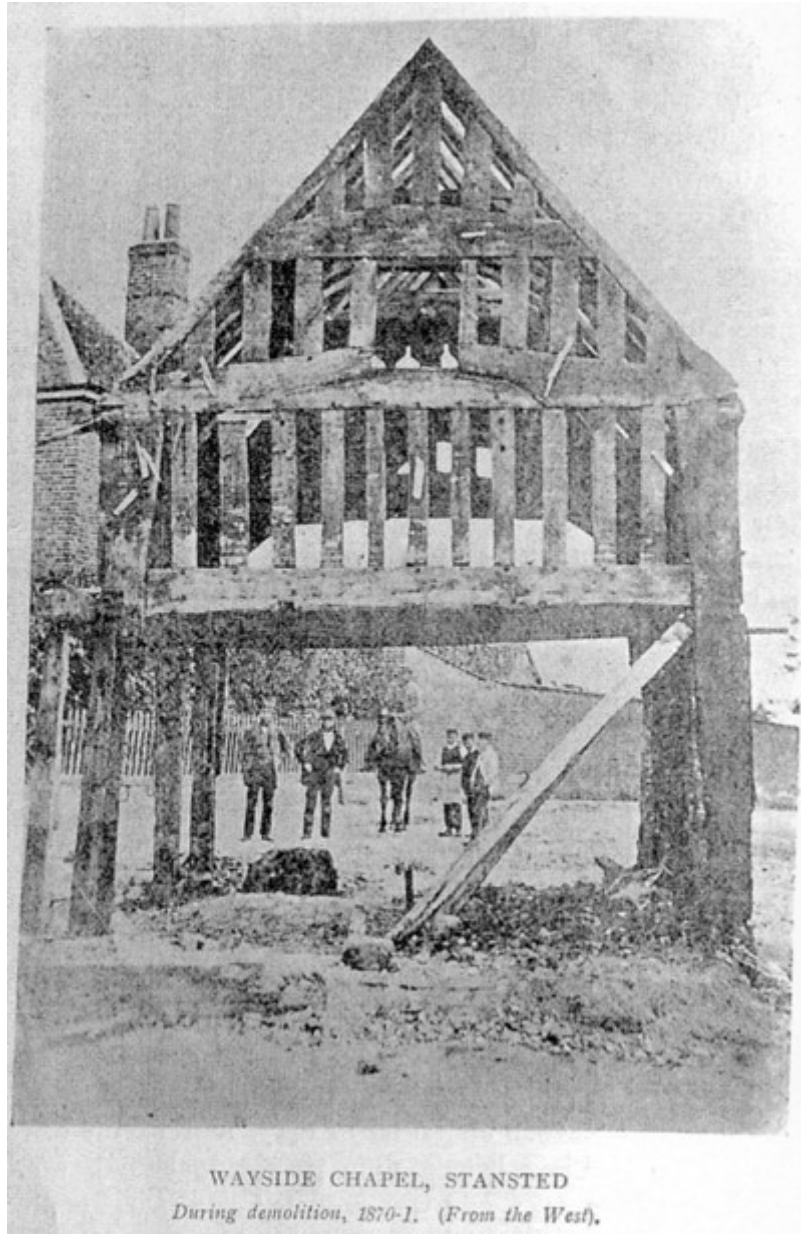


Stansted Chapel



Compiled by

Ralph Phillips.

To Mary, Mark, Alison and all the family.

To Audrey Rodgers for proof reading and assisting in the content,

My sincere thanks to you all.

Ralph.

2012

This work is not intended to be a deeply researched history of the subject; instead it is a coming together of facts gathered from dozens of books, pamphlets, papers and notes all collected over the past four, near five, decades. Further details on much of the material used, particularly the, 'Transcripts of Interviews with Residents of Stansted Mountfitchet', 1987 - 1988, may be available from our Local History Society library for a very modest annual membership fee.

It is to the historians of Stansted, who put pen to paper, that I owe so much. From Joseph Joshua Green in the mid 19th century to the former pupils of Bentfield County Primary School one hundred years later. Some of the information I know not from whence it came, other items are without references, More than a few details I, and others, have gathered from the Essex Records Office, Estate Agents, the World Wide Web and the like all are worthy of mention.

Many people will have detailed knowledge of a particular place within the Chapel neighbourhood that is conspicuous by its absence from this work; I would be grateful if such information is shared so that it can also be recorded.

My thanks are due to many members past and present of our Local History Society in sharing and helping with the production of this booklet.

R.P.

Contents

Illustrations.....5

Introduction.6

Roads in Stansted.7

Stansted Chapel. 13

Radical Stansted. 17

Walpole Farm. 18

Primitive Methodist Chapel. 20

Stansted’s Inns..... 22

Norman’s Way 24

Trees, 113 Cambridge Road. 25

Hargrave Lodge/House. 25

Hargrave and Stansted Sports. 31

Hargrave and the Army. 34

North House. 35

Chapel Cottage. 36

Potts Cottage. 37

Forge House. 37

Coopers Alley..... 38

Kitson’s Stores. 39

The Old Bell. 40

The Galloping Horses Villa..... 42

Tesco Store. 43

Green’s Stores. 44

Reed Cottage. 48

Western House. 51

The Fountain. 53

Mile Post. 55

Silver Street. 56

Conningree Wood or Cony Grove. 57

St Stephen’s..... 60

Linden Villa..... 61

The Police Station 63

The Smaller Shops. 64

The Old Independent Church. 64

Spencer House..... 66

The Rise..... 69

The Cedars..... 70

Stansted Chapel

4

Sanders Close.....	71
Roycot, The Old Manse and Blythwood Lodge.....	72
Belle Vue House. (Wonderful View).....	75
Blythwood Gardens.....	77
Crown House.....	80
The Village Labourer.	81
Village Signs.	83

Illustrations	
Front cover	Wayside Chapel from the West
Page	
7	Stukeley Henge
9	A 19th-century Turnpike road
10	The Norwich Stage Coach
13	John Chapman & Peter Andre map, 1777
14	Wayside Chapel from the North
18	The Old Mill
20	Primitive Methodist Chapel
23	The Old Bell and The White Bear inns
26	Map of Hargrave
27	Sir Walter Gilbey
31	Soccer, Challenge Vase final
33	Mary Macarthur Holiday Home
34	Hargrave House
36	Chapel Cottage
38	Bedlow's, wheelwrights
40	The Old Bell
44	Green's Stores model, 1840
46	Green's Stores, 1889
48	Gilbey's Camden depot
54	The Fountain, 1906
55	Mile Post
56	The Fountain and Silver Street, 1907
57	Woodhouse
60	St Stephen's and Linden House
68	Spencer House
72	Roycot, TB research
74	The Kitchen at The George
77	Blythwood House
83	Village sign and Richard de Montfichet

Introduction.

Two Manors, Stansteda and Benedfelda, the latter hamlet in the half hundred of Clavering or Clauelinga both were deep within the primeval forest, when recorded in Domesday Book of 1086. Both manors were established well before the Norman Conquest.

Clavering was an important village with more residents than Stansted up to the early 19th century. With the coming of the Navigation Canal to Bishop's Stortford in 1769 and the railways to Stansted and beyond in 1845, Stansted Mountfitchet was able to trade more easily with both London and country markets consequently our village very quickly outgrew Clavering.

The boundary between the two Hundreds in Stansted is very roughly Silver Street and the Cambridge Road. Bentfield Bury Manor is to the west, Burnells, sometimes called Stansted Hall, with Thremhall Priory mainly to the east of the road. Burnells Manor, by far the larger of the two manors, was established by Robert Burnell who died 1292. He was Bishop of Bath and Wells. It was he who purchased the land from the heiresses of Robert Monfichet. The manor house was in the vicinity of the railway station and the manor courts were at times held in the Kings Arms Inn, Bradford Street, later known as The Street and now Lower Street.

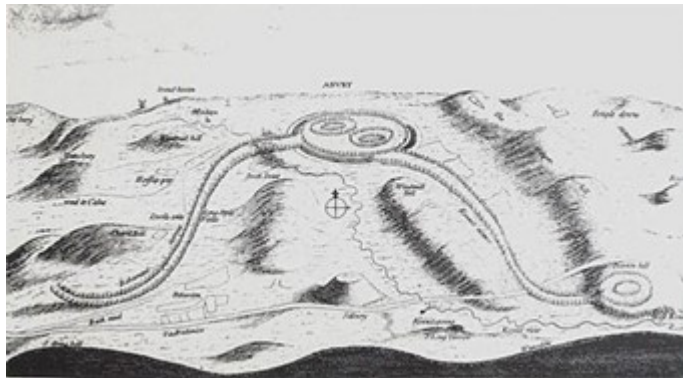
Bradford is thought to be a corruption of 'bad ford', a description of the river crossing parallel with the modern Church Road and close by the Manor House. Few of the Burnells Manorial records have survived the passage of time due to a bombing raid on their London solicitors in 1941. In due time both the Manors in Stansted, but not Bentfield Bury, came into the possession of the Earls of Oxford whose principal residence was at Castle Hedingham.

Roads in Stansted.

In and long before Roman Times, a major track passed through Bentfield End to the west of Stansted. It was later part of a vicinal way, that branched off from the great Roman Road, Stane Street, near Bishop's Stortford, and passed northward adjacent to the river Stort to Stansted and on to the Roman fortified settlement at, Cestreforda, or Great Chesterford, where there was a most important road junction with Ermine Street, Via Devana and possibly as many as eight minor roads to surrounding counties.

Evidence of the importance of this track can be found in the Henge or Henges on the outskirts of Bishop's Stortford. Similar to Stone Henge but without the stones. The Henges are situated in two fields just to the north west of the Farnham Road and Hazel End Road junctions with Rye Street, even spreading down to the river Stort. A roughly cobbled surface covered with Late Iron Age and Roman pottery has also been discovered.

A Henge is an enclosed area of land, in this case a circle originally surrounded by a high mound of earth creating an inner sanctum, to preserve a religious spiritual privacy. The difference between a Henge and a castle is that the ditch is within and not without the mound and therefore not a suitable site in a military context. These Henges and the several cremation burial sites within are thought to date from late Neolithic c4500 BC through to late Iron Age, early Bronze Age and with signs of Roman occupation.



Stukeley Henge, an example of how the Bishop's Stortford Henges may have looked.

These religious sites would have attracted large numbers of adherents from distant settlements, particularly from the area of the present Stansted Airport where an Iron Age village was built in the first century BC. Later there were two breathtaking Roman burials there. The village of Takeley is thought to have been occupied for at least 3,500 years. The track-way from Bishop's Stortford Henge then continued north close by the river, across Gypsy Lane, where it is still bounded by a row of ancient Oak trees, up to Poplar Hall, built facing due south down the track-way.

The road then went on behind Blythwood Gardens, now a typical sunken pathway, skirting to the west of Stansted and through to Bentfield End. Number 3 Bentfield Road, is facing the ancient track-way, a Grade II listed c.17 century, single storied thatched cottage predating King James' military road.

The former greenway then progressed either along the present Pennington Lane with its Roman Villa site or, according to the state of the road surface, via Bentfield Causeway, (hard surfaced path or firmly-surfaced road) thence in a northerly direction, along the Ridgeway, where there is further evidence of Roman and Saxon dwellings,. The Trackway passed Bollington Hall, Wades Hall, Rickling, Quendon to one of the earliest Roman settlements at Cestreforda c.43-c.410 AD.

John Speede's map of 1610, showing the county at the end of the Tudor period, although strong on rivers has little to say about roads. It implies that Benfield, (no "T" or End to the name) was on or adjacent to the road to Henham, Quendon and Newport and along the Granta valley. 'Nearly in line of the present turnpike' (written in 1848). Stansted Mountfitchet was some way distant to the east.

In Bentfield End there was a major junction with another byway leading east, and it was on this track that the Stansted Chapel was built. The lane leads down Chapel Hill, Bradford Street (Station Road) over the ford with a minor bridleway following the line of the brook (Gripper's path) south to Palmer's Watersmeet, via Gypsy Lane. Or more importantly over the 'bad ford' crossing, east via Bury Lodge Lane, to Thremhall Priory, a small Augustinian house dedicated to St James which was founded by Gilbert Mountfitchet in the 12th century, an institution which survived some 400 years. The Priory stood at the road junction with the Roman Stane Street to Colchester and the coast, passing important Neolithic remains at Takeley and another site at the former Colchester Hall, Takeley, or to the west and St Albans.

There were other roads from the Lower part of the village, High Lane, Low Lane, through to north of Quendon before joining the main highway and also Upprove Hill to Elsenham etc.

Today's Cambridge Road, terminated in the region of Stansted Flats, north of Walpole Farm, due to the marshy land there, which was subject to flooding in winter.

From the time when the chapel was built, this upper part of the village developed, and took its name, Stansted Chapel, with Silver Street to the south then called Chappell Street.

The road was rebuilt and moved to its present site by the military in the early 1660s, and paid for out of the public purse. Its purpose was to ease the journeys of Kings James II and Charles II when pressing affairs of state demanded they left their official Royal residence at Theobalds Grove Park to attend the racing at Newmarket during the 17th century, when such minor matters as the English Civil War, or under Charles II when the whole court would relocate to Newmarket twice a year. That's not to mention the attraction of his Mistress Nell Gwyn residing in that town; all made such trips a state necessity.

Charles II did more to advance racing than any other person when he instituted an Act of Parliament in 1665 which imposed written regulations on the sport. Royalty then had the road constructed forming one of the finest highways in the country. An early traveller on the new road was Samuel Pepys who wrote in his diaries of the 1660s, "I travelled from the Almshouses (Saffron Walden) to Epping by that very fine road".

A comment made during 1701–13 on the improved road transport when “every journeyman might enjoy comfort, for the trade was better paid than weaving”, for instance, Thomas Hill, journeyman, of Stansted Mountfitchet left household goods which seem to have been plentiful and of good quality.



A 19th Century Turnpike Road.

(Note the width of the road depended upon the state of the surface and could be a mile or more wide in places.)

It has been suggested that when the new road to Newmarket was built, the ancient road terminated in Benfield and the hamlet gained its full name of Bentfield End.

Daniel Defoe, that inexhaustible author with upwards of 500 books to his name, wrote his ‘Tour thro the whole island of Great Britain’, between 1724 and 1727. When passing through this part of the country he made Cambridge at the time of the ancient Sturbridge Fair, “which was then in its height’. ‘Of this fair, which is not only the greatest in the nation, but in the world; nor, if I may believe those who have seen them all, is the fair at Leipsick in Saxony, the mart at Frankfort on the Main, or the fairs at Neuremberg or Augsburg, any way to compare to this fair at Sturbridge”.

There then follows a long description of the site and vast amount of the goods bought and sold there. As most of the heavy goods were transported by river craft and sea, I will confine myself to the lesser passenger traffic which would in part have passed through Stansted. “---- besides the prodigious trade carry’d on here, by wholesale-men, from London, and all parts of England, who transacted their business wholly in their pocket-books, and meeting their chapmen (buyers or sellers) from all parts, make up their accounts, receive money chiefly in bills, and take orders: These they say exceed by far the sales of goods actually brought to the fair, and deliver’d in kind: it being frequent for the wholesale men to carry back orders from their dealers for ten thousand pounds worth of goods a man and much more”.

Of the road Defoe said, “The country on that side of Essex --- as the chief ‘corn country’, ---- Bishop’s Stortford to Cambridge ---- high density of villages along the border of Essex comprising of the countries only area of open farming, is famous for good land, good malt, and dirty roads; the latter in the winter are scarce passable for horse or man’. ‘Finally the whole of this western area drew benefit both from the cloth industry and from the London to Cambridge road”.

Rural Essex was spending much more on its road system than previously; between 1776 and 1803 parish expenditure on this service had risen by 50%, part of which was caused by the greater care given to non-turnpiked roads. Farmers became aware that better roads facilitated the marketing of their produce and other farming operations. In Stansted Mountfitchet they installed an iron pump for the horses and cattle.

The road was turnpiked some twenty years later, in 1744. It then was named The Hockerill Highway. The Trust secured the services of the very famous surveyor, James McAdam son of John McAdam, of tarmac fame. Their contract stretched from Stump Cross, Gt Chesterford in the north to Harlow Bush Common in the south, most of their mile posts are still in position. In 1748 the Trustees borrowed £600 from a banker who subsequently died; the name of their client who invested the money, was lost; the funds were never repaid although the interest continued to accumulate.

Thirty years later in 1775, Parson Woodforde described the highway as, “the best of roads he had ever travelled”. The Carrington Bowles map of 3rd January 1783 shows only five properties in Stansted Chapel, three on the western side and two opposite and none at all south of the chapel. That does not mean that there were not more, only that the cartographer did not consider them important enough for his map. There were rather more down in The Street around Burnells Manor House.



The Norwich Stage Coach.

In 1787 The Hockerill Highway secured the contract for the Royal Mails to and from Norwich to London. Stansted became a sub-post office of Bishop’s Stortford which was located at The White Lion in North Street. The posts were formerly conveyed via Bury St Edmunds and travelled in preference to passengers on mail coaches.

Ten years later the road became so bad that the Post Office threatened to withdraw their support of the tolls; minor improvements were made which held the contract secure.

Numerous families in the area had London businesses. Thomas Heath, a lawyer and Member of Parliament for Harwich 1714-1722. That is until the good citizens there suggested that they were prepared to accept anyone even, 'Heath a lousy fellow', in preference to Lord Perceval, Heath withdrew. He had bought the Lordship of the manor of Stansted Mountfitchet in 1710, and died in 1741 he is buried in the Lancaster Chapel, St Mary's, along with other members of his family. Heath is reported to have passed away, "in his lodgings in Piccadilly", suggesting that he commuted to and from his principal abode in Stansted.

After the major floods of 1794 the road was again in need of major repair. The disastrous seasons of 1794-95 had increased the price of wheat and at the end of the latter year the price of a loaf of bread, staple diet of the labouring classes, had risen from 7½d to 1/3d. (3p to 6½p) the Trust's labourers wages rose from 7/= to 8/= a week. By 1800 farmers became aware that better roads facilitated the marketing of their agricultural produce.

In 1809 a further Act of Parliament allowed a rise in the tolls where at the top end of the scale, a coach with six horses cost 2/6d through the toll gate while at the bottom a horse drawing a cart cost just 6d. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars factories closed, unemployment was rife; in northern Essex, there was riots and arson, wages fell to 8/= or even 6/= a week. Attempts were made to use some of the unemployed on the roads and the wage bill was supplemented out of the rates.

The cost of sending a letter by Royal Mail from the Parish Council, Farnham to Chelmsford in 1811, was 11d while a similar letter to Wapping, London cost only 6d, On the 30th July 1821 a letter from the House of Commons, Westminster to Farnham cost just 4p. Postage was not consistent in those early days. In 1812 the toll for using the highway to Saffron Walden was '1 shilling for the turnpike, twice', and again in 1840 the cost of transporting James Mascal, a pauper lunatic conveyed from Farnham to St Lukes Hospital in London at a charge of £1-10-6d. The same year Bishop's Stortford was sending more malt to the London brewers than any other town in the country mainly by canal but road transport to and from the loading docks was considerable just for this one item. It was the University traffic upon the roads that made the highways to both Oxford and Cambridge the very best roads in the country.

The railways caused the collapse of the highway, although times were very good while they were being constructed; there was a lot of road traffic which passed through the rearranged toll gates, spoil from the cuttings and tunnels etc, but when the railway opened the road's fate was settled.

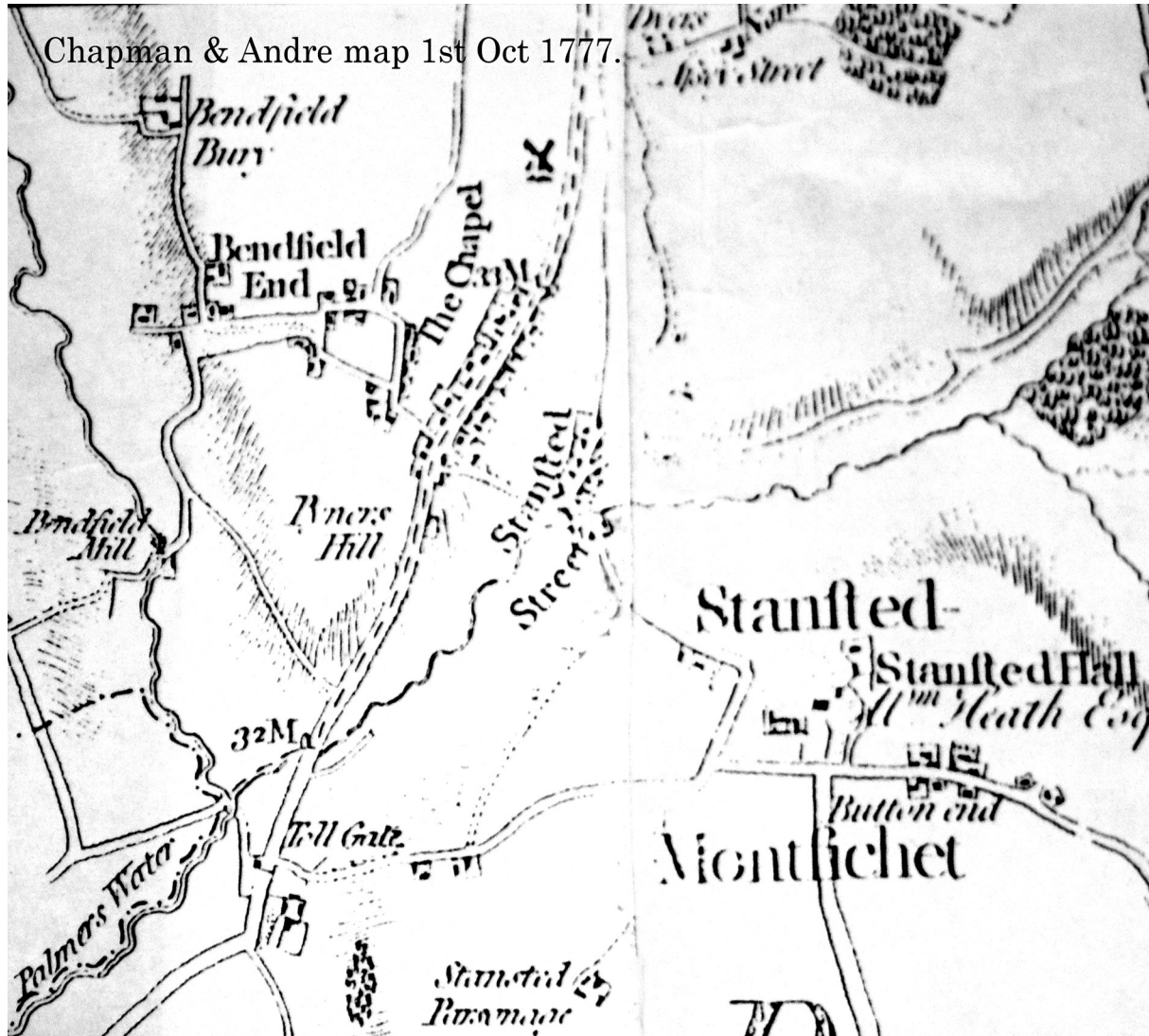
A contemporary report of the inaugural train journey from Shoreditch to Cambridge on the 29th July 1845 includes the stop at Bishop's Stortford, it was reported as follows: "*Amid the visitor's hearty welcome and the merry strains of the musicians there was a note which sounded lamentation. It was the bugle of the solitary stagecoach from Bishop's Stortford to Cambridge performing its journey for the last time. Thus it compelled its exterminating rival to listen to its requiem*". It was the Beehive Coach and more particularly the controversial, William Wilken alias Clark on the box. Clark later became Station Master of Cambridge Railway Station.

The Royal Mail was one of the earliest contracts to be transferred to the new method of transportation; certainly the contract was in place on the opening day. In April 1865 the lease of the road tolls was sold to a speculator who optimistically offered £1,200. The receipts did not justify such an amount and the rent fell behind and at the end the Trust had only received four months proportion plus £100 deposit. The Hockerill Trust was wound up on the 31st October 1870 when the remaining assets were distributed among the parishes in proportion to their share of the road.

The Cambridge Road in Stansted was still cobbled in the 1920s and 30s, with carts, wagons, men on horseback and huntsmen who went by regularly, cars were few and far between but with the men demobbed from the First World War, being trained in servicing and driving motor vehicles, that situation was not to last much longer.

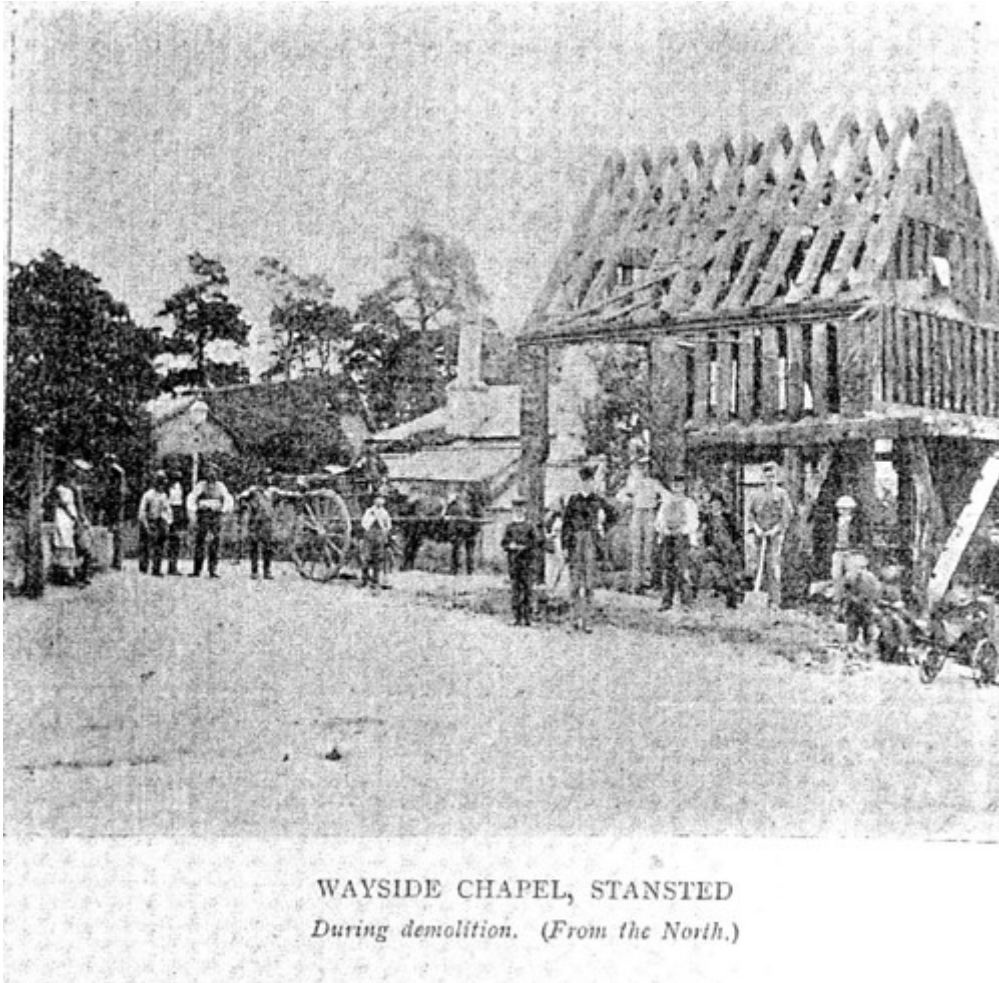
Stansted Chapel.

The extent of Stansted Chapel as an area of the village extends from Walpole Farm in the North to the Birchanger parish boundary, roughly Blythwood Gardens, in the South. 'Stansted Chapel' has always been a quite separate quarter from 'Stansted Street' (Lower Street) the difference is clearly shown on the John Chapman and Peter Andre map October 1st 1777, the areas remained as separate entities until living memory.



Both Stansted Chapel and Chapel Hill take their names from the Roman Catholic Chapel of Ease dedicated to Our Lady, constructed on the site of the present drinking fountain at the top of Chapel Hill, it was built by the 20th May 1492, for Lord of the Manor John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford 1442-1513. His father, the former John de Vere, 12th Earl of Oxford, born c.1408-1462, in the words of the chronicler, "*had the misfortune of being beheaded*", for planning a Lancastrian rising.

The 13th Earl, John Alcock de Vere, was a more celebrated character, who fought at Bosworth Field in 1485 and entertained Henry VII at their seat, Castle Hedingham. Edward 17th Earl of Oxford 1550 - 1604 was a poet and playwright. In Shakespeare Identified 1920 Thomas Looney school teacher proposed that Edward, also of Castle Hedingham wrote some of the Bard's works. It is a theory held by many today but not highly considered.



Salmon in his 'History and Antiquities of Essex 1740', says, "The Street, called Stansted Chapel, in the road from Stortford to Walden seems to have taken the name from the place of worship, which le Playz (a family name of de Vere,) and his tenants of Bentfield-Bury and Stansted attended". The Plaiz family of Stansted held part of the estate of Colchester Hall, (demolished to build Stansted Airport) in Knights fee (this meant doing military service for the King which could be converted to a set amount of money). This was before 1538 after which, Henry VIII gave the estate to Robert Fowler.

The Bishop of Ely granted an indulgence (forgiveness for confessed sins) for 40 days to those who should contribute to the support of John Parrott, hermit, Keeper of the Chapel. "New-built and not yet completed or to the ornament of it when finished", on the said 20th May 1492.

The arms of the de Vere family appeared in the oak window of the chapel, arms, mullet argent: crest, a boar passant, azure, attired or: the device or badge and a harpy. A Harpy was a fabulous winged monster of extreme ravenousness, living in filth, which had a body of a woman!

(This window was removed some while before the chapel was demolished).

It was a chapel of rest for travellers on the highway. It must be understood that this chapel was built beside the track leading from the lower village up to Bentfield End and the junction with the road from Bishop's Stortford to Quendon. But serving both roads.

At the Reformation the chapel was turned into a forge, it was at that time thought that God was better served by the destruction and desecration of these wayside chapels.

In the 1650s the blacksmith was a Royalist named John Milton. "Thieves and rogues!" he would shout whenever he saw groups of Parliamentarians riding past his shop. On the 23rd April 1655, he was brought before the magistrates for using such "wicked, seditious and scandalous words".

The forge or the buildings attached to it were at one time used as a workhouse but then returned again to a blacksmiths under the Brett family late in the 17th century. In his will dated 1720, Daniel Brett, Blacksmith, of Stansted, "bequeathed to Daniel Brett of Stansted, Butcher, Hannah Brett, widow, Robert and Joanna Patmore née Brett, whose husband was a Bishops Stortford Fellmonger, (dealer in hides), a messuage or tenement now, (in 1779) let into apartments, shop and ground called Chappell House, outhouses, offices, buildings, yards, garden, orchards, and backsides (everything to the rear) forever called the workhouse or such being severed and enclosed on the other side of the street or road and the orchard adjoining to the said shop lying and being near the said Chappell House containing by estimation half a rood more or less (1/8th acre) by the ground or wood for sometime and now the blacksmith's shop near the Chapell House, in the grounds of Thomas Parker, called Conygre (many spellings) Wood on the east and south, all in Stansted Chapel Street". The owners / tenants of the properties were Hanna Brett, widow, Robert Patmore and George Welch.

By 1810, the holding had increased by, one acre of land and one acre of pasture, all of which was owned by the Bocock family, who came mainly from Bishop's Stortford. This property was purchased by George Welch, surgeon and apothecary, that year, (see Western House) for £111. Welsh had Quaker family connections with the Green family.

Whilst the forge was on the traffic island, the size of the lease suggests that it must have included some of what is known today as St Stephens, Linden House and possibly Western House. At the rear of St Stephens there is small extension of a different age, it is possible this is the shop mentioned in the indenture, or the Link Inn, an early 19th century hostelry which provided wayfarers with a welcome pint whilst their horses were being shod. The building was used as a forge from the Commonwealth time, with the Bretts both leasing and owning the site until 1871, more than one hundred and fifty years, with a Thomas Brett, then William Brett as the blacksmiths. The same family continued as blacksmiths in the village with a forge near the bottom of Chapel Hill, now the Y Z minimarket, well into the 20th century.

So obscured was the history of the half-timbered wayside chapel that scarcely anyone in the village in 1871, was aware of any interest what-ever attaching to this ancient pre-reformation chapel, the centre beam of which had a hole to admit a rope for the Sanctus bell. The building to the east, the former public house, was said in 1906, to not be of any age or interest.

Charles Spencer, of Bentfield Bury and John Cole of Little Munden purchased the Abstract of Title of the building at the Easter term 1811 for £400, from George Welch.

Blacksmith William Brett was to have problems with his wayward 25 years old son, who was also a blacksmith, who on his second offence of felony was put down for twelve months with hard labour in early 1862 by amongst others, Lord of the Manor, William Fuller Maitland, Magistrate. It's a job to understand what happened as he was involved with Catherine Luck, alias Lucky or Luckey, (different spellings) aged 40 and her husband James Luck, alias Lucky, an agricultural labourer, aged 45. They robbed William Luck of a great deal of money, on the 9th December 1861. The amount, £160 was more than most working class people saw in a lifetime, Catherine stole the money and James and William Brett were punished for feloniously receiving it. In that year's census it shows that not only grandfather Lucky was named William but also the father and two grandsons all with the same Christian name; they all lived on the Cambridge Road. Just who was who, or how they obtained such a large amount of money is not recorded.

With the traffic increasing on the rough dirt track between The Street and Stansted Chapel, the upper road junction became inadequate and the forge isolated on its island. So in 1868, Charles Spencer, at the request of Joshua Green, his life long partner James Marsh, Walter and Henry Gilbey, conveyed, to Alfred Hicks and Edward Stacey Spencer and their successors as surveyors of the highways of Stansted Mountfitchet "all that messuage called Chappell House with the blacksmiths shop and other buildings together with the yard and other ground belonging to it for £400". The subsequent demolition of all the present buildings on the site also was acknowledged. In 1870 the Vestry Meeting drew up plans to widen the entrance to Chapel Hill and the forge was demolished the following year.

The entrance to Chapel Hill was extended 10ft on either side of the reduced triangular patch of ground which remained in the centre. On an early photograph; c.1904 the site was protected by substantial railings and to the eastern side a wide verge containing a very tall telegraph post. The Newmarket Road had a footpath only on the Western side of the highway. A few of the important timbers from the old chapel, for which the subscribers had received 40 days indulgence, were incorporated into and preserved in Joshua Green's summer house, which he called "The Hermitage" built on the northern side of Chapel Hill. Sadly the woodwork and carvings are thought to be no longer there.

Radical Stansted.

There was a political divide within the village, in that the Tory establishment tended to live south or east of The Street. Here was the Castle, St Mary's Church and its vicars and a lot of the landed gentry, also the Lords of the Manor, except some of the Fuller Maitlands who were Liberal. The Essex Review records: 'William Fuller Maitland MP for Brecknockshire since 1875 was selected as the Liberal candidate for the Saffron Walden division in 1895, but could not contest the seat on account of ill-health and Mr Gold was suddenly chosen after the dissolution. Charles Gold, of Silver Street, was elected to the Saffron Walden Constituency as the Liberal candidate in place of Herbert Gardener, a member of the Fuller Maitland family who had held the seat since 1885. Mr Gold was a director of Messrs W & A Gilbey, Limited'.

On the other hand, it was in Stansted Chapel, that many of the Liberals and nonconformists resided, the Quakers, Days, Greens and Welch's, then the businessmen Golds, Gilbeys, Blyths, Hicks and Spencers, Mary Macarthur and the Pulteneys. The labouring classes were confined mainly to Woodfields, Stoney Common and scattered around, Stansted Chapel with their Independent Church and Methodist Chapel. One result of this divide was, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Stansted became known as 'Radical Stansted'. Some may say, with pride, that a little of that spirit is still in evidence today.

Walpole Farm.

It is suggested that Orford House, half a mile north of Stansted, was built as a half-way house for the noble horse lovers on their journeys to and from the capital and the race course at Newmarket and that Walpole Farm took its name from Sir Robert Walpole 1676 – 1745, Britain's first Prime Minister, who after spending time in the Tower of London was created Earl of Orford. Despite the house coming with his title there are no records of his ever visiting this stately home or farm.

Orford House was built by Admiral Edward Russell, the First Earl of Orford, who was victorious in the battle of La Hogue in 1662 and a member of the Russell family of Woburn in the late 17th century. Russell had done himself a great favour by backing the future King, William of Orange 1689-1702. He had written a letter to William asking him to depose King James II, the result of which was within months of William taking the throne he was appointed Treasurer to the Navy and later promoted to 1st Lord of the Admiralty and then on upwards. His country seat was at Chippenham in Cambridgeshire and he may well have used Orford House on his way to and from there to London.

The Walpole Farm was the site of a Post Mill built, fenced and surrounded by a large motte it was one of two mills within 300 yards of each other. Of the second Mill, very little is known.



The Old Mill at Stanstead, Essex on

Thomas Girtin

The Mill at Walpole Farm is built on Dead Field, adjoining Dead Hill and shown on many maps, even painted by the renowned artist Thomas Girtin. That painting now hangs in Norwich Museum. Who that person was, or how he died, to have an area named after his place of death is not known,

In the mill there was a bake house the remains of which came to light when the present owners completed renovations in recent years. Robert Camp sold the mill in c.1707; it is thought he had built the mill only a short while beforehand. It was sold again several times until 23rd October 1866. After which there is no further mention, whether it was gales that caused irreparable damage or maybe a fire destroyed it, is not known. A family that are still living in Stansted Chapel within a few hundred yards from the site of the former mill are related to one of the early millers.

In 1901 Walpole Farm was part of the first governmental funded research programme into the relationship between animal and human tuberculosis, (see Roycot.) The farm was one of three properties owned by Sir James Blyth who had been created a baronet in 1895 for his services to agriculture. He was then was honoured for these services to the country and created Baron Blyth of Stansted Mountfitchet in 1907.

During the First World War, the farm was used as a horse remount station for the mounted regiments passing through the village. Concrete mounting blocks were still in position in one of the barns at Walpole Farm recently. September 1918 Lance-Corporal Arthur Clarke of the Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment, who had formerly been employed at the Stansted Remount Depot was severely wounded in the left leg. He was the son-in-law of Mr J. Croxford of Stansted.

Stansted had a very large army transit camp from 1914 the end of the First World War. It was based on Alley and Brewery Fields to the east of Cambridge Road, between Norman's Way and Clarence Road. A huge Army Camp with bell-tented areas for the Infantry who could not be accommodated in billets.

During the Second World War a Pill Box was constructed on Dead Field as part of the second line of defence against invasion from an airborne attack or either from landings at Stansted Airport, Easton Lodge airstrip, and sea borne attack from the Essex coast.

Primitive Methodist Chapel.

Stansted was 'Missioned' in 1851, that is to say formal open camp meetings or at best a series of meetings in private houses were held where local people were converted to the faith of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Unfortunately there is no record of these momentous events and momentous they were. Primitive Methodists were quite different from most other Christian sects, according to Tobias Smollett's book, *Humphry Clinker* 1771, "nobody reads sermons but Methodists and Dissenters".

The congregation had strong views on many topics, one concerning ministers or priests dressing up in strange clothing and worshipping in gothic palaces. Even, if one of their own worshipped in a Wesleyan Chapel, i.e. at Bishop's Stortford, they would be listed in the Society Roll Book as 'Fallen'. They were heavily censured by more orthodox church-goers and often went by the nick-name of 'Ranters'.

In 1864/5 the Congregationalists in Stansted built a new church on Chapel Hill and the Methodists with their enlarged congregations moved into the former Congregational Church on Silver Street.

The Cambridge Road Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in 1876, the building cost £287-12-6d, with seating for 110 people, 35 pews for renting and 75 free.



Ominously there were only 13 members at the time but they attracted congregations of 80 people. They had few or no paid elders. Each preacher earned his own living by the sweat of his brow; in this area working mainly as agricultural labourers. An unusual exception was in 1914, Kelly's Directory shows among private residents in Stansted, the Rev H.D. Halls (Primitive Methodist) Cambridge Road. In pure speculation, he may have lived in the thatched cottage that was then attached to north end of their chapel.

The Primitive Methodist Chapel was built adjoining the pavement on the east side of the Cambridge Road, now converted to a private residence; it stands roughly opposite the former Police Station. It is still possible to see that in past times there were five windows facing the road, now only three. A Trust Estates account for 1881 shows Stansted as still owning one house besides their Cambridge Road Chapel, another reference to Stansted states: "they had found a barn, cottage and a small garden. This could have been the former thatched cottage attached to the north end of the chapel which itself would have been built on the site of the former barn.

Alfred Phillips recalled that his parents were Primitive Methodists and worshipped there. He had to attend chapel morning and evening with Sunday school in the afternoon, without fail! The chapel services were 'powerful' with the congregation continually ejaculating 'Hallelujah', 'Praise the lord', & etc. A favourite hymn was 'Work for the Night is coming!' "We were teetotallers and joined The Band of Hope", he recalled.

The Chapel closed July 1921 after months when the collections per meeting averaged about 2/= or 10p per week. They then approached the Wesleyans in Bishop's Stortford for support, their meetings reopened and they continued until 29th June 1929, when an agreement to share the Quaker Meeting House for £13 per annum, was signed with the Society of Friends.

It was said that the main reason for the move, was that the former chapel was too close to the road and the clatter of the traffic interrupted their services. Winifred Phillips worshipped there, she said when she was a girl, alone and learning to play the harmonium, the noise of hunger strikers boots on the gravel road, marching onto London, during the great depression made her quake with fear, some of the travellers even disrupted their religious services.

The sale of the old chapel, took place on the 14th December 1932, it realised £150 when a local builder purchased it free from restrictions except it was not to be used for the sale of intoxicating liquors. Mr Robinson, senior, used it as a venture to keep his hands in employment during the depression but then his son, Horace, or more likely his future wife, Roy who fell in love with the building and the result of which was they spent the rest of their days living in it.

In May 1942 the Methodist Sunday collections at the Friends Meeting House amounted to just 14s-6d and a Joint Rebuilding Fund raised £1 from married couples while single people gave between 2/6d and 5/=, making a total of £10. By September 1944 the Methodists were relying heavily on sub-letting. The rent paid by the Stansted Freemason's Lodge, who also shared the Quaker building, helped to make their books tally. The building was condemned by an architect and all moved out in 1962 – except the Methodists moved to another part of the same building for some while before it closed. The Freemason's left to meet in Stansted Hall.

