

# Old Yew Tree Cottage

68, The Street, Wrecclesham, Farnham, GU10 4QR



The Farnham (Building  
Preservation) Trust Limited

2018

**OLD YEW TREE COTTAGE**

**68 THE STREET**

**WRECCLESHAM**

**FARNHAM**

**GU10 4QR**

The Farnham (Building Preservation) Trust Limited have put together this book as a summary of the history and development of this Grade 2 listed building. Having purchased Old Yew Tree Cottage in September 2015 the Trust set out with the intention of preparing a detailed record of its constructional history, obtaining an accurate date for the oldest part of the house using dendrochronology (tree ring) dating and to assemble existing knowledge from other people's research to extend our understanding and to provide as much information for the new owner as possible. Of course, the principal aim was to carry out a careful conservation project using traditional techniques and providing a sympathetic extension.



Photo of Yew Tree Cottage in 2015 before conservation and extension works

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Much of the information that follows was provided by local historians Pat Heather and John Birch, and the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) to whom the Trust are very grateful.

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(with thanks to Pat Heather and the Wrecclesham History Group)

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## BUILDING DEVELOPMENT AND SITE HISTORY



### Old Yew Tree Cottage, 68 The Street, Wrecclesham, Farnham, GU10 4QR

Grid Reference SU 825 449

This recording was arranged by invitation of Farnham Building Preservation Trust.

Old Yew Tree Cottage is two separate builds. The first is two surviving bays of a smoke bay house, which was built in 1551, probably as a 2 ½ bay end smoke bay house. The second build is a later cross wing built in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century with a chimney which has replaced the smoke bay of the original house. The first build has a half hipped roof. An outshot was added to the rear soon afterwards. A scullery was added to the rear of the gabled cross wing and an outshot was added to the west of it.

A renovation of 2018 enabled much of the full framing of the whole building to be seen.



**FIG. 1** Old Yew Tree Cottage in 1962 (Surrey History Centre CC1101/3/64/521)

*Thanks to the Surrey County Council Heritage Conservation Team*

## Exterior

In the original build, there are curved arch braces in the exterior walls. In the separately framed cross wing there are curved down braces, reflecting the change in brace styles between the dates of each construction.

The separate framing of the smoke bay house and the cross wing can be clearly seen by the front door.



**FIG. 2 Left:** Separate framing of original house and later cross wing.

**Below:** Front wall of DE and EF (see Ground Plan). Mullion window in the end bay, close to post E. There is also evidence of another window on the other side of post E, in bay DE. Brick repairs to the front wall have removed evidence of the original framing below the mid rail.



The front door may originally have been into a lobby entrance in the smoke bay or, alternatively, directly into the hearth room. As the smoke bay to the west of its truss DD<sup>1</sup> (see Ground Plan) has been completely replaced during the building of parlour wing, and the front wall of the hearth room has been rebuilt, the evidence for the entrance has gone. There are diamond mullion windows. During the 2018 renovation a mullion window in the rear of bay DE was also revealed.



**FIG. 3** Rear of bay DE showing mullion window during renovation.

## Smoke bay houses

In Surrey, houses built after about 1540 were built with some form of smoke control. Brick chimneys were a more expensive way of providing smoke control so tended to be found at first in towns and higher status houses. A cheaper alternative was to build a half bay to contain the hearth and its smoke. These could be framed to leave room within the half bay for a lobby entrance for the front door, a staircase, a space for smoking meats, storage etc.

Sometimes the half bays, in larger houses, were in the centre of the house with bays either side when the hearth could be open into each side, forming back to back hearths. The stair would usually be within the smoke bay so that access to both sides upstairs was possible.

In smaller houses, the smoke bay was sometimes at one end of the house. In this case, the stair may be in the rear corner of the service bay. It only needed to provide access to the rooms on one side of the smoke bay. In Old Yew Tree Cottage, there is no way in the framing for a doorway through to the other side of the smoke bay and the stair was in the rear corner of bay EF (see **Interior** below). Both these points add weight to the argument that it was originally an end smoke bay house.

The wall plate in bays D to F was not long enough to complete the building and a scarf joint could be seen near post D to extend the wall plate into the smoke bay to the west. Truss D is the eastern side of the original smoke bay and was retained. Everything of the original build to the west of this has been removed and replaced by the cross wing. The clasped purlin revealed during the renovation had been cleanly cut off (see below).



**FIG. 4 Above:** Scarf joint at post D

**Right:** West side of D<sup>1</sup> showing the smoke blackening in the original smoke bay. The purlin has clearly been cut off to accommodate the new parlour wing roof which can be seen adjoining.



## Roof

The roof of the original build has straight windbraces and a clasped purlin. There are three queen struts in the end truss and two in trusses D and E. The roof at the east end is half hipped and its



construction could be seen clearly in the renovation of 2018. There is no smoke blackening on the rafters of the bays beside the smoke bay.

**FIG. 5** Framing for the half hipped roof at the east end of the original house.



**FIG. 6** Straight windbrace between the clasped purlin and the rafter at post D

Bay DE was ceiled at collar level from the outset. The partition above the collar in both truss D and truss E was clearly unplastered, as it was never meant to be seen.



**FIG. 7 Above left:** Apex of roof on east side of truss D. This shows that above collar level it was never plastered, as it was not meant to be seen. The chamber next to the smoke bay must therefore have been ceiled at collar level from the outset.



**Above right:** Framing for the roof around truss E. This shows the partition above the collar in truss E was also unplastered. The size of the unblackened pegged rafters can clearly be seen.

## Interior

In the original build, there was a hearth room and a service room on the ground floor. In the service room, there is framing for a stair at the rear corner of the bay.



**FIG. 8** Framing in floor in bay EF showing the trimmer for a staircase in the rear corner of the bay. This would have originally allowed a space in the corner for a ladder stair to access the first floor.

The posts are jowled.

There are two chambers on the first floor. The framing for the smoke bay, with mortices for staves for a wall, shows that there was no way through the smoke bay so that it is unlikely there was originally a bay to the west of the smoke bay.

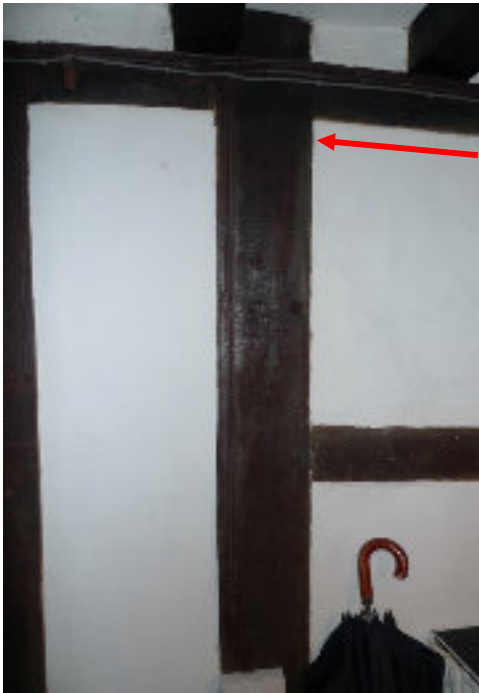
Exposed wattle and daub near post D was smoke blackened from the smoke bay showing that there was no doorway through on this side of the smoke bay either.

