

THE FORGOTTEN MANORS OF SHRIVENHAM

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The Anglo Saxon charters first mention Shrevenham in 816AD. It appears in various charters, documents, and registers as:-

Serveham	XI Century
Scrivenham	XII Century
Sherevenham, Syrvenham, Sortiveham	XIII Century
Sheryngham	XV Century
Shervenham	XVI Century
Shrinham	XVII Century

Various suggestions have been made as to their meaning. Dr Skeat in his book "Berkshire placenames" interprets it as Scrifenas Enclosure. A definite interpretation however is not possible because of the variation in the meaning of Anglo Saxon words. Shrevenham was well established by 1048, with a population of around 350 persons. A description of Shrevenham appears in the Domesday Book as follows:-

"The King holds Scrivenham in demesne. King Edward held it. There are 46 hides. There is land for 35 ploughs. On the demesne there are 4 ploughs and there, 80 villeins and 17 boarders with 3 ploughs. In the manor are two mills worth twenty shillings and 240 acres of meadow and woodland to render 20 swine. In the time of King Edward it was worth thirty-five pounds and after, twenty pounds, and now forty pounds."

The history of a village in to a large extent the history of its manor, and by the manor all lands with its rights, dues and apurtaances, belonging by lawful possession to an individual owner, known as Lord of the Manor, the Seignour, or as in Anglo Saxon times, the Thane.

In early times manors varied considerably in size. Very few were made of dressed stone, they were not infrequently held together, and carried with them a large rent roll. The ancient houses belonging to the manors were staffed with subordinates acting under the dependence of a Lord, and included his bailiff, his steward, his shepherd, waggoner, tithe agent, carpenter, and smith.

The church generally stood in the proximity of the manor, the Lord of the Manor frequently the founder of the church and thereby acquired the patronage of the benefice. All lands were originally derived from the Crown and the beginning of the Manor was when the King gave a thousand acres of land or a greater or smaller parcel of ground unto his subjects and to their heirs, which tenure is a knight's service at least. With the coming of William the Conqueror, the manorial system was reorganised by the King on a feudal basis, and it would seem from the Domesday Survey, that at the time of the King's death, manors were acquired by Norman holders, or overlords; the lordship that became known as the Barony.

The Parish of Shrivenham at this time consisted of Shrivenham (Scrivenham), Bourton, Watchfield, Cotes (Longcot) and Fernham, and held within these lands, the manors of Salop, Stallpit, Beckett (Becote), Rectory in Longcot, Cley Court in Bourton, and also the manors of Watchfield and Fernham.

SALOP MANOR

As forming part of the Royal demesne, the manor remained vested to the Crown from 1086 until 1200. King John in this year granted it to Geoffrey, Count of Perche in part payment of a rent of £1000 assigned to him by the King. The Count sided with the French in a struggle during the reign of Henry III, and was killed in the Battle of Lincoln in 1217, and once again the manor came into the possession of the Crown. The custody of it was granted to Henry de Trubleville, and later Robert de Bras. Shortly afterward, during the minority of the King, the Bishop of Chalon is said to have come to England and laid claim to the lands of the late Geoffrey de Perche. These he sold to William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, and William Longespee, Earl of Salisbury, and as custodians of the realm kept the manor for their own use.

William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke granted his moiety of Shrivenham, afterwards known as the Manor of Shrivenham Salop to Warren Manchesney in marriage to his daughter Joan. The issue of the marriage, Joan Manchesney, married William de Valence who was half-brother to the King, and in right of his wife's mother was given the title Earl of Pembroke.

In 1257, the Earl received a grant of a weekly market on Thursday, and a fair to be held on the Vigil, feast on the morrow of St Mary Magdalene. Joan de Valence survived both her husband and two elder sons John and William. Upon her death in 1307 her third son Aylmer succeeded her. Aylmer died in the year 1324; he left a widow, founder of Pembroke College, Cambridge. They left no male issue, and his heirs were the children of his sister Isabel, who had married John, Lord Hastings, and Joan, wife of John Comyn of Badenoch. Shrivenham Salop fell to Elizabeth, daughter of the latter. She married Richard Talbot, who afterwards became Lord Talbot.

The descent of Shrivenham Salop then followed that of the Barony of Talbot, and Earldom of Shrewsbury until the year 1507. At this time George, Earl of Shrewsbury and Anne his wife conveyed the manor to Sir John Fettiplace who died, seized of the property in 1523. His posthumous son Nicholas died when six months old, and ownership thus devolved upon his daughter Katherine at the age of four. In due course she married Sir Francis Englefeld, and in 1544 the manor was settled upon them and their heirs. Being a Roman Catholic, Sir Francis, from motives of prudence left England on the succession to the throne of Elizabeth, leaving Thomas Stratford and John Yate as trustees to the manor. Queen Elizabeth notwithstanding gave the lands into the custody of George Fettiplace and litigation ensued. Katherine, wife of George Fettiplace predeceased her husband in 1759, and John Fettiplace succeeded, and in turn Bessel Fettiplace who conveyed the manor to Sir Henry Unton in 1588, who at this time also held the manors of Faringdon and Hatford. Sir Henry Unton died in 1596, and the manor was vested by an Act of Parliament in the name of his daughter Cecelia and her husband Sir John Wentworth, Baronet. In 1615 Dame Dorothy Moore held the manor and passed it by purchase in 1624 to Henry Rolte,

who in 1635 sold Shrivenham Salop together with Cley Court at Bourton to Sir Henry Marten, from which time the manors followed the descent of Beckett Shrivenham.

