

Harefield History Society

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THE POOR AND THE POORHOUSE

IN 18TH C. HAREFIELD

BY DOROTHY WINTON



The Old Workhouse

The Harefield Old Workhouse is now 205 years old. Its story falls into four distinct periods, the first extending for 50 years from 1782-3 when it was built as the parish poorhouse, to 1834. In that year the Union Act was passed and the needy from parishes in this part of Middlesex were transferred to the new Union Workhouse at Hillingdon (which became Hillingdon Hospital). The parish workhouse was left empty until 1837 when it was bought from the Guardians of the Poor by Joseph Ashby Partridge of Breakspears, Harefield, who divided it into 5 cottages to house workpeople on his estate. The next period in the story begins with the death of Captain Tarleton of Breakspears in 1921 when the estate was broken up. The workhouse cottages were bought by Douglas Brown, a local cattle dealer, who came from a well known Harefield family. He continued to let the cottages which became very dilapidated, especially during and after the 1939-45 war. In 1953 the cottages were condemned but were rescued from threatened demolition by the present owners. The house was gradually restored as one property to enjoy a fourth totally different period of existence, this time as a family home. These notes give some account of its first few years when it was being built and established as the parish workhouse.

THE POOR BEFORE THE WORKHOUSE In the second half of the 18th century the provision of workhouses was adopted as a means of solving the age-old problem of caring for the poor in this part of Middlesex.

In medieval times relieving the poor was regarded as a Christian duty and needy people were dependent on monastic doles and donations from charitable laymen. In later Tudor times attempts were made to regularize the system, culminating in Elizabeth I's poor law of 1601 which was the basis of poor relief for two and a half centuries until the state took over responsibility from the parishes in the 19th c.

The churchwardens and overseers of the poor, elected annually by the vestry, had to collect the poor rate which was determined, again by the vestry, as expenditure made necessary. In 1778, for example, each land owner or tenant paid 6d for each £1 of value of his holding. By 1820 the rate was 1s per £1, and 4 rates were made that year. With the proceeds the overseers relieved those of the needy who had right of settlement in the parish and sought by forcible persuasion or litigation to exclude those who had no such right in case they became a liability on the

rates. They accounted to the vestry for money received and spent, and their rate and poor books give a valuable insight into village life.

In 1779 15 people in Harefield received regular payments from the poor rate: men, women (usually widows) and children who might be given between 8s and 12s per month, with a total cash disbursement of £6. In addition there were emergency payments, 46 in May 1779 totalling almost £10, for example, 2s to Sarah Groom, confined to bed. There was relief in the form of clothing: a shift, 2 pairs of stockings, 2 petticoats; or in food: 4lb mutton and a pint of red port on Dec 15, 1781 - near Christmas! The parish paid for sick children to be nursed, for the laying-out of the dead, for the affidavit that the corpse was buried in wool (under an act of 1678 which was not repealed until 1814) and for beer and gin at the funeral. Even when Harefield acquired a workhouse much of this outdoor relief continued unchanged alongside the indoor relief available in the "house".

THE PLANNING STAGE The first mention of a workhouse appears in the accounts for Oct 31 1781 when 5s was "paid at Mr Hills, a Vestry having been called about a workhouse". Henry Hills was the landlord at the White Horse, the public house which still stands in Church Hill and to which the vestry regularly adjourned. The second mention is on April 29 1782 when overseer Charles Greentree spends 15s 2d "going to Hillingdon and Iver Workhouse to have a plan drawn". Greentree came from Uxbridge and lived at the farm next to the Uxbridge Golf Course originally known as Bungers Hill and later Greentrees (G. London R.O. Acc 1085/EF17).

On May 8, 1782, 14s was spent going to London with Churchwardens Trumper and Row to see Sir Roger Newdigate about the workhouse. It was planned to build on roughly one and a half acres of common land on the north side of the track which became Breakspear Road. At this time Harefield common was much more extensive than it is today, stretching north to Whiteheath Farm, Shepherds Hill and Knightscoate with tracks meandering across it. Sir Roger Newdigate, though not resident in Harefield, was an important landowner and retained the lordship of the manor, long held by his family. His consent to the enclosure of the common land would have been necessary.

The building went ahead and in July the overseer had handbills printed, advertising for a governor. The

advertisements evidently bore fruit. A contract was drawn up with £6 6s 2d paid on October 31st to "Mr Clark attorney to makeing wrightings of workhouse", and Mr Summer the successful candidate was given one shilling in "Ernest to Come to look to the People in the workhouse at ladyday next (March 25) at 10 pounds a year".

It is tantalizing that the vestry minutes for this period have not survived. The dates of meetings "about Workhouse" continue to be marked in the poor book with entries of 5s for expenses but there are no details of the planning and financing of the building, matters which must have occupied the vestry almost exclusively for 9 months. Ruislip workhouse, built to exactly the same plan 7 years later, cost £760 which gives some idea of the sums involved. The initials of the builder at Harefield, I.I. (I and J were interchangeable) and the date (1782) are inscribed over the door in the centre front of this symmetrical 18th c. house of warm brick which looks exactly like any farmhouse; whose the initials were we do not know.

