

## AN ACCOUNT OF WOOBURN, IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

COMPILED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORITIES,

By J. O. GRIFFITS, Q.C.

“WOOBURN, Woburn, Waborne, Uburn, or Wybourn, as it is variously spelt, is said to signify properly a winding, deep, and narrow valley, with a rivulet at the bottom, and the declivities interspersed with trees and bushes, which was the true character of the place (Langley’s “Desborough,” p. 436). But it has been ingeniously suggested by a learned antiquary in the neighbourhood, with much greater probability, to have derived its appellation from Wyeburn, the bourne, or streamlet of the Wye, which runs through the Parish.”—(Lipscomb’s “History of Bucks,” Vol. III., p. 633.)

“The Parish is very extensive, and lies chiefly in the valley extending from Cookham Bridge (across the Thames) to Loudwater, in High Wycombe Parish, but it also reaches up the hills to Beaconsfield and Penn on the one side, and Flackwell Heath and Little Marlow on the other.”—(Ashley’s “Wooburn,” p. 1.)

“It is bounded to the north by Penn, to the north-east by Beaconsfield, to the east by Hitcham and Hedsor, to the south by the Thames, and to the south-west and west by Little Marlow and High Wycombe. It is four miles in length, about two in its greatest breadth, and fourteen in circumference. It contains 2,596 acres, of which 1772 are arable, 239 meadow, 300 woodland, and 285 common and waste. There are (were) on the river which runs from Wycombe through the whole extent of this Parish, two paper and four corn-mills, two millboard mills and one iron wire manufactory, four malt-houses and two brick and lime kilns. There are (were) also sixteen farm-houses, 225 private houses and tenements, 12 public-houses, 1,200 inhabitants. The quota paid to the land-tax is (was)—£353 9s. 9d.”—(“Langley,” pp. 436, 437.)

Lipscomb says (Vol. III., p. 633), “On the Wycombe

stream, between the western verge of that Parish and the point of its junction with the Thames, at the boundary line of the Counties of Bucks and Berks, in the Parish of Woburn (where it is called the Bourne), are no less than 39 mills, the greater part employed in the manufacture of paper; some for grinding corn and other purposes."

Lyson says, "Lace-making is carried on to a very great extent in the Hundreds of Burnham and Desborough, where lace of high price is made in considerable quantities." Lace-making is not carried on to such a great extent now.

"The Parish is composed of various hamlets:—The Tower, Wooburn Green, The Moor, Bergher's Hill, Holtspur, Northern Woods, Core's End, Egham's Green, Spring Gardens, Bourne End, Havens Lea, Harvest Hill, and the Common."—"Ashley," p. 1.)

"Lord Wharton obtained a charter, July 1st, 1686, for two fairs, on April 23rd and November the 1st, being the feasts of St. George and All Saints, but from the alteration of the style, they are now held May 4th and November 14th.

"There formerly stood a very large beech tree on Holtspur Heath, in which was a wooden house, built by some of the Wharton family, for their accommodation at the annual races upon this Common. The house was pulled down about thirty years ago."—"Langley," p. 437; about A.D. 1767.

#### WOORBURN HOUSE.

"Philip Lord Wharton, 1637, who married Jane, heiress to the Goodwin family, became possessed of the Wooburn Estate, and resided at Wooburn House."—"Ashley," p. 3.)

"Lord Wharton was a religious man, and entertained the eminent Nonconformists of his time, Owen, Manton, Bates, and others, at Wooburn House. He had a beautiful cruciform domestic chapel, and they were invited to preach in it; crowds gathered from the towns and villages near to hear them. After service, his Lordship would call out to the people from Wycombe, Beaconsfield, and Marlow, to go into his kitchen and take refreshment before their return. His Lordship bequeathed an annual

gift of twenty Bibles to Wooburn, and also he gave a rent charge of £20 per annum to the Vicar for a second service on Sundays. The Earl of Wharton enlarged the gardens, laying out a continuation of terraces to the summit of the hill, and he is said to have expended £100,000 on the mansion. The old Palace was surrounded by a moat, and until the last century retained its ancient character of feudal magnificence.

