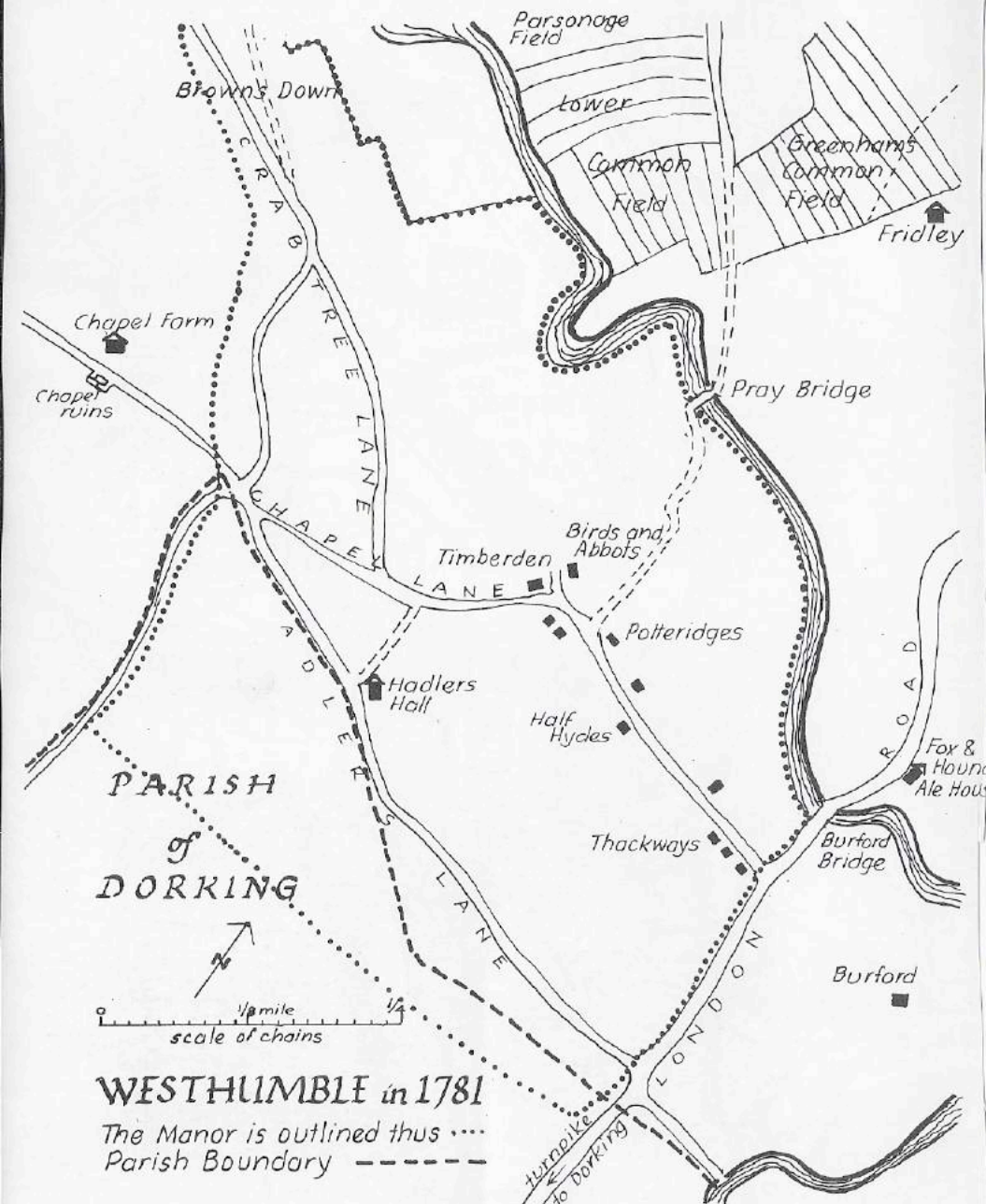


Part I 1775-1865

1775 was the year following William Lock's purchase of Norbury Park, and it has been chosen as a starting point in the present chapter because at that time two maps were produced which show, in a remarkably modern style, what Westthumble and the surrounding district looked like topographically then; also it was the year when the safekeeping of the Manor Rolls recommenced after the destruction of the former collection by Anthony Chapman, and there is, in the County Records Office at Kingston, a succession of these reports right up to 1850, recording most of the transactions in land ownership within the Manor during this period.

The map has a surprisingly modern look and the roads are identifiable today, although one or two have degenerated into footpaths, and it will be noticed that Crabtree Lane joins Chapel Lane at a point some two or three hundred yards further to the west than at present; also that Adlers Lane pro-

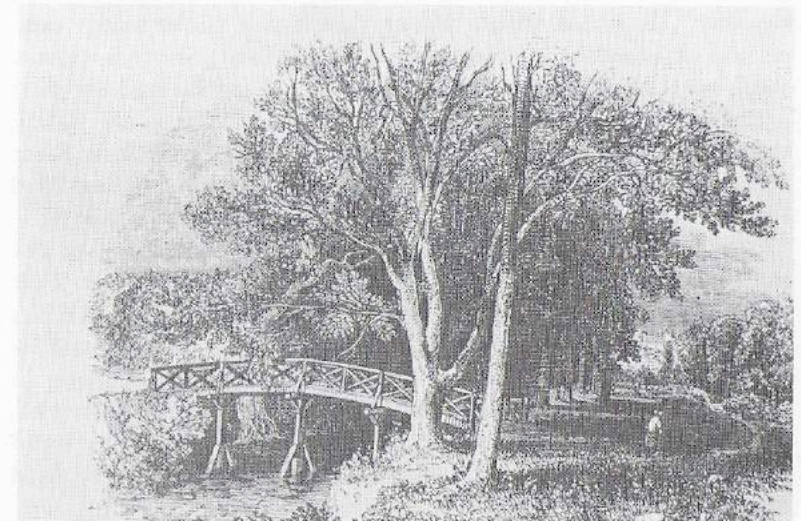




Westhumble in 1781 showing extent of Manor, drawn from Crows Map.

ceeds to its logical termination which is the junction with the London Road, near the spot where the Ancient Track crossed the River Mole at the Stepping Stones.

The second, 'Crows Map of the Parish of Mickleham', 1781 shows the village in greater detail. There are several features here which are well worth noting; the first is a reminder of the past in the three Common Fields lying between the manors of Westhumble, Norbury and Mickleham, all neatly divided into strips; by 1775 perhaps they may have been already enclosed and owned, not by the peasants, but by the surrounding land-owners. The next interesting feature is the path or track forming a communication between Westhumble, the Common Fields and the village of Mickleham, which leaves Westhumble Street at its Western end and crosses the River Mole at Pray Bridge. The remains of this track may still be identified today although the bridge disappeared when the railway was constructed; it must have been in existence here for a long time so that the inhabitants of the western part of the Parish might reach their common fields in order to till them.



Pray Bridge c.1800.



The road to Pray Bridge from Westhumble Street today.

The minutes of a Vestry Meeting (among the Parish Registers at Mickleham) records that "on October 13th 1725, it was agreed at a Vestrey, to repair the Bridge at Wist Homble". It is not absolutely certain if this is the bridge concerned or whether it refers to one at Burford, where we know there was a footbridge, although wheeled traffic had to cross the river by ford (as mentioned by *Defoe in his Tour Vol.I*); this footbridge is mentioned as early as 1534 (*E.P.N.S. Place Names of Surrey p.81*). However, another entry on June 23rd 1814 certainly refers to the bridge which we are discussing — "A resolution was passed to build a new footbridge over the Mole, known by the name of Spray or Pray Bridge at West Humble"; the cost was met by a rate levied in Jan. 1815. Its name is interesting — one of the old books on Dorking and its Environs says "it is so called because parishioners living in West Humble used it when they attended the Parish Church"; but of course, it has nothing to do with praying — the word comes from the latin 'pratun', a meadow — in fact the field through which the track runs is called Pray Meadow.

Perhaps the most interesting thing to note is the location of

the houses as shown on the map. The position of most of them will be seen to be exactly as it is at present, which can be verified by comparing the maps of 1781, 1840, 1870, and 1978; only two are missing, one at the eastern end of Westhumble Street and the one designated 'Hadlers Hall'. The discovery of the latter house on an old map was quite exciting; it was obviously a dwelling of some importance, as can be seen by the pointed roof on the square representing the building. It will be noticed that all the larger houses on this map are thus depicted; a similar house on the same map (although just out of the picture on the portion shown here) is seen standing on the London Rd at the corner of the Headley Rd, and this is marked as 'Juniper Hole'. Now in the Court Rolls (which we shall consider later) a name that constantly recurs is 'Audler's Hole' (later as 'Adler's Hole'); this had been thought to refer to a depression or pond situated in the garden of today's Burney Cottage, at the cross roads where Adlers Lane and Chapel Lane meet, but the fact that Juniper Hall was at that time spelt Hole, suggests the two words mean the same thing and that Audlers Hole was, in fact, Hadlers Hall.

Could this have been the old manor house of Westhumble which throughout our story (until Camilla Lacey acquired the status in 1816) has been missing from the picture? Even if the succession of lords, who always owned other manors, never lived here, at least where the stewards held the Courts Baron and perhaps lived themselves? In support of this theory, a field, contiguous with the Hall and called Sourfield is described in a deed of sale dated Aug. 13th 1797, between Sir William Geary and Charles Earl Gray, as being 'part of the demesne lands of the Manor of Westhumble'. (*S.C.R. Guildford A30D 35/1/31*). We know from the court rolls of 1772 that this 'Audlers Hole' was acquired by John Eckersell, gent. of Mickleham in that year and, presumably, he resided there whilst his imposing house, to be known as Burford Lodge, was being built beside the river Mole opposite to the spot where Westhumble Street joins the London Road. This house, destined to become one of the large mansions of the district, was completed in 1786, and we note from the Rolls that Audlers Hole passed to one, John Busby. Sad to relate, by 1840 the old house had degenerated

into two labourers cottages and today no sign remains.

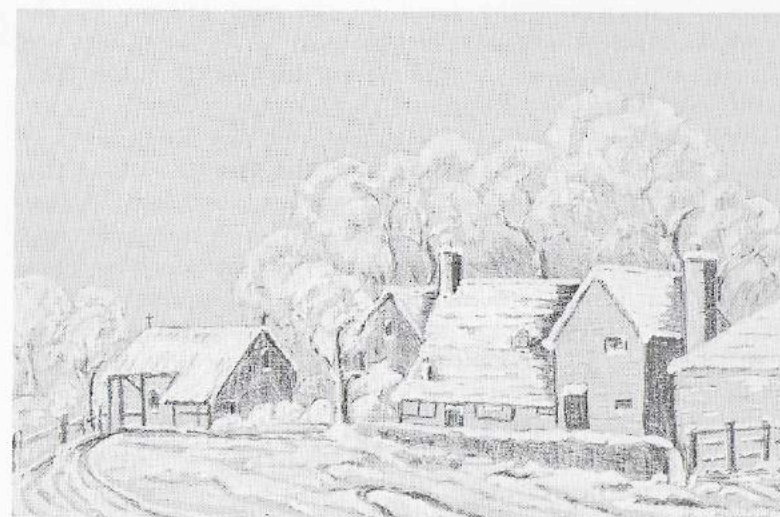
The Court Rolls

So much for the topography of the district around 1800; we shall now consider the information derived from the Court Rolls, already referred to. From the welter of repetitive, archaic legal jargon in which they are written, there emerge quite clearly, the names of various parcels of land which together make up the manor, also the names of the people who bought and sold these properties, as well as officials who presided over the transactions; and so we learn what the various parts of our Hamlet were called in those days.

The titles have an entrancing old world ring about them; 'Birds and Abbots', 'High Ditches', 'Half Hydes', 'Potteridges', 'Thackways', 'Mellumeys', 'Haudlers Hole' and so on. Of course, these names have disappeared long since, and it was impossible to identify them on a modern map. One of the keys which eventually solved the problem, was the Tithe Map of 1836-40, with its accompanying book of landowners and



'Potteridges' (now Catbells) showing Infant School.



'Birds and Abbots' (now Lovedon Cottage and St Michaels Chapel)
from water colour by Joy Shepperd.

tenants. Each parcel, messuage or tenement has been correlated between the Court Rolls and the Tithe Map, and one by one, they fell into place as shown in the Map which gives the extent of the Manor, on Page 48.

And the folk who bought and sold these 'messuages', both high and low, either resident within or without the manor, we come to know by name, and to recognise in other documents such as the Parish Register, Land Tax Returns and, later, the Census Returns.

Before we consider some of these characters and the impression each one left on the village, a word must be said of the transactions recorded in the Court Rolls, in which they took part. In each case, the vendor is described as a 'customary tenant of the said Manor, who surrenders, by the Rod, into the hands of the Lord of the said Manor, according to the custom thereof, all that customary messuage or tenement called — etc, etc'. The purchaser, 'comes to the court in his own proper person, and humbly prays of the Lord of the said Manor, to be admitted tenant to all and singular, the messuage

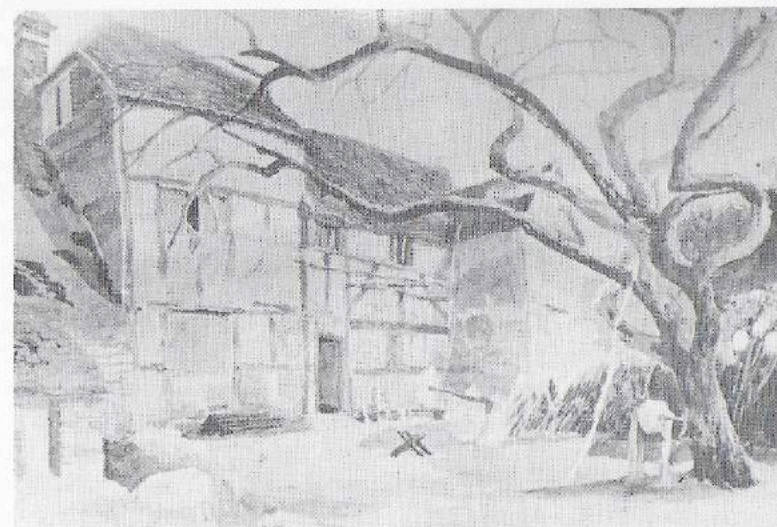
or tenement, lands, etc., according to the custom of the manor aforesaid, to whom the Lord of the said Manor, by the Steward aforesaid, grants seizin thereof, by the Rod, etc, etc, to have and to hold all the said etc, by copy of the Court Roll, at the will of the Lord etc, etc.'

This greatly attenuated transcript from the Rolls gives an idea of the archaic legal terminology used, and also shows that each possessor of land within the manor, holds it by 'Copyhold' or a 'customary tenant of the lord, even though he may be a neighbouring landowner himself. This explains how it was that William Lock, lord of the manor of Norbury, owned a field in a neighbouring manor, and was able to let the D'Arblays have it, although there seems to have been some slip up in the transference of the copyhold resulting in the legal mishap, already referred to, which caused the D'Arblays to have to sell the cottage they had hoped would be the inheritance of their son.

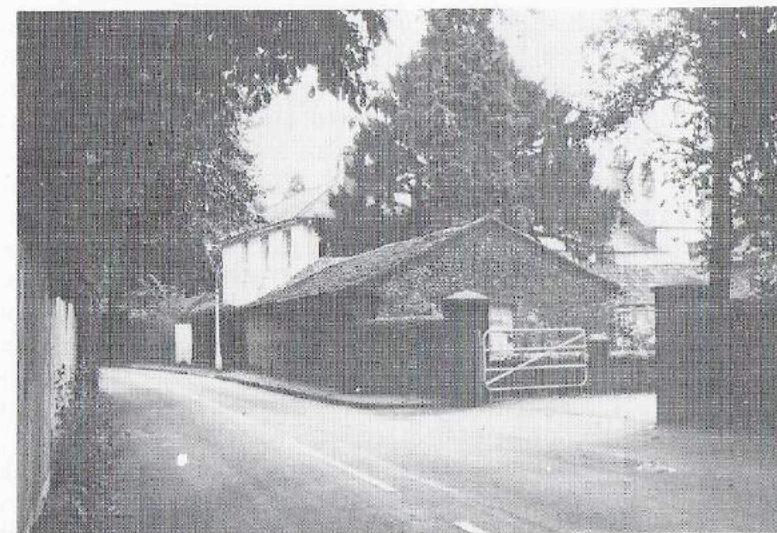
Personalities

Now we may take a look at some of the people who appear in these various documents — William Berry, for instance, whose name is immortalised in 'Berrys Farm Cottage' and 'Berrys Croft' in Westhumble Street. He was born in about 1752 and admitted a customary tenant of the manor in 1775. The messuage which he acquired was known as 'Half Hydes' and comprised the farm extending between Westhumble Street and Adlers Lane, and bounded on the north by Chapel Lane. This was known as Berrys Farm for 150 years. The original farmhouse, as shown on the 1840 map, stood near the road but was pulled down around 1870 and replaced by another higher up, known today as 'Berrys Croft'. In the Tate Gallery there is a water colour by *Cornelius Varley 1806* entitled 'Westhumble Lane, Dorking Surrey'. It is the picture of an old farmhouse, and it is almost certainly, Berry's.

Besides possessing Half Hydes, he also owned one third of what is now Cleveland Farm, the other two parts belonging to Peter Smallwood and Samuel Willeter, both yeomen who shared with William Berry the honour of serving on the



Copy of water colour by Cornelius Varley 'West Humble Lane' 1806, believed to be Berrys Farm (by permission of Tate Gallery).



Berrys Farm Cottage

'Homage' or jury of the Manor Court. Berry was also Church Warden at the Parish Church and their names are continually cropping up in the parish registers. Berry died in 1817, the year following that in which the D'Arblays returned from France to sell Camilla Cottage to Thomas Hudson. This latter is another prominent resident of the village at this period. He is described as of 'Mickleham, Gent.' He was a wealthy man of vision who saw that the cottage had the possibility of becoming, by extension, a desirable gentleman's residence, so he bought, not only the house and the land, but a great deal more, including Chapel Farm and also the Lordship of the Manor. Unfortunately there is no court roll which tells us of this momentous event, the relevant one being missing; all we have is one dated Aug. 16th 1816 — 'A special Court Baron of the Rt. Hon. Charles, Earl Grey', and the next in the collection is dated Oct. 12th 1818 — 'A Court Baron of Thomas Hudson Esq., Lord of the Manor'. The Camilla deeds give the date of the purchase as Nov. 13th 1816.

Thos. Hudson played his part in village affairs, not only as the lord of the manor but as a member of the Parish Council. From the parish register we learn that in 1818 he sought the permission of the Vestry to 'shorten the Public Highway between Westhumble and Fetcham', (in other words Crabtree Lane). This was granted and carried out at his expense, the road taking the route we know today from Chapel Lane. This sounds very public spirited of Thos. Hudson until we realise that the reason was most probably because the road ran right across his newly acquired estate, within a few yards of his house. This latter he extended greatly, although the original cottage was retained within the extended building. It was now that the suffix 'Lacey' was added to Camilla, in affectation, so it is said, of nearby Polesden Lacey. The *E.P.N.S.* in the already quoted '*Place Names of Surrey*' says that the derivation of the suffix Lacey cannot be traced.

Thomas Hudson died in 1837 and the manor passed to his widow Ann, who administered it through trustees, but they had left Camilla in 1835 and Ann was living in Cheshire, so the house was leased to Lady Caroline Cavendish. Chapel Farm was sold to W.J. Dennison of Denbies in 1836.

Before we move to the 1840's and 50's, however, we must revert back to the early 1800's for another character, Jeremiah Dyson. In 1820 Timb wrote a book, a charming little dissertation called '*A promenade round Dorking*'. In one chapter he describes Westhumble Street; he commences at the end where now stands the arch at the entrance to Camilla Drive. The first building is 'Timberden' — 'a cottage orne', built in rustic style, partly thatched, formerly an ordinary labourers cottage, with a verandah fitted at the back, the residence of Mrs Bolton'. This house was renamed Camilla Lacey Lodge when the drive was built leading to the big house in the 19th cent. — what a pity that the old name, so much more attractive than the present, has been lost.

The next building down is 'a neat cottage, long occupied by Jeremiah Dyson, late Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons'. This cottage is one of two, known then as 'Potteridges', and now joined together as Catbells, opposite Boxhill Station. It would seem that he used the place as a country retreat from his duties at Westminster, if he did not permanently reside there. The interesting thing is that Timb describes him 'as a man interested in learning, who formed, with other gentlemen in Dorking, the Book Society, and here in Westhumble, aided by other gentry, diffused the first rudiments of learning and education amongst the children of the Hamlet'. Now, it so happens that this cottage has attached to it, a small addition, with INFANT SCHOOL carved over the entrance. So far, no information has come to light as to when this addition was made; the school was certainly operating in 1851, because the census return of that date gives us 'Mrs Ann Dudley aged 40, born in Dorking, School Mistress', and in spite of lack of direct evidence, it seems possible if not probable, that Jeremiah Dyson had that small addition made around 1820 for use as a dames school. Incidentally, the school was still operating in 1911.

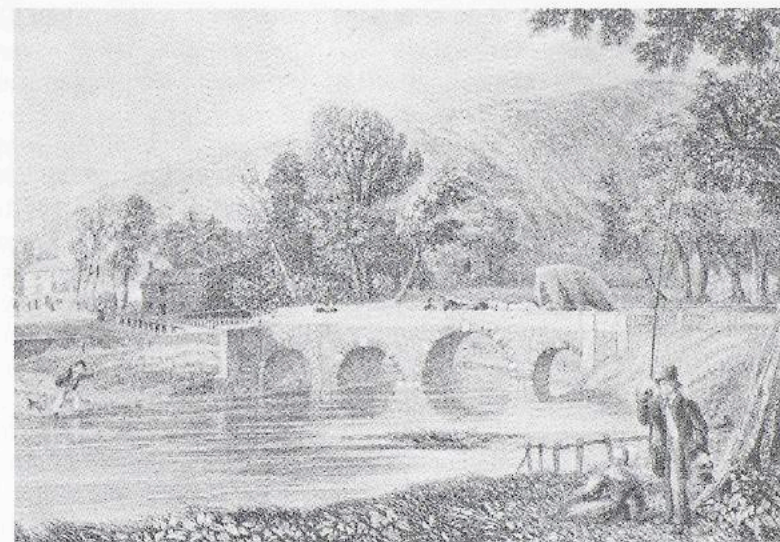
The Census Returns of 1841 and 1851

Although the *Tithe Map of 1836-40* (a copy of which relating to Westhumble, is to be found in the Appendix) with

its *'Apportionment Book'* tells us a great deal about the land, its owners, tenants and uses, it says nothing about the actual people who lived in the cottages, how many there were or what sort of work they did. Much of this information we can find from the census returns (which commenced naming people in 1841), although it must be said that here also we meet with much frustration; although we have each family enumerated by name, we are not told which houses they lived in, as no address is given; in fact, finding out where each family resided is largely a matter of conjecture, in which detective work in following clues and relating them with other known facts, plays a large part.

All manner of anomalies occur — people whom we know from other sources to be resident here, do not appear in the returns. This applies especially to the 'gentry'; none are mentioned in the 1841, and only Lady Cavendish in 1851 — in fact, apart from her there is only one mention in both lists of a man of independent means, John Legge who lived in a house, demolished before 1870 and never rebuilt, which stood at the corner of Westhumble St. next to Burford Corner. He was the grandson of William Charman who owned the Fox and Hounds (later renamed the Hare and Hounds, the Burford Bridge Inn and now the Burford Bridge Hotel), when Lord Nelson used to stay there. In passing, Mickleham Records tells us that, when leaving on his last journey, Nelson gave the host a pair of wicker mats for placing under dishes, which he carried when travelling, and also gave Mr Legge's mother a shilling. In 1900 these relics were still kept by the Legge family in Dorking, as heirlooms.

But to return to the Census, why do the 'gentry' not appear in the returns? Is it because, on the appointed day they were all residing elsewhere, or were they able to override the enumerators and refuse to give the information the law required? Certainly in 1841 the Duke and Duchess of Cleveland were living in Cleveland Lodge, then called 'Westhumble House', and most probably, Lady Cavendish was already renting Camilla. Another interesting feature of the census is the large number of 'visitors' recorded in most households; it seemed that they had all joined in to celebrate



Burford Bridge and 'Fox and Hounds' c.1820.
(Kind permission of Dorking Museum.)

the event but they were, in fact, all lodgers.

The census returns provide plenty of material for the statistician; the size of the population in the village, the number of individuals in each family, their various occupations — a tremendous wealth of interest can be obtained by comparing the returns of the four decades 41, 51, 61, and 71. Here we shall be content to use them as a basis, with the other documents mentioned, for describing life in the village at the end of the period under review.

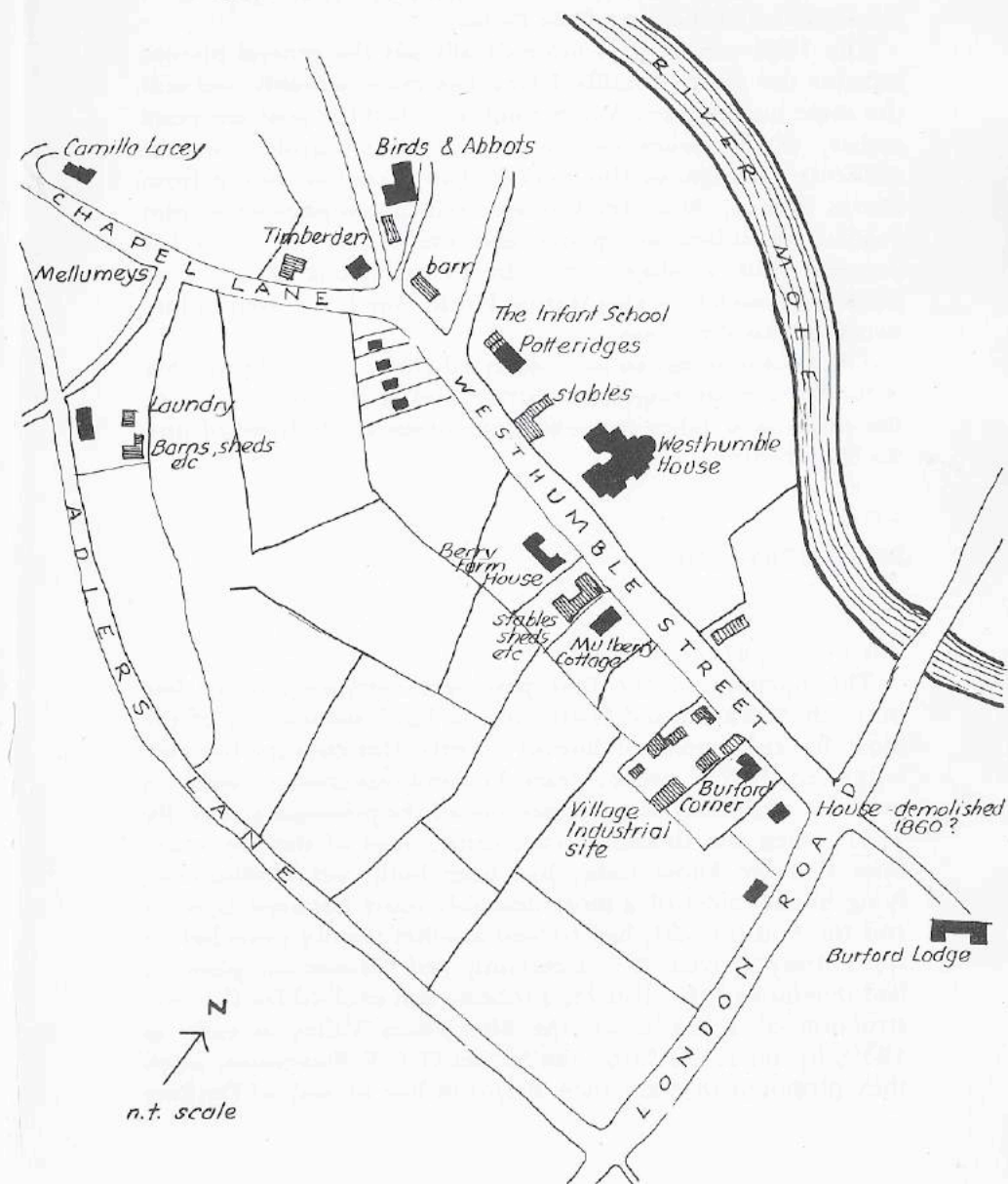
In 1841 there was a population of between 200 and 300, including such outlying places as Crabtree, Cowslip and Old Dean cottages. The reason why it is impossible to be more precise in the figure is that it is difficult to be sure about some of the households mentioned as to whether they are actually in Westhumble or along the London Road or even some in Mickleham. However with the small number of dwelling places

shown on the map, it is a matter for wonder where they all lived. There were at least three farms; Chapel, Berry's and 'Birds and Abbots' with, in addition, farms attached to Camilla Lacey and Westhumble House.

Birds and Abbots was only 30 acres and farmed by John Bartlett who lived in Lovedon Cottage, Berrys Farm of 100 acres was tenanted by Mary Field, who employed Jesse Jay to run the farm, both living at Berrys Farmhouse. Chapel Farm, always the largest one in the neighbourhood, was 200 acres and farmed by Joseph Humphreys aged 27. Beside his farm labourers, he kept 2 male and 2 female servants, so lived in some style. Mary Field had 3 farm labourers living in the farmhouse and kept one servant; the census gives her occupation as shopkeeper, and as she is the only person so designated, she must have run the village shop. There was a young doctor, John Mayhew, aged about 25, living in some style with 2 female servants, but which house he occupied cannot be discovered. We are fairly certain that the Infant School was in operation, but there was no village pub! The inhabitants of Westhumble had to wait another 27 years before they could drink their pints in their own pub; when they were thirsty they had to go down to the main road and turn either left to the Hare and Hounds, or right to the Beehive which stood on the old London turnpike road at a place called Giles Green, the spot where today Bradleys Lane joins the Main road. It was here also that the Toll Gate stood.

Where the Stepping Stones Inn now stands, including the car park and the surrounding area, there was in those days what we might call the 'Village Industrial Complex'. Here were sheds, shops and other buildings, where various crafts and businesses were carried on. A sawyer had his pit there, a carpenter his shop, the wheelwright made his waggons and carts, the local builders had their yard, the undertaker (who lived at Fredley Cottage) made his coffins, and the Maltster had his malthouse nearby in the garden of what is now Mulberry Cottage. In the Tithe Book the owner of this complex is listed as Timothy Lifford and Others; he was the carpenter and somewhere else in the village, Thomas Fuller, a shoemaker carried on his trade, aided by Thomas Sayers, his

WESTHUMBLE STREET in 1840



journeyman.

Altogether, we get the impression of a self contained, snug little village, working hard all the week and on Sundays and Festivals crossing the river to the parish church and joining all the activities of the rest of the Parish.

The 1851 census gives more details but the general picture remains the same. Camilla Lacey has more servants and still the same housekeeper Ann Stroud, who had the post ten years earlier, which makes one think that Lady Caroline was in residence throughout this period. The shop has moved from Berrys Farm to Mulberry Cottage, and the shopkeeper is John Pagden, described as 'grocer and draper' so the shop has become quite a village store. Incidentally, one of our local residents remembers that during World War I, she used to buy sweets at this very shop.

The doctor seems to have deserted the village and probably moved to a more populous district; and at this point we leave the place as it takes its next momentous stride forward into the 20th century.

Part II 1865-1919

The Coming of the Railway

The opening of the first passenger carrying railway line between Stockton and Darlington in 1825 started one of the most feverish bursts of human activity this country has ever witnessed. Within twenty years, England was criss-crossed by a network of railway lines connecting all the principal towns. By 1847, when the financial crash came, most of the important lines that we know today had been built; yet Westhumble, lying in the midst of a most desirable route between London and the South Coast, had to wait another twenty years before the railway arrived. It was certainly not because the planners had overlooked the district, a scheme was evolved for the construction of a line down the Mickleham Valley as early as 1830, by no less a firm than Messrs G & R Stevenson, when they proposed to carry their Brighton line by way of Dorking

and Horsham. The project, however, was set aside in favour of Rennie and Rastrick's direct line. Then followed 30 years of frustrated attempts by various companies to carry out the scheme; but owing to landowner's opposition and differences between the various companies involved, they all failed. In 1861 Jacomb Hood, chief engineer of the Brighton Company, planned a line to connect Leatherhead (where the railway had arrived many years before) with Horsham, where it continued to Brighton. However, one powerful landowner, unnamed in the account from which this story is derived (was it Thomas Cubitt of Denbies?) opposed it so vehemently, that the company only secured an Act for the southern section between Dorking and Horsham, so the Mickleham Valley remained undisturbed for a while longer. But in 1863, after a great fight, the Act was finally passed, giving The Brighton Company powers to complete their route. The work was given to one of Brunel's sub-contractors and started in 1864; but misfortune dogged the project — a succession of bad seasons, and great difficulty in the clay district south of Dorking, prolonged the work. Especially through the Mole Valley, it was very costly — the landowners Thomas Cubitt and Thomas Grisell of Norbury had laid down stringent conditions — one was that the tunnel under Norbury Park should have no shafts, the company being forbidden to disturb the surface above it. Three viaducts had to be built over the Mole, of approved design, and the stations at Westhumble and Dorking North, especially so. The aesthetic result achieved was quite beautiful and is greatly appreciated today. What a dreadful thing has been the demolishing of the charming old Dorking Station, and its replacement with a plain (some would say ugly) modern one carrying an office block!

There is one point of interest worth mentioning concerning the third bridge over the Mole. This was to be placed some 30 yards upstream of the large loop in the river, between Burford Bridge and Ham Bank. It was essential that the flow of water through the arches of the bridge should be as free as possible, especially at flood time, so the loop was by-passed by cutting a new channel, and thus was formed our 'ox-bow'. Although parties of schoolchildren are taken down to study

this phenomenon by their geography teachers as an example of natural river erosion, this one was most certainly made by man and not by nature.

Eventually the difficulties were all overcome and the line opened in March 1867, the architecture of the bridges and the stations remaining as a monument to the memory of a famous Dorking character, William Shearburn, their architect and builder.

The railway must have had a tremendous impact on the villagers — not only were they able to travel easily into Dorking, and without much difficulty, to London, but the Londoners were able to travel to Westhumble, which became a favourite destination for the emancipated cockneys who were now in easy reach of the most famous beauty spot south of the Thames. It also called for a public house, where travellers and locals alike could enjoy their pints, so on the spot where all the crafts and industries had been carried out to meet the villagers' needs (which now, no doubt, would be met in Dorking) they built the Railway Arms, described as a Beer Shop. There was another outcome of the building of the railway which will be dealt with under a separate heading.

The Barn that became a Chapel

The construction of the line through the valley, with its three bridges, its tunnel and the cutting into the side of the hill beside the newly built station, required an army of navvies to do the work; we have no record of the numbers engaged, where they lived during those three years, or what they did in their spare time, and with these matters this story is not concerned, but the reader who is interested may be referred to an excellent account of these things in *'The Railway Navvies'* by Terry Coleman published by Pelican.

What we do know, however, is that a certain lady from Mickleham named Miss Vulliamy, took great compassion on these men and set out to ameliorate, as far as she could, the hard conditions under which they worked. In the telling of this village story we meet many characters who move across the stage as it were, and leave upon the district an impression

which remains with us today. One has a great desire to know more about them, than the fleeting glimpse obtained from the recorded history. What sort of people were they — what 'made them tick', to use a modern expression? This Miss Vulliamy, for instance whose name so far exists only in a newspaper cutting of 1904 describing the consecration of St. Michaels Chapel of Ease, what was she like? Was she perhaps an old Victorian lady in bonnet and shawl, a typical 'do-gooder' with a passion for saving the souls of the perishing with the help of free soup and Sankey and Moody?

To try and find an answer to these questions, a search was made through the Parish Registers at Mickleham Church for a clue as to her identity; no girl of that name was recorded as being baptised from 1800 onwards, but the register of weddings was more helpful, for in 1864 it is recorded that two Miss Vulliamys were married in the Parish Church. On June 16th, Katherine Vulliamy, of full age, was married to Francis Wheatcroft, Clerk in Holy Orders, of Caen in Normandy; and on September 30th, Mary Vulliamy also of full age, married George Meredith, Poet and Author. This last entry was an exciting discovery but it was obvious that neither Katherine or Mary could have been the lady for whom we were looking, as they would have ceased to be spinsters before the railway building began. There must have been another sister, so the search was continued, this time through the 1861 Census Returns for Mickleham, and at last the answer was found in an entry for one household, in which were listed Julien Vulliamy aged 74, his wife Elizabeth aged 60, with two daughters Elizabeth aged 28, and Mary aged 21. Katherine was obviously away from home at the time; so we know that our Miss Vulliamy was named Elizabeth and aged 32 in 1865 when she became interested in the welfare of the navvies.

Standing at the corner where Crabtree Lane branches off from Chapel Lane, was an old barn belonging to the farm described as Birds and Abbots. It was very near to the spot where a cutting was being made into the hill, and a bridge to carry Westhumble Street over the railway line, was being built, together with the new station. This barn belonged, at the time, to Thomas Grisell who had acquired all the land east of

Crabtree Lane and incorporated it into Norbury Park. Agricultural work in the valley must have been badly disrupted owing to all the constructional work going on, and the barn stood empty. Elizabeth asked Mr Grisell if she could use it as a rest room for the navvies during their spare time and, having obtained his consent, she set up as the navvies guardian angel. One can imagine her inviting these rough men into the barn, giving them hot cups of cocoa and, once having gained their respect and trust, listening to all their problems. Many of them would have been Irish, men who had been children at the time of the Great Potato Famine, illiterate and rough, but most of them wanting to keep faith with their families back home in Ireland, and, so it has been observed, scrupulous in sending back to their families, a large part of their wages. Elizabeth was able to help them, writing their letters — she even had them in the evenings to teach them to read and write. She started mission services for them on Sundays with, no doubt, the singing of Sankey and Moody hymns which she accompanied on a harmonium. As many of them would have been Catholics, it would be interesting to know if she invited priests in to help with the work. The Vulliamys were of French Huguenot origin, the grandfather being a famous watchmaker, so it is likely that Elizabeth would have tended towards Low Church rather than High, and the Grisell family was Catholic, so it would be heartening to believe that in those days of bitter sectarian conflict, some oecumenicalism existed.

So the railway was built and the navvies moved on, but the Barn never reverted to its former role, which was just as well as so many old barns have been allowed to crumble away. This one has been well worth preserving; Victoria Houghton of the *Surrey Domestic Buildings Research Group*, recently surveyed it and dates it from the late 17th/early 18th cent. As some of the timbers appear to be older, she suggests that either an existing barn had been rebuilt or some pieces of old wood had been used in the new construction. There are several interesting features remaining from those old days such as the carpenters marks visible on the timbers, the hinge bolts in place on the front wall where the old door was hung. The siting too was interesting, on sloping ground, so that although the floor is

level with the road in front, on the farmyard side it stands 3 feet above the ground thus enabling carts to back up to the barn and drop their tail-boards level with the floor, for easy clearing of the contents.



St Michaels Chapel 1904.

So this ancient barn which, no doubt, during its use as a navvies rest room, had been little altered within except for such amenities as chairs, tables and lighting, now entered a new era. Miss Vulliamy started to use it as a kind of Mission Hall where she could hold services on Sunday afternoons for the local people, and from about 1870 until the end of the century, the interior underwent gradual improvements, funds for its upkeep being provided by Mr Grissell. In 1884 Mr and Mrs Birkett of Foxbury undertook to renovate the whole place; the walls were lined with matchboarding, a new wooden floor was laid and two windows put into the eastern wall; also new furniture was provided, and a rustic porch added on to the southern end. At the turn of the century, Mr and Mrs

Leverton Harris of Camilla Lacey completely transformed again the interior of the building, adding a simple altar, whilst the exterior was left untouched except for a small vestry, added by Mr Salamons of Norbury Park on the east side.

So popular were the services now held in the old Barn that in 1904 the Bishop of Winchester agreed that it should be consecrated and licensed as a Chapel of Ease to the Parish Church. In a newspaper cutting from the *Dorking Advertiser*, the service of consecration is described as taking place on April 18th 1904. It was a big social occasion and the new chapel is thus described 'The interior is that of a chaste and unique private chapel, whilst its rustic exterior, ivy-covered and thatched, reminds one of the picturesque chapels that are occasionally met with on the Swiss mountainside'. The accompanying picture shows what it looked like at that time. Another newspaper cutting of Nov. 5th 1904 says 'within the building are some very beautiful specimens of Italian art, and the Sanctuary lamps which hang before the altar are similar to those in Milan Cathedral. The Sunday services include early Celebration at 8 a.m. and Evensong at 3.30. The station master is a most energetic Sacristan'. The subsequent history of the chapel will be dealt with in a later chapter.

The Early Twentieth Century

Glimpses of life in the Village during the years before the outbreak of World War I have been obtained from conversation with various people who are still living in the district and can remember those days.

One such memory is of two small girls accompanying their nanny down Adlers Lane with a bundle of washing to take to the laundry. In the field which for ages was known as Hadlers Meadow, near to the spot where once stood Hadlers Hall, was a collection of buildings belonging to Camilla Lacey and used for the Home Farm; two cottages, a barn, a cattle shed and a small laundry to cater for the needs of the Big House; apparently, neighbours and other residents were able to bring along their washing and have it done there; in fact, among the census returns for 1871 several laundresses are listed as residing

in the village. All these buildings were demolished in the 1920's when the new farm, which will be described later, was built.

Another memory comes from Jack Arthur, of the well-known firm of builders in Dorking, who related how, as a young boy starting work in his father's firm, one of his first jobs was to accompany a tiler to St Michaels Chapel to strip off the thatch and, in its place, recover the roof with the pantiles which are still there. This was in 1913.

Bob Tidy recounts his memories of the Infant School in Westhumble St; he was born in Catbells, next door, in 1900, and attended the school before going on to Dorking Grammar School. In the picture he is seen with some of the other scholars, amongst whom was the son of the station master.

Yet another glimpse comes from W.G. Tharby, a retired railway employee who, in later life, became a notable local historian. In a long telephone conversation he recounted his experiences as an apprentice booking clerk at Westhumble in 1910. He joined the L.B.S.C.R. at the age of 13, his hours of work were from 8 am to 8 pm with no regular meal breaks, and was paid 2/6 per week. When he came to Boxhill and Burford Br. Station (as it was) in 1910, his wages were doubled to 5/-. The station master (Westhumble had one then) named Stephen Bromley, lived in the house attached to the station and was a leading light in the village. In addition to his position with the railway, he was the sub-postmaster of Westhumble, the post office being located in the booking office where he sold stamps and postal orders, and sent off registered letters and parcels; he also received and transmitted telegrams, as few houses had telephones. Yet another of his many activities, was sacristan of St. Michaels Chapel, where he rang the bell and played the harmonium.

Mr Tharby, who died recently at the age of 83, recalled the various houses to which he used to deliver telegrams — Foxbury where Clara Butt's mother-in-law, Mrs Rumford, lived; (an earlier generation will remember Clara Butt as one of the most famous singers of this period). At Polesden Lacey, Mrs Ronald Greville was at the height of her career as a Society hostess, and many of her famous guests were picked up at the station. Another person he remembered delivering telegrams

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to, was the American millionaire Vanderbilt, who used to drive his coach 'Venture' down to Brighton, and stop at the Burford Bridge Hotel for lunch; he would collect telegrams there about stock market movements, but the poor little telegraph boy never got a tip from him!

Camilla Lacey

To complete this survey of the village between 1865 and 1919, we must return to its main focal point, the Manor House. The cottage which Thomas Hudson bought in 1816 had developed into the 'Gentlemen's Residence' that he had in mind, set within an estate of some 80 acres including parkland and farm.

By 1865 a new tenant was in residence, James Leverton Wylie, who held it from the Hudsons on a 21 years lease. By 1866, Thomas had died, and his widow was living at Brabin Hall Cheshire, and she sold the whole estate, including the lordship, to Wylie in 1874. He died in 1900 leaving it to his nephew Frederick Leverton Harris, aged 36.

Throughout this period the property had been added to and improvements carried out, so that it had become a beautiful country house of gracious proportions. Its new owner was a man of talent and charm — like William Lock, a patron of the arts and a great admirer of Fanny Burney. He filled the house with much antique furniture and works of art including paintings by Gainsborough, Hoppner and Kuyp — but his most treasured possessions were certain mementoes of Fanny Burney, which he had collected over the years — manuscripts of some of her novels, her letters and family portraits, and these he kept in one of the original rooms of the cottage, still retained within the enlarged building, called the 'Burney Parlour', as a museum.

Leverton Harris was also a man of affairs — a shipowner and merchant, and a Member of Parliament; elected as a Unionist and Tariff Reformer, he would appear to have been a moderate Tory. During the 1914-18 war he was given, by Lloyd George, the task of directing the Allied blockade of Germany, as a member of the Privy Council. As one of the main reasons for

71
final victory, was the collapse of morale on the German Home Front due to the blockade, the Rt. Hon. Frederick Leverton Harris must be regarded as one of its architects.

In 1919 he was attending the Peace Conference at Versailles accompanied by his wife; at home in Camilla Lacey they had left a lady visitor with two maids and a gardener as the only occupants of the house. In the early hours of the morning of April 17th, Maundy Thursday, they were awakened by the loud ringing of bells, to find that the place was on fire. Fortunately the flames had bared the bell wires, making a short circuit which caused the bells to ring, thereby raising the alarm, and they were able to escape from the burning building. The whole sad event is reported in two newspaper cuttings from the Dorking Advertiser of April 17th and 25th 1919. The story makes extraordinary reading today; it has something of the quality of Rob Wilton's sketches; "A police constable on Tower Hill saw the glare at 3.40 am and, at once, made his way to the scene of the fire, which he thought was Bradleys Farm. Though he had to walk to Westhumble, he was in time, with the help of another constable, to do some good effective work in assisting in rescuing some of the furniture, etc. — and if other aid had been available much valuable property might have been saved. There seems to have been some unaccountable delay in summoning the Fire Brigade; the call not being received until 10 minutes to 5. The whole of the members responded, and, in extremely good time, the Brigade with the Steamer and Manual were on the spot".

The fire resulted in the almost total loss of the building and most of its valuable contents, including the Burney Parlour. Mr Harris was recalled by telegram, sent by his neighbour Sir William Lawrence of Burford Lodge, and arrived by aeroplane at Kenley Aerodrome. Anne Swann (Sir William's daughter) recounts that, as a very small child, she and her sister were sent next day to search amongst the charred paper that had been blown by a strong wind into the surrounding parkland, in the hope of finding, if possible, scraps of the valuable Burney Manuscripts. Some scraps from the fire may be seen today at the County Records Office, charred and unreadable at the edges, but stuck on linen and preserved.

The loss of his lovely home and his precious art treasures was a grievous blow to Leverton Harris, and immediately he put the estate on the market; it was sold within three months, and so another era came to an end.



Camilla Lacey South view 1910 (permission Tony Baker.)



Camilla Lacey North Front after rebuilding 1922

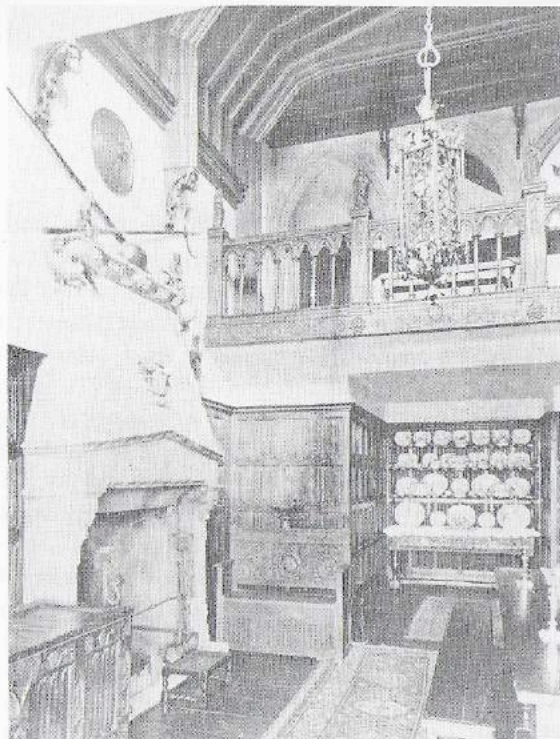
Chapter Eight INTERLUDE

It has just been noted that the fire marked the end of an era, and this was so, not only for Westhumble, but for the whole country. Life was never to be the same again and the break up of the Camilla Estate is typical of what was to happen to similar places throughout the length and breadth of Britain during the post war period.

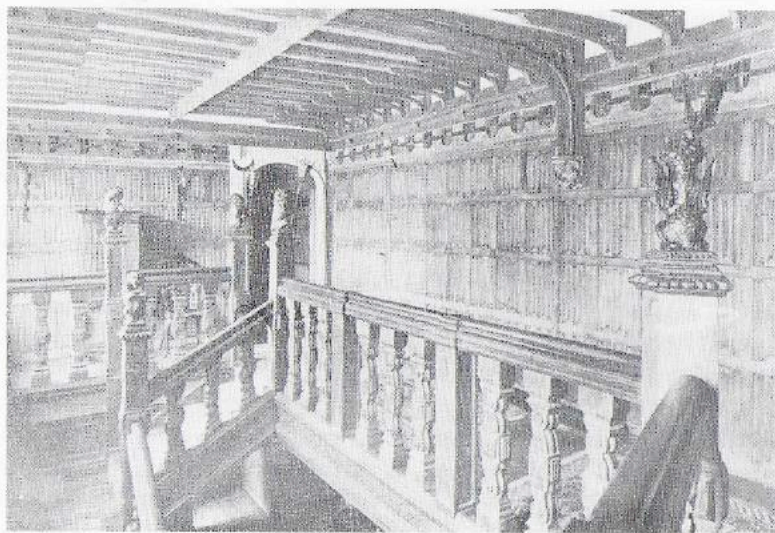
But Camilla was to be granted a temporary respite. The charred remains and the land upon which they stood, together with the Lordship of the Manor were bought by a Dutchman, Henry Van Nievelt, of More Place, Betchworth for £16,000. It appears that he was a provision merchant who had been importing margarine during the war from Holland, which was a neutral country. No doubt he had done well out of the business, but he was certainly not a millionaire, as has been suggested in some of the semi mythical stories told about this period, because, had he been that wealthy, it is unlikely that he would have needed to raise two mortgages for the purchase and rebuilding, one of these being raised from the firm of builders he employed for the work — Trollope & Colls.

So from the ashes of the old, there arose a new Camilla, but unlike the fabulous Phoenix, it bore no resemblance whatever to its predecessor. In this post war period there was a great craze for building imitation Tudor Houses, and this one certainly followed the trend. It is described in a sale catalogue of 1922 as a 'Tudor Style mansion erected in stone, with mullioned windows, charming old world gardens, cottages, stud farm buildings, riding school, rich parkland and woodland, extending to 80 acres'. It was lavishly furnished inside with Tudor, Elizabethan and Jacobean oak furniture and the walls were panelled with fine carved oak panels, mostly of 15th and 16th century English work.

Why Van Nievelt went to such lengths in the building, furnishing and decoration of his new house, only to put it up for sale the following year, is not known; but this he did, and in 1922 it was purchased by a rich American, Victor E Freeman

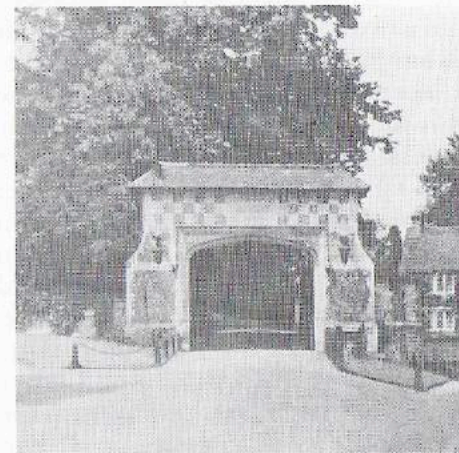


Camilla Lacey, interior panelling 1922 (permission Tony Baker).



of New York City, who paid for it £23,750. It would be fascinating to know more about this character in our story; rumour says that his name was originally Fredermann, and that he changed it on coming to England. He was certainly a wealthy man – if there is a millionaire in the story (as legend has it) it would most likely be him; from the fact that one of the executors he appointed in his will was the 'Mechanics and Metals Bank of New York', one wonders if, perhaps, he might have made a fortune out of scrap metals during the war and decided to spend it in the most sensible way possible, as an English country gentleman; but this is the merest speculation.

So Victor Freeman arrived here as lord of the manor in April 1923; but tragedy struck before he had time to settle in; his wife Lela died, and it was in her memory that he set up the archway at the entrance to Camilla Drive, and renamed the estate 'Leladene'. There has been some confusion over this arch; some think that it relates to the first house on the left in Camilla Drive called Leladene, but this one was built some thirty years after the arch was erected and borrowed the name; others believe that it was the arch which originally stood at the northern entrance to Norbury Park, and indeed, comparison of the two shows a remarkable similarity, but they are clearly not the same. Apart from other differences, this one has the initials VF on two shields at either side.



Leladene Arch.

The substitution of the name Leladene in place of the time honoured Camilla Lacey must have caused much resentment in the district, and one has the impression that other changes he made had the same effect. However, Victor Freeman did make a lot of improvements. One of these was the building of a new Home Farm in a large meadow on the south side of Chapel Lane shown as Scurr Field. This name Scurr presented a problem when its origin was sought; the authorities on field names had no mention of it. The mystery was solved when the deed mentioned on page 51 was re-examined and it became obvious that Scurr and Sour were one and the same, and that some copyist had failed to join up his O!

Freeman showed considerable taste in the erection of Home Farm, employing Trollope and Colls to do the work. The design of the buildings is based on an old Dutch model and covers three sides of a square, surrounding a courtyard with a pump in the middle. The sheds and stables were weather-boarded and painted white. At each end stood a cottage for senior farm workers. The approach to the farm from Chapel Lane had a semi-circular white fence at the entrance, on one side of which stood the Farm Managers cottage, half-timbered and tiled in Tudor style. The complex of farm buildings included a laundry, replacing the one that had stood below the hill in Adlers Lane, a cowshed and dairy, stables and a barn.

The field in Adlers Lane was taken over by John Hawker who, after old sheds and barns had been removed, built a small wooden bungalow together with a second building which he used as a store; and here he created a marvellous nursery garden from which he supplied the neighbourhood with flowers and vegetables throughout the thirties and forties.

The cattle, grazing in the fields around Adlers Lane, were driven to the farm up a winding grassy track which can still be identified today in the garden of Glendell Pilgrims Way.

But to return to Camilla Lacey (or rather Leladene, as it was then called), Victor Freeman had a great interest in horses and developed the Riding School, which had always existed in the building known today as Burney Cottage. Another change that he made was to unite the two cottages standing near the boundary with Chapel Farm (through which the horses broke



Home Farm 1931.



Entrance to Home Farm today.

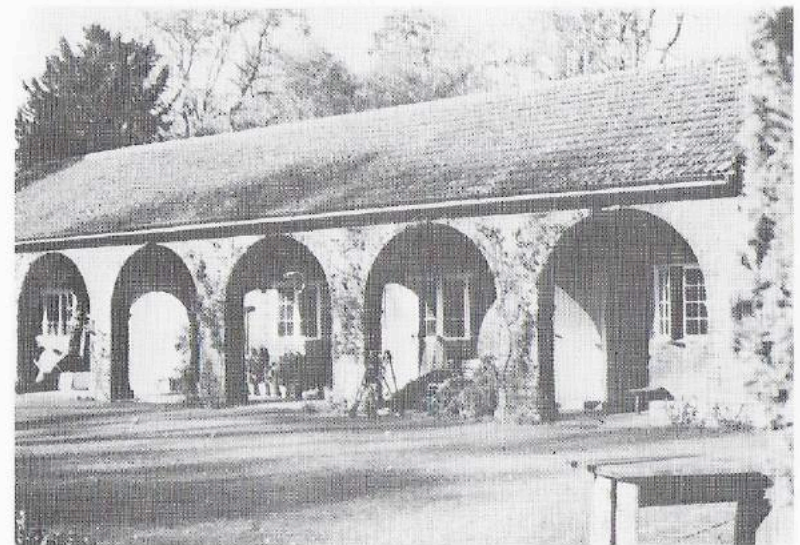
to destroy Gen. D'Arblays precious vegetables) with an archway, giving access to the stables beyond. The resulting building (known today as Postern House) he turned into a guest house for the entertainment of his friends. It is said that he had a great aversion to smoking, and if any of his friends wanted to smoke, they would have to do it in the guest house and not in the mansion.

But the most grandiose of Freeman's building schemes never materialised, and perhaps it was just as well. There are plans that can be seen today, drawn up by an architect, beautiful and imaginative, of proposals to add on to the eastern end of Leladene, a vast Tudor Hall, with high mullioned windows, and complete with a minstrel gallery. These would have almost doubled an already large mansion and rendered its management very difficult in the hard times ahead. As it was, before the plans could be put into operation, tragedy struck again. On Jan 1st 1931, Victor Freeman was found dead in his bath. The extraordinary thing about this death is that no report can be found in the local papers, either of it, or the inquest which, presumably, followed. Which seems strange when one considers that these papers usually make much of any sensational death, especially that of a local magnate.

Apparently the estate was in financial difficulties and it was put up for sale on Jan. 1st 1932. It must be remembered that this was the time of the great world depression, when Wall St. had collapsed, and the economic position of the whole world was at its lowest ebb. It was to be the beginning of the break up of many old estates, and for Camilla it was the end of its short-lived resurrection from the ashes. It was to be broken up and sold piecemeal, so that the land, upon which had stood one gracious house, would be divided amongst one hundred and seventy two. The story of the sale and its division will be told in our final chapter.



The Old Riding School (now Burney Cottage.)



The Old Stables.



Burford Corner. Rear showing original Building.



Burford Corner 1978. (In the original part a group of French emigres stayed in 1792.)

So we have come to the final chapter in the story of this ancient manor. The break up of the estate may have seemed a melancholy event to those who regretted the changing of the old order, but it was, in fact, the beginning of a new way of life in the village. Where 80 acres had, for so long, given the pride and pleasure of ownership to only one family — it was now going to be shared out amongst nearly 200. But before we consider in detail how this metamorphosis took place, we might pause to take note of what was happening in the village as a whole during those troubled pre-war years.

Already in Westhumble Street the building of new houses had begun. Sir Trevor Lawrence, of Burford Lodge, had at the turn of the century, built three dwellings for his gardeners in Bridge Meadow, next to those two ancient cottages, now joined into one and known as Boxhill Cottage. Also, in the early thirties on part of old Berrys Farm, two more houses were built — Westhumble Place and Garden Court.

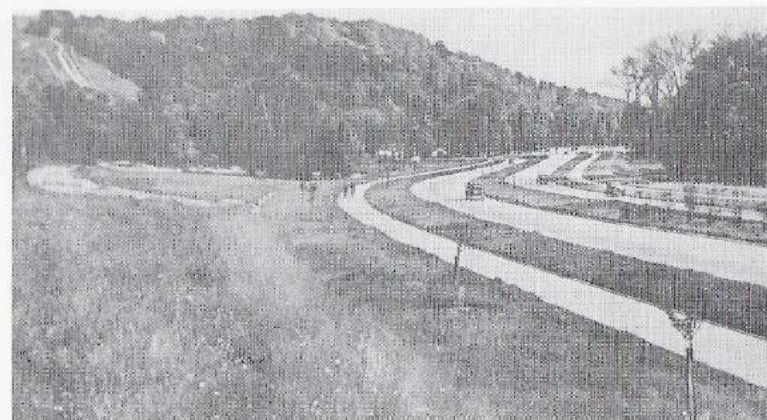
Changes were taking place too at Burford Corner. This house had been added to in various directions several times in its long history, certainly since the days when the small party of French Emigres under Mme. Broglie stayed in it, Juniper Hall being filled with the larger party. That was in 1792, and it was a small cottage with some fine old timbers, still to be seen at the rear of house dating, it is said, from the century before. This would indeed be the case if there is any truth in the tradition that Daniel Defoe once lived in it. It must be confessed that, after much research, no direct evidence can be found to support the story, although that does not mean to say that it is untrue. It is fairly certain that he lived in the Dorking area and went to school in Dorking as a boy; an excellent article in the *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, Vol 55 P42, in which the evidence for this is examined in a very comprehensive manner, is well worth reading. There is a small piece of circumstantial evidence which might point to our local tradition having some truth in it. It comes from a

description of the River Mole in his *'Tour through England'*, where he writes about the famous 'Swallow Holes', and corrects many fallacies about them put about by previous writers, including Camden. Defoe's knowledge of the river as it runs through the Mickleham Valley shows an intimacy that could have only been obtained by close and frequent observation, and an amusing story he relates about a fishing incident in that part of the river which is nearest to the house at Burford corner, lends support to a belief that he might well have lived there. The story tells of the river rising after heavy rain and flooding the low lying meadow, just upstream from Burford Bridge, and immediately opposite the house. One of the gentry persuaded the local boys to build a dam, thereby trapping a vast quantity of fish. From his detailed description, there can be little doubt that he was one of the boys.

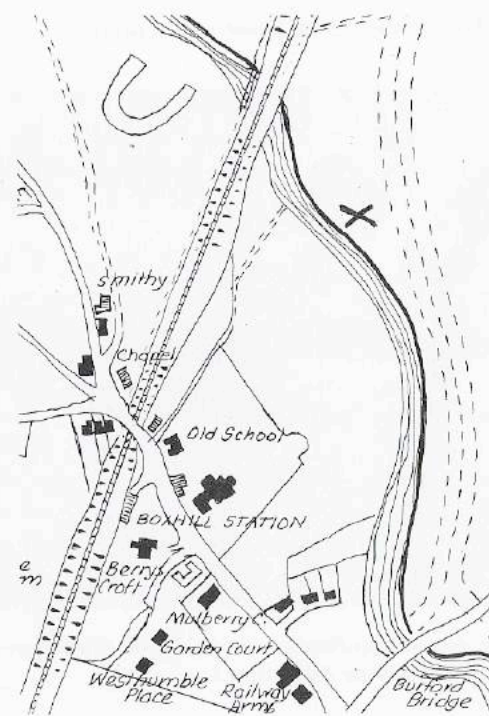
In the 1930's the enterprising owner of the house exploited the tradition when he turned it into a sort of Road House and restaurant and called it 'The Robinson Crusoe'. Here he catered for the motorists who were coming in increasing numbers down the London Road, either to Boxhill or through to the South Coast.

It is this increase in the volume of traffic that brings us to the next step in the march of progress through the valley — the construction of the Mickleham By-pass. Although not to be compared with the changes wrought by the coming of the railway in 1867 the new road nevertheless, had its impact and certainly brought a new era of prosperity to the Burford Bridge Hotel which in 1934 had erected, or rather re-erected, in its grounds a large old Tithe Barn, removed piece by piece from Abinger, as an amenity for large social gatherings. The By-pass was planned in 1932 and completed in 1937, embodying, as a newspaper cutting remarks 'all the latest ideas in road construction'. It was during the building of the new bridge that evidence pointing to the old ford over which Stane Street passed, was found.

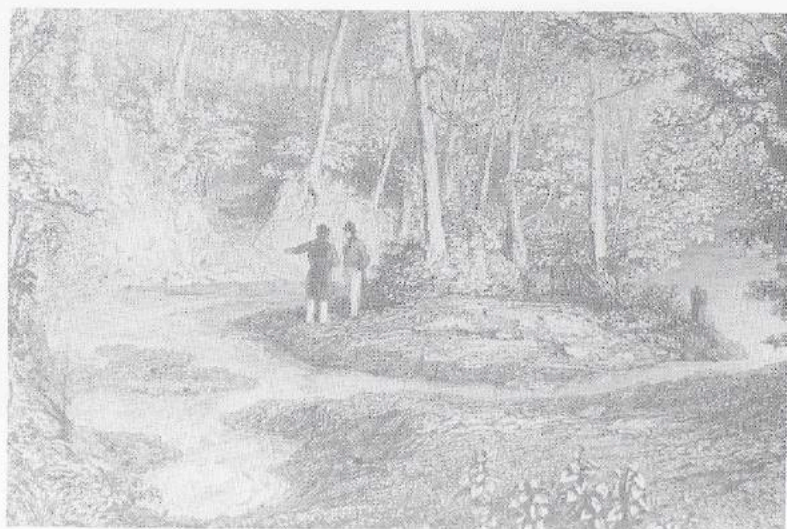
Further downstream, some 2-300 yds from the bridge, and near to the spot where the old Pray Bridge once stood, was a phenomenon that must have been well worth seeing; but with the new motorway running perilously close by, it was doomed



The New Mickleham By-pass 1938.



Map showing position (marked x) of Swallow Holes described overleaf, very near the new road.



Swallow Holes near Pray Bridge 1820. (from an old print.)



Same Swallow holes being covered during construction of Mickleham Bypass 1937 (Dorking Advertiser.)

to be lost for ever. This was a system of 'swallow holes', the largest in all the series that marked the course of the river between Box Hill and Leatherhead. It has just been mentioned that many fallacies existed amongst early writers concerning these swallows, in fact on some of the early maps (*Speeds Map of 'Surry'* for example) the river between these two points is shown as a dotted line with the words 'Here the river runneth underground'. Defoe was one of the first to show how absurd was this notion.

There are several places in this region where the water has worn a way down through the chalk (owing no doubt to some local weakness in its structure) through which the water rushes to a lower level where some subterranean stream must flow. Most of these swallows are smallish single holes, and some may be observed when, during prolonged drought, the river becomes very low. One such, at the foot of Ham Bank, where the Mole takes a sharp turn to the north, was visible and noted by the writer in 1947; it was about 2 feet in diameter and the water flowed down in a clockwise direction as if out of a bath.

The system referred to above however, was a much grander affair and its position can be seen from the map. It consisted of a low lying area of some half an acre, lying alongside and connected with the river. There were four or five large holes in between slightly higher patches of ground, forming islands, around which the water swirled before it poured down into the depths below. The amazing feature about these holes was their size; an article in the Times of April 1936 describes them as follows; "No.1 comprises two big holes and several smaller ones round the brink; the southern measures across the top 80 x 80 ft. and is 10 ft. deep, the northern measures 70 x 70 ft.; No.2 consists of two, 60 x 60 ft. and 30 x 30; No.3 is a straight down pipe 15 x 15, and No.4 is 90 x 88 ft. and 14 ft. deep".

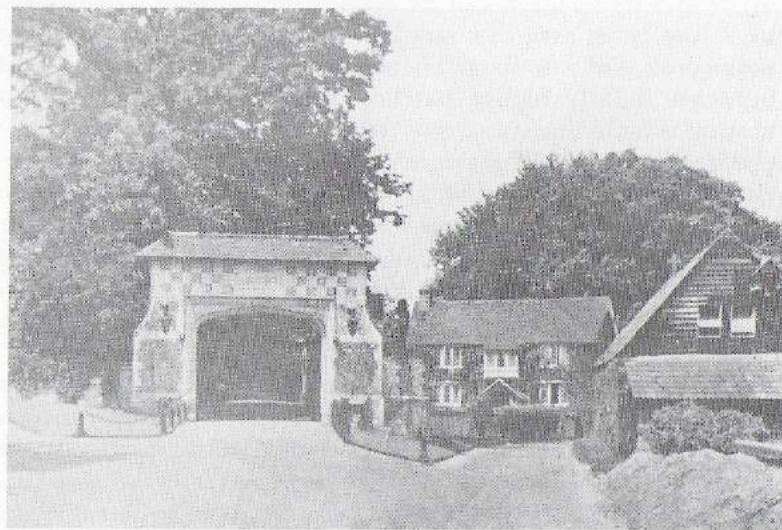
The course of the new road ran very close by and, in the interest of stability, it was decided to fill in the whole area. The swallow holes however, after their age long existence, did not submit easily, and as load after load of earth was shovelled in, it disappeared down into the depths. At last the engineers, realising that they were fighting a losing battle, had to build concrete domes over each hole up to road level, each being

covered with inspection plates.

The original site can still be identified on the river bank near the road, and one cannot help feeling that it was a great pity such an amazing natural phenomenon could not have been preserved for posterity.

The road was completed in 1937 and ran from Givons Grove to Bradleys Lane. Later, in 1964 the dual carriageway was continued into Dorking, sweeping away in its stride yet another ancient landmark, Shambles Farm, which stood opposite the old Beehive Inn at Giles Green where the Turnpike operated until the latter part of last century.

Other matters of interest during these pre-war years include further improvements to St. Michaels Chapel; Sir George Lloyd-Jacob, who was to become a High Court judge, came to Fredley Manor in 1932. As a Diocesan Lay Reader he took a keen interest in the chapel and provided the oak panelling which covers the lower part of the walls and surrounds the Altar. Also, at this time, the weatherboarding was removed from the outside and the original timbers inlaid with bricks.



St Michaels Chapel 1922.

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Another eminent resident during this period was Sir James Jeans, one of the world's great astronomers, who was said to have 'made the mysteries of the Universe comprehensible to the man in the street'. He bought Cleveland Lodge where his widow, Lady Susi Jeans, still lives; she also has reached eminence but in the world of music, and the B.B.C. has broadcast many of her recitals from Westhumble. In addition, she has held, for many years past, an annual Music Festival in Cleveland Lodge which receives tremendous support from music lovers, far and wide.

Another resident of renown, Sir Carl Aarvold, came to Foxbury in 1934. Already well known as a Rugby international with many English caps to his credit, he became distinguished in Law; after a successful career at the Bar, he was appointed, first the Common Sergeant and afterwards, the Recorder of London. Tennis enthusiasts will remember the many occasions upon which, as President of the Lawn Tennis Association, he has appeared at the Presentation of the Trophy ceremonies after the Wimbledon Finals. Yet another organisation of which he was chairman is the R.A.C. and the residents of Westhumble are proud to record that, on the vastly smaller stage of village life, he is the President of the Residents Association.

During World War II no outstanding event occurred in the village, except perhaps the bomb which fell about 200 yards away from the Railway Arms Pub, causing the only air raid casualty in Westhumble. The bomb, a 500lb HE, fell directly on to an Anderson shelter in which a member of the Home Guard, Sgt. Kirby was asleep; he was regrettably killed. The only other H.E. to fall within the manor was a flying bomb which landed in Nichols Field below Foxbury Shaw, but it did no damage. The local A.R.P. wardens had their post in the Railway Arms – an excellent choice, except for the fact that the communications centre was sited directly underneath a glass roof which suffered badly when the bomb was dropped. Later the post was moved to Pilgrims Way, where a disused cess pit belonging to the old Home Farm was cleared out, the walls scrubbed down and then tarred, after which bunks were inserted, and here the unfortunate wardens had to spend their

spells of duty during the night.

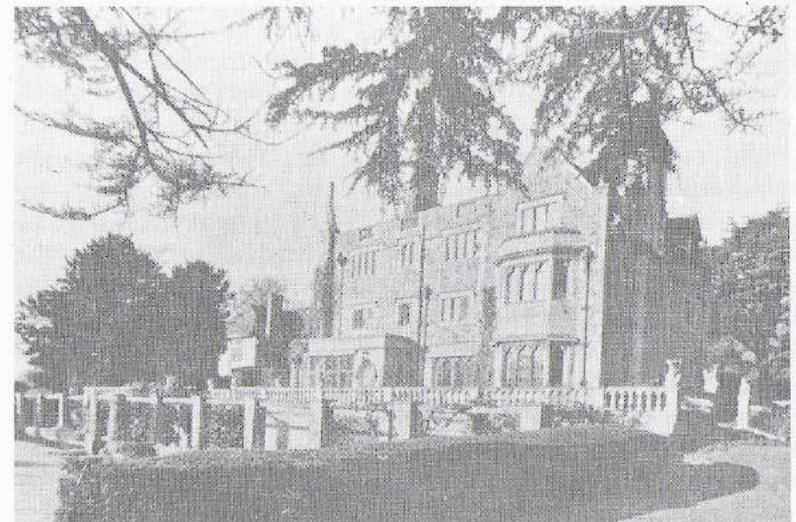
Before returning to the Camilla Estate, a final word may be said about the later history of St. Michaels Chapel. In 1950 under the guidance of the rector Rev. Andrew Douglas, further improvements were carried out. Not only was the chapel filling to capacity for Matins at 11, and a flourishing Childrens Service at 10 am., but it was felt that an organ (for which there was no room) should replace the harmonium which had done service for so long. So an extension was built on the southern end, incorporating the old porch and providing space for an excellent small church organ. For a brief period between 1976 and 1979 adult services were discontinued at the chapel, but it was kept alive by the Childrens Service which flourished as ever, and now, to the joy of many residents, adult services have been resumed, and it is to be hoped that they will long continue to keep alive this lovely little chapel that was once a barn.



St Michaels Chapel 1979 (permission E. Fitter.)



Camilla Lacey North Front 1931 (permission Knight Frank & Rutley.)



Camilla Lacey North Front after rebuilding 1922

The Break up of the old Estate

Victor Freeman's executors engaged Messrs Knight, Frank and Rutley to carry out the sale. In their catalogue they describe the estate as "the Freehold Residential Property 'Camilla Lacey' (recently known as Leladene), extending to about 80 acres. To be offered for sale by auction as a whole or in three lots". The sale took place on Jan. 21st 1932, and the lots were as follows:

Lot I. All that portion north of Chapel Lane, which included the Mansion with its numerous attached buildings and the Parkland.

Lot II. That portion south of Chapel Lane, consisting of the Home Farm and all its buildings.

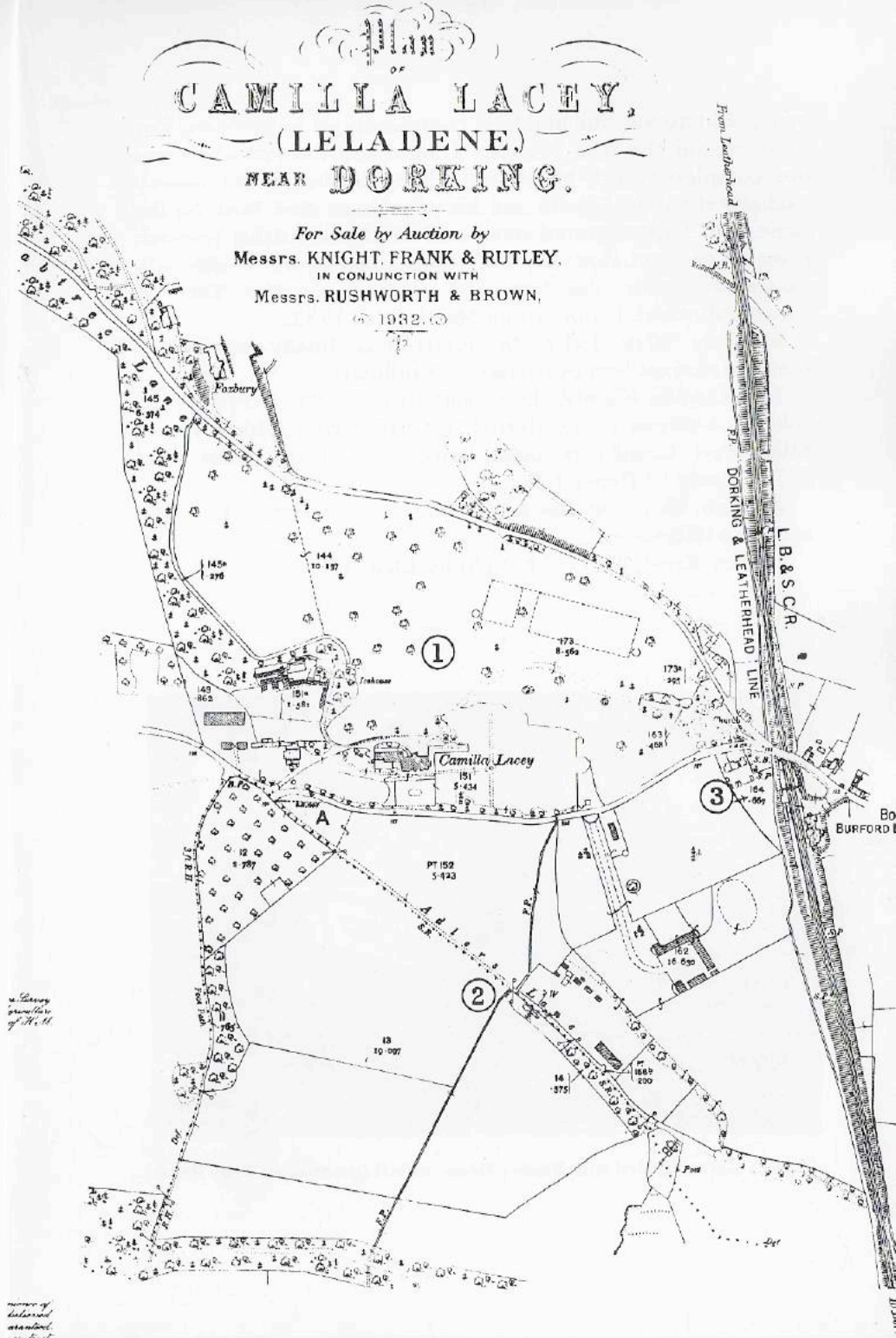
Lot III. A brick and tiled Block of Superior Modern Cottages near the Drive Entrance, all vacant.

The transactions, both of the sale and the subsequent dividing up of the property, are rather complicated and it is unnecessary to disentangle them in detail; briefly, apparently the whole estate was purchased by a young Property Developer named Lionel Anglio Dibdin who had already developed much land around Sutton and other areas of Surrey.

The house with 5 acres of Lot I was bought by E.J. Baker founder of the well known firm of motor engineers, Baker Motors Ltd. He must have been thankful that Freeman's grandiose extensions had never been carried out because he found that the Mansion, as it was, was too big for modern requirements, and divided it into two separate entities by removing part of the fabric. To the larger and main part he restored the time honoured name of Camilla Lacey whilst the smaller portion became Burney House. The riding school was converted into a residence as Burney Cottage, and the Guest House became Postern House.

Lot III, the block of Superior Modern Cottages, was purchased by a family named Fitter, members of which are still in residence and must have a fair claim to be amongst the earliest of the new inflow of Westhumble residents.

The rest of the estate, that is, the remainder of Lot I being Camilla Park, and the whole of Lot II, the Home Farm, was to be developed by Dibdin as a new residential estate — the plots



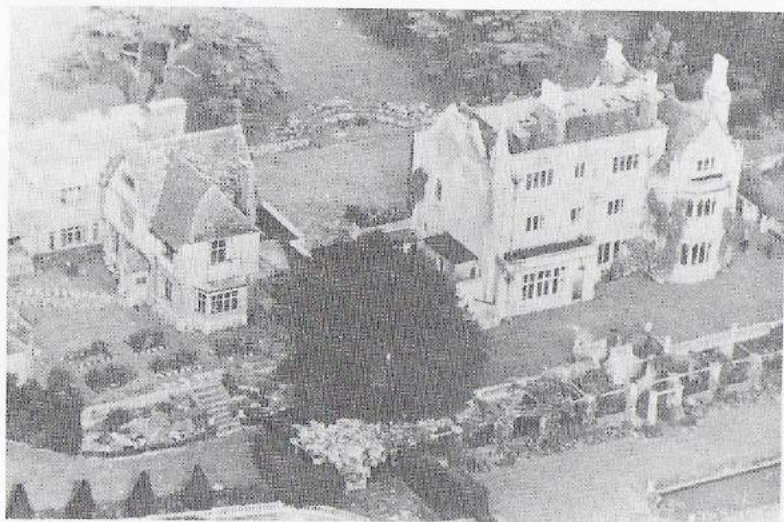
being sold to various builders, contractors or individuals. For some reason the deal between Dibdin and the executors was not completed until March 9th 1933, and before the money exchanged hands, Dibdin and his wife Grace died, both on the same day. This suggested accidental death and further research revealed the fact that they were both killed in one of the early passenger airline disasters, the crashing of the 'City of Liverpool' which happened on March 28th 1933.

By July 27th 1933 the estate was finally subdivided between various 'sub-purchasers', as follows:

East Camilla (Camilla Drive east of the cedar tree) 27/7/33 sold to Andrews – transferred to Chance who sold to Henry Ellis. West Camilla (Camilla Drive west of the cedar tree) 27/7/33 sold to Henry Ellis.

Pilgrims Way and Close, 27/7/33 sold to Henry Ellis and resold to Wilkinson.

Burney Road, 27/7/33 bought by Chance.



Camilla Lacey divided with Burney House on left (permission Tony Baker).

It will be seen that the main purchaser after Dibdin's death was Henry Russell Ellis, who obtained with the estate, the manorial rights still remaining. This means that he succeeded Freeman as lord of the Manor of Westhumble, and he built one of the first houses in Camilla Drive, named Westhumble Lacey, where he lived for some time before moving to the south coast for his retirement. Some years later, a lawyer came to live in Westhumble and with the specialised knowledge of his profession, realised what few of the residents had known, that somewhere a 'lordship of the manor' existed, possibly possessed by somebody who was no longer interested in such things. Accordingly, he approached Henry Ellis whom he found quite willing to part with this rather delightful relic of a bygone age; and that is how Barry Moughton became lord of the Manor of Westhumble.

To return to the disposition of the land, it would be tedious, even if possible, to give a detailed analysis, but in the pre-war period three names stand out as builders and developers: Wilkinson, Scarlett and Portwell Ltd. It may be of interest to note that the latter firm consisted of the founder and designer of the A.C. motor car, John Portwine and John Weller respectively. They were not builders, but both had a great interest in building and engaged in this venture as yet another sphere of their many business activities. It was due to their good judgement that the Home Farm on Pilgrim's Way, destined to be demolished, was preserved and converted into attractive dwellings which remain today as an architectural asset to the district. Two of the houses in Pilgrim's Way they built for themselves with thatched roofs, but that on Friars, the residence of John Weller, was lost by fire in 1948, and replaced by tiles.

By the outbreak of war in 1939 most of the houses in Pilgrims Way had been built; the other roads however, Pilgrims Close, Burney Rd. and Camilla Drive were only partially occupied as can be seen from the maps which follow; these give an idea of the way Westhumble has developed since 1780 to the present time.

The war was followed by a period of austerity caused by shortages of almost everything, and builders suffered greatly

from the stringent restrictions placed upon materials, and the size of houses waiting to be built. On the walls of one house in Burney Road a plaque commemorates this time, 'Built in the Year of Frustration 1946'. But slowly, as the years passed, the restrictions eased and building went on apace until by the late 1960's nearly every available plot of land had a house on it.

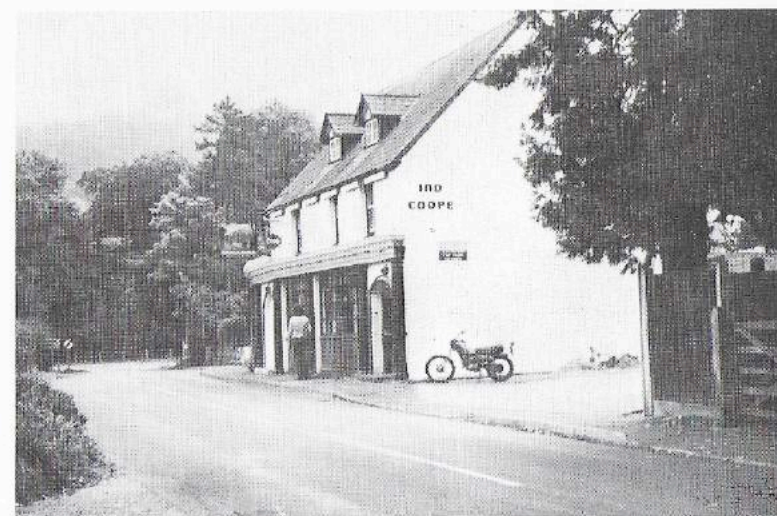
Life in Post War Westhumble

The quality of life during the immediate post-war years was so different from what it is today. People had awakened, as it were, from a nightmare and as they, and the world around them, were beginning to recover amidst the shortages, restrictions and rationing, it seemed that the spirit of comradeship which had existed throughout the war years was as strong as ever.

During the years of recovery this showed itself in the way residents enjoyed meeting together for social occasions. A Residents Association was formed with an enthusiastic membership; a Social committee arranged a number of gatherings, from the Annual Dinner and Dance at the Burford Bridge Hotel (run very successfully for many years by the late Jim Virgo), to quarterly 'Socials' held in the Village Hall at Mickleham, and Whist Drives in private houses. Incidentally, co-operation and integration between both ends of the Parish was very strong in those days, both Church and Chapel having large congregations who were happy to join together at Festival times. This spirit of cooperation was also shown in the field of drama through the formation of the 'Mickleham and Westhumble Arts and Dramatic Society' which put on, once or twice a year, plays in the Village Hall over a period of fifteen years. Another activity (derived from the war time group discussions 'A.B.C.A.') was the Westhumble Talks, held monthly in private houses, when discussions on topical subjects were led by experts in the relevant fields. One other annual event was started in those days; as soon as fireworks became available the St. Michaels Childrens Service commenced the Guy Fawkes celebrations and ran them for twenty years. This yearly jamboree which has grown from strength to

strength and is still a notable landmark in the village year, was taken over by various enthusiastic residents (notably Mike Hallet) and is supported by public subscription with a donation from the Association.

The strong social and community spirit which the war generated has waxed and waned during the intervening years. There was a period, not long ago, when it seemed that a new way of life dominated by the motor car and the T.V. set would put an end to many of the activities started after the war. The Annual Dinner and Dance was discontinued, the Dramatic Society gave up, Village Hall Socials and Whist Drives were no longer held, the Westhumble Talks became moribund.



The 'Stepping Stones'.

Built in 1868 with the coming of the railway and originally named 'The Railway Arms'. Served as A.R.P. post during World War II and place of many social gatherings during the post war period.

However, during the past decade there has been a remarkable rebirth of the community spirit in our midst and, to-day, social activities abound. The Horticultural Society is as popular as ever and is well supported, the Mickleham and Westhumble Wives group (started by Margaret Cornell, wife of a former rector John Cornell, in the 1950's) flourishes, the meetings of the Westhumble Association are keenly attended and Gala events are organised each summer for the children. Coincident with this flourishing state of social life has been a marked influx of younger families with children into the village, and, no doubt, their welcome presence is largely responsible for the revival.

And so the story we set out to tell of this ancient manor within whose confines our village has its being, and whose history goes back for so many hundreds of years, must halt here in the year of Grace 1982. But of course it will go on and we look forward with optimism to an even happier future under the influence of this younger generation.



APPENDIX A.

Maps showing development of houses from 1781-1977

The Development of Westhumble as shown by a series of Maps from 1781 to the present day. A description of their sources will be found in Appendix D.

The maps are all based on that drawn by Crow in 1781, and the original skeleton of roads and paths (still in their same places today, in spite of changes in status) has been copied for each one so that they are all to the same approximate scale. Later developments have been added, e.g. the changed course of Crabtree Lane in 1818, the deterioration of some roads into footpaths, and the creation of the modern roads. Information about the appearance of new houses since 1930 has been obtained by consulting various directories and later, by personal memory and observation.

The maps show Westhumble at the following dates:

1781	1934
1840	1938
1870	1951
1931	1977