BUILDING PROCEEDS Progress on the building can be pictured from the faithful record of parish expenditure, painstakingly maintained in a laboured hand.

Oct 6 pd Mr Row 4 15 Fagots to lay on the Bridge at the Workhouse..... 2s 6d
pd do for 2 days work to fill up the Foundation of Workhouse... 1. 0s. 0d
Oct 7 & 8 to 2 Days work at Cart with my teeme at the Workhouse..... 1. 0s. 0d
Oct 27 pd ben Treadaway for looking after the workhouse it being Sunday and no workmen to see to the windows..... 8d

The payments for looking after the half-finished building and especially the windows on Sundays seem to indicate an element of lawlessness in the late 18th c. even in a country village like Harefield. The John Row mentioned above succeeded Charles Greentree as overseer. He lived at Ruffins, one of the old houses on the west side of the village street. It was during his term of office that the building was completed, equipped and occupied. An entry for Nov 30 reads:

pd Mr Norton for goods bought at John Taylor sale for the workhouse..... 3. 14s. 6d
to fetching the Things to Ditto..... 2s. 6d

The Nortons were millers at Uxbridge and by 1782 one of the family was a valuer. In this capacity he was called upon to appraise the value of property when there was a change of governor at the workhouse.

Over the next four months, December 1782 - March 1783, there were many payments for labouring work: Ben King 15 days, James Harrice 4 days, James Hull 12 days, Richard Norrice for hedging and ditching in January and February, and in March William Povender for 7 days and John Groome 5 days. Most of this would have been outdoor work and whereas Ben Treadaway was paid 8d a day for minding windows on a Sunday, Ben King was paid 1s per day for labouring - sometimes it was less, but on one occasion when there was no work for him he received 2s parish relief and his children another 2s. All these men were on regular parish relief and Ben

Treadaway became an inmate when the workhouse opened. During these winter months the land taken from the common for the new workhouse was probably enclosed with a hedge and ditch to keep grazing animals out of the garden, and Richard Norrice was evidently paid at 3d the pole (5 1/2 yards) for hedging and ditching. In all there seem to have been 92 poles (506 yards, over quarter of a mile) of ditching and 89 poles of hedging. Originally the workhouse garden extended much further on the north west (the village side) than it does today, but had no land at all on the south east where a path crossing the common in the direction of Shepherds Hill House formed the perimeter. Richard Norrice the hedger and ditcher and his wife Mary had two children who had received parish relief the previous winter, and in April 1783 while the father was labouring in the workhouse garden, one of the children was in hospital: Mr Henman the maternal grandfather was paid 18s 6d for hospital expenses.

The "quicksets" for the hedging were purchased from Mr Matthews at Uxbridge, 6000 for £1. 7. 0d in December, another 6000 in January and 4000 for 18s in February. They were probably hawthorn like most of the hedges of the rather later 1813 enclosures in Harefield, though one would like to think that the quicksets of 1783 were the wildly over-grown hedging plums which formed the boundary when the present owners bought the workhouse cottages 175 years later. Mr Matthews also supplied a total of 42 "apple" trees costing 1s each. 1000 cabbage plants were bought for the poors' garden and the sack of potatoes purchased for 6s in March and brought "home" by Mr Trumper's men could well have been for setting.

Indoors preparations were advancing rapidly. A chaldron of coal (25cwts) was bought from Mr Nichols at Uxbridge for £2.10s; a spade and cinder fire from Mr Grainge for 9s 6d; a brewing copper and utensils from Henry Hill of the White Horse (£5.14s 7d); "a truss of straw, fagets two hea(r)th brooms a 1 pound mop a long handle scrubing brush short ditto and a hare broome" (6s 7d). Sarah Webb was paid 3s for spending 3 days cleaning inside ready to receive all this equipment.

Then there were beds. Early in the year one bed was purchased and John Groome was employed in "takeing down and seting up" bedsteads. "4 pare" of sheets, 7 "blancets", 1 coverlid and 1 quilt, 4 new bed cords, and a bed tick were mentioned (was this stuffed with the truss of straw bought in December?). More payments include 1s 6d for 6 chamberpots and £1 3s for a "pottidge" or porridge pot and some bedding, 7s 6d for 5 locks and 8s for bowls and trenchers. The trenchers would be squares of wood, smoothed off, but the bowls might have been pottery. How one wishes that the overseer had recorded how many he had bought. A "boyley" from Jack James was 11s 6d and was probably for cooking over the cinder fire as clothes seem to have been boiled in "coppers".

THE PAUPERS MOVE IN March 28 1783 was the all-important day. John Rowe the overseer used his own "Cart and people mooveing the people to the workhouse". We do not know how many there were but it took 3 days and cost the parish £1 3s. Presumably the newcomers

had possessions to bring with them.

