

## 12.

### **Broomfield Mill.**



The first mention of a mill in Broomfield comes in 1086, in the Domesday Book. Both Patching Hall and Broomfield Hall were shown as having a mill, Belstead Hall wasn't. The mill wouldn't have been a recent introduction, even at that date, for its history is much older. Marcus Vitruvius, the Roman engineer, architect and author gave an account of watermills way back in the 1st century AD, describing a mill with a geared vertical wheel. Early waterwheels in northern Europe may have been horizontal, of the Scandinavian type, but vertical wheels were no doubt common in England long before 1086.

Undershot wheels with paddles dipping into the water

and using the flow of the stream to drive the wheel were probably a common feature of Saxon England, but their efficiency would have depended on the flow of water. No less than 5,624 mills were mentioned in the Domesday Survey, mostly probably undershot, but it is very likely that by then the additional power of an overshot wheel would have been realised and put into use where feasible. This latter method relies on a water level more than 50% the height of the wheel, using the weight of falling water to generate more energy.

A lowland river like the Chelmer would have needed some additional engineering to get a fall of water sufficient to get the wheel revolving at a workable speed and the method is still clear to see at the site of Broomfield Hall's mill. The whereabouts of Patching Hall's mill is not certain but there is no doubt about Broomfield Hall's. Once the best site had been chosen for a mill, sufficiently distanced from any existing watermill, there would be no point in changing it later because much work would have been needed to ensure that the water level upstream was raised by means of a weir so as to give the necessary fall to provide the energy to drive the watermill.

The mills along the River Chelmer were built over a straight artificial cut which joined up the ends of a loop in the river, the loop being retained as a backwater to carry away excessive water flows. So there is no doubt that the water mill stood across the river along what is now Mill Lane. The Saxon lord of the manor would have used it long before the Normans came and only the coming of modern technology spelled its doom, and its final demolition, in 1919. The cut, the weir, the sluice gate, the backwater, all are still there.

The early records refer to the mill as Dunebregge Melne (Dunbridge Mill). That Dunbridge referred to Broomfield mill and not Patching mill is certain because in 1296 the Lord of the Manor of Broomfield Hall, Thomas de Mandeville, granted to Simon le Marischal his watermill "called Dunebregge Melne in Broomfield, with the mill sluices, etc" for £60, Simon paying £20 a year for the next three years. Simon's gift to Broomfield church in 1297, mentioned in the chapter on the Church Lands, suggests that he probably died before the £60 was fully paid. The deed makes it clear that the mill was in the gift of Broomfield Hall and not Patching Hall. This is important because of the later reference to Dunbridge.

In 1351 it was still referred to as Dunbridge mill, for a deed of that year relates "Feoffment by William de Wenden, clerk, Roger de Wodeham, Roger de Kepeworth, chaplain, and Richard Botild (Boteler?) of Broomfield, to John Bishop of Springfield, ½ acre of meadow they had of the gift of Sir John de Wendover in Springfield between the meadow of John Bishop of Leighes and the meadow formerly the said Sir John's and abutting on the bank of the river running from the watermill called Dubryggemelle to Springfield Mill". This is curious because Springfield mill was never the next watermill downstream from Broomfield. It should have been Patching mill or, if that mill had already gone by 1351, then it should have been Bishop's Hall mill in Chelmsford. Springfield mill can still be seen though it is now a restaurant in Victoria Road, Chelmsford, and its cut has been either filled in or covered over.

Only a few years later, in 1359, another deed refers to "a moiety of 3 roods of meadow between John de Goldington's meadow and the river running from Broomfield Mill to

Chelmsford.". So it would appear that at around that time Dunbridge had ceased to be the common name for the mill, only eight years after the previous deed referred to Dunbridge.

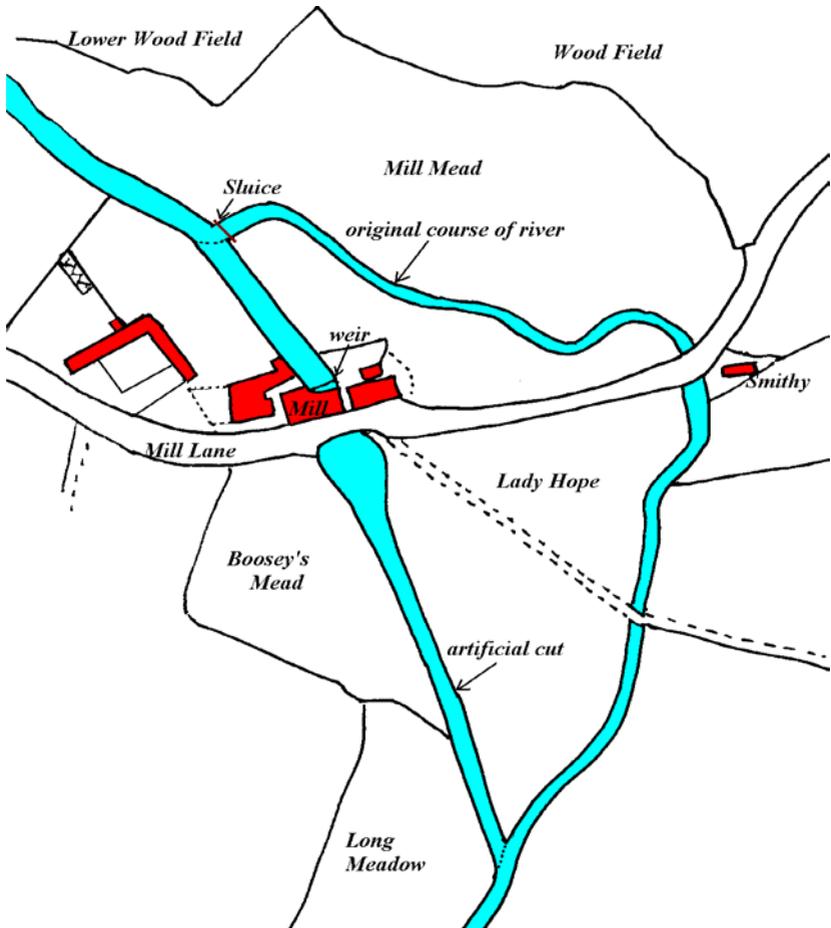
The origin of Dunbridge is obscure. The bridge bit is obvious. The original line of the river would have been a little further east, where there is now merely a backwater spanned by a small bridge. The new cut and its weir gave the miller the necessary fall and another bridge at this point gave access to the mill from both directions, west to Broomfield Hall, which originally owned the mill, and east to Belstead Hall which didn't possess one. But why Dun?

There is a field abutting the river Chelmer, about half a mile downstream from Broomfield Mill, called Dunns Hole. A curious name for a field, the hole bit might suggest that the river is deeper at this point. Dunns could well be associated with the early name of the mill, or the bridge at the mill, but it still doesn't explain the Dun. Or why it should be half a mile away from the mill.

Mill Lane served the needs of travellers to and from the mill, and as a route from Broomfield to Springfield, for many centuries yet the name seems to be of much more recent origin. Eighteenth century deeds refer to Mill Lane as the King's Highway leading to Bishop atte Water and deeds as late as 1830 refer to it as such though they were probably only reciting earlier deeds. Bishop is likely to refer to the family of John Bishop, he who was mentioned in the deed of 1351, and refers to the fields which he owned by the river. The name lives on today in the names of two fields at the end of Angel Lane, Great and Little Bishops.

It is possible that the Bishop family succeeded Simon le Marischal as the miller. This would give a nice continuity but it would seem to conflict with later records. The 1570 fence list called the miller's house "the tenement sometime John at Mell" and a John atte Melne was a Broomfield taxpayer in 1319. He was a witness to the deeds involving Sewell de Broomfield and his land in Broomfield in 1322, and he was still paying tax in 1327. Surnames were in use by 1319 so if John at the mill was really John Bishop the tax return should have said so. It is of course possible that John Bishop came after John at Mell and this could account for the lane "leading to Bishop atte Water".

There is then a gap. The Lay Subsidy tax of 1524 shows that a John Putto was a taxpayer in that year and the Fence List shows that by 1570 John Putto was living at the miller's house. The Puttos were a well-known family of millers and so they could have been at Broomfield mill at least as early as 1524. At that time it was known as the Water House. To confuse the issue somewhat, John Putto was at one time the owner of Crouch House in Broomfield (now the Kings Arms) which he had sold to Lawrence Rochell in 1563. Maybe he moved with his family from Crouch House to the Water House. There were other Puttos in Broomfield around that time; in 1553 an entry in a Pardon Roll mentioned one Thomas Putto, late of Broomfield, yeoman, alias late of London, barber/surgeon, an odd mix. And an Edward Putto was buried at Broomfield in 1559.



This drawing illustrates the cut that was made to create the water power for the mill. A weir was constructed part way along the cut, and a sluice gate was inserted at the top end to control the flow of water along the old course of the river.

John Putto and his wife Alice had eleven children,

Thomas, John the elder, John the younger, Joan, Jeffrey, Jeremy, Agnes, Robert, Richard, Lawrence and Mary. All were still living when John the father died in 1571 because he left bequests to one and all. His wife was to have the use of his lands in Broomfield and Springfield for the rest of her life and then they were to go to his eldest son Thomas. John decreed that the sum of £31.13.4 was to be shared between his ten other children. Jeremy, Robert, Richard, Lawrence and Mary were each to get £3.6.8 and the other five were to get £3 each.

Alice Putto died in 1591. Although the property wasn't hers to leave, the household good and chattels were. In her will she left two fustian pillows, a pair of pillowbeeres, the feather bed "that I now lie on" and its bedstead, the great cupboard in the hall, and all her wearing apparel to her daughter Mary. To her daughter Agnes Bretton she left a latten basin and a great platter. Her son John's children were to get three shillings and fourpence when they were 21 (equivalent to around £24 in 2004). Her son Robert's three children were to get one platter "of the middle sort" apiece. Her eldest son Thomas already took the property through his father's will but in addition Agnes left him the painted cloths in the parlour, the table with the form, the new cupboard, and the painted cloths in the hall. Another son, Richard, was left the cupboard in the parlour, and the rest of her goods were to be shared between Geffrey and Lawrence, two more sons, who were appointed her executors.

Thomas Putto died in 1618, by then an old man according to the burial register. It seems that he intended to make a will but before it could be committed to paper, signed and witnessed, it was too late. There exists a declaration by his son, Richard Putto, that Thomas verbally left all his goods

and chattels to Richard “and these words were spoken in the presence of Thomas Burr (the vicar) and Edward Bretton”.

The family had played their part in Broomfield’s affairs. John was churchwarden in 1563 and Thomas took on the same duty in 1606. In 1656 Lawrence Putto became churchwarden.

Apart from naming two of his children John, something which would normally only happen if the first one had died, John Putto also had an alias. He was shown in the parish register as Putto alias Tanner. There seems to have been a vogue for aliases in Broomfield at the time - the Devenishes were alias Collett, Haywards alias Wollward, and Smiths alias Salmon. This particular alias may tell of his calling before going to the mill for in 1566 John Putto of Broomfield, tanner, was up before the sessions on a charge of tippling.

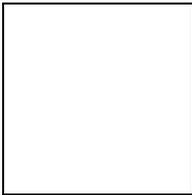
In 1570 the Quarter Sessions ordered that Tanner’s Bridge in Broomfield be made up by the inhabitants. It doesn’t say just where the bridge was. In the following year it was reported that “a bridge standing in the highway commonly called Tanner’s bridge is very noisome and dangerous”. So the inhabitants obviously hadn’t made it up very well. In 1601 there came a clue, another sessions record which recorded that Tanner’s Bridge leading from Broomfield to Springfield was in disrepair. In 1602 it got another mention, this time it was Tanner’s bridge next to the house late of the Widow Tanner. A curious coincidence that the bridge was reported as noisome and dangerous in the very year that John Putto alias Tanner died and it was in disrepair again in 1601 the very year in which his widow died. Dunbridge was now Tanner’s bridge.

By 1636 the Puttos still turned up in the parish register but no one of that name was on the Ship Money tax list for that year. However, one of the taxpayers was a Jeffrey Tanner, and a Jeffrey was one of John Putto's children, so maybe he was a Putto using the family alias. Lawrence Putto probably succeeded Jeffrey. Lawrence was active in the village in the 1650s, he died in 1661 and he may have been the last of the Puttos in Broomfield. Whether he was at the mill, however, is problematical.

The Puttos were also millers at Springfield Mill. Springfield's John Putto was a troublesome character. In 1617 the sessions court heard that he had conspired with others to get John Jolley of Springfield into Putto's house where "they did then break the King's peace upon him and beat him downe". In 1620 the constable reported that John Putto was a common drunkard. John died in 1625. In 1649 a John Putto of Boreham and Robert Putto of Danbury, millers, assaulted William Wright at Springfield. They confessed and each was fined 10s.

By 1662 it is likely that the Poole family, or part of it, were at the Water House; Lawrence Poole's name appears on the Hearth Tax for that year and by 1678 he was certainly there, as that year's fence lists testifies. Indeed, a marginal note on the 1570 fence list shows Lawrence Poole Jnr. against the mill house and another note, in the same hand, shows Putto's name against the Angel. These notes appear down the left-hand margin of the fence list and were two of several in what seems to be the same hand. One of these entries shows Edward Stokes at Crouch House (the King's Arms) and since he was there from 1656 to 1664 Lawrence Poole Jnr was most probably at the mill

house during this period.



### **The entry on the 1570 churchyard fence list**

The Poole family was long established in Broomfield and in the Walthams. Their family home in Broomfield was at Partridge Green but members of the family also lived at different times at Broomfield Hall, Wood Hall and at Biglands as well as at the Water House. In the 1670s Thomas Poole was at Partridge Green, Lawrence Poole Senr had been at Biglands, and Lawrence Poole Jnr was at the Water House. The Poole story properly belongs to Parsonage Green and is given in more detail there. Suffice to say that Lawrence Poole Jnr was at the Water House during the 1670s and 80s.

By 1735 the Water House was shown on the churchyard fence list as being in the possession of Mrs Marsh. She was the daughter of John and Mary Burr and a descendant of Thomas Burr, vicar of Broomfield from 1620 to 1656. Her mother had married Abraham Boosey after John died, and through him had acquired much property, though the Water House seems to have been a later purchase. When Abraham Boosey died his widow married again, to John Allen. She outlived her third husband and when Mary Allen died in 1694 she left everything to her daughter Mary, the wife of Thomas Marsh, mercer and linen draper, of Chelmsford. In 1735 Mary Marsh was shown as

possessing the Well House and Ayletts from the Boosey connection, as well as the Water House. Quite a property portfolio.

William Marriage was the son of William and Ruth Marriage of Partridge Green. This William died in 1774 and in his will he left his lease of Croxton's mill to his son Joseph. However, at the time of his will William was engaged in a lawsuit with Robert and Richard Dixon. He was aggrieved that the Dixons were "penning the water at the head of their mill called Broomfield mill to the injury of the working of Croxton's mill" and this could have affected Joseph's inheritance. This makes it clear that the Dixons were the owners of Broomfield mill after Mrs Marsh and before the Marriage family.

The Dixons were millers from Hartford End. They also owned North End farm, and they had lived in the Well House in Broomfield, so the Well House - Water House connection that was established by Mary Marsh continued. Thomas Dixon, then a widower, had arrived at the Well House in 1772 where he was joined by his son Robert, also a widower. Thomas and Robert Dixon both died at the Well House on the same day in 1785, as is related in the chapter on the Well House, and they were buried on the same day, the 10th April. A rating list for 1792 shows that Thomas Dixon was then rated for the Well House and Broomfield Mill. Four years later Robert Dixon was at the mill. The Land Tax return for 1803 shows that Robert Dixon was still at the mill in that year. He must have been the son of the Robert Dixon who died at the Well House in 1785. In 1804

the tax returns show him as occupant only, the owner being

shown as - Marriage (no forename was entered).. In 1805 the mill was in the occupation of John, one of the several sons of Joseph and Mary Marriage. From 1808 the Land Tax returns give another of Joseph's sons as owner and occupier of the mill.

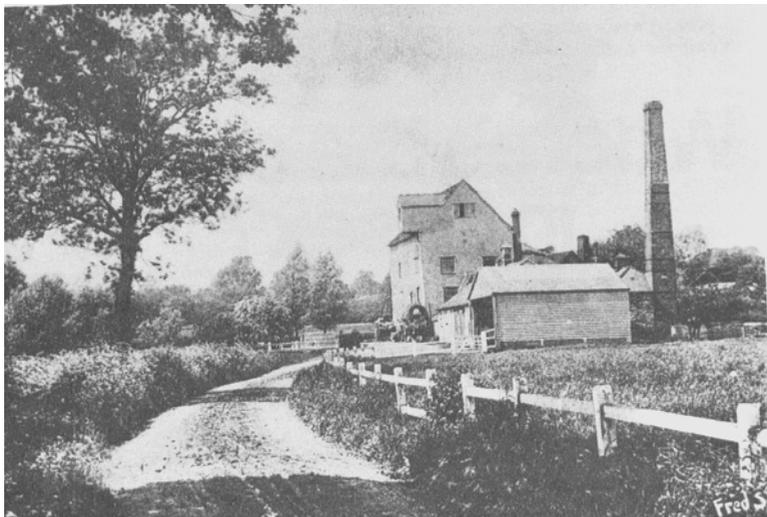
The squabble of 1774 clearly didn't preclude the Dixon family from future occupancy of the mill and they were still very much in evidence since in his will proved in 1797 Richard Dixon refers to a messuage or tenement called Scott's Farm in Broomfield and Springfield with a windmill, "now in the occupation of myself and Thomas Digby". This can only be Digby's windmill along Back Road, just in Springfield. It was common for a windmill to be associated with a watermill, as at Ayletts windmill, which was owned in common with Croxton's mill. But where exactly was Scott's Farm?

In 1807 Joseph's son William Marriage (1777-1824) and his wife Mary had twin sons, William and Henry, who were to start the milling business of W & H Marriage and in the following year he was shown on the Land Tax returns as both owner and occupier of Broomfield mill. In 1836 the water mill was converted to part water and part steam driven when a second-hand steam engine was installed. The wooden water mill still stood next to the miller's house while the engine room for the steam driven stones was on the other side of the river. William Marriage died in 1824 and in 1841 his son, also William Marriage, then aged 33, was living in the mill house with his wife Sophia, aged 23, and their young son William, then aged 4 months. Ten years later the household had grown apace. William and Sophia then had six children, and also at the mill house were 2 nursemaids, a housemaid and a cook, plus

Joseph Hawkins, a 23 year old miller from Good Easter. By 1871 William had died and it was his son, another William, who was living there. The census of that year gives an indication of the size of William's business; he was shown as employing 16 men and 6 boys on 346 acres of farmland, plus 40 millers, carters, etc.

