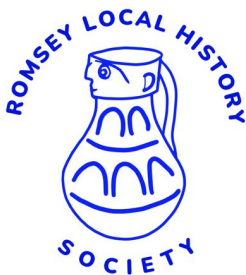


Romsey Local History Society [LTVAS Group]



*Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip on 'Walkabout' outside Romsey Abbey
June 2007, celebrating the 400th anniversary of James I's royal charter
(See article 'The End of an Era', page 3)*

Spring 2022



*Upper Church Street east
The large early 19th Century house on the right
probably replaced one similar to the smaller one next to it
(See article 'Romsey Solicitors', page 5)*

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The End of an Era

by Phoebe Merrick

Queen Victoria's death rocked the nation, but it was nothing to the outpouring of emotion on the death of Elizabeth II.

We, in Romsey, have always known we had a special link to her because of her relationship, particularly through Prince Philip, to the Mountbatten family at Broadlands and the huge numbers of people signing books of condolence at the Abbey or at Test Valley Council offices, and the many flowers left at Broadlands' entrance are all evidence of this feeling.

Princess Elizabeth (seated right) as bridesmaid to Lady Patricia Mountbatten. 1946

Other bridesmaids: Princess Margaret, Princess Alexandra and Lady Pamela Mountbatten



We in the Romsey Local History Society were particularly pleased when the Town Council asked us to mount an exhibition to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and with the benefit of hindsight, we can be particularly proud to have done so, while it was a current and not an historical event. Subsequently the mayor sent us a letter of thanks for our efforts.

Although the exhibition reviewed Romsey's connections with monarchs across the centuries, the exhibition made Her Majesty's links with the town the main feature of our display. The town can be proud of her official ones, to the two celebrations of the granting of the Borough Charter by James I in 1607 that were celebrated during her reign – one in 1957 and the other in 2007, which will be remembered fondly by those who participated in either or both events. In 2007, which more of us participated in, the sun shone and it was a happy day for all concerned (see front cover).



Queen Elizabeth at the 1957 Charter Celebrations. 6th April 1957

For the earlier celebration, the BBC made an 'outside' broadcast that involved over 2 miles of cables, and entailed commentators in Romsey Abbey, in Lloyds Bank and in the Town Hall. For the latter, again the BBC broadcast the event, this time on TV and in colour – just one of the many technological changes that took place during a reign of 70 years.



Prince Charles and Princess Anne with the Earl and Countess Mountbatten, early 1950s

Romsonians will miss the Queen's many informal visits. These informal or private visits to Broadlands, insofar as a reigning monarch has such moments, often involved country sports at Broadlands such as shooting and horse riding, in which latter she excelled, and always a visit to church if in town on a Sunday. Her attendance at the annual carol concerts in Romsey Abbey was one of the town's regular fixtures.



More sadly, she attended the funeral of her husband's uncle, Earl Mountbatten, after he was so senselessly murdered by the IRA. That funeral brought home to the rest of us the danger under which monarchs have to live their lives, and by association, many of those close to them.

Whatever one's views on Britain's constitutional arrangements, we can only send our condolences to her relations – many of whom we have also seen in Romsey, and wish the new King good luck in a role for which he has waited all his life.

Attending a service in Romsey Abbey c1960

The origins of the legal profession may be traced back to the classical times of Greece and Rome. Ancient Greece, however, frowned on fees being charged. So, it was not until the later, 1st century, Roman period that the role of the professional lawyer emerged as part of a formal system known as Roman Law. It was applied throughout the Roman Empire but, with the collapse of this empire in Western Europe, the legal profession virtually disappeared for several centuries in the early medieval period.

During this uncertain period the concept that ‘possession is nine tenths of the law’ probably prevailed with might as the controlling factor in property tenure; an element of which has filtered through to the squatters of today. But fairer and more orderly systems had to replace that of universal brute force, especially as Christianity brought with it a code of ethics that permeated society. Perhaps it is not surprising that, initially, the legal profession evolved in the context of ecclesiastical or canon law but gradually the civil lawyer also emerged.

And although the stricter feudal system of the post Norman Conquest period meant that the status of tenants of large estates were controlled by their lord, the role of the lawyer was able to develop within the growing townships. The profession of the civil lawyer was based on precedent and common law with acts of Parliament introduced only as successive monarchs sought to close any loopholes that deprived them of taxes and fines relating to property.

Law became an early study at Oxford and Cambridge and then the Inns of Court began in 14th century London, housed in buildings that had been the rallying point for the Crusaders – hence the rather mystical names of Inner Temple and Middle Temple as the addresses of elite lawyers and barristers.

The cream of all these lawyers – or at least the most ambitious of them – would have stayed in London or larger conurbations, but others spread throughout the country, taking with them an agreed form of words for each and every type of legal transaction – it is quite amazing to find a basic uniformity everywhere at a surprisingly early date. Certainly, the earliest deeds relating to domestic property in Romsey, dating to the late 13th century, are all properly witnessed.

