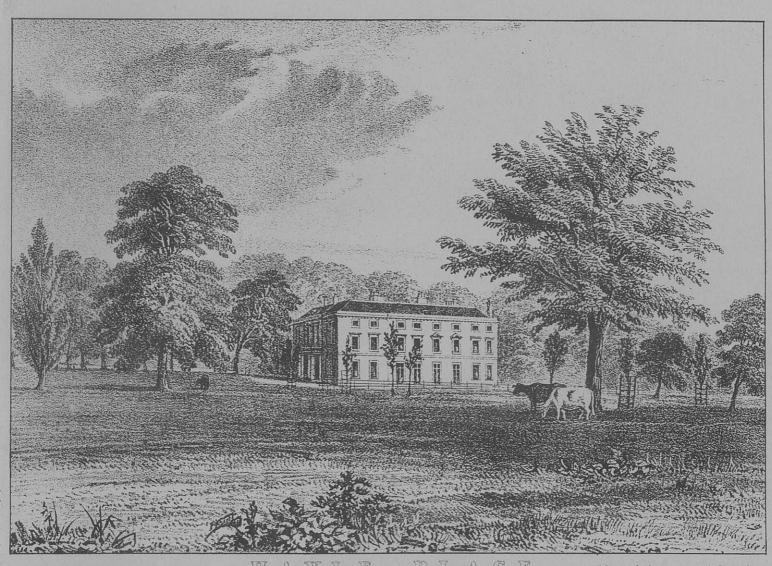
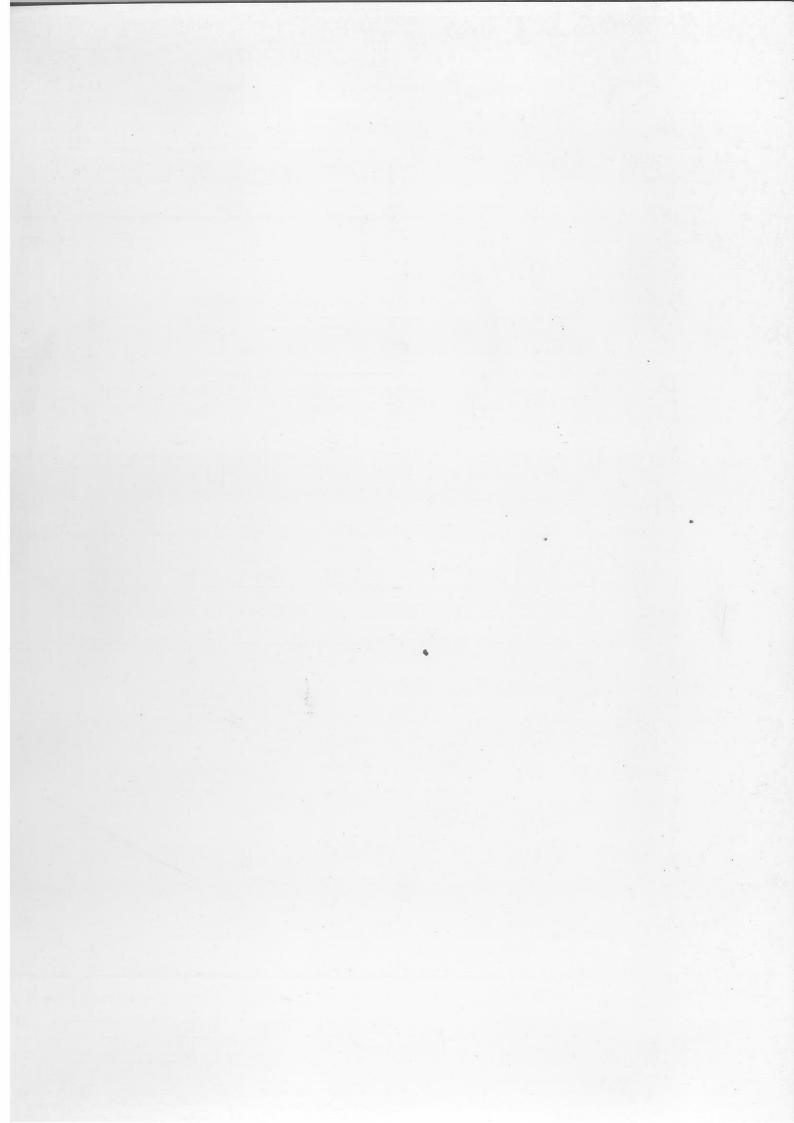
Loose Threads

Journal of the Loose Area History Society



HATLE PLACE

Number 4





LOOSE AREA HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society was formed in 1989 with the following aim enshrined in its Constitution: 'to research and record the history of Loose and its neighbourhood, and pursue these ends by means of a research group, lectures, exhibitions, publications and other events of a supportive nature'. The Constitution also states that 'the Society shall continue to collect evidence of Loose and its neighbourhood's history, and work towards acquiring a central repository at some future date'. The repository is still some way off, but the archive collection is growing steadily and is available for members of the Society and others to examine on application to the Archivist.

General meetings are held monthly, usually in the Loose Infants' School. The Research Group meets less frequently to discuss members' work, publications, the planning of exhibitions etc. For details of membership of the Society and its activities, please contact the Secretary, whose address and telephone number is opposite.

The name 'Loose' is usually taken as being derived from the Old English 'Hlose', meaning 'place of pigs', and the above logo showing a medieval pig has therefore been adopted by the Society

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There are still some copies of *Loose Threads* No.3 available. Numbers 1 and 2 are now out of print.

EDITORIAL

Purchasers of earlier issues of *Loose Threads* may well have been wondering when on earth issue number 4 was going to appear. They need wonder no longer, for it has at last arrived. For the Editor it is a relief, as its gestation has been a somewhat long-winded and tiresome business - mainly the result of a wish to produce a journal which would look more professional, followed by the difficulty in getting access to and learning how to use the all-singing, all-dancing computer equipment which would create pages of the desired quality. He can only apologise for the delay and hope that readers think it has all been worthwhile.

Most of the articles in this issue are, as usual, by regular members of the Society's Research Group, but there are a couple which are not, and it is worth saying that if anyone has an article either in mind or completed which is of local interest, and which he/she would like to see in *Loose Threads*, please contact the Editor.

The subjects covered in the present issue are of the customary assortment - from people and properties to industry, transport and entertainment - but their authors, I am sure, would not claim them to be in any way the last word on the matter; and we would urge anyone who is moved to argue with any of our statements or conclusions, or who may be able to add to our information, to speak up or write in. We would be delighted to hear from you.

Finally, I should like to welcome Sally Carss into the Editor's chair. She has very kindly agreed to type up the articles for *Loose Threads* No.5 and prepare it for the printers. My thanks to all those who have helped in the production of Nos.1-4.

Roger Thornburgh, Editor (retiring).

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THE INHABITANTS OF HAYLE PLACE IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Sheila Wilson

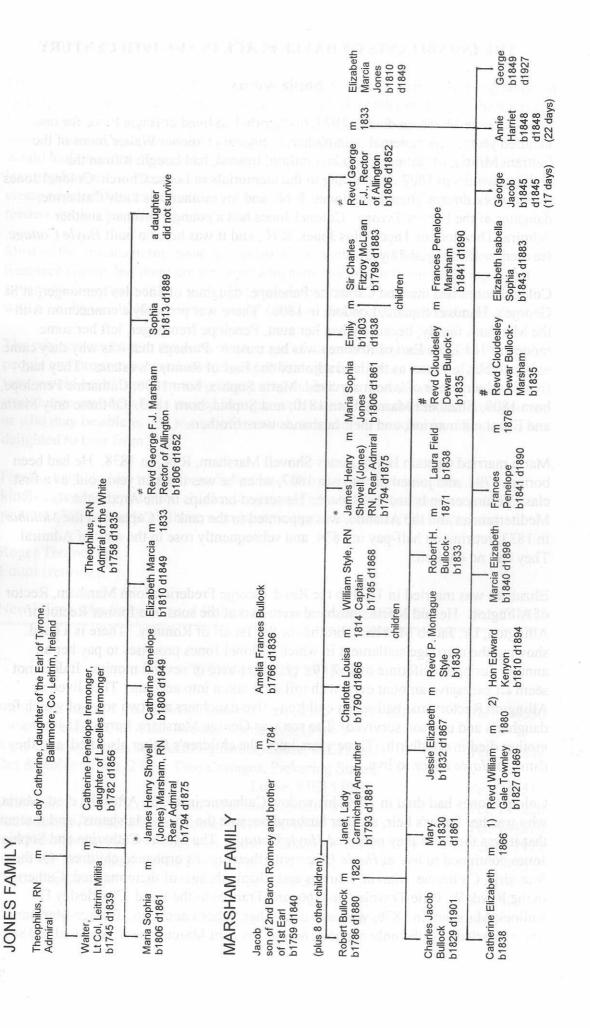
When George Marsham died in 1927, his family had lived at Hayle Place for one hundred years. His maternal grandfather, Lieutenant Colonel Walter Jones of the Leitram Militia, of Balinamore, Co. Leitram, Ireland, had bought it from the Hollingsworths in 1827. According to the memorials in Loose Church, Colonel Jones' father was Admiral Theophilus Jones, R.N., and his mother was Lady Catherine, daughter of the Earl of Tyrone. Colonel Jones had a younger brother, another Admiral Theodore or Theophilus Jones, R.N., and it was he who built *Hayle Cottage*. He died in 1835, aged 77 years.

Colonel Jones had married Catharine Penelope, daughter of Lacelles Iremonger, at St. George's, Hanover Square, London, in 1806. There was probably a connection with the Marsham family, because when her aunt, Penelope Iremonger, left her some money in 1813, the Earl of Romney was her trustee. Perhaps that was why they came to live at Hayle Place, as the land adjoined the Earl of Romney's estates. They had five daughters, four of whom survived: Maria Sophia, born 1806; Catharine Penelope, born 1808; Elizabeth Marcia, born 1810; and Sophia, born 1813. Of these only Maria and Elizabeth married, and their husbands were brothers.

Maria married Captain Henry James Shovell Marsham, R.N., in 1838. He had been born in 1794, and joined the navy in 1807, when he was thirteen years old, as a first class Volunteer on board the *Superb*. He served on ships in the Arctic, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, was appointed to the rank of Captain of the *Malabar* in 1833, retiring on half-pay in 1834, and subsequently rose to the rank of Admiral. They had no chidren.

Elizabeth was married in 1833 to the Revd. George Frederick John Marsham, Rector of Allington. He and Maria's husband were two of the sons of a former Rector of Allington, Dr. Jacob Marsham, brother of the 1st arl of Romney. There is a deed showing the marriage settlement in which Colonel Jones promises to pay her an annuity during his lifetime of £67.10s. plus her share of several monies. It does not seem an excessive amount even with inflation taken into account. They lived at Allington Rectory and had seven children - five daughters and two sons, of which four daughters and one son survived. The son was George Marsham, born in 1849; his mother died in childbirth. Three years later, the children's father also died, and they came to *Hayle Place* to live.

Colonel Jones had died in 1839, his widow Catharine in 1856. After she died, Maria, who was her father's heir, and her husband became the 'Jones Marshams', and it seems that it was then that they occupied *Hayle Cottage*. The Misses Catharine and Sophia Jones continued to live at *Hayle Place* with their sister's orphaned children. Of the four girls, Catherine, Marcia, Frances and Elizabeth, two of them married: Catherine to the Revd. W. Gale Townley in 1866, and Frances to the Revd. Cloudesley D. Bullock-Marsham in 1876, who was one of her father's nephews. George Marsham never married. As the only nephew, he was his aunt Marcia's heir. She died in 1861



and at some point Admiral Jones-Marsham went to live at *Hayle Place* with the rest of the family.

The senior George F.J. Marsham, Rector of Allington, was one of thirteen children seven girls and six boys. One of his sisters, Charlotte Louisa, married a Captain William Style R.N. in 1814, and another sister, Emily, married Sir Charles Fitzroy Maclean Bart. in 1831. These particular sisters are mentioned because an Albert E. Style lived at *Hayle Cottage* about 1870-1878 and later in the 1880s it was occupied by Lt. Col. Fitzroy Maclean, C.O. of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Yeomanry Cavalry. It seems likely that these are more cousins. When Mis Catherine Jones died in 1885, George Marsham went to live at *Hayle Cottage*. By then Admiral Jones-Marsham had died (in 1875), as had also his sister Elizabeth (in 1883). *Hayle Place* was then occupied by Colonel Pitt and his family from 1887 to 1913. He is listed in the Census as a paper manufacturer.

The Revd. George F.J. Marsham's brothers' families, and his own son George, were mostly all educated at Eton and either Christ Church or Merton College, Oxford. They were all keen cricketers, three of them playing for the university; Cloudesley Dewar Bullock-Marsham, who married George Marsham's sister Frances, was described as the best gentleman bowler of his day and played for the university for five years 1854-1858. The Censuses show that these cousins stayed at *Hayle Place*, and with this cricketing background in his childhood, it is not surprising that George Marsham should have the same love and ability for the game.

When one looks at the pattern of these two families, the Jones and the Marshams, they seem to fulfill all we expect of an upper class Victorian family, the education, the professions, the sport, the numerous cousins and aunts, but the intense intermarriage seems very surprising.

The family were not the only people to live at *Hayle Place*. The first Census, taken in 1841, shows that the Jones family were not in residence, but the staff were still living there of course. Some were living in a cottage near *Hayle Place*. There were three servants registered in *Hayle Place* itself, two women servants and John Gilmore, a male servant aged 25. The interesting thing about this entry is that exactly the same entry occurs again on the same sheet but living at *Ivy Cottages*. He was probably left in charge.

In 1851, Mrs C. Jones and her two daughters were living there. There were nine servants living in - a cook, two lady's maids, two housemaids, a kitchenmaid, a laundrymaid and two footmen. One of the lady's maids was called Sarah Fryer, aged 44, and one of the housemaids a Mary Butler or Butcher, aged 34. Most of the male servants were married and lived in cottages on the estate - the gardener, for example. He was born in Gosport and his wife, a British subject, in Bermuda, which suggests that perhaps there was a naval connection with Admiral Jones Marsham. There was also John Tyrell, a coachman, and his family, living on the estate and, at Ivy Cottage, a John Gilmore, another coachman, aged 36.

By 1881, one can see that the numbers of staff remain roughly the same. Most of the indoor staff are female and young and change over the years. Some names, however,

keep occurring. Sarah Fryer is now 74 and has risen to the rank of housekeeper, whereas Mary Butcher or Butler is a laundrymaid. The gardeners do not seem to stay very long, for there is a different name every ten years until 1881; Luckhurst appears again in 1891. Henry Freed, the butler in 1861 is still the butler in 1881. The coachman, John Tyrrell, listed in 1851, is still down as a coachman in 1881, aged 74. His son, Alfred Edward, is also a coachman and living next to John Gilmore at *Ivy Cottages*. John Gilmore, however, now aged 66, is a postman.

For some servants, *Hayle Place* was their home as well as the Jones/Marsham's. Even when they are old, the are still living there. It would seem that the Jones/Marsham family were good employers and it was a good household to work for.

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JUST PASSING THROUGH: THOMAS FOSTER (1820-1891)

Paul Newton Taylor

In local history journals, one often reads articles about the great and the good (and the not-so-good) who lived out their lives in one particular area. But what about those who suddenly appear, stick around for a short while and move on as suddenly as they appeared? Surely they can be as interesting as their less mobile contemporaries and their lives can tell us just as much about their times.

Take, for example, Thomas Foster, one of several schoolmasters listed in the Loose entry of Bagshaw's 1847 Directory of Kent. His daughters Anne and Ellen were baptised at All Saints, Loose, in April 1849 and July 1850 respectively. They, together with his wife Anne and mother Sophia, are listed in the census of April 1851, at which time Thomas was 29. However, after that they are heard of no more. Where did Thomas come from and where did he go?

The answer to the first part of the question is relatively easy. The 1851 census gives Thomas' place of birth as East Farleigh, and if we look in the registers of East Farleigh church we find that Thomas, son of James and Sophia Foster, was baptised on 26 January 1821; an elder brother, James, had been baptised on 8 May 1817.

In the graveyard of East Farleigh church we find three gravestones close together marking three generations of Fosters. The latest refers to James, son of James and

Catherine, who died in June 1830 aged 36 years leaving issue James, Thomas, George and Sophia. This must be our man Thomas' father; the burial register of 1830 records that James came from Maidstone at that time. I recently came across the papers of one of Thomas' grandsons, Lt. Col. Foster DSO, and in these Lt. Col. Foster records that James died of typhoid. Lt. Col. Foster also records that his grandfather first became a schoolmaster at Chatham, then at Maidstone, before starting his own school at Loose.

Before we leave East Farleigh we should note that Thomas' grandfather, James the Elder, died in 1811 aged 80 and his father, Thomas died in 1776, aged 76. I should point out that my reading of the gravestones was aided by a transcript in the Centre for Kentish Studies, obviously made some some years ago before the ravages of time set in, although one can still make out most of the words on the gravestones if not the dates. If you go into the church itself you can see a memorial in the bell tower recording the elder Thomas' bequest of £130 to the parish for the relief of the poor at Christmas. Thomas must have been quite a wealthy man (his will is in the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane) but it appears that the Foster family fortunes had declined in the next fifty years.



Thomas Foster (1820-1891)

Our first sighting of Thomas in Loose is, as already mentioned, as a 27-year old schoolmaster. Bagshaw says this was a boarding school and in the 1851 census he had two boarders resident with the family on North Hill: Charles Ellis, 12, and Robert Sweetlove, 9. Thomas gives his profession as schoolmaster at his daughters' baptisms and at the 1851 census.

The census shows that his wife, Ann aged 22, was born in Loose. Lt-Col Foster's papers include an original copy of their marriage certificate, and this shows that they

were married in April 1848 at Islington parish church. Thomas gives his occupation as surveyor and both parties give their address as 12 Brooksay Street, Islington. Lt-Col Foster notes that the marriage took place at Islington because Ann's parents did not approve of their daughter marrying a village schoolmaster. Who were Ann's parents? The marriage certificate records that Ann's father was William Skinner, farmer. The Loose parish registers tell us that Ann Skinner was born on 11 January 1829 and baptised 26 April 1829, the daughter of William and Ann Skinner. Readers of the last edition of *Loose Threads* may recall that they lived in Pickering Street, and it is interesting to note that although both were born in Loose, they too went to London to be married - at St Paul's, Covent Garden in December 1824.

That brings us to the second part of the question posed at the beginning of this article: where did Thomas go? Lt-Col Foster tells us that Thomas' father-in-law lent him money to start a farm at Chart Sutton. This was a successful venture for Thomas, and he had soon paid William Skinner off. In the 1861 census Thomas Foster is shown as living at *Norton Court Farm*, farming 77 acres and employing 8 labourers and 2 boys. He now has a further six children (we'll come back to these later) aged between nine and one years. They were all born at Chart Sutton, so it appears that Thomas moved there between April 1851 (the census) and May 1852 when Agnes is baptised at Chart Sutton where her father has already become a farmer (according to the baptism records). He is certainly doing well for himself in 1861, as he has two servants in the house. By 1871 he has expanded to 190 acres, employing 21 men and 4 boys, but has cut back to only one live-in servant, presumably as the children got older; and in 1881 he is farming 280 acres with 16 men and 4 boys. Thomas made his will on 2 May 1889 and died on 18 February 1891 at *New House*, Chart Sutton (where he had moved sometime in the 1870s) leaving some £1,265.

An obituary in the South Eastern Gazette in February 1891 records that Thomas had worked his farms with varying success for many years. It continues: 'He was of genial though modest nature, but perhaps the keenest enjoyment he felt and afforded was in his violin performances. It was a positive delight to see him play! Like the rest of us, he had his troubles, but with the fiddle in hand every crease of his features smoothed out, his eyes brightened, and he became a picture of animation. I doubt if Rossini had half so much pleasure in scoring his overtures as Mr Foster had in playing them.'

Thomas had come a long way in his seventy years. However, he only spent about four years in Loose (possibly a few more), so what relevance has he to the village. Some readers may remember Alan Wilson who lived in Loose Road for many years until his death at the age of 93 in 1983; his father ran *Upper Mill* in Salts Lane, and Alan is quoted at length in R.J. Spain's article on The Loose Watermills in *Archaeologia Cantiana* in 1972. Alan Wilson's mother was Lilian Foster and so Alan was one of Thomas' many grandchildren. Another grandchild, Mary daughter of William Foster and sister of Lt-Col Foster, remembers visiting her Wilson cousins as a young girl before the First World War. One of the older Wilson children used to pump the organ by hand in Loose church, and some sixty years later Mary still remembered having a go herself. In some ways Mary is the key to our story because she was my grandmother.

SCHOOL DAYS AT LOOSE, 1939-1945

Helen Gallavin

The article below was compiled using the Loose School Log Book 1939-1945.

Plans to provide adequate schooling were made well in advance of the outbreak of World War Two, and on 26 August 1939 all teaching staff were recalled from their summer holidays owing to the crisis. On 1 September, the school was reopened as a Reception Centre for evacuees. The Headmaster at this time was Mr Waldron, and he was in charge of the billeting arrangements.



Loose School Teaching Staff, 1939.
Standing: Mr W. Breakwell, Mr K. Knight,

Miss D. Stockwell, Mrs E. Parker, Mr Robson, Mr R.L. Waldron (Head):

Sitting: Mrs D. Jarrett, Miss E. Godden, Mr G. Bartlett, Miss N. Woodard.

The school began its new term on 25 September 1939, but no more than 150 children were allowed on the premises at one time. Loose took in children from Boughton Monchelsea as well. It was arranged that 150 seniors should attend on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and 150 juniors on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. School hours were 8.50-11.50am and 1.15-3.30pm. Six male teachers from another school joined the staff temporarily, and children were divided into eight groups each day, with one teacher in charge of each group. During this time, senior girls did work

in the Domestic Science Room and senior boys did Woodwork. Also, part of the allotments were used for cultivation by the boys. School dinners were provided at a charge of 4d per day.

By 23 October, new arrangements had been made: the old school at the top of Malthouse Hill was reopened for evacuated children and Loose infants for five days a week, and additional accommodation was organised in the Women's Institute Hall (at the bottom of Malthouse Hill) and the Baptist Church school room. Accomodation was a major problem for Mr Waldron, for it was necessary to provide the children with somewhere to go when they couldn't be at school. Extra space was found, however - in the Old Quarry Church, the *Star*, the *Chequers*, the Congregational Chapel, and the Vicar's Hall.

By January 1940, a start had been made on the trenches and shelters and it was felt that, despite all the disruption, schoolwork had been accomplished reasonably well without the children slipping back in their work. On 21 June, the school closed for one week's fruit picking, and the summer holidays started on 24 August.

The children returned to school on 7 October and, during the term, the Headmaster recorded that many visits were made to the trenches and shelters. However, despite such problems in the following months, fairly normal school routine was maintained, with even the school dentist and nurse visiting regularly. Some teachers were called up or moved around. During the summer break of 1942, although the school was officially closed, the building remained open for children to come in voluntarily, with half the staff remaining on duty. Various activities were organised, such as walks, swimming, blackberrying, a wild-flower show, film shows, tea-parties, jam-making, toy-making and games. Milk was also supplied for the children.

