contain a schedule of transactions and in the second part, the list starts with a *'Lease & Release'* dated 4th & 5th April 1805. By studying documents from other properties that belonged to the Barrington Estate, we have discovered that this was a *'Template'* for all deeds. From documents discovered for sale on Ebay in April 2021, we believe we have discovered the source of the template (SHS Listing N943). As will be seen below, the principal property known as *'West End'* today replaced an earlier structure in a different position on the same plot of land.



Information from the Tithe Map of 1844 (above) assisted at the beginning of the research on this property (See SHS N347). The premises shown at reference number 249 clearly matches the plot, but the position and shape of the building doesn't match what is there now (below).



The apportionment to the 1844 Tithe Map provided the information that the property consisted of two tenements and gardens and was owned by Lord Barrington of the Beckett Estate, and the occupiers were Martha Willoughby and William Willoughby. The first official census took place three years earlier and the entry shown below for Shrevenham bears a close resemblance to that information.

William Willoughby in 1841

1841 England, Wales & Scotland Census
 Shrivenham, Faringdon, Berkshire & Oxfordshire, England

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Household members (9 people) Copy to clipboard

First name(s)	Last name	Sex	Age	Birth year	Birth place
William	Willoughby	Male	40	1801	Berkshire, England
Elizabeth	Willoughby	Female	30	1811	Berkshire, England
William	Willoughby	Male	9	1832	Berkshire, England
Richard	Willoughby	Male	6	1835	Berkshire, England
Charlotte	Willoughby	Female	5	1836	Berkshire, England
Phoebe	Willoughby	Female	2	1839	Berkshire, England
Martha	Willoughby	Female	0	1841	Berkshire, England
Martha	Willoughby	Female	70	1771	Berkshire, England
Henry	Lawrence	Male	60	1781	Berkshire, England

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In the Berkshire County Archives at Reading there is an accounts book drawn up by George Merryweather who was Steward for the Barrington Estate from 1815 – 1821. His book (BRO D/Ex52/E1) contains a list of leases and one was granted to; *Isaac Willoughby, Shrivenham, by a lease granted by William Lord Barrington (2nd Viscount) dated 28th September 1769 (Michaelmas) of a Cottage where Isaac then lived. From 27th September for 99 years on the lives of Isaac Willoughby, Martha his wife and William the son of George Lewis, aged 5.* In the parish records Isaac is registered as having been buried on 10th February 1820, aged 84. It's likely then that the premises shown in plot 249 on the tithe map above is the property referred to in the lease and that it was old and had been divided to accommodate William, who had been adopted, his wife Elizabeth, and Martha the daughter of Isaac who was then aged 70. The Willoughby's were still there as recorded by the census' of 1851 and 1861, but then there was change.



The Barrington Estate map of 1865 showed that there had been changes that must have taken place in the 20 years previous, but very likely in the recent years as the original lease came to an end. The old premises had been taken down and a new cottage built in the position it is today. The owner was still Lord Barrington, but the occupier was listed as Miss Sealy; the age of the Willoughbys had passed.

Charlotte Sealy was originally from Ashbury and is recorded in the Shrivenham Census of 1841 as aged 40. She had sons John and James and a daughter Ann who were all in their 20s; she also had a much younger daughter, Mary aged 4. Her husband Henry was considerably younger at age 30 but was listed in the parish records as having died in 1841 and buried in St Andrew's churchyard on 27th December. In the census of 1851 Charlotte was listed as a Dressmaker and in the same household were her brother-in-laws John and James, both described as Tailors. Her daughter Mary was still with her at age 13. The census of 1861 showed Charlotte and Mary still together and Charlotte described as a Laundress. The positioning within the census of 1871 matches well with the information from the Barrington Estate map of 1865 and that Charlotte and Mary were living in the new cottage at West End and both described as Laundress'. Later, Charlotte was listed in the parish records as having been buried in St Andrew's Churchyard on 29th April 1872. Even though they died 30 years apart Charlotte and Henry came together in the churchyard as can be seen below.



The location within the census of 1881 is the only evidence that suggests that Charles Knapp and his family occupied the cottage. Although the 'Walk Order' of the census commissioners were sometimes very enigmatic, there were also occasions when it made perfect sense. The same criteria and logic have been applied to the following census' of 1891, 1901 and 1911. Henry Wake and his family were the most likely to have been in the cottage in 1891. Leonard Knapp was described as the village postman and the listings for him in the census' of 1901 and 1911 confirm that. But the location within the written survey suggested that he and his wife Amelia, occupied West End cottage. It would also tie up with the written evidence from an Indenture dated 12th January 1923, that Miss L. Knapp was the occupier of the premises. The same indenture was also the instrument that removed the property from the Barrington Estate and passed it to John Walter Pridham, the cottage and a piece of land to the rear measuring five acres, for £420.

Although John Pridham owned the property, he doesn't seem to have occupied it himself. The Electoral listing for 1958 showed that Edric G. Titcomb and his wife Olive G were the occupiers of 48 West End, Shrivenham. They were also shown as the occupiers in the 1978 Electoral list but with the address of 2 Station Road, the address it carries today.



This is as far as we can go on this rather nice spot on the edge of the village. The once five-acre field to the rear is now a new housing estate as can be seen from the photo above. If any reader has further information on this property, please contact us on info@shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk