An Historical Survey of Public Houses in Stonesfield Oxfordshire

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Stonesfield is a village and parish, 3 miles north-west from Handborough station, and 3 south-east from Charlbury station, both on the Oxford and Worcester section of the Great Western railway, and 4 miles west from Woodstock, in the Mid division of the county, hundred of Wootton, petty sessional division of Wootton South, Woodstock union and county court district, rural deanery of Woodstock and archdeaconry and diocese of Oxford. The river Evenlode flows on the south and forms the boundary.1

The Domesday Book of 1086 records Stonesfield as *Stunsfeld*, meaning "fool's field". This was because of the stony soil in the area, so the toponym's mutation is most appropriate. Thomas Hearne used the spelling "Stunsfield" in 1712 when he visited the village in order to make observations regarding the tessellated pavement at the Roman Villa.

Stonesfield presumably began as a clearing in Wychwood Forest, and forest clearances continued to play an important part in its history. Stonesfield formed part of the western portion of the royal forest in the 13th century, and in the 17th century it was claimed that the area had been deforested since the reign of Richard III; attempts to reimpose forest laws were resisted vigorously. As one of the seven demesne townships forming the honour of Woodstock, Stonesfield received privileges but was liable to special taxation and an obligation to provide minor services in Woodstock Park. The continued ownership of the parish by absentee landlords, and its industrial character which encouraged its people to be outward-looking and independent were also important in its history. Although essentially an agricultural community Stonesfield was also a source of unique roofing slates and a centre of the local gloving industry. The financial independence thus acquired by the villagers sometimes caused misgivings among their social superiors, who hinted at its effect on their moral condition. The presence of industry made contraction in the 19th century less severe than in more agricultural villages. After the Second World War the village increasingly attracted commuters, gaining a reputation beyond its boundaries for welcoming newcomers into village life.2

Only 8 people were enumerated at Stonesfield in 1086, but in 1279 tenants and jurors numbered 36, suggesting some expansion but a community smaller than most of its neighbours. In 1377 there were 60 people over 14, suggesting that Stonesfield had suffered less heavily from plague than many Oxfordshire places. There may have been some decline by the mid 16th century when there were only 48 communicants, but a recovery is indicated by the 56 adult males recorded in 1642, the 31 householders taxed in 1662, and the 107 adults recorded in 1676. The population grew in the 18th century: there were 257 inhabitants in 1771 and 374 in 1801, rising to a peak of 650 in 1861, emigration largely balanced natural increase. In 1845 15 Stonesfield people were among those drowned in the sinking of a ship taking migrants to Tasmania. Between 1861 and 1871 the population fell by 12 per cent, attributed to migration to manufacturing towns, and in the 1890s there was another sharp fall to only 491; numbers then remained static until the Second World War. In the late 19th century and early 20th many Stonesfield people emigrated to Canada, mostly to British Columbia. Between 1951 and 1971, as the village became a dormitory for people working in Oxford and elsewhere, the population more than doubled to 1,170. In 1979 the population was 1,340.2 The 2011 Census recorded the parish's population as 1,527.

In 1871, with a population of 537 and seven public houses, there was one pub for every 76 inhabitants whereas in 2011, with the population now at 1527 and only one pub it was getting very crowded in the bar! But then, of course, in 1861 the majority of the village inhabitants not only lived in the village but also worked here and the work was mostly hard manual labour, either agricultural or slate mining, very thirsty work! In the twenty first century most people who live in the village travel to work elsewhere and the work is not so manually intensive.
Part 2: Public Houses of Stonesfield

Rose and Crown

Early in March 1622 Robert Keate signed his Last Will and Testament, died shortly afterwards and was duly buried in Stonesfield on 10th of that month. His name was found by using a search criteria of 'Victualler Stonesfield' but unfortunately there is no mention of which public house he was the victualler of, either in his Will or the Parish Register. But it may be reasonable to assume that it was the Rose & Crown, because that was probably the oldest known public house in the village, situated on the south side of High Street. It was mentioned by Thomas Hearne (1678-1735) in 1712 when he paid a visit:

‘On Sunday Febr. 24th 1712 I walk’d over again to Stunsfield. … I was at Prayers at Stunsfield Church. One Mr Hart read. He is Curate & serves also at Combe. As soon as Prayers were done I went to the Rose and Crown, & endeavoured to be unknown; …’

There is also no mention in his Will that Thomas Gardiner, (born 1681 and married Mary Harries of Northley on 15th September 1706), who died in August 1741 and was buried on the 16th of that month in Stonesfield had anything to do with a public house. But looking ahead to 1754 a Thomas Gardener is mentioned in the Victuallers Recognizances as holding a licence for the Rose & Crown. By reading the Wills of the two Gardeners it is apparent that they were father and son and that the son took on the Rose & Crown licence from his father. As the father was the landlord in 1741 there is every possibility that, having married Mary Harries in 1706, he and his wife moved into the pub shortly afterwards and he was the person who served Thomas Hearne his pint in 1712.

Thomas Gardiner senior was succeeded by his son Thomas Gardener (born 1709 and married Margaret Fowler on 28th December 1734) who held the licence for the next 38 years until his death in December 1779. Thomas Gardener was buried on 29th December 1779 and it was noted that he was a farmer and inn-holder at the Rose and Crown. Thomas sired eight children, five boys and three girls. In his Will Thomas bequeathed ‘All my brewing utensils, barrels, stands, and stock of beer, one long table and one form’ to his son Richard. This would suggest that the Rose & Crown had its own brew house. There was also mention of the Friendly Society or Club in the Will. Margaret Gardener, widow of late Thomas, Publican was buried 3rd July 1783.

Richard Gardner only held the licence until 1783 when it passed to John Fowler. John Fowler had married Martha Gardener (Richard’s sister), of Stonesfield, on 6th September 1780 and four years later, in October 1784 they had taken on the licence of the Rose & Crown. John Fowler remained at the Rose & Crown until his death in 1802 (his Will is dated 9th November 1802) when Martha took on the licence. Martha held it for three years and after her death in 1805 their son Charles took up the licence. Charles was the holder for only five years before relinquishing it to his brother Robert who stayed for the next twenty-one years. Between them the Gardener/ Fowler family had run the Rose & Crown for more than 100 years.

In the evening of 5th November 1765 thirteen men met in the Rose & Crown and each paid one-shilling (5p) entry fee to found the “Stonesfield Friendly Society” also known as “The Club”. Quarterly subscriptions were 3s. 3d. and sickness benefits were 7s. a week for a year if necessary, then 3s. 6d. for a second year, ‘then quarter pay until he be perfectly recovered or dead’; those receiving benefit were said to be ‘on the box’. Grants to a widow and funeral benefits were also paid. The success of such an early rural friendly society owed much to the industrial character of Stonesfield. It was founded “to raise by subscription a fund for old age, sickness of members and the support of widows”. They were, in fact, the forerunners of the Welfare State. The first one in Oxfordshire started in Woodstock in 1757. In 1858 “The Club” transferred its headquarters to the Black Head and in 1912 the society was incorporated into the Ancient Order of Foresters.

In 1911 Esther Bishop (born in Combe in 1872) was the landlady, supplementing her income by being a haulier for the county council, and a widow with five children. Ralph, age 9, Albert 8, George 6, Gertrude 5 and Enias 2.


- 1779-11-22 Thomas Gardner, Victualler, died and left his property to his son Richard Gardner.
- 1780-06-20 Extract of the will of Thomas Gardner.
- 1802-11-09 Probate of the will of John Fowler.
1911 The Rose & Crown with Bert Bishop (age 8) & Esther Bishop (age 39) the Landlady

From Jackson's Oxford Journal:

Saturday 31 October 1835

'Rose and Crown, Stonesfield. A Gentleman having left a double-barrelled GUN at the above house, this is to inform him that unless it is fetched away in the course of a week, and the expenses paid, it will be sold to defray the same. October 31, 1835 Thos. Law.'

Saturday 10 March 1860

'SUICIDE. – On Thursday the 1st instant a melancholy occurrence took place in Stonesfield. A young man named Francis Smith, who appears to have been of unsound mind and subject to fits, returned home about nine o’clock, somewhat dejected in spirits; having seated himself near a table, around which others were seated, he leant forward, resting his head upon his arm, when, to the surprise and horror of those present, blood was seen falling upon the floor, and it was immediately discovered that he had cut his throat in a most frightful manner with a razor, which had been left in a drawer in the room, and which he must have succeeded in gaining possession of. Shortly after this sad occurrence he was seized with a fit, which caused the last spark of life to ebb from his body. An inquest was held at the Crown Inn, Stonesfield, on Saturday last, before Mr. F. Westwell, when a verdict of “Temporary insanity” was returned. This event has cast a gloom over the village in which it took place.’ Buried in Stonesfield on 4th March 1860.

Saturday 05 October 1867

‘Died. – Sept. 30, aged 15, James, third son of the late Edmund Harper, of the Rose and Crown Inn, Stonesfield.’

From the Oxford Times dated 7th December 1867: ‘Jane Harper, of Stonesfield, Inn Keeper, was fined 12s 6d for having in her possession unjust measures, viz., one quart and three pint measures.’

In the 1885 Electoral Register Harry Oldacre is cited as living in a dwelling house known as the Rose & Crown.

The Rose & Crown was demolished in 1958 to make way for a new schoolyard. In 1992 five low cost houses were erected on the site.

Planning applications (WODC):
1958 - Use of land as an extension of the site of the adj Stonesfield County Primary Schools ref. C57/0227 granted 15th March 1958.
c1914 A young Gertie Bishop (age 8) poses outside the Rose & Crown

A sketch of the village shop and the Rose & Crown, early 1930s, by Mrs M Warren
The Chequer

This public house was situated on the south side of Laughton's Hill. It was licensed from the mid 18th century when William Cudd was shown to be the licensee in 1753. The pub was apparently a favourite resort of entertainers travelling through Stonesfield.

6th December 1772 Thomas Cambden, son of John (Publican) and Margaret was buried.

3rd July 1783 Margaret Cambden, wife of John was buried.

The 1801 Census shows John Castle as being the Publican. He died in 1807 and his wife, Ann Castle, took on the licence until 1822.

It had ceased trading by 1847 and is now owned by Blenheim Estates.
1897 High Street with the Maltster & Shovel on the left

1900s Boot Street with the Boot Inn on the Left

1900s Looking across the Green to the White Horse

1940s Looking along The Riding with the White Horse on the left

ca. 1905 The Black Head

2002 The Black Head

2011 The Black Head
A stone from the Maltster & Shovel

1970s The Boot Inn

2015 The Chequer
The Boot Inn

Situated on the west side of Boot Street, this public house was licensed from the mid 18th century when John Howes was registered as the licence holder in 1753 and it continued to trade until 1972 when it closed. It was restored and reopened in 1974, but closed again in 1979. Since then this once thriving village pub became a private residence. The problem was that a one-bar pub without a restaurant could not generate enough income to service a mortgage and a brewery loan.

In the latter years of Frederick Griffin’s tenancy he would take a jug down to the cellar and fill it straight from the cask ready for opening time. If a customer visited the pub in the early evening he was assured of a fresh pint of beer, but if custom was slow and one visited late in the evening he would get a pint from the same jug of not so fresh beer.

John Haynes is shown as living in Dwelling Houses (successive) known as The Tower and The Boot in the Electoral Register of 1885.

The Last Years of the Boot Inn

In 1973 Ind Coope decided to close down and sell the old Boot Inn and the pub’s garden across the street by auction ‘with benefit of licence’. John Leaves and Tony Crofts bought it, with the aim of reopening it as a pub. The garden was bulldozed to form a car park; and they spent a year working on the building, forming a bridge to link the main pub and the clubroom/toilet building. The new Boot Inn finally opened triumphantly in February 1974 and, mercifully, the fire in the big inglenook actually stopped smoking on the opening night. The only pub in the village with a proper cellar, it rapidly went ‘free’, introducing first Scottish and Newcastle and later Charrington’s beers, together with a regular policy of live music. Rock bands, soloists and an eccentric group based around a Northumbrian pipe player all appeared regularly. Although in those days everyone went round to keep all three village pubs going, the Boot attracted real village characters. Reg Mills, Ray Brown and others formed a very lively lair-dice circle, which produced amazing insights into the psychology of individual players. Sunday lunch times, when families were welcomed to the sunny yard, were particularly happy.

There are memories of the night when no one wanted to go home at 11 pm and someone picked up one of Baker Barrett’s geese and threw it into the bar, clearing it in record time. And the geese sometimes got involuntarily ‘fed’ during high-speed lager-drinking contests.

In the end, after four years in which the pub had become famous across four counties, it closed because, without a restaurant pulling customers in from outside the village, a one-bar pub simply could not generate enough income to service a mortgage and a brewery loan. Boot Barn became Boot Barn Pottery and the car park became Friend’s Close.

Halls Oxford Brewery

- 1829-10-14 Assignment and Conveyance of a Five-Tenths Share … Also the following Copyhold Estates:
  1. Finstock: The Plough. (2) Stonesfield: Tenement once called a cottage and garden, with the street of Stonesfield to the north. (Henry Hall, of Halls Oxford Brewery and now of age, came into ownership.)
- 1891-08-29 Statutory Declaration by William Henry Walsh and William Scragg, concerning the following properties and pubs in Oxford and Oxfordshire owned or leased by Halls Brewery: 44) Stonesfield: The Boot.
From Jackson's Oxford Journal:

Saturday 17 March 1855
'A licence was granted to Wm. Stroud, of the Boot public house, at Stonesfield, lately occupied by H. Austin, deceased.'

Saturday 15 March 1856
'Transfer of Licences - from William Stroud, of the Boot Inn, Stonesfield, to Arthur Phipps.

Saturday 07 October 1865
'PETTY SESSIONS, Oct. 3. Present – Viscount Dillon, and C. E. Thornhill, Esq. Transfer of Licences. – The licence of the White Horse Inn, Stonesfield, lately kept by Mr. John Lardner, deceased, was transferred to his son, Mr. Henry Lardner. The licence of the Boot Inn, at Stonesfield, was transferred from Arthur Phipps to Thomas Laughton.'

Saturday 15 May 1869
'The licence of the Boot Inn, at Stonesfield was transferred from Thomas Laughton, jun., to Alfred Griffin.'

Saturday 01 July 1871
'John Woodward, of Dytchley, labourer, was convicted of assaulting Robert Oliver, at the Boot Inn, Stonesfield, on the 29th of May last; fine and costs 16s., or seven days hard labour; paid. Woodward was also bound in his own recognizance to keep the peace for six months.'

Saturday 03 May 1873
'TO LET, - an old licenced PUBLIC-HOUSE, at Stonesfield near Woodstock, Oxon. - For particulars apply at the Swan Brewery, Oxford.'
(I am assuming that this entry refers to the Boot Inn because in 1795 William Hall, of Halls Oxford Brewery, purchased the 'Swan's Nest Brewery' (later the Swan Brewery) from Sir John Treacher.)

Saturday 31 January 1885
'The following alehouse licences in the division were transferred: the Boot, Stonesfield, from Leonard Hanks to John Haynes.'

Planning applications (WODC):
1973 - New kitchen to replace existing galley to give access between pub and club room ref. C73/0349 granted 2nd July 1973
1975 - Extension to Public bar ref. W75/0141 granted 8th April 1975
1979 - Change of use from public house to private residence ref. W79/1079 granted 9th August 1979
1979 - Change of use from public house to residential use, provision of car parking accommodation on land opposite. Ref. No: W79/1214 | Status: Approve
Part 3: More Public Houses of Stonesfield

By the early 1840s there were six licenced houses, the new comers being the Black Boy, Maltster & Shovel, and the Marlborough Arms. In the 19th century the annual court leet dinner was held at the Maltster & Shovel.

Black Boy/Black Head

The Black Boy burnt down c. 1850 when it was in the care of Thomas Stewart and was rebuilt as the Black Head, the name it retained until closure in 2012. The Black Head in the twenty-first century had an unlikely owner, the Nomura Bank of Japan, which owned the Wellington Pub Company. The pub was a free house, offering, amongst other things, four real ales. Bob Hamerton, the licensee, kept the ales in such good condition that the pub gained an entry in the Good Beer Guide in 1999 and 2001. The entry read: ‘Two-bar pub: the front bar is the larger, with pool table and darts, while the back bar is quieter and more cosy. A busy, friendly pub, it offers guest beers not usually available locally, and is a rare outlet for beers from the nearby Wychwood Brewery.’

Courage Simonds Ltd.


- 1813-05-25 Surrender and Admission to Copyhold Property, Parties: William Adams and Mary, his wife (late Mary Long, spinster) and James Berry of Fawler. Property: Cottage, barn, yard and close of pasture in Stonesfield (in manor of Woodstock)
- 1867-02-16 Counterpart Lease for 14 years between Thomas Goddard of St. Fagans, Glamorgan, land agent, and John William Clinch and Charles Clinch. Property: Messuage called the Blacks Head public house and two cottages in Stonesfield.
- 1878-08-12 Affidavit by William John Goddard of Cardiff, gent.

1920 – 1930 The Black Head
From Jackson’s Oxford Journal:

Saturday 16 October 1852
‘The licence of the Black’s Head, Stonesfield, was transferred from Ann Stewart to Edmund Davis.’

Saturday 01 August 1868
‘A Licence to keep the Black Head, at Stonesfield, lately kept by Sarah Davis, was granted to Mr. John Hunt.’

Saturday 30 March 1878
‘STONESFIELD, near WOODSTOCK. A well-accustomed INN, called “The Black’s Head,” with COTTAGE adjoining: a COTTAGE on Chippng Bank: and COTTAGE, with large Garden, near the Church, Will be sold by Auction, by Messrs. J. W. Scroggs, Shortly – Full particulars in due course.’

Saturday 04 May 1878
‘STONESFIELD, near WOODSTOCK, Very desirable FREEHOLD and COPYHOLD PROPERTY, comprising “Black’s Head Inn”, with cottage adjoining; ... Which will be sold by auction, by Messrs. J. and W. SCROGGS, on Tuesday, May 14, 1878, at Three o’clock, at the Marlborough Arms Inn, Woodstock, by direction of the Executors of the late Mr P. Goddard.’

The Electoral Register of 1885 shows John Bartlett in a Dwelling House called The Black Head.

Planning applications (WODC):
1980 - Illumination of front elevation and illuminated lettering on side elevation. Ref. No: AW80/0033 | Status: Approve
1980 - Illumination of front elevation and illuminated lettering on side elevation. Ref. No: W80/1122 | Status: Approve
1981 - New garage to be erected adjoining existing one. Ref. No: W81/1257 | Status: NODEC
1990-09-20 - Connection of new drainage to main sewer-existing septic in use Ref. No: N/FP/0181/90 | Status: Building Work Complete
2008-10-15 - Installed a Gas Boiler Ref. No: 08/1256/B/CORGI/0 | Status: PCO
2012-07-16 - Change of use from public house to dwelling, erection of single storey rear extension and detached garage. Ref. No: 12/1126/P/FP | Status: APPCON
2014-08-07 - Change of use from public house to dwelling, erection of two storey rear extension and pitch roof over existing flat roof areas. Ref. No: 14/1173/P/FP | Status: APPCON
2014-09-18 - Extension & alterations to form bed & breakfast Ref. No: 14/0838/B/IN/0 | Status: Initial Notice Accepted
Maltster & Shovel

The first mention of this property was in 1771 with an example of a 99-year lease, which is worth quoting in full 8:

‘Let to Philip Howes, carpenter and wheelwright, for the sum of £50 the dwelling-house, malthouse, barn, yard, two walled gardens, wooden pump, and stone sink, now in the occupation of William Panting, from the Feast of Annunciation of the Virgin Mary next at a yearly rent of 5/- for 99 years then to be fully completed if Philip Howes (Aged 37) his wife Susanna (Aged 38) and son James (Aged 12) or any of them shall so long live.

The said Philip Howes shall keep the Messuage or Tenement, Malthouse, Outhouses and Buildings, and all Walls, Gates, Stiles, Rails, Pales, Hedges, Ditches, Mounds and Bounds in good sufficient and Tenantable repair.’

(This is beyond doubt the premises afterwards known as The Maltster & Shovel and it is interesting to compare this with the Sale Catalogue of the same property in 1896, shown on page 15.)

The Stonesfield Parish Register notes that on 20th January 1788 Amey Fowler, wife of James, Maltster, was buried and that James Fowler was buried on 26th December 1806. In the 1801 Census James Fowler was noted as being a Maltster.

In the 1831 Census James Berry is noted as a Cooper and John Fidler as a Maltster.9 By 1842 John Fidler was noted as the licence holder of the premises.

John Fidler was born in Collingbourne, Wilts on 3rd November 1804. He married a girl named Abigail Ebba Humphries, born 1811 in Marcham, Berks, in 1830, and they moved to Stonesfield. They set up home in a cottage in the High Street and by 1831, when he was just 27, John was recorded as a maltster. They had six daughters and a son. Annette Elizabeth 1832-1916; Georgiana 1835-1854; Sarah Abigail 1838-1917; Mary Ann 1839-1930; Edward George 1841-1889; Martha Jane 1847-1935 and Harriet Maria Augusta 1849-1850.

In 1841 John Fidler was a 36-year-old maltster and carpenter but was not mentioned as a victualler until 1854. The 1851 Census states his occupation as Maltster and Brewer and in 1853 the premises were known as the Malt Shovel. In 1857 he put the premises of the Maltster & Shovel Inn to be sold by auction. Apparently, nobody bought it, because he is shown as still there in the 1863 Directory of Oxon & Berks Dutton Allen & Co. By 1881 his occupation was stated as a Licenced Victualler & Farmer (42 acres, employing 4 men). John Fidler continued to run the Maltster & Shovel until his death on 27th January 1885, when his son Edward took over. This must make John Fidler the longest serving publican in the village, completing 54 years as a farmer, maltster and brewer. The Maltster and Shovel was a true brewpub, where the publican grew his barley, malted and kilned it and brewed the beer which was sold at the bar (refer to the auction poster on page 15).

In the Electoral Registers of 1852, 1856, 1860 and 1862 John Fidler is stated as being the occupier of land at Brook Lane Farm. In the Register of 1885 he is stated as being on Copyhold Land on The Green. In this Register his son Edward is in a Copyhold House known as the ‘Maltster and Shovel’ Inn.

From the National Probate Calendar 15th May 1885: ‘The Will of John Fidler late of Stonesfield in the county of Oxford brewer and innkeeper who died 27 January 1885 at Stonesfield was proved at Oxford by Edward George Fidler brewer and innkeeper the son and Sarah Abigail Fidler spinster the daughter both of Stonesfield and Martha Jane Hughes (wife of Thomas Hughes) of Coombe in the county of Oxford the daughter of the executors.’

John Fidler left a personal estate of £938 4s 3d.

Sadly, Edward died in 1889 at the age of 48 and the pub was taken over by his sister, Sarah, who continued to run it until 1896 when she put the premises to be sold by auction. The fully licenced public house known as the Maltster and Shovel was bought by Hitchman & Co of Chipping Norton for £1200 and it closed in 1939.10 The Fidler family had run the Maltster & Shovel for 66 years!

From Jackson's Oxford Journal:

Saturday 09 December 1820

‘To be LET, with immediate possession, - A neat DWELLING HOUSE, with a MALT-HOUSE, capable of making 7 quarters of Barley at a wetting, in good repair, situated at Stonesfield; also Three Acres of ARABLE LAND adjoining, with a yard, barn, stable, pigsties, and garden. To view the premises apply to Mr. H. S. Wells, in Stonesfield aforesaid, and also for terms of letting.’
Saturday, September 26, 1857

Maltster & Shovel is offered for auction:
(It may be reasonable to assume that as John Fildler was the landlord from at least 1851 until his death that the “Stone-built and Slated PREMISES forming “The Maltster and Shovel Inn” did not sell at auction as hoped.)

Saturday, September 28, 1889

Sept 14, at Stonesfield, Edward George Fidler, only son of the late John Fidler, of Stonesfield, aged 48. (Death Notices)

Saturday, February 3, 1894

‘Accident, - Miss Fidler, landlady of the Maltster and Shovel public house, met with an accident about four p.m. on Friday, Jan. 26th. It appears that a stranger called for a glass of beer, and as she was going down the cellar steps to fetch it she fell to the bottom, where she laid for a few minutes. She shouted to the customer to procure assistance, and on going into the street he met John Clarke (a workman employed by her) and told him of the accident. He immediately went to the house, and found Miss Fidler lying at the bottom of the cellar steps; he carried her up, and on examination it was found that a leg and arm was injured.’

From the Oxford Chronical dated 25th November 1854: ‘Nov. 18, aged 20, Miss Fidler (Georgiana), daughter of John Fidler, Brewer and Maltster, Stonesfield.’ (Death Notices)
1896 – The Maltster & Shovel was a Free house, noted for brewing its own beer and its sales catalogue stated
Marlborough Arms Inn

This public house may be the name of the licenced premises that at one time occupied the older part of what is now Prospect Villa (1877), on the corner of Woodstock Road and Church Street. It's first recorded licence holder was Thomas Andrews in 1841.

From Jackson's Oxford Journal:

Saturday 25 October 1851
Accidental and Fatal Accident – An inquest was held at the Marlborough Arms Inn, Stonesfield, on Tuesday, the 21st inst., by James Westell, Esq., coroner, on view of the body of William Lovegrove, of Old Basing Hants, labourer, aged 17 years, who died from injuries received on the Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton Railway, at Northleigh. By the evidence it appeared that the deceased was employed on the above railway, and was on a certain wagon, which started and jerked him off between the wheels and the rocks, driving him for about 16 yards under the wheels, and was afterwards rolled out. His left arm and one of his legs was broken, and his head and body severely injured. He was immediately taken to Stonesfield and Mr. Abel Davis, of that place, started with him in a cart to the Oxford infirmary, but deceased died after getting two miles on his journey. Verdict – accidental death.’ Buried in Stonesfield on 22nd October 1851.

Saturday, 01 September 1855
A complaint was made against James Hunt, of the Marlborough Arms, Stonesfield, and the licence stands over until the next meeting.’

Saturday 03 January 1857
Stonesfield. An inquest was held at the Marlborough Arms public house, on Monday last, on the body of Caleb Oliver, a slate maker, who was found frozen to death early in the morning on the previous Saturday. – From the evidence it appeared that deceased was upwards of 70 years of age, and was a man of intermperate habits, and had only the day before left the Woodstock Union, where he had been an inmate for the last two months; it seemed that during the day he had visited two or three public houses, where he partook of beer, and was last seen alive about eleven o’clock on Friday night at the Marlborough Arms, where he had a pint of ale, and left with another man, who parted with him outside the door. There seemed no doubt that deceased, after leaving the house alluded to, fell down after walking a few yards, and, being unable to rise or call for assistance, fell a prey to the inclement weather. – After hearing the above facts, the Jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased was frozen to death, being at the time under the influence of liquor.’ Buried in Stonesfield on 29th December 1856.

Saturday, 21 December 1861
Stonesfield, near Woodstock, Twenty Acres of Capital Underwood and 800 Beech Fagots, in Coombe Cliff, Poagles, Knotoaks, Gallows Wood, Upper King’s Wood, Wootton Wood, and Ben’s Ground, To be Sold by Auction, by Mr Jonas Paxton, at the Marlborough Arms Inn, Stonesfield, on Thursday, Dec. 26, 1861, agt Eleven o’clock, by order of his Grace the Duke of Marlborough. Catalogues may be obtained from Mr Mason, Blenheim Park; of John Maycock, the woodman; or of the auctioneer, Bicester. Credit will be allowed as usual.’

