

## 31.

### **Broomfield Place.**



### **Broomfield Place 1974**

This is another property that has undergone name changes over the centuries. On the 1570 fence list no house, messuage or tenement was mentioned. It was then just land, mostly lying alongside the main road on the south side of the junction with what is now School Lane. Some land may also have been alongside the main road on the north side of School Lane and perhaps where Brooklands now stands. The 1570 list records that it was once Scotcs and was then Thomas Hunwickses. Morant, in his *History and Antiquities of Essex* published in 1760, noted that it "belonged formerly to Sewell". Since he gave no date for Sewell it could have been before or after Scot. Morant also failed to give any attribution for the

Sewell reference so there is no way of discovering his source. He would have been aware of the 1570 list. He must have referred to it when he wrote an updated version during his time as vicar of Broomfield. There was of course another reference to land on the 1570 list - the Church Lands that "sometime were Sewell". Morant wrote his history some 30 years after he had updated the fence list, so could he have mixed up the Church Lands and Scotese? I suspect he did.

If indeed the land was sometime Sewells, and it's a big if, then this would have been Sewell de Broomfield, a dimly seen figure from the past. A local landowner who flourished during the period 1290 to 1330, little else is known of him. There is mention of him as early as 1290 when Isobel de Cloville granted him some land, and he appeared as a substantial Broomfield taxpayer in 1319. Sewell engaged in several land conveyances in the 1320s, when his wife Rose, a daughter Matilda and a son, Gilbert, were also mentioned. The land close to Priors which later became the source of John Gynes charity and known as the Church Lands was, as I mentioned above, recorded on the 1570 list as "sometime were Sewell de Broomfield"

Scot could have been a contemporary of Sewell, for in 1341 Peter Scot held land in Broomfield. This may have referred to the area near Scot's Green, some distance from the Broomfield Place site, but it could conceivably have been the land referred to on the 1570 list. There were other Scots in Broomfield who might have been the owners of this piece of land. In 1474 John Scot, son of John Scot, was a witness to a deed relating to Crouch House (the Kings Arms) in Broomfield. Although there were no Scots on the tax lists of 1524 and 1544 a

daughter of John Scot was baptised at Broomfield in 1556.

Thomas Hunwicke, the 1570 owner of the land, was a churchwarden in 1541 and again in 1572 so he must have had a home in Broomfield in addition to this piece of land yet he had no other responsibility for a length of the churchyard fence. A Thomas Hunwicke married a Clayden in 1593 but this is unlikely to have been the churchwarden of 1541 so perhaps there were two or more generations with the same name.

The Hunwicks weren't a Broomfield family, rather they came from Little Waltham and at some time also had connections with Chelmsford. A John Hunwick died at Little Waltham in 1530 and Richard Hunwick, a miller at Little Waltham, died there in 1553. William Hunwick, also a miller was buried at Little Waltham in 1565 and two Thomas Hunwicks, both millers at Little Waltham, were buried there in 1598 and 1614. One of the Thomas's could very well have been the 1570 occupant of Scot's in Broomfield, perhaps the same one who married Jane Hills at Little Waltham in 1547.

There are a few other Hunwicke references. When Thomas Motley of Broomfield died in 1568 Thomas Hunwicke was charged with others with the responsibility of letting the land which he held on lease from Robert Wood for the benefit of his, Motley's, children. John Brett, the farmer at Patching Hall, died in 1583 and amongst his bequests was a piece of land in Broomfield that he had bought from Thomas Hunwicke. In 1591 Robert Sames of Boreham left his lands in Broomfield called Cookes and Inglandes, then in the tenancy of Thomas Hunwick, to his wife Margery for life. Just to confuse the issue Thomas Hunwick was churchwarden at Chelmsford in

1563 and in 1569 when John Hills of Great Leighs died his executor was Thomas Hunwick of Chelmsford.

A likely scenario is that Thomas Hunwicke was a Little Waltham man who was living in Chelmsford in the 1560s, perhaps having taken on a mill there. By 1570 he was in Broomfield. He died in 1598 and was buried with his kinsmen in the churchyard at Little Waltham. There is no mention of Hunwicks in the Broomfield parish records after 1593. As to the property, it uniquely acquired three marginal notes on the 1570 fence list - Mr Harris, Lawrence Poole, and Mr Webb. Certainly Mr Webb was the last entry for he was still the owner when the next fence list was drawn up in 1678. The Mr Harris was Salter Harris of whom more shortly. Lawrence was a common Christian name in the Poole family in Broomfield, spanning at least four generations. The question is, who came next after Hunwicke? Was it Lawrence Poole or Salter Harris?

The marginal entry on the 1570 fence list shows:

Mr Harris  
behind Lawrence Poole  
Mr Webb.

There was very little room in the margin to make three entries and keep them beside the Hunwicke's entry on the list. I believe Lawrence Poole came first. It was then necessary to add Mr Harris; his name was put above Poole's but 'behind' was added in front of Lawrence Poole to indicate that Harris followed Poole. Mr Webb was later squeezed in below.

Of the several Lawrence Pooles the best candidate was born in 1560, the son of Thomas Poole, farmer at Broomfield

Hall. This Lawrence had a son, Lawrence, who died aged 18 and a grandson, also Lawrence, who was born in 1630. So the first Lawrence is the best fit.

Salter Harris was baptised at Woodham Mortimer in 1620, the son of Arthur Harris and Anne Salter. Arthur Harris had been born at Woodham Mortimer in 1584 and had married Anne Salter in 1615 so they were unlikely to have been connected to the many HARRISES long resident in Broomfield. On the 13th August 1647, described as Salter Harris, Esq., he was married to Mary Post at Margaretting. According to Morant a family of HARRISES lived at Shenfield Hall, Margaretting. Certainly the Esq suggests he was of the landed gentry, and it is probable that he moved to Broomfield shortly after his marriage.

Salter and his wife Mary had four children baptised at St Mary's church; Thomas (1655), William (1657), Ann (1658) and Mary (1661). His wife died in 1662 but Salter Harris was still in evidence in that year when he was assessed for the very large sum of 13 hearths on the tax list of that year. That it refers to Hunwickes is certain for Mr Webb was also assessed for 13 hearths on the 1671 tax list. It must have been quite a house and it was around this time that the property became known as New House, so the probability is that Salter Harris, a man of substance, had a new house built on the site and gave it the not very original name of "New House".

Salter Harris was present at the meeting in 1659 when new churchwardens were appointed and in the following year he became the parish surveyor. This was one of a handful of parish appointments, which rotated amongst the leading citizens

of the parish. Whether the death of his wife in 1662 played any part in his departure from New House isn't clear, but by 1671 Mr Webb had arrived.

There is a curious postscript to the story of Salter Harris. The unusual Christian name, which might have been thought to relate to his trade, was simply his mother's maiden name. But there are other references to a Salter Harris. In 1713 Salter Harris, "chyrurgion" (surgeon), was living in Wivenhoe. None of the four children of Salter Harris baptised at Broomfield were named Salter so was the Wivenhoe man a grandson? Broomfield's Salter Harris would then have been 93. The name is surely too unusual not to be connected. And there is another connection with Salter Harris and surgeon. It is the common name for a type of fracture of the epiphysis and growth plate, more common in boys, and usually seen in infancy and between the ages of 10 - 12, a Salter Harris fracture!

Jonathan Webb, esq., of Broomfield was a juror at the Essex Assizes in 1684 and he got another mention in 1686. Mr Webb was the occupant on the fence lists of 1678 and 1687. The Hearth Tax list of 1671, however, gives William Webb as the owner of the 13-hearth dwelling, so Jonathan was very likely one of William's sons. The William Webb of 1671, Salter Harris's successor, may have died before 1680 for there is a will in the Public Record Office of that year of Letitia, the widow of William Webb Esq, of London and New House, Broomfield.

