

LITTLE BADDOW
The History of an Essex Village

Part I – LORDS AND TENANTS
The manors, the land and the houses to c. 1840

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This booklet is based on a large number and variety of documents at the Essex Record Office and some court rolls at the Public Record Office. Numerous as they are they still leave many gaps. A few books have been consulted for information concerning the lords of the manors, principally Morant's History of Essex, the Dictionary of National Biography and Charles Strutt : The Strutts of Terling. The brief details of old houses issued by the former Ministry of Housing and Local Government have been used; also information kindly supplied by an architect of the Department of the Environment.

I am indebted to the staff of the Essex Record Office, who have produced many hundreds of documents for me over the years, and to people in and out of Little Baddow who have answered my questions about the village.

The drawings in the text are adapted from various mediaeval sources not connected with Little Baddow. The examples of handwriting used as section headings are taken from documents concerning the village. The rough sketch maps are of different scales, and generally the names on them are pre-nineteenth century. The cover picture is from an early twentieth century drawing by H.M. Paterson.

I hope to produce further booklets covering other aspects of the parish history, bringing it up to the present time.

Sheila V. Rowley, Little Baddow. 1975

Introduction

Many parishes in the county of Essex display the characteristics of areas which have been colonised from forest – they consist of small hamlets, often grouped around greens; the farms are scattered; there are several manors, with one manor house and the church standing together, isolated from any other settlement. Little Baddow is an example of this type of parish.

In the absence of modern excavation it is impossible to be certain about the early development of the village of Little Baddow. In spite of a few archaeological finds, there is no reason to suppose that there was any permanent settlement in the area until the Celts colonised the high point overlooking the river, and possibly along the river as well, probably some time during the third century B.C. The isolated neolithic flints, scraps of early pottery and the ox-horn dredged from the river imply no more than that there were ancient trackways through the forest. The twelve late bronze age celts (axe-heads) found near New Lodge in 1881 are considered to have been the stock-in-trade of a travelling smith of around 600 B.C., and so may the five found on Little Baddow common in about 1720.

The Celtic settlement may have been in occupation throughout the Roman period, when it is probable that there was a small Roman farm, approximately on the site later to be occupied by the church. If, as has been suggested, “Baddow” derives from the Celtic name for the River Chelmer, possibly meaning “birch stream”, it is likely that the Celts were still here when the Saxons arrived, perhaps in the sixth century A.D., or even (as at Rivenhall) soon after the Romans left. The earliest known use of the name “Beadewan” for the river is in a document of circa 975 A.D.

The Saxons, as was their general practice, seem to have made their settlements on the lower land, their primary requirements being a water supply, soil suitable for crop growing and some protection from the elements. A few family groups, as they arrived, no doubt each selected a forest glade and laboriously cleared the land around until there was a number of compact farms. Certainly by the Middle Ages a line of farms lay parallel with the river – Apsfields, Hammonds, Phillows, Rees, Bubbs, Pilcherines, Powleas and Old Bassetts. A few of these may well have been Saxon in origin, while the others may have been settled during the first century or two after the Norman Conquest. Other farmsteads that may have an early origin existed along the tracks, near a water supply, such as Cuckoos, Holybreads, Gibbs, Harwards and Belmers. No doubt Little Baddow Hall and Tofts manor house originated as Saxon farms, and Graces and Riffhams houses may have had early beginnings. A watermill has almost certainly been on the same site since Saxon times.

Christianity would have come at earliest during the late seventh century, and, probably nearly three centuries later, the scattered settlements were grouped into the ecclesiastical parish, coinciding with the bounds of the two “manors” which had been built up – “Badwen” and “Mildemet”. The lords of Badwen must have erected a cross or rudimentary church beside their homestead, resulting in the parish taking the name of Badwen and later the church becoming the

parish church. When the county “Hundreds” were formed (soon after the parishes) for civil and legal purposes, Badwen was included in the Chelmsford Hundred, while Mildemet was in the Dengie Hundred, and this arrangement continued for about a thousand years until the Hundreds ceased to have any function.

Mediaeval settlements, following the Norman Conquest, on land gradually taken from the waste to accommodate a growing population, are implied in names containing the words “green”, “end” or “street”. In Little Baddow such settlements could have been those grouped around Wickhay Green, York Street, Coldham End, Parsonage Green and perhaps Dales Green and Loves Green. The largest and undoubtedly earliest of these very small hamlets was that around Wickhay Green; perhaps the last to be settled was Coldham End, for, as its name implies, it did not hold much attraction for the settlers. These hamlets consisted mainly of the cottages of the craftsmen and land-workers.

As well as the enclosed fields of the individual farms and cottages, there were areas of common land (or waste) and of meadow land, the use of which by the lords’ tenants was governed by immemorial tradition. The rights and duties of every occupier of farm or cottage had evolved over the centuries, a compromise between the demands of the lord and the resistance to them of his tenants. The serfs or villeins (mostly Saxons) of Domesday Book (1086), performing menial services for the lord in return for their tenements, became the copyholders or customary tenants of the later Middle Ages, paying a quit rent in money or kind. The freemen (mostly Normans) became the freeholders, paying small money rents.

The population of the parish during the Middle Ages appears to have been comparatively small. At the Norman Conquest there may have been between 100 and 150 people and slightly less by Domesday Book – this was fewer than in Boreham but more than in Danbury. In 1327 there were 16 men and 2 women with movable goods worth more than 10s., rendering them liable for the “lay subsidy” a tax amounting to the twentieth part of the value of their movable goods. Ten of these were in the Little Baddow portion of the parish and the remainder in Middlemead. Perhaps the Black Death affected the village, as the 1381 Poll tax, levied on everyone over 15 years of age, for the Little Baddow portion totalled only 21 men and their wives, 6 other men, 5 women and 1 female pauper. The Middlemead figures have not survived. By 1524, when Henry VIII imposed his first subsidy, there were 16 people sufficiently wealthy to be taxed in Middlemead. The Little Baddow figures do not exist for this subsidy, but twenty years later there were 23 names for Little Baddow and 18 for Middlemead. Probably by Elizabethan times the total population had risen to about 250. There may have been about 300 villagers by 1642 when 73 men (over 18 years of age) subscribed to the Oath of Protestation. The Hearth Tax returns of 1671/2 show 46 householders in the Little Baddow portion of the parish and 28 in Middlemead, with 5 in receipt of poor relief, which implies a population of at least 350. In 1780 there were said to be 352 inhabitants, but there may have been more for, when the first Census was taken only 21 years later, in 1801, there were 456 men, women and children, comprising 86 families living in 71 houses. In 1831 there were 122 families in 110 houses, totalling 548 persons. The

population rose to 622 by 1861 then dropped until in 1901 it was 510, after which it started rising again.

The Manors

At the time of the Norman Conquest of 1066 the portion of the parish called Badwen had been divided into two parts, one being the manor that became Little Baddow Hall manor, and the other probably later forming the lesser manor called Graces. There were two Saxon lords: Lewin, who held the whole of Badwen, and Alwin who held Mildemet. Twenty years later it was recorded in the Domesday Book that Badwen manor was held by Germund from Ralph Baynard, Lord of Dunmow, for three knight's fees. A knight's fee involved military service and in this case the holder was expected to contribute towards the manning of Baynard's Castle in London. It may have been Germund who started building the present church beside his manor house, using various materials which included some Roman brick, perhaps found locally. The other part of Badwen was held by Lambert from Earl Eustace of Boulogne, while Mildemet manor was held by Ralph FitzBrien from the Bishop of London.

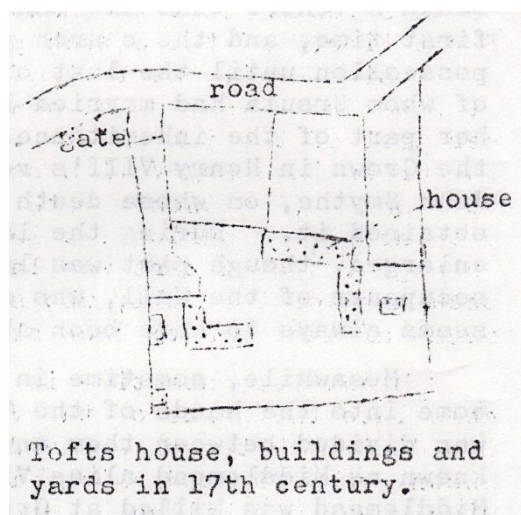
Ralph Baynard's grandson rebelled unsuccessfully against Henry I, his lands were forfeited and those in Little Baddow given to the Fitzwalter family. In Henry II's reign Richard de Badew was holding the Hall manor from the Fitzwalters, as was Richard Filiol in the mid-thirteenth century, but a little later the Burnell family were chief tenants. They administered their manors of Little Baddow, Graces and Little Waltham from their Boreham manor. At least by the time of the Filiols the military service had been commuted to a money payment of 18s 4d every 24 weeks towards the ward of Baynard's Castle. The last of the Filiols, Cecily, married Sir John de Bohun, a Sussex knight, but on the death of her mother in 1346, the manor seems to have been taken into the King's hands and committed first to John Fermer and, on his death, to Roger de Poleye, before it was finally granted to Cecily in 1368. It was during the de Bohun's tenure that the manor house was rebuilt, no doubt not for the first time, and the church partially rebuilt. The de Bohuns remained in possession until the last of them died in the 1490s, leaving two daughters of whom Ursula had married Robert Southwell and took the Hall manor with her part of the inheritance. Her nephew and heir alienated the manor to the Crown in Henry VIII's reign, and in 1572 Queen Elizabeth granted it to John Smythe, on whose death in 1607 Anthony Penninge, from Ipswich, obtained it. During the late sixteenth century the manor house had been enlarged, though part was later to be demolished. The land farmed by the occupants of the Hall, who since at least 1346 must have been tenants, seems always to have been about 200 acres.

Meanwhile, sometime in the thirteenth century, Middlemead manor had come into the hands of the Videluy or Videler and then Toft families and was divided between them and the Bassett family, the main portion becoming known as Middlemead alias Videluys alias Tofts. An Edmund Videler from Middlemead was killed at Great Tey in 1381 after the suppression of the peasants' revolt. William Toft died in 1470 (and is commemorated by a brass plaque in the church), leaving Tofts manor to his daughter, Isabella, who married Thomas Smyth of Rivenhall. Their son, Sir Clement, married Dorothy, the sister of Jane Seymour, Henry VIII's third wife. He lived at Tofts manor house (perhaps indeed rebuilding or enlarging it) which was surrounded by its park and warren, and he died there in 1552. His son, John, inherited the manor but spent much time

abroad, serving with distinction in foreign armies and being sent by the English government on diplomatic missions. He was knighted in 1576. He acquired the manors of Little Baddow Hall, Graces, Riffhams and Mowden Hall (in Hatfield Peverel), but, owing to financial difficulties, in 1577 mortgaged Mowden Hall and Graces to Lord Burleigh and another. Finally he sold all his lands except Little Baddow and Tofts manors. From 1578 he lived at Tofts and became involved in local affairs. John Norden, in his contemporary survey of Essex, described "Tuftes" as "a fayre howse". At the time of the Armada Sir John trained some regiments of foot raised in Essex and took them to Tilbury to join the army under the Earl of Leicester. He is said to have told Leicester that the rest of the Army was inadequately trained. No doubt some Little Baddow men went with Sir John and might even have been among those who heard Queen Elizabeth make her famous speech at Tilbury. During the 1590s Sir John wrote books on weapons. In June 1596 he was charged with treason and sent to the Tower for some incautious words spoken at Colchester. He apologised and was released on condition he did not go more than one mile from his house. In Little Baddow he died and was buried on 1st September 1607, but no monument remains to perpetuate the memory of one of the most interesting of the lords of the manors.

Tofts and Little Baddow manors were then acquired by Anthony Penninge and both descended to his grandson, Henry, who was a minor and in the guardianship of trustees. He grew up to be a spendthrift. In 1649 he mortgaged part of the manor house of Tofts and its lands for £216, the parts of the house being "the Roome called the old Nurserie and the Roome within the same the little Cellar ioyneing thereunto The Chamber over the Long Chamber Two Chambers over the Wash House and Bakehouse The outward Dairy and the inner dairy Two Chambers over the said dairy And the little Butrie within the same dairyes with the use of the Ovens in the Brewhouse att convenient times One great Barne the great Hay House and the hay house called the Coach house The Stable and the little house adioyneing to the said Coach house The Cart house and two little houses adioyneing to the same The henn house adioyneing to the Mill house Three hoggs coates and the Swill house together with the little hogg yeard adioyneing to the said hoggs Coates". He also mortgaged Little Baddow Hall, then in the occupation of Jacob Maldon, but apparently redeemed it and made it part of Frances Thelwall's jointure when they married in 1649.

Finally by 1652 Henry was forced by the amount of his debts to sell all his Little Baddow lands. He owed, for instance, £500 to a London merchant tailor for "Clothes apparell and other like necessaries"; £600 to a London clothworker; £400 to a London grocer, besides debts to local people. One of the Essex family of Barrington, Mr (later Sir) Gobert Barrington, bought both Little Baddow Hall and Tofts manors for the sum of £6,648 and the payment of Henry's outstanding debts. Like Sir



John Smythe and the Penninges he lived at Tofts and let the Hall, Edmund Butler being his tenant for most of the last half of the century. The returns exist of the 1671 (Middlemead) and 1672 (Little Baddow) Hearth Tax imposed by Parliament, and show that Sir Gobert had 17 hearths in his house and that Edmund Butler paid tax on 7 hearths at the Hall.

On Sir Gobert's death, Francis and his wife, Elizabeth Shute, took over the estate and resided at Tofts. The Hall was occupied by John Bruce. It was Francis who in 1708 gave the field called Bridge Croft for the purpose of building a "Meeting house for the public worshipping of God by the dissenting congregation of Protestants", and he and his wife gave £200 each for the use of the congregation, part of which was reputedly spent in 1794 to build the ministers' house beside the chapel. Francis had no surviving children, so he left the manors to his elder brother from whom he had purchased them. Thomas lived to enjoy "the seate with the orchard Garden Fish ponds Dove House and with all the Lands Meadow and Pasture" for three years, dying in 1711, also without issue. By his will he desired to be buried at Hatfield Broad Oak (the Barrington family home) "with as much privacy as may be...not to Exceed Fifty pounds in my Funerall". He left to his "Dear Friend and Kinsman Sir Charles Barrington one Diamond Ring with my wifes hair inclosed in it", and to an "old and faithful servant" £100.

A relation of Elizabeth, John Shute, inherited the manors and took the name of Barrington, later being created Viscount Barrington. His five sons became famous in their different fields – the eldest a Member of Parliament and Cabinet Minister, one a Major-General, another an Admiral, another a Judge and antiquary and the youngest a Bishop. The eldest son succeeded to the title and the manors in 1734 but leased Tofts as well as the Hall. In 1778 John Strutt, a wealthy miller who had already purchased land at Terling, bought both manors for £22,000. He lived at Terling Place and extended the leases, granted by Lord Barrington, of the Hall to Thomas Taylor (and then to his son) and of Tofts manor house, which had been "turned into and used as a Farm house", to Richard Sorrell and his son. Tofts later became the inheritance of John Strutt's second surviving son.

This son, William Goodday Strutt, after leaving Felsted School, joined the Army where he had a distinguished career. In 1796 he lost his right leg in action in the West Indies, made an effort to continue in the army, but was obliged to retire in 1798, with the rank of Major-General. He never married but lived at Terling with his father, whom he helped with the administration of his estates, especially interesting himself in the Little Baddow portions. His father and brother were for many years in turn Members of Parliament for Maldon, and all three were Justices of the Peace. On his father's death in 1816, his brother inherited the Terling estate and Little Baddow Hall manor, while the General was left a sum of money and Tofts, which he had been leasing from his father. He rebuilt the manor house, diverted the road to run further away from it, and lived there, often in pain, surrounded by dogs. A Witham artist painted him in 1835 sitting in his wheelchair. He also built a house at Southend, but seems to have spent most of his energies in running his own manor and helping his brother, who was often absent in London or Bath, with his estates. A number of letters to his brother

exist (one written with the left hand because he had gout) concerning estate matters. General Strutt died aged 86 at Tofts on 5th February 1848, three years after his brother, and was buried in the family vault at Terling. His nephew succeeded to Tofts and leased it to his unmarried sister who lived there for part of every year.

“Myddlemade alias Bassetts”

After the division of Middlemead manor, the portion called Bassetts remained with the Bassett family until about the 1390s when it passed to the Rawsons. Their heiress married John Blake, probably early in the sixteenth century. Richard Blake and Mabel, his wife, were lord and lady of the manor from at least 1558 until Richard died in 1588 and was succeeded by his son, Giles. It was at this time that New Bassetts, timber-framed and tiled, was built, and the old house, also rebuilt during this century, reverted to being a farm. Anthony Penninge acquired the manor in about 1620 and it descended to Henry Penninge, who mortgaged it and then sold it in 1650 to Moundeford Bramston, second son of Sir John Bramston of Boreham (later of Roxwell). He lived at Bassetts, stocked the land and became a grazier, but raised £800 on it in 1657. He was knighted in 1661, having had royalist sympathies during the Civil Wars. There were 8 hearths at Bassetts on which he paid tax in 1671. His third son, George, of Doctors Commons, succeeded in 1679, dying twenty years later and leaving the manor to his daughter, Theodosia. She married Sir Robert Abdy and it was held by the Abdy family thenceforth, although usually in the occupation of tenants. One of these was William Gladwin, who in 1802 insured the house (which was just within Woodham Walter parish boundary) for £200 and the buildings (which were in Little Baddow) consisting of timber-built and tiled barns, stables and granaries and thatched oxbouses and hay barn, together with the stock, hay, corn etc., furniture and wearing apparel for £1,200.

“The Mannor of Gracys”

Graces manor, which had its own free chapel, passed through various hands until in the thirteenth century it reached the le Gras family from whom it took its name. They held it from the Burnell family (whose main manor in the area was at Boreham) for the quarter of a knight's fee, and later it was owned by the Earls of Oxford. The Coggeshall family were in possession at the end of the fourteenth century and the Darcy family held it from the Earls of Oxford during the fifteenth century and into the Tudor period. Sir Clement Smyth obtained it and passed it on to his son, Sir John, who mortgaged it in 1577 and then sold it for £1,800 to Arthur Herry in 1591. Sir Henry Mildmay had bought it and settled there by 1612. He had fought in the wars in Ireland and was knighted at Dublin Castle (not on the field of battle as his tomb says) in 1605. He was Member of Parliament for Maldon three times, Sheriff of Essex in 1628 and a Deputy Lieutenant of the County. By his will of 1637 he desired to be buried beside his first wife, Alice, and left £40 to his second wife's brother, John Gurdon, to erect a tomb in the chancel of Little Baddow church. His son and heir, Henry, born in 1619, was educated at Felsted School, then under a Puritan master. On his father's death his mother was granted by the King his “Custody wardship and marriage”, as he was under age and therefore had become a ward of the Crown,

for which she paid £1,333.6.8 “for the Use of his Majesty”. The “Extente” of the lands left by Sir Henry included Graces manor (held direct from the King) with “All the Messuages Landes Tenementes and Hereditaments” and the “Chappell called Graces in Little Baddowe”. This is the last reference to the chapel. Henry became a Colonel of Horse in the Parliamentary Army in the Civil Wars and was present at the siege of Colchester. In 1672 he tried, by rather dubious means and unsuccessfully, to convict the Bramston brothers (one of them Sir Moundeford of Bassetts manor) of papacy.

A younger son of Sir Henry, Walter, died unmarried in 1648, leaving money to several members of his family, either to buy a ring or “a peece of plate”, but the main part of his possessions to his “deare and loving mother Dame Amy Mildmay...as a small testimony of my great thankfullness to hir for all hir love and extraordinary tender care”.

The Colonel’s daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of Edmund Waterson became heiress to the manor and she left it to Edmund Fowler, her nephew whose daughter, Frances, married Sir Brooke Bridges of Goodnestone, Kent. It descended to their son in the early nineteenth century, who leased it to J.P. Simmons and then to Joseph Yell.

It must have been the Darcy family who, during the reign of Henry VIII had the brick manor house built, the largest building ever erected in the parish, part only of which now survives, while the brick out-buildings of a century later must have been added by the Mildmays. Colonel Mildmay in 1672 paid tax on 26 hearths. The Mildmays probably laid out Graces Walk. In 1771 an Essex historian wrote “The mansion house on this manor is a noble building. It is approached thro’ a very extensive avenue of lofty trees which give it an heir of great grandeur. It is at present the seat of the right honourable lord Huntingtower.” Lord Huntingtower was only one of a number of tenants to occupy the house from the mid-eighteenth century.

“Mannor of Reiffains”

Riffhams seems to have been created during the Middle Ages as a subsidiary manor of Graces, but with few manorial rights. Richer and John de Refham lived in the village in 1308, but later there were Coggeshalls at both Graces and Riffhams. In the fifteenth century the Coggeshalls were holding Riffhams from the Darcys of Graces. It passed to Sir Thomas Charlton, whose son, a supporter of Richard III, was attainted by Henry VII. Riffhams was given to Sir John Rysley. Henry VIII gave it to Sir William Compton and sometime after 1560 Sir John Smythe came into possession. Sir John relinquished the property and Queen Elizabeth granted it to Thomas Spencer in 1597. He continued the lease Sir John had given to Thomas Emery and re-granted it to his son, who later became “a lunatique”. William Spencer was in possession in the 1670s, paying tax on 8 hearths, and Francis Perkins bought the manor in about 1690. Robert Clarke of Pleshy was owner from 1717 until his death in about 1764. Following several mortgages, Nicholas Coke acquired it in 1780, but soon disposed of it to Charles Phillips, Vicar of Terling. J.R.S. Phillips built New Riffhams in Danbury (at first called Riffhams Lodge) in the early nineteenth century, and the old house, dating

back perhaps to William Compton's time but much altered by later owners was let to tenants and by mid-century had become the home of three labourers and their families.

Lordship and Mannor

The ownership of a manor involved far more than the house, lands and tenements, as is shown by the grant of Little Baddow Hall manor to Sir John Smythe. He was put in possession of the "Lordshipp and Mannor of Littell Baddowe...and all and singular Messuages Landes tenements Mylles Howses Barnes Stables dovehouses Cottages medowes pastures feedinges woodes underwoodes waters Fysshinges Rentes Revercions and Services Courtes Leetes profittes of Courtes and Leetes Fynes amerciamentes wayfes strayes goodes and Chattelles of felons and fugitives Deodandes Wardes Marriages eschetes freewarrens Liberties Frannchisses Jurisdicions profittes Commodities and hereditamentes whatsoever".

An example of the survival of one of these rights (a deodand) occurred as late as 1782 at Little Baddow Hall manor court, when it was reported that John Hayes had died and that "according to the verdict of the Inquest impannelled and sworn by the Coroner of this County to enquire into the cause of the death of the said John Mayes he acquired his death by the wheel of a Cart belonging to the said John Mayes running over him and that such Cart Wheel is therefore a deodand and forfeited to the Lord of this Manor and that Deborah Stone the executor of the deceased being present here in Court compounded for the said deodand and paid to the Lord of this Manor the sum of Two shillings and sixpence for the same".

The administration of a manor was generally entrusted to a steward, aided by a bailiff. The steward presided over the manor courts, which dated back to the Middle Ages. By Tudor times, when the main surviving Little Baddow records start, the courts were being held irregularly and infrequently, but all the tenants, free or customary, still owed "suit of court". This meant that they were obliged to attend every court or send a valid excuse to avoid a fine. The courts had originally been largely responsible for law and order in their parishes by means of the ancient system of frankpledge which ensured that every man was in a "tithing" (originally ten households) all of whose members were answerable for the others' conduct. The part of the courts' proceedings which dealt with such matters became known as the View of Frankpledge or Court Leet. By Tudor times the Court Leet mainly judged and imposed fines for misdemeanours against manorial regulations such as not scouring ditches or keeping hedges in repair, cutting down trees without licence or encroaching on the common. When the court was dealing with the tenancies of the lands and houses it was called the Court Baron. The court proceedings were written down on long parchment sheets, which were carefully kept rolled up together – hence their name of "court rolls" – and they formed the authentic record of a man's claim to his tenement and also the record of the "customs of the manor".

The Hall and Tofts manors were no doubt entitled from early times to hold Court Leets, but in about 1576 the Queen's Bench indicted Richard Blake because he

had “for the space of a year last past without any warrant held View of Frankpledge within the manor of Bassetts...to the great contempt of the Queen etc.” The Court Leets seem to have been discontinued after Richard Blake’s death, but in 1789 the Rev. T A Abdy was claiming that Bassetts manor was “Anciently a Court Leet”. Graces manor also does not appear to have had authority for a Court Leet, though it held a Court Baron, and Riffhams had no court at all.

There survives the steward’s instruction to the Bailiff of Bassetts manor “to summon and warn, in the accustomed Method, the general Court Baron and customary Court of the rev. Thomas Abdy Abdy, Clerk, Lord of the said Manor”, for 15th January 1784, “at Eleven of the Clock in the Forenoon of that Day”. He was to “summon thither all tenants, Suitors, and all others who have anything to do there, to be then and there present, to do their several Suits and Services, and also to pay their Quit rents” and was ordered to “be you yourself also then and there present to make Return of this your Warrant, and to do and execute what else belongs to your office”. Normally the notice was read in church on the two Sundays previous to the date specified. On 20th October 1773 the Bailiff certified that he had “stuck up this paper on the Door of the parish church of Little Baddow on Sunday last”. The Courts generally met at the manor houses of the respective manors. A Jury (or Homage) was chosen and sworn in and then the business conducted. At the end of the proceedings, according to General Strutt, “my Father...used to give the Homage if there was but little to do only 10s. 6d. but if there was a fair proportion of fines received he gave £1” – with which presumably the Homage repaired to the ale-house. After John Strutt’s first court however there was a dinner, apparently held at Tofts, because Richard Sorrell, then tenant, was paid £2.12.6. “the expenses of Court Dinner exclusive of the punch the Lord voluntarily gave”. The expenses included 34 lb. of beef at 4d. a lb., 10 lb. of lamb at 5d., bread puddings, beer and “trouble whare and tare”.

Strife and contencion between Lord and Lord

The only time, apart from the Saxon period, when the parish was in the hands of no more than two lords was when Sir John Smythe held all the manors, except Bassetts. Friction was no doubt inevitable and the earliest documented disputes occurred in Sir John’s time. In 1593 in a lease of Bowling Alley House Sir John instructed his tenant, Thomas Heath, to learn the south and south east bounds of Little Baddow Common “and after knowledge had of the said boundes shall seke to have them kept in memorie for the avoyding of strife and contencion between Lord and Lord”. There was however “strife and contencion” between Sir John and Richard Blake of Bassetts. In 1575 Bassetts tenants were ordered at their manor court to enquire into the bounds of the common land of that manor and at the next court in 1576 they reported that they had examined old tenants and residents and determined the true bounds. They also reported that James Wever had erected a house on part of Bassetts common without licence of the lord and “as it is said specifically at the instance and desire of a certain John Smythe esquire lord of the manor of Tufte”, who claimed the land as part of his common of Tofts. At the next court in 1577 the dispute between the two lords was again under discussion. A tenant of Bassetts, John Draper, had affirmed

before “that worthy man John Smyth knight” that the land in question (known as Loves green) belonged to Tofts “which thing is not true”. John Draper was put on oath at the court and this time affirmed that to his certain knowledge the land had, ever since he could remember, that is for 40 years, been within Bassetts manor. All the rest of the tenants present affirmed this to be true. Because the lord of Bassetts had sustained loss and expense through the false testimony of John Draper, as an example and deterrent to all false witnesses, his lands and tenements were to be seized immediately by the bailiff.

Over a century later the ownership of the green was still in dispute and some acrimonious letters passed between Dr George Bramston and Francis Barrington on the subject. Bramston wrote “I desire to know wheather you will remove your gate placed upon my wast or do insist that it stands upon your own ground...” He was answered by Barrington “I have been diligent to get the opinion of my Lawyer concerning your pretentions and his Answer to me is that my Right to all that waste to which you make a Claime is so very indisputable that he Councels me by no meanes to allow of any Reference concerning itt...And until this matter be decided in a Legall way I pray you would forebeare to threaten or discourage any of my Tenants in their Lawfull employments to whome I have given full Assurances of protection and will support them in that Right which they derive from me...” As Dr Bramston died shortly after this, the matter seems to have ended for the time being but by 1800 Tofts manor was firmly in possession.

In 1677 Sir Gobert Barrington had a map drawn up by Ralph Dowsett showing the bounds of the manors of Little Baddow Hall and Tofts and giving an index of the field and house names and their tenants. The Court of 1680 said that it was a true map and prayed that it be enrolled for the information of posterity. In 1723 additions were made to it. For at least the following two centuries this map seems to have been constantly consulted, especially whenever a dispute arose. An undated memorandum of the early eighteenth century referring once again to Bassetts’ claim to Loves green says that it was “represented by my great Mapp” to be part of Tofts common. This memorandum, to determine whether Tofts and Little Baddow manors were “paramount” to the other manors in the parish, consists of answers given by Mr Solmes and Mr Pitman, two tenants, to certain questions posed presumably by the then lord of the two manors, John Shute Barrington. Mr Solmes said there were no Court Leets held by the other manors and that residents had to attend the Court Leets of the two paramount manors and were “fin’d if they do not”. He also said that there was a pound at Graces, but he did not know of any beast pounded there, while Mr Pitman agreed and added that he had heard there was one at Old Bassetts, but thought there was none at Riffhams. Both affirmed that neither Graces nor Riffhams had any waste, “except a bit enclosed adjoining the yard”, but that Bassetts claimed Loves green.

At about the same time, in 1719, the inhabitants of Little Baddow, marshalling their oldest men, who quoted their fathers and grandfathers, claimed that from “time out of mind” they had been used to cut wood and bushes on Baddow Common, including the part called Twitty fee, but that now Sir John Tyrrell “pretending Twyttiffee to be a mannor belonging to him has lately inclosed the

same with a Hedge and Ditch”, thus preventing them from exercising their rights. Apparently, as advised by a lawyer, one of these inhabitants, to put the matter to the proof, brought a court case against Sir John, which it seems Sir John lost.

Tree felling was another cause of contention between lords, especially as they so often held land in each other’s manors. As late as 1811 Sir Brooke Bridges of Graces was apologising to John Strutt for felling trees without licence as he “did not know of your manorial rights extending over the fields at Coldham end”. There was also trouble a few years later between the Phillips family of Riffhams and the Strutts. J.R. Spencer-Phillips had a large elm cut down for repairs to a freehold house he held on Strutt property and was told that timber was not allowed for repairing freehold premises. The custom of the manor of Little Baddow Hall entitled the lord to a third of the value of all trees (but not underwood) felled on copyhold lands.

Bounds

The only recorded disagreement between the parish and its neighbours occurred with Danbury, when they could not agree on the boundary between the parishes at Lingwood common. Boundaries between manors and parishes were shown by marked trees or ground marks. At the court of 1595 Tofts tenants were ordered to repair their boundary marks. For centuries the Squire Oak marked the boundary between Little Baddow and Tofts manors on the High common. Philip Morant, the Essex historian, in the mid-eighteenth century said that “The Squire Oak is a noted tree and still standing”, but in 1810 a document spoke of “the spot where the Squire Oak formerly stood”. In 1593 there was “a great oake standing upon a bank which devideth Woodham Walter Common from Tofts Common” and this oak is shown on the map of 1677. Another well-known landmark was the High Birch (by 1811 “the high birch stump”) where several Manors and divisions of Hundreds meet”. “Ground marks” were usually posts, as an occasional reference indicates, such as in 1726 – “a post is sett downe as the boundary”.

It seems that there had been doubt about the true bounds between Little Baddow and Danbury at least from 1593 when Sir John Smythe instructed his tenant, Thomas Heath, to learn the bounds between “Lyngwood crosse” and Woodham Walter common. Two centuries later, in a Perambulation of 8th May 1777, “as gone by me Richard Sorrell”, when he arrives at Lingwood common he says, “Now the Bounds are disputeable. Little Baddow claims part of the Common and Danbury claims it all but the best advice I could get was from Daniel Burchil an old man who had gone the Bounds 3 or 4 times and had known the same for 50 or 60 years”. He then wrote down what Daniel Burchil said. In 1811 the dispute came to a head when the parishioners of Little Baddow resolved to walk and mark their bounds, especially those adjoining Danbury, on Ascension Day. The Vicar of Little Baddow (Rev A Johnson) gave notice of this intention to the Rector of Danbury and requested his parishioners also to attend. He received the reply from the Rector that if the Little Baddow parishioners “infringe upon the undoubted rights of the Parish of Danbury with a Bodkin they will do it at their Peril”. Ten Little Baddow residents attended, including the Vicar, General Strutt, the Church Clerk and the Constable, and a similar number of

Danbury men appeared. When they reached Patten Well on the edge of Lingwood Common, General Strutt ordered the boundary claimed by Little Baddow to be marked by driving a plough along it.

Sir Brooke Bridges promptly brought an action against the General for breaking up his soil, as he contended that his manor of St. Clere was co-extensive with the parish of Danbury. The Strutts considered that he had acted too precipitately and left them no time to prepare their case. Letters passed between both parties and their solicitors, each trying to avoid a court case but equally unwilling to give in. The Strutts gathered evidence from old men of the village such as John Orton, who, the Vicar wrote, "is a Complete Cicumambulator" and David Saward, aged 74, who had been going the bounds for sixty years. The Rev. Johnson said that Danbury had altered the boundary slightly because they complained that they had all the roads to keep up and so they thought they "might throw, by way of compliment, some Rods of very bad Road into the kind keeping of the people of Little Baddow". Finally the case came to court and General Strutt, on the advice of his solicitors, allowed judgment to go by default. Damages were assessed at £5 instead of the one shilling usual in such cases, annoying the Strutts who blamed Sir Brooke's solicitor. Sir Brooke assured them he was "not actuated by any vindictive motive" in bringing the action and hoped no future case would upset "the cordiality and good fellowship that ought to subsist between persons whose Properties are so much connected". He voluntarily reduced the £5 to 1s.

The Highways

Roadways were the responsibility of the inhabitants at large and not of the manors, and in 1597 Tofts court noted that "the foote Cawsay" between Huskards mead gate and Huskards Mill (i.e. across Tofts' meadowland) was ruinous and that from time immemorial the inhabitants of Little Baddow had been accustomed to repair it. The court ordered that if they did not do it before the festival of St. John the Baptist they would be fined 10s. The Quarter Sessions were sometimes obliged to admonish the parish for default in working on the highways or for damaging them. The manor courts too had to fine tenants for such offences as digging holes in the roads or not cutting back trees. A few public-spirited people left money in their wills for the repair of highways. A military report of 1797 said that "Coleham Road" and the road from "Spring Elm" were "sound and passable at all time" and the road from Danbury was "A hard gravel road". The poor of the parish were sometimes given employment picking up stones from the fields, digging in the gravel pits and using these materials for repairing the roads.

Some of the names given by the mediaeval villagers to their roadways – Cherilane, Chirchlane, Chorneland, Leylane, Besteleslane, Howchons lane, Loves lane and Eastmans lane – were later forgotten and changed, while York Street, originally the name of a small settlement became a road name. Probably there was little alteration in the line of the roads until the nineteenth century, when, for instance, the track across the south side of Wickhay green was moved further north and the road up the hill through the lower common to Coldham End took a new course.

The Bridges

Bridges too needed continual repair and were the responsibility often of individuals. Cow bridge between the Hall and the mill was ruinous in 1575 and John Smythe, as lord of the manor, was supposed to repair it. It was again in need of repair in 1695 and the lord had neglected to do it, nor had he repaired the gate between the Hall manor and Wickhay green. The bridge between Boreham and Little Baddow near the mill was the joint responsibility of the lords of the manors of Boreham Old Hall and Little Baddow Hall. In 1568 it was "decayed and very noycws for the quynes lege peple to pas over". The inhabitants were ordered by Quarter Sessions in 1601 to repair "Cutone stane fotbredg", it being a market way and very dangerous. On the other hand it was the duty of the County to repair the "great horsebridge called Husketts mill bridge", just in Hatfield Peverel. By 1797 there was an alternative method of reaching Chelmsford or Maldon, for in that year, despite strenuous opposition from John Strutt, the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation Company completed and opened the canal to traffic as far as Springfield, with a wharf at Little Baddow. The canal also resulted in probably the first satisfactory bridges being built and maintained. In 1589 the Chelmer had been described as "a goodly ryver or streame to fish in very commodious and pleasant".

Joseph Pledger holdeth.....

There were at various times comparatively wealthy tenants who held from the lords a number of tenements. Notable among these was the Pledger family who came to the village in the mid-seventeenth century and during the eighteenth century acquired farms and land and also many cottages, presumably to house their farm-workers. The period of their chief prosperity was probably around 1800, but in 1851, when their homes were at Hammonds and Holybreds, they were farming a total of 860 acres, spread throughout the parish, employing 50 labourers and still holding many cottages. Their influence in the parish often rivalled that of the lords of the manors, whose supremacy was in any case on the decline from the privileged days of the Middle Ages.

The Land

There are no documents to say who were the pioneers in clearing the land and building the houses, nor who were their successors, nor what crops they grew or animals they reared.

By about 1300 however, when surnames were becoming universal and hereditary, a few names do emerge from the obscurity. John le Taillur died in 1305 holding land in Little Baddow direct from the Crown, and long afterwards in 1494 John Balsham and others held the land “called Taillours”, by then in Bassetts manor. The Balsham family, who were in the village from at least 1383, no doubt gave their name to the farm known as Balshams. On the other hand John de Wickey of c.1300 must have taken his name from the place where he lived – Wickhay Green – and it became a surname which remained in the parish for at least the next century. Perhaps he or his family built the original house called Wickhays. In 1387 a John Hammond witnessed a deed relating to Graces manor and he or one of his family could have given their name to the farm in Graces manor still called Hammonds. It is rare, from early Tudor times until the nineteenth century, that a later family changed the name of a house; most retained their names for centuries. In 1490 Joan Bastwick in her will referred to “this place that I dwelle In called Bubbs otherwise called Bastwykis”, but the Bastwick sojourn there was soon forgotten in favour of the earlier occupiers, of whom almost the only record is a name attached to a house now long since demolished.

Field names generally did not last as long as house names. Mediaeval names such as helveslond, leyland, Chericroft, bricideslond, brekecroft, le Close and Chornehope had been forgotten by the time the 1677 map was compiled. Others were slightly altered, such as Purifeeld which must have become Perry fields (perhaps where pears were grown) and Morefeldes which had apparently become Moarefeilde and Puttoks Taile (Kite’s tail) by 1677. Few fields were named after their owners – those like Nevells fields, Pledgers piece, Dukes orchard and Ketchers field are exceptional. Many field names were descriptive, such as (in 1677) Small Gaines, Sawpit Feilde, Pound Feilde, Gravell pitt Feilde, Haystack Feilde, Barne Feilde, Church Feilde, Greate Mill Feilde, Broome Feilde, Paretree Feilde, Stoney Downes, Moulehill Meade, Washhowse and Clothhedge Feildes.

Names of this kind often indicate the use to which particular fields were put, but there is no detailed information on farming before the nineteenth century. It was doubtless mixed farming, especially among the smallholders who had their families to feed. At least at times, the richer men were able to concentrate on grazing, such as in the mid seventeenth century at Bassetts and the early sixteenth century at Graces. It may be that others produced corn for the market. By the 1830s (when corn-growing had become predominant throughout Essex) there was far more arable land than pasture in the parish.

For the early years of the nineteenth century a cropping record was kept of Tofts manor farm, then being run by General Strutt. Between 1803 and 1807, for instance, “Herrings Land” (Hellensland) grew cabbages, turnips, coleseed,

clover, barley and wheat. It was regularly ploughed, harrowed, rolled and hoed and in 1805 fallows were cut at Scutlers Pool for land ditching part of the field. One November 58 sheep were turned in to feed off the cabbages and turnips, which in August had been attacked by black caterpillars "but the Lightning in the first week Sept. destroyed them". The following November lambs were pastured on the clover. On other fields, among the activities were stone-picking for land-ditching; pulling up a large quantity of twitch grass "also Docks innumerable"; having to use three horses to plough the heavy land; spreading of ant hills and mole casts and the carting of one hundred load of dung from winnowing and from the yard. Misfortunes occurred, as when sheep were turned into a turnip field and "many sheep died in feeding it off, when opened their paunches resembled Bag of Yeast in an high state of fermentation". In one field "Worm or grub – appears to have taken the wheat in places", and later "dibbed in about a bushel of wheat in places where it had been taken by Grub." One field was sown with wheat but "Rabbit laid so heavy on it all summer that if the seed be saved it is all – very foul."

The woodland of the parish is largely undocumented and much of it was reserved for their own use by the lords of the manors. In 1712 there were stated to be 37 acres of woodland belonging to the Hall and Tofts manors. Holybreds wood, with 22 acres of trees of 10 years' growth, was the largest area. Great East wood was of 5 years' growth and contained 6 acres; Warren spring, of 2 years' growth, was 3 acres; Walk spring (1 year's growth), Park spring (12 years) and Hills Land spring (15 years) were 2 acres each. By 1777 the total had risen to 54 acres, comprising Holybreds, Shrub, New and Great East woods and Park lower spring. A note stated that these woods were "overstocked with Oak Timber some of which is the finest growing young Timber in the country" and added that "The Farms are also well stocked with Timber and have 256 Oak 177 Ash and 422 trees of Elm now growing upon them". Scattered over Graces manor lands in 1546 were 221 and a half acres of woodland, which included 39 ashes rated at 7d each, 106 oaks of 200 years growth of which 40 were rated at 20d. each and 66 at 10d. each. 70 elms of 100 years' growth were worth 16d. each and a further 109 oaks growing in the marsh, of 120 years' growth, were valued at 18d. each. No mention was made in 1546 of the 72 acres or thereabouts of "Blacks" or "Blakes" wood which belonged to Graces manor. Riffhams in the mid seventeenth century had 43 acres of woodland, of which over 18 acres were in Longwood, over 8 acres in Black grove, 4 acres in Beeches wood and 11 acres in Lingwood. Bassetts had about 13 acres called Bassetts wood.

Apart from the fields attached to the individual farms and cottages, there was a considerable acreage of meadow land and common land in the parish. The meadow land, lying mainly on the flood plain of the river, was under permanent grass. Some portions of it were associated with specific tenements, such as "Holybreds half acre" in Huskards mead, belonging to Holybreds farm. Huskards mead (though sometimes called Wood mead) took its name from the mill, first named in a document of 1272 as "Hurscardesmill", which belonged to Mowden Hall manor in Hatfield Peverel. The meadow of 42 acres was divided mainly amongst some of the tenants of the two Middlemead manors, by means of "stakes and marks". After the hay had been cut and carted by each tenant, the meadow became common pasture for their animals. By "ancient custom" it was

the duty of the man holding a certain piece of meadow near the entrance gate from Wickhay green to remove the gate in the morning before the rising of the sun in the east on the feast of St. Peter ad vincula or "Lamasse Daye" (1st August) so that each tenant, on payment of 4s., could enter the meadow to pasture his cattle. It was the duty of another tenant holding the two acres "next to the great gate", on the day of the purification of St. Mary the Virgin or Candlemas (2nd February) to hang the gate to close the meadow. If they failed in these duties they paid a fine of 6s. 8d., again "by ancient custom". In 1608 the manor court of Tofts ordered that if any cattle should be found pasturing in Huskards mead between Candlemas and Lammas, the owner should forfeit 2s. per head of cattle, one half of the fine to go to the lord and the other to the person who found the animals in the meadow. At the same court it was ordered that no pig should be pastured unringed on Huskards mead or Wickhay green under penalty of 4d. per pig. According to a 1599 ordinance pigs had to be yoked as well as ringed. At the 1575 Bassetts manor court the tenants were ordered "diligently to enquire" who held one acre of meadow called "le hope" near Huskards mead and "renders therefore yearly one pair of gloves" at Easter. Also near Huskards were some small meads, like Scuttles Meade (by Scutlers pool) and Rownde mead belonging to Tofts, and others belonging to Bassetts, including an 11 acre piece called "shuttopps".

A few tenants held some pieces of meadow in Wriothesley or Risley mead across the river in Boreham, but Broadmead (49 acres) and Langmead (about 42 acres) were the other large areas of meadow land in the parish. A deed of about 1300 transferring the tenancy of an acre in Broadmead is the oldest document in the Essex Record Office concerning Little Baddow. A small part of Broadmead was in Boreham parish. There were also small meadows, such as those along both sides of the Sandon Brook called "Meadows or Lows". All this meadow land was shared mainly between the Hall, Graces and Riffhams manors. All the manors had some marsh land by the river and streams, such as Hall marsh and Mill marsh, both beside the mill.

The number of animals allowed on the meadows was probably limited for both lord and tenant. Henry Penninge's mortgage, to Humfry Groves, of Little Baddow manor implies this, as it referred to the "depasturing goeing and feeding of eight geldings or mares" in Broadmead during the whole of May yearly "according to the custome there used".

The waste or common land likewise was governed by strict rules which the manor courts enforced. Copyhold tenants were generally allowed to put their animals on it and to take firewood and wood for repairs to their houses, implements and fences, but they were not permitted, without licence to fell trees, take turf or earth, dig ditches, enclose portions, erect buildings or otherwise cause damage. When they did so they were duly fined by the courts and ordered to make reparation. The largest area of common land was High common, shared between the Hall and Tofts manors. The 1677 map gave the size of "Badowhale Common" as 127 acres, Parsonage common (in the Hall manor) as 21 acres and Wickhay green (Tofts) as 48 acres, but the acreage of the remainder of Tofts common is illegible. Graces manor seems originally to have had two small pieces of waste, one called The Green, adjoining the house, and Dales green.

Riffhams does not appear to have had any waste.

The 1576 court of Bassetts manor put it on record that the common land belonging to that manor amounted to about 100 acres and that the commons were called “wyckey grene leyghe hyll Crabbe hyll Hockham hylles and loves grene”. In reality the small piece they could claim on Wickhay green was almost all under cultivation or built on by 1576, and it is doubtful if they were entitled to any part of Hockham hills, which apparently included Leyght hyll and Crabbe hyll. The claim to Loves green was pursued for many years. In 1699 Tofts court found “upon our Oathes” that Hockham hills “hath within the knowledge of severall of we who are now upon the homage for the space of Forty yeares now last past and upwards beene used by the Lords of the said Mannor... for a Common Warren And alsoe beene informed by auntient Inhabitants...that the same was used for a Common Warren by Sir John Smith....about one hundred yeares now last past”.

Sir John Smythe allowed a number of persons to erect houses on his common land and take them on long leases, which gave Sir Gobert Barrington some trouble when he bought the manors. The tenants claimed that they were freehold houses, but Sir Gobert took legal opinion and they were thenceforth considered to be copyhold tenements. Sir John also allowed a few enclosures of the waste, such as when he granted Nicholas Steven a small piece of the waste behind the pales of his park for 2d. a year and allowed John Braynewood to enclose with hedge and ditch one rod or rood (1/4 acre) of land near his cottage (which had been an earlier enclosure). On the other hand at the court of January 1592 it was reported that William Twedye had encroached upon Tofts common “making there a certain hedge and certain gate to the disherison of the lord” and he was ordered to take down the hedge and gate before Easter. Sir John made money out of his common land by selling for £100 for three years to two Chelmsford and two Moulsham tradesmen the right to fell and carry away wood and underwood on most of the common of Little Baddow manor.

The need for more houses and land seems to have increased from the time of the 1677 map, for many enclosures had been permitted and added to the map by 1723. In 1696 Tofts manor court, when allowing some encroachments, declared “that there is satisfactory and sufficient Commonage for all the tenants of this manor and for all other persons whoever who have any right or title of Commonage or should, are accustomed or able to have, claim or lay claim to upon the several commons lying within the precincts of the Leet and Manor aforesaid...” By 1723 Parsonage common seems to have been entirely enclosed, mainly by Robert Clarke of Riffhams, with the consent of the Barringtons and their courts. A temporary enclosure was allowed at the 1665 court to Edmund Butler, tenant of the Hall, to enclose with posts and bars not more than one rood of waste next to the barn at the Hall for the better conservation of the barn, the enclosure to continue until the next court but not beyond.

The condition of the High common is revealed by a military report of 1797 (when it was proposed to establish an army camp there) which stated that it was covered with “Furzes and the roots of Brushwood” and that it was somewhat

“Springy and Rotten”, which might be remedied by clearing the roots and furze “that prevent the Water from running off and the Sun and wind having their due effect upon a soil naturally dry”.

In 1760 Lord Barrington agreed to a request by the majority of his tenants who had rights on the waste that the High common should be enclosed and it was suggested that the Bailiff, Isaac Pledger, should assign a portion to each tenant, to be held at a yearly rent of 6d. an acre. This scheme was agreed to by all the tenants “except Old Campion who refused and there ended the project”. Another abortive scheme was drawn up in 1773 by which the lord was to have 100 acres of High common and the poor 10 acres (later changed to 80 acres and 30 acres) while the remaining 59 acres, 20 acres on Wickhay green and various other pieces about the manors were to be divided amongst the tenants at about 4 acres each. This was “so opposed by the Lower Class, that nothing did, nor has ever taken place.”

Finally in 1810 John Strutt and his son, the Major-General, with their stewards, T. and G.W. Aylmer, came to an agreement with the twelve copy-hold tenants of Tofts manor (of whom the Major-General was one). Wickhay green was to be divided into 14 portions (in the event only 12) and Tofts’ share of High common, with a few other small pieces, also into 14 portions. The twelve copyholders were to have 2 portions each, and the remaining portions, including Whitlocks green (Loves green), were to be sold to defray expenses. A person was to be chosen to make the division and “set out what Hedges and ditches shall be made by each Lot” and to determine the “necessary Roads and Ways to the several Lots”, these to be paid for by the tenants if the money from the sale were insufficient. All the new roads were to be the property of the lord. Portions were to be drawn by lot and the remaining pieces sold by auction to the copyholders on the day of the drawing of lots. The tenants were to pay 1s. an acre rent annually for their portions and a fine (payment) on entry.

John Strutt was somewhat apprehensive of trouble from some of the tenants and wrote to T. Aylmer in March 1810 “On the common you may recollect there grows much brush-wood which is cut for firewood and I suppose ought to be the sole property of the tenants of the Manor but of late years all who reside in the parish have cut the wood at what time and in what manner suited their convenience without control – Another matter strikes me, may not the Freehold Tenants object.” G.W. Aylmer replied that “If the copyholders are the only tenants entitled to commonage and they all consent to the division among themselves there will be nobody left to dispute the decision: if the free tenants also have rights of common and they do not consent, there will be persons to complain of an enclosure not leaving sufficient common for all the Tenants entitled. If any opposition is really intended it must be on behalf of such persons...It is material also to know if possible about how long the Residents in the parish have been suffered to cut firewood – I say suffered, for I do not suppose any persons, but the Tenants, have a well-grounded right to such a privilege: but a long continued exercise of it might be the foundation of some disturbance and litigation trouble- some to you, though eventually unsuccessful to the parties instituting it.”

The General, however, pressed on with the matter and his father wrote that he had “sent out notices to the several copy-holders to meet at the Rodneys Head on Tuesday to lay before them the plan...for having All agreed he is not willing to let the moment slip.” A few days later he wrote “I suspect the Persons who have been unmolested to cut the firewood will be clamorous, tho’ I believe three fourths of them have no claim...I shall not go near the meeting but leave it entirely to my son and I will say he will be a good General if he gets through without clamour.”

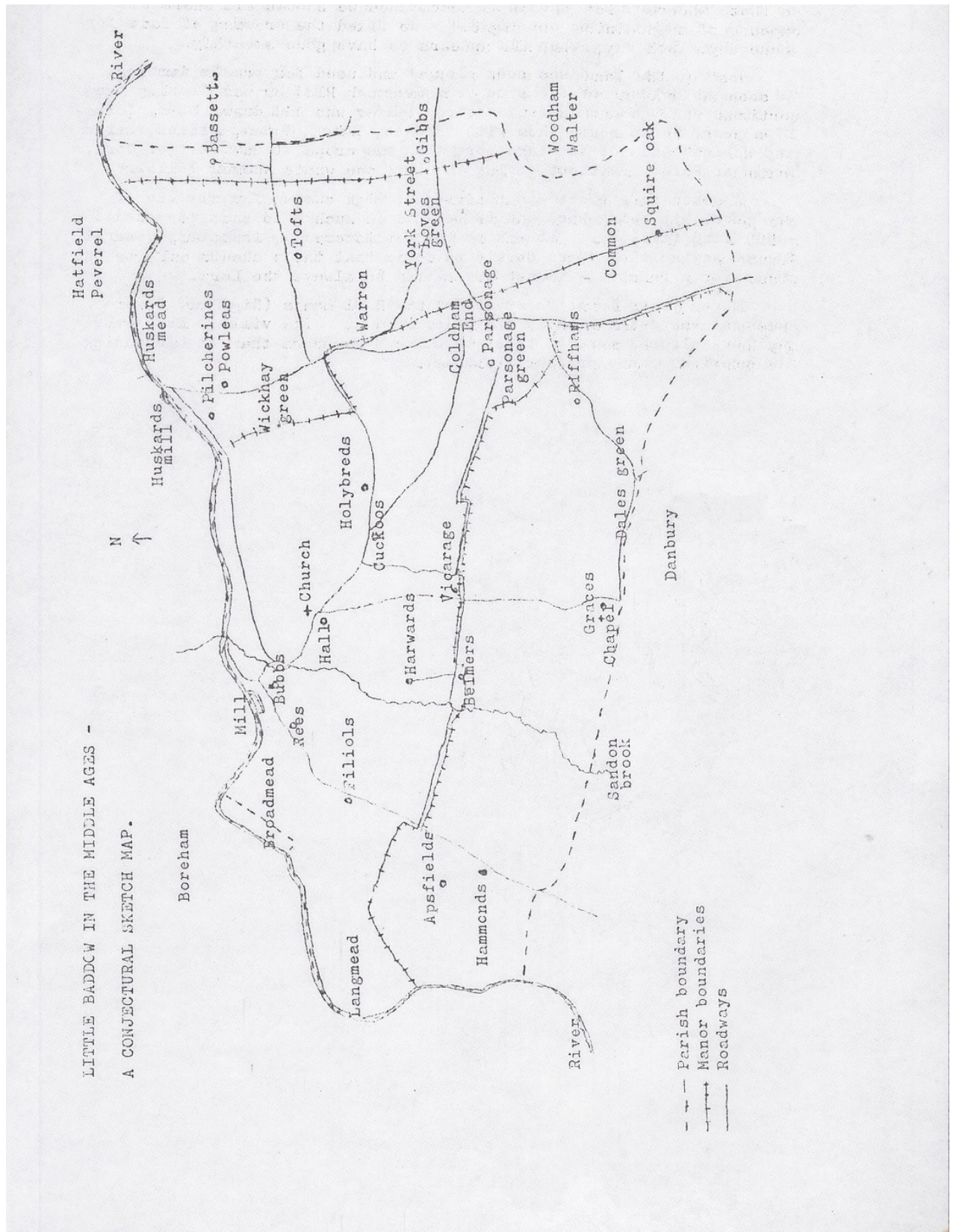
After the meeting the General was able to write, “...it was done without much difficulty – the Young Chancellor of Little Baddow (Richard Sorrell) giving most trouble but a sop was given to him and he was afterwards mute.” Later however he was writing “Flying reports threaten us, at a distant period, with some opposition. I understand Mr. Lawrance, an attorney at Maldon, has said when the fences are nearly completed he intends to level them, at the instance of persons who do not at present appear...Mr Lawrance...likes to fish in troubled waters.” He added that he would propose that the copyholders sign an agreement, so that “whoever’s lot should be demolished we should all share the expense of maintaining our right.” He fixed the drawing of lots for Wednesday, 30th May, when all appears to have gone smoothly.

Most of the land was soon cleared and used for arable farming. As soon as October of the same year Jeremiah Pledger was leasing two portions on High common from the copyholder who had drawn them, for £7 a year, he to equip them with “Hedges, Quick, Gates, Stiles, Rails and Whelms” and not to “take more than two crops of any sort of Corn, Grain or Pulse...without giving the Land one whole Summer Fallow.”

A seven-acre piece was reserved on High common for the use of the poor, “it being wood and to be kept as such”, so that they could still find firewood. It was to be administered by Trustees, General Strutt saying that “Care should be taken that there should only be one dissenter a Trustee – indeed one should be always the Lord.”

Three years later the waste of the Hall manor (High and Lower commons) was dealt with in a similar manner. The village landscape may have altered more in these three or four years than it had during the previous three or four centuries.

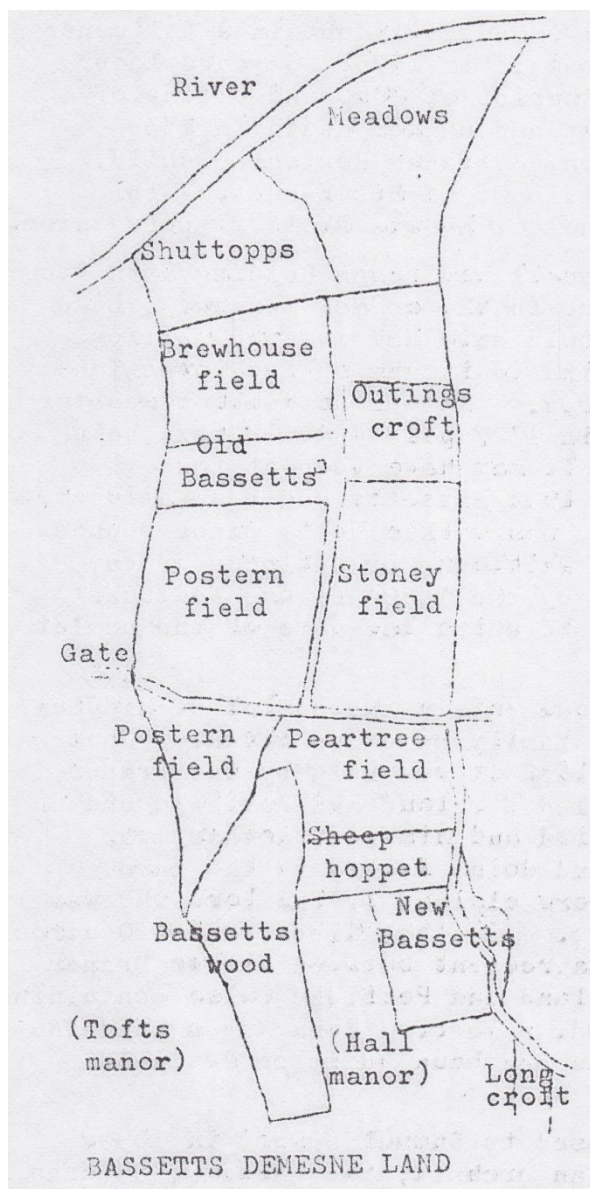
Map



The Tenements

The fields, which gradually since earliest times had been cleared from the forest and waste and enclosed with bank, hedge and ditch, were divided between the lords and the tenants. The “demesne” land of each manor was farmed by the occupant of the manor house, while the remainder of the fields, with the houses and cottages, formed the holdings of the tenants – the freehold, copyhold (or occasionally leasehold) tenements. Tenancy transactions took place at the manor courts.

Bassetts Manor



The extant court rolls of Bassetts manor give some of the most interesting references to specific property in the parish and date from 1558.

At the court of 1558 the Jury reported that the lord (Richard Blake), according to the custom of the manor, had seized the customary or copyhold tenement of 6 acres called Loves because the tenant, Anne Wentworth, had withheld the rent of 4s. a year for three years “though often asked”. Finally Anne’s two daughters and their husbands attended the court of 1563 and, on payment of £8 by one of the husbands (George Elyett), he and his wife were admitted as tenants in the accustomed manner, that is “by the rod at the will of the lord according to the custom of the manor by the ancient dues and services” and by doing their fealty to the lord. The rod was the Steward of the manor’s rod of office which he held out for the tenant taking over a tenement to grasp in sight of all the court. The dues included “suit of court”. The services had originally been a condition of customary

tenancies and could include such work as ploughing, carting and harvesting for the lord on his demesne land. These services had been commuted over the

years into rents in money or kind and “fines” were charged for admission to a tenement. The copy of the relevant part of the court roll which George Elyett would have been given constituted his proof of “copyhold” tenancy of the tenement. Bassetts manor retained the mediaeval custom of claiming a heriot (the best beast or money in lieu), on the death of a customary tenant, right up to the nineteenth century. When George Elyett died, therefore, his widow had to surrender a black cow valued at 30s. By 1622 Loves had been taken over by Henry Bastwick, whose tenant was Edward Saffold, and it was described as “a mesuage with an orchard a gardeyn and ii pytells of land”. On Henry Bastwick’s death a filly horse priced at 40s. was claimed as heriot. With the consent of the court, he had left Loves by will to his wife (who later married Edward Saffold) for 18 years, his elder son, Thomas, being only nine years old. Thomas died in 1645, leaving the property to his brother Giles. In 1649 the tenement was transferred to John Mabbs, who later, without licence from the lord, let it for three years and thereby forfeited it. The Bailiff of the manor was sent to seize it into the hands of the lord, so that at the 1666 court Mabbs had to pay a fine for his re-admission. On his son’s death in 1716 a cow worth £4 was taken as heriot, and his grandson paid 7s. for permission to sub-let Loves, Sareland and Petfield for 7 years. He renewed this licence in 1722. Widow Witham was his tenant for Loves. The Mabbs family remained in possession throughout the eighteenth century, later sub-letting to the Fosters, but in 1801 when the daughters of the late John Mabbs were admitted it was reported that the house “was fallen into decay and wasted”. By the 1830s the house had gone, the field was divided into two, both called Old House field, and John Foster was holding them from the Mabbs family.

Loves acre in Huskards mead, also forfeited by Anne Wentworth’s non-payment of the rent of 16d., became detached from the main tenement in 1563 when Henry Drurye was granted it. He immediately obtained a licence to let it for 21 years. John Brett acquired it in 1575; 5 years later his son inherited it, paying to the lord a heriot of 20s. and a fine of 20s. In 1699 Mary Horton became the tenant and on her death in 1739 “left nothing for a heriott”. Her grandson, Sylvanus Horton, a child, was heir and his mother paid the fine of £1.16.0. on his behalf. In 1789 his rent was 7 years in arrears but in 1801 he was still in possession.

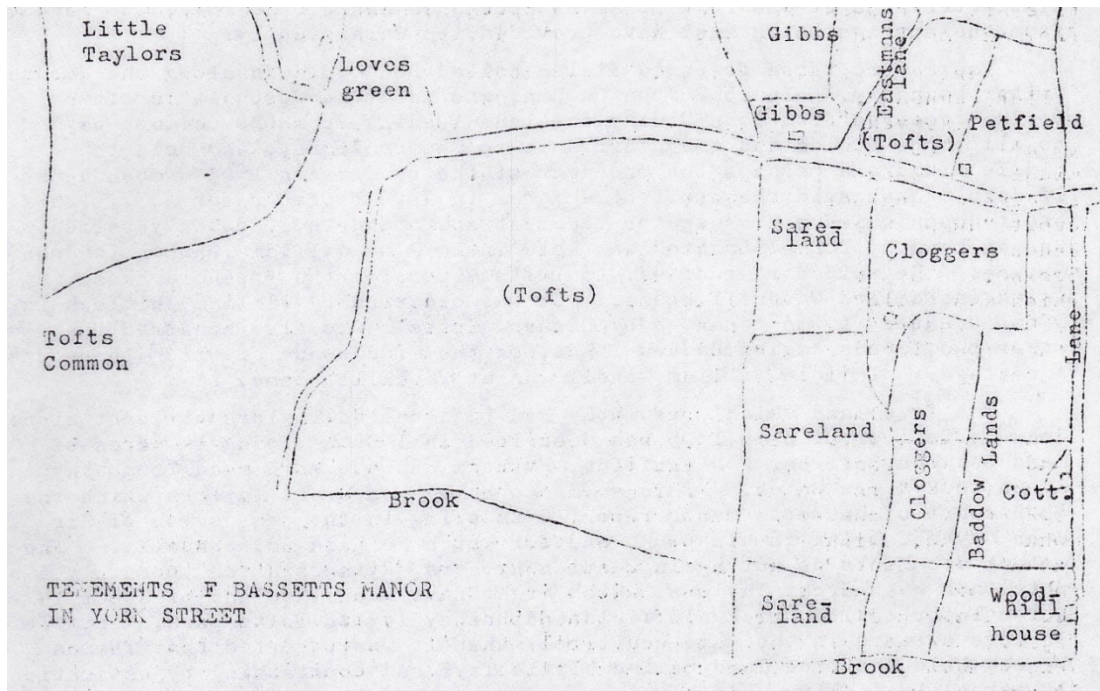
Loves appears to have been a typical small mediaeval holding with its house, barn, orchard, garden, land and share in the common meadow. Like almost every house and many cottages, it would have had its own well or spring and perhaps a pond. The lane leading to it was called Loves lane and the small green beside it was Loves green. It was no doubt named for the family of John Lof of Middlemead, who in 1327 paid 8½d. in tax, being the twentieth part of his movable goods. It may have been at the division of Middlemead into the two manors that Bassetts had been allocated Loves, which, like Taylors, Watts and Lees, was within Tofts manor bounds. In the eighteenth century the green became Whitlocks or Wetlocks green, presumably after the family of that name; by the 1820s it was Wedlocks green. The lane became part of the track to which the name of the hamlet had been transferred – York street.

In 1383 Stephen Gibbe was holding a tenement in the hamlet of Middlemead

which may have been that to which his family name was given. When Gibbs first appears in the court rolls in 1582 it was held by the Draper family, together with another tenement called Sareland and Petfield and an acre in Huskards mead. John Draper had died and his son, Arthur, was admitted as tenant on paying entry fines and doing fealty to the lord. As these were copyhold tenements heriots were claimed by the lord who was "satisfied" with two cows "of a red colour". By 1659 Gibbs, with 10 acres of land and the acre in Huskards mead, by agreement between Arthur Draper and John Mabbs, had been divided from Sareland and Petfield (also containing about 10 acres) and the rent fixed at 6s. 6d. a year. John Mabbs held the latter tenement for 5s. 2d. a year; a house had been built on Petfield sometime before 1607.

After three short tenancies Gibbs passed to Samuel Saward in 1699. From this time it was described as having an orchard, two gardens, 9 acres of land, 2 acres of pasture and an acre in Huskards mead. The Sawards were carpenters and builders and may have altered the house – re-using the old timbers, tiles or other materials where possible, as was the usual practice when the village houses were altered or rebuilt. Samuel Saward left the tenement to his only son, Thomas, in 1743, whose son, also Thomas, was permitted to inherit it in 1763 on payment of a fine of £12.12.0. In 1783 his son had to pay £5.5.0. as heriot on his father's death, but surrendered Gibbs to Jeremiah Pledger. In 1830 James Gibling took over the tenancy, paying a later Jeremiah Pledger £350, towards which he borrowed £300 from Jeremiah Pledger, junior. A few years later General Strutt acquired the farm, with Thomas Houghton in occupation.

Meanwhile Sareland and Petfield had descended in 1716 (after a horse priced at £3 had been taken as a heriot) to the John Mabbs who inherited Loves. On his death in 1728 his daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth, aged 16 and 13 became co-heirs and their mother was admitted tenant to Sareland, Petfield and Loves on their behalf. Eleven years later Sarah died "but left no living beast for a heriot". Her son, John Mayhew, aged 11 months, was her heir, and the guardianship of his half of the holding was committed to his father (on payment of £8.8.0. to the lord) until John was twenty-one years old, his father "then to Render an Account." By 1783 the tenements were in the hands of Rebecca Mabbs, the mother and guardian of the next child heir, another John Mabbs. On his death his daughters were admitted at the 1801 court, and it was reported that "a New Barn is lately erected and Built upon...Petfield". The Mabbs family continued as tenants and from at least the mid-eighteenth century the Fosters were occupiers.

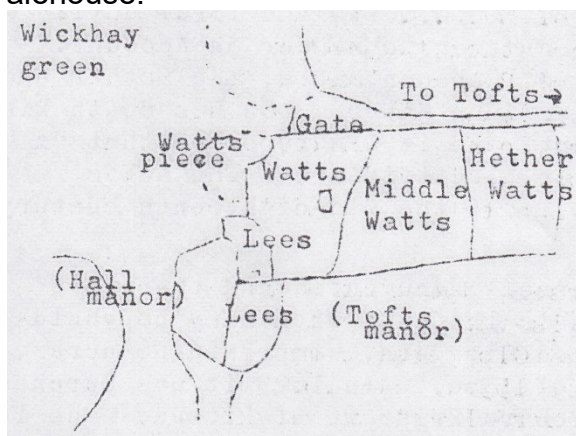


Freehold properties tend to be sparsely documented and therefore more gaps occur in their histories than is the case with many copyhold tenements. The freehold property called Cloggers, comprising 6 acres, is first referred to in the court roll of 1558. In 1629 it was purchased by John Hawes of Woodham Walter from Richard Bristowe of Pitsea. He left it in his will of 1650 to his son. No heriot was due on free tenements, but a "relief" had to be paid to the lord on entry by a new tenant. Richard Hawes mortgaged the tenement in 1660 to John Godbold, and in 1669 it was stated that there was a dwelling house lately built on the land. No records exist of who occupied the house at any time before the nineteenth century. In 1698 Richard Hawes alienated it to Edward Solme, whose descendants sold it in 1776 to Richard Sorrell (of Tofts manor house). The rent of 6d. a year was 20 years in arrears in 1789 and the relief on entry had not been paid so the "Bailiff was ordered to distrain". At the 1804 court, after Richard Sorrell's death, no one attended to claim the tenancy and pay the relief of 6d. and so the Bailiff again was ordered to distrain. By the 1830s the house was occupied by two families, and some time afterwards it was rebuilt as two cottages nearer the road, but further from the springs which must have provided its water supply.

There were three freehold fields called Baddow lands along the Woodham Walter boundary. In 1567 John Oughan, who held the furthest "croft or wood", received from John Radley the lane leading from the "common way" to all three fields and transferred it to Thomas Vessey, who held the middle field and perhaps the one nearest the road. In 1623 descendants of John Oughan sold the croft of 4 acres to Arthur Draper for £33. This croft "upon which a Messuage

or Tenement now Standeth... commonly called Baddow Land by Yorke Streete" was sold in 1672 by William Johnson to John Browne. He paid a rent of 4d. to Tofts manor for the freehold house which was called Woodhill house. It was occupied by William Whitlock in 1766. Later it was tenanted by Richard Sorrell who also acquired the other two fields called Baddow lands, on the middle one of which there was a cottage. In 1819 William Tonell was at Woodhill house.

The free land which presumably had been called Taylors at least since John le Taillur died in 1305 was described in 1494 as being 14 acres of land between Barowes, Posternfelde, Rythers and the high road from Wyky Green to Rythers Hatch. This seems to have been Great Taylors which the 1582 court of Bassetts manor reported as being in the possession of Sir John Smythe, lying in his park, and for which he paid 2s. annually. The extant documents do not again mention Rythers, Rythers Hatch (possibly a gate) nor even Great Taylors, which might have been the land of about 14 acres later called Brickwale field and Bushey ley in Tofts park. Little Taylors appears in the same court roll when it was reported that Thomas Vessey held the free land called "lytle Taylers" (containing by estimation 12 acres) by fealty, suit of court and rendering 2s.2d. annually. Its next appearance was in 1659 when it was found that the heir, one of the Vessey family, was an infant. In 1720 John Robinson inherited the Vessey holdings and Ann Lynsell, his relation, was living in the house called Taylors. He alienated the tenement to John Shute Barrington the same year. By about 1800 there was no longer a house and the field was named Rodney field after the adjoining alehouse.



"Holhowse ate Holl otherwise called Wattes", with curtilage and one acre of land, was held as a free tenement for 18d. rent a year. Perhaps it was connected with William ate Holl who lived in the village around 1400 and with Robert Watte of the 1430s and later. In 1572 John Offyn (Oughan) died leaving it in his will to his son Edward, aged 15 years. The relief due on entry, 18d., was paid by the

boy's attorney and his fealty was postponed "until his full and legal age of twenty and one years." He performed his fealty at the court held in 1580. By his will of 1607 he left Watts to his wife for her life and then to his son. A later member of the family, William Oughan, sold the tenement, now called "Hillhouse otherwise Watts", to John Chapman, whose widow was occupying it in 1659. It was mortgaged in 1667 to Henry Mildmay by its new tenant, James Arwaker, whose sub-tenant was John Oakes, the nonconformist minister. In 1670 the messuage was alienated to Sir Gobert Barrington, together with the garden, orchard and 3 acres of land. In 1672 John Oakes licensed his house as a Presbyterian meeting house and so this may well have been Watts. The previous year he had paid tax for 2 hearths. He left the village in 1678. Watts piece, soon after 1677, was taken from Wickhay green and added to the tenement. Widow Perry was leasing Watts for £5.8.0. a year in 1712. About this time, still in the hands of the Barringtons,

it was rebuilt, partly around the timber frame of the old house, and renamed "Waters" or Walters". In the 1770s it was described as a "Genteel Modern built Brick House with a good Garden and pleasantly situated" was let to the Pledgers and in the occupation of the Rev. Evan Jones, Minister of the Congregational Chapel. In 1783 Lord Barrington sold the freehold to John Strutt, who leased it in 1796 to Mrs. Mary Horne, and in 1805 to James Livermore for 21 years at £8 per annum. Mr Livermore agreed that he would "at all times succour and preserve all the Poplar Trees, ornamental Trees, Timber Trees, Fruit Trees, Plants and shrubs growing in the Garden". A few years later trees were planted on both corners of the road to Tofts, which was diverted by General Strutt in 1818 just beyond Walters.

Bassetts manor owned a small piece of land called Lees and a garden of 1 rood (1/4 acre) adjoining it, no doubt once the property of John Lee (1402) or one of his family. In 1559 it was reported to the court that Robert Tanner, in succession to his mother, had been admitted at the court held in 1552 to the tenancy of the garden at a rent of 2d. per annum. He had died leaving as heir his son, Thomas, aged 12, and his custody, as well as that of the garden, was committed to his uncle, George Tanner. At the age of 23 Thomas attended the court and performed his fealty. Three years later the court was told that, between meetings of the court, Thomas Tanner had surrendered the garden in to the hands of the lord, by the hands of Leonard Jaques, acting in place of the Bailiff, and witnessed by two of the customary tenants, to the "use and behoof" of Henry Evered and his heirs. Henry Evered duly appeared at the court to be delivered seisin of the garden and perform his fealty. Later tenants were Thomas Erle in 1620, by which time a cottage had been erected, Samuel Jeggons and Thomas Driver.

At the 1575 court Margaret Luckyn was granted the tenancy of the land called Lees "upon which a new Cottage is now built", at a rent of two pulletts yearly at Christmas. By 1580 she had died, her son Thomas was admitted and immediately surrendered it to Anthony Pope and Alice, his wife. Next Thomas Trott became the tenant and by 1659 it was held by Thomas and Hellen Croft.

Later in the seventeenth century both cottages with the garden and the land were in the possession of the Ram family, and in 1722, on the death of their heiress, her husband, Thomas Gilder, was admitted. At his death they passed to his sister, Rebecca Nightingale, and after she died the court of 1763 was told that one cottage "is greatly fallen into decay and become very ruinous and is thereby forfeited." Apparently this was the cottage on the garden portion, which is never again mentioned. Jeremiah Nightingale, Rebecca's son, was admitted however on payment of an entry fine of £2.2.0., and immediately he surrendered the tenements to Sarah Perry, who paid a fine of £1.11.6. Twenty years later she died and her son, William Perry took over the tenancy, for £3.3.0., still paying annually 2 pulletts for the cottage and land and 2d. for the garden. In 1790 he transferred them to Joseph Pledger, who paid an admission fine also of £3.3.0., and in 1796 passed them on to John Ambrose. At this time Lees was described as a "customary Messuage or Tenement with a smiths shop and Forge". It may have been a forge for many years for both the Ram and Perry families were blacksmiths. General Strutt acquired the tenements in 1817 (when

they were in the occupation of Samuel Maddocks, Blacksmith), having ascertained that they were not “herriotable”, in spite of being customary holdings.

In addition to the named and documented houses and cottages, there were other cottages, in all the manors, usually built by the farmers to house their workers, which are rarely mentioned in the records and which probably, being poorly built, had short lives. From 1589, by Statute every cottage was supposed to have 4 acres of land attached to it, but many were built without this, giving rise to convictions at the Quarter Sessions and Assizes. Among Little Baddow men committing this offence were Arthur Draper in 1648 (perhaps at Gibbs); Thomas Stevens, bricklayer; Joseph Mosse and John Mabbs (perhaps at Loves or Sareland) in 1658 and Francis Beadle in 1699.

Tofts Manor

The remainder of Middlemead, Tofts manor, is documented chiefly by court rolls commencing in 1573; manorial records and some rentals (lists of tenants, their holdings and rents), while the fields and houses are shown on the map of 1677.

Powleas (or Poleyas) appears to have been a small mediaeval farm of perhaps 25 acres, but by at least 1600 the customary cottage (rebuilt about that time) and its garden had become detached from the lands. It may have obtained its final name from the Powley family who lived in the village in the late fifteenth century. According to a rental of about 1620 of the manors of Tofts, Little Baddow and Bassetts (then all held by Anthony Penninge) Nicholas Nevell, a blacksmith, was tenant of the cottage at 10d. a year. Half a rod of land had been detached for the erection of another cottage, which in 1595 on the death of the tenant, Hugh Gyll, passed to his son, from him to John Fletcher and then to Thomas Marshall. In 1706 Joseph Pledger obtained a licence to pull this cottage down, but another was built and enfranchised in 1781 (later called Fir Tree cottage). Powleas meanwhile had descended to Margaret Nevell and her husband, Thomas Pechey, and then through a number of short tenancies. Thomas Sach, occupier in 1671, paid tax on one hearth. A century later Thomas and Judith Shrimpton having died in possession of both tenements, a “Proclamation for the heir at law had been thrice solemnly made” at three consecutive courts, but nobody had come to claim the property. The Bailiff was therefore instructed in 1773, according to the custom of the manor, to seize the tenements on behalf of Viscount Barrington, in the presence of two customary tenants of the manor. Following this Richard Sorrell (occupier of Tofts manor house) was admitted on payment of £2.2.0. It may have been he who had the roof of Powleas tiled, perhaps replacing thatch, and other alterations made, because his widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Sorrell, was living there when in 1802 her son Richard (who had left Tofts for Chelmsford) insured it and the contents for £100, and the adjoining cottage, occupied by Daniel King, for £50. The stable, hen house, barn and other buildings, like the cottages timber-built and tiled, were insured for another £50. In 1812 Mrs. Susannah Sorrell, widow of the younger Richard, was admitted. When she died in 1838 it passed to Mary Ann Grimwood, whose tenants were John Allen for Powleas and the Rev. Ady for

the cottage. In 1861 an auction notice for the property stated there were “two parlours, kitchen and three chambers, detached washhouse and stable, workshop with loft over, yard with pantiled shed, cottage with four rooms and buttery, gardens.” On the opposite side of the road was an enclosure with a pig yard, shed and sties. There was at least one well on the premises.

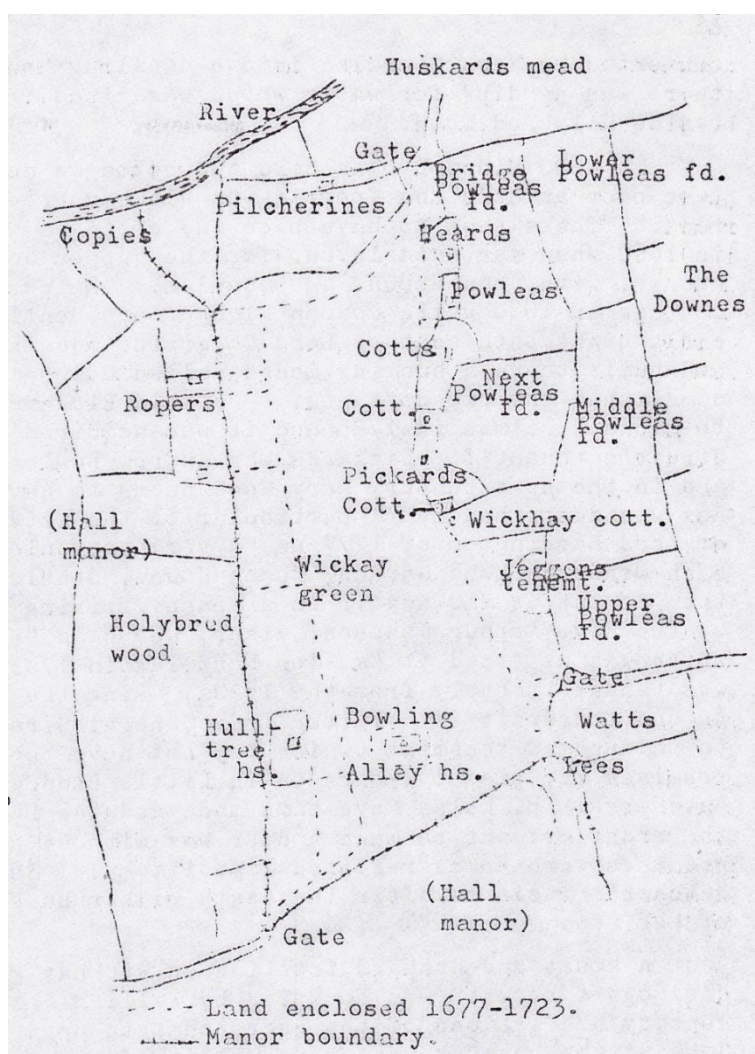
The cottage adjoining Powleas on the southwest, built on land taken from the green after 1677, appears in the early nineteenth century in the occupation of William Calcraft and in the 1830s of James Loveday.

From at least 1272 there were men in the parish named le Herd or le Hierd, who must have given their names to both tenements in the parish called Heards, one of which adjoined Powleas on the north. The latter consisted of a freehold house and garden held in 1620 by John Tanner for an annual rent of 4d. Later it passed to the Bridge family and in 1749 to the Lince family. In 1819 Thomas White was living at the “tenement and orchard called Heards” for the old rent of 4d. Benjamin Livermore acquired it from John Lince in 1838; he converted it into two timber, lath and plaster and tile cottages, often called Livermore’s cottages, and they survived into the twentieth century still in the Livermore family’s possession.

Benjamin Livermore operated the Paper Mill, owned by G.W. Aylmer, which had recently become part of Middlemead.

Previously it had been in Hatfield Peverel, and in a 1589 survey was described as “an anntient water myll called Huskerdes myll being both a Corn myll and a Fulling myll, having a goodly large pond or dame to serve the said Myll with water at all tymes”. In the seventeenth century paper-making was started there – perhaps the first in Essex.

The family of Reade alias Carter held from the manor of Mowden Hall in Hatfield Peverel



a customary cottage “with Garden platt or backyard” called Pickards or Piccottes, for which they paid 2s. a year and 3 fat capons at Christmas. This adjoined a piece of freehold land measuring 40’ x 18’ and another customary piece upon which a cottage was built, both belonging to Tofts manor, and held by the Reade family from before 1469. In 1524 there was a Johanna Pikkottes in Middlemead, possibly a descendant of Richard Picard who paid tax in 1327 and may have given his name to the Mowden Hall cottage. On her husband’s death in 1619 Widow Carter als. Rede was living in the Tofts cottage (by then called Wickhay cottage), paying 2s.2d. per annum. Pickards and the land seem to have been sold by her husband and in mid century Alice Nevell left them to her grandson, Samuel Hurrell. Meanwhile Samuel Jeggons had come into possession of Wickhay cottage and the freehold land which now also had a cottage on it and was rented at 10d. He was reprimanded at the 1655 court for allowing the barn belonging to Wickhay cottage to “fall downe to the ground”. The tenement was seized by the Bailiff and Jeggons allowed to resume the tenancy only on paying a fine of £3 and promising to erect a new barn. Immediately after this he surrendered the tenements to John Mabbs, on whose death in 1675 they went to his son and were in the occupation of Samuel Walford. In the next century they were transferred to the Perry family and finally to James Meagle, who had a cooper’s shop there and held adjoining land which had been taken from the green. He left the tenements and land between his two daughters, of whom the survivor was Elizabeth Sweeting. She and her husband sold the whole to General Strutt in 1807, but were permitted to remain in Wickhay cottage for their lives paying £1.1.0. per year. This cottage, probably a recent rebuilding, consisted of “a Parlour, keeping (living) room, Kitchen, Buttery and Pantry with two sleeping Rooms above”. A dispute arose because they had held back part of the garden to retain their manorial rights as copyhold tenants. The general told them “It is my wish to settle it amicably.” When the matter was finally settled, Mrs Sweeting mentioned at the court that she had stipulated that she should be permitted to draw water from the well within the copyhold premises. The cottage on the freehold land was occupied at this time by one of the Gibson family and later probably by James Peacock. The cooper’s shop had been converted by Mrs Sweeting into a dwelling house. Opposite these cottages there was a “dip” for water which was piped from the spring and stream beside Holybred wood.

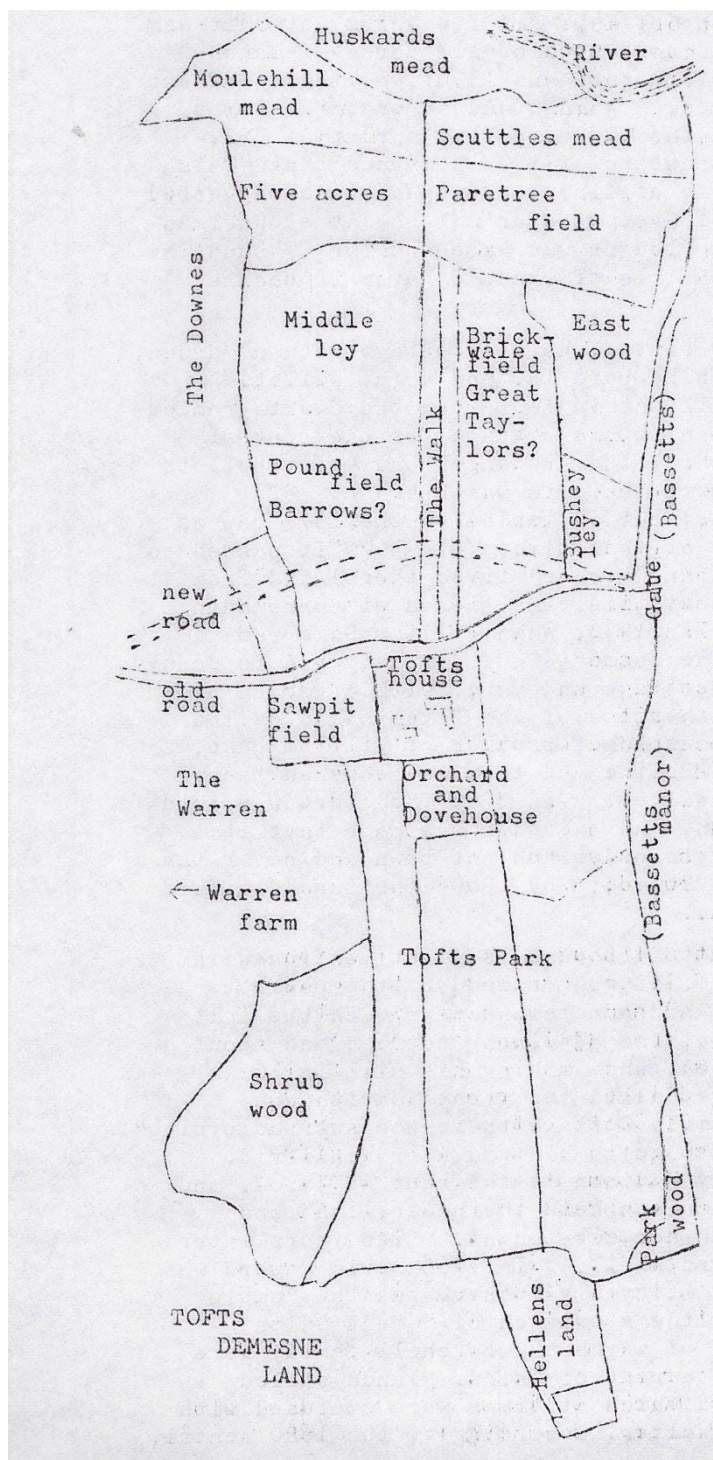
In 1620 Widow Lyeman held two cottages and gardens containing in all just over an acre and fronting on Wickhay green, for which she paid 3s.8d. rent. These seem to have been the cottages which Mrs Hull was holding in 1660 when she paid 1s 8d for the “upper house” and 2s. for the “lower house”, with John Browne as occupier. Ralph Cook was holding the latter cottage in 1688 while Joseph Pledger apparently held the other. In the early eighteenth century Lord Coleraine acquired them and also Pickards and built there a hunting lodge called Coleraines Box. He no doubt demolished the two cottages. He sold Pickards and 1½ acres of the land to Michael Pitman in 1723 and it was acquired by Tofts Manor,. John Strutts tenant for Pickard was Andrew Bowles, followed by Eliza Bowles, and in the next century Mary Wood seems to have lived there as “a very convenient Modern built Brick House, sash windows, good Garden, Coach House, Stable etc.” Thomas Hodges was then tenant at £10 a year on a lease expiring in 1780. He was followed by the Rev. Arthur Johnson, vicar, who held

4 acres of land with the house which was assessed at 4s. for Land Tax in 1799. Thomas Dennis, butcher, was tenant probably from the 1820s, using the land for grazing purposes. An undated draft of a letter from General Strutt to "Mr. Dennis" referring to an unnamed tenement (which may not have been Coleraines) states "In the premises occupied by your son in Little Baddow the part converted into a Butchers Shop, holes have been made and the Lath and plaster taken down, the front cut out to make a door way without asking my permission." The premises were to be restored immediately. Sarah Dennis carried on the butcher's business after the death of her husband in 1848 with the help of her son. Coleraines Box was described in "A particular of the extensive Estate " of Lord Barrington of 1777.

A house and orchard fronting on Wickhay green and later called "Jeggons tenement" was occupied by William Jolly in the early seventeenth century and was one of the encroachments upon the waste allowed by Sir John Smythe on long leases. William Jolly paid 12d. a year, but in Sir Gobert Barrington's time, when the tenant was Samuel Jeggons, a note was made on the rental of 1620 stating "now in the Lords hands and renteth 40s. per annum". The same note was written against Hulltree (or Hullbush) house and Bowling Alley house, both of which were similar encroachments. Hulltree house (a messuage and garden on Wickhay green "abutting upon hallybrede spring") was in the occupation of Samuel Jeggons at the time of the 1620 rental, at 3s.4d. a year. It was later in the possession of the Perry family – Nathaniel Perry paid £15 fine and a rent of 5s. in 1699 and was granted an extra 2 acres of land. It survived into the nineteenth century in the tenancy of the Fosters, but was finally "rased", as had been Jeggon's tenement many years before.

Bowling Alley house, for which a thirty-year lease was granted by Sir John Smythe to Thomas Heath in 1593, was "latelie builded upon a parcel of waste ground...on the west side of the common called Wickey grene nere to the bowling alley". In return for the lease Thomas Heath was "with all diligence and indevor (to) learne to know the south and south east boundes" of Little Baddow common, and "not onlie sea all maner of game...within the said Common...to be kept and preserved to the use of the said Sir John...but also that the woods there may be in like maner preserved and all offenders prosecuted in suche of the courts of the said Sir John Smith his heires and assignes where they shall be most fitt to be presented And that he the said Thomas his executors or assignes shall allwaies have in readiness one able bowe of Ewe and a sheafe of arrowes with a braser and shooting glove a sword and a dagger which they shall use at the lawfull commandement of the said Sir John Smithe". About 20 years later the house had become a copyhold tenement and was occupied by Robert Hayward at a rent of 16d. a year. By the end of the century, after several short tenancies, the Dawson family became tenants, sub-letting to others. In 1770 Benjamin Campion, already sub-tenant, obtained the premises from the Dawsons on payment of a five guinea entry fine. Twenty-two years later it had been converted into three dwellings, and in 1807 the house and most of the land were acquired by Jeremiah Pledger. The remaining portion, with a stable which had been converted into a cottage was retained by Campion and left by will to his grandson, John Turner, who proceeded to raise money on it from Taversham Nunn. General Strutt in 1838 had two attached brick cottages for farm labourers

built on this portion. In 1819 John Jarvis was the sub-tenant of the house, now apparently one dwelling again, and his family remained there until mid-century. As with others of the old, attractive, traditional-style village houses, there was little of the original Tudor structure remaining in 1973 when Bowling Alley house was demolished.



Some tenements in the early seventeenth century still were being held by the mediaeval tenure of knight's service, though a money rent had replaced the military service. One of these was Pilcherines (also called Pilchers and Hammonds), consisting of a house (which appears to have been built on the flood plain of the river), a garden and orchard and about 7 acres of land, besides and encroachment on Wickhay green let by Sir John Smythe in 1593 to the tenant, Edmund Stane, on a 598- year lease. Also included was a 3-acre field called Copies, which was in the Hall manor and was perhaps the 3 acres, towards Wickhay green and next to "le Close", granted to Clement Moole in 1495 at 12d. rent and a fine of 6s. The tenants preceding Stane had been John Radley and his sons, but Ralph Wilkes was the tenant when the 1620 rental was drawn up and he was paying 6s. a year. Later the tenement passed to the Aylmer family of Mowden hall, who in 1699 leased for 1000 years another encroachment from the green. Their

tenant about this time was John Cottis. Edmund Butler (of Little Baddow Hall) then held it all for a short time. The Pledgers obtained it in the mid-eighteenth century, Sarah Pledger being tenant with Thomas Hinde as occupier. The house

(which the 1677 map showed as being fairly large with two chimney stacks) had vanished by the early nineteenth century and the Buttle family were holding the land for 1s.2d. a year.

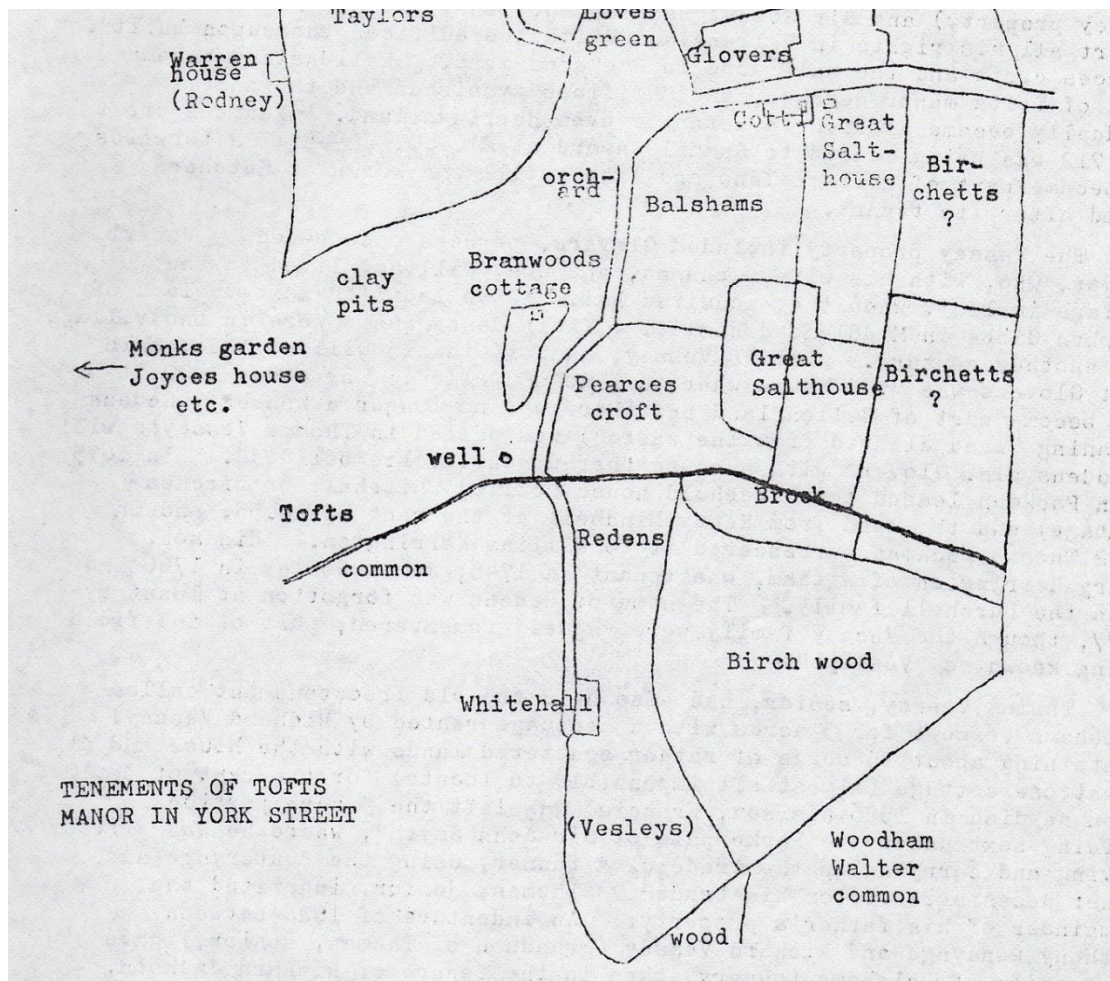
“Certain lands, called Piggesleys” with a barn and yard, were held for the fourth part of a knight’s fee in Elizabethan times by John Radley and his sons. The Radleys also held by knight’s service lands called Richermesham, Morecroft, a quillet of land called Le Close and a messuage called Pyllesshrynes for a rent of 2s.8d. together with Hosyers for 20d. No indication of their location is given but some were undoubtedly part of Pilcherines. In 1588 John Radley of Tollesbury transferred to Thomas Radley of Little Baddow some of these tenements, together with “all howses waynskott sealing glasse lockes dores wyndowes yards gardens landes growndes waters fyshinges commons feadings wayes easements profytes and commodities thereunto belonging” and “all tymber plantes and other wood and tymber”. These holdings do not appear again in the extant documents under these names.

A farm was formed from land that must have been taken from Tofts warren, possibly in the mid-seventeenth century. It was sometimes called Barrow Down farm, but usually Warren House farm. In a “Perticuler” of the Hall and Tofts manors drawn up in 1712 Daniel Reynolds is given as the leasehold tenant, paying an annual rent of £45. A few years later it was in the occupation of Isaac Pledger and consisted of 113 acres of land – 48 acres of arable, 6 of meadow, 48 of pasture and 13 of woodland. There was a messuage with a barn, two stables, a garden and an orchard. Mrs Sarah Pledger was farming the land in the 1770s, paying a rent of £52. The “particular” of Lord Barrington’s estate of 1777 remarked that “This is a good farm...enrich’d with 12 acres of fine Meadowland”, and suggested a reasonable rent at the expiration of Mrs. Pledger’s lease at Michaelmas 1796 would be £70. In 1799 Jeremiah Pledger was assessed for £7 Land Tax for the farm, which then comprised 100 acres of land. Later it became known as Warren farm.

Ellys Eve, according to the 1620 rental, held a cottage with a garden, late parcel of Tofts common, for which he paid 1s. and a fat pullet. John Braynewood or Branwood had been tenant in 1601 when the court granted him a rod of land from the waste adjoining his cottage for the rent of 6 fat pullets at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel and 4 fat pullets in the week before Lent, to be delivered to Tofts manor house. The cottage was usually known as Branwoods, but is marked on the 1677 map as Silvesters cottage after the occupier at that time. In 1679 it passed to the Ketcher or Catcher family (“old John Ketcher” lived there) and from them to the Duke family in 1722. About this time pieces of surrounding land were enclosed from the common. In 1746, when William Duke was tenant, the court was informed that the messuage had “greatly run to decay”. It was then described as a customary cottage and yard, with a garden or orchard and lands. The orchard was the site of the later house called Dukes Orchard. At the 1757 court James Duke, brother of William Duke, deceased, was admitted on payment of £2 fine and then surrendered the property to James Rowland of Woodham Walter. In 1764 the court was told that Branwoods cottage had fallen down, and an order was made that it be rebuilt. By 1776 the land (the court’s order had not been and never was obeyed) was in the possession of John

Howard; by 1789 John Burchell held it and in 1800 it descended to his son.

The freehold tenement called Great Salthouse is first mentioned in 1595 when the tenant of a third part of it was ordered by the court to make a sufficient hedge. Perhaps it had some connection with the salt trade from Maldon. In 1620 the house, the adjoining cottage and about 8 acres of land were held by John Hawes, who, making his will in 1626, left to his wife "my freehold messuage Called the greate Saulthowse whearein I nowe Dwell and one other smale Cottage thereunto neer adioyning". On his wife's death the property was to go to his daughter Winnifrid. By 1660 it was in the tenancy of Henry Madison at the rent of 3s.8d. and was occupied by Widow Smith. Mrs. Madison held the house, land and cottage in 1677 with Thomas Dowcett as her sub-tenant. Ten years later Ellen Johnson was letting it to Richard Abell. In 1766 David Saward was living in the house, having been left it by his father, but the "smale Cottage" is not mentioned. By 1824 it was written of "Great Salts" – formerly a cottage now only a field", of which the Burchell family were tenants. The Burchells also held at a rent of 1s.8d. "lands called Wilkerts" whose history is obscure and which at times were confused with Great Salts. John Hawes of Woodham Walter, according to the 1620 rental, held "a crofte called Wilkettes" of 2 and a half acres at a rent of 13d. which was inherited in 1653 by his sons, Jeremy and Roger Hawes. A rental of 1688 states that Richard Hawes was paying 1s.8d. rent for Willkets and sub-letting to Isaac Baker. According to the 1677 map, however, Thomas Pettit was paying 1s.8d. as tenant of Willkets, and in 1702 Francis Beadle received it from Widow Pettit. In 1766 John Dawson was tenant of "Wilkits field" and was followed by the Burchells.



Thomas Vessey in 1584 was granted a lease by Sir John Smythe for the payment of £20 "in the name of a Fyne or Income", for a term of four score years, of Forbyes, Hellensland and Pearces croft. Forbyes was a cottage with a garden on Hellensland, occupied by Jonan Springfield, widow. Hellensland with the cottage consisted of nearly 5 acres. Pearces croft lay near the "Brooke upon Toftes Common" and contained just over 3 acres. There was also half an acre in "the little meade", which was later part of Huskards mead. The rent was to be 6s.8d. per annum, the same now the lands were leasehold as when they had been copyhold, and 10d. per acre was to be paid on the death of any tenant. If the rent were unpaid for 14 days, Sir John could distrain and the distresses so taken "lawfully to leade dryve chase and carry away And the same to ympownde deteyne and withholde" until the rent was paid. Thomas Vessey could use wood and underwood from the properties for fencing and could take to his own use "suche offal and refuse" that remained after making the fences. He could in addition take from Tofts common "hulles Fyrres and bushes" towards hedging

and fencing the lands. In view of “divers Variances controversies etc.” between Henry Lindsell of Burnham (heir to all the Vessey property) and Sir Gobert Barrington, Henry in 1677 released to Sir Gobert all his rights in Hellensland “with the edifices thereupon built”, Pearces croft and the half acre in Huskards mead. Hellensland became part of Tofts manor demesne, the “edifices” vanished and the name gradually became altered to Hens or even Herrings land. Pearces croft in 1712 was being leased to Samuel Saward at £1.1.0. a year; afterwards it became part of Porters land and later still was known as Ketchers field after its tenant.

The Vessey property included Glovers, perhaps once owned by Robert Glovar, who, with his wife, Johanna, and son, William, lived in the village in 1383, when they acquired half “le Wellecroft” next to land of Stephen Gibbe in Middlemead hamlet. Their descendants were in the village for another century. Thomas Vessey, junior, in his will of 1626, said that Glovers was “the howse wherein I nowe dwelle”. By about 1800 it had become part of Hellensland and there was no longer a house. Redens (meaning “land cleared from the waste”) was called in Thomas Vessey’s will “Riddens als. Glovers with a howse thereupon latelie builded in 1675, John Packman leased this freehold house (called Whitehall or Birches cottage) and the land from Henry Lindsell at the rent of 2s.5d. and in 1702 Thomas Packman surrendered it to William Herrington. His son, Henry Herrington of Witham, was tenant in 1746, James Rowley in 1766 and then the Burchell family. The name of Redens was forgotten at least by 1777, though the Vessey family were vaguely remembered, part of the field being known as “Vesleys”.

Thomas Vessey, senior, had also held the old free tenement called Balshams (except for 3 acres with a messuage rented by Richard Vessey containing about 15 acres of rather scattered lands with the house and at least one cottage (almost all impossible to locate) for the rent of 3s.10d. When he died in 1596 his son, Francis, was left the 3 acre portion “lieing next under the Parke pale of Sir John Smyth”, where he was already living and carrying on the trade of a tanner, using the “waterynge and other necessities...for his trade”. Thomas, junior, inherited the remainder of his father’s property. An indenture of 1628 between Anthony Penninge and Richard Vessey (grandson of Tomas, senior,) gave possession of Balshams tannery, then in the tenure of Richard Jackson, “with barnes stables howses orchardes gardens yards landes pastures and meadows” containing 4 acres, to Anthony Penninge. In 1631, however, another Thomas Vessey paid £70 to Elizabeth Penninge, widow of Anthony, and to her son-in-law, and they returned Balshams to him. By 1671 it had descended to Henry Lindsell who provided as a jointure for his future wife, Anne Sparrow, the tannery, one cottage in the occupation of William Thurgood and other unspecified lands. A few days later he had mortgaged the whole of this for two years. The later history of the tannery is lost but the 15-acre portion was converted to leasehold property and let to John May for a period expiring in 1784 at an annual rent of £9. The dwelling house, barn, etc. were not then in good repair, but a house called Balshams survived until at least 1871.

In 1720 John Robinson of East Hanningfield, a descendant of the Vesseys and of Henry Lindsell, inherited all their property, and his own heir was his grandson,

Richard England. The same year they surrendered the whole to John Shute Barrington.

Warren house, a cottage with a garden, lying next to Taylors, was in the possession of John Steven in 1620 at 4d. a year, and may have been erected on the piece of waste land behind the pales of Sir John Smythe's park, granted by the court of 1573 to Nicholas Steven at 2d. a year. It passed to Richard Adams, but a later undated note on the 1620 rental states "since purchased in and puld down". In 1712 Robert Shoryer was leasing the warren "with the allowance of Fifty Couple of Rabbitts" at an annual rent of £10. By at least the mid-eighteenth century another house had been built called the Warren house, occupied by John Barker, and consisting of a messuage, a warren, a barn, a stable and a garden – in all 7 acres. By 1777 James Jordan was keeping an alehouse there, which was called the "Cock and Warren". It was held on a lease, due to expire in 1784, at £7 per annum. At that time it was written of the "Cock and Warren" that "this House is most pleasantly situated and actually commands one of the finest prospects in Essex." The alehouse was re-named the "Rodney" or "Rodney Head" late in the century (it first appears under that name in a document of 1794) presumably to honour the popular Admiral who died in 1792. In 1799 James Jordan and Maximus Gage were occupying the Rodney with the warren and also two farms, Balshams and Porters, containing 32 acres, the whole of which was assessed at 16s. Land Tax. Porters appears to have consisted at that time of Pearces croft, Little Taylors and some other land. The Rodney was taken over by John Pullen and then for many years up to the middle of the nineteenth century was run by Mary Pullen.

Although within Little Baddow manor bounds, Monks garden belonged to Tofts manor. At the 1689 court Christopher Spilman was admitted to the newly erected customary cottage with 1½ acres of land at a rent of 3s. The cottage seems to have replaced an earlier one. In 1694 Spilman was granted two rods of land with a barn lately built on it, adjoining "le Gravell Pitt" and "Muncks garden" for a rent of 1s. He left the tenement to his wife and two sons (with Leonard James living in the cottage), but some years later Elizabeth Witham took it over after Joseph Spilman failed to repay a loan. In 1736 John Duke was living there when he made his will. It was reported to the court of 1746 that the barn of James Wright at Monks garden had fallen to the ground and the messuage and outhouses were much out of repair and run to decay. In 1750 he transferred them to Josias Stammers. In 1763 Richard Denny surrendered "a Customary Messuage with 1½ acres called Monks Garden abutting upon the kings highway leading from Tofts Park Gate towards Danbury". There were several short tenancies during the remainder of the eighteenth century. From 1819 the tenant was William Allen who was letting it for 4s. a year. At about this time, owing to a road diversion, a piece of land was taken from Monks garden and another piece granted in lieu.

In 1819 Samuel Joice or Joyce was holding land near to Monks garden, taken from the common, including ½ acre "whereon a Messuage is built" – no doubt later to be called "Joyces Corner".

Sir Humfry Myldemay inherited in 1617 and held freely a wood and lands called

Birchetts “lying in Yorkestreat” containing 20 acres at a rent of 16d. Perhaps these were the same as “Burchfeilde and woode” being held by Dr. Cory in 1677 for 1s.4d. General Strutt was letting Birchfield and wood to Jeremiah Pledger in 1819 still for 1s.4d. Edward and Richard Oughan held freely a wood of about 3 acres “in Yorkestreete” adjoining Woodham Walter common at a rent of 4d. Their father’s will of 1607 called this “crosse grove”. It does not appear again in the records.

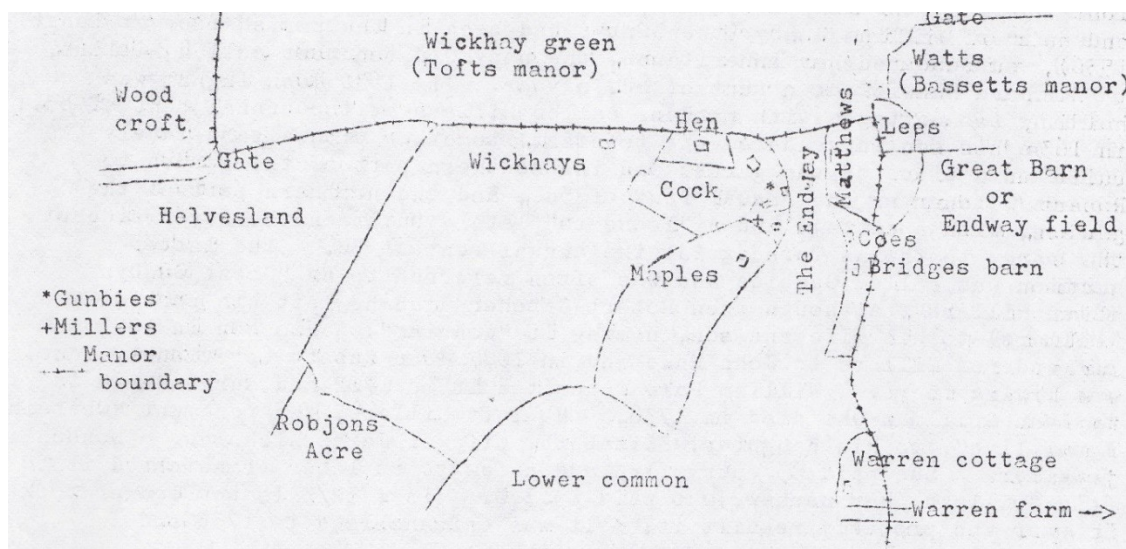
Little Baddow Hall Manor

There are a few court rolls for “manerium de parva Badew” – the manor of Little Baddow – dating from the fifteenth century (the earliest ones appended to those for Boreham Old Hall manor), but the nearly unbroken sequence begins in December 1607, with the first court held by Anthony Penninge. The earliest rental is the joint one of c. 1620.

First in this rental is Smythes, an alternative name until about 1700 for “The Cock”, probably a mediaeval alehouse. Shortly after 1400 Thomas Smyth held the house, giving his name to it, and it was inherited by his daughter, Johanna, and her husband Thomas Feryng. It passed in about 1475 to Henry Carpenter who was a brewer of beer, but may not have brewed at Smythes as he held other tenements. From about 1600 however the tenant, Richard Sea, was a tailor and alehouse-keeper and had a malthouse on the premises. On his death in 1614 his wife, Philippa, who had been a victualler during his lifetime, applied for a licence to continue the alehouse. Richard Sea in his will left the messuage, the malthouse and the main part of the orchard to his wife for ten years and then to his son, William; a little tenement with a shop attached to it and part of the orchard were left to his wife until his son, Thomas, reached the age of 23 years. According to the 1620 rental William Sea was in possession of the customary messuage (the Cock) and an orchard of about ½ acre at a rent of 6d., and Thomas of “an other parte of the same tenement”, namely a cottage with an orchard of about half a rood. This part of the tenement became known as the Hen or Pullett. At the 1627 court it was reported that Thomas had reached the age of 24 when he died, that William was his heir and that the 10 years stipulated in the will were ended. The court agreed that the whole tenement was worth annually £4.10.0. and not more. Philippa, now the wife of Edward Borne, attended the court and asked that William be admitted to all the premises, which was done. At the 1632 court William surrendered the Cock to John Hawes of Woodham Walter (whose tenant was Mary Groves, widow) then 3 years later the Hen to John Cole. He immediately transferred it to Francis Prentice, who the following year surrendered it to John Hawes.

When John Hawes made his will in 1650 he left the Cock to his son Matthew, saying that it was then in the possession of Peter Foster. A note on a later seventeenth century rental states “this is in tayle” and refers to both the Hawes and Fosters as being tenants “in tayle”. The Pullett was left to John Hawes’ daughter, Jane, with “free libertie of ingresse egresse and regresse to fetch, take and carry away water from the pond belonging to the forenamed Cock”. It was then in the possession of John Pake, who was paying 3d. a year.

Peter Foster was still in occupation of the Cock when the Hearth Tax was imposed in 1672 and he paid for 4 hearths. It may have been rebuilt by then with the one chimney stack shown on the 1677 map serving 4 hearths, but its final alteration or rebuilding was in the eighteenth century. The Fosters remained in occupation until the late nineteenth century. Before 1800 they had acquired Hulltree house and its lands, together with land in Bassetts manor and the Cock in consequence was often called Cock farm.



Meanwhile at the 1669 court it was reported that Jane Hawes (Jane Elliott, widow) had died and her son, John Elliott, aged 12, was her heir for the Hen, but he was not present in court. He was admitted later but in 1680 surrendered it for 10 years to the use of the churchwardens and overseers of the poor. Presumably it was used to house a poor family. He died in 1685 leaving 4 cousins, daughters of Matthew Hawes, as his heirs. These sisters (also the co-heirs to the Cock) were the last of the Hawes family to hold the two tenements. The survivor of the sisters surrendered the Hen to John Lincoln (who had been sub-tenant for some years) in 1699, in whose family it remained until it passed to the Perry family in the middle of the next century. Throughout the nineteenth century there were short tenancies. Having become derelict, it was demolished in the mid-twentieth century.

In 1496 the customary tenants of the Hall manor were told to bring to the next court their proof of tenancy of their holdings. Henry Carpenter duly produced documents showing that in 1475 Johanna Ferying, widow, daughter and heir of Thomas Smyth, had transferred to Henry and three other men land which had been in her father's possession, lying next to Smythes, containing three "Daywerkes". This is the sole example in the extant documents of a villein's obligation to work for his lord – in this case on three days a week – in return for his tenement. Lately Richard Paule had been in occupation of the cottage and land and had paid a rent of 2 capons, 1 cock and 5 silver pennies, presumably

in lieu of the day-works. This was the cottage and land called Wickhays. Perhaps John de Wickey of c. 1300 and Isabel de Wykey, who paid 14¾ pennies tax in 1327, had been early tenants. It is described in the 1620 rental as a “mesuage a garden and iii pytelles of land” containing about 6 acres, and it had been held by Henry Pare since his father’s death in 1607, for a rent of 6s. On his death in 1627 it passed to his sisters, of whom Comfort Prior and her husband, of Woodham Walter, were granted possession. They let it to William Saffold and sold it to Rebecca Stanes, who passed it to her daughter, Sara Chamberlyn. During this century it was rebuilt. In 1669 Edmund Butler (occupier of the Hall) obtained the tenancy from Sara, paying a fine of £6 (after which it was sometimes called Butlers). Among his sub-tenants were Widow Hompsted in 1677 and James Wyatt in 1688. It passed on his death with his other tenements to Sarah and Elizabeth Harwood, his great-granddaughters. The Pledger family later obtained it. In the nineteenth century it was given the name of the demolished house called Pilcherines, usually shortened to Pilgrims.

The court of 1650 ordered William Saffold of Wickhays to restore land he had enclosed “adjoining a close belonging to the house of Rebecca Stanes wherein he now dwelleth part of Robgents hill”. Four acres called Robjons hill were leased for 1000 years in 1699. They were transferred in 1784 from Thomas Hinde to Elizabeth Buttle and held by William Buttle in the early nineteenth century at an annual rent of 2s.

In 1480 John Oughan left his “tenement called Robert Myllers” to his son, Thomas. Perhaps it was this Thomas who brought to the 1497 court documents to prove that John Oughan had obtained from Thomas Bastwick the tenement with three houses built on it called Millers, in ancient time Hambleyn. Thomas Oughan was judged to be in possession without clear authority and the tenement was taken into the hands of the lord. No doubt he regained possession on payment of a fine. Its history is then lost until at the 1607 court John Fuller and his wife, who was daughter and heir of William Gunby (the Gunbys had been in the parish from at least 1536), surrendered her inheritance, the copyhold tenement called Millers, to Richard Hunwick at a rent of 8d. a year. In 1620 John Ingham was holding two cottages with gardens called Millers at the annual rent of 8d.; in 1636 his son surrendered one tenement, together with a barn lately built on a piece of the garden and the southern part of the garden to Robert Catcher at the annual rent of 5d., and the northern part of the garden, with a cottage and a “leane to” lately built on the north side of the barn, to Thomas Turnedge at the annual rent of 3d. The latter portion was called Gunbies and was often referred to as “Great Gunbys alias Millers”, although when Robert Catcher died he left his portion (Millers) to his wife and son, naming it “gonbies”. His son in 1651 surrendered Millers to John Pake and in 1677 Joan Cubett (previously Pake) was living there. William Pake inherited it in 1702 and surrendered it to John Spillman who died in 1738. He left Millers, the tenement “wherein I now live”, to his daughter, Elizabeth, wife of James Nicholas, a London jeweller. She paid £3 entry fine and a few years later transferred it to John Spillman, her nephew, who paid £3.3.0. In 1752/3 Isaac Pledger took it over and probably rebuilt it. It was enfranchised in 1755 and remained in the possession of the Pledger family.

Meanwhile in 1658 Thomas Turnedge, the elder, surrendered "Great Gunbyes", in the occupation of Thomas Turnedge, the younger, to Adam Catcher of Southminster. He transferred it (still occupied by Thomas Turnedge) to Richard Bridge in 1662. The 1677 map shows two cottages on the site. Richard Bridge's son was admitted in 1699, dying in 1726 without heirs. In 1731 Eleanor Raven became tenant and four years later Mary Orton, widow. When her son, Samuel Orton, paid £3.10.0 for his admission in 1746, Ann Perry, widow, and Thomas Wiltshire were living in the cottages. On Orton's death his daughters were admitted but surrendered the tenement to Hannah Foster (of the Cock). She mortgaged it to Elias Pledger, but failed to repay her debt so that in 1773 it was taken over by Pledger, paying a fine of £1.10.0. Ann Perry and Thomas Wiltshire were still in occupation. It may have been rebuilt soon after this as one cottage. When Elias Pledger died in 1800 he left Gunbies to his two daughters who transferred it to his grandson, Jeremiah Pledger, the younger, of Holybreds. In 1902, when J.W. Pledger inherited it from his father, the rent was still 3d. It was enfranchised in 1907.

The freehold cottage south of Millers, no doubt mediaeval in origin, does not enter the records until the 1620 rental when it was held by Thomas Kent for 6d. a year, and was described as a "Cotage with a pytell" and "late Maples als. Drayes mesuage". In 1660 George Charles purchased "Dranes nest otherwise Maples". He paid tax for 2 hearths which may have been in the rebuilt cottage which dates from about his time. Its name could have meant "squirrel's nest" or "bees' nest", and Maple was obviously an earlier occupier. Nothing further is heard of the cottage until from the 1840s Charles Smith ran it as a bakery and then in addition as a public house, later named "The Rodney".

On the east side of the Endway was the customary tenement called Matthews to which Ralph Rede was admitted in 1488 at a rent of 4d. and a fine of 2d. Henry Evered took possession in 1577 and in 1612 he transferred it to John Lucke. In 1620 Edward Borne held it at 8d., plus 1d. for ½ rod of land taken from Wickhay green. Samuel Jeggons, who obtained several properties around Wickhay green, acquired Matthews in 1643 from James Maldon. William Ram (who paid tax for 2 hearths) was the next tenant, and by this time it included a forge. In 1708 it was in the possession of Thomas Maldon, blacksmith, and on his death in 1746 it went to his nephew, Nathaniel Perry, also a smith, on payment of an entry fine of £6.10.0. It remained in the Perry family until the end of the century when it was acquired by the Pledgers and sub-let to the Maddocks family, blacksmiths, and, as the Rams and Perrys had been tenants of the adjoining Lees, another forge. Matthews seems to have been demolished during the second half of the nineteenth century.

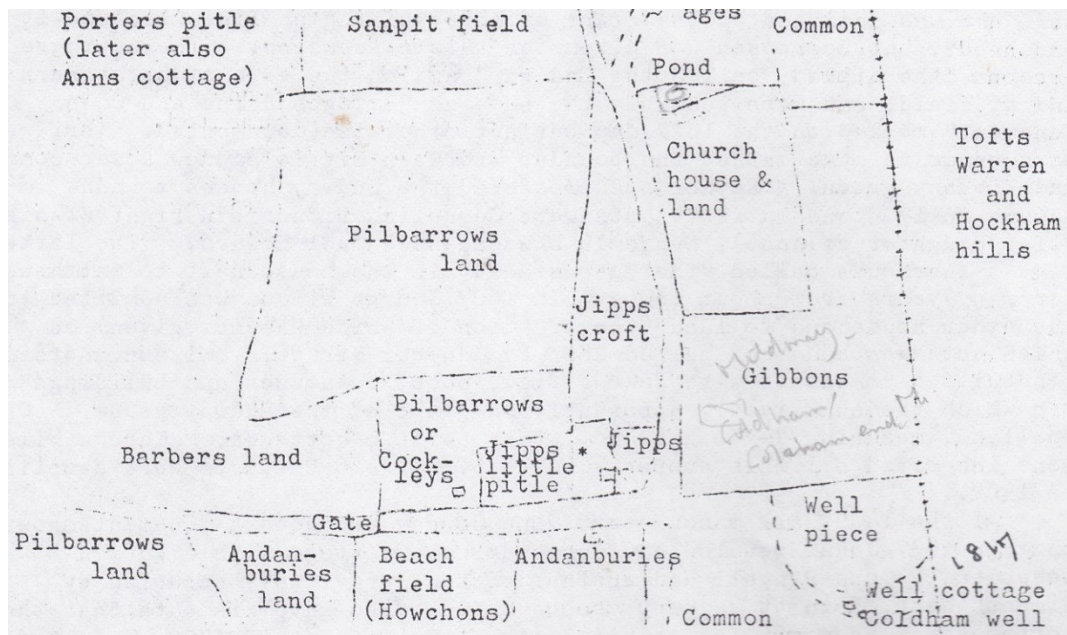
A rental of 1688 states that Walter Reynolds "holdeth A Customary Tennement in two parts Called the Endway houses" paying a rent of 5d., together with a piece of ground lately added to the tenement at a rent of 3s. He was admitted at the court of 1685, paying no fine "because it is pardoned", but no reason was given for this concession. The cottages were on "the highway called the End way" and on the edge of Great Barn or Endway field, and were possibly the same as "Bridges Barne And Coes Tenement" marked on the 1677 map but not

otherwise documented. Bridges barn seems to have marked the boundary between Little Baddow Lower common and Wickhay green. Reynolds surrendered the Endway houses to Anne Dawson in 1709 and later tenants were Cornelius Limner (in right of his wife, daughter of Anne), Benjamin Dawson and Samuel Howard. The latter kept a beerhouse called "The Queens Head" in the house next to Matthews for many years from about 1806. In 1807 George Wilson was admitted to the other house and to land (the location of which was not given) on which cottages had been pulled down by General Strutt. Wilson and his son built a "messuage with Bake office, shop, outhouses and buildings" (in which the son lived), apparently in place of the Endway house. On the land, measuring 44yd. X 12 yd., they built 6 cottages. George Wilson's sons inherited all this property in 1836. The 6 cottages were demolished in 1902.

At the 1497 Hall manor court John Corney produced a document showing that in 1437 John Spendlow had surrendered a cottage with a garden occupied by John Pyngell and another cottage previously occupied by Richard Webb, both at "Wykkey greene". He also gave his oath that the cottages had been granted to him in the reign of Edward IV. The lord therefore conceded them to him at the rent of 6d. and 2 capons yearly. These mediaeval cottages might have been on the sites of some of the above cottages.

Warren cottage "near the gate leading to the Warren Farm" was "lately erected" in 1802, when Ann, wife of Taversham Nunn, was admitted, on payment of 2s. 6d. and at a rent of 2s 6d. In 1811 Thomas Nunn was tenant and letting the cottage to Benjamin Lewin.

In 1577 the copyhold messuage and two acres of land called Ropers, to the north of Holybred wood, were granted to Rose, wife of William Bundock als. Saffold. By 1609 Rose was the wife of Edward Kenswick, and another cottage had been built on the northern half of the land, which they wished Isaac Bundock als. Saffold to have after their deaths. This was granted by the court, each portion to be liable to a rent of 6d. At the time of the 1620 rental Isaac was duly holding the northern half while William Williamson held the original messuage with its share of the land. Isaac's will left his portion to his widow for the "terme of her life" and after her death to Ralph Cooper als. Coarn, their daughter's son. The other half was transferred to John Banks als. Tanner, after whose death "according to the ancient customs of the manor" his widow, though she had remarried, was granted by the 1642 court one third of the tenement for life and two of his sons the remainder. In his will John Tanner had left his sons £4 towards their entry fine, and stated that Ropers was in the tenure of William Saffold. Both parts later passed through many hands, notably the Mayes, Stone and Saward families. Jeremiah Pledger purchased the original cottage with its acre of land in 1825, paying £147.10.0. to Richard Saward, plus £5 for the turnips growing on the land. The following year he obtained a licence to pull down the cottage. The later cottage, however, survived.



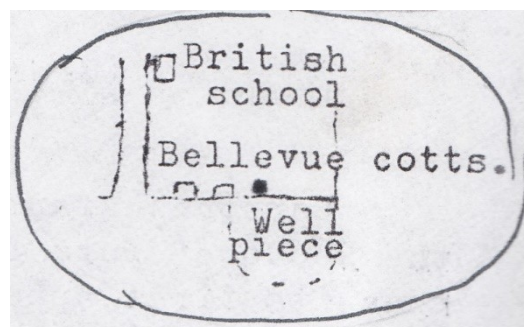
Among the small collection of houses at Coldham End, Gattons was presumably the possession of the Gatton family, villagers during the fifteenth century, the last representative of whom appears to have been Cecily Gatton, widow, (previously the widow of John Felsted). She died in 1504 and left "Coldham gardine" in her will to her grandson, William Felsted, but did not mention Gattons. In 1608 Richard Sea transferred to John Branwood one acre of ground called Gattons, which he had taken on a 54 year lease at 10s. a year, but it was soon in the hands of the Whitlock or Wetlock family who seem to have been related to the Felsteds. The 1620 rental indicates that William Cotton was living in a free cottage, with a garden, next to the land called Gattons, for the annual rent of 1/2d. This must have been the cottage (which he called "Porters pitle") left by Abraham Cotton in 1606 to his wife and son. Ann Bugby (nee Whitlock) in 1672 followed Jane Whitlock as tenant of Porters pitle, with William Hawes as the occupier. He was exempted by poverty from paying tax on the one hearth in the cottage. His widow was there in 1677. In 1702 William Bugby (Ann's son) inherited it on his mother's death at the rent of 1/2d. and a relief of 1/2d. Sir Gobert's 1677 map named the cottage "Gattons", but called the remainder of the land and another cottage "Jipps Crofte &c" and "Jipps Little Pitle". Perhaps Edward Gipps who died in 1623 had been the occupier. The 1777 "particular" gives William Bentley as tenant of Gattons cottage and Thomas Saward as tenant of the land, then called Porters land, and says "These are 3 small pieces of land very convenient to Build upon and would sell well for that use." In fact one new cottage (later called Hill house) took the place of Jipps cottage and another (later Anns cottage) appeared on the other side of Gattons cottage. Gattons and Anns cottages seem to be the ones purchased from Jeremiah Pledger in 1830 by the Butler School Charity (thereafter called Butler Charity cottages) and sold by them in 1907. James Moss lived from the 1820s in the

cottage (Anns cottage) next to Jipps Little Pittle, which then became known as the “Little field by Mosses”. In 1840 Joseph Saward was living in Gattons cottage and Sarah Barnard in the corner cottage (Hill house).

Osbert Pilebwe was living in the parish in 1300 and other members of the family until at least 1392. They no doubt gave their name to the customary farm called Pilbarrowes. Its original appearance in the documents is in 1509 when the manor court admitted Robert and John, the sons of William Bastwick who had died expressing, in the presence of two other tenants, his wish that they should inherit. In 1612 the court found that John Bastwick, who had been admitted to the premises in 1562, had died and left all to his wife (so long as she did not re-marry), for life, and then to his eldest son. His wife paid an entry fine of £5. Eight years later however the 1620 rental gave the tenant as Abraham Pond, paying 2s.6d. a year for the house, garden and “pytell” containing 5 acres, together with another 14 acres of land. When Abraham’s son made his will in 1628 he left to his son the house “that Robert Cockly nowe dwellith in”. It must have been during the sub-tenancy of the Cockleys that the house was re-built and the name changed in popular usage to Cockleys, although it was still named Pilbarrows in legal documents. John Rand, son of the Nonconformist minister, was sub-tenant in 1677 and had paid tax on 2 hearths 5 years previously – which could have been for a different house. The Ponds remained tenants until 1760, when Arthur Pond died, being followed by the Pledgers who retained it until the twentieth century.

The 1620 rental states that Ellit Sames held freely both Andanburies and Barbers (their first mention in the documents) and these were combined at least from that time. There was then no house on Barbers land but one on Andanburies. Barbers comprised about 17 acres and “was in antient tymes” rented at 4s. 6d., while Andanburies was just over 8 acres at 2s. 8d. A John Barbour had held a messuage and land in the parish in 1392 (including 3 rods in Long mead which he received from Thomas Pilberewe) which may have perpetuated his name. The Sames family let the farm in turn to Robert Clay, James How, John Lord and Thomas Frank before the Stone or Stane family acquired it in 1699. They held it until, at least by 1811, Samuel Saward was in occupation. Later there was both a house and a cottage at Andanburies and General Strutt had taken them over from Saward together with the lands. Perhaps in the 1830s the General built a house and workshop on the part of Andanburies adjoining the lane to the Parsonage. This was tenanted by Thomas Jaggs, carpenter, who later became a victualler as well, naming his house “The General’s Arms”. William Jaggs was meanwhile in occupation of Andanburies house, while Sarah Saward was at the cottage. William Jaggs farmed all the lands, including a small portion adjoining Cockleys which recalled the old name – Barbers orchard.

Gibbons, a freehold containing about 4 acres, was held by John Solme in 1620 at an annual rent of 9d. Later it was in the Rudd family and then Henry Mildmay acquired it, with John Lord as tenant. In



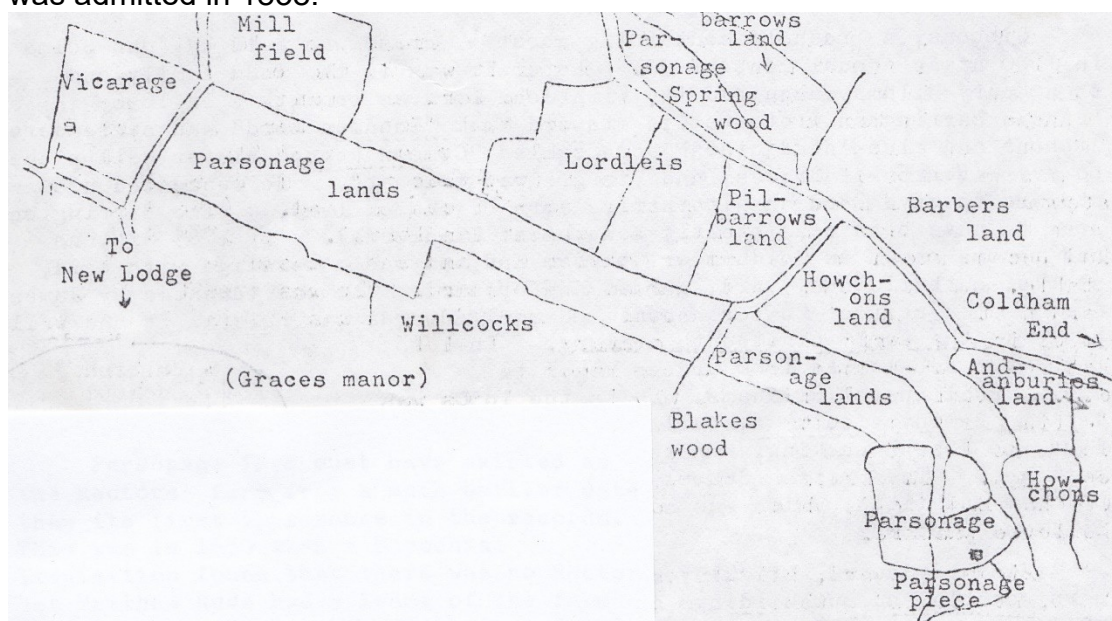
1696 Francis Barrington wrote to his steward that "Goodman Lord" had surrendered Gibbons and also an adjoining acre called "Common peese" (later Well piece) to Mr Waterson of Graces, and "is greived thereat". He requested his steward to give Lord an alternative acre of common land. (The Barringtons seem to have been consistently benevolent landlords). By 1765 Gibbons had become known as Coldham or Coleham End and was a messuage with barn, stable, outbuildings, yard, garden and orchard. It was tenanted by James Jordan at a rent of £6 per annum. Samuel Edwards was holding it and Well piece in the early nineteenth century. In 1818 both were sub-leased from Graces manor to J R S Phillips of Riffhams, who in the 1830s was letting Bellevue cottage, built on part of the land, to Joseph Lucking. Later there were two cottages. The British School occupied part of Coldham End field, which was sometimes called Bellevue pasture

Richard Saward, bricklayer, in 1817 built himself a cottage with a barn, stable and outbuildings on land taken from the waste, adjoining Well piece and beside Coldham well, and lived there, calling it Well cottage, until 1866, paying a rent of 1s. a year. No doubt he was responsible for the brickwork in most of the contemporary houses. Coldham well seems to have been almost the only public well in the village.

The 1620 rental states that the Churchwardens held a house and croft of land for 3d. and another house "next the churchyard and the hyeway" for 2d. annually. The latter house was usually occupied by the church clerk, and may have been the house excepted from Henry Penninge's mortgage to Humphrey Groves, which mentioned half a rood of land "lately inclosed" from Great Church field, "and letten for a yarde to a Tenement" in the occupation of Widow Cooke, relict of John Cooke. The other tenement called "Church house and land" or "Pond Hall" (presumably from the large pond beside the house from which the occupants were permitted to take water) was used as a poor house for the parish. Both must have been charitable donations dating from at least Tudor times. A Return made to Parliament in 1786 stated that Church house and land were the gift of an unknown donor, and that the land was being cultivated by paupers "in spade husbandry". Church house (or "The Townhouse" as it was commonly called) was rebuilt (facing the road) in 1768 at a cost of £126.4.5. by the local carpenter, Thomas Saward, and used to house the poor rent free, until it became the parish almshouses in the 1840s.

In the late eighteenth century the course of the road from Coldham End through Lower common to Wickhay green was altered, and parts of the common were enclosed. In 1801 John Polley, potash maker, was admitted to a parcel of ground taken from the common, with a potash house and buildings lately erected on it. When he surrendered the buildings to Thomas Isaac in 1822 they were in a ruinous condition and three years later part had been taken down and carried away. A malting business was carried on there by Benjamin Lewin in the 1830s, when a new timber and tiled cottage was occupied by Mrs Edwards and an older one by John Polley. Joseph Pledger was in possession of some cottages built in the early nineteenth century above "the Potash", including the one which became the master's house for the National School. Below "the Potash" was the land on which was built Holly cottage, to which Samuel Purkis

was admitted in 1838.



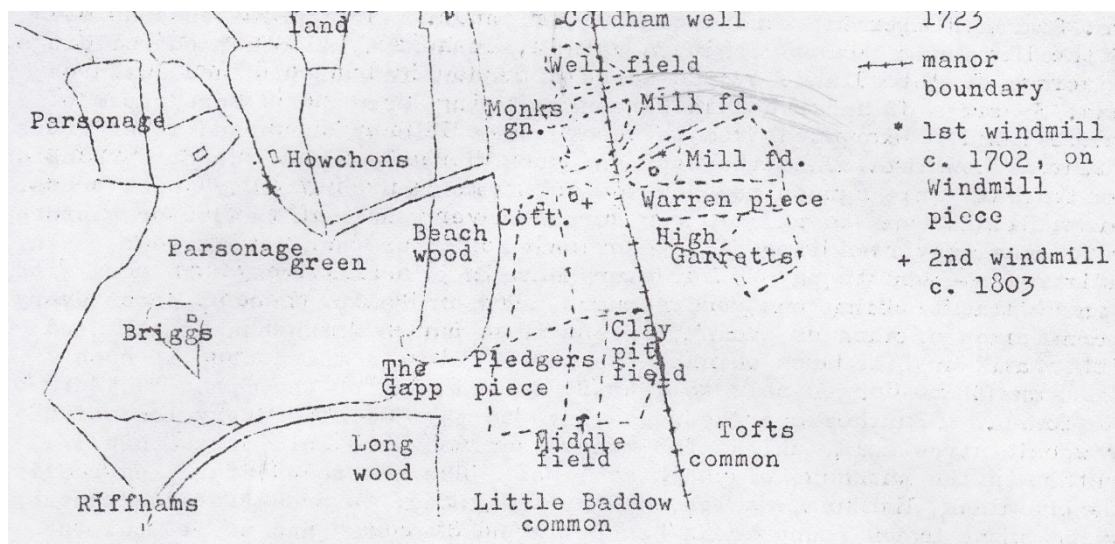
Parsonage farm must have existed as the Rectors' farm from a much earlier date than its first appearance in the records. This was in 1650 when a Parochial Inquisition found that there was no Rector, but Matthew Rudd had a lease of the farm from the late Rector for 21 years (of which 13 had elapsed) at a rent of £50 per annum, payable to Mr John Willson, Rector of Aldham. The rectory was a sinecure, often held by a layman, while the parochial duties were performed by a vicar. By 1712 John Bruce had succeeded Edmund Butler as tenant of both Little Baddow Hall and Parsonage farm and was paying £40 in rent for the latter £10 of which went to the Rector of Little Baddow and the remainder to the Barringtons, as lords of the manor. Ambrose Bentley of Woodham Walter held the farm in 1730 and was granted an extra piece of ground from the waste for a fine of 10s. and the annual rent of 2s. The records do not indicate who lived in the house at any time before an agricultural labourer was there in 1841.

At Michaelmas 1765 Viscount Barrington granted a 21 year lease of the farm (together with the Great Tithes and quit rents of the manors) to Mrs Sarah Pledger at a rent of £108 per annum. The premises consisted of the Parsonage house with barn, stable, cowhouse and other outbuildings, 28 acres of glebe land, over 6 acres of meadow in Langmead and Huskards mead, 3 acres of underwood in Parsonage Spring wood and 4 more acres of arable land. Excepted from the lease were "Timber trees and other Trees Pollards Bowlings...and the Lops and Tops thereof" and Viscount Barrington was to have free egress to "hew saw out frame and carry away" such trees. Sarah Pledger was to pay £10 per acre for every acre of meadow or pasture which she converted into tillage or mowed oftener than once a year. In addition she was to pay £5 for every acre in 3 successive years sown with corn "without making one good summers tilth or Fallow thereof after every second crop of corn or grain", except those parts which she "shall Mend with chalk or Lime from which parts

may be taken a third crop if such lands shall be Judged able to bear it", but only for the first 14 years of the lease. Furthermore she would have to pay 50s. for every load of hay or wheat straw sold, unless the money received were laid out within 3 months in the purchase of chalk or lime. She was to maintain and repair the premises, ditches, stiles, hedges and gates; to preserve all "Timber Trees Spire Trees Young Trees Standells and Storers" and not to cut the underwood of Parsonage Spring wood during the last 7 years of the lease. She was not to carry off any hay, straw, stover, muck, dung, compost or soil, but it was all to be used on the parsonage land. At Lady Day before the lease expired at Michaelmas, Viscount Barrington was to be permitted to enter the arable land with horses, ploughs and carts to "Till Manure and Sow". Mrs Pledger was allowed "rough timber" (at her own cost for the felling and carrying) for repairs to buildings, and also "Plowboot cartboot gateboot Railboot hedgeboot stakeboot and fireboot" (i.e. wood for ploughs, carts, gates etc.) She could have the use of the barn for threshing until the Lady Day following the expiration of the lease and also nine acres of land for "Foddering out her...last years Stover".

At the end of the century Richard Barnard was tenant of the parsonage lands and of 10 extra acres, at a rent of £35.8.0., but Jeremiah Pledger held the Great Tithes. Later Thomas Orrige proved an "unsatisfactory tenant" of Parsonage farm.

The vicarage, standing in a 5 acre field, was reported in 1572 as being "out of repair". It must have been a mediaeval house, for when it was mentioned in the records in 1610 it was described as "An old Vicarage-House cover'd with Tiles, a little Garden, a little Barn, a very little Stable and a little Hay-House, all thatch'd, two little Orchards and a little Garden-Plot". In 1686, when Andrew Shoard was vicar, a Visitation found "The house in noe very good Condition but Mr Shoard does something to it every yeare". In the late eighteenth century the vicarage had become a labourer's cottage and the vicar was living at Coleraines. It finally disappeared late in the nineteenth century; pieces of mediaeval pottery and sixteenth and seventeenth century bricks and tiles have been found on the site.



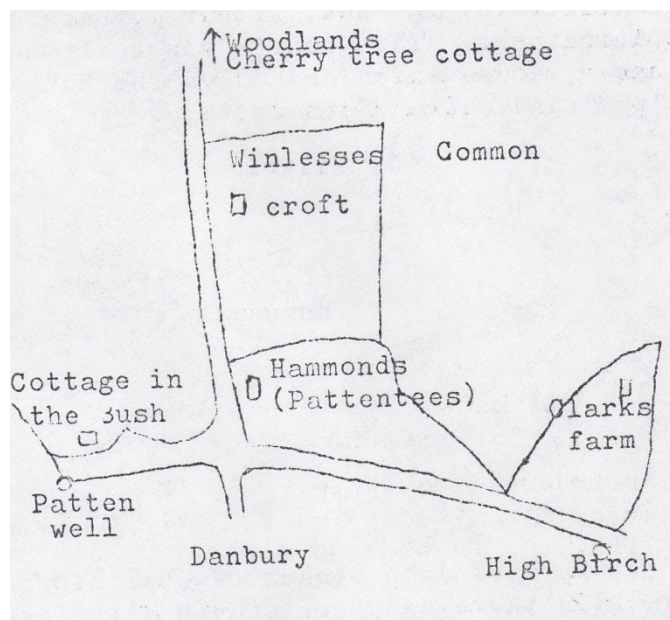
At Parsonage common or green there were at least two houses, besides the Parsonage, by the time the map was drawn up in 1677. Briggs was probably one of the encroachments on the common allowed by Sir John Smythe, and in about 1600 it was the home of Thomas Briggs or Bridges who was paying a rent of 6d. for the house and garden. The court of 1676, when admitting Robert Oughan, recorded that the house had 2 rods of land. Twenty years later Oughan was allowed to take 2 acres from Parsonage green at a rent of 2s., to add to his tenement. Following his death, his son, John, was admitted in 1712 on paying a fine of £3.15.0. He immediately surrendered the property to Ambrose Bentley, who a few years later transferred it (without the two acres) to Richard Penny, admitted on payment of £2.16.0. In 1726 Bentley alienated the two acres to Robert Clarke of Riffhams who paid 21s. admission fine. John Penny, son of Richard, in 1758 surrendered Briggs, then in the tenure of Andrew Griffiths, to Martha Blackley, aged ten, the illegitimate daughter of Robert Clarke. When Robert Clarke died in about 1764 he left the two acres (with other lands) to Martha. In 1764 the court found that the house was out of repair and ordered that it be demolished. The land still retained the name for a time and remained in the possession of the owners of Riffhams. Howchons, also at Parsonage green, had earlier become an appendage of Riffhams.

The first indication of a windmill existing in the parish is from additions which were made to Sir Gobert's map in 1723, showing that Windmill piece had been enclosed out of Tofts share of High common and a mill erected which Charles Richardson was then holding freely for the rent of 5s. Perhaps this was the portion of waste granted to William Rotherham, miller, in 1702, who may have built the mill. Richardson also held customarily the newly enclosed land adjoining, called Mill field, for a rent of 2s. John Richardson was miller in 1735 and the mill was still there in 1757, but it may not have lasted much longer than that, and by the nineteenth century the Pledgers were holding the land.

At the 1803 Hall manor court Ralph Stone transferred to Josiah Craneis 2 acres which an earlier Ralph Stone had enclosed from the Hall manor's share of High common before 1723. A note on the court roll states "9 Rods of this Land Enfranchised to erect a Windmill upon and to pay 2s.3d. as a Quit Rent for ever". Thomas Aylmer, steward, prepared the deed of enfranchisement immediately and presumably the mill was soon erected. The 1½ acres of land adjoining, with a house on it (later called Mill cottage), together with another 2 acre piece (unnamed) close by, were acquired by Josiah Craneis from Abraham Ager in 1805 at rents of 2s.6d. and 3s.6d. The 1½ acres had originally been enclosed out of High common by Edward Hollingham before 1723 and the cottage built. This piece had adjoined the "footpath leading to Le Old Clay pits" and a nearby enclosure was called Clay pit field. In 1814 Josiah Craneis was advertising the mill for sale or to let "with round house and going gears complete; has a very good country connection." He would "have no objection to accommodate the incomer with a few Acres of land, if required." A rental of 1819 gives William Hilton as tenant of the mill, with a man named Buckworth as occupier (and presumably miller). Some years later a note on a map shows the 9 rods as being "where a windmill stood".

The small enclosure called Mill field, lying north of the first mill, was part of Monks garden, as was Well field, all of which belonged to Tofts manor, though mainly within the Hall manor bounds. The un-named enclosure south of Monks garden is undocumented. On Tofts waste, Warren piece probably belonged to the Warren house (the Rodney); High Garretts was three small enclosures, enfranchised in 1755 and tenanted by the Pledgers. Pledgers piece was enclosed by the same family; Middle field is undocumented.

The court of 1694 admitted Thomas Hammond to a cottage he had built on an acre of land he had enclosed from the common, at an annual rent of 3s. This tenement became known as Hammonds, although as soon as 1701 Thomas had surrendered it to Daniel Turner. In 1708 John Lord was admitted and on his death his son and daughter, Benjamin and Anne Lord, paid £3 for admission. On Anne's death in 1735 Hammonds (together with other land enclosed from the waste) went to her sister, Mary Herrington,



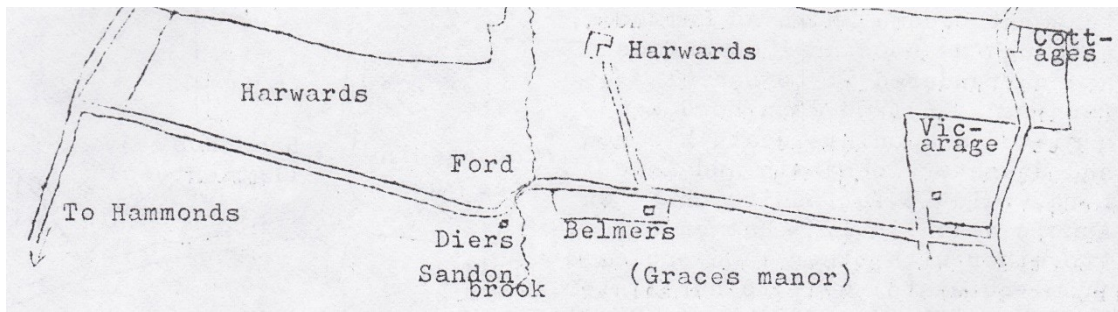
and then to Mary's grand-daughter, Rachel Cobbs, who paid £4.15.0. for admission. Henry Cobbs later transferred it to William Brooks of Boreham, who surrendered it to John Nicholls of Danbury. His son, Matthew, having paid his fine of £10.10.0. in 1797 mortgaged it and, two years afterwards surrendered it to Jeremiah Pledger, who paid £11.11.0. He transferred it in 1803 to Edward

Ellis of Danbury, who 3 years later passed it on to William Hilton. He had to pay, in addition to his fine of £17, the sum of £15.2.6. being one third of the value of timber on the land which Edward Ellis (who remained in occupation) had felled "through Ignorance and Inadvertancy". Hilton transferred the property to Mark Lay from whom Johnson Clark, late of the water-mill, purchased it and some land for £450 in 1813. He seems to have re-named it Pattentees, perhaps after "Patten well and trees" on the opposite side of the road. His trustees after his death sold it to William Dutton, but he soon re-sold it to Thomas Docwra who paid £210 for the house, barn, cowhouse, outbuilding, yard, garden in front and rear, and pasture adjoining of one acre. The rent was then 6s. a year and Sarah Bygrave was in occupation. In the 1830s William Docwra was tenant, there being then a house in the occupation of Samuel Ratcliff and some cottages on the site, one of which may have been on "Winlesses Croft" shown on the 1677 map as an encroachment on the common but otherwise undocumented.

In 1620 Humfry Hedge held a messuage with a garden containing about 1.2 acre "lying on the Comon next Danbury which was lately old Hartes" for which he paid 6d. and 2 hens yearly. It was near Patten well (which might have been a public well) and an old boundary oak. A note written in Sir Gobert's time gives Widow Windly as tenant and states "now in the Lord's hands and renteth 3 li. p. an." (£3 per annum). This appears to be "the howse in the Bush" being "the mansion house" of Daniel Cornewell, mentioned in the court roll for 1696, when Daniel was granted an encroachment of ½ acre with a quickset hedge around it on Little Baddow common, for a rent of 6d. per annum. Daniel Cornewell conveyed the copyhold messuage to John Burchell "by A free ded" (deed) whereby, the court judged in 1710, he forfeited it. Four generations of Burchells however remained tenants of both the messuage and the ½ acre, into the nineteenth century, at times sub-letting them.

In 1696 comes the first record of the "messuage called the halfe way howse" which was let to Anne Lord in consideration of the sum of £25. The grant included a 3 acre close and 5 acres of waste land with a quickset hedge, both on Little Baddow common. It passed to descendants of Anne Lord and to other tenants until in 1793 it was taken over by John Hance of Woodham Walter. It appears to have been the tenement he let to Johnson Clark, which was afterwards known as Clarks farm. John Hance's son surrendered it in 1820 to Thomas Docwra and it was in the possession of William Hilton in the 1830s.

By the 1830s Thomas Foker had built a cottage on High common, later to be called Cherry tree cottage, and Mr Meggy had built Woodlands, inhabited by the rev Arthur Johnson, vicar, who moved there from Coleraines. The Vicar's son built on part of Barbers land beside Coldham lane a house which he called The Bungalow. A cottage was built at "The Gapp" and called Fern cottage.

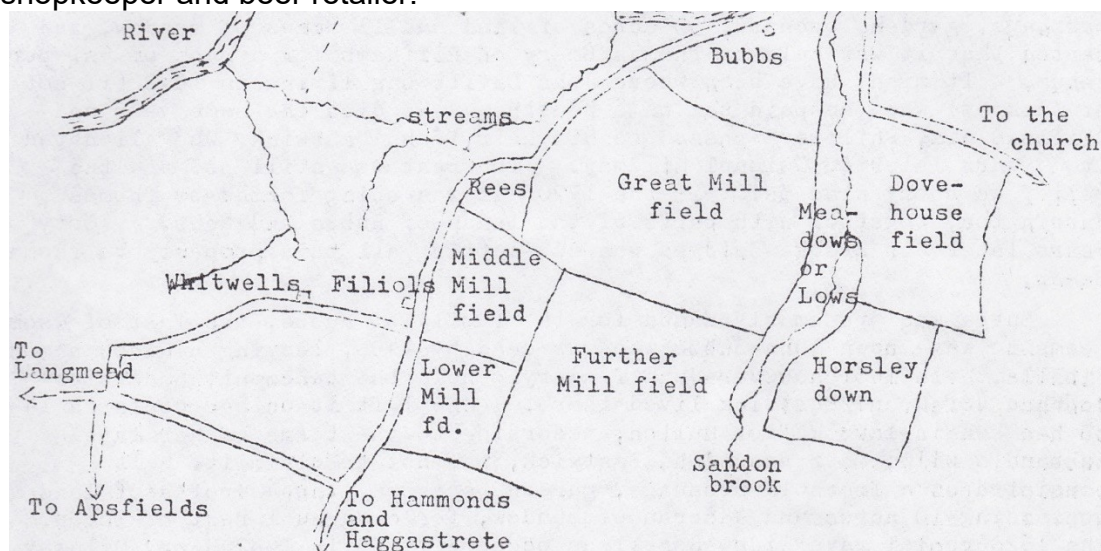


In 1491 John Bocher of Chelmsford held Belmores, a house at the ford. In 1302 there had been a Huigh atte Ford – but this was not the only ford in the parish. The freehold messuage, garden and orchard, with 20 acres of land and 2 acres of meadow, rented at 4s., was later usually called Belmers, and once, in the 1611 court roll, Belmarsh. It was held in the late sixteenth century by William Burles of London, who died in 1609, and it was in his time that the house was rebuilt. Nearby was a messuage, garden and orchard of 1½ acre called “Diers alias Belmores Hope” – “hope” meaning a small enclosure. This was left to Richard Glascock in 1612 by his father, when it was in the occupation of Homfery Willes. Both tenements were purchased by Sir Henry Mildmay, after which Graces manor continued to hold them from the Hall manor. Belmers became known as Waterhall during the nineteenth century, but Diers cottage survived only until the middle of that century.

Harwards was probably the messuage with 50 acres of land, 6 acres of pasture and 6 acres of wood, of which John Hereward and his wife Katharine, daughter of Sir Thomas Filiol, gained possession in 1356. John, son of Michael Hereward, (and obviously a relative of the successful John Hereward), put in a claim to it, as Michael himself had done in 1349. Michael was the son of an earlier John Hereward, perhaps the man who paid 18d. tax in 1327. Up to 1488 Harwards was tenanted by Thomas Combe, Richard Balsham, Margaret Fuller (widow of the latter) and then John Stodehawe. In 1495 William Stodehawe, son of John, was ordered to show at the next court by what right he had entered into possession of the tenement called Herwordes and its 40 acres of land, 6 acres of wood and 6 acres of pasture. He was also to pay the annual rent of 5s. as well as 2d. every 24 weeks, being a certain due called “Wardesilver”. This must have been part of the 18s.4d. payable by the lord every 24 weeks towards the ward of Baynards Castle, and possible others of the older tenements had carried out the same obligation which had by this time been incorporated in their rents. William Stodehawe also owed the relief for Harwards and fines for many times defaulting in his suit of court. He paid his dues at the next court and performed his fealty. By 1620, in the tenancy of Mathias Rudd, Harwards consisted of a freehold messuage, an orchard, 36 acres of land adjoining and a meadow of 3 acres, at a rent of 5s.2d. When Thomas Durrant, the occupier, died in 1633 he left Harwards “nowe into twoe tenements devided”, one of which was in the occupation of Thomas Kole, between his two sons. The house was large; on the 1677 map the two parts were shown joined at right angles, each with a chimney stack. Matthew Rudd sold the property to Colonel Mildmay, after which its

history is lost until in 1777 William Johnson, of the water-mill, was holding it. He bequeathed it to Johnson Clark, who held it into the nineteenth century and was followed by the Simmons family. At the end of the century it was a bakehouse until its demolition.

By 1840 cottages had been built, probably by Jeremiah Pledger, along the lane from the vicarage to the chapel, one occupied by William Thake who was a shopkeeper and beer retailer.



Although it must have been rebuilt many times and was destroyed by fire at least once, Little Baddow water-mill can claim an older recorded history than any other building in the parish, for it is unique in being mentioned in the Domesday Book. For the next six centuries however nothing has survived regarding it, except a mention in 1573 and the names of a few millers, until 1712 when Mr Ewick and Mr Chapman were leasing it at £10 a year "the Tenants Bound to all Repaires and to find and provid Tiimber for the said Repaires at their own charge". Mrs Burgis was leasing the "Mill Meadow and Marsh" also at £10. Soon after this it was said to consist of a messuage, a water corn mill, a barn, a stable, a garden and an orchard and to have 7 acres of land and 17 acres of meadow. In 1777 William Johnson paid Viscount Barrington £2000 for the mill and its lands of which his grandfather and father had previously been tenants. His successor, Johnson Clark, in 1802 insured the mill house and dwelling house for £1,200, both being "brick and timber built and tiled", the insurers noting that there was "no steam engine on the premises". With the coming of the canal in 1797 the mill's prosperity increased and Johnson Clark was able to rebuild it, so it may have been the new building he was insuring. The new mill probably had two water-wheels to cope with the large amount of grain that was landed at the wharf, which also dealt with many tons of coal, besides malt, lime, timber and other commodities. It was run by Piggot & Co., employing managers, for much of the nineteenth century.

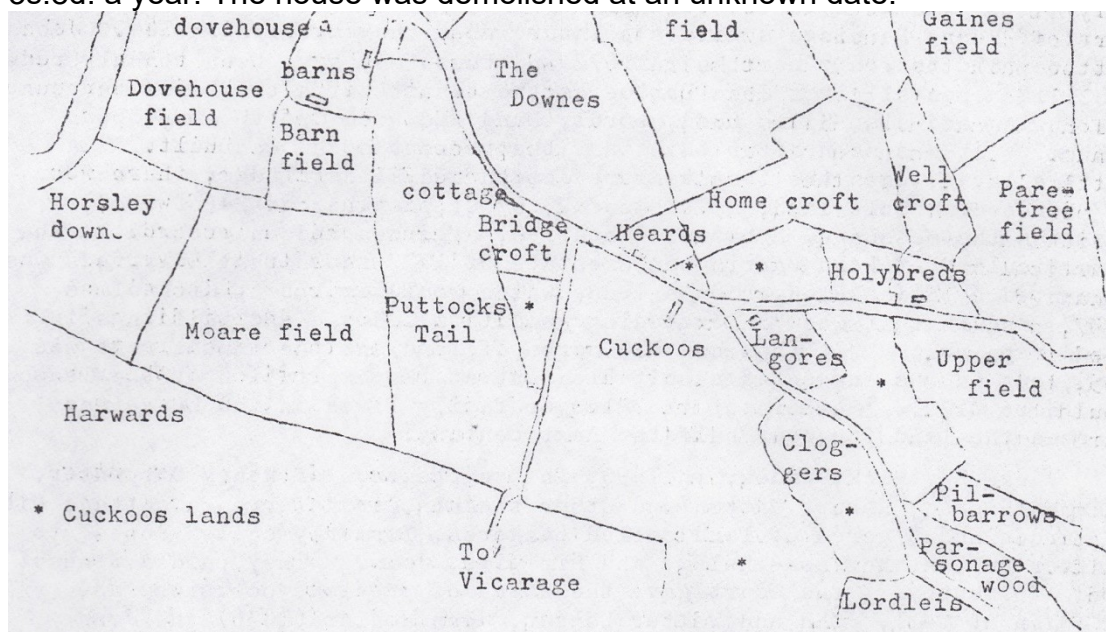
Whitwells, mentioned in 1404 and 1495 as land called “Whytewell”, with no reference to a house, was, according to the 1620 rental, a free-hold messuage with an orchard and 40 acres of land lying between the river, Langmead and “Fillolles”, and with 5 acres of meadow in Broadmead. When John Gowers made his will in 1621 he mentioned his “howse caled Whitwells” which he held on a lease, presumably from Mathias Rudd, the tenant. Some new rooms had been built on to the old house. Its rent is not given in the 1620 rental, but Priscilla Rudd, widow, in 1673 died leaving to her daughter Whitwells, held by fealty, suit of court and the annual rent of a peppercorn. It was then in the occupation of Thomas Thrussell, who had paid tax on 3 hearths. A century later Thompson Stoneham, J.P., lived there, dying in 1780, and his widow was followed by William Lees. During the nineteenth century it was divided into three cottages.

The free tenement of “Fillolles als. Fillockes” was on a mediaeval, perhaps even Saxon, moated site, although it was rebuilt in the seventeenth century and much altered later. It was occasionally called “Filloleshalle” and may have been inhabited by, and named after, members of the Filiol family, the fourteenth century lords of the Hall manor. In the 1490s however John Tendencyng of Boreham was in possession, after which its history is sparsely documented. The rental of 1620 described it as a messuage, garden, orchard, 55 acres of land and 11 acres of meadow, and stated that it was held by Thomas Emery of Riffhams for a rent of 5s. per annum. It might have been where John Levitt was living in 1672 (if not at Cuckoos) when he paid tax on 8 hearths. He died the same year and “Fillows als. Philoley” passed to his heir, John Bastwick, who alienated it 3 years later to Colonel Mildmay. The rent was still 5s. and the relief on entry also 5s. In the 1770s it was being farmed by Thomas Harrington, together with parts of the lands of Bubbs and Rees. Forty years later Sir Brooke Bridges was sub-letting all this property to Thomas Baker.

Bubbs was presumably named for the family of Bubbe, the last of whom seems to have been John Bubbe who was dead by 1496, leaving a widow named Sibella. In 1451 however John Tendencyng held the tenement, and later Johanna (of Joan) Bastwick lived there. She left it on her death in 1490 to her son-in-law, Walter Multon, according to the terms of her late husband’s will; her son, John Bastwick, was not to claim it. It consisted of a freehold messuage, garden, orchard, three crofts of land containing 10 acres and 4 acres of meadow, for an annual rent of 3s.8d. The 1620 rental gave Widow Sorell as occupier, and in 1662 Henry Mildmay acquired it from William Sorrell. It continued to be held by Graces manor; in 1811 Sir Brooke Bridges was the tenant, at 3s.4d. a year. Probably by this time the house had been demolished. In the 1620 rental two fields, called Cloggers and Rushe pytell, and containing 9 acres of land, were reported to be part of Bubbs “as the tenantes enforme” and a rent of 6d. was charged for them, Richard Bristowe being the tenant. They were almost surrounded by land belonging to Cuckoos and within a few years were included in that tenement. On them may have been the site of “Bubbesgrove” mentioned in two fifteenth century documents.

Rees, next to Bubbs on “the highway from Haggastrete to Boreham”, possibly belonged to Adam atte Ree (meaning “at the stream”) in 1327. In 1497 Margaret Fuller, widow, was in occupation. It consisted in 1620 of 29 acres (some of it

near the Parsonage land), the freehold messuage and orchard and 2 and a half acres of meadow in Langmead, at a rent of 7s. The tenant then was Mathias Rudd; his grandson, Matthew, sold Rees to Robert Hungerford, who at the 1675 court paid a relief of 3s.8d. for his entry. It was in the occupation of Widow Hunt who had paid tax for 3 hearths. In 1777 Thomas Harrington of Filiols farmed part of both Bubbs and Rees, and in 1811 Sir Brook Bridges was holding Rees at 3s.8d. a year. The house was demolished at an unknown date.



The early history of Cuckoos, a freehold tenement sited beside a stream and pond, is lacking. It is supposedly named for Walter Cukkok of Rivenhall, but this is unlikely as he received half a messuage and 16 acres of land in 1369 but immediately transferred them to John Botere of Little Baddow. The tenement however was called Cukkoks in 1509. John Porter held "Cuckowes" in 1620 at a rent of 2s.7d. It was soon after in the hands of John Levitt, who also acquired the lands called Cloggers and Rushe pigtle from Richard Bristowe in about 1637, when the rent went up to 3s.1d. It was at Cuckoos, according to tradition, that Thomas Hooker and John Eliot, two Nonconformist ministers, conducted a school in 1630/1. The present house was built during that century, and on the 1677 map is depicted as a fairly large house, with 3 chimney stacks, so perhaps it was where John Levitt was living in 1672 when he paid tax on 8 hearths. John Bastwick inherited the property and in 1688 sold it to Colonel Mildmay. In 1677, however, and probably earlier, Cuckoos was in the occupation of Isaac Putto, son-in-law of the Nonconformist minister, Richard Rand, and a few years later Colonel Mildmay's tenant was Elizabeth Rand, one of the minister's daughters. The tradition that it was used as a Nonconformist meeting house before the chapel was built therefore has substance. Its history during the eighteenth century is undocumented (except that in 1778 Sarah Pledger was farming part of the land), but in 1811 it was in the hands of Sir Brooke Bridges of Graces at

the old rent of 3s.1d. and was sub-let to Richard Barnard.

The Nonconformist chapel was built in 1708 on Bridge croft, next to Cuckoos, and later the manse also was erected there. The small cottage, which must have been built on ground taken from Bridge croft in the seventeenth century, was marked on the 1677 map but not included in the index, and its history is unrecorded.

Holybreds, a free tenement, it has been suggested might have been so named because in mediaeval times it perhaps provided an endowment for purchasing the holy bread for the Mass, but there is no documentary proof of this. A charter of 1451 shows that Thomas Glover, formerly of Little Baddow, Thomas Tendencyng of Boreham and John Fanner of Little Baddow, transferred the tenement called "Halybredes", with the house, garden, yard, 5 crofts of land and 3 pieces of meadow, to John Felstede and Henry Durrant of Boreham, John Herry alias Bocher, Robert Hawys and John Oughan of Little Baddow. They were to pay twelve marks sterling of lawful money (£8) at the next two feasts of the Nativity of our Lord. The seals of the five men taking over the tenement were attached to the document which was kept by Glover, Tendencyng and Fanner, who attached their seals to a copy which was retained by the other five. No further document mentions this farm until in 1648 an indenture states that Holybreds was then in the occupation of William Putto. It was made part of Henry Penninge's wife's jointure when they married in 1649. John Puttoe paid tax on 5 hearths in 1672 and these may have been at Holybreds. In 1712 a rental gives John Puttoe as the tenant "with the Lands thereunto belonging and also Hills Land, Lordly Land and wood Croft" at £60 per annum. It was soon after this that the present house was built. A little later, when the tenants were Joseph and Elias Pledger, there were 97 acres of arable land, 23 of meadow, 97 of pasture and 24 of wood, besides the messuage, 2 barns, 2 stables, a garden and an orchard. The "particular" of Lord Barrington's estate of 1777 shows that Holybreds was tenanted by Elias Pledger on a lease which would expire at Michaelmas 1797, and that it was "an exceeding good farm...House and buildings in good repair..." It then had 210 acres of land and the annual rent was £65, but it was suggested a suitable rent at the expiration of the lease would be £120. Members of the Pledger family lived in the house and farmed the land for over half the next century.

Joan Bastwick, widow, in 1490, in the presence of Henry Carpenter, Thomas Hierde, Robert Gatton and other tenants, transferred a cottage with a garden and 3 acres of land called Langores, formerly called Jopes, to Walter Multon, her son-in-law, and his wife, Joan. They paid a fine of 20d. for entry. The court gave the names of previous occupiers as Stephen at mell, John and Walter Langor, John Hosier (1436) and John Powley (1471). A man called Jope must have been there before any of these. Walter Multon made his will in 1505 leaving the customary tenement called "Langores alias Joppes" to Andrew Beyns. The 1620 rental stated that in addition to the messuage, garden and croft, there was a rood of meadow in Broad mead, and the annual rent was 8d. George Odeyn had been admitted in 1609, on payment of £3, at the request of Richard Odeyn, the previous tenant. According to the rental the tenement was "herriotable", but there is no record of a heriot being demanded, and no doubt it was included in

the entry fine. George Odeyn transferred the tenement in 1636 to John Levitt from whom it was inherited by John Bastwick. He obtained a licence to mortgage it for 21 years to Edmund Butler (the occupier being William Westgate), but the mortgage was annulled the following year. He left it, with his other properties, to his daughter, Sarah, an infant, whose tenant was John Bowles. Sarah's daughter and heiress, Elizabeth Lepper, also inherited as an infant and her father, William Lepper, was appointed her guardian for both Langores and Heards. She married John Pettit and in 1738 they transferred Langores to Samuel Brown, who sold it in 1761 to Elias Pledger for £136.17.0. John Nicholson, steward of the manor, presented Pledger with a bill for £3.4.0., being legal charges for the transaction. A condition of the sale was that Brown was to be permitted to live in one of the houses on the land, rent free for life, the house containing two chambers, one pantry, one small cellar and a kitchen. There was also a stable, shop and orchard and a woodhouse (which Brown was to have liberty to take down). On the death of Elias Pledger his two daughters inherited the property (still at the rent of 8d.) but transferred it to Jeremiah Pledger of Holybreds, eldest son of Jeremiah Pledger of Mowden Hall and grandson of Elias.

In 1489 Alice, wife of Philip Eliot of Danbury, previously wife of John Hierde, died in possession of the messuage and 5 acres of land called Hierdes alias Badewes, recently occupied by John Westwode and before that by Richard Badewe. Alice and John Hierde had been admitted in 1442, their heirs to be their daughter Joan and her husband, John Coker of Woodham Mortimer, whose heir was their son, John. He attended the 1490 court to claim his inheritance, paid a fine of 6s.8d. and was admitted. In 1497, when his sub-tenant was John Felsted, the court ordered him to repair the roof which was "ruinous". The following year he transferred the property to Thomas Rede alias Carter. The next record of "certeyn landes called Herdes" is in 1620 when John Porter held the customary lands with the messuage at a rent of 6s.11d. At the 1632 court he surrendered the cottage and 12 acres of arable land, meadow and pasture to John Levitt, whose heir, John Bastwick, paid a fine of £6 for them at the 1672 court. John Bastwick's daughter and then his grand daughter were his heiresses. Heards and its 12 acres was surrendered by Elizabeth Lepper in 1735 to Elizabeth Bruce, widow, who paid a fine of £4.10.0. She lived in the house, but eleven years later mortgaged it for the sum of £20 and then in 1758 surrendered it to Thomas Hales, who paid a fine of £3.15.0. for admission. When his son John inherited it in 1781 he had to find £12.1.6. as fine. On his death the fine paid by his two nephews had risen to £15.15.0., but the rent was still 6s.11d. Thomas Hales had added to the building, converting it into three tenements, and it was not until the mid nineteenth century that it became a wheelwright's shop and forge.

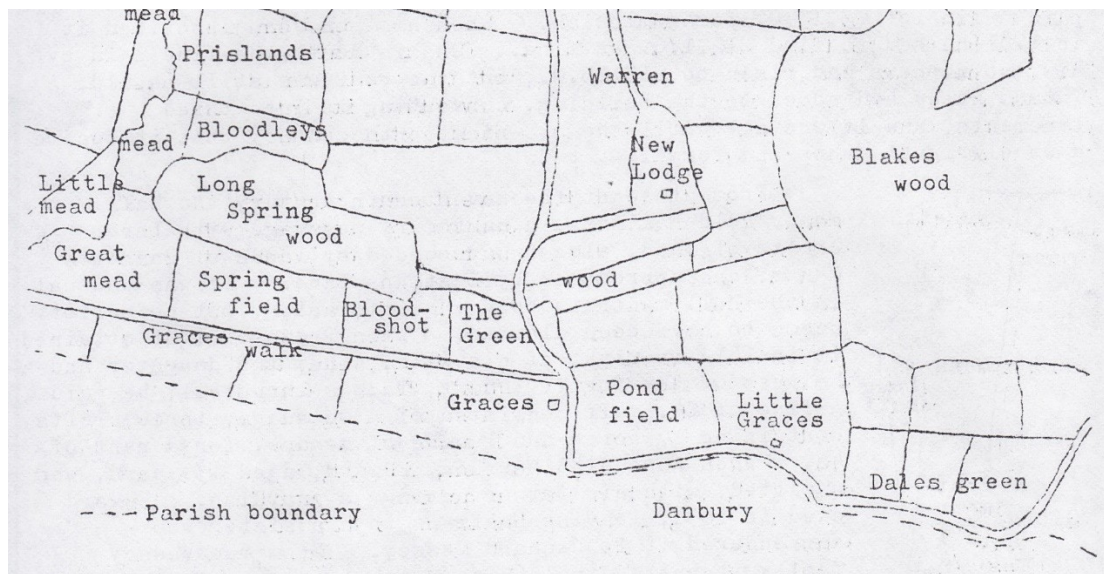


From at least the seventeenth century the Hall manor held Eastmans, a customary messuage with three crofts of land, almost surrounded by lands of Bassetts manor,

and approached by Eastmans lane. It was unusual in the Hall manor in being "herriotable", but no heriot seems to have been claimed. When Thomas Wright obtained it in 1612 in right of his wife, Anne, the daughter and heiress of the former tenant, Thomas Thrustell, he paid a fine of £4. It consisted of a messuage, three crofts containing 17 acres and 1 acre of meadow, for a rent of 4s. When Anne died her son, Edward, aged 13 years, was admitted, with his father acting as guardian. Edward died in 1638, leaving Eastmans to his sister who surrendered it to Richard Vessey. From the Vessey family it passed in 1665 to Matthew Dayles of East Hanningfield, for an entry fine of £10.10.0. Four years later Dayles forfeited the land because he had had seventeen ash trees growing there felled without obtaining licence from the lord. He regained possession and left it by will to his daughter, Alice, aged 12 at his death. She was admitted in 1680. Nearly twenty years later she surrendered the property (then in the occupation of Samuel Seward) to John Isaac. By 1722 Isaac had mortgaged it to Elizabeth Witham and George Adrewes, and the following year it was reported to the court that he "hath permitted the Dwellinghouse belonging to his copyhold Estate called Eastmans... to be very much out of Repair and also suffered the Barne belonging to the same Estate to fall down for want of Repair". He failed to repay the mortgage and the survivor of his two creditors, George Adrewes, was admitted to the tenement on payment of a fine of £16. A few months later he surrendered it to Michael Pitman who paid a fine also of £16, but soon relinquished it. By 1777 it had been converted to leasehold land and was in the tenancy of William Gladwin (tenant of Bassetts house) at an annual rent of £12 for 25 acres, the lease to expire in 1791. It was then stated that "there is no dwelling House upon this land but a Convenient Barn..." The arable land was described as "very poor". Gladwin's lease was continued into the nineteenth century.

Graces Manor

Graces and Riffhams manors are not well documented, nor is there a map earlier than the nineteenth century, so that it is impossible to locate many of the tenements and fields.



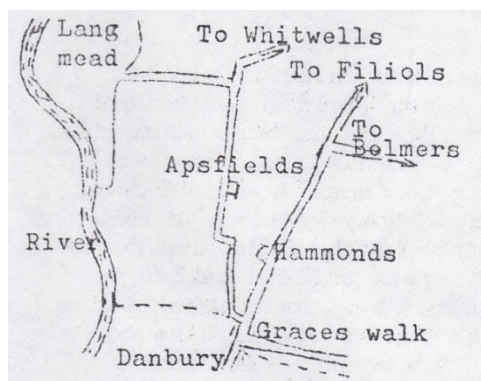
In 1546, however, “Sir Thomas Darcy Lorde of Graces” had a survey drawn up by Symon Amorey of the yearly value of all his possessions. First to be listed was the freehold messuage of Hammonds, then held by Robert Grene at a rent of 12s. a year. Thomas Tendring held freely a “parcel of lande named Greiscrough” at 2s.8d. a year; William Gunby an un-named free messuage at 11d. and John Taber a free close called Dukes also at 11d. John Hamonde held the copyhold tenancy of a messuage called Beachams for 3s. and Thomas Lawrens held un-named customary premises (perhaps including Apsfields), together with a large number of closes, fields and meadows, for a total rent of £17 per annum. Among the lands were “Appysfieldes”, “Littells”, “Mainershe”, “Row croftes”, “Geldonstall”, “litle Dunstall”, “bludshote”, “Porte marshe”, “Thrusores” and “Tyffens”. John Leyton held another un-named customary messuage, one acre of meadow and two parts of the tithes. The annual value of the manor was calculated at £18.13.4. The total pasture was estimated at 202 acres, the meadow land at 17 acres and “Arrabil” at 22 acres, so obviously the farming was predominantly pastoral – possibly sheep-rearing. There were two ponds “thon well replenished with Carpe, thother not so well replenished”. No mention was made of any common land, nor of Blakes wood, though Thomas Lawrens held two pastures called “great blakes” and “little blackes” containing 23 acres.

Cecily Gatton in her will of 1504 had directed that “Dukis” and “Welcokherdes”, which she had inherited from her previous husband, John Felsted, should be sold as he had wished. Presumably “Dukis” was the free close held by John Taber in 1546, but Welcokherdes does not appear by that name in Sir Thomas’s survey, though it was probably the land later called Willcocks. After her death a writ was taken out by John Felsted’s executor against William Felsted because he had retained the deeds for the two properties which the executor had sold to Thomas Oughan.

The next documents concerning Graces manor are the mortgage by Sir John Smyth in 1577 and then its sale in 1591 to Arthur Herry of Woodham Mortimer. There is a single court roll of 1612, being the first court held by Sir Henry Mildmay after he had acquired the manor. In 1621 Sir Henry and his wife, Lady Amy, granted to Daniel Spradborrow, warrener, "all the warraine of Conneyes and Warraine house with a Barne and stable tharunto belonging inclosed within a pale Conteyninge by estimacion Twenty six Acres more or less called Newlodge or the warraine..." together with 20 acres of land lying east and north of the warren, abutting on Blakes wood, and one acre of meadow in Broadmead, for £30 per annum. There was a covenant to supply up to 18 score couple of coneys and rabbits at 10d. per couple from March to Midsummer and 14d. from Midsummer to Candlemas. New Lodge is without record for the following two centuries, but in 1839 Sarah Simmons was farming there and may have built the brick house near to the earlier timber-framed ones.

Sir Henry in his will of 1637 mentioned Belmers farm, which he had held since about 1614 from Little Baddow manor, and "Dyers hope", lately purchased from Richard Glascocke of Little Baddow. He also mentioned Dales, purchased from Richard, John and Francis Whitlocke, and two tenements, "Ould Dales", purchased from John and Robert Haward. It is likely that the latter tenements were in the Dales green area, and possible that one of them could have been on the site later occupied by Little Graces, a seventeenth century cottage much altered, which has no records at all under that name. The earliest reference to it is in 1811 when John Burchell, aged 65, said that as a child he had lived as a servant with Mr Fletcher of Little Graces. In the 1830s John Simmons was tenant, sub-letting it.

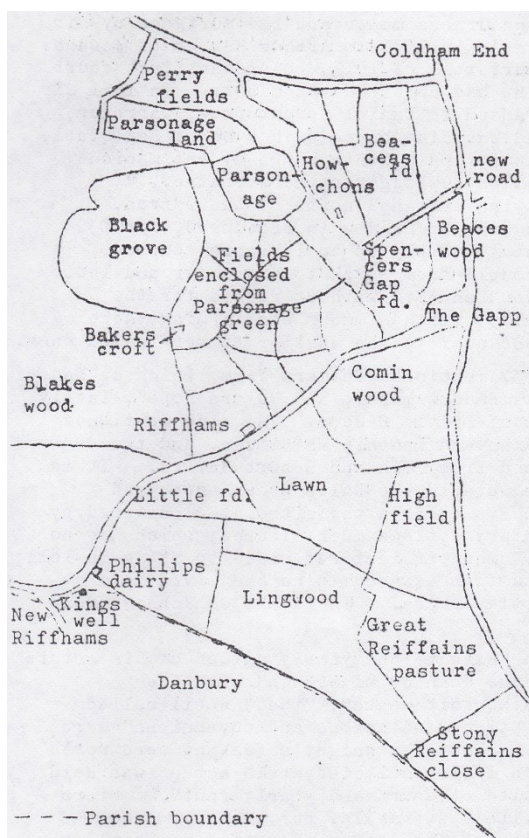
After Sir Henry's death, an "Extente and yearly value" of his estate was drawn up, which showed that the "Mannor of Graces" with the "Messuages Landes Tenementes and hereditaments", "The Chapell called Graces in little Baddow" and the "tithes oblacions and obvensions" were held of his Majesty by the fourth part of a knight's fee and were worth £5 per annum. Belmers, with its lands estimated at 18 acres, was held of Henry Penninge by "fealtie suite of Court and yearly rent". Diers hope was worth annually 2s.6d. (its rent was 1d. per annum). The messuage and 14 acres called Dales, in the occupation of John Whitlock, were valued at only 2s. a year and the two messuages "called auncientlie ould Dales" at 3s.4d. No other tenements were mentioned.



Apsfields, probably among the oldest farms in the parish, has almost no documentation. In 1330 Simon de Apsfeld became sub-tenant of two free messuages, 51 acres of land and 3 acres of meadow, for which he was to render yearly to Thomas de Apsfeld one rose on the day of the Nativity of St John the Baptist. He paid a consideration of 20 marks (£13.6.8.) and was to perform all the usual services. He had paid a tax of 6 and a quarter pennies on his movable goods in 1327. The history of the tenement is

then a blank except that John Brown was living there in 1692 and Susan Baker in the 1830s. It was later converted into two agricultural labourers' cottages and survived as such into the twentieth century.

Riffhams Manor



Riffhams manor was closely connected with both Graces and Little Baddow manors. In the mid-seventeenth century was drawn up "A true Survey of the Mannor of Reiffains...being sometime part of the Estate of Mr Thomas Emerye a Lunatique the perticulers whereof are as followeth." First are given the details of the 4 acres of the house, garden, orchard and waste, and the 75 acres of arable and pasture adjoining the house, including Bakers croft (later Black grove field), "plowed Reiffains field", "Stony Reiffains" (later Danbury field), "Greate Reiffains pasture where the High Timber is" (later called Grove field and the trees cut down) and "Furzei Close". There were 12 acres of meadow in Lang mead and Broad mead, and 43 acres of woodland in "Comin wood" (later Longwood), Black grove, "Beaces" (later Beach) wood and Lingwood. After Robert Clarke obtained Riffhams in 1717 he enclosed most of what

remained of Parsonage green (with the concurrence of the lord of the Hall manor) and made "a new way to the Parsonage...instead of the former way" on land taken from Beaces wood and field.

There follows a survey "of the farme called Houtchins". In its 23 acres were two closes called Beaces (later Beach field), two called Perry fields, in one of which was "greate Timber", and an acre of meadow, together with the house, garden and orchard. John Hawes was in possession, paying £9.6.8. rent and sub-letting to James Ward. This house, but not the lands, had been included in Anthony Penninge's 1620 rental, which stated that Jasper Gyrton held from Little Baddow manor at 15d. a year "a crofte of land with a mesuage thereon builded called Howchons" containing 2 acres. In 1509 too it had been held from Little Baddow manor, when that manor court ordered the tenant of Riffhams to repair the lane called Howchons lane. The 1677 map shows William Spencer of Riffhams holding Howchons (a house with two chimney stacks) from the Hall manor for the annual rent of "one Roase". At some time in the later seventeenth century Matthew Rudd was in possession, paying £11 rent to Riffhams, and was followed by John Hawes, who acquired, at the Hall manor court in 1694, an extra acre from the waste for an annual rent of 1s. From this time the farm disappears

from the records and the house had ceased to exist by the nineteenth century.

The survey included another farm called Prislands, which consisted of 24 acres of arable, pasture and meadow land. John Smith, the occupier, lived at the adjoining Belmers house, as Colonel Mildmay's tenant. A later note on the survey gives Matthew Rudd as tenant, paying £10 a year.

"The Farme and tenement called Hamonds" (held from Graces) was in the occupation of John Walker, who may have followed the Grene family, possibly occupiers for most of the previous hundred years, and who somewhat later was paying a yearly rent of £34.13.4. It consisted of "the dwelling house, yards, orchards, gardens, a Faire greate Barne and Stable att the end, a Cart Shedd and another little house in the yard, a henn house and another little house". The arable, pasture and meadow land lying "all most surrounded with the land of Collonell Henry Mildmay" amounted to 63 acres. The names given for the fields include "Kitchine Croft", "Home Pytell", "Doppers", "Nerogate Field" and "Hawkins Piece". In the eighteenth century Hammonds, with 75 acres of land, was sold by John Sadd and Gamaliel Keys to William Hart, who on his death in 1795 left it to his dead son's son, Evan Hart, when he reached the age of 30 years. Until then Evan's mother was to occupy the farm rent free (while she remained a widow) together with the 24 acres of "Priestlands" (Prislands). During the next century Hammonds was the principal home of the Pledger family, who probably built the present house on the site of the old one. In fact the site may well have been Saxon in origin.

Sometime before 1841 Phillips dairy had been built, for in that year Prudence Tween, dairywoman, was living there with her husband, an agricultural labourer. It was near Kings well, on the boundary with Danbury, first mentioned in a document of 1560.

The beginning of Queen Victoria's reign saw most of the old houses still standing (however many times rebuilt and altered) and still retaining their ancient names; the Victorian age and the twentieth century were to demolish some and to change the names of others, as well as to build many more houses on both new and old sites. The twentieth century was also to end the already diminished powers and privileges which had belonged through so many centuries to the lords of the manors.

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