

89/91

*The History
of a
Hampshire Parish*

—♦—
Heckfield and Mattingley

A brief historical sketch based on the
researches of

THE LATE W. J. JAMES

• EDITED BY

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Vicar of Heckfield with Mattingley

and

COLONEL COLIN DAVY,
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(1965)

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FOREWORD

Jack James had the quality of a true historian. He had a deep affection for the places and people of which he wrote, a dedication for research, and was staunch in his refusal to let romance lead him away from truth.

His history of Heckfield and Mattingley was a life's work: many years of enquiry, search and recording; poring over hundreds of dusty deeds, registers, tithe and rate-records; visiting museums, studying old maps; probing among the old bricks and timbers which are the foundation-members of our past. He loved history, and was determined to elucidate it for the present people of Heckfield and Mattingley.

His is an immense work running into 150,000 words. There is not a house or cottage, a footpath, stream or copse providing a link in the story, which he has not recorded. He begins when the Celts padded down "the Banks" to their capital, which later the Romans were to call Silchester; tells of the Saxons coming here up the Itchen and Test valleys; of Saxon government by the manorial system, and their courts of justice round the "Hundred Oak". He records the local events in Tudor times: of the first brick-making at "Brick-kilns", of the dissolution of the monasteries, and the end of the monastic landlords; of the Heckfield vicar's eviction during the reign of "Bloody" Mary. Of Stuart days he describes how neighbouring landlords took opposite sides in the Civil War, from which stems a feud between our two villages which lasted into the 20th Century. The information he has gathered of the 18th and 19th centuries would make a book in itself. In his writing about the coming of the great landowners of that period and the eradication of the old husbandman copy-holder and his homestead, one gets a clear insight into the character of Jack James himself—a countryman of great kindness, wisdom and sympathy.

As may be imagined from the above, this book is much too large for publication in popular size. Though we know that these few and slight excerpts are frail offspring of the original, we hope that through them his work may live. Jack James' large bibliography would be out of place in this work;

but it seems fitting to record his indebtedness to Miss Violet Martineau, Revd. H. R. P. Tringham, Revd. J. Crosbie Oates, Mr. C. H. H. C. Cook and Mrs. Lincoln Smith; and in our work of selecting, linking up and bringing up to date of this mass of information we, the editors, would express our appreciation of Revd. F. T. Ault, the last Vicar, whose extracts from the James MS. in the Parish Magazine were of great value in the early stages of our work.

P.W.R.K.
C.K.D.

INTRODUCTION

Some people may well wonder what reasons induced me to compile this rather comprehensive record of our two parishes. The seed of the desire was sown under rather unusual circumstances, during my schooldays. It happened thus. One day at Heckfield Shop I found a small coin which the late Revd. E. C. Spicer, M.A., pronounced to be of Roman origin. This naturally raised the question of the history of Heckfield, but my boyhood pride in my native village was sadly hurt when the reverend gentleman declared that the place had *no history*. There and then I determined some day to search out the history of Heckfield, for even to my boyish logic no place could exist 2,000 years without anything happening. . . . Gradually the information was accumulated.

W.J.J.

CHAPTER I

THE MANORS

Heckfield

The Domesday Book 1086 describes the Manor as Effelle, the Norman-French attempted pronunciation of the gruff Saxon name Heighfield. It was held by Hugh de Port, and described as formerly held by the Saxon, Stenesnoc, with land for 5 ploughs (1 in the lord's desmesne), 14 villeins (small farmers), 8 Bordars (cottagers with land), 2 serfs, a church, a Mill worth 5/- to the King, a Fishery worth 100 eels, woodlands for 100 swine, 3 acres meadow. The manor had been worth 100/- to King Edward (the Confessor) and was assessed at £6. No doubt poor Stenesnoc had lost his right of tenure by fighting at Harold's side at Hastings.

Heckfield was part of the great Royal Desmesne of the Hundred of Basingstoke, retained for the King's hunting. The de Ports had been granted many rich manors for their support of William the Conqueror, and did not reside at Heckfield. In 1166 Hugh de Port granted the manor to Adam St. Manefeo, but granted one hide of the land to the south to the Priors of Merton, which eventually became the manor of Putham.

In 1316 John St. Manefeo succeeded to the manor, but for forty years afterwards there were no records because of the Black Death, in which it is said 50% of the inhabitants died.

In 1330 there is a record of Sir Thomas St. Ledger suing for the manor, in which he succeeded, but by 1331 a member of the St. Manefeo family was again in possession. In 1395 he settled it on Edward Bokland (Buckland), and in 1405 to Sir Philip le Vache (from whom the family of Vachell claim to trace their ancestry).

The Creswells became lord of the manor in 1465, and the subsequent history can be found in the chapter on 'Houses and their Owners'.

As therein recorded, when Sir Humphrey Sturt sold his property to Sir Wm. Pitt of Stratfield Saye, the manorial

rights went with it. When this property was presented by the government to the Duke of Wellington, he and his successors became lords of the manor of Heckfield.

Putham

The original name of the manor was Holdshott. The manor was created by the Priors of Merton from the various grants of land given them in Heckfield, Hazell and Mattingley. There were few great landlords whose hopes of Life Everlasting were not subject to pricks of conscience, so in return for the prayers of the Priors they continually gave grants of land. The Priors themselves were by no means averse to increasing their property by changing a boundary, and to sue them in court for this meant losing some prayers and their monastic support, so the Priors' acres steadily increased.

The Manor of Putham consisted chiefly of the land sloping down to the Whitewater from Heckfield Bridge to Mattingley. The East side of the Whitewater was Hazell. This manor was also granted to the Priors by King John, but he kept the hunting there and in Le Garston Regis for himself. In these deeds there is no mention of Garston Regis being a wood, and Danemoor is recorded as a field. In a map of 1774, though the Rotherwick woods are clearly marked as such, Danemoor and Garstones are shown as open country.

In the early 13th century Revelendus, lord of the manor of Mattingley, died, and one of his sons or grandsons granted the property to the Priors. Thus the manor of Mattingley was extinguished, and the manor of Putham further increased.

The Priors built themselves a small chapel for their private use on the site of the present Holdshott Farm. On the major feast days they worshipped at the parish church, but on other occasions used their own chapel.

About 1350 the Priors gave up their manor, and Sir James de Woodstock became its tenant. His widow married Thomas de Foxley, of Bramshill, and held it until 1361. Later the de Puttes succeeded, and it is thought that from them came the name of Putham.

At the Reformation the manor passed to Henry VIII, who granted it to Wm. Paulet, Lord St. John, who became Marquess of Winchester. Thus the Heckfield portion came back to a descendant of the great Heckfield lord, Hugh de Port.

The Marquess of Winchester became the Duke of Bolton. It was a Duke of Bolton who sold the manor to Sir Wm. Pitt, who in his turn sold it to Charles Shaw Lefevre. His daughter sold it to Colonel Walpole, and his daughter, Mrs. Colin Davy, is lady of the manor today.

The Manor of Hazell

King John's grant of 1203 referred to the manor as Heishull. In 1515 it was spelt Heysyll. It is thought to mean High Hill or Hay Hill.

In the Domesday Book the manor was an outlying portion of the Royal Demesne of Basingstoke. It was sparsely populated, had no demesne land, no manorial mill, and little arable land. It was never rich, its only assets being a few rentals, the sporting rights, and later, a brick works.

In 1317 John de Foxeley, of Bramshill, was granted free warren of the manor, so evidently the Royal sporting rights were given up.

There was a racecourse on Hazeley Heath, shown on the map of 1774, and the late Lord Dorchester, who died in 1963, remembered attending the races there as a boy.

In 1818 the Corporation of Basingstoke sold the manor to Charles Shaw Lefevre for £1,179 14s. 4d., and it became part of the Heckfield Place estate.

The Heath has never been enclosed, but the Shaw Lefevre family made a compact with Sir John Cope of Bramshill House, that if ever it was enclosed the land should be shared out between the two contracting parties, Bramshill having the land East of the Holdshott-Hartley Row Road, Heckfield Place having the remainder.

Mrs. Colin Davy is now lady of the manor of Hazell.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL HISTORY

Heckfield 4,000 Years Ago. The Celtic Era

With this remote era there is within our parish, so far as I am aware, one direct connection. It is the ancient roadway forming the northern boundary of Heckfield, known locally as "The Banks", but shown on most maps as "Roman Road". There is no doubt that it had existed many centuries before the Roman Legions marched along it to Silchester and the West Country.

In the years immediately prior to the Roman invasion, Heckfield formed part of the extensive lands of the powerful and civilised Celtic tribe known as the Atrebatas. Their capital was nearby Silchester, and discoveries on the site show that in addition to being skilled agriculturists they were proficient in the arts of smelting and working iron and precious metals, and of weaving, dyeing and woodwork. Their main highway of commerce was the ancient one to the East and to the Continent along which they had come when they took possession of the land—none other than 'The Banks' of today.

All this has direct reference to Heckfield, with its strategic position only a few miles from the State capital and guarding the fords over the last rivers (the Loddon and the Blackwater). I think it reasonable to presume that there was some form of Celtic settlement there.

Celtic Remains

Flint implements have been discovered from the gravel beds of Finchampstead, bronze urns at Yatley, and there are the wonderful discoveries at Silchester. It seems probable that having regard to the extensive digging of gravel on Heckfield and Hazely Heaths and the dredging of the White-water in 1943 that some "finds" have passed unnoticed.

The Romans Occupy Britain

The only local discovery to my knowledge is the small coin which I dug up at Heckfield Shop. This was taken to Oxford for identification by the late Rev. E. C. Spicer and unfortunately never returned! The Romans colonised Silchester largely in conjunction with the Celts, and at this period "the Banks" must have borne some resemblance to our modern arterial roads.

The well-to-do Roman in Britain, was very fond of his villa, the counterpart of our small country estate. In the south of the country, where defence was not important, he showed marked discernment in the matters of agriculture and beauty of landscape. There were a number of "highly desirable" sites in Heckfield overlooking the various small streams. This fact, combined with the proximity of Silchester, suggests that some day more of Roman Heckfield will be revealed.

Anglo-Saxon Invasion

Following the withdrawal of the Roman legions the Celts, left to their own devices, were unable to withstand the Anglo-Saxon invaders, who were intent on conquest and settlement. The Celts held out in their forests for some years, but their chief stronghold of Silchester was taken in A.D. 566-568.

How Our Twin Villages got their Names

The Saxons, who colonised this northern part of Hampshire, were a powerful tribe generally known as the Basingas. Belonging to this tribe was a family named Matta, who in the 6th century pushed north from the coast along the White-water valley and founded a settlement later to be known as Mattingley (Matta's "Ley" or "Place"). The high, open grazing land a little further north they called the "High Veld", later of course, Heckfield.

King Alfred

Then, for nearly three centuries, a complete blackout descends on English history, a period producing one of the the greatest enigmas in our island story. The tribes became amalgamated into seven strong states or kingdoms. Later they produced the great Alfred, King first of Wessex (of

which modern Hampshire was a part) and then virtually of all England. But we know that the lot of the infant kingdom was far from peaceful owing to the incursions of the Danes.

Black Times for Heckfield and Mattingley

For many years life in our villages must have been very uncertain, the whole district being in the nature of a "No man's land", the Saxons holding the chalk hills around Basingstoke and the Danes firmly in possession of Reading. In 871 A.D. King Alfred and his brother Ethelred were defeated in battle near Basingstoke, and the fate of the local countryside is not difficult to imagine!

Heckfield and Mattingley in Saxon Times

In a sense the evidence for this period is mainly connected with William the Conqueror's Domesday Book of 1086. This describes the ownership, value, use and population of every acre of land in England at the point in history at which Saxon England ended and Norman England began. Both Effele (Heckfield) and Mantingelege (Mattingley) are recorded. Both are in—

The Hundred of Holdshott

The division of the country into Tithings and Hundreds originated in Saxon times. The Tithing is reputed originally to have consisted of ten households or the amount of land which would maintain them. The Hundred was ten Tithings. Having regard to scarcity of population in these early days, the Hundred no doubt included a great area of uncultivated and unrequired land.

The Hundred of Holdshott (which included the Manor of Heckfield) was one of the five Hundreds of the Great Royal Manor of Basingstoke, part of the Royal Demesne of the crown. To this day we are in the Basingstoke division of the County Court and Quarter Sessions. It is evident that Heckfield and Holdshott, meaning presumably Mattingley, were easily the largest parish in the Hundred.

Heckfield's Famous Hundred Oak

Heckfield held a central position and was the reputed place of meeting for the ancient Hundred Court. It appears

that this Court was held under a certain oak called the Hundred oak at Heckfield at Michaelmas and Hocktide. From several references in title deeds over the centuries the location of the famous tree is determined within the immediate locality of Danmore House and Heckfield Stores.*

The Saxon Lords of Heckfield and Mattingley

We have referred in Chapter I (The Manors) to Domesday Book in connection with Heckfield and its Lord, Stenesnoc. It is pretty certain that he was a resident, not like his Norman successors, an absentee; and the same can be said of Alric at Mattingley.

