

**Whitfield Court, Horsell
Littlewick Road, Surrey GU21 2JU.**

This house has always been in Horsell Parish notwithstanding revisions in the boundaries of Woking, Horsell and Bisley parishes in the 20th century



This is a Grade II* listed building. The listing as detailed by Woking Borough Council on their website is:

House. C16, remodelled in C18 and extended in late C19. Timber frame core, brick exterior, C19 plain tiled roofs with ridge stacks and end stack to rear. 3 framed bays and lobby entrance to original house, rear service range and staircase addition forming L shape plan. 2 storeys, dentilled eaves, sash windows to street front, 4 across the first floor under gabled hoods on brackets; ground floor window to left in angle bay. Wooden doorcase with panelled pilasters and flat hood on console brackets to left of centre; 6 panel door with transom light. Gable ends have large central window on each floor flanked by smaller, narrower windows, now blocked; all under gauged heads, with arched brick lunettes in gables. Round arched sash window with glazing bars to staircase extension at rear; casement windows to the service range. Interior: Panelled room with enriched C18 chimney piece in east ground floor room; timber construction, Queen post trusses exposed in west end. Dog leg staircase with open string, twisted balusters and swept hand rail.

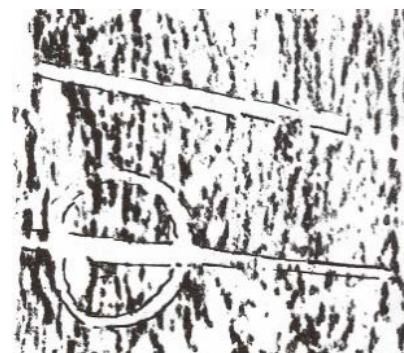
Whitfield Court is also within Woking Borough Council's Lower Knaphill Conservation Area which includes other neighbouring listed buildings together with properties on the Local List all situated in a tight knit group. It comprises of Anchor Hill from the *Royal Oak* through to *Littlewick Road* eastwards up to *Whitfield Court Barn* together with a small section of *Robin Hood Road* up to *Nuthurst*.

The house was last surveyed in 1996. Since this last visit the roof of the main house has been retiled, the entire loft space adapted for domestic use and minor alterations made at the rear where the service range joins the main house to correct a weakness there. (2004) This Report is concerned primarily with the history of the house.

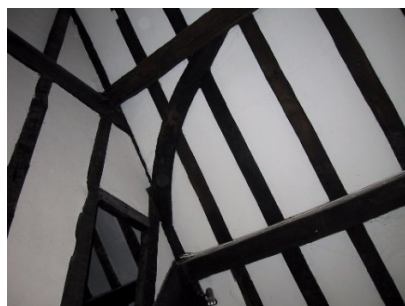


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A beam in the rear wing has a strange carpenter's mark (left). A similar mark has been found at Weavers Cottage, Wreclesham (right).



The rear service range of three small bays contains much reused timber:



Curved Brace



Mortice in tie beam



Large strut



This last image(left) is of the mullion for a window in the bathroom

These four images
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A list of Persons and Places in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Woking 1547-1553 mentions Edward and John Castell and Henry Heyward in connection with Knyghtsland referred to as freehold. Moreover, the will of James Castell, gentleman of Horsell made 29th July 1558 refers to *my land called Knyght's, Woking in occupation of Thomas Goryng and his son John Goryng* and that of Richard Simmons, yeoman made 26th April 1660 to *all my land etc. Knights, Woking*.

These references are probably just to the land on which Knight's Farm was eventually built and the fields used in connection with that farm. There is no suggestion that the farm was built any earlier than the estimate given in the main report of mid to late 17th century.

The present owners, Mr and Mrs Keith Sohl have a framed survey of the property (now in the care and custody of the Surrey History Centre Ref No.7641) entitled *Knight's Farm belonging to Joseph Whitfield Esq.* This must have been the house's original name and the owner's name the origin of both the name of the district and the house. There is no trace of the rear wing on this survey which must date from the middle of the 18th century.