The old mansion was taken down in 1750, and the present one raised upon its site. It is a handsome and commodious house."—("Ashley," pp. 4, 5.)

"Sir Giffen Wilson resided in Wooburn House about twenty years, till his death, in 1848."—"Ashley," p. 5.) It was then resided in by the late A. Gilbey, Esq., until his death recently. It is now occupied by his much respected widow.

The Episcopal Palace of the Bishops of Lincoln stood on the site of Wooburn House, the relics of that Palace, as it is believed, are to be found in the ancient buildings, still used as stables and offices to the present house. These buildings are extremely interesting, not only as being connected with the Episcopal Palace, but as forming part of the mansion of the Whartons.—(J. Parker, F.S.A.) Manor Farm is now occupied by Mr. Reeves.

#### THE LITTLE EASE.

"The Little Ease was a prison attached to the Antient Bishop's Palace at Wooburn."—(Parker's "History of Wycombe" p. 103.)

It was the usual accompaniment of mediæval episcopal residences—it is supposed to have been an underground building. Mr. A. Gilbey, the late resident of Wooburn House, used it as a dairy, and his widow now uses it as a furnace for heating the house.—(J. Parker, F.S.A.)

"These were Romish days, and in Bishop Smith's time (who died 1513) fearful persecutions were carried on at Wooburn House. Thomas Chase, of Amersham, was thrown into the prison—the Little Ease—in the Bishop's Palace. Chase was brought before the Bishop, and, after much cruelty, was bound with chains, gyves, manacles, and put into this wretched prison. When they could not prevail upon him to deny his faith, they strangled him,

as was witnessed by the keeper of the prison. They then secretly buried him in Norland Wood, in the way between Wooburn and Little Marlow."—(Fox's "Chronology," p. 711.)

"Thomas Harding, of Chesham, was found guilty of having certain books in English of the Holy Scriptures, under the boards of a floor. He was brought before Bishop Longland at Wooburn Palace, who, with his chaplains, grossly insulted him, and put him in the prison of Little Ease. The Bishop condemned him to the flames, which sentence was carried out by Rowland Messenger, the Vicar of High Wycombe, in the Dell going to Botley, at the north end of the town of Chesham."—"Fox," p. 896.)

"Rowland Messenger, Vicar of High Wycombe, March 12th, 1511."—"Parker," 105.)

#### THE MANOR.

"Earl Harold held this Manor before the Norman invasion, when King William bestowed it on the See of Lincoln. Walter holds the Manor of Waborne, of the same Bishop, for which he is taxed at eight hides and a half. There are nine plough lands; in demesne there are two, and twelve villeins with thirteen copyholders have ten ploughs. There is one servant, and eight mills, worth 104 shillings; there are six carucates of pasture, and sufficient besides for the lord's horses; a fishery which produces 300 eels, pannage and forage for 200 hogs, and wood besides, worth seven shillings and four pence. For all dues it is worth £15; when the Bishop received it, 100 shillings; in the reign of King Edward, when Earl Harold held it, £12.

Walter Deyncourt, progenitor of that noble family, was related to the Conqueror, and also to Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln, under whom he held many great Lordships, among others, Wooburn. On his death he was succeeded by his son Ralph; whose son, Oliver, married Nicholaa, niece to Nicholas de Hay. His successor was John Deyncourt.

Edmund was seized of this Manor, 21 King Edward I., as was Edward, the 9th year of King Edward II." ("Langley," 437, 8.)

"William the Conqueror (A.D. 1066) divided it into two manors, bestowing one (Bishops Wooburn) on his cousin, Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln; and the other (Wooburn Court) on another relative, Walter Deyncourt. The mansion of the latter was adjoining the Church, and Wooburn House, in the Manor of Bishops Wooburn, became the palace of the Bishops of Lincoln."—("Ashley," p. 1.)

