

Scrapbook April 2004

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2004 - A YEAR OF ANNIVERSARIES.

2004 marks the 20th year since the Bishop's Waltham Museum Trust was formed from the foundations laid by the earlier History and Museum Societies. It is a fitting achievement that the museum has more than doubled in size in this anniversary year with the move into St. George's Kitchen but with all the work and preparations involved in getting the enlarged museum up and running it has been decided that any celebrations will be held over until 2006, the actual 20th anniversary of when the Bishop's Waltham Museum first opened to the public. In the meantime there will be a celebration with the official re-opening of the museum when representatives from Barclays, the local Councils and other organisations and individuals who have helped us will be invited. Members will be informed of the date of this event as soon as it can be arranged. It all depends on how long it takes to get the decorating completed and all the exhibits set up.

Progress update on the museum extension - 1st May 2004.

The two large cupboards have been removed and a considerable amount of work has been done on the fireplace revealing an oak beam inscribed with names and the date 176(6?). Arrangements have been made for repairs and replastering and it should not be too long before the little band of volunteers can move in with their paint brushes



100 years ago in 1904 Mentor & Co. of Southampton produced a series of postcards of Bishop's Waltham. This one shows the top half of High Street. Another of Mentors cards from this date shows the Bishop's Waltham Railway Station with a steam rail car waiting at the platform. If any member is the proud owner of a copy of this one please will you be willing to lend it to the museum so that we can make a copy.

The opening of the Bishop's Waltham Railway.

140 years ago - Plus or minus a year -1863/1864/1865.



1866 the earliest known picture of Bishop's Waltham Railway.

To compare the view today stand by the garage next to Budgens supermarket and looked west towards the roundabout. The station stood approximately where the roundabout is now Only two buildings, the "Priory" (1864/5) and the School (1865) are to be seen off Victoria Road. In the background to the right of the station the square building was "Albert Terrace" which stood where Priory Court is now and the building furthest to the right was "The Old Coffee House" in latter years Miss Thomas' which stood just above the present fish and chip shop.

It was 141 years ago in 1863 that the line from Botley to Bishop's Waltham first opened for passengers but it was only to a temporary station situated close to where the Midpave building stands today. Nevertheless six trains ran each way on weekdays and three on Sundays. In 1864 the goods shed and yard were completed thus providing the Company with additional income from freight services but the main station building complete with Station Master's House was not completed until 1865. For our purposes therefore we have decided to take the middle year as the anniversary of the opening of our little railway that unfortunately did not reach its own centenary, the last working train running up to Bishop's Waltham in April 1962, just one year short of the 100. In 1881 the original Bishop's Waltham Railway Company had been purchased by the London & South Western Railway that eventually became part of the Southern Railway Company in 1923. With Nationalisation of the railways in 1948 the Bishop's Waltham Railway became a backwater of the British Railways network, an easy victim for Dr. Beeching's axe.

