

**63 Friday Street  
Henley-on-Thames**

**Grade II listed**



No 63

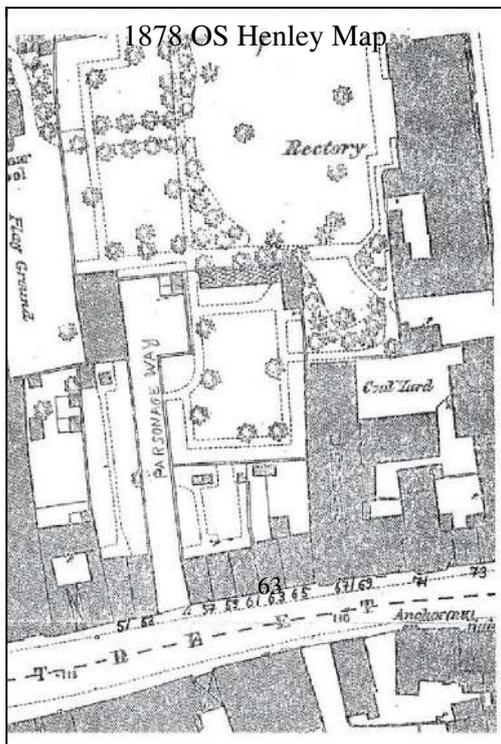
The building was first recorded in 1987 by members of the Henley Archaeological & Historical Group in Report No. 48/1987. The owner at that time was HAHG member Mrs. A. Price.

The Census Returns tell us that the house was occupied in 1891 by Wm. Taylor, 37 years old carpenter, his 24 years old wife Mary Anne and 6 months old son Oliver George.

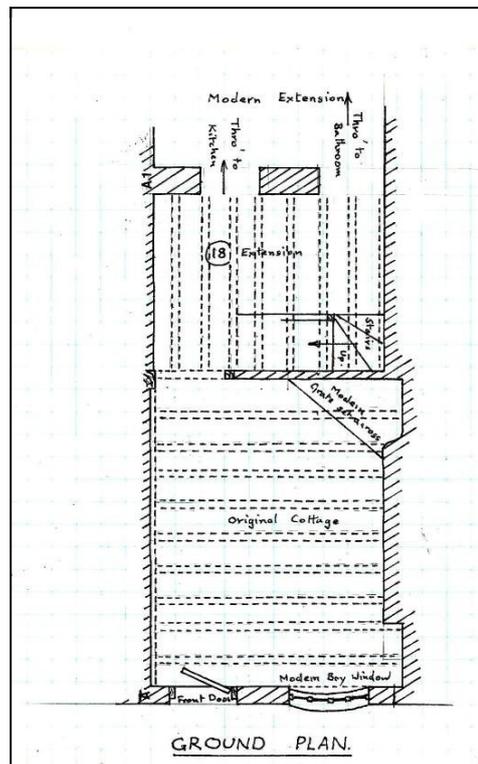
In 1901 the tenants were 48 years old labourer Robert Smith, his 50 years old wife Mary and 13 years old son Gerald Robert.

The house forms a group with Nos 57,59,61 on the west side and with No. 65 on the east and it appears to be historically linked to both, as still seen through the evidence of its surviving timber framed construction.

This small house is the sole survivor of a larger medieval building, i.e the eastern, two story end bay of a once large building. On the ground floor only the north/west corner post with a heavy jowl survives. However the flat laid heavy scantling ceiling joists appear to be original. The rear kitchen, stairs and bedroom are C18<sup>th</sup> additions.



1878 OS Henley Map



GROUND PLAN.

The first-floor chamber retains most of its structural wall and roof timbers. The trusses are of the queen strut type with the collars clasping the purlins. The tie beams are cambered and there are long, curved wall and wind braces. The visible corner posts have large jowls, although one of them is only visible from the bedroom of the adjoining No. 65, where it shows a heavily weathered surface. This demonstrates that No. 63 had been built and its east flank left exposed for a considerable time, until No. 65 was built in the gap between Nos 63 and Old Timbers (prob. mid-18<sup>th</sup> see HA&HG Report No. 59) using the existing framing of its neighbour as a side wall.



First floor room: wall post with wide jowl to support both plate and tie beams. Also note large, curved wall brace. The weathered post and brace below are the original east wall of No. 63 but are now only visible in the bedroom of No. 65.



The cambered tie beam supports the queen struts of the clasped purlin truss. Also note the wide, curved wind braces. All timbers indicate a well built, substantial structure, probably of mid-15<sup>th</sup> date, now occupied by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> C brick terrace at 57/59/61. The latter are still bounded by the Parsonage Way on the west, the side entrance to the former large Rectory grounds.



**Conclusion:** This appears to be the solar at the eastern end of a once very substantial house. It always had an upper floor, which means a chamber above and a private room or services such as a buttery and pantry below. The stack and fireplaces are later insertions, but too altered to speculate on when this might have happened.

This solar probably only survived because it was easy to convert into a small cottage by adding a rear extension which houses the kitchen and stairs all very similar to several other conversions of larger timber framed houses into small cottages in Friday Street in the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> C.

There seems to have been a great demand for labourer s accommodation in the town at that time. (Also see HAHG reports on Nos 17-21, 27-29, 31/33, 51/53 Friday Street for very similar conversions and alterations of earlier, larger timber framed houses in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> C ).