Heath Cottage

Sheepy Road, Pinwall, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, CV9 3QU





Historical Background Report

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1.0 Introduction: Description and Geographical Context

1.1 Heath Cottage, also known historically as Heath House and (to local people) as 'Cocksparrow Hall', is a modest two-storey cottage, which displays evidence of former single-storey wings adjoining on its north and west sides and at its south-west corner (where a ruined wall remains standing). The cottage has four main rooms downstairs and three upstairs. It is built from red brick, but the walls have a roughcast render, except where the scars of the former single-storey wings occur. The roof is covered with plain clay tiles and there is one chimneystack (of mixed red and blue bricks) attached to the west gable wall. The windows are two-light metal casements with horizontal glazing bars and both side and top hung opening lights, under shallow brick arches. The cottage is currently unoccupied and in a derelict condition. There are no longer any fences or walls marking out a curtilage from the surrounding fields.

1.2 Heath Cottage enjoys an isolated position at the end of a long grassy track, in the middle of open fields to the north of Sheepy Road. It is set back by around 265 metres from the road. Pinwall Hall Farm and the hamlet of Pinwall lie to the south-west, the village of Sheepy Magna to the east, the town of Atherstone to the south and extensive open countryside to the north and west.

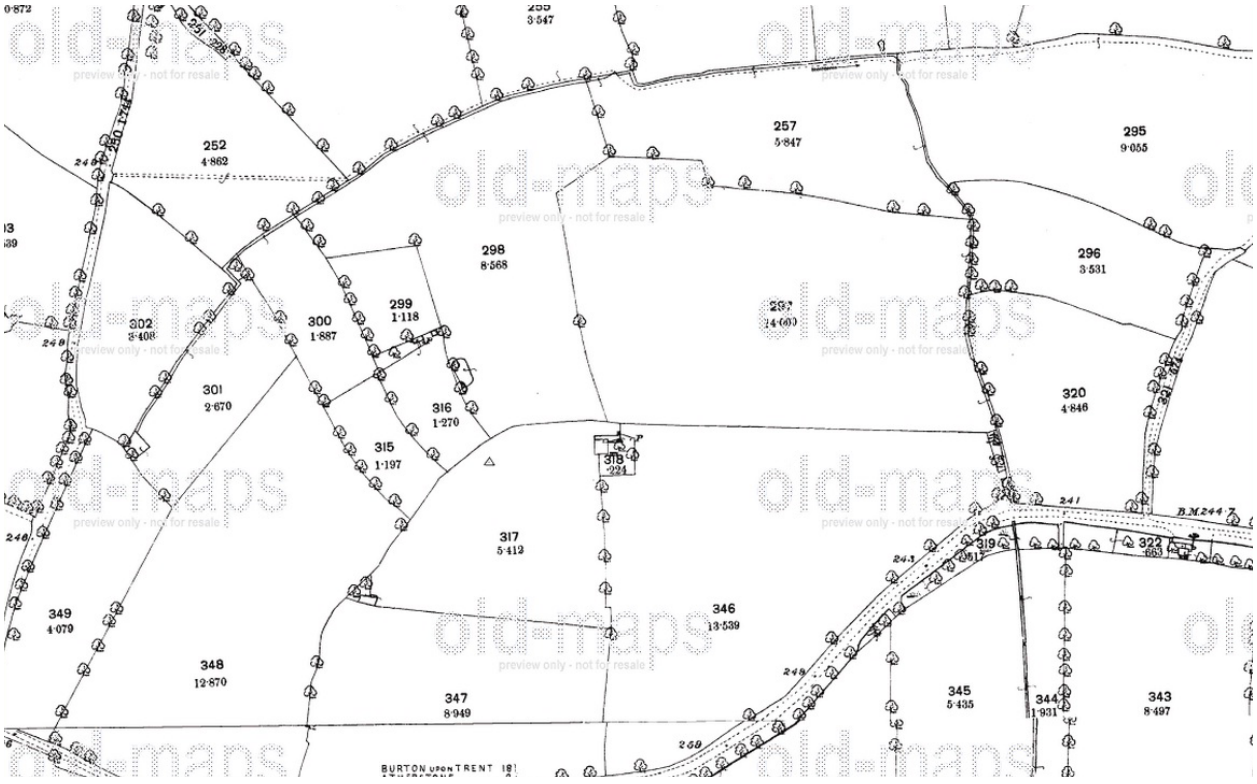


Heath Cottage as seen in a photograph on the Geograph web site (south elevation)

2.0 Historical Background – Heath Cottage and Pinwall Hall

2.1 This isolated cottage appears always to have been associated with Pinwall Hall Farm, perhaps originally as a farm labourer's or shepherd's cottage, being situated, as it is, in the midst of Pinwall Hall's farmland. It is not possible to distinguish the cottage in the Pinwall census records before 1891, although earlier censuses include several unnamed dwellings occupied by agricultural labourers, which were described as being located at Pinwall. I suspect that the cottage was built after 1881 but before 1885, although this supposition is based purely on the lack of specific evidence for its existence prior to 1885. (Should a tithe map survive in the County Record Office or elsewhere, this could establish whether the cottage existed by, say, the 1840s.) The building appears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale map of 1885, with an associated garden plot of 0.224 acres (numbered 318 and actually used as a fold-yard for sheep) and a substantial wing on the west side, as well as a small outbuilding to the north-east corner. Typical of the difficulty in establishing whether it existed long before that date is the appearance in the 1881 census of no less than five consecutive entries (58-62) immediately prior to the Pinwall Hall entry, all described as being on "Atherstone Road" (the old name for the Sheepy/Main Road) and all occupied by farm labourers. The Red Lion Inn immediately follows the Pinwall Hall entry, then Pinwall Lane, which does suggest that the enumerator was

approaching Pinwall Hall from Sheepy Magna rather than Pinwall hamlet (and the Sheepy Magna village entries do come first).