The 1881 census shows a change of occupant. Young William had died in 1875 and his brother Philip was living there with his sister Fanny, a cook and a housemaid, and this was still the situation in 1891. In 1901 Fanny was still at the mill, now with her brother Albert, and four servants. Another of Philip's brothers, Sampson Marriage, was living at the Parsonage and it was Sampson's son, Sampson (Percy) Marriage, who was next at the mill house. This takes the story well into the 20th century.

Percy Marriage was for many years a familiar figure in the village. A keen horseman, he rode with the foxhounds for many years. The late Geoff Garner recalled the days when Percy would be riding back to the mill from a meet. Having left his friend George Knowles at Parsonage Green Percy could be heard clip-clopping along School Lane. If Geoff Garner or Cyril Finning happened to be in evidence at the shop entrance at the corner of School Lane Percy, always with an eye to business, would stop and call out "need some more flour, boy?". Rosemary Rutherford, the vicar's daughter and a notable painter, once painted, or offered to paint, Percy's horse. On learning what it would cost to buy the painting Percy declined, declaring that he could buy another horse for that price!



**Broomfield Mill in its heyday**



**The forge during World War I**

The mill, and the Marriage's business, flourished and at

its peak towards the end of the 19th century the mill worked ten pairs of millstones. After World War I the mill, superseded by the large modern Chelmer Mill at the rear of Hoffmann's factory in Chelmsford, was no longer needed. The old watermill was demolished in 1919. The wooden cart shed was removed and rebuilt at Brick Barns Farm, Chignal St. James. The engine house survived until 1945, when it was demolished. A small reminder remained in a tree which grows in the meadow beside the river; the trunk is disfigured where it leaned against and grew round the corrugated iron roof.

In 1913 Percy Marriage married Dorothy Newman and their children in due course entered the family business. Percy was over 90 years of age when he died in 1971 and Dorothy continued to live in the mill house until her death. She was an active President of Broomfield's Darby and Joan Club, which she had formed in 1948. In 1973, 60 years after she had married Percy, she was an entrant in the Darby and Joan Club's "Hot Pants" competition!

The disappearance of the watermill wasn't the end of the story. The miller's house remained, still in the possession of the Marriage family. The present building, the successor no doubt to several which have stood on the site, is said to date from the 18th century and is listed as a building of architectural or historic interest. To the passer-by the house seems to be built on surprisingly low ground. Mill Lane is always in danger of being flooded when the river bursts its banks, as it does from time to time. The lane can then be under several inches of water yet somehow the mill house escapes, the flood waters spreading out over the flood plain of Lady Hope, Boosey's Mead and the other meadows, in the nick of time.

The schedule of listed buildings has very little to say about the house, merely that it is 18th century with later additions. Looking at the facade, it gives the impression that the east end has been tacked on to what had been a perfectly symmetrical building, very Georgian, of three bays with a typical parapet half hiding a peg-tiled roof. Also at the east end, set back, building of a different style with a curious east facing window in the roof, rather like a cross between a dormer and a lucam!

The outbuildings have retained their charm. The white weatherboarded stable block has long since been turned into additional family accommodation, but without losing its character. The yard now has cars instead of horses but still over all the fox on his weathervane remains in full flight from Percy Marriage and his fellow huntsmen.

By the time his mother died, Percy Marriage's eldest son David had long since married and he and his wife were living at Windmill Pasture, just over the Springfield border but still within sight of the mill. David therefore didn't take over the mill house which then passed to his son Peter, who now lives there with his wife Angela and their family. As this is written, at the end of 2004, David and his wife have moved down from Windmill Pasture to live in the accommodation created from the stable block at the mill.

As might be expected there was also land associated with Broomfield Mill although the earliest records make no mention of it. The situation is complicated by the fact that the Marriage

family added to their landholding in Broomfield from time to time and so it is not clear just what land went with the mill in its earlier years. However, the 1846 tithe map and award can be interpreted as associating the following with the mill:

	acres	rods	perches
Little Crooks	1	1	30
Great Crooks	3	2	18
Mill Mead	5	2	37
Lady Hope	2	2	20
Forge Field	2	0	30
Boosey's Mead	1	1	15
Long Meadow	2	2	22

Two other pieces of land, Lords Mead and Long Croft, on either side of Mill Lane towards the Main Road, were also owned by W & H Marriage at the time.

Lady Hope and Long Meadow had been shown as part of the Broomfield Hall estate in 1771. They were part of the 14 acres of meadow shown in the Domesday survey as belonging to the manor of Broomfield Hall. At the time of the tithe award in 1846 they were still owned by the Lord of the Manor, the Marriage family occupying it on a copyhold lease. It is highly unlikely that there was ever a Lady Hope associated with this field. The name must have been derived from ley hope or hoppit, the small field.

Boosey's Mead was, in 1846, a recent addition to the mill lands. This must also have been a part of the 14 acres of meadow belonging to Broomfield Hall in 1086. It had for centuries been a detached part of Stacey's Farm and is very

likely the answer to a curious aspect of the conveyance of 1362 which gave its name to that farm. At the time of Domesday, in 1086, meadow land was usually the low-lying land close by a river. Stacey's farm, however, is on the high land in the west of the parish, far removed from the mill, yet the 1362 conveyance was of 56 acres of arable land, one acre of wood, and "1½ acres of meadow". This just fits Boosey's Mead. It must have become divorced from the manor before 1362.

In 1831, when Stacey's Farm was put up for sale, Boosey's Mead was sold to Messrs W & H Marriage. The sale was occasioned by the death, on 1830, of William Boosey. His executors had found it necessary to sell the property to pay off the several people who had acquired an interest in the farm through mortgages which Boosey had taken out. The name of the mead may have arisen, not from that William Boosey, but from an earlier member of the family for the Booseys had been associated with Stacey's Farm since the 1600s.

Forge Field got its name from the forge which served the needs of the mill. It stood in the corner of that field, close by the little bridge that spanned the backwater, and was still operational into the 20th century. Indeed, it was used by the army when units were stationed in Broomfield during World War I. Clearly the forge had given its name to the field before 1846.



**The miller's house with the mill beyond.**

For perhaps 1,000 years traffic of one sort or another had passed the mill and the miller's house. Carts pulled by ox or horse power had called at the mill, bringing the corn and taking away the flour. Closure of the mill and its demolition in 1919 didn't bring a stop to the traffic for by then the motor car had arrived. At first a novelty, the number of cars and lorries passing the mill house steadily increased over the years. Heavy lorries from the gravel workings and the coal yard along the Back Road trundled past the house. Until 1983.

In 1983 a link road joining what was to become Essex Regiment Way with the main road from Chelmsford to Braintree, was proposed. The choice was between upgrading Mill Lane to take the inevitable increase in traffic and a new road crossing the River Chelmer further south, within the Chelmsford boundary. Battle lines were drawn; arguments

were put for and against each proposal. A public inquiry was held. Broomfield won the day, the new road went further south, and Mill Lane became a bridleway at the Mill House. The cars and lorries have gone. The grass verges creep slowly across the surface of the old road between the river and its backwater, and up the hill. Has Broomfield Mill ever been so peaceful in its long history?



**The Mill House today.**

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**1570.** The tenement sometime John at Mell and now John Putto maketh from the gate towards the west halfe a rodd. (Lawrence Poole Jnr entered in margin).

**1678.** The tenement of Lawrence Poole called Water House maketh from ye gate towards ye west by estimation halfe a rodd

**1687.** The tenement of Lawrence Poole called the Water House maketh from the gate towards the west half a rodd

**1735.** Waterhouse - Mrs Marsh - ½ a rod

**1843.** 12. The Water House and mill, occupied by Messrs W & H Marriage, maketh from no 11 half a rod. Owners W & H Marriage.

## 13.

### The Angel.



The Royal Commission on Historic Monuments had this to say of the Angel Inn, Broomfield. "It was built in the 15th century with a central hall of one storey and a cross wing at the north and south ends. In the 17th century an upper floor was inserted in the hall. At the back are modern additions. The roof of the former south cross wing is now ridged continuously with the main block. Inside the building, the roof of the former hall is of two bays divided by an original king post truss. Of the king post only the moulded base is now visible. The north cross wing is of three bays divided by trusses with curved braces. The central chimneystack contains a fireplace of the 16th century with a three-centred arch of brick."

The Angel is the oldest of Broomfield's public houses. The King's Arms, whose origins are also 15th century or even earlier didn't become a public house until 1765 whilst Broomfield's other known pub, the Plough, had a comparatively short life and was closed in 1849. There were other alehouses in Broomfield; Henry Devenish was a licensed victualler at the Well House in Broomfield in 1572, and John Bonner (in 1567), Stephen Gill (1578) and William Riley (1582) were also licensed victuallers. Richard Sawen was an innholder in Broomfield for at least 10 years, from 1574 to 1584. Riley lived at Swan House on Church Green but the whereabouts of the others isn't known. It is possible that one of them may have been at the Angel. What is certain is that the Angel was "an inne.....known by the name or sign of the Angel" in deeds dated 1707 and it has been a public house ever since. The parish register records that Christopher Haltoft, innholder at the Angel, was buried on the 22nd May 1707, so it was certainly in existence as a public house before that date.

On the 1570 fence list the property was described as "sometime Brownes and now Henry Weldes" and the entry collected two marginal notes; the left-hand note, probably the earlier, says "Putto's", and the right hand note says "Mrs Manwood". The Browne could have been the John Browne who witnessed a deed of conveyance of Crouch House (The Kings Arms) in 1474 and who may have owned the Pulling House at that time. This would take the story back a hundred years before the first fence list and would tie in with the date given by the Royal Commission for the age of the building. However, the former names given on the fence list sometimes take the story back much further and so it could have been a

much earlier Mr Brown who once lived there.