During 1943, it was mentioned that, on 14 April, the children were assembled outside the school as the Duchess of Kent was passing through Loose; and on 7 June, Pilot Officer Ralph visited the school to speak about 'Wings for Victory' week.

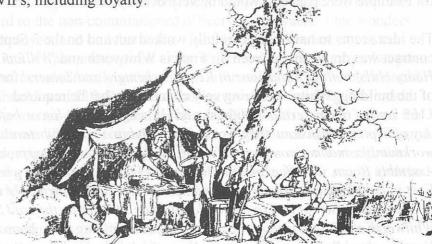
School carried on as normally as possible throughout the war, but on 16 June 1944, children were sent home in the morning because of enemy activity with the V1 flying bomb. By July, not many children were attending because their parents were frightened of the gunfire and the flying bomb. The Headmaster arranged for a system of spotting to give as much warning of enemy approach as possible, but it proved difficult to get the children into the shelters. On 27 July 1944, a flying bomb fell in Loose during the afternoon, landing at the top of Lancet Lane. There were no casualties at the school, however, and the building suffered little damage. During these difficult times, school continued until 8-9 May 1945 when it closed for the 'Victory in Europe' celebrations.

FUN AND GAMES IN COXHEATH CAMP, 1804

Julia Page

Those who have read *Loose Threads*, volumes 1 and 2, may recall that for some time my area of research has been the use of Coxheath as a military encampment during the various periods of conflict between 1757 and 1815, and recently I have come across a few interesting documents referring to some leisure activities organised by one particular regiment whilst stationed there. By and large, evidence of links between the village and the camp is hard to find, very little seems to have been written down, and thus the modest snippets forming this article are quite a breakthrough in their own small way.

And perhaps at this point I ought to explain to new readers that previous to the late nineteenth century there was no Coxheath village, merely a 3½ mile area of scrubland running from east to west and sliced through in the 1750s by the new turnpike road from Maidstone to Cranbrook, whose route ran down Old Loose Hill and up the other side towards Linton, approximately following the present road. Whenever the military encamped, their tented lines covered the stretch from the outskirts of Boughton, close to the *Cock Inn*, and across the southern end of Loose parish roughly to the *Bird in Hand*, with the remaining acres up to the Farleigh T-junction given over for manoeuvres and Field Day exercises, the latter frequently watched by some eminent VIPs, including royalty.



Camp cook-shop

(drawn by William Henry Pyne; from his 'Microcosm', 1808).

The year 1803 witnessed the outbreak of yet a further war, when France, ruled by Napoleon, threatened an invasion and subjugation of Britain in similar style to that promised by Hitler in 1940; and, as in 1940, Kent was to be the gateway. So once again Loose saw the military wagons, loaded with tents and camp equipment, creaking down the hill and up onto the heath, preparatory to the arrival of the regiments, currently marching towards Kent from all corners of the kingdom. The build up of troops grew and grew and a year later the canvas barracks housed nearly 10,000 men, while before the war ended this number topped 17,000.

However, with the months rolling by and Napoleon's threats failing to materialise, the regiments began to make themselves more comfortable, and one must say that there

are few armies more adept at homemaking and socialising than the British. Night after night the hillside was lit by a myriad flickering camp fires as the groups, gathering in small messes with their friends, sat cosily round them, officers and men alike setting a seal on the age-old camaraderie of service. The general staff, meanwhile, were ensconced in the nearby houses, for example *Clock House Farm*, *Boughton Monchelsea Place* - where Major General the Lord Southampton's good lady gave birth to a son - and *Linton Park*, the headquarters of the Officer commanding the camp.

No military camp of any size is ever without its guns, and a unit of the Royal Artillery, commanded by Lt. Col. Sir Francis Whitworth, was amongst the many regiments on Coxheath. The problem of stabling horses, particularly in winter, was always foremost in the armies of yesterday, depending as they did on the animals for both transport and draught, and care of the horses took pride of place. Not unnaturally, this extended to the officers' mounts, since a good horse was an exceedingly expensive purchase, and in 1804 we find Col. Whitworth having stables built on the RA lines, although whether for himself or the regimental horses is not clear. However, maybe watching the construction of the buildings gave him a bright idea, for soon after he ordered a hall to be built as well, for the purpose of elegant entertainment such as would be found in a town Assembly Rooms. And no doubt it proved a very popular move. Everyone had already lived through one winter on the heath with nothing to do after hours; Loose itstelf certainly lacked amenities, and Maidstone's Assembly Rooms, with so many regiments in the vicinity - the Barracks for example were packed - would be very overcrowded.

The idea seems to have been carefully worked out and on the 3 September 1804 a contract was drawn up between Sir Francis Whitworth and 'William Cutbush and Henry Hills, both of Maidstone in Kent, Carpenters and Joiners' for the construction of the building, Whitworth being very concise in what he required. For the sum of £165 'and of the materials', Cutbush and Hills agreed that 'on or before the thirteenth day of September instant' they would 'erect and in a good substantial and workmanlike manner completely finish ... a Building for the purposes of a Ball or Assembly Room, a Coffee and Tea Room and Ladies Room - the whole ... to be eighty Feet in length, twenty four Feet in width and sixteen Feet in height in the clear or internal parts thereof and to be divided in such Manner as the said Sir Francis Whitworth shall direct. The outside of the said Building to be boarded with Featheredged Battins and the Inside thereof, also the Cieling and partitions to be boarded with half Inch Deals planed and grooved, the Floor to be laid with one Inch Deals and the Roof to be covered with plain Tiles, with seven sash windows and three Doors to be placed in such parts of the said Rooms as the said Sir Francis Whitworth shall think proper, and an enclosed and covered passage nineteen Feet long and six Feet wide in the clear from ('oxheath to the said Ballroom to be lined, floored and cieled in the same manner as the said Rooms are hereby agreed to be done, and with Lock and Key to the Outer Door of the said passage'. All the parties signed the contract and the plans were drawn up, which happily survive to this day.

With regard to payment, it was agreed to be made on 13 September providing the building was completely finished to Sir Francis' specifications, and Whitworth ensured punctuality by adding the clause that 'William Cutbush and Henry Hills ...

further agree to abate and deduct out of the said sum ... the sum of ten pounds for every day after the said thirteenth September instant that the said Building shall remain unfinished and incompleat'.²

Ten days for such a project sounds short, but the following account also exists which suggests that Cutbush and Hills' contributions to the scheme came last, and that a great deal of preparation was carried out by military personel before the civilians arrived on site.

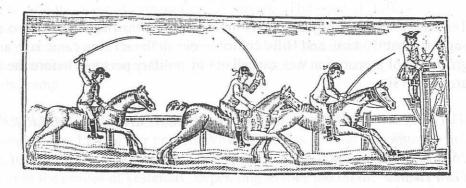
AMOUNT OF MONEY ON ACCOUNT OF BUILDING THE	BALLROOM
For NC officers	
16 days at 2s per day	1. 12. 0
For Privates	
102 days at 1s per day	5. 2. 0
For Carpenters	
to drink on finishing	1. 1. 0
For Bricklayers to drink	
on finishing	10. 6
For Porter given to the Workmen	
at the Ballroom and Theatre	7. 3. 4
	14. 8. 10

A study of this account begs several questions, beginning with the puzzle over the number of days paid to the non-commissioned officers and privates. One wonders how many were employed, and on what tasks. Tantalisingly, these are not listed. Also, the sum of £7. 3. 4. 'for porter given to the Workmen' is enormous; at that price it must have been an extraordinarily good party. Unfortunately, too, the clerk couldn't add up - the total should read £15. 8.10 - and this leaves one wondering if he made other mistakes. The mention of the Theatre refers to Whitworth's plan to extend the building and include one if sufficient money by way of additional subscriptions came in. Theatrical productions were regularly got up by regiments when in camp, the amateur actors taking anything from Sheridan to Shakespeare in their stride, and the gunners were clearly happy to tread the boards if the money was forthcoming.

But if this account confuses us a little, the regulations for controlling functions, except in one particular, are extremely clear; and no one was going to be allowed to step out of line. A committee was formed to run the place and they came up with a set of rules not dissimilar to those of any well-conducted Assembly Room. They began with the statement that 'All subscriptions must be closed by Friday at Twelve o'Clock when the Committee will meet and no officer present in camp will be allowed to subscribe nor can be admitted on any account', and of course this immediately sets us wondering if they meant to exclude officers on camp, which cannot be right; so perhaps, 190 or so years later, we are simply not au fait with something everyone took for granted, ie. possibly that subscriptions had to be in by midday, willy nilly, including those of the officers. However, thereafter there seem no puzzles.

'Ladies and Gentlemen will pay Eighteen Pence each for admission to the Balls for which Tea, Cakes, Lights and Music will be provided, all other refreshments, and

Coxheath Races, 1804.



On Thursday, October 11,

Mr. Burton's Bay Mare, Marcia, aged, against Capt. Clough's Roan Horse, White Stockings, aged, 10 Stone each.--Four Mile Heats. P. P.

FIFTY GUINEAS.

SAME DAY,

Capt. Dallings g. g. Traveller, 5 Years old, against Capt. Fane's g. h. Mountebank.—Two Miles.

SAME DAY,

Capt. Clough's b. h. Butcher, aged, against Mr. Burton's b. g. Seven's the Main, aged.---Half a Mile.

TWENTY GUINE AS EACH, P.P.

SAME DAY,

Capt. Thurston's br. g. Driver, 5 Years old, against Capt. Bevan's br. g. Hotspur, 10 Stone each.---Two Miles.

The Horses will Start for the First Match at Half past 12 o'Clock.

Hon. Col. LUMLEY, R. C. BURTON, Esq. STEWARDS.

Mr. LACY, CLERK OF THE COURSE.

MAIDSTONE: PRINTED BY J. BLAKE

Poster for Coxheath Races, 1804 (from Maidstone Museum).

Cards to be separately paid for, the Balls to begin at Eight o' Clock - Partners to be changed after every second dance.' (No monopolising the prettier girls!) 'Tickets of admission for Ladies and Gentlemen non-subscribers to be signed by two of the Committee and to be sent for the day before the ball.' And the document concludes with the Committee's recommendations on the Theatre, which seem to suggest it was never built: 'the Committee finding the additional Subscription of half a Guinea inadequate to the expence of erecting a Theatre, have thought it prudent at present to proceed only on the original plan, at the same time sufficient care has been taken to construct the Building so that any addition may hereafter be made for the above purpose'.4

But to return to Messrs Cutbush and Hills, their task was not quite complete because Whitworth included in the contract an arrangement whereby they would be 'allowed to take down the said Building and carry away and convert all the materials thereof to and for their own use and Benefit on and immediately after the Breaking up of the camp on Coxheath'. One presumes this must have been done because the enclosure of Coxheath did not begin until about 1817, a couple of years after the camp was broken up, and it is unlikely that the two would not wish to salvage something.

With regard to the site of the hall, the Artillery Lines abutted onto the upper part of the southern section of Old Loose Hill, possibly somewhere just below *Herts Farm* buildings, and the reference to the 19 foot long entrance passage from Coxheath suggests that to reach the hall, built within the Lines, one had to cross 19 feet of scrub from the turnpike road.

Yet another document that has come to light concerns a horse race which was apparently held three weeks after the completion of the ballroom, and I am indebted to Patricia Jenner for discovering a fly poster advertisement for the event. The Race Meeting was scheduled for 11 October 1804, with four-mile heats no less, but it is doubtful if it bore much resemblance to those of today, except with regard to the betting which would certainly be as important as the running. Getting up races was a common activity in the army, while in camp during the Peninsular War regiments often vied with each other; 'Our great amusement is mule racing, which we have established three times a week and produces excellent sport, the light bred racers kicking, whinneying, running and sulking in every direction', wrote one officer.⁶ The races at Coxheath hardly sported a large field but everyone would turn out for the fun and to wager.

Discoveries of the nature of these two events, the ballroom and the races, came about only because both Pat and I were looking through documents for something else and came upon them wholly unexpectedly. But this is what frequently happens in research and why historians need everybody's eyes and ears to help them, so if readers come across anything about Loose and its neighbouring villages and area, we in the Research Group hope you will be sure to tell us.

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IGH ROAD

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Fran Linten

Plan of Peale House and grounds from a conveyance of 1857.

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PEALE HOUSE

Anne Creasey, in collaboration with Bill and June Irons.

Part of the charm of local history is to look at a familiar scene and visualise the same place one hundred or two hundred years ago. June, Bill and I were able to do this when we read the deeds of their house, *Selby Cottage*, 580 Loose Road. These useful documents refer to the land and property bought and built by carpenter and builder. Thomas Tompson during the 1830s and 1840s, including the shops at Loose Green and most of the houses on the west side of Loose Road from the Green to the (present) British Telecom buildings. They contain too much material for one article, so we will start with the Telephone Exchange. What was this site in 1711 when the deeds begin?

Predictably, it was agricultural land, part of a farm owned by Henry Walter, clerk of Loose. Henry sold it to William Rand, a Maidstone upholsterer, and it passed through the hands of a succession of Maidstone businessmen who let it to local tenantfarmers. At the end of the 18th century the tenant was John Ashby, and the owner John Pett was a surgeon and apothecary of Maidstone. John Pett died in 1806, probably John Ashby died about the same time, and in 1809 the heirs sold the farm to Thomas Charlton, the local landowner who built Hill House. The name of the tenant is given as Anne Ashby, widow. In 1835 Ashby's Field, a part of the farm lying to the north of *Hawthorn Cottage*, was divided into three and sold. The centre was bought by William Naish, and the two end-pieces with good road frontages were bought by Thomas Tompson. He built Gable Cottages on the south-west portion, and four detached houses (one of which was Selby Cottage) plus a large house set in its own grounds on the north-east piece. It was a three-storeyed building with twenty-one rooms, a semi-circular front driveway, and a rear entrance leading to a yard behind the four smaller houses and so to the back of the building. Almost immediately it was let to the Revd. Francis T. Gregory, then in 1857 it was sold to William Peale, who, with his uncles John and Edward Peale, farmed a large acreage in Loose, East Farleigh and Maidstone which included the range of oasts near the Wool House that are a feature of old photgraphs of Loose. He paid £1000 for the house and grounds, a meadow behind the house, and a piece of 'garden ground' on the south side of the property. The plan shown here is from the sale document. In 1866 he bought another acre on the north side from James Hackett Hodsoll of Loose Court.

William died in 1879, followed by his wife Kate in 1882, and the estate was inherited by Lucy Coles (nee Hatch). She and her farmer husband James Readman Coles came to live in *Peale House* with their seven children. One windy December night in 1892 a fire started in a second-floor room. A messenger on horseback summoned the Kent Fire Office Brigade under the command of Captain Gates, but an adequate supply of water was not readily available and the house, being constructed of wood, lath and plaster, was completely demolished, leaving only a heap of bricks where the chimneys had been. The family escaped unhurt, but the servants on the top floor had to climb down a trellis, and one, 17-year old Emily Smitherman, jumped from a third floor window. Badly hurt, she was taken to Mr Golding's shop (*Hawthorn Stores*).

where Dr I.S. Jones attended her, but she died three days later in the West Kent Hospital. The house was not rebuilt.

The plot stood empty for many years. In 1908 Lucy Coles died, in 1911 the Kent County Council bought the central portion of Ashby's Field from J.R. Coles (either he or William Peale must have acquired it at some time) and built a school, and then in 1912 J.R. Coles himself died. His family had grown and many of them had settled abroad, so the estate was sold, partly in June 1912, the remainder in the following October. Lot 1, the site of *Peale House* and the Meadow, was bought by Philip, John, Albert and Harry Bray, members of a local fruit farming family. The portion of James Hackett Hodsoll's one acre adjoining the road was sold separately as three building plots.

The Brays built a new *Peale House*, which was later divided into No.1 and No.2 *Peale House*. In 1929 the 'garden ground' was sold to the Post Office who built the small telephone exchange. In 1960 part of the land was used to extend the school, then, in 1964, the Kent County Council compulsorily purchased the Meadow to build Loose CP Infants School. Finally, in 1967 road widening claimed more of the plot, and in the same year the second *Peale House* was demolished. The large Telephone Exchange building was begun in 1968.

Not much is left of the old *Peale House*, apart from the brick wall behind the school car-park which was the boundary of the rear entrance and yard. Traces can be seen in it of the stable and coach-house buildings shown on the plan, and the pillar that marks the entrance to *Peale House* garden. Without Bill and June's title deeds we would not know much about it at all. Do your deeds contain similar revelations? The Research Group would be very interested to study them.

SOURCES

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ALL ABOARD: THE ORIGINS OF SOME MAIDSTONE AREA BUS SERVICES

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Introduction of the last service and the last servi

To the majority of local people, the history of local bus services, if they know anything about them, begins with Maidstone & District in 1911. In fact, however, the history of bus services in the Maidstone area is far more complex and involves main roads and companies which historians generally fail to mention. The reason for this lack of historical accuracy is because people generally refer to the official company histories of Maidstone & District, which almost totally ignore a number of earlier companies that attempted and failed to bring regular and reliable passenger transport to the county town.

From Horse to Mechanics

At the turn of the century, the principal form of public transport in mid-Kent was the carrier's cart, which was reinforced by small horse buses on a number of major routes. Maidstone, as both the county town and a main market town, had become a focus for such services and various of its inns acted as terminals for horse-buses to/from:

Cranbrook: William's, Star, Daily at 4pm.

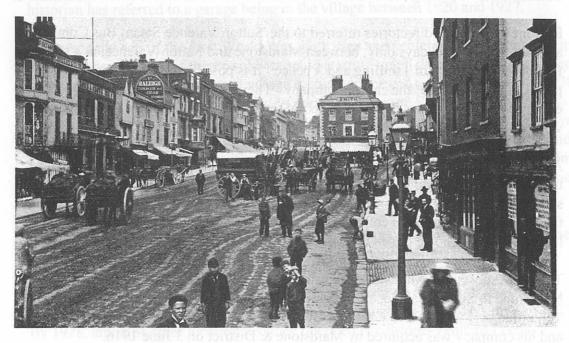
Headcorn: Martin's, Star, Thurs. 5pm, Friday and Wednesday 6pm.

Sittingbourne: Carey's, Mitre at 3.20pm to connect with Sheernes train.

Tenterden: Bennett's, Haunch, Daily at 3.30pm.

Wrotham Heath and Plaxtol: Snell's, the Cannon, Thursday 4pm.

Most of these routes developed from stagecoach or short-stage services, the major routes having disappeared with the progressive opening of various railway main lines or branches.



The High Street, Maidstone, in the 1890s, showing the carriers' carts.

By 1904, the Tenterden service was provided by Messrs R.J. Bennett, the principal carriers of that town who had been operating a horse bus on that route since at least the 1870s under 'The Times' fleetname. Indeed, a William Bennett was recorded as the Maidstone to Tenterden carrier as early as 1832. The service to Headcorn was commenced in the 1890s by Mr Martin, being increased to 'Daily' in 1905 and ceasing about 1912; though, yet again, a Martin was recorded as the Maidstone to Headcorn carrier in 1872.

The first mention of motor buses in the Maidstone area came in a prospectus which was published in the *Kent Messenger* on 10 September 1904 for the Headcorn, Sutton Valence & Maidstone Motor Omnibus Company Ltd. Two of its promoters were, incidentally, also involved in a projected Headcorn & Maidstone Joint Light Railway which was one of a number of similar schemes that failed to come to fruition. A trial trip was undertaken for press representatives on 27 October 1904, the actual service commencing on 31 October 1904 at a return fare of three shillings and four pence.

The initial bus which provided the service was a Clarkson Steam Bus, their standard bus at this time being a sixteen seat single-deck vehicle with a clerestory body and semi-circular driver's cab. They are also believed to have used a Lifu Steam Bus and a vehicle built by Jesse Ellis of Loose, a local quarry owner who was also involved in agriculture, road construction, road haulage and steam locomotive design and construction. They were not, however, very successful and Ellis' themselves were in financial difficulties by 1906 and the service had ceased by March 1907.

Competition entered the area in 1908 in the form of Kent Motor Services, one of several southern bus companies that were the brain-child of a Douglas Mackenzie. Services were opened to Sittingbourne and Faversham, Sutton Valence and Hastings (on Sundays), but traffic failed to live up to expectations and, depite attempting to use smaller vehicles, the enterprise lasted little longer than two months, the vehicles being transferred to Worthing Motor Services (a forerunner of Southdown Motor Services).

By June 1909, local directories referred to the 'Sutton Valence Steam Bus Company' as operating on weekdays only, between Maidstone and Sutton Valence, at a single fare of 9d and return of 1shilling and 3 pence. It is possible that they may have picked up the pieces of the earlier company. Their services appear to have operated either three or four times daily. A proposal to extend this service to Tunbridge Wells was refused by Maidstone Borough Council.

A further operator to appear on the route in 1912 was a Captain E. Neve, who was trading as Reliance Motor Services and, using 'modern' Leyland buses, soon succeeded to the Steam Bus Company's operations. I believe he may have extended the service to Tenterden to convert to motorbus operation. In fact Bennett was the last operator of a horse bus in the Maidstone area.

The more substantial Maidstone & District Motor Services commenced working from Maidstone to Sutton Valence in December 1912, and their operations had reached Tenterden by 1 May 1914. Captain Neve eventually succumbed to the competition and his company was acquired by Maidstone & District on 3 June 1916.

Consolidation

The Maidstone & District Motor Services had itself grown out of the Commercial Motor Company which had been formed in February 1908 to run services between Maidstone and London. In the event, in May 1908 they switched to a Maidstone to Chatham service and for a short period also operated a town service between London Road and Boxley Road and a service via Aylesford and Eccles. Their operations were not very profitable, however, and the manufacturers repossessed the vehicles. The undertaking was then purchased by a Walter Flexman French in May 1910 who extended services to West Malling and Gravesend and re-titled the business as the Maidstone, Chatham, Gravesend & District Motor Omnibus Services Ltd. in March 1911.

Despite its makeshift start, by 1913 improvement had been sufficient for them to attract the interest of the large British Electric Traction Company Ltd. They were able to supply management expertise and financial resources such that the company was able to expand in various directions including the Tenterden route as described above.

In 1917, Maidstone & District introduced route letters, the service to Tenterden becoming 'L' and that to Sutton Valence 'M'. As their territory grew, however, it soon became apparent that there were not enough letters to cope, so the more usual numbering of routes was introduced in early 1920, the service to Tenterden becoming number 12 and that to Sutton Valence 13.

Incidentally, the Maidstone & District timetable of 21 February 1916 states that 'parcels may be left at Company's Garage, Sutton Valence'. This may have been Neve's garage taken over later that year. One bus appears to have been outstationed there presumably to assist in the competition with Neve. Although there is no mention in the timetable of August 1918 of a garage at Sutton Valence, another historian has referred to a garage being in the village between 1920 and 1927.

