A TOUR AROUND BRIDGE  
HISTORY; DESCRIPTION; .  
  
GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION  
  
Bridge village is situated in the Nailbourne Valley in an attractive rural setting on the old  
Roman Watling Street, formerly the main road between London and Dover. The village is the  
  
\_ main settlement in the Parish of Bridge and lies 2.5 miles south east of Canterbury and 12  
  
miles from Dover.  
  
It is likely that the parish took its name from "Bregge" a bridge which crossed the Little Stour,  
a tributary of the Stour itself. '  
  
The"v-i-llage is linear in form having grown northwards and eastwards along Watling Street  
  
‘and away from the River Nailbourne which ﬂoods periodically. The older part of the village  
  
is built on fairly level alluvial and head deposits, the ‘height of the land varying between 25m.  
  
 and 50m. above sea level. In the early 1960's a significant amount of residential building took  
 to the south of the centre of the village at Bridge Down. This development is situated  
  
on north west facing chalkland between 50m. and 75m. above sea level.  
  
As a result of the 1986 parish boundary changes Bridge village now lies slightly offcentre in  
  
‘a parish reduced in size. Although land to the north west, north east and south east was  
  
gained from Patrixbourne and Bishopsbourne, more to the south west  
was lost to Lower Hardres, Upper Hardres and Bishopsbourne.  
  
Bridge, like other similar villages in the locality is a popular residential area for people  
working in Canterbury and other nearby towns. \_  
  
A SHORT HISTORY  
  
The village of Bridge, straddling theimain road from Dover to Canterbury has been an  
  
‘ important village since the Roman occupation of England. .  
  
There was probably a Roman bridge acrossthe river (Cf. Bruges which has asimilar site and  
  
V name) . The village is situated on theeold coaching route from -Dover to London, known as  
~ Wading Street. In the parish records. there are detailed many marriages between passing  
  
travellers and local villagers.  
  
Near by.on the Barham Downs the armies used to assemble for campaigns abroad such as  
  
"The Field of the Cloth of Gold", the Seven Years War and also India in the mid 19th  
Century.  
  
The church in characteristic Kentishﬂirit was restored with money given by Mrs. Gregory in  
1852. It is a feature of the village as you come down the hill from Canterbury and is even  
more exposed since the great storm in October, 1987.  
  
A characteristic of Bridge are the largernanor houses near the village:  
— Bridge Place was the home of the Braemes family (Sir Arnold Braemes was the first  
manager of the Dover Harbour Board),  
  
- Higham House, now known as Highland Court was one of the largest country  
houses in East Kent in the 17th Century, Count Zebrovsky of Chitty, Chitty Chitty  
Bang Bang fame lived in the house earlier this century.  
- Bridge Hill House was the former home of the grandson of the French  
philosopher Montesquieu,  
- East Bridge House,  
to mention but a few. A little further away is Bourne Park where Mozart stayed once to  
attend the horse races on the Barham Downs!  
  
There are three pubs of great antiquity. In The White Horse a famous brawl took place  
  
which is recorded in the Church Archives of Christopher Applegate, a contemporary of  
Marlowe.  
  
The Post Office is a great centre of the village and was used by Field Marshal Lord  
Kitchener, then living at Broome Park, to send his ﬁrst despatch in 1914.  
One of the first work houses in Kent was built in 1837 in Union Road and the Record  
  
Book gives the names of many inmates who, often forced by poverty, took up residence  
there.  
  
There are not many villages that can boast such varied architecture from Tudor to  
Victorian. The centre of village is a Designated Conservation Area but constant vigilance  
is needed to see that a high standard is maintained.  
  
Bridge which has survived two wars mercifully undamaged, has grown since the war and  
with this growth has come social change and mobility. The population of Bridge was  
1,297 at the 1981 Census. New houses have been built at Bridge Down and Western  
  
Avenue in the 1950's and 1960's. Riverside Close was developed in the 1970's and 1980's  
and the most recent addition is Mansﬁeld Court.  
  
One of the surgeons returning from the Battle of Waterloo, Dr. James wrote that "he was  
much impressed by the happiness and jollity of the inhabitants" of Bridge!  
  
1. Description of the Parish  
  
Triangular in shape; location of population; origin of the parish as offshoot of  
Patrixbourne; swine pastures in the weald [Arch Cam‘ 76, 1961 pp58-74: PH Reaney,  
Place-Names and Early Settlement in Kent] History of Burne  
  
Domesday book does not mention Bridge, as at that time it was a part of Patrixbourne.  
  
1 The name does however occur in the Domesday Monachorum, so there was at least a  
  
Saxon church (or chapel) pre-existing. Bridge Church itself built ca end of 12”‘ century.  
(like many others). Maybe this was the point at which Bridge Parish came into existence.  
Bridge Hundred does exist in Domesday. Was this a meeting point of the hundred, by the  
river?  
  
“In Bridge Hundred Richard son of William holds Patrixbourne from the Bishop [Odo of  
Bayeux] It answers for 6 sulungs. Land for 8 ploughs. In lordship 3 ploughs. 44 villagers  
  
with 3 smallholders have 10 ploughs. A church; 1 slave; 4 mills at 16s 8d; a ﬁshery at 6d;  
  
pasture, from which outsiders have ploughed 6 acres of land; woodland, 4 pigs. Value  
before 1066 £18; when acquired, £10; now £19.”  
  
A sulung defines the land worked by an eight-ox plough, including arable associated  
pastures, meadows, shaves etc. It approximated to the territory of a self-supporting  
hamlet, nominally 200 acres. (Arch Cant J09, 1991, pp 29-39: KP WITNEY: Kentish  
Land Measurements of the Thirteenth Century).  
  
In1914 the main road was not yet tarred through the village: a road of thick chalky  
dust.(Mrs Friend of the Red Lion) A hundred or two of London buses carrying troops.  
  
They thought the Germans must have put something in the dust to make everyone cough  
and sneeze.  
  
1. Description; origins (Romans and pre-Romans)  
  
British Camps (“oppida”) such as ‘Old England’s hole’ in Bourne Park on the  
Dover Road, are in close proximity to... these old (pre-Roman) roads. Three roads  
lead NW from Patrixbourne Hill. . . The road on the left hand ascends the steep hill  
in the direction of Hardres, and passes through Whitehill Wood It leads to the ancient  
Britisdh camp in lffin wood, where sunburnt pottery and other remains of clearly  
British origin have been found.. Caesar remarks that after defeating the Britons (on  
Barham Downs they retreated to one of their strongholds [perhaps in lfﬁn Wood?]  
This road is known as the Kingsbury Road [past Flint Cottage— Tithe Maps].  
[According to Mrs Friend, Kingsley Lane — she also remarks of a ‘mansion, in Gosley  
wood towards Kingston end.] What was the ‘Kingsbury’? May not this be merely  
Saxon for the British and Roman entrenchments this road passed through? They were  
supposed by the Saxons to be the ‘bury’ of a great king... the Saxons’ knowledge of  
the country they had conquered being notoriously weak. It is said to have terminated  
at Rutupiae and westward as far as Salisbury Plain lt crossed the Dover Road on  
Bridge Hill, but., though it did not go direct to Canterbury It went to Bigbury  
[according to Detsicas: The Cantiaci Belgic Canterbury’s predecessor] The central  
road is now the main road between Dover and Canterbury. It passes through Bridge,  
near by being the site of a British Camp known by the name of ‘Old England’s Hole’,  
at which place tradition places the last fight the Britons made in opposing Julius  
Caesar’s advance in BC 54. [Third road goes up Bekesbourne Hill to Longport. Also  
another road ‘Pilgrim’s way’ which meets the last mentioned at St Martin’s hill.  
  
[Most of this based on Vine]: GP Walker: OLD ROADS IN EAST KENT& THANET, Arch  
Cant 38: 1926, pp77-78  
  
Saxon Cemertery on Side Hill (in Patrixboume): 18-20 graves. Bourne Cemetery ?top  
  
of Star hill excavated by Bryan Faussett and Lord Londesborough [TG Faussett,  
MISCELLANEA, Arch Cam 6; 1864-5 pp 329-330]  
  
Extended description of this excavation in Arch Cant I0; 1876 by TG Faussett. ‘We  
examined about a hundred in all.’  
  
G.C.Harper, The lngoldsby Country (A & C Black, 1904) p. 64 notes: “(Old  
England’s Hole) is seen beside the road, on the right hand, just where the cutting  
through the crest of the hill, made in 1829, to ease the pull-up for the coach-horses,  
begins. At that same time the course of the road was very slightly diverted, and,  
instead of actually impinging upon this ancient historic landmark, as before, was  
  
made to run a few feet away.. . . The stronghold consists of a crater—like hollow,  
encircled by earthen banks, still high and steep.”  
  
2. Saxon Remains  
  
Arch cam 46, 1934, Field Notes, p 58 On the Roman road up Bridge Hill a row of  
Saxon barrows just inside Bourne Park (lnventorium Sepulchrale, p. 95-100: “About  
twenty years since [ie ca 1835, but according to The Archaeological Album about 12  
years ago, ie 1833] in digging the high road above Bourne Park a quantity of  
Romano-British sepulchral urns were found. More recently, while excavations were  
being made in the low ground for a sheet of water [ie Bourne Park lake] Mr Bell  
  
discovered several Roman interments” These were both burials on cofﬁns and urns of  
burned ashes.  
  
Arch Cant, 73, 1959 p 62-74: PH Reaney A Survey of Kent Place-Names, suggests that  
Bekesbourne (Livingsbourne) was tenanted in 1066 by a surviving saxon family.  
  
3 Bourne, earlier Hautbourne  
  
Sir William Haute of Bishopsboume involved in Buckingham’s rebellion of 1483  
[pro Richard III] was the son of Sir William Haute of Bishopsboume who had married  
Joan Woodville, sister of the first Earl Rivers in 1429 He was, therefore, a first cousin to  
the queen and brother to Sir Richard Haute of lghtham Mote, who had been beheaded at  
Pomfret. [William Cheney of Sheppey also involved] [Lady Elizabeth Grey (1. of Lord  
Rivers of the Mote married Edward IV secretly in 1464] AE Conway: THE MAIDSTONE  
SECTOR or BuCR1NGHAM’s REBELLION. OCT. 18 1483 Arch Cam 3 7, 1925 pp 97-120. [Pedigree  
  
of Sir Richard Woodville of The Mote on p 120] Cheney, Haute & Guilford families all  
in it together.  
  
Arch Cant 4], 1929, pp 181-185: WH Godfrey, BOURNE PARK, NEAR CANTERBURY : ref to  
Book of Bourne. Sr Anthony Aucher was Marshall of Calais, Governor of Guisnes and  
Master of the Jewel House to Henry VIII, Edward VI and Queen Mary, and was killed at  
the taking of Calais in 1558. His descendant Sir Anthony was created Baronet in 1666.  
Two sons inherited, and when Sir Hewitt (for whom his mother had built the house in ca  
1700, Westenhanger part demolished in 1701) died (1726) title became extinct. His eldest  
sister married Dr Corbett who had 5 daughters, eldest of whom married Stephen  
Beckingham. Matthew Bell snr bought from the widow of Rev J C Beckinghain, who had  
  
died in 1807. Bourne tenanted in 1844 by Lord Londesborough, brother of Marquess  
Conyngham.  
  
4 Bifrons, a brief history; Bargraves; Conynghams; Patrixbourne Road  
  
[Arch Cam 4; 1861 pedigree of Bargrave: ] Arch Cam‘ 14, 1882 p 173: suggestion  
that Bargrave or Bargar derives from Baracre or Beracre. Edward Taylor succeeded to  
Bifrons in 1767. Died 1792. Erected new Bifrons on site close to the old one. His  
  
building is the present house, but its exterior has been cased, and it has been  
otherwise altered.  
  
Illustrations of Bifrons in Arch Cant 107, 1989, pp327-332: - The ﬁrst house, and in  
1794 before 19”" c remodelling. Demolished 1948. First built ca 1600. Painting by Jan  
Siberechts ca 1705/10. new building 1767 by Rev Edward Tay1or.. Minor alterations  
after Conynghams bought in 1830, by Thomas Hunt (d. 1831) and his pupil GH  
  
Smith in 1835. Major rebuild in 1863/64. The early Georgian House was virtually  
demolished. Predominant bricks in rebuild were Faversham soft reds and LBC  
yellows.  
  
Arch Cam I 08, 1990 p 270 (PH Blake) adds that Robert Bargar of Bridge, Yeoman,  
was a tanner, buried in Bridge chancel on 4/ 1/ 1600/01 Had his tanhouse in Bridge.  
His eldest son John was “of Fatrixbourne‘ , but did not inherit the tanhouse, though his  
son was baptised in Bridge. John reputed to be the builder of Bifrons, ca 1607-1611.  
In 161 1, too, John Bargrave alias Bargar of Patrixbourne had a grant of arms from  
Camden, Garter. Family were of humdrum station in Willesborough. Wealth may  
have come through J ohn’s marriage to Jane, daughter of Giles Crouche of London, ca  
1597.  
  
Arch Cant 110, 1992: pp313- 329 : BM THOMAS: A History of Bifrons Manor House  
Built on site of a previous house, unknown. Sold by Bargraves to Sir Arthur Slingsby  
in 1662, Thomas Baker before 1673, Thomas Adrian 1680, John Taylor 1694, 29  
September. Taylor born 1665, son of Nathaniel Taylor a Shropshire barrister. Rev.  
Edward Taylor died 1798: 4 sons. Eldest was Edward, who married Louisa  
Beckingham of Bourne in 1802. He became MP for Canterbury in 1807. They moved  
to Bourne in 1824. Her mother died in 1844 in Dover (Bourne then bought by  
Matthew Bell). First tenant of Bifrons was 2'” Marquess of Ely in 1825. In 1828 Lady  
Byron tenant. 1830 Bifrons sold to Henry, Marquess Conyngham, Lord Steward of  
the Household to George IV. Died 1832, widow died 1861 aged 91. Then Francis, 2“  
Marquess C., died 1876. Lord Chamberlain 1835-39. Major changes to house 1863.  
Cost £12014 4s 9d. 3rd Marquess brother of 2'”, George Francis, 1876, d. 1882.  
House passed to 4th marquess Henry Francis, but house let: to Edward Weinholt, JA  
  
Miller, Frank Penn, Col. The Hon. Milo Talbot, died 1932, but Mrs Talbot remained  
till 1939  
Car Park  
  
Gives us an opportunity to point to the most signiﬁcant and inﬂuential site in all of  
Bridge — Bifrons.  
  
Bifrons was built by John Bargar or Bargrave (an old Kentish family, with enterprises in  
Virginia) in 1634. (Dean Robert Bargrave of Canterbury Cathedral, and John Bargrave,  
traveller and collector of Curiosities). Family tombstones in Patixbourne Church.  
Grandson John Bargrave (?the collector) sold Bifrons in 1662 to Sir Arthur Slingsby, and  
his son Sir Charles Slingsby in 1677 alienated it to Thomas Baker, a London merchant,  
on whose death it came to William Whitton of London, and he in 1680 passed it to  
  
Thomas Adrian. He alienated it in 1694 to John Taylor (1665-1729 son of Nathaniel  
Taylor, Barrister-at—law), and his wife Olivia (d.1716) (portrait with his family, 1696, in  
NPG) who had four sons and four daughters (Olive b 1681 ‘??, married John Bowtell DD,  
vicar of Patrixbourne (and Bridge)), Margaret (1683-1738, unmarried), Brook, DD  
(1685-1731) - a celebrated mathematician, the inventor of Taylor's Theorem, worked  
  
with Kepler on the laws of planetary motion, FRS; worked with D'A1embert in Paris on  
the theory of refraction, Mary (1690-1771 - died aged 91? At Bridge Place), Upton (b  
1696) (is this Herbert, second son, who succeeded to all the estates by his father's will,  
and died 1763?), Nathaniel (b 1687), Charles (merchant in Moscow), John (b 1687),  
Hannah, Bridges (1698-1754). (Something wrong, here. That makes eleven.)  
  
Herbert (d 1763) had two sons, Herbert (d 1767 unmarried) and Edward (1763-1798)  
who succeeded him and who about 1770 demolished the old house and rebuilt it using  
some materials from Bridge Place (which had been partly demolished in 1704). In 1796  
Jane Austen visited Bifrons. Edward had four sons: Edward (an Army Captain), Herbert  
(ditto), Brook (Private Secretary to Foreign Minister), Bridges (Naval lieutenant). Edward  
Taylor sold Bifrons in 1820 to the Marquess of Conyngham (d. 1832) who extended the  
house. Elizabeth (Marchioness, b ca 1770) continued to reside there until her death in  
1861. She was responsible for opening a school for girls at the lower Lodge Gate  
(uniform like Little Red Riding-Hood), and supported the free schools of Patrixbourne  
and Bridge. She helped towards the formation of a Volunteer Fire Brigade and the  
establishment of a small gasworks (1859) to supply the mansion and the villages. She was  
a favourite (but not necessarily mistress) of George IV, notorious for her elegant  
enbonpoint and large posterior: 'fat, handsome, kindly, shrewd and extremely fond of  
jewels.‘ A rhyme suggested that they spent their time  
  
'Quaffing their claret, then mingling their lips,  
  
Or tickling the fat about each other's hips’  
  
Bifrons remained in the Conyngham Estate (1874 - Earl & Countess Mountcharles) and  
then let to tenants: 1893-97: John A Miller, Esq.; 1903-4, Frank Penn, Esq.; 1907-13,  
Robert Henry Bullock Marsham; 1915-18 Frank Penn & Mrs Penn; 1924-30 Col. Hon.  
Milo George Talbot (incl 230 acres of finely timbered park); 1934 Hon. Mrs Milo Talbot.  
1940 Empty. Later used as a billet for Canadian servicemen and a home for displaced  
persons. Finally demolished in ‘P1949/51.  
  
Subsequent excavations have laid bare the cellars once more.  
  
Arch Cant 120, 2000 pp 77-105 MG BRENNAN: The Exile oftwo Kentish Royalists  
during the English civil war deals with Bargrave cousins John (cl 610-1680) and  
Robert (1628-61) Robert was son of Isaac B (1586-1643) John son ofJohn d. 1625  
(who built Bifrons). Ref to “Mr Cooly of Trin Coll Cambs was secretarie to the Lord  
X”(3l May 1645) on p 86 (nobody of that name listed in the Trinity Alumni, but John  
  
Cooly appears in the Churchwarden’s records for 1673/5 as a tenant of Anthony  
Aucher of Bourne with 6 acres of land.)  
  
5 The gas works  
  
Built by Marchioness Conyngham to supply Bifrons and two villages. Some  
pipework still surviving in ﬁeld?  
  
Memorandum of Agreement  
  
made the 7th Day of January 1896  
between  
  
The Bridge Gas Coke & Coal Compy Ltd.  
and  
  
Bridge Parish Council  
  
The Gas Compy will keep in repair and light with a light of gin by 2.5 The Eleven existing Lamps  
for the sum of Five Pounds Ten Shillings for each Lamp per ann.  
  
The Lamps to be lighted one hour after sunset and extinguished at 10.30 pm i   
months in the summer viz From the Middle of May to the Middle of August and for fi\_v§ nights of  
every full Moon at which periods the Lamps will not be required except also at any time when  
circumstances may arise over which the Company has no control in which latter case a  
proportionate reduction of the amount payable shall be made by the Company.  
  
This agreement commences 1st January 1896 and may be terminated by six months previous  
notice in writing on either side.  
  
Joshua Fairbrass Chairman of Matthew Bell  
Parish Council Chairman of  
Henry J Bird Parish Councillor Bridge Gas Compy  
Richard Friend Parish Councillor Chas Wills Secretary Bridge Gas Coke &  
Coal Compy Ltd.  
  
6 The school: people  
The Old School. Built by Marchioness Conyngham in 1849  
1859: Richard Wells, master, National School, Mrs Sophie Sayer, mistress  
1871: Mr & Mrs R Wye, first government teachers  
1874: Robert Wye, Mrs Mary Wye, Miss Ellen Wye  
  
1878/90: Robert Wye, Master, Mrs Susan Emmeline Wye, Mistress, Miss Fanny Wye,  
Infants Mistress  
  
1893: Robert Wye, master, assistant overseer (at the Union) and collector of tithes and  
Queen's taxes; Miss GF Wye, assistant, boys’ school, Mrs Wye girls, Miss Wye, infants  
1893: Robert Wye, Miss GF Wye, Mrs Wye, Miss Wye  
  
1903: John George Andrews, Master (Robert Wye retired in 191 1)  
  
1907-18: JG Andrews, Master, Miss F Wye, Infants  
  
1918: JG Andrews Master, Miss CG Wye, infants  
  
1924: WJ Billing, Master, Miss M Bell, infants (KCC control)  
  
1940: Public Elementary School  
  
Mrs Olive Knight (appointed 1948) retired as headmistress summer 1971 (1973?),  
  
after two terms in the new school, and was replaced by Miss W Tomlin.  
  
Interesting Presentation at Bridge: There was a pleasant gathering at the school on the  
24”‘ when Miss Wye was presented with a purse of gold, subscribed for by the managers,  
scholars (past and present), parents, and friends, as a token of esteem and appreciation of  
her 44 years work as headmistress of the infants‘ school. The presentation was made by  
the Vicar (Rev. H Knight), who spoke most highly of Miss Wye's work, as testified by  
the uniformly excellent reports of inspectors eulogising her skill as a teacher and her tact  
in the management of the little ones to whom she had been a second mother. (Kentish  
Gazette, January 1 1916) (Williamson 435)  
  
Diamond Wedding: Mr[b 1847] & Mrs[b 1844] R Wye, retired head teachers, who  
celebrated their diamond wedding on Tuesday, have resided in Bridge for 58 years. Mr  
  
‘Wye, after serving as a pupil teacher at Warrington, was trained at St Peter's College,  
  
Peterborough, and secured his certificate in 1867. He was appointed headmaster of the  
CE Boys‘ school at Shepton Mallett, Somerset, where the future Mrs Wye was then  
headmistress of the Infants‘ school. They were married at the Parish Church, Shepton  
  
Mallett, by the Rev. Canon Pratt on June 18”‘, 1869. Resigning their posts there in 1871,  
they were appointed to the headships of the Boys’ and Girls‘ Schools at Bridge, from  
which they retired in September 1900. Mr Wye has led a strenuous life at Bridge. Whilst  
at the school he was organist of Patrixbourne, conducted a large Band of Hope, and  
almost before lay readers were thought of, took a week night cottage service in an  
outlying part of the parish. He also held several public appointments, such as Assistant  
Overseer and Rate Collector for three parishes, Collector of Taxes for 12 parishes,  
collector of Tithes, etc. For over 45 years he has been connected with the Marquess  
Conyngham estate office, which he still attends, and has for 25 years been lay reader,  
churchwarden and school manager at Bridge, a post which he still occupies. At Christmas  
1871, Mr Wye's sister, Miss F Wye, was appointed headmistress of the Infants‘ School,  
from which she retired in 1914. During their tenure as head teachers all three departments  
received meritorious mention in the Education Office Blue Books, and whilst the  
‘Exce1lent' Merit Grant was in vogue, it was awarded to each department. Their respective  
ages now are: Mr Wye 82, Mrs Wye 85, Miss Wye 78. One oftheir old scholars is now a  
clergyman, another a doctor and specialist in New Zealand, and another, now deceased,  
  
obtained a post in the Chinese Diplomatic Service. — not a bad record for a village school.  
(Williamson 186- no source or date)  
  
Fanny Wye died Oct 30 1944 aged 94  
  
Susan Emily Wye died December 5 1929 aged 85  
Robert Wye died June 26 1935 aged 88  
  
All buried in Bridge Churchyard , tomb G10  
  
Thomas Badcocke of Patrixbourne d before 1681 leaving £227 17s 3d. Had 3 sons &  
1 dr. aged 3-14 A Thomas Badcocke was Churchwarden of Bridge in 1711, first  
mentioned 1693. If born in 1666 he’d be 15-27more likely the latter.  
  
Compton Census of 1676 of all inhabitants over 16yrs. Suggested 40 children to  
every 60 adults gives:  
  
Bekesbourne: Conformists 112 Papists 0 Nonconformists 8 Total pop: 200  
Bishopsbourne “ 127 “ 1 “ 2 “ 195  
Patrix& Bridge “ 196 “ O “ 4 “ 333  
(From: 17”‘ c Miscellany, Kent Records XVII, 1960)  
  
Religious worship in Kent: the census of 1851 (Kent Records 1999) p xxx “Bridge  
  
and Patrixbourne had ben united into a single benefice at the Tithe Commutation Act.  
(But it always was?) . Cl-1 Hallett had a stipend of £442 p.a.  
  
Bridge Parish: Area 1161 acres: Number ofHouses in 1851 — inhabited 132,  
uninhabited 6 building, 0.  
  
Population: 1801: 325; 18112397; 1821: 432; 1831: 543; 1841: 817; 1851: 864 [sharp  
rise in 1841 due to workhouse — 1841: 165; 1851: 234.  
  
St Peters’ endowed with tithe £201 Os 4d, fees £10  
  
Sittings: Free 100; other 300. The church will nearly accommodate the whole of the  
  
parishioners. Average attendance for year Morning: 270, afternoon 330, Evening 102.  
Vicar’s rent charge £400, Glebe rent £42 Total £442.  
  
Maurice Allen Smelt, Curate.  
  
Wesleyan Chapel Bridge Attendance Morning: 12 on average. [Primitives not yet  
taken over?]  
  
Kent Records 1984: KL Wood-Legh: The Kentish visitations of Archbishop Warham:  
(151 1-12):  
  
“Ecclesia de Bekysbourne. . .item, that Alice the wif of Johan C[l]aryngeboll  
suspiciously Goethe to the house of M. Malk’, vicare of Patryksbourne, late and rathe,  
and he in lykewyse to hir house.” [ie Malcolm Ramsey, vicar 1495-1538] — Joan  
Claryngbold denied the article against her, was ordered to avoid the company of of  
the vicar of Patrixbourne, but not required to purge herself, because this had been  
enjoined by the vicar.  
  
Ecclesia de Patrykisbourne. .. Compertum est: that the vicar of the said churche  
kepithe Alice Claryngbole and doethe advoutry the whiche is openly knowen.  
  
Mr Macolinus Ramsey denied the charge against him: ordered to purge himself with  
two laymen and two men of his order, came on the appointed day with . . . .  
  
Ecclesia de Brigge  
  
Compertum est: that the wardeyne of seynt Laurence in Caunterbury wothholdithe  
16d a yere dew to the churche of Brigges aforesaid whiche he paid not thies 30 yeres.  
[Robert Dovor, monk of St Augustine’s., warden of the house of the sisters of St  
Laurence, Canterbury, denied owing the church 16d annual rent. Churchwardens  
proved his liability and he was directed to pay or to answer before the abp.]  
  
Item, M. Isaac withholdithe 2d a yere of the churche rent and is behind by the space  
of 15 yeres.  
  
[William Isaak, gentleman, to pay annual rent of 2d in future and to settle with  
churchwardens for arrears.]  
  
Item oone Thomas Yong withholdithe 5d a yere of the churche rent 3 yeres and more  
and wille not pay except M Isaac and other pay theirs.  
  
[Thomas Yong said he had settled with churchwardens for rent and arrears and they  
confirmed this.]  
  
Item that Nicholas Parker withdrawithe 2d a yere thies 30 yeres.  
  
[Nicholas Parker denied owing rent. Churchwardens proved his liability by the rental,  
as above;: to pay rent and arrears or to compound with churchwardens.]  
  
Item that they be not duely served with an honest preest but sometime with a freere,  
sometime with noone at all, and that the vicare wille not have there a preest resident.  
[Mr Macolinus Ramsey, vicar, to serve the cure by a ﬁt secular priest as soon as  
possible; meanwhile no religious to minister to the parishioners.]  
  
Item that the vicare will geve noo rights to theym that wille not content his mynd and  
when they doo not aggre with hym aftir his pleasur.  
  
[Vicar denied having refused the sacraments to anyone on account of unpaid debts.]  
  
Kent Records: Calendar of feet of fines  
  
Bridge 1 1 June 1262: Q[uerentes] Ralph s. of Gervase de Kenewysburn. D[eforciates]  
Walter Truoe and w[ife] Blanche; a mess. 6 ac. Ofland, 4 ac. Of wood 13s of rent  
and rent of 10 hens in Brigges. D acknowledged the premises to be the right of Q of  
the gift of D. To hold to Q and his heirs of D and the heirs of Blanche, paying yearly  
  
half pound of cumin at easter and doing service to the chief lords. Q gave a sore  
sparrow hawk. (46 Hen. III)  
  
Bridge 25 Nov 1262; Q. Adam Snegg’. D William , Master of the Hospital of Priests  
of St Mary, Canterbury. 16 ‘/2 ac. Of land in Brigge and the suburbs of  
  
Canterbury. . . .  
  
Bridge 8 July 1271 Q. Nigel de Thurkyng and w. Cristine D Ralph de Brigg, clerk; 2  
mess. 4 ac of land and the moiety of a mill in Brigg. Q acknowledged the premises to  
be the right ofD D gave 20s. (55 Hen III)  
  
Bridge Pit; Blackmansbury; Kenewesborne 25 november 1271 D Ralph le Clark of  
Bregg 187 ac of land in Brigge Pitte, Blakemannesbir’ and Kynesburn’. D  
acknowledged the said land with appurtenances as in demesnes, homages, services etc  
to be the right of Q Roger Abbot of St Augustine Canterbury and his church of the  
  
gift of D and for this Q granted it to D. paying yearly 12 marks at Nativity of John  
Baptist & Michaelmas.  
  
Hasted III 724 notes that in 1249 Robert Abbot of St Augustines gave Ralph the lands  
of Kenewesborne for 20s per annum. Was Ralph an early vicar? [Not in the lists]  
  
7 Brookside  
  
Was a coal merchant’s; then a haulier. Last (and only) house in Bridge on the  
Patrixbourne Road  
  
8 Methodist Church  
Bridge Village Hall and the early history of Methodism in Bridge  
  
The Methodist Chapel as it now stands in Bridge has recently celebrated its centenary, for  
the ‘Iron Chapel’ in Patrixbourne Road was erected in 1894. The then Minister, William  
Rodwell Jones (who lived in Canterbury) signed the application to the Registrar General  
for use by the Wesleyan Methodists on June 22'” of that year. The application to build  
had been submitted to the Chapel Committee in Manchester on April 30th by Mr Jones,  
Thomas Grant Cozens (see also below), AJ Baker and Jabez James Lintott, the estimated  
cost being £177. This sum had to suffice for all possible costs, including purchase of the  
land, fencing, architect's commissions and so on. A further condition was that all  
liabilities had to be defrayed within twelve months after the opening of the Chapel, so as  
to leave no debt whatsoever. Sanction for the building furthermore was given only  
  
grudgingly, for a handwritten note is appended to the form:  
  
The Committee strongly object to Iron Chapels. In their opinion a good substantial brick building would be  
far more satisfactory in the end [and] more economical. Moreover the Committee would be prepared to aid  
in the latter but are precluded from doing so from allowing debt on Iron buildings.  
  
In spite therefore of no pecuniary help from Manchester the money was raised and the  
building completed and fitted out well under budget with seating, hymn books, mats and  
oil lighting for a total sum of £1 39—l7s-0%d. For more than 100 years now it has served  
its purpose, and perhaps it has confounded everyone by being more economical than  
brick?  
  
But what of the period before 1894? The early history of the Methodist Church is  
complicated by disputes over fine points of doctrine and organisation, which led to the  
formation of numerous breakaway groups, the reasons for which are not of importance  
  
here. They did however result in one decision which has left its mark on the village and  
in which the Marchioness Conyngham was closely involved.  
  
The first record of Methodism in the village is said to be a minute of 1823 authorising  
one William Fordred to rent a house for Methodist Meetings ’at no more than 2/6 per  
week’. Whether this was an option taken up is not certain, and William Fordred does not  
reappear, but the following year support for the cause was evidently already sufﬁciently  
strong for the trustees in Canterbury to feel able to buy a plot of land for £50 on which to  
erect their own Chapel. This was indeed a plot very conveniently and prominently  
situated, with a frontage of 33 feet on the south-west side of Bridge Street, and extending  
back some 97 feet, adjacent to land belonging to the Rev. Richard Barham, who at the  
time owned Bridge Farm. This is the site on which the present Village Hall stands.  
  
The earliest record of ownership of the land ascribes it to William Ottoway, who owned  
various properties in the county. On his death his sons sold this piece, which at the time  
consisted of a house and garden plot, to Stephen Simmonds for £100, in January 1819.  
Simmonds didn't enjoy the property for long however. He was in debt and died intestate  
leaving four sons, only one of whom (John) was of age, a few years later.  
  
Joseph Duplock of Ramsgate, gentleman, was the person who through Simmonds’ debts  
held claim on the property, and it was he who, presumably in agreement with John, sold it  
on to the Wesleyan Methodist Trustees in June 1824. Their names are worth recording  
here, though none lived in Bridge:  
  
Thomas Pilcher of St. Dunstan's in Canterbury, Wheelwright,  
  
Daniel Gouger of Kingston, Miller,  
  
Thomas Grant of Kingston, Farmer,  
  
James Sutherland of Canterbury, Tailor,  
  
Henry Stickalls of Canterbury, Clothier,  
  
Thomas Hobday of Canterbury, Coal merchant,  
  
Thomas Finch Cozens of Canterbury, Builder,  
  
Jonathan Bundock of Canterbury, Upholsterer,  
  
Robert Clarke of Canterbury, Butcher,  
  
William Clay of Canterbury, Hatter,  
  
William Potter of Canterbury, Cordwainer.  
  
As solid tradesmen they were doubtless aware that Mr Duplock's authority to sell was not  
100% secure, for they also required an indemnity from him to the tune of £150 in case  
any of the younger Simmonds boys (who were under 15 years old) should later ﬁle a  
claim, contending that they had not been party to the sale.  
  
With the property now in their hands, the Wesleyans began to build, and eventually spent  
£320 on constructing and furnishing the structure which is now the front portion of the  
Village Hall. Some years later a note happily records that the adjacent house is tenanted  
by a Mr Wood, Cordwainer (ie shoemaker) ‘with shoemaker's shop, garden and  
appurtenances together with a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel’. A photograph of the Village  
  
hall, or Reading Room as it then was, taken in the early 1900's still shows the shop as a  
‘leather store’ adjacent to the hall.  
  
To begin with the chapel flourished. The surviving March-July preaching plan of 1827  
shows that services were held twice every Sunday, at 10.30am and 6.30pm, or at 10.30am  
  
and 2.30pm in alternate weeks. A list of preachers, several of whom appear as the  
Trustees above, is appended:  
  
1 ,,r  
  
Cusworth; Stones; Langstone; Hobday; Hills; Coulter; Stubberfield; Crippen; Cozens;  
Bundock; Corbet; Vile; H.Coulter; White; Read; Ashwell; Masters; Tappenden; Clay;  
Martin; Bate; Dyason; Luck; Ladd; Laker; Royce (on trial)  
  
The 1820's, leading to the Reform Act of 1832 however, were marked by a period of  
political turbulence which was also reflected in the development of Methodism. Such  
agitation resulted in a series of secessions focussed on the tensions existing between the  
ministers, bolstered by the well—to-do laity, and the rest of the people generally. While at  
that time they did not in general affect the development of the creed, the unrest  
culminated in 1850 with the formation of the ‘Methodist Free Churches‘ and other groups,  
and between 1850 and 1855 the ‘Connexion’ lost some 100,000 members, nearly one third  
of the total.  
  
Bridge was evidently not untouched by these events, for in 1851 permission was sought  
from (and given by) the President at a conference in Sheffield for the building to be sold,  
as there had been ‘no attendance at late years at Wesleyan Chapel - hence their desire to  
sell.‘ [Alleged elsewhere to be ca 12 averageThe form of consent was eventually signed  
by ‘John Scott, 16 August 1852'.  
  
Where had the people gone? A letter from a local solicitor in the Conyngham papers (Mr  
R Pilcher) to another in London (probably Lady Conyngham‘s) dated 5 September 1853  
reveals that some had undoubtedly reverted to Anglicanism, but others had joined the  
secessionists:  
  
I am told . . . that no sale is valid unless the consent of the president be had - this was obtained 2  
years since when the idea of selling the estate was first thought about — owing 1 think to the Rev  
Mr Stevenson [the vicar of Patrixbourne & Bridge] drawing the Wesleyans to the parish church —  
a sect called ‘Ranters‘ now have the chapel at £4 per annum and they disturb the whole  
neighbourhood. The house lets for £10.  
  
The OED offers the following gloss on ‘Ranters‘:  
Ranter: Applied to members of the Primitive Methodist body, which originated in 1807-10.  
It then quotes the History of the Primitive Methodists by H Bourne:  
  
When these . . . meetings were closed, the praying people, in returning home, were accustomed to  
sing through the streets. . . This circumstance procured them the name of Ranters; and the name  
of Ranter, which first arose on this occasion [in 1814], afterwards spread very extensively.  
  
The OED also quotes the Penny Cyclopedia, XV: . . .the Primitive Methodists, who are  
sometimes known as Ranters, originated in Staffordshire.  
  
This term describes therefore people of a joyous and evangelical disposition, rather than  
  
rowdy. In Bridge they were however eventually ejected from the Chapel, for, as Mr  
Pilcher explains:  
  
The Marchioness has verbally agreed to purchase from the Wesleyan Trustees in the Canterbury  
District, a house, garden and methodist chapel at Bridge for £270 . . .Her ladyship intends turning  
  
the Chapel into a Lecture Room or a Village Literary Institution, on payment ofa shilling a year  
for the improvements of the rising generation.  
  
In due course the sale was agreed (on 21 July 1854) by the then Trustees, three of whom  
  
(Bundock. Gouger or Gauger and Thomas Finch Cozens) had survived since 1824, the  
remainder being  
  
Thomas Grant Cozens of Canterbury, Builder, probably the son of TFC, and the same  
  
who signed the petition to the Manchester Chapel Committee forty years later (he was  
born in 1825),  
  
Francis Hewson of Wickhambreux, Baker,  
Thomas Bird of Canterbury, Brushmaker,  
  
   
  
Edward Castle of Canterbury, Gardener,  
  
William Frederick Crippen of Camden Town, Grocer,  
  
Thomas Harnett Gifford of Bridge, Cordwainer,  
  
Henry Allsworth of Canterbury, Baker,  
  
John Smith of Canterbury, Carpenter,  
  
Edward Small of Canterbury, Plumber.  
  
All these were required to state that they had been 'in peaceable and uninterrupted  
possession of the property for 30 years and upward‘, and knew of no claim of title of  
possession since 1824. The reappearance of the younger Simmonds boys was still  
  
therefore evidently a remote possibility, as Mr Pilcher somewhat deviously notes:  
  
The father . . . died intestate consequently the sons were equally entitled, and had there been a  
surplus — under our law of gavelkind John the Elder son did sign as you will observe and the  
estate passed by feoffment, I think two of the brothers died. I know and believe he has a Brother  
living nr Romney — or this one by the bye may be John — it strikes me that it might be unadvisable  
  
to say anything to either on the subject — it is so far back — I recollect the [piece] of land when it  
was a garden abutting to the Dover Road.  
  
The Primitive Methodists, having been evicted from the chapel, presumably met privately  
for a while, until they were able to secure a site in Dering Road for a wooden chapel of  
their own, which was duly erected in 1868. At the time it was the only building on that  
side of the road (opposite the end of Filmer Road) and fairly well separated from other  
properties. The building survived (though in the 20”‘ century not as a chapel) until 1951,  
when it was demolished and replaced by a row of lock-up garages. It is however clearly  
marked as such in the survey of 1872‘/1873 (OS 1/2500 map sheet 47.9W), while there is  
no indication of a Wesleyan chapel at all. In the last two decades of the nineteenth  
century however a movement for Methodist Reunion was gathering pace, and by 1892 a  
Methodist Society was re-formed with 14 members, whose efforts then were rewarded  
with the erection of the 'Iron Chapel‘. The Primitive Chapel is recorded still on a map of  
  
1898, but by 1907 it is no longer marked, the building having been taken over as a private  
house.  
  
The history of Methodism since that time has been for Bridge quiet and relatively  
uneventful. But what of the Reading Room? The Chapel as originally built in the 1820's  
(and shown on the 1873 map) was only half as long as the present main hall. It survived  
until 1874, when major improvements were undertaken, ‘in celebration of the coming of  
age of the Marchioness's son’ (Henry Francis, Viscount Slane), which extended the hall to  
its present size, and inserted a ﬁreplace. The front wall abutting the pavement is original,  
though the windows may have been replaced. The former ‘Village shop’ was erected after  
1824, in the gap created between the Chapel and the earlier property on the corner of  
Union Road, but the old cordwainer's leather goods shop has vanished, and the space  
incorporated into the adjacent property. The Reading Room has meanwhile served many  
functions, not least as Canteen and Recreation Room for troops in the First World War,  
renamed as the Village Hall in the 1970's and purchased outright in the 1980's from the  
Conyngham Estate. The Hunter Room (named after the village doctor Roger Hunter, who  
  
practised here throughout World War II until the 1960's) has also been added in recent  
years.  
  
Sources: 1994 Exhibition documents (board 73);  
Conyngham papers (Whitfield) 8.U.438.T.25  
  
MM Raraty  
  
5 April 2000/revised 23 October 2001  
© mmr  
  
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.’ ‘ ;\* ‘l:, ‘  
f\s ~«  
  
25 ';\_.,,r«  
  
9 Bridge Hill Cottages; Bourne Lodge; Lynton House I  
Lynton House built probably 1857; Bourne Lodge rather later ?Edwardian  
Several board cottages on the hill adjacent to Patrixbourne Road, four now  
  
demolished. A forerunner of Lynton House is shown on Ogilby’s map of 1675.  
  
“A freehold Messe. or Tenement with the Garden Orchard and Appurts. thunto belongg  
containg by estimation 3 acres more or less situate lying and being in the several parishes  
of Bridge and Patrixbourne or one of them in the County of Kent.  
  
And also to six Cottages adjoining the above with the yards gardens and appurts. thunto  
belongg situate in the sd several parishes of Bridge & Patrixbourne or one of them — the  
latter Estate being held for the residue of a term of 500 years created by an lndre Dated  
23“‘ Nov’ 1710.”  
  
In 1675 this estate belonged to William Cheston, a yeoman of Bridge.  
  
167 4 18"‘ Sept"} Will of William Cheston then dated and proved at Canterbury the  
9”" June 1677 whereby he Willed & Bequeathed — His House whin he then lived and the  
Malthouse Barns Stable and Outhouses thereto belongg together with the gardens  
orchards closes and lands containing in all by estimon. 18 acres more or less with their  
  
and every of their appurts. and then in his posson. or occupon. Unto his eldest Son  
Richard Cheston his heirs and ass5' for ever.  
  
Lynton House was formerly known as Lansberry Cottage, and probably built by John  
Lansberry, who died in 1849. For many years until the 1980’s the upper side of the house  
proclaimed in bold letters the name of a coal merchant \*\*\*\*\* who resided here. It was  
later the residence of Mr FRW Berry, a prominent Canterbury Estate Agent (also air vice-  
  
marshal \*\*\*\*\*). Bourne Lodge built on part of this estate (all now built up) as dower  
house by Matthew Bell 2nd? Grandson of the Director of The Equitable Life.  
  
10 East Bridge House  
  
11 Bridge Hill House;  
  
Bridge Hill House 1799 property of Stephen Beckingham, tenanted by Edward  
Hawkins at a rent of £20 per annuin. Otherwise known as the Horse and Groom, it  
  
offered a good ordinary on race days and was where horses were entered for the races.  
  
12 Canterbury Races  
  
1799 The Race Ground yearly rent of £3 ls from executors of Francis Whitﬁeld.  
The race course 42 acres 1 perch valued at £313 45, property of Stephen Beckingham  
  
We hear that on Monday the 18”" inst. There will be a match of running on Barham  
Downs, between young women, twelve or fifteen on a side. The meeting to be at Bridge-  
  
Hill, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on that day, or on the first day afterwards that the  
weather will permit; - - —great diversion, and much Company are expected.  
  
We hear likewise, as a reward to those who shall have the best of the match, that twelve  
shifts will be given them by the gentry, &c.  
  
(Kentish Gazette, 5 July I 768)  
  
13 [Higham]  
Is in Patrixbourne.  
  
14 The Hexagon; Star Hill; Military  
Arch Cant 56, 1943 p 69: RF Jessup, MISC NOTES: “Saxon barrows inside Bourne  
Park mutilated by excavation in 1845 now obliterated by recent ploughing under war  
emergency. The Race Course... was responsible for much destruction... A small  
regular six—sided enclosure appears immediately to the NE of the hammer-shaped tree  
enclosure in Bourne Park. About 400 yards to the SE and 50 yards from the Roman  
road is a fairly large barrow circle, possibly Roman.Three other possible Roman  
barrow circles. . .could be seen in the fields between Bourne Park and Charlton Park.”  
The six—sided enclosure (hexagon — cf aerial photo) is by no means small: It has a  
radius of approx 18 metres. Recent (2001 -3, ongoing) excavations have revealed a  
surrounding ditch, and at least two graves. Date: Iron—Age, possible pre—Roman.. It  
lies very close to the line of Kingsbury Road as it rises up Star Hill (why the name?)  
'Before quitting Barham Downs and their neighbourhood, it will be well to notice one or  
two other features, which are corroborative as to their having been the site of Caesar's  
camp.  
On the brow of the hill, in Bourne Park, there are what appears to be the remains of two  
outposts, 400 yards apart, surrounded each by a ditch. They are of the same dimensions,  
and form almost perfect hexagons, each side being about 50 feet in length. They are  
situated in commanding positions on a hill, called locally "Star Hill," and would afford  
excellent stations for the guards placed before the gates of the camp, whence they could  
view the position and movements of the enemy. They are known traditionally as "the  
Forts". They are now bare of trees, but have the appearance of having been planted at  
some comparatively recent period.  
A deep depression a few yards distant from one of these may possibly have been one of  
  
thos extemporized amphitheatres with which we know Caesar sought amusement for his  
soldiers, when not in actual combat. . .'  
  
(FT Vine: Caesar in Kent, privately printed, 1886, pp 191/2, copy in possession of R  
Neame, esq., Bishopsbourne)  
  
The 'deep depression‘ referred to above is not, it seems a reference to ‘Old England's Hole’,  
since Vine refers to that separately on pp 167-9 of his book.  
  
See in reference to these comments the attached MS commentary by Matthew Bell of  
Bourne House (transcribed by Martin Vye). Mr Bell refers to a Scotch Fir plantation.  
  
1838 tithe map identiﬁes Star Hill, but no woodland is marked. 1801 map is too unclear  
to tell, 1764 map too unreliable.  
  
The hexagons were evidently visible on the ground in 1886. They appear on no maps.I do  
not know where the second one may be, but the one in the photo is currently invisible to  
the amateur eye. The ground is covered in long dry grass at the moment. If mown and put  
to sheep it might show something. Photo was taken in February 1982.  
  
As an enclosure to a plantation the hexagon is too regular: indeed it seems too  
mathematically precise altogether. The rounded corners I detect appear to be centred on  
the angles of the inner dark hexagon. It is situated on a high (but not the highest) part of  
the hill. A small tower (25ft or so) would give an uninterrupted 360 degree panorama,  
over the top of any trees. Wishful thinking?  
  
The scale of the photo I have judged to be 5cm : 9m approx., which gives a maximum  
diameter to the feature of 36m — rather large - it looks more mediaeval than Roman!.  
  
15 Mediaeval facts  
  
Arch Caz/11346, 1934, p 33f :Will of Joan widow of John Denys late of Welle next  
Littlebourne 8 feb 1441: To the fabric of the churches in Bekesbourne,  
Patrykkesbourne and Bregge 6s 8d each  
  
Arch Cant 50; 193 8 THE REGISTER AND CHARTULARY OF THE HOSPITAL OF ST LAURENCE,  
CANTERBURY p 48: “Warin Brends, son of Osbarn of Pette, near Rodweye, grants to  
the brothers and sisters of the hospital of St Laurence all his lands in Bregge [Bridge]  
to be held of grantor at a yearly rent of 16d, a payment of 3 1 d to Ralph Clerk, ld  
Romescot, 1 hen and 3 farthings, ‘and he that carries the hen shall eat it there or bring  
it back’ (qui illam portaverit illuc manducabit vel reportabit). . . .” (°a‘ 1331).  
  
16 Old Englands Hole  
[FT Vine: CAESAR IN KENT, 1886 P 169; 2”” EDN 1887, Elliot Stock p 172;] “Never  
  
forget, my son,” said the father of him whose researches and suggestions have done  
  
so much to inspire the writer of these pages, “Never forget that this is ‘Old england’s  
Hole’ and that here a last stand was made for liberty by your British  
  
forefathers.” . . .The rampart and ditch by which [the oppidum] was surrounded may  
still be traced. An agger or mound. . .still remains. . . .Watling street... runs close to  
the enclosure, below the modern road by which Bridge Hill is now ascended [not true]  
  
The rampart of the oppidum on this side is even now of considerable height, and must  
at one time have been at least twenty feet high[2"d edn — not in 1”] Other evidence:  
“When the present road on Bridge Hill was dug out in 1829 ﬁve or six Roman urns,  
with six or eight human skulls, were discovered about ﬁve feet below the surface,  
embedded in the chalk. The remains of a horst in a ferrruginous condition were found  
within the oppidum by some boys about ﬁfteen years ago [1872]. There is still a  
  
l  
  
slight bank surrounding the Hole, though it is probably a chalk pit, partly ﬁlled in by 5  
Matthew Bell. It is too small (and badly positioned) to be a defensive position. ‘  
Alec Detsicas in The Cantiaci, p.2 (1983) remarks: “The Hill-fort at Bigbury, the  
precursor of Belgic Canterbury, controlled the crossing of the Stour”. Bigbury is SE  
  
of the Stour, before the crossing. Sheppard Frere, writing in 1967 (revised ed 1987)  
says “In the early morning he reached the Stour and easily drove the Britons from the  
crossing. The principal ford lay at the future site of Canterbury. No settlement yet  
existed on this site [but later, Frere refers to Belgic Canterbury: did it appear between  
54BC and 43AD‘??], but a hill-fort lay on the heights above at Bigbury, one and a half  
miles beyond the ford.” Evidence has been found for Belgic settlement at Canterbury.  
The town is more than twice as far from Bigbury as suggested. And why should  
  
Caesar cross the river before attacking Bigbury? A romantic solution might be that he  
did in fact encounter Britons at Old England’s Hole, who then retired to Bigbury  
  
along the Kingsbury Road. The river would then be the little Stour. But C. doesn’t  
  
then mention the Stour crossing. None of these arguments quite work.  
Old England's Hole  
  
This is most probably an old quarry, cut into the side of the old road to Dover out of  
Bridge at about the lowest practicable point of the hill where chalk is available. It is  
however also a source of much romantic speculation. The theory that it is the site of an  
encounter between Britons and Romans is of relatively recent (early l9“‘ century) origin.  
The following account is almost wholly fanciful (Caesar died of course in 44 BC. His  
second British expedition was in 54 BC. Nero was Emperor in AD 56).  
  
‘At the summit of the. .. rise out of Bridge, the road, running exactly on the site of the  
Roman Watling Street, comes to that bleak and elevated table—land known as Barham  
Downs, the scene of Caesar's great battle with the Britons on July 23rd, AD 56. Twenty-  
seven thousand Roman soldiers, horse and foot, met the wild rush of the Britons, who,  
with the usual undisciplined and untaught courage of uncivilised races, ﬂung themselves  
upon the invaders and were thrown back by the impenetrable wall of the serried  
phalanxes. Recoiling dismayed from this reception, they were instantly pursued by the  
Roman cavalry and cut up into isolated bands, who fought courageously all that fatal day  
in the dense woodlands. Protected by mounds and trenches defended with palisades of  
stakes cunningly interwoven with brushwood, they prolonged the hopeless contest until  
nightfall, and then fell back. Caesar, describing these woodland forts as oppida, gives  
especial attention to one troublesome stronghold. "Being repulsed," he writes, "they  
withdrew themselves into the woods and reached a place which they had prepared before,  
having closed all approaches to it by felled timber." This retreat was captured by soldiers  
of the Seventh Legion, who, throwing up a mound against it, advanced, holding their  
shields over their heads in the military formation known as "the tortoise," and drove out  
the defenders at the sword's point.  
  
This, the last place to hold out, is, despite the eighteen and a half centuries that have  
passed, still to be seen in Bourne Park, on the summit of Bridge Hill, and is familiarly  
known in the neighbourhood as "Old England's Hole." "Never forget," the old  
countryfolk have been wont to impress their children - "never forget that this is Old  
  
England's Hole, and that on this spot a last stand for freedom was made by your British  
forefathers."  
  
Every one in the neighbourhood knows Old England's Hole. It is seen beside the road, on  
the right hand, just where the cutting through the crest of the hill, made in 1829, to ease  
the pull-up for the coach—horses, begins. At that same time the course of the road was  
very slightly diverted, and, instead of actually impinging on this ancient historic  
landmark, as before, was made to run a few feet away. Now the spot is seen across the  
fence of the park, the old course of the road still traceable beside it as a slightly depressed  
green track, plentifully dotted with thistles. The stronghold consists of a crater-like  
hollow, encircled by earthen banks, still high and steep. A great number of ash-trees and  
thorns, some very old, gnarled and decayed, grow on these banks, and cast a dense shade  
upon the interior.’  
  
(CG Harper: The Ingoldsby Country,1904, pp63-6)  
  
In 1846, during excavation for a lake in Bourne Park, Samian pottery and other articles  
were found at a depth of 10-13ft. Also, nearby, Roman interments, including a large urn  
containing ashes at the same depth. Also three skeletons with large nails near the  
shoulders, hands and feet. A few Roman coins. Faussett in 1771 mentions over 100  
tumuli on Hanging Hill, in front of and between Bourne Place, Bishopsbourne and the  
Roman road; others had been ploughed down. These were Saxon. (Wright).  
  
17 Bourne Gatehouse  
Built in 1857 by Matthew Bell of Bourne House as Gate Lodge to Bourne. Bourne  
  
Park Road was until after WWII a gated road at both ends. One post on the upper side  
of the road remains here. It is probable that there was a previous lodge on this side to  
guard the entrance to the park. And Ogilby’s map of the Dover Road of 1675 marks  
‘The Greyhound’ on this site in the corner of ‘Sir Anth. Aucher’s Park’  
  
Aucher owned Bourne Estate at the time. The Lodge has a number of ghost stories  
attached to it: one concerns a Victorian coachman in his greatcoat who was seen at  
the window by a young boy in the l970’s; another is of a young woman being  
brought into the house severely injured after her coach had turned over on the hill. A  
motorist on the hill is also said to have had to swerve on the hill outside to avoid  
something apparently crossing the road, although closer inspection revealed nothing  
there.  
  
Some ghostly anecdotes  
  
Mystery at Bridge  
  
On Sunday February 14, I was driving home from Whitstable, the evening was dark and I passed  
through the village of Bridge at approximately 7 pm. I had commenced the run up the hill leading  
from the village to Dover, when a dark shape, which I took to be a van without lights, crossed the  
road from my left to the right about 20 yards ahead, moving quite slowly. It did not turn down the  
hill towards Bridge, neither did it go up the hill, but seemed to disappear into the churchyard. I  
thought that perhaps I had imagined the apparition, but my friend sitting in the front passenger  
seat remarked: ‘He had no lights nor was there any noise.‘ We were both very puzzled by the  
incident, and were convinced that we had seen something unnatural, although we were unaware  
  
of any previous reports of this type of encounter. We have since mentioned it to friends and two  
of them have stated that this has been reported as being sighted before.  
  
Our wives were in the back seat, and being busy talking noticed nothing unusual and were  
inclined to treat our statements as a leg pull. The only drink we had was tea, and I assure you we  
  
were not joking. I have since passed through Bridge at night and have carefully noted that it could  
not have been a shadow.  
  
This statement can be conﬁrmed with my friend, Mr F Pursey, of 7 Pilgrims way, Dover.  
  
If you are aware of any history likely to be connected with this, if in book form, I should be much  
obliged to know the author and title of same  
CH Watson, 47 Srcmhope Road, Dover  
  
It was with much interest I read Mr Watson's letter, ‘Mystery at Bridge‘, in your paper of February  
26. When I lived in Bridge 15 years ago my sister, brother—in—law and I heard on more than one  
occasion unexplained footsteps and saw a ghost in our house (500 years old). Also my sister and  
brother—in—law had a similar experience to Mr Watson while they were walking along  
Patrixbourne Road one evening.  
  
I have always understood that Bridge and, indeed, many parts of Kent are haunted.  
BA Taylor, London SE 27  
  
Haunted Bridge  
  
If one believes in ghosts it is easy to agree with the correspondent who said recently, 'Ithas always  
been understood that Bridge and, indeed, Kent are haunted.’ And it may very well be that the  
ghosts are those of men killed during that desperate last stand at Old England's Hole.  
  
They could as well be the shades of some ofthose killed, or executed, in more recent times: Black  
Robin, the hi ghwayman whose only memorial is the public house at Kingston; the private soldier  
killed by a limber outside Bridge Church during the Napoleonic wars; or even the jockey, ‘Joe’,  
  
who broke his neck one day during the races on Barham Downs, not far from the changing room  
which used to be where Highland Court now stands.  
  
Or could it have been the ghost of the horse whose 'ferruginous remains were found within the  
oppidum (of Old England's Hole) by some boys‘ in 1862?  
  
One reader tells me that ‘the other Bridge Hill’ also had its apparition. During the War—to—end-  
Wars there was a camp at the top of the hill ‘on the right going to Canterbury‘ and one night a  
sentry not only saw ‘something’ but challenged it three times and then turned out the guard. He  
couldn't ﬁre as the guard mounted with unloaded riﬂes!  
  
This reader believes the troops in camp at the time were the Kent Cyclists. Perhaps some veteran  
with a long memory can confirm the story, or even explain it.  
  
(No year recorded for these — L Shirley's scrapbook, now with Williamson Archive)  
  
18 The Church  
  
Arch Cant I2; 1878 p 203f Holders of fees in Kent anno 38 Hen III (1254) ref to  
‘Blakemannesby[rie]’: ‘Thomas de Bourne tenet in Hegham iiij quarter. milit. de  
domino Willelmo de Say, unde j. quarter. In Berekere  
  
Arch Cant I4; 1882, pp 169-184: WA Scott Robinson: PATRICKSBOURNE CHURCH AND  
BIFRONS. Description of memorials in Patrixbourne & summary of vicars. ‘Cardinal  
Morton instituted Malcolm Ramsey MA on the 7"‘ of August 1494, but others must  
have held the beneﬁce during that century, whose names are not recorded. Very few  
incumbents retain a living for so long a period as Ramsey did. He died in 1538,  
having been vicar of Patricksbourne for 44 years, and was buried in the chancel of  
Bridge Church. A memorial of him is carved in relief on the south wall of that  
chancel.. All these vicars (save one) had been presented to the beneﬁce by the Prior  
and Convent of Merton in Surrey, but during Ramsey’s long incumbency, the priory  
sold or otherwise alienated the next presentation to one John Bowle. John Grene  
  
instituted by Cranmer on 5”‘ July 1538 after Merton had been dissolved. Various  
others until Robert Rawson, presented by William Partheryche December 1589, also  
John White in 1594. Edward Partridge was Patron in 1640 [so Braems had not yet  
taken over?] John Fige presented by Braems in Feb 1662/3 then John Mackallar Nov  
7 l667—Jan 27 1698/9 (31 years). Petition in Lambeth from 33 parishioners in May  
1695 “Against mr Mackallars oppression, vexations, misdemeanours, and  
miscarriages.ln the forefront stand disputes about tithes left long unsettled, and then  
overcharged. The vicar’s absence, for some weeks from Partixbourne, and for eight  
weeks from Bridge (Jan-March 1695) is likewise mentioned. The petitioners allege  
that he sometimes sat while reading prayers and preaching. They say that he detained  
the offertory amounting to about £1 per annum, pretending that he himself was ‘The  
Poor’. Also that he neglected to pay his proportion of the poor rates and the King’s  
taxes. The tenour of the petition evinces much petty irritation about trivial matters,  
but we can readily account for it when we remember that Mr Mackallar had then been  
vicar for 28 years and was evidently getting old and inf1rm.. His successor John  
Bowtell was presented to the living by Margaret, widow of Walter Braems and held it  
for 55 years (Feb 1697/8-Jan 1753). John B’s wife Olive was daughter of John Taylor.  
(Both buried in Patrixbourne churchyard) Then his brother-in-law Herbert Taylor for  
ten yrs, then Herbert’s son Edward Taylor for 35 years.  
  
Bridge Register:’John Levingston, a private soldier in Maj or General J effery’s  
regiment of foot (No. 14), who was accidentally killed by a bread or forage wagon,  
  
belonging to the camp at Barham Down, going over his body, whereby he was  
crushed to death, was buried Aug 17 1760.’  
  
WP Griffiths visited Bridge Church in 1844. Noted absence of an organ at Bridge,  
west kingsdown & Bapchild (out of 25). Overall impression is that most churches  
were well kept & carefully arranged. (qv his report) (Arch Cant 103, 1986, pp 119-  
125: N YATES, The Condition of Kentish Churches before Victorian Restoration)  
  
Notes on St Peters Bridge:  
  
Roman Road through Bridge may have continued in use for some time since  
  
a) Domesday refers to Bridge Hundred (knowledge of the bridge survives) and  
  
b) Domesday Monachorum (earliest date cal 100) lists the church in a way that  
  
suggests a record of remote times.  
  
There was therefore almost certainly a Saxon Church here before the Norman invasion. It  
was probably though never more than a Chapel, since Bridge has never been separate  
from Patrixbourne.  
The Chapel therefore implies habitation, and a continued use of the road. Possible pre-  
conquest trading centre for the Nailbourne valley. (Alan Everitt: Wickhambreux/lckham  
— Littlebourne (implying Great Bourne) — Bekesbourne — Patrixbourne — Bishopsbourne  
(Kingston/Bridge). (Wootton & Denton from Bishopsbourne)  
  
It is possible — even probable, given the course of the road up the hill, that the Norman  
church (late l2thc) is founded on the road itself.  
  
Two Norman doors (effigies of early Bridge inhabitants!)  
First listed vicar (as Patrixbourne Walter de Burne 1 189)  
  
1  
i  
l  
  
Outside W door a slab, with indents for a brass of a man & woman & group of daughters,  
ca 1450. once the top slab of a table tomb on the north side of the church (Hasted). If a  
genuine external brass it is the earliest recorded, & only pre-reformation example in Kent.  
Probably placed here in 1859/60.  
  
Another ediﬁce on the North side was probably the stocks [or were they on the Green‘?]  
“He who will not the law oboy/ here in ye Stocks must surely lay”  
  
Malcolm Ramsey was vicar for 43 years from 1495-1538 (alias Maccobus Keasey of  
Hasted who died 1512 having been vicar for 21 yrs — he it is whose efﬁgy lies in the  
North Chancel wall) Was he a Scotsman?? Listed as the only Pre-reformation MA..  
  
The visitation of 1502 (ecclesiastical progress by the bishop to hear complaints and  
inspect the parish) took place at Wye: Prior of Merton (who held the gift — appropriator)  
was absent, but vicar (Ramsey) appeared, with Churchwardens Thomas Cheseman/John  
Newman and Parishioners William Aleyn/ Stephen Miller/ John Miller/ Richard Prentice:  
the earliest certain inhabitants of the parish.  
  
Visitation of 1573 noted that Thomas Outlaw (surname common in the early birth  
registers which date from 1579) had got Mary Bell with child, she living with her father-  
in—1aw Simon Parramor. Also, that Mr Hevyside our curatt does not say the divine  
service every Sunday.  
  
Complaints about others no doubt too. John Mackallar (another Scot??) vicar 1667-1698,  
  
very conscientious at ﬁrst (his entries in the registers are full and beautifully written) was  
cited in 1695 for never being around.  
  
The parish accounts of 1673-1740 show that the parish was responsible for upkeep of the  
church, as well as the stocks and the bridge. 1676 saw a wholesale refurbishment of the  
belfry. Payments to a bellfounder (Mr Palmer) suggest that there have not always been  
three bells here (which I have not seen) though one is undoubtedly old, with an  
inscription: Ave Maria gratia plena d[e]us tecu in Saxon capitals, ca 1325, cast by same  
bellfounder as Patrixbourne no 2 William le Belytere.  
Bellropes were replaced every 2/3 years.  
Two surveys of the church done before the rebuilding of 1859/1860  
  
a) Z Cozens 1793  
  
b) WP Grifﬁth 1844  
See print of 1815.  
  
Rebuilt by Mary Gregory, native of Congleton, but her husband Edward was vicar of  
Petham  
  
See lgglesden for what is there now.  
  
Many old tablets were removed, pillars altered windows shifted in the restoration.  
Cozens notes Robert Bargrave 1584-1649. (By Cornelius Janzen?)  
  
Semicircular carving (from above a door?)  
  
Above God below in 5 compartments: 1 the expulsion from Eden; 2 Serpent, Adam &  
  
Eve; 3 Cain & Abel preparing sacriﬁces; 4 Abel offering sacriﬁce; 5 Cain slaying Abel  
Font of Serpentine marble.  
  
Clock by Gillett & Bland 1874 (or Gillett & Johnson 1847)  
Notable tablets:  
  
Baldock — common E Kent name  
Braems  
  
Brice — farmer  
  
F oord — farmer  
  
Forth — Workhouse master and clerk  
  
Lansberry — of Lansberry cottage alias Lynton House (1783-1849)  
  
Baron Montesquieu (1750-1824) of Bridge Hill house  
  
Amelius Sicard, (see also W Window) 48 years local doctor 1832-1880. Born 1809 His  
father was probably the doctor before him. See also gravestone outside.  
  
Churchyard was closed by Order in Council on October 31 1990. 1  
New part of Churchyard was purchased from Dowager Lady Conyngham on August 28   
1860 1  
Outside:  
  
Gravestones of Mantle (1762) (161)  
  
Colegate Frederick 1790-1877 builder of Chapel Yard (ie post office). Later built  
Alexandra House on his retirement. Daughter turned it into a school.  
  
Craft 1727 (b 1716) (193)  
  
Crofts [Crafts?] 1775 b 1686  
  
Foord James farmer 1733 b 1663 (41)  
  
Zebulon Vinson butler to Mrs Gregory (95)  
  
Halward 1749 b 1675 (27)  
  
Robinson 1723 b1688 (192)  
  
Spain 1715 b 1658 (135)  
  
Stringer 1752 b 1662 (17)  
  
Tucker 1714 b 1685 (76)  
  
Unknown 1716 b1633 (134)  
  
Arch Cant 122, 2002 pp113-142: MARY BERG: Patrixbourne Church suggests that  
Patrixbourne church was built by Ingelram Patrick (died 1 190/91) between 1170-1 190.  
Would Bridge have been built at much the same time? Patricks owned manors of Bridge  
as well. William Patrick 1 ﬂ. 1066-83; Richard his probable son held it in 1086  
(Domesday) from Odo of Bayeux. William Patrick 11 held Patrixbourne by 1 1 15 — he was  
heir to the French properties ofthe family. Stiil owned ca 1 135. His heir was William  
Patrick 111, died 1 174. WP IV also died 1 174, succeeded by Ingelram. Ca 1200 church  
(and village?) passed to Beaulieu Priory near Rouen and stayed until 100yrs war with one  
or two short interludes. Beaulieu had local trouble with peasants, gave up on Patrixbourne,  
which was given to Merton Priory to supervise in Surrey. In 1317 the archbishop of  
Canterbury decreed that there should always be two chaplains at Patrixbourne, one of  
them to serve Bridge. 1333 escheator of Kent ordered to return Patricksbourne to  
Beaulieu, but communication problems during 2100yrs war caused Beaulieu to lease  
  
Patrixbourne in 1390 to Richard Altryncham for 60 yrs. RA sold out to Merton Priory in  
1409. Next came lsaacs in 14oos John Isaac buried ca 1440.  
  
St Peter’s Church Bridge: W.Rose  
The Spire: It is recorded that repairs had been carried out by one Samuel Hills a chruchwarden in  
  
1787 and again in 1859 during major alterations instigated by mrs Mary Gregory. The whole  
structure is constructed of pine timbers and proof of its immense strength design and  
  
workmanship was put to the test in June 1983 when it was struck by lightning. The subsequent  
damage was duly and expertly repaired by steeplejack R Peter Harknett who refixed the weather  
vane in a more practical and weatherproof manner,  
  
The Belfry: There are three bells in size I) 33” 2) 36” 3) 39”. The third or tenor bell (together  
with number 2 at Patrixbourne church) was cast by the same bell founder in circa 1325 & both are  
thought to be amongst the ol;dest bells in this country. They were cast by one Wm Le Belytere  
and bear the moulded inscription “Ave Maria: gratia plena”. This tenor bell is used to strike the  
hour at Bridge. The other bells bear no inscription but are none the less fairly ancient. The bells  
are no longer fully swung, but still ring out a good account ofthemselves by means of harnessed  
clappers.  
  
The Clock: The clock keeps excellent time and controls two faces. It is motivated by  
handwinding the heavy weights and has a movement of great interest to horologists. The date on  
the frame casting is 1847 and was made by Gillett & Johnson. In 1975 the mechanism and cables  
were overhauled by Mr SJ Foord of Bridge.  
  
The Font: This is an outstanding piece of workmanship for both size and quality of workmanship.  
It is of serpentine stone from Cornwall. Such large pieces of this stone are very rare. We  
understand that to form the bowl of this font would have necessitated the use of a waterwheel for  
turning. It is therefore to be considered both priceless and beautiful.  
  
19 The Bakery; 18”‘ c row; Nash & Hardeman; Pharmacist  
  
JOHN NASH, Clock—maker,  
At Beaksbourn.  
  
WHEREAS some malicious Reports have been propagated by my Brother, WM. NASH,  
Clock—maker at Bridge, representing me as imposing on my kind Employers, - in  
Particular, that I had overcharged MR. DRAYSON of Upstreet, for repairing his Clock; and  
as such Reports have a manifest tendency to prejudice me in my Business, I have taken  
the Opportunity to lay the said Charge before some reputable Clock-makers of  
Canterbury; who have confirmed the Equity of the same, and will readily attest, if called  
  
upon, the Injustice done to  
JOHN NASH  
  
(Kentish Gazette, 8-] 1 December I 769)  
  
WILLIAM NASH, Watch-maker,  
At BRIDGE  
Thinks the Advertisement in last Tuesday's Paper too abrupt to pass unnoticed. - The  
  
Clock of Mr. Drayson, that could not perform, was charged 85 6d. It was examined by Mr.  
  
Warren, the reputable Watch-maker, who said, what was done to the Clock was worth 4s  
and the other 4s for fetching and carrying it back. This is my Brother's Method of  
working in the Clock Way. I have said, and can attest, he never cleaned and put together  
more than one Watch, to my Knowledge, all the Time he was with me and that was in  
  
April last. Therefore what Injustice is done to John Nash by me, I leave the Reader to  
determine.  
  
   
  
Elf the kind Friends of John Nash would prevent his ill Designs, and put him on a better  
Plan, it may answer his End better, as well as the reputable Watchmaker and his former  
  
Friend,  
  
(Kemish Gazette, 12 — 16 December I 769)  
  
Bridge High Street. List of Buildings  
  
Key: l5“‘ c.:  
  
>l<  
  
A 16“‘ c.: V  
  
Bridge Hill House  
  
High Street: Southwest Side  
  
9 2  
  
\* 6  
  
- 8-12  
o 14  
9- 16,16a  
o 18  
  
- 22,24  
9 26,28  
0  
  
9 30  
  
9 32,34  
\* 36  
  
o 38  
  
4 v 40-46  
- 48,50  
- 52  
  
\* 54-64  
0 66-76  
\* 78  
  
\* 80  
  
9 82  
  
9 84  
  
9 86  
  
9 88-96  
9  
  
I  
  
North—east Side  
>l<  
  
\* 1,3  
\* 5,7  
0 9,11  
0 13  
  
Sunnyside  
Penbourne House  
Regency Terrace  
  
Post Office  
Wayside  
Rosedale Villas  
Village Shop  
Village Hall  
Gordon House  
  
Rogers Garage  
Alexandra House  
Ship lnn  
  
Dentist  
Newsagent  
  
Riverdale House  
The Saddlers  
Plough & Harrow  
  
Church cottage  
St.Peter's Church  
  
Laudin House  
Semi—detached villas  
Semi—detached Villas  
Semi—detached cottages  
Wych Elm  
  
17“‘ c.:  
  
WILLIAM NASH.  
  
4- 18“‘ c.: 9  
  
Early 19“‘ c. L-shaped, 3 storeys  
  
18“‘ c. cottage — 2 storeys  
Mid—1990S  
  
Early 19“‘ c. row  
  
Mid-19“‘ 0.  
  
Late l8“‘ or early 19“‘ c. Originally two cottages  
Early 19“‘ c.  
  
Early 19“‘ c.  
  
Mid l8“‘ c. (note doorway to 26)  
Mid l9“‘ c. Shop adjacent  
  
18“‘ c.  
  
18“‘ c. Pair of cottages  
  
Mid 20\*“ c.  
  
Ca 1830  
  
Late 15“‘, early 16'‘ c. Timber frame, brick inﬁll  
cottage row. 16“‘ c. cottage behind.  
  
ca 1854 Pair of cottages  
  
Early 19“‘ c. Purssord butcher  
Mid-1960s Neo—Georgian. Nos 54/56 on site of  
Fagg's farm  
  
Late Victorian terrace. One of these a post office?  
  
1980's  
  
20“‘ 0.  
  
l8‘‘‘ C.  
  
l8“‘ c.  
  
l8“‘ c. Originally two dwelling houses  
  
18“‘ c. terrace  
  
18“‘ c.  
  
Norman and 19“‘ c.  
  
19705  
  
Early 20“‘ c. Late Edwardian?  
Early 20"‘ c. Probably 1900-1910  
Late 19\* c.  
  
Part of early 19"‘ c. terrace, with l9“‘ c. addition  
  
0 15-21 Albany terrace  
  
\* 23 The Vicarage  
  
\* 25 Rosebank  
  
0 27-31 Belle Vue Terrace  
A V 33,35 Walnut Tree Cottage  
9 37  
  
6 39,41 Gordon Cottage  
  
0 43—45a  
  
0 47,49 Maudsley House  
A V ".751 Lime Cottage  
  
A V 0 The White Horse  
0 ?59 L Wakeham  
  
6 61  
  
0 63,65  
  
6 67 River House  
  
-1- 69 Annes House  
  
\* 71  
  
9 73 Skippers  
  
V -1- 9 The Red Lion  
  
Some other local buildings  
  
9 Lynton House  
  
0 Bridgeford House  
  
-1- O Little Bridge Place  
  
A Middle Pett Farmhouse  
-2- Great Pett Farmhouse  
0 The Close  
  
-1- Bridge Place  
  
Early 19“‘ c. For Trinity House  
19603?  
19203?  
  
Mid-Late 19"‘ c.  
  
l6“‘ c. or earlier (now one dwelling)  
  
18“‘ c. (possibly earlier: false front), Post Office  
18“‘ c. now one dwelling  
  
18“‘ c. including shop, barn behind (shop)  
  
19“‘ c.? Pair of cottages, now one dwelling  
  
l5“‘ c. or 16“‘ c. Former forge  
  
Late mediaeval core. Early 16“‘ c. inscription on  
ﬁreplace lintel, 18“‘ c. exterior to front elevation.  
Posting House  
  
19“‘ c.? outhouse  
  
18“‘ c.  
  
19“‘ c.  
  
18“‘ c.  
  
Probably 17“‘ c. Shop, damaged by fire in early 20“‘ c.  
  
and partly rebuilt. Tea room. Now a private dwelling  
called Willow Brook.  
  
Early 20“‘ c. Former printing shop, previously motor  
spares  
  
l8“‘ c. Price's grocers, then The Motorists Shop, then  
Gold's Delicatessen  
  
l6“‘ c. or early 17“‘ c and 18“‘ c. Built around a core  
hearth  
  
Mid-Late l8“‘ c. Former coal merchant's (Bridge Hill)  
Early 19“‘ c. cottage row (Mill Lane)  
  
17“‘ c. or early 18“‘ c. (Mill Lane)  
  
Late Mediaeval  
  
Late l7“‘ c.  
  
1835. Former Union Workhouse for 22 local parishes  
  
Mid-late 17“‘ c. Relic of 9—bay by 7—bay house with  
central courtyard, built by Sir Arnold Braems in 1650s  
(drawn by Schellinks in 1661)  
  
Department of the Environment. Other comments and additions by R.Bodger & M Raraty  
  
Two early ﬁgures connected with Bridge  
  
780 EALDHUNE (ALDHUN, and variants)  
  
The Kings prefect in Canterbury  
  
William Somner (Canterbury, 1640, p. 363) cites certain charters dated at Canterbury,  
A.D.780 wherein mention is made of one Aldhune hujus Civitatis Praefectus and Regis  
Praefectus in Dorobernia, These charters, now apparently lost, recorded that Aldhune  
purchased ‘Burne’ consisting of four ploughlands from his master the Kentish King  
Egbert (Egbert II, c. 780 or later). The purchase price was 2000 shillings. It emerges from  
a series of surviving charters that Offa, King of Mercia (A.D.757-796), overlord of Kent,  
quashed the transaction on the grounds that King Egbert had no right to make the grant to  
Aldhune (Eald-). In 799 Coenwulf, King of Mercia at the request of AEthelheard,  
Archbishop of Canterbury, restored to Canterbury Cathedral various territories, including  
apparently the ground being subject of the grant quashed by Offa. The ground is said to  
be intended for support of the food-supply to the Cathedral community. There is not  
space here to enter into prolonged discussion of the site of the ground in question, but it  
appears to lie along the Nailbourne valley, between Barham and Bishopsbourne. [Why  
not lower‘?]  
  
Ealdhune the Prefect or Reeve was a man of some substance. He is called comes, and is  
furthermore described as an active and very wealthy man (strenuis er praedives homo).  
He is said to have been a kinsman of Archbishop Jaenbeorht (A.D.765—792). He made the  
original grant when about to travel overseas. (Birch: Cartularium Saxonicum, nos. 293,  
294, 319, 320, 332).  
  
Professor Stenton says (Anglo Saxon England, p. 206) that Offa’s revocation of the grant  
is the ‘most uncompromising assertion of an overlord’s authority that has come down  
from the whole Anglo-Saxon period.’  
  
J olliffe in Predeudal England (p. 47) suggests that Ealdhune was not exclusively a  
  
borough official, but was controller as well of the rural district adjacent to Canterbury,  
the lathe of the Burhware.  
  
ABOUT 1046 GODRIC, PORTREEVE  
  
Named as ‘portgerefa’ in the Cottonian charter of 1044-1048 recounting purchase by  
Godric of Bourne, the wealthy Kentish magnate and benefactor to Canterbury Cathedral,  
from his sister Eadgyva of land at Offham, Kent. The purchase was effected ‘before the  
whole Shire of Kent’ at Wye. Godric the portreeve is not speciﬁcally connected with  
Canterbury, but the ‘port’ (not necessarily a seaport but a place of trade) can hardly be  
other than Canterbury. See Bond: Facsimiles of Ancient Charters in the British Museum,  
IV, no. 28 for a reproduction of this charter. For a printed version, see A.J. Robertson:  
Anglo-Saxon Charters, 1939, no. C111 and notes thereto, p. 440.  
  
From: W. Urry: City of Canterbury — The Chief Citizens of Canterbury. A list of  
  
Portreeves (Prefects, Prepositi) from AD 780 until c. 1 100, etc. etc. (Canterbury City  
Council, 1980)  
  
20 The Red Lion  
Reminiscences of Mrs Friend (195 8)” When I came here in 1896 the Post Ofﬁce was  
  
at the Grocer’s shop. , Mr Perry; Miller, Mr White; Tailor, Mr Stevens; Veterinary  
Surgeon, Mr Howard; Blacksmith, Mr Gilbert; Clock Maker, Mr Billy Hardiman;  
Saddler, Mr Taylor; Schoolmaster, Mr Wye. Now is 1955, the post master is Mr  
Roberts and the Post Office is in his own house,; no mill or miller, no tailor, no vet,  
no smith, no clockmaker, no saddler.”  
  
the  
\* Red Lion \*  
  
This inn known by the name and sign of the Red Lion was built in the 35th  
year of Elizabeth I, in 1593. Though the original structure of the building has undergone  
alteration down through the years, particularly during the reign of George III, when the  
structure was refaced and that of Victoria when other alterations were carried out.  
  
When first built the property consisted of a main dwelling house or tenement with  
stables, outbuildings and a large tract of land. It was owned at this early date by Francis  
Bryce, yeoman of Patrixbourne. By 1632 he had disposed of the house by sale and in that  
year one Jacob Jarvis, victualler of Canterbury was granted a licence to sell ales from it.  
He called the house and registered it under the title of the “Red Lion”. By 1640, it had  
become a registered inn offering lodging and stabling facilities and because of its  
situation on the London to Dover High Road, it became an inn of some prominence.  
  
Jacob Jarvis’ family had for many years been vintners of Canterbury and were  
among the first to be called so outside the City of London. He kept the “Red Lion” until  
his death in 1661, whereafter it and all it contained passed with another dwelling in  
Bridge to he widow Arabella. She kept the house until 1672, when in that year she sold it  
and its wine licence, to Martyn Bradstowe, a victualler of Canterbury, who for many  
years had kept an inn there called the “Black Griffin” in St. Peters Street, (the present one  
was built in 1887). Bradstowe’s wife, Sarah was a harness maker by trade and it would  
appear that she conducted this trade from the “Red Lion” during the time she was here.  
  
Most of the trade in the parish of Bridge at this date, because of its situation,  
seemed to be centred around travel. There were three wheelwrights in the village, two  
blacksmiths and two saddlers. This was apart from the trades conducted from the “Red  
Lion” which by 1700 could boast commodious livery and bait, stables and a harness  
maker. In 1708, the Bradstowes sold the inn to Richard Knight, victualler, who kept it  
until his death in 1741 whereafter it passed to his daughter Jane, a milliner of Bridge and  
together they kept the house until 1768, selling in that year to Thomas Fagge. The  
Fagge’s were a prominent family of Bridge. There was at this date a baker called F agge,  
a miller, blacksmith and carpenter.  
  
The improvement of the London to Dover highway in the 1760's meant faster and  
more regular coaches. The “Red Lion” was never a main stage, but a resting place  
between stages. Private coaches would wait here for the through coaches to pick up  
passengers transferring to local transport. It was during this period that the stables were  
extended to accommodate more horses and a coach—house was built. By 1800 Naomi  
Fagge, widow of Thomas was keeping the “Red Lion”. She sold it in 1804, to Joseph  
  
Moss, victualler and equine dealer, who by the year 1810, was licenced to let horses from  
the inn, a tradition that remained for many years to follow.  
  
Moss sold the “Red Lion” in 1818 to Thomas Hawkins, who like his predecessor  
obtained a licence to let horses. By the time he sold the inn in 1832, wagonettes and  
carriages could also be hired here. In that year one Joseph Eyre purchased the house. By  
1850, he was advertising the “Red Lion” as a fine lodging inn, with carriage and stabling  
facilities. By 1860 he had become a ﬂy proprietor of the “Red Lion and livery stables”.  
A ﬂy was a small one horse carriage, first introduced at Brighton in 1816. It was  
originally pushed or pulled by two men, but later the term was given to any one horse  
carriage of the hansom type.  
  
Joseph Eyre kept the “Red Lion” until his death in 1871, whereafter it passed to  
his son Robert. ln 1886, he sold the house to the Frederick Flint Brewery of St. Dunstan’s  
Canterbury. They installed one Thomas Fisher Hinds into the house as a tenant. He kept  
it until 1898, being succeeded in that year by Samuel Dommett and he in 1902 by  
Frederick Anderson. It was whilst in his hands that the Flint Brewery sold out to the Beer  
and Rigden Brewery of Canterbury. In 1904, Anderson was succeeded by Frank Clayson,  
he in 1911 by John Friend, who was here for the duration of World War I, and on until  
1921, when he was succeeded by Joshua Golder, he in 1926 by John Thomas Watson, he  
in 1928 by Richard S. Ansell and he in 1933 by George Burton, who was here for many  
years to follow. 1n the 1940's the Beer and Rigden Brewery sold out to the Whitbread  
Brewery and they eventually sold the “Red Lion” to the Bass Charington Brewery.  
  