The new Friends Meeting House was reported as being reopened, 'the previous Saturday', in the 22nd September 1967, issue of 'The Friend's Magazine.

Stansted's Inns.

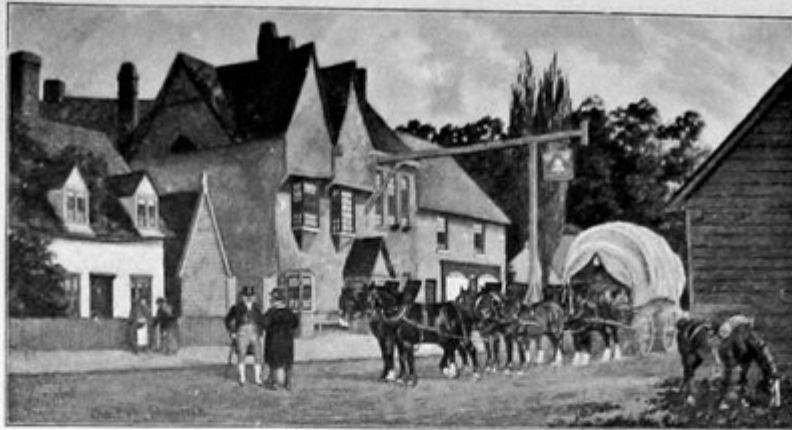
Up to the late 18th century travellers used accommodation according to their rank in life. The wealthy would find hospitality at the manor houses or monasteries along their route. Middle class excursionists and drovers would use the inns, they were always called inns up to this date. In Georgian days people stayed at an inn only when forced to do so by the length of their journey. English literature was fuller of complaints about their discomfort than praise of their merits until Dickens made them romantic. For the poor there was the hedgerow, barns or at best as in the case of Stansted, a chapel-of-ease.

Often these chapels were built at major road junctions, on or adjacent to road bridges, etc. The first hotels built with the title of hotel were from the start watering places either spas or at the sea-side resorts. Then the hotel proliferated with the coming of the railways when many more people required transitory accommodation in their longer journeys.

A number of inns sprang up along the Great Newmarket Road and at the humblest level, the traveller George Byng commented in 1781, how the turnpike roads in general had imported London manners' into the country, so that even milkmaids had 'the dress and looks of Strand Misses'. And we know that the gentry used to travel frequently through the villages on their way to the Newmarket races or up to college at Cambridge, and then the villagers used to come out to stare at their finery.

In 1774 there were six Coaching Inns in Stansted, the largest of which was The White Bear. It was situated on or about the site of Little Fosters, itself formerly a gate house to Hargraves House, on the Cambridge Road. One document of 1731 refers to the site by the French name 'le Beare, at Chapel Green, copyhold of the manor of Bentfield Bury'. A lease was taken on the Bear Inn by Robert Faddock from Michaelmas 1739 at the yearly rate of £22. There is also an agreement between Isaac Whittington of the Inner Temple, Esq, and Robert Faddock of Stansted Mountfitchet, Inn Holder, in which Faddock agreed to take the inn for 21 years at £20. The White Bear is listed among the inns in Stansted in 1769. John Joyce was the licensee in 1774, in 1775 there appears to have been two licensees – Joyce and Nancy (?). Richard Sanders was the licensee from 1776 to 1792, (his wife, Mercy, or Mercy Joyce). In 1793 Joseph Linsell was the licensee and in 1810 Samuel Gilbey then in 1815 George Sharpley.

It would have been the White Bear that was involved in a murder that must have been a national scandal at the time. A contemporary broadsheet (which contained a number of unintentional mistakes) refers to The White Hart, Stansted. The only locally known White Hart is in Ugley. The story goes that on Sunday 25th October 1789 two young lads walked over from Manuden for a drink in Stansted. They partook too deeply of the cup, and when returning, Richard Savill murdered Thomas Bray for his possessions. Savill fled to Chatham, under an assumed name, there joined a newly raised regiment about to embark overseas. He was recognised and after trial at Chelmsford was sentenced to death. He was a fine young man not twenty years of age. Tradition demanded that he be brought back to his place of residence, Manuden, where he hung for five days from a beech tree on the Downs. In a grim touch, his mother who lived at Walnut Tree Cottage on the opposite side of the Stortford Road; could from her bedroom overlook her son's grisly slow death.



THE OLD "BELL," STANSTED.

(From a painting by F. Falgout)

42

BALDWIN'S MAGAZINE.

[100]



THE "WHITE BEAR," STANSTED.

(From a drawing by F. Falgout)

44

BALDWIN'S MAGAZINE.

[10]

The White Bear Inn along with Green's Stores, were a massive economic advantage to the area. Customers would have travelled some distance to Stansted just to shop at Greens Stores, a business probably larger and with a greater range of products, than any shop in Bishop's Stortford. The inn itself would have been a considerable employer of local people. It was also a strongly favoured Drovers' Pub with large fields attached to the rear for their stock to over-night. The tithe map of 1843, shows all that triangular piece of land from Bird Cage Walk, the byway from the Cambridge Road to Pennington Lane in the north to Cooper's Alley in the south, and east of the Cambridge Road as being Bear Fields or Bear Pastures in five separate plots. The only exception to the inns property was the few cottages along the main road which remained in private hands. It was the drovers that used these fields to stable their stock whilst taking rest in the hostelry. One access particularly for the Drovers was from Pennington Lane, well away from the costly Toll Houses situated along the main road.

Many recent maps, Explorer 195 1998, still showed a path diagonally across the allotments on Pennington Lane to Bear Fields. Hence the name Pennington Lane, or the lane to the stock pens.

A picture painted in the late 19th century of the 'White Bear at Stansted' by P Palfrey was probably commissioned by the Gilbey family; it confirms the size and importance of the inn. It would seem that at some point between 1810 and 1820 the White Bear ceased to exist. The other inns at that time were, The Three Colts, The Old Bell, later The Bell and Feathers, The Rose and Crown, now Crown Cottage opposite Blythwood Gardens with the Kings Arms in Lower Street also a coaching inn for traffic going east/west, and the White Horse. Four of the six inns were in Stansted Chapel, reflecting the importance of the coaching trade to that part of the village. Sir Walter Gilbey's grandfather, Daniel was born in 1759 and died in 1814. He owned three of those inns, the Rose and Crown, the Bell Inn and The White Bear. Sir Walter's father, Henry, was born in the White Bear in 1789 and later moved to Bishop's Stortford from where he ran his coaching service from that town to both London and Cambridge. He was forced from his home at The Links, in Bishop's Stortford by the new railway, he then moved to The Red Lion Public House, Hockerill, dying there the following year.

The Three Colts, now a derelict building dates from around 1771 to 1774. The landlord from 1809 to 1835 was one Joseph Sanders, whose most prized possession, according to his will was a violin with which he entertained his customers. Sophia Sanders was the landlady when the tithe map of Stansted was published in 1843. Joseph's brother Richard was also a landlord of The White Bear. George Sanders who was there in 1848 was also a coach builder. A Thomas Sanders also owned a beer house in Stansted, at the same time. The family tradition continued with Mrs Mary Sanders who is listed as living at the Three Colts in 1870. Between the wars, the large barn and out buildings behind the Three Colts were the premises of Reg Amey, coal and wood merchant and the living quarters for visitors to the pub were rather like stalls in a stable. Maybe reflecting the nature of the trade their customers followed.

The Sanders family of whom we will hear more were, in addition to inn and beer house keepers, grocers, carpenters, and general builders. A member of this family still lives locally and has great interest in the village and its surrounds.

Norman's Way

Norman's Way is named after Luther Norman (1872-1960) who was a member of Stansted Parish Council for over 40 years. Luther Norman was the former owner of the Spar garage site and the premises behind, now occupied by Gillard Engineering. He was also the proprietor of the mouth-watering Norman Conqueror, Home Brewed Non Gassy Ginger Beer. The business started with C.A. Norman, Ginger Beer Manufacturer in c.1875, whose stoneware bottles are now considered highly collectable. One of Roland Norman's ginger beer factories was situated on the land behind his garage. During the Second World War this garage was requisitioned by the War Department and at times large queues of parked army Lorries could be seen stretching along the Cambridge Road awaiting fuel from Norman's petrol pump.

Trees, 113 Cambridge Road.

'Trees' was the home of our 'home-spun' poet Frank L. Finch. Listed in the Saffron Walden Year Book of 1940, he died in March 1984 aged 84. In his latter days he was to be seen with his beloved dog James Hancock Baskerville Finch in and about the pub, the Peahen and Whippet, more commonly known as the Dog and Duck in Lower Street, if not the Three Colts almost opposite. A number of the people and places that he wrote about in his poems were village characters and locations but under pseudonyms. Miss Loftus formerly of the Savages, Lower Street was but one who featured in the poem Pro Bono Publico and her villainous biographer's ill-gotten gains were then spent in the Pea and Whippet. In a short booklet of his entitled, Odes and Oddments published by Vitamealo, Vitamins Ltd, the last verse of the last poem, 'A Tale with a Moral' is about pigs, it runs as follows:

Now be it said that Brenda Brill
 Holds other views on Fearsome Swill;
 She studies hard from break of day
 The words the sages say
 About ingredients meet and proper,
 Of Riboflavin, iron and copper;
 In fact, with all the plans she's made,
 She'll never fail to make the grade.
 Her pigs their quivering snouts a-glisten
 All pin their lug'oles back and listen;
 Then squeal with joy - "The dangers past,
 Our Brenda's learnt good sense at last".
 She feeds, as is the expert's fashion,
 A Vitamealo balanced ration.

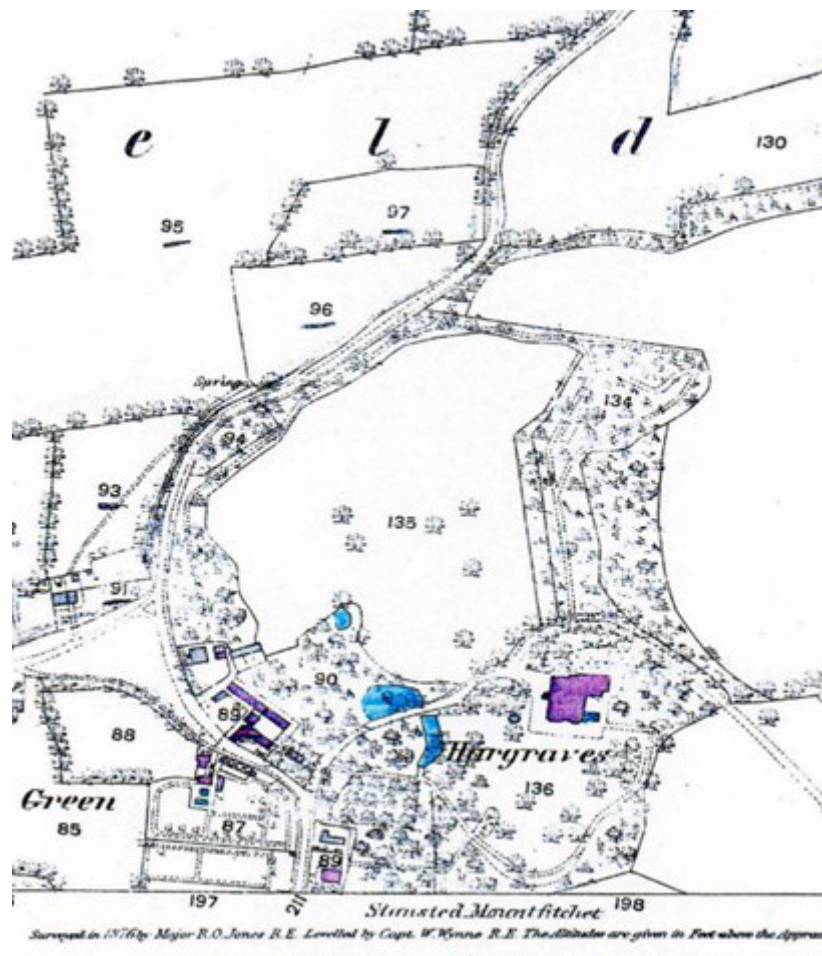
Hargrave Lodge/House.

On the grass verge of the junction Cambridge Road / Croasdaile Road there is a memorial urn dedicated to Henry and Mary Croasdaile by their son Henry James Alexander Croasdaile. The urn dated September 30th 1797, was in memory of their 'many valuable qualities'. Not sure that everybody had the same idea as one line of thought says the urn was found either behind a shed or even up a tree before being moved to its present position! They and their son Henry J.A. and daughter-in-Law Harriett lived in Hargrave Lodge from 1777 to 1847. The family are thought to have been the first residents of that house. Harriett was only eighteen years of age when she first came to Stansted in 1787 to get married to Henry J. A. She became a widow at the age of thirty eight, but continued to live in the lodge. She remained a widow for over forty years until her death 11th September 1847, 78 years old. During this span of time, she was to become one of the most kindly of benefactors to the poor. It was said, "to carry out such charity in the name of her marriage is worthy of note". On a memorial plaque in St Mary's Church she is said to be "Charitable to the poor and a most kind neighbour". Both her and her husband's remains are deposited in Brasted Church in Kent.

The following year, 1848, Hargrave Lodge became the seat of Mrs Charlotte Rainsford, it was a large handsome mansion in the castellated style, with tasteful pleasure grounds, Charlotte Rainsford lived in there until 1851. Rainsford Road is named after her.

One story told about the stables at Hargrave, was that a small staircase lead up to the loft and it was in this loft that the stable groom would sleep at night while he was looking after a horse in foal. Apparently there was a groom who had many worries, he committed suicide by drowning himself in the nearby pond, and it is his ghost which haunts this stable.

The stable site has recently become a housing development called Norman Quarter despite the rumour that there is a large pit, maybe one of the three ponds there, in which the horses that died were buried.



Charles Robert Sperling, Magistrate and land owner, his wife Louisa, nee Astle, four sons and two daughters moved into Hargrave Lodge sometime between 1851 and c.1855; He was born in Marylebone, London in 1798, and died 8th July 1863 at Stanmore Manor Middlesex.

The Sperling family had settled in Essex since 1659, they came from an ancient and honourable Swedish family, whose income was assured by marrying the heiresses of the Foxall and Byatt families.

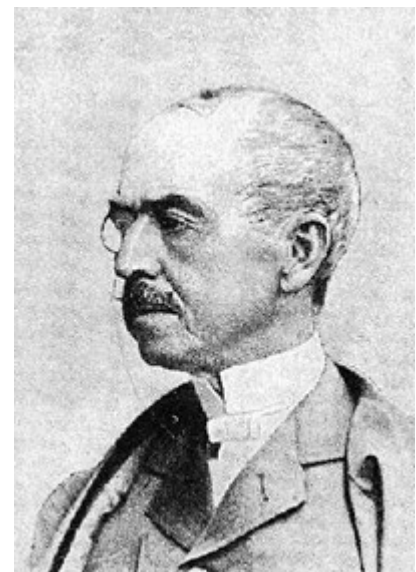
One ancestor, Joachim Sperling was Field Marshall Royal of Sweden, who was made a Count by the King of Sweden. During the greater part of the Duke of Wellington's last campaign in the north of France he served in H.M. 9th Regiment. He married his first cousin Maria, daughter of Mr Henry Piper Sperling, of Norbury Park; and is succeeded by his nephew, Charles Brogden Sperling, J.P. for Essex and eldest son of Mr Charles R. Sperling, J.P. (The Illustrated News August 5th 1882 p.150) Charles Brogden was Deputy Lieutenant of Essex as well as J.P, he later lived at Dynes Hall Great Maplestead, Essex. His son, Charles Frederick Denne Sperling J.P. Captain 4th Batt. Essex Regt. Barrister-at-Law, M.A. (Oxon) F.S.A. whose son Charles Auriol, Lieutenant, was killed at the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

The fourth son of Charles Robert was Commander Rowland Money Sperling, who seems to have been well known for his contribution to the International Journal of Avian Science, with an article entitled 'Ornithological Notes from the Ethiopian Region'. It was written while he was Captain, Acting-Commander, HMS Racoon. The Racoon was a handsome wooden hulled screw 22 gun corvette launched in 1857 and broken up just twenty years later, but a vessel much favoured by Royalty for their excursions by sea. The notes were taken in the last quarter of 1867 while the Racoon sailed from Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope, to Zanzibar and back, touching at some intermediate places.

Rowland Money was married to Maria Keyser in March 1873 at Westminster, the following December Rowland died aged 32 years, but she had his son, early the following year, Rowland Arthur Charles Sperling, 1874 – 1965, later C.B, C.M.G., Sir Rowland who was born at St George's, Hanover Square, London, was one time British Minister at Berne, Residence British Legation Sofia, who later became the British Ambassador to Finland in 1930 – 1935. His son, Philip Rowland Second Lieutenant Welsh Guards died aged 29 on the 11th March 1940 and buried St Mary's Church, Kingsdere, Hampshire.

Included in the 1861 census for Stansted but no other census returns was Charles and his wife, son Henry a bachelor, daughter Louisa along with two Sperling grandchildren. They had nine servants. Charles died on the 8th July 1863 at Rookcliffe, Lymington and Louise in 1879.

Walter Gilbey (pictured here), later Sir Walter, 1st Baronet of Elsenham Hall, of Gilbey's Gin fame was born in Stansted in 1831 in the public house of his grandparents, he moved into Hargrave House from 1865 to 1874, with his wife Ellen and six children. They had moved up from Middlesex to Bishop's Stortford and then on to Stansted, the home village of his youth. He was an ardent follower of country sports and a member of the Puckeridge Hunt; he also fished the upper reaches of the River Stort.



His family, the most famous family to have lived in the village, bestowed much generosity on the towns and villages with which they been associated and obviously had great enthusiasm for the poor and needy.

The owner of the Hargrave freehold is believed to have been Commander Rowland Money Sperling who died 6th December 1873, whose son Rowland Arthur Charles was born in the parish of St George's, Hanover Square, London the following March 1874. Mother, Maria Sperling probably did not want and most likely never used the house in Stansted, refused to renew the lease and decided to sell it. Sir Walter did not choose to purchase the property, he then had to move out in what appears to be a hurry as he first crossed the road to Chapel Cottage whilst he prepared to move to Brighton for a couple of years for health reasons and the sea air as well as getting-together with the very top flight of English society who frequented the resort. Not so good for his wife, she died there. Joshua Green recorded in his notes that Sir Walter was not very happy at having to move. He was waiting for the very extensive alterations and additions that he was making to Elsenham Hall to be finalised.

It was two years before the next residents purchased the estate; it was in this time that major alterations and redecoration had taken place at Hargrave House, hence the wall plaque dated 1875.

When Sir Walter received his baronetcy for his services to horse-breeding, there was great rejoicing in both Bishop's Stortford, (North Street was closed to hold a huge party at which the riffraff broke into the tents and stole all the meat!) and Elsenham also had its celebrations, but nothing much happened in Stansted.

A newspaper portrait of Walter Gilbey praised; "his excellence in breeding the Rioter strain of cattle through his bull Banboy, much favoured in America where they fetched the equivalent of 2,000 guineas. Banboy imparted a fashionable grey tint to his and other local herds. Mr Gilbey's removal from Hargrave Park and the neighbourhood where he was born was a cruel source of regret as his generous hospitality and kind consideration for the poor had endured him and his wife to everyone around. He moved to Brighton for a couple or three years then sold his house there to take Elsenham Hall, near to his old stamping grounds, where he faithfully performed the role of an English gentleman".

Walter also bred carthorses and at one time paid 800 guineas for a prize stallion called Spark. His stud at Elsenham held over 50 Cart horses and the previous year he had been appointed one of the judges in the great International Show at Hamburg. He was created Baronet in 1893, that is above all knighthoods except The Order of Garter but not up to the grade of a peerage, which left him behind his nephew and business partner, Lord Blyth. He was not amused.

It was said of Walter that when one of his stock died, he had it taken to the orchard and hung from a tree where the insects feasted upon it, and then the birds fed upon the insects and thus formed an ecological chain.

Another attribute of Sir Walter was that of a property developer at Littlecoates, Grimsby which has streets that are named Harlow, Clavering, Stortford, Hargrave and Dunmow, they are all connected by Elsenham and Gilbey Roads. It was in Grimsby that according to his daughter, in 1900, he sold land to the railways for a profit of £1,200. At that time, c.1900, he owned 35 cottages and 22 farms around Grimsby. In 1906 Sir Walter became Deputy Lieutenant of Essex.

The owners of Hargrave have long been conscious of the privacy of their property, restrictions were placed on new buildings across the road with window lights facing the park, Florida, the c.1800 building just north of the Primitive Methodist Chapel, now demolished, was one and when Redlands, now the doctors surgery was built with an offending window the site between that and the road, now a bungalow, was planted with trees.

