



Sandhurst, Berks.

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(Continued from page 63, Vol. 21.)

RATES.

We have the overseers' accounts from 1751 to 1758 at the end of one of the register books. In spite of the annual charge each year, for "wrighting a rate," the writing and spelling are most erratic. Outdoor relief was given throughout the eighteenth century, but paupers were also boarded out among the parishioners. Wokingham and Finchampstead had poor houses in the year 1624, when there is a record of their erection on the waste. The first mention of a poor house in Sandhurst is in 1788, at which time three cottages near the present site of St. Mary's Church were being rented from a man named Horne. Two of them still stand, and are known to the older inhabitants as the "alms houses." There is no record of rents paid for them after 1803.

An annual charge for "gole money" appears in the accounts. It is shown later as "gaol and Bridewell money," and was a rate paid to the county. Money was also expended on cutting the poors' turf.

The following shows the cost of a pauper's funeral in 1757 :—

	s.	d.
" Jan. 2nd—For a sroud for dame freeman	... 4	6
For a coffin ... ..	... 7	6
For the grave an Nell ... ..	... 2	6
P ^d for laying out dame freeman an affadavy ... ..	... 3	0
P ^d for 4 gans of beer ... ..	... 4	8

For a gane louf 1 1
 For three lbs. of cheese 1 0
 For a quartan of backo and a peck of
 pipes 3 0"

From 1787 onwards there is a most carefully kept account with the full assessment for rates made each year by the overseers, passed by the vestry, allowed by two justices, and read out after evening service by the parish clerk.

It appears from the books that from 1787 to 1809 the average rate levied was 4s. 6d. The lists give the names of the tenants of the various fields. The following is the assessment for 1787:—

"JOSEPH GILES and ROBERT RIDGERS, Overseers.
 (a six shilling rate).

		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
John North	for Breech Farm	...	12	18	0	}	15 6 6
	Winter's	...	1	10	0		
	Crout's	...	0	7	6		
	Bounty land	...	1	1	0		
William Giles	for Ambry Hill Farm	17	2	0	}	24 18 0	
	for Groves or Lower Farm	...	7	16			0
James Giles	for Wattmore's	...	1	16	0	}	2 14 0
	Belsher's	...	0	18	0		
Joseph Giles	for The Parsonage	...	8	8	0	}	10 17 0
	The Roundabout	...	0	12	0		
	Arbor's	...	1	4	0		
	Glebe land	...	0	3	0		
Matthew Justice	for Poor's land	...	1	4	0	}	4 10 0
	his own	...	3	6	0		
James Giblett	4	16	0	}	6 18 0
	his own	...	1	4	0		
	Harries Moor	...	0	18	0		
John Giles	0	18	0
William Deane	3	0	0
William Berry	1	10	0
John Watts	his own	...	0	6	0	}	3 6 0
	for Ford's	...	3	0	0		
William Watts	2	2	0	}	4 16 0
	for Moorland's	...	1	10	0		
	for Wattmore's	...	1	4	0		

William Barnard	...	...	...	...	12	0	0
William Terry (for Mill Lands)	...	...	...	...	9	0	0
Robert Ridgers	...	...	...	7 4 0	}	8	2 0
do.	for deep meadows	...	...	0 18 0			
Moses Rackstrow	...	...	...	3 9 0	}	7	10 0
do.	for Hurt Hill land	...	...	1 19 0			
	for Howard's	...	...	2 4 0			
	for Street Lands	...	...	0 18 0			
George Shefford	...	...	...	...	9	12	0
James Marlow (for Snap Rails)	...	...	...	...	0	18	0
Thomas Liley	...	...	...	...	11	14	0
Charles Eells for the Coppice	...	...	...	...	0	12	0
					<hr/>		
					£118 2 6"		

The money was expended as follows :—Weekly payments to ten paupers, £55 18s. 2d. ; rents of five paupers and of the parish poor houses, £9 13s. od. ; cutting the poor's firing, £3 10s. od. ; county rates (gaol and Bridewell money), £5 18s. 11½d. ; casualty expenses, etc., £5 5s. 3d. ; relief to persons travelling on pass, 14s. 6d. ; a pauper marriage, £7 13s. 5d. ; two funerals, £2 5s. od. ; clothes for seven paupers, £14 2s. 6d.

PAUPERS.

