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Wheathampstead Titmuss - Simons Family

by Win Deans nee Titmuss

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James Titmuss 1815 - 1876

James Titmuss came from Stevenage where the family had lived since **1704**. He married **Sara Amelia Garratt (1818 - 1878)** of Codicote Mills and they lived at Cross Farm, Langley. In **1848** they moved to Divers End and then to Nup End Farm, Codicote. Their son **George** was born in 1847 at Cross Farm.

George Titmuss 1847 - 1927

George probably decided that he would rather become a miller than a farmer. In the **1861 Census** we find him at Lemsford Mill with his uncle George Garratt as 'an apprentice'.

In **1866** he was able to rent the Mill at Wheathampstead (which incidentally is mentioned in the Domesday Book). The Mill was owned at that time by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

In **1870** the Codicote Road was immediately in front of Wheathampstead House. The owner **Lord Kilcoursie** (later he was the Earl of Cavan) wished for more privacy; so he approached the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to purchase some land enabling him to re-route the road, at his expense. Later a high wall and gates were



erected. The sale was agreed on condition that he also bought the Wheathampstead Mill; not wanting the latter **George Titmuss** purchased it.

1871 Census, Mill House		
George Titmuss	23	Head
Walter Titmuss	19	Brother
Alfred Welch	15	Cousin

In **1874 George** married **Mary Ann Webb** who was born at Park Gate House, Knebworth, a near neighbour of the Titmuss family at Nup End Farm. Her father was Land Steward for the Knebworth Estate.

About **1887** the old Wheathampstead Mill House was demolished and the present one erected

When the first Wheathampstead Parish Council was elected in **1895** George was a member, still serving in **1904** and probably even later. He served on the committee of the Annual Flower Show and Sports Day for many years. In **1901** he purchased Batford Flour Mills and sold it in **1928**.

George and Mary Ann had three children:

	Lived	Married
Alice	1876 – 1920	-
James William	1879 – 1951	Georgiana Simons
Ada Mary	1880 – 1950	George Seabrook

(The Seabrooks lived at Lamer Farm and Rose Lane)

George died in **1927** and was buried in Codicote Churchyard within sight of Nup End.

James William Titmuss 1879 - 1951

James Titmuss (my father) carried on the business. Always involved in village life he was Treasurer of the first Working Men's Club, a founder member of the Debating society (which George Bernard Shaw sometimes joined) as well as the Flower Show and Sports Day. He was an elected member of both the Parish Council and Rural District Council for many years.



James Titmuss married **Georgiana Simons** in **1914** at St Helen's, Wheathampstead. Both were buried in the Churchyard at Wheathampstead.

George Simons 1820 - 1887

My maternal great-grandfather **George Simons** came to Wheathampstead from Abbots Langley in **1844**. He was a butcher living at the corner of Luton Road and Lamer Lane. Five children were born there – **Mary**, **Emma**, twins **William** and **Harriet** and the youngest **George** being my grandfather.

Their children were

		Married
Mary	1846 - 1870	Lattimore
Emma	1849 - 1918	Bush
Harriet	1850 - 1911	
William	1850	
George	1856 - 1938	Dunham

All buried at St Helens, Wheathampstead,
except William at Abbots Langley

Whilst a boarder at Highgate School **George** caught smallpox; instead of isolating and nursing him there he was brought home. The tragedy was his eldest sister **Mary** volunteered to nurse him; catching this sickness herself and dying in December **1870**.

Once again **Lord Kilcoursie** was involved, he wished to purchase this property to build a house (subsequently known as Garden House) for his mother-in-law.

In December **1871** a sale of land and property by the executors of J. I. House was held at the Swan Hotel:

Lot 5 a shop & dwelling house

Lot 6 Meadow land (near the Mill).

George Simons purchased these. During **1872** the property on Lot 5 was demolished and a new shop and house were erected and known as 'Leabank'. My mother (**Georgiana Simons**) was born there in **1886**. The shop is now known as 'T.Potts'.

George Simons 1856 - 1938

George Simons, my grandfather, and **Mary Ann Sophia Dunham** (1860 - 1949) married at St Helen's Church in **1885**.

They had five children:

	Married
Georgiana	James Titmuss
Grace	Harold Clark
Robert	Honour Blowey
George	Olga Foot
Dorothy	Charles R Garrett

Robert and later his son, another **Robert**, continued trading until the latter died in **1984**

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Although Bridge Mills in Wheathampstead has ceased to function as such, George's grandson, great grandsons and great great grandson continue the name and business at the New Mill in Lamer Lane, making five generations.

Early Photographs



The Mill circa 1896



The High St showing Mill House in the distance



Station Rd showing Simon's Butchers on the left