Today, the inn is no longer brewery-owned and is kept by Andrew Paice Hill and  
  
Penelope Cavill. H   
  
21 Skippers  
22 Motorist  
  
23 Anne’s House  
  
Now Willow Brook, Was a tea room in the 1970s. Earlier, had been a ﬁsh & chip  
shop, and was extensively damaged by fire (photo)  
  
24 Fire Brigade  
  
Bridge Fire Brigade  
  
One organisation of Vital importance was the Bridge Volunteer Fire Brigade,  
whose equipment in 1915 included a Merry—Weather manual engine and about  
1,200 feet of hose. The Fire engine was horse—drawn being pulled by the same  
horses as were used for funerals and for delivering coal. The firemen were mostly  
local tradesmen and at one time included two grocers, the cycle agent, a publican,  
the draper, two gardeners, the coal merchant and the blacksmith. The men were  
summoned by a maroon ﬂare, and one was killed in 1926 when looking over the  
ﬂare, supposing it to have gone out. There were twelve sets of helmets, tunics  
  
and axes, and if a tall man left the force to be replaced by a short man, the latter  
had to endure an ill—fitting uniform. The force entered the motorised age when  
Count Zborowski donated a motor appliance, registration number CE 1037. It  
was kept running largely through the donations from insurance companies,  
whose outgoings would have soared but for the Volunteer Brigade’s existence and  
devotion to duty. The Brigade would resent the presence at small fires of the  
Canterbury or Sturry Brigades, who would be soaked on arrival. The Bridge  
Brigade had no ladders until shortly before the last war, while early hoses were  
  
made of leather and thick rubber. The Fire Brigade remained independent up  
until the Second World War.  
  
Author: Crispin Wilding — UKC Group Research Project 1976  
  
Bridge fire Brigade: engine house, Plough & Harrow P.H.; consists of a motor  
  
engine & trailer & about 1,200 feet of hose; Charles Eills, lt. & sec; number of men  
10.  
  
Kelly’s  
  
An interesting interlude whilst the Count was at Higham concerns the local fire  
brigade. In 1920 its chief had complained that their horse-drawn appliance could  
not reach fires in outlying districts in time to be effective. The Count, hearing of this,  
presented them with a car along the lines of the Chittys. Blythe Bros. adapted the  
body to accomodate 10 men and a mile of hose. With a rating of 75 h.p. and a speed  
of 60 m.p.h. this was probably the fastest of its kind in the country at that time. For  
his generosity the Count was made Honorary Captain of the Brigade.  
  
The Fire Maroon Tragedy at Bridge  
  
One of the most momentous events in Edwardian Bridge, at least, to judge from the  
coverage it received in The Kentish Gazette, was the early death of young Mr John  
  
Fenn, of 6 Albert Terrace, second engineer of the Bridge Fire Brigade, on 31st  
March 1910.  
  
It appears from the inquest that a fire had broken out at Pett Bottom. It was the job  
of Mr Fenn Junior to light the maroon to call together the Fire Brigade. On the fatal  
afternoon at about 12.30 he left the ‘Plough and Harrow’ and asked his brother for a  
match. This, his brother provided and then went off ‘round the corner‘. Almost  
immediately there were two simultaneous explosions and Mr Fenn's cap was seen  
by a witness to ‘go right up in the air‘. The witness hurried to the scene and found  
Mr Fenn lying outside on a pile of straw. Details of his injuries are graphic: "profuse  
  
hamorrhage (Kentish Gazette's spelling), left eye completely gone...." Mr Fenn lived  
for only twenty minutes after the explosion.  
  
It emerged during the inquest that second engineer Fenn had not fired a maroon  
before, and that instead of lying down to fire it, he had stood over it and hence  
received the fatal blow to the face. There seems to be some uncertainty as to  
whether the maroons were faulty, and in order to satisfy himself on this issue, a  
representative of Messrs Brocks "took train to Bridge“ and inspected the scene of  
the accident. He subsequently declared that the maroons were of the best quality,  
similar to those fired at Crystal Palace since 1865, and asked permission to fire the  
remaining five. He later contended that the maroons were not defective, thus  
clearing the name and reputation of Brooks.  
  
Mr Fenn's funeral was a stirring occasion. According to the Gazette: " Never before  
  
had the village of Bridge felt a disaster so keenly... April 3rd will stand out in the  
history of the village as a day never to be forgotten...."  
  
5000 people thronged the narrow street, overﬂowing into the surrounding fields.  
Most of the gentry were present at the graveside, though the Conynghams were not  
mentioned, presumably because they worshipped at Patrixbourne. The dead man  
was given a military funeral with a firing party from the East Kent Yeomanry. The  
coffin was borne by six foremen and followed by 65 members of other Fire Brigades.  
"It was a mournful procession indeed as it wended its way up the hillside and...  
there were but few dry eyes...." The grave had been prepared under the shadow of  
  
some tall trees bordering the road and "sympathetic hands had lined it with  
primroses and ivy.  
  
At evensong after the funeral the Rector of Bridge Rev. H Knight referring to the  
tragic death of Mr Fenn said that God took us out of this world for two reasons.  
Either we were well ready for entry to the heavenly Kingdom or else we were ‘so  
hardened‘ that it would be futile to give us any more chances. It was clear that the  
former case applied to Mr Fenn and that the ﬁnger of God had singled him out to  
  
lay down his life for his friends. It is to be hoped that such fatalism afforded some  
comfort to his relatives and young widow.  
  
Fire Brigade  
At a Fire Brigade meeting on Friday a letter was read from Captain S Gilbert tendering his  
resignation. He had been a member ofthe Brigade for a number ofyears, but now finds the duties  
  
too much for him. Lieut. F Hogben is elected Captain and Mr F Down Snr., becomes lieutenant.  
(Williamson 83 — undated)  
  
25 Plough & Harrow  
  
THE  
\* PLOUGH&HARROW \*  
  
This inn known by the name and sign of the Plough and Harrow was built in the 4th year of William and  
Mary in 1692, though the original structure of the building has been altered and added to down through the years.  
  
When first built the property was made up of two dwelling houses owned at this early date by one Charles  
Pittock. who appears not to have resided in either, but held leases on them. In I703, one ofthe dwellings was occupied  
by Isaac Whale. a shoemaker of Bridge, whilst the other by Thomas Kettle, a carpenter ofthe parish. By 1720, both  
dwellings along with two others in Bridge and a third at Patrixbourne, was in the possession of Elizabeth Maudistely  
Pittock. Isaac Whale still occupied one dwelling and did so until his death in 1742, whilst the other, was occupied by  
the widow Kettle, who at this date lived here on what appears to be a peppercorn lease.  
  
By 1750, the Pittock estate was in the hands of Dorothy Pittock, who had inherited it upon the death of her  
mother. At this date both dwellings were occupied, one by Henry Marshall and the other by Jacob Sherrod, however in  
I761 both properties were sold, Henry Marshall. still occupied one, whilst the other appears to have remained empty.  
They were sold to Richard Hardiman, who in l768 made them over in his will to Susannah Sherrad, daughter ofJacob  
Sherrod; and there followed some arguments at law between Sherrod and members of the Hardiman family as to the  
rightful owner, during the whole of which both dwellings remained unoccupied.  
  
In 2785, Susannah Sherrard (now spelt thus) spinster of Bridge parish disposed of the two dwellings by sale  
to Thomas Williams a maltster ofBridge, who between the years of 1785 and 1789, carried out works to the dwellings to  
form them into a malthouse, though in doing so, he probably retained a small living area for himself and his family.  
His wife bore him eleven children. but as was usual ofthe times, not all these, survived the perils of infancy and by  
I81 1, only six were recorded alive and living here with their parents,  
  
Thomas Williams lived out the rest of his life here, producing malt for the purpose of brewing. He died in  
1830. whereafter the house and business passed to his son William. who by 1831 was brewing ale here for he is  
recorded so throughout that year and early 1832. In that year he obtained a been house licence under the terms of the  
1830 been act, which enabled any house holder of good character to obtain a licence to sell beer from a dwelling or  
tenement of rateable value, by merely paying the small sum of two guineas to the department of excise, thereby  
  
avoiding the necessity of applying or being presented to Magistrates, who had no control over these beer houses and  
frowned upon the act.  
  
And so in April 1832. ale was sold here for the first time. The house bore no title at this date other than that  
of a beer house at Bridge and that the said Williams a brewer and now beer seller was ofthat house. He kept it and sold  
his home brewed beverages from it until 1858. when in that year he sold it to Joseph Burch. an ale and porter brewer.  
By 1863. the house had come to be commonly called the Plough and Harrow. It is quite possible that it was given this  
  
title because there was a blacksmiths nearby run by Thomas Fagg, who forged farming implements and probably  
displayed them outside his shop.  
  
In I877, Joseph Burch sold the house to Samuel Shepherd of the Shepherd Neame Brewery. It was sold as  
the Plough and Harrow beer-house with brewhouse, and outbuildings. the price of the purchase was 410 pounds. The  
Brewery set about altering the property and upon completion of the works, they leased the house to Edward Russell in  
l878. In the same year he was granted a wine and spirit licence for the house, and it became a registered tavern.  
  
Edward Russell gave up the house in 1881 to George Whiddett. He, in 1887 was succeeded here by Frederick Miles  
and he in 1894 by Charles Hopper Bean.  
  
Bean gave up the house in I898, to Robert Silsey and he in 1901 to William Brice. He was here until the  
outbreak of World War I when he was conscripted. He never returned, His wife Hariet took over the Plough ad  
  
Harrow and stayed until 1928, when she was succeeded by George Ford and he in 1937 by Philip Ralph Mullinger,  
who was here for many years to follow.  
  
To-day the Plough and Harrow is kept by James Henry Crowhurst.  
  
26 Saddlers  
  
27 Hawkins  
  
28 The Bridge; The river; Schellinks  
  
29 Albert Terrace  
  
Dental Surgery  
Opened in 1987 (Williamson 84)  
Formerly a shop  
  
30 River House & Glen Falls  
31 Butcher & shambles  
  
Butcher in 1668 was John Cooly  
32 Beans Cottages; The Farm; Western Avenue  
  
Bridge Farm was the home farm of Blackmansbury. In the 19”‘ C it was owned by  
Rev. RH Barham (Thomas lngoldsby). Demolished in 1962 it is Visible on  
Schellink’s drawing of the High Street of 1662. “The right-hand end of the jetty  
proved false, and masked a ﬁfteenth century wagon entrance which was in a direct  
line with the gateway into the farmyard.. Remainder of the house had been a typical  
15“‘ century wealden house, with central hall open to the roof, small rooms each side,  
and jettied out in front. Modernised in 13‘ half of 17“ c when a great ﬁreplace was  
added and upper ﬂoor inserted. Further modernised in 18“‘ or early 19“‘ c  
(Conyngham?) to appear as in modern times.. Another timbered house had stood at  
right-hand end of the building, but demolished in the 18“‘ c when the wagon entrance  
was blocked and entrance to yard moved to the right. Stairway of eight solid oak  
blocks of mediaeval date. The house must have presented a very attractive appearance  
at this time for on the front of the house vertical timbers known as studs were set  
  
close together. In first half of 17“‘ c alterations made, no doubt by Sir Arnold Braems.  
  
Bread oven probably added in 1638, when red brick ﬂoors were inserted. Late 18“‘ c  
covered all older windows, and three small bays inserted, with three sash windows  
above. Front doorway blocked and a new one inserted to the left. New newel stair  
inserted at rear ( later that the fireplace). Barn and cowshed undoubtedly dated from  
  
15“‘ c. Very like Durlock Grange, both belonging to St Augustine’s Abbey and then  
Conynghams. (Arch Cam‘ 79, 1964, pp 136-142)  
  
33 White Horse  
  
1 June 1668 Rented by William Ford yeoman from Sir Arnold & Walter Braems  
[Ford publican to 1668?]  
  
23 July 1668 Rented by John Cooley Butcher from A & W Braems and Wm Ford  
30 April 1679 Rented by John Cooley from Sir John[?] Aucher  
  
5 April 1682 Rented by John Cooley from Sir Anthony Aucher  
  
27 Jan 1682 three bonds from John Cooley to Sir A Aucher  
  
8 May 1685 Rented by John Cooley from Sir A A via Francis Mitchell gent of Cant.  
1702 Deed Poll under the hand of John Cooley  
  
[Cooley publican 1668-1700?]  
  
Subsequently property of Stephen Beckingham whose wife was Catherine Corbett  
one of five daughters of John Corbett of Bourne by his wife Elizabeth formerly  
Elizabeth Aucher, sister to Hewytt Aucher, son of Sir Anthony and dame Elizabeth  
Inventory of 28 November 1799 gives tenant of White Horse as James Aylward at a  
yearly rent of£l 8.  
  
34 Forge  
  
35 Purssord butcher  
  
36 The Ship; Primrose Alley  
  
Formerly a row of four workers cottages — even earlier perhaps a medieval hall house?  
With Oast attached. No evidence that it was ever a pub. Respondent recalls that she  
was not allowed to play with children from there because of the dirt.  
  
37 Alexandra House  
Built by Frederick Colegate (Bridge builder) as his retirement home. Used  
subsequently by his daughter as a school.  
  
38 Garage  
  
Established in 1927 by AW Rogers on the site of a woodyard. Forecourt originally  
not as wide: note the roofline on the adjacent property. Sheds at back are railway  
sheds from the now vanished South Canterbury Station.  
  
39 Belle Vue Terrace  
40 Rosebank  
  
41 Village Hall  
  
Patrixbourne  
Canterbury  
May 8 1895  
  
Revd. & Dear sir,  
  
Your letter of the 23rd alt. was duly placed before the Parish Council, at its meeting last evening,  
  
and the terms you proposed, relative to the use, by the Council, of the Reading Room, were  
unanimously agreed to, and are hereby accepted, viz,  
  
That the Council have the use of the Room on the first Tuesday evening in each month in  
consideration of a payment of £1 annually (at Michaelmas), with a payment of 2/— per night for  
additional meetings, if required subject to the room being at liberty, and reasonable notice being  
given to the caretaker, special arrangements to be made however for Parish Meetings.  
  
I have pleasure in adding that on the proposition of Mr F airbrass, seconded by Mr Bird it was also  
unanimously agreed, "that a vote of thanks be recorded to the Vicar for his services as Chairman  
  
of the Council to April last and for the liberal manner in which he had ...the Council in reference  
to the use of the Reading Room"  
  
The Council consider the resolution passed by the Guardians at their last meeting (mentioned by  
me to you this morning) both illegal and uncalled for, but as it was stated that you would take  
action thereon, at the Board meeting tomorrow, it was decided to leave the matter entirely in your  
hands,  
  
I am Revd. Sir  
your obedt. servant  
  
Robert Wye.  
  
42 Albany Terrace  
The Grand Old Man  
  
Bridge is justly proud of Mr Charles Wills, the village's Grand Old Man, who will celebrate his  
84”‘ birthday next week. He has earned the gratitude of the residents by reason of his long career  
of useful public service. As a boy, he attended the Commercial School at Canterbury and later the  
Dane John Academy. He then entered his father's bakery business, of which he assumed control  
on his father's death in 1896.  
  
Of charming andsympathetic disposition, he has prominently identified himself with nearly every  
phase of the village life. For some 70 years he assisted the St Peter's Church choir, and in the  
years gone by was always a popular entertainer in the district.  
  
Perhaps, however, Mr Wills‘ chief claim to distinction is his connection for over 50 years with the  
Bridge Fire Brigade, of which he was Chief officer for over 30 years. Upon his retirement he was  
elected Hon. Chief Officer. At the recent Fire Brigades Tournament at Canterbury his health was  
enthusiastically honoured by the officers of the South Eastern District.  
  
Among his official activities may be mentioned his long service on the Bridge RDC and the old  
Board of Guardians, his chairmanship of the Parish Council, of which he had been a member  
since its inception, and his secretaryship for nearly half a century of the Bridge Gas, Coal and  
Coke Co.  
  
During the [first] war he was nightly on duty at the canteen run at the Reading Room for the  
benefit of the troops stationed at Bourne Park.  
  
In his youth he was a keen cricketer and turned out for the local club for many years, while upon  
his ceasing to take an active part in the game, he assumed the duties of scorer. Despite his 84  
years, ‘Old Charlie‘ is remarkably active and vigorous. He comes ofa long-lived family. His aunt,  
the late Mrs. Hayzen, who lived with him, was a centenarian, and it is the sincere hope of  
  
everybody in the village that he himselfwill keep up his wicket and run into three figures.  
(Kentish Gazette May 28 1932. Williamson 172-3)  
  
[Mr Wills died aged 94 in 1943]  
  
Mr Charles Wills, of The Terrace, Bridge [ie Albany Terrace], near Canterbury, is affectionately  
referred to as Bridge's ‘grand old inan'. His records of long service in village affairs which earn  
him the title are as follows: - 68 years member of Bridge church choir; 51 years member Bridge  
Fire Brigade; 36 years Vicar's Churchwarden; 42 years Secretary of the Bridge Gas Coal and  
Coke Company, and a member ofthe Parish Council, of which he is now chairman, ever since it  
was formed.  
  
Born in the year 1848 he attended the Commercial School, Canterbury, now known as the Simon  
Langton School. On leaving he assisted his father in his baker's business, which he took over  
upon his father's death in 1896. A man of charming manners an genial disposition, Mr Wills has  
  
been closely connected with nearly every branch of sport and social life in Bridge. He has been a  
member of the St Peter's Church choir for 68 years and has a fine falsetto voice. In his younger  
days he was in great demand in the district at concerts. He has also been the Vicar's  
Churchwarden for the past 36 years. For 51 years Mr Wills has been a member of the Bridge Fire  
Brigade, and for the past 28 years he has been its Chief Officer. These years of fire service must  
surely constitute a record. Mr Wills has always been a keen cricketer, and played for Bridge CC  
for many years. He remembers playing in such good company as Mr C Howard (the local  
veterinary surgeon), who on one occasion played for Kent, Arthur Webb, who afterwards became  
one of Hampshire's leading professionals, and Tom Kersley, who later qualified for Surrey, and  
was on the ground staff at the Oval for several seasons. Even now Mr Wills does not forsake the  
ganm,andcmiﬂwmysbetoundscoﬁngﬁxlnsokldub.Ahhough79ymMsofageheismﬂlavmy  
active and busy man, being a member of the Bridge Rural Council and Board of Guardians,  
Chairman of the Parish Council and Secretary to the Bridge Gas Coal and Coke Company, a  
position he has held for the past 42 years. Those who during the Great War were in camp at  
Bourne Park or any of the [other camps] that were around Bridge will recognise [in] Mr Wills the  
old gentleman who assisted every night without a break at the canteen that was run by the late  
Mrs E Wilson for the troops at the Reading Room.  
  
Mr Wills comes ofa family noted for longevity and is the nephew of Mrs S Hayzen who  
celebrated her 100\*‘ birthday on February 25”‘, and who lives with him and his two sisters. The  
combined ages of the four people living in that house total 335 years. That Mr Wills, or ‘Old  
Charley', as he is affectionately known, will live to celebrate his 100\* birthday is the wish of all  
in the village. They are proud of him.  
  
(Kent Messenger March 12 l927. Williamson 192)  
  
43 Shop  
  
44 Doctors  
Dr. Hunter's House, 24 High Street, Bridge.  
  
Dr. Roger Hunter, my father, came to Bridge with my mother in about 1937 when  
he bought the house and the practice from Dr. Wilson. Dr. Wilson had been the  
village doctor for many years and lived in the house with his brother, known as  
Mr. Jack, and their valet. I assume they kept their horses out in the carriage  
house which is just round the corner up Union Lane. The old stables with two  
rooms above are still in a more or less original state, with the present garage  
added on. My mother thinks that the house was still lit by gas when she arrived,  
but I am not sure about this.  
  
The surgery was in the house with patients entering the waiting room through the  
door in the wall to the left of the house. Private patients were allowed to wait in  
the dining room and go in through the front door! In the 40s and 50s I can  
remember needles and syringes were sterilised on the kitchen stove in a  
  
saucepan and the drugs were kept in the family ‘fridge. My father worked closely  
with Mr. Stockwell who was the chemist in the village. Mr. Stockwe|l’s shop was  
  
down on the corner of Mill Lane and the High Street where I think there is now a  
  
kitchen appliance shop. He would make up the pills and potions in the back of the  
shop.  
  
The interior of 24 High Street is still very much as it was structurally, with all the  
original doors and fireplaces, etc. The hall ceiling is attractively plastered. In the  
basement there is an area where wine and spirits could be locked up and there is  
another large area with cupboard for storing apples and vegetables. The roof was  
repaired recently and over the bathroom the roofers found a large flat water tank  
which must have been used for collecting water for the house.  
  
It was a shame that when the roof was renovated back in the 70s (I think) that a  
copy of the original pediment wasn’t replaced and a mean little strip of wood was  
put back. You can see a trace of the original pediment on the corner of Miss  
Jones's house next door. The heavy traffic over the years before the by—pass was  
built caused the mathematical tiles on the front of the house to loosen and they  
all had to be re-fixed. I think that is when the pediment was taken down.  
  
Mathematical tiles were renovated on the side of the house early this year and I  
saw that the lower ones were fixed in plaster and the upper ones hung on timber.  
  
This is nothing to do with my parents‘ house, but I can remember Fagg's Farm as  
we used to ride with Captain Maslin, the local riding instructor, who sometimes  
  
kept his horses there, and we used to keep our ponies in the three fields where  
the Western Avenue estate now is.  
  
I hope this is useful information — do get in touch if you would like more help.  
  
Diana Cairns (01227 752836)  
  
Dr Wilson  
  
Death of Dr Wilson. Gloom was cast over the village when Dr Wilson passed away on Friday  
evening, after a few days illness. He had not been in good health for some time, but was able to  
carry on his practice, which covered a large area, including Bekesbourne, Barham,  
Bishopsbourne, Upper and Lower Hardres. He succeeded about 30 years ago, Dr Moorhead who  
left the district. A bachelor, Dr Wilson resided with his brother, Mr J Wilson, on the death ofhis  
mother, the late Mrs Wilson, at Bridge Place, Bridge. He was a member ofa well-known Irish  
family. His two surviving brothers are Sir Samuel Wilson and Mr Jack Wilson. Another brother,  
  
General Wilson, passed away a few years ago. (Williamson 83 — undated)  
Dr Hunter's house  
  
Death of Dr. A. T. Wilson  
Well—known Bridge Practitioner  
  
We regret to record the death of Dr. Arthur Thomas Wilson, at his home in Bridge, on Friday.  
Dr. Wilson, who was 67 years of age, was born in Dublin, was Irish, and came to Bridge to  
practice medicine in 1906. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin University, and held the  
following degrees, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., B.A. Dr. Wilson, who was devoted to his work, had  
  
lived with his brother, Mr. J .B.E. Wilson, for 33 years. His father, Mr. James Wilson, was a well-  
known Irish Barrister.  
  
The doctor had been M.O. at Bridge Institution since he first came to the village, and held the  
same position at the old isolation hospital, Bishopsbourne. Dr. Wilson was extremely well-liked  
and respected in the village and the surrounding district. He leaves two brothers, Mr. J.B.E.  
Wilson and Brig.—Gen. Sir Samuel Wilson, late Permanent Under Secretary for State for the  
Colonies.  
  
The funeral took place in Ireland on Tuesday, Dr. Wilson's ashes being buried in the family vault.  
  
A personal appreciation  
  
For years he resided in Bridge, near Canterbury. A small man with a big heart, an Irishman's  
sense of humour and a characteristic laugh. A doctor, no, more than a doctor, a friend in need.  
How many, for miles around, will mourn him in silence. In the large mansion and in the small  
cottage, aye, even the tramp on the road will, if he pass through Bridge again, learn of this death  
with a tightness in his throat. Nothing was too small for this man to see and understand, no one  
was too poor for him to sympathise with and comfort. For years he knew the trials and troubles of  
multitudes, yet never have I heard him say one word to the detriment of any. Unconscious of self,  
he gave his whole time to his people, and would often spend hours in sympathising rather than  
take the rest he sorely needed. Described in my hearing once by a Bishop as "A Christian" no  
man could deserve that appellation more than he. Yet his Christianity was not artiﬁcial, it was  
lived. Rarely have I discussed religion with him, but what he thought could be known by how he  
lived. So passes from sight a doctor, a man and an example, for if only one person can say "that  
man was a comfort and strength to me," then surely he has not lived in vain.  
  
(No source, no date: Williamson 463)  
  
Record of Bridge doctors:  
  
...1835—41? William Nix (medical officer, Bridge Union, from its establishment)  
Nov 29 1880 Amelius Sicard died: ‘beloved physician to rich and poor‘ b 17.6.1809. 48 yrs the  
  
doctor in Bridge, hence began practice in 1832 aged 23. Resided at the doctor’s house with his  
mother. Buried December 3 1880.  
  
Census 1851 describes him also as ‘Lic. Apoth. Co. Lond.’  
  
Wall plaque in the church: “Sacred / to the memory / of/ Amelius Sicard / M.R.C.S. /who  
departed this / life Novr. 29"‘ 1880 / aged 71 years / This tablet and the West window / were  
placed in this / Church by a numerous / circle of friends. /”  
  
Tombstone in the churchyard: “In memory of / Amelius Sicard / only son of John Jacob / and  
Mary Sicard. / born at Blackheath / June 12”‘ 1809, died at Bridge /November 29\* 1880. / Here  
he had resided forty-eight years and / had been to rich and poor / the beloved physician. /  
  
“ Headstone, Bodystone and Footstone: A.B. 1880  
  
Also: “Sacred / to the memory of/ Mary Sicard / widow ofthe late J.J. Sicard Esq. / of  
Kensington, who departed this life / on the 30'“ day of July 1843, / in her 79"‘ year /” Headstone,  
Bodystone & Footstonez. M.S. 1843 (buried on August 5"‘ 1943)  
  
John Jacob Sicard appears to have been Major-domo to Queen Caroline in Blackheath and  
Kensington. and to have carried the announcement of her succession as queen to Caroline in  
Florence in 1820. John Jacob probably = Jean-Jaques. a refugee from the revolution. Sicards are  
related to the Comtes de Lautrec [13‘h century ancestors called Amelius—Sicard]  
  
..1890. 1897 Charles Henry Schon. surgeon. medical officer. Bridge Union Died 1899 (buried Jan  
25”‘ 1899)  
  
1901 census 1 190-1 Robert Leishman Moorhead. MB CM ~(Edin) public vaccinator No. 1 District  
& M0 to Bridge Union.  
  
   
  
1906-71939: ArthurThomas Wilson MB, BCh, BAO(Dub) Public Vaccinator. His mother was  
living in Bridge Place in 1907. Bought his house from Dr Schon.  
  
1939-71970: Roger Bennett Hunter, MB (graduated from TCD in 1930)  
  
?1970—1988: William GS Russell Died December 25"‘ 1988  
  
Jan 15‘ 1988- present (1999): D Mark Jones (was Russell's junior); also now Mary Rafla & PH  
Sykes.  
  
The house in the High Street was therefore the Doctor's for at least 180 years, possibly longer.  
  
Mathematical Tiles: designed to give the appearance of brick, when hung on a timber-framed  
structure.  
  
45 Post Office; Chapel Yard  
  
46 Cottages  
  
47 Weston Villas  
  
48 Sefton Villas  
  
49 Conyngham Lane  
  
50 Hillside  
  
51 Sunnyside; Dering Road; ?Aunt Betsy  
  
52 Pett  
  
Originally ‘Houndpitt’ — 3 Oct 1361 Quitclaim from Alice, widow of Thomas Wydie,  
for a meesuage at ‘Pette’ , lying with the King’s highway to east and north, and the  
tenement of William Stokys to west and south. Witnesses John petit, Stephen  
  
Stodmerssh, John Wydie, William Stokes, William of Bridge, Adam Kyntard, Peter  
the Clerk.  
  
53 Duck Inn  
Notes on The Duck Inn  
  
Was originally built in 1623 as a farm and consisted of two dwellings owned by Isaac  
  
Clinton, who died in 1647. Thence to Samuel Clinton, d. 1701 and Robert Clinton d 1732.  
  
Was then known as Wodelands, and included 7 acres of land.  
  
In 1732 it was occupied by Clement Foxearth and Richard White.  
  
In 1780 was owned by Thomas ?Dack (a descendant of the Clintons)  
  
Sold in 1785 to Ruben Clare and in 1793 to Henry Corner of Canterbury. Sold in 1806 to  
  
Michael Price, wheelwright and horse dealer of Bishopsbourne, who died in 1831.  
Thence to Neville Price, d. 1842.  
  
Thomas Goodwin, grocer if Bishopsbourne obtained a licence in 1849 to sell ales,  
groceries and provisions from the property - ‘Woodlands’.  
  
1862 was in possession of Thomas Sargeant, grocer and beer seller [1861 census wood-  
sawyer]  
  
1874 William Newell,  
  
1890 Thomas Needle (general stores and beer house).  
  
1891 census Thomas Stubbles [56] & Caroline [61] Ag lab & Licensed Victualler:  
Woodmans Arms  
  
1904 a full licence granted to Thomas Stubbles as the 'Wood1nans Arms’. He left in 1906.  
Renamed ‘The Duck’ in the 1960's.  
  
54 Filmer Road development; Primitive Chapel  
Dering Road  
  
Dering Road in Bridge commemorates Colonel Cholmeley Dering, a younger brother of  
Sir Edward Dering of Surrenden Dering, the seventh baronet. He is well known in  
Kentish annals as commander of the New Romney Fencible Cavalry (Duke of York's  
Own), which he raised in East Kent in 1794 and with which he served in Ireland for three  
years, receiving the thanks of the Lord Lieutenant and both Houses of Parliament in that  
country for his eminent services during the rebellion of 1798. The regiment was  
disbanded in October, 1800, on its return from Ireland. One year before, probably in  
anticipation of the event, Colonel Dering had bought Howletts [in Ickham] C?) from its  
builder, Isaac Baugh, and was in consequence the second owner of that most  
distinguished house, one of the best of its size and style in England. On the death of his  
elder brother in 181 1 he became guardian of the infant eighth Dering baronet and had to  
remove to Surrenden from Howletts, which he sold about 1816 to George Gipps Esq., son  
and heir of one of the founders of the Canterbury Bank. In 1817 he was returned as MP  
  
for New Romney. He died in 1836 and was buried at Pluckley. Howletts remained in the  
Gipps family until about forty years ago.  
  
55 Union Road; The Workhouse  
W A N T E D.  
A Mistress for a Workhouse,  
  
In the Parish of BRIDGE, at Easter next. For further Particulars enquire of Mr. MILLER, or  
Mr. CHAMPION, CHURCHWARDEN, and OVERSEER.  
  
N.B. She must write a tolerable Hand.  
  
BRIDGE, April 10, 1772.  
  
(Kentish Gazette, April 7 — I I I 772)  
  
MY LIFE CONNECTED WITH  
  
THE UNION/THE CLOSE UNION ROAD BRIDGE  
  
   
  
- MISS GLADYS M. LEMAR  
  
In 1933, when we (the Lemar family) came to live in Old Mill House, Union Road,  
Bridge, we had relations working at The Union, Union Road. My Aunt and Uncle (Mr.  
and Mrs. Len Lemar) held the posts of Porter and Porteress, and their living  
accommodation was on the left—hand side of the main entrance (now made into two ﬂats).  
They had two daughters (our cousins), so as children we were often in The Union. This  
gave us an insight into life that we would not otherwise have known about.  
  
We spent many hours in the laundry, the chapel, the kitchen, and on the wards,  
doing little jobs when we could. The women lived on the left-hand side and the men on  
the right-hand side of the building. We talked frequently to the men and women who had  
to live there; we knew them all by name. In those days, some who lived in the Union, or  
the Institution, as it was often referred to, were only in their twenties and thirties. In  
  
addition there were the elderly, infirm and mentally retarded. Some women had their  
babies with them.  
  
I can remember vagrants being brought to The Union, being cleaned and bathed  
by my Uncle, and given food. After a night=s rest, some Awent on their wayz. The  
vagrants always arrived at, or were brought to, a special building which was situated  
opposite Old Mill House. The building was demolished in 1976, and later, houses were  
built on the site, now Mount Charles Walk. The Union gardens were eventually sold and  
Churchill House and Churchill Close are built where the gardens once were.  
  
During the early years, The Master and Matron of The Union were Mr. and Mrs.  
  
P. Honney and their living accommodation was on the right-hand side of the main  
entrance and above the archway.  
  
Among the many and varied duties my Aunt and Uncle did, is one that I always  
remember vividly. In the main entrance, next to his desk, my Uncle had a bell-pull. He  
had to toll the bell many times during the day; for example:- time to get up, time for  
breakfast, lunch and tea (even between the courses), also, to signify that the Doctor had  
arrived, and ﬁnally, of course, time for bed.  
  
The Board of Governors held a meeting every month on the premises.  
During those years I never thought that one day I would work at The Union.  
  
After working for The Bishop of Dover (Bishop Rose) and his wife, at St.  
Martin=s Priory, St. Martin=s Hill, Canterbury, as House Maid and then Parlour Maid,  
  
for five and a half years, I came to work at The Union in 1947, as The Matron=s Maid.  
  
The Matron then was Miss Eborn and I worked for her for ten years, until she retired and  
returned to live in her home town of Dover.  
  
During my time at The Union (later to be named The Close), I worked for seven  
Matrons. Sometimes my work took on a different role as some of the Matrons had  
families, and then I had the children to look after as well.  
  
During the time that Mrs. D. Upton (later to become Mrs. Holway) was Matron  
there was talk of The Union /The Close being closed. Matron became an active  
  
campaigner to keep the home in Bridge. None of the staff or the residents, or in fact the  
people of Bridge, wanted the home to move into Canterbury.  
  
The campaign and everyone-=s efforts to prevent the move were successful. The  
  
Close was converted into houses/flats and The New Close was built in Conyngham Lane,  
Bridge.  
  
We all moved to The New Close in I982 and here, men and women were able to  
live side by side and were not segregated as in the old days.  
  
I retired from The New Close in June 1985, having worked for The Kent County  
Council, at The Union/The Close/The new Close, for thirty eight and a half years. I  
  
remained a Committee Member for The New Close Amenity Fund until the middle of  
I997.  
  
10th January, 1999.  
  
THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EARLY ADMINISTRATION OF THE  
NEW POOR LAW IN THE BRIDGE UNION  
  
Miss J. A. Nunn  
  
THE NEW POOR LAW  
  
Any study of the New Poor Law must first encompass a description of the Poor Law  
Amendment Act of 1834, which laid down the principles governing the treatment of the poor  
for the rest of the nineteenth century. Prior to 1834 there was no national system of poor relief.  
Instead different parts of the country administered different kinds of workhouse or provided  
various payments of cash or kind, which supplemented the low incomes of the poor. The most  
famous type of outdoor relief was the ‘Speenhamland System‘. As pauperism and outdoor-relief  
increased so too did poor rates. It was alleged that the Speenhamland payments encouraged  
  
laziness and were a positive disincentive to work. For these reasons it was thought advisable to  
devise a new and national system of poor relief.  
  
The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 abolished outdoor relief to the able—bodied, who on  
applying for relief were to be offered maintenance in a workhouse where their lives would be  
  
regulated and made less comfortable than had they chosen to stay outside and fend for  
themselves (1). This principle of'less eligibility‘ had the attraction of being a self-acting test of  
destitution. Only those persons who were genuinely in dire need would accept the workhouse  
rather than starvation, particularly since on entering the workhouse they lost all the rights and  
privileges they were entitled to in the outside world. Those who were not in such straits would  
prefer to remain independent and thus avoid contracting the morally wasting disease of  
pauperism (2).  
  
The New Poor Law was seen as a positive solution to an increasing problem of pauperism,  
which would work wonders for the moral character of the working man, and reduce poor rates,  
since it would be cheaper to administer than the old systems of outdoor relief. For these reasons  
the Government accepted the principles of the New Poor Law even though they involved a  
greater degree of bureaucratic centralisation than would have been acceptable to them under  
normal circumstances. Under the 1834 act overall responsibility for the poor law passed into  
the hands of three Poor Law Commissioners at Somerset House, whose rulings were transmitted  
to Boards of Guardians in different areas by Assistant Poor Law Commissioners. The country  
was divided up into Poor Law Unions, for each of which a Board of Guardians was appointed  
with complete control of local administration. Each Poor Law Union was composed of several  
parishes. Boards varied in terms of administrative detail and in how they interpreted the  
legislation of 1834. Some stuck to the letter ofthe Poor Law Amendment Act, while others  
proved to be more ﬂexible. Boards of Guardians were elected annually and each Guardian  
represented a constituent Parish within his Poor Law Union.  
  
The implementation of the New Poor Law was not as uniform as its promoters had hoped for. For  
a few years several Boards of Guardians in Northern Counties merely administered the  
Registration Act of 1836 (3), and even when they were persuaded to assume responsibility for the  
poor law in place of the parish authorities they were allowed to continue the payment of outdoor  
relief to the able—bodied. Having permitted such a concession, the central authority experienced  
difficulty in withdrawing it. Moreover the workhouse test was never enforced in the  
industrialised Unions of Lancashire and the West Riding and Boards of Guardians even ignored  
the stipulation that able—bodied male applicants for relief be subjected to some form of task work.  
They demanded instead that their Guardians be given full discretion to relieve their poor as they  
thought fit, so that outdoor relief to the able—bodied continued, and even took the form of  
allowances in aid of inadequate earnings (4). Initially the central body lacked the power to  
enforce anyone to do anything, and yet much was achieved prior to the first great administrative  
  
change of 1847, whereby a new Poor Law Board replaced the three Poor Law Commissioners as  
a governing and ministerial rather than a reforming authority (5).  
  
For thirteen years between 1834 and 1847 the three Poor Law Commissioners, with Edwin  
Chadwick as their secretary administered the early years of the New Poor Law, but under  
constant pressure from Parliament and from hostile agitation in the industrial areas they failed to  
achieve national uniformity in poor law administration or the abolition of outdoor relief. During  
the 1840s they both formally permitted a considerable degree of outdoor relief, even to the able-  
bodied, and relaxed their supervision of local administration. Chadwick, after a number of  
quarrels, increasingly turned his attention to the sanitary problems raised by his report of 1842,  
and from 1847 was no longer involved in poor law administration. 1847 also produced a major  
scandal surrounding the Andover Workhouse, where paupers who had been so badly fed on being  
set to work on grinding bones for fertiliser fought for any scraps of food which still clung to the  
  
half—rotten bones (6). This case exposed a slackening of control from the centre and promoted a  
parliamentary storm out of which the Poor Law Board emerged as a minor government  
  
department. Under a new Act, which was passed at the same time, an inspectorate was  
established and some improvements in workhouse conditions were promised (7).  
  
Inadequate levels of outdoor and indoor relief have been blamed on the meanness of Boards of  
Guardians who, it is alleged, cared more for the rates than the poor under their control. Given a  
failure to reform the rating system in 1834, some of this parsimony is understandable. Prior to  
1865 each parish remained responsible for the cost of relieving its own paupers, and until 1861  
the contribution of each parish to the common expenses of the Union was assessed on the basis of  
its relief expenditure and not its rateable value; in other words, on its poverty rather than its  
property. Parishes with large working class populations experienced great difficulties in  
collecting poor rates in periods of trade depression, and so were unable to meet the ﬁnancial  
demands imposed upon them by their Boards of Guardians, who, in turn found their financial  
resources dwindling at times when calls upon them were at their greatest. Under the Union  
Chargeability Act of 1865 the entire cost of poor relief was placed on the Union, rather than on  
  
the parish, thereby redressing an unequal burden between rich and poor parishes within the same  
Union (8).  
  
The Bridge Poor Law Union in comparison with more extreme examples was a model union.  
While it did not adhere strictly to the principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act, it was certainly  
more co—operative than many unions in the North of England.  
  
THE MINUTE BOOKS OF THE BRIDGE GUARDIANS  
  
The main historical source for this chapter exists in the minute books of the Board of Guardians  
ofthe Bridge Poor Law Union, of which there are twenty—one spanning the years from 1835 to  
1930. They can be consulted in the County Archives Office in Maidstone. Entered in these books  
were the weekly meetings, decisions and reports of the Bridge Board of Guardians. The books  
themselves are very large measuring approximately eighteen inches in length and ten inches in  
  
width. One single volume can contain entries for three years. They are all beautifully written in  
fine copperplate hand—writing.  
  
The procedure at each meeting followed the normal pattern of any committee meeting,  
commencing with a list ofthose Guardians who were present. Normally the Guardians turned  
their attention firstly to the weekly financial accounts, as submitted by the two Receiving Officers  
ofthe Bridge Union, which usually showed how much had been paid in Out Relief over the  
previous week. Items discussed thereafter varied from one meeting to another, but might include  
the acceptance or rejection of tenders from local tradesmen, who competed with each other in  
supplying provisions and other necessities to the Workhouse; petitions for out-relief from paupers  
who resided in the Union; and matters of daily routine in the running ofthe Workhouse, such as  
new appointments, salaries, the diets of inmates and new pauper admissions. Queries on any  
point of administration were sent to the Poor Law Commissioners.  
  
The minute books provide a clear and lengthy account ofthe day to day running ofthe Bridge  
Poor Law Union. They also yield much valuable and useful information in such areas as the  
quarterly cost of poor relief, or the cost of poor relief for individual parishes. Unfortunately,  
however, there are gaps in this sort of information, which therefore cannot be followed through  
on a year by year basis. With respect to Bridge itselfthe Minute books portray the parish and  
village as one part of the Poor Law Union. Intermittently figures appear which show Bridge's  
share of the poor rate, or the numbers of paupers from this particular parish who were receiving  
outdoor relief or staying in the Workhouse.  
  
Despite gaps in information, lack of consistency and. problems of interpreting other people's  
handwriting, those minute books which have been consulted have proved to be an interesting and  
informative source.  
  
THE.BRIDGE POOR LAW UNION AND THE FIRST MEETING OF THE GUARDIANS  
  
The first meeting of the Bridge Union Board of Guardians was held on 22 April 1835, "by order  
and by declaration of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales dated 27 March,  
1835" (9). It was held at the White Horse Inn in Bridge. The Guardians werejoined by Sir  
Francis Head, as Assistant Poor Law Commissioner for the East Kent Area, and by the following  
  
Ex Officio—Guardians: the Rev. C. Hughes—Hallett [of Higham], George Gipps Esq. [ofHowletts],  
and Robert Ballard—Johnstone Esq.  
  
There were nineteen Parish Guardians: (10)  
  
Name Parish  
Richard Brice Bridge  
John Bushell Ickham  
  
Henry Collard  
John Sankey  
  
Patrixbourne  
Lower Hardres  
  
John Marsh Hood Kingston  
  
Stephen Fuller Harbledown  
Stephen Gambill Waltham  
  
John Howard Upper Hardres  
John Harvey Bishopsbourne  
Nathaniel Maynard Fordwich  
Thomas Byng Wickham  
Thomas Sladden Adisham  
Edward Collard Stodmarsh  
Richard Peckham Bekesbourne  
Denne Denne Littlebourne  
Henry Mount Nackington  
Robert Lathe Thanington  
Benjamin Harrison Womenswold  
Robert Owann Westgate.  
  
There were two guardians who were absent and they represented Barham and Petham. Thus the  
Bridge Poor Law Union was established on the basis of twenty—one parishes. The first meeting  
was largely concerned with settling the administration of the Union. Richard Peckham of  
Bekesbourne was elected Chairman and Nathaniel Maynard of Fordwich was elected Deputy  
Chairman. It was resolved that meetings should be held every Thursday morning at eleven  
o'clock at the White Horse Inn in Bridge. Herbert Collard was elected Clerk of the Union at a  
salary, to be recommended to the Poor Law Commissioners, of £40 per annum.  
  