Henry Wealde owned the Angel in 1570. The fence list is clear about that. Henry had been in Broomfield, and very likely at the Angel, at least as far back as 1551 when his child was baptised at Broomfield church. He also had property in Chelmsford, and elsewhere in Broomfield at the foot of Gutters Hill. In 1565 John Brett, John Pynchon and Robert Harris were brought before the court accused of assaulting Henry Wealde “so violently that his life is despaired of“. Either it wasn’t quite that violent or Henry was made of sterner stuff because he lived for another ten years, dying in 1575.

The marginal note on the fence list indicates that Putto was the next occupant of the Angel. The Puttos were active in Broomfield in the 16th century and into the 1600s. A John Putto was a taxpayer in 1524, in the early 1560s the family were at Crouch House, and in 1570 John Putto was at Broomfield Mill. The Putto who was at the Angel was clearly after these dates and probably the successor to Henry Wealde. It may have been Lawrence Putto; he seems to have been the last of the Broomfield Puttos and he died in 1661.

The next name on the fence list is Mrs Manwood. Now this must be before 1678, when the next fence list was produced. In fact the date of the entry can be narrowed down still further. Thomas Manwood and his wife Ann were living in Broomfield, at Priors, by the 1630s. There is more about them in the Priors chapter, suffice to say that Thomas Manwood died in 1650, leaving his estate to his wife for her lifetime and then to his son John. Ann Manwood died in 1663, when John Manwood

inherited the estate. So Thomas Manwood would have been the owner of the Angel up to 1650, Ann Manwood would have owned it from 1650 to 1663, and it then passed to their son John Manwood.

Although the Manwoods owned the Angel they never lived there. A prosperous family of lawyers, they lived sometimes at Priors and sometimes in a large town house in the centre of Chelmsford. This latter house was later demolished and replaced by the Corn Exchange, which was later demolished and replaced by a shopping precinct. The occupants of the Angel were tenants and by 1678 the tenant was John Ashby.

John and Ann Ashby may have arrived at the Angel in the late 1630s, maybe as tenants of Thomas Manwood after the property had been sold by Mr Putto. The first mention of their name was the baptism of their first child, John, in 1639. Five more children followed: Susan (1641), Henry (1645), William (1652), and Francis (1654). Another child, Henry, was born in 1643 but died two years later. John Ashby was a respected member of the community and a churchwarden. He died in 1671 and in his will he described himself as a butcher. This may or may not indicate that the Angel was then just a butcher's shop. The first positive evidence of the Angel being an inn was in 1702 when Christopher Haltoft was described as innkeeper, but this doesn't preclude the Angel being both inn and butchers shop. Indeed, this was precisely the case with the King's Arms for many years into the 20th century.

John Ashby's widow Ann re-married in 1673, to Thomas King, but at the Angel John was succeeded by his eldest son, also John, and it is he who appears as occupant of the Angel on

the 1678 fence list. This John was also a respected member of the community, attending the Parish meetings and being elected constable in 1672. He married and had four children. The eldest, John, was born in 1665 and died in 1667. He was followed by another John (1672), Elizabeth (1674) and Mary (1675). Mary too, didn't survive childhood, dying in 1677. The tenure of the second John Ashby cannot have lasted long. He would have succeeded his father in 1671 but by 1687 George Moore was shown as occupant of the Angel and he may have been there much earlier, perhaps soon after the 1678 fence list was drawn up.

George and Eleanor Moore made their first appearance in the parish register in 1678. Their first child was baptised and, sadly buried, in 1678. So it may be that that year saw the departure of John Ashby and the arrival of George Moore at the Angel. He and Eleanor had at least six children but three died young, a common occurrence in those days - George (1678-78), George (1682-83) and Mary (1685-86). Three more children, Thomas (b1680), James (b1684) and John (b1687) seem to have survived. George Moore died in 1703. His widow Eleanor lived on until 1720, the burial register described her as an ancient woman and midwife.

George Moore was succeeded at the Angel by Christopher Haltoft. In 1702 Haltoft, described as an inholder, was summoned to the Quarter Sessions at Chelmsford, along with Francis Lambert of Springfield and Thomas Freeman of Chelmsford, to answer to Frances, wife of Thomas Oddyns of Broomfield, for "beating, threatening, and setting her upon her head, and exposing her privy parts to public view on the highway". Haltoft was also the owner of a cottage

just across the road by Angel Green, which in more recent times has become a shop, for many years Finning's grocers shop and now Unwin's store. He died in 1707 and in his will, describing himself as an innholder, he left the cottage to his nephew, John Haltoft. The Angel was of course leased from the Manwoods.

It was in 1707 that Thomas Manwood, the grandson of the first Thomas Manwood and son and heir of John and Diana Manwood, leased to John Higham of Bernard's Inn, London, the "inne known by the name of The Angel late in the tenure of Christopher Haltoft". This may have been a purely financial arrangement because the ownership continued for long afterwards in the Manwood family and their heirs. The importance of this deed is that it seems to be the first record of the property being called the Angel, but since this is also the earliest surviving deed it probably isn't surprising.

John Haltoft didn't follow his uncle Christopher at the Angel. Indeed, he seems to have led a rather chequered life. He had married Dorothy Cork at Broomfield in 1805 but two years later, in the very year that his uncle died, the parish records state that John Haltoft was removed to Goxhill, a village in north Lincolnshire close by the river Humber. The record noted that he had returned to Broomfield with a wife (Dorothy) and child "since born". Shortly afterwards his son, also named John, was baptised in Broomfield church. He doesn't seem to have prospered, for years later another parish record noted that John Haltoft had only one shilling to his name and had come to dwell at the workhouse.

On the 16th November 1708 the parish register recorded

the burial of a stillborn child; the father was Richard Shippy "at the Angel", so Shippy must have succeeded Haltoft. The unfortunate Shippy lost three more children, Samuel and James both died in 1718 and a daughter died of the smallpox in 1720. Shippy survived the smallpox outbreak, which claimed 14 victims in the village, but by then he was no longer at the Angel. He became the Church Clerk, a post he held until his death in 1731.

Another victim of the smallpox in 1720 was William Rolfe "at the Angel". He must have taken over the pub from Richard Shippy. Having contracted the smallpox he doubtless feared his end was near and so he made his will. In it he left his stock of beer, the corn in the barn or growing in the ground, hay, cattle "of all sorts", bonds, bills and ready money to his wife Jane. He left property in Chelmsford to Jane for life and then to his grandson William Rolfe.

A likely scenario of the tenants of the Angel to that date reads as follows:

1639-1671	John Ashby Snr.
1671-1678	John Ashby Jnr
1678-1702	George Moore
1702-1707	Christopher Haltoft
1708-1720	William Rolfe

In 1731 a new man arrived at the Angel, Habacuck Cook. He may have come to help with the inn although he took in the licence straight away. In the event, on the 13th November 1742, he married the widow Rolfe. Habacuck held the licence for 35 years, taking an interest in parish affairs, serving as

Overseer of the Poor, until his death in 1766, when his widow Jane took over.

Jane Cook, previously Rolfe, ran the pub until her own death in 1772. She left her stock-in-trade to her son John Rolfe, daughters Jane Mason and Sarah Campen, and son-in-law John Wakelin. Her other daughter, Mary, had married John Wakelin in 1766 but had died in 1771. Jane's executors, John Mascall and Samuel Jesper, were to see that was equally distributed among them.

Through all these leases or tenancies ownership had remained with the Manwood family. It descended through the female line to Thomas Pocklington and he in turn, having no children, left the Angel to his sister Catherine who had married the Revd. John Woodroofe. John Woodroofe was born in 1705, the son of William Woodroofe, rector of Balsham in Cambridgeshire. He was educated at Felsted School and in 1722 went from there to St. John's College, Cambridge. In the following year he transferred to Clare College, where he obtained his BA in 1727. He was ordained as a priest in 1729 and was awarded his MA in 1730. John Woodroofe's first incumbencies were the small parishes of Leysdown and Warden on the Isle of Sheppey. In 1734 he became vicar of Cranham, near Upminster in Essex, and from 1748 until his death in 1786 he was rector of Springfield. On John Woodroofe's death he was succeeded by his son, the Revd. Thomas Woodroofe.

Thomas Woodroofe was born at Cranham in 1754 and in 1765, like his father, he went to Clare College, Cambridge. Thomas got his BA in 1770 and in that same year became a fellow of the college. His MA followed in 1773 and in 1774

he was ordained a priest. In 1783 he obtained a bachelors degree in divinity and in the following year he became the rector of Ockley, a village some three miles from Dorking in Surrey. In 1787 he married Catherine Barbor of Brentwood. Widowed, in 1800 he took as his second wife Sarah Barnard of Dorking. Thomas died at Ockley in 1817.

In 1772, on the death of Jane Cook, John Coe took over the licence and nearly thirty years later he bought the Angel from the Revd Woodroofe for £840. This was in 1801. Alas, he didn't have long to enjoy his new status for he died in 1803 and the trustees of his estate promptly sold the in for £1,390, a remarkable appreciation in value in only two years! The new owner was George Overall who lived at the Angel until his death there at the age of 66 when his widow, Sarah Overall, became owner and licensee.