Although the workhouse was complete and occupied and a governor installed there was no diminution of labour for the overseer of the poor. Not only did his responsibility for equipping and maintaining the building continue, but he had the additional task of settling the bills for food, laundry and so on. Between April 1 and 7 1783, the first full week of occupation, there were:

3 barrells of small beer (say 105 gall)	18s 0d
12 half peck loaves (12 x 10 lbs))
1 peck split peas (20 lbs)) 19s 0d
1/2 peck oatmeal (10 lbs))
1/2 peck "flower" (10 lbs))
a clod & sticking of beef (best & scrag end of neck) 6 st 3lbs (87 lbs) @ 3 1/2d	14s 10 1/2d
(something very wrong with the arithmetic here)	
1 stone 8lb (22 lb) cheese)
a bushel (80 lb) salt)
28 lb butter)
7 lb "sope") 3 13s 2 1/2d
1 lb starch)
1/2 stone of blue)
3 lb candles)
1 chaldron (25 cwt) coal and transport from Uxbridge	2 5s 0d

There is payment for a similar quantity of beef the following week plus a peck of beans, 1/2 peck of leven (yeast for bread making) and a peck of "flower" (£1). The next week, April 17, there is beef again (6 stone 7lb), a sack of potatoes for 7s 6d, 15 "loaves" and a half peck of "flower" for £1 and 3 weeks' milk, 7d.

We do not know how many people there were in the workhouse at this time. Thirty years later there were between 20 and 30 persons in the house each week; around 1830 there were 18. If in the week April 1-7 there were 24 residents, each might have consumed per day 1/2 lb beef, 11oz bread, 2 oz cheese, 2 oz split peas, 1 oz oatmeal, 2 oz butter and 5 pints of small beer! The diet would have been supplemented by produce from the workhouse garden as the 1000 cabbage plants set in February, the peck of beans, 4 oz onion seed, 4 oz parsnip and 4 oz carrot seed bought on April 1 had grown to maturity. It is arguable that in the south of England at least the people living in the parish workhouse were better fed and certainly consumed more meat than the independent labourers in their rented cottages.

The next purchases included 27 and 30 ells (or 30 -40 yards) of bed ticking and sheeting, 3 tubs (£1) to hold the pease, oatmeal and flour which were regular items of diet, 2 oz thread for 6d (to sew the 30 ells of sheeting?) and 100 nails. There were 2 washtubs from Mr Harman and 3 chairs. This is the first mention of anything to sit on but perhaps Jo Weeden the carpenter made forms, settles and tables (he was paid over £4 for unspecified work). There were 2 spinning wheels among more mundane items such as brooms (6), locks, another cinder shovel, and bundles of stakes and rods (for the garden?).

THE PUMP One commodity absolutely essential for any

community is water. In the 18th century there was no public supply. Each habitation from manor house to poorest cottage had to have access to a well and we can see from the Enclosure Map of 1813 that numerous public watering places were available. The water was often contaminated and people would have been much better off drinking beer, as they did in very large quantities - small beer for ordinary folk and very small beer for children. There would not have been a well near the site of the new workhouse in 1782 since it was in the middle of uninhabited common. The closest watering place would have been Shepherds Pond (the present village pond on what remains of the common).

An entry on July 20, 1782, when the foundations of the workhouse were being laid may refer to the digging of a well: "paid for Diging for Water on Harefield Common 3s 0d", which would represent 3 full days' labour. In May of 1783 when the workhouse had opened, Phillip Groom was employed to "lower" the well, presumably to give a better depth of water, and in June it was properly lined with blocks of chalk as the custom was. Mr Crismas (sic) was paid 8s for drawing 8 loads of chalk from a pit belonging to Mr Partridge of Breakspears, and Thos Wilson had £2 18s 6d for "diging and staining (stoning) the well". It is known that Doug Brown, a 20th century owner of the workhouse cottages, had the well relined in the traditional manner when there were complaints about the quality of the water. This was as recently as the 1920s.

Perhaps the water was drawn up by a bucket at first but pumps were almost universal and maybe when Thos Wilson lined the well he also installed a pump. There certainly was one later because in 1803 1s 6d was paid for leather for the pump at the poorhouse to repair the gaskets and seals. The bronze pump, of age-old design, still stands in the courtyard today. It supplied water for the whole house for 140 years until the installation of an outside standpipe, also still in existence, brought piped water from the public supply in 1934.

JOHN BURBRIDGE, WORKHOUSE GOVERNOR Burbridge's name first appears in the account books on April 18, 1783 when he was paid £1 8s 0d "for old Sumner's board & lodging 13 days, and for lodging of Ned Ensworth & family 6 weeks". Before the opening of the parish workhouse the overseer had to lodge the homeless poor as best he could, often paying local people to take them in and care for them. John Burbridge was innkeeper at the King's Arms at this time so must have had room to lodge this rather large number of people. Perhaps old Sumner, Ned Ensworth and his family were among those moved into the workhouse by means of Charles Greentree's horse and cart on March 25-27 when the building was ready for occupation.

In 1783 Burbridge was elected as constable for Harefield; as such he was paid 7s (May 5) "for takeing Jo Weedon to Mr Bishop's (a magistrate at Uxbridge?) on suspicion of takeing Mr Partridge Ducks" (Mr Partridge of Breakspears). Poaching was widespread in the 18th c. Burbridge is mentioned in the poor books throughout the first 3 years of workhouse history and it is clear that while Mr Salter was the regular supplier of the

V.F. WOODWARDS

enormous quantities of small beer drunk by the paupers, it was the job of John Burbridge as mine host at the nearest tavern to supply the strong beer and gin for special occasions: the laying out and burial of Widow Carter (Jan 1784) and the funeral of Ann Walker (March 10), murdered by her deranged husband. He was paid 2s for drink at the burial of Mary King and 1s for the day she was put in her coffin. At Christmas there was red wine (only a pint so perhaps it was for the governor) and a pot of beer when the ceah (choir?) came - it looks as though the paupers had festive entertainment.

