

Scrapbook February 2004

At Last - We have access to St. George's Kitchen and can now move in to our new double sized museum.

Ever since the Bishop's Waltham Museum Trust took over the small scullery to St. George's House nearly twenty years ago for the museum we have had a dream that one-day it could be extended into the next-door kitchen.

This opportunity arose in June 2002 when Barclays were planning to refurbish the offices and they agreed in principal that we could lease the additional space. Naively we thought that everything could be arranged and the work done over the 2002/3 winter period ready for the enlarged museum to open to the public in April 2003. Little did we know!!

The whole procedure has taken nearly two frustrating years of negotiations and delays. During this time, I at least thought more than once of giving up the whole idea, but thanks to the support and considerable efforts of Trustees Georgina Busher and Barry Cross the archway linking the two rooms has now been made. We can now move in and start converting the building to a museum.

The project has also proved far more expensive than originally envisaged. Colin Chamberlain, our Legal advisor, and Structural Engineer John Hams have both provided us with their services free and luckily my own plans, drawings and reports proved acceptable to the professionals thus avoiding the expense of an architect. However we have had to pay for Barclay's consultants and solicitors, all London based companies and seemingly among the most expensive. We received some financial help in the form of grants from the City and Parish Councils and donations from local organisations but this was not sufficient and the deficit has been made up by a personal loan of £2000 from one of our Trustees. All the bills to date can therefore be covered but more is needed to refurbish the building before we can function as a museum and the loan has to be repaid. There are high hopes that further grants and donations will be forthcoming but any bright fund raising ideas will be welcome.



Accompanying this newsletter will be a leaflet inviting all members to visit the museum to view the new room. It looks like a building site at the moment and a considerable amount remains to be done but with the support of the members it is hoped that Bishop's Waltham Museum will once more be up and running soon. ' -

John Bosworth.
Chairman & Hon Curator.

The account of the life of Willibald from the age of 5 years in C. 705 A.D. possibly gives us the earliest documentary evidence of Waltham and its early church. This very abbreviated account of his life and the details of his parentage give some indication that Waltham must have been a place of some importance 1300 years ago.

A shortened account of

The Story of St. Willibald.

From the writings of Huneberc, an Anglo-Saxon nun of Heidenheim.
Noted from his own words to the Bretheren whilst he was Bishop of Eichstadt.

Taken very ill at the age of three years his parents placed him at the foot of a cross and implored God to spare his life, promising that in return they would dedicate him to the service of Christ under the Discipline of Monastic life.

His life was spared and at the age of five years they took him to the . Monastery called Waldheim (Waltham) and handed him over to the Venerable Abbot Egwald as a novice. ~

Having been trained in Sacred Studies and advanced in wisdom, Willibald became anxious to go on a Pilgrimage to the Sacred Shrine of St. Peter and travel to distant foreign lands and eventually he persuaded his father and brother Wynnebald to accompany him.

One summer, when all had been prepared, they set forth to Hamblemouth near the port of Hamwith and embarked on a ship that took them across the Channel where they camped on the banks of the Seine before continuing their travels.

(From details related of their travels this must have been around the year 721 AD.)

Eventually, after much travelling and at the age of 41 years he was made a Bishop and later built a Monastery at Eichstadt.

PARENTAGE OF WILLIBALD (700? -786), bishop and traveller.

Born about 700, was the son of a certain St. Richard who bore the title of king, and is conjectured to have been the son of Hlothere, king of Kent, who died 685. His mother was Winna, sister of St. Boniface, the great apostle of Germany; she was also related to Ine, king of Wessex.

A full account of the life of St. Willibald is published in "The Makers of Christendom" under the general editorship of Christopher Dawson - See part - "The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany". Translated & Edited by C.R. Talbot.
Published by Sheen & Ward in 1954.

A Curiosity in the Museum. Waltham Black or Ancient Burial?

Readers will no doubt be familiar with the tale of the Waltham Blacks, the notorious gang of footpads and deer stealers who held up those travelling the roads to Bishop's Waltham and hunted the Bishop's deer on Waltham Chase. The gibbet where some of them were supposedly hung is marked on the early Ordnance Survey maps as standing beside the road just past the Chase Inn (until recently the Fountain Inn).



Details from the Ordnance Survey 1" Map showing the gibbet.