Domesday reads (modernised): "Manor of Mattingley. Held during the reign of King Edward (the Confessor) by Alric, who held it of the King as an 'Alod'." This means that virtually the Manor was a freehold, but nominally it formed part of the Royal Demesne of the Saxon kings. No doubt King Edward and, during his brief reign, King Harold, hunted on Hazeley Heath, as did their Norman and Angevin successors; and this "Alod" arrangement would give them every right to cross the Whitewater into Mattingley if necessary!

What does Domesday tell us further about Saxon Mattingley? It is assessed at $1\frac{1}{2}$ hides (somewhat vague, but about 200 acres). There was approximately 180 acres of arable land ("3 ploughs"), 4 acres of meadow (presumably water meadow). There was a mill (at Clappers Bridge no doubt) and the population consisted of 8 small farmers ("villeins") and 3 cottagers with land ("Bordars"). To this we must presumably add the Lord's household and farm staff, but even allowing each male head of household an average of five or six for his family the population was rather small.

Perhaps the most interesting information from Domesday about our two parishes is that Saxon Heckfield had a church but that Mattingley had none; but more about that later.

* According to the map of 1774, Hundred Oak was on the site of "The Grove", a mansion now demolished a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile North of the Stores.

Life in the Next Three Centuries

By 1086 (Domesday), Alsí, son of Brixi, was Lord of Mattingley. The remarkable thing is that in this case a Saxon family remained, while at Heckfield, as in most cases, a Norman was rewarded for his help in the Conquest of England.

It appears that the name of the Lord of the Manor of Mattingley, Alsí, was perpetuated as Ellis, but though the Ellis family had close connections with Mattingley into the early 19th century, the Lordship passed in 1167 to one Revelendus, and in the early 13th century to Merton Priory (Chapter 1, "The Manors", tells of the successive "Squires" of Heckfield during this period).

The only physical relic of Norman days is a cooking pot practically complete, which was discovered in April 1964 in the field opposite Mattingley Vicarage during excavations for a new bungalow. This has been properly verified and is now in Basingstoke Museum.

With the next era (the Angevin Kings) the only remaining link is the Crusader's chest in Heckfield Church (date 1199); and Heckfield Church also provides evidence of life (and death!) in the mid-14th century. In 1336 a bell was installed with an inscription embossed in dead black letters as a tragic memorial to the Black Death, which reduced the population of England by at least a third. During this period we gather that there was a frequent recurrence of cattle murrain.

Our twin parishes were served until 1387 by one church (St. Michael's, Heckfield), and its vicar. Parishioners must have been directly affected by such events as King John's (1199-1216) frequent visits to Odiham Castle, his siege there by the French Dauphin Prince Louis, and in 1244 by the residence there of the great Simon de Montfort; and during a great part of the 15th century the terrible Wars of the Roses (the Houses of Lancaster and York competing for the English throne) must have kept life extremely insecure for lord and labourer. In view also of the primitive nature of the domestic architecture of this period and the non-residence or

frequent changes of the manorial "Lords" it is not surprising that we have no certain remains before 1485 except our two churches (Mattingley, *circa* 1450).

The Tudor Period, 1485-1603

By the beginning of this period Mattingley Chapel was already in being. Compared with the previous centuries, life for ordinary folk settled down considerably under the Tudor monarchs, though the dissolution of the monasteries, the Reformation and the separation from the Roman allegiance made it an uncomfortable time for kings, queens, bishops and religious enthusiasts on either side. So far as the countryside was concerned the dissolution of the monasteries (Merton Priory disappeared in 1539) and a consequent grassing down of arable to "sheep-walk" land (the age of "The Golden Fleece") led to much unemployment amongst the labourers; but the rise of the merchant-landowner class and the re-discovery of brick-making (a craft lost since Roman times) led in the very early Tudor period to the building in our parishes of a number of dwellings which still survive. These include Springwell, Gobourn House and the Hollies in Heckfield and the Vicarage (formerly Chase's Farm) and Bannister's Farm (which may be a little earlier) in Mattingley. Later in the same period came Heckfield House (until 1949 the Vicarage), Heath House and Ragmoor Farm; and in Mattingley amongst other buildings the present Blue House, West End, formerly known as Aylewards.

Events within the neighbourhood which doubtless caused a flutter of excitement in Heckfield and Mattingley are: Henry VIII's meeting with Catherine of Aragon at Dogmersfield in 1509; Philip of Spain and Queen Mary's state visit to Basing in 1554, and Queen Elizabeth's in 1569 and 1591 (Elvetham) and to Basing and the Vine in 1601. She received a great public welcome on Silchester Heath.

Mention of Queen Mary suggests one definite local reflection of the crisis caused by her efforts to put the Reformation clock back. A certain William Greet became the Vicar of Heckfield in 1551. On 10th January, 1553, according to the marriage register, he took advantage of the new Reformation

permission for clergy to marry. The lady's name was Elizabeth Gedge, but the accession of the Catholic Mary meant his eviction from the living. A certain "Syr William Granger" took his place; and when Greet was restored in 1560, he took the opportunity of scoring off the intruder by referring very critically to his failure to properly maintain the church registers, as follows:

"Syr Granger omytted the keypyng of thys booke for III whole yeres almost to the great hurte of many who yt shall cu (?) in questyon" (the meaning is reasonably clear).

The register in which this appears is Volume I (1538-1573). This is certainly the original paper book first used under Chancellor Thomas Cromwell's Act, and not the parchment copies afterwards ordered and more frequently found. There are four large gaps in the entries, due probably to lost leaves, neglect and civil disturbances.

The "Pestilence" raged in 1548, probably small-pox. There were 37 burials between March and August. Here is a sample: "Burials March 15th Elizabeth Mylton (Mother), Brigett and Elizabeth (daughters); 24th Robert Mylton, 29th Adam Mylton." It is interesting that illegitimate children seem to have been comparatively rare during this period. The infant mortality rate during the 16th century was obviously terrible.

The Stuart Era, 1603-1700

The earlier years of this period saw the death of Thomas Creswell in 1608, after having been Lord of the Manor for 68 years. His funeral must have been one of the greatest Heckfield has seen. But the Creswell fortune declined as the century progressed, and his grandson was the last Lord. It was a great change when in 1651 the Manor was sold to Sir Anthony Sturt, though Creswells continued to reside in the parish until late in the 18th century, and Admiral Hector Creswell (still living in 1965) was baptized in Heckfield Church in 1889.

We have other evidence about Sir Thomas Creswell. "Lorde of ye towne of Heckfield". A Creswell lease of 1587 had been used as a cover for one of the parish registers.

One item instructs that "The said William White (tenant) shall yearly, within 14 days after ye feast of St. Michael, send and deliver to the Manor House of Thomas Creswell his heyers and assignes one couple of good and clean capons, and that without fraud or collusion". Thomas Creswell's son, the last "Lord", sided with Parliament against the King in the Civil War, though one wonders why, this being so, he found it necessary to sell up nine years before the Royalist Restoration.

There are two other notable early Stuart monuments in Heckfield Church; though it must be understood that all these three gentlemen lived most of their lives under Elizabeth I, the last Tudor.

Henry Tamworthe or Tomworthe of Aylwards (now Blue House) is the only Mattingley inhabitant of this period whose name is known to us through his memorial in Heckfield Church. The third of these monuments was erected by one Prudence Humphrey to her father and mother (Phillips) and her husband William Humphrey. (More about these monuments in the chapter on Heckfield Church.)

The registers give us several interesting glimpses of life in Stuart and Commonwealth times. We see that the duties of Vicar and Churchwardens included the apprehending and public whipping of all vagrants (tramps) having no pass. The stocks and whipping post survived well into the 18th century outside Heckfield Church. What with the not infrequent excommunication of "naughty" parishioners (names listed in the registers) life must have been full of incident!

From a number of interesting entries there is: "January 8th, 1695, Elizabeth Barrat Borroed Too Gynnys"—an interesting sidelight on the Vicar's "expenses" in those days!

The commercial background of this period is reflected as elsewhere in the affidavits certifying that bodies had been buried in Woollen; this was required by an Act of 1666, apparently to boost the wool trade. There was opposition to this Act. People considered it undignified to be buried in anything but pure linen, and left instructions accordingly. There are records in the registers of executors paying the penalty of £5 for non-compliance with this law.

The politico-religious background is reflected in two government enactments, first about burials (1644): "Let the body upon the day of burial be decently attended from the house to the place appointed for public burials and there be immediately interred without any ceremony." The other ordered "That all marriages should be solemnised before a justice of the peace and no other ceremony shall be held." This is all part of the Puritan and anti-Anglican outlook which prevailed in England from the defeat of the Royalists in the middle 1640's until the Restoration in 1660.

Jacobean Architecture

There appear to be no outstanding local examples, but there was originally a lovely bit of Jacobean panelling in one of the bedrooms of Heckfield Stores. Holdshott House is thought to be of this date. But one of the great local events of the 17th century was the building of Bramshill House (1605-1617). This must have provided much local employment. The source of the immense quantity of bricks involved has never been determined with certainty.

The Great Civil War of the 1640's

The tide of this war continually flooded up to the very boundaries of Heckfield and Mattingley, but happily never engulfed our village, although in 1642 Sir Thomas Creswell openly declared for Parliament while the Manor of Putham was held by the great Marquis of Winchester, Lord of Basing House and one of the most ardent supporters of the Crown. Partisanship was thus divided, and I surmise that many miniature civil wars were summarily decided on the spot. I wonder whether this is the origin of the endless feud which survived into my early school days with intermittent battles in the vicinity of the New Inn. Inevitably, however, throughout the Civil War life and possessions in our parish were uncertain and precarious. Fears rose and receded. Here are some alarming local events: 1643, April, "Reading was besieged 12 days and then taken by the Earl of Essex", "Excesses perpetrated on both sides." November: "Fierce attacks on Basing House by Sir William Waller with an

army of 7,000 men." "14th: Siege raised. . . . Cavaliers at Odiham." "16th: Cavaliers driven out of Odiham." 27th: "Cavaliers routed in skirmish at Hook."

There was much pillaging of the country population by both sides. All men in Hampshire between 16 and 60 were ordered to appear in arms for the King at Winchester early in the war, and in general connection with the Battle of Alton in 1643 there were marches and counter-marches between Basing and Reading, General Waller at Farnham with 10,000 men, captures of provision convoys, cavalry skirmishes, etc.

1644 and 1645 brought constant hostilities involving Odiham, Basingstoke, Sherfield, Kingsclere and Crondall. For instance, on October 22nd, 1644, the Parliament troops under Lords Manchester and Essex must have passed through Heckfield on their withdrawal to Reading from Basingstoke by way of Swallowfield. All this more or less local fighting culminated on Tuesday, 14th October, 1645, at 7.30 a.m. in the final taking of Basing House and its razing to the ground. Readers of this particular period should read "The Civil War in Hampshire", by Revd. G. N. Godwin.

Throughout this period, and to some extent reflecting the troubles of the times, there was almost continual argument between Heckfield and Mattingley on the subject of the Vicar of Heckfield's duties in Mattingley. The parish chest contains a most beautifully inscribed document which records in full a series of enactments on this subject. The first of these is dated 1578, as follows:

"A true copy of the award of Bartholomew Clarke Doctor of Law and Dean of the Arches made in a clause depending between Henry Richards, Richard Hill and Robert Shackelford and all other the inhabitants of the hamlett of Mattingley within the parish of Heckfield in the County of Southampton of the one part and William Greete vicar of the said parish of Heckfield of the other part . . . to the end that all unkindnesses and controversies may cease that the above named persons with better will and charity may come to the service of Almighty God and consequently in more due and willing sort may pay their tythes. . . . The said Vicar of Heckfield shall say Divine Service on Sundays and

Holydays and also on Wednesdays so often as conveniently he may by himself or by some other sufficient reader in Mattingley Chappell beginning always his service about eight of the clock in the morning. He shall christen, marry, visit the sick, etc., etc. The inhabitants of Mattingley shall resort four times in the year to the Church of Heckfield, to wit at Easter, Midsummer, Michaelmas and Christmas . . . and pay unto the said Vicar or his assignees after eleven pounds a year. Given the Sixth day of June in the twentieth year of our sovereign lady Elizabeth by the Grace of God. Vc. etc. 1578."

All seems to have gone according to schedule until the regular Vicar Richard Crosse had his living sequestered by the victorious Parliamentary (and broadly speaking Presbyterian) regime and one Jeremy Gosse installed in his stead. Despite entreaties from the people Gosse resolutely refused to fulfil his responsibilities in Mattingley, but according to the deeds he collected their tithes! On at least two occasions the people of Mattingley sought legal aid to secure a redress of their religious neglect.

1649. "The humble petition of the inhabitants of Mattingley. Sheweth that it hath been an antient custom time out of mind that the Vicar of Heckfield hath officiated at the Chappell of Mattingley as often as he did at the Church of Heckfield and hath received the tythes of both for his paines. That since these sad and calamitous times the then Vicar being sequestered and Mr. Gosse was by your honours placed in his room as Vicar of Heckfield and doth at the Church of Heckfield officiate twice every Sabbath Day but will not acknowledge anything to be due unto your petitioners at Mattingley although he doth receive the tythes of both. That true it is that he cometh to our Chappell of Mattingley once in a fortnight or thereabouts and then sings a psalm and preaches a sermon. But stands upon it that it is more than he is tyed unto, and we must take it for a curt'sey and give him thanks for his paines if he doth continue it. That our hamlett of Mattingley is very large and numerous consisting of about eighty families many of which live near three miles distant of Heckfield Church and some of them are aged, poor impotent people and are no ways able to

travel thither. So as their bodies are like to famish for want of temporall food so their souls are like to perish for want of spirituall and many of them being illiterate themselves do not hear a chapter read out of the Old or New Testament the year about. That your petitioners are thereby rendered into a very sad condition for altho' we choose officers as Churchwardens and overseers of our own, altho' we are bound to provide for our own poor and to repair our own Chappell (which at this time is very ruinous) yet we are likewise forced to contribute to the repairing of their Church and to pay tythes to their Minister and we are ourselves left like sheep without a Shepherd.

"In tender consideration of which our suit unto your Honour is that we may be exempted from bearing any burthen with them seeing we receive no benefit by them far exceeding us in value we equalizing them in number. And that we may be allowed our tythes which are but small towards the raising of a competent maintenance for a preaching minister which may be constant with us and may own us for his flock which we are contented at our own charge or else that your honour will be pleased to order that the present Vicar may officiate with us *de jure* as his predecessors have done that so the ignorant may be instructed and the learned make a further progress in the way of religion, so shall God's name have the Glory, our poor souls the Comfort and your Honours the prayers of your poor petitioners."

This petition was submitted to the Committee for Plundered Ministers, who hoped "that Mr. Gosse will not refuse to officiate once every Sabbath day at Mattingley." Were not these sad and calamitous days? Under such circumstances discretion was beyond doubt the better part of valour! Parson Gosse, however, was adamant. Even when the parishioners provided him with a horse he refused to ride over to Mattingley more often, and being a supporter of the Commonwealth he was secure in his tenure.

After the Restoration the people of Mattingley again petitioned for their rights, which annoyed the irate Mr. Gosse so much that he ceased to visit them at all. Accordingly,

another petition was made in 1661. Extracts from this petition are: "Since these unhappy times of distraction, Mr. Crosse the late vicar being sequestered one Mr. Gosse was there placed by the Committee of Plundered Ministers in his room who did receive the tythes of both places but refused to perform any duties at Mattingley alledging that he was not sent to them by his order, but afterwards upon complaints he was enjoined to officiate with us every third Sabbath so that for the other two days we were left like sheep without a shepherd . . . since this happy restoration of our Government Mr. Gosse hath been importuned by us to officiate more frequently in our Chappell. . . . Mr. Gosse hath now wholly left us, refusing to perform any duty at our Chappell and yet expecting to receive our tythes, by which means our Chappell doors are altogether shut on the Sabbath day and other (?) alehouses left open."

The remainder of the petition is very similar to that of 1649. Times had changed and the petition reached the Bishop of Winchester, who appointed three J.P.'s—Sir Andrew Henley, of Bramshill, Mr. Jervoyse, of Herriard, and Mr. William Rudiard—to hold an enquiry "at the house of Daniel Symonds by the sign of the George at Odiham".

The history of the case was carefully reviewed, in which it was revealed that a horse of three or four pounds price had been given "in civility and curtesy in regard he was to travel twice a day between Heckfield and Mattingley being two miles asunder".

The result was that the Bishop of Winchester ordered Gosse to perform "one part of the duty at Heckfield Church and the other at Mattingley Chappell" dated 15 day of December 1661. Mr. Gosse left Heckfield in 1666 and was succeeded by Revd. J. Brown. There are no later records of dispute on the subject. This may be a suitable point at which to record the fact that the "hamlett of Mattingley with its Chappell" remained part of the parish of Heckfield with Mattingley until 1863, when two ecclesiastical parishes were formed. This arrangement continued until 1949, when, after the death of Revd. J. Crosbie-Oates, Vicar of Mattingley, the reunion of the benefices took place, the first incumbent

of the modern parish of Heckfield with Mattingley being Revd. F. T. Ault, who resigned in 1963, to be followed by Revd. P. W. R. Kennedy, the present Vicar.

Georgian Times

We now come to a period for which a wealth of information is available; and many of the events of these times are told in the chapter on "Houses and their Owners".

Generally speaking, the first seeds of modern Heckfield and Mattingley were sown in the latter half of the 18th century. Slowly the old Heckfield of manorial days, with a village green around the church, yeoman farmer, small business and peasant-craftsman gave place to the rule of squire and parson, tenant farmers, domestic servants and estate hands, game preservation and a landless, poverty-stricken peasantry. Our main and very substantial evidence for the life of our parish in this period comes from the vestry minute and account books of the overseers of the poor, who were closely associated with the churchwardens in the upkeep of the highways, repair of the cottages of the poor (Parish houses), holding of inquests, militia service, apprenticeship and much besides. The Vestry was roughly analogous to the modern parish council, but had far greater responsibilities and powers, being basically responsible to the local justices of the peace for practically everything which now comes under the heading of the "Welfare State".

The churchwardens then, as now, were responsible, with the Vicar and the patrons of the living (New College, Oxford), but their office had much wider significance than in modern times. The funds to cover parish expenses were found by the levy of Poor and Church rates based on the value of land-holdings; and these assessments and the yearly accounts are full of historic evidence.

Many of the overseers were beyond doubt hard and brutal in their treatment of the unfortunate wretches whom fate cast into their clutches by their having to seek parish relief. Salaried assistant overseers were authorised under an Act of 1819 and the manner in which the Poor Law was administered depended a great deal on the personal disposition of

these men. Eventually the power of the Vestry became vested in the large landowner and his tenant farmers. Eager to win compliments from their employers for assiduity in the discharge of their duties, many of the early assistant overseers were nothing better than the modern Nazi Gauleiter. Everything possible was done to restrain a man from applying for relief. Probably the greatest deterrent, because of the humiliation involved, was the hideous contraption the parish cart, to which applicants were harnessed and driven round the parish, and the wearing of a piece of coloured cloth on the right sleeve or shoulder bearing in large metal letters, for example, "P.H."—"Pauper of Heckfield". To be poor was a crime for which there was neither legal remedy nor constructive assistance, only prescribed punishment. The poor, male and female alike, could not state their case, and on the least pretext could be publicly whipped or put in the stocks (somewhere about the present stable yard near Heckfield Church), or even cast into gaol.

Between 1811 and 1824 the average wages of the labourer was 9s.4d. per week, insufficient for the necessities of life, not including rent, fuel and clothing. No wonder that the Poor Rate rose to high records almost every year, and that the labourers' cottages became hovels.

Here are a few entries:—

"April 24th, 1782. Charles Bailey. Overseer.

"A rate made on the inhabitants of the Parish of Heckfield for the relief and employment of the poor of the said parish charging twenty pence in the pound on their annual rents or value of lands and tenements in their several occupation lying and being in the said parish."

"At a parish meeting on Sunday afternoon May 17th 1789 a list of poor persons claiming relief . . .

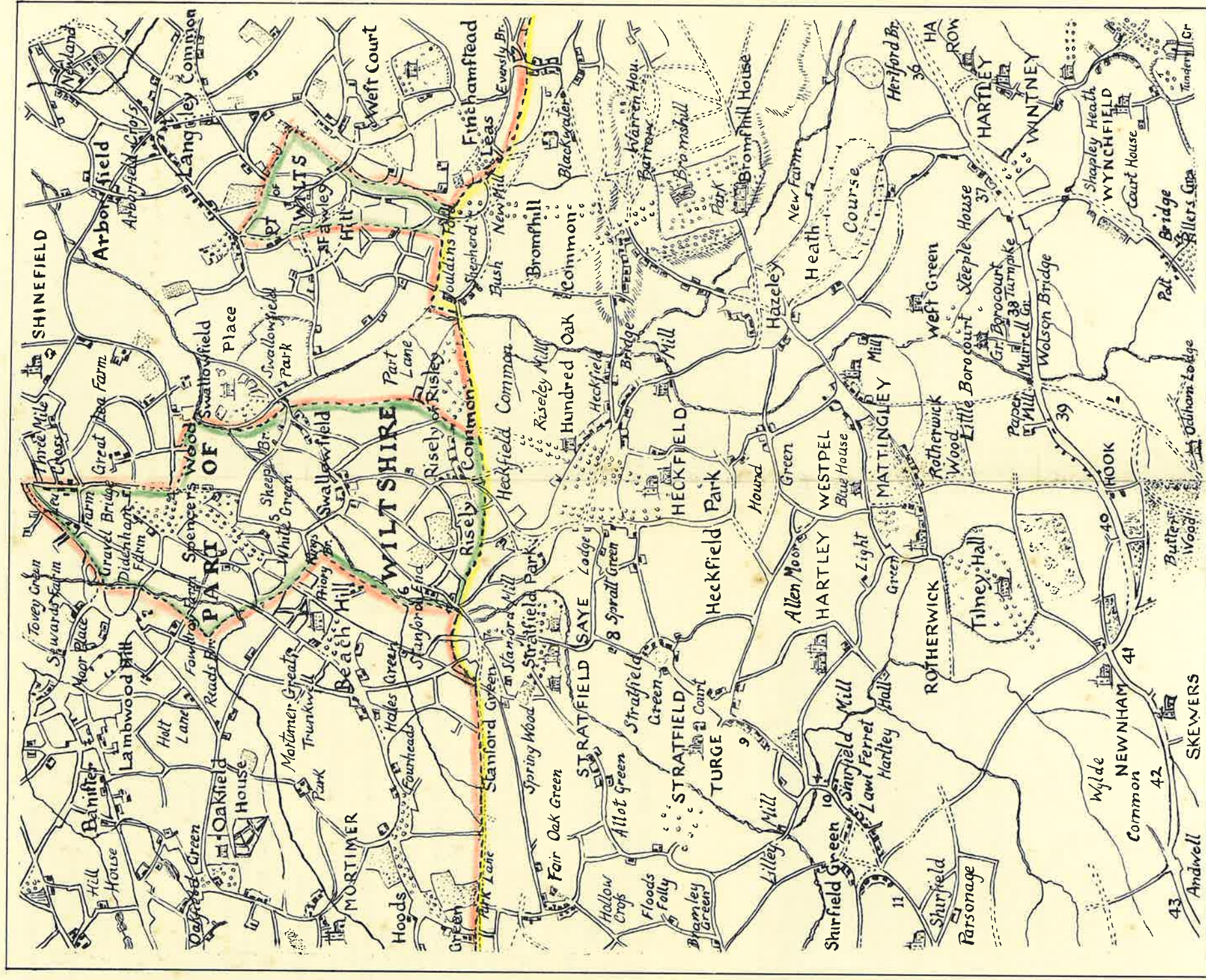
Bastard children, 18.

Destitute widows, 4 with 7 children.

Aged and infirm, 18, including a stout, able man until injured in an accident. A cripple girl capable of weeding, spinning and sewing and needing winter relief only.

Also widow B. and family at Brentford. Widow D. and

BERKSHIRE



Published June 10th 1774

HAMPSHIRE

43 Andwell

family at London, also 7 persons having part or all their rent paid—one in Reading."

Apprenticeship of Parish Children

The surviving indentures bind the employer that he "will during all the term aforesaid find, provide and allow unto the said apprentice meet, competent and sufficient meat, drink and apparel, lodging, washing and all other things necessary for an apprentice". The Parish is also indemnified against any claim for poor relief during the apprenticeship. The apprentice is bound to dwell with and serve his master "faithfully in all lawful business, according to his power, wit and ability, and honestly, orderly and obediently in all things demean and behave himself, towards his master and all his, during the said term . . . from the date of these presents until the said apprentice shall accomplish his full age of twenty-six years. There is no mention of wages!

Affiliation Cases

	s.	d.
Easter 1764. Paid for Examination Warrant for James B.	3	0
Going to Mr. Griffiths to get the Warrant signed and expenses	8	0
Going to Aldmaston and Brimpton with the Constable after B.	8	0
Expenses two officers and B.—the night and bringing them to Heckfield	12	0
And so it goes on, including expenses of taking "Elizabeth S. her mother and sister to Basingstoke" and concluding with "Vicar's and clerk's fees, 7s. 6d.". The whole transaction cost £14 6s. 8d.		

Current Prices

1745	Making 2 shirts for Boulton's child, 6d.
1748	A hatchet, 8d.
1750	A letter brought by Postman, 1/-.
1755	A pair of linen breeches, 2/6.

- 1769 Richard Darling's wife to buy baby things, 3/-.
 1781 Flitch of bacon, 76 lbs. at 6d., £1 18s. 0d.
 A round smock, 3/6.
 1783 A pair of stays for Goodyer's girl, 4s. 1d.

Maintenance of Roads, etc.

- 1746 Repairs Heckfield Bridge. Bricklayers,
 Carpenters and timber £3 0s. 10d.
 1747 Building Bourn Bridge (near New Inn) £4 0s. 4d.
 1752 Thos. Roberts his bill for building Alder
 Bridge £1 1s. 0d.

Alder Bridge is the one at the point now usually known as Holloway's Hole.

From time to time work was undertaken in order to relieve unemployment, particularly in repairing the turnpike roads, Reading-Basingstoke and Reading-Odiham (now A32). Weekly wages to parish labourers in 1822 were five shillings per week in comparison with seven shillings for regular labourers. Exploitation?

Public Health

The accounts for each year contain records of the payment of considerable sums—often £18-£20 to the village doctor “for services to the poor”. Up to 1765 this was Dr. Lamport, from then until 1793 Dr. Everett. In the 1820's a “Mr. Workman Surgeon” was appointed village M.O.H. at a fixed annual salary. “It is expected that Mr. Workman will attend without additional charge such of the poor who may be resident within the three tithings—Heckfield, Holdshot, and Mattingley”. 8th April, 1828. “Resolved that the salary for the ensuing year for medical attendance for the poor be £21, cases of surgery, midwifery and venereal disease excepted”.

Smallpox was the scourge of rural England in the 18th century. Heckfield had epidemics in 1754, 1758, 1772 and 1781-2. Some extracts:—

“Mr. Everett Apothecary attending and necessary things for small pox families £5 10s. 3d.

Master Bird (Shop) Things for small pox families £7 16s. 8d.
 Rogers. Beer and wine for small pox victims £5 10s. 3d.”
 Beer and wine were also freely supplied to the poor women at the time of their confinements. The overseers were also responsible for the health of the parish children, e.g.:
 “1782 Benj. Wallis to buy him Brimstone and treacle 3d.
 Stuff to cure the itch 4/6.”

Inquests

They were responsible for the holding of any inquests. Thus: “7th November, 1786. Expenses jury witnesses, tything man and church wardens at the New Inn. Inquest on the death of Sarah Strong by the Coroner. £1 3s. 0d.”

Militia Service

This was determined by ballot, but substitutes could be hired. The Parish overseers usually preferred this as otherwise they were likely to have to support the man selected. Here is an extract: “1784. Paid Wm. North to hire a substitute for the militia, £1 1s. 0d.

Various

Year ending Easter 1785: “Paid John Barnes to buy clothes for his children being very bear and naked, £1 1s. 0d.”

20th June 1785. “Paid to John Charlton (postman) towards buying him a horse to ride with letters, 10/6.”

Year ending June 1787: “Wm. Mullis, carpenter. Repairing the stocks, 5/-.”

December 1790: “Repairing the whipping stocks, 1/-.”

Occasional entry of this period: “Gave to parish children to spend at Heckfield Fair, 2/6.”

The Parish Workhouse

By the late 1770's the Poor Rate was soaring to such an extent that the vestry of 30th August 1780 passed a resolution to erect a workhouse. The site chosen was on the Reading-Basingstoke road opposite the wood now known as Coldharbour Copse: the entrance seems to have been very near the holly tree some distance on the Reading side of the

bend. The materials purchased by the Committee from Lord Rivers, of Highfield Park, came from "The late Church House commonly called The Five Bells" (from our Heckfield bells of course!). The work was done by William Mullis, carpenter, and John and Titus Strong, bricklayers. The cost was £400, which in those days would provide a pretty substantial building; and it was "raised by bond" of one Peter Body, the miller. The workhouse was in full operation by 1781. Little can be gleaned about running costs, but we read:

"Francis Belsher 1781 (6mos. A/C) flour and cheese £24 1s. 4d.
Francis Belsher 1784 (year) flour and cheese £55 18s. 9d."

There are many entries for purchases of bacon by the flitch, cheese by the cwt. and even butter. Michael Everard was Master-cum-Clerk and for managing the workhouse he received a salary of £11 1s. 0d. p.a. It is known to have been operating in 1827, but in 1830 the Vestry decided to pull it down and use the materials towards building two double tenements on the common between the present A32 road and Riseley Mill. These and other Parish houses were sold in 1836 by the Hartley Wintney Guardians, to whom they had passed under the 1834 Unions Act.

During this period the **Village Fairs** were regularly held. Heckfield, Friday in Easter Week, "Pedlery", finally fell into disuse early 19th century. Mattingley, 26th July, Cattle Fair, also came to an end at about the same time, as did other such country customs at Eversley, Hartley Row, etc.

Communications rapidly improved. We have noted the turnpike repairs above.

We have records of a serious typhoid epidemic in 1772, and of an Arctic winter 1775-6, with unprecedented snowfall in January 1776.

No record of 18th century Heckfield would be complete without reference to Robert Cane. He appears to have raised the status of his ancient family to its highest level, and in the 1740's to have been the local business magnate. He was farmer-miller (Holdshot) and shopkeeper. His residence was the present Danmoor.

Within the 18th century three very wealthy men were associated with Heckfield (yearly income more than £20,000),

viz.: Humphrey Sturt,
Baron Rivers,
Lord Bolton (Manor of Putham).

In Mattingley the old order changed more slowly, and many old yeomen families continued to hold their own land. Much was freehold and the remainder copyhold or leasehold of Putham. It was not until the last decade of the century that the estate building activities of Charles Shaw Lefevre began to alter the economics of local husbandry. Sir George Pitt, in his purchase of the Sturt Estate, acquired Priors Farm and a few isolated parcels of land. The Hawley family, of West Green House, held Blue House, Thorne's and Money's farms and also the old forge on the green—now Crocus Cottage.

Life in Southern England during the later years of the 18th and the early part of the 19th century was overshadowed by the Napoleonic Wars and the threat of invasion. A local invasion committee was formed and an evacuation scheme prepared. This scheme provided for farm wagons to assemble at the point where the Monument now stands and convey the people inland. When Mr. John Martineau came to Heckfield in 1870 there were still living at Springwell Cottages some old people called Arlett who could remember the occurrence. For many years the Arletts farmed this part of Heckfield, living in present Gobourn House, hence they would be active participants in this venture.

A more cheerful note is struck by memories of Royal visits to Heckfield. Charles Shaw Lefevre, later Viscount Eversley, remembered how he used to be taken as a boy to see King George III and his Queen when they stopped at Highfield Park, close to Heckfield Church, which they often did when Sir William and Lady Pitt were living there. Their Majesties never gave any notice when they were coming, but as soon as it was known, people would stand about on Heckfield Common and all along the road. The King, Lord Eversley remembered, was always dressed in plain clothes, with a wig; Queen Charlotte was very like her pictures; she used to speak

very fast, with a slight German accent. She and the King were very fond of children, and used to kiss him (Lord Eversley). Two or three of the princesses always accompanied them, wearing large hoops. (From Memoirs of the late Miss Martineau, of Park Corner.)

Victorian Days

The main event affecting the life of our parish was the consolidation by 1900 of a great proportion of Heckfield and Mattingley into either the Heckfield Place or Stratfield Saye Estates, the only noteworthy exceptions being the eastern portion of Hazell and Poplars Farm, Mattingley, which formed parts of the equally large estates of Bramshill and Rotherwick respectively. In 1817 the Stratfield Saye Estate (including the Manor of Heckfield) was purchased by the nation and presented to the Duke of Wellington, and in the same year Charles Shaw Lefevre purchased the Manor of Putham, then (1818) Hazell, and in 1886 his son Lord Eversley purchased the estate of Mark Wyeth, of Hazeley Heath. In the meantime the enclosure of the common lands had taken place and "our" two great landowners, by an exchange, had concentrated their respective properties respectively West and East of the Reading-Odiham road (A32). Colonel Walpole purchased the Eversley Estate in 1895 and added to it the remainder of the Hawley Estates in Mattingley.

Parochial Affairs

All old manorial customs and the various offices associated therewith passed into oblivion. The Parliamentary and local government reforms brought great changes; and the Act of 1894 created Rural District Councils and Parish Councils; Mattingley was made a separate Civil Parish. The overriding authority of the two great estates prevented the Parish Councils from operating to their full capacity, indeed, so far as Heckfield is concerned, from operating practically at all.

Village Life

The greatest changes of all are noted under this heading. Such transitional periods seem inevitably to bring hardship

and suffering to the ordinary people. The conditions arising from the great social changes were aggravated by the depression which followed the Napoleonic Wars. The Heckfield Vestry records contain many references which indicate the pitiable plight of the working people. Gone forever was the Heckfield of olden days, a community of yeoman farmers and craftsmen—smallholders who, with the help of their common rights, had been largely self-supporting according to the standard of life of those days. The new order, however, must not be condemned in its entirety. The big landowner and the well-to-do country gentleman usually took a great interest in his particular village, which he considered to be his own little personal domain. He therefore took a benevolent interest in the life of the poor, and many village institutions flourished under his patronage. Examples of this in our parish are:—

Education

There has been a school at Heckfield at least from the 1780's, when a certain Elizabeth Clements "kept a school", said to be the cottage in the Beeches near the Riseley boundary. Later "A Mr. Davis had a school" up to 1801, probably in the building now known as School Farm. There was an "Old Dame" school for infants in the early 19th century held in the old thatched cottage on the common (Bogey Common), best remembered as the home for many years of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Benham. Heckfield School as we know it now, derives from the establishment about 1835 of a school for girls by the four daughters of General Sir Galbraith Lowry-Cole, of Highfield Park. This school came under government jurisdiction in 1873, and seems to have become a mixed school after the separation of the civil parishes of Heckfield and Mattingley in 1894. By this time Hound Green School was well established, and took its place as a mixed Church of England school for the Mattingley children. It was closed in 1932.

Village Benefit Club

Almost every village had one of these. In Heckfield and Mattingley it was The Foresters, and the event of the year

was the annual fête and dinner, including sports, gingerbread stalls, etc. The Heckfield branch held their fête in the Dog and Partridge meadow, and on occasion, by invitation, at Park Corner on Whit-Monday, and Mattingley at the Old Bottle and on the Green on Trinity Monday.

Flower Show

The Heckfield and Mattingley Flower Show, usually on the second Wednesday in August, was quite an impressive affair. It originated in the 1880's and was held alternatively at Heckfield Place and Highfield. It flourished until 1914, and was revived after the Great War only to dwindle out in the 1920's.

Cricket Club

Heckfield and Mattingley and cricket are almost synonymous, the game having flourished here for well over a century and possibly much longer. (This is alas no longer true in 1965!—P.W.R.K.) Originally the matches were gloriously informal, played on the Green between "pick-up" teams from separate parts of the village and the "Big House Teams". It is interesting to record that Mr. William Barnes, brother of Mrs. Lincoln Smith, remembered playing cricket on the Recreation Ground near the Heckfield cross roads. Mrs. Lincoln Smith recalled friendly and entirely local matches on Hound Green, Mattingley Green and Chandlers Green, usually followed by a social evening.

The "Modern" Club (now alas no more) seems to have come into being in the 1870's with the strong support of Mr. John Martineau, matches taking place on the Warren and at Park Corner. We have no records of the early years, but here are some 20th century names: Charlie Clark with his famous lobbs; Solomon Martin, who bowled "googlies"; S. H. Bartlett and G. Hathaway (speed merchants); and the batsmen, Solomon Martin, S. H. Bartlett, Oscar Stacey (still with us in 1965!), a famous "caller" of runs; H. Foster, R. North, and all-rounders Jimmy Kyle and C. Bartlett.

The following local items are worthy of record:—

There was a Boys' Brigade complete with drum and fife band in the early years of the 20th century; also Boy Scouts, under the guidance of the Misses Thomas; and Girl Guides, led by Miss Callendar.

Industrially, the 19th century saw the last bricks made in Heckfield; an auxiliary steam engine was placed in Riseley Mill; and, perhaps most interesting of all, we nearly got a railway line between Hook and Reading with a station at Hound Green!

Very recently (February 1965) we lost a very valuable link with old Heckfield with the death at 74 of Eleanor ("Nellie") Grigg, née North, whose father, William North, was verger of the church for 40 years.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF HECKFIELD CHURCH

This fine church, dedicated to St. Michael, clearly indicates the former size and importance of Heckfield. Up to 1863 it was the Parish Church of Heckfield and Mattingley, and since 1949 it has been one of the two churches of the united parish. It is known that a church has stood upon the present spot since the 12th century, and there seems little doubt that an earlier (Saxon) church stood here. It is not easy to trace the early history of the church, so thorough and complete were the 19th century restorations.

In the 13th century the church consisted of a nave, with North and South doors and a chancel. There was a Vicar and Vicarage here at least as early as 1203. The first big restoration occurred in the 14th century. The church was practically rebuilt. The nave, with its massive walls of local ferrules, was built in the early part of that century. The tracery of a window of that date was discovered in the North wall during the second restoration. The oldest bell is dated 1336, and suggests the existence of a tower or belfry to house it.

The lovely font also dates from this period, and the **Crusaders' chest**. A second bell was added in 1420. The next important additions were the tower, a North aisle and North chapel. A brass to John Hall records that he built the North chapel. He died in 1514. Another memorial to John Creswell (Lord of the Manor of Heckfield in 1475-1518) refers to him as "Lord of the towne (of Heckfield) at the time of the building of this stepyll and new eyle and chapell"!

The North Chapel, and Aisle. Substantial pillars and arches would be necessary to support the big double-span roof, and these were probably of massive oak. The roof, being of thatch, would give to the church a very quaint appearance. An entrance from the Chancel into the North Chapel was a low narrow arch only six feet wide. The Chapel was probably separated from the Aisle by a wooden screen. This was undoubtedly the Mortuary Chapel of the Hall and Creswell families for many generations. (Here were the family pews of the Lords of the Manor.) The present site of this, for there is nothing left of it, is partly the Choir Vestry and that occupied by the organ.

The Tudor Window. The West Window of the tower contains an item of great interest. In the centre light are two small circular stained glass windows; the smaller circle just touches the larger. The glass has been pronounced by experts to be of genuine antiquity. The larger circle consists of an heraldic red rose surrounded by three small circles, white roses and a quaint heraldic figure on the top. The smaller circle consists solely of an heraldic red rose. These were the emblems of the Houses of Lancaster and York. The window was undoubtedly dedicated to commemorate the marriage of Henry Tudor (VIIth, 1485-1509) and Elizabeth of York, which ended the Wars of the Roses. A new East Window was built in the Chancel at this same period. The mullions are still to be seen in the lower part of the present window.

The Balcony which formerly existed, mainly as a **Musicians' Gallery**, is another probable feature of the period.

The small doorway for the ringers' compartment in the tower was no doubt the entrance to this. **An old bench**, listed in the church treasures, dates from about 1500, and is probably all that remains of the first seating accommodation. (Churches had no proper seating then. The congregation stood in the Nave.)

The Original Communion Plate of this period is a treasure carefully preserved and consisting of a wonderful silver Chalice and Paten, with the date engraved upon it—1568. It is used only at Easter and Christmas.

The Crusaders' Chest. This is our other great treasure, one of the very few remaining in Christendom of those ordered by Pope Pius III in 1199 to be placed in churches to collect alms for the Crusades.

The Font. This is of Purbeck marble, and is officially dated 1350.

Three More Bells were added in 1618, 1635, and 1641. ("Who can beat we five?") At some time during the period the thatched roof was replaced by one of tiles. To support the greatly increased weight, octagonal brick pillars and heavy brick arches were built.

The three-decker pulpit stood against the centre of the South wall. The seating consisted of a commodious pew for the Lord of the Manor, and possibly a few smaller ones for people who would be seated in family groups, the musicians in the gallery, and an irate Clerk endeavouring to instil a spirit of dignity into a host of unruly children.

The Floor must have resembled a graveyard, with more tombstones than flagstones for the surface. There were no heating arrangements. The surroundings of the church likewise bore little resemblance to those of today. The Highfield Staff Cottages did not exist, and there was certainly no Vicarage Corner. An oak post and rail fence enclosed the churchyard, whilst near the gate stood a large stone mounting block (removed in 1884).

Stocks, Whipping Post, and Bowling Green. The two former stood on the Green. There is reference to them up to 1820: their ultimate fate is unrecorded. The village

bowling green abutted upon the churchyard, probably on the North boundary. The history of this amenity after 1704 is unknown.

Heckfield Vicarage stood on the same site as today, but was undoubtedly smaller. The traditional English countryside of village church and green was much more apparent than today.

The Great Restoration, by the eminent architect William Butterfield, was begun May 1876 and completed Sunday, March 4th, 1877. The church was closed for nearly a year. The chief alterations and repairs which we now briefly relate must be read in conjunction with our previous description. The wall of the North Aisle was pulled down in its whole length of about 60 feet and rebuilt a few feet inwards, somewhat diminishing the size of the church. It was very old, of great thickness and strength, composed of local conglomerate or ferrules, and fixed with mortar almost as hard as Roman cement. Near the west end of the wall was found the tracery of an early 14th century window. The roof of the Aisle, previously a tiled span, was replaced by a lean-to leaden one. The four heavy brick arches and large octagonal pillars supporting the old roof were replaced by the present lighter stone arches and shafts.

The South Wall. This was on the other side of the Nave, and was pulled down within three or four feet of the ground and rebuilt, a little crooked to accommodate a bend in the plate of the roof. The principal entrance to the church, near the centre of this Nave wall was abolished, with its brick porch. In both North and South walls some unsightly windows were replaced.

The Chancel. The Chancel arch, which at some time had been bricked up and narrowed to a width of only ten feet, was opened to its present width and rebuilt. The Chancel roof, in a very dilapidated state, was replaced by an entirely new one. The East end was mostly rebuilt and the East window taken out and replaced about two feet higher.

The opening from the Chancel into the North Chapel, only six feet wide, was enlarged and an arch built to open

out the Chapel into the church for ordinary sittings (replacing the pews reserved for the Lords of the Manor). Before this date it had been shut in at its West end by a solid wooden screen.

Ancient Glass Broken. The South wall of the Chancel, with its windows and ancient shutters, was little altered. A small pane of very old glass was unfortunately broken in two, but one half of it still remains. The shutters appear to have been removed in 1889, when the then Vicar (Revd. Thomas) put in a stained glass Memorial Window to his son.

Refurnishings. Two heating stoves were put in (no heating before this date). The church was reseated throughout. The old pulpit and reading desk, which stood one above the other against the middle of the South wall of the Nave, were removed and a new pulpit put in its present place.

Quantities of Bones Found. The church floor was retiled throughout, in doing which and in getting at the foundations of the walls, considerable quantities of bones were found, especially under the floor of the Nave, close to the Chancel step, where they must at some time have been reburied, being too thick and close together to be in their original position.

Ancient Consecration Marks Found. On each side of the East window there became visible a cross in a double circle about one foot in diameter, marked in colour on the wall. These were no doubt the original consecration marks, where the sacred oil was laid on (perhaps about 1100 A.D.). One coin was found, said to be a token of the 15th century.

Cost of Restoration. When we check up from the records all that was done, a great wall removed and rebuilt, columns and arches replaced, the whole Chancel re-roofed, windows altered, entrances and porch pulled down and rebuilt elsewhere, gallery demolished, monuments removed, the whole of the church floor retiled throughout, heating installed, and the whole church refurnished, and innumerable other things,

it is astonishing, in view of modern costs, that the whole cost of restoration was only £2,257 15s. 2d. It was raised by subscription.

Modern Criticism. It has been said of this drastic treatment of our ancient church over 80 years ago, that it was not so much a restoration as a pulling down and rebuilding. The bringing in of the North wall has so narrowed the side aisle that a procession can only pass down in single file. There was some carelessness in altering the position of memorials like the Creswell Monument and the whereabouts of their family tomb and others is now unmarked and unknown. Ancient things like the quaint old scrapers with St. Michael's Dragons were swept away, and it was only due to Mr. John Martineau that the fine Perpendicular Font was saved. Probably our unique Crusaders' Alms Chest of the 12th century would have gone too, as its identity was not then known, but fortunately it was hidden under a pile of rubbish in the tower, and only brought to light about fifty years ago. But on the whole, the work was good and necessary, so let us say no more.

The Church Yard. This was closed for burials in 1885. and ground for the present cemetery was conveyed to the church by the then Lord of the Manor.

The Church Tower. Apart from a comparatively recent renovation, the old Tower, an outstanding feature of the building, has stood as it is today since about 1500. All the massive changes and restoration going on within the church itself have left it untouched.

Its massive walls are built, as were the original nave walls, of local rock, i.e., a conglomerate of iron and gravel, known as ferrules. These ferrules are as indestructible as any building material could possibly be, for exposure to the weather over the centuries leaves them unaltered.

The view from the top of the tower is superb. Three times it has served as a lookout post to the men of the village against the threat of invasion; in 1558 they watched for the signal fire on Beacon Hill, Kingsclere, to give warning of the approach of the Spanish Armada. In the years before

Trafalgar they watched in the direction of Beacon Hill for warning of Napoleon's invasion of England. Farm carts and wagons were marshalled on the common, all ready to move the people further inland.

The Last Great Watch. During the fateful summer and autumn of 1940, men of the L.D.V. watched from the tower through the long nights for a much more sinister foe. Bombs dropped comparatively near and shook and rocked this ancient tower, but its stout walls defied them. To its ancient bells was assigned the duty of warning the village should the enemy come, but happily they were not called on to fulfil this dread task. Instead, they were there to ring out the joyful message of victory.

Memorials. The history of Heckfield (and to some extent Mattingley) and its links with the history of our nation is notably illustrated by the many memorials in the church. The earliest are **Brasses**, as follows:

Four concerned with the Creswell family now below the stone memorial on the South wall of the Nave. They include a play on the family name (a Tudor well-top surmounted by a cross). Of approximately the same date (1518) is the lovely brass on the West wall of the North Chapel consisting of a name plate and figure of a monk to the memory of "John Hall and his Wife". According to the inscription, he built this Chapel and he died on 25th November, 1514. Little is known of this ancient Heckfield family, whose name occurs in the Registers from the 16th to the end of the 19th centuries and is associated with Hall's Copse, near the Pheasant Restaurant (formerly a public house), Hall's Lane, Mattingley, and Hall's Farm, Bramshill. Circumstantial evidence suggests that in the 16th and 17th centuries the Halls were the principal workers in iron in Heckfield. My own interpretation is that they founded and owned for many years the Forge and Iron Foundry which today is known as Ragmoor Farm.

There is another brass on the step from the North Aisle to the Chapel to "Thomas Wyfold, Emma and Anne his wyfes all his children". It is dated 1521. The name of

this family is connected with the history of Heckfield Parsonage, also with Church and Bannister's farms in Mattingley.

There are two more brasses now fixed to the woodwork between the North Chapel and the Vestry entrance to the church. They are to Charles Huett (sub-treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I in Ireland), who died in 1627, and his son of the same name, who died in 1652. They were clearly of high social standing, and must have occupied one of the large houses in the parish.

The next group of memorials are of stone (marble or alabaster), and all have recently been restored to their original appearance by an expert in this field, Miss Inger Norholt. They are in order of time, the Creswell Monument, now on the South wall of the Nave; this is to Thomas Creswell, who died aged 72 years on 1st January, 1607, but it also includes a record of the Creswell "heires" going back to William, "the First Lord", who died 6th November, 1475.

The next, on the South wall of the Chancel, is to "Henrye Tomworthe of Aylewards in Mattingley Esquyer", who died on 19th September, 1608. Aylewards is the modern Blue House Farm.

The third in this group, on the North wall of the Sanctuary, was erected by Prudence Humphrey in memory of her parents (Philips) and her husband, William, who died 8th November, 1608. The lady left a space for the date of her own death, never filled! Why? The registers give the answer when they record her marriage 15 months later to "John Bee Gent"! It is pretty clear that these three renaissance style monuments are all the work of one hand.

The fourth of these recently restored memorials is that to Sir Anthony Sturt, who died in 1724. The Sturt family later assumed the title of Lord Allington. It would appear that the "funeral" armour (helmet, gauntlets, sword and one spur with traces of gilt) which now lies on the window sill of the North Chapel is connected with Sir Anthony's obsequies.

Other memorials are those to the Shaw-Lefevre family in the North Chapel and the many 19th century memorials now in the Tower. This includes the various owners or tenants of Highfield Park, notably General the Right Hon. Sir William Augustus Pitt and his widow, the sister of Lord Howe, High Admiral of England; also General Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole. The Marson and MacNabb families, also of Highfield Park, are commemorated on the South wall of the Nave.

Further memorials which significantly link Heckfield with the history of the nation are: the small marble to "William Milton, formerly Fellow of New College and 51 years Vicar of this Parish. Died 12th July, 1824. Buried in Churchyard on East Side of Chancel door". This remarkable man was the designer of a safety apparatus to prevent the wheels of stage coaches falling off in mid career. He also had a hand in the planning of Bristol Docks. Perhaps even more important, his daughter Frances was the mother of the great novelist Anthony Trollope. She was married to Thomas Anthony Trollope on 23rd May, 1809, in Heckfield Church.

The latest memorial of national significance is that to the Right Honourable Neville Chamberlain, to whom reference is made elsewhere.

But no account of the Heckfield Memorials can be complete without reference to the simple tablet which reads "In Loving Memory of Ethel Rose Pershouse, wife of Archibald Arrol Stuart Black, of Highfield Park, died 17th February, 1960. Her ashes lie in the Garden of Remembrance". This beautiful garden was given in her memory by her husband, whose love of and generosity to Heckfield Church has been (1964) further marked by his paying the whole cost of the renovation of the three 17th century monuments.

CHAPTER IV THE HISTORY OF MATTINGLEY CHURCH

From time immemorial until 1863 Heckfield and Mattingley were one parish. This means that while we have

plenty of evidence for the history of Heckfield Church from registers, etc., there is hardly anything of this sort about the remarkable building known until Mattingley became for 80 years a separate parish as "Mattingley Chapel".

Domesday Book does not record a church at Mattingley. There may or may not have been any connection between the first church at Mattingley and the little 13th century chapel of the Prior of Merton at Holdshot. This is unlikely, as it was intended only for the Canons and servants of the Priory. It is towards the end of the 14th century that we have the first record of the people of Mattingley having a church of their own. In 1387, William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, granted a licence to the Vicar of Heckfield or to a suitable Chaplain chosen by him to officiate at a certain house "in the Vill" of Mattingley until the Sunday after the ensuing Easter.

There is a theory that this house may have been the present Bannister's Farm and previously known as "Crowchers" or "Crouches" Farm, both these words being corruptions of the Latin "Crucis", meaning "of the Cross". But the name could well derive from the Croucher (various spellings) family which appears some ten times in the registers 1603-1660. In any case the licence was for less than a year and everything seems to point to the fact that not long after 1387 there was a building used more or less exclusively as a church on the site of the present one which we know from its style and materials to have been in substantial existence before 1500 (generally attributed to Bishop Waynflete of Winchester, 1447-1487). Indeed, in 1425 Pope Martin granted a licence to the inhabitants of Mattingley to have a cemetery at their chapel on their petition that the chapel had all rights and insignia except burial, and that it was inconvenient for them to carry their dead to Heckfield because Mattingley was distant two miles and the waters between the two places were frequently in flood. So there must have been a building recognised primarily as a chapel within a very few years of 1387. Why has it no patron saint? A partial answer could be that it was from the first accepted as a "chapel-of-ease" to the Parish Church of St. Michael and

All Angels, Heckfield. But this hardly explains the lack of a patron saint for a pre-Reformation church building, and the present Vicar (1965) of the united parish suggests that the original building on the site was some sort of moot hall which may have been "the house in the Vill" mentioned above and which was more or less gradually accepted mainly as a place of divine worship. Speculation is fascinating! The experts agree that the Chancel exists in its original state, and as it is generally accepted that it was built in the second half of the 15th century, a rather interesting point arises. The bricks must be some of the earliest made after the re-introduction of the art of brick-making into England. In all probability they were burnt (on Hazeley Heath?) with bavons of gorse or charcoal. In my opinion, the shape and variation in size indicate that these bricks were purposefully made for "herringbone" work, that is, they were made as parallelograms and not oblong.

It seems clear that until 1837 the whole building was the same width as the Chancel, but that at the restoration of that date the Nave was ingeniously widened by extending the roof to north and south and changing the original supporting oak posts into pillars by giving them imitation backs. No doubt the porch reached its present form at the same date. Certainly some unknown local builder made a wonderful job of it. The net result is that this almost unique little church can be said to have been built of bricks made from clay within the parish and of timber from the oaks which formerly grew in profusion on the rich heavy loam of Mattingley Westend. Amongst features of great interest in this church are:

1. A beautiful 16th century chalice and paten (1568).
2. An ancient font which was restored to its place in the church in comparatively recent years. An old photograph shows it in the churchyard.
3. An altar cloth or frontal in crimson velvet with originally gold fringes and embroidered designs. It is dated 1667 and was used in the church for 220 years. Now it is preserved in a glass case.

4. Very interesting examples of the Ten Commandments to either side of the East window. These would appear to be of 17th century workmanship, but the most interesting feature is the most unusual addition above the window of a further plaque of the same period containing the Two (positive) Commandments of Our Lord.
5. Two ancient bells ("We Two"). The shape of the smaller indicates very early manufacture (before the date of the present building?); the larger is late 15th century and bears a line of reversed black-letter "smalls" forming the word *Turquieto*.
6. Small pieces of old stained glass in the north window of the Chancel.
7. An old clarionet which did duty before the organ.

The Churchyard

In spite of the reference to this in 1425 there seems to have been a long period subsequently (17th and 18th centuries) during which all burials were at Heckfield. Indeed the "modern" churchyard dates only from 1851, since when it has been enlarged two or three times. A prominent feature is the enormous Celtic cross erected by the Singleton family, who at one time lived at Hazeley House.

The **Visitors' Book** in the church bears witness to the considerable numbers who come each year; but the most significant feature is the frequency with which the surname "Mattingley" appears. They have come from all parts of South-East England and the Home Counties, but one or two from other parts of England, several from Australia (including two members of the R.A.A.F. during the 1939-45 War); also one from Canada, and now (March 1965) there is an inquiry from a William Mattingley, of Garden Grove, California. The surname appears frequently in the church registers of the 16th century, but as such records only became officially required in 1538, by order of the then Chancellor of England, Thomas Cromwell, it seems clear that the family had continued to live in the "hamlett of Mattingley", of which they had been "Lords" between 1167 (*Revelendus*)

and the early 12th century, when his son Stephen de Mattingley or his grandson Peter disposed of the Manor to the Prior of Merton, Surrey (v. Chapter I): What a fascinating story!

CHAPTER V.

HOUSES AND THEIR OWNERS

Highfield Park

Change of Name

Highfield Park, which had been the manor house of Heckfield for centuries, was known as Heckfield Park until 1819. Then Charles Shaw Le Fevre, having built and established himself at Heckfield Place, and having bought all the land around Heckfield and become the new squire, arranged with the Rivers family that the name of the old Heckfield manor house should be changed to Highfield for convenience and to save confusion. The Rivers family readily agreed to this as the old manor house was no longer a part of Heckfield, but had become a Stratfield Saye property.

Although Highfield, as it stands today, is of the Queen Anne and Georgian period, the foundations and cellars show signs of a building having been on that site before that period. It is not known where the Creswell family—squires of Heckfield from 1465 to 1651—lived, but it seems very probable that their house may have been on the same site. Being in a commanding position, very close to the church, and near what used to be the village green with its whipping post and stocks, it was a likely site for the manor house.

Early Occupiers

To go back further, in 1328 Robert de St. Manefeo had the grant of free warren in Heckfield and the right to empark a certain portion of land. It may well be that Highfield Park was the land enclosed and that the house stood in its centre.

The Creswell family sold their Heckfield land and property to Anthony Sturt in 1651. Anthony Sturt was the sixth son of Anthony Sturt, of Yately, an Alderman of London. The

family owned land in Dorset as well as Hampshire. The son of the new squire of Heckfield, Humphrey, married Diana Napier, the daughter of another Dorset landowner, and with her a great fortune. As this took place in 1717, it may well have been at that time and with the wife's money that the present Highfield was built. He and his wife were buried in Heckfield, and there is a mural monument to them in the church vestry. Although the Sturts were lords of the manor for more than a century, they left no other memorial—not even the name of a field or copse. It is probable that they were more interested in their Dorset properties than those at Heckfield. In 1757 the Sturts sold all their property in Heckfield to George Pitt, Esquire, of Stratfield Saye, the brother of Lord Rivers. The amount realised was £32,588 15s., a very large sum for those days.

The Pitts and Rivers

The first occupant of Highfield after the Sturts was Lieut.-Colonel William Augustus Pitt, brother of George, the new owner. He lived there for over fifty years, during which he became a Lieut.-General, Governor of Portsmouth, and A.D.C. to King George III. King George III and Queen Charlotte were the first recorded royal visitors to Highfield Park. Sir William died at Highfield in 1809, and was buried at Stratfield Saye. There is an imposing monument to him in Heckfield Church tower extolling his military glories with various regiments of Dragoons.

In 1817 Highfield, with other property of the Lord Rivers, formed part of the Stratfield Saye estate presented by the government to the Great Duke of Wellington.

Lady Pitt died in 1819, and she was followed at Highfield by Mrs. Elizabeth Nesbitt, widow of Major-General Colebrook Nesbitt. She was followed by General Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole, G.C.B., M.P., an officer who had distinguished himself in the Peninsular War and was a personal friend of the Duke of Wellington.

For the next few years, various members of the Dukinfield family lived at Highfield. They were succeeded by James Munro MacNab, of the Indian Civil Service, and he by Frederick Boyd Marson.

The Marsons and Later Occupiers

Mr. Marson lived at Highfield until he died at the age of 84 in 1910. He and his family were associated with practically everything in the village, and particularly with the affairs of the church. He was a churchwarden for 25 years. A contemporary of John Martineau and Lord Eversley, the village was indeed lucky in those days to have these three great characters giving the lead and their generous help in all its pleasures and duties.

The Marsons were followed as tenants of Highfield by Mrs. Thorne, from Lossiemouth, a widow of great charm and character with a large family of children, one of whom became General Sir Andrew Thorne, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., an officer of great distinction. She was austere and dominant, but greatly loved and respected in Heckfield.

During the second war, Mrs. Cole lived at Highfield, the sister-in-law of the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. Worn out by his responsibilities and disillusioned in his vain efforts to secure peace, he was ill when he came, and died there in November 1940. Several bombs were off-loaded near Highfield by returning German aviators, and there were people in the village who regarded the poor old gentleman's presence in their neighbourhood as the cause. The only casualty was one cow.

Following Mrs. Cole came Major and Mrs. Stuart Black. Though a director of a shipping line, Major Stuart Black had seen more fighting and been wounded oftener than many professional soldiers. But few, knowing his gentle kindness and reticent charm, would suspect that he had ever wielded a more dangerous weapon than a quill pen! He and his charming wife, Ethel Rose, took immense trouble to repair the war-time dilapidations to Highfield House and garden, and were lavish in their generosity to the church, the school and all other village requirements. Mrs. Stuart Black, in memory of whom the Garden of Remembrance was laid out in the churchyard, to the grief of all, died on February 17th, 1960.

Now Major and the Honourable Mrs. George Sheffield live at Highfield. Following the tradition of their predecessors,

they have entered wholeheartedly into all village activities, and have been lavish in their generosity to the church.

Heckfield Place. Sited on a Farmhouse

John Lefevre, a rich man of Huguenot descent, who owned considerable property in London and Buckinghamshire, came to this district in search of a country property for his daughter Helena. In 1785 he acquired "The Grove", a small Jacobean mansion which stood on some high ground half-way between Reading Lodge and Church Lodge, with its drive leading to the Heath. He also bought "Bakers", a farmhouse, of which the cellars and stable yard remain at the North-West end of the present Heckfield Place. At the same time he bought Coppid Hall (the late laundry, now Coppards), School Farm and other lands and properties around. He first lived in the old farmhouse, "Bakers". But in 1790, five years later, his home was described as Heckfield Place, so he must have begun to build the original house for his daughter straight away.

We know from the existence of certain outside walls that it was a small box-like manor or hunting lodge with four major rooms on the ground floor and two upstairs floors. What remained of "Bakers" provided domestic offices, cellars and servants' quarters.

In 1789 Helena, the heiress, married Charles Shaw, the son of a Yorkshire vicar, who added the name of Lefevre to his own and took the arms of the Lefevres and their motto, "Sans Changer". John Lefevre died in 1790, leaving a large fortune to his daughter and son-in-law.

Though Charles Shaw Lefevre was churchwarden for some twelve years, he was chiefly remembered for his insatiable appetite for acquiring land. He and his son after him, from 1790 until 1860, bought every field, cottage and manor that they could lay hands on, and negotiated exchanges with their neighbouring landowners, Lord Rivers, the Mildmays and the Duke of Wellington, until there was a consolidated estate of over 4,000 acres, reaching from Riseley to the far end of Mattingley, and including Hazeley Heath and Hazeley Bottom.

An Incomparable Site

Every subsequent occupier of Heckfield Place must be grateful to old John Lefevre, for he it was who chose the site of the house and had the imagination to see the possibilities of the view to the North-East. How the old farm pond could eventually become terraced lakes, and the heather slopes flanking them become stands for fine trees of every description, was his inspiration. It was his son and grandson who brought these to perfection, but he it was who chose the site.

In 1794 Charles Shaw Lefevre the second was born. At the age of 23 he married Emma Laura Whitbread, and six years later his father died and he succeeded to the property. In 1831 he entered Parliament, and was Speaker from 1839 until 1857. On relinquishing office he was given a pension of £4,000 a year and created Viscount Eversley.

Growing Grandeur

But in the meantime there had been great changes at Heckfield Place. The plain, boxlike house which his grandfather had built was not big enough or grand enough for a man of his ambition. The grand friends who visited them required more and more elaborate rooms, and their coachmen and servants still more accommodation. A large drawing room was needed, also a bigger dining room, more bedrooms for guests and a bigger kitchen and more servants' quarters. He added to both ends of the existing house, equipped the new reception rooms with marble chimney pieces from France, and the new drawing room with a fine plaster-work ceiling. He decorated the plain brickwork of the house with quoin stones, window dressings and balustrades, but these were not of brown stone which they imitated, but some stucco composition which has ill withstood the weather. He had a terrace laid out on the North-East side enclosed by a pretty stone balustrade and furnished with elegant stone flower baskets, probably of Italian make and design. All these improvements were completed before 1857, because on the finely ornamented firebacks of the new rooms there is no sign of the coming viscount's coronet in the heraldic crest.

The End of the Copyholders

The Charles Lefevres, father and son, required dignified seclusion in their grand mansion, also they were both passionate addicts to game preservation and shooting. Early in their occupation they pulled down the old Jacobean mansion to the North called "The Grove"; they bought out the copyholders who had grazing and turf-cutting rights on the Heath; they enclosed a considerable portion of the Heath to make the lawn on the South-West side of the house. In a map of 1774 there were cottages along the edge of the Heath almost all the way from Church Lodge to the Heckfield bridge over the Whitewater. All the occupiers were bought out and the cottages razed so that the Lefevres' pleasure grounds, park and the Bramshill drive could be enclosed in a park fence. The Lefevres' powers as Lords of the Manor of Putham and Hazell, combined with their legal knowledge, enabled them to exterminate many copyholds, leaseholds and lifeholds, so that eventually all cottage property came under their control as freeholds.

Game Preservation

Tenants were easier to manage than copyholders when it was a matter of preserving thousands of head of game. Thousands there were. On one occasion over two thousand pheasants were killed out of Moor Lane in twenty minutes. On another, a thousand head were killed in the river meadows between Danmoor Copse and Garstone Regis in two drives. No doubt there were two sets of beaters, and the distinguished visiting guns had only to turn about in their places between the first drive and the second!

Lord Eversley died in December 1888, within two months of his 95th birthday. It is recorded that when he was ninety he bought himself a new gun, and was an excellent shot to the last.

There is a memorial brass to him in Heckfield Church and a stained glass window in Mattingley Church.

The Last of the Lefevres

Miss Shaw Lefevre, his unmarried daughter, succeeded him. She was eccentric in that she preferred to give her

tea parties on the roof of the mansion. A true Victorian, she was rigidly strict about the dresses of her maids and retainers at church. Every week in winter she presided over her soup kitchen for the poor of Heckfield and Mattingley; and one of her chief interests was the Almshouses (now the Village Hall) inhabited by six old women who attended church in black poke bonnets and scarlet cloaks.

In 1895 she sold the property to Colonel Horace Walpole, of a branch of the great Norfolk family headed by the Earl of Orford. The first decade of the 20th century saw few changes. The gardens remained immaculately kept, house parties, shooting parties, garden parties continued. His two daughters, Dorothy and Maude, rode and drove their ponies about the place in carefree abandon, while he, attended by his Borzoi, "Star", and his deerhound, "Laird", patrolled his estates with more dignity, perhaps regaling his companion, the keeper Martin, with quotations from French verse.

The rides in the woods were kept levelled and trimmed, and game lay as thick in them as poultry on a poultry farm.

The Present Owner

Colonel Walpole died in April 1919, and his eldest daughter, Dorothy—now Mrs. Colin Davy—inherited the estate and the manors of Putham and Hazeley. Her devotion and love of the place and the people there can be judged by the fact that in those forty-five years she has only twice been away from Heckfield for more than three weeks!

The days are gone when there were fourteen "shrubbery men" to keep the paths trimmed and rhododendrons in control. If you want to find the lady of the manor in winter she will be in some bush with a billhook; in summer pursuing her little motor mower along the paths.

You'll find her with no difficulty, for as soon as you get anywhere near the dogs will come rushing and bawling blue murder. There have always been dogs at Heckfield Place.

Park Corner

In this charming house there is still discernible an old, square farmhouse of Queen Anne period with its great farmhouse kitchen and cool dairy. Because of its position on

high ground, near a good water supply, and close to what was even before the Roman times "The Great West Road", it is probably one of the oldest sites in the district.

It first appears in the records of 1741 as Heath End Farm, the property of the Alexanders. From 1747 to 1787 it was the property of Richard Bannister. Then it was bought by George Pitt, Esq., and made part of the Stratfield Saye property. The Revd. Edward Salter, rector of Stratfield Saye, lived there until 1812.

From 1817 to 1819 Major-General R. B. Long lived there; from 1828 to 1829 Lady Hervey; from 1830 to 1843 Sir Lloyd Dunkinfield. From 1843 to 1870 it was occupied by Henry Porcher, who was followed by John Martineau.

John Martineau

John Martineau, the story of whose life has been so ably and entertainingly written by his daughter, Violet, was one of the outstanding characters of Heckfield. He was a Justice of the Peace, a County Councillor and Guardian, and took great interest in emigration. He took immense interest in the welfare of the villagers, presided at the annual Whit-Monday dinner and introduced Penny Readings. He was a keen village cricketer and welcomed visiting teams to play at Park Corner despite the frequent damage to his green-houses. He started the village school and partly financed a village nurse. Although a strict churchman, even in those days, he was a staunch advocate for Sunday cricket.

He died in 1910, and an alabaster tablet in Heckfield Church perpetuates his memory. In the history of Heckfield Church from 1870 to 1910 a still greater memorial to him exists.

His daughter, Violet, followed in her father's footsteps. She played the organ in church, equipped the choir girls with scarlet capes, conducted the Sunday School, and was correspondent for the managers of the village school.

Present Day

It was not until after the second war that Park Corner came back to full life again. Then the Marquess Douro, back from service overseas, came back to live there with his

bride, and there most of his children were born. Again, there are fishing rods and muddy gum-boots in the porch, toys in the bushes, squeals of delight from the swimming pool, and the genial disorder of a happy country home.

Whether or not infected by the Martineau atmosphere, the Marquess and his lady, although greatly engaged by their duties to Stratfield Saye, come frequently to Heckfield Church, and give interest and support to all village activities.

Ragmore Grange and Heath House

Ragmore Grange, then known as Van Lands, is recorded among the Creswell properties between 1518 and 1594. There remains one gable which might be Jacobean or Carolean, but only the foundations and cellars could date back to the time of the Creswells.

The Helhouse Family

The next record shows it as the property of the Helhouse family. Their name appears frequently in the parish registers between 1575 and 1744. Mr. Edward Helhouse was buried in Heckfield Church in 1709, and his widow in 1744. Their daughter, Elizabeth, married Edward Lamport in 1701. The Lamports were a family of yeoman stock, and this Edward was agent to the Sturts of Highfield. Such property as his wife inherited passed to the Lamport family, but there is no record of them living at Van Lands. However, it seems that by 1752 a Philip Grove Lamport lived there. In 1782 he assigned his property to Ambrose Serle, and it was in that document that the house was first called Ragmoor Castle.

Subsequent Owners

It then became the property of Colonel William Tyndale, of the Life Guards, and was let to the Hon. John Vaughan while the unfortunate colonel was a prisoner at Verdun in 1801.

In 1807 Charles Shaw Lefevre bought it for £6,000, and pulled part of it down. The Tyndales moved to Heath Cottage, which had been one (or two) of the service cottages

of "The Castle", and what remained of the big house became the Grange.

Colonel William Tyndale and his widow lived at Heath Cottage, calling it Ragmore Cottage, until 1819. From then, until 1834, when Francis Piggott, Esq., came to live there it was probably unoccupied. Whether it was the Tyndales or the Piggotts who enlarged it to its present size is not known.

The Misses Piggott

The two Misses Piggott, daughters of Francis, lived all their lives and died at Heath Cottage.

Miss Martineau writes: "Their whole hearts centred in Heckfield and its interests. . . . They had a wonderful gift of sympathy and youthful-mindedness, and a genius for entertaining; their doors were always open, and they had a warm welcome for everyone; from 'Green-coated Cordery' who ran with the hounds for over half a century and died at 96, to the Duke of Clarence, who would turn into their house for a glass of cherry brandy when hunting."

The Sound of the Horn

The same standards of hospitality obtain today when Major the Hon. Nick Villiers and his wife live there. And the same love of hunting. At the sound of a horn, Pussy, the youngest daughter, on her pony Mr. Mercer, is bound to appear—if not the whole family.

Coppards

There is some uncertainty as to whether the "Coppids" Hall, bought by John Lefevre in 1795, is in fact the existing Coppards. But Coppids was occupied in 1780 by Chas. Bailey, collar maker, and there is a strange groove in one of the inside walls which appears to have been made to accommodate the wheel of a saddler's stitching machine. In a map of 1774 it is marked as little bigger than a cottage, but maybe the "Hall" had come down in the world. As the Shaw Lefevres pulled down both the Grange and the Grove, they may have pulled down the remains of the Hall. At all events, they later turned it into a private laundry.

Until after the Second World War it was the private laundry of Heckfield Place. The tall building at the South-East end was a barn-like room for hanging up sheets to dry; in the lean-to portion at the other end the ironing was done. In the old cottage of the central part the laundress lived.

It was transformed into a dwelling-house and bought by Mr. and Mrs. Pollard in 1963.

Hill House

Sometimes known as Heath End House, it was spoken of always as "the Doctor's", and the field opposite as Doctor's Meadow. In the parish records, Wm. Burgess was admitted the tenant in 1758 but there was no record before that date. From 1795 to the middle of the first war it was occupied by a succession of doctors, the best remembered of them Dr. Comber. It has been said that it was once an inn, but if that is true it was before 1758, because Wm. Burgess was a tallow chandler of Odiham.

Holdshott House

This was formerly Putham Hall, and in the map of 1774 marked as importantly as The Grove and Highfield. It is possible that it had official connection with the Manor of Putham at one time.

In 1743 John Coates lived there; in 1776 Joseph Parfett. The Coates family were a very old yeoman family, and one of them was churchwarden in 1662. A document of 1739 indicates that the Coates maintained a staff of domestic servants.

Joseph Parfett married Ann Basher, the daughter of the miller at Riseley Mill. He kept the churchwardens' accounts in 1777, and by the lucidity of them and his fine penmanship was no doubt a well-educated business man.

Racing Stables

In 1808 Charles Shaw Lefevre bought the Putham property and the Holdshott mills from Lord Bolton, and the "Hall" degenerated into two cottages.

After a short and not very successful period as the racing stables of Colonel Walpole, it became a country residence again.

Danmoor House

For the greater part of the 18th century this was the property of the Cane family, millers, of Holdshott. It was known as Canewood, and later as Cane's Cottages. Robert Cane, the younger, proved his title to the property in June 1758. In 1801 the property passed to his brother George, who died at Danmoor at the age of 92. He left the property to his son, George Lee Cane, who sold the copyholds to Mrs. Helena Shaw Lefevre in 1830. Heckfield Place Home Farm used to be "Cane's".

Subsequent Owners

In 1869 General Sir William Codrington lived at Danmoor. He had been in the Coldstream Guards, and commanded a division in the Crimean War.

Admiral Egerton came to live there in the early twenties, and his widow lived there until 1964, when she died at the age of 90.

Mattingley Lodge

There was an old cottage on this site in 1692 belonging to William Carpenter, husbandman. In 1764 another William Carpenter sold it for £157. Some time about 1777 the present house was built by Joseph Spicer, a local farmer. His ambition was greater than his financial resources, for the place was mortgaged beyond its value. In 1790 it was sold to George Wingfield Sparrow, of London, who made certain structural improvements, converting a cottage to a coach house, saddle room and servants' quarters.

The property was offered for sale by auction in 1800, and was bought by Charles Shaw Lefevre for £1,250.

It was let to Major Ralph Henry Sneyd until 1840, then to the Revd. J. H. Bushnell, and afterwards to Colonel Charles Townley.

It ceased to be part of Heckfield Place Estate on the death of Colonel Walpole, when it and the other Mattingley property and that about Hazeley Bottom was sold to pay death duties. H. O. Smith, Esq., was its last owner, whose widow died in 1964.

Heckfield House (formerly Heckfield Vicarage)

The Rectory and Parsonage is the old and correct title of this property owned for many years by New College, Oxford.

The earliest deed of 1627 describes it as "newly built", but this should not be taken literally, as a deed of forty years later describes it in the same manner. The architecture of the oldest portion suggests late Tudor origin.

It is tempting to think that the Creswells might have lived there, but there is no confirmation of this in the deeds available. Certain well-to-do families which appear in the records, but without mention of their dwelling, may well have lived there: the Wyfolds or Wyvoldes, from 1547 to 1594; the Humphrys, from 1594 to 1608; the Huets, until 1624; and the Bee family, one of whom married a Humphry after 1627.

New College, Oxford

In the deeds of 1627 the Wardens and scholars of New College, Oxford, were the lessors, John Bee and Prudence, his wife, the lessees. The property consisted of "the Rectory and Parsonage of Heighfield and the Mansion House (newly built) where it standeth at Berry Hill and also the Principall Chamber and houses of the Parsonage necessary at the coming of the Warden and Scholars."

So it seems that there were three houses: the Rectory, the Parsonage (Farm?) and the Mansion. Considerable accommodation was required for housing the Wardens and scholars on their two-yearly visits, and because the lessee was responsible for entertaining them the rent was very low. It was £5 13s. 4d. in money and 37s. 11d. in corn.

In the above unpunctuated deed, Berry Hill must refer to the Parsonage, not the Mansion. For Cotterill's Farm stands on Berry Hill and was always known as Parsonage Farm.

Whether the Rectory was close to Parsonage Farm or in the grounds of the Mansion is impossible to trace.

At all events it seems that the Vicar lived either in the Rectory or Parsonage Farm, and the Mansion was let to some richer man, who, as part of his tenancy, entertained the New College Wardens and scholars every two years in the Principal

Chamber or other chambers that the "newly-built" mansion could provide. The lessee also had to maintain and repair at his own cost the chancel of the church.

Business Men

From 1663 most of the lessees were business men from London—drapers, mercers and the like. Charles Faldo, a sail maker, of London, raised a mortgage on the property for £1,000, which gives an idea of its value.

One imagines all these rich people from London came to the old house in retirement. There could have been little "commuting" in the days of post chaises.

Parsonage Farm was sold to General Augustus Pitt, of Highfield, in 1782, and from then on it seems that the succeeding Vicars lived at the Mansion, which now became the Vicarage. The last Vicar of Heckfield to occupy this house was Revd. H. R. P. Tringham (1929–1946). When the benefices of Heckfield and Mattingley were united the Vicarage was sold to Brigadier and Mrs. White, and the Vicar took up his residence in Mattingley Vicarage.

Coldpiece Farm

This is a lovely example of the Jacobean homestead of a yeoman farmer, the house and the buildings built of the same materials and to the same standard of quality. Seeing it lit by the westering sun, the lichen-covered brickwork and tiles seem to glow golden pink. Beyond is the green of the Whitewater river-meadows, and beyond them the great trees of Garstones Regis.