The first governor, Summer, was in office for only a year and in January 1786 his successor John Row must have intimated that he wished to relinquish the post. At a vestry meeting on February 3 John Burbridge, who would have been well known to the members, was chosen as third governor. The goods and furnishings that Row left behind were appraised and valued at £10 3s 11 1/2d. Burbridge took over on Feb 9 1786. He was paid £19 per month and each year was confirmed in his post.

He performed other duties for the parish as well as running the workhouse, assisting with legal prosecutions such as that of William Groom at the Old Bailey (March 1787). In 1788 he was involved in "giting a warrant for Edward Ive", a troublesome man: the parish had to pay for his transport from Brentford by horse and cart to Uxbridge-Cage, for fresh straw and a quarter's rent there. His possessions were kept in a tea chest and Harefield was responsible for repairing its lock (6d).

In February 1790 there was yet another change of governor. Mr David Berry moved in, and the outgoing governor's property was valued (£32 17s for "a Barn and Pig Stye Dunghill and Furniture left at the Workhouse, Built and Brought into the house in his time as settled by Mr Norton"). The Burbridge family, having taken an active part in Harefield life for 8 years or more, transferred to the newly built Ruislip workhouse where John was to be the first governor. His salary was over £27 a month, £8 more than he received at Harefield. The Burbridges must have felt immediately at home in their new abode as it was built on exactly the same plan as the Harefield workhouse where they had spent 4 years.

It comes as a shock to learn that after 5 years as governor at Ruislip John Burbridge died. Widow Burbridge was paid £6 by the St Martin's, Ruislip, vestry for goods bought and improvements paid for by her husband. The Harefield vestry had to care for its own. The Burbridges must have been entitled to a "settlement" in Harefield and in February 1796, the year after John's death, the overseer paid 11s 6d "to Fetching Mrs Burbridge and family and goods etc" back to the village. John Burbridge had a posthumous child, it seems. In July there is a payment for Mrs Burbridge lying in!

John Burbridge Insures The King's Arms

In 1786 John Burbridge insured the inn against fire. The building of brick, timber and tiles (as today), contained goods worth £130, apparel worth £15, plate worth £5 and stock worth £50. The premium: 6s 9d p.a.

I have long been curious about the nicknames bestowed on many of the male inhabitants of Harefield. I first noticed the practice when my husband joined the Cricket Club nearly 40 years ago. The custom survives to this day. A recent discussion with Cyril Kempster, a native of the village and for many years Chairman of the Club (which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year) prompted me to write this article. Without his help I could not have produced such a comprehensive list. Some names are self explanatory but I would dearly like to know the circumstances and reasons for the majority. For posterity here is the story of one!

My son Michael was first known as "Woody" for obvious reasons, but in the early 70s when long hair and flowing moustaches were the order of the day he went in to bat in a crucial match, when Harefield had defeat staring them in the face. He strode from the pavilion, fair hair tumbling from his cap and sporting his first moustache, to face Mike Gatting's team. Somebody shouted "There goes General Custer to fight the last stand!" He has remained "Custer" ever since, though like his namesake he failed to win the day.

? AKERMAN	BONGY	T EVANS	TUGGY
G ALLEN	GOSH	R FANE	FANNY
? ANDREWS	MOGGY	F FLETCHER	BUBBLES
L ARTIS	NARRER	F FOSTER	DARKIE
A BATES	BUNTER	C GODFREY	DIDDLE
E BIGNELL	DATCHET	T GODFREY	TRUTHFUL
G BISHOP	HOPPY	T GRIFFIN	MICKY
? BLACKWELL	BLACKIE	G HARMAN	THE VICAR
C BLOWER	WHACKER	J HARMAN	BUNK
H BLOWER	PUFFY	W HUGHES	CHICK
G BOWDEN	POUSEY	W HUTCHINS	SCRATCHY
R BOWDEN	STALKY	N JAMES	JESSE
H BRANCH	TWIGS	G JORDAN	HANGERS
J BRANCH	NANNA	B JOYCE	NICKSIE
F BROOKER	MARVEL	C JOYCE	CHARCOAL
? BROWN	NINNY	C KEMPSTER	CRISIS
C BROWN	SNAPPER	B KNIFE }	CHOPPER
H BROWN	BUNKER	S KNIFE }	
F CHAPLIN	TADPOLE	G LANE	BANTAM
T CLEMENTS	SCISSORS	H LANE	HAMMER
R COLE	SACKA	G LEVICK	PEAKY
B COLLETT	FERRET	T LITTLE	PICKLE
W CONSTABLE	HAPPY	? LOFTY	PANTER
A COUBROUGH	SNAKEY	G LOFTY	TOOTSIE
R COUBROUGH	HAMMY	W LOFTY	LINCOLN
P CRAFT	CHUNKY	L LOVEDAY	RASHER
W CROOK	SHRIMPY	P MALIN	MUCKY
G CUTTS	COMIC	A MARKS	BONES
M DACRE	DINKLE	E MARKS	WHIPPET
? DICKENS	GUSSIE	J MARKS	SALAD
W DOBBS	SHOTTY	T MARTIN	DIGGER
Walter DOBBS	CAK	A MASKELL	MINNIE
A EGGLETON	FIDDLE	T MILES	MUDDY
? EGGLETON	MUMMY	? MILTON	BOCKER
? EGGLETON	EGGY	I MITCHELL	FISHY
P EVANS	ZEBADY	H MONTAGUE	NOTCH