In the museum we have a small assortment of fragments of a human skull and a piece of deer antler which came with the collection once held at The Institute in Bank Street and known as the "Parish Treasures". The information with these macabre relics is that they "were found in a local chalk pit and were obviously the remains of a Waltham Black, who having caught a deer fell into the pit with his ill gotten booty and died." It now seems more obvious to us that while quarrying the chalk an ancient burial was undermined and as fragments of the skeleton fell into the pit the workmen collected them up and presented them to someone with a fertile imagination and they eventually ended up in the Institute collection. Unfortunately, which chalk pit it was is not recorded so the only piece of information that might have been useful to us, the location of the burial, has been lost.



The pieces of human skull and deer antler found in a chalk pit.

Waltham Abbey Claims the Waltham Blacks.

It seems that Bishop's Waltham is not alone in claiming this notorious band of outlaws as part of their history. The following comes from "Epping Forest, its Literary and Historical Associations" by William Addison. Published by J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd in 1945.

"The eighteenth century brought exciting days to the Forest.

Towards the end of Strype's long life an Act of Parliament was passed with the object of ridding the tract of gangs of ruffians called Waltham Blacks. Its roads had long been infested by them, though cavalry patrolled every night between Hackney and Waltham. The fame of these Essex ruffians spread far. Even John Byrom, the Lancashire poet best known as the author of Christians, awake, wrote a ballad on an Epping Forest hold-up.

Most of these outlaws were ex-soldiers who had fought during the Civil War, and had turned deer-stealers and highwaymen for lack of regular employment afterwards. Their numbers steadily increased during the first half of the eighteenth century, until they became an organised menace. The most famous gang, the Waltham Blacks, appeared about 1690. They were a murderous horde of desperadoes, who once nearly captured William III himself on his way through the Forest to Newmarket. -----In spite of the death penalty the Blacks contrived to evade capture.

Some of them like Dick Turpin's gang, were not deer stealers regularly, but fell back on the less risky adventure if no wealthy traveler happened to come their way. Other gangs of thieves worked in London itself, and came out into the Forest for hiding."

BISHOP'S WALTHAM PALACE FISHPONDS

The Great Pond at Bishop's Waltham was in existence by 1210 and the Little Pond is first mentioned in the records for 1226-7. During the episcopacy of Bishop Henry Woodlock (1305-16) a small pond was also constructed in the Bishop's garden.

The nobility consumed fish in large quantities during the Middle Ages, not only during Lent but also on fish days throughout the year and fishponds were constructed to supply many of the great houses and palaces.

The Bishop's Waltham palace was no exception the ponds supplying fish exclusively for the Bishop's table especially on great occasions. There is no evidence in the ancient records however, that the villagers or even the Bishop's own servants were allowed to catch and eat fish from the Episcopal ponds.

The Bishop's Waltham pond is referred to as the "vivarium" rather than a "stagnum" thus indicating it was a pond used for breeding fish as well as providing for the table. This is born out by the record that in January 1333 men were hired to carry fish from here to stock the pond at Marwell and in addition four barrels were also taken to Wolvesey. Records for the 1244-45 season show that the catch at Bishop's Waltham amounted to 19 pike and 800 roach (no bream were taken then as it was during a time when it is known that an attempt was being made to build up stocks of that species). Seven of these pike and 300 of the roach were sent to Bitterne for the feast to welcome Bishop William Raleigh on his return from overseas.

Fish for Royalty.

In 1268 four Great Pike or "Water Wolves" as they were then often described were taken from Bishop's Waltham pond to Henry In at Winchester, pike being considered a fish fit for royal occasions, and during William of Wykeham's period fishermen were sent to Bishop's Waltham to obtain supplies for a feast for Richard n at Wolvesey in 1393. On this occasion pike, perch and bream were taken.

Maintaining the pond.

It seems that the pond was broken, that is completely drained, approximately every four years during the 13th century, a practice probably carried on much longer.

The purpose of this was to clean the pond of sediment and rubbish and to sort the fish. As many fish as possible would probably have been netted before the pond was drained, the remainder being caught in wattle hurdles placed across the escaping water. Those to be retained would be placed in a holding pond, possibly the purpose of the Little Pond at Bishop's Waltham. The pond would then be allowed to remain dry for a season, a crop often being taken from the fertile mud and it is recorded that during the 1257-8 season Bishop's Waltham pond was dug with spades and planted with barley.

Swans.

Swans were also kept on the ponds to provide prestigious dishes for feast days. Special islands were built for the birds to nest nevertheless during the season 1251-2 it is stated in the records that foxes ate five of the swans, possibly the cygnets.