The name dates back to medieval days. It has been a farm for centuries, and remains so now. Mr. James Guinness, who bought it and the land from the Heckfield Place estate in 1964, is modernising and enlarging it at the time of writing. He is taking every care that the beauty of the lovely old house is not lost but enhanced.

The Blue House

Although this house has undergone many vicissitudes and changes, it cannot be left out, for in years past it was one of the most important in the district.

Its name until 1608 was Ayelwards. There is a Tudor memorial in Heckfield Church to Henry Tomworth of Aylewardes Mattingley, Esquire, who died in 1608. He was probably a successful Elizabethan merchant of London who retired and became a landowner. The name is recorded as Ayleyard in the case of Banastre (another old Heckfield name) versus Aleyard in 1399, so it seems his ancestors lived there then.

Dialect for Ale

The Halliwell Archaic Dictionary gives Blue or Blew as a dialect word for Ale, so that to change Aleyards to Blue (or Brew-) house was not a great departure, only a dialect version for the same thing.

From various descriptions we can picture the original house as of old brick and timber, with Tudor gables and mullioned windows, with a walled garden and fishponds, and, as a relic from very early days, a moat. Nearby were its own fertile hopfields, from which the "blew" was brewed.

The property was sold to the Hawley family, of West Green House and was scheduled in the will of a Hawley in 1797. By then it was reduced to two cottages, and was bought by Lord Eversley in 1875. The present owner (1965) is Mr. Peter Tweedie-Smith.

The Inns

None of our present public houses is more than 150 years old. The New Inn, Heckfield, was opened at Michaelmas 1861, though the building itself—originally it seems two cottages—is much older. However, the present Memorial Hall links us with a more remote past. Originally seven almshouses, it took the site of the old "Five Bells" in 1862. This was the direct descendant as its name shews (the Five Bells of Heckfield Church) of the Church House, where the churchwardens brewed the "Church Ales" up to the latter part of the 18th century. This stood somewhere near the site of the present Highfield Park stables beside the village green, stocks, whipping post and bowling green. What an idyllic scene this conjures up!

The Pheasant Inn (now the Pheasant Restaurant) is of Victorian origin.

The Shoulder of Mutton was originally the present Hill Farm, Hazeley Heath, and was transferred to the present site some time before 1875. The landlord's name is given as James Hathaway, presumably at the time of the transfer. Hazeley Heath seems to have been well supplied when the old "Green Man" still flourished.

Perhaps the most historically interesting of our present inns is the "Leather Bottle." As Bottle Lane and Bottle Field indicates, an inn of this name has stood thereabouts for hundreds of years, although apparently the present house dates only from the 1830's. This was essentially the village inn of Mattingley, the seat of parochial government, of the annual dinner of the village benefit club (a tradition still maintained by the present licensees, Mr. and Mrs. Hillard). It was also the venue for the sports and fête, which were held on Mattingley Green on Trinity Monday. Another tantalising glimpse into our past.

CHAPTER VI

The Commons and the Inclosure Act

One of the natural features of both parishes is the considerable area of common or uncultivated land as distinguished from woodlands.

As a result of the Inclosure Act of 1860, the area of common in Heckfield is but a fraction of its former extent. The commons of Putham and Hazel have not been enclosed.

Legalised Rape

The inclosure of the commons was the greatest legalised rape in the domestic history of England. It had a devastating effect upon the rural communities. The main reasons were twofold. The personal enrichment of the big landowners by which they obtained rights of freehold over big areas was the first. The second, less obvious but far more insidious, was

the design of the landowning class to keep the working classes "in their place".

This was done by depriving them of their ancient rights and making them dependent for home and livelihood upon the landowner or large tenant farmer. The curse of the "tied cottage" was born.

A good start was the extinction of many copyholds and lifeholds by making extortionate fines for renewal. If the sufferers fought stubbornly, demanding their rights, they were awarded a small area of land totally inadequate for their needs, and compelled to fence it.

Commoners' Rights

The following are the more usual ancient rights which were extinguished by the Inclosure Act: Pasture, pannage (beech nut pasturage for swine) turbary (turf digging) and firewood.

Without these rights the small copyholder was doomed. As a rule part-time smallholder-farmer, part-time craftsman, he could no longer graze his ponies, cattle, goats and geese on the common, and his own home paddocks were too small. The loss of firing and bracken and heather for bedding and thatching were only less serious. With his fellow villagers reduced to the same plight and unable to buy the wares of his part-time craft, he was forced without remedy or protection to become another man's labourer. If he transgressed the harsh game laws in order to live he faced transportation.

The years 1780-1860 were the worst period of depression, or more correctly, oppression of the English labourer. Stark poverty was general.

The procedure was simple. If not carried through by "force majeure", it was only a matter of form for a private act to be passed in a parliament consisting of big landowners with no representatives for the class to be deprived of its rights.

A new Act was passed in 1876, since when inclosure has virtually ceased. One of its great protagonists from a legal aspect was the Right Hon. G. Shaw Lefevre, but by then his brother, Lord Eversley, had enclosed all he wanted!

The Goose

A little rustic song composed by an anonymous country-man voices the feelings of the day:

"Great is the crime of man or woman
Who steals the goose off the common.
But who shall plead the man's excuse
Who steals the common from the goose?"

The goose was an important item in the simple economics of the copyholder. I am told that it was not unusual to see a flock of 400-500 birds. These were usually sold to itinerant dealers, who drove them away on foot. Local names, such as Goosey Field, Goose Green and Gander Park, testify to the local importance of the goose. It was not unusual to pluck the birds twice a year to provide down and quill pens.

How better could we end this history of a Hampshire parish and pay tribute to the loving enthusiasm of the former parishioner whose lifelong work it represents than by using this ancient prayer which, Mr. James attributes to "the Authorised Prayer Book of 1552":

"We heartily pray thee to send thy Holy Spirit into the hearts of them that possess the grounds and pastures of the earth, that they, remembering themselves to be thy tenants, may not rack or stretch out the rents of their houses and lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines and monies after the manner of worldlings, but so let them out that the inhabitants thereof may be able to pay the rents and to live and nourish their families and remember the poor. Give them grace also to consider that they are but strangers and pilgrims in the world, having here no dwelling-place but seeking one to come, that they, remembering the short continuing of this life, may be content with that which is sufficient and not join house to house and land to land to the impoverishment of others, but so to behave themselves in letting their tenements, lands and pastures that after this life they may be received into everlasting habitations."

APPENDIX

HECKFIELD CHURCH: THE ADVOWSON (LIVING) AND ITS INCUMBENTS

There is no recorded history of our church in Saxon times. Following the Norman Conquest the advowson was granted with the Manor to Hugh de Port. It remained with the de Port family until 1202, when Adam de Port granted it to Robert de St. Manefeo, son of Adam de St. Manefeo, to whom John de Port had granted the manor in 1166. In the late 14th century Thomas de St. Manefeo granted it to William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and founder of New College, Oxford, in 1379. Full confirmation of this grant with the consent of the Crown took place in 1384, since when New College, Oxford, has held the patronage of the living in unbroken sequence.

1. Prior to A.D. 1400

1203 The seal of a Rector of "the Church of Hecfeld" is appended to a deed addressed to the Archdeacon of Winchester from the Deanery of Basingstoke.

1309 The record of an ordination held in the Holy Ghost Chapel, Basingstoke, includes two "acolytes" (an inferior clerical order), Thomas de la Putte (the origin of Putham) and Henricus de Heghfelde.

1382 John de Twiforde exchanges from Houghton to Heckfield.

1382 5th February. William Nortone, Sub-Deacon, resigned Heckfield on being instituted to West Meon.

2. Pre-Reformation

Between 1403 and 1522 the names of no less than 27 clerics of different descriptions appear (e.g., "sacerdos", "capellanus", "socius" (fellow). No doubt these were "detailed" by New College from time to time to carry out the duties of the benefice.

3. Post-Reformation

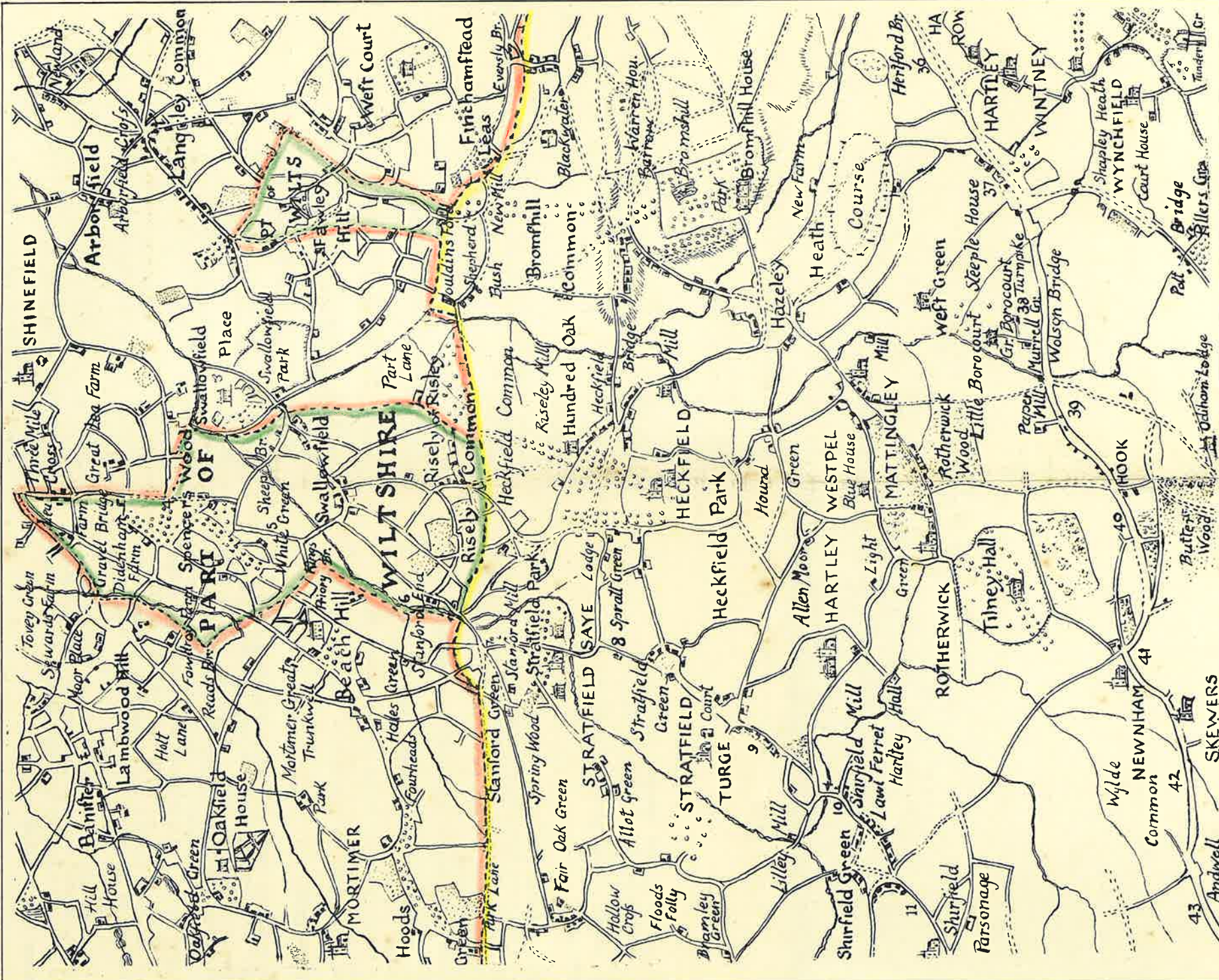
The list begins with Thomas Fykes or Fynes (1522), who lived through the Reformation years until 1548.

- 1548 Thomas Saunders.
- 1551 William Greet.
- 1554 Syr William Granger (evicted).
- 1560 William Greet (reinstated).
- 1601 Edward Evans.
- 1603 Richard Crosse.
- 1648 Jeremy Gosse.
- 1666 Joseph Brown
- 169(?) George Ely.
- 1707 John Lydyat.
- 1710 William Curll.
- 1722 Stephen Wheatland.
- 1745 John Taylor (left a bequest to provide literature).
- 1753 Living vacant.
- 1763 John Goodhart.
- 1768 William Hearest.
- 1771 John Cook.
- 1774 William Milton (inventor and father-in-law of Anthony Trollope).
- 1827 Frederick Charles Blackstone.
- 1862 William Duncan Mackenzie Bathurst.
- 1863 **Mattingley became a separate benefice.**
- 1880 Henry Edward Moberly.
- 1883 George James Thomas.
- 1913 Edward Clark Spicer.
- 1928 Harold Robert Parnell Tringham.
- 1946 **Living vacant.**
- 1949 **Heckfield and Mattingley reunited.**
Frederick Thornton Ault.
- 1963 Patrick William Rann Kennedy.

Vicars of Mattingley

- 1863 John William Blackwell (previously assistant curate of united parish).
- 1893 H. E. Salter.
- 1899 Edward Clarke.
- 1904 Henry Courtland Stokes.
- 1912 Herbert G. Dawson.
- 1916 John Crosbie-Oates.

BERKSHIRE



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