The 1885 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, showing Heath Cottage as plot 318 at centre (old-maps.co.uk)

2.2 Assuming that to be the case, entry 62 in the 1881 census would be the strongest contender for Heath Cottage, if indeed it did exist at that time. That dwelling was occupied by John Garfield, a 44-year-old farm labourer, with his wife Mary Ann (41), four daughters (aged 5 to 16) and a son (aged 8). By 1903 another wing had appeared on the south side of the original cottage, adjoining the earlier single-storey wing at the south-west corner of the main house. The form of the building then remained unchanged until the 1:2500 scale map of 1958, and probably for another twenty years or more after that, but the various single-storey wings have gradually been lost through decay and vandalism during the last 30 years or so.

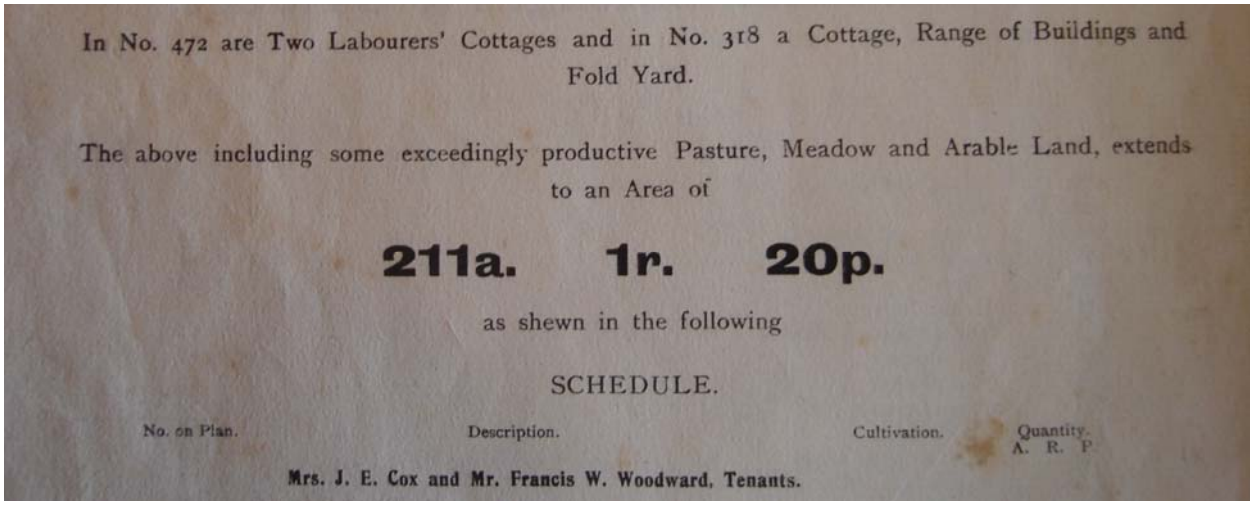
2.3 The current owner (at Pinwall Hall Farm) has told me that she understood the cottage was known as 'Heath Cottage', or as 'Cocksparrow Hall' by some local people. The latter name would seem to have an ironic connotation, as clearly this building, though associated with Pinwall Hall, was never a large or grand house itself. In researching the name, I came across a passage in James Brabazon's *Dorothy L. Sayers: A Biography* (1981), referring to a cottage of this name at Westcott or Westcote Barton, near Oxford:

> "The cottage was known to the villagers as Cocksparrow Hall, a name which, in that part of the country, does not denote any particular grandeur" (page 140).

Closer to home, a 17th century cottage at Maxstoke also bears this name.

2.4 The name 'Heath Cottage' does not appear on any Ordnance Survey map or in any Warwickshire Directory that I have seen. The cottage is unnamed on all the maps on which it appears. In the 1911 Grendon Hall Estate Auction Catalogue, it is simply referred to as Plot 318, a cottage, shed and yard amounting to 36 perches of land, elsewhere described as "a Cottage,

Range of Buildings and Fold Yard" and not dignified with a name. The adjoining fields, however, numbered 317 and 346, were known as 'Top Heath' (a meadow) and 'Great Heath' (arable) in 1911, which certainly lends weight to the idea that the cottage lying between them was popularly called 'Heath Cottage'. The 1891 and 1901 Pinwall census returns do include a 'Heath House', listed between Pinwall Hall and Bell Rope Hall, which seems very likely to be the same building as 'Heath Cottage'. In 1891 it was occupied by James Arnold, a shepherd, aged 31; he shared the house with his wife Harriet (aged 24) and at the time he had a four-year-old boy called George Hazzell staying with him, described as a "visitor". A shepherd might well have been employed by the farmer at Pinwall Hall. In the 1901 census, the same house was named again, but this time marked as "unoccupied".



In No. 472 are Two Labourers' Cottages and in No. 318 a Cottage, Range of Buildings and Fold Yard.