The state of the ponds today.

The Great Pond still exists but is much reduced in size. Over the years considerable silting and encroachment has occurred and the road was built across it in the 1960's. In medieval times and until much later all the lands and properties on the west side of Lower Lane were described as abutting the Lord Bishop's vivarium as far as "the weir called fishy bed" at Northbrook. The re-alignment of the Corhampton road and recent housing development has altered this area considerably. The southern part of the Great Pond is leased to the Parish Council and used by the local fishing club and the northern part, now commonly referred to as the North Pond although it is often dry during the summer months, is being managed to some extent as a nature reserve.

The Little Pond occupied the area to the south of Abbey Mill and the retaining bank: still exists though it was breached sometime before 1785. The area remained as damp meadowland until recent times when a lot of infilling took place and a large part of it was used for warehouses and light industry. Plans are now in hand to build houses on the site but it seems the rough meadow on the west side of Bishop Lane is to remain.

The location of the small pond in the Bishop's garden is not known but the late Mrs M. Martineau considered the lawn of the Palace House a likely site as an early plan of the palace does show a small pond there.



**Part of the "Great Pond" 100 years ago.
Houses in Ponds Lane can be seen in the background.**

THE LAWDAY HOUSE AND THE POSSIBLE REASON FOR ONE OF THE OLD PUBLIC FOOTPATHS OF BISHOP'S WALTHAM.

It may sometimes seem strange to those that walk in the countryside that some of our old public footpaths take the routes they do, sometimes diagonally across a ploughed field, through the middle of a farmyard and in some cases even through a building. The reason of course, is that the footpath came into being long ago when the landscape and the need to get from one point to another were far different than today, , in most instances the reason why a path follows the route it does having been long forgotten. Some recent research into the northeastern sector of Bishop's Waltham Parish has come up with a few questions and a possible reason why one of our public footpaths follows the route it does.

Early documents refer to Donrigg (various spellings) as the area of high land between Dundridge Lane and Roverigge (now Rareridge) and Hoe, Rigg meaning a ridge. In these early records the lane up the valley we now know as Dundridge lane is referred to as the "Road to the Lawday House". Exactly what the Lawday House was is not presently apparent, but it could be a corruption of Lady House, there was a Lady Barn close to the lane to the west of Galley Down (Part of the Bishop's Downfirst referred to as Galley and sometimes Gallows Down in the 16th century). The field in which the barn stood is still named Lady Barn Field.

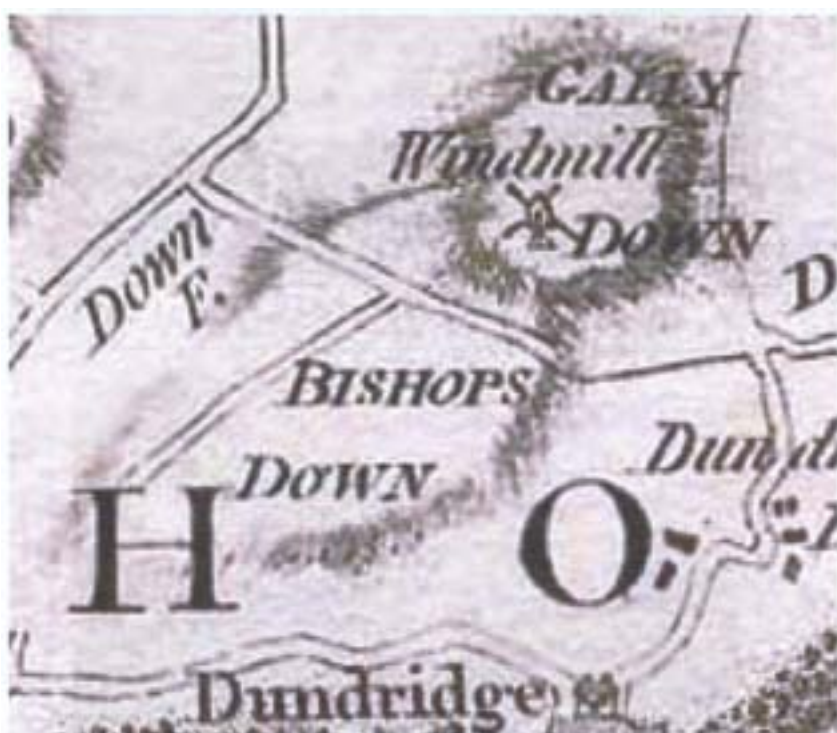


Detail from Greenwood's Map of 1826 showing the position of the Lady Barn.