This would indicate that the wing is an addition built in the late 19th century incorporating re-used roof timbers from an earlier age.

The survey speaks of the farm as being in the parishes of Horsell and Woking and as has already been mentioned above the land in Woking on the other side of the road was unusually freehold.

Joseph Whitfield married Martha King by licence at Horsell on 1st January 1749/50 and was buried in the churchyard in 1751. There are other Whitfield entries in the parish registers, Jane widow of John and Sophia daughter of Mrs Whitfield both buried in 1755 and Lucy baptised the following year.

The farm covered just under 100 acres and the survey was carried out and drawn by Matthew Richardson who was responsible for an early printed map of Guildford known as *The Ichnography or ground plan of Guildford, the county town of Surrey, Anno Dom. 1739*. On that plan the surveyor is described as *of Guildford in Surrey accountant and surveyor*. There are no known other instances of Matthew Richardson's work. The registers of Holy Trinity, Guildford record the death of a Matthew Richardson in 1758 and the baptism of a number of his children between 1726 and 1732 as well as the burial of one of those children, George in 1726.

There is a feet of fines Joseph Whitfield v Robert Kitching in 1739, and earlier entries of Robert Kitching v Charles Viner in 1723 and Charles Viner v John Clement in 1720 which may relate to the house and indicate that John Clement, Charles Viner and Robert Kitching were previous owners. William Clements was the owner of freehold land on the other side of the road in 1719. The name of Viner survived insofar as one of the fields mentioned in the Richardson survey was called Viners.

In 1830 this was *Mr Dover's farm* the subject of three water colours by Edward Hassell painted in that year. This diagnosis is confirmed by the semi-circular feature at the end of the house which also appears in the Hassell painting. The three images are the property of the British Library and must not be reproduced without prior written permission of the British Library.



© The British Library board, Crach.1.Tab.1.b.1., page after Vol.18 188.

Side view of Mr Dover's farm house



© The British Library board, Crach.1.Tab.1.b.1., page after Vol.18 188.

Mr Dover's farm front view



© The British Library board, Crach.1.Tab.1.b.1., page after Vol.18 188.

Mr Dover's farm back view



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The semi-circular window at the top of the gable has been reinstated following the conversion of the roof space. (see later) Note the blocked windows either side of the first floor window.



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It is difficult for obvious reasons to obtain a suitable up to date picture of the front of the house for comparison with the Edward Hassell water colour of 1830. Note the original second chimney on the front range has gone.



©Phillip Arnold 2004

The Back of the House

There is date stone AW 1883 on the larger of the two gables at the rear. This must be the date when the extension was built and its author, Anthony Waterer the elder.



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The East End

Note the blocked windows. The semi-circular window is difficult to make out as the conversion of the roof space had not been made when the photograph was taken.

Father John Hassell (1767-1825) and son Edward Hassell (1811-1852) produced over 2000 watercolours of Surrey between 1820 and 1833. (Batley and Moss Surrey Archaeological Collections Vol 75). This was before the advent of photography and importantly for admirers of the English church before the Victorians launched their onslaught on the medieval church. If, therefore, the Surrey magnate wanted a picture of his country house to go with his copy of Manning & Bray he could turn to the Hassells and we, looking back at the beginning of the 19th century, can see what a medieval church looked like.

One gathers that John was not averse to following his clients' wishes with regard to the content of a picture – a house on a hill could become one in fields. After all a client would be paying! The son Edward inherited his father's interest in Surrey but his approach is more that of an architectural draftsman although he began by completing his father's sketches. Edward it would appear was more precise and recorded what he saw. His father was more romantic. Surrey Archaeological Society Collections Volume 75 deals in greater detail with the different approaches of father and son.

The house today has its long front and four sets of windows facing the road and gables have been inserted above each of the four upper windows. Behind there is the later wing set at right angles to the main building.

When the roof of the main building was being retiled in 2004 inspection of the original timbers showed that a fairly basic method of construction was used. There was no ridge plate and all timbers were pegged.

Originally there were rooms in the roof with a staircase from the floor below (subsequently removed). In 2004 the entire loft space was adapted for domestic use extending from one end of the range to the other with the original semi-circular windows at the ends brought back into use. The newly created space formed just one long room save that at the West end, where a small room used as a music room was created, cut off from the rest of the space with an original wooden door. It was at this point that a new wooden staircase provides access from the floor below.



The Music Room
©Phillip Arnold 2016



The East End
©Phillip Arnold 2016



Looking through to the Chimney
©Phillip Arnold 2016

The date 1740 is scratched in the plaster of an original maid's room but this does not detract from the estimated date for the original building. A 1630 map appears to show a house on the site so the mid-17th century date can probably be moved further back.

The stair turret at the rear of the house contains an interesting staircase together with a fine window looking north



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There are also a couple of interesting surrounds to fireplaces on the first floor:



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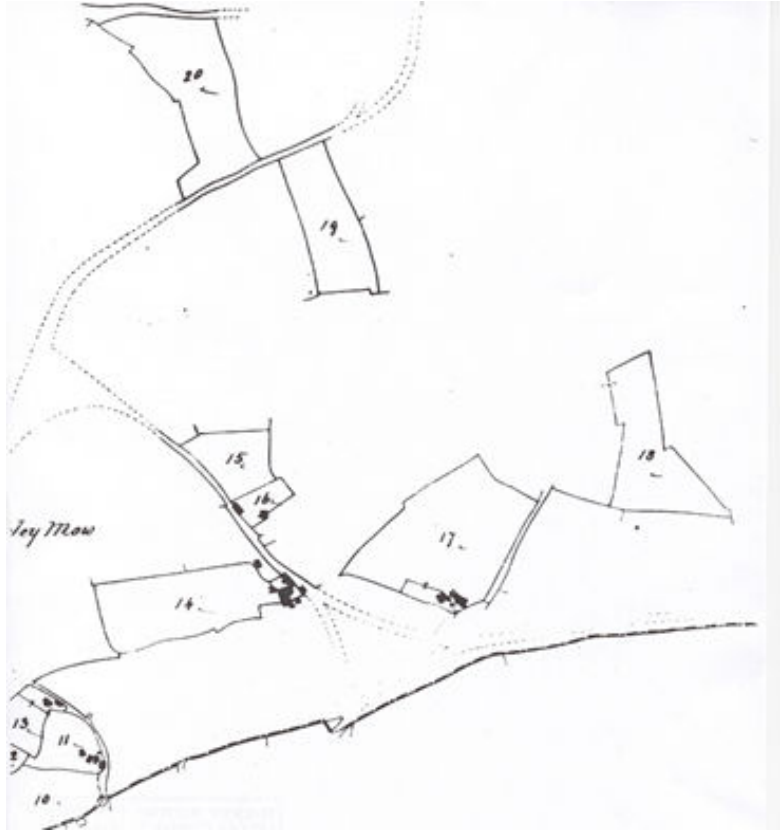
This is the surround in the bedroom at the east end. This is the surround in the previous bedroom

There is a parish valuation map and book of reference of Horsell in the Surrey History Centre (6198/11/188-189) drawn up by Edward Ryde in 1851 which gives details of the land use, owners and occupiers in the area surrounding Whitfield Court. The details of what was then Whitfield Farm in the ownership and occupation of Richard Dover were as follows:

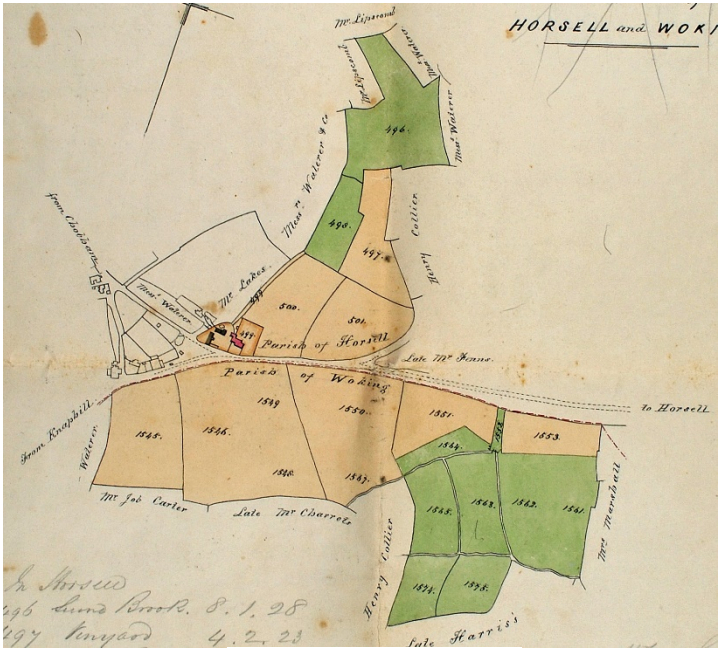
No.	Name	Use	A	R	P
496	Second Brook	Meadow	8	1	28
497	Vineyard	Arable	4	2	23
498	First Brook	Meadow	2	2	36
499	Whitfield Farm	Homestead	1	2	18
500	Brick Wall Field	Arable	5	2	03
501	Copse Field	Arable	5	1	05



The land behind the house was still owned and occupied by Richard Dover according to the Tithe Map in 1854/5. The Dover family were prominent in the area in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.



18 on the extract from the Tithe map on the left belonged and was occupied by Richard Dover as arable land, 17 is house garden and land belonging to Joseph Graham, probably present day Longcroft Cottage and 15, Knap Hill Nursery owned and occupied by Hosea Waterer (1798-1853). Whitfield Court is not shown since it was presumably already free from tithe. It would have been below 18 and a little to the right on the Map. There is a plan of the house drawn in 1860 (below left) previously kept with other Knap Hill nursery documents (*Surrey History Centre 3364/1*) deposited by Mr Gomer Waterer of Somerset in 1986



There is no specific entry for Whitfield Court in the 1861 census but with the continued possibility of managing more and more farm land from a single farm due to improvements in agricultural practice and the determination of Anthony Waterer (1822-1896) and Robert Godfrey (c1812-1874) to acquire redundant farm land for their Knaphill nursery it is likely that Whitfield Court was empty. There is an uninhabited house shown on the return nearby.

©Surrey History Centre

Whereas the nursery covered 103 acres under the hands of Hosea Waterer according to the 1851 census, this had increased to 350 acres in 1861 (see return for Nursery below) when his nephews Anthony and Robert had inherited the business. This increase was probably following the absorption of the farm lands previously farmed by a number of farmhouses in the neighbourhood

such as Whitfield Court, Inwoods, Bluegates and Longcroft Cottage. The remaining farmhouses might be sold, rented to nursery workers or just absorbed into the nursery

The occupants of the house according to the 1841-1911 censuses were:

1841 Knaphill

- Richard Dover, farmer, his wife Jane plus Ann Cogger, Mary Burchett and Frances Hurbet together with servants, Elizabeth Dewbery, William Harding and James Glaysher.

1851 Knaphill

- Richard Dover, farmer with 103 acres employing five labourers, his wife Jane, grandson Richard Lee, niece Ann Lee, house servant and agricultural labourers, William Harding and James Collyer.

1861 Nursery

- Robert Godfrey Nurseryman and farmer using 350 acres, employing 84 men, 20 boys and 3 women, his two nephews, James Woodward and Robert Martin, visitor Jane Fenn, Elizabeth Smith, servant and Charles Mundy groom

Mr Donald Waterer who lived at the property and is the son of F Gomer Waterer (1867-1945) of the Bagshot nursery, says (July 2004) that the house was bought by Anthony Waterer the elder in 1868 and let, as he required extra land for the nursery. The Electoral Register for 1890 (*Surrey History Centre*) has Major General HB Hayward living at the property. This is borne out by the 1891 census:

1871 Dovers Farm

- Charles Hughes, carter, his wife Sarah and their children, George, carter's boy and Mary and Mary Hampshire widow and mother in law.

