# Overend Cottage

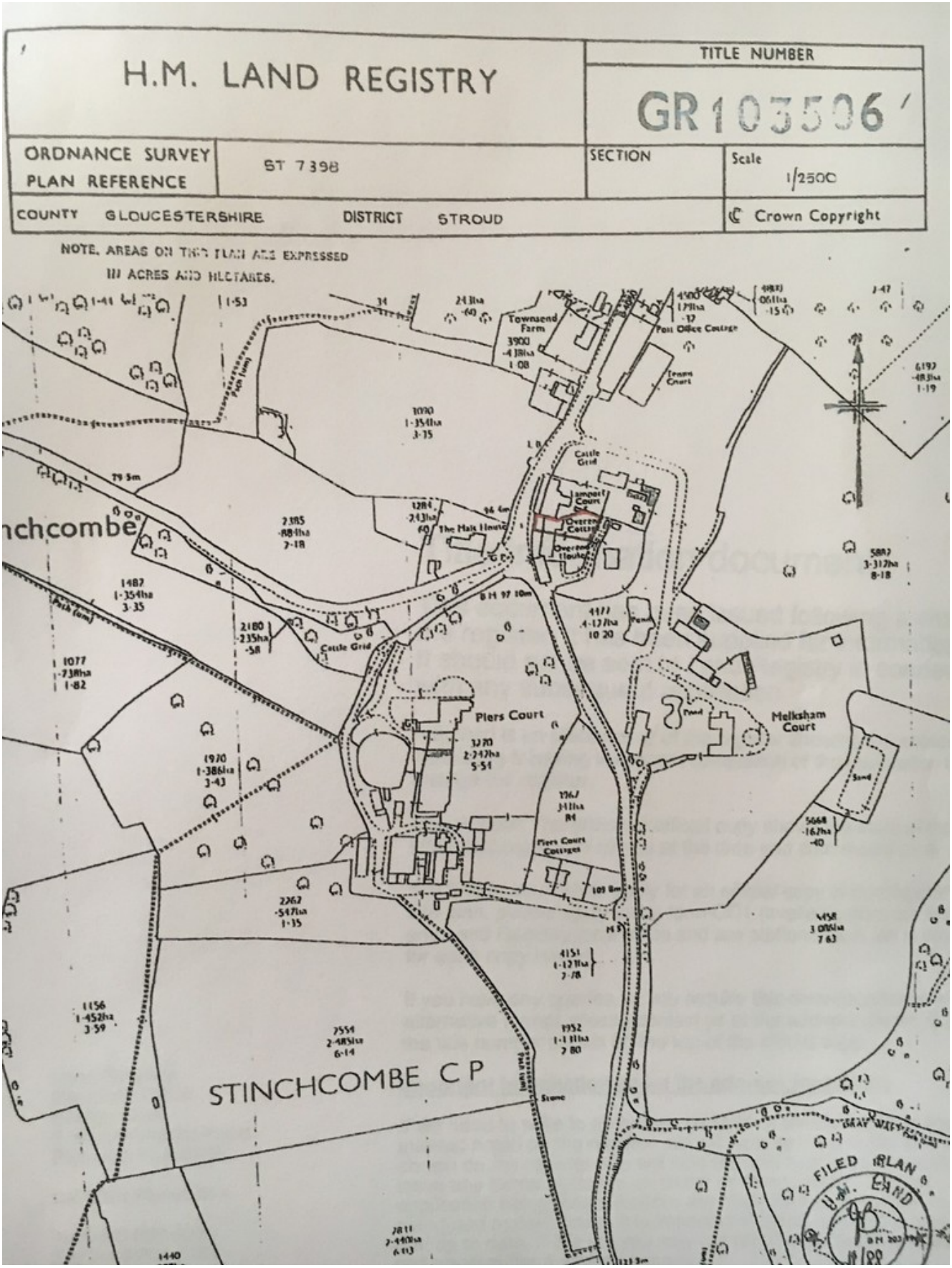
## Historical Account of Overend Cottage, Stinchcombe

Estimated reading time: 10 minutes

Overend Cottage comprises a semi-detached Cotswolds Cottage located centrally in Stinchcombe village. The house sits elevated and back from the main road (called The Street) that leads from Dursley through to North Nibley (B4060) and is situated on a sharp bend in the road that also forms a T junction. The road turning here leads down to the centre of Stinchcombe village and includes St Cyr's church.