The above including some exceedingly productive Pasture, Meadow and Arable Land, extends to an Area of

211a. 1r. 20p.

as shewn in the following

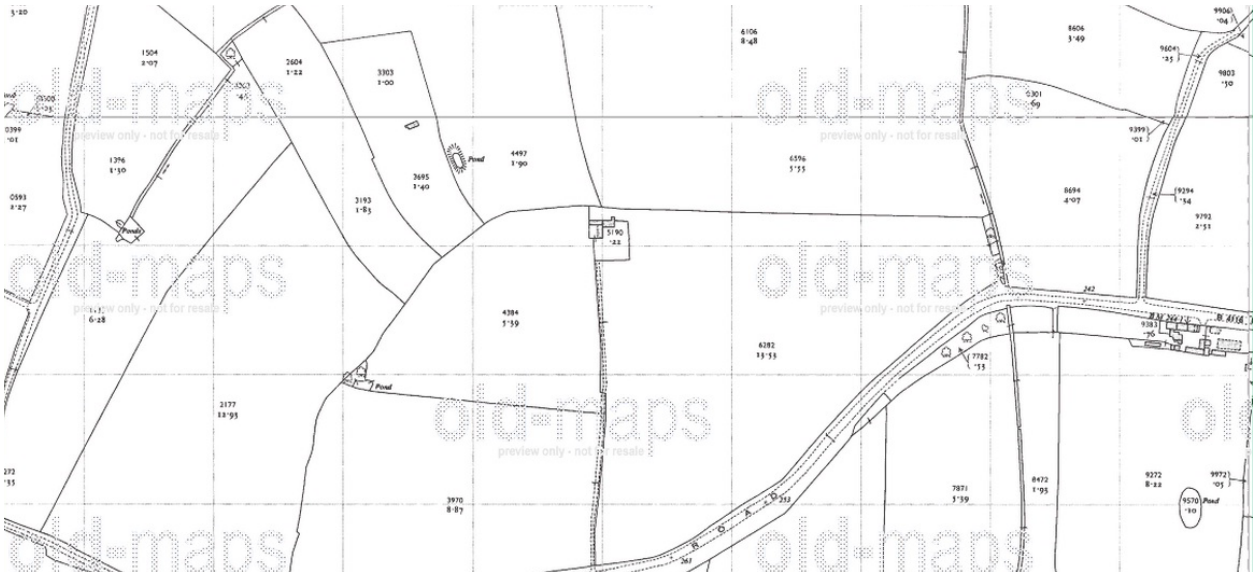
SCHEDULE.

No. on Plan.	Description.	Cultivation.	Quantity. A. R. P

Mrs. J. E. Cox and Mr. Francis W. Woodward, Tenants.

Extract from the 1911 Grendon Hall auction brochure, showing our cottage at "No. 318"

2.5 In 1911, the Grendon Hall Estate auction brochure includes the cottage as part of Pinwall Hall Farm (Lot 3), the whole being occupied by the tenants Mrs. J.E. Cox and Mr. Francis W. Woodward (mother and son, as the 1901 census reveals). The current owner has told me that Francis Woodward (the brother of her husband's grandfather) bought the farm and its associated cottages outright at the auction. Her father-in-law sold off the two cottages at the Pinwall crossroads (No. 472 in the auction catalogue) and waited to live on the property until Francis Woodward had died. The farm, including the retained 'Heath Cottage', has remained in the Woodward family until the present day.



Heath Cottage as it appeared at plot 5190 on the 1958 edition of the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map (old-maps.co.uk)



Older aerial photography from 'Bing' shows the former south-west wing still standing and roofed (which must have been before 1999, despite the 2010 date shown here). The shadows suggest that it could even have been of similar height to the main cottage, although available photographic evidence of its remains imply a tall single-storey plus steeply-pitched roof.



The west elevation of Heath Cottage, showing the remains of the west/south-west wings



The east and north elevations of Heath Cottage, showing the outline of the former small outbuilding on the north side (client's photograph)



Detail of one of the Heath Cottage windows: later metal casements added to older wooden outer frame

2.6 Pinwall Hall, which has probably always been a farm, or had a farm associated with it, is a substantial house of the late 18th century. It was added to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest in November 1966, at Grade II. There appears to be some disagreement over its address, which in the listing entry is given as "Atherstone Road", but elsewhere is called "Main Road" or "Sheepy Road". The listing description runs as follows:

> *House. Late C18. Render over brick, with plain tiled roof recessed behind parapet. 2 storeyed, 6 bays with central Doric doorcase with columns to open pediment, panelled rebates and delicately glazed fanlight over 6 panelled door. Sash windows have moulded architraves. East gable has 2 cast iron windows, and 2 blind window spaces. Gable and axial stacks.*







Photographs of Pinwall Hall from the Google, Images of England and Pinwall Hall web sites

2.7 From the 1841 to 1901 censuses and various directories and other books between 1846 and 1905 it is possible to establish the following tenants of Pinwall Hall (Farm). In 1841, John Wood (aged 30), his wife Ann (25), daughter Eleanor (1) and four servants (three of whom were aged only 15) lived at the Hall. Another John Wood, aged 50, lived at nearby Pinwall Cottage. Francis White's 1846 Leicestershire Directory lists John Wood as a resident at Pinwall, but does not include him among the five farmers also listed there. In the 1851 census, John, now described as aged 42, was a farmer of 200 acres at Pinwall Hall, employing two indoor and three outdoor labourers.

2.8 By 1861 the farmer was James Wood, aged 45, and his wife Elizabeth was aged 35. He was said to now be farming 383 acres and employing ten men and two boys. Both James and Elizabeth were born in nearby Ratcliff Culey. John Wood, aged 52, was described as a "retired farmer" and was living at Pinwall Cottage. Nearby unnamed cottages were occupied by agricultural labourers called John Parsons and William Hiorn, but there is no evidence that either were 'Heath Cottage'. He also appears as a farmer in the 1863 edition of White's Leicestershire Directory and in the Royal Agricultural Society journals for 1864, 1868 and 1873. In the 1871 census, James Wood, aged 55, was now farming only 178 acres and employing just four labourers.