1881 Dover's House

- Arthur Cutler retired draper, his wife Ann, Marian Norton, visitor, Alice May, cook and Susan Dolley housemaid.

Dover's

- George Daborn, farmer, his wife Emma and their daughter, Marian.

Dover's

- Samuel Lee, widower and his daughter, Ellen.

1891

- Frances Hayward, married and living on her own means, her daughters, Violet, Muriel, Winifred, Maud and Ethel plus Agnes Dickens cook and Lavina Hall parlour maid.

Ten years earlier, Frances and her daughters were living with her husband, Henry a lieutenant colonel, and a son of three months, Harold in the barracks of the 45th Regiment Sherwood Foresters at Aldershot.(1881 census)

1901

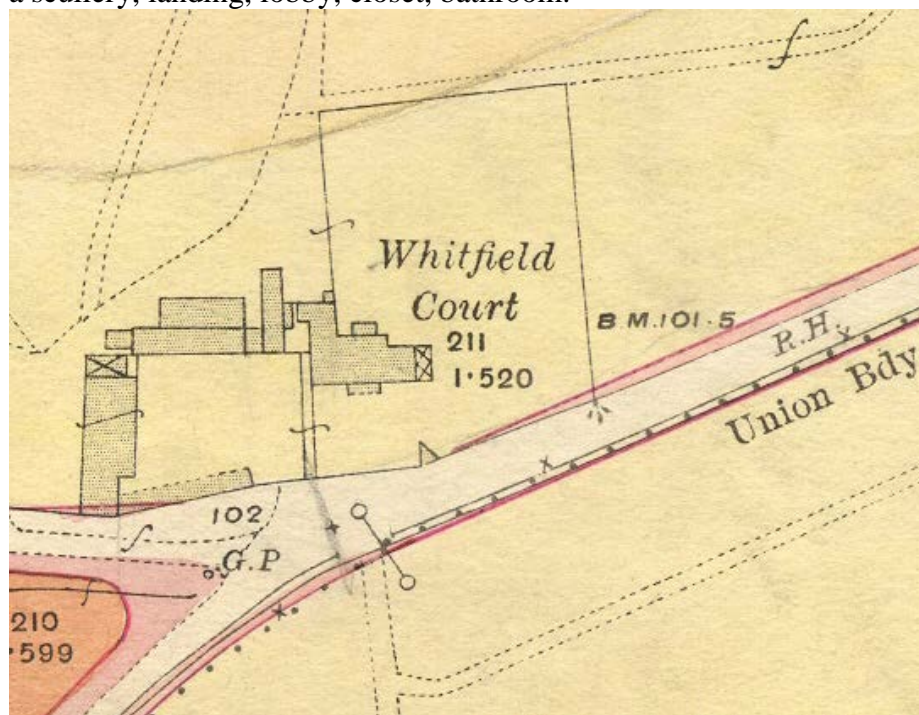
- Fanny Edenborough, widow and her children, Horatio, Horatia and Dora, all living on

own means apart from Dora and their servants, Charlotte and Emily Drew, housemaid and cook respectively.

1911

- Horatio Edenborough, private means and his servants, Rose Hill housemaid and Ellen Ryder, cook.

This census shows the number of rooms in a house – in this case 11 - including the kitchen but not a scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom.



The Ordnance Survey Plan of 1915 (left) shows the house more or less as it is today except that there appears to have a conservatory or some similar feature at the end furthest from the farmyard and there was a lobby or shelter covering the front door.