These earliest documents are found in the muniments of Winchester College which came to hold significant parts of Romsey. Occasionally, they match the evidence of archaeological excavations. Identifying the lawyers behind those early documents is another matter. Their names, or the names of scribes, may be there at the ends of witness lists. One name – that of a John Forster, probably living in the Portersbridge area – does emerge from the late 1300s. After the Black Death of 1349, he may well have found plenty of business, with properties left without owners or tenants.

During the centuries when the Abbess of Romsey ruled as secular lord of the manor, her steward would have presided over her manorial court. And over the centuries jobbing lawyers wrote out wills and other personal deeds for the inhabitants of Romsey - perhaps the individuals identified as the scribe were the local lawyers of the day, though their skills may have been limited.

One lawyer, however, does materialise in two significant contexts during the 1570s. He was John Ayliffe (with some alternative spellings such as Ayloff). He first comes to notice as one of three tenants in the 1571 bargain and sale deed displayed in *King John's House*. This document records the sale of *King John's House* and two other neighbouring properties. As John Ayliffe was paying by far the highest rent of the three tenants, he was probably inhabiting *King John's House* itself. The following year, 1572, the landlord of the White Horse Hotel in the Market Place sent for John Ayliffe, a lawyer, to attend the deathbed of John Uvedale of Lee, a guest who was dying and anxious to make a nuncupative or spoken will. This was probably the same man as the one who dwelt in *King John's House*.



But a lawyer of a higher calibre came after the 1607 royal charter of incorporation which gave borough status to the small town of Romsey Infra. This charter decreed that Romsey should have a recorder to control a new local court, which would fill the gap left by the demise of the Abbess's manorial court. John More was named in the Charter as the first Romsey Recorder. Such court recorders had to be qualified to the level of 'utter barrister' at least, but any

private practice outside their court work would have been of a higher status than mere local cases. Their coats of arms adorn the walls of the Romsey Town Hall's one-time Court Room on the ground floor.

Coming forward in time, there is an isolated reference in the early 18th century to someone known as 'Lawyer' Puckeridge, but whether that was a nickname or his profession is not clear. Earlier members of his family had been wool entrepreneurs.

All this haziness changed after the shift in Romsey's economy with the arrival of the coaching era in the 1750s. A growing and more sophisticated town attracted a variety of professional people, such as doctors. There were also several lawyers.

Some of the prominent local families produced a lawyer – it was obviously regarded as an up-and-coming profession – but seldom to start a new family tradition. So the Figes, who were mainly common brewers, produced Richard Figes a late 18th/early 19th century lawyer. John White, senior and junior, also practised in Romsey – they were from the White family of Ampfield House. The younger of these two, known as 'Honest' John White, was mayor of Romsey in 1750 and became land agent to the first Lord Palmerston of Broadlands. Later, the Newman family, with numerous business interests, produced Daniel Newman in the mid-19th century.

More interesting were the long-term practices that were set up at this time. Through the Abbey gateway to the site of the present UCR manse and Abbey Hall, there was a succession of Richard and Henry Holmes. One of the Henry Holmes was Town Clerk and was drawn into the dispute about the land around the Abbey and its ownership. There may also have been a link back to the 17th century when a man called Sandley Holmes was possibly a lawyer.

Then there were the Footners – a name that has survived in the profession to this day, although there is no longer a partner of that name in practice now. Throughout the 19th century and much of the 20th century the Footner family was a legal force to be reckoned with.

At this point, it is worth noting that lawyers then undertook rather wider responsibilities than now – acting also as estate agents and bankers. And the Town Clerk usually came from their number, not to mention the land agent for the owners of large estates, such as the Palmerstons of Broadlands.

William Footner in the early 1800s divided his empire between his sons – perhaps he foresaw that the two main strands would have to separate, their combined roles being seen as questionable. One son, William Andrews Footner, took on the banking side of the business, while George Bright Footner continued as lawyer. William Andrews Footner lived at No 2, The Hundred (currently Superdrug). This private house later evolved as the Wilts & Dorset Bank. His brother, George Bright Footner, based his legal practice in the splendid timber-framed house with its brick façade opening onto the slip road that links The Hundred with Love Lane. The Footner practice continues to be found in this little by-way.

For *Romsey Local History Society* research members, the most interesting legal practice in Romsey was the one started by William Daman in the 1760s. Without any overlap he took on the practice conducted by John White from his home on the north-east corner of Portersbridge Street as it turns off Church Street. William Daman was already practising law in Southampton, where his chief clerk was a man called Isaac Galpine. There were members of the Galpine family in Romsey, so Isaac may have suggested the town to William Daman as a place with a promising opening following the death of John White.

Mr Daman settled in what was then Cherville Street in a property bought from John White's widow that has now been replaced by the large yellow brick buildings (and which now count as being in Church Street). He took over John White's articled clerk. This was Thomas Warner, a bright boy from the local Nowes Charity School. Daman then took on a second clerk - John Marsh who came from a well-to-do family and had expectations of a future inheritance.

