

By Donald Victor Wasley (1918 - 2001)
Nephil at Badsey 1923-1933

ALDINGTON The Village that I knew as a Boy

"The end of the lane" the road that led from the Badsey/Evesham road to Sherwood Farm and the Slaughterhouse

"The Village" the road that led from Sherwood Farm to "The Corner and Nag Stable"

"The Street" the road that led from the Corner to the brow of the hill

"Offenham Road" the road that led from the brow of the hill to Aldington Siding and the Evesham/Offenham Road

"Chapel Lane" the road that led from the Corner to the gate to the Pastures and the gate to my Grandfather's land adjacent

"Down the Mill" the road that led from the Corner to the Flour Mill and the Mill House

"Ford lane" the lane that went from the road to the Mill to the Ford across to the Mill Meadows.

"The Furrows" the footpath that led from the top of the Street to the Badsey/Evesham Road near the 'S' Bend

It was known that locally if you lived in the Village you talked about going up the Street or along Chapel Lane or down the Mill or to the end of the lane. If you lived up the Street you spoke about going down the Village or along Offenham Road or along the Furrows.

When you came into the Village from the Badsey/Evesham Road there was agricultural land on the left and the Cherry Orchard on the right with a Copse and the Brook. on the little bank on the left there was a black tarred Shed on "Halfpenny Piece" owned by Charlie Heath and subsequently bought by my Father and sold on to Jack Byrd.

The village street first had three houses all attached occupied by Walt Jelfs, Charlie Heath and James Reeves. The large detached house was my old house and then there was the thatched cottaged occupied by Fred Taylor. The next three cottages all attached were occupied by the Enstones, Griffins and Alf Bell and then the Copse and Tennis Courts with the Manor House opposite.

The Corner was fronted by the Nag Stable with a low wall against which we played football and cricket and adjoining the Nag Stables was Mr. Butler's Garage, in which he kept his car - a Panhard Levesser.

The Street consisted of Butler's Orchard on the left with a row of Horse Chestnut trees and then Byrd's Orchard up to a driveway to Sam Byrd's house near the Furrows Gate, then an Orchard up to Ted Ballards on the brow of the hill (he always kept bee hives around his house) On the right hand side from the Corner there were three cottages occupied by Bill Stewart, Ralph Bell and Teddy Bell, then The Cider Mill and an orchard up to the White House occupied by Ernest Butler. There was then the middle Road which led to the tenanted agricultural land through Butler's Orchard which stretched from Chapel Lane to the top of the Street. Next to this middle Road were two cottages occupied by the Westburys and John Jelfs and then open land until the top Road opposite Ted Ballards which led along the top of all the tenanted agricultural lane stretching up from the Pastures.

The tenanted land was used under the Evesham Custom and owned by Squire Ashwin My Grandfather David Wasley had the first piece, later to become my Father's. next was land used by Walt Bell, then land used by the Harwoods, then another piece used by Walt Bell, and then pieces used by Ralph and Teddy Bell and by a Bill Dunkley. Right along the bottom of these lands was the Pastures which stretched to the Railway line and the Cuckoo Bridge.

Offenham Road from the brow of the hill to Aldington Siding was all open agricultural land or Plum Orchards. Aldington siding was open in the Summer months for goods train traffic to collect produce. A small cottage at the Evesham/Offenham road junction was I believe occupied by the Cook family.

Chapel lane had an entrance on the left leading up to the rear of Stewarts and Ralph and Teddy Bells houses with Butlers Orchard stretching up to the top of the Street and as far along Chapel Lane as my Grandfather's land. On the right hand side there was Ivy House occupied by John Byrd with all the farm buildings, with two cottages occupied by my Grandfather and the Tandy family. The other side of the farmyard entrance was the Chapel and two more cottages occupied by Edie Field and one of John Byrd's stockmen. Opposite this farmyard entrance just in Butlers orchard was the famous Nut Bush.

