

AN EXPERIMENT IN LOCAL HISTORY

BY

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IN recent years the high cost of printing has rendered the publication of adequate parish histories impracticable except in cases where a substantial subsidy can be obtained. This state of affairs has undoubtedly discouraged many potential authors, and tends to discount the value of a great deal of private research. Where original documents are published, they are often produced in support of some thesis of broad interest, and are not indexed for the personal and local names which they contain. For example, no index is provided to the 1635 Survey of Laxton, Nottinghamshire, printed entire in the otherwise admirable treatise on *The Open Fields* by Dr. and Mrs. C. S. Orwin.¹

In contradistinction to the historian and the field archæologist, the local topographer and still more the genealogist are interested in details rather than in broad outlines; the individual house and the particular person are all-important to them. For their purposes the "perfect" publication of a parish would include a transcript of the registers up to 1837, copies or abstracts of all wills of residents, a summary of the Court Rolls including all personal and place-names, reproductions of the Tithe Map and of all earlier MS. maps, a collection of charters and deeds, and of such survey books or rentals as survive; added to this should be an architectural account of all buildings, down to 1820 at least.

In Surrey possibly the nearest approach to this ideal has been made at Banstead, where the late Sir Henry Lambert produced an admirable parish history in two volumes, and the registers from 1547 to 1789 have been printed by the Parish Register Society. Another magnificent two-volume history, of Blechingley, by the late Mr. Uvedale Lambert, is not matched by printed registers, though the latter have been copied. So far as parish registers are concerned, efforts are being made by the Society of Genealogists to promote further transcription, and the success of the duplicated series of parish registers, collated with the Bishops' Transcripts, now in course of publication for Bedfordshire, gives ground for hope that other counties of moderate size, Surrey among them, may also be able to attain total publication of their registers within a relatively short period.

Comparable publication of other types of record is not to be hoped for, but it is here suggested that a series of "keys" to Surrey parish history should be compiled upon a uniform plan and

¹ Oxford U.P., 1938.

deposited in the collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society. Each key would consist of two essential parts: a map or set of maps; and a collection of index-cards. Upon the maps would be shown: ancient parish boundaries; ancient and modern communications; waterways; quarries and marlpits; commons; the extent of former open fields; manorial divisions; land-tenures (freehold, copyhold or indenturehold); the sites of courts and fairs; churches, chapels, and wayside crosses; houses and the sites of former houses. In view of the work already done in connection with the listing and mapping of prehistoric and Roman sites by the Ancient Monuments Committee of the Surrey County Council, the period which it is suggested should be included is from Anglo-Saxon times up to approximately 1840—the date of the Tithe Maps.

The maps once made, the card-index could be built up gradually as time permitted. Each site marked upon the map would be provided with a card, on which would be marked the salient points connected with the history of the site, beginning with any geological or geophysical peculiarities, and continuing in chronological order of the known references. The source of each reference, and the whereabouts of the sources would also be noted, in accordance with a separate section of cards devoted to records and archives.

Since it is easier to refer to a concrete example than to prepare extensive and possibly misleading descriptions, a start has been made on the parishes of Great and Little Bookham. Two principal and two subsidiary plans record the basic information available. One plan (A) is mainly devoted to communications and inhabited sites; another (B) to manors and land tenure. The subsidiary plans, on an enlarged scale, show the township of Bookham and the centre of the tithing of Preston respectively. For general maps the 6-inch and for details the 25-inch Ordnance Survey form suitable bases.

Little explanation is necessary; the principal sources are a map and survey book of the manor of Great Bookham, made by Thomas Clay in 1614, and a map and reference book of the parish of Great Bookham, c. 1798; the former is at present in the custody of the National Trust; the latter has been deposited at the Kingston-on-Thames Surrey County Record Office.¹ All houses which existed in 1614 have been numbered, from 1 to 85, and the few additional sites occupied by 1798 are distinguished on Map A by the addition of letters, *e.g.*, 33A, 33B, etc. Beneath the explanation of symbols on Map A is a list of all the inhabited sites shown, with the following particulars, so far as they can at present be established: name of site in 1614 or earlier; name of site in or about 1800; present or recent name; the manor of which the tenement was held, and by what tenure; date of the first known reference to the habitation; and date or period of the building (if any) existing

¹ And photostat copies (full-size) at Guildford Muniment Room.

