

## THE SHARDELOES MUNIMENTS

## II.—WEDON HILL MANOR, 1629—1745.

As was explained on p. 165 Richard Tothill, the printer, had acquired part of Wedon Hill manor in 1575, upon his death, an *inquisitio post mortem* was held at Buckingham, 21 March, 1594, which showed that he died seized of "Wedon Hill, Chesham, Amersham, and Little Missenden, Mantells, land in Wendover, Brasier's End"—<sup>1</sup> and many properties in Devon. It was further stated in this "*inquisitio*" that "Wedon Hill was held of Miles Sands, as of his manor of Chesham Higham, of a total value of £13 6s. 8d." Miles Sandys entered into possession of Chesham Higham in 1588,<sup>2</sup> he had held Latimer since 1567; his grandson alienated both properties to William Lord Cavendish, afterwards Earl of Devonshire.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the manor of Wedon Hill, or so much of it as lay in the parish of Amersham had been acquired by Richard Tothill as has been said; it appears therefore that William Tothill, upon succeeding to his father's estate, owned a portion of Wedon Hill manor and leased another portion. Clearly it was very extensive indeed, embracing South Heath in the west; part of what is now Hyde Heath; Hundridge; Pednor; part of Chart-ridge, and even of Ashridge, in the north, and Botley in the east.

From William Tothill's daughter, married to Francis Drake, the property passed into possession of the Drake family, but the only documents which relate to it are a series of rentals dated respectively 1629, 1674, 1738, 1739 and 1745. Of these the first is by far the most detailed, and indeed furnishes an extremely full picture of the whole area long before it was inclosed, though we may see a gradual process of inclosure taking place. It is contained in a parchment-bound volume of 18 leaves, of which the first 7 or 8 are devoted to Wedonhill manor, 4 or 5 to Little Missenden, Woodrow, Shardeletes, and

<sup>1</sup> *Abstracts from the Wills of English Printers*, by H. R. Plomer, 1903, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Victoria County History*, vol. III, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto vol. III, p. 209.

Amersham; and on the blank leaves at the end the rent roll, of the farms and cottages which were let at rack-rents in 1660, has been added. Whatever interest may attach to some of the personal names in the latter pages the high topographical interest belongs to the freeholds and copyholds in Wedonhill manor; the reason for this probably is that the "bayliff" lived near it, and had many of his relatives (including his own son), amongst the tenants. The first, or title-page, is as follows:—

A Noate-Booke made the Twentieth daye of December Anno Domin 1629 for receipt of the quitt Rentt due by the yeare unto the Lord of the Mañor of Weedonhill, Shardlowes, and Woodrowe, with the particuler denomination and scituation of the howses, Lands, and Tenements lyable to the payment of the same, As it hath binn manye yeares paste and at this present is gathered by Michaile Birche of Chartridge in the parish of Chesham, yoman; As well for the Right Wor<sup>th</sup>. William Tothell Esqu deceased as also for Mr. William Drake<sup>4</sup> present possesser theire of.

The rent roll of 1674 is contained upon four skins of vellum, each about 27 inches long by 8 inches wide; the rent roll called "1738" is only so dated on the cover, it bears no date inside in the general heading, but from names mentioned and from the writing can be put about 1700, though perhaps used for 1738; this and the other two 18th century rentals are written in bound books. The vellum has been rubbed in a few places, but, generally speaking, all are in excellent condition, and that of 1629 is beautifully written, inferior in workmanship only to the noble one from Hartwell now in the Society's possession. This rental (so far as it concerns the manor of Wedonhill), will be printed in this type; changes in the subsequent rentals will be inset below in smaller type. Obvious contractions have been expanded for easier reading, and for the same reason a little punctuation has been introduced.

<sup>4</sup> He was not created baronet until 17 July, 1641.

## HUNDREDG

Imprimis Frances Cheyne Esqu<sup>s</sup> for lands lying in Hundredg in the parrish of Chessham, and for other lands called Copperkins lying in the parrish if Agmondesham alias Amnarsham and payeth to the Lord of the manor of Weedonhill by the yeare for quitt rentt

11s.

In 1674 "certain lands called Copperkins and lying by Copperkins Lane" were held by Dame Lucy Tyrrel; she also held "Chownes Meade, Howletts Croft, Beech Croft, Lodgefield, Penn Croft, and Penn Grove." She was the daughter of Sir Thos. Barrington, of Essex, and married, firstly William Cheyne, and secondly Sir Toby Tyrrell, of Thornton. When she died in 1691 she was buried at Chesham Bois by her first husband, where a floor-slab commemorates her.<sup>5</sup> The main line of the Cheyne family, as is well known, came to an end upon the death of Viscount Newhaven in 1728, Lady Newhaven's niece had married John, second Lord Gower, who appears as holder of these lands in 1738. In the following year, and in 1745 the Duke of Bedford was holder.

Item Richard Birch of Chessham for two tenaments, one orchard, one meade plott to the said tenaments & adioyning; also for two Crofts both called Swornehilles, and adioyning upon a lane in the parrish of Chessham aforesaid called Westmeade Lane; also one other peece of arable land lying in a Comonfeild in the parrish aforesaid, called the Worthys, adioyning to a peece there called Dicksdell peece, all payeing by the yeare for quitt rentt to the Lord of the Manor of Weedonhill aforesaid

8s. 8d.

The same Richard Birch for two little tenaments more and a meadowe, all lying in the parrish of Chessham aforesaid and now in the occupation of one Nathan Edwards and of one William Catch, and is newe freehold. Also, for one close lying in Hundredg aforesaid (adioyning there unto certaine land called the Veneues) and is now in the occupation of Richard

<sup>5</sup> This was the Francis who succeeded his uncle at Chesham Bois in 1620; two years later he married Anne, daughter of Sir Wm. Fleetwood, of Great Missenden. He died in 1644. (*V.C.H.*, III, 219).

<sup>6</sup> Lipscomb, III, 119; Browne Willis's *Buckingham*, p. 311.

Bisco, is newe freehold, all paying by the yeare for quitt rent to the Lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid 9s.

The same for a meauage called Grymes where in the said Richard Birche now dwelleth and certaine plotts to the said meauage adioyning, all in the parrish of Chessham aforesaid, and payeth for quitt rent by the yeare to the Lord of the manor aforesaid 1s. 8d.

The same for certaine lands called Turners Closses adioyning upon the lane called Weedonhill lane paying by the yeare for quitt rent to the Lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid 8s. 4d.

The same for a peece of land lying in the Comon called Westdeane under Cadmorehill and payeth for quitt rent to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid by the yeare 4d.

The same for certaine lands lying at Hundredg aforesaid called Swornehill adioyning to the arable land theire latelye purchased for the poore of Agmondesham, and also for a grove lying at Hundredg aforesaid is all olde freehold and payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid for quitt rent 2s.

The same for lands called Chaulklets, sometime Burton's land, and is old freehold and payeth by the yeare for quitt rent to the lord of the manor aforesaid 3s. 10d.

The same for a tenement abutting on the lane called Weedonhill lane, and for a close to the said tenement adioyning is olde freehold and payeth to the lord of the manor aforesaid for quitt rent by y<sup>e</sup> yeare 1s. 4d.

The same for a close by Coppie called Graceletts adioyning to the lane called Weedonhill lane, and abutteth on a close theire called Spratts hill & payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor aforesaid 9s.

The same for a peece of land lying neare unto West meadelane gate, where sometime the old pound stode, paying by the yeare to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid 4d.

These holdings are not easy to recognize in the roll of 1674, at that date Thomas Birch held Turners Close, and another close called Chalklads, evidently the same as

"Chauklets" above; John Biscoe held "two closes caled Grassletts by Coppey," and one may be the copyhold "Graceletts" held by Richd. Birch. William Child had Grimes barn, which may be part of the messuage in which Rd. Birch lived. It seems likely that the Childs followed Richd. Birch's holdings, for in 1739 "Henry Child, gent." held Grimes Barn, ground in the Worthy, a close called Sworn Hill, alias Wingbarns, Chalkladds, and Graceletts. At that time Nemiah Keech was his tenant, but in 1745 Francis Kingston held it all under Mr. Child, Graceletts was still the only copyhold.

Item Nathaniell Carter for a certaine Tenament called Ladds in Chessham aforesaid, wherein the said Nathaniell now dwelleth, payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor aforesaid 2d.

In 1674 William Beale, gent., held "Lades," paying 3s. for it, and in 1745 Robert Herbert, a blacksmith, was paying the same, before him John Wingrove held it.

Item Thomas Didsbrough for a close called Bletchmorecroft lying neare unto another close called Bletchmore close, is newe freehold and payeth to the lord of the manor aforesaid by the yeare for quitt rent 2s.

William Child held it in 1674, it was then a close "caled Blechmoor croft abuting upon Blechmoor Cros."<sup>7</sup> Early in the 18th century the holders, "by copy," were Chrstr. Geary and John Hudsdon; in 1739 it had become "Buckmore Close," and was held with other lands, by Mrs. Meller, with Henry Chemer, junr., as tenant.

Item William Cock for a tenement in Chessham called Empes payeth to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid for quitt rent by the yeare 2d.

In 1674 John Dudsbury was at Empes, by 1738 Sarah Strap, widow, was in occupation; the name disappears after that date. The tenement was evidently in two portions for the Widow Bampton also had a tenement called Empes in 1674.

The same William Cock for 2 Closses lying in Hundredg aforesaid, the one called Graclets,<sup>8</sup> the other called Lytle Hyde, abutting upon the lane called

<sup>7</sup> On the other hand Thomas Dudsbury, who might be a son of J. Didsbrough, held "a close caled Blechmoor being formerly two"; but with the word "croft" added the close belonged to Child, as stated.

<sup>8</sup> This is written above "Grymes," as though intended to take its place.

Weedonhill lane, payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor aforesaid 2s. 8d.

Possibly the alterations from Grymes to Gracelets was wrong, because the rental of 1738 shows that Thomas Whitehart had "a close called Grinders, and another called Little Hide, alias St. John Booth, both adjoyning to Weedonhill lane." The widow Whiteheart had Grinders in 1745, and "Little Hides alias St. John" as copyhold. In 1739 the tenant was James Whitehart.

Item John Cock for 2 peeces of land now laid together neare adioyning to a close before called Bletchmore payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor aforesaid 1s. 8d.

Item Thomas Gardner, for a close by coppie abutting upon the said Bletchmore close payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill aforesaid 4s.

Item Thomas Cock<sup>9</sup> for a close called Pittfielde adioyning to a lane called Holt lane, and for a peece of land lying in the Common called the Worthyes<sup>10</sup> payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor aforesaid 3s. 8d.

In 1674 William Dyer, gent., citizen of London, held both these. In 1738 Charles Lowndes, Esq., held "a field called Pitt close, and a peice in the Worthy in the occupation of John Parrott."

Charles was the youngest son of "Ways and Means" Lowndes, and succeeded his father at the Bury, whilst the eldest son lived at Winslow. The present owner of the Bury is in the fifth descent from Charles Lowndes.

Item Benijah Breedon for two parcells of land called Wingbones abutting upon the Lane called Westmeade lane, payeth by the yeare &c., &c. 3s.

From entries in the rentals of 1738 and later it seems that Wingbones (then held by Henry Child), was an alias of Sworn hills; "two crofts both called Sworne hills" are mentioned in Richard Birch's first holding.

The same for a close called Calkleds adioyning upon the orchard of Thomas Hickman and abutteth upon the

<sup>9</sup> In the margin is written "nowe in the tenure of Timothy Lovet. Now Mr. Flower, Londoner."

<sup>10</sup> From "weorthig," meaning a small property or enclosure.

lane called Weedonhill lane, payeth by the yeare &c. 5s.

Richard Holl had the "close caled Chalklads" in 1674; by 1739 it was in possession of Henry Child.

The same for a parcell of land lying in the said Common field called the Worthies nere unto a lane theire called Hollts lane, payeth by the yeare &c. &c. 3s. 4d.

The same for a close which is part of the whole Hyde and lyeth next to a close called Hillfield and abutteth upon the lane afore called Westmeade lane payeth by the yeare &c. &c. 1s. 6d.

Item Thomas Hickman for a tenament wherein hee now dwelleth, which said Tenament adioyneth to the lane afore called Weedonhill lane, payeth &c. &c. 3d.