The Union was divided into two districts, each of which had one Receiving Officer. Captain  
Samuel Beachcroft, who was a half pay Officer of the 14"‘ Regiment, was recommended as the  
Receiving Officer for the first district at a salary of £50 per annum which had also to be  
  
recommended to the Poor Law Commissioners. Henry Illsby was appointed Receiving Officer for  
the 2nd District. The twenty one  
  
parishes were apportioned to the two districts as follows:  
  
1st District 2nd District  
  
Bridge Nackington  
Womenswold Upper Hardres  
Barham Lower Hardres  
Kingston Petham  
Patrixbourne Waltham  
Bishopsbourne Thanington  
Adisham Harbledown  
Bekesbourne Westgate  
Littlebourne Fordwich  
Ickhan  
  
Wickham  
  
Stodmarsh  
  
Four districts were created for purposes of medical assistance:  
  
1st District 2nd District 3rd District 4th  
District  
  
Bridge Adisham Nackington  
  
Harbledown  
  
Womenswold Bekesbourne Upper Hardres Fordwich  
Barham Littlebourne Petham  
  
Thanington  
  
Kingston Ickham Lower Hardres Westgate  
Bishopsbourne Wickham Waltham  
  
Patrixbourne Stodmarsh  
  
The subject of a Workhouse was also discussed at the first meeting. It was agreed, subject to the  
approval of the Poor Law Commissioners, to provide accommodation for no more than 500 able-  
bodied paupers. A committee was established to find a suitable site for the Workhouse,  
  
composed of Mr. Brice (representing Bridge), Mr. Maynard, Mr. Lathe, Mr. Peckham, and Mr.  
Denne.  
  
Administrative arrangements were finalised at subsequent meetings, Mr. D. Denne was appointed  
Treasurer to the Union and Richard Pilcher was appointed Auditor (11). £150 per annum was  
  
offered to the local doctor for caring for the sick poor. In July 1835 the Guardians accepted Sir  
Francis Head's request that the Parish of Chartham shouldjoin the Bridge Poor Law Union, which  
was thereby extended to twenty—two parishes, surrounding Canterbury as shown by the parallel  
  
lines on the attached map, which has been taken from G. H. Garrad, A Survey of the Agriculture  
of Kent (1954).  
  
THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE WORKHOUSE: THE BUILDING.  
  
The Bridge Union Board of Guardians, who resolved almost immediately to build a workhouse,  
set up a committee to find a suitable site within one mile of Bridge which contained an acre of  
ground (12). The site selected adjoined the turnpike road from Bridge to Canterbury. The  
necessary land, which belonged to the Marchioness of Conyngham (13), was bought for £237.  
10s. from Lord Al.bert Conyngham (14). Having located and purchased a site, the Guardians  
through the medium of the Canterbury newspapers invited builders to tender for constructing  
  
the Workhouse. A surveyor was appointed and the tender of Mr. T. F. Cozens, a Canterbury  
builder, was accepted for £4,376 (15). The construction of a Union Workhouse at Bridge was  
ﬁnanced by a £5,000 loan from the Exchequer (16).  
  
STAFF APPOINTMENTS  
  
Within nine months of accepting Mr. Cozen's tender the Workhouse was ready to admit its first  
inmates by February 1836. Already a Master for the Workhouse had been appointed. An  
advertisement which appeared in the newspapers during August 1835 offered a salary of £80 per  
annum (17). Applicants whose names were short—listed were interviewed at the White Horse,  
together with their wives (18). John Weeks and his wife were appointed as the first Master and  
Matron of the Bridge Union Workhouse at a salary of £80 per annum, exclusive of rent, candles  
and living (19). Mr. and Mrs. Weeks resigned their appointments towards the end of December  
1835 (20) before the workhouse ofﬁcially opened, thereby forcing the Guardians to find a new  
Master and Matron. Early in 1836 Thomas and Maria Cobb were appointed Master and Matron  
of the Bridge Union Workhouse at annual salaries of respectively £80 and £20 (21).  
  
A schoolmistress was appointed at a salary of£32 per annum, while John Adams as the ﬁrst  
porter received wages of 10/— a week (22). Spiritual needs were provided by a Workhouse  
  
Chaplain (23), while a medical officer was paid £50 per annum to attend on the sick in the  
Workhouse.  
  
By the time the Workhouse opened its doors the following domestic staff had been engaged (24).  
  
Laurance, Sarah, aged 35 — Cook  
  
Morgan, Mary, aged 32 — Cook  
  
Breasley, Mary, aged 37 - Cook  
  
Brice, Sarah, aged 48 — Nurse for Wards No. 7 to No. 15  
Spain, Mrs., aged 29 — To give her attendance to the Boys.  
Holness, Ann, aged 23 — To give her attendance to the Girls.  
  
Thus the Workhouse began its life with a minimum staff of twelve persons, eight of whom were  
women, and over half of whom were domestic staff.  
  
THE INMATES  
  
The Workhouse as constructed initially was intended to house 200 inmates, though it contained  
fewer than that number in its early stages. To start with only one hundred iron bedsteads were  
required. Inmates arrived from already established Workhouses, such as the Littlebourne  
Poorhouse (25). On 25 February 1836 the Bridge Guardians decided to seek authority to sell the  
Littlebourne Workhouse (26), which was the same Thursday when paupers from Barham and  
Bishopsbourne in Elham Workhouse moved into the Bridge Workhouse (27).  
  
THE LAYOUT OF THE WORKHOUSE (28)  
  
Probationary and waiting wards were situated below and next to the Committee Room. The  
Workhouse on its south and north sides contained upper and lower wards, viz:  
  
On the South Side of the Workhouse:  
  
Upper Wards To No. 7 inclusive Girls under 16 years of age.  
  
To No. 15 inclusive Old Women and Bedridden Women.  
Lower Wards To No. 22 inclusive Boys under 13 years of age.  
To No. 30 inclusive Able—bodied Women.  
  
On the North Side of the Workhouse:  
Upper Wards Old Men.  
Lower Wards Able—bodied men and boys 13 years of age and above.  
  
Permission had to be sought from the Poor Law Commissioners for two old couples to sleep  
  
together (29) but this was strictly against the rules of the Poor Law Commission until after 1847  
when some concessions were made.  
  
The Guardians‘ minute books contain few ﬁgures relating to numbers of paupers in the  
Workhouse, but during the first quarter of 1847 there were nineteen paupers from Bridge itselfin  
the Workhouse, whose maintenance cost £27. 8s. 9d. (30). During the same three months ﬁfteen  
paupers in Bridge had received outdoor relief at a total cost of £16. 17s. 7d. In comparison with  
the other parishes in the Union Bridge was about average. Chartham, on the other hand, was well  
above average, having had twenty-eight paupers in the Workhouse during the same period at a  
total cost of £45. 12s. 6d. In the granting to outdoor relief Chartham was much above average  
with ninety—seven paupers receiving outdoor relief at a total cost of £58. 15s 1 1/2d.  
  
THE lNMATES' DIET  
  
At a meeting which was held in 1835, involving all the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen ofthe East  
Kent Unions under the chairmanship of Sir Francis Head, it was agreed to adopt one common diet  
for all Union Workhouses and Poorhouses throughout East Kent (31):  
  
For the Able—Bodied: Men and Women  
  
Breakfast and Supper. Bread and cheese or butter - 6 oz. of bread for men, 5 oz. for women with  
1 oz. of cheese or 1/2 oz. of butter.  
  
Dinner. Two days — Suet Puddings and vegetables - 1 lb. of pudding for men, 10 oz. for  
women. One day — Meat pudding with vegetables — 1 lb. of pudding forymen and 10 oz.  
for women. Four days - Bread and Cheese — 7 oz. of bread and 1 oz. of cheese.  
  
For Old People  
The same as for the able—bodied plus 1 oz. of tea and milk for breakfast and supper.  
  
For Children  
  
Bread and milk for breakfast and supper and such proportions of the dinner diet for  
the able—bodied as the Board of Guardians shall decide.  
  
   
  
For the Sick  
Whatsoever be ordered for them by the Medical Ofﬁcer.  
  
Dietary alterations which were made subsequently included giving male inmates who  
  
worked hard a daily pint of beer, while the breakfast diet was changed from bread and  
cheese to gruel.  
  
EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY THE BOARD OF GUARDIANS AND HOW THEY  
EXTENDED THEIR FUNCTIONS  
  
It was immediately agreed by the Board of Guardians that the various parishes making up the  
Bridge Union had to meet the running costs of the union, in "such proportion of the general  
expenses of the union as is lawfully chargeable to the said parishes" (32). Bridge had to pay £27,  
as against Barham paying the most at £53 and Stodmarsh the least at only £6. Since the average  
was £22, Bridge paid something over the average.  
  
The Guardians also quickly agreed on the following scales of weekly outdoor relief:  
  
Amount without earnings  
  
For a married man and wife 5/-  
For each child 1/-  
For single men 2/6d.  
  
At the 1835 July meeting of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Sir Francis Head expressed the  
following views on the payment of out-relief (33):  
  
"any ﬁxed scale of relief is directly hostile to the principle of the Poor Law  
Amendment, Act. No pauper should be able to safely calculate the amount of  
relief he should receive and thus set store by it. Instead it should fluctuate so much  
that he could never calculate what he was to receive and therefore come to realise  
he had no certain support - nothing on which he could safely rely but his own  
industry and his own providence".  
  
It was agreed that the eleven unions of East Kent should act as uniformly as possible. Outdoor  
relief was ﬁxed at sums beyond which it was not to be extended under any circumstances:  
  
Amount per week  
  
For a man, wife and six children 10/-  
For a man and wife 5/-  
  
Outdoor relief was made still less attractive when it was decided that the maximum payment to  
old people should be 2/6d. per week.  
  
Sir Francis Head further ruled that parishes within the Bridge Union had to allocate ﬁve per cent  
of their average yearly poor law expenditure towards the administrative costs of the Union, for  
  
which purpose a report was compiled showing the annual average Expenditure on poor relief by  
each parish over the previous three years after deducting expenses for emigration (34):  
  
Adisham 288  
  
Barha,m 660  
Bekesbourne 122  
Bishopsbourne 365  
Bridge 175  
Chartham 884  
Fordwich 109  
Upper Hardres 258  
Lower Hardres 261  
Ickham 594  
Kingston 180  
Littlebourne 528  
Harbledown 496  
Nackington 302  
Petham 483  
Patrixbourne 259  
Stodmarsh 120  
Thanington 404  
Waltham 73 1  
Westgate 458  
Wickham 714  
Womenswold 101  
Total 8.492  
  
Bridge's share of administrative costs was £8. 15s. Compared with several other parishes,  
Bridge‘s poor law expenditure had been very low.  
  
Due to the establishment of the Workhouse there was a higher expenditure on poor relief during  
the first quarter of 1836 (35):  
  
1. Total cost ofin—reliefin the first quarter of... £275. 155. 3d.  
2. Total cost of out-relief in the first quarter of £763. 19s. 0 3/4d.  
Plus 3. Establishment charges of... £1,459. 11s. 3d.  
  
Had these costs continued at this level for the whole year, then total poor relief expenditure would  
have exceeded £10,000, which would have been more than the £8,492 average of the previous  
three years. The three items of expenditure as far as Bridge was concerned were:  
  
1. In—relief of £21. 7s. 10d.  
2. Out-relief of £21. 11s. 5d.  
3. Establishment of £30 15. 6 3/4d.  
  
Had these costs also continued then the total cost of poor relief in Bridge would have exceeded  
£200 for 1836. Initially higher costs were involved in implementing the 1834 Poor Law Act with  
the result that poor law expenditure increased considerably during the first year following the  
establishment of the New Poor Law in Bridge. Such high levels of expenditure, however, did not  
  
continue. By 1847 the total cost for the first quarter for Bridge was at a much lower level and  
was calculated as follows:  
  
1. In—relieef 0f£27. 8s. 9d.  
2. Out—relief of £16. 175. 7d.  
3. Establishment of£5. 2s. 1.d.  
  
Lower outdoor relief and establishment costs existed alongside a higher expenditure involved in  
maintaining those paupers who had entered the Workhouse. These trends were repeated for other  
parishes within the Bridge Union.  
  
The Guardians maintained a tight control over expenditure. Anything supplied to the Workhouse  
was subject to competitive tenders. The Receiving Officers in reporting weekly to the Board  
stated how much money had been spent on outdoor relief. Usually this amounted to about £45,  
except on those occasions when they had to pay for the treatment of lunatics, as on 9 April, 1840,  
when a weekly expenditure of £72. 7s. 0 1/2d. was reported. The corresponding expenditures for  
the previous week ending on 2 April were £41. 6s. 1 1/2d., and for the following week ending on  
16 April, £41. 6s. 0 1/2d.  
  
Initially the Guardians experienced difficulties in collecting the parochial poor rates. In 1836  
several parishes refused to acknowledge and pay the Guardians‘ appointed Collector (36). After  
continuous trouble throughout that year the Board set up a committee, consisting of ﬁve of its  
members who were to examine and report on the best method of collecting the Parish rates within  
the Bridge Union (37). Richard Brice from Bridge was elected to this committee. The Guardians  
in addition requested the Poor Law authorities to send an explanatory letter to the troublesome  
parishes concerning the collector's right to the Parish Rate (38). Subsequently on 27 February  
  
1840 the Board of Guardians allowed Parish Officers to excuse paupers from paying the Poor  
Rate (39).  
  
Another financial problem which the Guardians had to face in 1840 arose out of disagreements  
over the payment of Medical Officers. They sought information from the other Poor Law Unions  
in East Kent as to whether and how much they paid their Medical Officers (40). The Guardians  
were facing criticism from Mr. Nix who had been a Medical Officer to the Union since its  
formation. In 1840 he was continually complaining of underpayment, but was finally satisfied in  
1841 with a salary of £50 a year for attending the workhouse, plus 12/— for each attendance on the  
outdoor poor and 14/— for each midwifery case (41).  
As time progressed, so Boards of Guardians‘ functions were extended and their ﬁnancial  
affairs became more complicated. In 1847 Bridge Union became responsible for collecting  
those county rates which were due from within its boundaries and had also to pay the county  
clerk of the peace whatever sums were owing for judicial administration throughout its area  
(42). In 1847 a cheque for £168. Os. 10d. was paid over to Mr. Mercer, the County Treasurer,  
as the amount of county rate due from the parishes within the Union. Bridge's share of this  
was £9. 19s. 7d., but Chartham had most to pay at £19. 5s 11d.,(43).  
  
The Guardians had many demands on their purse other than normal poor relief payments.  
Occasionally they authorised grants to families to enable them to emigrate, as on 27 February  
1840, when "the sanction of the Board was given to the Parish Officers of Upper Hardres to  
advance the sum of £5 to Thomas Hobb's wife and child of that parish for the purpose oftheir  
emigrating to Australia“ (44). Later in that year on 11th September the sum of £14. 11s. 3d.  
  
was granted to Thomas Fairways and his family of Chartham for their emigration to New  
Zealand (45).  
  
Payments were sometimes made to other Unions for having incurred expenditure on a Bridge  
Union pauper. Whenever such requests were received the Bridge Guardians usually paid  
  
promptly, as on 1 December 1836 "to the Faversham Union for the upkeep, for twenty—six  
weeks, ofa child belonging to the Parish of Barham" (46).  
  
Extensions of functions in other directions can also be seen in the Guardians’ minutes. From  
1836 onwards they were responsible for the registration of births, marriages and deaths. They  
apprenticed boys to employers outside the area, so that a Canterbury sweep, for instance, was  
allowed to have apprentice boys in 1840 (47). On 11 September 1840 they agreed to  
vaccinate all the children who required vaccination within the Bridge Union (48).  
  
There was a wide range to the matters discussed and decisions taken by the Bridge Board of  
Guardians. This overall conclusion can be supported from their minute books during the  
1840s. On 5 March 1840 the Clerk to the Board of Guardians was requested to write to the  
Poor Law Commissioners to find out the correct procedure "towards Pregnant Unmarried  
Women requesting to lye—in in the Workhouse". and also whether such women who appeared  
on a second occasion should be punished (49). At the same time it was also decided that all  
  
bastards, over seven years of age, who applied for relief, would be ordered into the Workhouse.  
  
The Union Chaplain reported to the Board of Guardians on 14 March 1842 that the internal  
discipline of inmates was generally satisfactory, and that there had been particular progress in  
the education ofthe Workhouse children (50). On 29 April 1847 the Guardians considered  
  
moving a lunatic from Upper Hardres to the County Asylum at Barming Heath, near  
Maidstone (51).  
  
CONCLUSION  
  
Even from this brief study of the early years of the administration of the Bridge Poor Law Union,  
it is possible to advance several conclusions. The Guardians were very conscientious in  
executing their duties. They were not particularly hard or unkind in their administration of poor  
relief, yet this is a charge which is commonly thrown at Victorian Boards of Guardians.  
Although they were careful over financial matters, they were not always ti ght-fisted and did help  
those in genuine need. Costs of poor relief were not always reduced at least in the short-term.  
Despite condemnation of outdoor relief such payments to the able—b0died poor continued within  
the Bridge Union, alongside other types of out-relief such as funeral expenses, clothing grants and  
medical aid. Within the Bridge Union the parish of Bridge appears as a village having but a small  
number of paupers and an average poor-relief expenditure.  
  
FOOTNOTES  
(1) M. 13. Rose, The Reliefof Poverty 1834-1914 (1972), 8.  
(2) Ibid., 8.  
(3) Ibid., 11  
(4) mg... 11:  
  
(5) M. Bruce, The Coming ofthe Welfare State (1961), 103.  
(6) I. Anstruther, The Scandal of the Andover Workhouse (1973), 133.  
  
(7) Bruce, OP cit., 117.  
(8 Rose, op. cit., 42.  
  
   
  
(9} Minutes of Bridge Board of Guardians, 22 April 1835.  
  
(10) Ibid., 22 April 1835.  
  
(11) 31¢, 28 April 1835.  
  
(12) 1b@\_., 28 April 1835.  
  
(13) E” 7th May 1835.  
  
(14) Ltd, 6 August 1835.  
(15) Q” 27 May 1835.  
  
(16) I\_biQ, 25 February 1836.  
(17) 1\_l)ig1\_., 20 August 1835.  
(18) mg, 10 September 1835.  
(19) lbig, 17 September 1835.  
(20 M, 27 December 1835.  
(21} Ibid., 7 January 1836.  
(22) I\_l)i\_gl\_., 28 January 1836.  
(23) I\_1)i\_c\_l;, 17 November 1836.  
(24) Licl\_.\_, 10 December 1836.  
(25) 119$, 28 January 1836.  
(26 pg, 25 February 1836.  
(27) big, 18 February 1836.  
(28) 11>i\_d., 10 December 1836.  
(29) 113$, 11 February 1836.  
(30) Q. 1 April 1847.  
  
(31) E, 9July1835.  
  
(32) Ibid. 21 May 1835.  
  
(33) Ibid., ,9 July 1835.  
  
(34) @1\_.\_, 21 November 1835.  
(35) Ibid.', 25 February 1836.  
(36) 11$, 14 July 1836.  
  
(37) M, 3 November 1836.  
(38) Ibid., 3 November 1836.  
(39) M, 27 February 1840.  
(40) Il)\_id,, 27 February 1840.  
(41) lid, 5 March 1841  
  
(42) I\_l)i£1\_., 12 March 1847  
(43) 1\_b11\_., 9 April 1847  
  
(44) 1\_l)i;¢, 27 February 1840.  
(45) ﬂ)\_i\_cL, 11 September 1840.  
(46) I\_b\_ig\_., 1 December 1836.  
(47) LE, 2 January 1840.  
(48) mg, 11 September 1840.  
(49) Lbyi, 5 March 1840.  
  
(50) gr, 14 March 1842.  
(51) M29 April 1847.  
  
56 Mill Cottage and the Mill  
H I s T o R Y OF:  
  
OLD MILL HOUSE, 41 UNION ROAD, BFIDGF  
  
AND TH? L?MAR FAMILY  
  
Notes written by Gwen Herbert (nee Lemar)  
  
In the l8th Century some Huguenot families escaped from France  
during the French Revolution and came to settle in Kent.  
  
One of those families was "US" - the leMar family - (later to be  
written as Lemar). Out[r] Ancestors were Market Gardeners.  
  
Two centuries later, our family, Mr. & Mrs. G.F. Lemar and  
  
daughters, Gladys, Margaret and Gveq, moved from Canterbury to Bridge.  
The reason for this was that Mr. H.3. Burniston, Coal Merchant in  
  
Canterbury, for whom my father worked, had asked my father to move to  
Bridge to expand the coal trade in Bridge and surrounding villages.  
  
So, on 28th February 1933, we came to live in Old Mill House,  
Union Road, Bridge (later to be numbered No.41).  
  
Old Mill House was built c.l73O and when we moved in, in l933,  
there were very few houses in Union Road. There were none between Old  
Mill House and the Coal Yard (where my father worlced) which was  
situated at the top of Union Road (where the Oil Distribution Depot is  
today). In the Coal Yard stood a Mill and in arli r tim s th Mill r  
lived in Old Mill House. This is the reason why Old Mill House faces  
Union Road the Miller always kept an "eye" on his Mill! A Mill-stone is  
  
still in the front porch. at Old Mill House. The Mill was demolished in  
1955.  
  
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Hollands were the previous occupants of Old  
Mill House and they moved to No. l4 Union Road, Bridge.  
  
My father,(Mr. Lemar) had to do an immense amount of work to Old  
Mill House, i.e. levelling the floors, making ceilings and redecorating  
etc. In one instance, in a bedroom, when he stripped layers of paper off  
down to the wooden partitioning, he found signatures and ranks of  
  
soldiers who it seemed had been billeted in the house. (I wonder which  
war they fought in?)  
  
Old Mill House has only one half brick internal wall, all the  
other "walls" having wooden partitioning. There is an iron "X" on the  
  
back and front walls, securing an iron rod which runs through the house.  
  
When we moved in there were just two gas lights and no other means  
of artificial light, so candles and hurricane lamps were used. The  
toilet was outside and there was a cesspool and water-well in the back  
  
garden. After s few years a cement rendering was put over the old brick  
outer walls and the sash windows w r r plac d. B caus of these  
alterations, the house is not a listed building.  
  
My father and mother (Mr. & Mrs. Lemar) died in l98O and l98l  
respectively and both are buried in Bridge Churchyard; we all attended  
the Church. My sister, Margaret, became organist at Bridge Church at the  
age of 14, holding the post for 14% years. She married the local  
  
Policeman, moved to Gravesend and became organist at her Church there.  
She died in l986.  
  
Gwen (the writer of these notes) now lives in the West Midlands,  
but has always considered Bridge as "home".  
  
Gladys, who worked for seven successive Matrons at The Union  
(later to become The Close and The New Close) from 1947 until her  
retirement in 1985 (38 years) lived in Old Mill House until 15th  
September 1998 (nearly 66 years).  
  
Old Mill House has deteriorated over recent years; it has been  
owned by four different landlords and the present Landlords offered my  
sister the move to "Mereworth", 55 Union Road, Bridge.  
  
Ironically, Gladys has moved next to the very "reason" we moved to  
  
Bridge in the first place — the Coal Yard (now the Oil Distribution  
Depot)!  
  
(Attached: Photographs of the Mill, Old Mill Hose and Old Mill House  
from Mill)  
  
A short history of Bridge Windmill: 1596-1954  
Bridge 8 July 1271 Q. Nigel de Thurkyng and w. Cristine D Ralph de Brigg, clerk; 2  
mess. 4 ac of land and the moiety of a mill in Brigg. Q acknowledged the premises to  
be the right of D D gave 205. (55 Hen III) Was probably a water—mill  
  
There is no windmill in Bridge. A brief exploration of the village will however reveal the  
existence of Mill Lane, running up from the ford by Little Bridge Place to a row of eight  
postwar houses alongside an old bridleway at the top, named Mill Terrace, and a 1960's  
development in the centre of the village off Western Avenue called Windmill Close.  
These names are virtually all that remain to remind us of a once familiar landmark, whose  
site now lies beneath one of the fuel storage tanks on the corner of Mill lane and Union  
Road. The only building remaining associated with it is Mill Cottage in Union Road, built  
  
(it is said, about 1730, but in fact more probably 1830) sideways on to the road to give  
the miller a clear view of his workplace.  
  
The first evidence for a corn mill at Bridge appears on the first detailed map of Kent  
issued by Philip Symondson in 1596, but it may have been in existence of course long  
before that. Windmills have been recorded in this country since the twelfth century. What  
is perhaps remarkable about Symondson's mill is that it is plainly not visible from Mill  
Cottage, for it is placed near the top of Side Hill, a quarter of a mile from the church, on  
the NE side of Bridge Hill. On a later map, in John Harris's History 0fKent of 1719, it is  
similarly positioned, and represented clearly as a post mill (like Chillenden Mill), which  
is the oldest type of mill. It is not represented on the large-scale map (2 inches to the mile)  
by Andrews, Dury and Herbert of 1769, but reappears clearly positioned on Greenwood’s  
1821 map and again on a map dating probably from 1825/6 in the 18”‘ edition of  
Paterson's Roads. Here it is again placed at the top of Side Hill, just on the Patrixbourne  
side of the parish boundary below the ancient track known then as Kingsbury Lane which  
cut through the woodland and ran down into Patrixbourne, very close, indeed, to the  
viewpoint chosen by Jan Siberechts for his panorama of Bifrons House and Patrixbourne  
of 1705-10, (a viewpoint now obliterated by the by-pass). This track from Middle Pett is  
traceable from the point where it crosses the bridge over the old railway down the hollow  
way past Flint Cottages. It has been obliterated (though still visible in aerial photographs)  
  
across Star Hill, and was stopped up altogether in 1830 for a distance of 385 yards  
beyond its crossing of Bridge Hill. A continuation does still survive beyond Bridge  
bypass behind the wood above Side Hill as far as Keeper’s Hill. It would not be wholly  
fanciful to imagine the painter Siberechts seated within a convenient distance of the mill,  
and the resulting view conﬁrms one's sense that this is indeed a better site for a windmill  
than that down in the valley, albeit on a small eminence, and closer to the village.  
  
Very likely the order stopping up the bridleway was not unconnected with the  
disappearance of the mill from this site, as will appear as the story unfolds.  
  
The position of Bridge Mill prior to about 1820 is confirmed by the documentary  
  
evidence, which also introduces us to some of the millers. The Kentish Gazette of 26-30  
May 1786 reported that  
  
On Saturday last was committed to St Dunstan's gaol. . . John Kent, of this  
  
city, miller, charged on the oath of John Pilcher, of Bridge, miller and baker,  
  
with having stolen out of his mill in the Parish of Patrixbourne, a bag,  
  
containing upwards of one hundred weight of wheaten flour. . .  
Our ﬁrst known miller is revealed. Mr Pilcher was not a young man in 1786, and could well have  
  
begun his work forty or more years before that, for the Gazette shortly afterwards (13-17 April  
1787) carried a small advertisement:  
  
Wanted, a man who understands the business of a MILLER and BAKER. . .  
He may have constant work and good wages by applying to John Pilcher, at  
Bridge.  
  
Eighteen months later Mr Pilcher was dead.  
Wednesday last died in Bridger's Alms Houses, in this city, Mrs Pilcher,  
  
aged 94, mother of the late Mr Pilcher, miller, of Bridge. (Gazette, 2-5  
September 1788)  
  
On 10-14 October of the same year an advertisement was placed, offering for sale  
furniture ‘of the late Mr John Pilcher, Baker, at Bridge.‘ Perhaps the Gazette gives a clue  
as to the identity of the man who applied for work in 1786:  
Tuesday was married at Boxley . . . Mr George Cleggett, miller and baker at  
Bridge, to Miss Frances Parks, at Boxley (8 July 1791).  
Mr Cleggett's business was evidently prosperous:  
WANTED. An apprentice to a miller and Baker - a stout healthy lad, of a  
creditable family. Apply to George Cleggett, Bridge (12 August 1791).  
With more hands available, Mr Cleggett was able to expand:  
Cleggett, miller and baker, Bridge, takes this opportunity of returning his  
most grateful acknowledgements to the neighbouring gentry and inhabitants  
of Bridge for the many past favours received in the above branches: at the  
same time begs leave to inform them, he has just opened a corn-Chandler's  
shop, and hopes by the strictest attention to every article of his business, he  
shall be able to merit their future as well as past favours. Beans, Peas and  
Barley, to be sold ready—ground. N.B. Gentlemen who keep dogs may be  
  
supplied with oatmeal, in any quantity, on the most reasonable terms.  
(8 October 1791)  
  
Shortly after this (26 October 1791) we find a further advertisement for ‘a sober miller’,  
  
presumably because of the expansion of business, rather than because his apprentice had  
been too stout or healthy in his indulgence.  
  
By the early years of the following century the mill had been taken over by John Fagg,  
who in the Gazette of 18 July 1808 was in his turn advertising for ‘a journeyman wind-  
  
miller'. Later that same year we find explicit reference to the location of the mill:  
MILL ROBBED, Whereas in the night of Wednesday last, the 30”‘  
November, the Mill belonging to John Fagg, on Bridge Hill, was broke open  
by forcing the hinges of the door, apparently with an iron crow or chisel, and  
a Quantity of flour with TWO SACKS marked ’J.Fagg, Bridge Mill‘ were  
stolen thereout and traced for about half a mile across the ﬁelds, leading  
towards Canterbury by Patrixbourne, Whoever can give information so that  
the offender or offenders may be convicted, shall receive a reward of  
  
TWENTY POUNDS from the aforesaid John Fagg (2 December 1808).  
Such a substantial reward underlines both the value of flour, and the vulnerability of mills.  
  
The ﬁnal chapter in the history of this mill is tantalisingly recorded by the Gazette of 7  
July 1818:  
To be sold. . . a CORN WINDMILL, driving two pair of stones, and  
machinery complete and a storehouse near. . . both in good repair, as the  
same are standing . . . on a piece of land at Bridge Hill . . . now in the  
  
occupation of Mr John Fagg, miller. The said corn windmill and storehouse  
must be taken down and removed by the purchaser, on or before the sixth  
April next . . .  
  
The reason for the strict deadline is unclear, and as has been mentioned above, even the  
1826 map still marks the old location, so the mill may not have been removed so swiftly;  
though equally, the change may not yet have been picked up. The sequence of events in  
the 1820's remains mysterious. But the period around 1820-1830 was one of change in  
the village as a whole. The great houses round about were changing hands. The Taylors  
who had owned Bifrons (and much else besides) sold the house to Lord Conyngham in  
January 1830. Edward Taylor the younger had married the heiress of Bourne, Louisa  
Beckingham, in 1802, and after her father's death sold that property too to Lord  
Conyngham. Charles de Secondat, Baron Montesquieu, who had been living at Oswalds  
in Bishopsbourne since his escape from the French Revolution and who had bought  
Bridge Hill House (originally owned by the Rev. John Beckingham) for £1500 in 1793,  
died there in 1824. The property was then taken by the Rev. Edward Gregory, who  
immediately entered upon major improvements, including the stopping-up of the road  
mentioned earlier. This most conveniently coincided with the realignment of Bridge Hill  
north-eastwards and the grading of its slope under the Turnpike Acts, which was taking  
place in 1829-30, along with a similar treatment of Town Hill on the Canterbury side of  
the village (hence the very steep slope at the entrance to Dering Road). A few years  
earlier, in 1816/17, the principal road from Bridge to Patrixbourne, which ran right past  
the front of Bifrons, was stopped up part way along (Laundry Lane, now Conyngham  
Lane), and a new road built (Bekesbourne Road) around the perimeter of Edward Taylor's  
land. Pressure of traffic was being noticed even at this early date.  
  
In the midst of this, on 19-20 January 1830, at the same time as Bifrons was sold, an  
agreement was drawn up between Edward Lord Skelmersdale, Sir Herbert Taylor (by  
now Lieutenant General) and Edward Taylor, late of Bifrons on one side, and James  
  
Ashenden, farmer and William Sankey, surgeon of Bridge on the other, for the sale to  
Ashenden for £200 of  
  
All that piece of land called or known by the name of the Three Corner  
  
Meadow containing 2 acres, 2 roods 7 perches formerly in tenure of Henry  
  
Crosoer, afterwards of Charles Howard, late of said James Ashenden and  
  
then of Joseph Gardener and William Fagg the younger . . . abutting to a  
  
bridle way leading from the village of Bridge to a place called Linsey  
  
Bottom towards the north, to the highway or road leading from the village of  
  
Bridge to a place called Street End towards the west or south-west, and to  
  
lands formerly of the heirs of Mr Forde and then belonging to the Rev  
  
Barham [RH Barham, alias Thomas Ingoldsby, 1788-1845, who at the time  
  
owned Bridge Farm in the High Street, demolished in 1962] towards the  
  
south—east, which said piece was theretofore used with and formed part of a  
  
farm called the Upper Pett Farm late in occupation of Richard Garner  
  
deceased, and was theretofore described as all that . . . in occupation of  
  
Henry Crosoer . . . And also all that com windmill and other the buildings  
  
then lately erected and built on said land by and at the whole costs and  
  
expense of said James Ashenden [though in a later document, of 21 August  
  
1878, Thomas Ashenden is said to have been the builder]. (East Kent  
  
Archive Centre ref. U438 T27)  
By 1830 therefore a mill existed, though it had only lately been built, on the site in the  
village. Was this the same mill that had been demolished elsewhere a few years earlier?  
Both had two pairs of stones, but this was a smock mill, albeit quite a small one. The mill  
on Bridge Hill was, by the time of its demolition, possibly still the post-mill of the 17th  
century. Wholesale removal of a mill was not impossible, although the terrain between  
Bridge Hill and Three Corner Meadow was difficult:  
  
Many . . . Kentish mills were moved . . . from one part of a village to another  
  
or into an adjoining parish, often to take advantage of the prevailing south-  
  
westerly winds from a more exposed position. . . . Often, to remove a mill,  
  
the octagonal body was divided up into eight sections by sawing down the  
  
eight cant (corner) posts; then, in re—erection, these sections would be bolted  
  
together again. One of the original cant posts bolted together in this way can  
  
still be seen in Ripple Mill. . . Frequently, however, the body of the mill was  
  
conveyed intact, and one can imagine that difficulties sometimes arose in the  
  
conveyance of such a huge structure. . . . (W.Coles Finch, p.63)  
The day after James Ashenden bought the site from the Taylors, he turned a tidy profit by  
leasing the mill and land to Ann and Sarah Garner for 500 years at a price of £400 (plus  
ten shillings to Dr Sankey). Ann Garner died on 8 March 1831 however, and the land was  
passed to Charles Edward Howard, a veterinary surgeon. Ashenden died in September  
1832, and the following year Sarah Garner sold out to Thomas Sladden, who, having  
bought out Ashenden's children in turn sold the mill to Thomas and Benjamin Johnson (2  
March 1832) for £650 - a profit of £250 therefore. The 1841 census records Thomas  
Johnson (born ca 1791) as resident in Union Street, presumably in Mill Cottage. Thomas  
ran the mill until his death in 1856. His long tenure, of some 24 years evidently left a  
mark on the village, for he was still remembered nearly a century later:  
  
Local history has it that the ﬁgure of the dusty miller was a familiar sight in  
  
the village, for his practice was to deliver ﬂour to his customers personally,  
  
his method of transport being the back of a donkey. One presumes, of course,  
  
that he loaded the donkey with his sacks of flour and he himself led the  
  
animal through the village. (Folkestorze Herald, 25 March 1933)  
  
Before Johnson died he had taken on Gilbert Huxstep as miller ( aged 32, census 1851),  
but by 1859 Huxstep had taken on the tenancy of Bridge Farm and the miller was George  
Fryer, who was Benjamin Johnson's executor and brother-in-law. Fryer kept the mill  
running for a further twenty years or so, while Benjamin seems to have been in charge of  
Barton Mill in Canterbury.  
  
In 1865 Benjamin Johnson died (1 1 March), and a couple of years later his widow, Mary  
Ann, took out a mortgage from one George Adams (?a cooper) for £500, presumably to  
buy back Fryer's interest, yet in 1874 Fryer also paid Adams £500 to recover ownership.  
After Mary Ann's death in 1875 (15 March) however ownership of the whole property  
was conveyed (January 1877) to the Johnson children Susanna, Martha Francis, Ellen  
Eliza, Emily and John Gilbert, with Fryer remaining as tenant, In the following year (21  
August 1878) the J ohnsons sold the whole property to the Rt. Hon Arthur Baron  
Wrottesley (Baron Wrottesley, Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire) and Theodore Henry  
Brinckman, Bart. for the princely sum of £1000. The property had once more reverted to  
aristocratic ownershipl  
  
At this point the 24 year old John Gilbert Johnson was prospering, for he was the  
employer of four men at Barton Mill, and ofa maid at home, where his eldest sister  
Susanna now ran the household (Wrottesley and Brinckman on the other hand employed  
32 servants between them).  
  
On 10 April 1879 the 65 year old Fryer gave up his tenancy of the mill, which was valued  
then at just £98 10s 10d — notably including a sack chain 50 feet long and two iron  
pinions to the stones — and retired with his wife Mary Ann (a daughter of Thomas  
  
J ohnson) a few yards down the hill to number 5 Union Road. Some months later (October  
1880) John Johnson transferred the tenancy to William White, who in his turn moved into  
the Mill House with his wife Rebecca and thirteen year old daughter Emily. William had  
been born in 1829, and was therefore by now well into middle age. The fact that his  
daughter was born in Bridge suggests that Mr White had already been working at Bridge  
Mill for some years. At this point the mill was judged to be worth no more than £65 9s 6d,  
including the ‘lifts etc. for sweeps . . .and three old sails‘. The reference to (canvas) sails  
suggests that the mill at this time was fitted with ‘common sweeps’. Later photographs  
suggest that these were subsequently modernised as ’patent sweeps’, with automatic  
adjustment of the shutters, depending on wind speed.  
  
By the last decade of the century industrial milling was offering stiff competition to the  
old trade, and Mr White endeavoured to upgrade the mill with the addition of a steam-  
engine to assist the wind. This was however no more than a short-term solution, and  
when the mill was taken over by William Manwaring in 1900 he endeavoured to improve  
productivity further by installing a Blackstone oil engine in an outside store to run an  
additional pair of stones. The inevitable could not be put off for much longer though, and  
in 1907 wind-power was abandoned. A long period of slow decay set in as ﬁrst the  
sweeps were removed and then the body of the mill demoted to serve merely as a general  
storehouse. The mill probably ceased work grinding corn by whatever means sometime  
during or just after the first world war. Mr Manwaring moved on to become the owner of  
one of the last remaining working windmills in the country (before their recent revival as  
a ‘heritage’ industry) at Willesborough. The last journeyman ever to have worked at  
Bridge Mill was remembered (in 1954) as one A. Pegden.  
  
By 1933 when the Lemar family replaced Mr and Mrs Charlie Hollands in the Mill House  
the mill site was being used as a coal yard, an outlying depot of HE Burniston, a  
Canterbury coal merchant, and Mr GF Lemar was employed to expand the local coal  
trade. His daughter Gladys still (2000) resides at 41 Union Road, the Mill House, though  
the coal yard in its turn has been replaced by the storage tanks of Messrs Corralls liquid  
  
fuel depot. The one remaining relic of the mill itself is a millstone in the front porch of  
the Mill House.  
  
Early in 1933 the remains of the mill were described by the correspondent of The  
F olkestone Herald.‘  
  
The tower of Bridge Mill is covered with tarred sheeting. It therefore has a  
  
sombre aspect and is not as picturesque as some of our old derelicts. It is, in  
  
fact, rather a sorry spectacle, with two sweeps missing and only the midlings  
  
remaining of the other two. The stage. . . has vanished entirely, and the  
  
fantail has also disappeared. The body of the mill, however, is fairly sound,  
  
and there are two floors of brickwork beneath the weather—boarded structure.  
  
(25 March 1933)  
Mr J Holman, reporting the state of affairs in June of the same year, relates:  
  
The midling has been cut off at the end of the cheek pieces, the cap  
  
reboarded and creosoted. The back of the cap has been cut off short and  
  
boarded up, while the tower has also been repaired. Although the cap looks a  
  
bit strange, I am glad that repairs have been carried out since the mill was  
  
getting into a bad state. I believe it is now used as a store. (W Coles Finch, p.  
  
313)  
The mill survived, decaying gradually, through the second world war and beyond, until at  
last the end came, witnessed by the late Mr CP Davies. On Friday 15 October 1954 four  
men arrived to commence demolition. By midday on Wednesday 20”‘ they had, with the  
aid of a crane, reduced the mill to its unusually tall, two-storey tapering brick base - tall  
perhaps to compensate for its relatively low-lying position.  
  
There remained on the site at the time of my visit the cast iron windshaft  
  
l1‘4" long, canisters 9" by 1'2‘/2", tapering from top to centre thus >. Brake  
  
wheel wooden, clasp armed, wood geared, cant 1'2" deep, cogs 3" pitch, 3  
  
5/8" face. Brake - wood; curb - wood; iron truck wheels. Upright shaft - in  
  
two parts; upper part iron, carrying iron wallower, with wood ring to drive  
  
sack hoist. Wallower had four arms, cogs 3" pitch, 4" face. Lower part,  
  
upright shaft wooden, octagonal in section, spur wheel wooden, clasp armed,  
  
1‘/2" pitch, 3" face. (CP Davies, MS notes)  
The major part of the mill gear was thus still in place and well-preserved.  
Even the body might have been saved if it had survived another 15 years or so.  
  
But an age which allowed the destruction of Bridge Farm had no time for an  
old windmill.  
  
MM Raraty  
©1 1/03/00  
  
57 Pett Farm  
  
1799 Property of Stephen Beckingham of Bourne. Tenanted by James Finch at an  
annual rent of £24  
  
58 The Duck Inn  
Notes on The Duck Inn  
  
Was originally built in 1623 as a farm and consisted of two dwellings owned by Isaac  
  
Clinton, who died in 1647. Thence to Samuel Clinton, d. 1701 and Robert Clinton d 1732.  
  
Was then known as Wodelands, and included 7 acres of land.  
  
In 1732 it was occupied by Clement Foxearth and Richard White.  
  
In 1780 was owned by Thomas ?Dack (a descendant of the Clintons)  
  
Sold in 1785 to Ruben Clare and in 1793 to Henry Corner of Canterbury. Sold in 1806 to  
Michael Price, wheelwright and horse dealer of Bishopsbourne, who died in 1831.  
Thence to Neville Price, d. 1842.  
  
Thomas Goodwin, grocer if Bishopsbourne obtained a licence in 1849 to sell ales,  
groceries and provisions from the property — ’Woodlands'.  
  