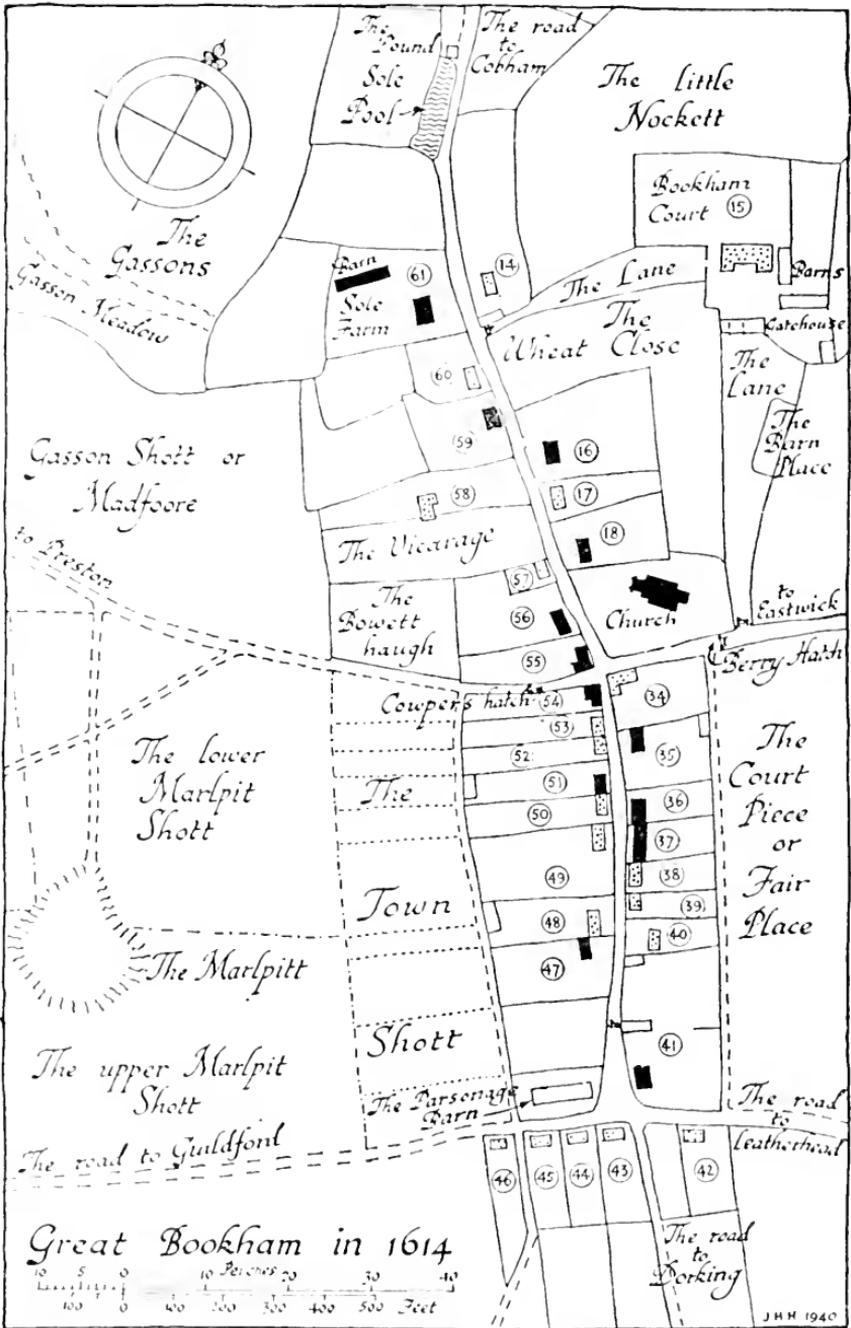


FIG. 1.—THE TOWN OF BOOKHAM, ADAPTED FROM THOMAS CLAY'S MAP. Buildings which survive, wholly or in part, are shown solid black; other houses stippled; vanished barns and outbuildings in outline.

upon the site in 1945 ; where no building now exists, note of the approximate date of demolition is given.

The following specimens are included by way of explanation of the principles adopted in preparing index cards for Bookham. The following abbreviations are used :—

- C* Chertsey Abbey Cartulary (P.R.O., E.164/25).
Ch Chertsey Abbey Register (B.M., Lansdowne MS. 434).
Ct Court Rolls & Books of Great Bookham (National Trust).
L Little Bookham Court Rolls and Books (Messrs. Carter & Swallow).¹
M Map & Reference Book, c. 1798 (Surrey Record Office, Kingston).
P Plan & Survey of 1614 (National Trust).
PCC Will in Prerogative Court of Canterbury (Somerset House).
S Survey of Great Bookham, 1548 (P.R.O., E.36/168).
SW Surrey Wills, Archdeaconry Court (Somerset House).

BOOKHAM, Great & Little Common Wastes.

Lower or North Common on clay, between township and River Mole ; typical tree, Oak.

Upper or South Common on chalk, on ridge of North Downs, between township and summit ; typical tree, Beech.

For North Common, see Reports of the Ecological Survey of Bookham Common in *The London Naturalist* for 1942 (1943) and succeeding years. In the First Year's Report are Preliminary Observations and large-scale base-map by C.P. Castell, and Short History of the Common, with map, by J. H. Harvey.

The South Common is Suthwode, c.1200 (*C*) ; la Southwode, 1333 (*Ch*) ; South or Abbots Wood, 1606 (*Ct*) ; described as the Upper or South Common of 448 acres 14 perches, 1614 (*P*) ; Ranmore Common (*M*).

BOOKHAM, Great Roads—Main N.—S.

The first known main road through Bookham from N. to S. entered the parish at a ford in the Mole $\frac{1}{4}$ mile W. of Stoke D'Abernon Church, passed beside and to W. of tenements Nos. 2 & 3, crossed the N. Common partly on a made causeway (in 1523 Walter Hudson left 20d. "to the Causey towarde the Comyn there as most new is"—*SW*), thence climbed steadily between enclosures to the cross-roads at Great Bookham Church ; here it passes from the clay to gravel capping on the chalk, forming for the next $\frac{1}{4}$ mile the High Street of the town of Bookham (frequently refs. to the "Regia Strata"—*C* & *Ch*) and continues on the chalk as

¹ Now in the possession of Miss Green, Lady of the Manor ; others at the County Record Office, Kingston.

Hole Hedge Way (*P*) past the early enclosures known as Vines (now Phoenix Farm), to descend sharply into the valley at Bagden (see tenement No. 80); at the bottom of the valley it turns eastward and leaves the parish, after which it forms for some distance the boundary between the parishes of Mickleham and Dorking, and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Bookham boundary reaches West Humble Chapel (on S. of road) (see *S.A.C.*, XLVII, p.1*ff.*); the road which leads to "Dorkyng" is mentioned temp. Abbot Adam of Chertsey (1207-23); two King's highways extending towards Dorking occur in 1243, of which one is almost certainly this; and this road is described as leading from "Coueham" (Cobham) to "Dorkyng" in 1342 (all *C*). For some later history see Roads—Cobham Road.

BOOKHAM, Great

Roads—Cobham Road.

At a date uncertain, earlier than the survey of 1614, the Mole was bridged a little to the E. of Stoke Manor House, and a new ford made for use in the dry season still higher upstream. The bridge is said to have been (re-)built by Sir Francis Vincent, 1757-75. (*V.C.H.*, iii, 457). A new brick bridge was built in 1805, still higher up the river, some $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to E. of the original ford. This (made) road now leaves the parish at Mark Oak and proceeds to Leatherhead by way of Fetcham. The section of this road from a point roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ mile W. of Mark Oak to a point near tenements Nos. 63 and 64 (a distance of about 1 mile) has never been made up, and is not used by through traffic. From the S. end of this section onward the route followed is that of the original Main N.-S. Road through Bookham. In 1561 the homage and tenants of Great Bookham presented that Edmund Slyfield gen. had made a purpresture in the King's highway leading from Bookham to Stoke to the common hurt, and that he had made insult and affray upon John Longe and Richard Roger attempting to pass there with two cartloads of the Queen's timber. Slyfield was ordered to destroy his encroachment on the road (*Ct*). In 1776 the Surveyors of Highways were ordered to mend "the Road leading from Slyfield Mill to the Bridge by Sir Francis Vincent," but the parish was unwilling to make up the higher lying section of the road to Mark Oak; in 1787 this section: "the Road from Sheep Bell House (tenement No. 7) to Mark Oak" was indicted by a Mr. Page, and by resolutions of 11 March 1787, 23 Feb. 1791, and 2 March 1792 the Vestry agreed to defend the case before the Assizes. (Great Bookham Vestry Minutes—Rectory.)