Item Thomas Bowler for a close called the Halfe Hyde adioyning to the parcell of land before mentioned to be in the occupation of Benijah Breedon called part of the whole Hide, and abutteth upon the lane afore called West Meade lane, payeth by the yeare to the lord of the manor of Weedonhill. 1s. 9d.

In 1674 Richard Holl held this, and by 1739 Henry Child included it amongst his other holdings.

Item Jossias Twetchell for certaine parcells of land called Doblins abutting upon the lane before called Weedonhill lane, payeth &c. &c. 13s. 4d.

A marginal note marks it "nowe Jossias Weedon"; in 1674 Thomas Weedon had Doblins and Doblins Leeth; by 1739 Philip Doughty, Esq., had become owner, with Thos. Whitehart as tenant; it would be interesting to know if this Leeth or Leath is the same word as the Lythe, familiar to readers of White's *Selborne*, with the meaning of a steep pasture, from Old English *hlid*, meaning a slope, a hill side. In the rental of 1745 it has become corrupted to "Heath."

Item Sarah and Abigall Tyller for a close by Coppie called Cockdell Close, abutting upon the said Weedon hill lane, and adioyning to a close before mentioned to be in the occupation of William Cock called Grynders, payeth &c. 4s.

Item Richard Biscoe for a close called Spratts hill, adioyning upon the said Weedonhill lane, and upon a parcell of Coppiehold land called Cocksdel Croft payeth &c. &c. 4s.

In 1674 John Biscoe had Spratts Hill; the 1738 rental gives it to Mrs. Thoresby, though it is in the occupation of John Cony. The 1739 rental makes "Mr. Prince" the proprietor and Thomas Whitehart tenant, and in 1745 the proprietor's name has become Prince Child.

The same for a close by Coppie called Graclets abutting upon the said Weedon hill lane and adioyning upon the parcells of land before mentioned to be in the occupation of Josias Twitchell called Doblins, payeth &c. &c. 7s.

As was noted on p. 214, John Biscoe held *two* closes called Grasslets in 1674, one of them had been Richard Birch's, and the other was this held by John Biscoe, who was possibly his father. In 1738 Samuel Ware held both closes, in 1739 the proprietor is given as "Mrs. Hawes, trustee of Woolford and John Ware," with John Cony as her tenant; in 1745 Woolford and John Ware had succeeded her and Hen. Collins was tenant.

Item Thomas Butcher for a tenament and a croft adioyning upon the comon called Weedonhill Grove payeth &c. 8s. 2d.

In 1674, when Deborah Jurdain held it, the description was "a tenament and a meade belonging to the same standing and being by Weedonhill Greene." When Dorothy Rane<sup>11</sup> had it in 1738 it was called "Weedonhill croft, late Smith's"; she still had it in 1745.

The same Thomas Butcher for a plott by coppie adioyning to the said tenament and sometime taken from the said Common called Weedonhill Greene, payeth &c. 4d.

Item Lawzerus Weedon for a Tenament and 4 Closses all called Wards and lyeth neare to a lane

<sup>11</sup> One cannot help wondering whether this was the Dorothy Evesdale who married Benjamin Rane of Little Missendon on 16 Jan., 1701 (*Phillimore*, VIII, 53), and whether Benjamin was a relic of the family of Rane, extinct in the 14th century, whose name is still preserved in Raans Farm, that agreeable 16th century structure some 4 miles S.E. of Weedonhill. The last was Walter (1372) whose daughter married Thos. Grove, from whom it passed to the Brudenells.



leading to the grounds and wood called Molefreeth payeth &c. 2s. 8d.

The rental of 1674 shows that William Dossitt was then owner; it describes them as "a Joyning to the lane that comes by Molfreeth & soe to Hidheath." In 1738 Robert Edwards had them and a tenement "where Wm. White lives." In 1739 the proprietor unexpectedly becomes Francis, Lord Bishop of Chichester, and the tenant was Joseph Hewson; the holding had become merged with many others; by 1745, when the Bishop was dead, it was vested in his widow, and Thos. Tufin was tenant.

Item William Lovett for a Wood called Molefreeth payeth &c. 10s.

George Norburey had it in 1674; afterwards it followed the same occupations as in the case of Wards above.

Item James Lovett for a measuage and 3 tenements (with fiftie acres of land all called Tomlinsnes), the said measuage and one of the said tenaments adioyning upon a Comon called Mainewood Heath, and the other tenement upon a lane called Cane lane payeth &c. £1.

In 1674 "Daniell Antoney and Mary his wif" were holders, and the acreage was put at "a Bout three score"; in 1738 Thomas Child was there, in both places it is called 'lycing by Hyde Heath." Afterwards Wm. West, Esq., was proprietor and Wm. White the tenant, and so it remained in 1745.

This is the only case of the number of acres being named in the 1629 rental.

Item William Clifton gent. for parte of a farme called Hundredg with a Tenementt, woods, and lands called Darriers, payeth &c. &c. 6s.

The same for parte of a meade and for 2 peeces of land lying in the comon called the Worthies, one of which peeces lyeth neare to a gate called Ridgges feildegate payeth &c. &c. 10s.

These seem to have become included in a larger holding by John Crippse in 1674; the same group was held by Robert Edwards in 1738, but directly afterwards passed to the Bishop of Chichester.

Item Josias Weedon, gent. for lands called Dobblins and Dobblins Lyth, abutting upon the said Weedonhill

lane, and neare adioyning to the land of the said Josias Twetchell called Doblins, payeth &c. &c. 14s. 8d.

This is doubtless the Josias "sonne of Richard and Mary Weeden of Pidner" whose baptism is recorded in the Chesham register,<sup>12</sup> though he was actually baptized at Great Missenden, 15 Jan., 1575. In 1674 Thomas Weeden held Doblins; by 1738 Philip Doughty, Esq., had become owner, and remained so in 1745 when the Widow Whitehart was tenant.

Item Daniell Weedon, gent. for one close called Howletts crofft, for one other close called Bitchcroft, for one other close called Lodgefield, for one other close called Penncroft and Pennygrove, all lying unto that side of Hundredg next to Bitch lane, payeth &c. &c. 11s.

Daniel we may take to be brother of Josias, being baptized on 20 Novr., 1580, as "sonne of Ryc. and Mary Weeden of Pedner."<sup>13</sup> In the 1738 rental these formed part of the property held by John, Lord Gower; by this time the spelling of the second close had improved to Beech Croft, which it probably should have been all the time.

