

IV. 75



From the Tithe Map, of 1842.

FOREWORD

After courses of study in the Winter of 1951 - 1952 on Essex Geography led by Mr. M. R. Innes and a Local Study by Mr. K. Brierley, followed by further independent research, the Hatfield Peverel Branch of the Workers Educational Association presents this booklet, published in conjunction with an exhibition on the history of the village. An effort has been made to record some aspects of life in Hatfield Peverel during the last hundred and fifty years.

Readers should refer for a history of the Church to Mr. A. T. Steele's "History of the Priory and Parish Church" and to Miss T. Hope's "The Township of Hatfield Peverel" for earlier details of the village. We gratefully acknowledge any information drawn from these books.

We are grateful for the facilities offered by the Essex Record Office, for notes on the village supplied by Mr. A. J. Brown and to the Vicar and the Chairman of the Parish Council; and the Headmaster for access to Church, Parish and School records.

Particular thanks are given to all those people who have searched their memories and to Mr. W. T. Clarke and Mrs. J. Steel for their zeal in helping us to re-create the past. Without such co-operation in the village, this booklet would not have been possible.

HATFIELD PEVEREL: THE NATURAL BACKGROUND

Hatfield Peverel is situated in Mid-Essex some two-thirds of the distance from Chelmsford towards Witham. Disregarding minor irregularities, the parish is approximately square in shape and covers about seven square miles. The Roman Road, London to Colchester, and the River Ter form a crude cross whose centre lies somewhat west of the centre of the parish.

The highest point in the parish, about midway between Whitelands and Pitfield Barns is but 157 feet above mean sea level and there are only small areas in the South and South East below the 50 feet contour, so that the maximum height-range over the seven square miles of the parish is little more than 100 feet. That being so, high ground is nowhere a dominant landscape feature; it is the valleys that one must stress in seeking for what is outstanding in the physical background. That of the Chelmer in the South and the Blackwater in the South East are landscape features out of all proportion to the meagreness of their streams or of the heights and slopes involved. The much greater heights beyond the Chelmer and Blackwater Valleys give to Hatfield Peverel some attractive views and house situations. The River Ter, though a lesser stream than the Chelmer to which it is tributary near Cardfield's Farm, has a valley which nevertheless supplies the Priory with a gracious South Westerly vista, and which near Hatfield Place occasions one of the major downsweeps on the London-Colchester road.

The surface geology and consequently the character of the soils in Hatfield Peverel is of considerable variety. London Clay, a heavy intractable brown material which is the bedrock of Essex as a whole, appears only in the Ter Valley, approximately South of Hatfield Wick. It has been exposed in this area by the long-continued damcutting of the Ter Valley. Elsewhere it is buried beneath newer deposits of utterly different character. These are four in number; three of them are glacial, that is, they were carried to their existing location by the moving ice-masses of the Great Ice Ages, and perhaps by the flood waters which must have attended the disappearance of the ice. Resting immediately upon the London Clay, and exposed on either side of the Ter as well as on either side of the Chelmer is Glacial Sand and Gravel. On top of the sand and gravel, and therefore remaining only along the Eastern and Western extremities of the parish, i.e. away from the Ter Valley, is the Boulder Clay, a stiff clay, which though heavy is less intractable than the London Clay and contains numerous rock fragments especially pieces of chalk which have given it its name. Finally, West of the Ter and also North of the Roman Road, are areas of Brick-Earth, a fine loam whose mode of origin is uncertain, but which may have accumulated as silt on the floor of an Ice-Age or post-Ice-Age lake which has since dried out. The fourth deposit is Alluvium or "flood-mud"! This occurs only in the King's and Wald's End and Cardfields area of the parish, where the flats on either side of the Chelmer have slowly built up into a considerable

thickness of silt, film by film, as flood has succeeded flood. It will be recalled that this area is still liable to flooding.

Weather records have been kept for many years at Langford Waterworks in the Chelmer Valley, only just outside the Southern border of the parish. At that point, the average yearly total of rainfall, as measured over the past 22 years, works out at 21.04 inches. During this period the yearly amount has ranged from a low of 13.165 inches in 1933 to a high of 31.4 inches in 1939. By way of comparison, the average yearly total for Plymouth is 36.2 inches, while that for Valencia in South Western Ireland reaches 55.6 inches. Hardly any English areas have averages lower than the 21.04 inches for Langford, so whatever our views as residents, Hatfield Peverel is most certainly on the "dry side" of the country.

Addendum

A well boring made at Hatfield Place in 1900 is interesting in indicating the strata. The boring was made on the site of an old well 35 feet deep and below that depth the following were found, the dimension shown being the thickness of each layer from this 35 ft. downwards:

London Clay: Common 53 ft., Blue 67 ft., Grey Sand and Stone 1½ ft. Grey Sand and Clay 15½ ft., followed by Reading and Thanet Beds of: Sand 14 ft., mostly Clay 9 ft., Green Sand 33 ft., Grey Sand 4 ft., Green Sand 1 ft., Grey Sand 41 ft., Green Sand 5 ft., followed by: Chalk and Flints 61 ft., to the full depth of the bore at 340 ft.