The Rev R.T. Pulteney's, family, lived at Hargraves from 1876 to 1898. They came to the village from Ashley in Northamptonshire where five of their seven children were born in six years. The eldest son William was a Lieutenant in the Militia. The former Chapel of Ease of St John the Divine, situated just north of Chapel Hill was funded largely by the Pulteneys. Francis Basil Pulteney, born Market Harborough 1859, gave the land and there is a plaque in the Lady Chapel, commemorating his death. The cost of the church building 1888/1889 was nearly £5,700, of which about 4/5ths was provided by the generosity of the Pulteney family. The tower was added in 1895 at a further cost of £2,000 which was also defrayed by the Pulteneys. This was the same year that Francis Basil died at Wandsworth, London. Members of the same family gave the Gern organ, which was rebuilt in 1962; they also endowed a curate who served under very strict conditions. The Pulteney family had at least two attempts to sell Hargrave House in 1895 and 1898. As there is no mention of Mother or the two sons, only the five daughters, in the 1898 vendor's sales brochure, it must be presumed they had died by this date.

General Sir William Pulteney K.C.B. was invited to unveil the War Memorial in the gardens of St John's Church in July 1920. It is engraved with the names of 54 officers and men who fell in the 1914 – 1918 conflict, and it now also has the 17 men who died in the Second World War added. General Sir William, said he must express the great satisfaction it was to him to come to Stansted, where in his early youth he was brought up, to unveil the two memorials. (There is also a plaque in St Marys Church). The Pulteney connection must explain just why the War Memorial Cross was not placed at St Mary's the then Parish Church, but at the Chapel of Ease, St John's.

The house sold in 1901 to Gilbert Alder and his mother who took up residence there. Gilbert Alder, was a Freeman of the City of London and sat on the courts of the Dyers' and Watermen's Livery Companies. He lived there with his wife Anne, his father, mother, brother and sister and their son. He was a keen sportsman and encouraged village sportsmen and women. At one time they had two Daimler cars. Their son, Sidney was inclined to kick over the traces, he had a 45 horsepower Renault, an immense car.

The Flight Magazine February 8 1917, informed the nation that:- "Flight Lieutenant Sydney Alder, R.F.C., who has been reported missing, is the elder son of the late Mr. Sidney Alder, and grandson of the late Mr. Gilbert Alder and of Mrs. Alder, of Hargrave, Stansted Essex. He formerly held a commission in the Sherwood Foresters, and was wounded at the Battle of Loos". The family received the following telegram: "Beg to inform you that information has been received from an unofficial but apparently reliable source that Lieutenant Sydney Alder, Sherwood Foresters and Royal Flying Corps, is wounded and prisoner of war". Secretary, War Office.

Sidney was wounded at the Battle of Loos September 1915, Gilbert Alder died and was buried on the 4th January 1915.

Although Sidney was unable to attend the funeral he was later granted 10 days leave. Only four days after his return to duty he was shot down over Menin. A postcard was received by Mrs Alder stating that "he is a prisoner of war in hospital in Germany". He wrote home the card, "We both had a marvellous escape, as all controls were shot away and we fell three miles. The machine was smashed up, but I only got a badly smashed ankle and a knock on the eye". Sidney was perhaps one of the lucky ones, he returned from the war.

Miss Edith Alder was the last of the family to live in the house which she left in 1931. Mrs Alder senior, was a large imposing lady who only wore black. Her daughter was said to be slightly less imposing but still favoured wearing black as though they both followed on from Edwardian times.

The Hargrave staff at this time consisted of butler/valet, two house maids, two parlour maids, a cook and a kitchen maid. Mr Abraham was the gardener and Mr Banks the groomsman who had four staff working under them. It was from this family that Alderbury Close took its name.

Hargrave and Stansted Sports.

The Stansted Tennis Courts were established on Hargrave's Park in 1888 when the Pulteneys were living in the house. The cricket pitch also became permanently established in its present position as Stansted's Home Ground in c 1921 when Gilbert Alder was in residence. The estate was purchased by Major Fetwell who in 1933 ran it with another teacher as a private boys school. About a dozen boys attended. In 1934 Major Fetwell sold by auction a piece of the estate on the Cambridge Road to the Stansted Sports Association.

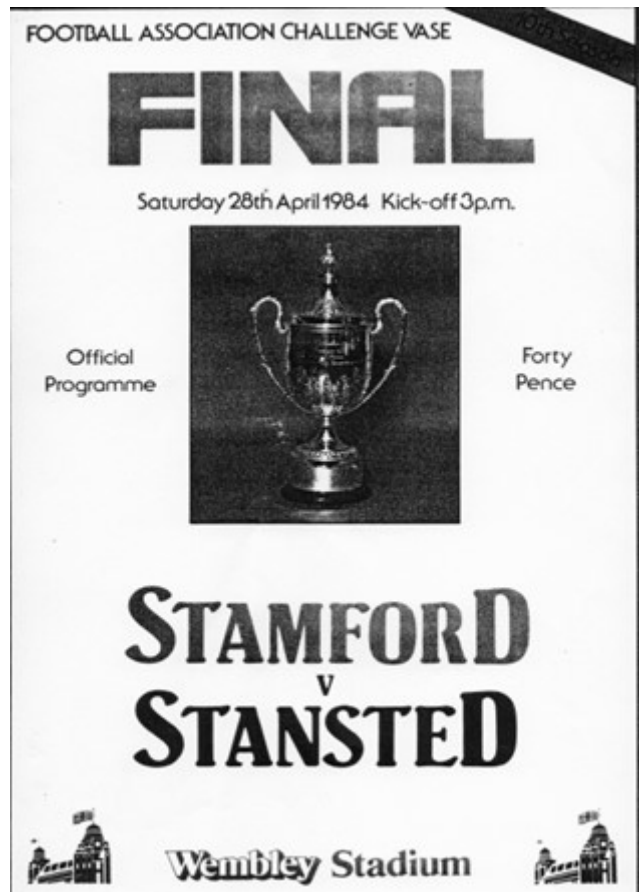
A Sports Trust that had been set up in that year to advance the amenities within the village. Parishioners helped to raise money by a public subscription to purchase part of this land. Entrance to the Sports Ground is under a wrought iron arch commemorating George V and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee on the 6th May 1935 but the ground did not formerly open until 22nd June 1935.

The ground was opened with a cricket match between the football and cricket clubs. The Stansted Football Club first formed in 1891, had moved from Green's Meadow in 1938, where they had used 'The Hermitage' on Chapel Hill as changing rooms.

By 1939, through the efforts of Freddie Wells, this football club had achieved 'Senior Status', as well as membership of the Spartan League, which was considered at the time one of the top five amateur competitions in the country.

The pinnacle of their achievements was when in the national competition Stansted played Stamford in the final and won the Football Association Challenge Vase Final, at Wembley on the 28th April 1984. The final score was 3-2. Considering the village had a population of between 2,000 to 3,000 residents at the time, this was quite an accomplishment.

The wooden terrace to the southern side of Hargrave football ground is one of the few wooden stands left in the country. It was built in 1938 and used during the Second World War as food storage depot.



In 2012 the Football League is trying to get Stansted to dispense with the wooden stand as it is said to pose a fire risk; an over-rated peril when most weeks only two retired members of the public use it, while renewing it would be a major financial burden for the club.

Cricket continued to flourish but without the support that soccer enjoyed. A new cricket pavilion was installed. It came from their former site, now Mountfitchet College playing fields, Church Road. It was moved to its present site by Robt Levey, on the undertaker's, horse and cart to replace the tent which had served as changing rooms up till then. The removal from Church Road was occasioned by William Fuller Maitland, owner of the site, having lost two of his sons, one killed by an elephant in Africa and another during the First World War, with a further son who suffered serious injuries from which he never fully recovered. William Fuller Maitland had decided to leave the village although he didn't actually depart until 1921.

Gilbert Alder was the great village cricketer of his time. He played cricket for Stansted and was instrumental, in getting his mother to agree to the present ground at Hargrave Park, to be used by the Stansted Cricket Club. He paid for all the removal expenses.

Although in the early days of Hargrave Park Sports Association, athletics had thrived under the leadership of Mr Sheering and Alec Andrews, unfortunately they failed to win support and so athletics are no longer included in the Sports Association activities. Without any of these sports, Stansted would lose a major open space in the centre of the village and a part of its life in such an event. The school in Hargrave House closed in 1936 when the estate was bought up by Mr Light a land speculator.

Eventually the cottages on the road were purchased by their residents for small amounts of money and the house was sold to the Mary Macarthur Trust who modernised and refitted it as a holiday home for exhausted Trade Union ladies mainly from the North of England and the poorer areas of London.

Mary Macarthur Holiday Home.

The Mary Macarthur Holiday Home was opened on the 5th April 1939 by Queen Mary. I have yet to hear a good word said about that lady except surprisingly she was a friend of Mary Macarthur. The Queen only spoke twelve words at the opening and while the event is thought to have been recorded it is unfortunately not known if a copy still exists. Despite the torrential rain she didn't condescend to even acknowledge the crowds awaiting her in the appalling weather. Queen's Close, a very short road, commemorates her very short visit.

Mary Macarthur was born in Ayr in 1880, at 23 she was President of the National Federation of Women Workers. At the request of Queen Mary she became Honorary Secretary of the Central Committee of Women's Unemployment.

Her nomination to stand as M.P. for Stourbridge was rejected as it was ruled that she should stand under her married name of Anderson which the electorate did not know. She secured an amendment to the Munitions Act so that those women should receive the same rate of pay when doing the same work as men, and she established a national minimum rate of pay for women in the munitions industry.

Mary Macarthur died at Golders Green on the 1st January 1921. Matron of the Holiday Home in 1940 was one Miss Robinson.

Hargrave and the Army.

In 1939, Mr Light then owned the land around the house and with the coming World War Two he found a good buyer or tenant – the Government. The grounds of the house were converted into yet another army camp, first used by The London Searchlight Regiment before there being relocated to Newport. Searchlights were positioned all round the area. During a raid they used to light up the whole village “as bright as day”. The Camp’s very large square, was just off what is now Croasdaile Road. It extended down to Walpole Farm. The camp was once attacked by a Dornier, a German aircraft; the plane was seriously damaged by small arms fire and crashed in Sawbridgeworth.

Troops at the camp lived in tents but in the winter moved into huts which didn’t even have windows. The camp had a NAAFI canteen that was able to attract famous entertainers and bands to their shows to which the villagers (at least the girls) were invited to attend.

The Territorial Army had an early presence at the camp and at weekends they trained civilians in the art of warfare. Attached to the Territorial Army was ATS or Auxiliary Territorial Service. All women in the army joined the ATS except nurses. The women serving would receive 2/3^{rds} the pay of male soldiers. They were commanded by Col Dove’s wife, the one surviving lady who served with the ATS is Gwen Harbridge.

The Camp remained in use by the army until sometime after the Suez crisis in July 1956. One could never get a seat on the last bus after the cinemas and pubs in Bishop’s Stortford closed, for squaddies making it back to the barracks, not a few a little the worse for wear. One of the few signs of army occupation left now is, a short triangular concrete post on the left-hand side of Dove Close, inscribed, “W ↑ D”. With a similar post in Bird Cage Walk to the north but that one appears to have been almost lost under heaps of household refuse.

Hargrave House was then sold in 1970 to Essex County Council as a school for disturbed boys then a home for handicapped children, some blind or deaf others found it difficult to walk or talk.

In 1985 the house was sold again and the children removed to Chelmsford. After standing empty for three years work again started on the house in 1988.

Rumour had it that it was being converted into offices but it still continues under a variety of names as Hargrave Care Home for the Elderly, photographed here in 2012.



North House.

Formerly North House and yard belonged to George Levey one of three brothers, all either builders and or undertakers who had formerly lived at and had their business at Pesterford Bridge, Birchanger. The family originated in Stansted over many generations,

The Clock Tower on Orford House stables was renovated in 1790s by Robert Levey and renovated yet again by yet another Robert Levey in 1921/22 by the father of George Levey at North House.

The family expanded, one branch, Alan Levey, was the architect of High Wych Church and practically rebuilt Great Hallingbury Church. Another branch of the family had No 1 Rye Street, Bishop's Stortford, as a funeral directors site. They were responsible for the funeral of John Archer Houblon of Great Hallingbury Place, former owner of the National Trust's property, Hatfield Forest.

Chapel Cottage.

Chapel Cottage, standing on the corner of Clarence Road, was part of a Queen Anne House with a small attached cottage attached either side of the main building;



It took its name from the Chapel at the fountain rather than the closer Primitive Methodist chapel which the cottages predate. It was possibly the main house which accommodated Sir Walter Gilbey and family for a short while before he removed to Brighton. The above photograph of Chapel Cottage was taken by the photographer George Potts, who lived opposite. One of the later residents of Chapel Cottage was, according to the aforementioned poet Frank Finch called Paraffin Kate. It seems that Chapel Cottage was never blessed with modern utilities, and that Kate was regularly to be seen walking up and down the road to purchase the necessary paraffin for lighting, cooking and heating and thus she featured in the poem by Frank Finch.

Clarence Road was formerly part of a twitchel down to Lower Street and takes its name from the Clarence Villas there, named after the Duke of Clarence, eldest son of King Edward VII. Mrs Cooper, Miss or Mrs Smith and Mr & Mrs Sizeland are thought to have been the last occupiers of the dwellings which were demolished in the 1970s,

On the south side of the junction facing Cambridge Road, the middle room between the two thatched cottages was formerly the village library during the middle/late 20th century. The Librarian was Mrs Maud Rodgers.

Potts Cottage.

Potts Cottage numbered No 45, is a picturesque single storied medieval thatched cottage to the south of the Tennis Courts, a one story timber framed and plastered house with weather boarded plinth with attics and small casement windows. It is named after the celebrated photographer George Potts. He lived there during the middle of the nineteenth century, and recorded many images of the village. He, is usually referred to as 'Mr Potts', only once have I found reference to his forename, George. Mr Potts was born in 1818 in Newport and subsequently lived in Stansted until the late 1880s. He and his wife used to foster children from London; the children were not above stealing food when they could. Only when it was explained the depths of poverty, to which some of these children had been subjected to in their usual life, did their behaviour become better understood in Stansted.

The four photographs in this book, the two showing the demolition of the Wayside Chapel in 1870/71, Chapel Cottage and Primitive Methodist Chapel c.1876, are all examples of George Potts photographic work. I only possess the latter original photograph produced on thick card. Photography traces its beginnings to hundred years B.C. but photography as we know it today owes much to Louis Daguerre of Paris in 1837. The English inventor William Fox Talbot refined his process so that portraits were readily available to the masses. Talbot's famous 1835 print of a window in Lacock Abbey is the oldest known negative in existence. Our George Potts recorded the demolition of the Wayside Chapel and that places him among the earlier photographers.

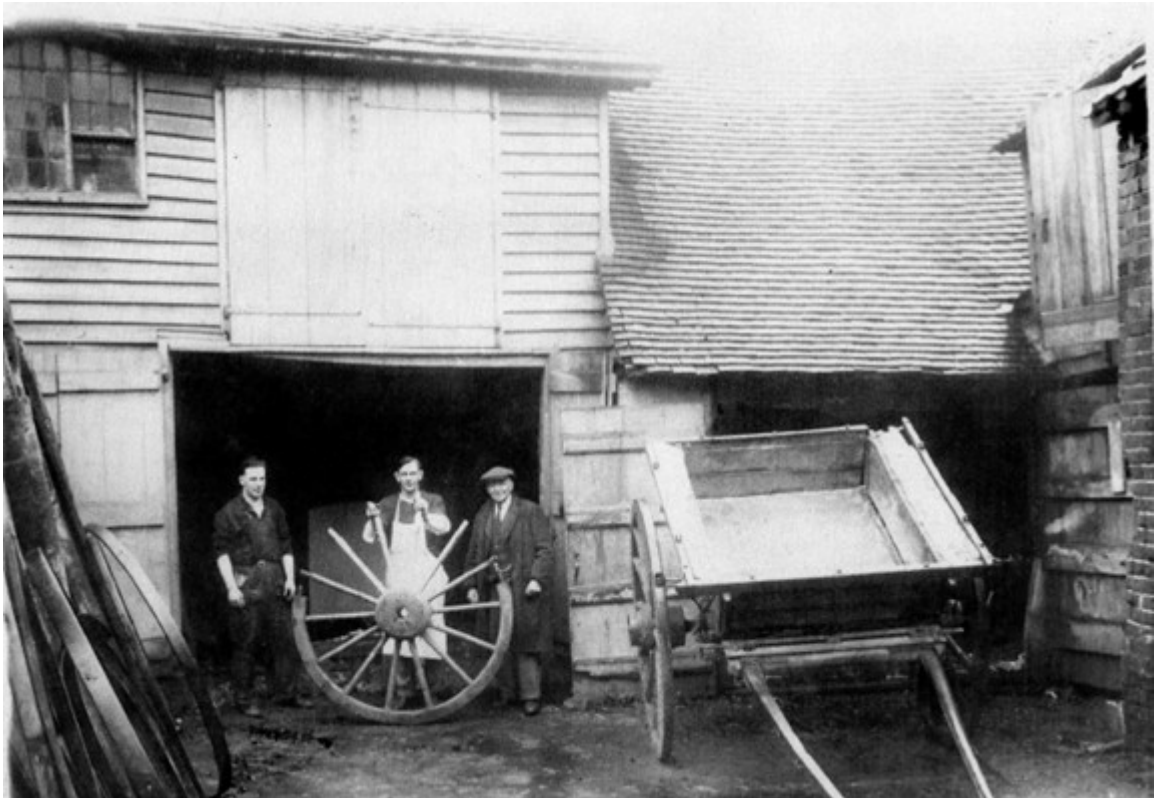
Forge House.

Forge House, c.1700 north gable has an oval plaster panel with the date 1759 and some remains of pargeting. Nothing is known of the forge or the Smith therein.

In 2012 Forge House is again on the market for £565,000. The owners state that it is 'a superb Grade II listed five bedroom detached 16th century property, renovated and refurbished by the present owners'. ---- 'believed to have been built in approximately 1550 as two cottages adjacent to the old forge and has great kerb appeal (if you ignore the cars parked upon the pavement) with external exposed beams, peg tiled roof and a pathway leading to the front door. There are many period features internally including exposed beams and an inglenook fireplace. The two cottages were converted into one dwelling by Mike Snow in the 1950s.

Coopers Alley.

The passageway is said to take its name from a strip of woodland that ran beside the path; some of the mature trees from this woodland are still standing. Perhaps in earlier days it was this wood, from which the barrels were made or maybe it was named after Teddy Cooper who lived opposite in the Queen Anne House. It may be coincidental that the path also served F.W. Bedlow's property, generations of his family were wheelwrights and general smiths, all working from the same premises accessing on to the alleyway, where amongst other work they repaired agricultural implements and undertook general smith's work.



Jim (Binks) Turner, (Apprentice Wheelwright) Walter Bedlow and Mr Bright.

In 1937 a tragic accident occurred to Mr Bedlow which put an end to his working life. He was manipulating a piece of red hot metal when it suddenly flew up into his eye, causing him agonising pain. Dr Platt could do little for him and in a few days he had lost the sight of that eye. He soon began to lose the sight in the other eye as well and even the new doctor who came to Stansted in 1938 could do little but recommend he receive treatment at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. Despite this treatment he went totally blind by 1939 and unable to continue his trade. In the early 20th century Nellie and Walter Bedlow had a very bright boy who would have liked to have gone to University but his parents could not afford his education so he also followed the family occupation as wheelwright cum blacksmith.

The house was a fairly large one, with four rooms up and down and could be one of the older houses in the village. Behind it was a spacious yard with a blacksmiths shop, two wheelwrights sheds and a wash up containing a pump, bread oven and a copper, in which Frank Bedlow's sister brewed excellent beer and wine using grapes from Rochford's Nurseries.

Kitson's Stores.

The buildings to the south of Coopers Alley bear the initials T (above) L S and the date July ye 25 1559. In fact the shops are listed as being 17th to 18th century timber framed and plastered houses and it is thought that the date should read, 'July Ye 25 1759'. But the adjacent property to the north is reckoned to be c. 1550s

These used to be Kitson's Stores. Miss Annie Kitson ran a gift and wool shop, also selling toys and books; and in their early days fireworks among many other items, consequently they were very popular with children. Vera Wyatt remembered going to Kitson's to buy a little toy or something marked up at 6½d the lady in the shop would say "I'll let you have it for 6d because I know you". Her thoughts were that the lady had put an extra ½d on the price before-hand! In the early part of the 20th century the Stansted Telephone Exchange was kept at the back of the shop, Miss Kitson being an inveterate gossip often listened unabashed to her customers' telephone conversations and always knew more than anyone else what was going on in the village. Annie, was one of the founder members of the Stansted Women's Institute.

Before and during the First World War, Mr Kitson, father to Annie Kitson was a Basket Weaver and had the building at the rear of the shop, facing on Coopers Alley, he wove baskets, hampers and chairs with osiers (willow twigs) that grew at the edge of the large pond which existed until the 1930s in a field behind Bedlow's yard. Kitson's advertised in c.1914 that they manufactured and sold baskets, fans, sieves, garden chairs, wicker tables and hampers, hay, corn and drag rakes. Chairs were re-seated with cane, wicker and fancy seats. Later his supply came from the water cress beds on the road to Hazel End.

The former public house, now private residence, at the eastern end of Coopers Alley was and is called, 'The Willows'. This rear part of Kitson's establishment became Peter Jay's, Gents Hairdressers in the 1960s / 1970s and is now occupied by a sports physiotherapist. The shops on the main road are now leased by Dorringtons Bakery and Orion Heating.

The Old Bell.

