

## 2) Blizzard's Cottage

This cottage stood on or very near the corner of Paines Hill and Heyford Road, its garden bounded on the other two sides by land Harris had inherited from John Marten Watson. It may well be the building shown on the Enclosure Map. Watson's father, Jacob Watson, had detached this crucial site from the estate and sold it to Thomas Blizzard. Although of different social status the two men seem to have been friends – Jacob Watson was a witness at Blizzard's marriage to Anna Maria Hester in 1775. The description reads as follows:

All that plot piece or parcel of ground upon which lately stood a Messuage Cottage or tenement outbuildings and premises erected and built by Thomas Blizzard deceased and by him purchased of Jacob Watson Gentleman but which has lately been pulled down and removed by him the said Charles Harris situate lying and being in Steeple Aston in the County of Oxford and being formerly part of a certain field or inclosure in the liberties of Steeple Aston aforesaid called the South Duckeridge [*sic*] which said piece or parcel of ground and premises contain Five poles and a half of ground (That is to say) Two poles and ten feet from East to West and two poles one foot from North to South and are bounded on the North and East by land late belonging to the within John Marten Watson deceased and on the South by the public road and heretofore in the tenure of Thomas Waine and Ann Clark but now in the tenure or occupation of the said Charles Harris.

Harris had had to wait until October 1835 to buy this property, by which time his new Manor was already far advanced. As the description shows, he quickly demolished the cottage and began some sort of building activity on the site.

## 3) The Blacksmith's Cottage and Shop

The exact location of this property is not made clear, but it seems to have lurked somewhere between the other two. Unlike Blizzard's Cottage it remained part of the estate, and was leased to the Plumb family of blacksmiths. Under his Will, however, John Marten Watson bequeathed the cottage to his housekeeper Ann Ell for life, apparently to provide her with a retirement income out of the rent the Plumbs paid for their shop:

I give and bequeath unto my Housekeeper Ann Ell that Cottage commonly called the Blacksmith's now in the occupation of Elizabeth Plumb with hovels adjoining gardens and orchard excepting the Cow Hovel which I reserve for the use of the Estate and the Occupier.

Ann Ell also received a small annuity. She married shortly afterwards but died in 1831, when the cottage reverted to Charles. When mortgaged in 1836 it was described as follows: