

## NOTES ON SOME FARMS IN CAPEL.

BY

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### MISBROOK.

MISBROOK is one of the picturesque old farm-houses now converted into a gentleman's house, which are not uncommon in the Weald. It is in the parish of Capel, away from the main road from Dorking to Horsham, near Misbrook Green. The farm and the green are named from the brook. Misbrooks, as it is often called, is a misnomer—there was no man named Misbrook. The house is of a type often found in the Weald. There were originally two high halls at right angles to each other, the house practically consisting of two large rooms. These may be 15th century in date. Somewhere about 1590 to 1600 attics were put into the upper parts of each, making separate rooms on a top floor, and a stair was built in, literally a staircase outside at the back of the house, to give access to them. Rather later another wing was added at right angles to the central hall, as it became, and this had a stair inside it. The ground floors of the two old halls have now been divided by partitions into several rooms. The house is well worth the attention of the archæologist and the artist. It may possibly have been moated. There is a bit of water in front of the house which may be all that is left of a moat. The ground is quite level, and the Misbrook close by would have furnished water. The house is timber-framed, and roofed with Horsham slabs.

The ownership, or tenancy, rather, under the lords of Dorking manor can be traced intermittently in the Court Rolls from the 15th century.

The earliest record of tenancy includes a house. In the Steward's Accounts of the 6th year of Henry VI (A.D. 1427-8) we have—

John Broker for one messuage and one ferlingate of land called Mosbroke 4<sup>s</sup> 10<sup>d</sup>. Of the same for half a ferlingat of land called Sewards 2<sup>s</sup> 10<sup>½</sup><sup>d</sup>.

Sewards is apparently a lost name now. It seems by the next record to be merged in Misbrook.

In the Court Rolls of the 28th May, 20th year of Henry VIII, Nicholas (*sic*) death is presented:

who held one tenement and one ferlingat of land and a half called Misbrooke for the rent of 7<sup>s</sup> 8<sup>½</sup><sup>d</sup> and Nicholas Steere his youngest son and heire by custome (is) of full age. Heriot one ox, value 20<sup>s</sup>; Fine for that and his other customary land 33<sup>s</sup> 4<sup>d</sup>.

Sewards and its rent are clearly merged in Misbrook—Nicholas Steere's other customary land was at Stockhouse and Le Beare, the house which since about 1860-70 has been called Bearehurst. The Steeres were a widely-spread family in Capel, Dorking, Ockley and Wotton, and are still flourishing. The custom of Borough English, the succession of the youngest son to customary (villein) land prevailed in Dorking Manor, as usually in the Weald.

From the Court Roll of Dec. 7th, 18th year of Elizabeth, we have a—

Surrender (*by whom?*) to the use of John Steere a tenement and one ferlingat and a half of land called Misbrook, except one close and a parcell of land called a little tagg containing 2 acres called Weeves, parcell of the tenement aforesaid. Rent 10<sup>s</sup>.

Weeves is now called 'The Whewes.

In the Survey of the Manor made in 1622:

Coheires of William Grynfeild holdeth (*sic*) one ferlingat and a halfe of land called Misbrooks and Swards by estimaccon — acres sometimes Brokers after Steeres. Rent 10<sup>s</sup>.

From the Survey of the Manor made in 1649:

William Grynfeild, one other of the sons of the said Thomas Grinfeild<sup>1</sup> holdeth one Customerye Tenement with barnes, stables, orchards, gardens, and — acres of land called Mosebrokes alias Mysbrooks, being a ferlingat and a half of land, sometymes — Rent 10<sup>s</sup>. Present tenant, William Randall (*holding under William Grynfeild apparently*).

In 1780 Michael Constable (another old local name) was owner, and William Ward tenant, as appears from the Land Tax return. I cannot trace all the subsequent holdings.

A ferlingate of land is said to be 32 acres. Thomas Grinfeild was apparently one of the co-heirs of William Grynfeild the elder.

#### BROOMELLS AND BROOME HALL.

In the old parish of Capel and manor of Dorking are two houses, Broomells and Broome Hall, as they are called to-day. The former, however, is marked upon the Ordnance Map (6-inch) as Broomhams, and, to my knowledge, was often called Broomans formerly. Before a new house was built on the site of the latter about a century ago, the old house was called Lower House, and so appears in the earliest 1-inch Ordnance Map. Aubrey, however, collecting his material in 1673, speaks of Broomhall, undoubtedly meaning this place, for it is

The youngest son of Thomas Grinfeild, Samuel, has been mentioned just above.

in connection with the great landslip on Constable's Mosses close to it. To say that there was a great landslip "about Broomhall" would be meaningless with reference to Broomells, which is some miles away from the hill which slid down. So much in preparation for those who do not know the ground. There is a family name, Broman, and I have the strongest suspicion that both places were named from a Broman who held them, that both were Broman's (land), and that a strange working of the Surrey tongue called Broman Bromall, and Bromall Broman, indifferently.