Following the end of the First World War, both men and vehicles were 'demobbed' in large numbers. Some of the ex-soldiers set to starting up on their own whereas others motorised or modernised existing village carrier services. At any one time until 1930, there were up to a dozen or more carriers serving the Sutton Road into or out of Maidstone. They not only carried goods, livestock and produce to and from the town, but also passengers in increasing numbers. Unfortunately such operations in the mid-Kent area have not, as yet, been well documented. Most of them started in their home villages, operating anything from once-a-week to daily, with two or three trips in each direction.

As it turned out, Maidstone & District remained the major bus operator on this route, only receiving competition from two other local operators in the late 1920s:

W.M. Buck: starting in the early 1920s, they were licensed for a number of local routes and advertised a service to Ulcombe on Tuesdays and Thursdays in May 1923. By 1928, amongst other local routes, they operated Maidstone-Yeoman-Leeds-Langley-Otham-Blue Door-Maidstone and Maidstone-Langley-Otham, and competed

heavily with both Maidstone & District and the Corporation trams. This firm was associated with Cambrian, a large operator with interests in London, Folkestone and Ashford, who themselves were taken over by Maidstone & District and East Kent in November 1929. I am unaware of the starting dates or earlier history of these village services, but I believe they were primarily catered for by village carriers.

Red Road Cars: having commenced a Maidstone to London service in November 1927, they later appeared on a Maidstone-Ulcombe-Lenham route but were taken over by Maidstone & District in April 1929.

At some stage thereabouts, Maidstone & District appear to have competed on the village service as Service 12A, operating via Langley to Ulcombe. Although suspended in the summer of 1929, the service appears to have recommenced on the take-over of Cambrian and was soon extended towards Charing. The main road service to Sutton Valence, Headcorn and Tenterden was now solely referred to as Service 12.

With regards to local in-town services, the Sutton Road - being relatively unpopulated - had its needs mainly met by the longer distance services. In the second half of the nineteenth century, a new town cemetery was opened on the Sutton Road near the *Wheatsheaf*, and it is known that a horse bus did operate for some time between there, the town centre and the lunatic asylum at Barming. Unfortunately, I have been unable as yet to trace any further information on horse bus services in the town. It would be reasonable to assume, however, that the advent of tram services to Barming in July 1904, and to Loose in October 1907, would have effectively killed off such services. With the building of the Mangravet council housing estate, Maidstone Borough introduced a motorbus service between the Cannon and Mangravet Avenue in July 1928. The service was extended across town to Park Avenue the following August but was replaced by trolleybuses on a Grove Road to Barming Bull service in February 1930. There were, incidentally, proposals to extend tram services to Sutton Valence amongst other places around 1910 but such proposals died out with the onset of the First World War.

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THE PARISH BOUNDARY

Roger Thornburgh

1994 marked the hundredth anniversary of parish councils in England and Wales (though they have been known as community councils in Wales since 1974), having been set up by the Local Government Act of 1894. Loose, having a larger population than the minimum of 200 required for a council, duly elected its councillors at a Parish Meeting held on 4 December 1894, and they met for the first time in January of the following year.

So, if parish councils are just over a century old, what about the actual parish areas that they represent? The majority are older by far, dating back to medieval times, and quite likely having their origins in the estates of the Anglo-Saxons, or even the Romano-British. By Norman times, monasteries and minsters were often managing extensive estates - often based on the earlier landholdings - and creating daughter churches; and all over the country, where tenants large and small held manors, a pattern of village life was beginning to emerge which was centred around the manor house and church. Gradually the church exerted such influence that the area served by the parson from his church and from which he could claim tithes - the ecclesiastical parish - became virtually synonymous with the village, certainly in the southern half of the country; and by the end of the 13th century there were probably about 9000 parishes in England.¹

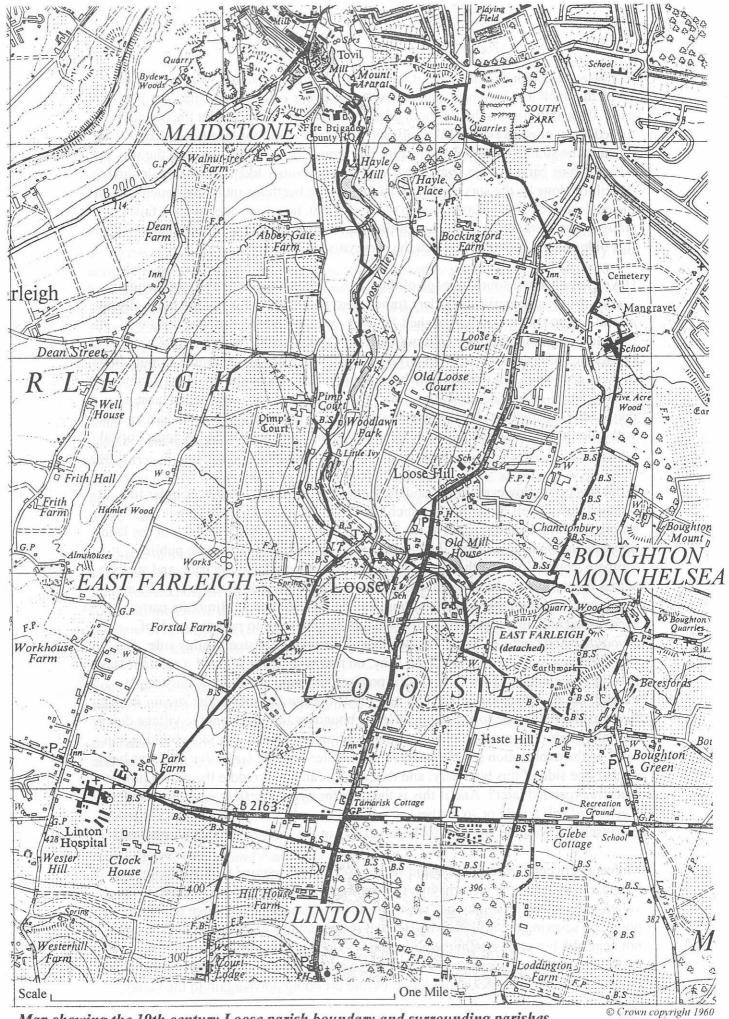
Estates, manors and villages must all have had boundaries of one form or another, vague or contested though some of them undoubtedly were. The Anglo-Saxons built banks and used ditches, hedges, streams, ancient ways and other features of the landscape as boundary markers; evidence for this comes from charters that have survived and which include descriptive and detailed perambulations of the land in question. The Normans continued the process, defining the territory of landholdings and settlements more precisely and clearly and, at the same time, laying down the shape of the ecclesiastical parishes. 'By the twelfth century,' writes Christopher Taylor,2 '... numerous churches had appeared and these demanded fixed boundaries to the land which provided them with tithes, their financial support. The power of the medieval Church, once established, tended to make the boundaries of these new parishes even more permanent.' Sometimes the boundaries of the various territories coincided, sometimes they did not; and it is nowadays usually exceptionally difficult, if not impossible, to sort them out, unless the documentary evidence is available and revealing. What is clear, however, is that, as the power of the manorial courts declined at the end of the Middle Ages, the ecclesiastical parish was called upon by the new Tudor monarchy to be a unit of secular as well as religious administration. It was given the responsibility not only for recording baptisms, marriages and burials, and looking after the fabric of the church, but also dealing with the 'relief of the poor and impotent persons', maintaining the highways, and keeping local law and order. Local JPs and vestries were the bodies responsible for this administration within the individual parishes, so parish boundaries continued to be of considerable importance. Changes came during the 19th century, however, that transferred most of the functions of the vestries to various other bodies, set up to provide specific services. Even so, the outcome of the discussions and debates about local administration was

that parishes should continue to play a part, small though it may be; and so the 1894 Local Government Act brought parish councils into existence, thereby helping to preserve parish boundaries.

How, then, does Loose fit into this picture? Certainly it had been a manor back in Anglo-Saxon times, when it 'was given by king Ethelwulf, son of king Egbert, about the year 832, to a widow, named Suete and her daughter', by whose generosity (or was it perhaps through need?) it became part of the network of estates of Christ Church Priory, Canterbury. Neighbouring East Farleigh belonged to the Priory too, but the fact that Loose was considerably smaller, and the two were considered together, probably explains why East Farleigh achieves an individual mention in the Domesday Book of 1086, and Loose does not. Loose does feature, however, in the Domesday Monachorum, the Priory's own estate record of about 1100,4 where the entry states that it is 'assessed at a sulung'. So, how big is that, one naturally asks? And the answer is that one cannot be certain. A 'sulung' was a land measurement for tax purposes, and seems to have been rather inconsistent in size, given a certain lack of standardization in the 11th century. If, as is commonly supposed, it was equivalent to about 180-200 acres⁵, it would have made the Norman manor of Loose a fairly small place, and less than one-third the size of the present civil parish.

Andrew Butcher, as a result of his study of the medieval Christ Church Priory documents in the Canterbury Cathedral Library, has suggested that Loose, which initially was probably a rather small and poor agricultural settlement, began to develop from about the 13th century. Its population grew, and industry - notably the fulling mills along the valley - started to appear. So it may have been about this time that the parish expanded in size too, taking over land (from East Farleigh?) down the Loose valley towards the Medway. Such an expansion, following the establishment of the mills, might explain the rather strange elongated shape of the parish as it appears on the Tithe Map of about 1840 - the first map to delineate clearly the parish boundary of Loose. If such is the case, one might suppose that the boundary as shown around the southern end of the parish is rather older than that around the northern end; some of it may be, but the enclosure in 1817 of Coxheath - the long stretch of open heathland that ran from *The Cock Inn* along the ridge to *Love's Cottage* at the western end of Heath Road - evidently had a considerable effect on the course of the former.

Where, then, did the Loose parish boundary run in the mid-19th century, and doubtless for several centuries before, in part at least? The relatively modern map opposite has had the old boundary line drawn onto it, and also an indication of the surrounding parishes as they then existed. Although many of the stones that were set up to mark the boundary in the 18th and 19th centuries have disappeared, a considerable number still exist, and the one inscribed 'Loose 1' stands against the wall of *Vale House* opposite *The ('hequers -* rather strangely, one might think, almost in the middle of the village. The reason is that (until 1887) East Farleigh held a fairly large slice of land that took in much of Salts Lane, Quarry Wood, Filmer's Farm and the Iron Age hill fort beyond, and the 'Loose 1' stone marks the most westerly point of this slice. Proceeding clockwise round the parish from this stone, the boundary crossed the Linton Road at the southern end of the viaduct, kept to the top of the bank, passing the old vicarage (now the *Loose Nursing Home*), and joined Salts Lane



Map showing the 19th century Loose parish boundary and surrounding parishes.

just below Salts Place, following it to the Filmer's Farm junction, where it continued along the track to where now stand Campfield Farm Cottages and what, until the early 19th century, was the northern edge of Coxheath. At this point the boundary turned right, crossed Haste Hill Road, and made a bee line for Heath Road and, beyond, the southern edge of the heath. The straightness of this line, and the way in which it runs parallel with Hubbards Lane, is suspiciously like the sort of ruler and pencil job done by the surveyors who carved up the heath for individual puchasers in the enclosure of 1817. Hasted's map of about 1790, however, does show a fairly straight line marking the boundary of the Maidstone Hundred at this point, so perhaps it is older than it seems. No doubt the surveyors tidied it up.