Under the poor laws of George the Third's reign all kinds of able-bodied people became chargeable to the support of the parish, so that the overseers were kept busily employed in getting rid of impecunious persons who might be an expense to the ratepayers. Tramps were taken up before the magistrate, who gave them a pass to the town or village in which they were last legally settled.

1788. "Sept. 19th.—Paid Farmer Ridgers his self, horse, and cart carrying a woman to Justice Palmers and back, to constable 3s.

Paid William Berry for necessary relief for her 6 days at his house 4s.

Oct. 5th.—Paid James Giles expences for a travelling man in comp^t 1s. 6d.

Paid Farmer Shefford carrying the man to Justice to swear him to his parish, for an order, and conveying to Hurst parish 5s.

Paid James Giles P. Constable for relieving a man and his wife on the road travelling pass, 1s."

It may be of interest to follow the history of one of the families who were receiving relief at this time as revealed by the overseers' books.

On the death of William S—— his wife, mother and three children were left without means of support, and came on the parish. The following year a certain Mr. John L—— was found who was quite prepared to take the widow off the overseers' hands provided he was put to no expense in the matter. So it was arranged that the parish should pay all the expenses of the wedding. The bill, which came to £7 13s. 5d., included the marriage license, legal fees, ring, clergyman, and parish clerk's fees, and board and lodging for the bridegroom in the village. Finally they were provided with a horse and cart to take them to Windsor, where the husband resided.

The history of the rest of the family can be followed in the books. How "old widow S——" had her rent paid weekly, a new ash box, and 4s. "for curing of her lame hand." How the children, William, Fanny and Sall, were boarded out, and how hats, shoes, camblett, thread, buttons, hessian and dowlas were provided wherewith to clothe them, and a coffin for poor Sall, who succumbed to small pox the same year.

We follow each year the articles of clothing purchased for Fanny and William, and notice especially a large amount for boot repairs. They were taken in by a farmer for 3s. a week. Then seven years later William is apprenticed to Farmer Rackstraw at 2s. 6d. a week and given "a hatt, jacket, round frock, and a pair of breeches," while Fanny, now dignified with the name of "Frances S——, a servant," is also set to work at a neighbouring house.

In 1795 the parish had to pay £6 7s. 6d. to Surgeon Case for medically attending her, and 2s. for "vinegar, oatmeal, etc., for making of Poltices to her arm."

Fanny's shoe bill to F. Horn in 1795, and William's four years later, are the last we hear of the family.

SMALL POX.

In 1794 an outbreak of small pox occurred in the Doe family, and cost the parish the sum of £17 5s. 0½d. A small pox house is mentioned, and two women were employed as nurses at 2s. 6d. a week. One of them subsequently took the disease and her baby died of it. The detailed expenses include "a bottle of wine and 2lbs. of mutton 2s. 1d., ½ ell sheeting 15d., 4¼ ells dowlas 16d., sroud for the child 1s., coffin for the child 3s., paid Doe for burying

1s. 4d., paid for beer at the burying of the child 1s. 6d., $\frac{3}{4}$ bottle of wine 2s. 4d., wine and pork 1s. 6d., wine and mutton 2s. 3d., Doe's wife's funeral (including beer and cheese) 18s. 6d., oranges, wine, meat and gin, etc." The doctor's bill was £4 2s. 6d.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

1792. "At a public vestry meeting held this day by the inhabitants of this parish by the churchwardens and overseers we whose names are hereunto written do consent unto and agree to pay the sum of 3 guineas to W^m. Pargeter surgeon and apothecary of Wokingham to attend the poor under the overseers of the parish of Sandhurst Berks under all sicknesses, broken bones, midwifery etc. as may happen, with proper attendance commencing from Easter Ap. 10th 1792, being this present meeting to Easter 1793, one year only, as witness our hand.

[Signed by] JOHN NORTH, JOSEPH GILES, WILLIAM GILES, JNO. WATTS, JOHN × RACKSTROW, MOSES WATTS, WILLIAM WATTS, JOHN GILL, JOHN SHEFFORD, JAMES GIBLETT, PHILIP PARGETER."

During the war all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 25 were liable to be drawn by ballot for the militia. To avoid their families coming on the parish the overseers would frequently pay for a substitute.

1794. "Paid to Charles Brundon a substitute for Joseph Payse a drawn man for the militia £3 3s. od. Paid for the discharge paper 2s. Paid J^{no}. Rackstrow and James Giblett ex^s attending that day substitute was sworn in 5s."