The likeness of the two names gives a pleasing uncertainty to the following extracts from the Court Rolls and Surveys. To identify the two places is not easy, especially as Chasemores held both, I think. The Parish Registers do not begin early enough to allow us to disentangle these Chasemores by their help. I think that I have correctly apportioned the entries, but if any member of the Society can offer a better solution I shall not be above persuasion.

According to the Court Roll of 10 Richard II—

John Broman holds Bromansland, Herstland and Hatchland.

This is Broomells, I think; Hatchland is close to Broomells.

Court Roll of 20 Richard II:

Stephen att hollowaie (*near Dorking*) is dead.  
John Broman junior is next heir.

Court Roll of 6 Henry VI:

John Broman holds Hollowaye, Le Herste, and two fourth parts of Hatchland. Walter Broman holds land at Hatchland. John Broman has also Bromansland. Rent 4<sup>s</sup> 10<sup>d</sup>.

This is clearly the inheritance from John Broman, junior.

## Court Roll of 18 Henry VII :

William Chasemore is dead. He was seised of Bromans and Mosses. Robert, his son, is next heir.

This Bromans is Broome Hall of to-day (*see below*).

## Court Roll of 21 Henry VII :

Charles Barlow surrenders Bromans and Estbrigsills to Robert Lowe.

This is Broomells. It appears later that Bromans and East Bregssells are merged or identical. The farm Bregssells, burnt down a few years ago, which stood near the present railway line, seems elsewhere to be called West Bregssells. Though Broomells is much more south than east of Bregssells, Broome Hall is due west of Bregssells, and could not possibly be called East Bregssells.

## Court Roll of 3 Henry VIII :

Robert Lowe surrenders Estbrigsills and Bromans to William Chasemore and his heirs.

## Court Roll of 6 Henry VIII :

Margerye Nytingale, widow, holds a messuage and land called Bromans with Hatchland.

## Court Roll of 21 Henry VIII :

John Nitingale holds Hatchland and a tenement called Bromans.

## Court Roll of 26 Henry VIII :

William Chasemore is dead ; he held land called Bromans, alias Estbrigsills, left to Richard Chasemore and his heirs ; also Lynd (*Lyne*), which is left to Robert Chasemore and his heirs.

Robert Swan claims these, and his claim is admitted.

These are all Broomells. Lyne is not far away. But in the next entry Chasemores appear holding Broome Hall.

## Court Roll of 29 Henry VIII:

Robert Chasemore surrenders lands in Capell called Bromalls, lying on the east part of the King's highway, to the use of his wife Joan during her life, if not married again, and to her son Robert.

This is Broome Hall. The situation on the east side of the King's highway, the villainously bad track which served as high road from London to Arundel, *vice* the Roman Stone Street abandoned, is decisive. Mosses, which follows, is on the other side of the same road, west of it.

## Court Roll of 36 Henry VIII:

Robert Chasemore is dead, leaving Bromalls to Robert Chasemore, and Mosses to John Chasemore after the death of their mother Joan.

## Court Roll of 38 Henry VIII:

Robert Chasemore (*the younger*) is dead, leaving a daughter Joan, aged one year. Joan Chasemore widow (*his widow*) admitted to Bromals "on the east side of the waye there."

## Court Roll of 1 Edward VI:

William Steere in right of Joan his wife, late wife of Robert Chasemore, craved to have the rent of Mosses and Bromalls to be apportioned Mosses 11<sup>s</sup> 1<sup>d</sup>, Bromalls 14<sup>s</sup>.

## Court Roll of 2 Edward VI:

Joan Chasemore widow (*of the elder Robert*), releaseth to John Chasemore her son all her estate right and tytle in land called Mosses, on condition that he pays her 18<sup>s</sup> yearly.

## Court Roll of 4 Philip &amp; Mary:

Joan Chasemore dead. John Chasemore admitted to Mosses.

## Court Roll of 3 Elizabeth :

William Nitingale holds Bromhams and Hatchlands.

That is Broomells.

## Court Roll of 11 Elizabeth :

Joan Steere (*widow of Robert Chasemore the younger*) holdeth by copie for life a tenement and land called Brommalls. Rent 14<sup>s</sup>. Remainder to Joann Bax wyfe of Thomas Bax.

This is Broome Hall, and Joann is the daughter, a year old in 1546, of Robert Chasemore the younger.