The Manor House Farm buildings stretched down towards the Mill with the Maltings cattle shed and stables, with the cart shed and Mill House opposite and then the Flour Mill, locks and mill pond. By the side of the cart shed the lane went down to the Ford. The Mill House was occupied by the Miller Mr. John Sharp and his family and they were great friends of my Father and Mother. John had an old solid tyred Foden Lorry for his work and a four seater Ford car, my Father had a Clyno car which he garaged at the Mill.

The other side of Aldington Brook and the Mill Pond were the Mill Meadows which separated more agricultural land which stretched up to Badsey and Horsebridge Hill. The Mill meadows ran alongside the brook to Blackminster and a footpath down the Pastures and through these meadows allowed us a short cut to Littleton and Badsey Station, on the GWR line.

In the Cherry Orchard opposite Walt Jelfs house there was a corrugated iron shed which we called the Gardeners Arms. The Hardwoods and Bells had the Cherry Orchard and when working on their tenanted land adjacent to my Grandfathers they would have their lunch there with the usual tot of cider. It was the custom that at about 11 a.m. there would be about six cycles propped up against the wall. As a boy I went there at times to collect cigarette cards and there would be Mr. Harwood Cecil, Artie, Bill and Jim and Teddy and Ralph Bell, they were a great crowd and sent me on all kinds of errands. At cherry picking time I had a bird-scaring job, and plenty of cherries.

The development of the village started with eight council house up the Street then two Houses in Byrd's Orchard opposite which were occupied by Charles Gardiner, Clerk to the RDC and Dr. Murray the Medical Officer of Health. Then two more houses next to the Cider Mill, one of which was occupied by a Teacher and one by Doug Jelfs. After that well I was no longer resident at Aldington and only an occasional visitor.

I believe that Village life was not always friendly and placid, as my Father and Mother when married lived in Lime Street Evesham. Thomas Byrd however owned the double fronted house in which the Cockbills and the Taylors lived and when the Cockbills moved out he also wanted the Taylors out and thought that as my Mother had been brought up on a Farm at Laverton she wouldn't like the town so offered them the whole of the house. Mr. Byrd got the Taylors out and hoped they would move out of the Village, but Squire Ashwin rented them the thatched cottage which at the time was empty next door. In any event my Father and Mother were pleased to move into Village Life, my sister and I were born there, and my Father and Mother lived until they were both 92 in that same house. I understand that the property was put into a family trust by Thomas Byrd and when the last member of the family trust died in about 1973 properties were sold and my Sister bought the old house at an auction held at the Oak. In the meantime Thomas Byrd ensured that John would have Ivy House and Sherwood Farm, and of course I can only remember John Byrd living there. Harry Byrd had the Butchers shop in Evesham and I remember going there at times when my Father was asked to mend the motor that ran the sausage machine at the back of the shop; in those days we came home with a few sausages and a joint as payment!!

The Manor House and Ivy House

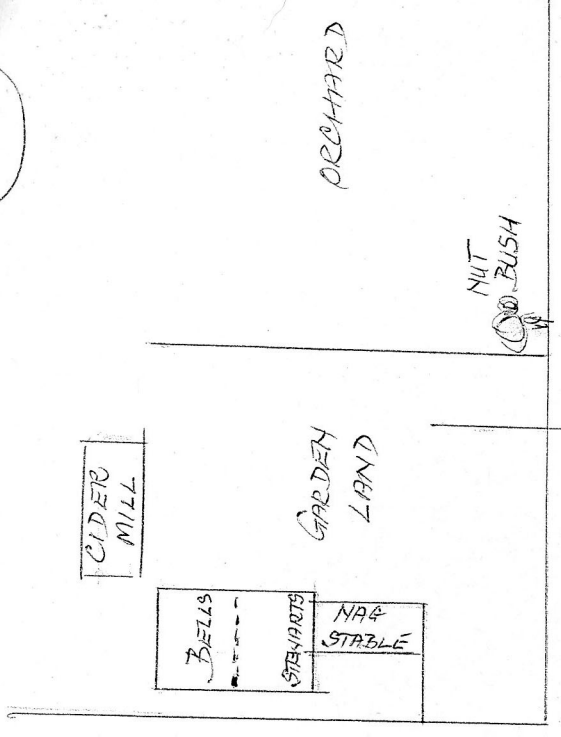
See Plan "A" and Plan "B"