1797. "Paid expenses at James Giles. J^{no}. New in custody a substitute for W^m. Stevens 5s. 11d. Said James Giblett attending one night and going to Oakingham with do. 1s. 6d. Overseers going to do. 1s. Paid expenses at Oakingham having J^{no}. New to join reg^t 3s. 6d. Paid W^m. Stevens being a drawn man in the supplementary militia* £2 12s. 6d. Paid to John Horne for his discharge paper 2s. £3 6s. 5d."

* The Supplementary Militia were raised for service in the county this year to replace the Royal Berks Militia, who were defending the coasts of Kent and Sussex.

1807. "Paid Jas. Justice by order of the magistrates he being drawn for militia by ye parish of Sandhurst £13 10s. od."

The parish had also to help support a man for the Navy.

1795. "Paid at Justice meeting at Wokingham, Sandhurst parish part of the expenses etc. paid for hiring a person for the Navy £5 16s. 3d."

Among the casual expenses, "paid to a sailor 1s." is a common entry, especially in 1803.

The Easter vestry meeting was at one time always the occasion of a dinner.

1800. "Ap. 18th. Paid James Giles for the Easter vestry liquor etc. £1 10s. od. Paid Mr. Goodchild by bill for leg mutton etc. 10s. 6d. Paid for currans and spice for the puddings 1s. 4½d. Paid by liquor after the bill in 2s. 6d."

1803. "Paid for hedge-pigs, sparrow-birds' heads, and jays' heads 16s. 4½d."

1808. "Feb. 7. Paid Thos. Thrift. Expences on y^e highways £3 12s. 8d. For dinners etc. setting out highway for each inhabitant to perform his duty on account of no. of horses kept when each person agreed to keep the road in repairs as then set out by me Anthony Draper."

Thomas Thrift was the landlord of the "Rose and Crown."

BRIEFS.†

One of the register books contains a list of briefs for which collections were made in the parish during the following years:— 1680, 1694, 1695, 1704 to 1714, 1738, and 1804 to 1808. They were read out in church before the sermon, after which the churchwardens made a collection in church, and also, if so ordered, round the parish during the week. The objects for which the briefs were issued were mainly the repair of some church or the building of another. Others were for private losses by fire and various secular purposes, for example, "The redeeming of prisoners in Turkey" [1680]; "For the French prodisons" [1694]; "William Boyar's brief, loss by fire £1,162" [1714]; "Dunbar harbour" [1738]. Of the 145 briefs recorded only five were for places within the present Oxford diocese, namely, "Rebuilding All Saints' Church Oxford" [1705]; "William Smith, loss by fire at Anchorwick in

† Briefs were Royal Letters issued to the Bishops, and by them to the clergy of their dioceses, authorizing the collection of money for various charitable purposes. They ceased to be issued in 1853.

Wiradsbury Bucks, damage £554" [1706]; "Chalfont St. Peter's in co. Bucks, repair of church" [1709]; "Twiford, in co. Berks and Wilts, loss by fire £1,221" [1709]; "Ensham brief co. Oxon, loss by fire £1,474" [1709]. Between 1704 and 1714 the collections averaged 1s. 6d., but by 1807 they had become very small. Out of eleven briefs read six produced no response at all, and the rest 3s. 4d. between them. The people probably had enough to do to keep up their own church.

(*To be continued.*)

History of the Parish of Beenham.

By *Mary Sharp.*

(*Continued from page 53, Vol. 21.*)

THE BEENHAM LODGE ESTATE.

But little has been traced of the early history of this freehold property. We know that before the year 1828 it had belonged to the Webb family, but although their records can be traced in the Beenham parish books perhaps further back than any others of its inhabitants, yet unfortunately not much information is to be found as to the nature of their holdings.

The earliest record we have comes from Somerset House, a will of one Richard Webb dated 1585, from which we gather that he was a well-to-do yeoman farmer living in the *Parishe of Benhm in the Countie of Barckes*. In it he directs that his body is to be buried in the Churchyard of Benham, and he leaves xij^d. to the *poore man's boxe of the said parishe*, and if that may seem a small sum for a farmer's bequest it must be remembered that money was then at least ten or twelve times its present value; he also gives iiij^d. to his Diocesan Church of Sarum. To his (younger) son William and his three daughters he leaves xij^s. and iiij^d. each, also in