Front view of Overend Cottage (left) and Overend House (right)
Overend Cottage is one of a series of 16th and 17th Century properties in Stinchcombe. The following pictures show how Overend Cottage is positioned around neighbouring properties.




Land Registry for Overend Cottage (Edition Date 11.02.2015), shows location of surrounding properties and boundary of the property shown within the red line



Aerial view of Overend Cottage adjoined to Overend House, and shows Melksham Court (far right), Piers Court (bottom left) and other neighbouring properties

# History of Overend Cottage

Overend Cottage is a Grade 2 listed property, semi-detached to neighbouring Overend House. Overend Cottage shares its list description with its neighbouring dwelling as follows:

*"Semi-detached dwellings. C17. Squared and coursed marlstone, concrete tile roof. Overend Cottage has projecting stair turret at rear, opposite entrance; Overend House is set at lower level than the Cottage, but roof here has been raised; stacks at each gable, and at party wall. Two storeys, 3+1 windowed, mainly 3-light wood casement with two horizontal glazing bars under wood lintels, but, right of each door, small C19 canted bay with hipped roofs; ground floor window,*

*left end of Overend Cottage is standard 3-light, but is placed under timber lintel and moulded stopped drip originally covering 4 or 5 light opening. Modern door to flat wooden brackets, Overend Cottage central, C19 4-panel, part glazed, in heavy frame, off-centre left, Overend House. This lower end of the property may have been original one storey stable."* ***(Historic England, 1952)***

Originally it is believed that Overend Cottage was built as part of the Melksham Court Estate. Melksham Court is positioned to the east and rear of the property. Accounts of Melksham Court reach back to the 15th Century where it is documented that it was tenanted by Tebota Hochyns and later inherited by Richard Tyndale, father of William Tyndale who is believed to have been born at Melksham Court (***Daniell, 1994***) and whose family resided in the house from 1561 to 1768 (Historic England, 1952).

The ***Tyndale*** family were of great influence in Stinchcombe at this time; ***William Tyndale*** is prominently known to the area through his fame as being a key figure during the Protestant civil war following his return from Oxford University, with strong relationships with Martin Luther and later on, translator of the Old Testament Bible to English.