"The manor subsequently reverted to the Crown, and Queen Elizabeth granted the perpetuity of it to the Spencers. Sir William Spencer's daughter married Sir John Goodwin, of Bishops Wooburn, and thus the two manors were again united, A.D. 1580."—("Ashley," p. 3; "Lipscomb," Vol. III., p. 635; "Langley," p. 445.)

"Peregrine Bertie, Esq., Lord of this manor, Patron of the church, and Impropiator of the Rectory of this Parish, died the 12th of October, 1782, aged 43 years."—("Langley," p. 459.)

"Philip Bertie, descended from Leopold de Bertie, Constable of Dover Castle, temp. King Ethelred, attended Henry II. into England in 1154."—("Lipscomb," Vol. I., pp. 234—5.)

The pedigree of Bertie is given from this time to Peregrine Bertie above, in "Lipscomb," Vol. I., pp. 234, 5, 6.)

#### THE RECTORY.

"The Rectory was valued at 16 marks, and by the Bishop of Norwich at 25 marks, with a portion payable to the Abbess of Elnestow, Co. Beds., of 50s. It was rated in the King's books at £12, but returned to the Bounty Office at £45 7s., and was discharged from first-fruits and tenths."—("Lipscomb," Vol. III., p. 637.)

RECTORS.	PATRONS.
Martin de Patteshull .	1216-7 . Bishop of Lincoln.
William de Lecton, or Linton .	1229 .
William de Avetin . . . .	. . . . resigned.
John de Welleden . . . .	1265 . . . .
Richard de Northfleet . . . .	. . . . died.
William de Thornton . . . .	1269 . . . . died 1313.
William de Wylkyefby . . . .	1313 . . . . resigned.
Henry de Paynton . . . .	1316 . . . .



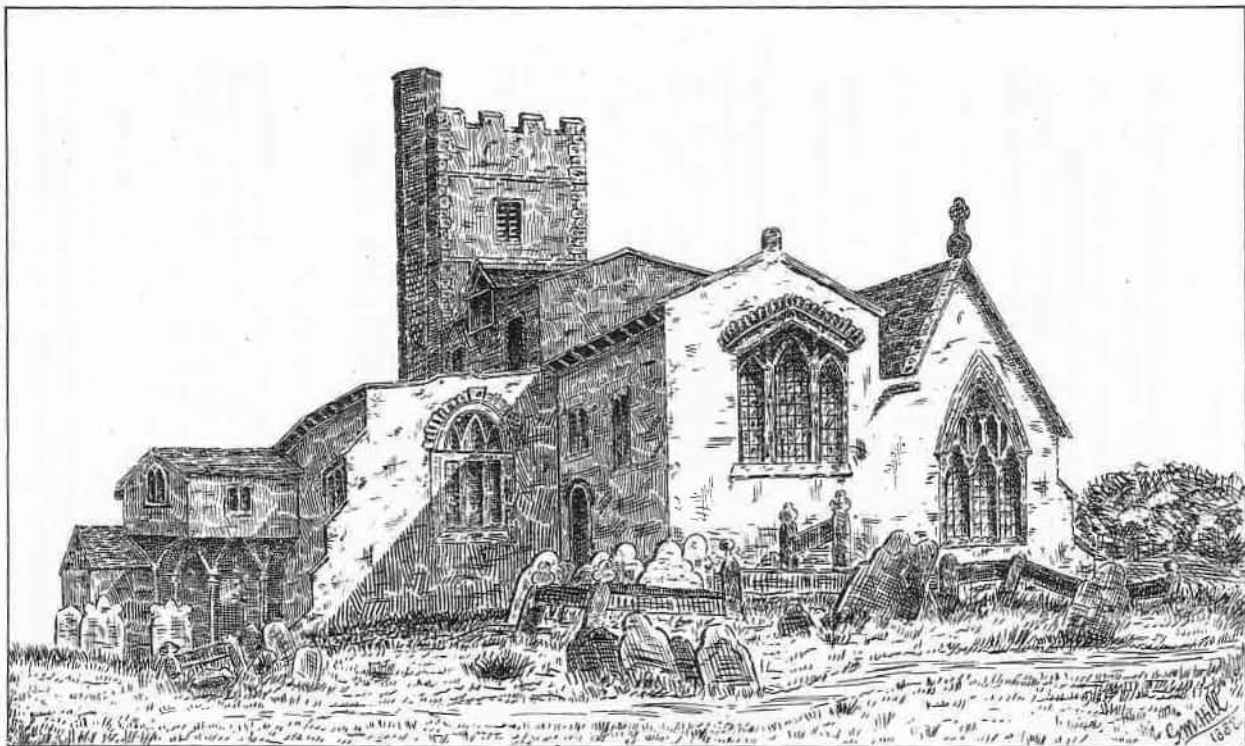
He was also Prebendary of Carlton Kyme, in  
 Lincoln Cathedral . . . . . Oct. 7, 1542  
 William Hamon . . . . . 4th Nov., 1550  
 Patron, John, Earl of Bedford.  
 John Athwick . . . . . 1st Dec., 1554  
 Same Patron. Buried here 22nd Feb., 1580  
 Hugh Roberts . . . . . 19th July, 1581  
 He died, and was buried here, Oct. 18th, 1614  
 The Parishioners, from their regard for him, placed  
 the memorial over his grave in the church, which  
 still remains.  
 Gabriel Wilkinson . . . . . 1614  
 Patron, Sir Francis Goodwin.  
 He was buried here Dec. 27th, 1658. The living  
 was returned to be worth only £11 per annum.