Having reached the southern edge of the heath - nowadays lost in the woodland of *Linton House* - the parish boundary turned west and followed that edge fairly closely all the way to the now long-vanished *Star Inn* and Linton Hill; the spot is now marked by a public footpath entrance and sign. Once across the main road, the boundaries of heath and parish diverged, the latter heading in an almost straight line to meet up with Heath Road a little beyond the junction with the drive to *Clock House Farm* - almost certainly the work of the enclosure surveyors. And it seems they hadn't finished yet, for the line now made an acute turn to the north-east and ran, with ruler precision, directly for the bend in the road where Well Street joins Forstal Lane.

From this point, however, the boundary seemed to follow an altogether older line. It plunged down Well Street itself, which is undoubtedly an old sunken trackway, but before reaching the crossroads at the bottom, turned left, round the back of the land opposite the Wool House and the bungalows in Busbridge Road, to the public footpath steps. Crossing the road, the boundary dropped down the bank and struck across the middle of the orchard and alongside the mill ponds to Little Ivy. Its aim was now clearly to head down the Loose valley, for it turned to climb the narrow access road and, three-quarters of the way up, turned again to pass the back of Woodlawn and continue along the top edge of the relatively steep valley side. But why did it not stick to the top edge? Why, on reaching Great Ivy, did it suddenly take two right-angle turns, first to descend a precipitous bank, and then to cut straight through the middle of Great Ivy Mill and Ivy Mill House to follow the stream itself? It seems likely that the tortuous line that the boundary follows from the village down the valley was determined by the boundaries of properties, so why slice buildings in two? Is the explanation simply that a much smaller original Great Ivy Mill was built on just one side of this boundary, and that it only came to straddle the parish limits when it expanded later? And if this is the case for (ireat Ivy Mill, is it also true for Hayle Mill half a mile or so further on, where a boundary stone lies under a wooden lid (inscribed with the words 'Parish Boundary') in the floor of the mill's upper salle?

Midway between *Great Ivy Mill* and *Hayle Mill* is *Bockingford Mill*, where the parish boundary passed to the west, having left the stream and climbed up the side of the valley once again for no obvious reason, before descending to the edge of *Hayle Mill* pond and severing the mill in two. Beyond is the remains of a small quarry, probably not very old, but at this point the boundary line took another abrupt turn to the top of it and the valley side, and made a sweeping curve round the present-day County Fire Brigade Headquarters of *The Godlands* before dropping down again to the valley

floor. Here it made some very strange convolutions round a barn, across Cave Hill and the northern end of *Lower Crisbrook Mill* pond, through one end of the mill itself, and then up the track leading past *Mount Ararat*. It all looks like another instance of circumnavigating old properties, which, by the the 19th century, had either disappeared or changed radically. The track up through the trees (and now through estate houses) to Postley Road has the semblance of an old way, and may well have marked the border between Maidstone and Loose for a long time.

Once on the eastern side of the valley, the parish boundary initially turned south along the top edge again. Very soon, however, it veered off away from the valley and across fields (now houses) to the Loose Road in a rather wavy line which seems to bear little relation to the field boundaries shown on the Tithe Map, but probably was linked with older local property boundaries, and quite likely those of nearby Hayle Place. Crossing the Loose Road between the present-day Fire and Ambulance Stations, the boundary followed what used to be the edge of a field and then turned diagonally across a second field towards the top corner and Pheasant Lane (as it now is). After following this south for 150 yards or so, it turned left along the southern fringe of Mangravet Wood - now Municipal Cemetery and housing estate. Before long, it turned away from the wood and struck out across farm land (now Oldborough Manor Community College) and down the side of Five Acre Wood (some of which still survives) to converge on Boughton Lane. Going its own way a few yards further on, when the road took a sudden left turn, the boundary kept its alignment and ran along the edge of fields, across a track (now serving Boughton Manor) and down the slope into the Loose valley again.

A couple of sharp and inexplicable turns brought the boundary line to the eastern end of what was once known as *Braddick's Pond* (now *Heron Pond*), and the boundary of the detached portion of East Farleigh again. Turning right along the pond edge it followed the Loose downstream, along the southern bank of *Leg o' Mutton Pond* to the dam of *Springhead* (or *Salts*) *Pond*, where it marched through the middle of *Upper Mill*, and on past *Gurney's Mill* to the 'Loose 1' boundary stone once more.

Such was the route taken by the old boundary. Deciding what sections are really ancient is not an easy task and would need a good deal more detailed investigation. What are clearer and more tangible are the old boundary stones that still survive, and in a future edition I hope to examine these, which are by no means all of one period, and are variously inscribed.

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OF ANCHORITES AND HERMITS

Pat Jenner

To live away from the world was not encouraged by the early Christian Church, but during the fourth century AD the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia and Persia were peopled by a race of men who abandoned the cities to live in solitude as hermits. The solitary monk frequently became the founder of a body of disciples, and in England some of the later monastic houses were of eremitical (hermit) origin - the ruined abbey of Crowland in the Fens having its origin in Guthlac and his companions.

And Loose? In the Calendar of Close Rolls of 1231-2 there is a single reference to us: 'Place: Loose, Kent. Description: Anchorite. Date: before 1228.

Patron: The Archbishop. Name: Sarah.'

She was not alone in her choice of life. Between 1207 and 1548 when the monastic and eremitical traditions were stilled for nearly 300 years, there were forty hermits and anchorites listed in Kent.² Sutton Valence had an un-named anchorite in the 13th century, West Malling an un-named hermit in the 15th century, and Faversham had four anchorites at various times, William, Ann, Thomas and one not named. Both Faversham and Staplehurst have the small window on the north side of the chancel, usual when cells were attached to the church.

As an anchorite, Sarah would have been enclosed in four walls. This could have been a small building - usually at the north side of the church³ - with a 'squint' through which she could see the High Altar and receive the sacraments; or there could have been a detached building in the churchyard itself. Loose church has a little ground on the north side, and it seems likely that the cell was attached to the wall where the vestry is now, the reconstructions of the late 18th and 19th centuries having swept all away. Sarah would have received the common dole of 1½d a day and this sum provided her with a servant to fetch and remove food and attend to the cleaning of the cell. The Ancren Riwle of the 13th century laid down "Ye shall not possess any beast, my dear sisters, except only a cat. If, however, anyone must needs have a cow, let her take care that she neither annoy nor harm anyone, and that her own thoughts be not fixed thereon.' Cleanliness of person and cell were encouraged.





Sarah's task was to pray for the needy, to sew and mend and, if she was literate (which many anchorites were), to write and illuminate manuscripts. Petitioners for prayers would ask the servant if they might address 'the holy lady', leaving a small coin as an offering.

Hermits had freedom of movement, and frequently acted as guardian of a shrine or keeper of a bridge. Lighthouses to guide seamen were also kept by hermits, one such coastguard/chaplain being Thomas Hamond, 'hermyte of the chapell being at Our Lady of Rekolver'. In 1367, Brother Nicholas de Legh kept a hermitage and the light on the South Foreland. In 1535, an anchorite had a cell in Dover cliff, but local men thought 'it was a signal to the king's enemies and must burn no more, so they beat him cruelly'. The founding of Trinity House as a religious guild in 1514 shifted the responsibility for safety around our coasts.

Though Julian of Norwich, anchorite and mystic, is commemorated each year on 2 May,⁴ the eremitical way of life appears archaic today, and anchorites are no more. However, from Kent to Wales, and into Northumberland and Scotland, there are men and women hermits still. The call the Desert Fathers heard still sounds; for those who follow it, it is a freedom and not a restriction.

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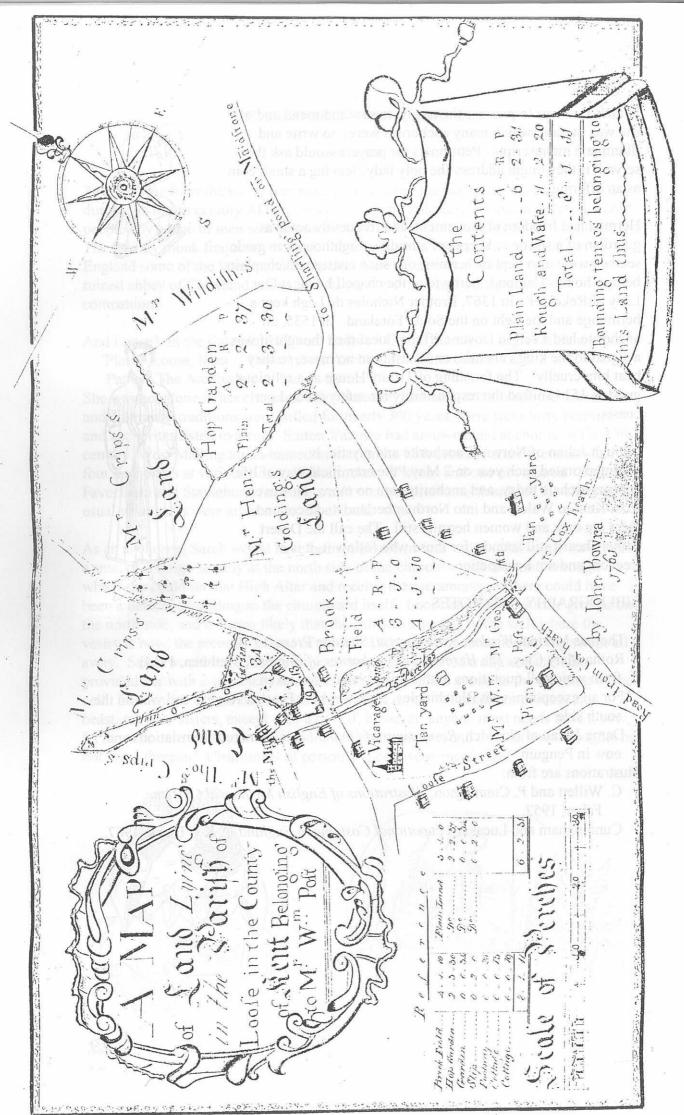


Fig.1: Map of 1761 by John Bowra, showing the sites of two of the Loose tanyards. Reproduced courtesy of the Centre for Kentish Studies, (C.K.S. U106 P2).

THE TANYARDS OF LOOSE

Frank Allchurch

The tanning of leather has always been an essential to our way of life, and over the centuries has supplied a great many of our operational and personal needs. Nowadays much of this production of hides and skins has been overtaken by man-made materials, such as plastic and fibreglass, and tanning is done by modern methods and not the old-fashioned way. It may be useful to point out here that hides are from the larger, hoofed animals - cattle, horses etc.- whereas skins are from calves, goats, pigs and rabbits, and even crocodiles and snakes, making the finer and more delicate articles of leather. Leather once had a very wide range of uses, resulting in a variety of items: from heavy horse harness to fine leather strops for sharpening and honing 'cut-throat' razors; from jackets and motor coats to boots, shoes and their laces; and there were decorative artefacts too. Leather is a breathable material and is so versatile that it can be split, dyed, shaped, moulded, embossed, gilded, wetted and dried over extended periods, used on either side, and, if properly cared for, it will last a life-time.

There are reputed to have been four tanyards in Loose, two hundred years ago or so:

- 1 In the garden of Vale House, adjacent to the viaduct over Salts Lane;
- 2 In the garden of Brook House, between the Loose Stream and Cape Cottages;
- 3 Inside the square bounded by Mill Street, Church Street and Bridge Street;
- 4 On the site of the *Wool House/Wool House Cottage* garden on the corner of Well Street.