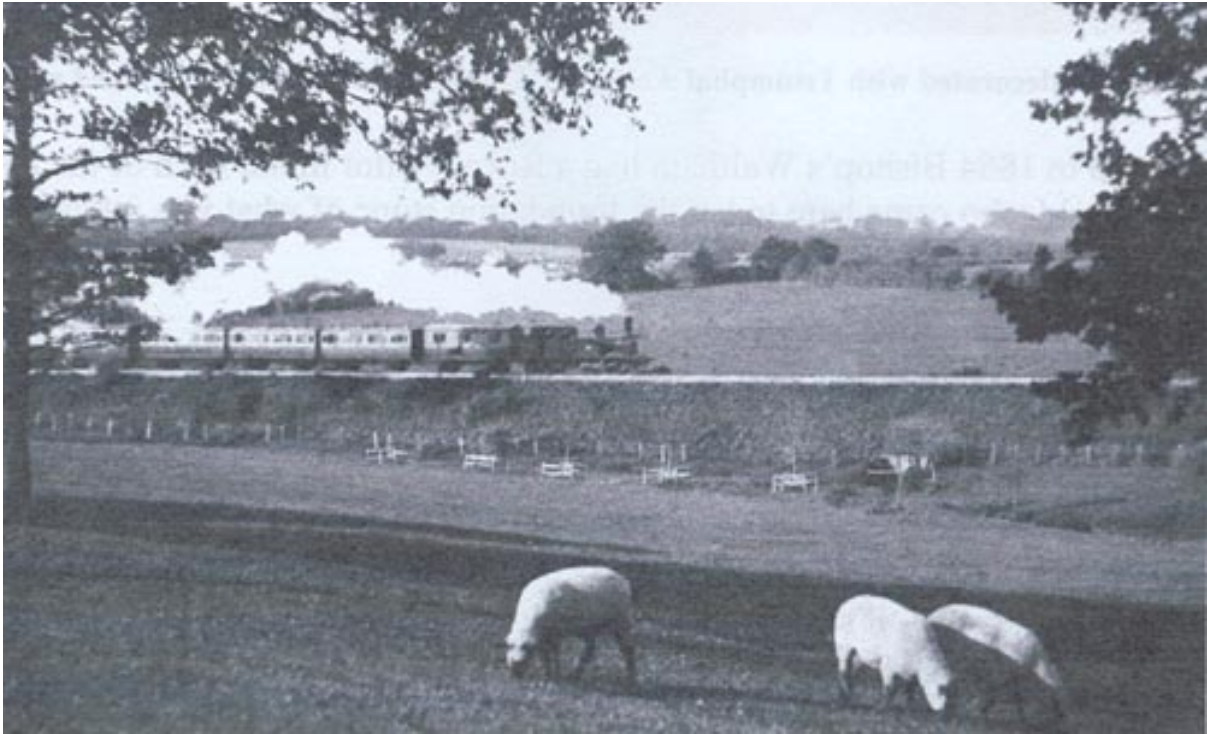
There were several early plans to extend the railway including the continuation of the line to Petersfield. It was even proposed at one stage that this should be a main line from a station at Southampton through to Petersfield and London. None of these plans came to anything and the Bishop's Waltham Railway remained a four-mile single line branch from Botley on the Eastleigh to Gosport line. The Bishop's Waltham station building was of timber frame construction infilled with Taylor's patent yellow blocks and it had many characteristics of the architecture of Sir William Tite who was responsible for many of the designs used by the London South Western Railway. It was often a matter of conjecture as to why such a large and ornate station should have been built on a short rural branch line but it was probably planned that way because of the original intention for this to be a through line carrying a considerable amount of traffic. The last attempt to extend the railway was in the 1890's when there was a proposal to continue the line through Dunderidge to join up with the new Meon Valley Line at Brockbridge, Droxford. The museum has a large map showing this proposed extension and this will be placed on display now we have room.

In the early days there was also a proposal to build the London & South Western Railway's Carriage Works at Bishop's Waltham but this plan was abandoned, probably because this never became a through line. Instead the Carriage & Loco works were built at Bishopstoke (Eastleigh). If the earlier proposals had materialised Bishop's Waltham would have developed into a railway town instead of Eastleigh.

Work is in progress making a 4mm (00 gauge) working model of the Bishop's Waltham Railway Station and goods yard for the museum. This will no doubt be a great attraction for boys of all ages.