The fence list of 1687 shows the occupant only as Mr Webb but a separate list of ratepayers in the parish records for that year states Jonathan Webb (New House). In 1708 another William Webb was buried at Broomfield. He was described as a citizen of London, the son of William Webb, Esq., of New

House, and he was buried in the chancel of the church near his grandfather. Hunwickes was now known as New House. So there must have been three William Webb's, one after the other, and at least one Jonathan. The first William died before 1680, and the second was still living at New House when his son, the third William Webb, died in 1708. There had been other occupants during this time for an entry in the Broomfield register records the baptism in 1693 of Maria, the daughter of Thomas Laut, Gent. and his wife Joyce, 'boarders at Mr Webb's New House'.

It looks as though William Webb II died shortly after his son for on the 9th December 1712 Sir Richard Everard bought New House from Jonathan Webb, the heir to the Webb's estate. The Everards had been owners of Langleys, Great Waltham, and Sir Richard's father, another Sir Richard, was Governor of North Carolina. Debts had caused the sale of Langleys in 1710/11 and Sir Richard no doubt was looking for a suitable residence.

Sir Richard owned New House until his death and it is known that he was in Broomfield in 1712 for in that year a butcher, William Levitt, was fined 5/- for "assaulting Sir Richard Everard in Broomfield so that his life was despaired of". Fortunately he recovered. At this time New House had a farm attached to it which tends to confuse the issue because the residents in the big house weren't necessarily the people who farmed the land.

By 1727 the Earl and Countess of Donegal were living at New House - in that year Edith Lincoln, retainer to the Countess at New House, died. Between 1728 and 1731 John Glass, Gent and his wife Hannah were living at New House with the

Donegals and three of the Glass children were baptised at Broomfield during this period.

In 1736 Edward Kelsall, Gent., was living at New House, Sir Richard Everard must still have been living elsewhere - he no doubt continued to own the estate as an investment rather than as a family dwelling. It was in 1736 that Rebecca Margaret, 'a black maid belonging to Edward Kelsall at New House', was baptised, and in that same year Lucy, the daughter of Edward and Betty Kelsall, was also baptised. Their daughter Mary was baptised in 1739 and another daughter, Susannah, was baptised in 1741.

On the death of Sir Richard the estate of New House remained in the Everard family for the next deed, in 1738, refers to Dame Susan Everard, widow. It then passed to Sir Hugh Everard who in 1742 sold it to George and Ann Lothbury. Ann Lothbury was Sir Richard Everard's sister. In 1744 their son Richard Augustus was baptised and this was followed two years later by the baptism of their daughter Susanna Kidder. The Lothburys held New House until 1749 when they sold it to John Hanbury, a merchant from Coggeshall. The Lothbury connection lasted for two more years for in 1751 Anne Everard Lothbury, an infant, was buried at Broomfield.

From John Hanbury New House passed to his son Osgood Hanbury. An interesting entry in the Broomfield Parish registers for 1760, during the Hanbury ownership, records the death of John Hitchen, "a boarder at the school at New House". The school, no doubt in one of the buildings around the house, was run by one Samuel Hawtyn. In fact Samuel Hawtyn, schoolmaster, was there from 1756 to 1766 because he

was paying the tithe for New House over this period.

A few years later, in 1769, Osgood Hanbury sold New House to Maria Tufnell of Great Waltham, the family who had succeeded the Everards at Langleys, and it stayed in the Tufnell family for almost 60 years. Maria paid £1,030 for the property, which was described in the deed of conveyance as “Broomfield Place otherwise New House”. The abstract of title recites that in addition to the house and its immediate grounds there were two closes or crofts of pasture which were “late of Samuel Hawtyn and Augustus Finch”, plus two closes or fields of 8 acres more or less, part and parcel of New House “wherein Sir Richard Everard, Bart, deceased, formerly dwelt”.

Maria Anna Tufnell was christened at St Paul’s, Covent Garden, on the 12th February 1723. She was the 4th child and second daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth Tufnell. Maria never married. She was 46 years of age when she bought New House and continued as owner until her death. Her father, who had died in 1758, left her £7,000 in his will so she was well able to afford Broomfield Place. Other Tufnells may have lived there; from 1779 a series of baptisms signify the presence of the Tufnell family in Broomfield. Anne Maria, the daughter of John and Hannah Tufnell was baptised in 1778 and in 1784 their son William Besley Tufnell was baptised.

In 1788 Maria Tufnell made her will and in it she left Broomfield Place to her brother George Forster Tufnell for his lifetime, then to George’s eldest son William for his lifetime and then to William’s heir. Maria lived on until 1801 and Broomfield Place then passed as she had wished, first to George and then to William. In 1804 William Tufnell married Mary

Carleton and in the following year their son Henry was born. William died in 1816 and Broomfield Place passed to Henry, then still a minor.

In 1827 Henry Tufnell sold Broomfield Place to Charles King, of 116 Sloane Street, Chelsea. It is likely that it was around this time that the farmland was also sold, part at least to Thomas Christy. Several occupants of the additional land belonging to New House are named in the deeds of Broomfield Place, most significantly, in a deed of 1714, Richard Entwistle and his son Robert. Their land amounted to 59 acres 2 rod 18 perches. This was the land on either side of the main road, part of which, known as Entwistles, was bought by Thomas Christy in 1827 as the site for his new home, Brooklands.

As to the Entwistles, Richard and Robert Entwistle, father and son, appear in the Oxford Alumnensis which records that they matriculated in 1668 and 1711 respectively. They came of a family of landed gentry living at Foxhole, Lancaster. Richard was a barrister at Grays Inn and Robert became a Justice of the Peace. Robert Entwistle died in 1778.

Other names associated with the farmland of New House/Broomfield Place were Augustine Finch (to 1793), John Smith (1783-1801), John Coe (1801- 1815), John Joliffe Tufnell (1815-1820) and William Lucas (1820-1828). Thomas Christy built his house, Brooklands, on Entwistles land. Adding together the land around the house, the two pairs of closes, and the land known as Entwistles, New House must originally have had around 80 acres of land.

The arrival at Broomfield Place, once Hunwickes, then New House, of Charles King might have heralded the rebuilding of the main house, the building that is there today. The King family were Roman Catholics from Errigal Keerogue in Co. Tyrone, Ireland. Francis King had married Catherine Early and they had three sons, Patrick, John and Charles. John married Margaret Edwards at Dublin in 1801; they had one son, John, who was born in 1803 and who died in 1822. Francis died at Fintona, Co. Tyrone in 1808, aged 71. His other two sons, Patrick and Charles, sought their fortune in England. Both of them ended up as owners of property in Broomfield.

Patrick King was the elder brother and he lived first at Broomfield Lodge which he had bought in 1822 and then, from 1831, in Brighthelmstone (Brighton). In 1835 Patrick bought Broomfield Place from his brother Charles. Patrick died in 1838 and was buried at Moorfields Roman Catholic chapel in London. He left a legacy of £500 towards the purchase of a site for a Roman Catholic church in Chelmsford.

On Patrick's death Broomfield Place reverted to his brother Charles who then returned to Broomfield Place. In 1841 Charles was in residence with his wife Maria and their two daughters, Ellen and Agnes. On the census Ellen's age was given as 20 and Agnes as 15 but the 1841 census rounded ages to the nearest five years so their actual age isn't certain. In 1845 Father Charles Patrick King, the nephew of Charles King of Broomfield Place, was sent from his church in Colchester to found a Roman Catholic mission in Chelmsford. The present Roman Catholic church of the Immaculate Conception in New London Road was built in 1847.