Confirmation is given of tanyards 1 and 2 on a map drawn by John Bowra in 1761 (Fig.1), which shows a tanyard with nine pits in the garden of *Vale House*, and another with twelve pits in the garden of *Brook House*. Further confirmation of the latter site is given in a conveyance, dated 27 January 1874, which the writer has transcribed for the present owner of *Brook House* and which refers to the transfer of ground and property:

'...being four several messuages tenements or cottages [a reference to *Cape Cottages* in Church Street] with gardens thereto respectively belonging standing and being upon a portion of the said premises formerly used as a tanyard'. Clearly, by 1874 this tanyard had ceased to exist, and it appears that there were no tanyards thirty or so years earlier either, as they are not mentioned in the Tithe Maps of Loose or East Farleigh of 1840/1841, (East Farleigh then covering part of the present Loose area).

Cape Cottages, whose gardens had once formed part of the Brook House tanyard, were originally not cottages at all. Their lower part (below street level and facing north) had been stables, and the upper part - on Church Street (or Loose Street as it is named on John Bowra's 1761 map) - the hay loft. Indeed it has been pointed out that the original roof-line of the hay loft could, until recently, still be seen in the weatherboarded end of No.4 (as shown in Fig.2, a photograph taken in the summer of 1993), but is not now visible as that end has been refurbished.

Tanyards were useful to papermills, and were sometimes sited near to them, hoof and horn from the hides being used to produce size for the papermaking process. This

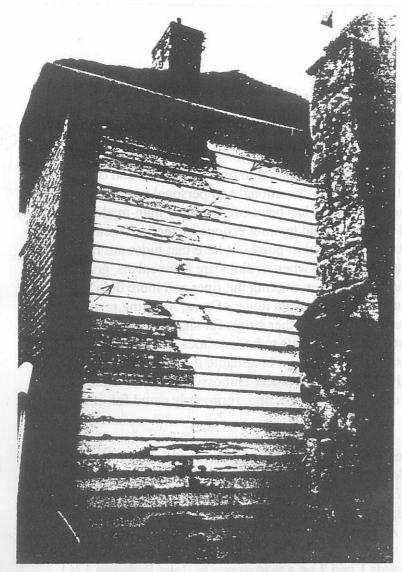


Fig.2: The weatherboarded end of No.4 Cape Cottages, in Church Street. The superimposed arrows point to the cuts which show the old roof-line of the building. (Photo. Frank Allchurch, 1993).

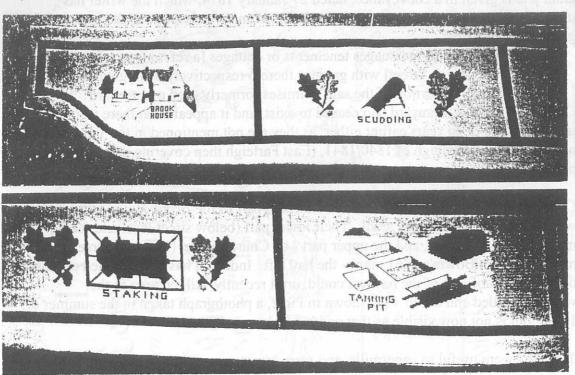


Fig.3: Tapestry seat runners from All Saints' Church, Loose, showing pictures related to the tanning industry of the village. (Photos. Frank Allchurch).

occurred at the *Vale House* site, where *Gurney's Mill* would have been next door in Salts Lane in the days before the viaduct was built.²

It is difficult to imagine what it was like living in Loose in those days, as tanyards were notoriously offensive to the nose with their rotting hides and offal, and the strong smelling tanyard pits; and especially so with four tanyards in the village. This local industry is commemorated on some of the tapestry runners made for the seats in All Saints' Church, Loose, as Fig.3 shows. *Brook House* is featured, and also shown are some details of the methods which were once employed in tanning. In the tanning pits hides were hung for lengthy periods in liquid containing lime, salt and and oak bark to soften and cleanse them. They were then treated in the beamhouse, so-called because a piece of equipment called a 'beam' was used to spread the hides upon for scraping off the fat and flesh with shaving and scudding knives, and the hair with an unhairing knife. Finally they were staked out.³



Records consulted have yielded the names of the following seven tanners in the Loose area:

Isaac Ware 1665 ⁴; Henry Austen 1687 ⁵; Joseph Charlton 1761 ⁶; John Jacques 1730 ⁷; John Wilkins 1730 ⁸; John Austen 1724 ⁹; and Thomas Fryland 1719 ¹⁰.

However, the tanyards of Loose must have created much other employment, not only directly but also indirectly to surrounding trades, and given much pleasure to the users of the products.

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PEAR TREE FARM: MEMORIES OF CHARLES AND BETTY NEWMAN

Dot and Robin Froud

In 1898 W.E. Bowles purchased the farm that was to be known as *Pear Tree Farm*. His father, Edmund Bowles rented *Martin's Farm* at Boughton Monchelsea (opposite the *Cock Inn*). Charles Newman was born on 12 April 1914, his grandmother being the sister of W.E. Bowles.

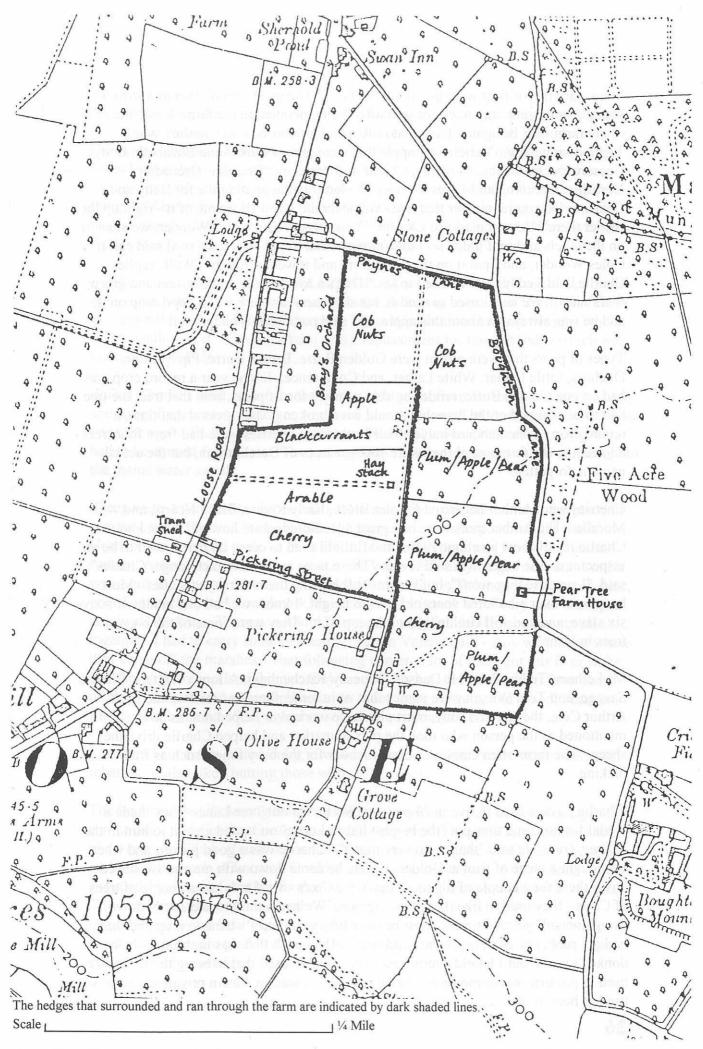
In his early years, Charles visited his great-grandfather at *Martin's Farm* from his home in south-east London, and would travel to *Pear Tree Farm* on the back of his second cousin Eddie's motorcycle; Eddie was managing the farm but living with his grandfather at *Martin's*. In 1925 Eddie Bowles had the farmhouse built on Boughton Lane; he married in 1928, but his wife died the following year. Subsequently, Charlie - only 15 years old - was 'more or less adopted by Eddie', as his parents had split up. When Eddie died, about 1933, his brother Reg took over, but Charlie effectively managed the farm. Betty Reed, later to become Betty Newman, came to *Pear Tree Cottage* as a girl of 8 in January 1930.

The boundary of the farm at this time extended along Boughton Lane to Paynes Lane, down the side of the latter to where Berwyn Grove now is, parallel with Loose Road to the present-day Norrington Road, down to and along the Loose Road, up Pickering Street as far as Leonard Gould's factory, and then up to Boughton Lane.

The piece of ground that is now Pear Tree Lane was sold to Mr Birch in 1931; Charlie remembers being present when the agreement was signed at Brighton where his uncle W.E. Bowles had a wholesale fruit and vegetable business. Around 1932/33 the piece that is now called Norrington Road was sold to the Hastings Building Society, the bottom corners being retained by Bowles to be sold about 1946; the building work on the earlier piece was done by Norman Smith. The Maidstone side of Pickering Street was sold in the mid-30s and, in Charlie's words, 'about £3 a foot that was sold for. And then the bottom bungalows - there was a man from Margate way bought that; he stayed with us for a little while, while he built those - I think they was about £300'. (The two small plots at the bottom and each side of Norrington Road were originally intended for shops, according to Roy Hood; his father, who owned the village shop and coal merchants, had an option on one plot.)

Around 1970, the ground that is now Birchfield Close, the extension of Norrington Road, and Leigh Avenue, were sold to Tilbury Construction, who purchased the rest of the farm in 1974. Walking round the area that was Pear Tree Farm, one can easily see the different times of sale from observation of the styles of architecture.

The farm grew soft fruit, vegetables, apples, cherries, damsons and cob nuts, and had pigs, sheep, chicken and geese. As the farm diminished, as a result of the sales for building, the vegetables gave way to orchards and the livestock numbers were reduced, although sheep were maintained until 1947 and three geese were still with us until the late 60s.



Pear Tree Farm around 1929 (shown on a six-inch to the mile OS map of 1909).

Many varieties of fruit were grown on the farm. The great-grandfather at *Martin's* kept a tree nursery, any trees not sold often being planted on the farm; hence the part of the farm near Boughton Lane that took most of them was, in Charlie's words, 'higgledy-piggledy'. Varieties of apple that were grown were Anne Elizabeth, Betty Geeson, Queen, Derby, Monarch, Christmas Pearmaine, Bramley, Grenadier, Yorkshire Greening and Coles Wonder, the latter being an old joke for Betty and Charlie. 'Do you remember that one - we never did know the name of it - right up the corner there?' Betty remarks to Charlie. 'You christened it Coles Wonder; we stuck it on the labels and sent it down. I didn't know what to put on it and [you] said call it Coles Wonder, and I put it on the order form and it went through.' 'Well', replies Charlie, 'old Teddy Cole he used to say "That's a lovely little apple, sweet and green, that's nice". We never used to send it, but this one year there was a good crop on it, and he was always on about this apple, so I said put Coles Wonder on it.'

Types of pears that were grown were Golden Burre, Brown Burre, Pip Mastion Duchess, Little Lamar, White Lamar, and Conference. In one year a record crop was had on one Golden Burre, rendering very nearly a ton of pears from that tree; the tree had to be propped or the branches would have broken. Also, around that time, a record crop of one hundred halves (half-bushels) of cherries were had from four trees adjacent to the farmhouse; they were younger trees of Dutch origin, but the actual name is forgotten.

Cherries were Amber Bigareau, Cluster Black, Early Rivers, Black Hearts, and Morello. The Amber trees were of a great age, though quite how old is not known. Charlie recalls how 'in about 1940, Fred Enfield used to come up here - used to be an inspector on the buses. He said to me, "These trees won't last much longer Charles"; I said, "I suppose they won't", but we was still picking them thirty years after. Must have been over a hundred years old.' As to height, 'I know we had one ladder of sixty-six stave, and you still couldn't get to the top of it. They were some of the biggest trees in Kent.'

Mr Letham, Teddy Cole, Mr Dadson, 'Mousey' Kitchenham, Alfonso Walters, Charlie Savage, and Tom Wilson were names that were remembered as staff on the farm. Arthur Cole, the son of Teddy, must also have worked or helped out as he is mentioned as the person who took the pigs to market and helped Charlie drive the sheep. The farm often employed casual labour for the busy times, such as fruit-picking.