BOOKHAM, Great

Tenement No. 72.

Copyhold of the Manor of Little Bookham, known as Rolts, later the Half Moon Public House; divided into two, became known as Half Moon Cottages after the house was de-licensed; since 1935 forms a single house, Half Moon Cottage. In the 16th

century held by John Rowlis (*L*); 1593 part of holding of John Rogere of Preston (*S.A.C.*, XIX); 1614 held by John Roger (*P*); 1623 death of John Roger and his son of same name admitted (*SW*; *L*); 1634 surrendered to John Masseye; rent 2 capons (*L*); 1641 John "Macy" obtains licence to sublet; 1650 dies; William Macey later admitted; 1678 dies; his daughter Agnes, widow of — Foxwell, admitted and surrenders to John Oakeshott, gent.; 1697 held by him; 1710 dies, son John Oakeshott admitted; *c.*1725 occupied by James Elliott; 1723 reversion to Thomas Wood; 1735 John Oakeshott dies; 1739 Thomas Wood dies; 1739 admission of William Wood; 1772 dies; Sarah Wood his only child admitted; 1786 death of Sarah Skinner, *née* Wood; her husband, William Wilson Skinner, admitted; 1798 dies; his brother Thomas Skinner admitted; *c.* 1798 described as Half Moon Public House (*M*); 1800 in occupation of William Edgeler; 1838 Thomas Skinner dies; William Willis admitted; 1840 Willis surrenders to Joseph Bonsor Esq. of Polesden; 1846 Bonsor surrenders to Thomas Samuel Seawell; in occupation of William Quelch and John Cleveland; 1852 T. S. Seawell dies; his son Thomas Augustus Seawell admitted; 1894 T.A. Seawell surrenders to Arthur Horace Bird Esq.; 1895 enfranchised (generally *L*).

BOOKHAM, Great

Records—Manorial.

These records, consisting of Court Rolls and other documents, though known to Manning & Bray and to the compilers of the V.C.H. had disappeared when the Guide to Surrey Manorial Records was drawn up by Miss D. L. Powell in 1928. They were rediscovered in 1936 in the possession of the National Trust, to whom they had passed with the Lower Common and Manorial Rights in 1922.

These records include the following:—

Survey Book and Map, begun 1614, by Thomas Clay (Transcript of Book and copy of Map by J. H. Harvey in collections of S.A.S.) Court Roll A—1554-1617 (not complete; large hiatus in Eliz.) Book 1621-1642; Roll B—1643-1660; Roll C—1661-1679; Roll D—1680-1698; Book E—1691-1706 with Index; Book F—1707-1722 with Index; Book G—1722-1739 with Index; Book H—1739-1784 with Index; Book I—1784-1823 with Index; Book—1825-1848; Book—1845-1874; Book—1875-1935 with separate Index; Minute Book containing Courts of Great Bookham—1737-1770; Fetcham—1737-1770; Cannon Court—1767-1790; Book—1707-1800 with Index; Draft Books—1606-1615; 1707-1710; 1709-1723; 1801-1812; 1812-1817; 1818-1821; 1822-1828; 1829-1831; 1833-1847; Minute Books—1708-1715; 1812-1819; 1831-1848; several bundles of 18th and 19th century deeds; Book of Copyhold Lands in the Manors of Fetcham and Cannon Court—1787. At the end of the Book of 1621-1642 are

minutes of four Courts of the Manor of Eastwick, held in 1626, 1628, 1631, and 1634. Abstracts of these and extracts from some of the earlier Great Bookham Courts are contained in a typescript entitled *Materials for the History of Great Bookham* deposited in the collections of the S.A.S. Certain of the documents have now been deposited at the County Record Office, Kingston-upon-Thames.

Note.—Copies of the 6-inch scale plans of Bookham (*A & B*), here referred to, can be consulted at Castle Arch, Guildford.