**FIG. 9** Tie beam in Truss D. The stave holes in its soffit were to form a wall. This means there was no way through the smoke bay suggesting there was no further bay beyond the smoke bay.



**FIG. 10** Smoke blackened wattle and daub in truss D





There are mid posts which go all the way to the wall plate. The floor of the hearth room is framed as part of the original framing showing that it was always floored.

**FIG. 11** Mid bay post in bay DE, a feature of West Surrey

There are both arch braces and sagging braces in the trusses.

There are many taper burns in the upper room of bay EF.



**FIG. 12** Sagging brace at post E

## The cross wing

The cross wing was built to the west of truss DD<sup>1</sup> and is separately framed next to the eastern truss of the smoke bay. The purlin from the original house has been cut off in the smoke bay to accommodate this. The cross wing was built with a chimney with back to back hearths replacing the smoke bay hearth.

There is a large curved hearth on the ground floor of the wing and a fireplace with bolection moulding on the first floor.

The curved down braces show a change in style from the arch braces of the original build. This style developed later in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to become straight, rather than curved, down braces, especially in Hampshire and nearby.

The staircase was moved from the service bay and built at the rear of the chimney when the cross wing and its chimney replaced the original smoke bay.

The cross wing is of unusual construction with carpentry not by a master carpenter. For example, the floor for the first floor has not been constructed in the traditional way.

## Cross wing roof

The roof of the cross wing is gabled and of clasped purlin construction with straight windbraces. The principal rafters are not diminished above the purlin. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century a different roof construction is often be found where the purlins were tenoned into the principal rafters.

In Old Yew Tree Cottage, the purlin is halved to fit into the collar, with the rafter on top of the purlin.



**FIG. 13 Left:** The purlin of the cross wing roof, halved to fit into the collar.

**Below:** The straight windbraces and clasped purlin of the cross wing roof.



Unfortunately, the cross wing could not be dendrodated.

A scullery was later added to the rear of the cross wing and an outshot to the west of it.

Old Yew Tree Cottage was recorded on:-

19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 by Martin Higgins, Brigid Fice, Rod Wild, Rosemary Hughesdon,  
Caroline Frisby and David Chalcraft and on:-

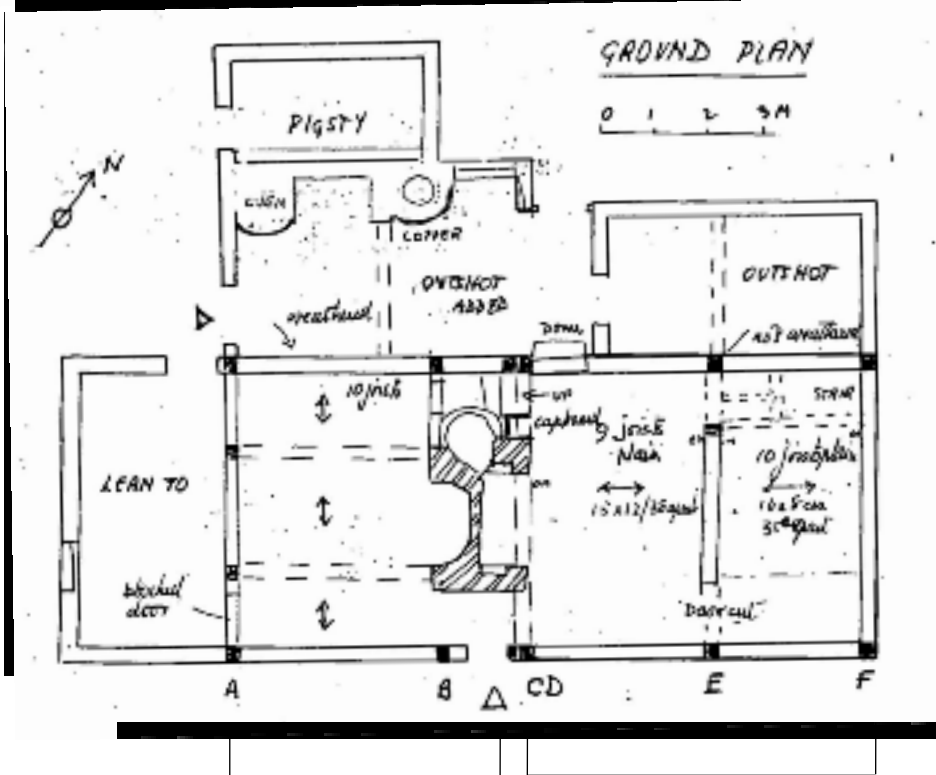
22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 by Brigid Fice, Martin Higgins, Lucy Rodd and Caroline Frisby and on:- 30<sup>th</sup> July  
2018 by Brigid Fice.

Dendrodating by Andy Moir at Tree Ring Services

Report by Brigid Fice

Photos by Brigid Fice unless otherwise stated.