John Marsh was in Romsey for about ten years during which time he continued to keep the journal he had started at the age of thirteen. In it he described much about life in the town and its inhabitants, including the fact that Thomas Warner ate in the kitchen while he, as a member of the gentry, ate with the Daman family. But William Daman, probably seeing Marsh as a rather dilettante lawyer, chose Thomas Warner to be his chief clerk and, eventually, his partner.

It was from this partnership that the practice became an established one, gradually changing personnel to become Tylee, Mortimer and Attlee in Portersbridge Street (closed 1990).

Daman allowed his partner to build on part of his land – the further of the two yellow houses. It must have been rather large for Thomas Warner as he was a bachelor. When William Daman decided to return to Southampton, he left the Romsey practice in the capable hands of Thomas Warner on condition that he completed the training of Daman's son, William Charles, who was a wayward character for some years.

Perhaps to counterbalance the difficulties with William Charles, Thomas brought his nephew, Stephen Warner, into the practice. Sadly, Stephen died young, and for several decades his widow lived on alone in their home at Cherville House on the corner of Church Road and Mill Lane.

Thomas Warner is chief suspect regarding significant documents. During his lifetime he was Town Clerk during a period when the corporation was outgrowing its accommodation in the 2nd town hall (Audit House) and had not yet moved into the 3rd town hall (where the present Abbey church rooms now stand). Thomas Warner probably lent the deeds in his care to Dr Latham, Romsey's first local historian. Certainly, Dr Latham copied them, in some cases preserving contents which would otherwise have been lost. Some of them, however, seem to have ended up back in Mr Warner's house, eventually to be moved to the dedicated offices in Portersbridge Street during the 1870s, when the lawyers of this practice separated their homes from their offices. – A few were recovered from there in 1990.

Harry Porter Curtis, solicitor, town clerk and mayor of Romsey Borough in 1850

Stephen Warner died before his uncle, leaving Thomas Warner with William Charles Daman as his partner. After Thomas Warner's death in 1826, he was succeeded by Mr Stead, who worked alongside the younger Mr Daman. More than 30 years after Warner's house, a later partner built another yellow brick property on the corner. Known today as the *Old Brewery House*, the join with Thomas Warner's house is easily overlooked today. Then a Mr



Deacon joined the practice for a short while after the death of William Charles Daman, but was quickly replaced by Mr John Tylee, a Daman relative by marriage. It was probably Mr Tylee who wrote the scrappy note that tells us that Mr Stead did not get on with their chief clerk, Mr Harry Porter Curtis, who later became town clerk and seems to have broken away from the partnership and set up independently in Abbey Water.

Stead and Tylee were then joined by Mr Henry Cipriani Potter who stayed for a decade or so. It is noticeable that the records were rather better kept during Mr Potter's time. He was also responsible for the move out of private houses and into the Portersbridge Street offices. Unfortunately, he was also responsible for a splendid scandal, as his departure from town was caused by his running away with Rosalie, the youngest daughter of the Rev. Berthon, vicar of Romsey. Since there was already a Mrs Potter, this event must have had the tongues wagging for some time, though people seem to have been remarkably discreet, probably out of respect for the vicar. Details of this sorry episode only surface obliquely; for example, in the papers dissolving the partnership.

In place of this rather exotic member of the practice came Mr Mortimer, son-in-law of Mr Tylee. Mr Mortimer upheld the honour of the town as lawyer and town clerk into the beginnings of the 1900s when he was succeeded as town clerk by the first of the Attlee family. Mr Bartram Waller Attlee was a rounded character – famous rider of a penny farthing bicycle and a popular ventriloquist as well as a lawyer.

His son and grandsons continued the practice – though without the same entertaining skills – until 1990. It is probably one of the worst kept secrets in town that they allowed representatives of the *Hampshire Record Office* and the local historians to sort out their historic papers for posterity and we shall be ever grateful that they have been preserved in this way – though they insisted on no publicity.

The long-term practices often overlapped on cases, representing different parties. In early days, when they were still engaged in banking interests, they often collaborated. This came to light in the case of the Latham bankruptcy in 1817, when Dr Latham's son lost his brewing empire. The names of Holmes, Footner and Daman & Warner all came together, as they represented various vested interests. Records of this case were just one set amongst the documents retrieved from Tylee Mortimer and Attlee offices in 1991.

The names of those solicitors who served Romsey appear regularly in documents. Invariably designated as 'gentlemen', they are named as parties or trustees in property deeds or as executors/trustees in wills. They represent creditors in bankruptcy cases and draw up marriage settlements. Some take on prestigious roles as land agents for local large estates or as secretaries to turnpike trusts or similar bodies. Our knowledge of people and property has been expanded through the work undertaken by these gentlemen of the legal profession, particularly through the opportunity offered to local historians through access to the old deeds that had survived in the sprawling offices of Tylee, Mortimer and Attlee.