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EILEEN M BOWLT

One Sunday evening in March 1784 Francis Jones, a Harefield labourer, was sitting in the chimney corner at his neighbour Samuel Wood's house, presumably enjoying some relaxation after his day's work and evening meal. At this point Ann Walker burst in and begged Samuel Woods to be so good as to go to her house. It appeared that her husband William Walker had been acting in an uncontrolled, violent manner for some time past. Six weeks earlier he had drawn a knife on her in bed, and again on the previous night, threatening to kill her if she "spoke or wagged". That very morning he had followed the cat out of doors and killed it with his axe, then waved his knife at his wife saying that he would give her time to say her prayers and would then kill her.

Small wonder that Ann was terrified and had sent Samuel Woods to Mr Morton, one of the Overseers of the Poor, to ask for somebody to sit up at her house that night. The Overseer promised to pay if Samuel Woods would find two men. As no-one had arrived when Ann and William were preparing for bed (before 9 o'clock) she went to her neighbour's herself, but her husband followed saying "Nan, what is the reason you leave me by myself. What are you afraid on?" to which she replied placatingly "My dear, I am not afraid of you". She then followed her husband home after begging Francis Jones to go with her, which he did, along with a Mrs Webb, whom one surmises had come outside to see what was going on.

Once home, a snatch of conversation between husband and wife (reported by Jones) reveals William's disordered state and her soothing manner. William said "I want to settle affairs with my wife and she won't resolve me", to which she replied "My dear creature, anything you ask me I will resolve you". The he said "There is somebody coming to kill me". Was it this fancy which made him take a knife to bed? She answered "There is nobody will come to hurt you. Make yourself easy" and she offered to take the coals up when he went off to bed.

Ann came back down telling Mrs Webb she was coming for the children, but stayed talking until about 9 o'clock when she went to fetch Joseph Branch, another neighbour, to watch with Francis Jones. Mrs Webb appears to have gone home. The watchers tried to persuade Ann to stay downstairs with them but the poor woman said "No I have had but little rest for some time. I must go to bed", asserting that she was not in the least afraid when any person was in the house with her.

Peace settled on the troubled home as the married couple lay quietly upstairs, and Jones and Branch watched down below by the fireplace. Between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning the wife was heard to ask her husband if he would like the chamber pot and shortly after cried "Oh Lord". The two watchers jumped up from the fireplace to the foot of the stairs in time to catch at husband and wife as they fell down together.

They restrained the husband who with knife in hand was stamping on his wife as she lay on the floor. Ann got up and ran out of doors where she leaned over a hurdle. She was seen to be bleeding from the breast.

Joseph Branch rushed to Conduit Farm (Manor Court) to fetch Edward Trumper the Constable. William Walker, now calmer, looked at the blood and said "I have killed her. I meant to kill her. I wish to die. I shall be hanged. Pick her up and bring her indoors". Joseph Branch's wife Martha and Ann Priest tended the injured woman but she died within about half an hour. The witnesses saw William stand in front of his wife as she sat on the ground dying and heard him say "Be you dead?" and call her ill names.

When Edward Trumper arrived he said "Walker, what have you done? You have killed your wife". "She deserved it", Walker replied. "She had used me ill and I am not sorry for it and now I shall be hanged, but don't mind that". The Constable prevented one of the women from destroying evidence (she was wiping the blood off the pocket knife) and then belatedly went home to get a horse to send for a surgeon.

Ann Walker was buried at St Mary's on March 11 and William was tried at the Old Bailey in April. The Harefield Overseers paid the expenses of the Constable and other witnesses:

April 17 1784 Coach hire for self to London	
expenses of the day, lodging & breakfast next morning	11s 0d
April 18 Pd Mr Edw. Trumper for the carriage of himself & 5 witnesses & expenses on the road	£1 5s 11d
Expenses during the day	19s 6d
Pd for indictment & swearing	8s 0d
Gave Martha Branch she being obliged to return home on account of her child	3s 6d
Supper lodging & Breakfast Coach hire & expenses on the road for Mr Edw Trumper & self returning home	19s 6d
April 23 Mr Parson's Bill in Holborn his Bill for Board & Lodging of the Evidence's Day	
Their stay in for 5 days	£4 5s 9d
Mr Edw Trumper's Bill for himself during the Tryall & .. return home	£1 16s 6d
Mr Robertson Attorney's Bill	13s 4d

William was found guilty of murdering his wife on March 5 1784 with a clasp knife, valued at 2d, having inflicted a wound lynch wide and 3 inches deep. He did not hang, however, but was committed to Bedlam whither he was conveyed by Mr Thomas Trumper and John Tongey Overseer of the Poor on May 8, having spent the intervening period in an unnamed Madhouse. For the next 3 years he was supported in Bedlam by the Harefield Overseers. They paid a half year's bill of £17 0s 6d for his clothes and maintenance in 1786. In March 1787 he was moved to Mr Stratton's private Madhouse in Bethnal Green which is the last we hear of him.