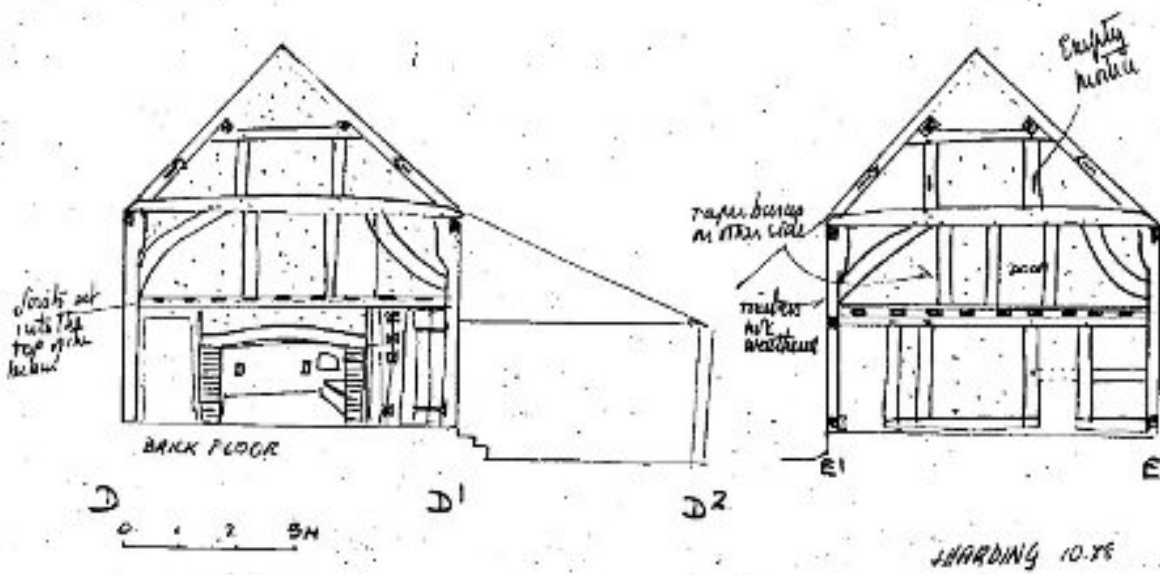
## - Ground Plan



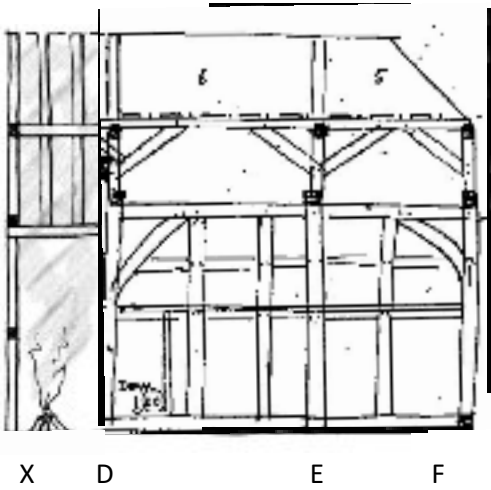
Later cross wing

Two surviving bays of original build

## Cross sections



## Probable development

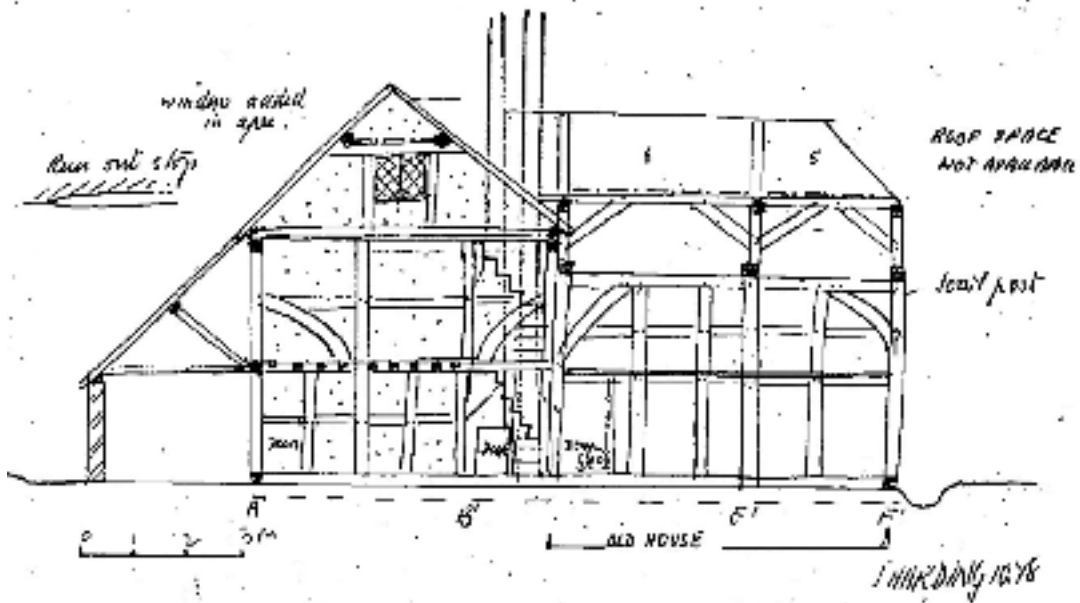


**1551** 2 ½ bay end smoke bay house built

Outshot added to the rear soon after

The smoke bay west of D was removed when the cross wing was built

### LONG DIAGRAM

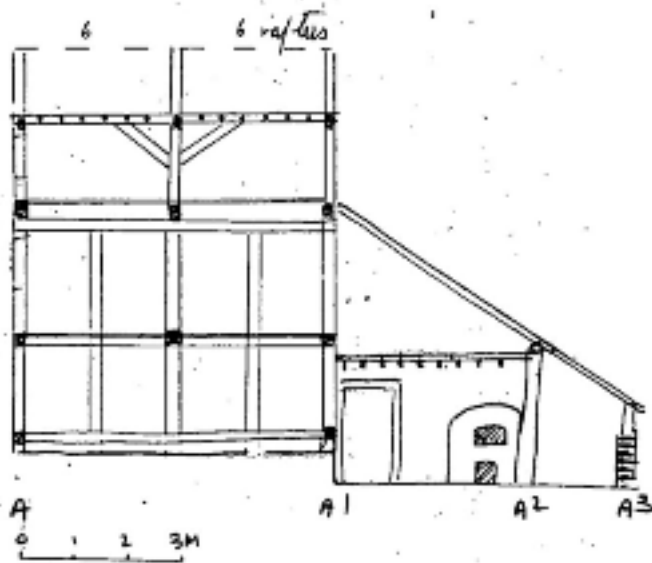


**c1600** Smoke bay removed to the west of D

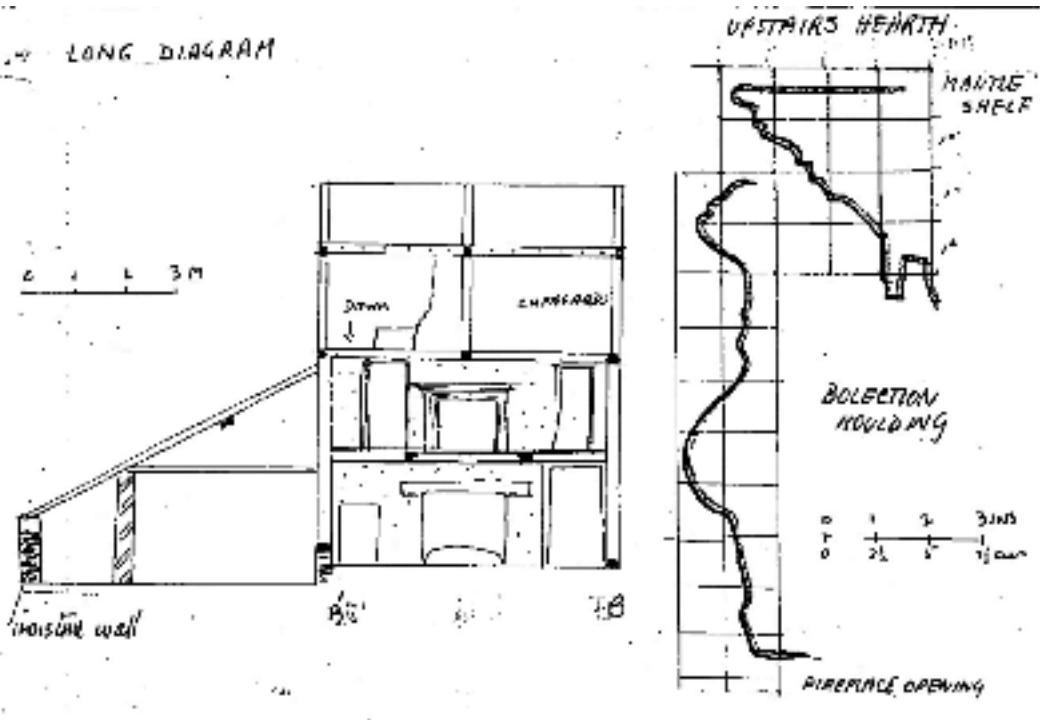
Cross wing A-C built with chimney replacing the smoke bay.