Charles King died in 1850 and in 1852 the trustees of his estate, his nephews Charles Edward and Daniel King, sold Broomfield Place to Henry Copland, a son of John Copland who was a leading Chelmsford solicitor and dissenter and who had died in 1845. John's eldest son John had taken over his father's legal practice. Much of the layout of the grounds of Broomfield Place dates from this period and it may have been Henry Copland who had the trees planted which later grew into imposing specimens, some of which still stand.

The sale catalogue of 1852 reveals some details of the house as it then was. The sale by auction took place at The Black Boy in Chelmsford on the 10th September 1852 and Broomfield Place was Lot No. 12. Broomfield Place was described as an elegant, commodious and substantially built family residence, situated in one of the most salubrious parts of the County, in the centre of a first rate sporting district.

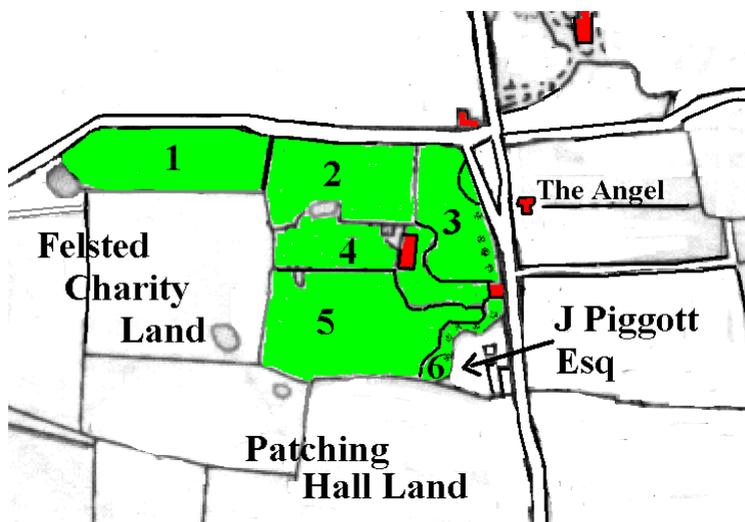
The ground floor rooms consisted of entrance hall, drawing room, dining room, library, breakfast room, kitchen, scullery, pantry, housekeeper's room, etc. The first floor, known as the chamber floor, had six bedrooms, three dressing rooms, a private chapel, a water closet, and four servant's apartments. The chapel was surely the creation of the Roman Catholic King family. There was also a basement with wine and beer cellars.

The outbuildings included dairy, larder, brewhouse, coal and knife houses, stables, loose boxes, a harness room and a coach house. There was a newly erected conservatory, spacious pleasure gardens, and a kitchen garden with melon and pine pits, tool house, potting shed etc. The property also had

what was described as a neat lodge house and entrance. Altogether a most desirable residence.

With the house went nearly 18 acres of land. It was a mixture of pasture, plantations, and pleasure grounds. The home, not of a farmer but of a gentleman who probably had business interests elsewhere. The sale catalogue of 1852 included a plan, showing it to be much as expected, together with a list of the pieces of land that made up the estate:

1. Upper Pasture	3a	1r	28p
2. The Pasture	3a	1r	14p
3. The Park	2a	1r	4p
4. House & Gardens	2a	2r	3p
5. Back Field	5a	1r	30p
6. Plantations	0a	2r	24p
Unenclosed waste	0a	1r	2p
<b>Total</b>	<b>17a</b>	<b>3r</b>	<b>25p</b>



The unenclosed waste on the 1852 plan was the area attached to The Park (3), opposite Angel Green. The piece of land shown as owned by J Piggott, Esq, then held a row of three cottages, known as Piggott's Row, which were believed to date back to the 16th century and may once have been a single dwelling. The cottages, although listed, were demolished in the 1970s and replaced by modern housing.

Henry Copland was one of seven sons of the prosperous Chelmsford solicitor, John Copland. John Jnr. became the head of the practice after his father's death and he was joined by his brother Edward. Oscar became a surgeon and practised in Crane Court (now the NatWest Bank), Alfred was a printer and stationer in the High Street, William became a farmer at Writtle, and Frederick took on Braxted Mill. Henry became a chemist in Tindal (then Conduit) Square.

The census of 1861 shows Henry Copland, then aged 45, living at Broomfield Place with his wife Ann and their 8-year-old daughter Annie Florence. There was no mention of him being a chemist - he was of independent means, getting his income from property and rents. Ten years on and Henry described himself as a landowner. In 1881 he was still of independent means, getting his income from rents and dividends. By 1891 his wife had died, his daughter was still at home, and there were three servants living in - a housekeeper, parlourmaid and kitchenmaid.

In 1887 Henry Copland made his will, naming his nephew John Albert Copland and Henry Marriage of Ayletts as his executors and trustees. Later he added an intriguing codicil removing Henry Marriage as executor and trustee, and revoking the £100 he had left him. In his place was a hitherto unmentioned son, Montague Bigg Copland.

When Henry Copland died in 1896 Broomfield Place became the home of his daughter, Annie Florence Copland. The estate was still vested in trustees, members of the Copland family charged with serving the interests of Annie Florence, and changing from time to time as one of them died. In 1932 Annie made her will, appointing Charles Edward Copland and Eric Formby Copland as her executors.

Annie, who was born in 1853, and who never married, became one of Broomfield's most notable residents, and many a Broomfield resident had tales to tell of her good works, her church activities, and her Temperance crusade. In Broomfield, what Miss Copland said, went. If her decisions were questioned, it was out of her hearing.



### **Annie Florence Copland**

It is said that Henry Copland kept a fine cellar with racks of excellent wines. The sale catalogue of 1852 had mentioned the wine and beer cellars. The story is told that when his daughter took over the house her first act was to get a servant to empty all the bottles down the drain. Just imagine, clarets, champagne, vintage ports, perhaps a Chateau Latour or a Dom Perignon, going glug glug down the plughole!

Miss Copland's welfare work in Broomfield was legendary. For mothers, children, the less fortunate members of the community, if it was a good cause she would be involved. Miss Ivy Smith, a Broomfieldian who later moved to Colchester, writing in 1981, noted:

"She (Miss Copland) held Scripture Union classes for

young teenagers, and I still have the bible which I won as a prize with her signature in it. Also she was an ardent worker for the blind who, with her faithful companion Miss Wheeler taught me to do Braille sheets for the blind. We used a pointed tool and the sheets were laid on a frame and every dot had to be pricked through after which Miss Copland would check thoroughly to see I had not missed any.

The Reverend Charles Edmunds was vicar in my young days, and when he visited Miss Copland at Broomfield Place he promptly put his umbrella up as he walked under the horse chestnut trees to catch the rook droppings; he laughingly said to me one day "They are such good marksmen my wife has to clean my umbrella after each visit"

Even before her father had died Annie Copland had made her mark in Broomfield. In December 1894 she was nominated as a candidate for Broomfield's very first Parish Council. At a meeting of residents in the School Room she was one of seven declared elected. However, following an objection to the result from an unsuccessful candidate, a poll of all villagers was taken. Annie Copland was comfortably elected, coming second in the poll behind William Impey of Broomfield hall.



**Miss Copland enrolled John Turner as a member of the Temperance Society in 1884**



**Broomfield's first baby clinic was sponsored by Miss Copland (seated at L) at Broomfield Place in 1918**

Another of Annie's early acts was the founding, in 1899, of four almshouses in School Lane, on Broomfield Place land. Known as Fairhaven, they were set up to provide

accommodation for poor and deserving persons of both sexes, whether widows or widowers, married or single, who had been resident in the parish of Broomfield for at least three years immediately prior to appointment. They were to be free of rent, rates and taxes. Times have changed since then - the almshouses still continue their function but residents now have to pay water and sewage charges.

A committed Christian, Annie Copland was not always satisfied with the way things were done at Broomfield church and so on occasion she transferred her allegiance to Chelmsford cathedral or to the Congregational church of which her forebears had been such prominent members. For some reason she decreed that the vicar of Broomfield should not be a trustee of her Almshouse charity which she created to endow almshouses in School Lane.

One of Annie Copland's last acts was to remove the last vestige of Broomfield Place's manorial past. A small piece of land along the front of the property, close by Angel Green, had always been copyhold of the manor of Broomfield Hall. The deeds of Broomfield Place contain many records of the Manor Court dealing with admissions to this piece of land every time the ownership of Broomfield Place changed. In 1937 Miss Copland agreed a payment of £71.13.10 compensation to the lord of the manor, Joseph Duffy of Brooklands, for extinguishing all manorial rights, including minerals under the soil.



**Broomfield Place from the rear**



**Broomfield Place. The lodge house and entrance.**

**The beasts on the pillars have now gone**

Annie Copland died on the 24th January 1941. In 1942

her personal representatives, charged with winding up the estate, were Captain Eric Formby Copland, Royal Artillery, and Thomas Martin. Captain Copland died in the following year. Annie Copland's final wishes also aroused controversy - the disposal of Broomfield Place.

Miss Copland had no heir and she wished Broomfield to have first refusal of her property. A prominent local businessman, garage owner Joseph Day, offered the council a loan to secure the property but the Parish Council declined to buy it. It was said in the village that the then Parish Council chairman, Charles Ernest Ridley, of the brewing family, strongly objected to the council borrowing money from a tradesman!

The Essex County Council could afford it and so it passed to that body where it now remains under the aegis of the Council's Education Committee. As to its surrounding land, part of the Upper Pasture (1 on map) was used for the Fairhaven almshouses, the rest was sold, originally for Council housing and later for a mix of rented and private houses. The Pasture (2 on map) became the playing field for Broomfield Primary School.

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**1570.** The land sometye Scotcs and nowe Thomas Hunwikes maketh from Richard Everids towards the north one qtr of a rodde

**1678.** The (tenement - crossed out) land sometimes Hunwikes now Mr Webbs maketh from Knights towards the north by estimation a quarter of a rodde.

**1687.** The tenement sometime Hunwikes now Mr Webbs maketh from thence a qtr of a rod.

**1735.** New House. A qtr of a rod.

**1843.** 30. Broomfield Place, now occupied by C King maketh from no. 29 to the corner one quarter of a rod. Owner C King.

## 32.

### The Vicarage.



The story of the Vicarage starts in the year 1303 with the appointment of Broomfield's first vicar, Thomas de Wamberge. Up to the end of the 13th century the Prior and Canons of the Church of the Holy Trinity in London had appointed rectors to Broomfield church, the rectors living in what was then known as the rectory. In 1303 the Bishop of London established a vicarage at Broomfield, reserving to himself the choice of vicar from candidates put forward by the Prior and Canons. From then on the rectory became known as the old rectory or lay rectory and later the Parsonage. The Vicarage was built on land given to the vicar for manse and glebe, amounting to 9 acres close by the main road from Chelmsford to Braintree, facing the Church Green. This land was called Boygrove and

was the site of the medieval St Leonard's Fair; the Glebe Land is now the site of Glebe Crescent. A further one acre was some distance away, at the end of Angel Lane.

Between the appointment of Thomas de Wamberge in 1303 and the arrival of William Thornton, who was vicar at the time of the first churchyard fence list in 1570, there were 27 other incumbents, most just names on a board on the wall of the nave in Broomfield church. These are the residents at the Vicarage in those years:

**1303** Thomas de Wamberge

**1307** John Clerk. At an assize held in 1307 John Clerk, vicar of Broomfield, was accused of taking from Robert le Chaundeler and Margery his wife in the high road at Broomfield, wax candles and other goods worth seven shillings. A chandler was a dealer in candles so it is logical that Robert should have been in possession of some, and candles were much in use in churches so it is logical that John would have needed some. But to take them from the chandler in the high road without paying for them? This was extraordinary charge and the value too was extraordinary. At today's (2005) prices this would be around £120! The outcome wasn't recorded. It is also uncertain whether or not the vicar had acquired his surname by then or if he was John the clerk.

**1320** John Benyt

**1356** Richard of Norwich. It seems that Richard's interest extended beyond the Vicarage for a fine of that year refers to 8 acres of arable land, 3 acres of meadow, 15 acres of

pasture, 8 acres of wood, two shillings in rents, and a half share of a messuage in Broomfield, all of which was granted to Richard to hold of the chief lord. This was considerably more than his glebe land. The previous owners of this land had been John and Maud de Bretton.

**c1390** Solomon Broun. Broun appears on a Patent Roll of 1393 for "not appearing to answer to William Rysyng, Prior of Holy Trinity, London, touching a debt of £40".

This was a huge sum for the time, equivalent to about £15,000 now, but it seems he still continued as vicar of Broomfield until 1399.

**1399** John May became vicar on the resignation of Broun. May had previously been vicar of St Nicholas church, Colchester. He was also vicar at Stanway, Chigwell, Cressing and West Thurrock

**1418** John Piercy

**1433** Walter Crom. Fellow of Gonville College, Cambridge. Ordained in 1412, he was vicar of St Peter's, Colchester in 1427. Known as a liberal donor to his College and University, he resigned as vicar of Broomfield in 1437 and died in 1453.

**1437** Thomas Scorier became vicar on resignation of Crom. Scorier died in 1448.

**1448** Robert Foster succeeded Scorier and was vicar until 1465 when he left to become vicar of Gt Waltham.

**1465** Richard at Wode. He was previously vicar of Mountnessing. In 1467 he transferred to Cold Norton where he remained until his death in 1495.

**1467** Thomas Stubber became vicar on the resignation of Wode.

**c1470** John Willis replaced Stubber. He was a much-travelled vicar. He had previously been vicar of Hatfield Peverel. He resigned his Broomfield living and became vicar of Wickham Bishops, Southminster (1477), Great Henny (1482), Fairstead (1483), and finally West Hanningfield (1503) where he died in 1530

**1472** John Freeman succeeded on the resignation of Willis. Freeman left in 1476 to become vicar of Little Baddow. He died in 1479/80.

**1476** John Wodehouse, on resignation of Freeman. He was also vicar of Fulham and Hampton, Middlesex

**1488** Brian Dayvelt on resignation of Wodehouse

**1492** Thomas Percy, who was also vicar of Braughing, Herts

**1492** Hugo Ashton on resignation of Percy

**1493** John Breton on death of Ashton

**1498** Gervaise Newton on death of Breton

**1499** William Hood

**1505** Robert Perott on death of Hood

**1513** John Gotson on death of Perott. In 1517 he left to become vicar of Gt Warley until he died in 1520.

**1517** John Grangier succeeded on resignation of Gotson. Grangier had previously been vicar of High Laver from 1506.

**1518** Jacob Calvord on resignation of Grangier

**1524** Richard Wright on resignation of Calvord. Richard Wright, was vicar from 1524 until his death in 1541 and he got a posthumous mention on the 1570 fence list. Against the Vicarage it was noted that it was sometime in the possession of Richard Wright. This is the first mention of a vicar positively associated with the building that was responsible for a share in maintaining the churchyard fence. Richard Wright also got a mention in the will of John Ram, who died in 1520. Ram left him 20d and described Wright as the priest of the church. This suggests that Wright was vicar as early as 1520 although Newcourt records his arrival as 1524.

**1541** John Sargeon on death of Wright.

**1554** John Baker on death of Sargeon. Baker was previously vicar of Kelvedon Hatch from 1547.

**1562** William Feering on death of Baker. Feering became vicar of Stondon Massey in 1564

**1564** William Thornton, on the cessation of Feering.

Wills frequently identified the vicar of the time. Sometimes the recipient of a bequest for the church, sometimes, as in the case of the will of Andrew Gynes in 1481, as a witness or executor. In Gynes will John Woderoffe was named as a witness, a puzzling spelling since Newcourt gives his name was Wodehouse. In many cases the will would have been written down by the vicar as the person most able to write.

William Thornton was the vicar when the first churchyard fence list was ratified in 1570. He and the churchwarden Robert Wood were probably the instigators of it, prompted no doubt by the Archdeacon of Essex's recent visitation. The absence of any written confirmation of responsibility may have caused some problems and Thornton and Wood decided to put it right once and for all. Thornton was still the vicar in 1575 when the records of the ecclesiastical court stated that "Broomfield vicarage houses be in great decay and ready to fall down and some be down already". One wonders how the vicar managed in such circumstances. Thornton died in 1579 and the succeeding vicars have been:

**1579** John Maddox, on the death of Thornton

**1582** George Parnell. Born at Saffron Walden in 1552 Parnell apparently went to Clare College, Cambridge in 1567, a seemingly early age. He obtained his BA in 1571. Ordained in 1578, he was curate of Elsenham from 1578 to 1582. The Tudor age was a tricky one for vicars; they needed to follow the current religious trend as ordained by the monarch.

In 1584, when Puritan ideas were already making headway amongst the clergy, the courts were alert to this dangerous trend. One manifestation involved the sign of the cross at baptism. Someone must have reported George Parnell for such an infringement. He was brought before the court where he promised to 'use the cross orderly in future'. It was regarded as a minor lapse and he was discharged.

Years later, in 1600, George Parnell was in court again, this time as the aggrieved party. It was alleged that 'Thomas Crowe misused Mr Parnell the vicar in the churchyard of Broomfield'. Crowe had sold a cow for Parnell at the May Fair and told him 'he would see a cow in his belly before he would sell a cow for \*\*\*\*\*'. Crowe was ordered to do penitential confession. No doubt Parnell needed to engage in farming activities to supplement his income - in 1603 the benefice was worth just £35 a year.

**1620** Thomas Burr became vicar on the death of Parnell. Burr had entered St John's College, Cambridge around 1593 and obtained his BA in 1597. He was curate at Broomfield from 1612-13 and he was still the vicar during the troubled Commonwealth period. In 1627 he bought Crouch House (The Kings Arms) and he also owned the land immediately to the south of that property. Burr lived at the Vicarage, renting out Crouch House, which he eventually sold to Edward Stoakes in 1656. Later in that year Robert Smith of Great Baddow was repairing some palings for Stoakes and 'intending to put one pair of rayles ends into the corner post next to Crouch House yard by the street, Mr Burr then Minister of Broomfield did forbid me so doing and told me it was his post, craved me to put up another post by to his post '. So Mr Burr

still owned the adjacent land.

Thomas Burr apparently died or left by 1656/7 and a note in the parish records in 1657 states that the parish had been without a vicar for some time. His signature last appears in the parish records at a meeting in 1656. A trust deed of the church lands in 1659 stated that William Alchorne was then vicar, though he seems not to have been confirmed until later. This confusion was no doubt due to the troubled times at the end of the Commonwealth, the restoration of Charles II and the reinstatement of the Church of England. The burial of Thomas Burr's wife Avice took place at Broomfield in 1665 and the burial record has her written as 'wife' rather than 'widow' which suggests that Thomas was still living then.

**1657** William Alchorne BA. William Alchorne became vicar before the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 but the date is uncertain, it may have been as early as 1657. . He was born around 1630 in Sussex and went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1647. He obtained his BA in 1651 and BD in 1661. He became the vicar of Barling in 1655 before moving to Broomfield. Alchorne seems to have jointly held the post of rector of Mashbury in 1661-2 before becoming rector of High Ongar in 1662. He was the father of Charles Alchorne MA BA, a distinguished Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. William Alchorne had two other sons, James and Robert, and a daughter Elizabeth. In his will he left all his books to his son Charles "except those my wife shall take for her own use". He was succeeded at Broomfield by Daniel Wall.

**1663** Daniel Wall was appointed on the cessation of Alchorne. Wall studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge

from 1645, obtained his BA in 1649 and his MA in 1652. The son of Daniel Wall of Stratford, Suffolk, Daniel was rector of Hintlesham, Suffolk before coming to Broomfield. He was ejected from Hintlesham in 1662. He died in 1685.

**1685** Thomas Cox MA Thomas Cox and Philip Morant were Broomfield's most famous and arguably most learned vicars. Cox was vicar for almost 50 years. Morant was vicar for only four years and the achievement for which he is remembered, "The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex" was produced long after he had left for Colchester.

Thomas Cox, described as a man of considerable learning, great industry and application, was a graduate of Queen's College, Cambridge, where he was admitted in 1672. He was Bachelor and Master of Arts, a noted topographer and translator. Ordained in 1679, he translated from the French Dupin's "Life of Christ and His Apostles" and his "Abridgement of Ecclesiastical History" in 4 volumes. From the Latin he translated Pancirollus "Of things lost" in 2 volumes, and from the Greek Plutarch's "Morals" by way of abstract. In Kennet's "Complete History of England" the lives of Richard II, Henry IV, V, and VI were his work.

Cox's best known literary work was "A new survey of Great Britain" in six volumes published between 1720 and 1731, which expanded Camden's "Brittania" and "added a more large History, not only of the Cities, Boroughs, Towns and Parishes ... but also of many other places of note and Antiquaries since discovered"

Thomas Cox married Love, daughter of Thomas

Manwood of Priors; she bore him eight children and lived to the age of 99. Cox died on the 11th January 1734. He directed in his will that his son Thomas should have his library, and that his wife Love should receive among other bequests the estate known as The Crane in Chelmsford. (It stood next to the Saracen's Head in the High Street).

**1735 Philip Morant MA** Philip Morant succeeded Thomas Cox, having previously been curate at Great Waltham for some 8 years. The son of Steven Morant of Jersey, he was educated at Abingdon and entered Pembroke College, Oxford in 1717, getting his BA in 1721. While he was at Broomfield he wrote a brief history of the parish and recorded tithing customs, as well as updating the churchyard fence list. His major works were written in the rectory of St Mary's, Colchester, where he spent over 30 years of his life after leaving Broomfield. Writing in the Essex Review, Richenda Christy recorded that Morant lived at the Parsonage in Broomfield but this is highly unlikely.

Although in later years he was an imposing figure, "the most striking and engaging figure in 18th century Colchester, known for his great wit and learning, his great wigs and his gold topped cane", when he was in Broomfield he was still relatively unknown and since Richard Price was lessee of the Parsonage during Morant's period at Broomfield it is likely that Morant would have lived at the Vicarage.

**1738 Edmund Gibson.** Edmund Gibson was the Bishop of London. Whilst he had overall responsibility for Broomfield church during the months between Morant going and Shrigley becoming vicar, it was John Shrigley as curate at

Broomfield who looked after the parish pending his appointment as vicar.

**1739** John Shrigley MA Born 1710, he was the son of William Shrigley of Manchester. He was at Eton from 1721 to 1730. In 1731 he entered Brasenose College, Oxford. He obtained his BA in 1734 and his MA at St Catherine's College, Cambridge in 1745. He was curate at Broomfield in 1738 when Philip Morant departed. Shrigley left Broomfield to become vicar of Mashbury in 1745, where he remained until his death in 1761.