This Lawday House and or the Lady Barn seems to have been of some considerable importance from medieval times to at least the 17th century and it is interesting to note that the public footpath from the Butts at Free Street heads in a straight line directly to the site of the Lady Barn (apart from a slight kink where it crosses Dundridge Lane and this could be a later re-alignment) thus providing a direct route from the town and could be the reason for its existence and survival today as a public right of way. The large-scale Ordnance Survey map of 1872 shows much of the path as a lane. Could some parts of it in fact be the Road to the Lawday House referred to in ancient documents?

THE BISHOP'S WALTHAM WINDMILLS .

We have recently seen Waltham Chase water mill back in action thanks to owner Jeremy Nedwell and the Channel4 television Salvage Squad but it is less well known that Bishop's Waltham once had two windmills. Both these were on the high ground to the north of Dundry lane one on Cornhill and the other on Galley Down and both disappeared long ago and have been all but forgotten apart from the field names recorded on the Tithe map of 1841 and the name of the little used lane, Old Windmill lane, that goes off towards Cornhill from Dundry lane almost opposite Chalky lane. For those who wish to locate where these mills were the fields are Windmill field on Cornhill, Tithe Map No 271, which can be found at the end of Old Windmill lane if one is prepared to struggle through the nettles and undergrowth to gain access from Dundry lane, and Windmill field on Galley Down, Tithe Map No 124, is to the left of the footpath north of Dundry Farm, but now only part of a much larger field. The late Alan Phillips, who worked for many years on farms in the area and may well be remembered driving his horse and cart around Bishop's Waltham not that long ago, related that he and some others had found hard foundations in the Cornhill field where they believed the windmill to have stood. Both of these mills were no doubt post mills and would probably have left little to show of their existence but there is one other piece of tangible evidence in the form of Milne's map of 1791 which shows a post mill on Galley Down but somewhat to the east of what is believed to have been its actual position.



The Bishop's Waltham Tollhouses .

Bishop's Waltham had four Turnpike roads, the oldest being the route to Bar End, Winchester via Stephens Castle Down and Morstead. The London to Southampton road came over the Hangars from Corhampton through Bishop's Waltham then on through Botley to Southampton, but the two most interesting at the moment are the Gosport to Bishop's Waltham via Wickham road and the four miles oft11 road that joined this with the Titchfield to Winchester Turnpike at Fishers Pond thus providing an alternative route to Winchester. There were a number of Toll Houses that served these roads but only two remain, the little building opposite Paradise Lane on the Wickham Road, originally Forest Gate Toll House, and the other at Ashton Corner, Park Lane Gate on the Fishers Pond road. The Forest Gate Toll House has been beautifully restored and it is a pleasure to see this reminder of bygone days of travel, but what is to become of the other at Ashton Corner, rapidly deteriorating with ivy growing through the windows and at the mercy of vandals?



**The restored Forest Gate Toll House
beside the Wickham road.**



The rapidly deteriorating Park Lane Toll House at Ashton Corner.

THE WHEAT SHEAF

Free Street/Hoe Road corner.

Now - W heatsheaf Cottage, Middle Cottage, and End Cottage.

Additional notes relating to the early history of the premises.

Since the article on this one time Public House was published in the Spring 2002 edition of "Scrapbook" further research has revealed additional information taking the history of this property back to the mid 15th century. Until about 1800 this house was known as "The George" previously one of the lost Public Houses of Bishop's Waltham being listed in the 1792-98 Hampshire section of the Universal British Directory but we did not know of its location. Appropriately a George Lee is listed as being the proprietor at that time. From then on the name "The George" does not appear in the old directories but the name "The W heatsheaf" appears in Piggot's Hampshire Directory of 1828, Thomas Eades being landlord. Ann Eades had succeeded him by 1830 and by 1844 it was in the hands of Edward Eades. The 1784 Hampshire Directory does not list "The George" but a Thomas Padbury (the clockmaker?) kept a house called "The Old King's Head" (not to be confused with "The King's Head in The Square which was kept by a Robert Colbourne at this time).