2.9 It would seem that 1873 was the year when Henry Smith took over Pinwall Hall Farm, because James Wood appears in the RASE journal for 1873 but Henry Smith is listed as being at Pinwall Hall in the Farmer's Magazine for the same year. Henry Smith also appears under Pinwall in Kelly's Directory listings for 1876 and 1879. The 1881 census describes him as aged 34, a farmer of 230 acres, employing three men and two boys as farm labourers. (The fluctuating acreages are rather puzzling.) His wife was called Lucy Ann and she was then aged 38. By 1891 the farmer had changed again. It was now William R. Chamberlain, aged 38, who had four servants, including two women house servants and two farm boys (aged 15 and 17). He was not married and hailed from Cloudsley in Leicestershire. By 1901, the farm was jointly run by Jane E. Cox, aged 62, a farmer and employer and presumably also a widow. Interestingly, her co-farmer, Francis Woodward, aged 30 and born in Bulkington, Warwickshire, was described as her son. There were also three Woodward children (two daughters called Mary and Alice and a grandson named Reginald), as well as a granddaughter (Mabel) with the surname Lucas, but no mention of Francis's wife.

2.10 Francis Woodward is mentioned as the farmer at Pinwall in the 1900 Kelly's Directory and at Pinwall Hall in the Shire Horse Stud Book for 1902 (as Francis William Woodward). He is also mentioned in a book of 1905. Jane Cox and Francis Woodward were still tenants of the Grendon Hall Estate at the time when it was auctioned off in 1911 – see at paragraph 2.4 above. Curiously, though, the 1922 edition of Kelly's Directory lists a Daniel Davies as the farmer at Pinwall Hall (according to the transcript which has been provided on the Sheepy parish history website – see the listings at http://www.mdlp.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/resources/Sheepy/directorys_kellys.htm.

2.11 As we have seen, for many years, Pinwall Hall and, indeed, most of the other properties at Pinwall, formed part of the Grendon Hall Estate and belonged to the Chetwynd family. When the estate was sold at auction on 25th October, 1911, it amounted to nearly 3,600 acres, together with another 504 acres of detached farmland at Attleborough, Whitestone and Bramcote Hill. The sale included Grendon Hall itself and its associated buildings and parkland, together with five farms and numerous smaller properties, in "Lot 1". Pinwall Hall Farm, the three tied cottages (including Heath Cottage), the associated fields, meadows and plantations, amounting to over 211 acres in total, formed "Lot 3". The above-mentioned Pinwall Cottage and over 22 acres of land formed "Lot 4", with Jane Cox and Francis Woodward holding over five acres of that land, although by 1911 the house itself was occupied by a Mr. Edwin Coles.



The Pinwall Hall Farm site layout in July 2006 (Google Earth)

3.0 History of the Grendon Hall Estate

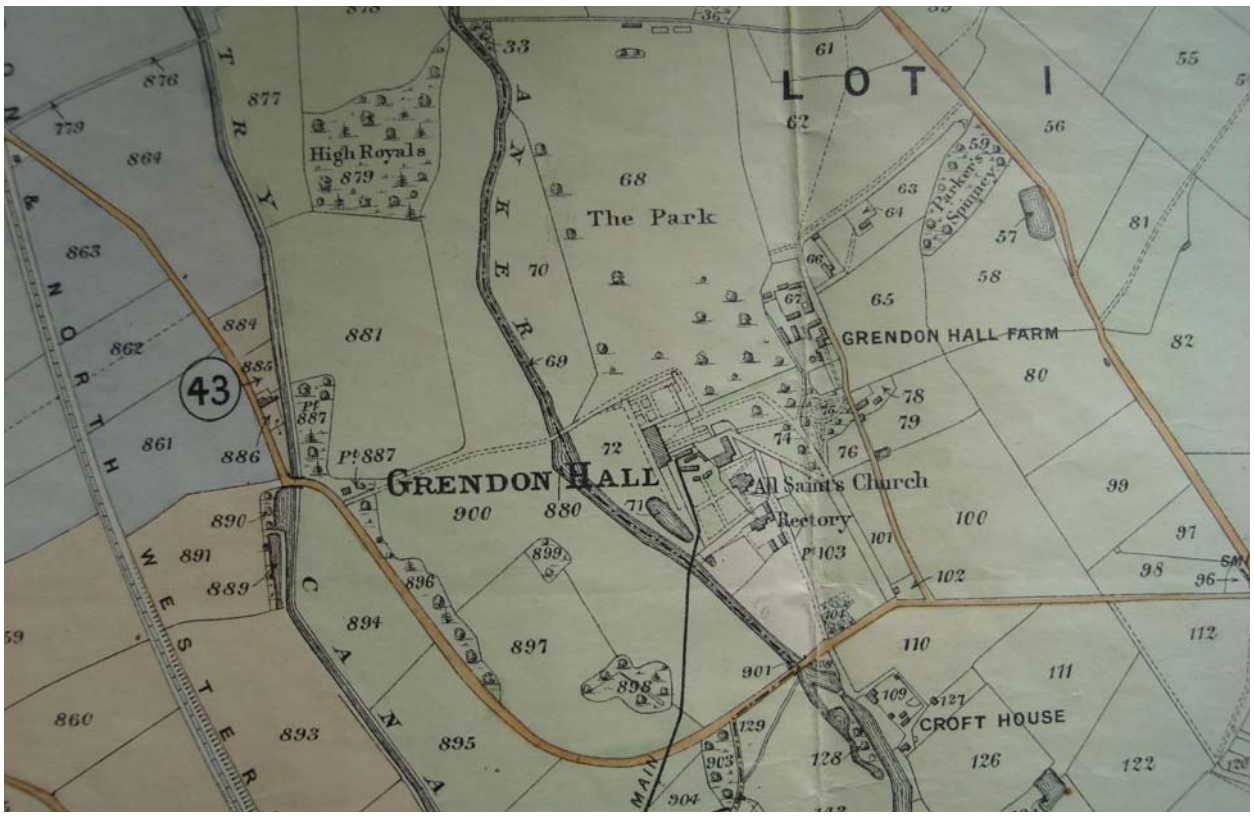
3.1 The Chetwynd family first occupied the Grendon estate in the mid-14th century. Sir George Chetwynd of Brocton Hall in Staffordshire was created a baronet on 1st May 1795 and inherited the Grendon estate in 1798, whereupon he moved his seat to Grendon Hall. According to the *Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, "William Henry Chetwynd is said to have left Grendon to his cousin Lady Robert Bertie…She died *c.* 1800 and left the manor to her distant relative Sir George Chetwynd, 1st bart., of Brocton, with whose descendants it remained for five generations, until the death of the last baronet, Sir Victor Chetwynd, in 1935." The second Sir George succeeded to the title upon his father's death in 1824. He largely rebuilt Grendon Hall in 1825, though he allowed the 18th century outbuildings to remain. The third baronet, another Sir George, was born at the old Grendon Hall in 1809, succeeded his father to the title in 1850 and, by 1864, lived at Mancetter Lodge as well as the new Grendon Hall. He died at Grendon Hall in 1869.

