

# S.A.L.H.S

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*Stanstead Abbotts Local History Society*

**Issue 33**

Editor—Terry Collins

**January 2020**

## Hoddesdon - Saxons to Supermarkets

Our November meeting saw the welcome return of Sue Garside with her talk on the history of Hoddesdon.

Following the departure of the Romans after AD406, by which time Angles, Jutes and Saxons were already living in Britain, the local area was already relatively busy partially due to the two Roman roads leading away from London which passed through the area. Few Saxon remains have been found in Hoddesdon but a spearhead was found in Cock Lane in 1880 in a gravel pit.

From about AD800 Viking incursions began across the country and in AD894 a force of Danes rowed up the Thames and the Lea and established a fort somewhere between Hoddesdon and Hertford, most likely Ware. but they were forced back by King Alfred and had to leave their boats and get away overland.

Following the Norman conquest Hoddesdon is mentioned five times in the Domesday book and as with other towns and villages lands were given by King William to his Norman followers, as a result there were five major manors within Hoddesdon and a number of smaller ones.

The early middle ages saw a large growth in the population which meant that there was a demand in trade and the establishment of town markets. In 1256 Henry III granted a charter allowing a weekly market and an annual fair lasting four days. A market cross was erected but few records exist of the Hoddesdon market until 1468 when the fair

was held on 11th November and the days before and after. Changes to these dates were granted during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

During the Reign of Elizabeth I the manor of Hoddesdonbury was owned by Sir William Cecil and he showed great interest in his manors even though Hoddesdonbury had been let to Thomas Thorowgood. Several of the inns in the town date from this era,



The White Swan 16th Century Inn including The White Swan and The Bell. Another of them, The Star, gained some fame in 2014 when the new owners J D Wetherspoon who were having the building refurbished discovered Tudor wall paintings and oak beams, which were cleaned and are now on show to the customers.

During the 17th century there were two or three wealthy families and property owners who made their homes in the town, the Thorowgood's, Molesworth's and most importantly the Rawdon's. Marmaduke Rawdon was born in 1621 and was a man of many interests and was successful in all of them. He was a member of the City of London Council and was consulted by both James I and Charles I. When the Civil broke out he left the area and went to Oxford to join the

kings army, which he did after financing his own infantry regiment. He died soon afterwards in 1646.

Both the 18th and particularly the 19th centuries saw lots of changes to Hoddesdon and the surrounding areas as the population grew dramatically. The 19th century also saw changes to the ecclesiastical life of Hoddesdon as the chapel built in the mid 18th century was too small for the congregation so in 1864 a new church was built and dedicated the following year and this became the parish church. A tower was added in 1887 and by 1901 a peal of bells was added. Among the notable residents was William Gosse who discovered Uluru, formerly Ayers Rock in Australia. He was the son of Dr. William Gosse of Rathnore House Hoddesdon who had emigrated to Australia in 1830 and their son William became a land surveyor. In 1873 he was chosen to lead an expedition from Alice Springs to the coast and during this he found the large rock outcrop which he called Ayers Rock after the then Prime Minister of South Australia, Sir Henry Ayers.

During the 1960s the whole face of the area around the high street changed dramatically with the building of the Tower Centre which has seen its ups and downs over the years. Much of the development that has taken place has been out of keeping with surrounding buildings, the Bull Inn for instance now Peacocks store, the removal of the Tudor cottages that were destroyed when the Tower Centre development took place. Many people believe that the whole of the centre was a mistake as almost half of it is now empty.

*Terry Collins*

## Much Hadham – A Brief Tour

A brief tour of the High Street in one of our most attractive neighbouring villages was our January highlight, given to us by Michael Clarke from Much Hadham's history society.

Much Hadham, sometimes called Hadham Magna also takes in the smaller village of Little Hadham. It is a linear village following the river Ash. The village has part of a Roman Road and Roman pottery remains have been found together with others items, including a Neolithic axe on the Chaldean estate on the outskirts of the village. The main street runs parallel to the river which floods quite often, some say that it is almost an annual event. The ford in the village was the only means of crossing the river until the first bridge was built in 1767 after a flood in which a man and several horses drowned.

The name Much Hadham is Saxon, Hadda's Ham or Hading Ham, meaning one who ordains. The queen of Mercia, Ethelfled donated the lands around the village to the Bishops of London who held it as part of the bishopric. It is mentioned in the Domesday book as consisting of 4 hides, land for four ploughs, 200 pigs and was worth £20, Chaldean Estate had land for two ploughs and 50 pigs and was shown as worth thirty shillings, together the land totalled 50 acres.

It is believed that there was a church in the village in the 7th century and the present church of St Andrew dates from the 12th century in its oldest parts, but it is now mainly 15th century, it contains a number of interesting features including a monument by Henry Moore. There are also brasses of the Newce family one of the influential Much Hadham families. The village itself contains a number of 16th and 17th century timber framed house sand some 18th century gentleman's residences. One of the most important buildings is Bishops Palace, the home of the Bishops of London until 1647 and again from 1660. It remained in this ownership until 1817 when it became a private lunatic asylum until 1880 when it was sold to private tenants. The original manor house was the birthplace of Edmund Tudor, father of Henry VII. Another Hadham resident in the Palace was Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Pauls from 1517–1602, one of his claims to fame was that he invented bottled beer.

Heading south along the main road on the eastern side there are a number of 16/17 century houses, one of the first was built in 1570 which became a pub, the White Lion and then The Saracens Head. Some of these houses were used as shops. One house called Knights was used as a butchers who hung his meat between the lime trees in the street outside. Almost next is the Old Bakery and then Green Shutters both timber framed Grade 2 listed buildings. The next cottage used to be Ye Olde Fruit and Flower Shop

Opposite the Bull public house is the Hall currently the home of the Newce family. South of that are Vine cottages, originally there were four of them but they

have been enlarged so that there are now just two. Crossing the road we come to the Angel a pub built in 1450 and it remained one until the brewers Ind Coope sold it in 1970/71. It is said to be haunted and have a secret passage leading to the church. Next to this is the Bank House its name tells you what it was, adjacent to this is another timber framed cottage which used to be a saddlers and then became Much Hadham Radio which closed in the 1990's. Next we have Fletchers cottage which used to be a Bootmakers and prior to that it was another butchers. Beyond that there is the Old Drapery and then the Crown house.

The next set of buildings are known as the square a development of 18th century cottages and below that we have the Police House which ceased to serve that purpose in 1965. The next building is Bull Cottage possibly built as early as the 15th century. The adjacent buildings are the Forge and its cottage, this is now the Much Hadham museum where you can find out a lot more about the village as well as see the Tudor wall paintings, both of these buildings are from the 15th century. Next in the street is the site of the old gas holder now removed and not used since the 1920's. Beyond that we have the site of the Kings head packhorse inn one of 12 pubs and inns that used to thrive in the village now however there is just one surviving. In the centre of the village is Moor Place, the original house was built in 16th century and demolished in 1770. The building is now divided into three separate dwellings including the stables, some of the land adjacent has also been made available for further development.

Moving on we finish our little tour of Much Hadham at the war memorial, this is appropriate as the village paid a part in both World Wars. In the first World War there was a Red Cross Hospital in the village and in the second World War there was a Prisoner of War Camp which held both Italian and German prisoners later it held American Soldiers preparing for the D Day landings, the camp finally closed in 1950.

*Terry Collins*



Bishops Palace Much Hadham



## Glenmire Windmill by Stuart Moye

A large seventy foot tall windmill once existed in Glenmire Stanstead Abbots and was built by Richard Hunt a rich businessman who from 1875 lived in the prestigious Stanstead Hall in the High Street. It was in fact the biggest windmill of its type ever built in Hertfordshire. The Glenmire Windmill was located on the banks of the millstream at the Millers Lane end of the Glenmire Terrace land where Windmill Cottage now stands. A storage building was also built connected to the windmill and extended over the area occupied by the rest of the riverside terrace.

Available evidence dates the building of the windmill to after 1877 but before 1887. This was at a time when windmills were becoming uneconomic and going out of use. Given this and the fact it was built in a valley where wind speeds were reduced, it was a case of a very rich local businessman building this windmill as an indulgence in an enjoyable but very expensive hobby. His parents had run a windmill in Much Hadham in his youth and it was here he learnt the trade of flour milling. A trade he was to later carry on with both at Mardock Mill and the Roydon Road Mill in the village. Richard Hunt was in fact to build another very large windmill in Much Hadham in 1892 after he had moved back to the village of his childhood, on his retirement.

The Glenmire Windmill along with its associated storage building and land were put up for sale by auction with many other properties and land owned by Richard Hunt in 1891. The auction was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June at the Pied Bull but the windmill failed to reach its reserve price. However he was able to sell the windmill privately some four months later. Rather sadly the impressive windmill did not last long after the sale. It was demolished and the riverside row of cottages we know today in Glenmire were built on the site, being completed and occupied before 1896.



## Hailey Brick and Tile Works by Stuart Moye



A picture dated to about 1904 looking from the brickworks east towards the Hoddesdon Road which is marked by the line of trees in the middle distance. Cranbourne School was later built just beyond where the right hand row of wagons are standing on the loop line.

The area we know today as the One Hundred Acre Estate along the Hoddesdon Road was once the site of the St. Margaret' Sand and Gravel Company and the Hailey Brick and Tile Works. These industries began sometime in the 1870s with the products moved out by horse and cart. The Brick and Tile Works did not fare well financially and was put up for auction through the bankruptcy courts in April 1889. The sale included 150,000 red facing bricks and 250,000 unfinished bricks which gives an idea of the scale of the operation at that time.

Under new ownership production rose and in 1899 a long railway siding was built to the Brick Works from the Hertford Branch Line with storage sidings near the main railway and spurs off into the various sand and gravel quarries. The point where the line crossed the New River is marked to this day by a concrete sill in the east bank, which once supported the bridge. A little further on the rails passed beneath the Hoddesdon Road with the remains of a cutting beyond just discernible today on the left as one turns

into Bridleway South. Further on the site of the industrial activity now lies hidden at depth beneath the housing estate and Cranbourne Primary School.

The considerable traffic generated from these industries was hauled by horse along the siding one or two at a time. Many of the bricks were conveyed by the main line railway to the North London Suburbs and used in building the many new houses being erected there. The two industries appear to have ceased operating during the Great War with the tracks removed in the 1920's with the land fully turned over to nurseries.

Long after many had forgotten these industries and railway, workmen digging a new drain discovered a large void beneath where the old bridge had allowed the rails to pass under the Hoddesdon Road. The bridge it was discovered had not ever been fully filled in and the road was still supported on the thick iron plates of the 1899 bridge above the abandoned track bed.

## Christmas Party 2019

Although the numbers attending were slightly down those who did come along enjoyed an evening of, song poetry and quizzes, together with enough food and drink to feed more than twice the number of people who were there.

The music and song was provided as usual by Lynne Heraud and Pat Turner, all the songs they sang were worth listening to and they varied from bawdy to tender and they thoroughly deserved the loud applause they received.

There were three quizzes to keep the brain ticking over, firstly a 25 question General Knowledge quiz with a Christmas theme, then there was an identification quiz with a number of photographs of famous people when they were children. Some were easy (Boris Johnson) and others more difficult. Finally there were a number of flags strung along the wall to identify, not very easy believe me.

Two members also recited poems, the first was by Imogen White who gave us a very thought provoking and enchaining piece entitled "Soup" written by Salena Godden. This was followed by Terry Collins reading "Christmas 1914" which was a Mike Harding song about the Christmas truce during WW1. Both pieces were well received by the audience.

The evening culminated with the usual Christmas raffle of many prizes making a profit of £57 for the society's funds.

*Glenis Collins*

## Picture from the Past



The Oak Public House, a flooded High Street and Norma Archer's mother. Picture taken circa 1952/54. Note the painted pub sign of an oak tree. This car's considerable driver is driving in the centre of the road to avoid wetting pedestrians. (Courtesy of Mrs. Archer's family)

Picture taken from Ron Dales research files

*Just in case you have forgotten how things used to be*

*Terry Collins*

### The SALHS Committee

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### Data Protection Act

In accordance with the above act we have to advise that the Society holds information on computer in respect of each member. This information is used for routine membership purposes only and remains confidential.

### Forthcoming events

February	14th	2020	Policing in Hertfordshire by Nik Pringle
March	13th	2020	The Stort Story by Richard Thomas
April	3rd	2020	Timber Framed Buildings by Helen Gibson
May	1st	2020	AGM
June	12th	2020	An Evening with Old Relics by Tim Turner
July	10th	2020	St Albans South Signal Box by Tony Furse

Unless stated otherwise all meetings are at the Parish Hall at 7.30pm  
Members Free. Non Members £2 Tea, Coffee and biscuits included