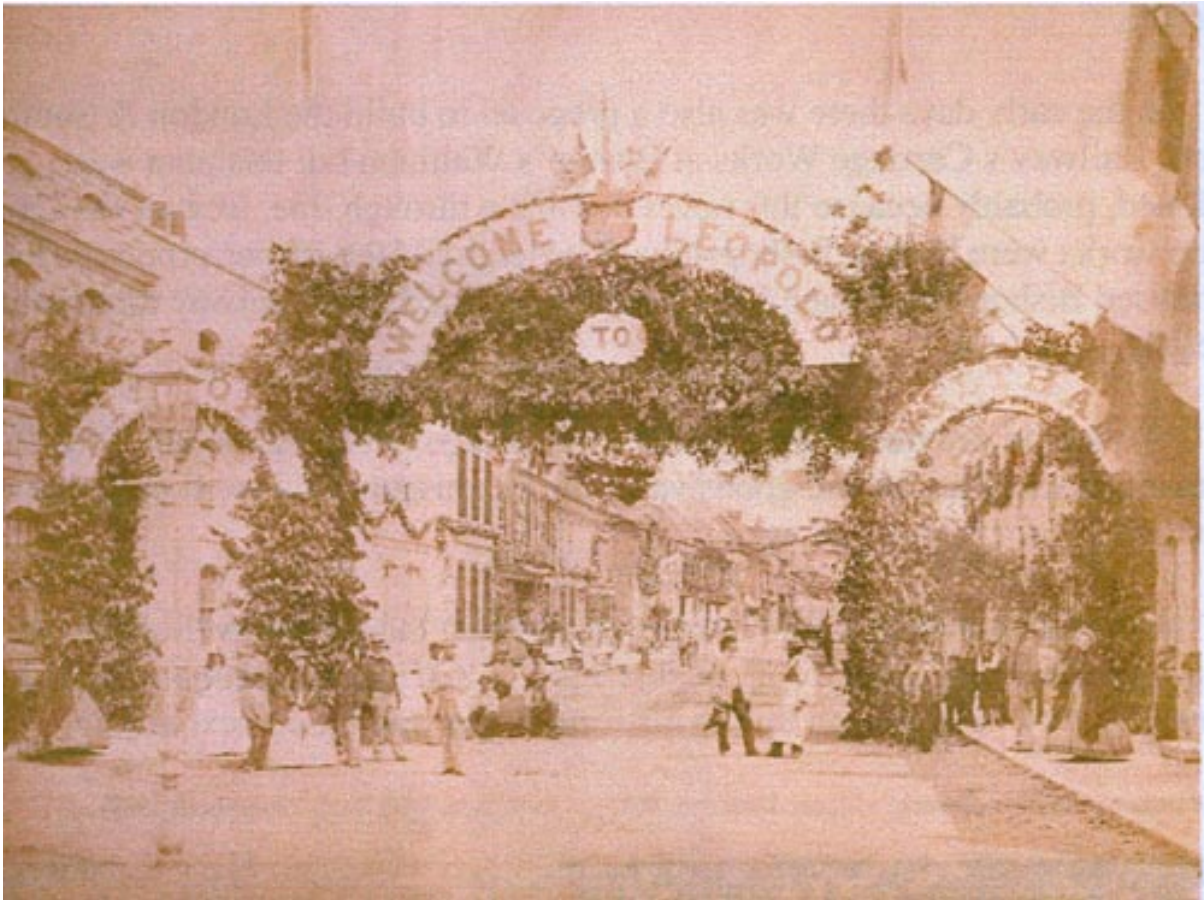
A Royal personage could have been amongst the early travellers on the Bishop's Waltham Railway for in August 1864 H.R.H. Prince Leopold visited the town and he may have chosen this as his form of transport. See next article.

Ref: "The Bishop's Waltham Branch" - Roger Simmonds & Kevin Robertson. Wild Swan Publications 1988



A picturesque view of a little tank locomotive with its rake of carriages puffing its way past the Thickets on the way up to Bishop's Waltham in 1898. In the far distance the line of trees marks the Park Lug on the Durley parish boundary and Tangier Farm lays in the hollow behind the smoke from the engine. A few years after this steam railcars were introduced on the line as a more economic form of transport. These were single coach units with a steam engine fitted at one end as an integral part of the conveyance. They were apparently not too popular as they had hard wooden seats and the soot from the engine was a constant problem. Railway rules dictated that tank locomotives had to be used on the line, as there was no turntable at Bishop's Waltham although one is shown on a copy of an early Ordnance Survey map that we have but it appears to have been drawn in by hand and we are not sure whether it ever actually existed.

1864 A Royal Visitor. Prince Leopold lays foundation stone to the Royal Albert Infirmary



High Street decorated with Triumphal Arches in August 1864 to welcome Prince Leopold.