Henry and Elizabeth Gilbey owned the inn until 1818 when, because of the general economic depression following the Napoleonic Wars they moved to Bishop's Stortford. The landlord of this inn in c.1864 was Samuel Gilbey, uncle to Sir Walter. As with the White Bear, this inn featured in Baily's Magazine for 1904, when it was referred to as the 'Old Bell', Stansted. The original painting by P Palfrey must have been executed well before the artist's death in 1902. The Gilbeys amassed a considerable art collection; this picture depicts the ancient hostelry, complete with horses and well loaded carts of corn in the foreground. It is a painting depicting a commercial scene as opposed to The White Bear inn which suggests an upmarket passenger enterprise.

The photograph c.1915 shows the pub had undergone a major face lift in the early part of the 20th century and was then called The Bell Hotel



The Old Bell.

. More recently the name was changed to The Bell and Feathers to differentiate it from The Old Bell at Birchanger and then to The Plume of Feathers and lastly just The Feathers. Mr Harun Khan has now incorporated the inn, into, Yuva, Fine Fusion Restaurants part of the Eleat Restaurant Group. (Yuva means; feminine youth and sensuality.)

The Gilbeys were not universally acceptable; The Eastern Counties Railway Company considered and passed a minute at their Locomotive and Permanent Way Committee on the 22nd of April 1857 that: *'The Manager requested instructions as to Porter Gilbey of Stansted who keeps a beer shop there, which he declines giving up. It was resolved that his services be dispensed with'*.

Much later the railways were more deferential to the Gilbeys who travelled to and from their office in 'The Pantheon', Oxford St, London in their own railway saloon which was attached and detached from the trains, morning and evening, at Stansted Station. Some of the rapid growth of the Gilbeys' fortunes was the fact that Gladstone's Act of 1860 reduced duties on all imported wines and permitted the selling of wines and spirits in 'Off Licences', Gilbeys appointed many agents for this job and, as the railways spread all over the country, quite a few Station Masters enjoyed the privilege of acting as Gilbey's agents in the sale of alcohol.

The Galloping Horses Villa.

The Galloping Horses Villa, is the most flamboyant shop in Stansted, built in 1901 it is now occupied by the Co-operative Group Limited, (Manchester). Behind the store's name plate there is still thought to be a plaster cast of a 'galloping horse'. It will be noticed the frontage is decorated with wreaths of greenery and the symbols: a dove for loving constancy, a bee skip for efficient industry and cornucopia (horn of plenty), the bounty of nature's gifts. An upper window sill is supported by a magnificent pair of lion's heads.

In fact the building was the winter quarter of the Thurstons, the fair ground family. The Fair season always started on Stansted's Fair Day, 1st May. One account tells that, "They had a 'Grand Fair', with their famous 'galloping horses' roundabout, with all the stalls, sideshows, booths, and swing boats, roundabouts, coconut-shies and shooting galleries and the paraphernalia which went with it. The children were excited just seeing the fair being set up before the event. It was the first fair of the season and for many years was held on the meadow at the rear of the Bell and Feathers public house, only later Bentfield Upper Green and occasionally on the site of Five Acres estate, Cambridge Road.

The Thurston and Merry families had lived in Stansted all winter, overhauling and repairing their equipment for the summer tour, only returning to their winter quarters again when the season was finished. Behind the buildings there is a large warehouse which accommodated Thurston's fair equipment during the winter. The 1848 Gazetteer and Directory states that: Stansted has a fair for cattle, &c, on the 1st of May and on the day following for toys &c. It is thought that an earlier fair was run by the Greenaway family but nothing is known about them. The site is at present demolished and the subject of planning application for redevelopment.

In c.1908, the Thurston building was occupied by Matthew's Cycle Stores who built cycles for the workers; he later owned the first car in Stansted. R.E. Bowyer, Motor Garage occupied the archway and an extensive building behind with the Bowyers living in the flat above what is now the Co-op. These premises were later owned by Green's Stores, and their garage was located in the large building behind the shop which became an integral part of the huge surrounding business that the garage also served. Hose pipes from two petrol pumps were run up high over the pavement, people walked beneath whilst cars were being fuelled.

The premises became H. T. Clarke's garage in the early 1920s which was still listed in the 1940 Saffron Walden Year Book. He was an Automobile Engineer but he also hired out Landaullets. These were usually either Daimler or Mercedes-Benz limousines without front passenger seats and were chauffeur driven. A two part folding top covered the rear seats, a very popular car with a number of Popes through the ages. In July 1932 Messrs Phildrew (mobile Greengrocers) had a problem with their Morris van, Clarke investigated the matter, changed the carburettor cleaned the plugs and tested it. Ten days later they 'decarbonised the engine, ground the valves re-facing their heads, adjusted the tappets, and supplied new cylinder head and exhaust gaskets, adjusted the magneto and brakes, lubricated all connections, removed rear wheels and brake drums to examine brake linings and replaced them all, supplied and fitted return spring on footbrake pedal and readjusted the brakes'. Then he 'reinstalled the original carburettor after servicing it'. Reassembled, tested and adjusted, all for £2-2-6d or £2-12p. The bill was duly paid one month later.

Tesco Store.

This building was constructed for Mayhew Bros, garage. Fred Mayhew c.1928, was a partner in the business of garage owners, & motor-coach proprietors and also Parish Councillor. According to Aubrey Levey, he was a character; he had a musical pipe on which could play almost anything from the National Anthem down to Sunset Blues. A frightful thing was that pipe. "I've never heard of anyone with such a disgusting pipe as old Fred Mayhew". Mayhew's also had premises in High Lane and Station Road.

After the garage, the business became Havenwood's, who specialised in home swimming pools.

More recently the building became a carpet showroom, which, when taken over by Tesco moved further down Green's Buildings but that shop is now also closed and empty.

Green's Stores.

Whilst many people will still remember 'You're Furnished' demolished 2013, and Sworder's Auction Rooms, (now established north of the village, on the B1383), as being the London and Stansted Furnishing Company, the history of the building is as outstanding as any business for many miles around. In c.1894 it was Joshua Green & Company, North Essex Furniture Stores. Green's Buildings stretched from Clarence Road to Western House, including Barclay's Bank. That was William Grover's, a partner's home, which later reverted to Samuel Tayspill Day.



Photograph of a model of Green's Stores executed in 1840.

Joshua Green was a member of that influential family of farmers and merchants, whose family tree has been traced back to John of Gaunt. In its day the shop was as large and as well respected as any departmental store for many miles around including Bishop's Stortford and other larger towns. The founder was one John Day who either started up in business or took an existing company on his marriage in 1687. This company was for its 273 years a very strong, Quaker led concern. In their earliest days the family were often persecuted for their beliefs. In 1836 Day and Robson, the Saffron Walden branch, had umbrellas, coal scuttles, warming pans and other goods forfeited for refusing to pay tithes and church rates. The family was well acquainted with, if not related to, William Penn of Pennsylvania, George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends and Elizabeth Fry amongst many other famous Quakers.

John Day added the trade of 'Sope boyling' to that of grocer, draper, and chandler. He carried on a considerable export trade in fancy soap with France. The soap was made at Potash Cottages down near the railway line. One of the Days married into the Dimsdale family of Bishop's Stortford, all doctors, who by inoculation first found a treatment for smallpox. By 1825 the Greens branched out into British and foreign wines, spirits and drapery. Undertaking also became very important with an extensive department trading in paraphernalia in the days of elaborate mourning

On Friday September 2nd 1887, Messrs J Green & Co closed their establishment in order to celebrate the bi-centenary this Jubilee year of the establishment of their firm. A party of thirty four including Messrs Green, the whole of their assistants, gardeners etc and the wives of some of them spent a very happy day at the American Exhibition which was much appreciated by all present.

In May of 1889, Gibson's Bank opened on the site of the present Barclays. Even during the harsh trading years of the Second World War Green's of Stansted still boasted twelve different departments. Grocery, Fruit, Greengrocery, Provisions, Hardware, Ironmongery, Poultry Foods, Drapery, Millinery, Bespoke Tailoring, Outfitting and Boots and Shoes. A mail-order business was set up which was extensively advertised, the literature for which was a book known as 'Green's Home Herald', which extended to some fifty pages. It was sent to some 50,000 customers throughout the country.

Joshua Green and his life-long friend James Marsh were involved in all things they thought important to the village. Such interests included the founding of the Literary Institution, building the Central Hall with a Reading Room and Post Office now sadly none of which are available to the villagers. They were also instrumental in the formation of the Gas Company. Joshua Green allowed no consideration of family business or pleasure to interfere with his duties of attending Quaker meetings. In writing an account of the first 200 years of the shop, 1687 to 1887, Joshua Green said that:

"In 1687 tea and coffee had only been introduced into the country some 25 years and then only to the upper circles. For some time tea was only sold in liquor stores and taxed by the gallon. A century later tea was still an almost unknown luxury to the poor. Now (1887) it is almost a necessity. In 1815 the firm turned out about twenty tons of tallow candles in the year. The Butterine trade, (Butterine was a product of animal fat, milk, and yoke of eggs, sold and used as butter). Now styled Margarine it is sold as low as 6d per pound and as good as genuine butter.'

'Another feature of the trade is the fact that while a few years since, (again c.1887) rancid butter and greatly decayed cheese were bought eagerly, now they may go begging, showing the improvement in the position of the working class'.

'In convenience of sale enormous strides have been made. Many years ago tobacco had to be cut by the retailer, within the last fifteen years moist sugar, which arrived in unwieldy hogsheads; (large cask capable of containing 63 gallons of wine) is now brought in convenient two hundredweight bags. While loaf sugar is now sold in cases and barrels ready cut by machinery, previously was purchased in loaves and titlers and much valuable time was spent in breaking ready for sale'.

Joshua Green then alluded to some of the then modern features of his trade." Early this century (19th) the biscuit business was confined to two or three expensive kinds, now we have only to name such a house as 'Huntley and Palmer' to what an enormous trade is done in this direction, and from 3d a pound upwards. Again we must notice the Italian warehouse trade; what a business in pickles and sauces, jams and marmalades, tinned meat and fish, preserved fruits in tins and bottles &c., &c., this has developed.

In drapery the changes have been still greater. A few years ago certain goods held their own from generation to generation; now fashions change incessantly in every department, and trade is more complicated and difficult.

Of the other new departments we must mention outfitting, bespoke tailoring, millinery, etc. Amongst branches of the business which have been discontinued since 1840, may be named wines and spirits, drugs, and gunpowder, and what was once a large trade that of snuff, has, thanks to good sense, been virtually snuffed out”.



VIEW OF J. GREEN & CO.'S PREMISES AT STANSTED, AS ALTERED 1877-78,
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN 1889.

In c.1772 Samuel Day owned some 48 acres of Stansted, Birchanger and Ugley mainly residential or commercial. The part of Water Lane Stansted, called Potash is named from the place where the Days made potash for their soap manufacture. Samuel Day used to travel to London in his coach with a pair of long tailed black horses to make trade purchases.

Dorothy Davis was apprenticed at Green's for two years to train in dressmaking. This was undertaken on the top floor above the shop. The first year she didn't earn anything, but during the second year of her apprenticeship she received 2/6d (12p) a week and she eventually received 5/= 25p a week. There was no Union of Workers at Greens but on one occasion when it was so cold in the shop some of the staff tried to take coal from the yard, unfortunately they were caught by Mr Hatch, the boss. They then threatened not to work unless they were allowed to have a fire to make it a little less cold.

Miss Berry also worked for Green's Stores and she remembered that during the last war, "rationing made serving in the grocery department both tedious and tricky. Coupons had to be cut off ration books for nearly every item, and it was difficult doling out exactly 2oz. of this or that to every customer. --- tempers were easily roused at this period, and fights sometimes developed between customers over food".

And so back to Green's Stores, they had a countrywide reputation, equally as prestigious as Joscelyne's in Bishop's Stortford. They delivered purchases in the villages. In 1926 they boasted a special machine for re-making mattresses and bedding. As late as 1962, after a major reorganisation they still traded in furniture, carpets, floor coverings, radio, with an accumulator charging service, television and electrical goods, soft furnishings china and glassware. For removals and storage they had a pantechnicon with a capacity of 2,000 cubic feet. Earlier Lorries of the 1920s had the phenomenally low total of 6½ miles to the gallon of petrol. London and Stansted made a speciality of crating and shipping goods overseas from the massive depot at Hockerill, Bishop's Stortford.

During 1960 a large part of Green's Stores was taken over by William Caton Ltd. That company was founded by William Caton, a long time partner in Green's Stores. H.C. Caton is listed as living in Tayspill house back in 1940s. He had been in business a number of years when at the beginning of the twentieth century he bought the windmills and Mill House at Clavering Mills. They were to become home, head office and warehouse. "Variety is the spice of life" said the Grocer's Gazette, in a long article on Caton's Stores in December 1961. In all Caton's owned nine shops spread over four counties. William Caton, Cambridge Road, Stansted closed their doors for the final time 26th September 1981. London and Stansted Furnishing Company was bought out by Messrs Watson, Hayden and Isaac or now Hunter Jones, Rowe and Watson families.

Whilst now a number of businesses in Green's Building occupy the ground floor and the offices above, many have stood empty for a long while.

Reed Cottage.

Henry Parry Gilbey (1824-1892), was the elder brother of Sir Walter and Alfred Gilbey. He had a good start in life. His great Uncle Christopher Smith obtained for him a coveted place as a scholar at Christ's Hospital School. At just 15 he joined the wine firm Smith, Bailey and Co. He later set up his own company the London based wholesale wine merchants, Southard, Gilbey and Company just before the Crimean War. Henry found the capital for his brothers' wine and spirits business in 1857 before his joining their company in 1864.



Bird's-eye View of W & A Gilbey's Stores, Camden Town, London

Gilbey's Camden depot

Also in 1864 he commissioned architect, G.E. Pritchett to design for him a substantial residence at Stansted, situated on the site behind the present Esso Filling Station / Nunn's Garage, which he modestly called "The Cottage". It had 8/9 bedrooms and later became known as "Reed Cottage", as it was thatched with Norfolk reeds. There were Edwardian additions and modifications with well-lit spacious rooms.

The extent of the wonderful landscaped garden was from the Cambridge Road to Bentfield Road including what is now known as Bentfield Gardens, and bounded in the north by Coopers Alley. After 1865 Henry Parry Gilbey was usually associated with his brother's firm W & A Gilbey. Henry spent the rest of his life at "The Cottage" which later became known as Bentfield Hall.

Henry Parry became a generous benefactor to the people of Stansted. He gave the Liberal Club, a building which cost him £2,000; it was opened by the Earl of Roseberry, (Prime Minister 1894/5) on July 25th 1888. In the same year he donated about a quarter of the cost of restoring the Parish Church of St Mary's and in June 1890 Henry was responsible for constructing a sewer in the Cambridge Road/Silver Street part of the village which not only connected to a number of large houses inhabited by his relatives and friends, but was of use to the many other humbler premises en route. This became the first ever sewer in the village.

An important light on the perceived necessity of a sewer is to be gained from a Parish Council minute dated 1896, stating that:

“the proposed system of drainage (in the village) is entirely unnecessary for the following reasons, viz: The death rate for the parish is only 17.7 and that no epidemic of any Zymotic disease has occurred in the last ten years”. The four appointed signatories, William Fuller Maitland, Doctor S. Haynes, Hartford Green and Stacey Spencer all of whom agreed to wait on the Local Government Board in London to represent their views. A sewer not wanted?

Henry, like his brothers travelled to business in London by rail in their private saloon. He was taken ill on the way to town on December 12th 1892 and died the same day at their headquarters, “The Pantheon”.

The immensely talented Alfred Gilbey (1833-1879) was not of this village, as with Henry he was born at The Links, Windhill, Bishop's Stortford. He married Agnes Crosby and lived at Wooburn House, Wooburn Buckinghamshire they had six sons and five daughters. He started in partnership with his brother Walter and opened W & A Gilbey, Wine Merchants and Distillers, in a basement in Oxford Street, London, in 1857. He died suddenly in 1879, 46 years of age.

Reed Cottage became the home of Mr and Mrs Riviere, their first child, Marguerite Ada, was born in Stansted in December 1881. Nothing is known locally about Mr Riviere except he may have had an family interest in Chateau Gaubert, an estate in the St Emilion appellation, producing Maison Riviere blended wine. As a widow, from 1913, Mrs Riviere was said to have been quite a character and moderately wealthy, and always known by her surname. She was Henry Parry Gilbey's youngest child. Laura Southard Gilbey was born in Stansted in March 1861, while being registered in the 1871/91 census as at Cavendish Square Marylebone, London.

In Stansted she lived in some style in that she had a lady's maid. You only had a lady's maid after employing numerous other staff. It was said that you could rate the standing of the aristocratic families by whether they employed a lady's maid or not. Laura's lady's maid lived in one of the two tied cottages, on the site of the now used car lot, 11-12 Cambridge Road and when she died, it was the late Mrs Riviere's son in law, Stuart St John (Admiral) Farquhar, (1866 to 1901), who dealt with the maid's funeral proceedings. Laura died on the 11th April 1930 aged 69 in Grand Hotel Paris, France. She had married Jean Claude Francois Henri Riviere, in March 1883 in St George's Square London. He was born about 1853 in Mauritius, and had lived in Sydenham Park Lewisham in 1871. In 1891 he was a Wine Merchant, 77 Portland place, Marylebone, London.

Jean died on the 19th June 1913 at the age of 60 in Hospitaliers de St Jean-de Dieu, 19 Rue Oudinot, Paris. They had four children Marguerite, Henry, George and Richard all with the surname Gilbey-Riviere. It may well be that the family sold Reed Cottage in or around 1930. The land or most of it was sold in two lots to Mr Rawlings and that part now the Esso Filling station to Frank Bull, latterly owning garages in Bishop's Stortford.

Nos 11 & 12 Cambridge Road, were formerly known as No 1 & 2 Bentfield Hall Cottages, they were their maids and gardeners' houses or at times one of their grooms lived there. No 1 became The District Nurses home in c. 1933. Owned by The Stansted and Birchanger Nursing Association and administered by Judith Chester of Broome End., It is fondly remembered by Nurse Patmore's daughter as having many Georgian features including an arched and pillared internal doorway. Her Mother was the last occupant being both midwife and district nurse. The organisation was supported by many of the wives of the established families in the village, Mrs Fuller Maitland the first President in 1895 followed by Miss Poulteney others were Mrs L. Goslin, Mrs Gold, M Spencer, E Spencer, Mrs Cawkell, Mrs Gawthrop and many more. Members paid 2d per week or 1/6d per annum in 1909, except those on poor law. By 1921 these rates had been increased to 4d per visit or 3/= per annum to help to pay the increased salaries of the nurses.

In 1978 general Nursing was separated from midwifery and was probably the commencement of the Social Services that we know today. In 1980 the Nurses moved into Crafton Green Centre.

No 2 Bentfield Hall Cottages was owned by the Education Authorities, one of several in the village. Mr & Mrs Humphries lived there. He taught at the Mountfitchet High School and she was Chair of the Parish Council and Founder Member of the Day Centre. The Sandwich Bar and vacant shop next door was Bentfield Halls large stable block.

Mr and Mrs Edmund Cawkell, the one time owners of Rochford's Nurseries in Stansted, lived in Reed Cottage until c 1932. The Cawkells then moved to Burton Bower. They bequeathed Turner's Spring to the north of their mansion to the Essex Wildlife Trusts, as a nature reserve, in the year following his death. Edmund Cawkell was the nephew of Edmund Rochford, of Rochford's Nurseries, in the days when they owned 26 acres of glass and 293 greenhouses in Stoney Common. Cawkell Close which runs behind part of their former estate is named after Edmund, (1890-1974) and his wife Fredi, nee Winifred Oliver, (1892-1984), both of whom were very active in the public life of the village from about 1920 until their death.

The Reed Cottage was converted into Bentfield Hall Hotel, by a Mr Rawlingson, until August 1940/41 when the greater part of it was destroyed by fire. The fire was occasioned by an army officer who was staying at the hotel; who carelessly tossed a cigarette out of the window which caught the thatched roof alight. The land to the rear, now Bentfield Gardens had become derelict and was developed in part before the last war, The houses being requisitioned by the military and one of which was used as the Congregational Manse.

During the 1940s and 50s the surviving lower front section of Reed Cottage was used as a British Restaurant. During and after the Second World War, British Restaurants supplied meals to school children, travellers or folks who had used up their ration coupons.

Western House.

Western House is situated at the North Eastern side of the junction between Chapel Hill and Cambridge Road, a good example of a five bay two story Tudor house with a Georgian façade with attics. It has a modern extension wing to the rear in the style of the original building. The property now functions as offices with a large section unoccupied.

The 1870 Post Office Directory lists Mrs Mary Augusta Boast as having a boarding school in Western House, her husband had lived there from sometime before 1848 he was a Professor of Music. Later Western House became the home of the Welch family. George Welch was a surgeon and superintendant registrar of Bishop's Stortford Union, whilst Samuel Welch, surgeon, was the medical officer for the Bishop's Stortford Union.

Smallpox was the chief killer disease in England from the end of the great plague in 1666 to the late 18th century. Next to the plague it was the most feared and infectious of all human diseases. By the early 1770s general inoculation like that at Newport in 1772 was commonplace. Nearly half the labouring families were inoculated on a haphazard basis by two old women in the parish apparently being completely successful. It was then thought prudent that Mr Welch of Stansted be paid 20 guineas and the inoculations were carried out in the second week in March.