STALPITS MANOR

The moiety of Shrivenham acquired by William Longespee, Earl of Salisbury was held on his death by his widow Ela, Countess of Salisbury, who founded Lacock Abbey and became the Abbess. His son, William Longespee received a grant in 1529 confirming the possession. It is said that he enfeoffed two tenants, Reynold de Whitchurch and Adam de Hautrey. The lands granted became the Manor of Stalpit, also known as Staulpeth and Stalpitty.

The overship developed and descended through the granddaughter of William, Earl of Salisbury in 1250 and wife of Henry, Earl of Lincoln which he passed on to their daughter Alice. Alice married as her first husband Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, and secondly Ebolu le Strange. She in 1325 conveyed certain knight's fees including Stalpit Manor to Henry le Despenser.

Afterwards, his forfeiture seems to have been assigned to Phillipa of Hainault, Queen Consort of England and wife of Henry III as guardian to Edmund of Longley, the King's son to whom the lands of the Earl of Surrey had been granted. In 1378, 1392 and in 1396 the manor was held by John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, and in 1424 was returned as held by the King.

The immediate tenancy of the manor descended from Reynold de Whitchurch to his daughter and heir Eva, who married Giles de Clifford. In 1257 Giles de Clifford and Eva his wife appear as overlords. In the right of Eva of lands in the Shrivenham Hundred, formerly held by Alen de Farnham, this they quitclaimed to William and Joan de Valence, Lords of Shrivenham Salop, receiving in return a quitclaim on the plot of land where the Manor of Staulpeth of Stalpit was built. In 1276 the manor was held by Giles de Clifford. In the same year Reynold, son of Giles de Clifford received from Ralph de Wylington and his wife Julilana a quitclaim of a messuage and two carucates of land in Shrivenham, which at their insistence he granted to Joan de Chambernun. It appears that Joan de Chambernun, mother of Ralph de Wylington was daughter of Eva and William Chamberbun. It is possible therefore from the devolution of the manor, that the daughter of Reynold de Whitchurch married first William Chambernun, by whom she had a daughter Joan, who married Ralph de Wylington the elder, and secondly Giles de Clifford. Joan de Chamberbun was holding the manor in 1284. Before 1310 it had descended to John Wylington, son of Ralph and Juliana, who in that year received a grant of free warren in his demesne land at Stalpit. In 1321 he enfeoffed his son Ralph of the manor and joined the rebel barons. In spite of this precaution the lands were confiscated after Boroughbridge, but were restored in 1323 to Ralph, who died seised of the manor in 1348. His uncle Reynold was returned as heir, but Stalpit was settled on his cousin Henry de Wylington. Ralph left a widow Eleanor, who granted her life interest in Stalpit to the Convent of Denny, Cambridge. On her death in 1349 she was followed by John, son of Henry de Wylington who was a minor. John Laundels being made custodian of his lands. Sir John de Wylington died in 1378; leaving a son Ralph aged seven, who died shortly afterward. His brother and heir John de Wylington was a minor and was pronounced insane, his lands were seized into the hands of the King. John died in

1396, his heirs being his sister Isabella, wife of William Beaumont and John Wroth, son of his sister Margaret.

The Manor of Stalpit was assigned to Isabella who died seised of it in 1424. At the inquest on the death of her son Sir Thomas Beaumont of Youlston, who died in 1450, there are no returns issued from Berkshire, or upon the death of his son William Beaumont in 1453. Between 1501 and 1502, Hugh Beaumont another son of Sir Thomas and Elisabeth his wife, John Basset and Elizabeth his wife, daughter of Sir Thomas, John Beaumont, clerk another son released their rights to the manor to Richard, Bishop of Durham, Giles Lord Daubney, and others who in 1503 received a quitclaim from John Chichester and Margaret his wife, daughter of Hugh Beaumont. These transactions were for assurance of title, and that the feofees were representing the interests of Edward Courtney, Earl of Devon. For the manor had been settled on Maud, sister of Sir Thomas Beaumont, wife of Sir Hugh Courtenay of Haccombe. In 1471 Isabella Courtenay was returned overlord to certain estates said to be held at Stalpit. Edward Courtenay was returned in December 1476 and as Earl of Devon he died seised of it in 1509.

William Courtenay, son of Earl Edward had been attainted believed for treason in 1504, but was restored after succession of Henry VIII to the throne. Earl Edward's son succeeded him in 1511 and became the Marquess of Exeter in 1525, and with his wife Gertrude was party to a conveyance of the manor to John Russell and others in 1530. It was held in trust for Thomas Unton who died seised of it in 1533, leaving a son Alexander who in 1546 parted with the property to Sir William Essex. The descent of the manor then follows that of Beckett.

The other part of William Longespee's moiety of Shrivenham was granted by him to one of the family of Hawtrey. Phillip Hawtrey being tenant in the first half of the 13th Century. Maud, daughter of Phillip Hawtrey married Andrew de Wike of Stainswick, and Phillip Hawtrey gave with her in free marriage 3 hides of land in the manor of Shrivenham, including lands in Bourton, Cotes (Longcot) and Fernham. He apparently retained land in Shrivenham, and his rights over the Hundred, for in 1274 Isabella Hawtrey held the Hundred of Shrivenham jointly with William de Valence and Giles de Clifford, and in 1287 the heirs of Adam Hawtrey are returned as holders of part of Shrivenham. The heirs were Henry and Thomas Hawtrey, who at the same time were said to have gallows and assize of bread and ale in Shrivenham. Robert Hawtrey appears as joint holder of the Hundred in 1284, and Thomas Hawtrey a joint holder of the vill (feudal village) in 1316. Thomas died before May 1324 when the custody of two parts of the carucate of land in Shrivenham belonging to his son John Hawtrey, a minor who was granted to John de Creklade. In 1327 and 1332 Emma Hawtrey was assessed for subsidies under Shrivenham. In 1393 John Hawtrey and his wife Alice quitclaimed Ralph de Stane the elder, all lands they held for life in Shrivenham. After the latter date no further record of this family holding property in the parish has been found.

