

WADD'S IN A NAME

Our meeting in January 2010 was based on some of the place names in Whilton, beginning by re-visiting a Newsletter article by Harold Haynes published in December 1997. He called it "Wadd's in a name?", and raised a number of questions and suggestions, some of which can now be answered.

Harold rightly guessed that **Wadd Close** came from the word "woad". From the late 17th century until the enclosure, Whilton was in the area known for its woad growing and processing. The woad people were itinerant, staying for three or four years in an area, and then moving on. They would return twelve to fifteen years later. Woad was not grown in the open fields, but in old enclosures near the village. Landowners would grant leases to the woadmen who organised this. Woad Close and second Woad Close fitted into this category. Some of the enclosures of Roughmoor and fields in Brington and Norton were used for woad.

Harold was intrigued by the name "**Top of the Town Close**", saying you could hardly call this a town. In fact you could. The suffix "ton" is a Saxon word meaning settlement or village, and in many records over the centuries there are references to the "township" of Whilton. Modern "Hill Top" stands in this close. Not only does it mark the top of the hill, but it also marked the end of the village before the enclosure, when the road took a different route down to the valley.

Inkerman is another puzzle, because no record suggests that a Whilton man fought in the Battle of Inkerman in the Crimea in 1854. However, in the previous year, a Captain George Jenkinson of Weedon Barracks had purchased Whilton Lodge, including the Mill and its farm. The Captain and his family lived in Whilton for a few years, becoming involved in parish affairs, before he left for his new home after becoming the eleventh Earl of Liverpool. It would seem likely that he had some influence in renaming the field in honour of the great battle.

Harold mentioned **Windmill Close**, **Dairy Ground** and **Donkey Field** as having obvious meanings, the Donkey Field being where the Rector kept the donkey which pulled the mowing machine over the Rectory lawns. The Donkey Field was next to a much larger old enclosure, known as the **Dove House Close**. The medieval dove house may well have stood in this field.

Harold wondered who was the Tarry of **Tarry's Orchard**. Edward Tarry was born in about 1832 in Chapel Brampton. His mother, Ann, had come from Whilton. When his father died, Edward came to live in The Old Cottage, Whilton, with his uncle John Dunkley, a bachelor. The records suggest he may have had an unhappy childhood, and this may be what prompted him to leave for Australia. When John Dunkley died in 1866, leaving his house and land to his nephew, Edward Tarry came back from Melbourne. He lived the rest of his life in the Old Cottage, being a grazier here. Presumably Tarry's Orchard was used for grazing and apple growing. Edward Tarry died a widower with no children in 1907.

Collins Orchard was remembered by Harold as a place for scrumping pears. There were Collins families in Whilton throughout the 19th century. In 1841 Thomas Collins and his family were living in a cottage next to the Wheatsheaf pub in Brington Lane; almost certainly it was they who gave the name to the field beyond their cottage. Thomas was an agricultural labourer.

Harold believed the three fields called **Butlins** to the north of the road going down Whilton Hill, may have once been farmed by William Langton Wright Butlin. In fact they were allotments to John Butlin at the enclosure in 1778. John Butlin must have been a relative of William Langton Wright Butlin and both were living in Whilton at this time. Later John Butlin seems to have moved to Duston, and let his farmland to Thomas Humphrey.

The Humphrey family were butchers and some were millers. Harold guessed that the two fields off the Brington Road known as **John Humphreys** were allotted to John Humphrey the butcher in 1778. This is probably correct. It is interesting that some of the original names of people who gained land at the enclosure have been preserved in these field names after two and a quarter centuries. **Lang's Hill Meadow** and **Langs Hill** were allotments to Perridge Langton and **Joe Langs** was allotted to Joseph Langton at the enclosure.

Harold noted that one of the fields in the glebeland has the intriguing name, "**Anglends**". This is in fact a very old name. The first record of it is in 1501, when it was part of the open **Fen Field**, and was known as Hanging Lands or Hanglands, that is "land on a slope".