3.2 The fourth baronet, yet another Sir George, was the son of the third George by Lady Charlotte Augusta Hill and he died on 10th March 1917. He was the Sir George who ordered that the Grendon estate be put up for auction, although whether, in fact, he continued to live there beyond that date is not clear. The fifth, Sir George Guy Chetwynd, died in 1935. He is still described, in Arthur Charles Fox-Davies' book *Armorial* Families (1929), as "5th Bart. of Grendon, co. Warwick". He could, of course, have still owned the estate after the Hall had been vacated. According to North Warwickshire Borough Council's *Your Guide to North* Warwickshire (2002), the estate was not broken up until 1925, but the 1911 auction brochure suggests otherwise – although it is possible that not all of the lots were actually sold at that time. Grendon Hall was largely demolished in 1933 and, allegedly, shipped off to America, but a few of the outbuildings survived and were later converted to living accommodation ('Windows on Warwickshire' web site). I suspect that it may have failed to sell as a "going concern" and that this led to the eventual decision to demolish. The sixth and last baronet to be associated with the Grendon estate, Sir Victor, died only three years after his succession, in 1938. While living in Curzon Street, Mayfair, London, he had achieved some notoriety by secretly removing his wife's coffin from a parish church in Worcestershire under cover of darkness and taking it by hearse to London, because (as he said later) he had changed his mind as to where he wished her to be buried! The baronetcy has been dormant since 2004, the eighth baronet (Sir Arthur Ralph) being the last who could prove his right of succession.

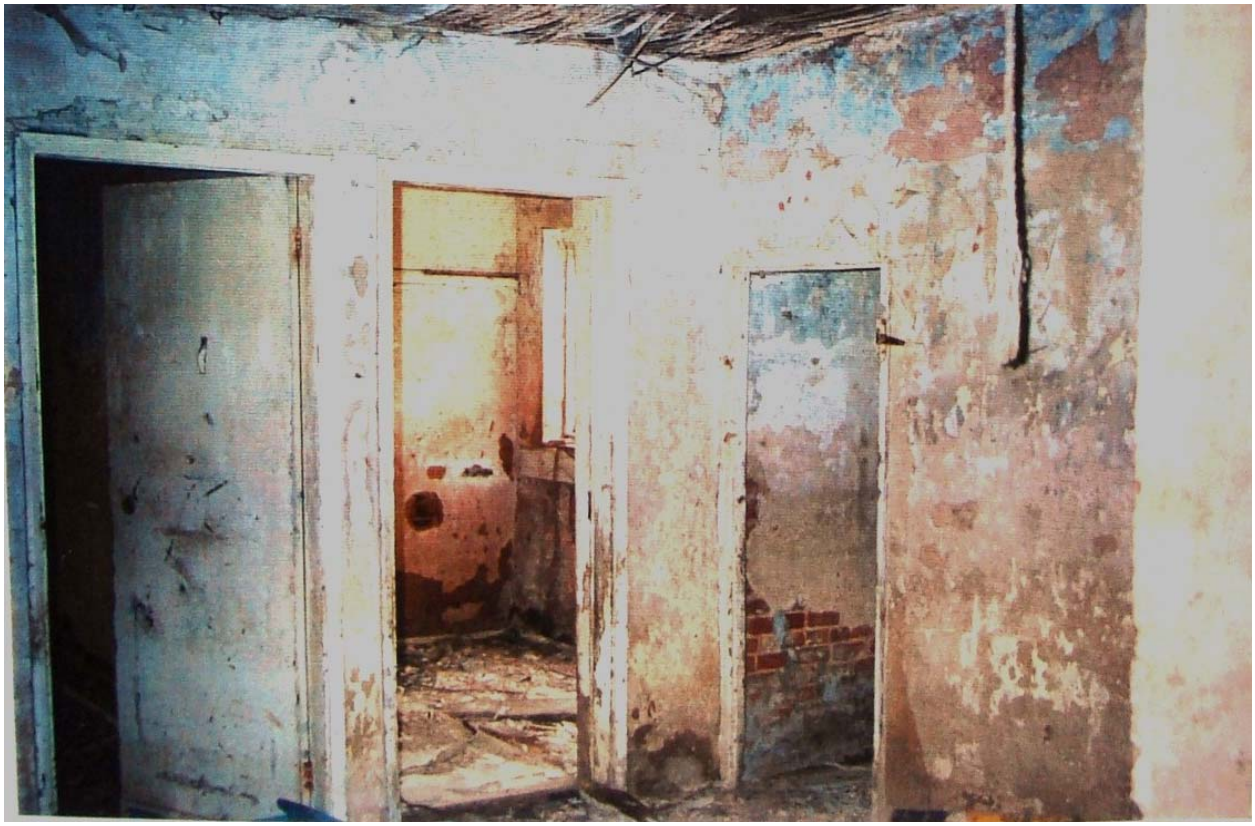
3.3 The 1825 hall was a true mansion, with a 25 feet high Great Hall, five Reception rooms and a whole suite of 'Domestic Offices' on the ground floor, nine principal and six secondary bedrooms on the first floor and seven servants' bedrooms on the top floor, plus stables, gardens, kitchen garden and parkland. A series of photographs of Grendon Hall from the auction catalogue, the current owner of Pinwall Hall and Internet sources may be found in the Appendix (pages 8-13).