1862 was in possession of Thomas Sargeant, grocer and beer seller [1861 census wood-  
sawyer]  
  
1874 William Newell,  
  
1890 Thomas Needle (general stores and beer house).  
  
1891 census Thomas Stubbles [56] & Caroline [61] Ag lab & Licensed Victuallerz  
Woodmans Arms  
  
1904 a full licence granted to Thomas Stubbles as the 'Woodmans Arms‘. He left in 1906.  
Renamed ‘The Duck’ in the 1960's.  
  
59 Mill Lane  
  
Dering Road  
  
Dering Road in Bridge commemorates Colonel Cholmeley Dering, a younger brother of  
Sir Edward Dering of Surrenden Dering, the seventh baronet. He is well known in  
Kentish annals as commander of the New Romney Fencible Cavalry (Duke of York's  
Own), which he raised in East Kent in 1794 and with which he served in Ireland for three  
years, receiving the thanks of the Lord Lieutenant and both Houses of Parliament in that  
country for his eminent services during the rebellion of 1798. The regiment was  
disbanded in October, 1800, on its return from Ireland. One year before, probably in  
anticipation of the event, Colonel Dering had bought Howletts [in Ickham] (‘D from its  
builder, Isaac Baugh, and was in consequence the second owner of that most  
distinguished house, one of the best of its size and style in England. On the death of his  
elder brother in 181 1 he became guardian of the infant eighth Dering baronet and had to  
remove to Surrenden from Howletts, which he sold about 1816 to George Gipps Esq., son  
and heir of one of the founders of the Canterbury Bank. In 1817 he was returned as MP  
  
for New Romney. He died in 1836 and was buried at Pluckley. Howletts remained in the  
Gipps family until about forty years ago.  
  
Another local Irish connection!  
  
Howletts (or Owlets, as it was formerly called) was formerly the inheritance of Isaac  
family, but they lost it before the reign of Elizabeth I. In 1558 it belonged to John  
Dorante ( a benefactor to Littlebourne) whose descendants alienated it to Sir Henry  
Palmer who resided here and died in 1611, and by his will gave it to Sir Isaac Sidley, his  
son—in-law, who conveyed his right to his brother-in-law Sir Henry Palmer, and he about  
1620 alienated it to Sir Charles Hales of Thanington, but afterwards of Howletts, who  
died in 1623. His grandson Sir Robert Hales was created baronet 1660 during the time of  
whose grandson Sir Thomas this seat fell down and the family removed to another house  
nearer the church in this parish (Bekesbourne), where they afterwards resided. At length  
his descendant Sir Philip Hales in 1787 alienated the scite of it, with the gardens and  
offices remaining, and belonging to it, to Isaac Baugh who... has lately built for his  
residence a mansion on these grounds at a small distance north-westward from the scite  
of the ancient house. . . (Ed. Hasted, vol 3 p 716)  
60  
  
61 Brickfield  
  
62 the ford; Brick Noggin  
63 Little Bridge Place  
  
64 Bridge Place; Braems  
  
During the Thirty Years’ War an international entrepot developed at the port of Dover  
as a result of English attempts to tax continental Europeans for using neutral English  
shipping by forcing trafﬁc into Doveer to pay taxes. Goods brought to Dover for  
storage, then reexported in English ships.. Silver entrepot began in 1620, by 1632  
(diplomatic accord England/ Spain) “It provided that English vessels freighting  
Spanish silver should always stop at Dover in order to unload two—thirds of their  
cargoes for coinage in London. The silver removed from the ships was transported  
over the Dover Road to the Tower Mint.” Rate reductions resulted in higher income:  
“The Farmers saw their revenue from commodity re-exports increase from £11000 in  
1634 to over £18000 in 1636 and to £23000 in 1638.” Arch Cant 95, 1979 pp 53-64  
A KEPLER: Entrepot Policy etc . No wonder A Braems thought he could afford to  
build a big house!  
  
A Hasenson: The History of Dover Harbour, p 42 (map p 43): In 1641 “The Land at  
this point is mostly owned by Jacob Braeme[s].” Jacob was son of Charles Braems, m  
1595, d ca 161 1 of Sandwich & Dover. Jacob was Customer of Dover. Elder Brother  
of Sir Arnold, ba. Oct 1602. hence born 1596/1600. Arnold 1602-1681, knighted 27  
May l660.(in consequence of his ‘humble remonstrance’ to Charles II which  
  
accounts for a great loss of money?) MP for Dover 1660. [see Blackmansbury, vols 5  
& 8]  
  
Bridge Place  
  
The Manor of Blackmansbury, alias Bridge belonged to the Abbey of St Augustine, a  
total of 62 acres and three roods. Was let to tenants until suppression of the abbey in 15 39  
  
put it into the King's hands. In 1545 this manor, with divers lands in Houndpit and  
Blackmanbury was granted to Henry Laurence to hold in capite by the 20th part of a  
knight's fee, and he that year held a court here; and in his descendants it continued till  
1576 when it was alienated by John Laurence to William Partherich, [Harris spells this  
Patrick] whose grandson Sir Edward Partherich passed it away in 1638 to (afterwards Sir)  
Arnold Braems who built a spacious and magniﬁcent mansion on the site of the ancient  
court-lodge, which he named Bridge Place, in which he afterwards resided, as did his son  
Walter Braems until his death in 1692; but the great cost of building this seat so  
impoverished the estate that his heirs, for he had no surviving issue, about the year 1704,  
were obliged to part with it, which they did by sale to John Taylor, of Bifrons, who soon  
afterwards pulled down the greatest part of this mansion, leaving only one wing of it  
standing, the size and stateliness of which, being of itself full sufficient for a gentleman's  
residence, cannot fail to implant in our minds an idea of the grandeur of the whole  
building when entire. He died in 1729 since which this manor and seat has continued in  
his descendants, in like manner as Bifrons, down to his {great - {Hasted 2nd edn}]  
grandson the Rev. Edward Taylor. (Ed. Hasted, Vol.3 p724/5).  
  
This was the largest house in 17“‘ century East Kent after Chilham Castle. It appears to  
have been rectangular, certainly with a flat front of nine bays with the main door in the  
centre (Illustrations by Schellinks, 1661, and Adriaen Ocker, late 1670s), two storeyed,  
but with a row of seven dormers projecting from the hipped roof. Of this only three bays  
of the house's left hand end remain.  
  
Some excavations in 1962 by members of the King's School uncovered parts of the  
terrace and other garden remains.  
  
Among subsequent owners / tenants have been  
  
1849: R Brice, vice—chairman of the Board of Guardians (of the Union)  
1890-1897: Oscar de Satges  
1907: Mrs Wilson  
  
1913-15: Seymour Harries  
  
1924-40: Mrs Ethel Penn  
  
1954: Mrs Neame  
  
?1962 2 Malcolm Pinhorn  
  
1969: Peter Malkin  
  
[Mrs Friend: I remember when General and Lady Byng resided there. . .the Duchess of  
Albany, daughter of Queen Victoria stayed after opening some official event in  
Canterbury]  
  
PG ELGAR: The Braems of Bridge Place: Bygone Kent 18, 1997 says bridge Place was  
built with imported Dutch bricks.. The house possessed a large deer park, an aviary and  
extensive gardens. Schellinks arrived on 8 July 1661 at 8pm ‘to a friendly welcome and  
were magnificently entertained and drank quite a few healths with sack’. Next day he  
played on the bowling green. The grounds were ‘very beautiful, well kept pleasure  
grounds, with fruit trees, well watered by a fast ﬂowing fresh sparkling stream of  
wonderfully clear sweet water. This splits up into several branches and rivulets; [did  
Braems divert the stream? An early map qv shows a house astride the stream] also some  
fish ponds in which trout is bred. . . There are also some vineyards, producing yearly two  
or three hogsheads of wine. He also has his own brewery, bakery, wine-press, hop garden,  
barns, stables, oxen, cows, sheep, pigs, geese, ducks. . .everything that one can  
  
desire. . .He has planted a fine avenue of lime trees from his house to the  
  
church. . .Schellinks also mentions an annual muster of seven or eight companies of the  
Militia on 6”‘ October 1661 , each 200 men strong, on the hill above Bishopsbourne.  
Arnold & Walter were respectively Major and Colonel in the East Kent force in the civil  
war, supporting the royalist cause. Arnold lost considerable sums in this respect. (see  
  
Pinhorn: Blackmansbury). In the Kentish rebellion of 1648 the petitioners were led by  
Arnold.  
  
Arch Cant 116, 1996 J KEPLER: The international entrepot at Dover in crisis etc pp293-  
303.contains a long account of the activities of Jacob Braems (Brames) who ‘had  
inherited a quay, wharves, and herring houses at Dover from his father (Charles) in 1611.  
During the 1630’s he had spent £3000 in building houses at Dover to fit and  
accommodate his ﬁshing business...’ Made losses. Qv. This was Arnold’s brother, but A  
must have been also closely involved.  
  
BRAEM E S FAMILY  
  
Misc. Notes  
Origins Family came of Flemish stock. Ancestors settled at Sandwich at the beginning of  
  
the Stuart Period. Jacob (father of Arnold) set up in business as a merchant at Dover in  
the time of Charles 1. (1 l)  
  
   
  
Arnold Braems later Sir Arnold Braems Kt. Born in Dover, baptized as in register of St.  
Mary's, 3rd Oct. 1602. Used his energies to develop Dover as a port. He acquired land  
all along the Sea Front and made a fortune out of Harbour Rights. Erected large  
buildings, monopolized landing and warehousing of goods, farming harbour tolls and  
customs. First chairman of Dover Harbour Board. Elected M.P. for Dover, April, 1660  
and received Knighthood from King Charles II. Remained at House of Commons only a  
  
short time, preferring commercial life. Buildings used by officers of customs. Most of  
them destroyed in disastrous fire in 1808. (13)  
  
Expended much of his fortune on construction of an enormous mansion at  
Bridge (Bridge Place).  
  
Bridge Place —Bacl<ground Originally Manor of Bridge or Blackemansbury was in  
possession of the Abbey of St. Augustine. Suppressed by Henry VIII and lands taken. In  
36th year of reign granted it to Henry Lawrence to hold by knight's services. Court was  
regularly held, the ancient court lodge standing on the spot occupied by Bridge Place.  
Passing through several hands the land came into possession of Sir Arrnold Braems who  
pulled down the court lodge and erected a magnificent mansion on the site (c. 1638?).  
  
(13)  
  
Sir Arnold Braems. Kt. departed his life in his mansion house called Blackmansbury  
alias Bridge Place on Sunday morning, 10 o’ clock, 13th November, 1681, in the 80th  
year of his age, buried on 21st of the same month in the East Chancel of the Chapel of  
  
Bridge. close to the tomb which he had . . . erected there in memory of his two deceased  
ladies.  
  
Widow - Margaret  
  
Kentish Rebellion 1648 In the town of Dover itself the petitioners were led by Sir Arnold  
Braems.  
  
   
  
Group of conspirators involved in further conspiracies. Walter (son) and Arnold  
Braems among moving spirits - disturbing the peace of the County - helped to pave way  
for the Restoration. Off the Kent coast the newly—knighted Arnold Braems endeavoured  
to corrupt the Commonwealth Navy, 1659.  
  
Walter Braems laid a plot at Dover to seduce the Governor and betray the Castle to  
Prince Charles, (1647-48). It is practically certain that Walter Braems and other Kentish  
  
gentry were involved in the assassination of Dr. Dorislaus in May, I649; arrested as  
suspected accomplices(‘.7).  
  
Gerard's Plot 1654 In this wild conspiracy several of the young Kent cavaliers who were  
to have been John Gerard's officers in 1651 were involved, including Walter Braems.  
The plot itself had little connection with Kent, but it set off a train of events leading to the  
most serious insurrection of the Interregnum, the Rising of  
1655, usually known by the name of its Wiltshire leader - Penruddock. (5)  
Additional Notes on Braems  
Member of Royal Fishing Association.  
Son-in-law of Sir Thomas Palmer of Wingham.  
  
Brother—in—law of Thomas Harfleete of Bekesbourne and Anthony Hamond of  
St. Alban's Court  
  
Held rank of major in the East Kent force.  
  
   
  
From 1670 onwards  
  
At the Southern end of the (Custom House Quay) . . . was constructed a quay  
by James Hammond . . . while at the Northern end one Isaac Minet had a wharf and  
further along the Braemes family were established. The quay they owned at this point lay  
opposite their large warehouses across the Harbour, a block of houses known as "The Old  
Buildings", all destroyed by a great fire in 1808. (7)  
The shipbuilding yard was then situated at the north-east corner of the Harbour, opposite  
the northern extremity of Strond Street . . . lay next to the warehouses which the Minets  
had taken over from the Braemes family (0. 1660). The Pents and houses running along  
  
the Crosswall, also the Harbour Wall of 1592 — land at this point mostly owned by Jacob  
Braems. (7)  
  
Reference to "Major Braems" who farmed the Harbour revenues in the time of Charles I.  
  
(7)  
  
At Bridge, though nothing of his house now remain, lived Sir Edward Partherich  
and his wife (Oxinden's kinswoman). After their property had been sold to the Dutch  
merchant Sir Arnold Braems their residence was handsomely rebuilt as Bridge Place - a  
  
frequent guest was the painter Cornelis J anssen who painted portraits of the friendly  
families. (6)  
  
About 1636 Sir Edward (Partherich) of Bridge conveyed his house at Bridge to . . .  
  
Sir Arnold Braems, under whose patronage Cornelis Janssen came into the  
neighbourhood. (6)  
  
Sir Arnold Braems had as his guest a famous portrait painter of his days Cornelius  
Janssen, for 20 years a fasionable artist in Blackfriars(?) at Bridge he painted county  
families. (14)  
  
High on the east wall is a portrait thought to be the work of Cornelius J anssen a  
noted painter of the time of King Charles I . . . this painting on copper is of Richard  
Bargrave who was the builder of Bifrons in the 16th century.  
  
The town of Dover seems to have been moderately loyal to the Parliamentarians,  
though a return of "suspects" in the town reveals the fact that disturbances may have been  
possible. These rather curious returns of suspected persons throughout the kingdom  
occupy seven volumes in the British Museum Add. mss. series. A suspect was most  
carefully watched. Information on movements was notified to central ofﬁcials. Dover  
returns were made by one Reynolds "Registrar".  
  
Reynolds seems to have been a careless person - constantly upbraided for sending  
returns wrongly addressed or writing in an illegible hand. (9)  
  
Egs. Dover Arnold Braems, merchant 6th Febrgary, 1656 at the house of Mr. Richard  
  
Harrison, a tailor over against the Dolphin Tavern in the Parish of Barking.  
  
12th Feb. Braines gave notice of removal to Dover.  
12th March Againe at Harrison's.  
  
19th May Arnold Braems of Bridge went to the house of Harrison a taylor [ ]  
(9)  
  
Bridge Place, addn, Fragment of a large brick courtyard house built between 1638 and  
1659 by Sir Arnold Braems in a correct classical style with Tuscan plasters, a first ﬂoor  
entablature and eaves cornice articulating the elevations.  
  
Much of the mansion was built with hand—made Dutch brick which was brought over  
from Holland and landed at Sandwich.  
  
Recently drawings of the original house were discovered in Amsterdam Museum.  
After Chilham Castle it was the largest country house in East Kent in the 17th century.  
Had a large deer park and aviary.  
  
The Heirs of Sir Arnold Braems, namely one Sir Thomas Braems (‘.7 probably mistaken  
for Walter), had to sell it in 1704 to the Rev. John Taylor of Bifrons. Remained in  
  
possession of the Taylor family until purchased by Marquis of Conyngham and became  
part of Bifrons Estate. Today — a country club, owned and run by  
Mr. Peter Malkin. (15)  
The heirs of his son Walter (d. 1692 were forced to sell the estate c. 1704. So extensive  
  
had been his building that the purchaser was able to pull down all except one wing and  
still have a large enough house for a gentleman's  
  
residence. (8)  
  
1671 A collection by HM. Privy Council towards the raising of £3000 for "the  
redemption of a great number of our Christian countrymen from that miserable Turkish  
  
inﬁdel whose inhuman slavery and bondage they now groan under". Sir Arnold Braems  
and his Lady - £1 . 10.0, apart from 4d and 3d all the rest gave 2p each. (15)  
  
Buried in linen — a matter of extravagance for which a heavy fine was imposed - a law  
compelled all to be buried in wool for the benefit of the home woollen industry.  
  
(13)  
  
Bridge Place came into the possession of Walter Braems the old merchant's son, but  
widow sold it to Mr. John Taylor, who pulled down the greater portion of it. Remained  
in the possession of the Taylor family until purchased by the Marquis of Conyngham — -  
present tenant Mr. William Howard. Remaining part was apparently  
  
one wing — wall upon which stables are built marks front of the old building. (13)  
  
   
  
Custom House Dover New Custom House erected in 1806, as the houses erected by  
Braems were in a very ruinous state. The old house was originally in two dwellings,  
which were occupied by Braems and his son Walter, then the principal merchants in the  
town. They had a grant of the Beach on the opposite side of the basin, on which they  
  
erected a square pile of buildings for store—houses. They were then in expectation of  
Dover being made a free port. (1 1)  
  
One wife buried in St. Mary's Church, Dover.  
  
Obituaries Anno Domini, 1681. Sir Arnold Braems, Kt. (Born in Dover  
and baptized as in the Register of St. Mary's in that town  
Doth appear October 3 A.D. 1602.  
  
Departed this life in his mansion house called Blackmansbury alias Bridge Place on  
Sunday morning, ten o'clock November 13th A.D. 1681 in the 80th year of his age and  
was buried on the 20th of the same month in the east chancel of the Chapel of Bridge,  
  
close to the tomb which he had . . . erected there in memory of his two deceased Ladies.  
(3  
  
x. Arch. Cantiana says 21st. Anno Domini, 1684. Sarah the daughter of Walter Braems  
  
of Blackmansbury alias Bridge Place esq. by Mary his wife (who died of this child being  
the 14th) two hours after she was delivered was born on Tuesday(?) 27th at half an  
  
hour past eight at night and baptized the next day being Wednesday January 28th 1684.(3)  
  
1692 (Colonel) Walter Braems (of Bridge Place) was buried in woollen in the east  
chancel of the Chapel of Bridge on the 7"' day of September, 1692. (2)  
  
Maps Dover, c. 1641. (P. 41)  
Dover, 1750. (P.43) (7)  
  
Bridge. Tithe Map, I83 8.  
  
Key to Main Sources Consulted  
  
(l) Archaelogia Cantiana.  
  
(2) Bishops’ Transcripts, (Canterbury Cathedral Archives).  
  
65 Brewery Lane; Fire engine; Waterloo cottages  
  
The village Green was between Waterloo Cottages and Brewery Lane A well was  
there when I came to Bridge and was used by the cottagers(Mrs Friend). Very  
probably the stocks were there too.  
  
66 Roads; Bypass  
  
Arch Cam [2], 2001 pp 121-131: T TATTON-BROWN: The Evolution of ‘Watling  
Street’ in Kent. “In the earlier Anglo-Saxon period, much of the Watling street route  
in Kent was probably not used at all. Only in the late Anglo-Saxon period did it once  
again become a main land—route from London to Canterbury and beyond (p121/2).  
Watling street begun immediately in 43AD. In 999 Danes sailed up Medway and laid  
waste the whole area. Though Rochester Bridge was possibly in use again from the  
seventh to ninth centuries, it was perhaps in ruins at this time (sea route to London  
from Canterbury via Seasalter)., and the Danes may have been able to sail through the  
bridge and further up the Medway. Danes took Canterbury in 101 1. Only after  
accession of Cnut (1017) could the bridge have been rebuilt. From this time Watling  
St became once again the main route from Sandwich, Dover and Canterbury. The sea  
route however was probably the more important route until after the Norman  
conquest. From 12”‘ c onwards the land route re-established its importance. By late  
14”‘ c (Chaucer) this was the road to Canterbury. Old Rochester bridge destroyed by  
  
ﬂoodwater after a great freeze in l38l , and not rebuilt until 1392. Ferry used  
meanwhile.  
  
A DETSICAS: The Cantiaci, p 33 “According to Margary, Watling Street began at Dover:  
though this has the advantage of a shorter route from the Channel, it is unlikely to have  
happened before the second century, when Dover replaced Richborough as the main port  
of entry.” The road from Dover and that from Lympne were both in use from the  
beginning of the second century.(p35) But for a long time Dover was principally a naval  
port: the commercial port was Richborough. “Here was the beginning of the main Roman  
  
road to London and beyond...” (p 17) Military phase of occupation came to an end in ca  
85AD. Construction then of the quadrifons.  
  
“The decline of Richborough in Hadrian—Antonine times brought about the development  
of Dover as the main gateway to Roman Britain. (p78)” Or vice—versa? Riding Gate in  
Canterbury (Dover Road) is the only one with a double portal.  
  
In 1836 the best served route was Royal mail London Dover, though more than half  
of all coaches went no further than Canterbury.  
  
Statute of Highways, 1555 provided for a Surveyor who served for one year and was  
unpaid, supplied by the vestry. Given a salary after 1773. Duty to get other  
parishioners on the roads for repairs six days a year. By end of 17"‘ c cartswere taking  
over from pack-horses.. Start of turnpike trusts. Bills originated by a group of  
landowners who would beneﬁt, or tradesmen who wanted better roads for transport..  
  
Money had to be raised to obtain an Act. Bill drafted, petition submitted to Parliament.  
  
Most acts ran for 21 yrs, on assumption that no more repairs need be done. Hence  
need for renewal acts. Discontinued in 1827. Later threatened by the railways.  
Canterbury & Barham turnpike act 1791. (Arch Cam‘, 100, 1984: B KEITH—LUCAS,  
Kentish Turnpikes).  
First turnpike act 1663: first in Kent 1709. 1787 paving, cleansing, lighting &  
watching of streets in Canterbury authorized. By 1851 there were over 290 tollgates  
in Kent.  
Canterbury& Barham Trust:: bar at Gutteridge Corner Income 1799-1802 was £342,  
£324, £324, £420. Income for august (race month ) was twice that of next highest. In  
the years 1827-29 major work was undertaken to smooth the gradients at Bridge,  
Barham & Denne hill at a cost of ca £2000. Trust closed in 1878.. In 1800 the debt  
was £5200, spread between eight people and one firm of bankers. Treasurer 1833 was  
Hammond, Plumptre, Parker, Farley, Bankers. Clerk Curteis & Kingford, Surveyor  
Wm Collis of Sturry. 1834 repairs: 1600 tons of ﬂints annually at 2s a ton. (for 7 ‘/2  
miles). The toll house at Gutteridge is incorporated in the Old Gate House Inn.. There  
is a fine milestone beyond Bridge on the old Dover Road. (Arch Cant, 102, 1985 pp  
171-191: FH PANTON, Turnpike Roads in the Canterbury area).  
An 31 Georg. III (1791)  
'AnAct for making a new Road from St George's gate in the City of Canterbury, to a  
Place called Gutteridge Bottom; and for repairing and widening the present Road from  
thence to the Dover Turnpike Road, in the Parish of Barham.  
  
Whereas the Road. . .is in a ruinous condition and in several parts narrow and  
inconvenient for passengers and carriages. . .and it would be of great convenience . . . if a  
new commodious carriage Road was set out and made from St George's Gate to join the  
present Road at or near a Place called Gutteridge Bottom in the parish of Patrixbourne. . .'  
  
Trustees must possess by right (or wife's right) rents of £40, or an estate of £800, or be  
heir to an estate of £1 00; none to be licensed victuallers.  
  
Trustees to meet at The King's Head in Canterbury on the second Monday after the Act is  
passed;  
  
‘and shall then adjourn themselves to the Horse and Groom on Bridge Hill, and  
afterwards meet alternately at some publick Inn or tavern at Canterbury and Bridge, or  
alternatively at Canterbury and at any other Place near the said Road. . . . no Business  
shall be done . . . before the Hour of Eleven in the Forenoon.'  
  
The quorum to be five.  
  
Trustees empowered to make a new road not less than 35 feet and not more than 40 feet  
in breadth through land belonging to JohnHodges, Gent; James Warren, watchmaker;  
Will Elwyn & Thomas Elwyn, Gents; Chauntry Lane; George White; Wm Baldock,  
  
brewer; Wm Hougham; Elizabeth farewell Sladden & Henry Simmons; Ann Smith; John  
Nutt; John Walker; Thomas White Collard.  
  
Also, to widen and render safe and commodious the present road from Gutteridge Bottom  
to the Dover Turnpike Road in Barham they may buy up ground by the road.  
  
No house or land to be taken without the consent of the owner or proprietor thereof, . . .  
other than and except certain Messuages or Cottages and Sheds or Buildings, and a  
Carpenter's Yard, and Certain Gardens, Orchards and Yards, situate in Bridge Street, the  
Property of the Reverend Edward Taylor Clerk, Stephen Beckingham Esquire, Henry  
Crosoer, Henry Farley, Thomas Abree Pickering, —-- Nash, and Thomas Neal respectively,  
in the respective Occupations of Richard Jarvis, John Cooper, Robert Kingsland, Robert  
Osborn, Samuel Elvey, James Aylward, the said Henry Crosoer, Joseph Dixon, George  
Fortune, Joseph Best, Mary Peake, and - - - Lawrence.  
  
Turnpikes and Tollhouses to be erected. Dues: Coaches etc with 4 or more horses 1/-; 2-3  
  
horses 6d; 1 horse 3d. Waggons, carts with 5 or more horses l/-; 4 horses 6d; 2-3 horses  
4d; 1 horse 3d.  
  
Every horse, mare or gelding laden or unladen, not drawing, 1d;  
  
Every drove of Oxen, cows, neat cattle 10d per score, pro rata;  
  
Calves, hogs, sheep, lambs 5d per score, pro rata;  
  
Carriages & waggons with broad wheels to pay only half tolls  
  
Tolls to be paid but once per day, tickets not transferable.  
  
Exemptions: election days, road repairers, dung or manure carriers, hay, undried hops,  
farm implements, mails, soldiers etc, farmers or servants residing in Patrixbourne, Bridge,  
Bishopsbourne, Kingston and Barham. Tolls to be let 3 years at a time. No Parking on the  
  
road: 40/— penalty. Nothing to be erected within 6 yards of the centre of the road.  
Mileposts to be installed.  
  
Trustees:  
  
Sir Brook Bridges barz‘ Sir Narborough d'Aeth bart Sir William Fagg ban‘  
  
Sir John Honywood bart Sir Edward Knatchbull bart Sir Horace Mann ban‘  
  
Sir Henry Oxenden bar! Sir John Brewer Davis Kt John Abbott of St Dunstans  
  
John Austen John Baker of St Dunstans Thomas Barrett  
Richard Harris Barham William Baldock John Baker of Canterbury  
  
A'I:r’ . 5 L,  
f\_"—-\_' ~a...\_..¢;.,.ii;~=1   
  
Dear Mr Cornfield,  
  
Bridge & District History Society's Millennium Project.  
  
My wife and I are members of the above Society. I left  
Bridge at the age of 12 years in 7936, 1 have received the form  
requesting Rouse/site information and that I am not able to help in this  
specific connection, however I do have some recollections which might be  
of some value, Mindful of my age on leaving the village and the time  
  
distance between then and now you night feel obliged to check some of  
the details.  
  
William Bates  
  
John Charles Beckingham Clerk  
John William Head Brydges  
James Drake Brockman  
William Dejovas Byrche Clerk  
William Cantis  
  
Edward Lord Chick  
  
Thomas White Collard  
  
Edward Crayford  
  
John Deedes  
  
John Dilnott of Patrixbourne  
John Drew  
  
John Fagg Clerk  
  
John Minet Fector of Updown  
James Finch of Bishopsbourne  
Daniel Fox of Barham  
Hopkins Francis  
  
Richard Garner of Bridge  
William Gregory Clerk  
Richard Halford  
  
Will'm Hammond ofthe White Friars William Hammond of Stonehouse  
  
Anthony Egerton Hammond  
Filmer Honywood  
Woilliam Hougham junior  
William Hugessen  
Gilbert Knowler  
William Lade Clerk  
Robert Le Geyt  
  
Johnson Macaree  
Richard Mills  
  
Henry Mount  
  
John Nutt  
  
David Papillon  
  
John Palmer Clerk  
Thomas Parker  
  
Thomas Paine  
  
John Peckham  
  
— — — Plumtre junior  
Robert Potter  
  
Robert Thomas Pyott  
Joseph Royle  
  
Edwin Humphry Sandys  
Thomas Sankey  
  
Jacob Sharp  
  
James Six  
  
George Stringer  
  
Robert Staines  
  
Edward Taylor Clerk  
Edward Toker  
  
Samuel Balderston  
  
Edward Tymewell Brydges Clerk  
William Bridges  
  
William Bristow  
  
John Calcraft  
  
William Carter MD  
  
William Chandler  
  
Henry Crosoer  
  
William Deedes  
  
Charles Dering  
  
George Downe  
  
Richard Elwyn  
  
Henry Godfrey Faussett  
Thomas Fenner  
  
John Fowell DD  
  
William Foord  
  
Thomas Francis  
  
George Gipps  
  
John Gregory Clerk  
  
Richard Harvey of Barfreston  
  
John Springett Harvey  
William Honywood  
Thomas Hodges of Elham  
John Jackson  
  
John Lade  
  
John Le Grand  
  
William Loftie  
  
John Hollingbery Mann  
John Monins  
  
John Nairn Clerk  
  
Henry Oxenden  
  
Thomas Papillon  
Christopher Pache MD  
William Patteson  
  
Vincent Page  
  
Robert Peckham  
  
Ralph Price Clerk  
Thomas Pope  
  
Thomas Randolph Clerk  
Charles Robinson  
Thomas Sayer  
  
William Webster Sankey  
Markham Ellis Sherville  
Henry Simmons of Bridge  
John Hollingbery Stringer  
Thomas Starr  
  
John Thomson  
  
John Venner  
  
Peter Berry  
  
Samuel Egerton Brydges  
Henry Bridges  
  
Cyprian Rondeau Bunce  
John Cantis  
  
William Carter junior MD  
John Henry Clapham Clerk  
William Crosoer  
  
William Deedes junior  
John Denne  
  
Bladen Downing Clerk  
James Elwyn  
  
Peter Fector of Eythorne  
James Finch of Canterbury  
John Foote  
  
William Fox  
  
Richard Frend  
  
John Graham  
  
James Hallett  
  
Thomas Hammond  
Thomas Hammond junior  
Thomas Hey Clerk  
William Hougham  
  
John Hodges  
  
John Jacob  
  
John Hobday Lade  
George Le Grand  
William Long  
  
Robert Matson  
  
Richard Mount  
  
Henry Nicholl junior  
Thomas Watkinson Payler  
Philip Papillon Clerk  
Deane John Parker  
  
John Parnell  
  
John Peirce  
  
John Plumtre  
  
Giles Powell Clerk  
  
John Pope  
  
William Rigden  
  
Robert Rushbrooke  
James Minet Sayer Clerk  
John Sankey  
  
James Simmons  
Hardingc Stracey  
Richard Staines  
  
Thomas Powell Symonds  
Mark Thomas  
  
John Walker  
  
I remember some of the horse drawn vehicles around at the  
time, The milk delivery from Mr, Jones farm (I believe it was called  
Brickfield Farm) was by horse and float. The milk would be bailed out  
from the churn in a measuring scoop straight into the jugs which would  
be brought out by the customers, I seem to recall that we paid him  
weekly, The coalman (a Mr. Hollands who lived I think in Union Road) had  
a flat truck and he would deliver coal to the houses. We lived in one of  
the small terraced cottages opposite the Union, I seem to remember the  
coal being kept in the cupboard under the stairs, Another hose drawn  
vehicle, which as boys we called the soup cart was a barrel shaped  
container on wheels into which the toilet bucket were emptied,  
Incidentally, our toilets were located at the far end of the communal  
back yard In a terrace of loos. Also in the yard was the pump, fed from  
a well, from which all the cottages a drew their water, Another horse  
drawn vehicle was the ambulance in which I was transported to the fever  
hospital in Bekesbourne when f had scarlet fever, The Ambulance was  
'garaged' within the union grounds located between the main buildings  
and the gardens which extended to the end of Union Road, I think the  
Sardens were tended by some of the ‘permanent’ male residents.  
  
At the top of Union Road on the left (leaving the village)  
was a wind mill (which I can never remember working) with some out  
buildings one of which was a stable, Somewhere in the village there was  
a riding stable and there ~AB a forg R ar th Whit Hors Inn.  
  
Between the Wars the village had a branch of the British  
legion (pre Royal) which had a number of local members. My father was  
one of these and he was also a member of the Canterbury Branch of the  
Old Contemptibles Association. The badge of this association is on my  
father's gravestone in Bridge churchyard.  
  
I attended The Bridge and Patrixbourne School and of  
interest to us lads was the large brewery lorry which was steam driven  
  
topping up its water supply from the River Nailbourne right opposite the  
school.  
  
In retrospect I realist just how close we were to nature  
in  
those days. I am horrified to think that after school we would sometimes  
‘call in‘ to one of the two slaughter houses (which in those days were  
par: of the butchers shops) just to see what was going on. The thought  
of doing that today would ‘turn me up’ but it was in many ways a fairly  
basic life. Many of the men in the village would go 'rabbiting'- it was  
a cieap meal and my mother with some of her friends would go 'wooding'  
  
in :he woods to collect ‘chips’ (small pieces of wood that were left  
behind when trees were chopped down).  
  
My father was gassed in the First World War and was frequently ‘on the  
  
panel’. He was a baker by trade and when he was able he would work in Mr.  
  
Cas:le's bakehouse (opposite the Red Lion) but at other times he would  
see< casual jobs. I remember him working as a night watchman on road  
wor<s, doing stone breaking for road construction and work as a beater  
during the shooting season- At home in our small kitchen and on a  
  
paraffin stove he would make doughnuts and on his bicycle would take  
them to sell in the hop gardens.  
  
The Master and Matron of the Union were Mr. and Mrs. Honey. I  
would imagine them to have had a supportive staff but they also employed  
a number of local ladies who would have jobs in various departments of  
the establishment. My mother, Betty O'Connell was one such lady. She  
was in charge of what she called the needle room in which some of the  
f mal 'p rman nt' r sid nts would repair linen and clothing. I recall  
another lady, Ada Wilson who worked in the laundry. I would imagine  
there were others who worked in other departments.  
  
When I have read of the harsh regime of The poor law I have been  
reminded of the poor ‘tramps’(as they were referred to) making their way  
to The Union to secure a bed for the night. As young people we were a  
bit afraid of these men and generally kept out of their way.  
  
One final memory I have is of excitement and adventure created  
when electric light came to the viilage — it was electric light that was  
important up to now some houses had gas lighting and others were  
dependent on oil lamps. That reminds me, we had an oil man, I think he  
  
came from Canterbury and I think he may have had a house(sic) and cart  
as well.  
  
This has been a memory ‘jogging’ experience for me. I'm sorry  
about the standard of typing but I think it might be more legible than  
my writing might have been.  
  
I hope this letter might be of some value. My thanks and good  
wishes to you and all concerned in this project.  
  
Yours sincerely,  
  
Vic O'Connell.  
Village recollections  
  
Often villages are shown as clusters of houses and shops merely providing a slumberland for  
commuters and retired businessmen. This illusion of rural stagnation is immediately destroyed  
when visiting villages such as Bridge, whose villagers care - sometimes passionately — about the  
future of their go—ahead community.  
  
Bridge, with its rising population, has found itself coming to grips with the inﬂux of new blood.  
Modern houses and bungalows have appeared on both sides of the village's main street and now  
its population is heading for about 2000.  
  
Only about three miles from Canterbury, Bridge houses many people who come to the city to  
work but prefer the village to provide their home life. Business houses and factories Bridge may  
not have; shops to cater for its needs it certainly has.  
  
Apart from a wet fish shop and a bank, Bridge has every type of shop needed to make it self-  
contained for the housewife.  
  
Some villagers are pressing hard to get a bank and, if they are as successful with this project as  
they have been with past demands, Bridge should have one in the not too distant future.  
  
Yet that is looking ahead and Bridge is proud of its past. It takes its name from what is now the  
18"‘ Century brick bridge straddling the River Nailbourne in the High Street.  
  
For many ofthe older residents an evening is often well spent recalling life in the village at the  
  
turn of the Century. Anyone wishing to know of the Bridge of decades ago is immediately  
directed to the home of Mr Herbert Price at Lynton Cottage.  
  
Formerly the village's representative on the Bridge Blean Rural District Council he retired  
because of ill—health but is still an active member ofthe Parish Council, which he joined in 1930.  
He is also Chairman of the managers of Bridge and Patrixbourne Church of England Controlled  
Primary School.  
  
Mr Price has almost a lifetime of recollections of the village. He remembers the days when the  
High Street was uncluttered by cars and when the Elham Valley Railway line was in operation.  
Some of his fondest memories are of the old Bridge Volunteer Fire Brigade, started by the  
Marquess of Conyngham in the 1890's. In the early days the brigade's manual pump was horse-  
drawn, but in 1925. when Mr Price joined the brigade, they had a motor tender which proved to  
be extremely efficient and was often called into Canterbury to help with city ﬁres.  
  
Later a Rolls Royce chassis was converted for use and in 1929 the brigade got its own motor  
pump. In 1938 the Rolls Royce was replaced by a Bedford.  
  
Of the changes in the village, Mr Price said: "Years ago the road was narrower near the bridge  
and we had a fine set of lime trees down the street. What is now the Red Lion public house's car  
park was stables, and the White Horse's car park was a lawn. We used to hold open—air dances  
there.  
  
"The Village Hall belonged to the Marquess of Conyngham but in 1952 he let the village have it  
  
on a 50-year lease at 6d a year, to be rented by a committee delegated by the Parish Council. At  
present we need a new hall and are looking for a suitable site."  
  
Looking back at the village characters he has known, several names came to Mr Price's mind. He  
said he could clearly remember Mr Jack Friend, a former landlord of the Red Lion, who  
organised the village's King George VI Coronation celebrations. He also had vivid memories of a  
former village baker Mr Charles Wills, and Mr Chas. White, who was the chairman of the Parish  
Council for many years.  
  
During his recollections Mr Price never fails to remember the day Bridge was packed with people.  
It was at the funeral in 1910 of Fireman J. Fenn, who was killed while ﬁring a maroon.  
  
"Bridge has never been as full as it was on the day of Fireman Fenn's funeral. The streets were  
lined with masses of people who came from miles around to pay their respects to this popular  
fireman," said Mr Price.  
  
Another person who has many memories of Bridge is Mr Harry Hawkins, owner of the ladies‘ and  
men's outﬁtters and the newsagents. His father came to Bridge in 1907 and he was born in the  
village.  
  
Over the years he has seen the great housing developments in the village and is particularly proud  
of the way local tradesmen have risen to the occasion to meet the demands of the expanding  
population.  
  
"There is," said Mr Hawkins, "everything for the shopper. Really there is very little reason for  
anyone needing to go out of the village for their shopping." With its shops, character and friendly  
atmosphere, Bridge obviously provides a popular base for young families in search of the country,  
but at the same time not wanting to be too far from the town. But what can these newcomers,  
together with the well-established villager, expect of the future?  
  
Like any community, Bridge has its problems to face. But it is lucky in having a great number of  
people interested enough in its future to spend hours of their time striving to make the village  
more accommodating to growing needs.  
  
Traffic is an almost constant menace to the village High Street. Cars stream through, coming or  
going to the continent, and Bridge is desperately trying to speed up plans for a by—pass to weed  
out this trafﬁc problem from its doorstep.  
  
Recently the A2 group was formed to demand a by-pass. The campaign secretary, 23-year-old Mr  
Brian Lewis, said the group was started when some members of the old Bridge youth Club  
became appalled at the road conditions through Bridge.  
  
About 20 young people arranged a protest march through the village and at the same time they  
joined forces with another resident, Mr John Purchese, who was conducting his own campaign  
with letters to the Ministry ofTransport.  
  
With the Youth Club members teaming up wqith Mr Purchese, protest demonstrations were  
arranged, aiming at a plan for an extension of the M2 from Brenley Corner to Dover. Because of  
their near-militant protests and pestering of local authorities and the Ministry . . . . ..  
  
(incomplete: Kentish Gazette, no date, Williamson 215)  
  
Jack Friend  
  
We record with regret the death, which occurred rather suddenly on Saturday, of Councillor john  
friend. By his passing the village of Bridge loses one ofits most indefatigable workers. Known  
affectionately as 'Jack‘, Mr Friend was only 48 years old and had been ill for only a few days. The  
only son of Mr Richard friend and ofthe late Mrs Friend, he leaves a widow and one son, Mr JE  
Friend, while a very large number of friends in the district will also sincerely mourn his death.  
Mr Friend, who was an old Langtonian, filled a remarkable and enviable position in the life ofthe  
village, for there was scarcely any activity for the benefit of the community with which he was  
not closely connected. Since 1930 he had been a member ofthe Bridge—Blean RDC, he was  
Chairman of the Folkestone and District PAC (Divisions 23 and 24), member of the Folkestone  
and District Guardians Committee, of the Bridge Parish Council for many years and ofthe local  
Old Age Pensions Committee. He acted as Chairman of the village's Jubilee Committee and as  
Hon. Secretary of the fete in aid of the Bridge Quota for the new Kent and Canterbury Hospital.  
For 29 years he was a member of the Fire Brigade and in recent years was Second officer.  
  
It will be as a thorough all—round sportsman, however, that Mr Friend will be best remembered.  
He played the game in every sense. In earlier years he was a clever footballer and he continued  
his interest in the winter sport by taking on the duties of a referee, becoming a KCFA Class 2  
official and on two occasions visiting France with representative teams as referee-linesman. On  
numerous occasions he has officiated at Wincheap Grove.  
  
Also a keen cricketer, he was a forcing bat, on several occasions topping the century, and was a  
useful performer behind the stumps. He was captain and Hon. Secretary of the former Bridge  
Football and Cricket Club and played for a number of teams in the district, including Lower  
Hardres. He was an enthusiastic member of the Kent County Cricket Club for many years and  
regularly attended the Canterbury Weeks. In addition he was captain ofthe Bridge Bowling Club,  
a supporter ofthe local school sports teams, was a keen tennis player and an excellent shot with a  
sporting gun.  
  
Other organisations with which he was associated include the Bridge Reading Room Committee,  
the Bridge Horticultural Society, whose cup for the highest number of points at the annual show  
he twice won, the Bridge Boys‘ Club, of which he was the first secretary, and the East Kent and  
Canterbury Conservative Club, of which he was a member.  
  
Upon leaving school, Mr Friend assisted in his father's coal merchant's business and in 1909  
married Miss Louie Brice, daughter ofthe late Mr and Mrs W Brice, of Bridge. From 1912 to  
l9l 8 he was licensee of the Red Lion.  
  