Also in 1864 Bishop's Waltham had a Royal visitor in the form of the young Prince Leopold who came here to lay the foundation stone of what was intended to be a grand new hospital, the Royal Albert Infirmary.

This building was the vision of Sir Arthur Helps of Vernon Hill who started numerous grand schemes here, many of which failed, as did the Royal Albert Infirmary, despite being financed by public subscription, Prince Leopold heading the list of donors with ~pound;100. The building was still unfinished the following year when Prince Arthur and the Princesses Helena and Louisa officially opened it and unveiled a statue of the Prince Consort set high above the front door, in fact it was never completed as a hospital. It seems to have remained unused until 1877 when it was offered for sale by auction. The description in the sale catalogue of the time reads as follows-

"A Capacious Building originally intended as an infirmary. The building is of modern design, with red brick exterior; most adequately adapted and suitably situated for an infirmary; the interior arrangements having ample accommodation, with Four Large Wards, Nurses' and Matron's Rooms, Surgery and Operating Rooms, Bath Rooms, Lavatories, and well-arranged Offices; rendering it most complete as an Infirmary or Convalescent Hospital. It is placed in an elevated position, with Southern aspect, overlooking the Ruins of the Old Palace and Pond, the Town, Church, and surrounding Picturesque Country, with the Isle of Wight in the distance.

THE BUILDING is most substantially built - the Windows, Mullions, Splays, Sailing Courses, Arches and Buttresses, in Ornamental Brick; it is very Dry, and the various Water, Bath, and Lavatory Fittings, and those for Culinary and Laundry purposes, will be included in the sale. There is a Large Water Tank, affording abundant supply, and the Pipes of the Bishop's Waltham Water Company are brought up to the premises. THE GROUND FLOOR is complete, with the exception of a few fittings, and the first floor remains unplastered and unceiled, but the whole might be completed, fit for use, at a comparatively small cost. "

Also included with the building were the terraced grounds and an adjoining plot of pasture land and the whole lot was sold for ~pound;500.

It was converted into a large private house and we believe at first named "Albert House". We do not know how many times it changed hands but by 1908 it was owned by Mr Arthur Robinson and called "The Priory". And he offered it for sale as a "Gentleman's Exceptionally Well-built and Substantial Residence" in May 1908. There is not space here to give the full catalogue description but this is an abridged version

"Approached from a quiet country road by a long carriage drive. The porch entrance with seats either side opens into a magnificent 63ft long corridor and entrance hall 18ft 8in. x 17ft 8in. with a fireplace. Off the corridor are a fine suite of rooms all 13ft 2in. high including Drawing Room (25ft x 18ft), a Boudoir (16ft x 10ft 6in.) Morning Room (22ft x 12ft 3in.) Ground Floor Bedroom (12ft 3in. x 9ft 11 in.), a Cloak Room, Dining Room (25ft x 18ft) and a Study (16ft x 10ft). Also on the ground floor were the Butler's Pantry, Kitchen, Scullery, Larder and the servants' Sitting Room that measured 16ft x 15ft, water toilets and a cellar. Two staircases led to the first floor with its 9ft high bed and dressing rooms above which the roof was described as a very spacious attic - presumably providing the servants accommodation.

Three acres of grounds included the ornamental terraces, a Rosery (said to be quite famous locally), lawns, Tennis lawn, orchard with every description of fruit trees and a useful paddock There were also stables, a coach house and other buildings"

Two interesting comments from this 1908 sale catalogue are that the Nearest Roman Catholic Church is 7 miles distant at Eastleigh and there is no prospect of the adjoining land ever being built upon.

It is not at present known if it was sold at this time but we do know that The Roman Catholic Society of Missionaries of Africa purchased it in 1912 and it became the home of "The White Fathers". As such the name "The Priory" seemed appropriate and so the building remained until the end though it was never actually a Priory. It was offered for sale by them in 1967 and eventually purchased and converted at considerable expense by the Hampshire Police Authority into a Training School, which opened in 1972, serving in this capacity until 1988 when it was again put on the market. For several years it remained empty, the target of vandals and after suffering several fires and considerable damage it was eventually demolished in 1993 to be replaced by an estate of new houses. After a poll of local electors the playing fields that had been constructed for the Police Cadets were purchased by the Bishop's Waltham Parish Council. These are now known as "Priory Park" so Bishop's Waltham now has a sports facility, a Public House, Retirement Flats, and a housing estate all named after a Priory that never really existed.