'Charlie Savage used to live in *Hope Cottages* in Walnut Tree Lane. They made a medal for him, and they put "the biggest liar in Loose" on it, and gave it to him in the *Walnut Tree*. He said "thank you very much". Charlie was a good picker, and when we bought a piece of fruit at Golders Green, he came down with me and we stayed down there for a couple of nights. They were Cox's - we'd only got a couple of trees of Cox's - they used to like them for Brighton. We had a trailer - old Juddy down Boughton still got that trailer, must be over fifty years old - we made it up and that had got rubber tyres. They were solid tyres, off a coach that was in the stables for donkey's years, but I let old Juddy have that. But we used that to bring the fruit. We used to put that on our motor and bring it home. It was an Austin private car what we used to hook it on.'

A number of different horses were used on the farm, often originating from Brighton, where they would 'retire' horses used for delivery work to the farm, for lighter duty. One horse Charlie remembers in particular: 'we had a very big old black horse, but when I came down, I was staying over [at *Martins*] when they came and said he twisted himself with a rope, and he choked himself, more or less. He was a spiteful thing; he'd have the back of your hand, and he'd kick, a terrible thing. He was a worker though. Alphonso Walters used to look after him, a little old man, lived down those cottages where Cyril Horne used to live' - near the *King's Arms*.

The farm buildings, consisting of a large barn of some considerable age and a brick barn constructed in 1916, were situated at the Pickering Street end. In front of them was a small pond, fed by ground water. When this became shallow, the pigs would like to wallow in it. The brick barn was a replacement for the cart lodge which was burnt down in 1916.

Before Charlie's time, water for the farm was brought from Brishing stream in a cart, and water for use at the cottages was from a well. Around 1930, a standpipe was laid on at the top of Pickering Street, and from then until around 1950 all drinking water had to be carried from there. The cottages and farm buildings were then connected to the mains water supply.

Sheep were driven to Maidstone market for sale, and often driven from the place of purchase to the farm. Charlie recalls: 'I know one lot of sheep we bought was at Headcorn and we had to drive them from Headcorn to here, and I was only about sixteen; Arthur Cole was still at school - he was a little bit younger than me. And it was a hot day, and all that road from Headcorn to Sutton Valence was tarry, oh dear, your feet stuck to it. I don't know how many hours it took us. Every gate was open nearly all the way. There was about thirty ewes and their lambs, about sixty all together. I had to carry some of them up Sutton Valence hill - they were lame where they came off the marshes. That following winter, a lot of them got this liver fluke, and they'd go thinner and thinner, they used to die, and the lambs got it from their mothers. Oh, we had a mess! We had to shoot some of them, and we sold that lot. That would be about 1931, a year or so before my cousin Eddie died.'

The farm kept a ram called Toby; it was a 'Sussex', and apparently liked a chew of tobacco. It also liked butting those who didn't supply it!

The land between Pickering Street and Norrington Road was used for grazing in the earlier days, and *Garden Cottage* ground (on the private road by *Merriehills*) and the piece opposite *Slade House* was rented for sheep. During the WW2 years the apple orchard at the back of Leonard Gould's factory was also rented. Often sheep were 'boarded' over night for other farmers who were driving them to market for the May, October or November fair. At other times, the orchards were let for grazing to Gordon Duncanson (of *Pimp's Court Farm*), this mainly after his trees had been sprayed. 'They were glad of the grass, because if they'd sprayed, it would burn the grass. Tar oil would burn it just like disinfectant - kill all the worms, it used to.'

Spraying the trees was one of the main tasks on the farm. In the early days, an 'Amanco' sprayer was used - of American manufacture. It was started on petrol and then changed over to paraffin. It had to be either manhandled or pulled by a horse. The machine would be placed at a suitable spot, and then hoses run out to spray the adjacent area. When that had been sprayed, the machine would then be moved to another section. The trees were sprayed 'about every fortnight, so you would keep a certain amount on the leaf and apple up to about June, then the scab stops. Previous to that, any warm day with a drop of rain brings the scab out the ground, a sort of fungus. See, the English apples years ago were a bit more dirty than the foreign, but we've got the stuff now, we can compete with them, just as good, more tricky because we get different weather to what the French do. But you can't beat an English apple for flavour'.

Charlie remembers the tar oil spray: 'tar oil, oh blimey, that'd burn you, that really did used to burn. I had very sensitive skin, and if I was spraying - and also with lime sulphur - that used to crack me, my face would be terrible. We had one what we sprayed, it was a yellow stuff. My Tess, the sheep dog, she wouldn't leave me; she'd still sit there, and the drift come over, and turn yellow didn't she, yes all yellow. And a woman came to me one day and says, "What breed of dog is that?" I said, "Chinese". She thought it was!'

'DNOC, that was the name of the stuff - ditro nitro ortho creoso, or something. I had a belt off it which I didn't realise at the time: I had an old cap which I kept using for spraying, [and] when I came home I had a ring right round there [indicating where the hat-band would be]. I felt queer; I had to go and lay down. When I told the doctor he said that's what it was - being a hot day I'd absorbed some of it. It didn't half used to burn our eyes sometimes, and you couldn't put goggles on because it used to spray on them and you couldn't see what you was doing, so you had to take your goggles off. Of course, when we had the other sprayer it didn't matter: you was at the front and that was at the back, so it wasn't too bad.'

Fruit was either brought to the farm or collected for sale by the wholesale side at Brighton. 'We used to sometimes have two or three motors up here. We used to collect Archer's, Brislee's, Hartridge's and Don Druit's. Hartridges uncle used to sometimes take a load down. Brislee used to live along opposite Dr Bird [opposite Heath House on Heath Road]; we used to get rid of all his stuff. Druit used to have the farm down Stokett Lane, past the Bird in Hand down there on the left. He used to grow a lot of gooseberries. We used to have a lot of stuff from him - raspberries, strawberries - yes it all went down to Brighton. We've had stuff from Joan [Foster-Clark]. We'd often buy from local people who had a few trees.

'Bowles had quite a large wholesale business, the biggest in Brighton it probably was at one time. Potatoes, we used to have lots of potatoes too; they were potato merchants. We used to go up to Boxley and Daynums. They would have a five or ten ton load, sale on commission or buy them sometimes.'

'We made this our centre for empties. One time we used to have baskets; they all used to come from Lenham. They were for the growers to use - wasn't boxes, was all wicker baskets done in eights, mostly half-bushel. A few of the smaller ones, they

used them for tomatoes. We used to pack them. The cherries used to go in them till we started boxes. Did you have baskets when you came, Bett?'

'No, the only baskets I've helped you pack, when I was younger, was the cobnuts. Used to put blue paper with W.E. Bowles on it, and the crossed hazel nut sticks to keep it down, pointed at the ends to stick through the basket. We used to do that, cross them over.'

Charlie again: 'That used to be a wet weather job for old Teddy Cole, he'd only got one arm. I could never do it like him. They used to break the nut wands where the suckers came out, and then he'd chop them the right length and shave them off to a point. We used to push them in, and where they stuck out we used to trim them round. Then Dunkie and Archer's used to send us a lot of big Derbies. We'd pack them in bushel boxes, and then put blue paper over them and then put straw and a piece of string from one end to the other handle; that used to keep them from bruising.'

We wasn't so modern as some of them. We did hand grading, didn't we Bett? You got so used to it: first and seconds, any scabby ones we used to throw them separate - what we called the "cheap jacks"; would buy them for the market stalls. They was just as good an apple, only got a little brown mark on them. Well, people always skinned their apples for cooking, didn't they? There was a big market there. I have known the time we packed them in barrels - I think some of them went for mincemeat; someone used to use them. Those old Yorkshire Greenings we did one year - we had a row of them down near the farmhouse; they were eating or cooking.'

Looking after the hedges was a big job, as Charlie explains. 'They were all done by hand with a brishing hook, right round, all down Boughton Lane, Pear Tree Lane, and right along from Birch's house; and, previous to that, old Teddy Cole used to do it. There was the hedge right down to the bottom of Norrington, down to the Loose Road, then it used to go down to Paynes Lane, down Paynes Lane, right along. Of course, if you cut one side you had to cut the other.' '[Charlie] used to do the outside,' continues Betty, 'and I used to do the inside, as a rule, because he didn't like me being on the road.' 'And I made a better job', adds Charlie, to which Betty responds with 'No comment!'

Charlie explains how Teddy Cole lost his hand: 'Well, he had this gun. He must have put too much powder in it. He was out shooting, and the barrel burst, and it blew him off there [indicating the lower part of the arm], and it was hanging by a piece of leader there, and they wrapped him in a towel - it wasn't done here, it was done over Boughton - and they got him to the *Blue Door*, and gave him a drop of brandy, and took him to the West Kent. He'd signed, with his pal, to go to the Boer War. Of course he never did go. He didn't do it because he didn't want to go; he'd volunteered to go with old Perce Smith. Teddy Cole had a hook in place of his missing arm. He told me in, in the old days if you went down Stone Street it was a pretty rough old time to go down there, and some bloke got hold of him and gave him a clout or something. He said the next weekend he saw him, he thought "Now I'll have him". He said, "Come here", and got hold of him with his hook and tore his shirt right off

him, and said, "Don't you ever do that to me again". He could be a bit foul when he was upset. I used to be a bit scared of him.'

'He used to move our ladders', added Betty. He used to put the hook under the rung, and hold it with the other hand. Towards the end of the [day], when we was cherrying - of course it was piece-work - before five o'clock, we all used to be in a hurry to make another box up to get a bit more money, and about quarter to five if you wanted your ladder moved to get a few more cherries, [he'd say] "I'm not moving any more b----- ladders today. That's your lot." And he wouldn't move them for you. He'd sit on a box, and we'd have to run round the bottom of another tree to find a few cherries to make the box up, before they went in to be weighed - all for one and threepence a box.'

Asked about manpower during the war and the difficulties then, Charlie replied: 'Well, we were more or less on reserved occupations. That was because of the sheep mainly, and I was just about over the age. I think it was only volunteers went from the farms; even then some weren't allowed to go - depends what they did really. I was in the Home Guard at Tovil. About once a week we had to do guard duty. We'd do so long, and then we'd go in there and lay on a stretcher to rest. And someone had smelly feet, all over the blanket, in the winter, ohhh!' 'It was the same when I had to do fire-watching in the town,' interjected Betty. 'We used to have to take our turn with the men. Some of the blankets, oh, horrible!'

After the war, the farm needed less and less manpower. With the sheep no longer on the farm and less acreage to cover, Charlie only needed seasonal help. Of course, it kept him busy; he was often out spraying, or picking and packing in the late evenings.

The demise of *Pear Tree Farm*, brought about by the need for housing the increasing population, and the greater efficiency of farming, has deprived us all of the beauty of a farm on our doorstep.

We would like to thank Charlie and Betty for sharing their memories, and for their patience during the many sessions of interrogation to which they allowed us to subject them.

TAILPIECE

contributed by Pat Jenner

The spelling of parish officers in the 17th and 18th centuries - at Loose and elsewhere - was eccentric in the extreme:

Cervaers : Surveyors Feyseytashyn : Visitation
Arter david : Affidavit Frant and sens : Frankincense
Cilling a notter : Killing an otter Sillister : Solicitor
Waichin ye sorples : Washing the surplice Disses : Disease

From the Loose Parish Registers and The Parish Chest by W.E. Tate.

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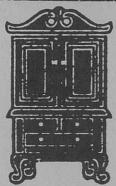
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