The Directories published by the Woking News & Mail have the occupants of the house as:

1921 Col AA Goschen **1924-5** W Ackworth **1926-7** vacant **1928-30** F Broughton **1931-39** F Gomer Waterer **1948-9** FG Pullinger **1957** H Goude **1964-9** MT Turnbull

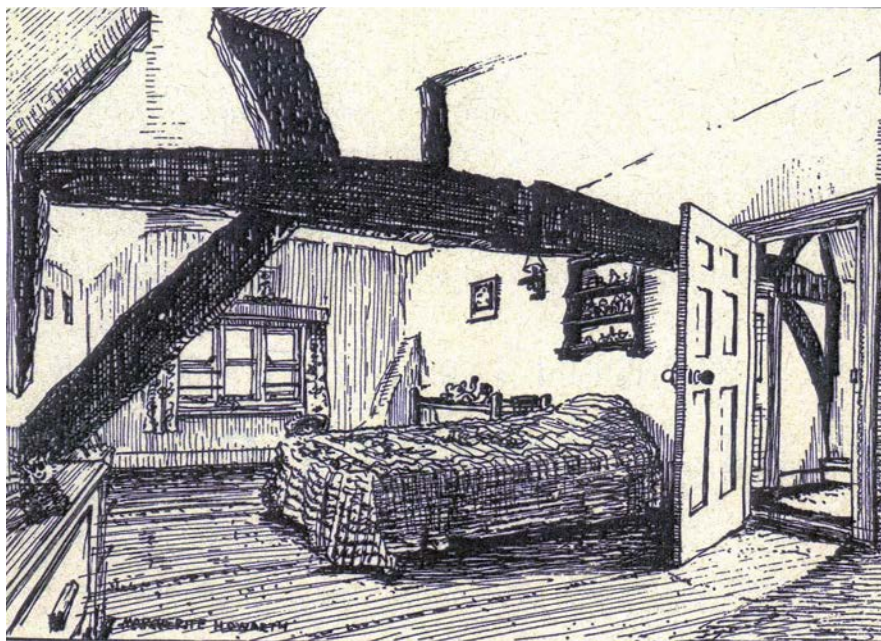
There is a hand written note on the back of the framed survey (see page 2 above) as follows:

Whitfield Court belonged in the 1930s to Gomer Waterer of Knaphill Nurseries. The clipped yew tree SE of the house was created by Jim Coban (Charles James Cockburn), nephew of Gomer - his mother was a Miss Waterer - who was killed in World War I. (25th April 1915)

Gomer Waterer brought the tree from Bagshot to the garden of Whitfield Court in 1931 and kept it clipped all through World War II when he was getting pretty old.

Jim Cockburn was a grandson of John Waterer of Bagshot.

The house belonged to Mr Pullinger, baker, of Woking, from about 1948 to 1952 when it was bought by the writer M.T. Turnbull.



Pen and ink drawing of the first floor bedroom in the rear extension by local artist Marguerite Howarth
©the Howarth family

Mr Donald Waterer says that he lived at the house with his parents from 1931 until 1939 when he joined the Royal Air Force. F Broughton, who according to the Woking News & Mail was the occupant from 1931 to 1939, was clerk to Anthony Waterer 1850-1924, owner of the Knap Hill Nursery, who gave Waterers' Field to the people of Woking. F Gomer Waterer 1867-1945 was Director of the nursery.

Donald Waterer goes on to say that when he returned to England in May 1945 after two years in Stalag Luft III, he found Whitfield Court in a sadly dilapidated state. The Nursery sold the house to Mr Pullinger and Mr Waterer re-joined the Nursery.

Sources

Survey for Joseph Whitfield c1750
Edward Hassell 1830 water colours at British Library
1841-1901 Census Returns Surrey History Centre
Horsell Tithe Map 1854/5 Surrey History Centre
Plan of Whitfield Farm 1860
Woking News & Mail Directories Surrey History Centre
DBRG Reports 1868 and 1868 (Revised)
A List of Surrey Feet of Fines 1714-1760 West Surrey Family History Society
John Remnant Map of The Manor of Woking 1719
Edward Ryde valuation map of Horsell 1851 Surrey History Centre
Nurserymen to the World EJ Willson 1989
A list of Persons and Places in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Woking 1547-1553