Saturday 16 November 1867
‘Alehouse Licences – An application by Thomas Oliver for a licence to keep the Marlborough Arms at Stonesfield lately occupied by George Lay, was not granted.’

Saturday 11 December 1869
‘Transfer of Licence – The licence of the Marlborough Arms Inn at Stonesfield, was transferred from William Baker to William Hanks.’

From the Oxford Chronical dated 27th January 1866: ‘Transfer – The Licence of the Marlborough Arms, Stonesfield, was transferred from Stephen Oliver to George Lay.’

In 1871 William Hanks, who lived in Boot Street, was a Hurdle Maker & Publican. By 1881 he was a Hurdle Maker only and it is known that he made hurdles in the barn that was situated on the same plot as the Marlborough Arms. The pub was also known as the Gamblers’ Pub due to the slate miners who gathered there and gambled. Many years later, when the floorboards were being replaced, many coins were found that had dropped out of sight between the boards. (Story recounted by Frank Hall, Stonesfield resident.)

It is not known exactly when this public house ceased trading but it may have been in the early 1870s.

By 1850 there were still six public houses, but the Chequer had closed in 1847 and was replaced by the White Lion, with John Lardner being recorded in 1847 as a Beer Retailer.
White Lion/White Horse

In 1847-1852 John Lardner was listed as a beer retailer in the village and between 1853-1868 was shown as the licence holder at the White Lion. The name was probably changed to White Horse a few years before it was up for sale by auction on 28th October 1876, when the detached brew-house was mentioned. The outcome of the auction is unclear. Henry Lardner was the proprietor, possibly the same individual later shown at the Moreton-in-Marsh Brewery.

In the Electoral Register of 1852, 1856, 1860 and 1862 John Lardner was in a Freehold Cottage belonging to Richard Collier. John Lardner was also noted as being a beer retailer during these years. The Freehold cottage must have been one of the two or three cottages that eventually comprised the White Lion.

From Jackson's Oxford Journal:

Saturday 28 August 1852
'Wootton South Division. – Woodstock, Monday. Before M. Ricardo & T. Thornhill, Esqrs., and Rev. W. S. Bricknell. Licences were granted for the sale of spirits to John Lardner, of Stonesfield.'

Saturday 07 October 1865
‘PETTY SESSIONS, Oct. 3. Present – Viscount Dillon, and C. E. Thornhill, Esq. Transfer of Licences. – The licence of the White Horse Inn, Stonesfield, lately kept by Mr. John Lardner, deceased, was transferred to his son, Mr. Henry Lardner. The licence of the Boot Inn, at Stonesfield, was transferred from Arthur Phipps to Thomas Laughton.'

Saturday 28 October 1865
‘STONESFIELD, near WOODSTOCK, Several large & small Sweet BEER CASKS, large Cooler and BREWING UTENSILS, GIG, Wheels and Iron Axles, Malt-Mill, quantity of Old Iron, and other Effects; also a DRAPER’S STOCK-IN-TRADE of Ready-made CLOTHES, etc, late of the property of Mr. John Lardner, deceased, TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, By Mr. LONG On Tuesday the 31st of October, at Eleven o’clock, on the premises at Stonesfield, sometime known as the White Lion, now the residence of Mr. Henry Lardner. Catalogues may be had on the premises, and of the auctioneer, Witney.'

Saturday 18 November 1865
‘SOUTH WOOTTON PETTY SESSION, Nov. 14. Before Colonel the Hon. R. C. H. Spencer, and C. E. Thornhill, Esq. Publicans’ Licences. – The following licences were transferred: The White Horse, from Henry Lardner to John Baker; …’

Saturday 12 December 1868
‘SOUTH WOOTTON PETTY SESSION, Dec. 5. Before Colonel the Hon. R. C. H. Spencer. The licence of the White Horse Inn, Stonesfield, was transferred from John Baker to Henry Lardner; …’

Saturday 31 July 1875
‘PUBLIC HOUSE To be LET, - “THE WHITE HORSE,” at Stonesfield: good stabling, garden, yard, etc. – Apply to MR. H. Lardner, Stonesfield, Woodstock.’

Saturday, October 28, 1876
The White Horse is offered for Auction:

The Hanley Debenture of 1897 mentions the brewhouse. It was described as originally the property of William Austin. This might be the pub near the crossroads.

In 1885 the Electoral Register shows Thomas Clarke of Stonesfield as being in a Dwelling House known as the White House.

From the Witney Gazette dated Thursday 23rd June 1977:

'A connection with the licenced trade in Stonesfield, which stretches back 60 years, has ended with the retirement of Mr Vivian Miles and his wife, Emily. Mr Miles has been the landlord of the White Horse Inn

To view, apply on the premises, and for any additional information application may be made to Messrs. Hazel and Baines, solicitors, Oxford, or to the auctioneers, Bicester.'
for the past ten years (should be 15 years. Ed) and before that ran the Boot Inn, just along the road, for 15 years (should be 10 years. Ed).
The couple took over the Boot Inn from Mr Miles’s parents, Mr and Mrs Fred Griffin, who had been there since 1917.
“I’ve never lived anywhere else, other than in a pub. I’m quite looking forward to our retirement,” said Mrs Miles. She and her husband are going to live at Yarnton. Mr Miles, who was born in Woodstock, and was a glove cutter by trade before becoming a publican, said that in the last six months there had been a big fall in trade.
But the changing times did not deter a large number of people from visiting the White Horse Inn for a farewell party for Mr and Mrs Miles.’ (see page 10)

Planning applications (WODC):
1979 - Conversion of barn into bar and skittle alley Ref. No: W79/0104 | Status: Approve
1980 - Erection of 3 loose boxes Ref. No: W80/0827 | Status: Approve
1990-12-13 - Kitchen Store Extension Ref. No: N/FP/0247/90 | Status: Building Work Complete
1997-05-27 - Extension to link public house with skittles alley covered way to south west elevation re-roof skittles alley/barn with artificial stone slates and insert conservation roof lights on north west roof slope. Ref. No: W97/0074 | Status: Approve
1998-09-17 - Demolition of existing timber storage shed and first floor storage room, re-roof existing rooms and new roofing over part of yard areas to create replacement storage rooms. Ref. No: W98/1357 | Status: Approve
1999-03-12 - Alterations REVOKED 10.6.02 Ref. No: N/FP/0014/99 | Status: Building Work Started
2005-05-17 - Alterations & Extension Ref. No: 05/0895/B/SOL/0 | Status: PCO
2013-06-24 - Demolition of barn and erection of two detached dwellings with new access and associated works. Ref. No: 13/0881/P/FP | Status: Refused
2014-05-01 - Conversion of out building to dwelling with associated parking. Ref. No: 14/0633/P/FP | Status: APPCON
2014-10-06 - Conversion of Outbuilding to dwelling Ref. No: 14/0863/B/FP/0 | Status: Conditional approval

2015 The bar at the White Horse

2015 The restaurant at the White Horse
Part 4: Other Public Houses of Stonesfield

Other licenced houses of whose whereabouts we can only make a vague surmise are:

The Pick and Hammer (the slater’s sign) is said to have been in the block of cottages at the bottom of Well Lane, where the outline of a built-up doorway may still be seen (the doorway has since been replaced by a window). No records of this pub in the archives, only hearsay. But if this was the Pick and Hammer the cottage gained notoriety in the early 21st century when the police looking for the body of a murdered woman searched it. Millionaire architect Michael Morton was jailed for seven years after being convicted of killing his wife. Gracia Morton, 40, disappeared without trace in 1997 after going to her estranged husband’s house. His cottage at Stonesfield was searched in an attempt to find a body.