In June 1844, the Clerk to the Guardians of the Poor Law Union confirmed the contracts as previously paid to the medical men for the various parishes they served. Mr Samuel Welch; Stansted £35, Henham £18. Manuden £18, Mr George Welch; Birchanger £20, Elsenham £8, Ugley £14, Berden £8.

The Welch family also owned other extensive property in the village over a number of years. Whilst the 1848 Gazetteer lists Samuel and George it does not give their address but it does list Chas, Jas Welch gent, as living on Pines Hill. In 1870 George lived at the Chestnuts. He married Clarinda Day, a Quaker, of the Green family, while Samuel's address is again not given. The 1891 census returns for Stansted show the Welch family at Western House, Alfred 44 years old with Marie Annetta at 42, then Alfred George, Clifford, Florence, Frances, Margaret, Marian, organist at St Mary's for many years. Marie, and Samuel are listed as living in Cambridge Road, maybe they had run out of beds.

The next resident was Mr A. Sawyer who went to London each day he was a large affluent-looking gentleman who '*did something*' in the city. Sawyer lived there in the 1920s, nothing is known about him or his family.

Miss Rosemary Seabrook and her family resided in Western House in the 1930s – 40s. She said that her father "discovered a fine Tudor fireplace in the drawing room, hidden behind a Victorian or Edwardian one. The cellars are also very fine; legend has it that somewhere in one of them there is an entrance to a secret passage leading to the castle at Bishop's Stortford". The back garden was full of gnarled, old Rackhamesque fruit trees that were still producing very good fruit. Long gone now!

After the Seabrooks came an architect whose name is not remembered but when he moved away, in the 1970s the house was bought by the Midland Bank who considered opening a bank as a result of the proposed enlargement of Stansted Airport.

The then Airport Enquiry turned down a second runway so the Midland Bank, rather inadvisably sold the property and it became offices. Since then of course the airport has enlarged considerably and there has been yet another airport enquiry. British Airports Authority, after expending, some would say wasting, well in excess of £200 million on the enquiry and plans for up to four runways, then the subsequent appeals, the outcome of which was that there would not be a second, much less a third or fourth runway, BAA were then forced by government to sell the airport.

The powers that be, both political and commercial badly underestimated the opposition of the residents of 'Radical Stansted', but the latest governmental developments still leave us in doubt as to the future of the airport and surrounding area. In the meantime despite extensive recent refurbishment, Western House stands with only the front section and offices upstairs occupied.

The Fountain.

It will be remembered, from the earlier chapter, that on the 2nd February 1871, Charles Spencer, Joshua Green, James Marsh, Walter Gilbey and Henry Gilbey all of Stansted Mountfitchet conveyed to Alfred Hicks and Edward Stacey Spencer and their successors of Stansted Mountfitchet, as surveyors of the highways, the site of Chapel House and the blacksmiths shop and other buildings together with a yard and ground belonging to it. **“On trust to preserve the site as an open space for the use of the public, and not to erect any building except a pump or a lamppost for the public use, for a sum of £400”.**

The junction area was considerably more than just the forge and its surroundings; it contained one house with adjoining land, a shop, one acre of land and one acre of pasture. In the north, it stretched from the Silver Street junction east down Chapel Hill to the GPO Sorting Office, including all of Spencer Close and across the back of the four lower houses to a hedge boundary with the Recreation Ground road and to the south bordering on Fuller-Maitland's land now part of the Recreation Ground. But the conveyance did not include the 6 by 4½ poles belonging to the Friends Meeting House.

The sole reason for this conveyance was to improve the road junction there by 10ft either side of the island. Thomas Brett, blacksmith and William Amey publican of the Link Inn, were given compensation and asked to vacate their premises. William Amey later took the Cock Public House on Silver Street.

The original drinking fountain was then situated on that island, and described in 1871 as:

‘Built in cast iron under a domed ornamented canopy with semi-circular arches on cast iron columns. The fountain is raised on a stepped platform with three steps’. A contemporary account states;

‘The Elegant Drinking Fountain’ was opened on Stansted Fair Day May 1st 1871, by Henry Parry Gilbey and his brother Walter from Hargrave Park shortly after 11.00 am. Henry said “the work had exceeded his expectations in its beauty” whilst the Vicar, the Reverend T.G. Luard, said it was a work of art and a very handsome addition to the place”. The Rev Daniel Davies, Congregational Minister, referred to “a very pretty fountain” and Mr Walter Gilbey said it was a very pretty ornament and useful landmark”. It cost £35 and was manufactured by the Saracen Foundry of Glasgow to Walter Macfarlane’s patent and erected by J.L. Glasscock of Bishop’s Stortford’.

Macfarlanes were in the process of moving into their new foundry on Possil Estate Glasgow, a move which raised the population of that area from 10 in 1872 to 10,000 in 1891. Macfarlane became known as the Laird of Fossiltown because of the pollution created in producing our, along with thousands of other fountains that were distributed around the Empire, many of which were very similar in design to our own. The firm was eventually sold out in 1965 and the works demolished in 1967.

The water supply to the fountain came from Hick's new Steam Flour Mill which had been erected on what was the site of the Water Works at the rear of Spencer House. An artesian well which had been sunk there proved so extravagant that surplus water was piped off to neighbouring properties.

All four sides of the fountain have the instruction, 'Keep the Pavement Dry' above the arches. This would reflect the days of the first fountain when it actually worked. The top step of the fountain was originally paved with tiles and the water issued from a gilded stork under the dome. There were four taps with cups and the whole was surmounted by a gas light and signpost. Also provided was a horse and dog trough. Later in 1871 several pink chestnut trees were planted near the fountain, to provide welcome shade. The Stansted Water Company formed in 1896, a Gilbey institution, took responsibility for the fountain.

To commemorate the coronation of Edward VII, in 1902 the area was further embellished with railings, flower beds and white wooden seats and a willow tree planted. This willow would have been a good age by 1953. Alison Barnes, a notable local historian, wrote in November 1974 about the trees at the Fountain: "pink chestnuts trees were planted (1871) and two of them still provide welcome shade during the summer months". Whether or not they were the same chestnuts, which would be just over 100 years old when written, remains a matter of speculation.

The willow tree felled in autumn 2010 was, by a very rough and ready count of the medullar rings on the remaining trunk, 50 to 60 years, old. That would more or less suggest that it and maybe the two other trees felled earlier were replanted around 1953.

The Mountfitchet Crest was also added to each face of the dome to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Coronation that year. One of the crests facing the main road has the date 1871 and a serious spelling mistake in the name, 'Stanstead'!



The Fountain 1906.

The fountain was refurbished in 1986, in memory of Irvine Sanders, past Chairman of the Parish Council and village historian with money raised by public subscription including a generous donation from the Morton family then living at Parsonage Farm.

In recent years, despite the covenant: *'On trust to preserve the site as an open space for the use of the public, and not to erect any building except a pump or a lamp post for the public use'*, three public utilities have crossed the grass triangle leaving inspection covers, one of which is a fire hydrant. Gas and Electricity services run either side in the roadway. This must mean that we will never again see the magnificent trees that graced the area for nearly 140 years. At best we may have shrubs with short shallow roots.

How will we celebrate the next Coronation? Perhaps by sending to the tower all those who signed the death warrant on the last willow without being able to replace our tribute to the Monarch? In truth the area underwent a major refurbishment in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, 2nd June 2012, still no trees but it looks good.

Mile Post.

On the Western side of the cross-roads there is an unusual and fine example of a cast iron cover plate (Mile Post), the largest in Essex. When or where it was manufactured is not known but it replaced the original stone Mile Post in c. 1902.

Note that over the years the mileage cast on the flanks has had to be altered as certain roads changed and journeys become longer or shorter. It now reads: Top: Thaxted 9 - North side: London - 31 - Bishops Stortford 3 - Chelmsford 21/24 - South side: Cambridge 23/22 - Saffron Walden 9 Dunmow 10.

Two early photographs of the fountain area show a similar Mile Post on the opposite side of the road in front of the fountain and cattle grazing in the foreground, with an animal drinking trough behind. It is difficult to imagine why the mile post was moved across the road.



Silver Street.

Silver Street: the origin of the name is not known but it is thought to be mediaeval. In deeds dated 4th June 1810, the area was referred to as “the street called The Chapel”, not to be confused with Chapel Hill. Chapel Street formerly continued south to a road junction at Palmer’s Watersmeet, Pesterford Bridge area where it joined the road to Bishop’s Stortford to the east of the river.

In the Manor of Burnells Court Roll 19th March 1788, “Samuel Day leased a messuage, (house and gardens) formerly two tenements, on former waste ground in Stansted Mountfitchet to William Candler from the village, for a yearly rent of 3s 6d and one fat capon”. (A capon is a domestic cock which has been castigated to improve its flesh for eating). This site could well be the premises later named Linden House formerly two semi-detached houses. Considerable land to the south of the chapel was formerly owned by Quaker Samuel Day, of Stansted, as was a large land holding to the north of the junction. In 1796 Samuel Day, grocer, made a will in which he left to his son Samuel Tayspill Day and daughter Susannah Day, for life and then to their children, a malting office and dwelling house, now in the occupation of Charles Hicks, part of the copyhold estates of George Welch, deceased. (See Spencer House for the Hicks.)



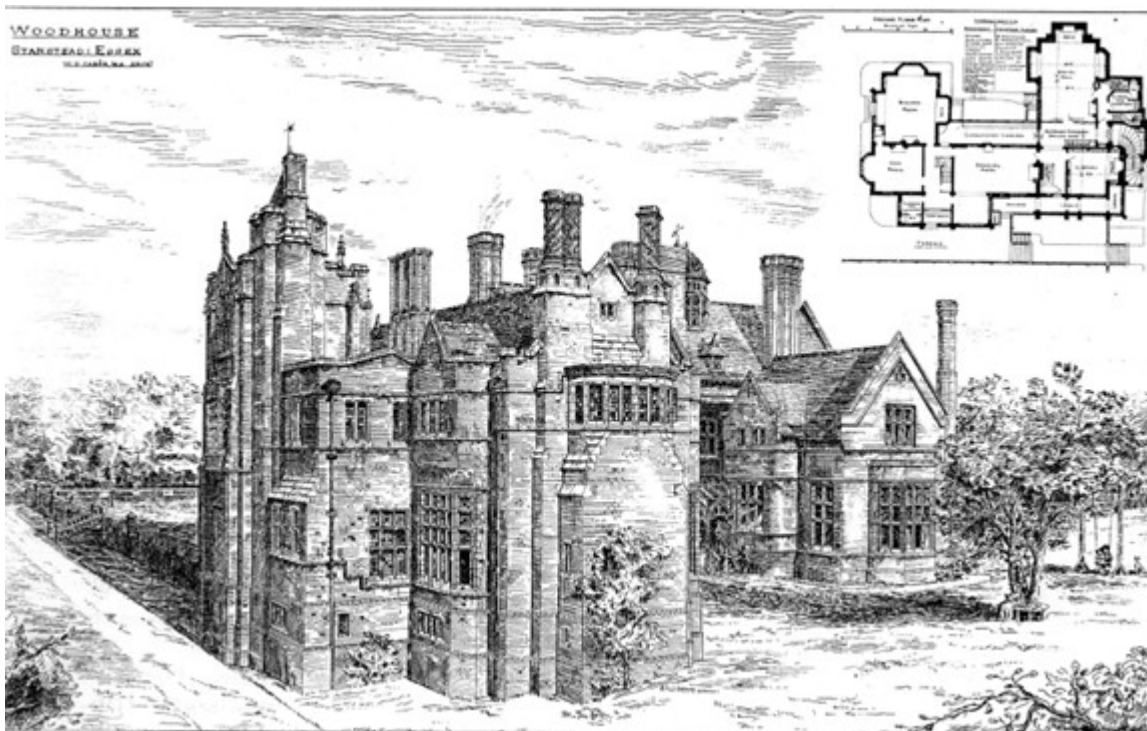
Silver Street 1907.

Conningree Wood or Cony Grove.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the 24 acres of woodland bordering onto Silver Street, with Chapel Hill in the north, Water Lane to the east and just beyond the roadway to the windmill in the south was Conningree Wood, or in at least one instance, Cony Wood.

With the wood came Woodhouse, described as a cottage, which I suspect was of some considerable size, as was Reed Cottage at the top of Silver Street that had eight or nine bedrooms. The illustration of the former Woodhouse that survives shows a massive property. One definition of cottager is, 'one who lives on a common without paying any rent or having land of his own'.

The house was rebuilt by Lord Blyth in 1884 and then renamed Blythwood House.



Woodhouse, Silver Street.

It is suggested that the name of the woods referred to the indigenous rabbits, but there is a Tudor definition of the word Cony that was still in use at the start of the 20th century which may be more informative. That is, Cony: '*an easy victim*', or Cony-catcher: '*a thief or cheat*'. *John Munday of Loughton was charged in 1592 of going to a 'Connyng-man to learn of goods that were stolen or gon*'. Did Highway robbers or other villains use these woods as cover for their transgressions?

In 1663/4 George Parker bought one cottage and 24 acres of woodland called Conningree Wood, in Stansted Mountfitchet from Mary Stilgo, widow, He paid in two instalments totalling £213. The property was on a 500 year lease and paid for at The Shopp, Soapy Wharf, Wapping Wall. (Now Tower Hamlets).

George Parker was a Haberdasher whose main home was at Adam & Eve Court, St Botolph's, Aldgate without, London, (off Petticoat Lane). The Court name refers to The Fruiterers Company whose crest depicts Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The Parkers were a long established wealthy family who possibly lived at the same address from at least the Thomas Parker who recorded the death of his servant Fraunces, a Blackamoor on the 8th January 1591 at St Botolph Aldgate, London.

In George Parker's will dated 1646 but not proved until his death, 20th August 1663, he left the cottage and Conningree Wood to Thomas Stock of Elsenham, (Thomas Stock, Yeoman of Elsenham made his will on the 5th April 1669.) Of the wood and cottage Parker says; "which lately bought of one Thomas Clarke of Stansted Mountfitchet, Yeoman, and Joanne his wife and what-way here-to-fore bought and purchased by Josiah Clarke, Edward Hubbard of Birchanger and Richard Clarke of Stansted, Yeoman, leasehold for 2,000 years". George Parker left two other properties in Farnham to his sister Grace.

George's son Thomas Parker, also a Haberdasher, of London, in his will dated 6th December 1699 also gave Thomas Stock of Elsenham their family home in Aldgate and all his estates in Stansted and Elsenham occupied by ----- Chapman.

To Henry Stock he left "my million Lottery Tickets and the money thereon"! The first official recorded lottery was chartered by Queen Elizabeth 1st in 1566. The prizes equalled the money raised, thus the lottery money was an interest free loan to the government. Prizes were in the form of silver plate and other valuable commodities. In later years the government sold the lottery ticket rights to brokers, who in turn hired agents and runners to sell them. These brokers eventually became the modern day stockbrokers for various ventures. Most people could not afford the entire cost of a lottery ticket, so the brokers would sell shares in a ticket; this resulted in tickets being issued with a notation such as "Sixteenth" or "Third Class". The English State Lottery ran from 1694 to 1826, or over 250 years. As there were only four years between the beginning of the lottery and Thomas Parker's death, he must count among the first Stockbrokers in the country. The Parkers were probably the wealthiest residents of Stansted, ever.

Thomas left "all his other goods, stock and stock in trade unto his loving friends John Mayhew and Stephen Perry, Linen Draper", who were also executors of his will.

Later in 1700 John Mayhew sold the cottage and 24 acres of woodland, timber and underwood, (that is trees in the first part and coppicing or pollard woodland and brushwood in the second part), "now in the occupation of Charles Bones, except that part that had been grubbed up and was used as tillage pasture, or meadow, being about 2 acres for £200 to Stephen Perry the Elder", now referred to as, "Citizen and Pin Maker in trust for Stephen Perry the Younger". The 24 acres of land was at that time leased to Kirkhouse-Hart for 3/4d per annum and the house let to Thomas Parker for 2,000 years for £200.

In an Assignment dated 3rd June 1710 John Elio Eldridge of Elsenham, Jonathan Elio Eldridge of Bishop's Stortford and his wife, John Eldridge of Stansted Mountfitchet and William Elio Eldridge paid "Stephen Perry Linen Draper, his wife, John Mayhew, Citizen and Haberdasher and Elizabeth Parker £200 for the 24 acres of wood named Cony Grove or by what-ever-name, 2,000 years for the use of Richard Clarke, now in the possession of William Bawroff". The Perrys were represented by Mr Stock of Elsenham.

By 1730 John Nicholls of Birchanger owned a house called, The Lees with about seventeen acres and two woods, Princes Wood Birchanger and Conige Princes Wood Stansted Mountfitchet which he left to his daughter Elizabeth Nicholls and on her death, “to go to my nephew’s son Thomas Nicholls of Dartford”. A 1735 indenture on the land refers to 27 poles of ground with edifices.

St Stephen's

Number 1 Silver Street is St Stephen's; it has a large concrete house name plate across the building proclaiming that fact. Why it should carry this Saint's name is unknown, the Chapel here was dedicated to Our Lady. St Stephen is the Patron Saint of Deacons, headaches, horses, coffin makers and masons. Formerly called Chapel House or previous to that The Workhouse, but in 1779, the blacksmiths shop.

The Stansted Society of Friends told me that six by four poles of Conningree Wood were purchased on the 20th August 1703 to build their earliest Friends Meeting House. The lease on the land was for 1,500 years, or to the year 3203. It was signed by Stephen Perry the Elder of London who, two years later, on the 24th December 1705, assigned his tenements to his son Stephen Perry the Younger, "in consideration of the natural love between them". He transferred his estates to Stephen Perry the Younger in trust and loving affection. One wonders if the abode was simply called Stephen's House until some unknowing person beatified him!

The first recorded Quaker in the village was one John Burnett c.1665. Quaker meetings had been held in Stansted from as early as 1696 but then in private houses. St Stephen's is an early 18th century timber framed & plastered building, lime washed with a mansard tiled roof, to give more floor space on the upper of three floors. The third floor within the roof has two Dormer windows to the front, one recent dormer window to the rear and two similar shaped windows to the northern aspect which are off centre due to the presence of a chimney stack which must have preceded those windows. All the windows are in Gothic Revival style. Up to the 1950s, the west facing ground floor was obscured by a very large porch reaching up to the bedroom windows.



Friends Meeting House, St Stephen's and Linden House.

St Stephen's with Linden House are described all together in the deeds to hand. It may be that Hannah Brett, widow of Daniel the blacksmith, lived in St Stephen's; the house has always been in private ownership. In the early part of the 20th century Mrs E.L. Earnest lived at St Stephen's.

Most recently St Stephan's was the family home of the Ecclestons, the village chemists who moved from Pharmacist House, Chapel Hill. The last member of that family who lived locally was Mary, a village character, who passed away in 2008. Attached to the rear of the house is an extension which is brick built and old. It could have been the shop mentioned in the deeds from 1720 or possibly part of the former Link Inn c.1871.

Linden Villa.

Lindon Villa, was, on one account, the former parish almshouses. It was rebuilt and refronted in 1884 by Joshua Green, a widower, for his retirement the following year. He was 71 years of age when he left the business to his two sons; he may also have had in mind his future wife Caroline, for he was to marry for a second time on the 9th June 1886. She was the daughter of Henry and Harriet Watson, Woollen Draper of Friday Street, London, and the widow of Dr William White of Manchester and Southport, Lancashire. There are various stories about her. It is said that being a widow of a doctor gave her a social one-upmanship which was duly noted by her step-children who being grown men and women could not bring themselves to call her 'mother', she was always known as 'Aunty Grandma'.

The date that the house was converted with Joshua Green's initials are displayed above the front door of the building. Joshua's first wife Elizabeth was daughter of Thomas Robson of Liverpool and closely related to Edward Pease who was arguably, 'the father of the world wide railway system'. Pease in 1818 first projected the Stockton and Darlington Railway, opened in 1823. Edward Pease, who was also a prominent Quaker who was active in efforts to abolish slavery.

Elizabeth Green had three sons and four daughters; she died in 1881 and was buried in the Quaker Memorial Garden, Chapel Hill. Joshua died in February 1894 and buried adjacent to his first wife. Caroline's burial is not listed in the memorial gardens. Joseph Joshua Green was born on the 15th April 1854.

Joseph Joshua Green married Elizabeth Perry Poulter on the 17th August 1873. He would have been 30 years of age, his wife; Elizabeth was born 26th November 1860. Her grandfather James had founded a brewery in Biggin Street, Dover. The business passed to her father Daniel Perry Poulter. He had a second prestigious address in Charlton, London. It is possible that there was a family connection to the Stephen Perry family, Draper and Pin Makers of London, who sold the lease to the Stansted Quakers for a Meeting House.

Philip Church lived at Linden House in 1914 which subsequently became the Paringa Nursing Home whose advertisements c.1926, said that they offered 'Medical, Surgical, Maternity etc. (with) every care and attention'. It proved not always to be the case!

