

Hartley Rectory from the Glebe.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OLD HOUSES AND THEIR OCCUPANTS.

The Court. There is little doubt that what is now called Hartley Court was formerly the Manor House.

Here, or hereabouts, near the Church, and within the demesne, almost certainly stood the residence of the lord in Saxon times.

There is no record of the house in Saxon or Norman times, but in a survey of the Manor in

1392 mention is made of the Manor-hall. It is described as an "Aula with one solar at either end for the bailiff (in utroque fine pro ballivo), one granary thatched with straw and reeds, one cattle shed for horses and oxen, and two granges."

The greater part of the present house is comparatively modern, but it contains the remains of a more ancient mansion.

Older still than any part of the present Court was a house, the foundations of which are said to exist further back in Foxborough Wood.

This was no doubt the Manor House in 1550, when William Sedley became Lord of the Manor, and it was perhaps a hundred years later that the newer residence was built on the site nearer the Church.

Wm. Granville Evelyn, to whom Sir Chas. Sedley sold the Manor appears to have been non-resident, and the Court, as it was then called, was occupied by Mr. Thomas Edmeads from 1769 to 1792, when Mr. William Bensted came into possession.

He died in 1836. His son William, after him, lived here till he removed to Hartley Wood Farm, when Mr. William Alien came. Mr. Adam Tait followed and then for some years it was let to Mr. Thomas James Gibbs Duncanson. Then came Colonel Godfrey Hildebrand, who rented the Court from the then Lord of the Manor, Sir Wm. Chance.

After the death of Colonel Hildebrand, his son, Captain Arthur, now General Hildebrand, lived here for some years.

By the time he left the property had passed into the hands of the Small Owners, Ltd. and by them it was let to Major Lambton.

Major Brett followed and then came Mr. A. L. Farrow. When he left the parish in 1926, Hartley Court was purchased from the Small Owners by General A. Andrus.

The Manor. In 1860 there were two cottages and a farm yard on the site of what is now called Hartley Manor. It was at that time known as Hartley Wood Farm. The cottages were probably all that remained of the old farm house. It is possible that the Manor-hall may at one time have occupied this site, but there is no evidence that it did so. Mr. Wm. Bensted converted the two houses into one when he left the Court, and after him his son William lived here for a few years. .

In 1872 Colonel George Palmer Evelyn, the then Lord of the Manor came to live here. He made some improvements in the house and called it Hartley Manor, and by this designation it has been known ever since.

At his death, Mr. Henry Kendall Barnes purchased Colonel Evelyn's estate here and lived at the

Manor. He was followed by Mr. A. E. Dobbs who left in 1902. Mr. Thomas Morton occupied the house for a short time while Fairby was reconstructed. Mr. Fass came after him. Then Mr. Lionel Harris took a lease of 25 years. He made extensive enlargements and improvements, but remained in residence only two years. Sir Herbert Baker, the celebrated architect, occupied the house for a short time and then the Rt. Hon. Ian Macpherson, the then Under Secretary for War. Mr. Rawlinson followed and in 1920 Mr. Wm. Daniel took over the remainder of the lease.

Fairby. Fairby Farm was in the possession of the Youngs in the 17th and 18th centuries. An ancestor who came to this country with William the Conqueror is said to have been settled by him at "Lone Barn" in the parish of Ash. At any rate they built a house, or rebuilt an older one, here in 1612. Fairby on some maps is spelt Firby. The name is probably derived from the family of Feerby or Ferby. They were landowners in this neighbourhood in the 15th and 16th centuries, and in 1420 there is record of one "John Feerby Esquire, of Hertle in the County of Kent."

John Young, of Fairby, died in 1713. His eldest son, Thomas, owned and lived at Fairby after him. Mary, the only daughter of Thomas, who married Eichard Treadwell, inherited the house and farm and was eventually succeeded by her youngest son

Francis Treadwell, who died aged 93 in 1851. After his death the house was occupied by his grandson, James Treadwell, for some years. When he left, Mr. J. T. Smith, the then owner, put in Mr. Thos. King Coulson as bailiff, and he, and his son after



Fairby.

him, managed the farm till the property was purchased in 1903 by Mr. Thos. Morton. Mr. Morton reconstructed the house and enlarged it, and also converted the adjoining meadow land into an extension of the garden and grounds. He called the house Fairby Grange.

Mr. Robert Emmet purchased the property, in-

cluding about 20i. acres of land in 1910, and lived here till 1917, when he sold the house and land to Dr. Salter who, later on, presented them to the Bermondsey Borough Council, who are the present owners.

Hartley House. At the beginning of the last century this was called Hartley Cottage, and here lived a retired naval officer named Richard Prouse. His two daughters taught the children in the little school which was held in one of the newly built Black Lion Cottages.

In 1836 Mrs. Elizabeth Bensted came here to live after the death of her husband at Hartley Court. She died in 1845 and afterwards for 19 years her widowed daughter, Mrs. Mary Ann Parsons lived here.

In 1864 Mr. Henry Bensted came for a few years. Mr. A. Vail was here in 1892, and Mr. Leleux in 1894. In his time alterations and additions were made, since when it has been known as Hartley House.

Mr. L. A. Goldie came in 1903. The house was sublet in 1910 to Mr. Eustace Hare, and later on to Mr. E. H. W. Tripe. In 1921 the property was purchased from Mr; Goldie by the present owner, Mr. Ronald Spier.

New House. Five hundred years ago there was a house here which with the farm
Farm. belonging to it was called Le

Hayez or The Hayes. At that time John Cotyer lived here and his wife, Christiana, after them their son Thomas and Rose, his wife.

When Mrs. Rose Cotyer died the property passed in accordance with the will of her husband, to Mr. Wm. Hoke and his wife Jane.

At the beginning of the 16th century John and Elizabeth Overey were the owners.

After their death the property passed in tale male to their son, Richard.

The Overeys appear to have been here till the middle of the 17th century when the Burrows came into possession.

It seems to have been in the time of the Burrows that the residence was rebuilt, since when it has been known as New Hayes, Howse or House.

In the will of John Overey dated 1555, it is called "The Howse."

In the 18th century the property passed into the possession of the Bradley family, and from them to the Forrests and then to Miss E. M. Forbes. On her death it was purchased by Mr. Geo. Day, of Ash.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Mr. Robert Monk was living at New House. Following him came Mr. Owen Parsons who was for some years Churchwarden.

At this time the land was farmed by Mr. William Treadwell, who lived at Fairby with his father. After his death his son William came here to live.

Mr. Gambrill was the next resident and after him. Mr. William Alien.

Mr. Joseph Thornton took over the house and land in 1897, and was here till 1919, when Mr. Ralph Day came into residence.

Till late in the last century the Hartley Hill road ran through the farm yard.

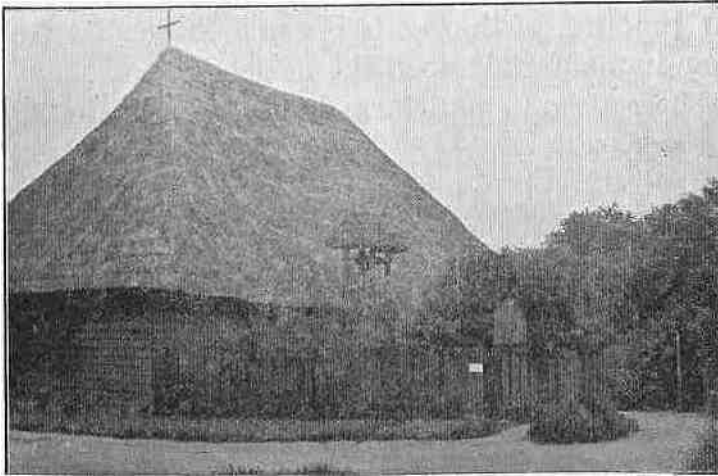
Middle Farm. This house and farm in the early part of the 18th century was in the occupation of Mr. John Best. He died in 1759



Middle Farm.

and was followed by his son Edward Best, who was here till 1832. After him came George Best, who died in 1883. In the foundations are the remains of a very ancient building, perhaps, as old as the 11th century.

The four wooden cottages which, till the end of



Oratory of St. Francis.

the century, stood at the corner of the Manor Drive belonged to this farm and were called Best's Cottages.

In 1913 the property was purchased by Miss Davies-Cooke. The two cottages which stood on the site of the old farm house were converted by her into one residence, and the old barn into a Catholic

Oratory, which is dedicated to S. Francis, in memory of her late brother and sister.

Stock's Farm. In the 15th and 16th centuries there were Cotyers living at "The Stokke." We may, therefore, assume that the history of what is now known as "Stock's Farm" dates, at least, from that period. It was at the junction of the roadways near here that from time immemorial, stood the parish stocks.

There was a small farm house here in the 18th century.

In 1800 David Wellard lived here, followed by his son. After them came the Wares and Mitchels, then Isaac Outred.

Mr. Alfred Cromar rented it till 1913, when the property was purchased by Mr. Wm. Lockwood.

Bay Lodge. There was a house here in the 18th century adjoining the wheelwright's shop, and in 1703 was in the occupation of Wm. Mugg. Wm. Dean was in possession in 1843. His son, Thomas Dean, rebuilt the house and lived here till his death in 1891. It was he who planted the hedge of bay trees from which the name is derived.

Mr. Tom Mabe lived here till 1919. Then Mrs. M'Intyre, and a little later, Mrs. Hobbs, who died in 1925. It is now in the occupation of Miss Hobbs.

Willow Lodge. The present residence was built about 70 years ago on the site of a small farm house which was called the Blue House. About 50 acres of land went with it which included the Cherry Orchard, and the land on the opposite side of the road.

After the fire which destroyed the old house in the middle of the century, the land was purchased by the owners of Fairby Farm;

The Rectory. The Rectory, in former times, occupied the site of the Parsonage Cottages near the Church. Here also, till the



Hartley Rectory.

middle of the last century, stood the tithe barn, one end of which had been converted into a stable.

The house was a wooden structure and fell into



The First Child Inmate of Hartley Rectory for 170 Years

such bad repair that Thomas Bradley, at the end of the 18th century, obtained a dispensation from the Bishop permitting him to live out of the parish.

This permission was extended for a time, to Edward Alien, his successor, but later on he was required by the Bishop to live in the parish. He was given permission to exchange the glebe land, and the present Rectory was built in 1857.

The site formed part of Hoseland Wood. About 13 acres were cleared, and the new glebe sown with grass the same year.

The family of the late Rector, by the way, were grown up before they came to live here. 'No children were born to his predecessors since Thomas, the only son of the Rev. Thomas Blomefield, born in 1748. And so it comes to pass that the present daughter of the house was the first child inmate of Hartley-Rectory for 170 years.

The Old Downs. Five and forty years ago Colonel Joseph Hartley bought 10 acres of land in Hartley Green Field, intending to build a house there.

He changed his mind and bought the present site of the Old Downs. He built a lodge, took up his residence in it and laid the foundations of his house farther back in the wood.

Here he and his family lived for a number of years, while the mansion slowly rose into being. He was wont to boast that this plan enabled him to build on the interest of the money he had intended to spend on it, and left him in possession

of both house and capital. Mrs. Hartley died in 1897 and the Colonel in 1898. His only son was killed on the Alps, and the property remained in the hands of trustees for some years. It was first let to Mr. Edward Daun, who left in 1903. Then Mrs. Baker Cresswell came. After her death in 1913 Major Charles Tristram took the house. Mrs. Lewis followed, and when she left, the property was purchased by Colonel J. Waley Cohen, who sold it in 1927 to Mr. J. R. Stickland.