I remember that my Grandfather and my Father often spoke of the feud which existed between Thomas Byrd and Arthur Savory, as apparently the village street in those days ran along quite near to the front door of the Manor House and the Kitchen window. When Thomas Byrd took his manure wagons along from Ivy House Farm to Sherwood Farm they went right in front of Manor House windows and to avoid this nuisance Arthur Savory asked if Thomas who was on the Council would enquire if the road could be diverted. This was subsequently agreed as long as Savory bore the cost. He got his men to dig out the new roadway build the retaining walls on each side, make the old road into a driveway with a turn to the left to face up the street and pave along in front of the dairy to steps leading down towards Chapel Lane.

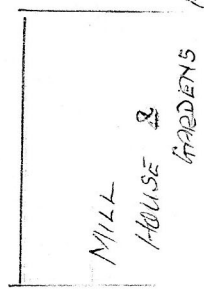
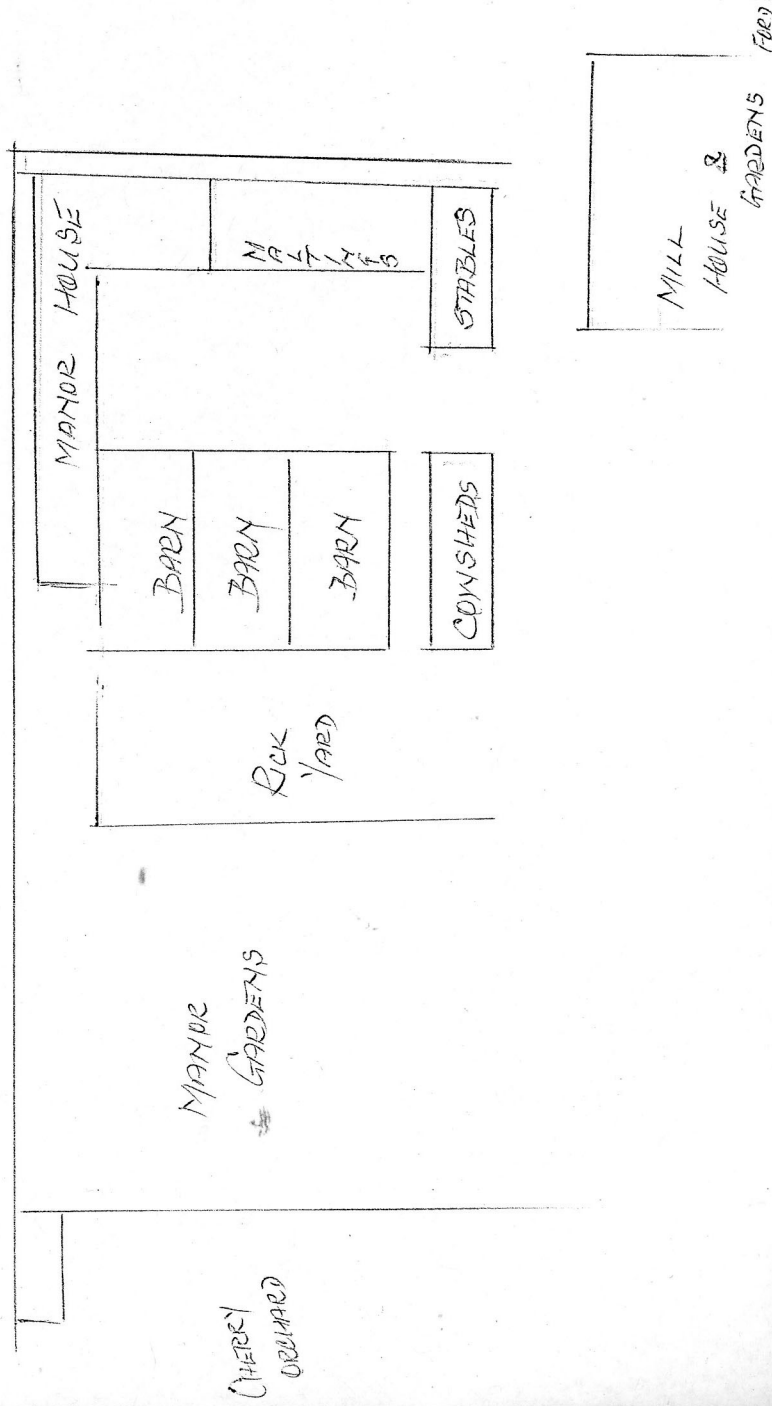
