

Oxfordshire

BURFORD GAZETTEER: OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS

High Street: No. 34 (Wren Gallery and entrance to Bear Court)

Work on the owners and occupiers of Burford's buildings was undertaken during 2003-6 as part of the Oxfordshire EPE project. The research accompanied the architectural investigations summarised on this website.

Standard sources included: census enumerators' books 1841-1901 in The National Archives; District Valuation assessments in Oxfordshire Record Office; printed trades directories including Kelly's Directory of Oxfordshire (1883-1939); RH Gretton, The Burford Records (1920), which summarises a vast body of early property deeds; and research (published and unpublished) by the Revd Raymond Moody and Mrs Joan Moody of Burford, drawing in part on title deeds in private possession. In some cases lack of documentation prevents the building's history being taken back earlier than the 19th century. The research was carried out by RB Peberdy of VCH Oxfordshire.

OCCUPATION and USE

2005

Group of shops in premises known as 'Bear Court'.

Late 20th c.

Premises remodelled as shops, 'Bear Court' (inf. from R. Moody).

1960s

Bear Inn closed (inf. from R. Moody).

1920

William Hall, 'Bear P.H. & blacksmith', listed (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1915

William Hall, 'Bear P.H. & blacksmith', listed (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1911

James Vincent Merchant, Bear P.H., listed (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1910

Owned by Clinch & Co.; occupied by Vincent Merchant; pencil note 'Bear Inn' (DV Survey, ref. no. 381).

1908-9

James V. Merchant listed as 'proprietor' of Bear (Oxon. and District Trades Dir.).

1903

Mrs. Anne Ruddle, Bear P.H., listed (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1901

The Bear, occupied by Frank Ruddell (innkeeper), wife, dau. (dressmaker), nephew (house boy) (census, entry no. 13).

1899

Frank Ruddell, Bear P.H., listed (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1895

Frank Arthurs listed as 'Bear P.H. & hurdle maker, Priory street' (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1891

Bear Inn, Frank Arthurs (hurdle maker and publican), wife, 4 children, niece, servant (ostler), 3 lodgers (bootmaker, 2 hawkers) (census, entry no. 12).

1887

Frank Arthurs listed as 'Bear P.H. & hurdle maker, Priory street' (Kelly's Dir. Oxon.).

1881

Bear Inn, John Butler (publican and carrier), wife, 6 children (census, entry no. 11).

Next household poss. also resident in Bear buildings, viz. John Simms (shoemaker), woman, her 6 children (inc. ploughboy) (census, entry no. 12).

1874

John Butler, Bear inn, listed (Mercer and Crocker's Dir. Oxon.).

1871

The Bear, Emanuel Sperrink (innkeeper), wife, son (carpenter), son-in-law (groom), boarder (publican), 2 lodgers (wine cooper, agric. labourer) (census, entry no. 14).

Next household possibly resident in Bear buildings, William Ruddell (hairdresser), wife, 4 children (inc. plasterer's labourer) (census, entry no. 17).

1869

Emanuel Sperrink listed as 'beer retailer' (PO Dir. Oxon.).

1861

Occupied by Emanuel Sperrink (publican), wife, 2 children, 2 visitors (inc. agric. labourer), 2 servants (inc. besom maker) (census, entry no. 13).

Next three households may have lived in Bear buildings or in adjacent building: see Nos. 42-4 below.

1854

Emanuel Sperink listed under 'Bear' (PO Dir.).

1853

John Jones listed as 'victualler, Bear Inn' (Lascelles' Dir. Oxon.).

1852

J. Jones listed under 'Bear' and as 'builder' (Gardner's Dir. Oxon.).

1851

John Jones (carpenter), wife, 2 children, traveller (tailor), lodger (wheelwright) (census, entry no. 2).

1847

John Jones, 'Bear inn, & carpenter', listed ([PO Dir.](#)).

1841

John Jones (carpenter and builder), wife, 5 children, lodger (army) (census, entry no. 116)

1830

Bear (including 'Falkland Hall') bought from Lenthall estate by John Jones, carpenter and builder (R. Moody, [Inns of Burford](#), 35).

1774—1800

Bear absent from recorded lists of victuallers (R. Moody, [Inns of Burford](#), 35).

1760

Meeting of Land Tax Commissioners held at the Bear (R. Moody, [Inns of Burford](#), 35).

1684

Death of Jonathan Matthews, son of Thomas; end of Matthews family's involvement in the Bear (R. Moody, [Inns of Burford](#), 35).

late 1640s

Bear Inn probably established by Thomas Matthews (d. 1680) (R. Moody, [Inns of Burford](#), 34).

PLOT INFORMATION

Frontage width (OBR measurement): 7.14 m. Length (map measurement): 42 m. Frontage includes gateway 2.36 m. wide between sides. Length includes extension to plot beyond rear gateway. Note that behind the front gateway the plot is wider, including land behind the Falkland Hall.

1999

Buildings essentially as in 1921; but different internal divisions, small northward extension towards rear of range; westward addition to building on south side of rear gateway.

1921

Building comprises front gateway, long north range, rear gateway, building to south of rear gateway.

Read more in the EPE book *Burford: Buildings and People in a Cotswold Town* by Antonia Catchpole, David Clark and Robert Peberdy (published 2008)