The lands granted by Phillip Hawtrey with his daughter to Andrew de Wike apparently came through their daughter Alice at Stainswick to Ralph de la Stane. He was assessed under Bourton for a subsidy levied in the reign of Edward I. Lands which he held of the Hawtrey fee in Fernham were acquired by William de Valence,

Lord of Shrivenham Salop. The rest may have formed part of the Stainswick Estate, since this extended into the parish of Shrivenham

CLEYCOURT MANOR

In 1307 the extent of Shrivenham Salop included eight free tenants in Bourton; the manor lying in both Over and Nether Bourton. At the end of the 15th Century the estate called Cleycourt was held by Edmund Beakingham, Earl of Shrewsbury who died in 1498 leaving a son, Thomas of Duckington Oxon, who was dealing with the estate in 1508. In 1510 he died seised of the manor of Cleycourt which he held for Thomas Fettiplace, Lord of Shrivenham Salop. It is possible that the manor of Cleycourt is the former manor of Bourton called by a different name.

Thomas Beckington left a son Thomas then aged ten, the latter dying in 1527, when the wardship of his son John, with the annuity out of the manor of Cleycourt, and lands in Shrivenham and Bourton was granted to Thomas Redhood. John Beckingham died within the next three years, the manor devolving on his sister Mary. The latter married Thomas Windsor, and with her husband conveyed the property in 1565 to Richard Rolte, who died seised of it in 1575, leaving a son Thomas Rolte of Henley. The latter died without issue in 1578, when the manor passed by settlement to his cousin Thomas, the second son of his father's brother John Rolte of Eltham, Kent. Thomas Rolte of St Margaret's in Kent died in 1617, having a son Henry, by whom the manor was sold in 1635 to Sir Henry Marten. From this time the descent of the manor follows that of Beckett.

RECTORY MANOR

The manor in 1086 consisted of five hides of land, which was granted with the Church to the Abbey of Cirencester by Henry I. It comprised the hamlet of Longcott and land in Watchfield, Bourton and Beckett. The estates were increased by grants from Henry Sturmeay, William de Wykeham, Reynold de Whichchurch, Adam Ayland, Adam Lacey and Walter de Fendour, all made before the Statute of Mortmain in 1279. The Abbot kept a house at Cotes (Longcot) in 1346.

At the dissolution, the manor of Rectory and the demesne lands were held by William Pleydell of Coleshill, under lease to himself and his sons, made by the Abbot in 1535. In 1585 the lease was renewed by the Crown to John, son of Thomas, sixth son of William Pleydell for twenty-one years. In 1593 a further lease was granted to him. A grant was made by Robert Morgen and Thomas Butter in 1606 and put in trust for John Pleydell, who was party to a fine of it in 1633 and died seised of it in 1635, having made a settlement on his younger son Oliver on his marriage to Elizabeth Hippersley. Oliver's son and heir was Thomas Pleydell of Shrivenham, whose son Henry Pleydell of Coleshill was dealing with the site of the manor, the rectory and the tithes in 1701 and again in 1714. His son Mark Stuart Pleydell, Baronet succeeded him in 1727 and died in 1768. Harriet his daughter predeceased him and married William Bouverie, later Lord Pleydell of Coleshill and Earl of Radnor. Their son Jacob, second son of the Earl of Radnor who inherited his grandfather's estate took the name of Pleydell. Bouverie dealt with the site of the manor and rectory by recovery in 1800. In 1814 the site of the manor and rectory was in the possession of Viscount Barrington of Beckett Shrivenham.

FOWERSMILL

The estate known as Fowersmill, Fayersmull, or Fowyersmill in the 14th Century originated in a grant made in 1188 by King Henry II to Reynold de Fouwer (Focarius or stoker) of the King's Chamber, lands to the value of twenty-five shillings and four pence at Shrivenham. Reynold and his descendents held this land by service of making fire in the King's Chamber, later this tenure was changed to the presentation of two white capons when so ever the King passed over the bridge at Fowersmill with these words "*Ecce domine istos capanes quos alias habetitis sed non nunc*" – "Behold my Lord, these two capons you shall have, but not today." The bridge was at the North Ford entrance to the Beckett estate, the lower part of the present lake, probably the millpond, where there was evidence of an ancient spillway and dam.

Robert le Fower obtained a writ of Morte d'Ancestor for a mill and five vigrates of land, approximately 150 acres in 1214. In 1261 the property was held by Reynold who died seised of a carucate of land (this being as much land that can be ploughed as a team in one year) with a messuage and watermill in 1300, leaving a son John the Latter conveyed the property to Aylmer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, retaining a life interest. Richard Talbot and Elizabeth his wife, co-heir of the Earl of Pembroke were holding John le Fouwer's lands in 1345 (after the expiration in 1341 of a life grant made by them to James de Woodstock) subject to the Dower Ellen, widow of John le Fouwer. They were acquired afterwards by John Laundels who had a grant of free warren at Shrivenham from 1359 to 1361, leaving a son and heir John, the latter who was from Bampton in Oxon conveyed it to John de Beckett who also held the adjoining estate of Beckett. He died in 1375, his heir of the same name parted with it in 1376 to John Warneford who made settlement of it upon his son Richard in 1392, the latter dying in 1468. There is no evidence of the estate for nearly two hundred years, but about 1640 a Thomas Warneford died seised of a messuage, a watermill, and land in Shrivenham, leaving a son Edmund. An Edmund Warneford dealt with the same property in 1707. In 1902 the property passed to Lord Banbury of Southam, the descent then follows that of the Warneford estate at Sevenhampton.