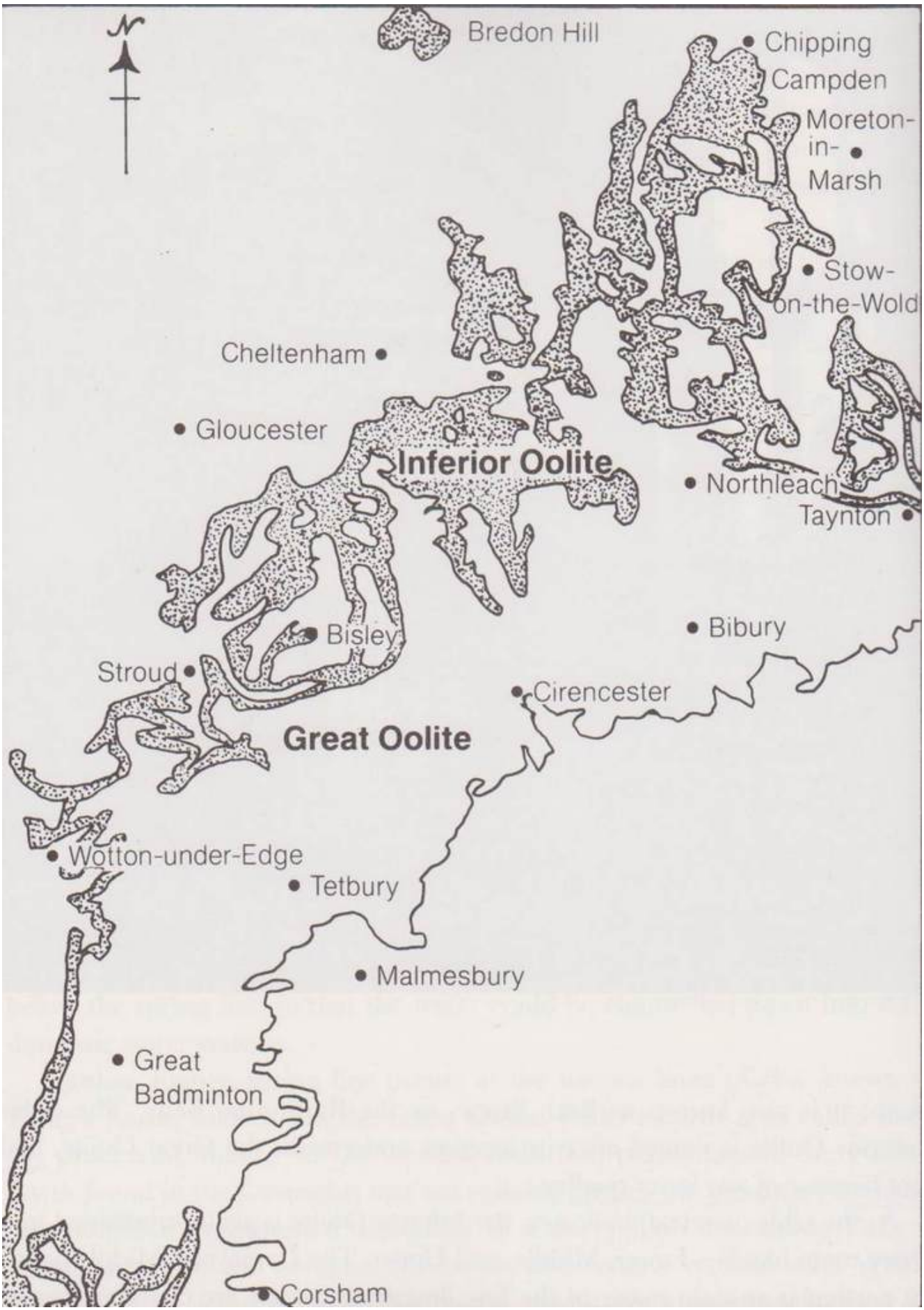
The ***Melksham Court*** estate originally would have reached beyond its existing boundary and would have included multiple buildings in the village, including Overend House & Overend Cottage, Court Barn, and potentially ***Lamport Court***.

It is suspected that Overend Cottage was created to provide one of the principal servant quarters or Stable Master living accommodation to the main estate, and had attached stables to the side where Overend House is now situated. It is thought that the building was later connected to Lamport Court (built in the mid 16th Century and originally a farmhouse) by a connecting corridor between the dwellings. Visible remnants of the corridor linkage points can be seen on the end of Lamport

Court.

## Construction

Overend Cottage is constructed of course cut Marlstone. Marlstone is an impure limestone found in the Inferior Oolite rock formation which has a high fossil content and a rusty iron-rich colour. This type of limestone is very rare; historic quarries can only be found in Cam, Moreton in the Marsh and further north in Northamptonshire.




Cotswold Geology; both Great and Inferior Oolite stone formations dominate the Cotswold geography (Picture taken from

Hill, M. & Birch, S., (1994) p. 28)
Overend Cottage is constructed of uniform coursed and dressed Marlstone (which would have been quarried and transported locally from land in Cam). This type of construction – uniform, high quality dressed stone as opposed to loose stone with a high quantity of mortar – indicates that the property was considered important and was built to a high quality. This supports the theory that the house originally belonged to the Melksham Court Farm estate and was for high ranking servants quarters.

The rear of the property faces onto an elevated garden. Originally it is expected that the property would have carved directly into the higher ground at the back with excavation of further ground in the 1950's when an extension was built to host the kitchen and utility facilities.

The rear of the property is divided by a red brick garden wall which extends the full length of the property (separating Overend Cottage from Lamport Court) and continues to run the full length of Lamport Court and Court Barn boundary lines. The wall is listed (as part of Lamport Court listing) and is thought to date from the 17/18th Century when it would have been created as part of the Estate's kitchen gardens. The wall is a mixture of both English and Flemish bonds and is made up of a variety of red clay bricks which are likely to have been made by a number of different brick manufacturers of the time.

# Internal Construction

Originally the house would have comprised of two open plan floor spaces with the kitchen in what is now the living room (Ground Floor), and the sleeping accommodation based on the 1st floor with loft space, probably originally used to store grain, hoisted to the 2nd floor.