When John Ashby was at the Angel in the 1660s he was a butcher and he might have kept his own cattle for slaughter. When William Rolfe died in 1720 he mentioned his cattle "of all sorts" in his will. Rolfe was certainly an innkeeper but he might also have been a butcher. Both of them would have needed pasture for their beasts and the Angel had the land. Since the extant deeds only go back to 1707 it isn't known what land went with the property when Henry Wealde had it back in 1570, but from the time of those first deeds it is likely to have been around seven or eight acres of pasture.

The tithe map of 1846 shows that the Angel property was made up as follows:

Acres	Rods
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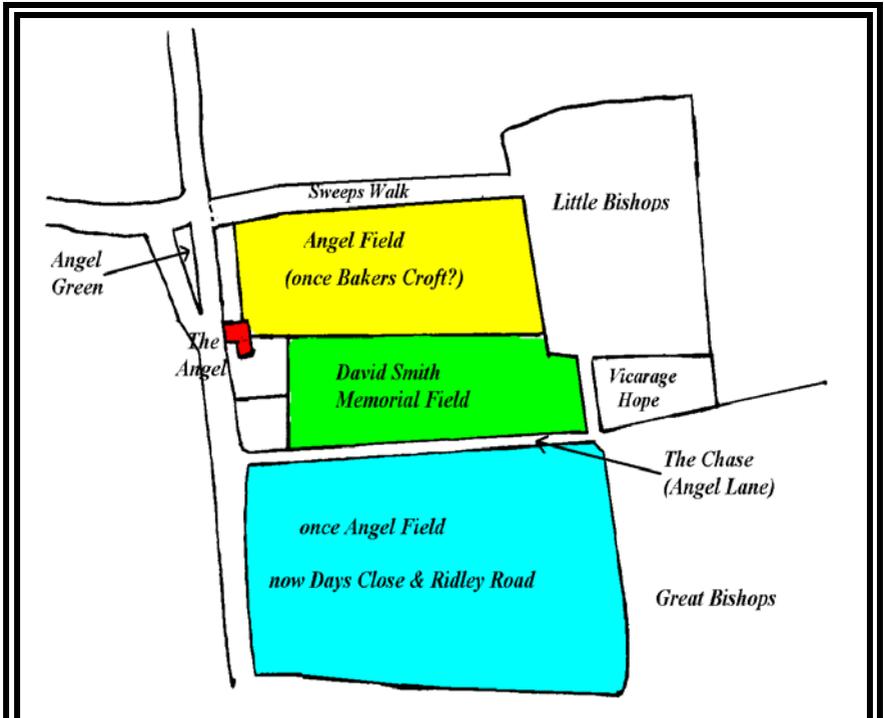
Perches			
2	House & premises (The Angel)	0	3
27	Pasture (now David Smith Field)	2	2
20	Pasture (rear of Angel)	3	3
11	Cottage (replaced by new devt)	0	0
1	Chase (Angel Lane)		0
	14		

This gave a total size of 7a 2r 34p. The deeds from 1803 onwards give a figure of 7a 0r 35p, about half an acre short. There was then no cottage but it's hard to see where the extra bit could have come from. The figure of very nearly an acre for the house and premises no doubt included the yard and outbuildings, now the car park, and the land where the cottage was built and has since been redeveloped.

The situation isn't particularly helped by two other factors. First, the court rolls of the manor of Patching Hall. These were unfortunately destroyed in World War II but two extracts have been preserved amongst the records of the Angel. They refer to the fee payable by first John Coe and then by George Overall for land which was historically part of the manor of Patching Hall. The fee for their entry on to the court rolls was only two shillings but more significant was the identification of the land involved. It referred to three pieces of land: Bakers Croft (3 acres), Barn Croft (2 acres), and Dukes Croft (½ acre). No combination of bits of land as shown in 1846 matches these crofts.

The second factor is the name of another field on the tithe map. Along the south side of Angel Lane was another field, now built over with the houses of Days Close and Ridley Road. In 1846 this was known as Angel Field and its size was almost eight acres, 7a 3r 26p to be exact. In 1846 it belonged to Thomas Christy of Brooklands and there is no suggestion in the deeds of the Angel of him buying it or of it ever being part of the Angel estate. If it had once belonged to the Angel it would have taken the land up to 15 acres, much more than was ever mentioned in the deeds.

It is very possible that Angel Field had once belonged to the Angel and had been disposed of some time before 1707. If the field name dates from before 1707 then the name of the building must also go back further. As to the land which was copyhold of the manor of Patching Hall, the loss of the court rolls and any estate maps relating to the manor, make it impossible to identify the three crofts. Since they were owned by Coe and Overall they must have been within the 7½ acres that went with the Angel in 1846. The names must have changed over the years. The approximately 2½ acres that is now the David Smith field could have been the 2 acre Barn Croft plus the ½ acre Dukes Croft. The 3-acre Bakers Croft could have been most of what is now the field at the rear of the Angel.



The David Smith field may once have been two smaller fields known as Barn Croft and Dukes Croft. It may have included the two pieces to the south of the Angel (now car park) - the piece nearer the Angel did once have outbuildings and could have been the site of the barn.

On November 22nd 1838 Sarah Overall sold the Angel to Messrs Wells and Perry, brewers, for £2,000 and a house to be built for her occupation during her lifetime. Sarah was to have the occupation of the inn until her new house was ready for her to live in. She in turn agreed not to increase the stock, which the brewers had agreed to take, more than was necessary

for the regular trade. It seems very likely that Sarah's new house was quickly built because the land tax for 1838 shows John Markham in occupation of the Angel.

An interesting article appeared in the Essex Chronicle on Friday, January 18th 1839. It reported that "The following convicts were removed on Friday last from the convict jail at Springfield to be put on board the Fortitude hulk at Chatham ..... John Stubbings, for breaking into the house of Mrs Overall at Broomfield - 10 years". Crime didn't pay in those days! Since he had already been convicted and was in prison the offence must have taken place before 1839 so it is very likely that he broke into the Angel. In the cottage provided for her Sarah Overall lived on to enjoy her retirement. £2,000 and a house must have been quite a comfortable situation in the 1840s. She died in 1851 at the age of 80.

As soon as the sale had been completed and a new house provided for Sarah Overall the brewers let the tenancy to John Markham and it is he who appears as occupant on the 1843 fence list and on the 1846 tithe map. By 1848 however, William Spurgin was licensee. The trade directories of the day described Mr Spurgin as an innkeeper and butcher so there was still a butcher's shop associated with the inn (as was the case with the Kings Arms). It really looks as though the Angel had served as butcher's shop and inn since the 1660s.

William Spurgin died in 1852 at the age of 40 and the headstone on his grave mentions the Angel. The headstone narrowly escaped a bomb in World War II but time has proved just as deadly, the inscription is now barely readable. And it is no longer over his grave; when the new church hall was built on

to the north side of the church in the 1990s the stone was moved to another part of the churchyard. It must be very unusual for a headstone to mention a public house and this one carried an additional adornment, a carved set of compasses showing that he was also a freemason.

Yet again a widow took over. William Spurgin's widow Dorothy ran the pub for a while. She lived on until 1888 but by 1863 the tenancy had gone to William Barker. He didn't last long and by 1867 it was in the hands of Alfred Ely. This was another short tenancy and 1870 saw George Colleer in charge. George kept the pub for more than 20 years and saw the last great period of horse drawn traffic along the main road before the appearance of the motor car. Stage coaches would pass through on their way to Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds, while other coaches served the more local routes. Farm carts must have constantly passed by, their drivers stopping for refreshment from time to time. The yard would have been busy with carts in for repair at the wheelwright's shop, which then stood in the yard. In 1892 George Collier died and his successor, James Lincoln then had the Angel for ten years.

James Lincoln too took an interest in parish affairs and was Overseer of the Poor. He seems to have been less enthusiastic about cricket. For some time the cricket club had used the field behind the Angel for their matches, courtesy of the landlord. George Colleer had allowed the club to use the field and when James Lincoln took over he did likewise, charging the club £3 a season for the privilege.



**The Angel Inn in the 1890s, when James Lincoln was the licensee.**

In 1898, just as the cricket club was preparing for the new season, it was noticed that Mr Lincoln had put a load of manure on the pitch. He was requested to move it but refused to do so. This put the club in a quandary. Luckily Mr Impey, the farmer at Broomfield Hall stepped in and put one of his fields at their disposal until they could find another site. The club then wrote to Mr Lincoln stating that in view of his attitude they were terminating their use of his field.

In 1902 Alfred George Kime arrived at the Angel. An impressively large man, Mr Kime had for some years been butler to the Wells family at Broomfield Lodge (also known as the Clock House). This was the brewing family, which owned the Angel and may have had something to do with his acquiring the licence for the Angel. Mr Kime lived in a house by the

Main Road on the Chelmsford side of Pottery Lane.

In 1894 Mr Kime had stood for the very first Broomfield Parish Council, a new body replacing the old vestry meetings. He failed to gain election. He failed again in 1896 when, after getting the same number of votes as Charles Deverill he lost on drawing lots. His interest didn't flag; the new Parish Council was bombarded with letters from Mr Kime. He continually complained of nuisances near Patching Hall, so much so that the Parish council eventually told him that they had done all they could and that he must take future complaints direct to Mr Smith, the Inspector of Nuisances at the Rural District Council. The minutes don't say just what those nuisances were.