WATCHFIELD MANOR

Wacensfeld	VIII Century
Wachensfeld	XI Century
Wachfeud	XIII Century
Wachfeld, Wasshyngfeld, Watchyngfeld	XVI Century

In 1086 the manor at Watchfield belonged to the Abbey at Abingdon, to whom a grant of 27 cassati is contained in a confirmatory charter bearing the name of King Ethelbald in the years between 726 and 737 AD.

The rent of the mill mentioned in the Domesday Survey was devoted by the will of Abbot Ingulf to celebrate the feasts of St Swithun and St Ethlewold. In 1107 the tithes of the three hides of land held by William le Watchfield were given to the Abbey until the dissolution, passing again to the King in 1538. In 1541 it was granted to John Malt, citizen and merchant of London who settled it in 1546 upon his illegitimate daughter Audrey, who by the contract then made between John Rolte and

Sir Henry Southwell was to marry Richard Southwell bastard son of the latter. She seems to have later been married to John Harrington, for he and his wife Audrey were party to a fine of it in 1567, and John and Hester Harrington in 1568. In 1593 a William Stubbs was assessed to a subsidy under Shrivenham, and in 1631 Hester Stubbs his widow was holding the property. Five years later the estate was sold to Thomas Tatton and his wife Margaret who sold it to Henry Forster, Baronet in 1674. It was conveyed by Margaret Pratt, widow, and Oliver Pleydell and Martha his wife to Christopher Willoughby. George Willoughby was holding it in 1715 and Henry in 1751, but the latter sold it to Lord Holland who dealt with it by recovery in 1796. It was later bought by Lord Barrington, owner of the estate at Beckett Shrivenham, and then followed the descent of that manor.

FERNHAM MANOR

The manor of Fernham appears to have been mainly composed of lands held in the first half of the 13th Century by the Lord of Shrivenham, Alan de Farnham, whose daughter and heir Juliana, wife of Gilbert de Elsefeld quitclaimed six virgates of land in Fernham to William de Valence and his wife Joan, Lords of the manor of Shrivenham Salop, and the heirs of Joan in 1257. In the same year William and Joan received for themselves and their heirs from Giles de Clifford and his wife Eva of the manor of Stallpit two virgates of land in Fernham. Another tenement belonging to the fee of Robert de Hawtreay was acquired by William de Valence. After the Battle of Lewes in which the Earl sided with the King, Fernham was granted as a manor with Shrivenham to his wife Joan de Valence for her maintenance. It descended with Shrivenham to Richard, Lord Talbot, John Laundrells, and John Carew. In 1365 John Laundrells' son is found making a quitclaim of the manor to John Blewbury. Whether this was a release to Lord Talbot's successor is unclear.

Fernham in 1415 was in the possession of Thomas Pinchpole and his wife Katherine, who made a settlement upon themselves and their issue. The next owner to whom there is a record was one Drew Sambourne who died seised of it in 1506, leaving a granddaughter Margaret, who married Edward, Lord Windsor. Their son, also Edward, Lord Windsor conveyed it in 1561 to Toby Pleydell of Chipping Farringdon (Faringdon) who died seised of it in 1583. His heir John Pleydell conveyed the manor in 1596 to Thomas Fettiplace. Upon the death of the latter in 1617 he was followed by a son of the same name who was dealing with the estate in 1627. In 1637 his son Thomas, being a party to the latter transaction. This Thomas succeeded his father in 1660. His heir and nephew Thomas was holding it in 1708. He left a son of the same name, who was succeeded before 1733 by his brothers Daniel and Geoffrey. They conveyed the manor to John Bisoe, from whom it seems to have been acquired by William Morris, whose son Witherington Morris sold the manor of Fernham in 1755 to Peregrine Furye. In 1780 the latter made a settlement of a quarter of the manor on Thomas Humphrey Lowe, the son of his daughter and co-heir Elizabeth. In 1783 Nathaniel Ellison and Jane his wife, who was probably another heir were dealing with three quarters of the manor, and the latter as Jane Ellison suffered a recovery in 1823 with Nathaniel Ellison the younger. William Butler and Anne his wife were parties to it in 1801. The latter is probably the Mrs Anne Furye who was holding the manor in 1806. The fourth part in 1830 was in the possession of the Reverend Thomas Hill, Peregrine Furye Lowe, son of Thomas Humphrey Lowe. This property then descended into the estates held at Wantage.

BECKETT MANOR

The manor of Becotte	XI Century
The manor of Buccot, Bockette	XIII Century
The manor of Bewcott, Bowcote	XVII Century

The manor was held in demesne by the King in 1086, and granted to William Evreux with other lands. Before the Conquest it was held as two manors by two free men, although there is no proof that the second manor may have been the manor of Fouwersmill on lands adjoining Beckett.

This land was granted to the Prior of Noyan, a cell of St Evroul by William, Count of Evroux, and confirmed by his successor Simon, Count of Evroux about the middle of the 12th Century. The original five hides of land mentioned in the Domesday Survey as belonging to the Church in Shrivenham, were granted to the Abbey at Cirencester by Henry I. The Priory was one of the alien monasteries granted to Henry V by Sheen. Such a monastery may have existed around this time at or close to Shrivenham. Although there is no evidence to support this, there are two local legends connected with such a monastery. One telling of a nun who fell in love with a monk, and drowned herself in Maidens Well, situated north of Bower Brook, and close to Wellington Wood. The other of a monk who haunts the churchyard of All Saint's Eve.

In 1202 the Prior received a quitclaim or deed of release of five hides of land from Gilbert Martel who was a tenant under the Priory, these were granted to Walter de Beckett and his son John de Beckett for life. John, succeeded by Oliver de Beckett quitclaimed two thirds of the manor and a reversion of the other third, which Roger Capys and Alice his wife held in dower of Oliver's inheritance to a certain John Beckett. In 1424 Maud de Merfeld who together with Richard Ocle, his wife Joan and John Westover conveyed the manor to John Shottesbrook and his wife Alice. John Rogers of Benham de Valence married Elizabeth; daughter of John Shottisbrook and the manor was settled on them. In 1471 Thomas Rogers, their son was seized of the manor, leaving a younger son Thomas. He died in 1488 and left a widow Margaret, on whom he had settled the property for life, and a daughter Elizabeth, the wife of Sir William Essex. Elizabeth inherited on Margaret's death in 1518. The manor was leased in 1581 by Jane, widow of Sir Thomas Essex, then wife of Christopher Lycot, to Edward Unton for the life of Jane. Thomas Essex was party to a fine of it in 1584, dying in 1587, and was succeeded by a son William, who was created a Baronet in 1611, and who in 1621 conveyed Beckett and Stalpit to Josse (Joseph) Glover and Robert Pemberton.

In 1633 Roger Glover together with Josse Glover and their wives sold the manor to Sir Henry Marten, a judge and man of considerable wealth, who with his son Henry in 1624 established a charity in the village and built eight almshouses. Sir Henry Marten's son was a staunch republican, who with Sir Arthur Hazlerigg were of the more violent of the commons. Sir Henry Marten became known as the "First Republican" and a Regicide for having been one of the judges who tried and signed the death warrant of Charles I. Locally he raised a regiment of horse, for which most part were impressed from his Royalist neighbours, with which he threatened the Long

Parliament when their principles began to waver. Henry Marten in these puritanical times lived his life to the extreme, womanising and gambling, ably assisted by the men of Watchfield. He was soon in trouble and outlawed for debt. When he could no longer afford to live at Beckett, he sold it to Sir George Pratt of Coleshill. After the Restoration of the monarchy, Henry Marten surrendered himself to the King, where upon he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death. An appeal to the Commons for his life failed, but later his appeal to the House of Lords was successful, and he was reprieved declaring that he had "done his best to abolish this place." Henry Marten died imprisoned in Chepstow Castle.

Sir George Pratt sold the estate of Beckett in 1666 to Sir John Wildman. John Wildman was born in 1621, but little is known of his early life. He was educated at Cambridge and studied law in London. At the outbreak of the Civil War when he was only nineteen, he fought with the Parliamentarians, and at this time married Frances, daughter of the Catholic Francis Englefield of Berkshire. There was a son from this marriage. At the death of Frances, he married Lucy, daughter of Lord Lovelace. In 1647 he became the leading spokesman for the new model regiments in arguing against negotiations with Charles I, and accompanied the agents of five dissentient regiments to the general meeting of the Army at Putney. With the King failing to recover power, which swung between "Levellers" and "Agitators," the "Levellers" claiming ultimate power for the people and the "Agitators" being elected from the troops, John Wildman produced a document which when broadened became the constitution of the Government, namely a pamphlet called "A case for the Army." He became an officer sometime in the 1650s, and was in 1655 regularly referred to as the Major in the Regiment raised by Sir John Reynolds. He was in 1654 elected as an MP and when Cromwell called a new Parliament to replace the Long Parliament, John Wildman was called to it, but for refusing to sign the recognition that Cromwell demanded, he was dismissed. Later he was caught with members of the Army Republicans in lodgings in Marlborough plotting the downfall of Cromwell, where he was seized and placed in Chepstow Castle. In 1659 employed by the Council of Officers to draw up a form of government, he plotted to overthrow them and seize Windsor Castle for Parliament.

With the death of Oliver Cromwell, despite the unrest in the country, the Army remained stable, and General Monk controlled the country for the Restoration of Charles II. In 1666 Wildman had become friendly with the King's favourite, the Second Duke of Buckingham, who under his influence became the Commissioner for the Bill of Accounts. Suspected of involvement with Republican plots after the Restoration, he was imprisoned for a further six years. In 1679 the Habeus Corpus Act was made law, and this enabled Wildman's wife Lucy to obtain a writ to bring her husband out of prison and into the courts for trial. He was then closely associated with Algernon Sidney, who was executed for treason in the Rye House Plot. John Wildman, although arrested with Sidney escaped execution. When Charles II died in 1685. Wildman was prominent among those who helped the illegitimate son take the throne from his brother James. The Bloody Assize followed, and the Royal cause lost its following. After Monmouth's rising he fled to the Netherlands, returning with William of Orange. Both he and his son, who was by now a captain in William's army, took an active part. John Senior now regained his lost possessions. He was made Post Master General, and he who had so often acted as a spy, was now in virtual command of all communications of State. A year later he was dismissed from this

post for using his office to discredit his political opponents by means of forged letters. He was made an Alderman of the City of London and was knighted in 1692. Both he and his wife enjoyed the honour of being received at Court. A year later at the age of seventy he died at Beckett, his wife Lucy had died six months earlier. They are buried in the Chancel of St Andrew's Church in Shrivenham. Their son also lies in the Chancel.