Scullery and lean-to added

Long diagram of wing at A- A<sup>1</sup>



Long diagram of wing at B<sup>1</sup>-B



## HISTORICAL NOTES

### Old Yew Tree Cottage

Old Yew Tree Cottage was the farmhouse for the medieval copyhold farm known as *Hughe's* in the Farnham manor records, after **HUGH WEYLOT** who had inherited it in **1282**. Attached to the farm were six acres of land which were in the tithing of Frensham, adjoining Ede's hatch (one of the entry ways into the Alice Holt forest). The lord of the manor was the Bishop of Winchester and the custom of the manor was that copyhold properties were inherited by the eldest son or the eldest daughter if there was no son.

The oldest part of the current building would have replaced an earlier farmhouse.

The farm was one of a series of farms held by the same family from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

**WILLIAM ATTE HULDE** was a carpenter who had inherited a farm in Wrecclesham whose farmhouse was further up The Street towards Farnham, called *Gilbert's*. He had prospered at a time when others were still suffering from the long drawn-out economic depression following the plagues of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and it was his skill as a carpenter which had helped him to flourish. In **1412** he had been hired to build the lodge in the Little Park (Farnham Park) for the Bishop of Winchester, and when the lodge was rebuilt in **1425** he, along with other carpenters, was employed for the work. Given the regular building work which was carried out at the castle itself, he was no doubt frequently employed.

William atte Hulde purchased *Hughe's* in **1414**. His son **WILLIAM** would inherit the family farm *Gilbert's* so this enabled him to leave the second property to his two daughters **JULIA** and **AGNES**. When William died, his widow **MATILDA** retained her right in it until **1450** when *Hughe's* passed first to Julia, the eldest, who was married to **JOHN MIXENBROKE**. It then passed to her younger sister Agnes who was married to **JOHN PARYS**.

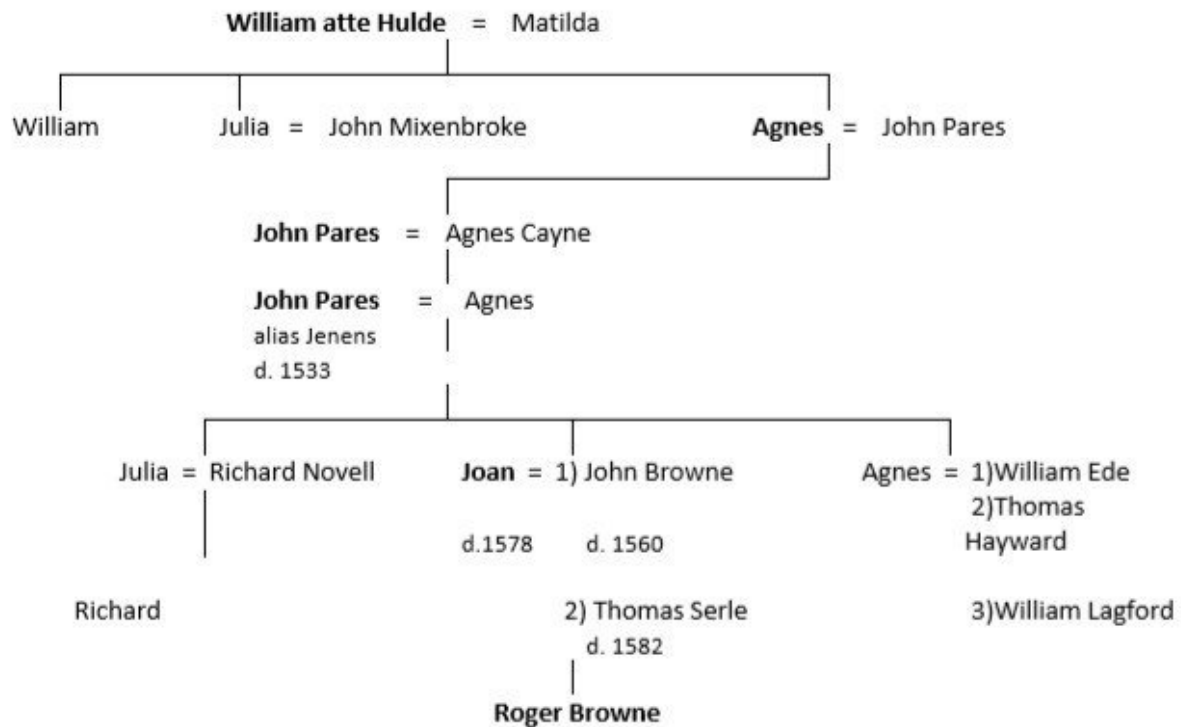
John Parys owned the smallholding, *Garlands*, with the farmhouse (now 1 Albion Cottages) next door to Old Yew Tree Cottage which he had purchased in **1433**. John and Agnes' son was also named **JOHN** and he inherited both his father's and his mother's farms in accordance with the custom of the manor. John, the younger, married another **AGNES**, the daughter of **THOMAS CAYME** who owned another farm in Wrecclesham. It was known as *Thurban's* and the farmhouse was in School Hill.

The second John and Agnes Pares also had a son they named John who is recorded as **JOHN PARES** alias **JENENS**. Once his parents had died, he inherited all three farms, *Hughe's*, *Garland's* and *Thurbans*. To further confuse things, he also married an Agnes. They had three daughters. When John died in **1533**, John's widow retained the land in accordance with her right. Once she had died, the farms should have passed to their eldest daughter, **JULIA** who married **JOHN NOVELL**. However, John had arranged his affairs so that each of their three daughters would receive one of the three copyholds.

Julia inherited the larger farm, *Thurban's*. The second daughter, **JOAN** who married **JOHN BROWNE**, inherited *Hughe's*. Agnes, the youngest daughter who had three husbands, inherited *Garlands*.

After Joan Browne was widowed in **1560**, she remarried. Her new husband was **THOMAS SERLE**, her widowed neighbour in The Street. In **1569** she transferred the farm to her eldest son and heir **ROGER BROWNE**, though retaining a life interest. The farm remained in the family until **1661** when it was sold by her great-great grandson **JOHN BROWNE**.

A rent charge was set up on the six acres of land at Ede's hatch, in order to endow an income for the support of a schoolmaster to teach Latin in the schoolhouse adjoining the church of Farnham.



Extract of the family tree of William atte Hulde  
 The owners of *Hughe's* (Old Yew Tree Cottage) are shown in bold

The oldest part of the current building (Old Yew Tree Cottage) was built in **1551**. Joan and John Browne were the owners at the time and their son Roger would have been born by then. Joan's mother, Agnes was entitled to hold on to the farm for her life after her husband had died in **1533** so this may have been the first opportunity that Joan and her husband had the control to rebuild the farmhouse to leave to their son, Roger.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All this information is taken from Pat Heather's articles in Farnham & District Museum Journals Volumes 15 No 2 (June 2008) and Volume 15 No 6 (June 2009).