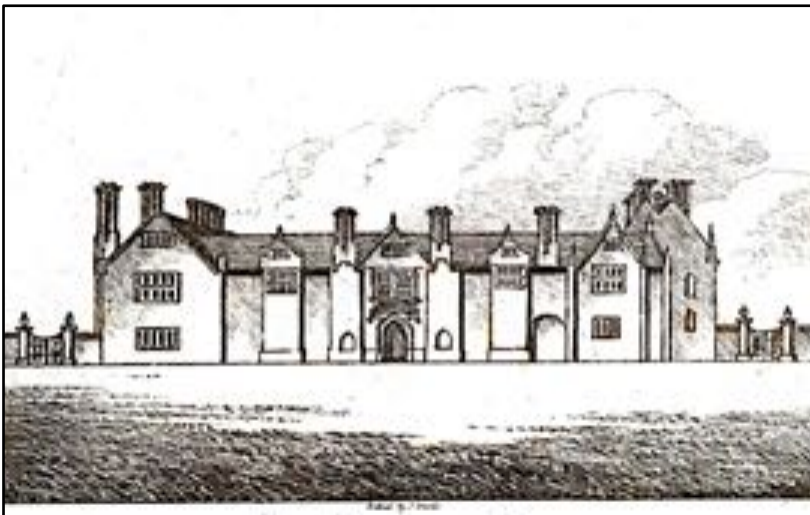
*The Offices of Tylee, Mortimer & Attlee
shortly after closure of the legal practice, 1990*

Celebrating Hampshire Historians Reverend John Marsh: 1763-1824

by R. Munday

John Marsh was born in Adderbury, Oxfordshire, the son of George Marsh, a master carpenter, and his wife Catherine. It is unknown how or when he arrived in Hursley, Hampshire, a distance of some 80 miles from his home. Nor do we know much about his education – he does not appear to have attended a university. His ordination as deacon for Hursley Parish Church took place in May 1786 when he was 23 years old. His application was supported by the vicars of Portsmouth and Hursley and his initial salary was £25 per annum. He was ordained as a priest in April 1788 and acted as a curate at Hursley church. It is not clear when he became a rector at North Baddesley but his curate's licence from 1814 states that he was to act as curate for the Parish Church of Hursley and the Chapel at Otterbourne whilst still residing in Hursley.

Fairly late in life, in 1812, John Marsh married Maria Morgan and went on to have four daughters and one son. The four daughters do not seem to have married and continued to live in the Hursley residence until 1841 with John Marsh's spinster sister.



*The Façade of Old Lodge in Hursley Park, within the Manor of Merdon
The remains of Old Lodge now lie beneath the south lawn of the
present Hursley House*

His main contribution to Hampshire history is the *Memoranda of the Parishes of Hursley and North Baddesley in the County of Southampton*. This book not only recounts the general history of the parishes but refers to a manuscript preserving the reminiscences of Richard Morley, a very elderly resident of Hursley, who remembered back to 1580s. In addition, Marsh copied out the customs of the manor of Hursley as confirmed by a Chancery decision in 1698 which preserve long-established customs of the manor of Merdon. These include the right of inheritance by the youngest son, known as ‘Borough English’.

Charlotte Yonge of Otterbourne, Hampshire, drew heavily from Marsh’s writings in her book *John Keble’s Parishes* (1898). John Marsh was clearly an enthusiast for local history and may have corresponded with Dr John Latham of Romsey as hand-written diagrams found in his *History of North Baddesley* appear to be duplicated within John Latham’s notes. The publication of Marsh’s later work, *Asiatic Memorials*, just a year prior to his death suggests he had very wide interests. His introduction to the latter book suggests that he had spent many years paying attention to the Researches of the Asiatic Society and other discoveries made by the learned in India relative to ancient literature and religious records.

3rd May 1824, The Hampshire Chronicle carried an obituary for him: *‘died at Hursley near this city on Monday last aged 60 the Rev. John Marsh Rector of North Baddesley, and for above thirty years Curate of Hursley. The fidelity and assiduity with which he sustained the character and fulfilled the duties of a Christian minister, his active and universal benevolence, his amiable and unpretending manners, his patience and resignation under the sufferings of a protracted illness, endear his memory to all who knew him, and afford his friends the consolatory conviction that he is now a partaker of the rest which remains for the people of God.’*

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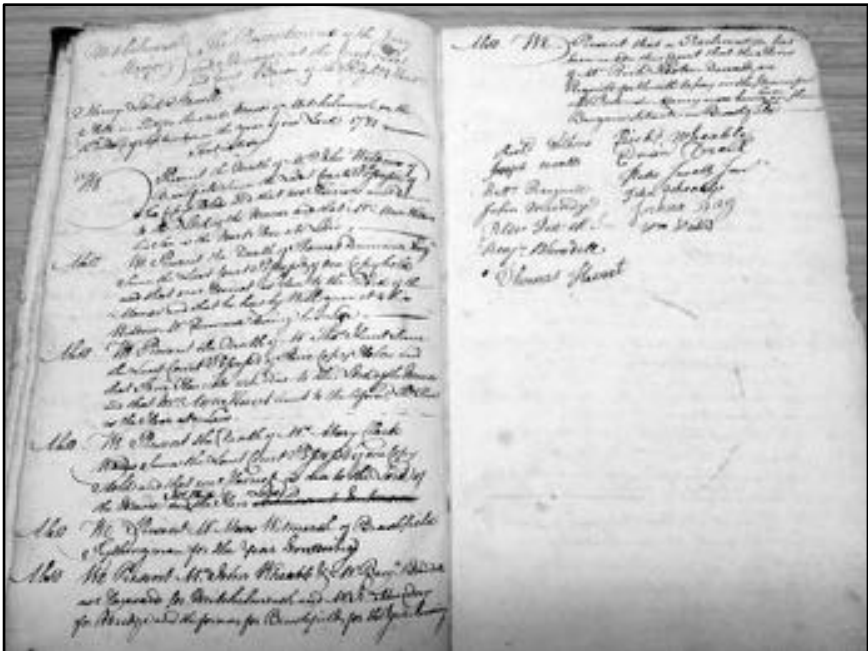
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Michelmersh Manor Court Book

by Mary Harris

Recently, the Michelmersh Manor Court Book for 1764-1836 was discovered by a parishioner in Timsbury. The contents of the book have been transcribed and it will be deposited at the Hampshire Record Office. The book records the meetings of the Court Leet and Court Baron for the manor of Michelmersh which at that time included Braishfield and Awbridge as well as Michelmersh itself.



Sample page from the Court Book

Spellings of place names are erratic: Michelmersh occurs as Mitchelmersh or Mitchelmarsh on most occasions but Awbridge varies from Abridge, Aubridge, Awbrige and Awbridge, Braishfield is most commonly spelt Brashfield in the early entries and Braishfield by 1770s.

The court book records the deaths of the copyholders and who was to be the next heir as tenant. Usually this is recorded as 'according to the custom of this Manor' and this appears to be often the youngest son or the wife of the previous tenant. For example, in 1777 'Mr Charles

Wade senr died seised of one copyhold, and his youngest son, John, to be the next heir'. When the eldest son was specified it was recorded as according to the deceased's will. Sometimes the heir is described as 'heir at law'. Increasingly, in the 19th century, the heir is recorded as 'according to the will and testament' of the previous tenant. For example, on the death of Colson Bernard in 1808, 'Thos Bernard his eldest son is the next heir according to his last will and testament'.

At the death of each copyholder the next heir had to pay an entry fine and pay a heriot in order to take over the tenancy. In the Middle Ages a heriot usually consisted of the tenant's best beast but in the court book there is no indication of whether the heriot was paid in livestock or as a money payment nor is there any record of the actual amount of fines.

Some references to who had right as the next heir become very complex and it seems that individual wills and trusts could override the customs of the manor. In 1767 'James King devised the same to Trustees for the purposes mentioned in his will and that after the expiration of the said Trusts mentioned in the said will the said James King devised the said Copyhold Estate to his Brother in law Mr Harvey Combe and Christian his wife for the term of their lives and the Life of the Longest liver of them and after the death of the survivor of them he gave the same to their daughter Charlotte Comb and her Heirs for ever'. In 1784 the court decided that the next heir to John Fielder should be his sister, Hester Holmes, according to the customs of the manor. However, her nephew challenged this in the court at Winchester and won. The Court Leet changed its decision in 1785 and recognised the nephew as the true heir.

Holders of land in the village were 'presented' for breaking the rules. In 1766 John Hatwood was presented for driving his sheep over the Down called Mitchelmersh Down to North Leaze meadow from Park Farm 'which he has no right to do'. No fine or punishment was recorded for this and John Hatwood was presented for the same offence year after year. Still in 1793 Colson Bernard was presented for exactly the same offence. Sir Richard Mill Baronet and successive owners of his estate were presented at each court from 1754 to 1834 for 'a trespass on a road across the Marsh'. In fact, the court book often lists that a fine is due but virtually never how much the fine was or whether it was ever paid. In some cases the same reference is repeated year after year so it seems likely that it was never paid.

Each year a man was appointed tithingman and was considered responsible for reporting any misdemeanours, acting as a constable. In the 18th century this seems to have been allocated on a rota system according to the properties men held. In 1766 Benjamin Blundell was appointed 'tithingman for the year ensuing in the right of the Mersh Bargain'. In 1773 a woman was appointed 'The Widow Curtis to be Tithingman for James Hattats bargain'. 'Bargain' used in this way refers to a small farm. In the 19th century it became more common for one man to serve as tithingman for many years

Also, haywards were appointed every year, one each for Braishfield and Awbridge and two for Michelmersh. Their duties were to supervise the upkeep of fences and enclosures and make sure that livestock did not stray onto arable fields. Each man appointed had his own holding in the area he was responsible for which must have made supervision easier. Some haywards served year after year; David Fay, for example, was hayward for Awbridge from 1787 to 1816

For a few years in the 1780s the court recorded proclamations for individuals to come into court and pay debts incurred to other tenants. In 1785 there is the first proclamation to Sarah Drake to come into court and pay Robert Anthony the principal sum of £260 with interest secured to said Robert Anthony by a Mortgage. There is no indication of whether the debt was ever paid and this type of entry ceases in 1786.

The open commons in Michelmersh were not enclosed until 1796 and in the years before that there is concern about how the commons were used. In 1772 the tenants of Braishfield agreed to put no more than 'one horse or two cows' and no sheep' on Braishfield Common for every 4 acres of copyhold land they held.

Copyholders had some rights to use the resources of the commons but they were limited. In 1770s it was agreed that 'no person or persons whatsoever shall dig or carry away any chalke from the lower chalk pit on Michelmersh Down under the penalty of forty shillings'. In 1775 Joseph Mersh was presented 'for cutting and carrying away Turfe from Abrige Common he being a parishioner of Mottisfont'. In 1789 John Anthony was presented 'for digging and carrying away sand from Awbridge Common'.

In 1791 the proprietors of the Andover Canal Navigation were presented 'for cutting the Canal through the common and Marsh and

digging clay for making bricks on the Common belonging to the freeholders and copyholders of the manor and not having paid for the land according to the Act of Parliament'. In 1796 the proprietors of the Salisbury and Southampton Canal company were added to this presentment. This was repeated every year until 1809. Other effects of the building of the canals included a change in the water management and there were repeated complaints about the Proprietors of the Salisbury Canal for penning back the water from the Aqueduct and damaging lands. In 1814 Moses Waterman, Bargeman, was presented for taking Chalk from the chalk Pitt at Michelmersh Down. This may have been to make good the bank of the canal or simply for sale.

After the enclosure of the last local open commons in 1796 there were increasing references to individuals enclosing common resources, like chalk or gravel pits, ponds, and even roads, when they had no right to. In 1818 Thomas Freeman Heathcote Esq was presented for filling up Cade moor pond and also for taking possession of a certain road leading to it which pond and road had been awarded to the use of the copyhold tenants of the Hamlet of Awbridge. Those attempting to gain extra land by encroachment were often the wealthiest and most respectable in the village. In 1804 Rev Henry Woodcock was presented for an encroachment on the Lord's waste by putting his paling out beyond his own Bounds in Mitchelmarsh Street by the Church Yard. Despite Braishfield and Awbridge being part of the parish and manor of Michelmersh the copyholders in different districts only had rights in their own. In 1810 Copyholders of Michelmersh were presented for bringing gravel from Abridge to repair the roads which they had no right to do. Gravel, sand, chalk, furze, turf and wood were all reserved for the use of certain copyholders. In 1814 Mr Thomas Bernard was presented 'for inclosing Calimoor Pond on Awbridge Common & likewise letting the said pond dry and planting potatoes thereon'. In 1815 William Wilson was presented for 'an encroachment on the land at Awbridge gravel pit and building a house thereon'.

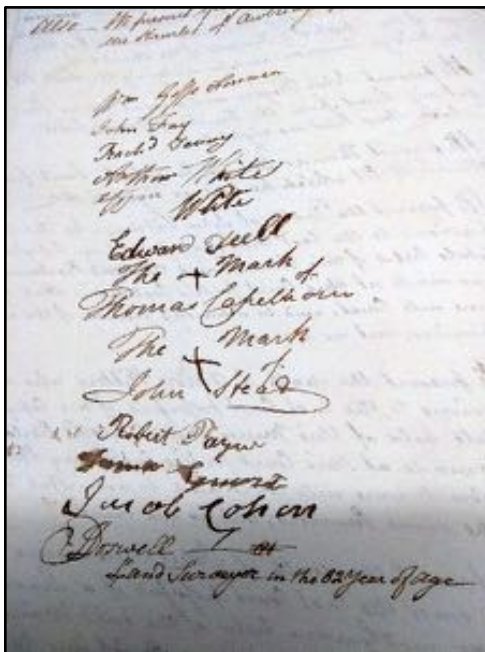
One duty of the haywards was to take straying livestock and keep them in the manor pound until the owner paid a fine. In 1804 it was presented that 'the Manor Pound is out of repair and that the Lord of the Manor ought to repair it'. By 1816 the Parish pound was recorded as 'for not being in sufficient repair to confine Piggs'. In 1834 the court was more specific, presenting the 'Right honourable John Lord Sherborne now Lord of this manor for not keeping the manor pound in repair'.

Between 1811 and 1814 there were several presentments for tenants not performing customary duties like Plough Duty and Reap Days. In 1811, for example, 'We present Mr John Blundell for refusing doing his Duty from Custom Plowing Days Work, due to Mitchelmarsh In lieu of Composition due from the copyhold belonging to His Father'. In 1813 Mrs Parry who had died in 1810 was presented for not performing her Reap Days. It is unlikely that at this time tenants were still actually performing these duties but they may have been refusing to make payment in lieu. It is also possible that a more officious or dedicated steward was making the records.

Into the 19th century there were increasing references to heirs not coming into court to be admitted to their tenancies; also examples of no heir being known and, although a call was made, 'no one came'. Either the agricultural depression was making land tenure less desirable or there was less respect for the Court Leet, or both.

At the end of the account of each court those attending signed their names with varying degrees of competence. There are only a few

instances of men making their mark and actually more towards the end of the book. In 1836 Thomas Capelthorn and John Head both made their marks. Someone signing with a signature from 1769 was Edward Dozell who signed many sessions through to 1836 when he signed as 'E Doswell, Land Surveyor in the 82 year of age'.