**1745** John Gibson. Appointed on cessation of Shrigley, he was the son of Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London. John entered Christ Church, Oxford, in 1730. He obtained his BA in 1734 and his MA in 1737. He was a noted Oxford scholar. John Gibson found on his arrival in Broomfield that the Vicarage was in a decrepit state, shades of 1575. It was only seven years since his father had overseen the parish whilst a new vicar was appointed; one wonders how it could have been allowed to get in such a state. Gibson had the Vicarage rebuilt in 1750 and this was the Georgian house, illustrated at the beginning of this chapter, which stood until the 1960s.

**1756** Edmund Tyrwhitt was appointed on the death of Gibson. He achieved his BA in 1753 and his MA in 1756. He obtained £200 from Queen Anne's Bounty, a fund to augment the stipend of the poorer clergy. He actually received the interest, which gave him an income of £4 a year, not a great sum. Edmund Tyrwhitt's tithe account book has survived, giving a most valuable account of not only the tithes but also details of the Vicarage and of his personal expenditure. The

book turned up unexpectedly in the Royal archives at Windsor!

Tyrwhitt's account book reveals that in 1757, shortly after his arrival, he paid Richard Brightman, the local builder, £8.8.0 as part payment for work done at the Vicarage - only seven years after his predecessor had it built. The next year he paid the balance of Brightman's account - £38.8.7. It was also in 1757 that he bought a tenement and shop adjoining the Vicarage from John Olmius for £150. He also owned Wheelers close by - in 1759 he recorded that he had received £2 from Joseph Gage, being the rent for Wheelers from Lady Day to Michaelmas.

The account book also raises some curious matters about the Vicarage. In 1769 and 1770 he recorded the receipt of rent from Major St Leger in respect of the Vicarage and the glebe land. There are also references to rent being paid for the Well House which at the time was owned by John Olmius. In 1771 he began to receive rent for the Vicarage from Rev Pawson, in 1774 from Rev Jenner, and in 1781 from Rev Walford. Could it be that Tyrwhitt was living at the Well House while Major St Leger was at the Vicarage? And were the several reverends curates boarding at the Vicarage?

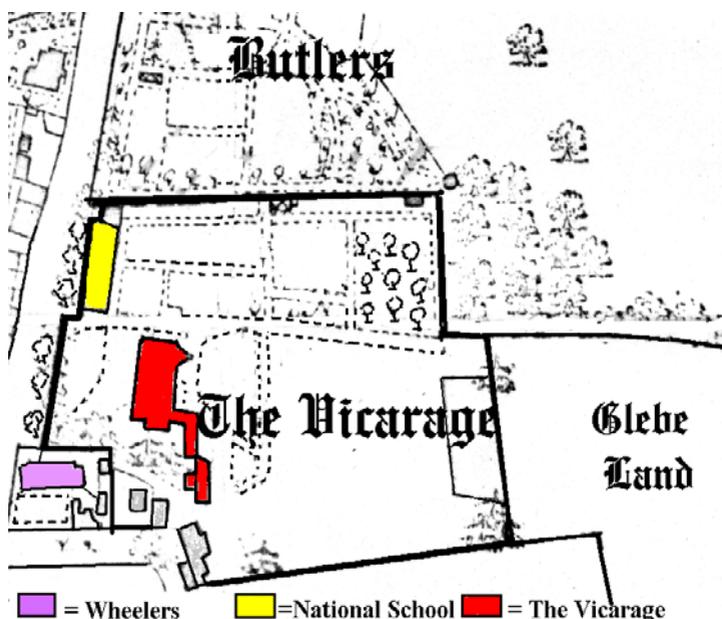
**1789** Joseph Wise became vicar after the death of Tyrwhitt in 1788.

**1796** Vincent Edwards replaced Wise. Educated at Trinity College, Oxford from 1787 he got his BA in 1791 and his MA 1794. He was the son of Vincent Edwards of Wolverhampton, Gent. When Rev Edwards died in 1843 there was an auction of various items from the Vicarage,

including King Charles I's bible, which a benefactor fortunately rescued and restored to the church.

**1843** Henry Eley was appointed on the death of Edwards. Eley entered Peterhouse College, Cambridge in 1826. He obtained his BA in 1830 and MA in 1836. He was ordained as a priest in 1830 and was vicar of Coggeshall from 1838 to 1842. He was at High Beech from 1842 to 1843 when he moved to Broomfield. In 1861 he retired to Brighton. Henry Eley was the author of several religious works and the curiously titled "*Geology in the garden*".

**1861** John Bradford Whiting became vicar on the resignation of Eley. He was born in 1828 at Cawnpore, India, the son of Revd. James Whiting. He entered Caius College, Cambridge in 1846, got his BA in 1850 and MA in 1853. Rev. Whiting was ordained at Ely in 1851 and was curate at Saffron Walden from 1851 to 1856. He married Maria Markby at Duxford, Cambs. in 1860. He arrived in Broomfield in 1861 and remained until 1874 when he moved to Ramsgate as vicar of St Luke's, church, Ramsgate.

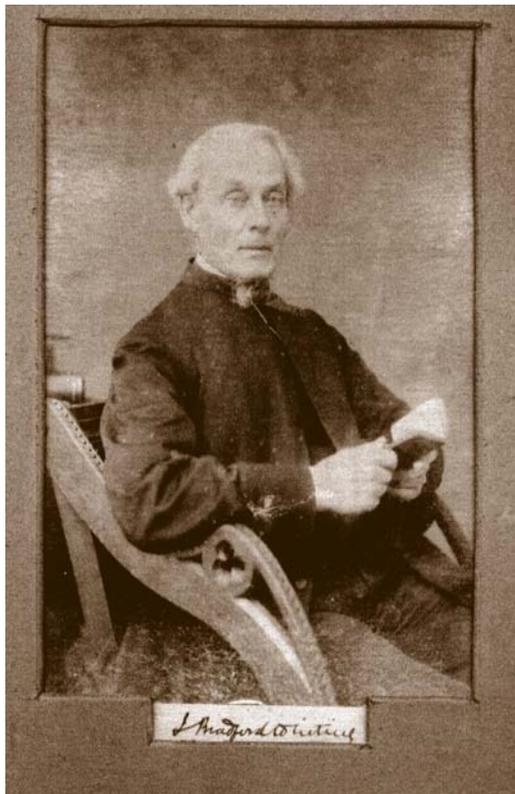


**The Vicarage when Rev Whiting was the vicar.**

**The National School had been built in the Vicarage garden.**

When John Bradford Whiting arrived in Broomfield in 1861 he found the Vicarage in a sorry state. The whole building was riddled with rot and very many of the internal timbers were in an advance state of decay. During the vicar's inspection of the building with an architect, the appropriately named Mr Christian, the staircase completely collapsed into the cellar. The repairs were estimated to cost £290, but in the event a further £600 was needed to fully restore the Vicarage.

The dining room of the 1750 construction was probably completely panelled in wood and this panelling had almost certainly been attacked by timber fungus because the Revd Whiting recorded that "more than one thousand fruits of rot fungus had to be removed and killed", especially in the dining room and the cellar walls. Rev Whiting negotiated the loan of £550 from Queen Anne's Bounty, repayable at 3½ interest towards the cost of the repairs.



**Rev John Bradford Whiting**

A most energetic vicar, Rev Whiting was the prime

mover in the creation of Broomfield's National School following a famous dispute with the Quaker British School in 1870 when Broomfield held perhaps its only referendum. Rev Whiting was also responsible for some imaginative tree planting, some of which - the cedar of Lebanon and the Wellingtonia in the churchyard, and the swamp cypress in what was then the Vicarage garden - still survive.

The 1871 census shows Rev Whiting at the Vicarage with his wife and four children - Isabelle (9), Mary (7), Lucy (4) and John (2). Also in residence were a nurse, a cook and a housemaid. Three years later, when he moved to Ramsgate, he bought the Broomfield church plate to take with him! John Whiting retired in 1905 and died at Ramsgate on the 29.7.1914 aged 86.