Heath Cottage in its isolated position amid open fields, 2006 (Google Earth)



Above: Extract from 1911 Grendon Hall Estate auction brochure's 'Plan No. 1', showing Grendon Hall; below: internal ground floor detail of Heath Cottage at Pinwall



Mark Singlehurst, for Alder Mill
10th-11th May, 2011; expanded 25th May 2011

Appendix – Grendon Hall Photographs



Grendon Hall – the north and west fronts of the 1825 hall (1911 auction brochure)



The old Grendon Hall, c. 1800-09 (Windows on Warwickshire)



Grendon Hall – view of the Hall, church and rectory (1911 auction brochure)



The 1825 Grendon Hall, undated postcard (Windows on Warwickshire)



Grendon Hall – Interior of the Great Hall (1911 auction brochure)



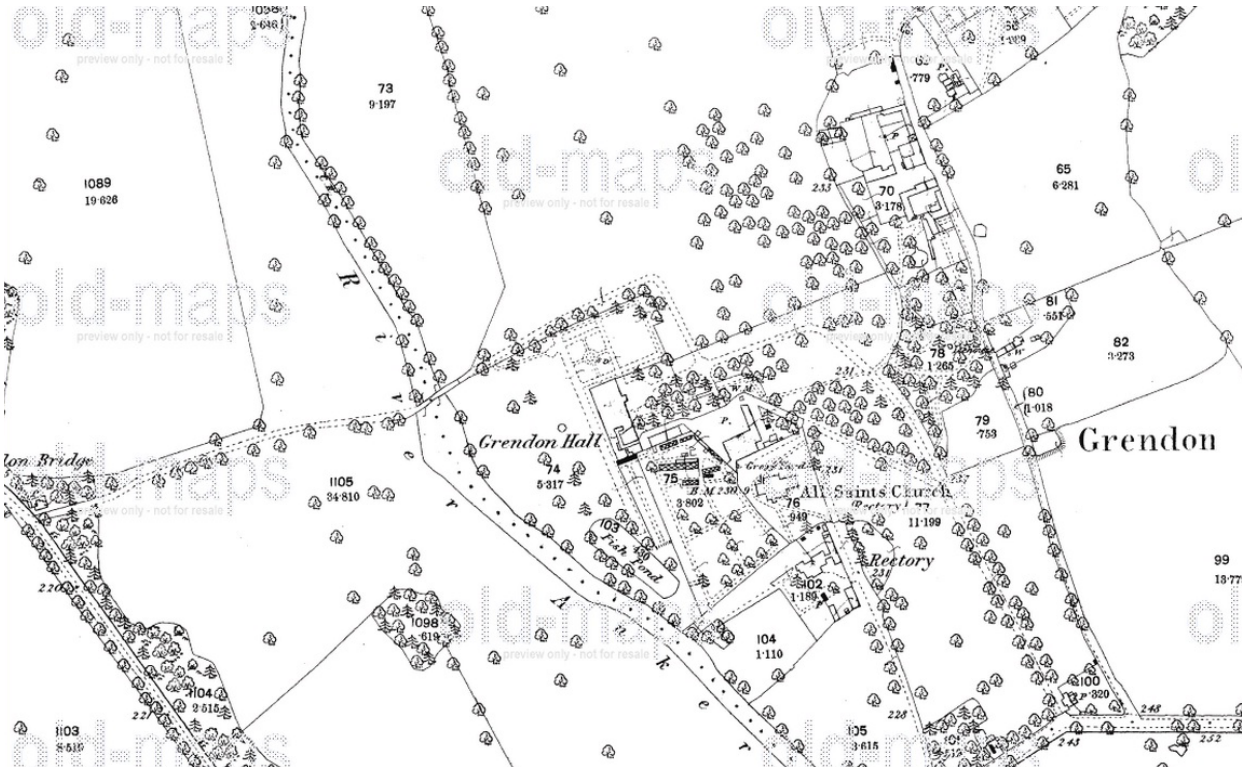
Grendon Hall in the 1910s (Windows on Warwickshire)