Heading further back in time the Manorial rental for 1693 shows that the house and land was held by a Mr Newby. The entry being as follows-

*"Mr Newby holds by his wife, a messuage with a curtilage containing half an acre of free lanlinow called the "George". Sum Is. 6d
He also holds a tenement with a curtilage in Free Street. "*

In the rental for 1630 "The George" is not mentioned by name but there is the following entry-

"Henry Cleverly holds freely a tenement, in times past Henry Rive 's, by the rent of 3s. 10d"

This ties in with this entry in the rental of 1550-

"Henry Ryve holds freely, a tenement with a curtilage called 'The George" where he now lives, with a small meadow annexed, formerly Agnes Cristian and later David Knyght, situated in Frestrete between the tenancy of Henry Paperyng in one part and the lane leading towards Swanmore on the pther part, with the east boundary abutting land of Phillip French, by the annual rent at four terms 3s. 10d "

A note with this entry added at a later date reads-

"Now Thomas Cleverley holds freely the "George" with meadow".

Agnes Cristian, the former holder, turns up in the rental for 1464 -

"Agnes Cristian widow holds a tenement with curtilage in which she lives, situated in the Frestrete, between the tenement of William Wylkyin in one part and the lane that comes from Waltham and goes towards Swanmore by the house of Cristine Clere in the other part against the corner there, by the annual rent at four terms 3s. 10d "

Although this early document gives no indication that this was an Inn at that time it is certainly the same holding.

This is now a Grade II Listed Building with the following description on the English Heritage records

"Once the Wheatsheaf Inn, now three houses. Late-medieval timber-framed hall with two-storeyed crosswing, with early C18 extension (End Cottage) and re-cladding, with minor features of the late C19 and C20. Front wall of brickwork in Flemish bond with blue headers, plinth, cambered openings (arch in the gable), remains of rubbed flat arches to two windows now replaced by a cambered arch to one window, 1st floor band to part, deep eaves fascia on brick dentils to the south side; north wall with exposed brick-nogged frame, other walls of painted brickwork. Tile roof, half-hipped at the north end, with large middle gable (to crosswing), and higher roof to the south side ending in a gable. Large hall with inserted 1st floor and fireplace (c1600), with crosswing having a gabled front masking a once jettied 1st floor, and a south side extension of the early C18 with later alterations to the fenestration; west front elevation of two storeys (centre with attic), 3.2.1. windows. Casements, the south side with sashes, including a splayed bay. Two plain doorways, with C20 hipped tiled canopies on posts. The interior of Middle Cottage indicates the medieval form; the former jettied upper floor, the gabled cross wing, and the insertion of fire-place and upper floor to the former hall. End cottage has an oak staircase. "

Notes.

1. The entry in the rental of 1693 is unusual in that it uses "Mr" Newby. Mr was originally an abbreviation of the word Master and a style of address for a Gentleman. It was sometimes used informally for the son of a Baron and the children and the wife of a Baronet, a hereditary title created in 1611, were also addressed as Mr. Miss or Mrs. In the 19th century Mr. usually denotes a tradesman or someone who had no claim to be called gentry.
2. The description from the National Monuments Record shows "End Cottage" as early 18 century. This is the part of the building described in the previous article as "The Wheatsheaf" and is possibly the section described in the 1693 rental as a messuage with a curtilage containing half an acre of free land now called the "George". This, and the fact that the rent has changed, indicates that the original holding had been divided and possibly a new section built. This would date this cottage as late 17th century rather than early 18th century. The 1693 and 1630 rentals come a few years either side of the Civil War so who knows what changes took place at Bishop's Waltham during the period following the demise of the Palace.
3. The 1464 rental states that the property was by "the lane that comes from Waltham and goes towards Swanmore by the house of Cristine Clere." The house of Cristine Clere stood on the opposite (south) side of Bank Street (then French Street) somewhere between Shore Lane and Green Lane, probably approximately where the house "Bank End" stands today. ..
4. It is interesting to note that the two earliest known Inn's at Bishop's Waltham are to be found in this area. The 1464 rental also describes a property on the opposite side of Free Street, approximately where the Waltham Tandoori, previously the "Mafeking Hero" and before that "The White Hart" stands, as "Le Ynne" (Inn) or a messuage called "Hostrys" formerly held by John Mighell at Node (at the crossroads) or alternatively John Mighell the hosteller (innkeeper). No other such establishments have been found in the records until 1630 when a building at the southeast end of the Square previously listed as a tanners cottage had become "The Crown". Could it be that many years ago this was the main route into Bishop's Waltham and the first convenient place to cater for the weary traveler?

Newer members who did not receive the Spring 2002 newsletter with the previous article on the Wheatsheaf may obtain a copy from the museum if required.