Item William Weedon, gent. for a tenement, an orchard' 2 closses called Peddnor, one other close called Oates, and one other close called Pease Close, all adioyning upon a lane called Peddnor lane, and for one other close called Ladds, abutting upon a lane leadeing to a comon called South heatthe, payeth &c. &c. 11s. 6d.

This William may have been he who, with a twin Thomas, was baptized on 25 Mar., 1574, as "sonnes of Ryc. and Joan Weedon of Ashlygreene."<sup>14</sup> His wife's name appears as Felix, and they left five daughters, the eldest of whom we shall meet again as Mary Beale; it was William's brother Thomas who founded the almshouses at Chesham.<sup>15</sup> These Wedons represented the eponymous Wedons of the very Manor we are considering and of Weedon, the hamlet of Hardwick (they lived at Drayton Beauchamp); in both places Almar, the Domesday tenant, was followed by the family which had a William Wedon towards the end of the 12th century; although their ownership of Weedonhill manor ceased

<sup>12</sup> J. W. Garrett-Pegge, p. 37.

<sup>13</sup> Ditto p. 47.

<sup>14</sup> Ditto p. 35, the years are O.S.

<sup>15</sup> Report of Charity Commissioners, 1819-1837, p. 55.

in 1365, there were many of the name still living there, as we see, in the 17th century. Their association with Little Pednor is mentioned by the *Victoria County History*,<sup>16</sup> one feels that the William of our rental would be very greatly astonished to see the architectural freaks which the present century has inflicted on his old home; though it had admittedly lost all the dignity it may have borne in his day before this great scheme was carried out. Probably he would remember his Horace and cry:

cur invidendis postibus et novo  
sublime ritu moliar atrium?

Item George Baldwin for one close called Randolls, one other close called Twickhans Croft, both adioyning to the lane called Collens Croft lane, payeth &c. &c.  
2s. 4d.

An original note reads "nowe in the tenure of Jossias Weedon"; in 1674 Henery Cock had Tincker's Croft, and Thomas Weedon had Randalls. In 1738 Wm. Potter held "Tinckham's Croft, late Henry Cocks," and Phillip Doughty held "Randalls, now in the possession of Ellis Cogdell." By 1739 "Twickhams" had become "Finchams"; and in 1745 Elizabeth had succeeded William Potter.

Item William Weedon, gentn., for a tenement and 2 plotts called Ladds, lying at the upper end of the lane called Peddnor lane, paith &c. &c. 6s.

The same for land called Buckmore adioyning on the said Peddnor lane, for a peece of land called Fryanhill peece, adioyning upon land called Crutches and a lane called Greeneyard lane,<sup>17</sup> leadeing from Chartridg to West Deane, and for one other peece lying in Elmonfield adioyning on the bottome of the same West Deane, payeth &c. &c. 4s. 4d.

The same for a close called Fryanhill abutting upon Monkscroft. The same for 2 peeces in Elmonfield lying under Buckmore and abutting upon the said Monkes Croft, and for one other parcell of land lying in the bottome betwixt the said Fryanhill and the said Monkscroft, all holden by coppie, payeth &c. &c. 8d.

<sup>16</sup> Vol. III, p. 206, and p. 148 for the descent of Wedon Hill manor.

<sup>17</sup> A marginal note says "now in the tenur of Robert Lovet."

In 1674 Willm. Beale, gent., held all these, and in 1738 & 1745 Mrs. Meller had them, with Hy. Channer, junr., as tenant. To-day the ridge to the north of Pednor is called Friar's Hills, and one wonders whether Monks Croft is a relic of the interest which the abbey of St. Mary Pré, Leicester, held here, furnishing the name of Chesham Leicester, whilst "Friars" is the modern corruption of Fryan; a bush-drained field is called "fry" (from gen. of O.E. thryh—a water pipe). The next entry is in different, but contemporary, writing:

Item Edmund Wright Esq. for Westmead, Horssemead, Hinchley, Crockhill, one tenement, Borescrofts and Border's Croffts, 2 closes called Linsletts, Hullfield and three closes called Venices. 1d.

No entries are found in the later rentals for any of these, which is the more to be regretted as "linslett" certainly gives the idea of linchet, which might well be found in such hilly country; and "Venices" "admits of a wide conjecture."

## CHARTRIDG

Item Ezechèll Norwood for a tenement in Chessham, and for 2 peeces of land lying in the comon called Pullfield, the one of them under a woodside there called Hineng, the other at the end of a close there called Compp, payeth &c. &c. 2d.

When Thomas Owen, Esq., held this in 1674 the description ran: "two peeces of land in Pulfeild now inclosed with other land and lying upon Belingdon hill, the one of them abuting upon a close caled the Comp, and the other upon a wood caled Litle Hyneing."

The *Dialect Dictionary* gives Comp as a Sussex word for valley. Ezechiel Norwood was baptized at Chessham 17 Jan., 1579, and buried 22 July, 1631.

The same for one other peece of land lying in Beechfield adioyning on a close called Halfe Reading, payeth, &c. 3d.

A marginal note in the writing of the rental reads: "Since this booke was mad the 2 peeces lying in the comon called Pullfield above named to be in the possession of Ezechell Norrod is sould unto [Steeven] Roubard and payeth by the yeare to the Lord for quit rent. 8d."

Item John Robarts for a peece in Pullfield adioyning upon the highway leading from Ashridg to Chessham, payeth &c. &c. 4d.

In 1674 Mathew Learad was paying 2d. for this land; in 1738 John Brant held it, with Henry Parrott "malster of Chessham" as his tenant, and this continued in 1745.

Item Richard Bisco for a peece in Westdeane called Cattsbraine hill payeth &c. 3d.

This is not found in later rentals, the field name of Cat's-brains is common throughout England and, according to the *English Dialect Dictionary*, means a rough clayey soil full of stones or clay and chalk such as occurs above the gault; the second meaning applies well to Chartridge.

Item Steeven Roubard for 4 peeces of land in Pullfield adioyning upon the highway and abutting all upon a close called Gasscoynegrove, payeth &c. &c. 8d.