The Swan was probably the little pub up the Tewer (the right hand house of the first pair on the left). No records of the premises have been found to date but there are landlords listed in the 1860s.

From the Oxford Times dated 02nd September 1865: ‘Licence granted to Joseph Kirby for the Swan inn, Stonesfield.’ (He is recorded as being in the Swan until 1871)

In 1877 John Carpenter is recorded as being the landlord.

Churchill Arms is referred to in Jackson’s Oxford Journal but at the time of writing this establishment is more of a mystery than the Pick and Hammer.

From Jackson’s Oxford Journal:

Saturday 09 December 1826
‘To be sold by auction, at the Churchill Arms, in Stonesfield, on Thursday next the 14th December, 1826, at Three o’clock in the afternoon. Etc. etc.’

Saturday 21 June 1828
‘Estate at Stonesfield, Oxon. To be sold by auction, by Mr. LONG. On Monday next the 23rd June, at the Churchill Arms, in Stonesfield at Two o’clock in the afternoon. Etc. etc.’

The Swan
And the latest addition to the imbibing houses of Stonesfield:

The Sports & Social Club finally opened on Sunday 23rd July 1995, ten years after the original idea of an extension to the Village Hall was first raised! The total cost was £65,000. By its constitution it is a non-profit making organisation dedicated to supporting sports and social activities within the village.

Additional points of interest:

From the Stonesfield Parish Register on 28th August 1783 William Horn, farmer & publican was buried.

From Jackson's Oxford Journal dated 18th July 1857 there is mention of the Miner’s Hotel, Stonesfield.

From Jackson's Oxford Journal dated 5th December 1863 ‘A PUBLIC HOUSE at Stonesfield to LET. … Apply 20 Queen Street, Oxford.’ (This was the address of Daniel Hanley, a 40 year old wine merchant born in Witney, who founded Hanley & Co, City Brewery in 1852 in Castle Street, Oxford.)


Arthur Phipps took over the licence of the Boot Inn in 1856 (as mentioned in the Oxford Journal dated 15th March 1856) and was still there in 1867. In the 1871 Census (aged 49) his occupation is stated as Tailer (sic) and Publican, though which public house he was in is not stated. John Baker has a very brief mention in the White Lion in 1865. So it is unclear as to what or where the Miner’s Arms was.

Court cases involving Stonesfield Licencees (from the Oxfordshire Quarter Session Rolls):

1st May 1770, Case 10: Thomas Panting, servant £20: John Maycock, yeoman £10 and John Howse, victualler £10 all of Stonesfield to answer for child of Sarah Smith of Sibford Gower.

5th October 1772 Case 26: John Howse of Stonesfield, victualler £20 for self and daughter Elizabeth to prosecute William Burborough for theft of 2.5lb of bacon. (verdict – guilty)

Excerpt from the 1841 Census:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Inn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Harper</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Inn Keeper</td>
<td>Rose &amp; Crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Law</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Inn Keeper</td>
<td>Rose &amp; Crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Stewart</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Publican</td>
<td>Black Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Fidler</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Maltster</td>
<td>Maltster &amp; Shovel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail Fidler</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annette Fidler</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georiana Fidler</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Fidler</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marv Fidler</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Excerpt from the 1871 Census:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Where Born</th>
<th>Inn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Kirby</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Farmer of 11 acres &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Whitlock. Bucks</td>
<td>The Swan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hanks</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Hurdle Maker &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>Marlborough Arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred Griffin</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Publican &amp; Dealer</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>Boot Inn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Lanier</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Farmer of 6 acres &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>White Horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Philios</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Tailer &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>(?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hunt</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Farmer of 15 acres &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>Black Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Jane Harroer</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Seamstress &amp; Publican</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td>Rose &amp; Crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Fidler</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Maltster &amp; Brewer</td>
<td>Collinbourne. Wilts</td>
<td>Maltster &amp; Shovel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail Fidler</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Brewer’s Wife</td>
<td>Marcham. Berks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Fidler</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Brewer’s Daughter</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Fidler</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Maltster</td>
<td>Stonesfield. Oxon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ‘Messuage’: A dwelling house with outbuildings and land assigned to its use. Late Middle English: from Anglo-Norman French, based on Latin manere ‘dwell’.

Beer Retailer: A person licensed to sell beer and cider.

Vicualler: (also licenced vicualler) A person licensed to sell beer, cider, wine and spirits.

Originally beerhouses and alehouses only sold ale or beer whilst taverns sold additional beverages such as wine and spirits.

Public houses, or ‘alehouses’, have been subject to licensing for many centuries, and the first national licensing system was introduced by the Alehouse Act of 1552. Under this act, persons wishing to sell ale had to be licenced by a Justice of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions. This meant entering into a bond, or ‘recognizance,’ in which the victualler pledged to abide by the Act and maintain good behaviour in his alehouse.

This system continued throughout the 16th – 18th centuries, with minor alterations. Under the 1753 Licensing Act, victuallers could be licenced only if they had a certificate confirming their good character, and this had to be signed by a parish notable, but no further amendments to the system were made until the Acts of 1828 and 1830. These alterations meant that the licensing system moved from the jurisdiction of the Quarter Sessions to the Petty Sessions, but no provision was made for the Clerk of the Peace to keep licensing records. The records of licenced victuallers are less comprehensive, therefore, after 1828.

In the early 21st century it is becoming ever more difficult for a landlord to earn a reasonable living from selling just beer, wine and spirits and a few bar snacks. Those that do run such a pub have built their business and reputation by offering a larger than usual range of real ales and real ciders which are kept in top condition and regularly changed. These wet sales only pubs are in the minority and tend to be Free Houses, those that are not tied to a big pub chain company or brewery. The majority of pubs need to diversify in order to increase their income and many do so by offering food. This presents a dilemma; are they a pub serving food or are they a restaurant serving beer? Nevertheless, this diversification in order to stay in business is not a modern trend.

