

# Wargrave Local History Society

## *From the archives*

SALE EDITION.

### WARGRAVE, BERKS,

Three miles from Henley-on-Thames and two from Twyford Station on the G.W.R. main line.

#### Particulars, Plan, and Conditions

#### OF IMPORTANT SALE OF

### Freehold & Building & Property,

KNOWN AS

### THE WORKHOUSE GROUND,

Situate in the Parish and close to the Village of Wargrave, and within ten minutes' walk of the River Thames and approached by good roads, the

### FIRST PORTION OF THE PROPERTY

(As shewn on the accompanying Plan) comprising

### 46 CONVENIENT LOTS,

Will be offered for Sale by Auction, by

## MESSRS. SIMMONS & SONS

AT THE

GEORGE & DRAGON HOTEL, WARGRAVE,

On **TUESDAY, DECEMBER the 7th, 1886,**

AT TWO FOR THREE O'CLOCK.

*The Land is level and apportioned with good depths with a frontage to a new road of the width of 40-ft.*

There is a great demand for Cottages and small Villas in the locality. The remainder of the Property will be developed with expedition.

Particulars, with Plans, may be obtained at the Broad Face Hotel, Reading; at the George & Dragon Hotel, Wargrave; at the Catherine Wheel Hotel, Henley-on-Thames; of Messrs. SOAMES, EDWARDS, & JONES, Solicitors, 28, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.; or of the Auctioneers, HENLEY-ON-THAMES and Basingstoke.

DRAGHT AND SON, PRINTERS, MARKET PLACE, READING.

This item from the Society's archive is a poster advertising an auction at the St George and Dragon that took place 135 years ago, on December 7th 1886. On offer was part of what was known as "The Workhouse Ground".

This was not the site of the workhouse itself, but land that had been associated with it, but both had a common history. The family name Piggott is of course well known in Wargrave, as the village schools were founded by Robert Piggott in the 1790s. Only one of Robert's brothers, John, survived into adulthood, and in 1770 he donated a piece of land to the parish of Wargrave, to be used to build a parish workhouse. The workhouse was administered by parish overseers, and existed to give help to the poor in time of need. (often they were old or infirm - but the able bodied would be given work to do). The main area of housing in the village at that time consisted of the area between Dark Lane (then called "the Above Town Road") and the river, and the workhouse was built on open land to the east of this, with a road running down to the village centre.

By the mid 1830s, the workhouse accommodated 40 paupers. As a result of a new Poor Law in 1834, a new large workhouse was built at Wokingham, to serve the needs of the area. That, however, catered only for adults, and so the Wargrave building was adapted for use as a Poor Law Board School in 1849 - jointly run by the Reading and Wokingham Unions. By the early 1900s, the need for this had diminished, and the Poor Law Board School closed, with the building then being used for the infant classes of the Piggott School, until the 1960s. The land was then used to create Elizabeth Court in the 1970s, with the doctor's surgery moving alongside a few years later.

The fields to the east of there, including what is now the main recreation ground and allotments, had also belonged to the Piggott family, and Ann Piggott had left this land to Joseph King, a descendant of her cousin John - it becoming King's Farm. It is part of this land that was being offered for sale. It was to be split into 46 lots, typically each having a 30ft frontage to a "proposed new road". Plots 1 to 17 ranged from 200ft to 255 ft long, with others varying from 135 ft to 170ft in length. The sales particulars note that the site is "2 miles from Twyford Station on the GWR main line" (although the branch line existed, a station was not built at Wargrave until 1900).

The 'new road' was to have a width of 40ft, and extended eastwards from the Poor Law Board School to Blakes Road (then known as King's Road). Being built the following year, it (including the part from the workhouse site towards the village centre) was named Jubilee Road (1887 being the year of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee). It was later renamed as Victoria Road, and several of the older properties have stones set into the wall recording their being built soon after 1886.