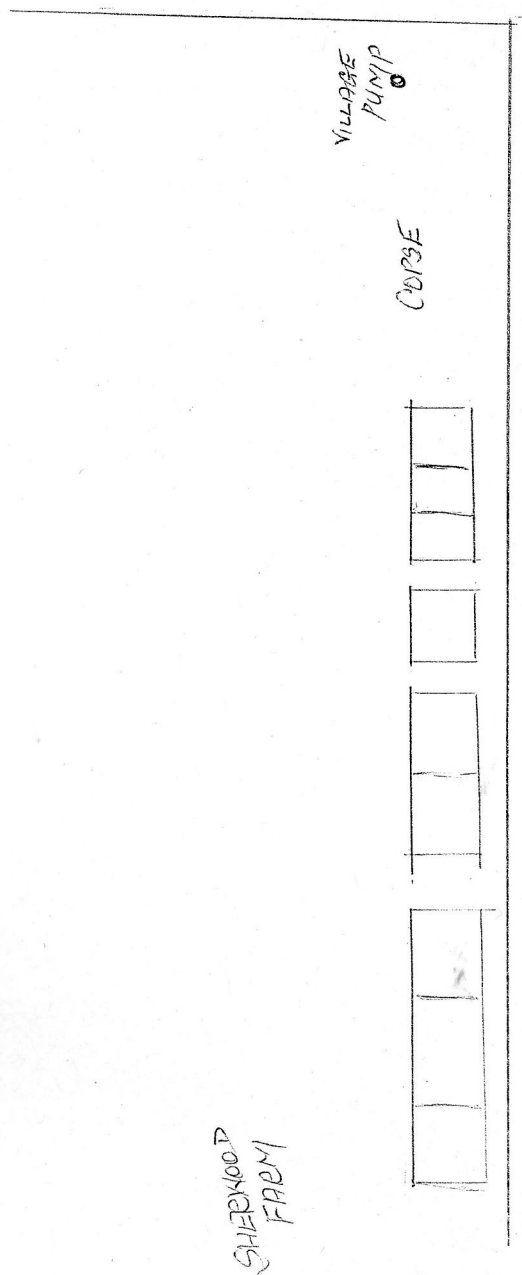
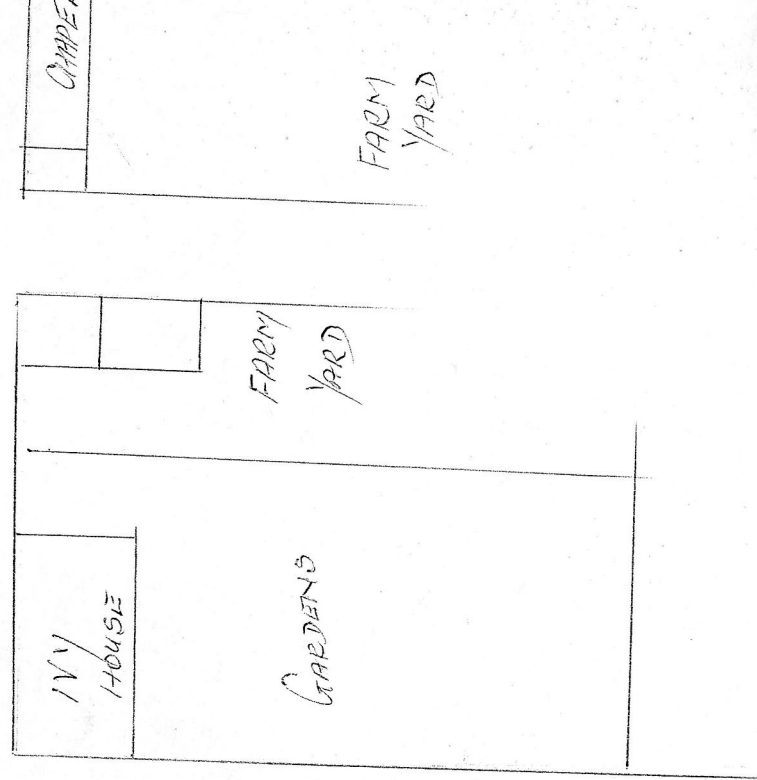
The land in front of the Manor House was raised and a lawn laid with shrubbery at each end and opposite and next to the copse a tennis court was laid out near the old village pump. When all this was completed see Plans A and B, apparently Thomas Byrd asked Savory if he would as a favour let him clear away a bit of bank and piece of land near the Nut Bush in Chapel Lane so that when his horses pulled the manure wagons from the Farm into Chapel Lane the lead horse wouldn't need to turn so sharp that it ceased to pull before the wagon was on the roadway. Apparently Savory had agreed to this but when the time came for him to surrender a bit of his land near the Nut Bush he thought better of it and refused. They said Thomas Byrd and Arthur Savory never spoke to each other again.

True or False - quite feasible when you look at the layout as it is today.

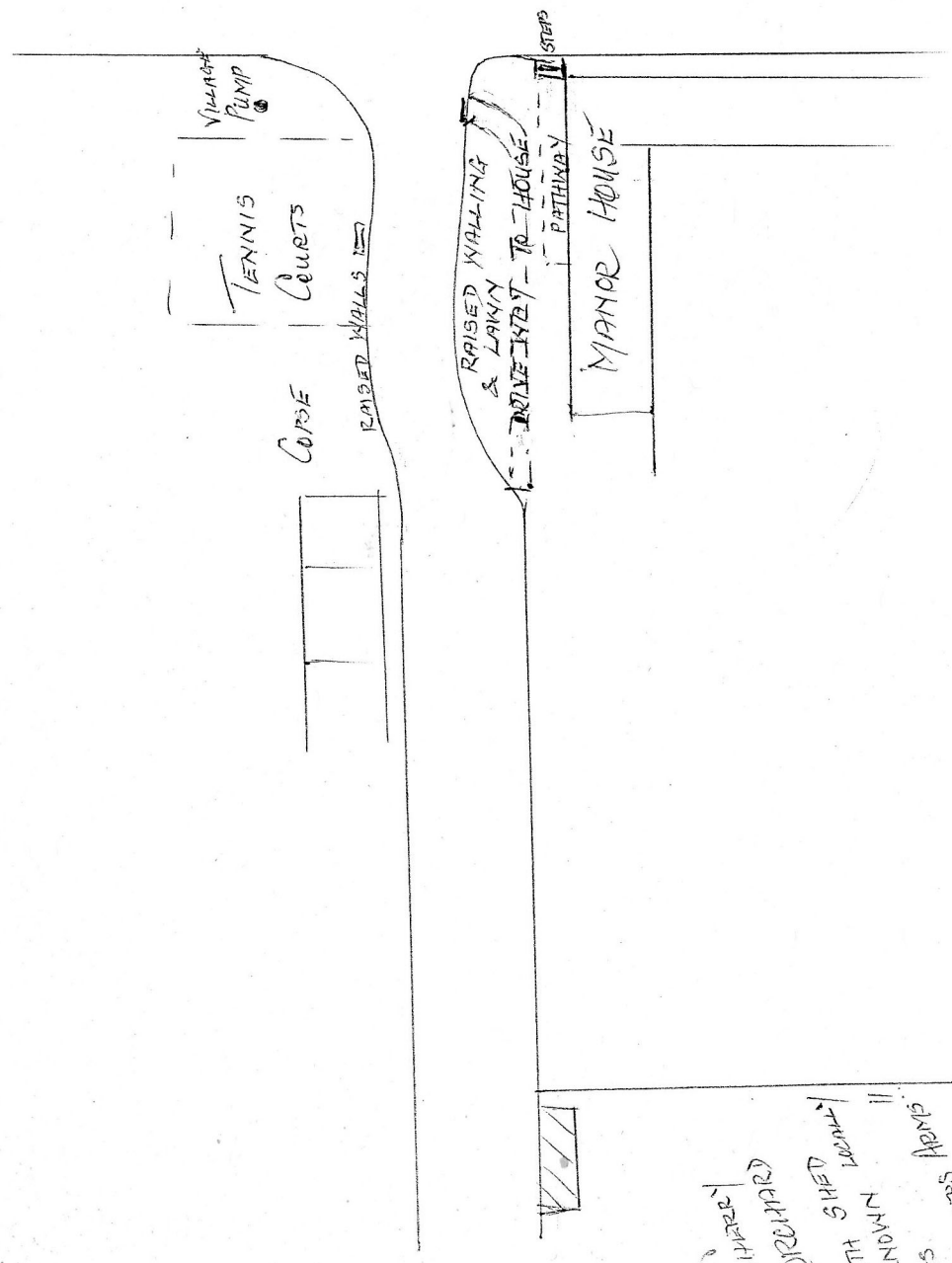