In 1871 John Hunt, who was the landlord of the Black Head, was also a farmer of 15 acres. In 1911 John Maycock, again of the Black Head, was a Waggoner on a farm. In 1851 Herbert Austin, of the Boot Inn, supplemented his income from the pub by also being a mason. By 1881 John Fidler, of the Maltster & Shovel, was not only a Licenced Vicualler but also spending a lot of his day farming 42 acres and employing 4 men to assist him! William Hanks was the publican in the Marlborough Arms in 1871 and when not serving beer he was in the barn making hurdles. By 1871 Mrs Jane Harper of the Rose and Crown was spending her quiet moments from serving thirsty workers by being a seamstress. George Bishop had a nice little side business of being a coal merchant and when Mrs Esther Bishop took over the licence of the Rose and Crown from George she was also a haulier for the county council.

This seems a little strange considering that the people who lived in the village worked in the village or for the nearby farms and that they would visit the pub for all the latest news and gossip. Travel was not widespread. Entertainment was what you made it either at home or in the pub. But on the other hand the total population of the village in 1871 was 537 and the number of men would have been very few. Certainly not enough drinkers to support seven pubs. Increasing the income from running a pub by having a second job was as much a necessity in the 19th century as it is now in the 21st century.
Part 5: Publicans through the years

**Black Boy**

1841 – 1851 Stewart, Thomas  
• (1841 Census, b 1786, Publican, spouse Ann b 1786)

**Black Head**

1851 – 1852 Stewart, Ann (Mrs)  
• (1851 Census, b 1783, Victualler)

1852 – 1863 Davis, Edmund  

13

1864 – 1868 Davis, Sarah (Mrs)  

14

1868 – 1881 Hunt, John  
• (1871 Census, b 1830, farmer 15 acres & publican, spouse Annie Maria)

1878 – (To be Sold by Auction, Acquired by Clinch & Co Ltd of Witney)

1883 – Hunt, Henry

1885 – 1903 Bartlett, John  
• (1891 Census, b 1844 in Westcott, Gloucester, farmer & publican, spouse Sarah Bartlett)

1897 – 1907 Law, John

1907 – 1911 Maycock, John  
• (1911 Census, b 1865, Waggoner on Farm, spouse Clara)

1911 – Maycock, James

• (1911 Census, b 1868, Waggoner, spouse Louisa)

1911 – 1952 Griffin, Frederick  
• (1911 Census, b 1879, spouse Ellen b 1883 in Chadlington)

1952 – 1962 Miles, Vivian (Sonny) & Emily

1962 – Closed

**Boot Inn**

1753 – 1759 Howes, John

1760 – 1769 House, Mary

1770 – 1773 hose, John

1774 – 1789 West, Richard  

21

1792 – 1807 Berry, James  

22

1812 – 1824 Harper, Edmund  

22

1825 – 1831 Harper, Ann (Mrs)  

9

1841 – Harper, Edmund

1842 – 1854 Austin, Herbert  
• (1851 Census, b 1808, Victualler & Mason, spouse Ann b 1807 in Brize Norton)

1855 – 1856 Stroud, William

1856 – 1867 Phipps, Arthur

1869 – Laughton, T (Jnr)  

24

1869 – 1871 Griffin, Alfred

1876 – 1883 Bartlett, John

25

• (1871 Census, b 1844 in Westcott, Gloucester, spouse Sarah Bartlett b 1842 in Abingdon, Berks)

• (1881 Census, Carrier & Publican)

1884 – 1885 Hanks, Leonard

1885 – 1887 Haynes, John

1891 – (Inn owned or leased by Halls Brewery)

1891 – 1899 Griffin, Thomas  

12,6

• (1891 Census, b 1860, farm labourer & publican, spouse Emma)

1901 – 1910 Maycock, John

• (1901 Census, b 1864, spouse Clara)

1911 – Maycock, James

• (1911 Census, b 1868, Waggoner, spouse Louisa)

1911 – 1952 Griffin, Frederick  
• (1911 Census, b 1879, spouse Ellen b 1883 in Chadlington)

1952 – 1962 Miles, Vivian (Sonny) & Emily

1972 – Closed

1974 – 1979 Leaves, John

1979 – Closed

**Chequer**

1753 – 1763 Cudd, William

1764 – 1782 Camden, John  

4,21

1783 – 1785 Williams, Joseph

21

1786 – 1807 Castle, John

22

1807 – 1822 Castle, Ann

22

1847 – Closed

**Maltster & Shovel**

1770 – Panting, William

1771 – Howes, Philip

1788 – 1806 Fowler, James (Maltster)

1831 – 1884 Fidler, John  

27

• (1841 Census, age 35, Maltster)

• (1851 Census, b 1805 in Colloburn (Collingbourne), Wiltshire, Maltster & Brewer, spouse Abigail b 1811 in Marscham, Berks)

• (1871 Census, b 1805 in Collingbourne, Wiltshire, Maltster & Brewer, spouse Abigail b 1811 in Marscham, Berks, Brewer’s Wife)

• (1881 Census, Licensed Victualler & Farmer 42 acres, employing 4 men)

• (d 1885)

1857 – (To be Sold by Auction)

1885 – 1889 Fidler, Edward

1890 – 1896 Fidler, Sarah A (Miss)

• (1891 Census, b1837, publican & farmer & brewer)

1896 – (To be Sold by Auction, Acquired by Hitchman & Co Ltd of Chipping Norton)

1997 – 1907 Kirby, Henry Willoughby  

26

• (1901 Census, b 1856 Caldecote, Rutland, Inn Keeper & Carpenter, spouse Sarah Ann)

1911 – Timms, Francis
1865 – 1871 Kirby, Joseph
  • (1871 Census, b 1815 in Whitchurch, Bucks, Farmer 11 acres & Publican, spouse Harriet)
1877 – Carpenter, John

**White Lion**

1847 – 1864 Lardner, John (beer retailer) 10,23
1865 – Lardner, Henry
1865 – Baker, John
1866 – Lardner, Henry
1867 – 1868 Lardner, John
1869 – 1876 Lardner, Henry 24
1875 – (Pub to Let)
1876 – (To be Sold by Auction) 10

**White Horse**

1881 – Neville, Samuel
  • (1881 Census, b 1834 in Coggs, Oxon, Licensed Victualler, spouse Elizabeth)
1883 – 1887 Clarke, Thomas
1891 – 1901 Scroggs, William 1
  • (1891 Census, b 1858 in Cassington, Oxon Publican & Agri Labourer, spouse Fanny b 1860)
  • (1901 Census, Publican & Farm Labourer)
1901 – 1930 Oliver, Edward 16
  • (1901 Census, b 1868, Farm Labourer, spouse Ellen b 1869)
1931 – 1951 Oliver, William 20
1952 – 1962 Oliver, Mini
1962 – 1977 Miles, Vivian (Sonny) & Emily 29
1977 – 1991 Bishop, Nigel
  • (ex National Hunt Jockey) (Halls Tenant)
  • (Purchased from Halls by B.D.I. Catering Ltd (Spud Pubs))
  • (spouse Wendy)
1995 – 1997 Bishop, Nigel (a Spud Pub)
1997 – O’Connor, Richard & Victoria (managers)
2000 – 2005 Closed
2005 – 2010 Starowski, Richard
2010 – present Lloyd, John
www.whitehorsestonesfield.co.uk
Part 6: What are they now in 2015?

