

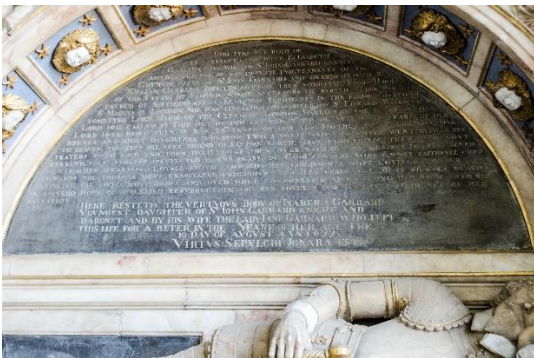


News and events

- Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 20 March 2024**. In this talk, Dianne Payne will ask **What's in a Name? What do the street names of Wheathampstead tell us about our village?** She will explore how the historic, cultural and symbolic priorities of Wheathampstead are reflected in its street names.
- The St Albans Mayor's History Lecture will be given by Professor Mark Freeman on **St Albans and its Pasts - Writing a New History of the City** on 1 March from 4:30 to 5:45 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, St Albans. Admission free. To book a place, apply to mayoralty@stalbans.gov.uk

Three lives

The Garrard family are well known locally. They owned the Lamer estate from 1608 until Apsley Cherry-Garrard sold up in 1945. The magnificent memorial to Elizabeth Garrard, who died in 1632, is in the north transept of St. Helen's church.



Memorial to Elizabeth Garrard and Sir John Garrard, first baronet.

What is less well-known is that, as well as running the large Lamer estate, the Garrards also leased the whole of Wheathampstead manor from Westminster Abbey who had been lord of the manor since 1060 when Edward the Confessor gifted it to Westminster. The Garrards managed the Wheathampsteadbury farm estate and also the mill. Documents in the Westminster Abbey archive may suggest that the Garrards held this lease from the early 1610s until at least 1685.

'Sir John Garrard, knight and baronet, on lease of the scite of the manor of Whethamsted in the countye of Hertford, for three lives, videlicet the said Sir John Garrard, Benedict Garrard his brother, and John Garrard eldest sonne of the

said Sir John, rent per annum - 80 quarters of wheate.'

The lease, which runs to several pages, is full of obscure phrases. For example, 'videlicet' is simply Latin for 'namely'. What are 'three lives'? This is an old type of lease that expired when the last surviving named person died. This type of lease lasted longer than it first appeared because it could often be renewed and another 'life' added. So we can't be sure how long the Garrards' lease lasted.



Sir John Garrard, second baronet

The rent per annum was for eighty quarters of wheat. How much wheat was this? A quarter is an old term for a quarter of a ton so the rent must have been twenty tons of wheat. There was a separate rent for the mill. How did the Garrards pay this rent? We know that in the medieval period the wheat was sent by cart to Westminster, a distance of more than twenty-five miles over roads that would make sure you never complained about potholes again. Did the Garrards have to do this? We do not know.

Mike Smith

Source - *'Acts of the dean and chapter of Westminster, 1609-1642'* ed. C.S. Knighton. (Boydell Press 2006)