**The Angel c1903, shortly after Alfred Kime took over as landlord. Note the pub sign, with no picture.**

Alfred Kime was eventually elected to the Parish Council

in 1898. He at once took a close interest in Woollard's Charity, asking for the publication of a list of the beneficiaries. The council didn't support him but his campaign continued. The next year, 1899, saw him elected chairman of the council and his campaign began to bear fruit. At his proposal the council agreed that a list of the beneficiaries be published and that the Parish Council be consulted in all matters relating to the administration and distribution of the charity. Further, it was agreed that the Charity Commissioners be asked to take steps to ensure the appointment of a more representative body when future appointments of trustees were made. His relations with the then chairman of the trustees of Woollard's Charity, Henry Marriage, must have been somewhat strained.

Re-elected chairman in 1900, 1901, 1902 and 1903 Mr Kime's move from butler to publican didn't lessen his fervour. In 1902 he gave 200 pints of beer for the men and 50 pints of beer for the women as his contribution to the King Edward VII coronation festivities. Although no longer chairman from 1904, Kime continued to be its most active member, most items on the agenda being either proposed or seconded by him. In 1906 he became a trustee of Woollard's Charity and in 1908 he was elected Overseer of the Poor. In 1910 he successfully opposed a proposal by Mr Pilley to open the Parish Council's meetings to the public. One of his last proposals, to investigate the possibility of a swimming bath for Broomfield was the subject of a report which was "laid on the table" in 1912. It's probably still there somewhere.

Mr Kime's name didn't appear among the candidates for the 1913 Parish council election and in 1914 a new licensee

arrived at the Angel. Mr Goodchild was the publican there for 20 years, until 1935. In his later years, when weather and trade permitted, he would take a wicker chair and sit outside the pub, watching the passing traffic. Although local affairs were no doubt still discussed in the public bar, with the going of Alfred Kime it was no longer the political hub of the village. World War I saw army tents appear in the Angel Field as a Scots regiment took up residence in Broomfield. The local football club, which had for years used the field where Ridley Road now stands, moved closer, to the field behind the pub.



**The Angel in the 1930s The inn sign now read:  
THE ANGEL  
TAYLOR WALKER'S  
BEST BEERS**

In 1935 Mr Watts became licensee. Taylor Walker took over as owners from Wells and Perry, and in 1944 Bob Petch started his tenure which was to last until 1964. In those

days the area immediately north of the Angel, between it and the cottage built for Sarah Overall, was used as a tennis court. Bob Petch was succeeded by Mr Hemming who was followed, in 1972, by Ron and Evelyn Daffern. By now there had been other changes.

For long, probably for centuries, there had been outbuildings associated with the Angel. There had once been a wheelwright's business, with its workshop, close by the pub. Later there was a coach-house there which in turn became the workshop for Broomfield's general factotum, Jack Latham, where he would repair lawn mowers, bicycles, etc., and where he would sell all manner of hardware. And after the death of one of Broomfield's most popular figures, David Smith, it was decided to commemorate him with the purchase of one of the Angel's fields which was renamed the David Smith Memorial Field.

As with the Kings arms, the turnover of licensees continued. In 1980 Raoul and Jane de Vaux arrived at the Angel, bringing new ideas. A beer garden and a childrens play area with a "farm zoo" were introduced. By 1982 Raoul and Jane were providing meals and buffets, Raoul had become a member of the Parish Council, and he was also a vice-president of Broomfield Cricket Club. The tennis court had long gone and Raoul used the area to put down a "pint and petanque" pitch but although regulars at the Angel had once played quoits petanque never caught on.

Time moved on and so did Raoul and Jane. They moved away to take on another, very different, pub - the Red Lion in Parliament Street, London. Hob-nobbing with

Members of Parliament replaced the repartee with the villagers of Broomfield, though Raoul returned for several years to attend President's Day at the cricket club and the club's annual dinner. By 1990 Paul and Andrea Read were at the Angel and they in turn were replaced by Ian and Suzan Scott. The 20-plus years tenancies of Colleer, Goodchild and Petch seemed a thing of the past and the new century saw another change.

The brewers had sold out and the Angel became part of a much smaller chain. Paul and Margaret Jones arrived at the Angel; they were already owners of the Running Mare at Galleywood. The Angel was refurbished, the car parking extended and smartened up, as was the beer garden - the petanque pitch had long since gone. The restaurant facilities took precedence over pints, a sign of the times. With one exception all these changes were generally accepted as improving the appearance and the ambience of the old pub.

The pub sign had been a feature of Broomfield for longer than anyone could remember. The Angel was thought of as a symbol of an ancient hostelry, a stopping place for pilgrims on their way, perhaps south to Canterbury or north to Walsingham. The image was of a sign portraying an angel in its pre-Raphaelite glory and this was indeed the picture portrayed on the pub sign for many years. However, a photograph taken in about 1903 tells a different story. Then there was no Angel; the sign simply read "THE ANGEL INN". The photograph can be dated by the recently planted tree on Angel Green - planted in 1902 to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII. And, as a photograph taken in the 1930s shows, although the sign had changed there was still no picture on it.

The rumpus over the new 21st century sign was its portrayal of the angel as a helmeted and goggled figure with the features of the new owner! Is it contemporary and witty? Or is it bad taste, even blasphemous? Whatever the arguments, one suspects that in the final analysis the deciding factor will be the success or otherwise in attracting customers which in turn is more likely to depend on the quality of the hospitality within.



**The Angel in 2004, with its controversial pub sign.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**1570.** The tenement sometime Brownes and now Henrie Welde maketh from Puttos towards the west half a rodd.

**1678.** The tenement of Mr Manwood and now in ye occupation of John Ashby maketh from Water House toward ye west by estimation half a rodd.

**1687.** The tenement of Mr Manwood now in the occupation of Geo. More maketh from the Water House west half a rod.

**1735.** The Angel - Mr Manwood -  $\frac{1}{2}$  a rod.

**1843.** 13. The Angel Inn, John Markham, maketh from no. 12 half a rod. Owners Wells & Perry.

## 14.

### Swan House.



It had one of the prime positions for a house in Broomfield, on the south side of Church Green immediately opposite the church. Now there is no trace of the original Swan House. Nor of its successor, Broomfield House, shown in the picture above. Nor is it readily apparent why the first house was ever called Swan House. The 1570 fence list refers to it as being sometime Swan House and now Rylles (Riley's). Two possible origins come to mind.

Swan isn't a common surname but it did occur in early records though not in Broomfield. Henry le Swan was a witness to a grant of stewardship of the Forest of Essex in 1338, Thomas Swan was at Great Parndon in 1341, John Swan was at

Aveley in 1405 and a Robert Swan was at Great Dunmow in 1494. There was a Richard le Swan living at Roxwell in 1324. Roxwell is only a short distance from Broomfield and an association with that family is one explanation for the name. And yet, unlike most other Broomfield properties with a personal name for an origin, the name never occurs in any of the extant early records for Broomfield.

The other possibility is that the house was once an alehouse and it was the sign of the Swan. There are still some public houses with the swan as their sign, and as a pub name it is long established. There was a Swan Inn at Colchester in 1436. This explanation is given some credibility by the fact that its first named occupant, on the 1570 fence list, William Riley, was a licensed victualler. There was for a long time a maltings associated with the house and a John Malte was a Broomfield taxpayer in 1524 but this may be coincidental. Nevertheless, when Thomas Cass died in 1574 it was his will that his daughter Joan and son William shared his barley, which was “with Goodman Malte”. But since William Riley was at Swan House in 1570 this is arguably a red herring.

It was probably around the year 1550 when William Riley came to live in Broomfield; he wasn't mentioned in Broomfield tax returns for 1524 and 1544 but he does appear as a witness to a Broomfield will in 1555 and in that same year he had a daughter, Margaret, baptised in Broomfield church on the 25th June. His son William was baptised on the 3rd November 1556. It was common for the first children to be named after their parents so William's wife may have been Margaret, the registers don't elaborate. No Riley burials were recorded in the register so the family must have moved on sometime between

1570, when they were shown as living at Swan House, and 1589 when their successors were in Broomfield. They were still there as late as 1582 when William Riley was granted a victualler's licence. If this was his first licence then the theory that Swan House was named from its inn sign weakens somewhat. Another prominent Broomfield man of the time, Edward Bigland, stood surety for him. Interestingly, a Margaret Riley married William Wheeler, another Broomfield name, at Chelmsford in 1570. It was unlikely to have been the daughter baptised in 1555, so this too may be a coincidence

The property was part of the manor of Broomfield Hall and William would have held it as a customary, or copyhold, dwelling, swearing fealty to the Lord of the manor, Baron Rich of Leez. When the Rileys left Swan House is uncertain except that it must have been after 1582. The name was present in Chelmsford, in the person of John Riley, in 1583 and in 1605 William, the son of a William Riley, was baptised at Chelmsford. These could have been the son and grandson of the William Riley of Swan House.

Brewing is an ancient craft. When the Romans arrived in Britain they found the natives drank an ale prepared from barley. At one time oats and wheat were also malted but barley has always been the most popular basis of the malt. The brewer makes his beer or ale by mixing malt, water, and hops. The malt is produced by the maltster who soaks the barley and spreads it out on his maltings floor to germinate, then heats it to dry it out. Just when Broomfield got its first maltster isn't known; John Malte may have been one, William Riley may well have been one and it may have been associated with his getting his victualler's licence in 1582. He would have brewed his

own beer and he may well have used his own malt. John Force certainly was a maltster, and Swan House was certainly the site of Broomfield's malt house.