The late Gerald Snow, a recluse who lived on Bentfield Upper Green recalled in his autobiography:

“On the 9th June 1930, at 5.30pm in a little back upstairs room at the Porringer (Paringa) Nursing home on Silver Street, Stansted, I made my first appearance into this world on Whit Monday. The weather was a sweltering heat wave maybe that is why I like heat waves. Sister (E.I.) Horton was the Matron in the Nursing Home. There was a Nurse Hart working there who had the sack after my birth, my mother had the suspicion that Nurse Hart had tried to smother me because I cried a lot, but could not prove anything. Sister Horton caught her in the act. My mother heard Sister Horton say to Nurse Hart, “what are you doing to that baby?” She then said, “Get out, your sacked.” Nurse Hart was sacked on the spot and had to go into lodgings and she hated my mother ever afterwards. Sister Horton always took an interest in me even after I was grown up for I was an only child.”

Later the building became Mr Sergeant’s antique shop until the present refurbishment.

In 2011 plans and work well advanced, to transform both St Stephen’s and Linden House into ‘a hotel with 10 luxury en-suite bedrooms with a lounge bar and restaurant open to the public, serving traditional English cuisine’. Karl and Sarah Foster said that, “the gardens to the front and back will accommodate al fresco diners in the summer months and the buildings which are more than 200 years old were suffering from severe winter damage”. Having now been restored they are a credit to the owners.

The Police Station

On the opposite (western) side of the road, The Chestnuts, the lower of the semi-detached Victorian town houses cellar used to serve as the Stansted Police Station with a police cell all below ground level. The brick arch of the cellar window light is just visible, whereas the adjoining house has only an airbrick. John Arthur Jonas was a policeman with the Essex Constabulary from 1842 to 1856. From the beginning of January 1853 until the end of November 1856 he was Inspector (3rd) class at Stansted.

His daughter Ellen, married George Phillips they ran a bakers shop in The Street. Another part of the same building served as Cyril Spalding's upholstery business

During early August 1914, Mr Black addressed a public meeting about the serious disorder that was spreading due to the impending war. He suggested that the inhabitants of Stansted should form a company of special constables to assist the police, as they had not got a very strong force. He suggested picking about fifty men for this task of assisting the police. His suggestion was greeted by a long round of applause. At about the time of the First World War crime was not of the greatest importance locally but 'Old Kemp' the police sergeant wasn't popular. On the other hand policeman Tucker was well liked. It was in the Great War that a Zeppelin was spotted over the village. Miss Dorothy Davies believed it crashed shortly afterwards, possibly the one to do so at Cuffley.

In the 1940s the local bobby was a Sgt Alabaster, the Police Station was usually staffed by a Sergeant and two constables. During the Second World War this was the site of an air-raid warning siren with the air-raid post at the bottom of Silver Street by The Limes Stables.

One of the last constables to use this station was remembered for his distinctive methods of controlling the traffic at the Fountain cross roads on Newmarket Race days. He, there-by gained himself the nickname, 'Windmill'! In the more recent history, c.1960s, Stansted still boasted a police sergeant, when I wanted to know the finer details of Sleeping Policemen, (traffic calming devices) it was to him that I sought answers to my questions..

The Smaller Shops.

This quarter of the village was the heart of the shopping area, several people remember shops in Silver Street: Tissiman's tailors, then the boot shop Tedder's, Mrs McRorie's fried fish and scallops shop, Joey Ticker, a clock-maker who went around all the big houses winding their clocks. Chopping's the Taxidermist (their daughter was never allowed out to play), there was a huge demand in stuffed birds and animals at this time, Joscelyne's Home Furnishings, in the independent Chapel, Cyril Spalding the harness maker's workshop at The Chestnuts, Mrs Bloom's sweet shop, Wrights the bakers who were later taken over by Pearson's. Sydney Wyatt worked for Pearson's bakery, but had to leave due to ill health, he had 'Bakers Asthma' so he was advised to work out-doors which he did by becoming a bread deliveryman. There was a café behind Rose's sweet shop, their daughter May Rose died of diphtheria when only eight. The Cock Public House had a blacksmith's forge in the yard, The Windmill Public House, later a Guest House.

Aubrey Levey could remember going around the back of Mascall's the butchers on his way fishing to collect maggots from a large tub there, "in which all the off cuts of meat were thrown". Today, he said, "it would have been seen as immensely unhygienic and dreadful, but then I thought nothing of it". Then there was a sweet shop, and a 'sixpenny shop, another saddler's shop, Francis a watchmaker, Ramsey a gent's hairdresser. More particularly it is the loss of the shopkeepers themselves who have all long since gone, Norman & Nina Adams, Nipper Player the cobbler and so many others.

Many village people and from the surrounding area would not bother in going into Bishop's Stortford at all they would do all their shopping in Stansted, the result of which is the village is that much poorer without them.

The Old Independent Church.

On the west side of Silver Street there is a large, rather unattractive, red brick building standing back a few yards from the pavement. It is the site of Leisure Plan, Outdoor / Indoor Furniture. Formerly Joscelyne's Furniture Depository. A closer look and it is clearly once a Dissenting Chapel built in 1822 by the Independents. They were led by their minister Josiah Redford. The building cost £550 mostly raised by local subscription and completed in three months. Whilst those involved thought that it was of the 'Lord's doing', and 'it was marvellous in all our eyes'. Not everybody agreed and some thought it a 'Monument of Disgrace'.

It was a breakaway church from the existing Independent Chapel near the bottom of Chapel Hill (now the Free Church). It would seem that the Congregationalists, so called because they had independent congregations, were having troubles with the morals of some of their members. In 1813 Robert Tyler was suspended for cruelly beating his father. Mrs Gaffee was dismissed for fornication; she was the widow of a former minister and in 1843 John Munchall was 'solemnly excommunicated' for 'profanely violating the Lord's Day by selling goods 'secretly' and 'by artifice'.

With the new Chapel or Meeting at the bottom of the hill, matters did not improve a great deal. In 1834 Hetty Tripp was excommunicated for 'continued absence', and failing to respond to a request for an interview. She probably thought, 'what the hell'?

The elders, after their former leader had died, set aside one hour, 'for the purpose of imploring.... the direction and blessing of the Most High' for another minister. They all agreed in August 1821, that Josiah Redford was their man, and two months later he was duly ordained. At last the church's difficulties seemed resolved. In January 1822 Redford went away to fulfil a previous engagement in Bristol. One account states that, "On his departure, it transpired, that he had privately entered into a matrimonial engagement and connection with the younger daughter of Mr John Tyler of Bentfield End". This caused much dissatisfaction among the members when he was found to be living in fornication '*at the very time of his Ordination*'. The couple married in May when she was already several months pregnant. This sex-before-marriage caused great offence. Redford publicly tendered his resignation; this was however, as it turned out, both premature and quite contrary to the feelings of a large majority of the congregation.

After much argument Redford's supporters suggested that if the Chapel could not support him then he should preach from another 'more humble' spot. Guiver Sanders made a providential offer of land in the Newmarket Road, He also was a jobbing carpenter who did all the woodwork; he charged nine guineas for the freehold and was paid £163 for his work. Seventeen of the thirty-one members went with Redford and the Old Meeting was crippled for many years. The Church was still wracked with dissention and conflict and support dwindled over the years until 1875 when it was reformed as a Union Church of Baptists and Independents.

Before and after the First World War the church was extremely successful. The building was used as a Sunday school which attracted very large numbers of children from many denominations. Inside the building there are still three memorial plaques high on the walls, one in particular is to the Snow family. While in the office there is a photograph of the front of the building showing that high above the front door there was the sign, 'Congregational Sunday School' and beneath a more temporary banner proclaiming YMCA, in front of which there is a large group of people, all the men folk were dressed in WW1 army uniforms, suggesting that the building was probably used as a chapel or for the entertainment of the troops billeted in the village.

Spencer House.

The Hicks family owned this Silver Street property; they were farmers, maltsters, millers and coal merchants. The family served for many years as Surveyors of the Highway, it was a voluntary post

They dealt in hops grown in the village that were used in the production of beer. The descendants of these plants can still be seen in many local hedgerows today and in particular in and around the Aubrey Buxton Wild Life Reserve.

A Belgium brewer once told me, *"You English, you lik many hops in your beer, yus? Gut! Hop very close relative to the Cannabis!"*

The Hicks were also a devout Quaker family, eight of whose lives are commemorated in the Quaker Memorial Garden. Thomas who lived at Bentfield Green Farm entered into his first agreement with The Great Eastern Railway in 1897, after a refusal by The Eastern Counties Railway in 1851, was then granted land to be used as a coal stacking ground. The family signed their last agreement, this time with The British Transport Commission relating to the same plot of land in 1959. As late as the planned electrification of the route to Cambridge and the railways requirement to use the coal sidings for their installation equipment, Hicks and Co were informed that, 'No guarantee could be given about their long term occupation of the site, and it was considered only fair to point out that it may be necessary for them to move to another (coal concentration) depot within the area'.

At the time of the 1843 tithe map, Edward Hicks is shown as landlord of the properties from the Chapel Hill road junction to his house, at this time renamed, Spencer House. Edward was first and foremost a miller at the cutting edge of milling technology.

He with Charles took a lease on the Tower Mill across the Recreation Ground, built in 1787. It is a fine example of a Tower Mill, the last type of windmill to evolve. Apart for two short breaks the Hicks family worked it for over 70 years. The mill was not all that successful and the running of a mill generally was financially perilous. At least four people have become bankrupt, or nearly so, operating this mill. Edward wrote to the owners saying that they asked too much rent for a mill it was not worth much. He had a problem with the then present trade when he wrote, 'in the past month, it ground scarcely anything, for the want of wind'. In May 1860 he proposed that the mill be modernised and fitted with a steam engine but his proposal was dropped. Hicks continued to use the mill until its working life finished in 1910. Edward was not to be frustrated in his desire for a mill that worked even without wind and so a new steam mill was erected in his back garden behind Spencer House it is clearly shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1897. This building burnt down in the 1950s, when on lease to Tommy Johnson, the electrical contractor who used it as a store room. Hicks had yet another steam mill at the bottom of Chapel Hill, behind the Working Men's Club.

During W.W.II, the mill off Silver Street, was taken over by the Boy Scouts as their HQ, they left in 1963. In 2003, the August Bank holiday was stormy: lightning struck the Mill while it was full of visitors. The lightning conductor did its job and has since been upgraded.

It was the Hicks who first provided the Fire Engine House in the Friends Meeting House grounds, (now demolished). A horse drawn fire engine was bought second hand in November 1914 for £50 by the Parish Council. That appliance is still in the village today. This engine continued in use in Stansted until 1928 when, following the disastrous fire at Blythwood, a new fire engine house was to be built on the opposite side of the road and a Dennis motor trailer pump was then purchased. There has been some sort of fire brigade in the village since the eighteenth century, for in 1794 Samuel Game was paid seven shillings and sixpence for oiling the engine, buckets and pipes.

Spencer House takes its name from Charles Spencer born in Farnham, Essex in 1813; he was an extraordinarily successful farmer of 820 acres, employing 28 men, 11 boys and 3 women, whose family lived in some of the largest houses in the village. Bentfield Bower, Bentfield Bury, Tudor House, and Norman House. Such was his foresight and business acumen that when the Northern and Eastern Railway Company first built their lines as far as Bishop's Stortford in 1843, two years before arriving in Stansted, Spencer entered into a 999 year agreement with them for the land at Stoney Common Road for his maltings. The site, is now called, The Riverside Business Park.

The very first railway station at Stansted was first planned on the opposite side of the line in 'a field belonging to Mr Bird, at the end of Stansted Chapel'. That site, now Old Bell Close being the closest the railway could get to the Hockerill Highway from which they very quickly withdrew the greater part of both freight and passenger traffic.

What Spencer didn't foresee was that William Fuller Maitland, Lord of the Manor and Director of the Northern and Eastern Railway, required the station to be built where it could be seen from his residence. He had the banks of the railway adjacent to the present station planted with evergreen shrubs and his stables constructed at the front of the station house for his horses and carriages; hence for the last 170 years the station has been situated in its most inconvenient position adjoining what was then called New Road (Church Road) to Stansted Hall!

Charles Spencer first purchased Spencer House in 1851. It was clearly built with extensive outbuildings as is shown on the tithe map of 1843. The building is listed as early 19th century as, timber and plaster but there is no record of a Spencer ever having lived there. In the 1870s, Charles considered a new home and built the house now known as Brooklands, Pines Hill, Birchanger. He used lime from the chalk pits opposite and clay from the side of the drive to The Mount, to make the bricks in the village brick-kilns, in the construction of his house, This was the first house in Stansted or Birchanger to have an inside lavatory that was still in position in 1988 if not now. It has or had a large wooden seat over an attractive willow-patterned bowl.

Commenting on Charles Spencer, undertaker, Aubrey Levey related his father's story that Charles Spencer arranged in his will for the whole of the funeral people to have a meal, not, as was usual, after the funeral, but before, which was thought to be a great mistake, because inevitably what happened was they plied the bearers with so much liquid refreshment that when they went to pick up the coffin the two men at the foot of the coffin forgot they had to face out of the church but found themselves facing the other bearers. So that to move at all two had to step backward until the director had them all facing the right direction!

Ernest L. Burton, a widower, and his family lived in Spencer House possibly from late 19th century until c.1939. He was a former Chairman of the Gas Company and recognised as a great supporter of the village

His son, Hyde Clark Burton, born in Bishop's Stortford, attended Keyham College. It was a Royal Navy Engineering establishment built on the dockside at Plymouth, where he studied for five years before moving on to Greenwich for a further two years, then being assigned to a ship as Assistant Engineer. Later he became a Commander RN. When retired he worked as an accountant. Hyde, was also a rugby player, represented RNEC Keyham, Bishop's Stortford, Richmond, Eastern Counties, the Navy and England. He played on the wing when he represented England against Wales at Cardiff Arms Park in 1926, in a game which the score was tied 3-3. He shared a field with some of England's most notable players of the day such as William Wavell Wakefield and Tom Voyce. When Commander Burton returned home from the Welsh game he was met at the station and carried shoulder high from the station up to his home in Silver Street to the great acclaim of the onlookers. The house was then taken in 1940 by Miss A.E. Wall.

Because the village was fast running out of a doctor's surgery, plans had been proposed at regular intervals, over the past thirty or so years to rectify this. Spencer House was but one in this long list of possible sites suggested to the Patient Care Trust, by the parish council, and interested villagers. It became the NHS West Essex preferred site in the early part of 2009. A year later and because there was no positive news on the negotiations between the NHS West Essex and the developer or owner of the site, the villagers passed a vote of no confidence in the Trust by a massive majority, at their annual parish meeting. The proposed plans were said to include the demolition of the house and the construction of an underground car park beneath the new building all at a cost of several millions of pounds. The story has now moved to another site but there still remains the anger, controversy and no surgery.



Spencer House 2012

The Rise.

William White lived at The Rise, numbered 5 Silver Street, in 1867; He had recently purchased the Stansted Windmill at auction for £1,150 he then held the mill until 1887, when it was acquired by James Blyth

The Rise, is noted for its central 6-panel door with a semi-circular fanlight and a narrow fluted architrave. The house was for a long time the family home of the Spaldings. They had come from Newport, Essex, Father and son had a business there and on the death of the father they came to Stansted. It is not clear just when they moved into The Rise, but in the 1881 census, there were five members of the family listed in what was called, the Stansted shop. John was 45 years old and widowed, his housekeeper was Rebecca Eden born in Albury, Herts. There were three children aged between 8 and 15 years, Albert, Bertha and Harry and John a harness maker. Only the youngest child Harry was born in Stansted, the rest of the family were born in Norfolk, either Brandon or Hingham. Walter J. aged 22 years of age born in Hingham, was the eldest son, who is shown as a harness maker living at the shop but does not appear on the same record as his family. It could be that it was he that was the listed boot maker at the second premises shown on Chapel Hill. Ten years later none of the family are described as living in Silver Street except John, the father, 55 and Harold, (Harry) born in Stansted. Then Walter's family, Emily 30, born in Stansted, Dora 2, born in Birchanger. Harriet 25, and Polly 16, were both born in Norfolk.

The 1914 Kelly's directory lists: Spalding, Walter John, saddler, Silver Street & boot maker Chapel Hill. The saddler's business was carried on in the large barns at The Rise and it must have been quite successful particularly during and as a result of the heavy military presence in the village during the First World War. It is a very large house, outbuildings and grounds, they employed maids, one of whom was killed in a cycling accident on the Cambridge Road, and a granddaughter killed in a similar accident at Hockerill traffic lights in Bishop's Stortford. A third member of the family, Jennifer was killed on Sparrows Hill, cycling to Saffron Walden in more recent history. There are still members of the same family in the village today. One of the later owners of The Rise was Tommy King. A gentleman who displayed a very large portrait of William Fuller Maitland in his hallway, rumour has it that he was very closely related to the Lord of the Manor.

The Cedars.

To many of the older residents the Cedars will still be known principally as 'The Doctors'. There have always been at least two doctors in the village with other surgeries on Chapel Hill, Coltsfield, etc, depending where the doctors lived. Sidney Haynes, surgeon, was practicing here on the 20th February 1869 when Dick Cotton, a well known Newmarket trainer died on the railway line at Palmer's Watersmeet level crossing gate. He left the train by climbing out of the window on the track side. In those days the doors were locked to prevent travel fraud, and walked back along the track to the road crossing where he collapsed and died. His condition was caused by the effects of an earlier rail accident that he had been involved in. Dr Haynes was also called in 1884, to a Stansted platelayer with severe sickness and diarrhoea from which he died the same evening. Haynes, his wife and four girls, but not his son Walter Frederick, were still resident in Silver Street in the 1891 census. Walter Haynes LRCP London became, Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator, Stansted district, Bishop's Stortford Union. Kelly's Directory 1914 gives his address as both The Rise and The Cedars, one suspects that The Rise was his home but he practised from the surgery at The Cedars. By 1926 he was only shown as living at The Cedars.

His sister, Miss Haynes, was considered a tartar, she ran the little private school from the Cedars, and was the only teacher, with about 12 pupils ranging in age from five to seven years. The school was thought to have been scholastically a failure but definitely the place to send ones children. The children were taught to sit still, be upright and "you'd preserve a proper industrious look about you, as though you meant business, although you were only seven!" From the age of seven the brighter boys were admitted to Newport Free School. The schoolrooms were also used for outside meetings. The Nursing Association held their AGM meeting there. Later in W.W.I. there were two sisters called Misses Haynes teaching at the Church school, where there were no games and the only exercise was drill, as was to be expected during a world war.

Following Haynes' departure Dr Platt came to the village in the 1920s. It was he who gave his name to Platt's Alley, a truncated path which originally went from Silver Street, across the Recreation Ground and down Lopy's Hill across the railway south of the footbridge to all points east via the later A 120. It was in Platt's time that a young Peter Brown a local lad was taken to the surgery with suspected Whooping Cough, but was made by the receptionist to stand in the cold outside until the doctor was able to see him for fear of infecting the other patients in the surgery waiting room. That single story building, attached to the south side of The Cedars now a private bungalow. In 1961 this alley was also known as Dr Gabb's Lane in correspondence between the Parish Council and the County Surveyor. Dr Gabb joined the practice in 1947 on return from the Second World War and served until the early 1960s some time after the practice moved to Redlands, St John's Road.

Sanders Close.

Sanders Close is named after the late Harold Irvine Sanders, who died in 1984. He was Chairman of the Parish Council and a renowned local historian, some of whose work is incorporated into this study. He lived for many years on the Recreation Ground. This Close was quite appropriately named after him as a number of other road names in the village were adopted at his suggestion.

The newer houses now facing the Recreation Ground were built in 2001 and sold for between £350,000 and £400,000 at the time. The flats in the adjoining Windmill Close, costing between £180,000 and £250,000 were completed one or two years later making 27 dwellings in total.

Roycot, The Old Manse and Blythwood Lodge.

All three houses were later reserved for senior members of Lord James Blyth's household, i.e. Head Gardener etc, but they then became desirable residences for others. Roycot and the Old Manse are listed as, late 18th to early 19th century timber framed and plastered, built by Guiver Sanders who lived with his wife Mary, in some style, in one of only two houses built on the western side of Silver Street in 1777. Guiver as builder and developer, made a lot of his money infilling yet more houses on the same side of the street over the coming years.

Sanders sold the house now known as **Roycot** to John Atkin, Tailor and Draper in 1823 for £200. He, like Guiver, was a member of the Independent Church; it is now brick fronted and has the feature where a partitioning wall can be slid to one side, on rollers, when a larger room is required for entertaining. James Blyth disbanded his flocks and herds and at the end of 1901, He handed over his two farms, Blythwood and Walpole with the house Roycot all free of charge, to the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the relationship between animal and human tuberculosis. Hence the house name, Roycot which was used as a third laboratory and offices.



Left, Harry Warwick (Father to Audrey Rodgers), T.B. Research Station Walpole Farm, Stansted, He worked there from 1902 to 1910.

The scheme formed the very first government funded research programme into the nation's health. The programme ran between 1902 and 1911, then moved to the Zoological Gardens, London. For these services in Stansted James Blyth was created, Baron Blyth of Stansted Mountfitchet in 1907.

The Old Manse was sold by the elder Guiver Sanders to the Independent Church in 1821, for £400. Josiah Retford the minister who lived there left office c.1855. The Manse is timber framed and still has two good original fireplaces. Miss L.L. Young, then Mr G.S. McNaughton lived there in the first half of the 20th century.

