

## THOMAS ADAMS (1769-1845)

Thomas Adams describes himself in his will as a gentleman but may have originally followed his father John's trade as a stonemason. It was common for men who achieved a certain level of financial and social success to call themselves 'gentlemen' in 19<sup>th</sup> Century wills. Thomas wrote his will on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1839 but he did not die until the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1845 at the age of 76. His will shows that he owned a large number of houses and several pieces of land in Fairford. He and his wife Mary had no children, or at least none surviving by 1839, so he left most of his property to his nephews and nieces. The bequests are as follows:

1. Five long lease cottages in Horcott Lane and five long lease cottages in Mill Lane bequeathed to his nephew William, son of his late brother Adam Adams
2. Two long lease cottages in East End bequeathed to his great nephew Thomas, son of his nephew William Adam of Dean Court, Berkshire
3. Four newly-erected cottages on The Green bequeathed to his great niece Mary Walker, daughter of his nephew William Adam of Dean Court, Berkshire
4. Thomas's own long lease house in Milton End and five closes of long lease land near the Pest House called The Meadow bequeathed to his nephew William, son of his late brother John Adams
5. The rest of his houses, tenements and closes of land (not specified) bequeathed to his wife Mary

The five long lease cottages in Horcott Lane are most probably the row of cottages called 'The Virgills'. These were later reduced to four cottages, possibly in 1932 when Dr. Arthur Charles King-Turner had the cottages rebuilt. Thomas Adams is unlikely to be referring to the row of cottages further down Horcott Road opposite the house called 'Deepwell' as there were in Kempford parish when the will was written and he would have stated that in his will. The five cottages in Mill Lane were demolished some years ago. The Pest House was a small building used as an isolation hospital and was situated on the site of Mere Park near Burdocks.

In addition to this large portfolio of property Thomas also bequeathed a total of £1,420 to his relatives and a few friends. This would be roughly equivalent to about £86,000 in today's money. His wealth is in sharp contrast to the £40 (about £3,500 in 2020 terms) he received in the will of his father John who died in 1782. Thomas Adams, his wife Mary who died in 1843, and his parents are buried or commemorated under a well-preserved chest tomb close to the entrance to St Mary's churchyard.