## Court Roll of 22 Elizabeth :

William Nitingale surrenders to Alice his daughter, afterwards wife of Edward Burstled, land called Bromhams.

## Survey of the Manor, 1622 :

John Dale in right of his wife holdeth Bromhams. Robert Swann holdeth Estbrigsells, Bromans and Lynde. Katheren and Mary Steere hold tenements and lands at Bromans, Estbrigsells, and Lynde, sometime one Briggsells, after Swans, after Barlows, after Lowes, after Chasemores, after Swans, &c.

All these must be parts of Broomells.

## From the same Survey :

Philip Bax holds Bromalls, sometime Robert Chasemore's, afterwards Joan Chasemore's (*who married Thomas Bax father of Philip*).

In these earlier records Broomells is always Bromans, or something like it, but has now become Broomells; and Broome Hall is once at least Bromans, if I am right.

In the Land Tax Assessment of 1780 Broomhalls appears representing the old Bromans and the present Broomells, but Bromans or Broomhams recurs again later. In 1780 the present Broome Hall, the former Bromalls, &c., is Lower House. Broomhill is a place



on the Surrey and Berkshire borders, and there may be others. De Bromhill appears as a surname in Surrey Subsidy Rolls under Edward III. The original holder of Bromalls may have been a de Bromhill. Broman is a name of different origin, but the country folk who corrupted Worsfold into Wurzell, Boxfold into Boxall, and Ascelin into Ansell, might easily, indeed evidently do, confound one with the other. The name Lower House was probably used as opposed to Mosses, in the same or the same family's ownership, across the road at a higher level.

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### MOORHURST.

The following extracts from the Court Rolls of Westcote Manor are chiefly interesting as illustrating a common process of change in a local name:

To the Court held Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> 5 Charles (1629) came Thomas Constable who acknowledged that he held of the lord by copy of Court Roll a tenement and land by estimation 100 acres called Moorers, rent 20<sup>s</sup> *et alia servitia debita*.

Court, March 16th, 1715:

William Steere of Morehurst or Morers deceased since last Court. About 60 acres, rent 13<sup>s</sup> 4<sup>d</sup>, heriot a horse worth £3. Anne and Elizabeth his daughters admitted. Fine £30.

Court, Nov. 4th, 1726:

Edward Bax of Morers deceased. Quit rent 6<sup>s</sup> 0<sup>d</sup>, heriot a mare worth 20<sup>s</sup>. Nathaniel Bax, youngest son and heir admitted. Fine £17.

Borough English prevails in Westcote Manor as in Dorking. It seems from the rent and the extent that the holding was divided. Edward Bax was a prosperous man who acquired a good deal of land.



Court, Nov. 12th, 1735 :

Anne Steere of Ockley spinster in contemplation of her intended marriage with Giles Griffin of Dorking, gentleman, surrendered Morehurst or Moorers to her own use until her marriage, then to her own use for life, and after to her intended husband for his life, and after to his heirs and assigns.

It is described as in Dorking parish. The land is in Dorking and Capel; the house is now commonly said to be in Capel parish. But as the public bridle road, not a public carriage road, was diverted from one side of the house to the other early in the 19th century, and as the parish boundary follows the old line of road, it is properly rated in Dorking.

In the Court Roll of Nov. 5th, 1742, we find—

Will of Nathaniel Bax late of Moorers recited. He bequeaths to his son Richard all his customary Messuage Tenement and Farm commonly called Moorhouse, “or by whatever other name or names the same is called, lying and being in Capel.” If Richard dies under age it is to go to testator’s son Philip. Richard aged 17 is admitted through a guardian to Moorhouse. Quit rent 6<sup>s</sup> 8<sup>d</sup>.

The original name of the holding was pretty certainly Moorers. Moorer was a surname of the neighbourhood, meaning no doubt the man who lived on the moor, as Heather, another common name, not pronounced like the plant *Erica*, meant the man who lived on the heath. We see it changing into Moorhouse and Moorhurst. It is the former in the old one-inch Ordnance Map, the latter in universal practice now; and a fanciful derivation from A. S. Maer, a boundary, has been put forward because it is on the boundary of Dorking and Capel parishes, which were, as it happens, one parish till long after the Norman Conquest. Probably several other “hursts” in names are corruptions. There is a case

coming about now close by. In Coldharbour is a farm, Crockers, and a lane, Crockers Lane; Crockers is the name of the holding in the Dorking Court Rolls under Richard II, and was always in use till the last twenty years: but would-be purists, who write guide books, now call it Crockhurst, misinstruct visitors, and tend to corrupt even the natives' pronunciation.