His cheery personality will be greatly missed by all who knew him.  
  
The funeral took place at Bridge Church on Wednesday afternoon when the coffin, which rested  
among a profusion ofﬂoral tributes, was carried to the Church on the tender ofthe Bridge Fire  
Brigade, members of the Brigade acting as bearers.  
  
The service was conducted by by the Vicar (Rev. H Knight) assisted by Canon Ashton Gwatkin  
(former Rector of Bishopsbourne) and Canon WF Burnside (Rector of Bishopsbourne).  
  
[those present included] WH Wass (Relieving officer), Mr and Mrs PW Honney (Master and  
Matron, Poor Law Institution)  
  
Blackmansbury, Braems and Bridge Place  
  
The Parish of Bridge in early times had within it two manors: the first, Bereacre, very much the  
less important, has left no big house and had vanished before the mid—seventeenth century but  
appears to have occupied the northern part of the parish. It survives in two names: that of the  
triangular ﬁeld at the junction of the roads to Pett Bottom and Whitehill, which on the tithe  
commutation map of 1838 is called Barakers, and possibly also in the former name of the  
Bargrave family, who are first recorded as Bargar, one of whom John, built the first house  
called Bifrons in Patrixbourne in 1607-1 1 but whose father Robert Bargar (died January 4  
  
1600/01) was a yeoman tanner of Bridge. The family, though, is also said to have come from  
Woodnesborough.  
  
The second, and far more significant manor was that of Blackmansbury (Blackemannesbyrie,  
1253/4), 62 acres and three roods in extent in 1384, and until the suppression of the  
monasteries the property of the Abbey of St Augustine. It is notable that although the village of  
Bridge is not mentioned in Domesday, as the parish was regarded then, and for long after, as a  
subsidiary part of Patricksbourne, the name is attached to a much larger administrative division  
of Kent, the Hundred of Bridge. This suggests that the Hundred Court sat in or near Bridge.  
The most obvious location for this was likely to have been in the building described by Hasted  
as the ‘Court Lodge’ which was demolished to make way for Bridge Place.  
  
Symonson’s map of Kent of 1596 clearly shows a building on this site lying astride the  
Nailbourne. It is obvious that the stream at this point today does not lie in its natural bed, and  
there is evidence in Church Meadow (most noticeable when the stream is in ﬂood) of a former  
stream bed on a different alignment. One of the two branches into which it is now artificially  
divided ﬂows around Bridge Place to enclose its former gardens (the outline of which may be  
discerned from aerial photographs). The other has been more obviously canalised and ﬂows  
through the grounds within three or four yards of the house. This seems possibly to be the  
remains ofa mill—leat, for in 1271 Ralph de Brigg, clerk paid 20s for use of ‘4 acres ofland and  
the moiety of a mill in Brigg’. Although windmills had been known for eighty years in England  
at this time, it is probable that this was a water-mill, and no other site within the parish is more  
appropriate (in Domesday, Patrixbourne as a whole is credited with four mills).  
  
Although nominally the property of St Augustine’s, as mentioned above, Blackmansbury was  
of course let to tenants until the Abbey was suppressed in 1538/9. Of these, the family of  
Garwinton is recorded, the last of whom was Thomas Garwinton who died c. 1411.  
  
Blackmansbury then passed by marriage to the Hauts of Hautbourn and later by the same  
means to the Isaaks. In 1544 after the dissolution it was granted by the king to Henry Laurence,  
who held a court there in the same year, establishing his manorial rights. At this time the  
  
Blackmansbury estate included ‘Honpit’ (or houndpit) i.e. Pett: where the manorial dogs were  
housed?.  
  
The manor remained with that family until 1576 when John Laurence sold it to William  
Partheriche. By the late 16”‘ century the mill had perhaps gone (to be replaced by a windmill  
on Bridgedown) though the building shown on Symonson’s map might suggest its recent  
presence. The immediate vicinity of a supply of good water however was very convenient for  
  
the manor house erected by William Partheriche, probably soon after he purchased the estate.  
Excavations in 1964/5 of the semi-basement of Bridge Place (originally used as a kitchen)  
revealed a number of centrally placed hexagonal brick pillars, cemented over and with the  
brick outline redrawn, still standing to a height of three or four feet, which probably supported  
a vaulted ceiling in Partheriche’s house. These were unfortunately demolished in the early  
l970’s to make way for the dance floor of the Country Club. Some of the shaped bricks were  
later inserted in a wall in the garden, facing the stream.  
  
William Partheriche was Surveyor of the Ordnance Office under Elizabeth I, and its second  
principal officer, an important position at a time when there was no other permanent military  
establishment. The Office was responsible for “the ordering, purchase, storage, maintenance,  
issue, recovery, and repair of all munitions of war both by land and sea” (GE Aylmer: T he  
King ’s Servants, 1961). In 1582 he was a member of a commission appointed by the Queen to  
carry out extensive work on Dover Harbour, which improved its facilities very considerably,  
and which of course also improved the mercantile life of the town. William died in 1598. His  
will makes no mention of Bridge or Blackmansbury, and refers only to ‘Higham Close’ or  
‘Higham Garden’ as bequeathed to his son, but this is because his third wife (Affra Morton)  
continued to live at Bridge, even though in 1607 she was remarried to Sir Anthony St Leger,  
Master of the Rolls in Ireland. William was buried in his chapel in Bridge church. His son  
Edward Partheriche did not live at Bridge, but moved away, probably to Hollingbourne, the  
  
home of his wife’s stepfather, Francis Colepeper. He was however eventually buried at Bridge  
in 1612.  
  
Edward’s son, also Edward, and later knighted, married Catherine Throckmorton, a niece of Sir  
Walter Raleigh, and later, Mary, a daughter of Sir Edward Fagge. He was MP for Sandwich  
from 1640-48 and is described as ‘Adventurer [speculator/investor] in and a candidate for the  
Directorship of the drainage of the Bedford Level’. He appears to have lived first at  
Hollingbourne but never at Bridge, so no doubt the old house, left empty after his  
grandmother’s death in the early decades of the century had fallen into some disrepair by the  
  
time he sold out in 1638 to Arnold Braems. He later moved to Ely, to be near his interests in  
the fens.  
  
As a son of a merchant of Dover who had prospered mightily by the harbour works in which  
William Partheriche had been involved, Arnold Braems no doubt came to know of the old  
  
property languishing unwanted in Bridge, and as a canny businessman made Sir Edward  
Partheriche an offer it was not worth refusing.  
  
So, Partheriche’s Court Lodge in its turn was replaced by the house whose remains are still  
standing. When first erected, Bridge Place was the largest house in East Kent, second only to  
Chilham Castle and with its construction the name of Blackmansbury passed more or less into  
history. The house was rectangular, with a front of nine bays and a projecting porch with a  
balcony, seven bays at the sides. The gardens at the rear were lavishly landscaped. The centre  
was occupied by a courtyard serving as a light well. The front wing (facing what is now  
Bourne Park Road) incorporated the semi-basement of the old house, which extended nearly  
halfway under the two wings at the side. Further basement building towards the Nailbourne  
was impeded by the height of the water—table on that side. Four of the bays of Braems’ original  
  
front remain, with ﬁve of the east wing. The house is of red bricks, probably made in the  
adjacent ﬁeld where remains of the old brickﬁeld are still discernible (and which has been no  
doubt the source of material for other houses in Bridge), although it is also suggested that they  
were imported into Sandwich from the Netherlands as their size is alleged to be slightly smaller  
than English bricks of the same period, being two inches shorter. However, many are, by  
measurement, longer. On the outer face the bricks are laid (says Malcolm Pinhom) entirely as  
stretchers (i.e. lengthways), and are worked into pilasters and string courses to form an  
ornamental and decorative facade. Even the window frames were originally of brick and then  
plastered over to simulate stone mullions and transoms. The windows between ground and first  
ﬁoor are separated by a full entablature. Above is a deep projecting cornice under a hipped roof.  
There were originally ﬁve chimney stacks, serving 24 hearths, one at each corner and one in  
the middle of the front wing. In the inventory of Sir Arnold’s property drawn up at his death  
there are in fact 27 rooms listed, including a ‘Billiatt Roome’, in addition to the kitchen and  
lesser ofﬁces. The front porch was of stone topped with a balcony, and a wide terrace extended  
along the whole front. On the west wing there was an open verandah and covered terrace  
giving on to the water garden at the side which was surrounded by a wall, the lower courses of  
which still survive beside the stream. Thomas Philipot, writing in 1659 says: “Mr Arnold  
Brame of Dover. . . upon the foundation of the ancient fabrick hath erected that magniﬁcent  
pile which obliges the eyes of the passenger, both to admiration and delight, and which like a  
Phoenix seems to have arose more glorious out of the ruins.” Internally only the secondary  
staircase, one wooden cornice, two or perhaps three fireplaces, some panelling and some doors  
survive. The cornice is of carved wood (probably cut down from a larger room) which shows a  
number of carved heads about four or ﬁve inches in height, one with a Flemish hat, one with a  
wig — portraits of Sir Arnold perhaps? — and others, more grotesquely stylised. Until the fire at  
the house in l97l there was another cornice depicting leaves and bunches of fruit. The  
ﬁreplaces are of Bethersden marble. Quite apart from the subsequent demolition of some two-  
thirds of the building, the remains have undergone considerable alteration, with the insertion of  
  
some wooden window frames at various periods — Regency, Victorian and Modern - and the  
addition of smaller extensions to the building.  
  
The English branch of the Braems family probably came to Kent from Brabant in the mid-16th  
century as the result of Spanish political and religious policy. Jasper Braems came to England  
in the time of Queen Mary and settled at Sandwich, one of a large community of Flemish  
refugees. By the early l570’s however, perhaps foreseeing the developments which were about  
to take place (to the detriment of Sandwich) he had moved to Dover, where his son Charles  
Braems (died c.1593) was already a merchant. Charles’ son, also Charles (died 1611),  
merchant and ﬁshing entrepreneur increased the family prosperity, acquiring ‘a quay, wharves,  
and “herring houses” along Dover harbour front. In turn his son Jacob Braems eventually  
acquired most of the land along the harbour wall and by virtue of his pre-eminent mercantile  
position Jacob became Customer (ie collector of customs) of Dover. A street at the base of the  
harbour had even become known as ‘Braems, his street’.His ‘Old Buildings’, originally two  
dwellings, and subsequently occupied by Arnold Braems and later also his son Walter, had by  
the 19”" century become ruinous, and were destroyed by ﬁre in 1808, but not before, in l806,  
the New Custom House had been erected.) Arnold (and Walter) also acquired a grant of the  
beach on the opposite side of the new basin, which had been created in the later years of the  
16”‘ century, on which he erected a square pile of buildings for store-houses.  
  
During the Thirty Years’ War (1618-48) an international entrepot developed at Dover as a  
result of attempts to exploit English neutrality by offering the convenience and safety of using  
neutral English shipping. Goods were to be brought to Dover, to be re-exported in (neutral)  
English ships. Naturally, in the process, customs duties were levied. As part of this process a  
silver entrepot was established in 1620, and by 1632, with a diplomatic accord between  
England and Spain, ‘it provided that English vessels freighting Spanish silver should always  
stop at Dover in order to unload two-thirds of their cargoes for coinage in London. The silver  
removed from the ships was transported “over the Dover Road [through Bridge] to the Tower  
Mint”.’ Reductions in the rate of tax resulted in higher income: ‘The Farmers saw their  
revenue from commodity re-exports increase from £1 1,000 in 1634 to over £18,000 in 1636  
and to £23,000 in 1638’[A.Kepler, Arch Cant 95]. As Jacob Braems’ younger brother, a  
  
merchant in his own right and also one of the farmers of Customs, Arnold was closely involved.  
  
As he himself later admitted: ‘when we had peace with Spain [I] paid in the Port of Dover for  
Customs six thousand and eight thousand pounds a year; and by [my] inﬂuence and Credit in  
foreign parts came through my hands in plate and bullion for many years five, six and eight  
hundred thousand pounds each year, a great part of which [I] sent to several merchants in  
London to be coined in the Tower. . . ’. [from The humble remonslrance] No wonder that by  
1638 he could afford to buy Blackmansbury and to build a vast new mansion there!  
  
Arnold Braems was cultured, a royalist and a bon viveur. Born in October 1602 in Dover he  
was married three times: first to Joan, daughter of Walter Harﬂet of Bekesbourne (21 April  
1631) who died in 1635, second, to Elizabeth Digges daughter of Sir Dudley Digges, Master of  
the Rolls, of Chilhain (17 August 1636) who died in 1643, ‘and was buried [according to  
Zachariah Cozens] near the handsome tomb in the chancel of Bridge Church under a  
gravestone’ -regrettably the tomb is no more: Its top slab is probably now the one to be found  
just outside the west door of the church, lacking its brasses. Arnold was married thirdly to  
Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Palmer Bt of Wingham, who died in 1685. He himself died  
on 13 November 1681 and was buried at Bridge in the east Chancel ‘close to the tomb which  
  
he in his life created there in memory of his two deceased ladies’ [Register entry by John  
Mackallar, vicar].  
  
He was knighted by Charles II on 27 May 1660 as reward for his efforts in support of the  
Cause during the civil war, and was MP for Dover in the 1660 parliament, but soon gave up  
politics in favour of continuing his business career.  
  
On establishing his house, Arnold seems to have entertained very freely — no doubt partly from  
business acumen and motives, but also because he enjoyed it. He had an interest in art and  
artists: one frequent guest was Cornelius Janssen (1593-1664) a Flemish painter born in  
London, who was patronised by James I and his Court, and later by Charles 1, and who painted  
portraits of numerous members of the gentry. One of these, said to be by him and of Robert  
Bargrave (1584-1649), is still in Bridge Church on the north wall ofthe chancel. As life  
  
became more difficult for those closely connected with Charles I Janssen in 1643 left England  
for Holland, where he died in 1664.  
  
In the l670’s another such visitor was Adriaen Ocker, to whom we are indebted for the picture  
of Bridge Place in its proper setting, with subsidiary scenes reminiscent of the experiences of  
an earlier visitor who came just after the Restoration to stay for a while. This was Willem  
Schellinks (1627-78), who has left us a vivid portrait both of Braems and of Bridge. In the  
Journal ofhis travels in England, 1661-1663, he writes:  
  
“On the 6"‘ [August 1661] we [he is travelling with Jan Maurits (1604-79), founder of the Mauritshuis]  
were merrily entertained by the younger Sir Arnold Braems [a nephew, son of Jacob, born 1630] with  
French wine and light refreshments. . . .In the afternoon ofthe 8"‘ . . . left Dover at 3 o’clock in a  
carriage, which Sir Arnold Braems had sent to take us to his delightful residence at Bridge, one hour’s  
walk from Canterbury. . . We arrived there at 8 o’clock in the evening to a friendly welcome and were  
magnificently entertained, and drank quite a few good healths with sack.  
  
On the 9”‘ we played on the bowling green on the hill near Sir Arnold Braem’s place.  
  
On the 10“ we saw a hart shot with a crossbow in the deerpark of Sir Arnold Braems; everybody,  
especially the ladies, washed their hands in the warm blood, to get white hands. The hart was  
immediately gutted and cut up into quarters.  
  
On the 11”‘ a venison pie and other dishes of the hart were on the menu. After the meal I walked to  
Canterbury and explored the town.  
  
On the 12"‘ we rode in two carriages with Sir Arnold Braems and Mr. Adriaens of London and several  
ladies to Canterbury and went to the cathedral to hear the canons sing the prayers and looked at the  
sepulchres or gravestones of kings, bishops, and other notables, some very old and much ravaged by  
age and war. In the recent troubles between the king and parliament, Oliver Cromwell had here, as  
elsewhere throughout the country, everything which looked like popery, such as glass, statues, crosses  
and the like, in and on churches and other public buildings, torn down and broken to pieces.  
  
The 9”‘ [September 1661] . . .took our lodgings .. in the Lily [in Canterbury] . . word was sent to Sir  
Arnold Braems to let him know we had arrived.  
  
On the 10"‘ September Sir Arnold came. . .we went on to Bridge, where we were sumptuously  
entertained in his great hall by Sir Arnold Braems with a large company of friends, ladies and  
gentlemen, and spent the afternoon in making good cheer and other pastimes, and left in the evening at  
6 o’clock by coach for Dover [where] we were again merrily entertained by Mr Walter Braems, the son  
of Sir Arnold Braems.  
  
On the 12”‘. . .we left in the afternoon for Bridge, and safely arrived in the evening to a friendly  
  
welcome. Sir Arnold Braems gave us a room where we both could stay as long as we remained there, in  
fact we stayed for three months.  
  
This estate of Sir Arnold Braems lies in a valley of outstanding beauty; it contains, in addition to his  
own ﬁne residence, a large number of rooms, chambers, halls and other good apartments; there is also a  
large deerpark with many deer and does, woods, a rabbit warren in the hills [which still exists], and  
very beautiful, well kept pleasure grounds with fruit trees, well watered by a fast flowing, fresh  
sparkling stream of wonderfully clear sweet water. This splits up into several branches and rivulets, also  
some fishponds, in which a certain kind of fish called trout is bred, which is very similar to a large carp,  
and, prepared in the English manner, tastes very delicious. There are also some vineyards round the  
house and gardens, producing yearly two or three hogshead of wine. There is a aj5§éE;6ti like a chapel, in  
which are at“al‘l'"times so many young pigeons that throughout the whole summer and longer 12 to 14  
dozen can be taken out every week to put into pies or prepared otherwise. His people go out hunting 1,  
every day and catch a lot of partridges and pheasants, which we had every day on the table, besides a   
choice of other delicate food, all with the most delicious English sauces; there is an ample supply of I  
drinks, different kinds of wine and perry, which is made from pears. He also has his own brewery,  
bakery, wine press, hop garden, barns, stables, oxen, cows, sheep, pigs, geese, ducks, corn and fruit,  
everything that one can desire in such an establishment. And because he is, with all this, so kind and  
  
hospitable, and keeps such a princely table, he has so many visits from noblemen, gentlemen and ladies,  
so that his table is always surrounded by his own people and outside guests. The church stands not far  
from his house, and he has the right to nominate a minister of his choice for it. He has planted a fine  
avenue of lime trees from his house to the church, under which one is protected from rain and sun. His  
lands and his annual income, which amounts to a considerable sum, had suffered much damage in the  
war between the king and parliament, but is now all restored to him. As we now had the freedom of the  
  
place we went walking and drawing every day in the countryside and in the villages in the  
neighbourhood. . . .  
  
On the 6"‘ October a general muster of seven or eight companies of the militia [Braems was a Major in  
the East Kent Militia] was held on the hill above Bishopsbourne, which lies at the bottom ofthe valley,  
each company 200 men strong. They were brought on and off, skirmishing in one or two groups, ﬁring  
spiritedly at each other, commanded by numerous officers on horseback and on foot. They started in the  
morning, but had to stop it all towards evening because of strong winds and oncoming rain. All the men  
get a drink allowance to refresh themselves. This muster usually takes place about once a year. Every  
parish and household has to supply and arm as many men as it is able...”  
  
As further proof of Sir Arnold’s conviviality, and his connections in high places, it may be ‘,1,  
noted that Samuel Pepys mentions him three times in his diary: on 15 November and 27   
December 1660, and 5 October 1661, each time in relation to a drinking party.   
  
Sir Arnold’s relief at the Restoration must have been considerable, for since the beginning of  
the civil war until then, as a staunch supporter of the Royal cause, he had been put to much  
expense. This was summarised in The humble remonstrance of Sir Arnold Braems of his  
services and suﬂerings (PRO SP 23/9) in which he catalogues his expenditures on behalf of the  
King: so for instance, forbidden by parliament, he sent a ship loaded with 300 tons of rye to  
Dublin, resulting in its confiscation, together with its returning cargo, and a loss of ‘above  
£2000’, including 20 guns; in other instances he was, ‘before 1648 several times plundered for  
refusing commissions from the parliamentary power’; then in 1648 he paid for 40 barrels of  
gunpowder spent in the service, as the leader of the Dover petitioners to parliament. He later  
maintained supplies and provisions to the castles in the Downs [Sandown and Walmer] which  
were holding out; obtained 14 chests of sugar, which were sent to Zeeland in Holland, to be  
  
turned into 100 tons of beer, for which he had to pay; lost more than £4000 in a seized ship in  
Lisbon, and rendered many other services at his own expense.  
  
For all these costs he was now claiming restitution. In spite of Schellink’s belief, it is likely  
that what he principally received as his reward was his knighthood. This loss of revenue,  
  
together with his obvious high level ofliving, clearly made life difficult for Sir Arnold’s  
successors, and with his death the glory days of Bridge Place were over.  
  
His son Walter Braems, born 3 October 1633, was, as a high-spirited young man, heavily  
involved in the Civil War. He is said to have laid a plot to seduce the Governor and betray  
Dover Castle to Prince Charles (Dover was predominantly on the Parliamentarian side). It is  
practically certain that he and other Kentish gentry were involved in the assassination of Dr  
  
Dorislaus in May 1649. Similarly, he was one of a number of Kentish cavaliers concerned in  
Gerard’s Plot of 1654, leading to the most serious insurrection of the Interregnum, the  
  
Penruddock Rising of 1655. He married in 1663 Mary, daughter of Sir John Jacob Kt of  
Bromley, Middlesex and was promoted Colonel in King Charles II’s army. He became  
Comptroller of HM Customs at Sandwich, having petitioned the king that he had been ‘at 14  
  
years of age fetched out of his sicke bed by your Maj esty’s Enemies carried & imprisoned in  
Dover Castle which hath since esteemed for an honour to crown his ﬁdelity to have been ye  
youngest prisoner in England for your Majesty’s service’.  
  
Walter later became Comptroller of HM Customs at Dover, but under Charles II the  
opportunity for profit seems to have been more circumscribed than previously, and in 1690 he  
was obliged to petition the king for six years’ arrears of salary: life in the big house was  
becoming expensive.  
  
When Colonel Walter, father of at least 14 children, but several of whom did not survive  
childhood, died in September1692 his family could no longer afford to maintain the house nor,  
presumably, did they wish to live in it.. His eldest son Jacob (b.1664) was a professional  
soldier, as was another, Walter (b.1670), who later settled in St Stephens, Canterbury.  
  
ln June 1695 the Bridge estate (incuding the home farm in Bridge street, and Pett farm) was  
sold to John Taylor (1665-1729), son of Nathaniel Taylor, a Shropshire barrister. John had  
purchased Bifrons nearby in Patrixbourne only in the previous year. Preferring to stay at  
Bifrons, he demolished two—thirds of Bridge Place, and converted the remainder, presumably  
into a dower house. It is from this time that Bridge Place ceased to be the principal residence of  
its owner, and reverted for the next 250 years or so to accommodating a long series of  
(frequently elderly) tenants. Taylor himself died at the age of 64, thirteen years after his wife  
Olivia. It is unknown who lived at the house between 1695 and 1729, but until 1708, according  
to the Churchwardens’ accounts he was himself liable for the parish rate. It is possible that at  
least for some years the occupier was John Bowtell DD, vicar of Patrixbourne and Bridge, who  
had succeeded John Mackallar on the latter’s death in February 1697/8 and who married Olive,  
Taylor’s eldest daughter. Between 1708 and 1713 no rate was levied on the house. But  
thereafter, the ‘Bridge Place Land’ was assessed as the liability of various tenants, while a new  
figure, Farnham Aldersey, Gent. appears as perhaps the tenant of the house itself. By 1720,  
Taylor was again assessed in his own right, and this continued until 1726, when again no  
mention was made of Bridge Place until 1735 when John Philpot jun. was assessed. This tenant  
farmer remained in possession, John Taylor’s eldest son Brook having died in 1731, and  
ownership having passed to the Rev. Herbert Taylor, until 1742 when tenancy reverted to the  
family in the person of John Taylor’s daughter Mary, born in 1690, who resided there from  
1742 until her death in 1771. Here she attended to the upbringing of her niece, the daughter of  
  
Brook Taylor, the first secretary of the Royal Society, who had died while she was still under  
age.  
  
Thereafter, the house was let to John Hardy, probably a relative of the Halletts of Higham, who  
had just married the daughter of the vicar of Bekesbourne, the Rev. William Bedford. He died  
in 1778, but the widow Hardy continued there until her death in 1783. She was followed by  
  
William Hougham, who later moved to his family home in Longport, now known as Barton  
Court.  
  
In 1766, at the time of Mary Taylor’s occupancy under the ownership of her brother Herbert,  
who was by now himself vicar of Patrixbourne and Bridge (since 1753), the Bridge Place  
Estate was described as:  
  
All that capital messuage or tenement situate and being the ville of Blackmansbury within the . . .parish  
of Bridge. . . .together with all Houses, Ediﬁces, Buildings, Outhouses, Orchards, Gardens, Courts,  
  
Yards, Lands Arable Meadow Pasture and Woodlands. . . containing by estimation 40 acres or  
thereabouts. . . sometime in the tenure or occupation of Nicholas Heniker or his assigns [Heniker is  
nowhere else mentioned] and late in the tenure or occupation of Walter Breames or his assigns with all  
warrens for coneys and grounds inclosed for coneys to the same belonging. . .with the two. . .tenements  
thereupon theretofore built by William Partherick Esq deceased whereof one of the same tenements is  
within the said furclosed grounds commonly called Hounds Pitts [Great Pett] and the other is in a close  
called Whitehill [?Middle Pett] in Bridge near the highway leading to Dover.  
  
William Hougham remained at Bridge until 1791, when the following notice appeared in the  
Kentish Gazette:  
  
To be LET. /’  
  
A Mansion House called BRIDGE—PLACE, now in the occupation of William Hougham, Esq; jun.  
Consisting of an eating parlour, 22 by 16‘/2; a drawing-room, 22 by 17, and a small room. —On the  
second—floor, good bedrooms; and four garrets, with proper offices for a family; a coach—house with  
stabling for seven horses, and eleven acres of very fine pasture; two gardens; and a cottage, consisting  
of a brewhouse, laundry and dairy, with good lodging—rooms over them.  
  
It is situated in the neighbourhood of Barham Downs and three miles from Canterbury.  
  
For particulars enquire of Mr. DILNOT, Patrixbourne.  
  
(Kentish Gazette. March 1“ I791)  
  
Whoever took the property, if any did, did not stay long, for two years later Bridge Place was  
  
again advertised, this time with its description subtly enhanced, presumably to encourage  
enquiry.  
BRIDGE PLACE  
To be LET.  
Either for two or six years, from Michaelmas next  
  
BRIDGE PLACE, three miles from Canterbury, fit for the immediate reception of a family, with twelve  
acres of meadow land surrounding the house, and two walled gardens well cropt; coach houses for two  
carriages, and very good stables for seven horses, with other convenient offices for cows, pigs and  
poultry. ~ The whole has lately been put into complete order. — The ﬁxtures, and all or any part of the  
furniture, may be had with the house; and also four excellent cows, pigs, &c. with the coals, wood and  
hay. — Immediate possession will be given.  
  
N.B. There is a trout—stream runs through the meadows.  
  
For further particulars, and to see the house, apply to the Rev. JOHN FRANCIS, Mint Yard, Canterbury.  
(Kentish Gazette, August 2 7”’ I 793)  
  
This time the tenancy was taken up by Lady Elizabeth Yates, after the death of her second husband in  
1793. Here she stayed until her death in 1808. Her daughter, married to Col. Cholomeley Dering lived  
nearby at Howletts in Littlebourne. She was followed by the Rev Charles Hughes who became vicar of  
  
Patrixbourne and Bridge in February 1813, but who took up residence meanwhile at Bridge when the  
house became vacant.  
  
In 1829 the whole property of the Taylors, including Bridge Place, which by now was reduced to  
‘containing by estimation 1 1 acres or thereabouts’, was sold to the first Marquess of Conyngham for  
£97, 475. Of this, Edward Taylor, grandson of John Taylor, had to contribute £18, 083 19s 8d in  
settlement of outstanding debts. Under the Marquess’s ownership Bridge Place was let to farming  
  
families. From 1826 to the l850’s it was occupied by Richard (born 1783) and Sarah (born 1789) Brice.  
He is described in the Land tax returns as ‘yeoman’ and in 1849 was vice-chairman of the Board of  
  
Guardians of Bridge Union Workhouse. They were still resident there in 1851 (census return), together  
  
with four unmarried daughters (Ann 35, Eliza 33, Ellen 30, Jane 26) and an eight year old grandson  
(Thomas). Four servants (two men, two women) are also recorded.  
  
In the later l850’s the house was occupied by George Athill, another farmer, whose three children were  
all baptised at Bridge on 18 August 1857, after their father’s death aged 50 in February the same year.  
One ofthem, Charles Harold Athill MVO (1853-1922) became Clarenceaux King of Arms in 1919.  
They did not stay long, however, for in 1861 the census records William Aldwith, aged 32, Curate of  
Patrixbourne and a native of Scotland, together with his wife, an elderly aunt, cook, parlourmaid,  
housemaid and coachman. He also remained only a few months. In 1862 George Henry Conyngham  
(1825-1882), Lord Mount Charles and later (1876) third Marquess of Conyngham for reasons as yet  
unexplained moved in, staying until 1867.  
  
1871 records a retired Major-General, George Briggs, born in 1808, and who seems to have spent most  
of his military career in India, where both his wife, his daughter and three grandchildren were born.  
They however kept but three servants — a cook, housemaid, and nurse for the fourth child of a mere two  
months, born in Bridge. In 1878 the contents of the house were sent for auction, but they were said to  
be the property of Walter Gipps Esq., who was leaving the neighbourhood.  
  
By 1881 the house had been taken by another military man, the retired Lieutenant-Colonel George  
Billington, born in 1833, whose last posting was probably in Ireland, where his six year old younger  
daughter was born. He lived there with his wife, two daughters and four female servants, but again only  
for a few months, for by 1882 Bridge Place was in the possession of Col. Moyle Billington.  
  
By 1891 a break had been made with military tenancy, and for a few years (1890-98) the house was  
occupied by a more exotic character, Oscar de Satgé, described as a 54 year old ‘Retired Australian  
“Squatter” and sheep farmer’, and a native of Switzerland. He had brought his wife, 20 years younger,  
and three small children under eight, together with no fewer than seven female servants, all except  
himself however of British stock. In 1901 the census reveals another change, but equally notable: a  
disabled gentleman of cosmopolitan experience, St John Butler, aged 47, married to an Englishwoman  
  
(Agnes) born in Russia, with four servants, including a footman from Germany and a French maid. The  
census also happened to catch a visitor from India.  
  
The tradition of providing a home for retired military or widowed persons returned with Mrs Wilson,  
the mother of the then Bridge medical practitioner Arthur Wilson. She stayed until 1907, to be replaced  
by Seymour L Harries (1907—12 — an American?), RHB Hammond—Chambers a WWI Naval  
Lieutenant—Commander (1919) and Julian Hedworth George Byng, General and later Viscount Byng of  
Vimy, with whom the Duchess of Albany (daughter of Queen Victoria) stayed after opening some  
official event in Canterbury. At some time in this period the house was also rented by William Howard.  
  
Some greater stability was achieved by Mrs Ethel Penn, who with her daughter, Miss N. Penn tenanted  
the house from the mid—l 920’s until her death in 1949. Malcolm Pinhorn records that in the course of  
her tenancy the wall between the dining room and the entrance staircase collapsed, destroying in its fall  
one of the three remaining original ﬁreplaces. The number has however recently been restored by the  
discovery (by Peter Malkin) of another, which had been hidden behind wainscoting. Miss Penn  
survived until 1952. In 1954 the long ownership by the Marquess Conyngham came to an end when the  
freehold of Bridge Place, now reduced to 6 acres was bought by the Hon. Mrs Neame. One further  
tenant (Harold Wyles) is recorded for 1955, but in 1962 Mrs Neame sold to Malcolm Alan Pinhorn,  
Fellow of the Society of Genealogists and of Phillimore & Co, who undertook archaeological work at  
the house, and to whom a great deal of the present work is very much indebted. He in turn sold Bridge  
Place to Peter Malkin in 1967, with whom it has remained until the present, and who established there a  
Country Club, with bar and dance ﬂoor in the semi-basement, and who, after the closure of the Club  
  
opened (very brieﬂy) a restaurant. We might say that the ghost of conviviality, established so long ago  
  
with the hospitality extended by Sir Arnold Braems, had once again returned to haunt old Bridge Place.  
It is however now (2006) up for sale once more.  
  
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Bridge Doctors  
  
The earliest record we have of a doctor in Bridge is that of Amelius Sicard, born in  
  
Blackheath on June 12”" 1809, the son of John Jacob Sicard, who was probably a refugee  
  
from revolutionary France (‘Jean—Jacques’) and his wife Mary. John Jacob it appears was  
‘Major—Domo’ to Princess Caroline of Brunswick (wife of the Prince Regent) at  
  
Montague House in Blackheath. It was he who brought news to her in 1820 in Florence  
  
that George III was dead and that she was now queen. He died in Kensington (?Palace)  
  
after this date, but before 1841. Amelius entered into practice in Bridge in 1832, aged 23,  
MRCS and Lie. Apoth. Co. London, and clearly able to afford the 18”‘ century property \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ V»  
on the corner of Union Road and the High Street, which remained ‘the doctor’s house’ it 1“  
until ?1970. Sicard was the village doctor for 48 years, dying on November 29th 1880.  
  
Wall plaque in the church: “Sacred / to the memory / of/ Amelius Sicard / M.R.C.S. /who departed  
this / life Novr. 29"‘ 1880 / aged 71 years / This tablet and the West window / were placed in this /  
Church by a numerous / circle of friends. /”  
  
Tombstone in the churchyard: “In memory of / Amelius Sicard / only son of John Jacob / and Mary  
Sicard. / born at Blackheath / June 12\*‘ 1809, died at Bridge / November 29”‘ 1880. / Here he had  
  
resided forty—eight years and / had been to rich and poor / the beloved physician. / “ Headstone,  
Bodystone and Footstone: A.B. 1880  
  
Also: “Sacred / to the memory of/ Mary Sicard / widow ofthe late J.J. Sicard Esq. / of Kensington,  
  
who departed this life / on the 30"‘ day ofJuly 1843, / in her 79”‘ year /” Headstone, Bodystone &  
Footstonez. M.S. 1843 (buried on August 5m 1943)  
  
The family of Sicard appears also to be\ related to the Counts Lautrec — several 13”‘ century members  
being called Amelius-Sicard.  
  
1841 census  
  
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From 1835 until after 1841 the Union Workhouse had its own doctor, William Nix.  
  
1841 census  
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Sicard was succeeded by Charles Henry Schon, born in Chatham in 1855, the son of  
James F(rederick) Schon, chaplain to the Melville Hospital. He was born in the Grand  
Duchy of Baden, but a British subject (presumably naturalized). Charles served also as  
medical officer to the workhouse. He died in 1899 aged 44, and was buried on January  
25”‘ of that year. A brother, Frederick Schon was a sub Editor for the Press  
Associationand had spent some time in Canada, where two of his children were born.  
  
1881 census  
  
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
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Schon was succeeded by Robert Leishman Moorhead, MB CM (Edin) between 1899  
and 1906, but who quickly moved on. Moorhead was born in 1872 in London, possibly  
the son of Richard B Moorhead of Paddington, born in Newcastle, Co. Down in 1850,  
and in 1881 a ‘buyer in Mouster House Ireland’ (?), but also possibly oflsabella (b. 1839  
in London) or more likely of Phoebe (b. 1845), both of whom were widows by 1881. In  
that year Robert was living with an aunt, Elizabeth Leishman in Edinburgh, who was  
herself almost certainly the daughter of the Minister of Linton Parish in Roxburgh and  
Glasgow Doctor of Divinity Thomas Leishman, born in Govan, Lanark in 1801.  
  
1901 census  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
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Moorhead was followed in 1906 by Arthur Thomas Wilson, MB, BCh, BAO, BA  
(Dub).until ?1937  
  
Death of Dr Wilson. Gloom was cast over the village when Dr Wilson passed away on Friday  
evening, after a few days illness. He had not been in good health for some time, but was able to  
carry on his practice, which covered a large area, including Bekesbourne, Barham,  
Bishopsbourne, Upper and Lower Hardres. He succeeded about 30 years ago, Dr Moorhead who  
left the district. A bachelor, Dr Wilson resided with his brother, Mr J Wilson, on the death of his  
mother, the late Mrs Wilson, at Bridge Place, Bridge. He was a member of a well—known Irish  
family. His two surviving brothers are Sir Samuel Wilson and Mr Jack Wilson. Another brother,  
General Wilson, passed away a few years ago. (Williamson — undated)  
  
Death of Dr. A. T. Wilson  
  
Well-known Bridge Practitioner  
  
We regret to record the death of Dr. Arthur Thomas Wilson, at his home in Bridge, on Friday.  
Dr. Wilson, who was 67 years of age, was born in Dublin, was Irish, and came to Bridge to  
practice medicine in 1906. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin University, and held the  
following degrees, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., B.A. Dr. Wilson, who was devoted to his work, had  
  
lived with his brother, Mr. J.B.E. Wilson, for 33 years. His father, Mr. James Wilson, was a well-  
known Irish Barrister.  
  
The doctor had been M.O. at Bridge Institution since he first came to the village, and held the  
same position at the old isolation hospital, Bishopsbourne. Dr. Wilson was extremely well-liked  
and respected in the village and the surrounding district. He leaves two brothers, Mr. J .B.E.  
Wilson and Brig.—Gen. Sir Samuel Wilson, late Permanent Under Secretary for State for the  
Colonies.  
  
The funeral took place in Ireland on Tuesday, Dr. Wilson's ashes being buried in the family vault.  
  
A personal appreciation  
  
For years he resided in Bridge, near Canterbury. A small man with a big heart, an Irishman's  
sense of humour and a characteristic laugh. A doctor, no, more than a doctor, a friend in need.  
How many, for miles around, will mourn him in silence. In the large mansion and in the small  
cottage, aye, even the tramp on the road will, if he pass through Bridge again, learn of this death  
with a tightness in his throat. Nothing was too small for this man to see and understand, no one  
was too poor for him to sympathise with and comfort. For years he knew the trials and troubles of  
multitudes, yet never have I heard him say one word to the detriment of any. Unconscious of self,  
he gave his whole time to his people, and would often spend hours in sympathising rather than  
take the rest he sorely needed. Described in my hearing once by a Bishop as "A Christian" no  
man could deserve that appellation more than he. Yet his Christianity was not artificial, it was  
lived. Rarely have I discussed religion with him, but what he thought could be known by how he  
lived. So passes from sight a doctor, a man and an example, for if only one person can say "that  
man was a comfort and strength to me," then surely he has not lived in vain.  
  
(No source, no date: Williamson)  
  
Dr Wilson was in turn succeeded by Roger Bennett Hunter MB (1910-1988) who  
  
graduated from TCD in 1930  
Dr. Hunter's House, 24 High Street, Bridge.  
  
Dr. Roger Hunter, my father, came to Bridge with my mother in about 1937 when he bought the  
house and the practice from Dr. Wilson. Dr. Wilson had been the village doctor for many years  
and lived in the house with his brother, known as Mr. Jack, and their valet. I assume they kept  
their horses out in the carriage house which is just round the corner up Union Lane. The old  
stables with two rooms above are still in a more or less original state, with the present garage  
  
added on. My mother thinks that the house was still lit by gas when she arrived, but I am not sure  
about this.  
  
The surgery was in the house with patients entering the waiting room through the door in the wall  
to the left of the house. Private patients were allowed to wait in the dining room and go in through  
the front door! In the 40s and 50s I can remember needles and syringes were sterilised on the  
kitchen stove in a saucepan and the drugs were kept in the family ‘fridge. My father worked  
closely with Mr. Stockwell who was the chemist in the village. Mr. Stockwell’s shop was down  
on the corner of Mill Lane and the High Street where I think there is now a kitchen appliance  
shop. He would make up the pills and potions in the back ofthe shop.  
  
The interior of 24 High Street is still very much as it was structurally, with all the original doors  
and fireplaces, etc. The hall ceiling is attractively plastered. In the basement there is an area  
where wine and spirits could be locked up and there is another large area with cupboard for  
storing apples and vegetables. The roof was repaired recently and over the bathroom the roofers  
found a large flat water tank which must have been used for collecting water for the house.  
  
It was a shame that when the roof was renovated back in the 70s (I think) that a copy of the  
original pediment wasn’t replaced and a mean little strip of wood was put back. You can see a  
trace of the original pediment on the corner of Miss Jones's house next door. The heavy traffic  
over the years before the by~pass was built caused the mathematical tiles on the front of the house  
to loosen and they all had to be re—ﬁxed. I think that is when the pediment was taken down.  
  
Mathematical tiles were renovated on the side of the house early this year and I saw that the lower  
ones were ﬁxed in plaster and the upper ones hung on timber.  
  
This is nothing to do with my parents‘ house, but I can remember Fagg's Farm as we used to ride  
with Captain Maslin, the local riding instructor, who sometimes kept his horses there, and we  
used to keep our ponies in the three fields where the Western Avenue estate now is.  
  
I hope this is useful information — do get in touch if you would like more help.  
  
Diana Cairns (01227 752836)  
  
Dr Hunter was succeeded in ?l970 by William GS Russell who died December 25th  
1988. Dr Hunter retained his house on the High Street when he retired (even though the  
  
notice ‘Surgery’ remained on the garden door until the 1990s) and Dr Russell began his  
practice in Green Court. After more than 130 years the doctor had moved.  
  
Upon Dr Russe1l’s death the practice was taken over by D Mark Jones, who had begun  
with him only on January 1“ 1988, and who transferred the practice to a new purpose-  
built medical centre in Patrixbourne Road in 2002.  
  
Bridge in Kent: Some Notes on the Place and the People  
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
The Bridge at“Bridge: m1-18 century. Photo ca. 193i)  
  
The River Crossing and the Parish of Bridge  
  
In October 2000 the rains came. The ‘river’ Nailbourne — a description many might until then have  
thought of as an unnecessarily generous term - began to run again after an interval of years, and  
within months had inundated its valley: the ‘waters of woe’ had risen to levels unseen for at least  
three centuries. Many properties in Bridge were ﬂooded, though some not by any means for the first  
time. The stream, so quietly picturesque, became an impressive and formidable torrent. But that, of  
course, is precisely why Bridge is where it is, and why it bears the name, shared only, in its simple  
form, by one small hamlet in Cornwall.  
  