Sir John Wildman's son had no heirs. He married Eleanor Choute when she was eighteen, and one year later she died, probably in childbirth. He did not marry again. Having no heir, he adopted the Roman custom and in 1702 adopted John Shute as his heir. The will was written when John Shute was in his late twenties. John Wildman and John Shute were not related, but they held the same tenets of "Presbyterian dissensions." John Wildman found him to be the most upright man of his acquaintance; John Shute was a distinguished politician and theologian. The only son of Benjamin Shute, merchant, son of Francis Shute of Upton Leicester descended from Phillip Shute, standard bearer to Henry VIII, and Robert Shute of Hockington, one of the twelve judges at the court of Elizabeth I.

John Shute acquired another property by settlement from Francis Barrington of Tofts Essex, who had married his cousin Elizabeth, daughter of Samuel Shute, Sheriff of London and in pursuance of this settlement, John Shute assumed by Act of Parliament the surname and arms of Barrington. He stood successfully as Parliamentary candidate on two occasions for Berwick on Tweed. In 1720 he was created Baron Barrington of Newcastle County Dublin and Viscount Barrington of Ardglass County Down, in the Irish peerage.

He was expelled from Parliament in 1723 for his participation in the "South Sea Bubble," an English financial disaster. The punishment, which was extracted by Sir Thomas Walpole, with whom he had been at variance, was considered as excessive. The Prince of Wales was deeply involved in the scandal. Lord Barrington, who had ventured unwillingly at the express wish of the King became involved, and seems to have been made the Royal scapegoat.

Viscount Shute Barrington was succeeded by William Wildman Barrington, the eldest son in 1734. He made a settlement on the manor at Shrivenham in 1740. Between the years of 1754 and 1778 he successively served George II and George III as Secretary to the Admiralty, Master of the Great Wardrobe, Secretary at War, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Treasurer to the Navy. There is a memorial to him in Shrivenham Church, a marble urn situated in the chancel. Also in the north west corner of the nave is a memorial to the fifth son, Lord Samuel Barrington, which lies under a white marble flag with the inscription: -

*He when his arm, St Lucia's trophy boasts
Ascribe the glory to the Lord of Hosts*

Lord Samuel Barrington was Admiral of the White and a general of marines. He served in command of HMS Achilles, making war on the French in the West Indies. At St Lucia he captured a large white flag from the French battleship St Florentine, which surrendered to him. Discoloured with age, and shot full of holes, it hung in the chancel for many years. This was the last trophy of war to have been captured from

the French monarchy. The sixth son held many offices within the Church, and became the Bishop of Durham, a post Lord Shute Barrington held for thirty-five years. There is a memorial to him in the south transept of Durham Cathedral.

The second Viscount, William Wildman Barrington kept a house in Cavendish Square in London, visiting Shrivvenham only on occasions, declaring the house at Shrivvenham to have been damp, cold and a miserable place. Little work having been carried out on it since the Civil War, the house in the Eighteenth Century was a mixture of the early remains. At about this time the Barringtons seem to have become more affluent, and in 1780, to ensure greater privacy in the park, the road which ran to the south of the house and through the estate from Shrivvenham to Longcot, Faringdon and beyond was re-aligned (see drawing). The fishing lodge now called the China House, attributed to Inigo Jones was a favourite place for Lord Barrington's house guests to watch for the approach of the stage coach, and view it as it splashed through the ford, where the footbridge now stands. At this time the white horse on the hill above Uffington had passed into the keeping of the Parish of Uffington. The Barrington family at their own expense continued to keep this ancient landmark clean and tidy. This event was accompanied by local feasts and celebrations and was known as the "scouring of the white horse." It was customary to hold a picnic, "harvest home" in the village. This was held in the park of the manor after the corn had been gathered. Lord Barrington and the local farmers providing the food, tea and ale where the locals regaled themselves, and afterwards indulged in sports and games.

The village also held a fair. This fell in April, and was a considerable event. Any cottager, by placing a thorn bush outside his door on fair days was allowed to sell ale. The brandy that was drunk was smuggled from village to village across the downs by commercial travellers or packmen, who carried the spirits in bladders concealed in their bundles of calico and woollens. After the fair came a week of feasting. Every cottager on the Monday would boil up a gammon of ham and several dozen plum pies to entertain their friends and neighbours. Through the week there would be dancing, skittling, bowling, wrestling, bear baiting and cock fighting. It was not uncommon to have fatal accidents, but this was taken as a matter of course. In around the middle of the Nineteenth Century the village stocks were used for the last time. A carterer from Shrivvenham was placed in them for stealing saffron, and for many years a notice hung on the wall of Tarifa Cottage

"By order of the Magistrates. All idle or disorderly persons found and apprehended in the Parish of Shrivvenham will accordingly be removed as the law directs."

The second Viscount was made guardian to his brother's children. He died in 1793, and was succeeded each in turn by his nephews William, Richard and George. George the fifth Viscount was dealing with the manor with his son William Kepple Barrington, who would become the sixth Viscount.

The present house was built by the sixth Viscount Barrington, and was designed by William Atkinson. Atkinson was the son of a Durham miner, and became a protégé of Bishop Shute Barrington. He was sent to study in London, and became architect to the Board of Ordnance at the Tower of London. Portions of Atkinson's original house have been removed including the large conservatory. The original manor stood to the north of the present building. It was in two blocks joined by an east-west wing

(see drawing). The archway on the present building may represent part of the older building; this would have been in line with the avenue that led from the front of the house to the church.

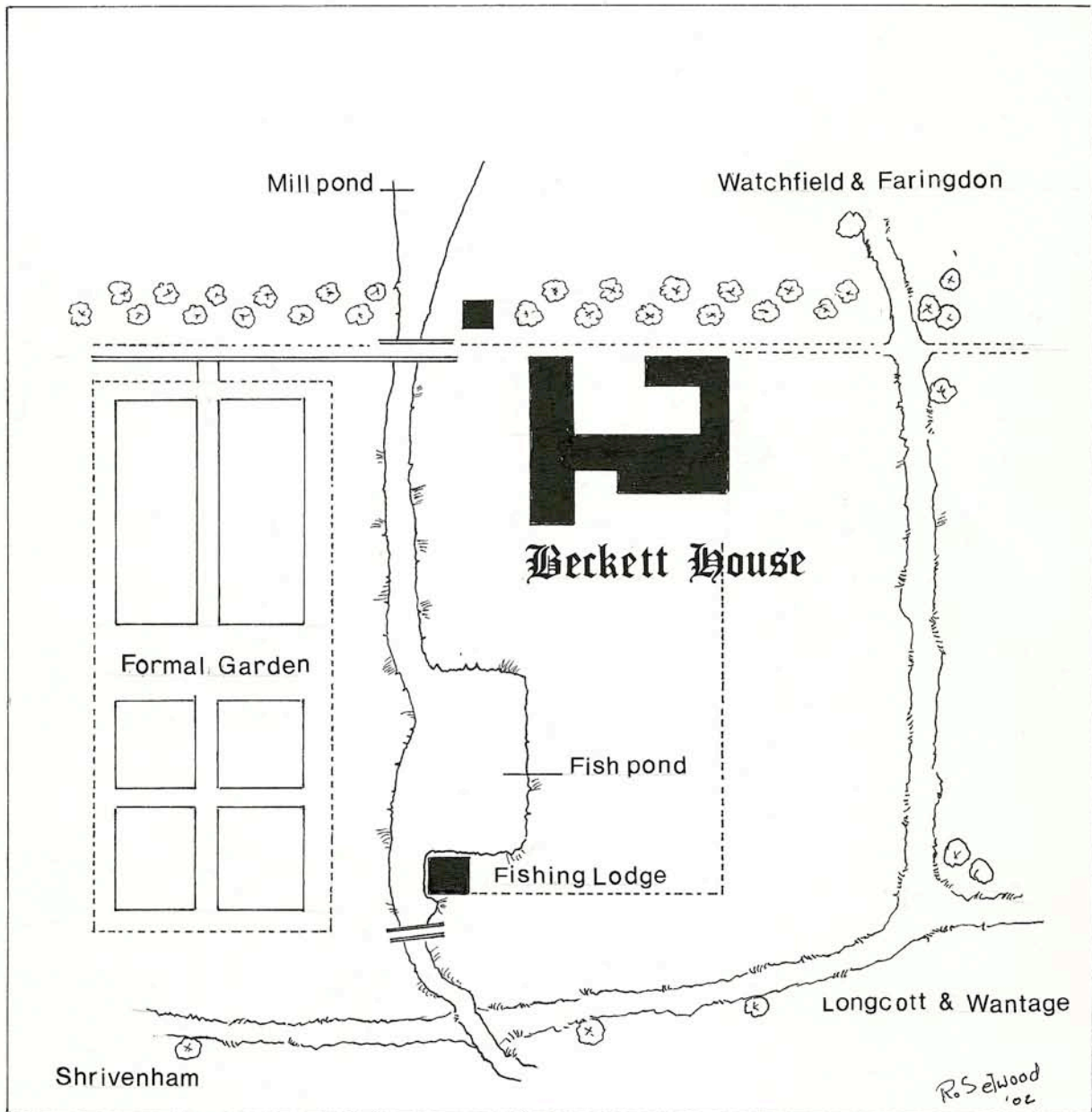
George William Barrington, the seventh Viscount held many court positions, and was raised in the English Peerage as Baron Shute of Beckett. Six years before his death, on the stipulation that failing a male heir, the Barony would pass to his brother the Honourable Percy Barrington. The next in line was Walter Bulkely, ninth Viscount Barrington and third Baron Shute of Beckett. He died in 1933. There is a memorial to him on the west wall of the church. Here you can see that he now has a second crest to his coat of arms. He was the nephew of the first Baron Shute.

In 1922 and 1927 the estate was offered for sale, and after extensive work on the roof it was sold in 1933 to the Countess of Courtown, who in 1936 sold the estate to the War Department. Here an Army barracks was built for the Royal Artillery, as part of the modernisation of the Army being created by the then Secretary of State for War, Mr Hore-Belisha. It was occupied by the American Army during the Second World War, and was an American Army university at the war's end. In the summer of 1946 it became the Military College of Science, and Beckett House became the officer's mess (it is interesting to note that the ladies entrance to the mess was by a small insignificant door hidden in a recess at the back of the building). In 1953 Her Majesty the Queen conferred the title of Royal Military College of Science on the establishment. During the course of the war years the house had been allowed to fall into disrepair, and between 1952 and 1960, work was again carried out on the roof, and the crumbling masonry made safe, and restored to its original appearance. Beckett House was closed as an officer's mess in 1969, and in 1970 it became the Library of the College. In 1985 at the cost of many thousands of pounds major building work was again carried out, renovating the property to the fine edifice it appears today. This work was completed in 1990.

In 1984 the Royal Military College of Science entered into a contractual association with Cranfield University, becoming its facility for military sciences. Beckett remains as the Library of this academic establishment

As for the family of Beckett, the Barony became extinct in 1990.

Dedicated with love to my grand-daughter Amy Elizabeth Barrett

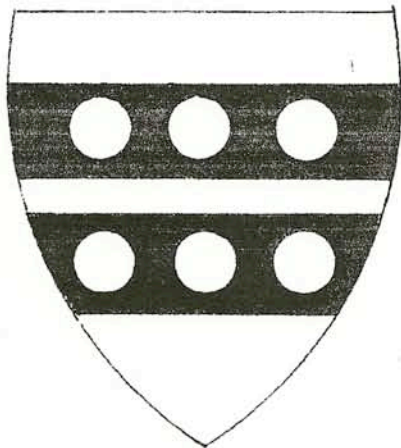


Taken from a map by

John Rocque

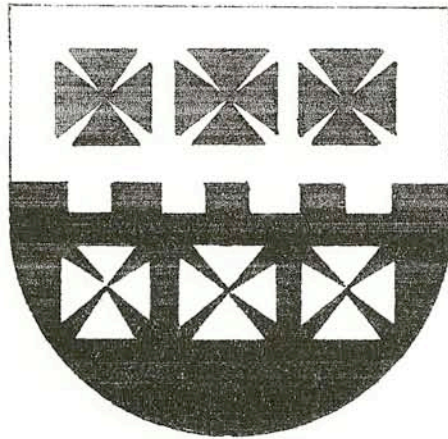
Cartographer to the Crown

1761

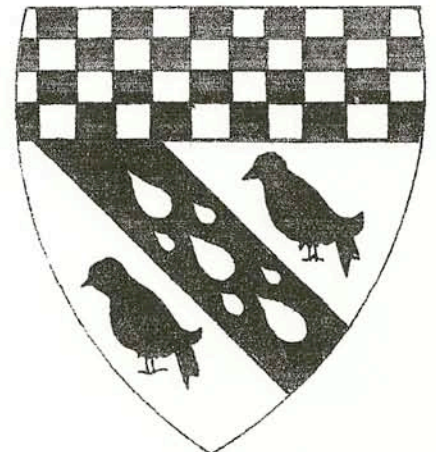


Marten

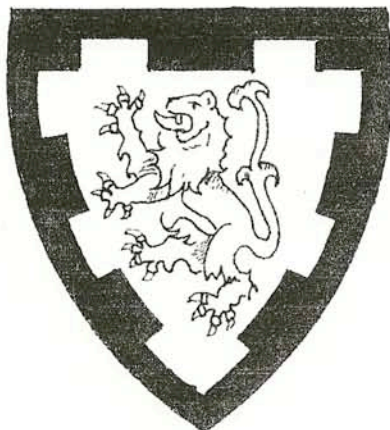
Cley Court
1663



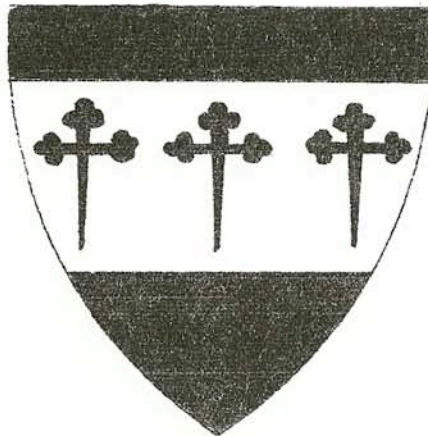
Warneford
Towersmill
1640



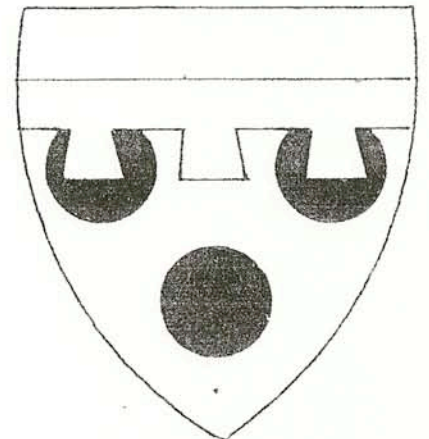
Pleydell
Earl of Radnor
Rectory
1800



Talbot
Earl of Shrewsbury
Salop
1507



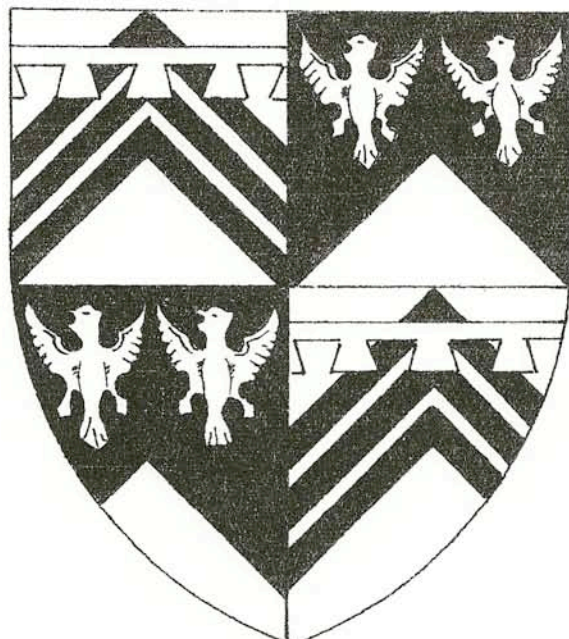
Wike
Stainswick
1220



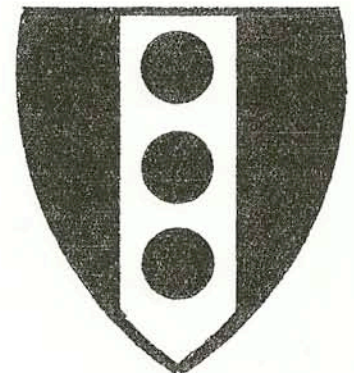
Courtney
Earl of Devon
Stalpus
1476



Fettiplace
Fernham
1596



Harrington
Beckett
1720



Wildman
Beckett
1666

R Selwood
2007