**1876** John Pound Smith replaced Rev Whiting but died two years later.

**1878** William Trimmer. Appointed on the death of Smith, William Trimmer was born at Camberwell in 1845, the son of James Trimmer, a London merchant. He entered Caius College, Cambridge in 1865, obtained his BA in 1869 and MA in 1872. Ordained in 1869, he was curate at Wanstead from 1869 to 1876. He was curate at Woodford Wells from 1876 to 1878. Rev Trimmer never married. In 1881 he was living at the Vicarage with his older brother George, a wine merchant, and two servants, a housekeeper and a housemaid. He retired to Streatham in 1904 where he died in 1910.



**Rev Trimmer (at front) in a group photograph of the Primrose League in 1891.**

**1904** Charles Edmunds was appointed on the resignation of William Trimmer. He was the son of John Edmunds, Esq., of Worcester, and he entered Jesus College, Cambridge in 1869. BA in 1873 and MA in 1876, he was ordained in 1874. Curate at Farnsworth-in-Widnes from 1874 to 1876, at Bishopswearmouth, Durham from 1877 to 1882, and at Leyton from 1882 to 1886, he was vicar of All Saints, Leyton from 1886 to 1904. He resigned in 1924 and moved to Forest Gate, where he died 20.11.1926.

**1925** George Bunbury entered Oriel College, Oxford in 1891, getting his BA in 1893 and MA in 1896. He was ordained in 1895 and was curate at Holy Trinity, Oxford from 1895 to 1898. From 1898 Rev Bunbury was a missionary with CMS, Hong Kong. He was the Principal of St Paul's College, Hong Kong from 1899 to 1913. He was vicar of Coleby from 1914 to 1920, and of St Catharine's, Leyton from 1920 until his

move to Broomfield.

**1930** John Finlay Rutherford became vicar on the resignation of Bunbury. Rutherford was educated at Queen's University, Belfast. BA in 1901, he was ordained in 1904. Curate at Ladywood, Birmingham from 1903 to 1905, at St Luke's, Birmingham from 1905 to 1909, and Northfield with Bartley Green from 1909 to 1918, he was rector of Templeton with Lockbeare from 1919 to 1930 before coming to Broomfield. He died in 1957.

**1957** Albert James Caton was appointed on the death of Rev Rutherford. It was while Rev Caton was vicar of Broomfield that the most significant change to the Vicarage took place. The Glebe Land was sold for development, as was the Vicarage and much of its garden. The former became Glebe Crescent and the latter became the small Rutherfords development, named after the Rev Rutherford. The Vicarage was demolished, ending some 650 years on the site, and a new vicarage was built in Butlers Close.

Ordained as a priest in 1933, Rev Caton was curate at Woolwich. He later became vicar at Romford and then Clerkenwell. Prior to his move to Broomfield he was chaplain at Grendon Hall prison.

**1972** Alfred MacKenzie. Appointed on the death of Caton. Born in 1925, he attended Bishop's College, Cheshunt in 1961. He was ordained in 1962 and was curate at Waltham Abbey from 1961 to 1964. He was at Barking St Erkenwald from 1964 until his transfer to Broomfield. From Broomfield Rev MacKenzie went to Willerby with Ganton and Folkton, a

group of three small villages in North Yorkshire.

**1983** Arthur William David Ritson was appointed on the resignation of Rev MacKenzie. Born 1935, David Ritson studied at Kings College, London. He was curate at Bishopwearmouth from 1959 to 1963 and a chaplain in the Royal navy from 1963 to 1967. Curate at Sudbury from 1967 to 1969, he then moved to Little Hallingbury until transferring to Broomfield in 1983. He died in 1999.

**1999** Peter Ball became vicar on the death of David Ritson. Awarded his BD at London University in 1965, he was at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford in 1975. Curate at Prescot from 1977 and ordained as a priest in 1978, Rev Ball moved to Lawford in 1980 as rector. Concurrent with his Lawford post, he was rural dean for Harwich from 1991.

The last relic of the old Vicarage, the Church Hall, which was itself once a part of the Vicarage garden, together with the residual garden at the rear became a small housing development. It was named Deverill Close, apparently because the Parish Council thought Deverill was the name of a previous vicar. In fact he was the owner of the Coffee House which was at the corner of Church Green at the turn of the 19th/20th century!



**The present vicarage, built on a new site in Butlers Close in the 1960s with a much more convenient access to the church than its predecessor.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**1570.** The mansion house of the Vicarage sometye in the possession of Richard Wright and now in the possession of William Thorneton, clerk, maketh from Thomas Hunwikes towards the este.

**1678.** The mansion house of the Vicarage maketh from Mr Webbs against Mr Freeman's field towards the east.

**1687.** The mansion house of the Vicarage maketh from Mr Webb's to Mr Freeman's field.

**1735.** The Vicarage. All the north side.

**1843.** 31. The Vicarage, now occupied by Rev H Eley, maketh from 30 the whole north side. Owner Mr Eley.

## Postscript.

One further building appears on the churchyard fence list for 1843. By then Woollards was maintained by the Parish for the benefit of the poor and it was not appropriate for it to bear a share of the responsibility for maintaining the churchyard fence. In its place a building which had not existed in 1570 was substituted. This was Broomfield Lodge.



**Broomfield Lodge** was built in the late 1700s on the land that was once part of Gutters Farm. Gutters Farm had been bought by John Judd Snr, a Chelmsford grocer who had done very well for himself. He became High Sheriff of Essex and in 1777 he bought the prestigious Mansion House (later the Essex Weekly News office and now the Royal Bank of Scotland) in the centre of Chelmsford's High Street. His son, also John Judd, married Elizabeth Harrington and they set up home in

their grand new house, Broomfield Lodge. The house stood back from the main road, almost opposite Patching Hall Lane.

John Judd jnr died on the 3rd September 1808 and Broomfield Lodge passed to his widow who in the following year married David Pryor of Grays Inn, London. Elizabeth and David Pryor lived at Broomfield Lodge until, in the Spring of 1813, the property was put up for sale and two years later David Pryor died. By then Broomfield Lodge had a new owner, a C J Brackenbury, Esq, but only for a short while for by 1816 he too had died and the estate was now in the name of Widow Brackenbury.

In 1832 Broomfield Lodge passed into the hands of Patrick King, the brother of Charles King of Broomfield Place. Patrick died in 1838 and the next owner was James Beadel, a Witham land agent and auctioneer. Beadel was still there in 1861 when the census showed him living there with his wife Mary and their family. He had six daughters and one son and also in the household at the time of the census were a son-in-law, 2 grandchildren and 5 servants. By 1871 Beadel had gone and Henry Collings Wells was the owner and occupant. He was the Wells of Wells and Perry, the Chelmsford brewers.

Henry Collings Wells became a prominent figure in 19th century Broomfield. Justice of the Peace and a Deputy Lieutenant of the County, he was for 44 years a churchwarden of Broomfield church. A considerable benefactor to the church, this is recorded on a plaque in the church "from the working classes of Broomfield" for his generous contribution to the repair of the fabric in 1874. He too kept up a prestigious household at Broomfield Lodge, with a cook, 2 kitchenmaids, 3 housemaids and a lady's maid.

By 1935 Broomfield Lodge and its 24 acres of land was no longer in Broomfield, it had become part of an expanding Chelmsford. Its demise came in 1964 when the house was demolished.