The Walkers were not married in Harefield but their daughter Ann was baptized at St Mary's on March 24 1782. Ann Walker's reference to "children" (see above) suggests that at least one more child had been

born, perhaps before the couple moved to the village. They may well have lived at Hill End where William Watkin's name appears in the manor court book for 1780 as occupant of one of 6 cottages at Longcroft.

Sources Information about this sad affair comes from evidence given by Joseph Branch, Francis Jones and Edward Trumper at the Coroner's Inquest on March 8 and kept among the Old Bailey Sessions Papers at the Greater London Record Office OBSP 1784 Ap/88. The indictment is in an Old Bailey Sessions Roll OBSR 227 26 Ap 1784. Information from the Harefield Parish Vestry Books kindly supplied by Dorothy Winton.

 Bedlam where William Walker was confined was the first English lunatic asylum. It was founded as a priory of the order of the Star of Bethlehem. It was mentioned as a hospital in 1330 and was receiving lunatics by 1403. Henry VIII gave it - and its revenues - to the City of London for the "treatment" of the insane. It was rebuilt at Moorfields in 1675. Originally it was open to the public and people paid to go and see the antics of the deranged, but in 1770 it was decided that the sightseers made the patients worse. A Harefield woman was sent for treatment in Bedlam in the 17th century, and maybe other patients from here had to make the long journey to London in times past. The third Bedlam became the Imperial War Museum. Editor

HAREFIELD NICKNAMES

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G MOORE	SEAMAN	? SIBLEY	SOLDIER
B OWEN	BLADDER	T SIMMONDS	SINBAD
M OWEN	PLONK	A SMITH	APPLE
R OWEN	TOSH	H STEVENS	NOBBY
A PAINTER	WILLA	J STEVENS	ROWDY
F PALMER	SHAVER	? SUMMERSBY	DIDO
G PANTING	PANCHO	H SUMMERSBY	CROW
C PERKINS	POLLY	ALF SWAN	DOLT
B PETLEY	DONK	ARTHUR SWAN	PEACHEY
C PETLEY	GINNY	F SWAN	TREADLIGHT
L PEVERIL	PODGY	G SWAN	CHOPPER
C PHIPPS	NUDGER	J SWAN	JOHNTD
R PHIPPS	CONKER	H THRIFT	JUMBO
A PITCHFORD	CLERKY	A WALKER	CUDGEL
A POWELL	PUDDING	D WALKER	PORKY
B POWELL	SPARROW	T WALKER	THUMBY
H POWELL	BUCKET	A WARD	NOGGER
D PULLAN	DILLIE	W WARD	FUSE
W QUATERMAINE	SNUFFY	? WARNER	STINGER
J ROBINSON	COCK	R WESTON	WETON
? RYDER	SLOGGY	F WHEELER	BUDGET
? RYDER	MARYLEBONE	E WHYMER	SHINEY
E RYDER	DGGIE	D WILLIAMS	MIRACLE
G SHARMAN	TOTTY	J WILLIS	LOFTY
M SHEPHERD	BOTTLE	M WOOD	TIMBER
BILL SIBLEY	TICKER	W WOOD	DIGGER
BOB SIBLEY	SNOBBER	M WOODWARDS	CUSTER

Can you add to this list? Here is one new contribution:
 James Milton, known as TARPOT.

A HAREFIELD CURATE

AT WHITEHEATH FARM

William Henry Rowlatt was born in London in 1775, the 2nd son of a prosperous merchant. He was educated at St John's College Cambridge, married in 1802, then went to live in Paris for a year. He was called to the bar and practiced the legal profession for a time, but having a rich father and "an inclination for a country life" he took the lease - or rather, his father took the lease on his behalf - of a farm at Harefield.

This was in 1810 and the farm was Whiteheath. But "although the residence was most agreeable, the land was sterile" and Rowlatt was not "a scientific agriculturalist". In short, he did not prosper. This might not have mattered too much given his well-to-do background, but in 1812 disaster struck. His father lost all his money "almost to a shilling" and was declared bankrupt "leaving his family in difficulties from which some of them have never effectually been able to extricate themselves".

In 1814 Rowlatt took Holy Orders, officiated at Rickmansworth for a time and was then appointed curate at Harefield. Alas, by 1818 the farm at Whiteheath was proving so unproductive that Rowlatt "was compelled" to the great regret of his family to quit Harefield. He had been on friendly terms with "most of the clergy and gentry for a circuit of several miles" and was popular with the lower orders: "thirty four years after he had left the parish as a residence forever he was not only respectfully but affectionately remembered by the labouring people of the village". He also left behind, buried in Harefield Churchyard, his twin daughters Fanny and Julia who died in infancy.

Rowlatt obtained an appointment as Librarian to the Inner Temple and later as Reader of the Temple Church, but obviously his career did not progress as he would have liked and perhaps deserved, judging by the panegyrics in the Gentleman's Magazine. His hopes of preferment were dashed, apparently because of the financial scandal in which the family was involved.