# Glossary

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Bay               | The portion of a timber-framed building between principal supporting timbers   |
| Brace             | A subsidiary timber, curved or straight.   |
| Brace, arch       | Brace from post to tiebeam   |
| Brace, down       | Brace from a vertical to a lower horizontal timber.  |
| Collar            | Transverse timber connecting rafters at a point above their feet and below the apex of the roof  |
| Cross wing        | Section of a house roofed at right angles to the adjacent main range.  |
| Gabled roof       | A pitched roof with a vertical wall at the end which goes all the way up to the apex   |
| Half hipped roof  | An end to a pitched roof which instead of sloping up from the eaves, as does a hipped end, is gabled part way and hipped for the remainder |
| Jowl post         | Expansion of the inner face of the top of a wall post to accommodate housings for wall plate and tie beam                                  |
| Mullion           | Vertical wooden members between the lights of the opening of a window, instead of glass  |
| Purlin            | Horizontal longitudinal timber in a roof structure   |
| Purlin, clasped   | A purlin supported by a collar, queen post or raking strut and resting against the soffit of a principal                                   |
| Rafter            | Inclined timber, usually one of a pair, which supports laths under the roof covering.  |
| Rafter, principal | A rafter which forms part of the truss   |
| Scarf joint       | A method of joining two timbers end to end   |
| Tenon             | A rectangular projection from the end of a piece of timber which goes into a mortice to form a joint                                       |
| Tie beam          | Main transverse timber connecting the tops of walls  |
| Trimmer           | A small horizontal beam into which the ends of one or more joists are framed to accommodate a stair  |
| Truss             | A framework of beams forming a rigid structure   |
| Wall plate        | Timber along the top of a wall   |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Wattle and daub | Interwoven arrangement of staves and rods filling a panel in a frame and clad in a daub of mud, straw and dung |
| Windbrace       | Straight or curved brace joining a purlin and principal rafter   |

## OCCUPATION HISTORY

The following information has been taken from notes supplied by John Birch of the Wrecclesham History Group and follows on from the ownership information provided in the Current Building and Site History chapter. Much of this information concerns occupancy rather than ownership although in reality, they could in some instances, be one and the same.

| <u>Date</u>    | <u>Occupier and source of information</u>                        |
|----------------|--|
| 1750 - 1811    | George & Ann (Nee Bonfil) Beldham                                |
| 1811 - 1820    | William Beldham (Also known as Silver Billy Beldham – see below) |
| 1820 – 1841    | John Wells (Silver Billy’s brother-in-law and also a cricketer)  |
| 1841 Tithe Map | Robert Nicholls (Tithe Map)                                      |
| 1851 Census    | Ann Turner (Census)  |
| 1861 Census    | No Record (Census)   |
| 1871 Census    | Henry and Ann Forder (Census)                                    |
| 1881 Census    | Mary Chandler (Census)   |
| 1891 Census    | Albert, Kate and Arthur Chandler (Census)                        |
| 1901 Census    | George Hack, Albert and Elizabeth Chandler (Census)              |
| 1911 Census    | Mary Loveland and Thomas Chandler (Census)                       |
| 1918 – 1929    | Hannah, Thomas and Mary Chandler (Electoral Roll)                |
| 1932 – 1939    | Albert, William and Ellen Hack (Electoral Roll)                  |
| 1945           | Elizabeth Searle (N02 Yew Tree Cottage – Electoral Roll)         |
| C. 1950/60     | W F Rankine (See below)  |
| C. 1962-2015   | Jane Pelling   |
| 2015           | Farnham Building Preservation Trust                              |

## William Beldham



(photo sourced from Wikimedia commons – no copyright)

William (Silver Billy) Beldham (1766-1862) was one of 6 children born to George and Ann Beldham and is most likely to have been born in Yew Tree Cottage. His siblings were; George 1758-1842 (also a cricketer), Elizabeth 1762-1830, John 1763-1809, Hannah (married to John Wells) 1768-1842 and Thomas 1770-1854.

Silver Billy married Ann Smith and they had one daughter who was born and died in 1800. His second wife, also an Ann, bore him eight children

He is widely acknowledged as probably one of the greatest batsmen of the underarm era. His cricket career spanned the 1782-1821 seasons, almost four decades. He probably first played for Farnham against Odiham in 1782 when he would have been 16 years of age. His career in top class cricket started in 1785 when he was invited to play for Hampshire against All England. He also played for Hambledon, Surrey and England. The journey to Hambledon was 27 miles each way and he and his brother rode horses. Due to saddle soreness they considered building a cart for the journey, but the Government introduced a tax on vehicles and they abandoned the idea.

Although known as a fine attacking batsman, he was in fact an all-rounder, and took many wickets. He was seen as a safe pair of hands in the slips and is even accredited with stumpings indicating he was sometimes the wicket keeper.

Beldham once recalled that he was paid five guineas a game in the 1780s if his team won and three guineas if they lost, plus two guineas for Tuesday's practise. Twenty years later the figures were six and four. This was a pittance compared with the money that the gentry could make from their wagers: e.g. Lord Frederick Beauclerk remarked that he made some £630 a year from cricket, but it was a good income compared with those of artisans and labourers: at the time the weekly wage of a farm labourer was something like seven shillings and sixpence. Thus, to take the 1788 season as an example, Beldham played in 10 known matches, his side winning six of them, for which he was paid 42 guineas, or £44 & 2 shillings, or slightly over two and a quarter years' wages for a farm worker.

In another recollection, he said: "You may hear that I sold matches. I will confess I once was sold myself by two men, one of whom would not bowl, and the other would not bat, his best, and lost ten pounds. The next match, at Nottingham, I joined in selling, and got my money back. But for this once, I could say I never was bought in my life; and this was not for want of offers from C and other turfmen, though often I must have been accused. For where it was worthwhile to buy, no man could keep a character; because to be out without runs or to miss a catch was, by the disappointed betting-men, deemed proof as strong as Holy Writ".

Ball tampering is nothing new. Unlike his contemporary Lord Frederick Beauclerk, Beldham was noted for his integrity and fair play. It was said of him that the only blot on his playing career was that he once biased a ball he bowled against Beauclerk, during a single wicket match at Lords in June 1806, with a lump of mud and sawdust. It had the desired effect.

He retired from cricket in 1820 and became the landlord of the Barley Mow pub at Tilford until his death in 1862. He is buried in the church yard just across the green from the Barley Mow in Tilford church yard along with his second wife Ann who survived him by 7 years.

The Bengal Lounge on the corner of The Street, Wrecclesham Road and School Hill was until 2007 The Cricketers pub where Silver Billy used to drink. His brother John was the landlord. The pub sign was saved when it became an Indian Restaurant and is now located at Wrecclesham Recreation ground just behind Yew Tree Cottage. The portrait shows Silver Billy and the unveiling was carried out by the England (also Farnham and Surrey) batsman Graham Thorpe who grew up with his parents and two older brothers on Wrecclesham Hill.

### **William Francis Rankine**

William Rankine (1877 – 1962) went to school in Dorking, Surrey but his family connections were in Scotland where he spent much time in his younger days and where he went on holiday whenever possible in later years.

He was a school master at Badshot Lea and is believed to have been a Head Teacher at Churt.