There is a marginal note on the 1570 fence list against Swan House. It says Force's. John and Joan Force followed the Rileys at Swan House and they may have moved into Broomfield early in 1589. It was later that year that their daughter Joan was baptised at Broomfield church. They already had several children, two sons - John and William, and two daughters, Mabel and Jane. John Senr. was the first of four generations of his family to be associated with Swan House over the next 100 years. His wife died in 1597 and in 1599 his daughter Mabel married John Malt, keeping it in the business so to speak. In 1612 William Force married Mary Putto of the local milling family. Old John lived on until 1616; the record of his burial refers to him as "John Force the elder, an ancient man and householder of Broomfield". In his will he left £3 to each of his children and the residue of his estate to daughter Jane whom he made his executor.

As expected, John Force was succeeded at Swan House by his son, John Force II who within two years became John Force the elder as his wife Mary presented him with a son, another John. Five years later, in 1622, their daughter Mary was baptised. In 1632 John was appointed churchwarden but it was a short-lived term of office for in the following year he died.

John Force II died in 1633. In his will he described himself as a maltster and he left his copyhold messuage, Swan House, to his wife for the rest of her life and then to his son John Force III. He also owned a field called Little Shapley and this

he left to his wife "towards the payment of my debts". The field can still be identified, along New Barn Lane, on the right hand side as one walks away from the church. His dear friend Henry Godsave was to be overseer of his will, which was witnessed by the vicar Thomas Burr and the village blacksmith George Neville.

There is a tantalising entry in the Quarter Sessions records for 1637 which tells us that Mary Force, widow, and John Force, glover, were ordered to keep the peace towards Winifred Field of Chelmsford. What caused the breach of the peace isn't stated. And as to John Force, he seems at that date to have been a glove maker.

And so Swan House descended via Mary Force to John Force III who in 1652 married Martha Turnedge. Martha bore him a son, predictably named John, and they also had two daughters, Martha and Susan. The hearth taxes of 1662 and 1671 show that Swan House had 4 hearths, a reasonably large house if not one of Broomfield's grandest.

John Force III died in 1677 and it seems that his son, John Force IV, followed him at Swan House because the fence list for 1678 shows a John Force as occupant of Swan House. The fourth and last generation of his family to be involved in the house and the village married Jane Read in 1686. John was still in evidence in 1692 but by then he had left Swan House for the fence list of 1687 shows that in that year it was in the occupation of Henry Neville.

There was a family of Nevills, long established in Broomfield, who were blacksmiths. Henry was born in 1640,

the son of George, the village blacksmith, and Jane Nevill, and in 1678 he was living in the tenement called Podinge. He had married Mary Bonnington in 1685 and their son Henry was "baptised by non-conformists as is said" on 9th November 1686. Henry was twice summoned before the Assizes to answer for not having attended church for a month, no doubt because of his non-conformist beliefs. Henry had an elder brother George who had succeeded as the blacksmith when their father died in 1671 and this George in turn handed on the smithy to his son, another George.

Henry's brother George died in 1719 at the age of 84 but Henry himself didn't appear in the registers again, no doubt because he had moved away from the village, very likely to Little Waltham. A Henry Nevill, and it was most likely our Henry, was into the malting business elsewhere. As related in the Podinge chapter, there was a maltings along Blasford Hill, just over the border in Little Waltham and Henry owned land there, from the main road down to the river, as well as Podinge farm along Wood House lane. So it seems that in 1687 Henry Nevill had Swan House and the maltings, as well as Podinges and the other maltings at Blasford Hill.

The next period in the history of Swan House is uncertain. In 1692 a widow Porter died and in her will she mentioned her second son, Arthur Porter of Broomfield, maltster. It doesn't follow that Arthur was at Swan House but two maltings in the village was improbable and, interestingly, the widow Porter's will was witnessed by John Force. It is possible that John Force IV still owned the house and maltings, Henry Neville had leased it for a time, and he was followed by Arthur Porter. Another tantalising Quarter Sessions record

tells that John Force and Thomas Bridgeman of Writtle, cordwainers, at Broomfield were accused of stealing a pair of buckskin breeches and 6/8d in money from James Burrell. Was this John Force IV, and had he given up malt for shoemaking?

The end of the Force dynasty in Broomfield came with the death in 1717 of Jane, widow of the last John Force. The next record of a maltster in Broomfield was in 1710 when there was a fire at the malt house. A Quarter Session record for that year states "Francis Booth of Little Waltham maketh say that Henry Bretton of Broomfield has in his malting office 30 bushels of malt burnt and spoiled by a fire which accidentally happened there, and that the duty for the same was charged upon him accordingly before the same was burned". This was followed by another statement which read "Thomas Terry, servant to Henry Bretton of Broomfield, maltster, maketh oath that his master Henry Bretton had the misfortune of a fire happening in his malting office. 30 bushels of malt were burnt and spoilt by the fire, and that he was charged the duty by the Officer before the fire happened". Swan House wasn't mentioned so it isn't certain that Henry Bretton followed the Force/Neville/Porter period there.

Some time before 1731, and possibly shortly after Henry Bretton's misfortune in 1710, Swan House had been bought by John Gandy. The Gandys were farmers, their name crops up at Writtle and at Chignal St James. Gandy had then sold it to Samuel Marriage. Samuel also held the lease of Broomfield Hall and it may have been there that he made his will in 1731, leaving the remaining lease of Broomfield Hall and "my messuage on Broomfield Green heretofore purchased of John

Gandy with the malt house and kiln" to his son Robert.

Samuel Marriage was born in 1666, the son of Francis and Mary Marriage. Samuel had acquired property at High Easter, which he left to his eldest son Samuel, and at Great Waltham, which went to his second son, Francis. Samuel's brother William was then farming at Partridge Green and it is William's descendants who have continued to live in Broomfield. Amongst others named in Samuel's will were his son-in-law Joseph Jesper, who had married his daughter Elizabeth, and his grandchild Samuel Dawson, names which were to appear again in the story of Swan House. In 1733 Samuel Marriage died and was buried in the Quaker burial ground at Earls Colne near his wife and daughter Mary. Swan House passed to Robert Marriage, as Samuel had specified in his will.

In 1739 Richard Taylor, maltster, of Broomfield, married Ruth Lee, the daughter of Thomas Lee, the Broomfield grocer at Crouch House who had died in the smallpox outbreak of 1720. Ruth was then 38 and four months after their marriage their first child, Richard, was baptised. The vicar wrote the mother's name as Ruth Lee, which it was when the child was conceived. A second son, David, was born in March 1742, he was baptised on the 10th March, his mother died giving birth and she was buried on the 14th March and baby David was buried the following day. A year later Richard Taylor married Rhoda Wiltshire at Broomfield and in 1744 their daughter Elizabeth was baptised. Richard Senr. died in 1748 but he made no mention of property in his will so it is likely that he was employed at Swan House as maltster, the property remaining in the ownership of the Marriage family.

In 1751 two more families were living in Broomfield who were to be associated with Swan House. Samuel Dawson, the grandson of Samuel Marriage, had recently bought the shop at Angel Green and in May of that year their son Samuel was born. Thomas Gopsill, a woolstapler, had married Elizabeth Jesper in June 1751; she was the daughter of Joseph Jesper and granddaughter of Samuel Marriage. By 1770 Samuel Dawson and his wife Lydia had moved into Swan House and Samuel now described himself as a maltster.

Although the manorial records of the manor of Broomfield Hall were destroyed in World War II a few draft court rolls survived filed away in a Chelmsford solicitor's office. These enable the story of the ownership of Swan House to be picked up in the 1770s through to the arrival of the Gopsill family. The first entry is dated 1779 and relates that the previous owner, Samuel Dawson, held "that house and malt house, with all the yards, gardens, outhouses, lands and appurtenances in the Parish of Broomfield abutting on Broomfield Green towards the north, on a field called Knightleys (Night Pasture) on the south, and a customary tenement now used as a parish workhouse (Woollards) on the east". Although no longer at Swan House Samuel and Lydia lived on in Broomfield for several more years. Lydia died in 1793 aged 73 and Samuel died in 1796 at the age of 77.

The court rolls show that in 1779 John Smith was admitted to the house and malt house in place of Samuel Dawson. In 1787 John Smith's cousin, another John Smith of Stonage Farm, Little Waltham, was one of two executors (the other was another maltster, John Sammes of Little Waltham)

admitted on the death of the first John Smith. The executors then sold the house and all its appurtenances to Richard Lawrinson, maltster, who was admitted in 1790 but who had rather a short ownership since he died in 1793 leaving the house and malt house to his wife Ellen. Eighteen months later Ellen Lawrinson died, leaving her estate to her eldest brother Thomas Bakewell of Cheadle in Staffordshire, who promptly sold it.

The period between the end of the Force dynasty at Swan House and the arrival of Thomas Gopsill tells a somewhat confused story. Up to the 1680s the owner was most likely also the maltster. From then until say the 1720s the owner may have been the maltster or he may have leased it to or employed a maltster. When Samuel marriage bought it he did not live there and neither did his son Robert.

The early period can be summarised as:

c1550 - c1589	William Riley
c1589 - 1616	John Force I
1616 - 1633	John Force II
1633 - c1650	Mary Force
c1650 - 1677	John Force III
1677 -	John Force IV
1687	Henry Nevill
1692	Arthur Porter
1710	Henry Bretton
1717	Death of Jane Force
c1711 - c1720	John Gandy
c1720 - 1733	Samuel Marriage
1733 -	Robert Marriage
1739 - 1748	Richard Taylor

1770	-	1779	Samuel Dawson
1779	-	1787	John Smith
1787		- 1790	John Smith II (acting as executor)
1790	-	1793	Richard Lawrinson
1793	-	1795	Ellen Lawrinson

The new owner of Swan House was Thomas Gopsill II, who took possession on the 14th May 1795. He was the son of Thomas Gopsill I who had married Elizabeth Jesper at Broomfield in 1751 and the great-grandson of Samuel Marriage. Thomas and Mary Gopsill were farming at Partridge Green immediately before their move to Swan House and their first two children, Mary and Thomas, were born at Partridge Green. It is likely that the farm was leased from the Marriage family.