Tithe maps of 1838 show the parish  
extending as far north as the Gate Inn at  
the junction of the two Dover Roads, and  
including Milestone Farm, but as may be  
seen from the sketch-map the parish as  
deﬁned in the local government act of  
1894 is rather smaller, and is largely  
agricultural and woodland. The village  
itself, and the river crossing, are tucked  
into the north-eastern end, while the  
boundary with Patrixbourne runs not far  
from the main Dover Road. It includes at  
its eastern extremity Bridge Hill House,  
but not Higham, and until the  
reorganisation of boundaries in the 1970's  
incorporated only part of Bridge Down,  
then ran down the edge of the wood  
enclosing Side Hill. It extends northwards  
to the crossroads of Town Hill; its  
  
southernmost point stops just short of  
Bursted Manor and Broxhall Farm.It includes therefore all three Pett farms, the Duck Inn, and a  
  
large part of Gorsley Wood. By far the greatest part of the population inhabits the village, though in  
former days the proportion was a little less. The Nailbourne, from its source (as the East Brook)  
  
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near Etchinghill hardly more than three miles from the Channel coast at Hythe, ﬂows  
predominantly northwards until it is deﬂected to the north-west by the sweep of the chalk downs at  
Barham. At Bridge it turns smartly through a right angle, and then runs (from Garrington as the  
Little Stour) north—eastwards to its conﬂuence with the Great Stour at Plucks Gutter. The road from  
Dover to Canterbury runs of course along the dry scarp of the Downs, until it is obliged, by the turn  
in the river valley, to descend and cross the water. The valley itself has since before Roman times  
been heavily populated: the density of remains is among the highest in the country. There are  
several large post—Roman burial sites on the brow of the hills overlooking the river, mostly on the  
eastern side, but there were also three much earlier burial chambers (kistvaens) found in Gorsley  
Woods that were excavated by Francis Vine, vicar of Patrixbourne. In 1846, during excavation of  
the lake in Bourne Park, Samian pottery and other articles were found at a depth of 10-13 feet,  
alongside some Roman burials. The Revd. Bryan Faussett, an enthusiastic antiquary of the late 18th  
century, mentions the existence in 1771 of more than 100 tumuli on Hanging Hill, in front of and  
between Bourne House, Bishopsbourne and the main road, most of which he uncovered, though  
these were Anglo-Saxon in date. Burials were also found on Side Hill above the road to  
Patrixbourne, while during the realigning of the turnpike road up Bridge Hill in 1829 a number of  
Romano-British urns and earthen vessels were discovered, with skeletons and fragments of  
  
weapons, at a greater depth than the Saxon graves. There is no doubt more to be found, especially if  
one is to be guided by aerial photography.  
  
One particular site that shows up well on such photographs among other mysterious marks  
deserving further investigation is that of "Old England's Hole". This is a very nearly circular,  
though much disturbed and dug—over, hollow about 90 metres in diameter in the field overlooking  
Bourne House, half—way up Bridge Hill. It is enclosed by a low embankment, much degraded now,  
but suggesting that the structure is more than a mere chalkpit. The fact also that it is cut through by  
the Roman road suggests that it is of greater antiquity. This has led to the popular supposition that it  
represents a defensive position constructed by the ancient Britons to protect the river-crossing after  
  
their defeat on Barham Down in 54 AD by Caesar's seventh legion. (cf CG Harper, The Ingoldsby  
Country, 1904, pp63—66).  
  
Village origins  
  
At this point then, where there is a natural obstruction across the road, a bridge almost certainly  
existed, probably in Roman times, or even before. The name itself is first recorded in 1086 in  
Domesday, as brige, a word whose etymology suggests a wooden structure. Such a name also  
implies of course that the river was often enough sufficiently deep to offer, on its own,  
inconvenience at the very least to those attempting to cross. A bridge is after all a costly thing to  
build and maintain. Such evidence as there is suggests that the stream would have run until  
relatively recently more or less permanently from the spring just above Bourne Lake: the map  
issued by Andrews, Drury and Herbert in 1769 marks a point nearby as ‘Stour Head’. The settlement  
of Bridge presumably took its name from the structure, even if previously there were some kind of  
habitations near the crossing. It is true that William Lambarde, in his Perambulation of Kent of  
1576, does not mention this Nailbourne bridge in his catalogue of Kent bridges, but the ones he  
thought worthy of note were probably all stone-built. This one was surely not.  
  
However, what is particularly notable about Domesday is that a settlement called Bridge is not  
identified. Patrixbourne, Bishopsbourne, Bekesbourne all are listed as distinct villages or hamlets  
(all perhaps part of the manor of ’Great' Bourne, as opposed to Littlebourne), yet Bridge is not.  
Instead, the word is used to identify the Hundred or administrative district within which these places  
are located: that is, it is the structure across the stream that gives its name to the whole district, the  
most noteworthy feature for some miles around. Any dwellings associated with it were presumably  
  
to be included in one of the nearby villages, most probably Patrixbourne, since, as Hasted remarks,  
"The church of Bridge. . . was always esteemed as a chapel to the church of Patricksborne. . ." It is  
not clear whether references subsequent to Domesday, as Brygge (ca 1100) and somewhat later as  
Bregge (1235), indicate the village as opposed to the bridge on the stream, though by then the ﬂint-  
built church of St Peter must have been erected, for even today, in spite of the very considerable  
rebuilding it underwent in 1859/61 as the gift of Mrs Mary Gregory of Bridge Hill House, Norman  
elements in the church are still visible, in the West door for instance. A church would not have been  
built without a congregation to serve. The church may indeed have been erected even nearer the  
stream than now appears, for the water has been evidently diverted from its original and natural  
course, most probably by Sir Arnold Braems when he built Bridge Place. Recent ﬂooding patterns  
may support this view. An additional complication lies in the fact that for at least some of the period  
in the early Middle Ages the Roman road was probably not the main thoroughfare from Canterbury  
towards Dover. That status must be accorded to the Pilgrims‘ Way, which ran through the Barton  
Estate to Hode Lane and crossed the Nailbourne at Patrixbourne, before climbing the hill towards  
Barham Down. It is possible therefore that at this period there was no longer a bridge at Bridge, and  
how much traffic along this road there was during this period must be a matter of speculation.  
  
The origins of the village nevertheless lie in its dependency on the road, and the passage of  
travellers. For most of its existence it has consisted of a single street, whose buildings were very  
largely devoted to supplying the needs and wants of passers-by, in terms of both food and drink,  
and in the appurtenances of travel — a blacksmith, saddler, shoemaker, and so on. And although in  
recent years these travellers passed largely without stopping any longer, but merely causing such  
congestion and disturbance that a by-pass was eventually built in 1974, over the centuries the Street  
has seen the passage of virtually anyone en route to the Continent Via Dover. Merchants, aristocrats  
and kings have all passed through Bridge. John Harris, in his History of Kent of 1719, enumerates  
various encampments of prodigious numbers on Barham Down, all of whom will have seen Bridge.  
He cites, for instance, King John, in 1212, with 60,000 men in readiness to oppose a French  
invasion. Henry V returning from Agincourt to Calais and Dover in 1415 may well have passed  
  
through the village, as did Henry VIII on his way to encamp on Barham Down before embarking  
for the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. And the Downs have more recently seen no less  
  
numerous and well-attested assemblies of armies. In August 1799 for instance, at the height of an  
  
invasion scare during the Napoleonic wars, more than 10,000 infantrymen encamped on Barham  
  
Down. All had come through Bridge from Canterbury, as the Kentish Gazette reports:  
  
The immense train of farmer's and artillery waggons, employed in conveying the troops and baggage, ammunition,  
military and other stores, and provisions, towards the camp, adding the numerous carriages filled with officers and other  
  
passengers; these together have produced a scene of populousness and traffic in this ancient city, which has not been  
beheld by its inhabitants since the days of St Thomas Becket.  
  
Some months earlier, in preparation for this inﬂux, Dr Wardell, physician to the forces and  
quartered in Bridge, was looking for a 'roomy house or other sort of building. . .to be used for a  
Regimental Hospital‘.  
  
How much more so, then, were the crowds in the narrow street of Bridge on the way to the trenches  
of the first World War and no doubt on many other occasions too. All these have passed through  
Bridge. In 1914-18 the ‘Reading Room’, as it then was, doubled as a canteen and rest centre, and the  
chemist's register for the period revives the perception of Bridge as a medical centre as it records  
the numerous military personnel who visited the doctor, including General Haig and Lord Kitchener  
— who also famously sent his first telegram of the War from Bridge Post Office, though this was  
  
probably not from the building we now know. The Post Office then was at Mr Price the Grocer's —  
at present Skipper's Restaurant.  
  
Growth and Development  
  
Bridge is thus not a charcteristic mediaeval nuclear village, housing the tenants of smallholdings  
radiating from its centre, nor yet is it part of any great estate, and dependent on it, albeit in later  
years it has been surrounded by great houses, notably Bourne, Bridge Place, Higham and Bifrons,  
all of whose owners have played their part in its development, though it is only Bridge Place itself  
which lies in the parish. For most of its existence its inhabitants have numbered but a very few  
hundred: the late 18”‘ century saw a few new cottages (’Brook Place’) in Brewery Lane, 1852 the  
development of Union, Deering (sic, but Sir Edward Cholmeley Dering was elected MP for East  
Kent at this time) and Filmer Roads, the later 19”" century a gradual extension along the Street  
towards Canterbury. But only in the last half-century has there been any serious expansion, with the  
development of Bridge Down (1962), Western Avenue (1963) and Riverside Close (1965). At the  
outset of the 19m century the entire parish population (including outlying farms) by census in 1801  
was 325. By 1831 it had reached 543, and by 1841 a total of 817, of whom however no fewer than  
165 were inmates of the recently established (1835) workhouse, which was built to serve 25  
parishes around Canterbury. The previous parish workhouse of course was obliged to cater for the  
poor of Bridge only. The village population reached a peak of 941 in 1871 and then ﬂuctuated,  
reaching a low point of 699 in 1921 as agricultural employment diminished. Numbers rose again  
slowly to 761 in 1961, which is when the face of Bridge began to change irrevocably, with the  
demolition of the most notable building in the centre, the essentially early 14”" century Bridge Farm,  
a year or two later. lts replacement by streets of undistinguished modern housing resulted in a  
population in 1971 of 1225. By the Millennium it has reached close on 2000.  
  
Bridge village emerges from mediaeval obscurity  
for the first time in Philip Symonson's map of Kent  
of 1596. The road to Dover as the principal route  
from Canterbury is by now clearly established, and  
the right-angled bend of the river past the church  
very obvious, even if the presence of a bridge is  
somewhat uncertain (unlike the well-marked bridge  
at Littlebourne to the north-east). Two other features  
are of note. The site of Bridge Place is labelled  
"Blakmasbery" (ie Blackmansbury), and there is a  
post—windmill placed on the edge of the hill to the  
south, alongside a road (Kingsbury Road)  
overlooking the village, north-east of the main road.  
  
Manor and Village  
  
The manor of Blackmansbury, first mentioned in  
1254, and about 62 acres in extent in 1384, was  
once part of the possessions of St Augustine's  
Abbey in Canterbury. The name therefore seems to pre-date that of the nearby village, though by  
the end of the 16th century the latter is large and important enough to warrant a place on Symonson's  
map. According to Hasted, upon the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII ownership of the  
manor was granted in 1545 to Henry Laurence, whose son John passed it in 1576 to William  
Partherich. Harris offers a slightly different succession, asserting that the manor belonged to Sir  
Alexander de Cheyney in Edward 1's reign. Both agree however that in 1638 Partherich's (or  
Patrick's) grandson Edward sold the estate to (Sir) Arnold Braems (1602-1681), who soon  
afterwards built Bridge Place on the site of the old Court Lodge. Sir Arnold's father, a Fleming by  
birth, was a Dover merchant in Charles 1's time. At the Restoration Arnold was elected MP for  
Dover and knighted very shortly after. The family pursued a commercial career with such  
enthusiasm that they had soon bought up much of Dover waterfront, covered it with warehouses  
  
(destroyed in a ﬁre in 1808), and thus largely controlled the Harbour Board, its tolls and customs  
and movement of goods.  
  
Sir Arnold rather ambitiously devoted  
his fortune to the construction of a  
magniﬁcent house, rectangular in shape,  
nine bays by seven, with a central  
courtyard, second only in size in East  
Kent to Chilham Castle, and described  
by Philipot in 1659 as 'complete'. But by  
the time of the death of his son Walter in  
1692 the fortune was dissipated, and the  
property obliged to be sold in 1704 to  
John Taylor of Bifrons in Patrixbourne.  
He immediately demolished a large part  
of it, leaving just one corner, in which  
state it remains today, though still the  
largest house in the village. A second  
manor, not indicated on the map, was  
that of Bereacre, or Great and Little Barakers (according to Hasted), in the south-west of the parish.  
  
Its location and extent are not clear, though by the mid 16”‘ century it had come into the hands of  
the Nailors of Renville.  
  
‘ Adriaen Ocker, detail from Bridge Place, Kent, late 1670's  
  
   
  
The Windmill  
  
Bridge windmill, situated conveniently on the scarp of Side Hill in Symonson's map, served the  
  
village for a further 200 years. It is documented in the Kentish Gazette of 26-30 May 1786 when  
‘On Saturday last was committed to St Dunstan's gaol . . John Kent, of this city, miller, charged on the oath of John  
  
Pilcher, of Bridge, miller and baker, with having stolen out of his mill in the Parish of Patrixbourne, a bag, containing  
upwards of one hundred weight of wheaten ﬂour. . .'  
  
and again in 1808 when  
  
‘the mill belonging to John Fagg, on Bridge Hill, was broke open’  
  
It is still recorded in this position on a map of about 1825/6, but possibly earlier, for in July 1818  
the mill was advertised for sale, but with a proviso:  
  
‘To be sold. . .a CORN WINDMILL. . .standing. . .on a piece ofland at Bridge Hill. . . now in the occupation ofMr  
John Fagg, miller. The said corn windmill and storehouse must be taken down and removed by the purchaser, on or  
before the sixth April next. . .  
  
In 1830, however, at the same time as Bifrons was sold (to the  
Marquis of Conyngham), an agreement was drawn up for the sale of  
‘Three Corner Meadow‘ (at the junction of Union Road and Mill  
Lane,) together With ‘all that com windmill and other the buildings then lately  
erected and built on said land by. . . James Ashenden'. Whether this Was a new  
mill — it was certainly a smock mill, rather than a post-mill - or the  
old one in a new position is not certain, but there the mill stayed  
throughout the 19”‘ century, overseen from the mill house a few yards  
down Union Road, until wind power was abandoned in 1907. By  
1933 the site was in use as a coal yard while the mill itself steadily  
decayed, until it was eventually demolished in October 1954. One of  
  
Messrs Corrall's oil storage tanks now rests on the mill's old brick  
base.  
  
   
  
Sir Arnold Braems  
  
Sir Arnold Braems maintained extensive contacts in London, where Pepys met him for meals at  
least three times in 1660 and 1661, and with the Continent. His wealth and position enabled him to  
entertain numerous visitors, amongst them the artist William Schellinks, who toured England from  
1661 to 1663, drawing the sights as he went. Schellinks’ journal records a deal of drinking, but also  
a game of bowls 'on the bowling green on the hill near Sir Arnold Braems' place‘, and he refers in  
enthusiastic detail to the deerpark, woods, rabbit warren, fruit trees, vineyard and the stream ‘in  
which a certain kind of ﬁsh called trout is bred’ (Harris too mentions trout at Bifrons). Schellinks  
  
 .. .. \_, , ..i, . ................... incidentally also notes on 6  
  
i October 1661 'a general  
muster of seven or eight  
companies of the militia . .  
.on the hill above  
Bishopsbourne. . . each  
company 200 men strong.’  
  
   
  
Among scenes that caught  
his interest here are  
sketches of the gardens of  
Bridge Place, and two  
wider perspectives: a view  
« \_ p of Bridge from the top of  
 ,. .\_\_\_.\_\_m i; M; .: ;' . " s I Town Hill across the  
Willem Schellinks: Bridge Street, 1661 .© Courtauld Institute Valley, and a View of the  
Street from a point at the bottom of Bridge Hill. This latter is particularly interesting, for the White  
Horse Inn is clearly identiﬁable, with its sign hanging out over the street, and a horseman waiting  
outside, as well as Bridge Farmhouse, and in the foreground the Bridge itself at last: two low brick  
arches under the dirt road and marked by two big wooden posts. To the side, for those wishing to  
water their horses or to cool the metal rims of their cart or carriage wheels after the steep descent of  
either of the hills on each side, there is a wide water-splash. The bridge itself was rebuilt and  
widened in the latter part of the 18”‘ century, though retaining the two neat arches, and these may  
still be seen by anyone prepared to Venture into the river—bed when it is dry. The water—splash too  
  
remained until well into the 20m century, before the road was widened again to accommodate the  
demands of modern traffic densities.  
  
The Roads  
  
The street was of course not tarred until the mid-20"‘ century, probably when the water—splash was  
covered, though Harris describes the Roman Military Way from Canterbury to Dover ‘about three-  
quarters of a mile before you come to Bridge-Street‘ as appearing ‘entire and high, and continues so almost to the  
Town's End; as it doth beyond it again on Barham Down‘. Even in the early 20”‘ century however the passage  
of traffic inevitably resulted in clouds of dust in a dry summer, and muddied ruts in winter. Such  
conditions must surely have often made life intolerable when large numbers of soldiers, for  
instance, were passing through on their way to Barham. A graphic illustration of winter conditions  
is provided by Charles Dickens in Ch 2 of A Tale of Two Cities. He refers to Shooter's Hill, and the  
  
year is 1775, but it might as well be Bridge Hill in the same period, where the Roman Road was not  
so much in evidence:  
It was the Dover Road. . .He walked uphill in the mire by the side of the mail, as the rest of the passengers did; not  
  
because they had the least relish for walking exercise, under the circumstances, but because the hill, and the harness,  
  
and the mud, and the mail, were all so heavy, that the horses had three times already come to a stop, besides once  
drawing the coach across the road. . .  
  
With drooping heads and tremulous tails, they mashed their way through the thick mud, ﬂoundering and stumbling  
between whiles, as ifthey were falling to pieces at the largerjoints. . .  
  
Both hills, on either side of the village, were perhaps not quite so muddy, but they were steeper than  
they are now. Signiﬁcant is perhaps the name 'Stickfast Hill‘ attached to the slope down towards  
Bridge from the Gate Inn into Gutteridge Bottom.  
  
On December 23 1769 the Kentish Gazette noted that  
  
‘some public—spirited Gentlemen intend to petition Parliament for a Turnpike Act for the road from Dover—lane in  
Canterbury to the Half-way House leading to Dover over Barham-downs, and that the gate will be erected opposite the  
mile—stone near St. Lawrance.'  
  
The following week it records that the proposal met with universal approval, since ‘how it has  
remained in its present neglected condition is something very strange’. It was another 21 years  
however before the Act was passed, the Gazette meanwhile from time to time recording incidents of  
  
road accidents and highway robbery. In 1791 however Parliament was presented with  
An Act for making a new Road from St George's gate in the City of Canterbury, to a Place called Gutteridge Bottom,  
and for repairing and widening the present Road from thence to the Dover Turnpike Road in the Parish of Barham. . .  
  
Whereas the Road. . . is in a ruinous condition and in several parts narrow and inconvenient for passengers and  
carriages. . .  
  
1 . .  
In the same year, on June 6”, notice was given  
  
That the Turnpike Gate, now standing in Bridge street will be removed, on Monday next, the 13th instant, to the end of  
the New Road next Bridge, and that HENRY BEAR is appointed by the Trustees to receive the Tolls at the said gate on  
and after that day. And the next meeting of the Trustees will be holden at the sign of the Star, without St. George's Gate,  
Canterbury, on Friday the 17”‘ instant, to take into consideration the improvement of the road up Bridge—hill.  
  
The Act enabled the construction of the New Dover Road, which was however only completed by  
about 1800, and enabled the Trustees to buy up land adjoining the road from there to Barham for  
widening, including  
  
‘certain Gardens, Orchards, and Yards, situate in Bridge Street, the Property of the Reverend Edward Taylor Clerk,  
Stephen Beckingham Esquire, Henry Crosoer, Henry Farley, Thomas Abree Pickering, - — -Nash, and Thomas Neal  
  
respectively, in the respective Occupations of Richard Jarvis, John Cooper, Robert Kingsland, Robert Osborn, Samuel  
  
Relvey, James Aylward, the said Henry Crosoer, Joseph Dixon, George Fortune, Joseph Best, Mary Peake, and - — —  
Lawrence’  
  
This list thus neatly enumerates most of the owners and occupiers of property in the Street. Some of  
these names are still familiar in the ﬁrst census (1841) to identify individuals - Jarvis the butcher,  
Crosoer the farmer, while William Nash the watchmaker was there already in 1769 and Edward  
Taylor was the owner of Bifrons and several properties on both sides of the Street.  
  
The Act also specifies the dues and tolls to be collected: coaches with 4 or more horses one shilling,  
a single horse 3d; horses laden or unladen ld; cattle 10d per score, sheep and pigs 5d per score.  
Carriages and wagons with broad wheels to pay only half tolls - which reﬂects their relative lack of  
damage to the road. Exemptions were available for election days, road repairers, dung or manure  
carriers, hay, undried hops, farm implements, mails, soldiers, farmers or servants residing in  
Patrixbourne, Bridge, Bishopsbourne, Kingston and Barham. There was to be no parking on the  
road, nor any structure erected within 6 yards of the centre line. All this seems perhaps very  
familiar. Familiar too was the fact that due to objections of various sorts, the toll road up Bridge  
Hill was not completed until 1829/30, a full 60 years after it was first suggested!  
  
As a result of the turnpike roadworks both hills into Bridge were regraded to lessen the incline  
  
down into the village and smooth out the slope. Consequently the descent into Dering Road (which  
was originally no more than a footpath) had to be made steep, and Surmyside found itself  
  
overlooked by a new embankment. Recent excavations outside the Post Office suggest that a layer  
of chalk rubble up to two feet thick was also laid down along the Street. At the other end of the  
village not only was the gradient evened and lessened, but the road itself was shifted a few feet to  
the north-east: the line of the old road can be gauged by extending the line of the churchyard wall  
up the hill. The result is that the road runs on an embankment until it cuts into Old England's Hole  
(rather less than before), then it drops into a cutting until it reaches the brow of the hill, where  
  
levelling takes it on to a fairly high embankment into Bishopsbourne Parish. In the course of  
digging the cutting, again some Roman skulls were said to have been found ﬁve feet below the  
surface.  
  
Other changes have taken place in the road layout as Bridge has expanded. Probably in conjunction  
with the rebuilding of Bridge Hill in 1830 the ancient Kingsbury Road past the old mill, represented  
on Symonson’s map and apparently 9 feet wide (and part of which still exists as the path behind the  
wood above Side Hill from the top of Keepers Hill in Patrixbourne to the south-westwards), was  
stopped, more or less where the by-pass now cuts through. It would once have gone on across  
Bridge Hill and down the ﬁeld to join the very old hollow way past Flint Cottages. Maybe the new  
owners of Bridge Hill House felt it to be an intrusion on their property. Some years earlier, in 1816,  
similar considerations had no doubt prompted Edward Taylor of Bifrons to close the principal road  
to Patrixbourne (Laundry Lane, alias Conyngham Lane), which ran past his front door, and to  
replace it with a new road round the outside of his estate, from his lodge in Patrixbourne and the  
junction with Hode Lane, north and west to the present crossroads at the top of Town Hill —  
Bekesbourne Road. Laundry Lane as a public right of way thus became a cul-de-sac, with Bifrons  
laundry at the end. Union Road led at first merely to the mill, but came into its own with the  
construction of the Workhouse in 1835 and the development of housing adjacent to it, from 1853  
onwards, in Filmer Road, Dering Road and Union Square. The extension of the road beyond the  
Workhouse to the mill was designated Union Lane. Western Avenue and its Closes of course came  
into existence only after the demolition of Bridge Farm in 1962. Further south, Brewery (or  
Brewhouse or Brandy, or originally Malthouse) Lane is rather older. It formed the original access to  
Arnold Braems‘ mansion, ﬂanked by ‘a noble avenue of limes‘; and received its modern name more  
mundanely following the establishment of the malthouse that was the origin of the Plough and  
Harrow public house. Its continuation across the ford to Pett Farm as Mill Lane is recorded on the  
Ordnance Survey map of 1801. Bourne Park Road was until after 1945 a private road to Bourne  
House, gated at both ends. At least one of the gateposts survived into the 1970's. The remaining  
track of signiﬁcance in the parish to the south of the Dover Road is the rather prosaically named  
  
Pett Bottom Road, which links the three Pett farms to the village. It has remained largely unchanged  
over the centuries.  
  
On the other side of the street the only property in Bridge parish on the Patrixbourne Road (‘School  
Lane‘) was the appropriately named Brookside. The school (built in 1849) and the gasworks (1859)  
were actually in Patrixbourne. Finally, in 1866 a scheme was proposed to cut a road between the  
White Horse Inn and the butcher's along the line of a public footpath. But only the ﬁrst few yards  
were built, to give better access to the slaughterhouse behind the butcher. It was not until a hundred  
years later that housing was built on that land, now called Riverside Close. On the brow of the hill  
above the village to the south Bridge Down was built on part of the estate belonging to Bridge Hill  
House, some of which, fronting on to the Hill had already been sold off in the 19”" century. At the  
northern end of the village the properties on Bekesbourne Road lie outside the old boundary.  
  
:1‘;-1 :3; $55” 15,, 5 In 1675 John Ogilby published a map or  
"gun:-non: in . I 5’ - -  
  
§;.:......% ~.:3%«,.x.,..a.u.ii.\_i.-~ ‘E?’ "" ” itinerary of the road from London to Dover.  
 Bridge unfortunately happens to lie on the  
 .5’:’.¢\*;..~.<§.-u~:2‘:.».~;§.m end of a section of the continuous ribbon  
 P\*""é which characterises Ogilby's method, but  
3% :  
  
there are still several points if interest and  
indeed mystery here. Braems‘ Bridge Place is  
clearly indicated, as is St Peter's church. The  
fenced expanse of Sir Anthony Aucher's (ie  
  
   
  
ll'llil  
  
   
  
Bourne) Park is also shown. But the village appears to be called Bishops Court - or is that the name  
  
of the bridg(e)‘? There is also a strange property, within the bounds of the park, called The  
  
Grayhound, apparently on the site of the lodge erected by Matthew Bell of Bourne, at the junction  
  
of Bourne Park Road.  
  
A Parish Register of Accounts  
  
A surviving register of parish accounts for the years 1673-1740 lists the landowners and tenants  
  
paying the parish rate in May 1675, as also those outdwellers, ie outside the parish, who were  
  
nevertheless liable for land they owned within it. Arnold Braems and Anthony Aucher are thus  
  
listed, as is Thomas Baker ( who owned Bridge Farm), as major landowners. Other names, such as  
  
Hopkins, May, Eldredge, Ovenden, Castle and Pilcher are well attested in the census returns of  
  
1841-91, some even in the present day. Robert Bargrave's family built the original Bifrons and  
  
numbered among its members a notable Dean of the cathedral, and the collector of the ‘cabinet of  
  
curiosities’ from his travels on the Continent of Europe, John Bargrave, who is buried in  
  
Patrixbourne St Mary's church. Some of these names indeed (Ovenden, Eldredge, Philpot) are  
  
T " " T A A 2, recorded in the early years of Bridge parish registers  
of baptisms and marriages, which begin in 1579.  
  
An Asaeemf made ye 123" day or May, Anna 1675. By  
eymm Maren e: iidrden dr Dredge; in ye Diocese of  
Canterbury, for, & towards ye reparations of Chappel, Steeple,  
dc reneee &c. at ye rate of Sixpence tr Acre. viz.  
  
John Eldredge ~»—~~—X~——~— O04 » 0 — O2 —  
  
Out Dwellers, viz. . cres L 5  
The sum? or Leicester, 3; s’ Anni? Aucher  
  
s’ Anthony Aucher xi re Barre?‘ .\_x\_\_... 052 — i 7 O6 -  
For ya farine in Bredge Stree’(rX012 W o — 06  
Thomas Baker sen‘ For Ovendens farme ‘reap.-. oaa -. i e 04 »  
  
For ya furme cdetie us‘d—X4—— oso 1 W 10 —.~  
  
strongly suggests a wayside inn. Equally mysterious  
is perhaps the 16”‘ century property in the centre of  
the Street, known now as The Ship. This too was by  
  
003 0 ~04 —'  
  
For woodland ——.——..\_x....\_.\_ 009 ~— 0 04 V  
  
repute once an inn, though its more recent recorded  
  
0 Drinking Opportunities  
wners Occupiers Acres 11 s d \_ \_ \_  
jilfrnolg Time K? ——————— v—« ————— ~-4;»--—— 3:0 2 -0: —o Within the parish there have been over the years  
‘P \_iam or soman A —~ ~ \* ' B 4‘ O--0 ~-0 \_ \_ . \_  
)"\_imm “hem mm — ~— r -— 012 ~ 0 -A or 0 seven erha s ei ht establishments deservin of this  
P  
13322:‘ §%::::::‘r::;::“ . .. , ear :. e.:.e2.:e ’ . . .  
' 31:33:; :::::::T\_4::' 33;“ 5- :3 jg name. The first in line comes to attention from  
 “'“““‘ ‘,i:;;‘;‘,';aj‘::“,,;\_,, ,§\_\_\_ 3;; 3 \_ ‘j: j 3 Ogilby’s map, where, clearly marked, is 'The  
 ,,,,, {§Z’SZ.i“Z:5Z§;;‘;‘ue.,sxil"’" 33? 3'. 2;?’ 2 Grayhourza", situated apparently on the site of the  
\_, 0 $3232: §C¥.....i,; ‘S3? 3 ii’ 3 lodge at the entrance to Bourne Park Road. This is the  
5 ’\*“° "“°\*““" {John Doolie .-. ....x-.. . 005 —. o —o3— o - -  
mm Hopkinp \_.x\_\_,.. 040 .. 1 —oo .. 0 only reference known so far to a building whose name  
3  
O  
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U  
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I  
  
M? Thomas Baker ~— Richard smith .--we-7 7- —x—-—— ~- 004-—» 0 ~02 -  
  
;,l\_i2‘;:,:::‘;:’ ,f’;::;§“f.:;:,j““,”°“ "iii: 3:‘; ,3 2'; 3: 1"; history designates it as Primrose Alley (recorded by a  
W" 5 §Z§,"§i§f,,”,ZZ”\_j \_. “X”; 333 . 3 T 3: 3 Weathered board nailed to the side wall until about  
  
(Wed-ii:.§7ZZ"e’.§ilf'§'hi;"ZZ;f§ \_T:§: 1998), in ltter years a row of four very down-at-heel  
  
George Butterris his . .  
  
::::e1i:::::n:iey. ::::r:1a::::::el/ice?\_v\_,,. labourers’ cottages, whose urchin children were  
  
ms M A ,..x-— avoided on parental order by the more respectable’  
  
(2, ,,,,,,,, youngsters of the village. Perhaps as the successor to  
The Grayhound we may see The Red Lion, on the  
corner of Patrixbourne Road and on the Dover side of  
  
the stream. The building (much altered since) is first recorded in 1593 and may well be older,  
though it was not until 1632 that Jacob Jarvis obtained a licence to sell ale there and gave the house  
its present name. In the following century, and into the 19th, it developed substantial stabling and  
livery facilities, and offering carriages and other vehicles for private hire, as well as providing  
stabling for horses entered for the Canterbury Race meetings. It was also the first location for  
Bridge fire engine, though this soon moved across the road to the Plough and Harrow. This house  
was first built about a century after the Red Lion, in 1692, as a pair of cottages, but it was not until  
1785 when Thomas Williams 'maltster of Bridge’ took them over that they were converted into a  
malthouse with a dwelling attached. It is presumably some time after this date that the first part of  
the way to Bridge Place acquired the name of first Malthouse, then Brewhouse Lane. Only in 1832  
however did Williams‘ son acquire a beerhouse licence under the terms of the 1830 Beer Act, and  
thus began a business which by the 1860's recognised the house by the name it bears today.  
  
To this catalogue may also be added a later beerhouse (or off-licence) situated in one of the cottages  
(now No.5) in Dering Road and which survived into the 20”" century under the ownership of George  
Prickett (whose son Cyril took the Village Shop next to the Village Hall into the 1970's). The alley  
adjacent to this cottage still bears the graffiti of 1“ World War soldiers.  
  
Out in the country the Woodman ’s Arms at Pett Bottom served, as its name suggests, a certain  
section of the local population, and survives today as the Duck. At the other end of the old parish  
the Gate Inn owes its origin to the establishment of the tollgate there in 1791: its current signboard  
is regrettably wholly inappropriate. The sign of the White Horse is however thoroughly Kentish,  
and this house near the village centre is perhaps the oldest of all, though its history is not well  
researched. This has a late mediaeval core, though perhaps the earliest extant reference, from the  
late 16”‘ century, is held in the Cathedral Archives, which records a brawl here involving one  
Christopher Applegate, a Marlowe contemporary. An (as yet undeciphered) inscription above one  
of the fireplaces seems to be early 16”‘ century, and there is Tudor stonework as well. An Indenture  
of June 15‘ 1668 refers to the sale of the property by Sir Arnold Braems to Sir Anthony Aucher. At  
the time William Ford seems to have been the tenant. A month or two later (23 July 1668) John  
Cooley, butcher, comes into the picture, again probably as tenant. All these names appear in the  
extract from the Parish accounts above. The White Horse then remained in the hands of the  
descendants of Sir Anthony and subsequent owners of Bourne Place (including the Beckinghams)  
until it was eventually sold at the end of the 18”‘ century. Unlike the Red Lion which provided  
private stabling and livery, the White Horse was the public posting house (and consequently post-  
office) up until the latter part of the 19”" century. It was the venue for the first meeting of the  
Guardians of the workhouse on 22 April 1835 and (like many other such houses) was used for  
  
property sales and suchlike. In the late 18th century it was also the venue for meetings of gardening  
  
enthusiasts - early precursors of the Horticultural Society:  
To the FLORISTS.  
  
On Wednesday the 20"‘ ofthis Instant [April 1774] will be an AURICULA FEAST, at Mrs [Sarah] GILBERT'S, at the  
WHITE HORSE, at BRIDGE. Every ﬂower entitled to a Prize must have six Pips. The first Flower to be intitled to  
  
FIFTEEN SHILLINGS. . . No ﬂower to be intitled to a Prize unless it be in the House before Dinner. . . No person to  
  
win two Prizes. The ﬂowers to be shewn at Four o'clock in the Afternoon. A good Ordinary on Table at Two o'Clock,  
and every Shewer of Flowers to be at Dinner, or have no Right to shew his Flower.  
  
Five years earlier, in 1769 Mrs Gilbert was serving ’a good Twelvepenny Ordinary at One o'Clock'.  
  
More exciting fare was also available here. The Gazette for June 2-6 1772 advertises  
COCK—FIGHTlNG  
  
At JOHN PALMER's, the WHITE HORSE at BRIDGE: To show Twenty-one Cocks on each side; to Weigh on  
TUESDAY the 9”‘ of JUNE and to Fight on WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY for Four GUINEAS a Battle, and TEN  
  
the odd Battle. A Close Pit and a good Ordinary at One o'Clock each Day. ii A pair of Cocks to Fight before Dinner.  
  
The White Horse was by no means the only Public House in Bridge to offer Cock-fighting. Perhaps  
the most mysterious of all such establishments in the village was Bridge Hill House, known in the  
late 18”‘ century as the Horse and Groom. The Canterbury to Barham Turnpike Trustees were  
  
enjoined in the Act of 1791 to meet at The King's Head in Canterbury on the second Monday after  
the Act was passed, and then to  
  
Adjourn themselves to the Horse and Groom on Bridge Hill, and afterwards meet alternately at some publick Inn or  
tavern at Canterbury and Bridge, or alternatively at Canterbury and at any other Place near the said Road. . .  
  
Bridge Hill House was however much more the resort of the sporting fraternity in the late 18”" and  
early 19”‘ centuries. This was the period when Canterbury Races (on the course at Barham Down)  
were at their most popular. The races had begun in 1678: a hundred years later they were attracting  
vast crowds of people, including many fashionable gentry; in 1774 a ‘new stand‘ had been built to  
supplement the old one, affording extensive views of the racing and the surrounding countryside,  
  
but it was Bridge Hill House that was the administrative focus:  
The Horses, &c for the County and City Plates to enter at Bridge-hill House on the Thursday before running, between  
the Hours of Four and Six in the evening. . . No Person will be allowed to erect a Booth on the Downs, for the Sale of  
  
Liquors, in the Race Week [August], but what shall subscribe Ten Shillings and Sizpence. . .The great Main of Cocks  
will be fought every Day, during the Races, as usual. (Gazette, 1768).  
  
The Kemish Gazette in 1773 offered other attractions: horse racing was not confined to the official  
  
race-week in August. For many years there was a meeting also at Easter, but in addition  
  
On Monday next, being the first of February, Will be run a Match over the New Round Course on Barham Downs, one  
four—miles heat, for one hundred Guineas, between two Gentlemens horses - one is the Grey horse, that run twenty  
miles in an hour some time since on Barham Downs; the other a capital Hunter. To start exactly at Twelve o'clock  
Dinner will be ready at Bridge-Hill after the race is over.  
  
A subsequent report notes the result - evidently a surprise for the bookmakers:  
  
Such was the infatuated notions of the knowing ones in favour of grey and his rider, against dun and his rider, that soon  
after starting from two to one and so on as high as ten to one, was laid; but behold, grey was turned up, to the great  
disappointment of the learned, and the interest of those who knew nothing before hand. And on Thursday next we hear  
the grey horse is to run eighteen miles within the hour. . . a dinner will be provided at Bridge Hill house, as much  
company is expected on the occasion.  
  
And other sports were catered for: cock-ﬁghting, as mentioned above -  
  
At Bridge-Hill on Tuesday next the 16"‘ instant [March 1773] Bridge against Deal, to shew eleven cocks on each side,  
  
and ﬁght for Four Guineas a battle, and Six Guineas the Main. There will be a Battle before Dinner. Dinner will be  
ready at One o'clock.  
  
Nor was racing limited to horses. On June 26 1770 there was  
  
At Bridge Hill a match of running, between Twenty—four Gentlemen of the Chilham Club, and Twenty—four Gentlemen  
of East Kent; to meet at four o'clock, and strip exactly at five o'clock.  
  
While on Monday July 24 the previous year there was more intriguingly  
At Bridge-Hill a match of Running by Maids. To Strip at Five o'clock. They are desired to meet at Bridge-Hill on  
  
Saturday evening, at Six o'clock, to give in their names, and to run that night, that the Goals may be made equal on  
Monday.  
  
It is reported that the match was played ‘to the great satisfaction of a vast concourse of people’.  
Such ‘smock races’ (so called because the prize was usually a new smock or shift) were not  
uncommon in the south of England in the 18'“ century.  
  
The more mundane fact that the House was also a venue (as were most public houses) for auctions  
of property and real estate makes clear that the Horse and Groom was no misnomer. Its popularity  
  
as a resort for sporting types survived even its conversion into a private house when it was bought  
by the Baron De Montesquieu in 1793 (for £1500).  
  
Bridge Population statistics  
  
1801 325 1861  
1811 397 1871  
1821 432 1881  
1831 543 1891  
1841 817 1901  
1851 864 1911  
  
Bagshaw's Directory 1847  
  
Post Office at Mr Richard Sherrard's  
Andrews, Mrs Eleanor  
  
Beazley, Mrs S  
  
Bettison, Wm Geo :Gent  
  
Bing, Wm B :Commercia1 Traveller  
Boysack, Mrs D :Ladies bdg school  
Chapman, Mr Wm  
  
Colegate, Fdck :Carpenter & Builder  
Collard, Thomas :Tai1or  
  
F agg, Thomas :Blacksmith  
Fisenden, Peter :Gent  
  
Gambrill, Mr John  
  
Gregory, Rev Edward :Bridge Hill House  
Hardeman, Wm :Watch & Clockmaker & Parish Clerk  
  
Hills, Henry :Draper  
  
Johnson, Thomas :Corn Miller  
Lansberry, John :Gent  
  
Martin, John & Son :Saddlers  
Pittock, Wm :Gent  
  
Pratt, Lieut. David  
  
Richards, Wm :Schoo1master  
Sicard, A :Surgeon  
  
Thomas, James :Chemist  
Williams, Daniel :Shopkeeper  
Williams, Wm :Brewer & Beerhouse  
Winter, Capt. :Bridge Hill  
  
893  
941  
857  
850  
775  
823  
  
1921  
1931  
1951  
1961  
  
1971 1225  
1981 1272  
  
699  
713  
703  
761  
  
Inns and Taverns  
Red Lion:  
White Horse: Richard Sherrard  
  
Bakers  
  
Turner, Thomas  
Wills, Richard  
  
Boot & Shoemakers  
  
Robinson, Henry  
White, Thomas  
  
Butchers  
  
Farmers  
  
Brice, Richard :Bridge Place  
Huxstep, Wm  
Richardson, James  
  
Grocers  
  
Cozens, Richard  
Davis, Charles  
Lawrence, J & bricklayer  
  
Plumbers & Painters  
  
Hodges, Charles  
Jervis, Henry  
Jervis, Richard  
  
Sayer, Wm  
  
Verrier, Wm  
  
>l<\*>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<>l<  
  
Joseph Eyres  
  
1991  
  
Coach Directory 1821  
A List of all the Inns throughout the Metropolis from which the Mail and other Stage Coaches depart.  
  