He was very interested in archaeology and the first site of outstanding importance which he discovered in the area was that of the Mesolithic habitation site on part of the land of the Farnham sewage works. This he investigated in a series of excavations between 1929 and 1935. In 1936 he discovered a Neolithic long barrow at Badshot Farm, the only such barrow in Surrey at that time. The pottery and implements found there are now in Guildford Museum.

His work on many important sites of the Mesolithic period provided the material for many important reports and research papers. Apart from being recognised as a leading authority in the field of Mesolithic studies, he was the Honorary Editor of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland 1947- 1949 and was a Fellow of that organisation.

## CONSERVATION AND CONSTRUCTION WORKS

The Trust acquired Yew Tree Cottage in September 2015 following the passing away of the previous owner, Jane Pelling, earlier that year. The intention was to date it accurately, record it, restore it using traditional building techniques and sympathetically extend it.

The Trust felt Old Yew Tree Cottage represented a rare and exciting chance to take a fairly unchanged building and try to discover some of the many secrets it held. The building also gave the Trust an opportunity to meet one its main objectives, to protect and preserve the historical architectural and constructional heritage in the town of Farnham.

Like all previous occupants of Old Yew Tree Cottage, Miss Pelling had made changes and small alterations over the years of her ownership to meet her needs. However, unlike many historic buildings in the second half of the twentieth century, these had been minimal and the Trust felt they had an unusual opportunity to conserve the building and pass it on in a much better condition and ready for a new 21<sup>st</sup> century owner.

An early discovery was that on looking up the chimney in the dining room, the hooks are still in place which were used to hang meat whilst it was curing/being smoked. Many other timbers around the building have other marks and fixings. The Trust have endeavoured to leave these as intact as possible where they were felt to be historic.

The current kitchen was two rooms when the Trust acquired the property. It was split between a very dated kitchen and a downstairs, and only, bathroom. A previously inserted stud wall (but not historic) was removed to make it one larger room and suitable for a new larger kitchen to reflect the size of the building. One of the two previous door openings to the kitchen has a very fine oak door with a linen fold moulding. This has been retained in the building although is likely not original to the cottage.

There was an external "apple store" lean to with an entrance door adjacent to the previous back door. This has been incorporated into the main cottage and is now the downstairs shower/utility/boot room. It was single skin brick to the outer walls with gaps between the bricks and timber providing plenty of ventilation! There was a similar situation in the living room.

The garage is a later addition believed to have been built in the 1980's when the property was re-roofed. Miss Pelling reputedly owned a Rolls Royce which obviously deserved a fine house of its own.

Once the Trust had assessed the condition of the building and possible solutions to making it more practical as a modern dwelling, we sought competitive tenders for the role of lead Architect. Whilst cost was an important factor, another judging criterion was an understanding of heritage buildings. This resulted in Farnham architects Stedman Blower being appointed.

The Trust's vision to bring the cottage in to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and suitable for modern life required a specialist conservation builder. R A Croft were engaged, who used traditional tools and materials to bring the original building back to its former glory. Where necessary, experts in specialist techniques, such as lime plastering, were brought in to ensure that works were completed to a very high standard. To enhance the way the building functions a new entrance lobby, staircase and bathroom were added using more modern techniques. The Trust adopted an honest approach to make sure that the old and the new sit side by side but are evident to future historians trying to decipher the building.

In parallel with the conservation process, the Trust sought to determine the exact age of the oldest part of the building. Dendrochronological (tree ring) dating was carried out by Rod Wild of the Surrey Dendrochronology Project and Andy Moir of Tree Ring Services who initially thought that the timbers might not be suitable for the process. That was, fortunately, found not to be the case and it was possible to provide an accurate date of 1551 for the oldest part of the building. The newer parlour wing is made of elm and was therefore unsuitable for dendro-dating.

The chapter on Site and Building History has described the constructional evolution of the building. The Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) (DBRG) had previously reported on the construction of the building in the 1970's but had not been able at that time to undertake a full inspection of the roof timbers. During the Farnham Trust's work, it was found necessary to remove the roof, and the DBRG were then able to carry out a full inspection which enabled them to update and re-write the previous history.

Following the appointment of Stedman Blower, initial drawings were prepared incorporating an extension with a two-storey staircase up to the top bedroom. On cost and conservation principle grounds this had to be reduced to a single storey.

In preparing for the planning application and listed building application, consultants were called in to advise on ecology and structural engineering. Prior to any application being submitted, a bat survey was required but this can only be done between May and September when the bats are active. It was carried out during May and June 2016 and revealed the presence of summer roosting bats under the roof tiles, mainly Pipistrelle, but no hibernating bats or maternal roosts.

The Structural Engineer identified the need for some underpinning, mainly in the area of the old "apple store" (now the ground floor boot/utility/shower room) and the garage.

Once the final scheme had been agreed with the Trust, the Architect submitted the Planning and Listed Building applications. A short-list of contractors was prepared and interviewed. R A Croft were selected, and they commenced works in September 2017.

During the works, a problem with the roof was discovered. The cottage had been re-roofed in the 1980's including bitumen felt and insulation. As was typical at the time, ventilation was not incorporated. Later in the Trust's project when the ceiling plaster was removed, rot to timbers was identified, which meant that the whole roof had to be taken off. It was at this stage that the DBRG were able to refine their development history of the property, but

only once the chimneys had been re-built (they were very unstable and in danger of being blown down in a wind) and upper floor joists properly secured to the outer walls. Typically for properties of this age, the walls move out at upper levels meaning that in some places, the joists were only being supported by a few millimetres.

With the flooring, it was decided to leave the old brick floors to the living and dining rooms, but to clean them up. What is now the kitchen, the downstairs day room and bedroom all had concrete floors. The apple store was just dirt, and this was replaced with a limecrete floor. All were then tiled, the concrete floors with ceramic tiles whilst over the limecrete floor stone tiles were used to maintain breathability. As much of the timber floors up-stairs were retained as possible although some timbers had to be replaced due to rot/woodworm. In the course of the works, all timbers were treated for woodworm.

The conservation works turned out to be more comprehensive than the Trust had anticipated and in hindsight, but with rather a large cost, the Trust are delighted to have made Old Yew Cottage fit for, hopefully, many centuries to come.

The timber frame has been made structurally sound, the roof is fully insulated and watertight, the infill panels are weather tight, and the plumbing and electrics have been replaced. In addition the cottage benefits from 21<sup>st</sup> century technology such as modern heating, Wifi ability and USB ports in most rooms.

The Trust are very proud to have made this special building safe and comfortable for its next guardian and owner.

## Photographic Diary of the Conservation Works



It soon became apparent that many of the lath and plaster ceilings were in a bad state and the hard decision to remove many of these had to be taken. Where they were found to be stable they were left.



A previous reroofing had used bitumen felt and a non-breathable insulation leading to dampness and some rot in the rafters.



Some floorboards in the en-suite and bedrooms were taken up and carefully numbered for re-laying in original position later in the project.



Many of the walls were in a sorry state. There was also a huge variation in panel infills from wattle and daub, lime, brick and cement. Each panel was individually labelled with its construction to aid restoration work.