- Bibliography: The Illustrated London News Aug. 13, 1864 & Nov. 18, 1865.
- Sale catalogues of 1877 & 1908 - Bishop's Waltham Museum
- "History of The Priory Bishop's Waltham." Peter Finn. Hedera Books 2002.
- "The White Fathers and their Missions". J. Bouniol. Ed. Sands & Co. 1929.



A picture from The Illustrated London News of 13th August 1864 showing Prince Leopold laying the foundation stone at Bishops Waltham



The illustration of "The Priory" published in the sale catalogue of 1908

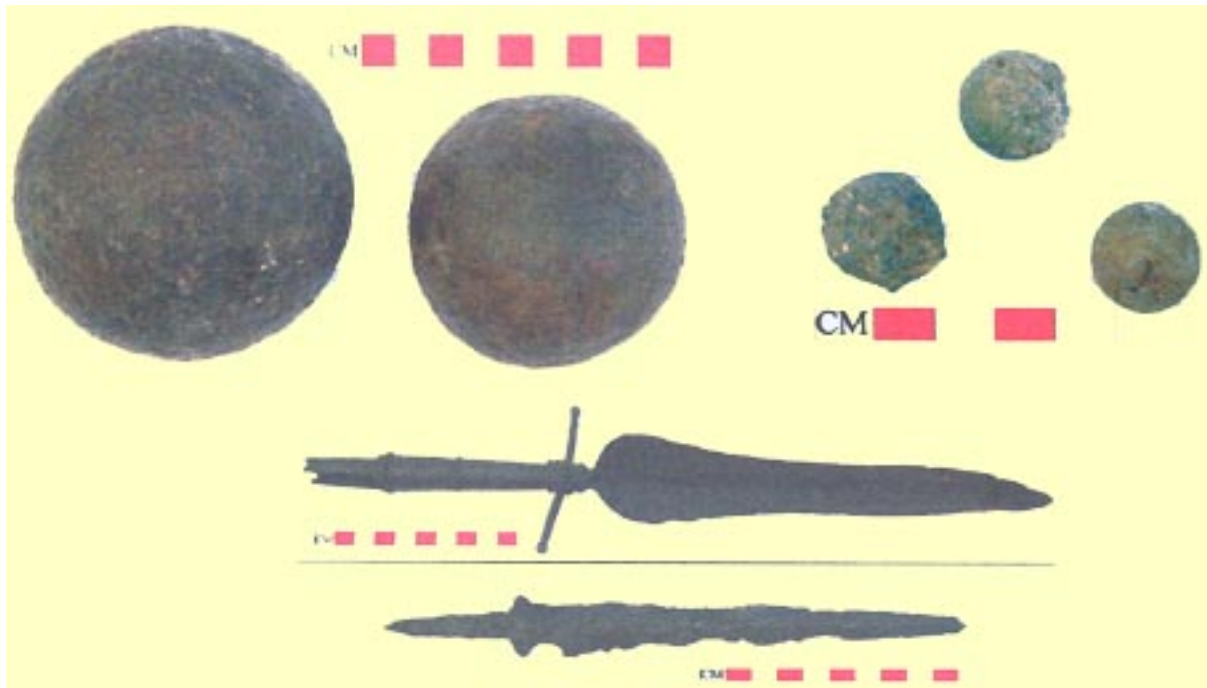
1814 - 190 years ago The last hanging under the Black Act.

In the last issue of "Scrapbook" we published an article on the notorious footpads and deer stealers the "Waltham Blacks" which led to the introduction of the Black Act in May 1723. This made poaching and damage to forests and parks a hanging offence and its wide provisions over the next few years increased the number of capital crimes from 30 to 150, even including the blackening of the face or using other disguises whilst committing a crime.