The same for a peece of land in Burrett's field next unto Burrett's lane, on the lower side of certaine land theire called Readings, payeth &c. &c. 2d.

In 1674 one of the many holdings of Thomas Owen, Esq., consisted of "two peeces in Pullfeald abuting upon a close caled Gazon Grove and are now inclosed." Unfortunately this holding does not appear distinctly in later rentals, so one does not know whether "Gazon" is a corruption of "Gasscoyne" which we shall meet again in the 1629 rental.

The later rentals give Burrett's as a tenement, in which the "heirs of John Gosham" followed Wm. Chase; in 1674 John Chase held it.

Item Robert Attkins for a tenement in Chartridg adioyning upon the highwaye leadeng from Ashridge to Chessham, payeth &c. 1d.

A marginal note has "nowe John Twitch of Watfort."

The same for a peece of land in West Deane aforesaid with a gore abutting upon a style called Churchfield style, payeth &c. &c. 7d.

In 1674 John Cheeseman had this, he was followed by Joseph Potter in 1738, and he by John Treacher in 1745.

Item John Grover for a peece of land in West Deane aforesaid, adioyning upon a place theire called Uplands [altered from Sarretshill], payeth &c. &c. 1s. 4d.

Item Thomas Cock for a peece of land in the said West Deane abutting upon a parcell of land there called Houseside, payeth &c. &c. 8d.

A marginal note reads "nowe in the tenur of Timothy Lovet." These pieces cannot be identified with certainty in later rentals.

Item Steeven Roubard for a close called Salletts abutting upon Chartridge streete, and for one meade platt called Belhamsmeade adioyning to the said close called Salletts, and for a part of the land called Ridings adioyning to the said Chartridge streete, and for one other parcell of land called Sheecroft adioyning to a close called Crabtree peece, payeth &c. &c. 8s.

This became one of Thos. Owen's many properties in 1674, though the spelling was corrupted: "lands calleth Sellatts, Burnham's mead and parte of a close caled Redings lying by Charteridg greene & millway, abutting upon a close caled Crabtree peece." Later these lands were included in a farm which was leased to Harry Lasenby at £65 a year; the total acreage was 188.

Item Thomas Preston for a tenement and a plott to the same adioyning and for a close in Beechfield neare unto Burrets lane, and for one other close in West-deane aforesaid, lying nere under a place there called Shortegrove, payeth &c. &c. 2s.

Thos. Owen also had these lands, but not the tenement in 1674.

Item John Birch for a close called Revits adioyning to the orchard belonging to the measuage wherein the said John now dwelleth, and for 2 peeces of land lying in Westdeane hill, and for one other peice lying in a close called Gascoinegrove Close neere unto the lane there called Longelane, and for the lower part of a close in Beechfield abutting upon the land there called Short Ladds, payeth &c. &c. 2s. 4d.

In 1674 John Birch, or his son of the same name, held this; in 1738 the Widow Birch and John Birch the younger were the holders; here "Gascoinegrove Close" is avoided by calling it a "peice of land inclosed in Pullfield adioyning to Long Lane." By 1745 Mr. Reynolds held jointly with the Widow, and Thomas Putnam was their tenant.

The same for a close called Painseshill and for a wood called Gorewood adioyning upon certaine lands their called St. Maries land, payeth &c. &c. 2s. 2d.

These followed the course of the last holding. The name of "St. Maries land" certainly refers back to the Leicester abbey of St. Mary de Pré already mentioned.

The same for a close called Chambers adioyning to the lane called Appshudd lane, payeth &c. &c. 5s.

Chambers followed the other lands of John Birch. A later entry will show that the lane should be called "Appswood lane."

Item Thomas Birch, sonne of Michaile, for part of a close called Gorewood longeclose, and for one acre in Painseshill, and for one peece of land lying in West Deane aforesaid neare unto certaine land their called Greatlands, and for one other peece of land lying in Beechfield aforesaid and adioyning upon certaine land their called Shortladds, payeth &c. &c. £1 3s. 6d.

These also were taken by the Widow named above.

Item Robart Lovett for a close called Pitterroft abutting upon Chartridg streete aforesaid and adioyneing upon a lane their called Hawksheadlane, and for other lands called Hawksheadcroft and Phillipps Pitt, payeth &c. &c. 4s. 6d.

In 1674 Robert Lovett, possibly son of the above, was the holder; in 1738 John Birch of the Maple had become owner, whilst in 1745 Nathaniel Birch of the Maple had succeeded him.

The next entry which follows relates to property which passed through the same hands.

The same for a close called Painseshill adioyning upon the woods called Bellowes wood and Painseshill springe, and for a close called Butts close lying neare unto the land called Greeneyard, and for a maune in Peasehill field, and for one other maune lying in West Deane neare unto grounds their called Longegrove, and for one other peece of land lying in the said West deane abutting upon the lands before called Greatheads, payeth &c. &c. 4s.

This being the first appearance of the word "maune," something needs to be said of it; the later rentals spell it

"maum" (with variations), and though its only appearance in Wright's dictionary is for "malm," meaning a rich clayey soil mixed with chalk (like the catsbrain we have already seen), there is no doubt that it came to be used for the pit out of which chalk could be dug. The *Victoria County History* (vol. III, p. 206), in speaking of Chartridge says: "the surface of the soil is clay with a subsoil of chalk, which has been worked in pits, now mostly disused, scattered over the parish." Such chalk is still used for yards, gateways and roads, where, if covered over, it will make a good and fairly durable bottom. From belonging to the pit the name may even have spread to the field in which it lay, for the rental of 1745 has "a close called the Maume." If the word is, as appears to be certain, derived from "malm," it is clear that it always formed an assonance with "storm" and not with "calm" (at Chartridge), though the *Oxford Dictionary* makes the present day pronunciation rhyme exactly with "calm."

In a letter from Ralph Thorseby to John Ray, n.d. but printed in Derham's edition of Ray's *Letters*, 1718, p. 332, is a long list of "local words," including *maum*, tender, fryable, short, mellow.

Cobbett in *Rural Rides* (vol. i, p. 180 of edn. 1908), says "the soil is a sort of marl, or as they call it here, maume or mame, which is when wet very much like grey soap."

Item Josias Weedon, gent., for a cottage and 3 plotts called Deerings adioyning upon a lane called Holte lane, payeth 6s.