He seems to have been something of a writer. In youth he composed "brief poetical pieces and good-humoured political squibs", some of them published in the Morning Chronicle, and he contributed to an organ called the British Critic. The squibs and political pieces were supplemented by more serious stuff: "Sermons on the Evidences, the Doctrines, and the Duties of Christianity", 2 vols 1816, "The present Prosperous State of the Country: a Sermon" 1824, and so on.

He died in 1863 aged 88 "at Elgin Crescent, Nottinghill, in consequence of a fall, three days previously, down the stairs of his own home".

This article is based on material in "The Rowllatts" by Mary Emmeline Rowlatt, privately published in 1975, and the quotations are from the Gentleman's Magazine.

Elona Cuthbertson

HIGHWAY FARM

With contributions from Margaret Evans, Vi Spicer and
Elona Cuthbertson

Highway Farm at the junction of Harvil Road and New Year's Green Lane is of medieval origin. It used to be called Stamfords (spelt variously) but was referred to as Highway by 1597 when its tenant, Thomas Baldwin "of the Highwaie", witnessed a friend's will.

In 1559 Margery Priest, a widow, rented "Samnfords" which was part of the manorial estate and belonged to the Newdigate family.¹ In 1593 the tenant was the above mentioned Thomas Baldwin, also known as "Thomas Baldwyn (t)h'elder of Herfeld yeoman". He had the house (Stanfords House) and farmed 118 acres including fields which are readily identifiable on the 1813 Enclosure Map. Baldwin who died in 1613 seems to have been quite comfortably off. In his will Alice his wife was left £200 to be paid within 6 months after his death and "all my lynnens". His servants were remembered; Elizabeth Wickes "which hath dwelt a long time with me" was specially favoured and was to have 40s in money and a bullock of 2 years old. To the poor of the parish was a bequest of £5 "to be paide unto them upon the day of my burriall". His daughter Margaret Wingfield was to have £10 and grandchildren Alice and Margaret the same when they married. Any remaining goods and chattells were destined for his eldest son Thomas, the full and sole executor.²

Joseph Wingfield took a 21 year lease of Highway from 1665 - 139 acres of arable, 19 acres of water meadow, common for 20 cows in Cow Moor and common in Harefield Moor for the whole year, useful grazing rights. The Wingfields were people of some social standing in the parish. Ralph Wingfield senior (possibly Joseph's brother) was the Newdigate's bailiff for a long time, and they seem to have been regarded as "gentlemen" rather than "yeomen" in the class conscious 17th century. At one time or another there were Wingfields at Brackenbury, Newes at New Year's Green and Chamberhills (see below).³

John Ives senior, yeoman, was the tenant at the end of the 17th century. In 1699 he renewed his lease which included conditions about planting elm trees. He agreed also to pay the King's Tax (was this the Land Tax?) and to build a new granary. He farmed 218 acres in 1708 making this the largest farm in the parish at the time. The Ives, who had 4 living-in servants in 1699, seem to have prospered.⁴ The family remained at Highway until 1838 at least. William Ive was there in 1727 and John in 1763. He paid a rent of £182 per annum and kept a boar for the use of the parish. By this time the land attached to Chamberhills Farm, part of the Brackenbury estate (notable because it remained in the unbroken possession of the Newdigate family) was included with Highway. It was nearby, just along New Year's Green Lane, so the fields were contiguous. The house at Chamberhills was apparently demolished in 1767 and the materials used to repair a barn.⁴

The fields which John Ive farmed are listed in the following table and can be identified on the Enclosure Map:

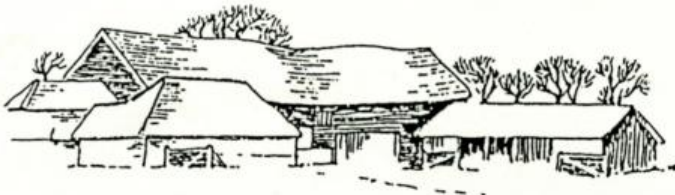


Highway Farm or Stamfords⁵

House & Homestead	Chamberhills House and Orchard
Homefield	
Long Meadow	Pingle Meadow
Grove Lands	Mead next orchard
E Perry Field	Bit near garden
W Perry Field	Gr(eat) Chamberhills (2 parts)
Stockins or Little Perry F.	Longhill (part of)
Brookshot Meadow	Bit next Shorthill
Part of Dewsfield	Little Chamberhills
Part of Southfield	
Frye Field	
Bakers Meadow by Bayhurst	
Slipe Meadow	
Far Stockins	
Sandy Herons	

On now to the Victorian age. The 1851 Census shows that a family called Bate had taken over Highway. George Bate was born in Suffolk but his wife Mary was a local woman. They had two young children and employed a house servant and a nurse as well as 5 farm servants and 8 labourers. The farm included 240 acres in 1851 and 230 in 1871 (by which time the Bates' son had grown up and become a Flour Salesman). In the December of that year George Bate must have been the toast of Harefield for he distributed 100 rabbits among the poor of the village. When he died in 1881 aged 73 he had retired to Uxbridge but he was buried in Harefield Churchyard. According to the obituary in the local paper, Mr Bate was widely known and respected through his long connection as tenant farmer and bailiff with the Newdigates' estate at Harefield. "Indeed he was a true specimen of an old English Gentleman". The farm was put on the market by the Newdigates in 1877, 240 acres, including 9 arable fields and 11 grass.