They were followed by Lieut-Col. W.W. Dove, the first Commanding Officer of the military camp, at Hargrave Park in 1939, who occupied the house for over twenty years. He was mentioned in The London Gazette, 15th June 1951. "The King has been graciously pleased to confer the award of C.B.E. M.C, 3 clasps Territorial Efficiency Decoration on Lt Col W.W. Dove D.L". He was also an historian; on the 29th June 1964 he read a paper to, the Guildhall Historical Association entitled, 'The Wooden Giants of Fleet Street. It was about two giants which strike the clock bells at the church of St Dunstan in the west, Fleet Street, London from 1671 to 1935.

He quoted: William Cowper (1782):

When labour and when dullness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,
Beating alternately in measured time
The clockwork tintinnabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be,
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

Dove Close was fittingly named after him, as on entering the Close, on the right hand side the War Department boundary post B.S. 10, of the army camp, is still in position.

Blythwood Lodge was the home of Capt Claude Stuart Rome, 1875 – 1956. He lived there in 1914. Maybe the house was a wedding present from the in-laws. Claude Stuart was born in Queensland, Australia on 14th January 1875, educated Harrow (school Captain 1893) and Sandhurst. He played a lot of cricket for his schools, colleges and army teams. He played Soccer for Harrow. At boxing, he was, Public Schools Middleweight Champion 1883, and boxed for Harrow school and Royal Military Sandhurst.

Claude Stuart married Hon, Grace Loudenne Blyth on the 24th October 1905. She was the daughter of James, 1st Baron Blyth. Grace, (1875 – 1952) was born and lived in Marylebone until after the 1881 census. By 1891 she was a 16 year old scholar, from Silver Street Stansted. Her birth was in the same year that her parents moved into Woodhouse, Silver Street. Grace Loudenne's middle name came from the family's vineyard at Chateau Loudenne on the Gironde, France. Grace had a son, born 7th November 1907 S/Ldr Claude Alastair Blyth Rome who died 11th February 1987. Grace died aged 76, on the 11th July 1952. Burke's Peerage does not record her place of burial.

On the 7th December 2005, DNW Auctioneers sold, 'The mounted group of nine miniature dress medals attributed to Brigadier-General Claude Stuart Rome, Dragoon Guards, 11th Hussars and Queens Bays'. His honours included C.M.G. and D.S.O. Listed in The London Gazette 1 January 1919. D.S.O. The London Gazette 1 January 1918. Mentioned in Dispatches in, The London Gazette 6 July 1917, 12 January 1918, 14 June 1918, 22 January 1919. His name features in the Roll of Honour in St John's Church for those, 'who have gone to serve King and Country'.

He saw service in the N.W. frontier India, the Boer War, Adjutant 1st Johannesburg Mounted Rifles, served in Rhodesia, Transvaal, Elands River, Zululand Natal and Egypt. He was promoted Captain in 1905, entered the Gallipoli War 1915, promoted to Major 1916, placed in command of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers 1915 – 1917, temporary Brigadier-General 1917, and awarded the order of the White Eagle the same year, In 1920 he was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of the Queens Bays, and retired from the army 1925.

Before and during the Second World War John Kinnersley Kirby, R.A. born 1894 Nottingham also lived in Blythwood Lodge, he was certainly well known locally at the time because of his many local paintings that were photographed and published in the Herts and Essex Observer. He painted and exhibited to the Royal Academy, One work was the war time meat ration as displayed in a butchers shop, He produced numerous other paintings including, The Kitchen at the George (below), the owner of the Chequers Hotel, a calf buyer in the cattle market etc all in Bishop's Stortford. His paintings were very realistic, in some ways almost cartoon-like; he was a highly regarded member of the Royal Academy. Kirby, on retirement, moved to a cottage at the bottom of Grove Hill at one time called Kirby Cottage.



‘The Kitchen at The George’, by John Kinnersley Kirby, R.A.

Belle Vue House. (Wonderful View)

On the Eastern side of Silver Street is the house, often referred to on early Ordnance Survey maps, as Belle Vue House. The Grade II old Mill House dates back to the building of the Mill by Joseph Linsell and his wife in 1787. They also built the Malthouse which was burnt down during Lord Blyth's ownership, the villa later named Belle Vue, possibly by Lord Blyth who was always a Francophile. The house with its extensive cellars served as his game cellar and cold store, he owned the mill including the land up to Platt's Alley from 1887 to 1935 when the second Lord Blyth conveyed the mill 'for the benefit of the inhabitants of Stansted'. The land, not the mill, was later sold with the house to the Roman Catholic Church. J.H. Thurgood lived in the Mill House in 1940. The mill-house backs directly onto the windmill, Fronting on Silver Street it has a detached double garage and double annexe above.

In 1958 the miller's house was converted into the Roman Catholic Church of St Theresa of Lisieux, as a large plaque on the rear of the house still proclaims.

The Catholic Herald printed the following article on the 10th October 1958:

'BELLE VUE' IS THE NEW CHAPEL

"The Stansted area of North West Essex now has a Mass centre of its own. For the past seven years Mass has been celebrated, first at a private house and then in a hired outhouse.

Early in 1957 the Parish priest, Fr Bernard Clay, was instrumental in the purchase of "Belle Vue" a large private house dating back to 1789.

On Sunday Bishop Wall of Brentford travelled to Stansted to bless the new chapel, made by the conversion of two downstairs rooms into one. The purchase of the house and grounds and work to date has cost £0,000, but more work needs to be done. ---- . (The church is) Dedicated to St Teresa of Lisieux. The Altar, of the new chapel was appropriately surrounded by many kinds of roses. In the afternoon there were four baptisms, all boys".

The building was the centre for Catholic worship in Stansted for more than forty years until 2002 when the new church was built in High Lane Stansted.

In c.1970s Father David Chapman showed a member of his congregation, the cellars accessed from beneath the church altar, Father Chapman pointed out what he thought was a bricked up entrance to a tunnel running in the direction of the windmill. The mill is 15-20 feet away boundary to boundary, and it's thought unlikely that a tunnel would be built for such a short distance. In what is pure speculation and rumour, if indeed the structure is or was a former tunnel; it would have been built running, in the vicinity of the houses on the Recreation Ground. The third house from the end of the Recreation Ground built c.1890 did have some unexplained brickwork in the garden.

According to a late resident of one of the last two properties in the road, built in c. 1905 she believed they were formerly owned by Lord Blyth and occupied by the families of his illegitimate children!

The historic church building underwent its second transformation after it was sold around the millennium. It was converted into a 4-bedroom house by the former owners Mr Dave Morris and his wife Karen. The project was designed by their teenaged son Carl who is now an architect in his own right. The ground floor is open plan and has an incredible sunken basement room with glass surround. The design has also highlighted the former church altar which is now used as a 'Snug' area. The original confessional boxes in the sitting room were turned into storage cupboards. The house which also featured a cinema room and a pool table was on the market in 2010 for £775,000. It continues to be a focus for inspiration and design. Maybe after being resold, the offer price in 2012 is £699,995 it will be altered still further.

Blythwood Gardens.

This road takes its name from the house of Sir James Blyth from Norwich. He purchased Wood House in 1875 from his Uncle Arthur Nockolds, a Land Agent. Blyth had married Harriett Gilbey in 1843 and joined the family business. He then employed the architect W.D.Caroe to re-construct and enlarge the property which he then re-named Blythwood House.



A feature of the house was a partitioning wall which could be raised from the basement (pictures and all) by means of a hydraulic lift. In later years, much entertaining was done in this house and the village people used to gather in Silver Street to watch the “Comings and goings” of the nobility.

Sir James added to his estates by purchasing Parsonage Farm, Walpole Farm in Stansted, and Foxdells in Bishop’s Stortford and in 1885, he constructed a model farm, Blythwood Farm on the west side of the River Stort, south of Stansted, formally known as either Monkey or New Farm, now again Blyth farm. He also built or improved Gypsy Lane off the B1383 with two river bridges to the farm. . It was whilst the windmill was in his possession, 1887 that the malt house burnt down. He was followed by the second Lord Blyth who in 1935 conveyed the mill “for the benefit of the inhabitants of Stansted”. In its final years of working life c.1910 the mill was only used to crush oats for cattle feed. The windmill was scheduled as an Ancient Monument in 1952.

At Blythwood he built up a herd of pedigree Jersey cattle, a flock of Southdown sheep and a stud of Shire horses.

It appears that Castor, born August 20th 1885, was his prize Jersey Bull at Blythwood; he won a first at the Royal Agricultural Jubilee Show at Windsor in 1889, also the winner of the English Jersey Society's Champion Cup and the Queen's Gold Medal for the best Jersey exhibited out of 434 entries. His service charge for the bull was 3 guineas in 1892. Blyth was able to boast, 'That in that same year he had won 306 prizes and honours by 46 cows and heifers, and 12 bulls, now in the Blythwood Herd'.

Again he employed W.D.Caroe in 1892, to design for him a model dairy to be erected in the grounds of Blythwood House. It was in 'Jacobean' style of local red brick and oak of two stories over a semi-basement, the ground floor comprised a 'lounge-cum-summerhouse' and the upper story was used by the dairymaid, The dairy was in the basement lined in marble and lit by electricity and served by spring water carefully filtered, to produce a superior type of butter. It was opened with some ceremony with a gold key by the Mayoress of London, who was accompanied by the Lord Mayor, on the 23rd July 1892.

Three months later on October 17th, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), accompanied by Lord and Lady Brooke (who later became Earl and Countess of Warwick, the latter better known as Edward's Mistress Darling Daisy, (who later blackmailed the King,) paid an afternoon visit to Blythwood 'to inspect the model electric dairy'.

The same year Lieutenant (James) Audley Blyth, the 18 year old son of James Blyth, marched C Company of the 1st Herts volunteers of the Bedfordshire Regiment from Bishops Stortford to parade in front of the Liberal Club, Lower Street. 1892 was a busy time for the British Army with Ireland pressing for home rule. The first Matabele war was looming, Russia threatening to seize Constantinople, Britain's involvement in the Bunganda war in Uganda, and defeating the Ljebu Army in Nigeria, West Africa! Home support was never needed more. But it didn't do much for the Liberals, their club closed and became the Workingmen's Club a month later. James Audley Blyth died in 1908 killed in Africa in mysterious circumstances, (could have been murder, or it could have been suicide,) while he was on safari with his wife.

James Blyth, the father, was created a baronet in 1895 for his services to agriculture, and Sir James was created Baron Blyth of Stansted Mountfitchet in 1907, for his invaluable assistance with research into tuberculosis. In July 1920 he gave the village the Memorial Garden on Chapel Hill, the war memorial there lists 54 officers and men who fell in the 1914 - 1918 conflict and the 17 men killed in the second World War. He had a vested interest in this as his son-in-law, Claude, was a very distinguished military man. Lord Blyth died in 1925.

On the 11th August 1926 Blythwood House was destroyed by fire all the occupants had narrow escapes. The second Lord Blyth was unmarried, a wheelchair bound invalid who was asleep on the first floor, and he nearly lost his life but escaped by a rope from an upper window. It was always local gossip and hinted at in the national press of the time, that nephew Ian Blyth was involved in the fire, after which Ian went abroad to live in New Zealand.

Photographs and a report of the event covered the front page of the following day's Daily Mirror. Alfred Phillips as one of Tommy Johnson's electricians and who had on a number of occasions worked on the electrics of Blythwood House before it burnt down, suggested that maybe the local gossip was untrue, when he stated that: "The electrical system was very primitive, installed entirely with a 'Capping's Casing' system which was insulated with bitumen and tape covering overall. The conductors branched off as required with a soldered 'T' joint; a fuse wire was incorporated in each ceiling rose. It used 50 volt D.C. type plant".

Molly Gold, the last family survivor in the village of that large wealthy family grouping of Blyths, Gilbeys and Golds said of her relations that, "she had a photograph on which 113 members of the family were represented and they were all either Blyths, Gilbeys or Golds and that they all looked very much alike and quite utterly stupid! Molly was not exactly brusque, but very outspoken person. She pulled no punches!

To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Windmill a fete was organised on the recreation ground in 1987. Many of the village organisations were co-opted into providing the entertainment which included 30 stalls. Lord Blyth, whose ancestors had given the windmill to the village, planted a Hornbeam tree on the Recreation Ground to mark the anniversary.

Crown House.

The c.18th century timbered and weather-boarded Crown House is on the eastern side of Silver Street opposite Blythwood Gardens. It was formerly the Rose and Crown one of the three Gilbey's coaching inns in the village. In Victorian times there were four or five coaches to and from London every day and carrier's carts twice a week. One of the last residents of Rose and Crown was Mrs Anne Nicholls, who wrote in 1969, when she was 93 years old, that she could remember playing on the sails of the windmill in 1881 which had been blown down in a gale. That was the year of gales and storms but also a comet. In 1883 her family moved to Bishops Stortford because they had to carry all their water from a pump up near the mill to the public house. Later they moved into a cottage in Millside at the back of the Rose and Crown gardens.

Her grandfather was Sam Snow, licensee of the pub but also a shoe maker by trade. Anne's mother Susan Snow met her husband when he was a young man sent down from London to repair Maitland's Mansion. They used to get together in the Crown in the evenings when they were married they had ten children, of whom Anne Nicholls was the eldest. She didn't think many people took the Crown Public House after her grandfather left. Her mother and father moved to Elsenham to take up his old trade making shoes. Anne thinks the family became too fond of the drink 'so he had to give it up'! Anne used the carriers cart when she went to Elsenham to visit her grandparents, she loved going there. She remembered seeing Sir Walter (Gilbey) passing with his beautiful horses, no coachman riding postillion (actually on one of the horses), Sir Walter sitting back in his carriage very friendly. She also remembered that Gilbeys' first bottles of whisky and brandy cost 3s. 6d. When grandfather died grandmother went into Maitland (Fuller's) Almshouses, (recently closed) facing the park, and while at school Anne had her treats on the Castle Hills.

The Rose and Crown also offered accommodation. Daisy Bayford recalled that when aunts and uncles used to visit them, they went to the Rose and Crown because they couldn't all get into the cottage. This pub seems to have been the social meeting place not only for the men but also their mothers and aunts.

After the public house closed it was used until the fire at Blythwood in August 1926, as the men's living accommodation for Lord Blyth. It then became a residential house owned by a military man, Colonel J. Reid-Hyde. He was a regular soldier in the First World War, and was thought to have had a considerable wealth but not in the category of immensely rich. In 1940 Col. J. Reid-Hyde is listed as living there with Mrs M.B. (Blanche) Herrington, possibly she was a housekeeper. There were a number of Herringtons in the village, one listed as 'near the Three Colts Public House'. It is suggested that Reid-Hyde either was or related to Lieut-Col J. Reid Hyde C.B.E. who originated from a Canadian family? His brother George Taylor Hyde was one of the outstanding architects of the Dominion, who, with his partner, designed McGill University etc. A brother was Brig. Walter C. Hyde D.S.O. Headquarters Staff Pacific Command, Canadian Army. In 1944, Lieut Col J. Reid Hyde is shown as living in New York. Maybe he was a military attaché.

The Village Labourer.

Amid the great distress that followed Waterloo and peace, statesmen like Castlereagh believed that, 'England was the only happy country in the world, and so long as the monopoly of their little class was left untouched, their happiness would survive', but it has left dim and meagre records of the disinherited peasants that are the shadow of its pleasures; of the villages sinking into poverty, crime and shame that are the shadow of its power and its pride.

Poor relief was established in this country from 1601 and continued in many forms until a Poor Law Commission was set up 1832-34. Its report was influential and affected poor relief policy into the 20th century. Like all good governments they were not going to take a decision until they had first surveyed the situation. The result of which was the Rural Queries 1833, which they sent to every parish in the country, a set of 53 questions regarding the plight of the labourer. Not all parishes replied and those that did may not have answered every question, but Stansted did reply and we have a good insight into the labourer's lot at that time.

Martin Nockold, Matthew Woodley, churchwardens and Charles Hicks overseer were responsible for the answers. The population of Stansted in 1801 was 673, this rose to 1,055 by 1831 but the total Poor Rate Expenditure fell from £1,316 to £1,160.

The following are a selection of the questions asked:

- Numbers of acres in your parish? *4,244 acres excluding the sites of houses, yards and gardens,*
- How Much woodland, arable and pasture? *No commons or wastes excluding baulks dividing lands in the openfields. Woodland 22 acres, arable, 2,975 acres, pasture and meadows 893 acres.*
- Are there many or few landowners in your parish and are the farms large or small? *There upwards of twenty landowners; the largest about 1.600 acres, the next 900 acres and thence downwards to 2 or 3 acres. The farms vary in size from 600 to 400, 300, 200, 150 and thence to 30 acres respectively.*
- Number of labours generally out of work? *In summer about 14, and when out of employment by relief from the Poor Rate of course, in winter about 12, this being the principal season for hedging, ditching and threshing.*
- How many non-parishioners have you in general, distinguishing Scotch and Irish? *Thirty-one, no Scotch or Irish.*
- Weekly wage with and without beer and cider in summer and winter? *Summer 12s, winter 10s. The labourers are generally provided with beer by their employers, when they are not, it is added on top of their wages.*
- Is piecework general in your neighbourhood? *In almost all cases where it is practicable.*
- What on the whole might an average labourer obtain an average amount both in day and piece work expect to earn in the year including harvest work and the value of all his other advantages and means of making a living, except poor relief? *About 11s a week throughout the year and an allowance of beer also daily.*
- Have you any and what employment for women and children? *Only weeding the growing crops and haymaking during the two months in the spring and summer,*

except boys from 12 to 16 years of age who are generally employed by the farmer. Summer women and children under 16 years of age and girls after that age about 6d or 8d per day. Winter no employment, Harvest Women and girls, gleaning for themselves..

- *Could the family subsist on these earnings and if so on what food? When house rent, firing and clothing and other necessities are taken into account it may be decidedly said that the family, without the strictest economy, unless they debarred themselves from wheaten bread and potatoes, which are their general subsistence.*
- *Could they lay anything by and how much? Certainly impossible to lay anything by.*
- *What class of people are usually the owners of cottages? Chiefly owners of land, in some instances tradesmen or large farmers. About twenty cottages owned by persons who can earn their subsistence by their daily labour.*
- *What is the rent of cottages? Average about £3 per annum.*
- *Is any land let to labourers? No.*
- *Have you a Workhouse? A workhouse the inmates of which are female 8, male 10.*
- *Number of individuals received relief last week not being in the workhouse? 56.*
- *Is there any attention paid to the character of the applicant or to the cause of his distress? The causes of distress are always attended to as far as is possible. If a pauper of bad character happens to have a large family, parochial relief is consequently more necessary, and relief cannot be withheld without punishing the family for the misconduct of the man.*
- *Whether any distinction is made in wages paid by employers to married and single men? About 1s a week less to a single than a married man.*
- *Is the industry of labourers increasing or decreasing, are your labourers supposed to be better or worse than they formerly were? Industry is diminishing, the labourers are worse workmen, the cause is undoubtedly the facility of obtaining parochial relief. The passing of the Act for permitting the sale of beer, no less than six beer shops have been established, in addition to the four licensed public houses in the village and one within one hundred yards thereof in an adjoining parish.*
- *What would be the effect of an enactment enabling parishes to tax themselves in order to facilitate emigration? It is not considered that emigration would eventually produce the expected benefit. Settlement would be lost.*
- *What is the allowance received by a woman for a bastard child? From 1s 6d to 2s 6d per week which does not more than repay*
- *What number of bastards have been charged to your parish? Stansted, no answer.*
- *Can you suggest any changes in the laws relating to bastardy? A sever punishment of the parties might, perhaps have some effect. The departure of boarding and lodging young men as well as females in the farmhouse where they were subjected to the control of their Master has undoubtedly had a great tendency to promote these evils.*
- *Can you suggest any causes for the recent spate of agricultural rioting? Nothing of the kind took place in this parish, but there is reason for believing that want of employment and inadequate relief in some instances and increasing depravity in others, have a strong tendency towards increasing vindictiveness and desperation.*

Village Signs.

To the north of Cambridge Road and the south of Silver Street there are two village sign posts, designed and carved by Harry Carter of Norfolk, son of Howard Carter leader of the expedition to Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922. They were erected to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee.

They are cartoon-like effigies, of a mediaeval Knight, with a pointed helmet and nose protector, a skirt of what appears to be grey chain-mail, and a large shield bearing the device of three white chevrons on a red background. Above the effigy are the words Magna Carta and the date 1215.

The knight is Richard de Montfichet of Stansted Castle. The tradition of dissent within the village can be traced back to him; he died without male heir in 1258.

He, who was last of his line, and the most notable member of his family, being one of the barons of England who met at the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds in November 1214, there to take a solemn oath to force King John to sign a charter confirming their ancient liberties. The signing of the Magna Carta took place on the island of Runnymede in the river Thames. Richard was Lord of the Manor of that island.

Later as result of his actions, he was punished by the destruction of his castle in Lower Street.

In the North Chapel of the original Norman Church of St Mary, built by Richard, is a magnificent effigy of a cross-legged Knight in chain-mail, circa 1300, arguably believed to be the tomb of, Lord of the Manor Sir Roger-de-Lancastre, c. 1275, after whom the chapel is named and a descendant of Richard de Montfichet.