The Gopsills were at Swan House for some 90 years. Thomas and Mary had two more children while they were at Swan House, Elizabeth born in 1797 and John born in 1800. Thomas Gopsill II died in 1830 at the age of 76 and left it to his wife Mary, who lived there for another fourteen years until she died on the 30th December 1844 at the age of 84. The 1841 census shows that she was then living there with her son Thomas, and her daughters Mary and Elizabeth. Surprisingly, all the children, though by then in their forties, were still unmarried.

In 1844 Mary's eldest son, Thomas Gopsill III, inherited Swan House. In 1851 he was shown as a maltster employing one man and one boy and also as a farmer of 85 acres employing five more men on the farm. The farm may have been Partridge

Green, which the Gopsills may have continued to lease from the Marriage family who were after all their kinsfolk. The 1851 census shows that a Samuel Franklin, described as a farm looker, was living at Partridge Green. By then Thomas had married and his wife Eliza had a baby daughter, also named Eliza. There was one servant living at the house. When Thomas died it passed on to his wife Eliza for life from whom it went to their son, Thomas Gopsill IV.

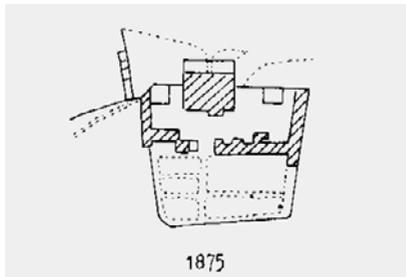
In 1861 another family was living at Swan House. By then Thomas Gopsill III had died and although the Gopsills still owned the property a maltster was needed to do the work and so the Franklin family arrived. Samuel Franklin and his wife Eliza and their seven children took up residence. This must have been the son of the Samuel who was their farm looker ten years earlier and who had died in 1859. The Franklins were still there ten years later though diminished in numbers. Samuel Franklin was now a widower and with him were two of his children, Hannah then 24 and Emma who was 10. Eliza Gopsill was also in residence with two of her children, Eliza aged 20 and Thomas aged 15.

By 1881 Thomas Gopsill IV was 25 and had taken over as maltster at Swan House. His mother was still living there, as was Thomas's sister Eliza. The Franklins had gone though Samuel lived on until 1887.

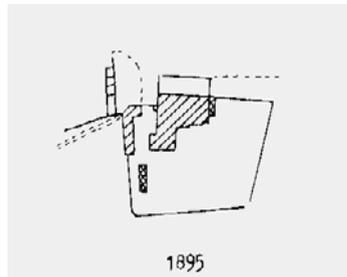
Until now the Gopsills had called themselves maltsters but a deed of 1887, transferring the property from copyhold to freehold, describes the owner as "Thomas Gopsill, Gentleman". It must have been about this time when Swan House ceased to exist. Thomas Gopsill IV not only bought the freehold he also

had the old house demolished and replaced by a new house, a suitable residence for a successful gentleman.

This Thomas Gopsill had the enjoyment of his new house for only a short while for he died in 1889 and his tombstone in Broomfield churchyard gives the first mention of the new house - Broomfield House. Two ordnance surveys carried out in Broomfield, in 1875 and 1895, show a marked difference in the plan of the buildings abutting the Green opposite the church making it clear that the new house bore little resemblance to its predecessor.



**Swan House**



**Broomfield House**

In 1890 Frederick William Neild arrived at Broomfield House. Born in Warrington, Lancashire in 1851, he was a miller and flour merchant. The census taken in the following year confirms this though where he practised his profession isn't stated. He didn't appear in the 1881 census anywhere in Essex so it seems he may have moved down from Lancashire to Broomfield House. Warrington isn't so very far removed from Stockport where the Christy family, who had then been living in Broomfield for many years, had their hat factory. Could there

have been a connection? In fact he had married Rose Marriage and this was clearly the Broomfield connection, but how did he meet Rose?

At the time of the 1891 census William and Rose Neild had two children living with them, Elsie then aged 1 and William aged 3 months. There were three servants living there; Lizzie Clark, cook, Sarah Clark, housemaid, and Ellen Dowsett, nursemaid to the Neild children. There would also have been non-resident servants.

So the history of Swan House came to an end. At Broomfield House the Neilds lived in the style of late Victorian and Edwardian gentry, keeping several servants; cook, housemaid, parlourmaid, gardeners and a houseboy. Two well known Broomfield characters started their working life there, Ethel Crozier was a housemaid and Walter Hagger was houseboy. And a member of another well known Broomfield family, Joseph Tunbridge, was the gardener.



**Taken from an old photograph, this shows the newly built Broomfield House before the maltings and the other outbuildings had been demolished**

In 1891 William Neild unsuccessfully tried to buy Woollard's cottages from the Trustees of Woollard's Charity. They were immediately next door to Broomfield House so perhaps he wished to expand his estate. Whatever the reason the Trustees of Woollard's charity weren't selling and the negotiations came to nothing.

In 1895 Neild became one of Broomfield's first Parish Councillors. And in that same year he was elected to the committee of the newly formed Broomfield Cricket Club (there had been a cricket club for many years but this put it on a formal footing). As befitting a member of the village gentry he was also made a vice-president of the cricket club. Although in formal matters he seems to have preferred being referred to as William, at the cricket club he was Frederick or Freddie. In

1901 he donated a seat for the club's new ground at the rear of Brooklands.

In 1902 William, or Freddie, Neild became closely involved with the village's preparations for the coronation festivities. When in April of that year the cricket club proposed to buy a pavilion for the ground, and several members offered donations, he opposed the idea, pointing out that money was wanted for the forthcoming festivities. He suggested that the idea be held over for the time being. It was.

William Neild and Henry Collings Wells planted a horse chestnut tree on Angel Green to commemorate Edward VII's coronation. The actual donkeywork was carried out by the two gardeners, Mr Pragnell, the gardener at Broomfield Lodge, and Joseph Tunbridge, the gardener at Broomfield House. The coronation celebrations were a great success with 700 villagers sitting down to tea in a large marquee in three relays. Mr Neild gave a "handsome volume in scarlet and gold entitled King Edward's Realm" to each school child.

Another significant event in the Neild household occurred in 1902, their baptism into the Church of England. On the 31st July 1902 Frederick and Rose were baptised; the register noted that they were adults. Two weeks later, on the 14th August, their children Elsie and William were also baptised. They had presumably moved away from the Quaker faith into the established church.

Frederick William Neild died on the 26th March 1908 at the age of 56. His widow Rose kept the house on for a while after her husband's death. She and her son William also kept

going the family interest in the cricket club, Rose providing the tea for the annual match with the Police and William playing for the club. Rose lived on until 1939 but by then the house and long since been sold.

Rose Neild gave way to Henry Hill. Mr Hill's ownership was short-lived and in 1920 he sold it to Frank Ainslie Williams for £4,000. Major Frank Ainslie Williams subsequently became Lt. Colonel then Colonel Williams. He was awarded the O.B.E and the T.D., and kept the house and garden in the same immaculate condition as the Neilds. As Major Williams he quickly became involved in village affairs and in 1922 he was elected President of the Broomfield Cricket Club. For some reason he only held the post for a couple of years, giving way to Gerald Ridley, but he remained a vice-president for the rest of his time in Broomfield and still took an interest in its affairs. In 1932 he offered a fielding prize for the 1st and 2nd teams which led to much discussion as to how such a prize could be adjudicated!

The Williams family moved away just before World War II and for a short time the R.A.F. took possession. During the war the outbuildings became the quartermasters stores for the local Home Guard. Later the Marconi's Company rented the building for use as offices. Unsightly huts had been erected in the once immaculate gardens. On the expiry of the Marconi lease the house became derelict - shrubs sprouted from the chimneys, windows were broken.



This is a rather sad view of the rear of Broomfield House in its latter days. The once beautiful garden tended by Joseph Tunbridge replaced by less beautiful huts.

In 1978 Broomfield House was demolished and new houses built on the site. There was some sadness at its going although it had become an eyesore and its replacement was certainly an improvement, except for its name. The new house that took its place went by the rather prosaic title of number 19 Church Green. The new owners, Ian and Morag Hughes, however, continued in the tradition of their predecessors by getting involved in local affairs.

Ian Hughes, a native of Hereford, was a general builder. Now retired, he has been a member of Broomfield Parish

Council since he was first elected in 1981. He has also served on the Parochial Church Council and as a bell ringer at St Mary's church opposite. For 21 years he was a trustee of Woollard's Charity, succeeding Henry Marriage as Chairman. His current interest is in the planting and management of trees in the parish where he is now the tree warden.

But number 19 sounds nothing like as impressive as Swan House or Broomfield House. Sic transit titulus.



**Swan House, Broomfield House, now Number 19**

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**1570.** The tenement sometime Swan House and now Rylles maketh from Brownes toward the west four foot and halfe

**1678.** The tenement sometime Swan House and now John Forces maketh from Ashby's towards the west four foot and halfe by estimation.

**1687.** The tenement sometime Swan House now Hary Nevill maketh from Mores westwards four foot and half

**1735.** Swan House - 4 foot & a half

**1843.** 14. Swan House, occupied by Mr Thomas Gopsill, maketh from no. 13 four feet and a half. Owner Thomas Gopsill.