- The Black Head – now a Bed & Breakfast
- The Boot – a private residence
- The Chequer – owned and let by Blenheim Estates
- The Maltster & Shovel – three private cottages
- The Marlborough Arms – part of Prospect Villa
- The Rose & Crown – demolished
- The Swan – a private residence
- The White Horse – still a public house!
According to the Census conducted on 3-4 April 1871 the population of Stonesfield was 537. The split between male and female was amazingly 50/50 (271 male and 266 female). Of the male inhabitants 132 were aged 16 or over (48.7%) which was probably drinking age. These hard manual workers had an amazing choice of seven public houses in which to slate (no pun intended) their thirst!

In the Black Head John Hunt was the publican, aged 41 born 1830 in Stonesfield. He was also a farmer of 15 acres. With him was his wife Annie Maria Hunt aged 35 who stated her occupation as Farmer’s Wife. They had nine children. Louisa Hunt, 13, John Hunt, 12, Henry Hunt, a scholar at 11, Georgina Hunt, 9 and a scholar, Charles Hunt 8 a scholar, Annie Hunt, 5 a scholar, Fanny Selina Hunt, 4 a scholar, Sarah Hunt, 2 and Victor Edward Hunt aged 1. In the household at this time were also Mary Andrews (Annie Maria Hunt’s mother), age 81 mother, widow and a gloveress, Sarah Andrews (Annie Maria’s sister), age 19 daughter and gloveress, Henry Andrews (Annie Maria’s brother), age 17 son and a painter and Thomas Clark, a nephew aged 27 a dealer. All were born in Stonesfield.

Meanwhile down at the Boot Inn Alfred Griffin was the publican, aged 33 born 1838 in Stonesfield. He was also a dealer, but of what is not known. With him was his wife Sarah age 32, a gloveress born in Westcott, Berks. They had seven children. Eliza, age 13 a gloveress, Henry, age 11 a scholar, Fanny, age 7 a scholar, Philip, age 5 a scholar, Richard, age 3, Emily, age 2 and Alfred aged 1. All the children were born in Stonesfield.

Over at the Maltster & Shovel John Fidler was still in charge. Now aged 66, born in 1805 in Collingbourne, Wiltshire. He states his occupation as maltster and brewer. With him are his wife Abigail, age 60 and born in Marcham, Bucks, whose occupation was brewer’s wife, his daughter Sarah Abigail, age 33 a brewer’s daughter (unmarried), his son Edward George, age 28 a maltster (unmarried) and a second daughter Martha, age 25 and also unmarried. The three children were born in Stonesfield.

The Marlborough Arms was being run by William Hanks, age 53, born in 1818 in Stonesfield. His occupation was hurdle maker and publican. Lucy Hanks was William’s wife, age 47, a dress maker. They had three children, Harry, age 18 a gardener, John, age 14 a farmer’s boy and Edward, age 13 a farmer’s boy. Staying with the Hanks’ family were two step children. Philip Austin, age 18 a baker and Maria Austin, age 16 a dress maker. All were born in the village.

Round the corner at the Rose and Crown Mrs Jane Harper was the landlady, age 52 born in 1819. Her occupation stated as seamstress and publican. She had four children to look after, all noted as scholars. There was John age 12, Ann age 10, Ellen age 8 and Sarah age 6. Also in the household was Jane Hanks, a niece aged 23, a gloveress. All were born in Stonesfield.

In the Tewer at the Swan Joseph Kirby was behind the bar. His occupation is given as farmer of 11 acres and publican. He is now 55 years old being born in Whitchurch, Bucks. His wife Harriet, age 60 and born in Bicester, Oxon, gives her occupation as farmer’s wife. They had a son, Henry, age 15 who states his occupation as farmer’s son.

Finally, up at the White Lion (later to be renamed White Horse) Henry Larner, age 41, gives his occupation as farmer of 6 acres and publican. He was born in Stonesfield. His wife is Ann Lardner, age 32 born in Radford, Oxon and is stated as a farmer’s wife. They have two children, Elizabeth Lardner, age 4 born in Stonesfield and is a scholar and Henry John Lardner, age 1. Staying in the house is Jane Hickman, age 18, who states her occupation as domestic servant.

The census also lists Arthur Phipps, age 49 born in Stonesfield, as a Tailer & Publican, but no idea which pub. He had been the landlord at the Boot Inn until 1867. With him was his wife Harriet, age 48 born in Northleigh, a tailoress, his daughters Ellen, age 20 unmarried a gloveress born in Northleigh and Jane, age 12 a nurse. Also three sons Benjamin, age 9 a scholar, John, age 5 a scholar and Jacob, age 3 a scholar. Completing the household was Arthur’s granddaughter Susan Phipps, age 5 months.
In 1830 the Beerhouse Act, passed to encourage the sale of beer, brought into being beer retailers who kept beer shops, or beer houses; they could only sell beer and cider (as against public houses which could also sell wine and spirits). Licence for these could be obtained on demand from the local excise office; beer retailers did not have to acquire a licence at the annual Brewster Sessions.

**Beer Retailers**

1831 – Millin, William (1831 Census)
   Laughton, Thomas (1831 Census & Farmer)
1837 – Law, Thomas, Victualler (ref. QS1837/3/L2/63)
1847 – Maycock, George
1848 – Lardner, John (ref. QS1848/2/L1/165)
1852 – Lardner, John (ref. QS1852/2/L2/63)
1867 – Phipps, Arthur
   Griffin, Charles
1876 – Barney, George

Belson, Aaron
Blackwell, J
Coventry, William
Deane, Joseph
Dudley, Philip
Grimsdale, William
Larner, Henry
Puddifer, Joseph
Rixon, Edwin

1876 – Innkeeper – Priest, Henry (?)
1876 – Red Lion – Wall, William (?)

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27
Part 9: A Selection of Advertisements

Oxford Journal 28 October 1820 The Boot

Oxford Journal 02 December 1826 The Churchill Arms

Oxford Journal 07 June 1828 The Churchill Arms

Oxford Journal 28 August 1830 The Chequer

Oxford Journal 05 October 1867 The Rose & Crown

Oxford Journal 29 July 1843 The Maltster & Shovel

Oxford Times 18 November 1865 The White Horse

Oxford Times 07 October 1865 Boot Inn

Oxford Journal 16 November 1867 The Marlborough Arms

Oxford Journal 04 July 1868 the Black’s Head Inn

Oxford Journal 11 July 1868 The Black’s Head

Oxford Journal 08 November 1890 The Rose & Crown
Thanks also to: Ray Brown, Bob Lawrence, Frank Hall, Anne Hamerton

As some of the information in this history of the Public Houses of Stonesfield, Oxon has been obtained from sources that due to the passage of time cannot be verified, there may be discrepancies or errors. Your assistance in the correction of any such errors, or with the completion of any missing information, would be most gratefully received.

Should anyone have any further information about the pubs of Stonesfield, e.g. stories, anecdotes or history, I should be pleased to hear about it. I can be contacted at drudlin@stones1.plus.com