Sample signatures from Court Book of those attending the court session

New Forest Manoeuvres

by Jane Powell



HRH Prince Arthur of Connaught

Born in 1850, Prince Arthur began his military career at the age of 16 and by 1893 he was in command of the troops at Aldershot.

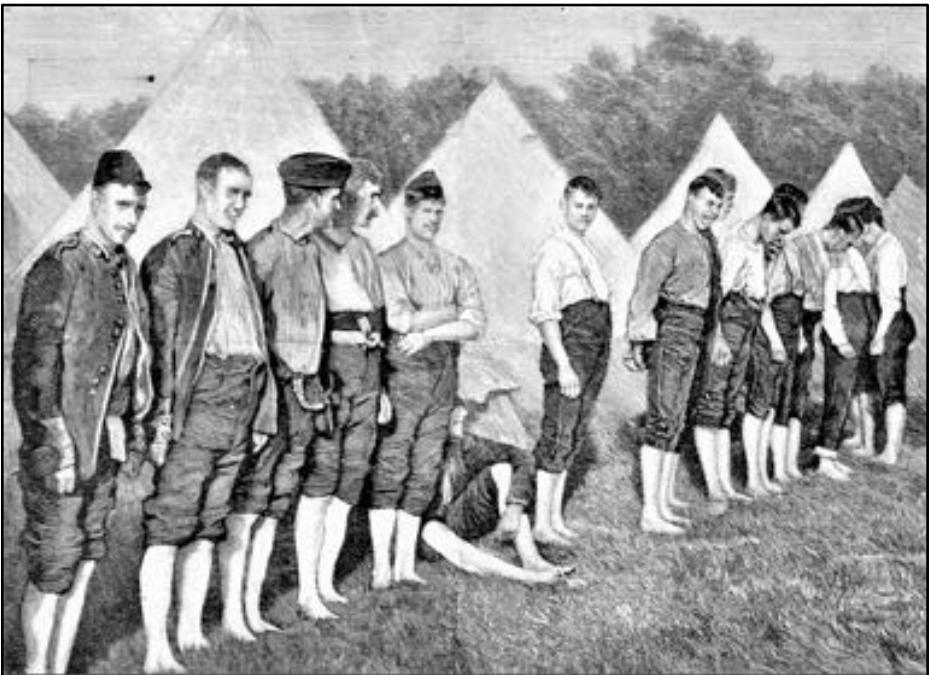
In late August 1895 a large-scale military exercise, devised by Queen Victoria's son HRH Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, took place on Ocknell Plain in the New Forest. The exercise involved over 11,000 troops and they were to march from Aldershot to the New Forest, stopping at rest camps at Alton, Avington Park, near Alresford, and North Baddesley. Once they were all assembled at Ocknell the various planned manoeuvres would take

place between Friday 23rd August and Saturday 31st August 1895.

Prior to the event the Duke carried out a tour of inspection of the rest camps and, on the 29th July, he visited Baddesley to examine the camp facilities and the area of Baddesley Common to be occupied by the battalions. After the inspection he decided that it was tea-time and a newspaper reporter covering the visit recommended the White Horse Hotel in Romsey. The Duke and his entourage arrived unannounced and the landlord's wife, Mrs Bignal, had to hastily assemble a meal.

On his departure he thanked her for the excellent tea she had provided. As he left the town to proceed to the camp at Ocknell he received respectful cheers from the crowd congregated in the Market Place.

On Wednesday 21st August, the troops marched from Avington Park rest camp to Baddesley but, due to a spell of intensely hot weather, large numbers of men dropped at the road-side with heat exhaustion. The hills at Compton and Otterbourne proved particularly arduous while the dusty state of the roads caused an additional problem. Many men could not complete the distance because their ill-fitting army-issue boots had rubbed their feet raw. The Duke was at Baddesley to see the men arrive and when he realized the sorry state they were in he cancelled the following day's march to the New Forest so that they could recover.



Feet inspection at Baddesley Camp

The troops were ordered to keep within a mile radius of the camp but some decided to ignore this in favour of visiting the pubs of Romsey. One London newspaper described Baddesley camp as being situated in a rough and outlandish place but a local reporter thought the camp pleasantly positioned with the white tents nestling cosily in the

countryside. He reported that the cavalry were positioned quite close to the main road with their horses tethered between the lines of tents. He also remarked on the large number of sightseers - many of whom had come from Southampton.

On Friday the troops resumed the march at 5am. They passed through Romsey at around 6am where, despite the early hour, they received rousing cheers from a large crowd. Along the route people distributed fruit and drinks to the men. Mr & Mrs Butt of Ryedown Farm received particular mention in the local newspaper for their generosity in supplying the troops with fruit from their orchard on the outward march and, on the return march from the Forest, they provided jugs of milk. However, such was the demand, they resorted to bringing the milk from the dairy in buckets. They were rewarded by the Duke riding into the farm-yard to thank them for their kindness.