## PATRONS.

John Bockel, 1658 . . . . . Arthur Goodwin, Esq.  
 He was buried here, Aug., 1661.  
 Edward Rawson, 5th Feb., 1662 . . Philip, Lord Wharton.  
 Also Rector of Hedsor. Buried  
 here January 13th, 1666-7.  
 William Jay, 8th June, 1668 . . Philip, Lord Wharton.  
 Buried here 16th April, 1679.  
 James Wrexham, 26th May, 1679 . . . . . do.  
 (resigned.)  
 John Pomfret, 21st July, 1681 . . . . . do.  
 (resigned.)  
 Nathaniel Smalley, 29th Sept., 1684 . . . . . do.  
 Quitted for a portion of Waddesden,  
 in this county.  
 Meverell Warkrer, 1st April, 1715. . Marquis of Wharton.  
 James Horton, inducted Oct. 29th, 1715 . . . . . do.  
 He died July 13, 1752.  
 John Cleobury, 8th Feb., 1753 . . . . . Agatha Child.  
 Also Vicar of Great Marlow.  
 The above is the list of Vicars as given in "Langley,"  
 pp. 468, 9, 70, 1.

The following Vicars only are mentioned in Lipscomb:—

William Jervays, exchanged with Thomas de Olney,  
 4th April, 1354.  
 John de Peneshall, LL.B., presented 23rd March, 1392.



WOOBURN CHURCH.  
(1800.)



John Brocket, presented 1658.

John Cleobury, A.B.

Thomas Horne, A.M., presented 1st January, 1802, by James Dupre, Esq. He resigned.

James ETTY, A.M., presented 1st April, 1802, by the same patron. He died, and was succeeded by

Thomas George Tyndale, A.M., presented 2nd March, 1805, by the same patron; but he resigned, and was again presented in 1812.

W. M. Dupre, presented 1835, by Charles Dupre, Esq. (Lipscomb, Vol. III., p. 637.)

F. B. Ashley, instituted Nov., 1847, by James Dupre, Esq., of Wilton Park.

Alfred Woodin, instituted 25th March, 1885. Patron, Caledon George Du Pre, Esq., on the recommendation of the Very Rev. the Dean of Lichfield.