James Puddifant was the next farmer at Highway. He had 198 acres according to the 1881 census. He was 49 years old at the time and had 5 children, 3 of them at school, an 18-year-old who acted as a manager for his father, and a daughter of 22 who helped her mother. The youthful farm manager seems to have fallen foul of the Uxbridge magistrates and Mrs Puddifant wrote a letter about the severe treatment meted out to him (1883). In 1888 "constant work" was being offered to a haybinder and thatcher; also a good cottage and garden. However the Puddifants were only to remain in Harefield for a short time longer. In August 1891 there was a notice of a sale at Highway and Dews Farms on the instructions of



Mr James Puddifant who was to leave at Michaelmas. The stock on offer included 66 head of shorthorn cattle, 150 sheep, 10 store pigs, 20 horses. There were also a thrashing engine and tackle, elevator, rollers, ploughs and 22 wagons. A postscript:

Oct 31 1891 Lost from Nicholls Farm Edgware (the family's new address) wire haired fox terrier - name on collar "J Puddiphant, Harefield". Reward 10s.

Between 1895 and 1907 the name Bennetts appears in the school registers with the address Highway Farm, though in one instance it was called Wayside Farm, and there were Bennetts on the electoral register until 1912 at least, with John Bennetts at Highway and Richard at New Year's Green.

In 1962 Highway Farm was amalgamated with Park Lodge Farm, to the north, to create a large holding which was developed by the Greater London Council as a farm interpretation centre. Since 1974 it has been managed by the GLC and now the London Borough of Hillingdon. The manager lives at Highway, which is apparently one of the relatively few Green Belt farms to keep sheep.

In conclusion, some reference should be made to the buildings which are an attractive landmark on Harvil Road. The chimney stack of the house was part of an early building, 17th century at least, but it is not known how much else remains of what would have been a timber framed farmhouse, probably rebuilt in the 18th century. It is scheduled Grade II, early 17th - early 19th century, and the forecourt walls are said to be 18th century. The barn is a genuine antique, probably 16th century, and a reminder of Widow Priest and Thomas Baldwin the elder who held the farm 300 years ago and more.

References: 1. GLRD Acc1085/EF3 2. Ibid EM1 and Guildhall ms 9171/22 171v 3. Acc1085/EM5 4. WRD CR136/2384, PRO T64/302 5. Acc 1085/EF17 6. This is mentioned in D.F.A. Kiddle's Historical Geography, a ms in the Uxbridge Library Local History section.

RIGHTS OF WAY A RECURRENT PROBLEM

1694 Proceedings of the manor court. It was ordered that persons that now have or formerly had any common footpaths going through their grounds which have been stopped or barred up should "unstop the said Footpaths and also sett up timber stiles" where they had formerly been.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at the Harefield Library on Monday April 25th and will be followed by a talk on the history of Manor Court (previously known as Marlowes and Conduit Farm) by Eileen Bowlt. Nominations for next year's Committee will be welcome.

Booking forms are available for our 1988 excursions: Winchester and Avington Park 14th May (£6.50); Cambridge, with a tour of some of the colleges, and Anglesey Abbey on 11th June (£8). A visit to Warwick is planned for September.

Park Lodge Farm. There will be an open weekend with an exhibition illustrating 50 years of the Green Belt on 11th and 12th June.

Some time ago outline planning permission was granted for just over 1 acre of Green Belt land near the Rugby Football Club, Belfry Avenue, on the grounds that there would be a planning gain, which would include the upgrading of the sports pavilion and the removal of asbestos. Unfortunately the club does not want to stay on the site so the future of the sports field is in doubt; also, if the pavilion is not rebuilt where is the planning gain? In these circumstances the recent proposal to build 18 houses on this one and a bit acres of Green Belt seems quite unacceptable. If you think so too, please write to the Director of Planning, Civic Centre, Uxbridge.

Congratulations to Gwen Thomas on her success in the Middlesex Quiz, the competition in the Gazette.

HIGHFIELD HEIGHTS We failed to get alternative suggestions for the name of this new estate in Park Lane (on the Cape Works site) adopted by Prowtings, the developers. Ideas we put forward were "Pritchetts", after the Pritchett family who owned land here in the 17th century, and Beechfield or Northfield which were old field names in the vicinity. Highfield Heights has absolutely no local significance historically speaking. It seems a shame to ignore all connections with the past so we'll try to be quicker off the mark in future.

1988 sees the end of another chapter in the history of Harefield House with the departure of the Aeronautical Quality Assurance Directorate which has been relocated at Woolwich Arsenal. What will happen to the house is uncertain but Valerie Woodward has secured for the Society a variety of pictures and papers relating to its interesting past. As she says, these are part of Harefield's heritage and of no importance to the Ministry of Defence, a view with which the powers that be totally agreed. The material will be documented and indexed then deposited in the Society's archives. Incidentally more storage space is to be made available for our collection of historical material.

This newsletter was edited by Elona Cuthbertson
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