The manoeuvres concluded on Saturday 31st August and the troops commenced the return march on Monday, 2nd September. When they passed through Romsey they received an enthusiastic welcome. The streets were decorated with bunting, the Abbey bells were ringing, and the crowds cheered them.

They reached Baddesley camp at mid-day where the Duke was awaiting their arrival. Shortly afterwards, at about 1pm, he proceeded to the White Horse Hotel to be served luncheon by Mrs Bignal. Her culinary skills had obviously made a favourable impression on the Duke when he had visited the previous month. In the afternoon he was shown around the Abbey.

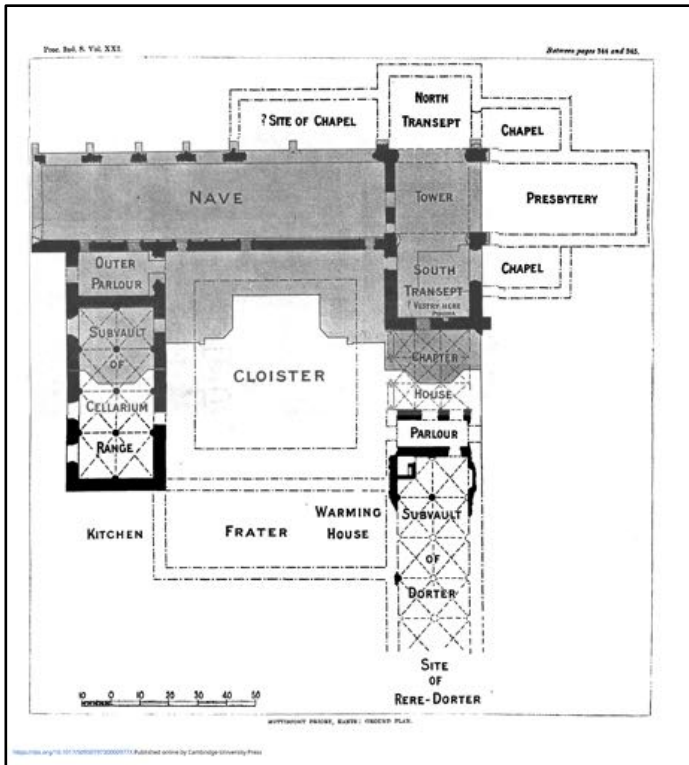
The Mayor thought it would be a great treat for the people of Romsey to have some military music to entertain them so consent was granted for the band and pipers of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders to be brought from Baddesley camp to the town. They began with a march round the market place then played for two hours, from 7pm-9pm, while the Duke was having his dinner at the White Horse. After the band left the town the huge crowd that had assembled stayed on in the hope of seeing HRH and were rewarded by catching sight of him at a window of the hotel.

The Duke spent Monday night at the White Horse and at 7.30am the next day he accompanied Reverend Berthon around the Berthon Boat Works inspecting the military pontoons and the collapsible boats.

Archaeology Revealed by the Recent Heatwave

by Roger Leech

The reporter Adele Bouchard has written in recent editions of the *Romsey Advertiser* about the impact of the recent heatwave on the gardens at Mottisfont, both damage by drought and parching to the lawns and plants, and the revelation of buried walls showing as parch marks. In this article I include two photographs, one taken at ground level from the terrace next to the house, the other from a second-floor window. (See back page).



Map of Mottisfont Priory, drawn 1907

Closest to the house the parch marks are the walls of the cloister and the buildings around it – chapter house, dormitory and refectory. Further away is a second courtyard, probably the infirmary or hospital of the priory with its own refectory and dormitory. These remains are visible in most dry summers at Mottisfont and were depicted when still

standing on a map of the early 18th century. Before the pandemic but now stalled, plans were in progress with other archaeologists and volunteers at Mottisfont to ensure that these discoveries and recent archaeological work there might contribute to the visitor experience at Mottisfont and be available to the wider world in a new publication under the aegis of the National Trust.

This will draw on the air photography obtained by the present writer when Head of Archaeology for the *Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England* in 1996 and more recently by National Trust archaeologist James Brown, together with the archaeological recording directed by Frank Green when head of the *Test Valley Archaeological Trust*. Also to be included will be the results of the geophysical surveys undertaken by Southampton University students in 1996 and later by Stratascan. Yet a further important input will be the historical information assembled by volunteers at Mottisfont as *The Mottisfont Knowledge Bank*.

Parch marks have also been visible in the parched grass to the south of Romsey Abbey, noted first by former churchwarden David Johnson and the subject of much interest by members of the *Romsey Local History Society*. Members of RLHS's buildings survey group - Karen Anderson, Mary Harris Ronnie Munday and others, led by Roger Leech - are agreed that the wall showing prominently below the parched grass on the photograph (See page 23) is the boundary wall of the garden shown there on the Ordnance Survey map of 1867. Unlike Mottisfont, the cloister of the Abbey is too deeply buried to show as a parch mark.



South Garth of Romsey Abbey showing parch mark running from foreground and continuing under garden bench



*Mottisfont Abbey
showing parch marks as viewed from a terrace*



*Mottisfont Abbey
showing parch marks as viewed from a second floor window*