Brickend. Previous to 1922 there were three cottages here known as Hartley Hole Cottages. Two of them appear to have been the remains of a small homestead which was called the Red House, and which was subsequently converted into the cottages for the use of the Blue House Farm. A third cottage of brick was afterwards built on to the wooden ones and they came to be known as the Red Houses or Cottages. In 1922, the property was purchased by Mr. John Green and reconstructed to form one house which he called "Brickend."

Hartley Hill Cottage, There was formerly some land attached to this cottage, and here for several generations lived the Packman family. Till recent times it was known as Packman's or Pettman's Cottage.

In the middle of the century Robert, and Jane his wife lived here. He was for many years shep-

herd on the Court Farm. He died in 1864, and his wife in 1901, aged 96 years. She was a widow for 37 years and latterly lived with a son in one of the New House Cottages. Her two daughters kept a little school in the old house. One of them, Amy, married Mr. Russell of Ash, and is now, in 1927, still living, aged 81.

Several of the old Hartley families afterwards lived in this cottage, including French, Marsh, Bevan and Blackwell. The present owner is Mr. F. C. Robertson.

Whiffin's Cottage, In the early part of last century this belonged to Richard Thorp. In 1844 Henry Woodin was living here and later on William Whiffin. Then came Thomas Whiffin, and after him, his son, Thomas, who drove a carrier's cart to Gravesend.

Some of the beams in this cottage, as in several other houses in the parish, are old ships' timbers, curved, and showing the wooden bolts or tree nails with which they were originally fastened together.

The Thatched Cottage. This has been the home of the Goodwins for at least five generations. Five Thomas Goodwins in succession have owned the property. There was a Thomas Goodwin in the parish in the 16th century, as shown by the Subsidy Rolls of that date.

Hartley Cottage, There was a cottage here belonging to the Fairby Estate in the 18th century. Mary, the great granddaughter of John Young, of Fairby, went to live here on her marriage with Wm. Wharton, of Pescott, in 1788.

In the Fairby title deeds provision is made that the other cottagers on Hartley Green shall have the right to draw water from the well in front of the house.

Yew Cottages. At the beginning of the 18th century there was a farm house



Yew Cottages.

here in the occupation of Mr. Richard Treadwell. At a later date it was converted into two cottages for the use of Fairby farm, in the time of Mr. Francis Treadwell.

Here at one time lived John Elcomb and, later on, Wm. Elcomb, the parish clerk who died in 1888, and next door lived the Martins.

**The Shepherd's
Cottage,**

This in earlier days was one of the small farm houses of the village. The old barn was standing 20 years ago but gradually fell into ruins. Twenty-six acres of land went with the house, and in 1853 it belonged to James Page. At the beginning of the century it was in the tenancy of Edward Best, of Middle Farm, then of Thomas Wilson, and afterwards of Wm. Woodin.

There seem to have been rumours of hidden treasure here. At any rate there is a legend of a midnight raid. Three masked men entered the cottage, gagged and bound the inmates, but no further details have been handed down except that the raiders made good their escape.

For many years the turn in the road here was called "Woodin's Corner,"

**The
Black Lion
Inn.**

In the early part of the 18th century this, as well as the Smithy, belonged to Richard Glover. Mr. Wm. Treadwell was here in 1858. Then came Mr. George Chas. Wansbury, who served



The Black Lion Inn.

the office of churchwarden for several years. It has since been in the occupation of Mr. Charles English who took it over in 1913.

The old sign is said to have been brought from

Fawkham in the 17th. century by Mr. Cooper of Pennis.

The origin of "Black Lion," as an inn sign, appears to be Flemish.

" Au noir Lyon la fleur de lis
" Prest las terre de ca te lis."

The Kings Arms. In 1841 Robert Hayes lived here. He was a shoemaker by trade and also landlord of the Inn. John King followed him, and afterwards William Marshall. The house which ceased to be licensed in 1864, is now called Hartley Bottom Farm, and is in the occupation of Mr. H. Glover.