The last hanging under the "Black Act" apparently took place in 1814 when a William Potter was executed for the crime of cutting down an orchard. It is said that even the judge petitioned for a reprieve!

Perhaps one of our readers can tell us more of William Potter, where he came from and where he was hung. Was it at Bishop's Waltham?

1644 - 360 years ago. Bishop's Waltham Palace destroyed in the Civil War.



Items at the museum believed to be relics from the attack on the Palace.

Top - Left: Iron shot or "Cannon balls"

Right: Lead musket balls.

Bottom: An iron pike and a dagger.

For our account of this event we can do no better than quote from The Rev.

G.N.Godwin's "The Civil War in Hampshire, (1642-45), and the Story of Basing House", published by Elliot Stock, London, in 1882.

The pages relating to Bishop's Waltham read as follows

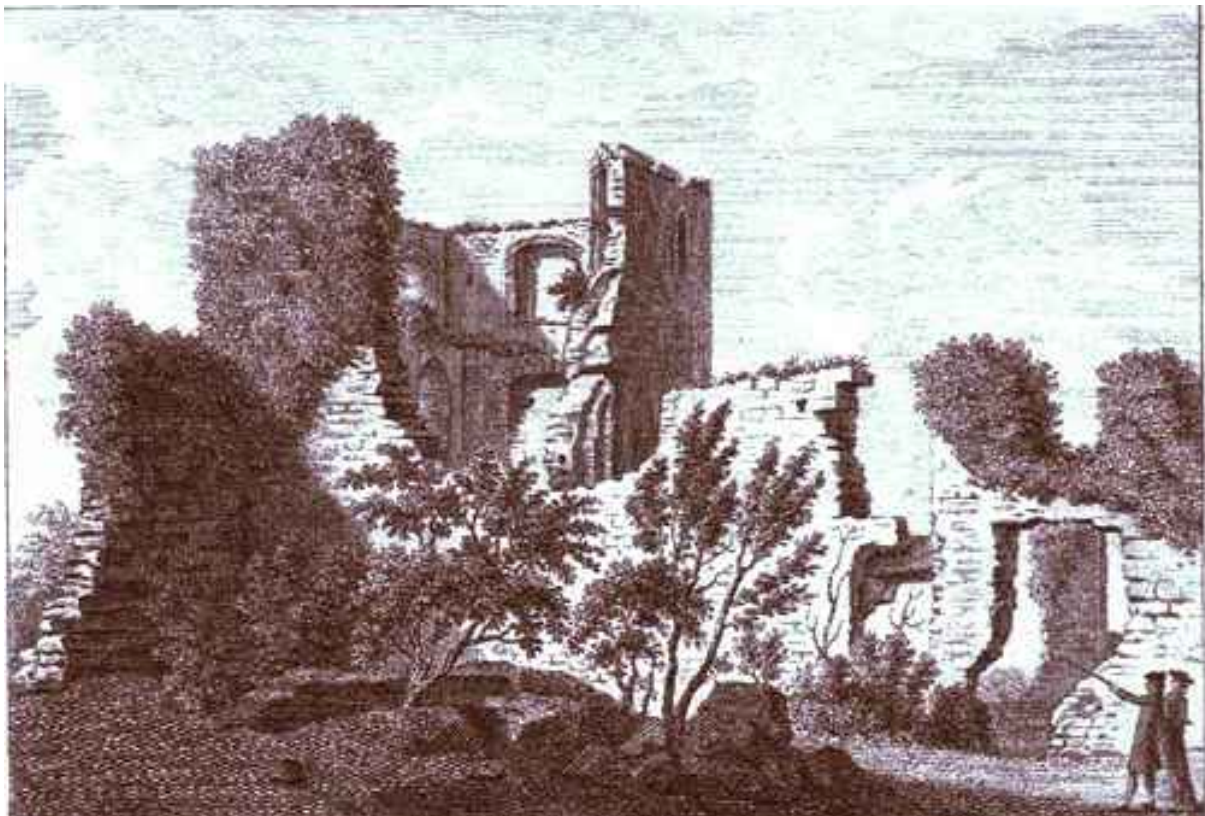
"Under the command of Major-General Browne they (the Londoners) marched from Southampton through Botley to the village of Wickham, where they learned that Colonel Whitehead, MP. for Southampton, with 200 men, was besieging an equal force of Cavaliers, under Colonel Bennet, at Bishop's Waltham, in the stately Palace belonging to the Bishop of Winchester, then known as Waltham House, and of which the stately ivy-grown ruins now arrest the attention of even the most heedless passer-by. Bishop Robert Poyntet, the successor of Bishop Gardiner in the see of Winchester, surrendered the palace and manor to John, first Marquis of Winchester, who in his turn was obliged in the reign of Queen Mary to restore the property to its former Episcopal owner. Hearing of the proximity of the London Brigade, Colonel Whitehead asked for and readily obtained assistance from its commander. Major-General Browne marched from the village, wherein William of Wykeham was born, to destroy the stately palace in which, in good old age, that never-to-be-forgotten prelate gently breathed his last. On his arrival he placed his guns in position, and the local tradition asserts they fired many rounds before the besieged consented to treat for a surrender, which they at length did when they perceived that every preparation had been made for an assault. The duration of Colonel Whitehead's operations against the garrison is unknown, but the London Brigade reached Bishop's Waltham on April 6th, and the capitulation was signed on April 9th. The conditions agreed were 'that the commanders and officers then in the house