“It is rather curious that in the reign of Henry VII. the Vicars of Hughenden and Wooburn had town houses in the High Street (Wycombe). The house of the former was situate on the site of the wine vaults now belonging to Mr. Leadbetter, and the latter on the site of the house at the corner of Crendon Street, lately erected by Mr. Robt. Vernon. The house originally belonged to the Corporation, to whom, in 1319, it was granted by William Oughtred. It was let in 1388 to William Dephaur, Sir Robt., Vicar of Wouborne, and Sir Geof. Laver, priest, with certain privileges.”— (“Parker,” p. 30.)

The present Vicarage was formerly the Rectory, and occupied by Rectors, afterwards Vicars, and is now (A.D. 1888) occupied by the Rev. Alfred Woodin, the Vicar.

#### THE CHURCH (ST. PAUL'S).

“The Church is a large, antient building, consisting of a nave and two aisles, covered with lead, with a good tower, in which there is a clock and a ring of six bells. On the roof are several Latin inscriptions in old character, much defaced. The front is a curious and very antient piece of carved work, with some remains of arms, among which there are three fleurs-de-lis.

“The north aisle of the chancel is now converted into burial place of the Bertie family. On a mural monu-

ment, 'To perpetuate the memory of Elizabeth, the wife of Peregrine Bertie, Esq., niece and heiress of John Morse, Esq., and last of that family. Her husband has caused this monument to be erected, as a token of his regard to her extraordinary virtues and manly sense, and of his most entire affection for one of the best of women, whom he always reflects on with the highest esteem, and hopes to meet in a state of everlasting happiness. Obiit, 13 Martii, 1765.'—("Langley," pp. 454—9.)

"Langley describes various painted windows in the church. All these have long since disappeared, as well as the curious carved font. At the beginning of this century there was a handsome stone porch on the south side, with a vestry over it; but this was removed, and the entrance built up.\* Probably at the same time the whole exterior of the church was covered with stucco, and the windows mended with wood and plaster, and a cement basin on a pedestal placed in the middle of the church for a font. Anterior to this the large arch had been built up, shutting it off from the nave, and also the arch entering the side chapel."—("Ashley," p. 7.)

"There are several very antient brasses without date, but some are in good preservation. Among these may be mentioned the following:—Two figures to John Goodwin, and Parnell his wife, founders of the present steeple of Wooburn Deyncourt, dated 1488; a beautiful brass in memory of Thomas Swaine, a priest, 1519; and one to an infant of the Duke of Wharton's, 1642, with a curious inscription."—("Ashley," p. 7.)

"Twenty years ago the church was in a grievous state. However, by the year 1856, after long efforts, the church was closed for restoration, and the handsome National Schools, which had been built three years before, were fitted up for divine service. Mr. W. Butterfield was engaged as architect for the restoration. The interior was most successfully restored, and opened for public worship by the Bishop in 1857."—("Ashley," p. 8.)

A new churchyard was needed, and a suitable one was opened by the Bishop in 1862.

---

\* The illustration of Wooburn Church, which accompanies this paper, is interesting, as it represents the south porch as it appeared in 1800.

The restoration of the exterior of the church was commenced in 1868. This has been a heavy undertaking, for it included rebuilding some of the walls, erecting stone windows with rich tracery throughout the building, new foundations, removing the stucco on every side; substantial buttresses all round the church, the handsome windows fitted with hammered glass of different tints and very effective patterns; the entire church, chancel, chapel, and tower refaced with snapped flint, new battlements to the nave, chancel, and tower, entire new roof, a handsome carved stone pulpit, and several stained glass windows. The mortuary chapel, north of the chancel, has also been handsomely restored and decorated.

The large west tower window is very beautiful; it represents the six acts of mercy.

The chancel arch, clock, stone pulpit, and four stained glass windows were gifts. The inside and roofs have been tastefully decorated, and the whole, both inside and outside, is now extremely effective and substantial, and forms a complete and handsome work."—(“Ashley,” p. 8.)