It is surprising that **Hill Farm** (above) never featured on the fence lists. The house has the timeless appearance of an old Essex timber framed building and the farms within Broomfield parish almost invariably have a history going back beyond 1570. The explanation must be that in 1570 it was still a part of the manor of Belsted Hall. In 1624 Belstead Hall farm extended to 161 acres and this included what became Hill Farm. The lands of Hill Farm are shown in the Belstead Hall chapter. At some time Hill Farm became a separate entity - the picture is confused because it had hitherto been a part of Belstead Hall which itself had become part of the estate of New Hall, Boreham.

In 1737 John Olmius bought New Hall and it may be that this marked the separation of the properties. By 1791 William Blyth was shown as owner of Belstead Hall but the Hon. John Olmius was shown as owner of Hill Farm with widow French as his tenant. In 1818 William Walford was shown as owner with widow French still in residence but in 1822 Samuel Shaer was given as both owner and occupier. By 1830 Robert French was owner and occupier until 1846 when John Blyth, who had been owner of Belstead Hall, took over. Blyth's son, also a John, was then at Belstead Hall. This remained the situation until 1854 when John Blyth Snr. died and the Hill Farm portion of the estate was sold to Elizabeth Seabrook, the owner of Butlers.

Hill Farm was lived in by farmworkers - in 1891 George Hales, farm bailiff, was living there. By 1908 Belstead Hall and Hill Farm were back in the same ownership, that of George Herbert Gray of Gray's brewery. In 1921 Gray sold Hill Farm to John Smith who had a new house built at the top of Mill Lane, next to the old farmhouse of Hill Farm. The latter was still used to house farmworkers.



Inevitably, other houses appeared over the years which, had they been there in 1570, might have landed them with a share in the maintenance of the churchyard fence. One such is **The Gables** (above), along Main Road. The deeds of this property date from 1754. They recite previous owners Adam and Elizabeth Dynes who had sold the property to George and Elizabeth Lee around the year 1749. George Lee was the village carpenter.

George Lee sold The Gables, though it wasn't then known as such, to the local blacksmith, Philip Wakelyn in 1762 and from him it passed to his widow Ann. When Ann Wakelyn died in 1783 she left it to her daughter Ann Moss from whom it passed to her children who sold it to William Playle, a shopkeeper who rented the shop at Angel Green. Playle borrowed £70 from John Parsons, a farmer at Chignal St James but he was unable to repay it so in 1808 the property was sold to Thomas Malden, also a Chignal St James farmer. Malden paid £124 for it; £77 went to Parsons (the £70 loan plus interest) and £47

went to Playle.

When Thomas Malden died in 1816 he left the property to his daughter Susanna, the wife of George Woodgate the farmer at Broomfield Hall. In 1830 Woodgate obtained £450 of 3% Consols from George Cheveley of Butlers and he later mortgaged the property to Mary and Susannah Finch in order to repay Cheveley. Woodgate defaulted on repayment of the loan from the Misses Finch and so the property was auctioned at the Black Boy in Chelmsford on the 17th May 1847. The sale catalogue described it as a 'very desirable freehold estate known as The Plough beer house, with bakehouse, shop, 4 rooms below and 3 above, stable, brewhouse, yard and good garden'. It was then in the occupation of James Bland, a respectable tenant, at the low rent of £20 per annum. Part of the frontage and the projection of the beerhouse was copyhold of the Manor of Broomfield Hall.

Wells and Perry, brewers, bought The Plough but the pub became a source of annoyance to the neighbour, Thomas Christy of Brooklands. Christy was a devout Quaker. In September 1849 Thomas Christy resolved to buy The Plough in order to close it down. The agreed price was £335 but it seems that Wells & Perry also required Christy to pay their solicitor's charges. Christy was unhappy, but paid up since his object was "to put down a most demoralising place of resort for the youth of the village". A certain amount of somewhat acrimonious correspondence passed between Christy, Wells & Perry, Murray (Christy's solicitor) and Copland (Wells & Perry's solicitor) between October 1849 and January 1850, but the deed was done and the Plough was closed.

28 Sept. 1829

Sir  
 In reply to your note  
 my agreement with Messrs Wells  
 was £335. they to lend me the  
 deeds to save trouble & if  
 approved by you I was to  
 pay the £335. and take  
 the cottages -  
 I never understood I was  
 to pay Messrs Wells sol<sup>r</sup>  
 charges for pursuing the  
 deed for their satisfaction  
 As the object is to put  
 down a most demoralising

place of resort for the  
 youth of the village I will  
 agree to pay these extra  
 charges if Mr<sup>r</sup> Wells says  
 it was so contemplated  
 as I must try and get rid of  
 it now I have begun  
 I am my dear Sir  
 Yours truly  
 Thomas Christy  
 Mr. Murray  
 London.

### The letter from Thomas Christy to Wells & Perry's solicitor.

The Plough became a private residence and for several years Louisa Radcliffe, Thomas Christy's daughter, lived there after the death of her husband and before she moved to her new residence at Broomfield Court.

Another Broomfield property of considerable age, though it never appeared on the fence lists, is the **shop at Angel Green**. Its deeds go back to 1712 when the owner, John Haltoft, sold the property to his brother-in-law Joseph Sach for £31. John Haltoft was the nephew of Christopher Haltoft, the licensee of the nearby Angel Inn. So the shop at Angel Green must date from some time before 1712.

Joseph Sach's daughter Anne married George Allen of Maldon.

She outlived him and married again, to Arthur Bull, a Maldon shipwright, and it was as Anne Bull that in 1751 she sold the cottage to Samuel Dawson of Broomfield. The Weights & Measures reports from 1758 show Dawson as a shopkeeper so the present shop must have been there for around 250 years. Dawson borrowed £100 from Jane Cook of The Angel but when Jane died in 1777 the £100 was still outstanding (though the interest had been paid). Samuel Jesper, her executor, bought the shop for £120, paid £100 to Jane's estate and gave the balance of £20 to Dawson.

In 1778 Samuel Jesper sold the shop to John Parsons for £160 and when Parsons died in 1807 it passed to his grand-daughter Abigail who married John Snow of Woodham Walter. The shop was rented out, to Christopher Sayer, then to William Playle, and then to George Pitts. The tithe map of 1846 reveals that the shop was still owned by John Snow. It was then rented by the grocer Thomas Watcham and when he died in 1847 his widow Susannah took over the shop. John Snow died in 1851 and in 1856 Thomas Christy wanted to buy the property from Abigail Snow. She was willing, but at her own price, £500. Christy thought it was too much and he was also uncertain about Abigail's title. He sought his solicitor's opinion, and then he sought Counsel's opinion. His solicitor wrote "This title appears defective to me. Mr Hayes coincides" Still Christy wanted the property. His solicitor wrote "The old lady will not reduce the price... If you want the property run the slight risk. Abigail got her way, Christy paid the £500 and the shop at Angel Green was his.

Mrs Watcham stayed on at the shop. She was still there in 1863 but by 1874 George Henry Abbot, describing himself as 'Grocer and draper', had taken over. "Porky" Abbot married George Coller's daughter from The Angel and their two sons, Claude and Harold, had a distinguished academic career, both going from King Edward VI

Grammar School to Cambridge University. Abbot was succeeded by John Payne and then, in 1908, by Alfred Houghton. In 1912 here was a new shopkeeper, Oswald Saltmarsh had moved in with his wife Alice and their two daughters Alice and Kathleen.

The Christy family had owned the shop since 1856. From Thomas it had passed to his daughter Louisa Radcliffe and then to her daughter Constance Nash. In 1923 Oswald Saltmarsh bought the shop from Mrs Nash for £750. Eventually, in 1943, "Ossie" gave up the business to the Finning family who already had the butcher's shop down the road. There have been more changes since then, and now, at the end of 2005, after a period as Unwins store and off-licence, its future is uncertain.



**The shop at Angel Green.**