There are a number of notable features in the house which support this theory:

- There is a very large fireplace in the living room which is thought to have been the original kitchen for the property. Scorch marks can be seen against the rear of the fireplace which are thought to have been from a larger stove system, common to properties of this time, where all cooking and heating for the downstairs of the property would have been supplied.
- The “projecting stair turret” would have originally provided access to the upper floor via a circular staircase to the upper floors in the property
- On the first floor there is another large fireplace which shares a chimney with the downstairs fireplace, as well as another fireplace which has been bricked up in the adjoining room. These fireplaces would have provided heating to the entire 1st floor sleeping accommodation.
- The uppermost window in the turret, linking to the 2nd story floor, is of a different profile to the lower windows. It is believed that this window was actually a hatch potentially for storing and accessing agricultural materials such as corn or hay.



The fireplace in the living room shows signs of once being the kitchen for the house – scorch marks outline the location of where an earlier large kitchen stove would have been

## Significant changes to the original house

At some point during the house's history the staircase was moved out of the "turreted stair" to allow provision for bathroom facilities to be provided on the ground and first floor within the turret footprint.

The addition of a kitchen and utility extension is recorded to have been undertaken in 1950. This was constructed principally of block and render and was attached by a timber and glass conservatory providing utility room space. The structure originally had an asbestos cement roof which was later replaced in the 1990s by a bitumen felt roof instead.

The windows for the kitchen and utility had a Crittall windows style design, common to the time period. It is believed that when the extension was added to the property the rear outer wall was also rendered, as can be seen in the picture below.



Picture of rear of Overend Cottage taken in 2016



In 1995, Gillie and Rob Harris (owners at the time) undertook a loft conversion adding a bedroom in the loft space and a bathroom within the 2nd floor area within the “turreted stair”.
No other major alterations are believed to have been made to the property during this time.

## 2015 onwards

In December 2014, Naomi and Will Heming moved into the property and started building and renovation works at once.

Of immediate attention was the rear garden. Originally sloping down to the house, and with no support to the drive, this was changed to provide a retaining wall with reclaimed brick fronting in keeping with the surrounding red brick garden walls.

The 1950s extension was subsequently removed in 2018, when planning was granted for a new kitchen extension. A picture of the new construction can be seen below.



Picture of rear of Overend Cottage, taken in January 2022
Further extensive renovations to repair and modernize the inside of the property have been undertaken. The addition of a timber clad garage was also added to the property in 2021.

# Historical list of owners of Overend Cottage

1650 – 1768 Tyndale family. In 1378 the family acquire land and build Melksham Court Farm During this time Overend Cottage would have been built.

1768 – 1901 Morse family purchase Melksham Court farm and the estate's buildings (including Overend Cottage)

1901 – 1956 Provost family purchases Melksham Court Farm in an auction, including the land and property at Overend,

1911 – 1928 Gilbert J Nicholls takes a lease of Melksham Court

Farm including Overend Cottage. During the 1920s it is known that Alice and James Nicholls (Alice was sister to Emily Nicholls, and James was Gilbert's brother!) live at the property for a while in the 1920s.

1928 to late 1951 Philip Sturdy, an architect, acquires Melksham Court including Lamport Court, Overend House and Overend Cottage.

1951 – 1959 Robert Catcheside, a Harley Street Dentist acquires Melksham Court. It is has not been confirmed if this included Overend Cottage.

1956 – 1987 Doris Gadsden purchases Piers Court from Evelyn Waugh and as part of the purchase acquires Overend Cottage and Overend House. The exact nature of how these house purchases were made alongside Piers Court has not been established.

However since the above, we have heard from Jane Blackton (ne Woodward) who lives at Hounds Green Stinchcombe. Her parents Derek and Sylvia Woodward bought Overend Cottage in September 1955 for £1,000 then they moved to Hounds Green in 1968. They sold Overend Cottage to Mrs Gadsden of Piers Court. Mrs Gadsden also owned Overend House where workers were housed and Jane believed she was going to do the same with the Cottage.

It is understood that Avida Benson, the widow of Doris Gadsden's uncle Arthur Wynford Benson moved into the property at some point and stayed until her death in 1987. It is not known when the property was separated legally from the Piers Court estate.

1987 – 2014 Rob & Gillie Harris purchase the property and bring up their 2 boys at the house.

2014 – present day. Naomi & Will Heming purchase the property and start renovation works. They now have a son and a daughter as well as their two Labradors well known to the village!