In 1674 Thomas Weedon had this, although there were then "fower closes"; from 1738 onwards it was one of the many holdings of Phillipp Doughty, Esq., with Stephen Birch as his tenant.

The same for an other tenament called Barnewick adioyning unto the said Holtt lane, and for 3 closes called the Hollts,<sup>18</sup> and for 2 maunes called Groofield maune and Peasehull maune, and adioyning upon the lands of William Weedon, gent., and for 2 peeces of land in the said Peasehull field, part of it adioyning upon the Holts aforesaid, and for one other peece of land lying in West deane aforesaid and adioyning

<sup>18</sup> According to Wright "holt" means "a wood, or plantation; a wooded hill," but sometimes "poor land covered with furze; a field in a weedy condition."



upon the land their called Greatheads, and for one other peece of land—the hill called Catsbrainehill, payeth 12s.

These followed the last holding of Josias Weedon in all respects in the later rentals, the first maume is there called Grovefield maume.

The same for a tenement and certaine lands adioyning upon Chartridg streete; that is to say 4 Closses called Sibblyes and one other close called Pratts Corner, and one other called Clay Acre, and one other close called Longelands, and for one peece in Westdeane aforesaid abutting their upon the lands of Robart Attkins afore mentioned, and payeth &c. &c. 5s.

In 1674 Robert Gansford, gent., held these; the close called Clay Acre is there called "a pittle." In 1738 John Harding, Esq., had them, with John Horwood as his tenant who was still there in 1745, but the proprietor had become Messrs. Belcher and Bentley, with "now Mr. Raymond" written in subsequently.

The same Josias Weedon for 3 peeces of land lying in the Comon called Peasehull fieelde towards the lower side thereof and butting on to another, payeth &c. &c. 1s.

The same for a close called Poleacre abutting upon a close called Arnolls, and for 5 peeces of land more lying in the said Peasehullfield parte of which adioyne upon the said Greeneyard, payeth &c. &c. 2s. 10d.

In 1674 Thos. Weedon, gent., held, amongst other things, "land lying in Peasehullfeild some of them inclosed, and a close caled Pole acre." In and after 1738 the owner was Philip Doughty, with Stephen Birch for tenant.

Item Thomas Birch the elder for parte of his orchard adioyning unto certaine land called Sibblyes, payeth &c. &c. 1s.

The same for the lower parte of a close called the Brede adioyning upon Chartridg streete aforesaid, neare unto a pond their called Hearningsmore pond, and for a close called Greeneyard close, and for a maune lying in Brodefield aforesaid adioyning upon a

close called Uplands, and for a peece of land in the said Brodefield lying under Peasehullfield hedge aforesaid, payeth &c. &c. 3s. 10d.

In 1674 John Wright had "fower closes caled the Breads," and "Greeneyard peece," amongst other lands. In 1738 Edward Johnson, of Chesham Bois, had these; the "Green Yard Peice" was called "late Peeds."

The same for a tenement called Greate Hauckeshed and for a close abutting upon a lane theire caled Anlowewitch lane, and for one other close called Longeclose, also abutting upon the same lane, and for one other close adioyning to the said Longeclose called Flowercroft, and for one meade adioyning to the said Flowercroft; and for one other close called Stonye Close abutting upon the said meade, and for one other close and a meade platt called Chambers abutting upon Chartridg streete aforesaid, and for one other close called Holtt Ridings abutting upon a lane theire called Cappes lane, and for two peeces lying in a fielde called Grovefelde, the one of the same peeces abutting upon Painseshill aforesaid, and the other upon the land called St. Marie land, payeth &c. &c. 14s. 3d.

Samuel Birch held a good deal of this, including Great Hawkshards, in 1674, Thomas Birch had Long Close, and John Birch had Chambers. In 1738 Samuel Birch had Great Hawkshards, Long Close, Stony Close, and Flowercroft; whilst the Widow Birch and John Birch the younger had Chambers, amongst others. By 1745 Wm. Atkins had them all.

The same Thomas Birch for a tenement and three platts called Little Haukeshead abutting upon Chartridg streete aforesaid, and adionying upon the lane called Haukesheadlane, payeth &c. &c. 3s. 4d.

These had passed to Thomas Weedon in 1674; in 1738 and later Mathew Channer was owner, with the words added "late Wm. Child's."

Item Richard Birch, labourer, for two peeces of land in Pullfield aforesaid, the one of them adioyning upon a close theire called Gascoynegrove, the other upon a peece of land theire called Gascoynegrove peece payeth &c. &c. 6d.

This is an instance of the way in which names were given to every scrap of land. A marginal note in the 1629 rental reads: "now John Robinse"; in 1674 these were part of Thos. Owen's many properties, the alteration or corruption to "Gaxon Grove," had been noticed, and the final words to the entry are "now inclosed." They are not discoverable in the later rentals.

Item Edward Salle for two peeces of land in a close adioyning upon Coppthorne payeth &c. &c. 3d.

Item John Harding for a mesuage adioyning upon Chartridg streete, and for a meadowe called Harpers meade, and for one other meade called Brodemeade, and for one close called Harper's close, and for one other close called Ponde close, and for two other closes called Nuffield hilles, and for two closes called Nuffield ladders, and for one pitchle called Midle Pichle, these all adioyning neare about the said mesuage, and for one other close called Nuffield close, abutting upon the lane called Nuffield lane, payeth &c. &c. 13s. 4d.

The word spelt in two ways above, but more usually "pitchle" nowadays may mean: (1) a small field or inclosure; (2) the corner of a field, a long narrow strip of ground terminating at a sharp angle. The other word "ladder" is more uncommon and can mean (1) a long narrow strip or land, (2) a broad green lane. As to Nuffield, Ekwall thinks the more famous place of that name in Oxfordshire means "open country by a spur of land"; a description which is certainly applicable at Chartridge and "lyeing near Ashridge," as the rental of 1738 expresses it. The name of Harpers is not in rentals after 1629, but the Nuffield closes were owned in 1738 by Wm. Hakewill who was probably of the family of the Wm. Hakewill who revived the three dormant boroughs, and himself sat in 1624 as one of the Members of Amersham; he lived at Wendover. In 1745 he was still owner of Nuffield closes, part of a much larger holding.