might pass away with their horses, and their swords by their sides, and the common soldiers only with a rod or staff in their hands. ' The garrison left all their arms and ammunition to the victors, who permitted their soldiers to treat the whole contents of the palace as common plunder. One writer says that one hundred of the garrison were detained in captivity.

'Mercurius Aulicus ' says that the rebels obtained only forty-two muskets, no pikes, powder-barrels, guns, or baggage, and not much besides soldiers' clothes, to secure which they stripped the garrison to their shirts in a field near the palace.

On the other hand, we have it on record that the articles of surrender were so strictly observed that a soldier who had taken a poleaxe from Colonel Bennet, who commanded the garrison, received orders from Major-General Browne to immediately restore it. Local tradition says that Bishop Curle was in the palace during the siege, and succeeded in escaping in a cart, a layer of manure being placed over him.

A folio black letter Bible and a stately bedstead which had 'come out of the Palace House' were formerly preserved at Bishop's Waltham. The victors found much bacon, and said that the palace had been 'a plundering garrison. ' After the division of the spoil, the London Brigade marched away, leaving Colonel Whitehead to pull down the house if he chose. ' On Thursday, April 11!, we read: 'Waltham House in ashes. Poor England, the glory of the nations, now growing into a wilderness!' The Manor of Bishop's Waltham was sequestered, and sold in 1646 by the Parliament to Robert Reynolds, Esq., for ~pound;7999 14s 10d".



This etching of the southwest corner tower of the palace dated 1773 was made from a drawing of 1761, just 117 years after Colonel Whitehead's attack. Other versions of this picture exist but this is believed to be the earliest

1404 AD - Six hundred years ago. Bishop William of Wykeham died at Bishop's Waltham Palace

William of Wykeham was born 680 years ago at Wickham, Hampshire, supposedly of poor but creditable parents. He was educated at Winchester Cathedral Priory by a wealthy patron, believed to be Nicholas Uvedale, Lord of the Manor of Wickham.

After an already distinguished career he was made Bishop of Winchester in 1366. At that time the See of Winchester maintained twelve palaces, including that at Bishop's Waltham, as places of residence for the bishop. One of Wykeham's first priorities on becoming bishop was to put all these Episcopal houses into good repair, a task that he set about with great zeal. His fame as an architect is probably best recognised nationally for his work at Windsor, Winchester College and New College Oxford both of which he founded and built, and for beginning the rebuilding the nave of Winchester Cathedral. Bishop's Waltham seems to have been one of his favourite palaces and in 1378 he began major alterations here, completely refurbishing most of the palace in a much more grand style that had become demanded by his time. Employed on the task were some of the most prestigious craftsmen of the day. Master Mason William Wynford, known for his work at both Winchester College and the Cathedral, was later joined by Hugh Herland, the Carpenter responsible for the great roof of Westminster Hall. Although the terms of those times refer to them as Master Mason and Carpenter, today they would be considered as architects and another of the country's greatest architects, Henry Yevele was also involved in the reconstruction of the hall.

Looking at the ruins today it is hard to believe that the building must have been amongst the grandest in the land, even the windows were the work of a topmost craftsman of the time, Thomas the Glazier of Oxford. - What treasures must have been destroyed in 1644 when we read that report of Thursday, April 11th, "Waltham House in ashes."

Wykeham's rebuilding began in 1378 and large numbers of craftsmen must have been brought here for the purpose. Much local flint and timber from Hampshire woods was used in the construction, stone coming from the Isle of Wight and Devon. Some of the roofing was of stone but clay tiles; both locally made and from other places in Hampshire, were introduced on many of the new structures.

The Great Hall with its impressive windows and adjoining service rooms and kitchen, which we see today as majestic ruins, also the brewhouse and bakehouse still surviving at the northeast corner are all his work. The lord's great chamber built on the south side beside the still existing tower has gone but most of that which we see today can be attributed to him.

He seems to have spent much of his time in residence at Waltham Palace and he died here on the morning of Saturday 27th September 1404.



This 19th century drawing of Bishop Williams Ornate Crozier at New College Oxford, was crosen by Bishops Waltham Society for their logo.

Henry Beaufort who also made alterations to the Bishop's Waltham Palace succeeded him as Bishop of Winchester

Ref: "Bishop's Waltham Palace" J. N. Hare. English Heritage 1987

"Old England's Worthies." Lord Brougham. Pub. Sangster London

904 AD -1100 years ago - Waltham exchanged for Porchester

We became "Bishop's" Waltham

The prefix "Bishop's" was gained when Edward I, the Elder, made a deal with Bishop Danewulf of Winchester, exchanging the settlement of Waltham for Porchester which he needed in an effort to fight off the Viking raiders. Danewulf was born about AD 845 and succeeded Bishop Tunberht to the See of Winchester in AD 878 where he remained until he died in 908. Ancient tradition has it that he was a swineherd in the Isle of Athelney in Somerset at whose cottage King Alfred the Great took shelter during his struggles against the invading Danes. It was his wife who supposedly reproved the King for allowing her cakes to burn. Alfred apparently had been so greatly struck by Denewulfs abilities that on his return to power he caused him to be ordained and appointed him Bishop of Winchester. The tradition does not relate what happened to the wife. Although this makes a nice story the dates alone make it impossible but it is very probable that Danewulf did come from humble origins.

The Charter recording the exchange reads as follows-

A.D. 904 (Bickleigh, Devon). King Edward to Denewulf, bishop of Winchester, and his familia; grant of 38 hides (manentes) at Bishops Waltham, Hants, in exchange for 40 hides (cassati) at Portchester, Hants.

Archive: Winchester, Old Minster MS: BL Add. 15350, 65v-66r (s. xii)

July 17, 924AD, is also the anniversary of the death of King Edward the Elder 1080 years ago at Farndon in Mercia.. He was son of Alfred the Great and is probably best known for re-conquering Mercia from the Vikings with the help of his sister Ethelflaed, the Lady of the Mercians. His main achievement was to use the military platform created by his father to bring back the whole of the Danelaw, south of the River Humber under English control. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle gives an account of the campaigns of Edward and his sister, up until 920AD

Ref- <http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww/>

It was to help his brother King Stephen during the troubles back in the 1130's that Bishop Henry de Blois founded the Palace here and it was destroyed just 360 years ago in 1644, thus it was built during one Civil War and knocked down during another. King Stephen died 850 years ago at Dover in Kent on 25th October 1154, another anniversary but perhaps however, the death of a king and the demise of our grandest building are not really grounds for great celebrations Waltham was here long before this but we regret that 1100 years ago is where we have to draw a line and give up this record of anniversaries, for the time being at least.