By late 2017 it had become apparent that works were urgently needed to the roof timbers so the decision was taken to take the whole roof down and carry out repairs where necessary. The timbers were replaced, like for like which meant with oak in most cases. This included rafters, wall plates and many other supporting timbers. Worryingly, some rafters were found to be 'floating' on air and so once the weight of the tiles was removed it was possible to 'wobble' the roof by hand. The tiles were a mixture of older clay tiles and later 20<sup>th</sup> century ones. As the Trust were not permitted to replace the roof with reclaimed tiles they were sold to offset the cost of new clay tiles.

This picture shows the poor state of the roof in the apple store and varying panel infills. A new doorway into one of the bedrooms from the new extension was made by removing some brick infill from the frame, leaving the frame intact.





Many timber repairs were required to make the frame structurally sound for another few hundred years. This picture shows one of the joints - between main truss, wall plate and tie beam. Minimal intervention was employed to repair the frame with new oak only where necessary.

The frame was completely exposed as a result of the re-roof decision, providing an unexpected opportunity to re-assess the history and development of the building.

This picture shows the cat slide roof of the newer wing extending down into the apple store. It was at the joining point of the two sets of rafters that they were found to be floating from the wall plate of the frame.



Another view of the poor condition of the rafters at wall plate level.

This joint is at the corner of the frame adjoining the apple store. The timbers were small and flaky. New oak was inserted, spliced into the existing frame.



In some places, cement mortar had been used to repair timber frame joints. This was removed and lime mortar used to seal around timbers where necessary.

The chimney was felt to be unsafe so this was also rebuilt reusing the bricks where possible. A new liner was inserted and a stone slab cap.

Some of the roofing timbers had been built into the chimney and so solutions were found to make it safer, supporting the timbers against the chimney rather than 'into' the chimney when it was rebuilt.

This point of the roof marked the join between the original part of the frame and the later frame. Very small timbers had been used around the chimney.



The roof had a beautiful 'waviness' with the natural undulations formed from centuries of frame movement and fluctuations in the rafter timbers.

It was a condition of the listed building consent, and desire of the Trust, to retain these undulations and allow the roof to conserve the historic character of its huge roof.

Replacement or supporting timbers were all in line with existing. The insulation, batons and resulting roof therefore follows the original form.



This picture shows one of the repaired assembly joints. The top of the post had rotted away so a piece of new oak was inserted into the joint to allow the post, wall plate and tie beam to be securely joined again restoring the structural integrity of the frame.





Whilst the roof was off it was possible to view the space above the back outshot. We discovered an old window opening with diamond mullions that would have provided light into the master bedroom.

The chimney after being rebuilt showing three chambers.

A stone paving slab was then placed to top the chimney.

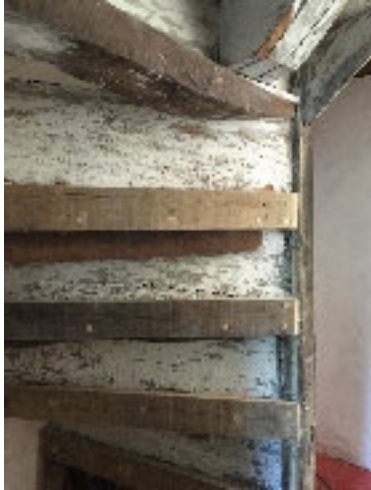


Many of the lathe and plaster ceilings were falling down as the plaster had become delaminated from the lathes. There was great variation in the width of the riven lathes from approximately 1cm to 6cm. As a cost saving the Trust had to take the decision to use a metal mesh to attach the new lime plaster to instead of wooden lathes. The picture shows the scratch coat.

The finished roof, retaining the long cat slide roof with undulations.

New clay tiles were used as a condition of the listed building consent. The colour was carefully chosen with the approval of the council's conservation team to ensure a local tile colour was achieved once the tiles have had time to mellow to a softer colour.





The original spiral staircase had some structural weakness so new oak supports were introduced to add stability. Original timber and treads were left in place along with original whitewashing.

All internal timbers were checked and treated for woodworm as part of the conservation works.

All internal and external panel infills were repaired sympathetically. Minimal intervention was used, with panels being only sanded down and repainted in a clay breathable paint where panels were good.

Some panels needed greater intervention with previous cement additions or loose lime plaster removed and new lime plaster repairs carried out.

All new wall finishes are breathable to allow the historic fabric to breathe.



Some panels were in poor condition. The sill had also rotted so the brick infill and timbers were replaced. Bricks were reused where possible.

Below is the same part of the frame during repair. New oak sill, rails and studs.





Another part of the frame, just to the right of the front door, had also rotted to the point of making it structurally weak. This was mainly due to water ingress where cement had been put over the joint, trapping moisture. New oak was used to repair it. Lime mortar was then used to cap the wall below, maintaining breathability.



## THE HISTORY OF WRECCLESHAM

*The following has been taken from the Wrecclesham History Group who credit their webpage with "The information in this section has been largely adapted from an anonymous paper believed to be written by Pat Heather".*

Wrecclesham's long history is evidenced by the discovery in the district of stone tools, Bronze age and Iron Age occupation sites and Roman pottery. It is possible that the original settlement would have developed more to the east of the present village where there was a convergence of tracks leading to the ford at the bottom of the hill. The Street did not become the main road as we understand it until the 1820's although it would have been an important trackway in and out of the forest particularly when the Roman kilns were active.

By the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, the Bishops of Winchester had acquired the Manor of Farnham and Wrecclesham formed one of the smaller administrative divisions known as a 'Tithing'. The original tithing included part of Rowledge, Boundstone and Upper and Middle Bourne. Weydon Mill, formerly at the end of Red Lion Lane in Farnham, but now demolished was also included. The name Wrecclesham is Saxon in origin but its derivation is unclear. It may derive from the Old English word 'wrecel' denoting something driven away and has been interpreted as making Wrecclesham an area for outlaws or outcasts! Another suggestion is that it might have derived from a personal name.

The earliest known mention of Wrecclesham as a name is in 1225. Variations of the name are found with both c's and k's. It is 'Worklesham' in 1344 and 'Racelsan' in 1675. The local pronunciation, 'Wracklesham' has persisted into modern times.

Like much of the country Wrecclesham was severely affected by events such as the Black Death and the Civil War but recovery was aided by the range of farming land available, with meadows and wetlands by the river to lighter sandy soils further up the valley. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century hop growing was of particular importance to the local economy with the annual picking in September requiring a huge amount of casual labour. Gradually the village would have taken on the shape we recognise today. The oldest buildings date from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries but as well as these, there are also those from the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Even the modern houses in the Street are often on the site of earlier properties which have now disappeared.

Until the construction of the Farnham to Petersfield Turnpike Road in the 1820's the present A31 was the main route westwards and the journey to Petersfield was via Alton and Selborne. The road through Wrecclesham led out into the forest and the Street, appropriately was at one time referred to as 'Holtstrete'. The turnpike required the construction of new stretches of road, including that from Coxbridge to the Street, replacing the narrow River Lane which had been the former way to the village. The new road was then continued through Alice Holt and on to Bordon and beyond.

The nineteenth century saw many improvements to the village, mainly at the instigation of the Bishop of Winchester, Charles Sumner. In 1840 the Vicar of St Andrews Church, in Farnham, was asked to consider the provision of churches for both Wrecclesham and Hale.