Item Samuell Birch for a tenement and a close called Middle Whittchurch abutting upon Chartridg streete, payeth &c. &c. 5s.

This may be the "close caled Whitchurch" which Edward Ranne held in 1674; in 1738 — Baldwin, Esq., held a "messuage and five closes thereto belonging called Whitchurch in the occupation of Avery Wood." Later

the Widow Harding held "a close called Whitchurch," with Jacob Horwood as her tenant. A marginal note in the 1629 rental says "nowe Jossias Weedon."

Item Richard Tokefield of Chartridg for two Closses called Botchers adioyning upon Chartridg aforesaid, neare a gutter theire called the Sladds, payeth &c &c.  
4s.

In 1674 Daniell Sweetsur held one close called Botchers and another called Clarkcroft; this might very well be the Daniel, son of James and Mary Sweetsur, who was baptized on 13 Mar., 1624.<sup>19</sup> In 1728 Mary Sweetsir has been entered, but crossed out and "now John Ayres landlord" inserted; in 1739 he appears as tenant and so continues in 1745.

The same Richard Tokefield for a close called Grovefield close abutting upon the lane called Apsswood lane, and for a maune called Grovefield maune adioyning upon the lane called Grovefield lane and for a peece of land lying at the said Grovefieldgate, payeth &c. &c.  
2s. 8d.

Richard Browne held Grovefield Close and "mame" in 1674; he was followed by the Widow Geary who held them with other lands in 1745.

Item William Weedon, gent., for two Closses called Chambers adioyning each to other and abutting upon Chartridg streete aforesaid. And for one other close called Long Readings abutting upon the said two Closses, and for one Springe called Greenewayegrove abutting upon the said Long Reading, and for one other close called Whitchurch abutting upon Chartridg streete aforesaid and adioyning upon a close called Cappes, and for two peeces of land lying in the comonfield called Grovefielde, one of them abutting upon Paineshill aforesaid and the other abutting upon a pack and primewaye leading from Gorewood unto Chart-ridg, payeth &c.  
17s.

A marginal note reads "nowe Robert Lovett," but the whole entry seems notable for its remarkable detail. The "springe" is a young wood, or perhaps what the modern forester would call coppice with standard; in 1738 it is called a wood. The pack and primeway is a bridle road,

<sup>19</sup> Garrett-Peggs, p. 142.

for which the *English Dialect Dictionary* can only quote West Yorkshire. By 1674 this holding had become divided. Richard Woodhouse held the 2 closes called Chambers, Grenewaye Grove, and part of Long Ridings, and Edward Ranne had the close called Whitchurch, a peece in Grovefeild, and part of Long Ridings. This passed to the Widow Harding, with Jacob Horwood as her tenant, in and from 1738.

In 1738 Alexr. Ayres held 2 closes called Chambers, one close called Greenway Grove pightle, and part of Riddings, also "a wood called Greenway Grove, late Wright's, and part of Half Ridings." In 1739 Ayres still owned and occupied the last two properties, but the others had been acquired by "the poor of Chesham," and he appears as tenant only.

Item Richard Tokefield of the Wood for three closes called Hauksheads through two of which lyeth the pack and prime waye leading from Chartridg to Asheridg, and the third joyneth to those two, payeth &c. &c. 8s.

In 1738 John Tockfield of the Wood held these three closes. The Tokefield family, under many variations in spelling, bulk largely in the first Chesham register, and no doubt this John could easily be traced; the Richard of 1629 may well be he who was baptized on 21 Decr., 1581; his father's name was John.

Item Daniell Weedon, gent., for a wood called Haukeshead grove adioyning upon the said closes called Haukeshead closes, payeth &c. &c. 6s. 8d.

Item Josias Weedon, gent., for two Closes called Whittchurch adioyning the one to the other, and abutting upon Chartridg streete neere to the Two Beeches there, payeth &c. &c. 1s. 6d.

This last *may* be the same as the holding of Edward Balldwin, of Beconsfield, Esq., in 1684, though it had then become larger; "a message caled Whitchurch and five closes thereunto belonging." In 1745 Robert Darell, Esq., had become proprietor. This is most probably he who bought the manors of Cholesbury and Hawridge in 1748; he was "of Richmond."<sup>20</sup>

Item George Birch for a peece of land lying in West Deane aforesaid under Catsbrainhill aforesaid, payeth &c. &c. 1d.

<sup>20</sup> Lipscomb, III, 317 and 373.

"Nowe Thomas Didsboro" is a contemporary marginal note; one of Thomas Owen's many holdings in 1674 was "a peece of land in Westdaine caled Catsbrain hill, and a little peece ajoyning to the same." On the other hand Thomas Dudsbury had "a peece in West daine" as well, and so had John Norwood; whilst in 1738 Benjamin Lake, of Chesham town, held "3 peices in West Dean, late Dudsbury's."

Item Micah Woodhouse for a mesuage scituate at the west end of Chartridg streete called Graces, and for three orchards to the same belonging, and for one meadow plott called the Pickle, and for one other close called Homefielde, and for two other Closses called Rushmoore, and for one other close called Layefielde, and for one other close called Littlecrofte, and for one other close called Whomefielld, and for two other closes called Hawksheads Closses, and for one other close and parte of a close called Further Leayes, And for one other close called Noke close, and for parte of one other close called Rudsmoore hill, all which said closes and landes lying neere upon the said mesuage adioyne each to other, And for one meadow called Nueland meade abutting upon Chartridge streete aforesaid, and adioyning upon a close their called Nuelands, And for a wood called Gorewood abutting upon the land of Thomas Ellmes Esq. also called Gorewood, and for two peeces of land lying in the field called Grovefield aforesaid, one of which is called Mapledene, the other of them lyeth in the same field just under a grove their called Greenewaye grove, for all which said mesuage, meadowes, closses, woods and lands hee payeth &c. &c. 8s. 9d.

This particularly large property seems to furnish names for all that part of Chartridge towards what is now called Threegates Bottom, and furnishes us with the beautiful name of Greenway Grove. The owner seems to be "Michaiah, sonne of Henry and Anne Woodhouse" who was baptised on 20 Feb., 1591.<sup>21</sup> After his death it was divided, Hakewill had acquired Biscoe's property, and the "Rusmore" closes, Homefeild, and Homefeild Daine, Layfeild, Rudmoor Hill, the Further Lays, and Hawks-hard close. John Birch had acquired Newlands meade,

<sup>21</sup> Garrett-Pegge, p. 68.

and Gorewood. In 1728 Wm. Hakewill had acquired Biscoe's property, and the Widow Birch and John Birch the younger had inherited Newlands mead "and a spring called Gearewood."