#### THE VICARAGE.

“The Bishops of Lincoln retained the chief royalty of the town, and the patronage of the Rectory, which Bishop D'Alderby appropriated to the See about 1330. I am inclined to think that the Bishop did not reside here before the appropriation of the great Tithes.”—(“Langley,” 443.)

Langley was under the impression that the Bishops of Lincoln converted the Rectory into an Episcopal Palace, but as has been before mentioned there can be no question. Their palace stood on the site of Wooburn House, and this place became their favourite residence in later times. (J. Parker, F. S. A.)

Bishop Smith, the founder of Brazenose College, died here, January 2nd, 1513, but was buried at Lincoln. Bishop Atwater, who had been fellow of Eton, died at this palace, A.D. 1520.

His successor, John Longland, laid out considerable sums on his palace here, and gave the second bell to

Wooburn Church. He was born at Henley, in Oxfordshire, and from the vicinity of Wooburn and Fingest, he frequently resided at one of these palaces.

He was remarkable for being a person of excellent learning, and a popular preacher, though, by being Confessor to Henry VIII. he is much blamed by some for stirring up the divorce between the King and Queen. He died May the 7th, 1547, at Wooburn, and was buried under a gravestone in Eton College Chapel.

"Henry Holbeach, on succeeding to this bishopric, alienated great part of the Estates of the See, among which the Manor of Wooburn, which had been valued in the endowment of the See in 1513, at £22 17s. 1d. The patent of alienation bears date September 26th, 1547, first year of King Edward VI., and soon after, January 12th, 1549, the Crown granted it to John, first Earl of Bedford, K.G., whose son, Francis, Earl of Bedford, also K.G., sold this estate to Sir John Goodwin about 1580, when the two manors became united."—"Langley," pp. 442, 3, 4, 5.)

"The estate descended to Sir Francis Goodwin, who was returned one of the Knights of the Shire, the 18th year of James I., and the first year of Charles. On his decease in 1634, he was succeeded by his son, Arthur Goodwin, who attached himself to the cause of freedom under the banners of Hampden, and having only one daughter and heiress, married her to Philip, Lord Wharton, September 7, 1637."

On the death of Arthur Goodwin, Lord Wharton succeeded to his estates, and resided at Winchenden till the decease of Lady Jane Wharton, in 1658, after which he lived at Wooburn. He had the honour of receiving King William at Wooburn soon after his accession, and seeing all his exertions for constitutional liberty sealed by the Bill of Rights.

His Lordship died Feb. 1695, at the advanced age of eighty-three years, leaving issue, Thomas Goodwin and several other children.

"Thomas (afterwards Lord Wharton) was born in 1640, and on coming of age was elected to serve in Parliament for Wendover; he was afterwards returned as one of the Knights of this Shire, in which situation he continued till the death of his father, in 1695. He was created

Viscount Winchenden and Earl of Wharton, Dec. 23rd, 1706."—("Langley," p. 447.)

"After a life of the greatest absurdity and contradiction, accepting a dukedom from George I. and a blue ribbon from the Pretender; after a life disgraceful to a man and dishonourable to a Briton, the Duke of Wharton resigned his breath in misery and obscurity at a small monastery in Catalonia in Spain, May 31st, 1731. His unfortunate Duchess came over to England after his decease, and died in February, 1777."—("Langley," 450.)

"The Manor of Wooburn was mortgaged to Colonel Chartres, who resided here for some years."—("Langley," p. 451.)

"After the Duke of Wharton's decease, the Manor of Wooburn was sold to John Morse, Esq., who died in 1739, and was succeeded by his niece and heiress Elizabeth, wife of Peregrine Bertie, Esq. In this family, Wooburn continued till 1784, when Albemarle Bertie, Esq., sold it to Mrs. Rebecca Dupre."—("Langley," p. 451.)

On a small mural monument (in the church), "Near this monument lies John Morse, Esq., citizen and goldsmith of London. He purchased the Manor of Wooburne, 1732. He departed this life, May 28, A.D. 1739, aged seventy-seven years."—("Langley," p. 465.)