The land for the Church was given by William Pinke Paine, a wealthy local land owner. His son, John Manwaring Paine, who had a quarry at Dippenhall, gave the stone to build the church. The Church building cost £1442 which was met by grants and personal subscriptions of local people. Donations raised £1473. Significantly, the large majority were from Farnham residents who contributed 51% of the funds raised. Less than £7 (0.5%) was raised from Wrecclesham residents. However, this only represented part of the story. Many locals gave contributions in kind. The list of subscribers records that teams of horses were provided for the work by 14 farmers, which amounted to a contribution of 66 horse-days. 12 Wrecclesham men each donated one day's labour to the building work and 22 others gave items towards the furnishing or fitting out of the church. The Church was opened and consecrated by Bishop Sumner on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1840, St Swithun's Day.

A village school was built in the same year. The original school building was close to the church, but this soon became overcrowded with local children, who had previously had little or no school opportunity. In 1859 the school was relocated to new buildings up the hill and just above the Church. Unfortunately, this building was built on sand and became unstable and, in 1909, the school was again relocated to the site where it remains to this day.

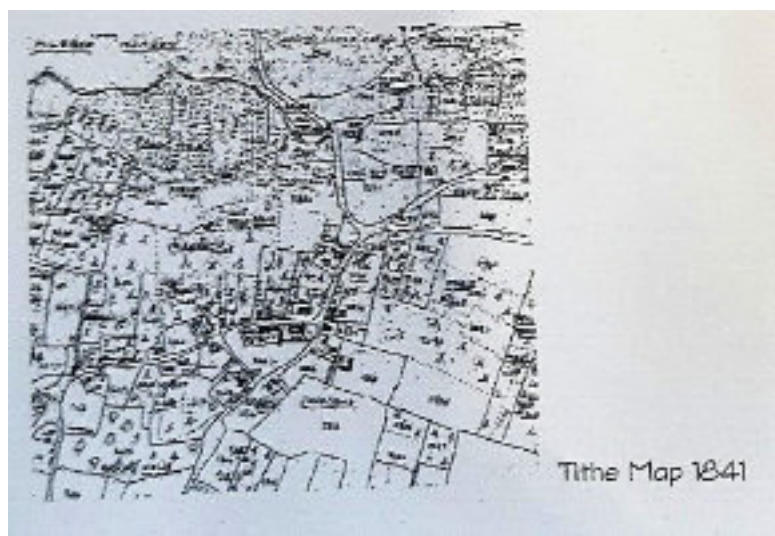
Among the many initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for the residents was the introduction of a water supply and pump for the use of the village. The Almshouses were built in 1861. Sand and gravel had always been dug locally but the coming of the railway to Farnham in 1849 made transportation easier and much land including local hop grounds were given to this profitable venture. In 1872 Absalom Harris moved his local pottery business from the edge of the Alice Holt forest to its present site. The well-known Farnham Pottery in Wrecclesham soon established a reputation which went far beyond the village.

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as agriculture lost its dominance, so the village changed and light industry appeared. The pressure for housing led to large scale developments around the edge of the village, notably the large pre-war Woodcut and Broadwell estates and now more recently the Riverdale Estate and St Peter's Gardens. Meanwhile Farnham was spreading its tentacles westwards and large housing estates emerged which almost totally filled the land which had previously provided a gap between Farnham and Wrecclesham.

Traffic through the village increased rapidly during the twentieth century. As well as being the main road to Petersfield and Portsmouth, it was also the direct link between the army camps of Bordon and Aldershot. Widening of the Street has taken place from time to time to accommodate the traffic but with the planned growth of Bordon the case for a western by pass to take the traffic out of the village is becoming more and more necessary.

Some significant renovation projects have been carried out to properties in the Street. Albion Cottages has been revealed as an important historical property and restored. Turners Cottages, a row of very small buildings in, were empty for some years but are all now sold and occupied. The Farnham Building Preservation Trust has also been active in the village by purchasing the Farnham Pottery (off Quennells Lane), saving the unique buildings which

were under threat of demolition, restoring them and then selling on to new owners. The Farnham Pottery is now a popular community-based arts, craft and education experience inspired by its history as a working pottery.



Old Maps of Wrecchlesham

## **FARNHAM BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST**

The Farnham Building Preservation Trust Limited was founded in 1968 by Sir John Verney, Bt., and Richard Dufty CBE, DLitt, FSA, two men of imagination and vision who had between them considerable expert knowledge of the town and its buildings. The Trust was incorporated as a Company on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 1968. It was one of the first building preservation trusts to be set up in this country, setting an example which has been followed by many other such trusts in subsequent years.

Architect Michael Blower, now President of the Trust, had worked with Sir John Verney as a member of a listed buildings working party which had the task of identifying the many Farnham buildings of historical or architectural importance which had been missed when the statutory list had been introduced in 1947. Mr Blower joined the Trust in 1973 and served it for many years as consultant architect, and successively secretary, vice chairman and then chairman until 2000.

In the 1960's, the concept of conservation was growing in importance, in reaction to post-war trends which saw widespread demolition of older buildings, and replacement with modern buildings often perceived as much less attractive. The Trust's founders saw that in many cases although the more important buildings were being given the protection of Listed status, numerous smaller old buildings, which contributed a great deal to the character of the street scene but were less highly regarded, were being swept away. They therefore set up the Farnham Trust with the particular aim of saving such buildings, restoring them and returning them in good condition for use by the community.

One of the Trust's first projects was at the Farnham Maltings in 1969. The old buildings had been left empty and abandoned, they had fallen into disrepair, and various plans to develop the site had been submitted, including a proposal to convert two of the buildings in to 25 flats and demolish the remainder.

A campaign to save the buildings was launched and the people of Farnham raised £18,000 towards the £30,000 required by Courage's Brewery, the owners. The Farnham Trust, led by Sir John Verney and Richard Dufty, raised the remaining £12,000 with grants from Surrey County Council and The Pilgrim Trust. The Trust bought 9 cottages which were part of the Maltings site, thus providing the balance of the funds needed to complete the purchase. These cottages, including Tanyard House, one of the oldest buildings in Farnham, were gradually restored by the Trust and sold. Now, nearly 50 years later, Farnham Maltings is a very active and successful arts and community centre, an important asset to the town.



Tanyard House at The Maltings – Copyright Farnham Trust

The Farnham Trust is mainly self-funding, operating where possible on the principle of “rolling capital”, acquiring properties, refurbishing them and selling them with the aim of rescuing threatened buildings, large and small, which form part of the local heritage and returning them to the community with a viable use.

As well as restoring threatened buildings, the Trust has been active in offering Grants to restoration projects and supporting young people in obtaining qualifications in traditional building methods.

The Trust has no regular source of income other than that generated by projects and gratefully acknowledges valuable grant assistance with past projects provided by English Heritage, the Pilgrim Trust and Waverley Borough Council. In the 1990s, the sale of a property in Farnham which had been bequeathed to the Trust provided some capital reserves which were used in the purchase and restoration of the Farnham Pottery.