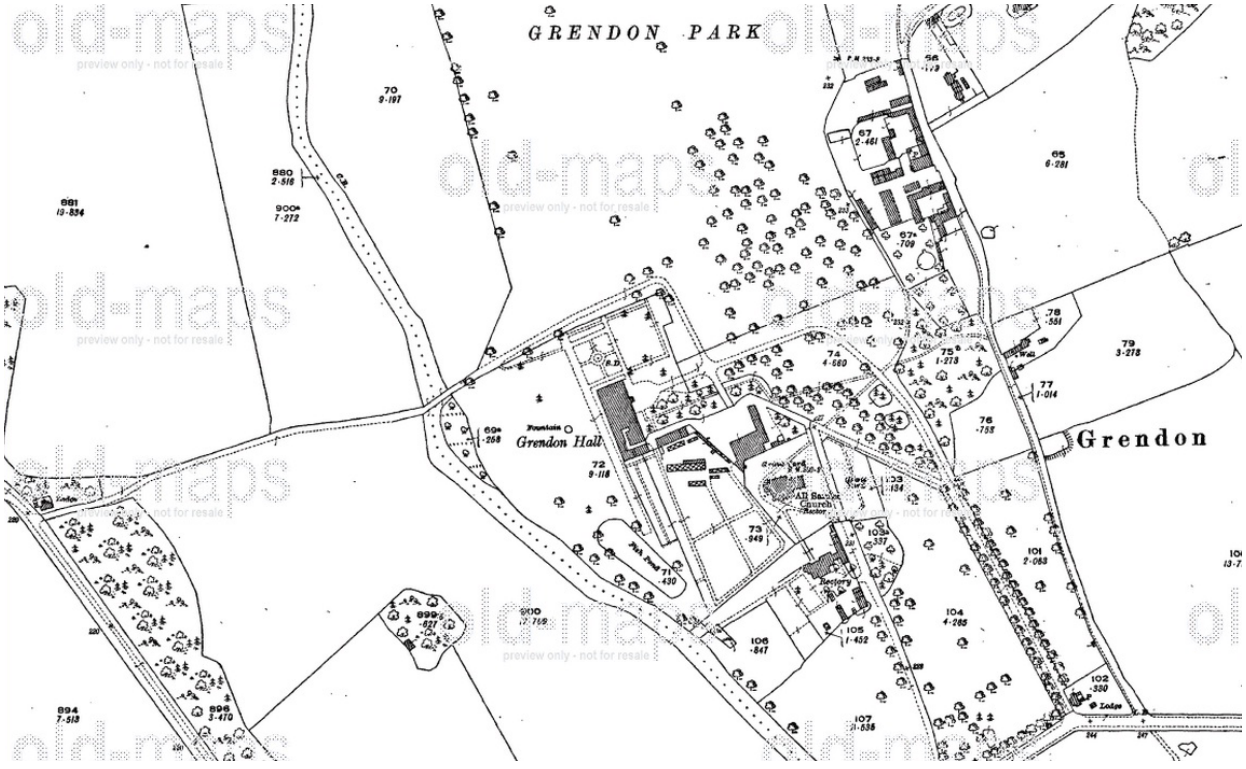
Grendon Hall – the old river bridge in the park (1911 auction brochure)



Another version of the image at the bottom of page 9



The Grendon Hall site from the 1885-89 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map (Old-Maps.co.uk)



The Hall, church and rectory as they appeared on the 1924 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map



One of the converted Grendon Hall outbuildings in 1981 (Flickr)



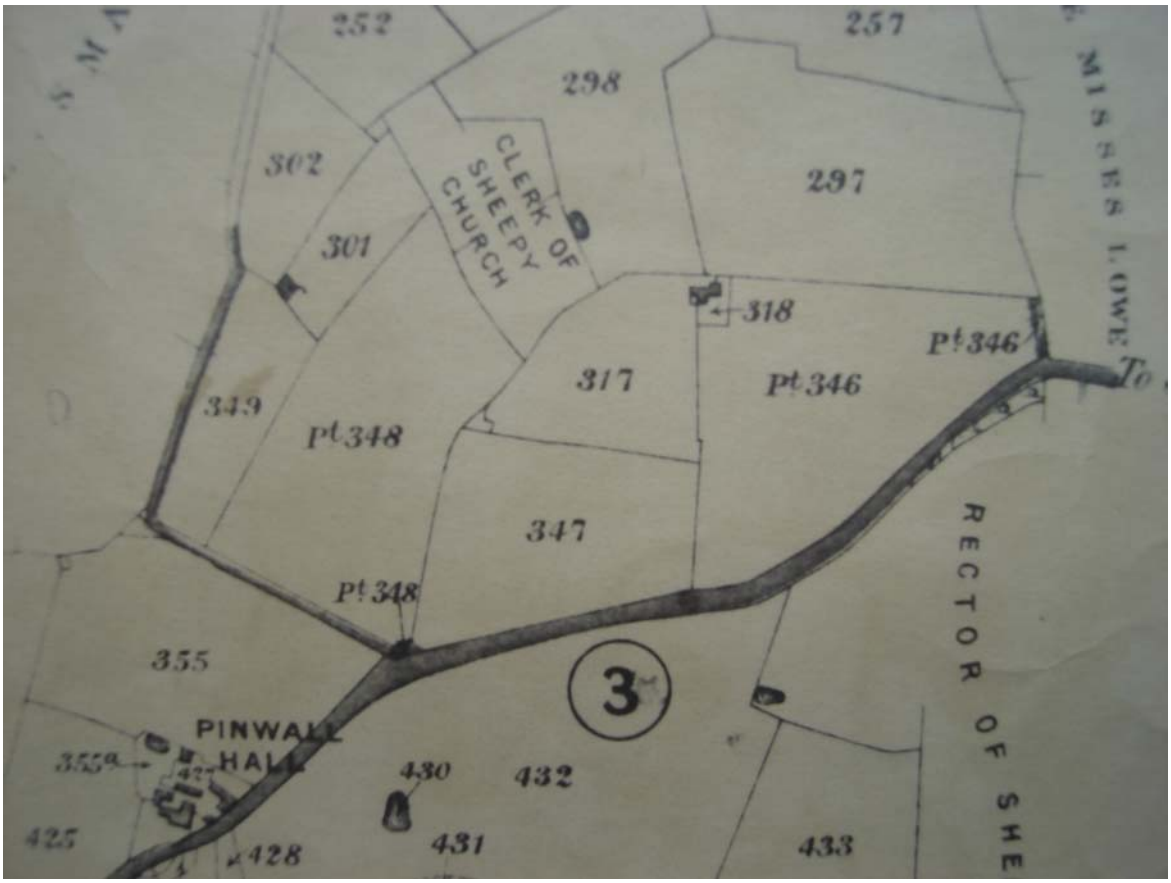
The site of Grendon Hall in 2006 (Google Earth), at the small village of Old Grendon (not to be confused with New Grendon or Grendon Common, two miles away) with the church at bottom, right of centre, and some of the surviving outbuildings seen just below centre; the former Grendon Park is glimpsed as the yellow area seen at the top of the photograph