To Canterbury, Dover and Paris &c  
  
Angel, St Clement’s, Strand Royal Mail  
Via Gravesend, Rochester, Chatham, Sittingboume, Ospringe, Faversham, Canterbury  
To London Hotel, Dover: depart Daily 7.30pm; Sunday 6.45pm  
Arrive 6.45am  
Return depart 6.30pm; arrive 5.30am  
Light Post Coach daily 6.30am and 5.30pm  
  
Paris (Mail) by way of Dover  
Tuesday & Friday l2at night  
  
Bell & Crown,Holborn  
To Ship Inn, Dover daily 6.45am; 5.45pm  
Arr in 10 hours  
  
Old Bell, Holborn Union Coach  
Thro’ Deal, Ramsgate, Margate & Canterbury  
To Union Hotel, Dover daily 7.00am; 6.00pm  
  
Arrive 12 hours  
  
Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill Light Coaches  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Chatham & Rochester  
Daily 7.30am; 6.00pm  
  
Bell, Bell Yard, Gracechurch Street Union Coach  
Dover, Chatham, Rochester & Canterbury  
  
Daily 7.00am; 7.00pm  
  
Blossoms Inn, Lawrence Lane, Cheapside Post Coach  
  
Canterbury  
Daily 7.00pm; arr 4.00am  
Return 8.00pm; arr 6.00am  
Dover daily 6.30pm; arr Union Hotel 6.00am  
Return 5.00pm; arr 5.00am  
  
Boar & Castle Inn and Oxford Hotel, 6 Oxford Street, near Tottenham Court Road  
  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Chatham, Rochester, Sittingbourne, Faversham &  
Gravesend. 6.45am  
  
Bull, Bishopsgate Street  
Dover Daily 7.00am; 6.30pm  
  
Bull, Leadenhall Street & Old Black Bear, Piccadilly  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate 8.00am; 6.00pm  
  
Cross Keys, Gracechurch Street  
  
Dover, Deal, Canterbury  
  
To Ship, Dover Daily 8.00am; 7.30pm  
Extra Coaches at any hour  
Paris, by Dover 8.00am 7.30pm  
Cross Keys, Wood Street, Cheapside Light Coach  
  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury  
Daily 7.00am; 8.00am; 6.30pm  
Paris (Diligence) by Dover Daily 8.O0a1n 6.00pm  
  
George, Borough  
Deal, Dover, Canterbury, Faversham, Ramsgate, Margate  
Daily 7.00am; 7.00pm  
George and Blue Boar, Holborn  
Dover, thro’ Dartford, Gravesend, Rochester, Chatham, Sittingbourne, Canterbury  
  
Daily 6.30am  
To Ship, Dover arr 7.00pm  
Return 7.30am; arr7.00pm  
George & Gate, Graceehurch Street  
Dover, Deal, l\/largate Daily 7.00am; 6.00pm  
Golden Cross, Charing Cross  
Canterbury Daily 7.00am; 8.00am 7.00pm  
To Rose Inn 10 hours  
Dover, Margate, Ramsgate, Deal & Canterbury  
Daily 7.00am; 8.00am 7.00p1n  
  
To Ship lnn, Dover 12 hours  
Extra carriages always ready for families and parties  
Paris (Diligencies of the Messageries Royales) by Calais or Dieppe &c  
  
Daily 7.00am 8.00am 7.00pm  
No.4 Gracechurch Street  
  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Faversham, Chatham & Rochester  
Daily 7.00am; 8.00am  
  
No.11 Gracechurch Street  
Deal, Dover & Canterbury (Union Coach)  
  
Daily 7.30am; 6.30pm  
  
Saracen’s Head, Snow Hill  
  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Faversham, Chatham, Rochester & Gravesend  
Daily 6.00am l2noon 6.00pm  
  
Shepherd’s Original Office, No. 90, Bishopsgate Within, and No. 35 Camomile Street  
Deal, Dover & Paris Daily 7.00am 6.30pm  
  
Margate, Ramsgate & Canterbury Daily 7.00am 6.30pm  
  
Ship, Charing Cross  
  
Canterbury Daily 7.45am 6.45pm  
Dover, Deal, Margate, Ramsgate, Canterbury, Faversham, Chatham, Rochester  
Daily 8.00am  
Spread Eagle, Gracechurch Street  
Canterbury Daily 8.00am 6.00pm  
To Rose, Canterbury in 8 hours  
Dover Daily 8.00am 7.30pm  
To London Hotel Dover arr 6.00pm 8.00am  
Return 7.00am 5.00pm  
Arr 9.00pm 7.00am  
Paris, by Dover Daily 8.00am 7.30pm  
Swan with Two Necks  
Paris (New Light Diligence), by Dover Daily 7.00am  
Rochester, Canterbury, Ramsgate & Dover (Telegraph) Daily 7.30  
White Bear, Piccadilly  
  
Canterbury, Chatham, Rochester Daily 7.00am; 8.00am; 6.30pm  
  
White Bear. Piccadilly  
  
Dover (Union Coach) Daily 7.00am; 6.30pm  
Dover (Safe Coach) Daily 8.00am  
To the Union and York Hotels  
Paris Daily 7.00am 8.00am 6.30pm  
  
White Horse, Fetter Lane  
  
Canterbury Daily (nearly all hours)  
To the Fountain and King’s Head Inn  
  
Dover & Deal Nearly at all hours,  
To King’s Arms and York Hotel, Dover  
  
Paris (Royal Mail) Wed. and Saturday 2.00am  
Other mornings 6.00am  
  
(Cary’s New Itinerary, 9”" edn 1821)  
  
Gazette Extracts  
  
Houses that are no more. . .  
  
27 December 1768: Friday evening, between ﬁve and six, a ﬁre broke out at Mr Henry Simmons,  
Weaver, at Bridge, which intirely consumed his workshop, with an adjacent building, in which were  
stowed 150 pieces of hop-bagging, but by the timely assistance of the neighbouring inhabitants, the hop  
bagging was saved from the ﬂames. This unhappy accident was occasioned by the candle setting ﬁre to  
some loose pieces oftow in the loom.  
  
This was as nothing compared with the sums claimed elsewhere. . .  
  
26 August 1791] To be let. A Mansion house called Bridge Place, now in the occupation of William  
Hougham Esq. Jun. Consisting of an eating parlour 22 by 18‘/2, a drawing room 22 by 17, and a small  
room,; on the second ﬂoor, good bedrooms; and four garrets etc. [again in 1793]  
  
Advice to the Ladies  
  
Never sit between two windows open, or a door and window, to play at cards. This short hint may save  
the life of many a good Card—Player. I have sneezed above a thousand times from so sitting, and would  
not do it again to get two sole voles in a night. An ingenious author says, if a man gets a fever by  
drinking and dies, he dies of drinking, and should be put down so in the bills of mortality; so ifa Lady  
dies ofa cold caught at quadrille, she dies of quadrille, [1768]  
  
On Friday next will be played in Bourn Paddock, a MATCH OF CRICKET between the Gentlemen of  
Surrey and the Bourn Club, for a large sum The last match was thought to be as good a match as was  
ever played. [August 1768]  
  
15 August 1772] On Wednesday next the 19”‘ instant, will be played in Bourn Paddock the long and  
great depending match of cricket, the Gentlemen of Hampshire against all England; the wickets to be  
pitched at ten o’clock, and the match to be played out. There is a large commodious stand for  
gentlemen, and a ﬁne ordinary as usual, there will be a large Ring made, and it is hoped that no one  
will, out of the great company expected, encroach upon the noble players.. . .[18 August] At the cricket  
match to be played in Bourne Paddock tomorrow, is expected the greatest company ever met on such  
an occasion; amongst whom will be the Duke of Dorset, the Duke of Richmond, the gentlemen of the  
county and much company of rank and distinction. Sir Horace Man has made great preparations at  
Bourne house, and a long range of booth are erected in the paddock for the reception of the spectators.  
[21 August 1772]. . . The concourse of spectators is incredible, and a computation can scarcely be  
formed, but there were supposed to be in the ﬁeld on the ﬁrst day's sport between 15 and 20,000  
  
people, among whom were several noblemen, the principal gentlemen of the county, and otherpersons  
of rank and distinction. [scores given — England won by 2 wickets]  
  
24 July 1769: Monday next July 24 will be run At Bridge-Hill, A match of running by Maids. To strip  
at ﬁve o’clock. They are desired to meet at Bridge—Hill on Saturday evening, at six o’clock to give in  
their names, and to run that night that the Goals may be made equal on Monday.  
  
[later] On Monday evening the match of running by young women was played upon barham Downs, to  
the great satisfaction ofa vast concourse of people.  
  
28 June 1770: This present evening will be run at Bridge Hill a match at running between twenty-four  
gentlemen of the Chilham Club, and twenty—four gentlemen of East Kent, to meet at four o’clock, and  
strip exactly at ﬁve o’clock. It is expected to be a ﬁne match, as both parties are determined to set  
every stroke aside, that does not appear remarkably clear. . . . . (won 7-3 by chilham) There was a very  
numerous appearance of genteel company, who were well entertained with the sport of the day, and  
what added to the general satisfaction was, that the whole match was won without a single dispute.. . .  
  
We hear that on Monday the 18"‘ inst. [July] there will be a match of running on Barham Downs,  
between young women, twelve or ﬁfteen on a side. The meeting to be at Bridge—Hill, at 4 o’clock in the  
afternoon on that day, or on the ﬁrst day afterwards that the weather will permit; ——- great diversion,  
and much Company are expected. We hear likewise, as a reward to those who shall have the best of the  
  
match, that twelve shifts will be given them by the gentry &c. [again on August 15' — unless this was  
the ﬁrst clear dayl]  
  
A local spat in 1769:  
  
[August] William Nash Clock and watch maker at Bridge  
  
Begs leave to inform the publick, that the servitude of his brother, John Nash, is now dissolved.  
Therefore what watches he should be instructed with for the future, I will not be accountable for, nor  
for the performance. I continue working in the country as usual, and shall be ever studious in meeting  
the approbation of those who will continue their favours to their obedient humble servant William  
Nash.  
  
Wanted immediately, ajourneyman or a young person, to be instructed in the Clock and Watch Making  
business.  
  
[September] John Nash takes this opportunity to acquaint the public, that there is no occasion for his  
brother Mr William Nash, to be answerable for any watches intrusted in his care, for he has not  
wronged him of any thing, as wascimagined by his advertisement. New Clocks and Watches to be had  
at reasonable terms, by sending to John Nash at Beakesbourne, near Canterbury, who will go round the  
country as usual. All persons, that please to favour him with their custom, may depend on their work  
being done well, and reasonable, by their humble servant John Nash.  
  
[I I December 1769] John Nash, Clock-Maker at Beakesbourne. Whereas some malicious Reports have  
been propagated by my brother, Wm Nash, clock—maker at Bridge, representing me as imposing on my  
kind employers, - in particular, that I had overcharged Mr Drayson of Upstreet, for repairing his clock;  
and as such Reports have a manifest tendency to prejudice me in my business, I have taken the  
opportunity to lay the said charge before some reputable clock-makers of Canterbury; who have  
  
conﬁrmed the equity of the same, and will readily attest, if called upon, the injustice done to John  
Nash.  
  
[16 December 1769] William Nash, Watch—maker At Bridge. Thinks the advertisement in last  
Tuesday’s paper too abrupt to pass unnoticed. — The clock of Mr Drayson, that could not perform, was  
charged 8s 6d. It was examined by Mr Warren, the reputable watch-maker, who said, what was done to  
the clock was worth 4s. and the other 45 for fetching and carrying it back. This is my brother’s method  
of working in the clock way. I have said, and can attest, he never cleaned and put together more than  
  
one watch, to my knowledge, all the time he was with me, and that was in April last. Therefore what  
injustice is done to John Nash by me, I leave the reader to determine.  
  
Ifthe kind friends ofJohn Nash would prevent his ill designs, and put him on a better plan, it may  
answer his end better, as well as the reputable watchmaker and his former friend, William Nash.  
  
[march 1769] Cock ﬁghting. At Bridge—Hill on Thursday the 23”‘ instant — Canterbury against Bridge —  
to shew eleven cocks on each side, and ﬁght for four guineas a battle and ten the main. Dinner will be  
ready at one o’clock. NB a pair of ﬁve pound cocks to ﬁght before dinner for ﬁve guineas.  
  
6 June 1772] Cock-Fighting. At John palmer’s, the White Horse at Bridge; to show twenty-one cocks  
on each side; to weigh on Tuesday the 9"‘ of June and to ﬁght on Wednesday and Thursday for four  
  
guineas a battle, and ten the odd battle. A close pit and a good ordinary at one o’clock each day. A pair  
of large cocks to ﬁght before dinner.  
  
In addition to the regular easter and Autumn meetings  
  
[22 April 1769] Horse racing. On Tuesday next will be run for, over barham Downs, a match of ﬁfty  
guineas between a bay gelding, late the property 0 fWilliam Lynch esq; who won the Easter Plate last  
year, and a grey gelding, who won the Easter plate this year, the bay gelding to carry eight stone, two  
pounds, and the grey gelding nine stone. Dinner will be ready, at Bridge-Hill, at one o’clock.  
  
Origins of the Horticultural Society?  
  
[I 769] This is to acquaint all lovers of Auriculas. That on Thursday the 6”‘ of April, will be an Auricula  
feast, at Sarah Gilbert’s the White Horse, in Bridge. The best ﬂower produced, will be entitled to a  
guinea, the second best to ﬁfteen shillings, the third best to halfa guinea and the fourth best to ﬁve  
shillings. Each ﬂower that is entitled to a prize, must have six pips. And every person that shews a  
ﬂower must have had it in his own possession fourteen days before before the day of shewing, which  
must be attested on oath if required. No person will be entitled to a prize, but who has subscribed half a  
crown three months before the day of shewing, unless he makes it up ﬁve shillings on the feast day,  
before one o’clock. No ﬂower to be entitled to a prize, unless it is in the house before one o’clock. And  
  
no person to win two prizes. Every person that shews a ﬂower to appoint an umpire. NB There will be  
a good twelvepenny ordinary at one o’clock.  
  
20 March 1774] again at Mrs Gilbert’s. A good ordinary on table at two o’clock, and every shewer of  
ﬂowers to be at dinner, or have no right to shew his ﬂower.  
  
[1769] Bridge. Made by John Thompson, Junior, a plough for lays, with two chips, one before the other  
in the length of a common beam, with turned Reests, the fore share to cut only the turf, the other to  
bury it. Also house joinery and carpentry work done, from the saloon to the plough. NB A journeyman  
wanting for the last branch.  
  
10 march 1772] Whereas on Friday night last, the 6"‘ of this Instant March, the workshop of John  
Thompson, Carpenter at Bridge; was broken open, and the several tools hereafter mentioned stolen  
thereout, viz One ax, one handsaw. One cast steel panel ditto, two tenant ditto, and one turning ditto,  
one plough—plane, two bench ditto, one smoothing ditto, one double-iron smoothing ditto, and several  
moulding ditto; one wimb1e—stock and bitts; several firmer chisles, gouges, mortis chisles, and socket-  
chisles; one claw—hammer, one bench ditto, with squares, gauges and several other articles . . .if any of  
the said articles are offered for sale, that the person offering them be detained. . .etc. Reward two  
gumeas.  
  
8 August 1772] Thomas Kedman, for stealing one ax, five saws, a plough, several planes, and divers  
other carpenters tools, out of the workshop of John Thompson of Bridge; and Margaret Lamb, for  
stealing a pair of silverbuckles, a pair of silver buttons, two gold rings, two handkerchiefs, and three  
caps, out ofthe dwelling house of Bridget Little, in Chatham, were burnt in the hand, and ordered to be  
discharged.  
  
[23 December 1769] We hear some public-spirited gentlemen intend to petition Parliament for a  
turnpike act for the road from Dover lane in Canterbury to the half-way house leading to Dover over  
Barham Downs, and that the gate will be erected opposite the inile—stone near St Lawrence.  
  
[1 1 April 1772] Wanted. A mistress for a workhouse in the parish of Bridge, at Easter next. For further  
  
particulars enquire of Mr Miller, or Mr Champion., Churchwarden, and Overseer. NB She must write a  
tolerable hand.  
  
Also at Bridge Hill House: 21 December 1773: Sale of property in Barham by auction.  
  
24january 1815] To Be Sold by Auction. At the White Horse Inn, Bridge-Street, on Friday the 27”‘  
instant, at three—o’clock in the afternoon. All the interest or right and occupation of Mr Richard  
Sherrard, as tenant under E.Taylor, esq. Containing a large Farm House, barn, yard, stabling, lodges,  
  
and all other necessary out-buildings; together with 20 acres of rich pastureland, three acresofhop  
ground and ten acres of arable. . .  
  
215‘/22“ March 1815] Auction of all the genteel and valuable household furniture of Miss Fitch, at  
Bridge; consisting of four post and tent bedsteads, with handsome mahogany carved and plain pillars,  
elegantly burnished gold and other cornices, with fashionable white dimity and printed cotton hangings  
to ditto; French drapery and festoon window curtains, with cornices to correspond; excellent goose and  
down beds in bordered and plain ticks, paillasses, bordered horse-hair and wool mattresses, ﬁne witney  
and other blankets, large 14 4ths Marseilles quilts and counterpanes, Kidderminster, Venetian, and  
Brussels carpets, nearly new; hearth rugs; mahogany double and single chests of drawers, circular and  
straight fronts, of excellent workmanship; circular and square bason—stands, ditto commode dressing  
drawers and tables, pier and dressing glasses, an elegant mirror in burnished gold frame, inlaid  
sideboard with celleret drawer, set of mahogany dining tables with circular ends, two sets of mahogany  
carved back chairs, neat painted and stained bedroom ditto, excellent elliptic, Pembroke, card and tea  
tables, a square stuffed sofa, with bolsters and cotton cases; polished steel fenders and fire irons, a  
capital bracket clock, a barometer and thermometer, hall—1amp, ﬁgured and plain oil cloths, tea trays  
and waiters, a set of blue and white printed dinner service, a quantity of queensware, a great variety of  
of kitchen requisites in copper, pewter, and tin, in excellent preservation, washing tubs, brine tubs,  
&c. an assortment of garden tools, hand glasses, ladders, and garden lights, about 1 1 rods of capital oak  
garden fence, a quantity of coals, faggots, and other effects, as will be particularised.  
  
2 may 1823] similar list for Mrs Stephens at Bridge.. Houses were sold with entire contents.  
  
27 January l773] Horse racing on 15‘ February a match over the new round course on Barham Downs,  
one four miles heat, for one hundred guineas, between two gentlemen’s horses — one IS the grey horse,  
  
that run twenty miles in an hour some time since on Barham Downs, the other a capital hunter. To start ,/  
  
exactly at twelve o’clock. Dinner will be ready at Bridge-Hill after the race is over.[further report later] '  
  
5 June 1799] Wanted, a roomy and airy situated house, or other sort of building, in the city or suburbs  
of Canterbury, to be used a a regimental hospital. Any person, having such a building to let, may aply  
to Dr Wardell, physician to the forces, Bridge, or to Dr Bruff, surgeon, 2"d battalion of grenadiers, St  
Dunstans.  
  
1799] military camp on Barham Downs ca 6000 men. August 13] second encampment of 18-20,000  
men. . . .The immense train of farmers and artillery wagons, employed in conveying the troops and  
baggage, ammunition, military and other stores, and provisions, towards the camp, adding the  
numerous carriages filled with officers and other passengers; these together have produced a scene of  
  
populousness and traffic in this ancient city which has not been beheld by its inhabitants since the days  
of St Thomas Becket. . .  
  
15 April l823] A robbery attended with aggravating circumstances, was committed between the hours  
of ﬁve and six o’clock, on Monday afternoon, in the house of --—Brooks, a shepherd in the employ of  
Mr Henry Croasdill, of Tyler Hill, near this city. In the early part of the afternoon of the above day, a  
man had been to the cottage, soliciting alms, and from his apparently earnest representations of distress  
and hunger, he was relieved, and a quantity of victuals given to him by the wife of Brooks: he was  
however subsequently observed lurking about the premises by a part of the family, who expressed an  
apprehension of the man’s intention. About fouro’clock, Brooks went from home, leaving his wife,  
who also went out a short time after. The man, it would seem, watched the opportunity of their  
  
absence, and with the aid of a knife, took out a pane of glass, and throwing up the sash, entered the  
house, and stole a quantity of tea, four silver spoons, a silver watch, a pair of silver studs, three silk  
hankerchiefs, and two cotton ones, together with a waistcoat and other articles of a portable nature; but  
it would seem he was disturbed by the return of Brooks, as upon entering the premises, Brooks found  
the back door, leading to the wood open, and upon calling his wife from a neighbouring house, and  
remonstrating with her upon the impropriety of leaving the door open, the robbery was immediately  
discovered. A search was commenced, and it was ascertained that the object of their suspicion had been  
to a public house in North—lane, and there divided the tea between two men, acquaintances of the  
fellow, and from their statement, a constable traced the robber, and overtook him at Renville pond, near  
  
Bridge, with part of the property in his possession. After an examination ofthe prisoner, by the Rev. C  
Hughes, of Bridge—place, he was committed to St Augustine’s gaol.  
  
7 November l823] Daring outrages. On Monday night a carpenter’s shop, at bridge, was broken open;  
the depredators stole from the tools there deposited several implements for breaking open doors, and on  
their departure left a right—hand glove. The villains then proceeded to the church, which they forcibly  
entered, and stole the prayer books and baptismal basin. It is supposed that the same gang subsequently  
proceeded to the house of baron Montesquieu, and broke into the servants’ room, from which they stole  
a quantity of wearing apparel; one of the servants, hearing a noise, struck a light, upon which the  
robbers decamped. The same night the same depredators went to the parsonage at Beakesbourne, from  
whence they stole two hives of bees and the garden line; and here they left the fellow glove to the one  
  
left at Bridge. They made a secure retreat with their booty, and no clue to discovery has yet been  
obtained.  
  
17 November 1823] In the night of Tuesday last, a barn in bifrons Park near Bridge was feloniously  
  
entered by some thieves, who stole between three and four bushels of white wheat, with which they got  
off undiscovered.  
  
/  
  
NEW ROAD from CANTERBURY towards DOVER.  
  
NOTICE is hereby Given,  
THAT the TURNPIKE GATE, now standing in BRIDGE-STREET, will be removed, on Monday next,  
the 13"‘ Instant, to the END of the NEW RoAD, next BRIDGE; and that HENRY BEAR is appointed by  
the Trustees to receive the Tolls at the said Gate, on and after that Day.  
And the next Meeting of the Trustees will be holden at the Sign of the STAR, without Saint George's  
Gate CANTERBURY, on Friday the 17”‘ Instant, to take into Consideration the Improvements of the  
Road up BRIDGE HILL.  
  
By Order of the Trustees.  
  
JOHN HODGES, Clerk  
CANTERBURY, June 6, 1791  
  
(Kentish Post, June 7, 179])  
  
To be LET.  
  
A Mansion House called BRIDGE-PLACE, now in the occupation of William Hougham, Esq; jun.  
Consisting of an eating parlour, 22 by 16/2; a drawing—room, 22 by 17, and a small room. —On the  
second—ﬂoor, good bedrooms; and four garrets, with proper offices for a family; a coach—house with  
stabling for seven horses, and eleven acres of very ﬁne pasture; two gardens; and a cottage,  
consisting of a brewhouse, laundry and dairy, with good lodging-rooms over them.  
  
It is situated in the neighbourhood of Barham Downs and three miles from Canterbury.  
  
For particulars enquire of Mr. DILNOT, Patrixbourne.  
(Kentish Gazette, March 1” J 791)  
  
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,  
By Messrs POUT and SON  
  
At the FALSTAFF INN, Wesgate, near Canterbury, on WEDNESDAY, 30”" June instans, at three  
o‘clock in the afternoon - all that  
  
FREEHOLD MESSUAGE OR TENEMENT,  
With a commodious Garden, and a large Workshop thereunto belonging.  
The above is situate in the centre of the pleasant Village of Bridge, in the county of Kent, about two  
  
miles and a half from Canterbury, and in the occupation of Mr. Bruce. The Premises may be viewed  
on application to the Tenant.  
  
Fopr further particulars and to treat for the same by Private Contract, apply to Mr PITT,  
Conveyancer, Hawk's Lane, or to the AUCTIONEERS, High—street, Canterbury.  
(Kentish Gazette, June 15”’ 182 7)  
  
HOUSE - BREAKING.  
  
Whereas on Thursday night the 14”‘ or early on Friday morning the 15”" of this instant October,  
1790, the house of Mr. Robert Kingsland, at the Sign of the Red Lion at Bridge, was entered by  
means of a ladder placed against the window of a back chamber, the easement of which was opened  
by taking out a pane of glass; from which chamber the following articles were stolen:  
  
A worked muslin apron bound with white ribbon; a worked handkerchief, bound with ditto; a clear  
lawn apron, worked in sprigs; a striped muslin apron, scolloped round the edges; a striped lawn  
apron; two pair of dark worsted stockings; one pillow-case; a new silk handkerchief not made;  
about 18 or so calico shirts, marked R. Kingsland with Indian ink; and a quantity of cravats, marked  
and numbered in the same manner, with several other articles.  
  
On the same night the house of Mr. Thomas Fletcher, at Bridge, was also entered by means of a  
ladder being placed against the window of the chamber in which Mr. Fletcher slept; from which  
they took a watch marked T.Fletcher on the inside case, and some silver from his breeches pockets.  
Whoever will give such information as may be instrumental in securing the offenders, shall, on  
  
conviction, receive Five Guineas reward, by applying to R. Kingsland as above.. . .  
(Kentish Gazette, October 4”’ I 790)  
  
JOHN NASH, Clock-maker,  
At Beaksbourn.  
  
WHEREAS some malicious Reports have been propagated by my Brother, WM. NASH, Clock-  
maker at Bridge, representing me as imposing on my kind Employers, — in Particular, that I had  
overcharged MR. DRAYSON of Upstreet, for repairing his Clock; and as such Reports have a  
manifest tendency to prejudice me in my Business, I have taken the Opportunity to lay the said  
Charge before some reputable Clock—makers of Canterbury; who have confirmed the Equity of the  
same, and will readily attest, if called upon, the Injustice done to  
JOHN NASH  
(Kerttish Gazette, 8-1] December 1 769)  
  
WILLIAM NASH, Watch-maker,  
At BRIDGE  
  
Thinks the Advertisement in last Tuesday's Paper too abrupt to pass unnoticed. - The Clock of Mr.  
Drayson, that could not perform, was charged 8s 6d. It was examined by Mr. Warren, the reputable  
Watch-maker, who said, what was done to the Clock was worth 4s and the other 4s for fetching and  
carrying it back. This is my Brother's Method of working in the Clock Way. I have said, and can  
attest, he never cleaned and put together more than one Watch, to my Knowledge, all the Time he  
was with me and that was in April last. Therefore what Injustice is done to John Nash by me, I leave  
the Reader to determine.  
  
elf the kind Friends of John Nash would prevent his ill Designs, and put him on a better Plan, it  
may answer his End better, as well as the reputable Watchmaker and his former Friend,  
  
WILLIAM NASH.  
  
(Kenlish Gazette, I2 - J 6 December I 769)  
  
We hear that on Monday the 18”‘ inst. There will be a match of running on Barham Downs, between  
young women, twelve or ﬁfteen on a side. The meeting to be at Bridge-Hill, at 4 o'clock in the  
afternoon on that day, or on the first day afterwards that the weather will permit; - — -great diversion,  
and much Company are expected.  
  
We hear likewise, as a reward to those who shall have the best of the match, that twelve shifts will  
be given them by the gentry, &c.  
  
(Kerztish Gazette, 5 July I 768)  
  
W A N T E D.  
A Mistress for a Workhouse,  
  
In the Parish of BRIDGE, at Easter next. For further Particulars enquire of Mr. MILLER, or Mr.  
CHAMPION, CHURCHWARDEN, and OVERSEER.  
  
N.B. She must write a tolerable Hand.  
BRIDGE, April 10, 1772.  
(Kerztish Gazette, April 7 - 11 1772)  
  
White Horse  
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
Sherrard 6  
Sarah Sherrard 5  
  
   
   
   
  
1841  
Richard Sherrard Richard Sherrard Charles F Charles Hornsby James Webb 59 James N Kennett  
Victualler 30 43 Licensed Hornsby 58 69 Licensed Licensed 64 Licensed  
  
Victualler & ‘ Licensed ‘ Victualler ) Victualler Victualler  
  
trainer of Victualler  
  
racehorses  
Anne Sherrard 30 ( Anne Sherrard 45 \ Elizabeth Elizabeth A  
  
l Hornsby 56 Hornsby 67 1  
Catharine Anne Sherrard 14 1 Elizabeth Catherine A George W Webb Ellen M Kennett  
Sherrard 65 Hornsby 19 I-Iornsby 16 23 professional 12  
(granddaughter) cricketer  
  
Francis Sherrard 6 Richard G Charles Webb 13 John Hornsby 13 Caroline Anne Reginald J  
  
Sherrard ll (grandson) (grandson) Webb 18 barmaid Kennett 10  
Anne Sherrard 4 George C Lucy Keeler 15 M Caroline Hornsby Arthur Stewart Charles S Kennett  
  
servant 35 (daur/law) Webb 12 6  
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
Richard Sherrard  
2  
  
William Lemon  
‘ 66 boarder, ag  
labourer  
Thomas Godding  
69 boarder, ag  
labourer  
  
\_ George Maytum  
J 17 ostler  
  
‘ George Strood 23 Arthur Fairbrass  
M groom 15 domestic  
servant  
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
Louisa Sherrard Ellen Sherrard 3  
  
William Swinson  
16 gardener  
  
Thomas Godding  
60 lodger,  
labourer  
William Lerman  
60 lodger,  
labourer  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
Catherine  
Sherrard l  
  
Louisa Sherrard  
2mth  
William Willard  
:-  
Mary Ann  
Robinson 22  
—  
  
William Jarvis 22  
general labourer  
  
George Eatwell  
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
y William Gould 40 y William 0 Gould William 0 Gould  
Elizabeth Gould ‘ Elizabeth Gould Elizabeth Gould Elizabeth Gould V M  
=  
  
0  
Isabella Gould ll Isabella Gould 20  
Dressmaker  
  
   
  
William Gould 30  
Gardener  
  
Elizabeth Gould  
30  
  
Isabella Gould 2  
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
William Gould 8 William H Gould  
18 Groom  
  
Robert Reynolds  
  
1 ‘ George Mallows  
‘ 4 22 lodger,  
  
carpenter  
  
John North 22  
  
lodger, carpenter  
  
Gilbert Huxstep  
  
William Rye 44  
72 retired farrner  
  
   
  
  
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
  
William Rye 35  
Ag Labourer  
  
William Rye 52  
M Brewer’s servant  
  
   
   
  
Thomas W  
A Sargent 42  
builder employing  
  
Thomas Sargent  
  
Brewer’s servant 32 carpenter  
  
Elizabeth Rye 35  
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
Elizabeth Rye 11 Charles Rye I8  
  
butcher  
  
Henry Walls 27  
(son/law)  
bricklayer  
  
William Rye 15 Emily Walls 17  
shoemaker (daughter)  
iam Rye 6 Emily Rye 7 Alexander  
  
Tripland 4  
  
nursechild  
Frederick Rye 4 William Harris 66 Richard Rickman  
lodger Ag 20 Lodger,  
labourer brewer’s servant  
John Wilson 25  
lodger, brewer’s  
  
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
  
Emily Daniels 19  
general servant  
  
   
  
Charles Rye 8  
  
Will  
  
   
  
   
   
  
Mary Rye I  
  
labourer  
  
Henry Wilson 20  
lodger Ag  
labourer  
  
Elias Wilson 15  
lodger, Ag  
labourer  
  
Hannah Whitnall  
  
35 visitor, house  
servant  
  
   
  
i .841» A  
aim!-1.0mm‘  
  
mu nstaasszzmn mm  
  
Red Lion  
  
1841 1851 W 1871 1881 1891  
  
Thomas Hawkins Joseph Eyers 41 Joseph Eyers 50 Joseph Eyers 60 1 George Finn 44 Thomas Hinds 52  
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
50 Victualler Licensed Publican Licensed Licensed Hotel Keeper  
Victualler ‘ Victualler Victualler ‘  
46  
Edward Hawkins Robert Eyers 5 William Thomas William G Finn Thomas Adley 73  
21 Cheesman 37 Lawrance 15 pot l2 (father/law)  
Coachman Gardener  
  
Sarah Apps 20 M Emma Raiment Stephen West 15 Ann Jeffery 31  
Thomas Taylor Alvis Lott 22 Fanny Lawrance  
15 servant servant 14 servant  
  
Kingsford Brice  
  
62 lodger, ag  
labourer  
William Brice 53  
  
   
   
  
lodger, ag  
labourer  
  
Hannah Finn 4 George Noble 27  
servant  
  
George Finn 2 ‘ William Brice 65  
servant  
  
Auther H Evans 1  
(grandson)  
  
boy  
Rosie Finn 5 William Inge 26  
Lodger, dairyman  
  
Louisa Taffenden  
17 general  
servant  
  
   
   
  
Plough and Harrow  
  
William Williams  
45 Brewer  
  
William Williams  
I 58 Brewer & Coal  
Merchant  
employing 3 men  
Elizabeth  
‘ Williams 58  
  
Richard Mutton  
34 Brewer  
  
Elizabeth  
Williams 45  
  
Ann Halse 36  
(sister)  
housekeeper  
Ellen Williams 17 Henry Mutton 9  
  
Emma Williams Frederick  
15 1 Williams 13  
  
Robert Williams Mary Ann  
  
14 Manson 28 house  
servant  
  
Thomas Hills 63  
Lodger,  
Coachman  
  
John Williams 17  
  
Sarah Thriepland  
33 House servant  
  
Walter Williams  
  
13  
  
Peter Heritage 62  
Brewer’s servant  
  
Ellen Williams 6 Henry Rickwood  
  
15 Lodger,  
  
brickmaker  
Frederick  
  
Williams 4  
  
James Spratbrow  
50  
  
Thomas Brice 50  
  
Edward Gibbs 35  
  
' Brewer &  
  
Publican  
  
Jane Gibbs 34  
  
‘ Edward J Gibbs 5  
  
‘ Emily Mutton 7 Sarah J Gibbs 3  
  
Mary A Gibbs 2  
  
John Gibbs llmth  
  
George Whiddett  
\_ 29 Licensed  
Victualler  
  
Catherine  
Whiddett 29  
  
George Johnson  
30 Lodger,  
butcher  
  
Alfred Russell 18  
servant, ﬂy driver  
  
Frederick Miles  
39 Publican &  
farmer  
  
Jane Miles 39  
  
Ernest Miles 18  
farmer’s son  
  
‘ Florence E Miles  
8  
  
Lilian A Miles 4  
  
James German 21  
Lodger,  
coachman  
  
Harriet Gibbs 33  
(sister)  
  
Fanny Cox 18  
servant  
  
William  
Setterﬁeld 18  
Brewer’s servant  
  
Richard Watson  
36 Lodger,  
  
Shop  
  
  
   
   
  
1871 1881 1891  
  
George Lott 53 Rebecca Lott 60 William H  
4 general dealer carrier Fogarty 25  
  
‘ hairdresser etc  
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
John Hoar 50 ag  
labourer  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
George Lott 33  
miller’s labourer  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
George Lott 43  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
Rebecca Lott 40  
  
   
   
  
   
  
baker & carrier  
  
general shop  
George Lott 20 Mary Ann Lott 9 Dorcas Lott 13 Emily M Lott 1 1 William Mills 77  
ag labourer i  
  
means  
  
Dorothy Lott 3 Caroline H Lott 5  
  
Rebecca Hoar 50 Rebecca Lott 30 1 M Rebecca Lott 49 1 George Lott 20 Emily Fogarty 21 1  
carrier  
  
William Hoar 8 William Lott 12 Rebecca Lott 16 Harriet O Lott 18 Hilda A E  
Fogarty 1  
(father/ law)  
living on his own  
  
Rebecca Lott 20 Sophia Lott 6 Charlotte Lott 1 1 George H Lott 7 Jane Mills  
65(mother/law)  
  
William Lott 2 Rebecca Lott 6 Rosannah Lott 7   
  
— Charlotte Lott I Emily M Lott 1 ‘-  
Jane Claringbold  
43 visitor  
  
   
  
   
  
Thomas Fagg 45 Thomas Fagg 57 Thomas Fagge 67 William Fagge 40 William Fagge 49 Thomas R Gilbert  
blacksmith master blacksmith blacksmith blacksmith blacksmith 48 blacksmith  
  
employing 1 man employing 2 men employing 2 men  
  
Susannah Fagg 40 Susannah Fagg 53 Susannah F agge Margaret Fagge Margaret Fagge Lizzie Gilbert 16  
64 40 48 lady’s help  
  
William Fagg 7 ‘ William Fagg 17 William Fagge 27 Sidney Gilbert 14  
‘ blacksmith assistant blacksmith’s  
‘ ‘ blacksmith apprentice  
  
Julia Fagg 5 Julia Fagg 14 Lucy Fagge 21  
  
Lucy Faggi Lucy Fagg n jj  
  
Margaret Greg 50  
servant  
  
Doctor  
  
   
   
  
Amelius Sicard Amelius Sicard Amelius Sicard Amelius Sicard Charles H Schon  
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
Charles Henry  
  
   
   
  
   
  
30 surgeon 42 MRCS Lic 52 MRCS Lic 62 Surgeon Schon 26 surgeon 36 general  
Apoth Co . Apoth co London. practitioner  
London. general general  
practitioner practitioner  
  
Mary Sicard 75 James Drum 21 Emma Freeman Frances Jeffreys Kate Schon 31  
servant 43 housekeeper 47 housekeeper Schon 31 (sister)  
Catherine Noble John Harrison 23 William Churchill Ashenden Ursula K Schon 2  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
\_ 38 house servant M Cornwell 19  
  
domestic servant  
  
M 28 groom  
  
   
   
   
   
  
William Wilson  
33 living on his  
own means  
  
Chapel Yard  
Post Office  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
  
Frederick  
Colegate 45  
builder  
  
Frederick  
Colegate 58  
builder,  
wheelwright  
undertaker  
employing 6  
men  
M Anne Colegate  
54  
  
Frederick  
‘ Colegate 68  
retired builder  
  
   
   
   
  
John Ovenden  
63  
  
Joseph Taylor  
‘ 32 builder  
employing 6  
men & l  
apprentice  
  
Joseph Taylor  
79 bricklayer  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
Anne Colegate  
40  
  
Ann Colegate  
65  
  
Caroline Taylor  
30  
  
Joseph Taylor  
42 plumber  
painter & glazier  
  
Jane Colegate Jane Colegate Annie Taylor 5 Caroline Taylor  
28 35 3 40 5  
  
Mary Ann William Edward Herbert Taylor 3 Annie Taylor 15  
Colegate 21 Colegate 27 Brighurst 22  
  
blacksmith  
Elizabeth Eliza A Harry Taylor 2  
Williams 10 Brighurst 21  
(granddaur)  
  
   
   
  
Jane Colegate  
15  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
   
  
Colegate 14  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
William  
Colegate 17  
apprentice  
  
Mary Colegate  
l 1  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
Herbert Taylor  
1 3  
  
Annie Brighurst Helen Taylor Henry B Taylor  
7 (niece) 2mth 12  
  
Joseph Taylor Hellen Taylor  
68 builder  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
Louis Taylor 8  
Ruth Taylor 5  
  
j Hughrayion  
  
   
  
Butcher  
Jarvis  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
Henry Jarvis 45  
Butcher  
  
Richard Sherrard  
31 Trainer of  
racehorces  
  
(jockey)  
  
Ellen Jarvis 31 M Sarah E Sherrard Alice Prior 24  
fund holder 27 ‘ (sister) ,  
  
A i housekeeper ‘  
John Jarvis 27 . . . Sherrard 5 James Spillett 19 Ethel N page 5  
  
--  
  
M Mary Ann Jarvis William R Jarvis Alice Skinner 17  
20 25 fund holder general servant 4  
  
John Jarvis 18 Elizabeth Jarvis Fred Auty 29 Hilda M Page 2  
linendraper 23 fund holder servant, lad in  
William  
Bridgland 19  
butcher’s assistant M  
  
Alfred Prior 31  
Postmaster &  
grocer  
  
Henry Jarvis 60  
Butcher  
  
Mary Jarvis 67  
Retired butcher’s  
widow  
  
Alfred J Page 39  
Butcher  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
Mary Jarvis 40 M Mary Jarvis 54  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Ellen Jarvis 14 Ellen Jarvis 23  
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
Mary Jarvis 1 1  
  
   
  
William Jarvis 6  
  
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
Elizabethjarvis 4 M William R Jarvis  
  
16 linendraper  
  
Henry Vye 24  
visitor,  
commercial  
traveller (woollen  
cloth)  
Charles Ayres 17  
groom  
  
servant, lad in  
racing stables  
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
racing stables  
Henry Small 16  
  
Joseph Green 19  
Elizabeth Keeler  
butcher’s assistant  
  
20 servant  
  
Elizabeth Jarvis  
14  
  
George Goodwin  
18 apprentice, lad  
in racing stables  
William Peters 17  
apprentice, lad in  
racing stables  
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
Mary Ann Rutley  
11 visitor  
  
Emma Castle 24  
general servant  
  
   
   
  
Butcher  
Hodges  
  
-Ii 1891  
Charles Hodges Charles Hodges Charles Hodges Charles Hodges Sarah Hodges 62 Joshua Fairbrass  
40 butcher 60 butcher butcher 48 butcher  
Mary Hodges 70 Sarah Hodges 29 Sarah Hodges 38 Sarah Hodges 50 Charles Hodges Mary E  
John Steed 15 Cecilia Hodges 8 Cecilia Hodges Cecilia Hodges Edward Hodges Joshua T  
Mary Mantle 15 Laura Hodges 7 ‘ Laura Hodges 16 Charles Hodges V Edwin S Hodges Mary J Fairbrass  
Peter Gammon Charles Hodges Charles Hodges Edward Hodges Nina Hodges 19 Sarah E  
  
Edward Hodges Edward Hodges Edwin S Hodges Jessie Gibbs 18 Edward M  
1 10 11 visitor Fairbrass 13  
  
James Hodges Edwin J Hodges Nina E Hodges 8 Alice R  
  
73 visitor, 3 Fairbrass 11  
butcher  
  
Charlotte Mantle Nina E Hodges Charles Lott 16 Walter G  
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
  
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
   
  
   
   
   
  
22 butcher  
journeyman  
  
George Minter  
27 servant, F airbrass 5  
  
   
  
shopman  
  
Alexandra House  
High Street Junior School  
  
Frederick Jane Colegate Elizabeth  
  
Colegate 78 p 55 scholastic V Williams 40  
  
retired builder profession schoolmistress  
  
Jane Colegate ‘ Elizabeth Elizabeth A  
  
45 ‘scholester’ Williams 30 Fletcher 20  
(niece)scholastic boarder,  
profession governess  
Charlotte E Jane Castle 17  
Hatcher 14 domestic servant  
boarder, scholar  
  
Elizabeth  
Hatcher 10  
  
Bates 13  
boarder, scholar  
  
Eleanor Smith 9 John B Bates 11  
pupil boarder, scholar  
Edith Mary Alice James 9  
  
Smith 7 pupil boarder, scholar  
  
Percy L Smith 6 William  
pupil Whyman 9  
  
boarder, scholar  
  
Hopkins 16  
general servant  
  
Not yet built??  
  
Thomas Collard  
50 Tailor  
  
Elizabeth Collard  
50  
  
Catharine Collard  
13  
  
Samuel Miles 15  
Apprentice  
  
Amalia Minett 15  
  
Not yet built??  
  
Thomas Collard  
62 Tailor  
  
‘ Elizabeth Collard  
  
Bellevue Terrace  
  
Thomas Collard  
72 Tailor master  
  
Elizabeth Collard  
  
Catherine A  
Collard 32  
  
Catherine Ann  
Collard 43  
Tailoress  
  
Fanny Algar 18  
  
Elizabeth J  
Sutton 16 (sister)  
  
Christine A  
Collard 53  
Tailoress  
Frederick Sutton  
29 (cousin)  
gardener  
  
William Fairbrass  
32 Butcher’s  
assistant  
Margaret  
Fairbrass 23