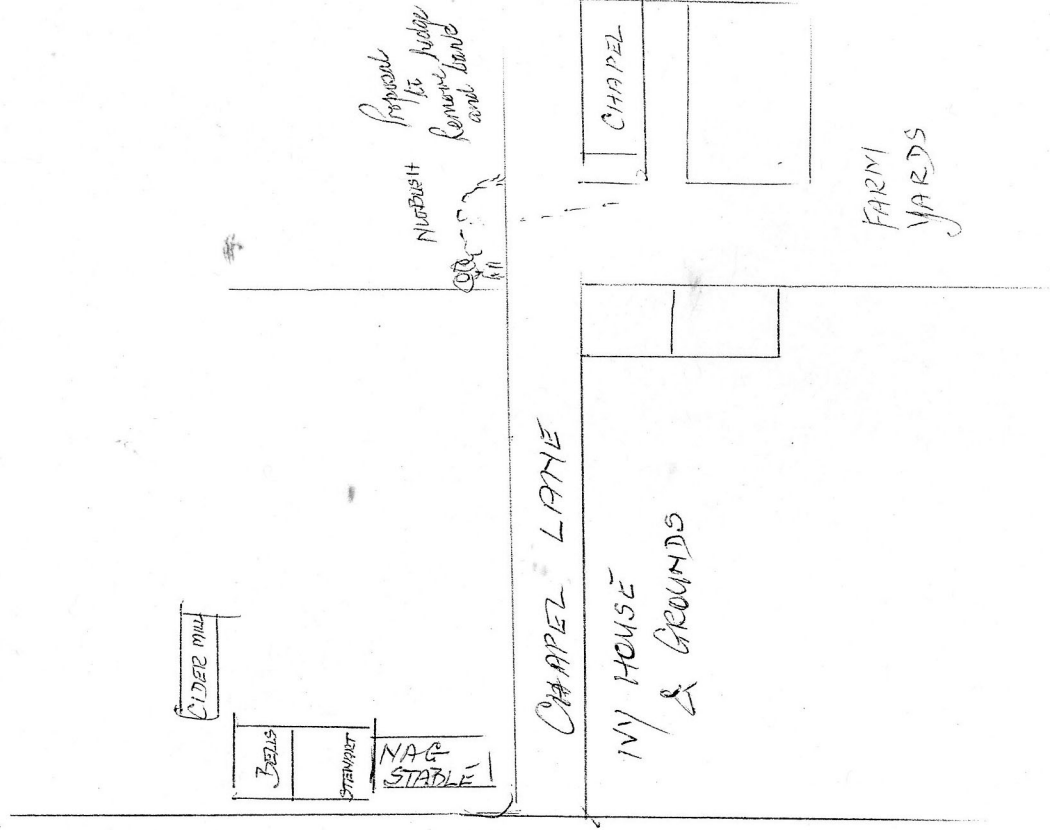
(A)



CHAPPEL LANE



B



CHERRY
ORCHARD
WITH SHED
KNOWN
AS
GARDENETTES