Supplementary Material Relating to Heath Cottage at Pinwall

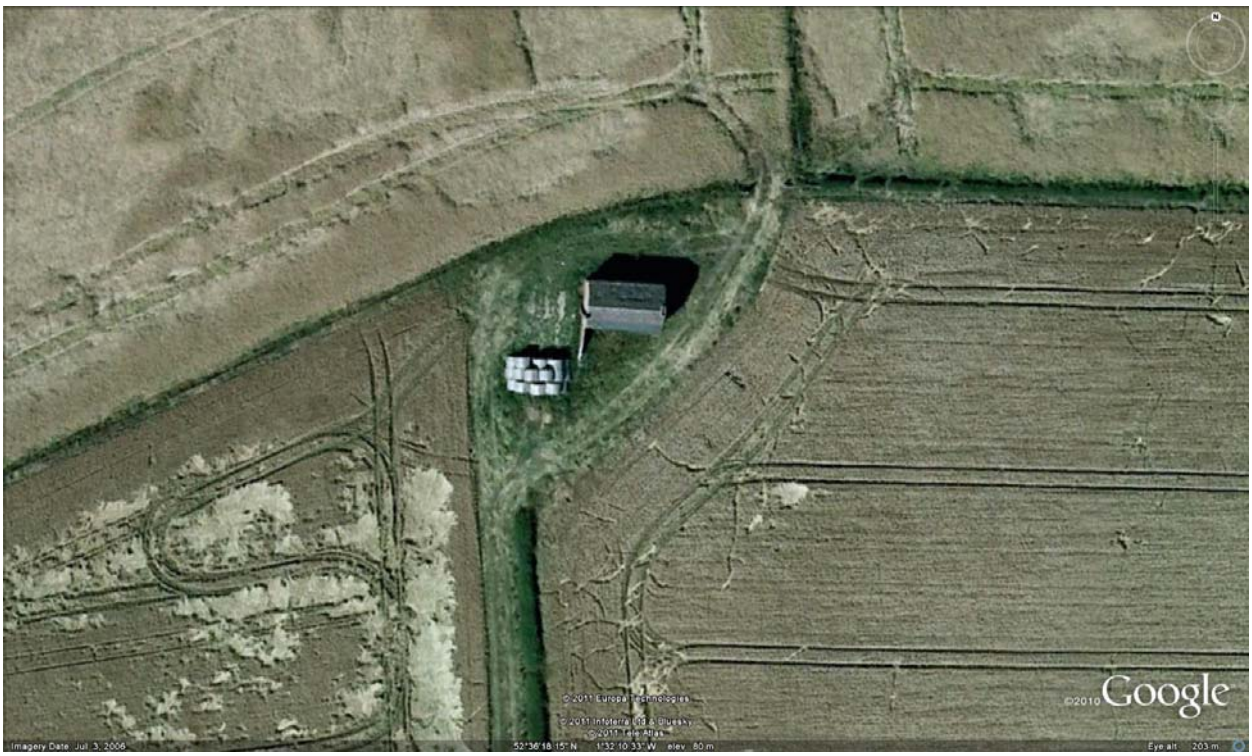
LOT 3 (*continued*).

No. on Plan.	Description.	Cultivation.	Quantity. A.	R.	P.
		Brought forward ...	118	1	10
Pt. 250	Lane	... ...	1	0	6
251	Pool	Water ...	0	0	36
252	Second Frogmoor	Pasture ...	4	3	18
257	Nut Close	Do. ...	5	3	16
297	Far Easter Hill	Arable ...	14	0	0
298	Near Do.	Do. ...	8	2	11
317	Top Heath	Meadow ...	5	1	26
318	Cottage, Shed and Yard	... ...	0	0	36
Pt. 346	Great Heath	Arable ...	13	1	34
	Mr. W. Marshall or his Sub-tenants.				
472	Two Cottages and Gardens	... ...	0	0	16

1911 Grendon Hall Estate Auction Brochure: extract from page 17, showing our 'Heath Cottage' as Plot 318, together with the two adjacent fields named Top and Great Heath (317 and part of 346)



Extract from 1911 Auction Brochure showing Heath Cottage at Plot 318 and in relation to Pinwall Hall at bottom left



Close-up of Heath Cottage from above, as it appeared on Google Earth photography in 2006



Google Street View photography of Heath Cottage from the main road



Above and below: more Google Street View images of Heath Cottage as it is seen from the B4116 Sheepy/Main Road; the large tree hides the building on the lower picture





Above: Google Earth photograph (2006) with Heath Cottage at centre, showing its isolated position amid large open fields; below: a Geograph photograph, showing Heath Cottage on the left



MCS, 11-5-2011