Item Thomas Heires for 2 Closses called Nouffeffields, and 2 peeces of Arable land lying in the Common called Noufffield. 8s. 6d.

These came to Wm. Hakewill in 1738.

#### ASHRIDGE

Item Richard Arnold for a tenament called Tylles adioyning upon Ashridge streete, and for two closses, and for three peeces lying in a field their called Beechfield upon Ashridg hill, payeth 6s.

The rental of 1674 shows that Thomas Owen owned this "messuage caled Tyles" (which can still be identified), and the pieces in Beechfield; but these are not traced in the later rentals.

There was a Richard Arnold who was son of George and Ellen and was baptized 28 May, 1587.<sup>22</sup>

#### BOTTLYE

Item Daniell Garrett for a mesuage abutting upon Bottlye streete, and for 4 plotts to the same adioyning, and for a spring and three closses called Pigg-hoggeswick adioyning upon a lane leading from Bottly streete to Tyllers hill, payeth &c. &c. 14s. 8d.

In 1674 Daniell Garrett was still owner; the spring was then 'a wood called Hawkshadds'; the same name appears in 1738 and in 1739, but in the last year Richard Widmore is tenant, and becomes proprietor in 1745. However many generations are represented the continuance of the names "Daniel Garrett" for over a century is the only case in our rentals.

Item Frances Lovett for a close called Baggshall abutting upon Bottlye streete aforesaid, and for a springe at the lower end of the same close also called Baggshalls, payeth &c. &c. 3s. 10d.

In 1674 William Birch held this, with an "alias" name of Baggotsholes; by 1738 Richard Widmer had absorbed it and retained it in 1745.

<sup>22</sup> Ditto p. 59.

Item Thomas Hunt, gent., for a mesuage called the Lee adioyning to the said Bottlye street, and for fower closes to the same belonging. 14s.

The name of the holder in 1674 is not very clear, it seems to be John Daine; it was then "caled the Leehouse." In 1738 Joseph Hobbs was owner and Thos. Daniels the tenant. In 1739 "the heirs of Joseph Hobbs" appear as owners, but by 1745 Richard Widmer had included it in his many properties.

Item Thomas Gate for a measuage and for two peeces of land, and for parte of a close adioyning to the measuage at Tyllerhill wherein the said Thomas Gate now dwelleth, and for one other close being parte of a field called Greate Leith and adioyning upon a lane leadeing from the said Tylliershill towards a grove called Dunne Grove, payeth &c. 4s. 9d

"A message and orchard at Tyler's hill, late James Adkins," was in the possession of Richd. Widmer in 1738, and so remained in 1745.

Item Thomas Fryer for parte of the orchard belonging to a tenement in Bottlye wherein the said Thomas Fryer now dwelleth, payeth &c. 1d.

Item William Balam for a close, the residue of Great Leith aforesaid, abutting upon the lane leading unto Dunningrove aforesaid, payeth &c. &c. 4s.

This last also fell to Richard Widmer; the first syllable of its owner's name was presumably short, because the spelling in the Chesham register is "Ballam."

Item Robert Jonson for fower plotts called Hawkesfield abutting upon the land of Thomas Grover their called Sandyhearne, payeth &c &c. 10s. 4d.

Joseph Johnson held this in 1674, and in 1728, when Richard Widmer had acquired it, it was called "late John Johnson's."

Item Thomas Ashfield Esq. for a peece of land in Roggromhill abutting upon a springe belonging to a farme their called Whytende Farme, and for one other peece of land lying in the bottome of a field before called Great Bottlye field, and was sometime the land of James Birch, are now both enclosed, payeth &c. &c. 8d.



The Ashfields had been connected with Chesham since they leased the advowson of Chesham Leicester in 1571; Sir Edmund died in 1620, and this was probably his son Thomas, and he may have become the Royalist delinquent who, after spending eight months in the Fleet prison, petitioned for "either a grave or a bedlam."<sup>23</sup> In 1674 this Botley property seems to be the same as the "certaine lands lying neare Whitend" which John Bellfield, gent., owned. By 1738 the ownership had passed to Sir Wm. Dodwell, indeed the word "dead" appears against his name and his heirs were owners in 1745, with a tenant named King, who had a sub-tenant named Saunders; a later hand has inserted "now Mr. Tracy" in the proprietor's column.

Item James Weedon for a close abutting upon Bottly streete aforesaid called Goosse acre, payeth &c. &c. 8d.

The owner in 1674 was (?) James Dell, followed in 1738 by "Mr. Thrall" with Hen. Cogdell as tenant, and so it was in 1745.

Item Marie and Sarah Gate for a cottage called Hodgkins adioyning upon the said Bottlye streete, payeth &c. &c. 1d.

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No reader can possibly have read through the preceding pages; it was thought that they were worth placing on record because of the very ample detail which they provide; the field and other place-names are particularly ample and yield us the euphonious Gracelets and Greenway Grove, and the cacophonous Pig-hog-wick. The explanation is that Michael Birch, who signs the 1629 rental as "bayllif," was "on his native heath" and from his extensive and peculiar knowledge could put in little allusions to the place where the old pound stood, or the two beeches on Chartridge Green, or to a piece of land in the common field near Ridgesfield Gate, or to a gore "abutting upon Churchfield style." Then we have at Chartridge the word "maum," which not only eluded Mr. Cock's lists

<sup>23</sup> *Victoria County History*, vol. LV, p. 542.

of local words,<sup>24</sup> but even the wide net of Dr. Joseph Wright's six volumes.

Michael's remuneration for his services was not excessive, he drew

For his cloke the halfe yeare	10	0
For his wages the halfe yeare	1	5 10

He also drew about the same amount for "the halfe of the quitt rents paid to the Lord of Bedford," and to "the Right Honoble. Elizabeth Countyes of Devon." Presumably therefore the Drake interest only extended to one half of the Russell and Cavendish properties covered by the rental which makes no distinction between them.

<sup>24</sup> In vols. VII and IX of the *Records*.