It is interesting to note that the Chalk Bed, commencing here at 279 ft. below the surface, comes out to the surface in the Saffron Walden area.

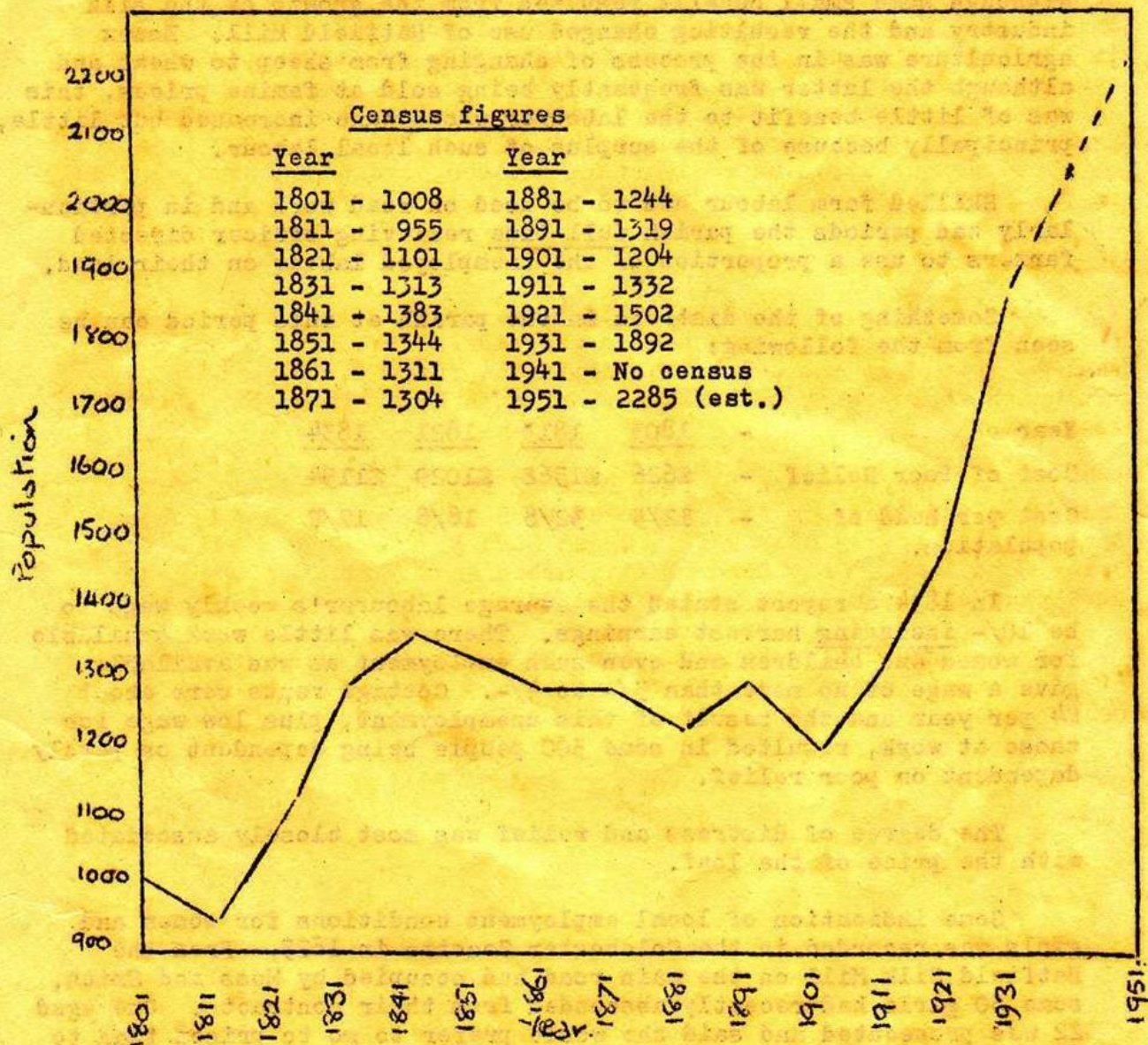
THE PINK HORSE

A detachment of the Bedfordshire Yeomanry was billeted in the village for three years in the 1914 - 18 War. When it was ordered abroad an officer who rode a white horse is reputed to have asked if anything could be done to make it less conspicuous. The story goes that the farriers painted the horse with a mixture of permanganate of potash, but unfortunately in the morning the horse was pink!

THE CHANGING COMMUNITY

(1) - POPULATION

The Variable Population



The first census figures are for 1801. The end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries were bad times for Essex. The American Wars had taxed the country and the process was continued with the Napoleonic Wars. The country was most vulnerable to invasion and approximately one fourteenth of the nation's population was under arms. Prior to the Napoleonic Wars, the flourishing wool industry -

Witham being the nearest centre - which affected sheep farming and the home occupations of spinning was on the decline. The 1790's saw the Bread Riots and by 1801 the quartern loaf cost 1/8d, black bread only being eaten by the peasant.

The return of peace in 1815 saw an increase in population common to the country as a whole but little increase in rural prosperity, although some small benefit resulted from the growth of the silk industry and the resulting changed use of Hatfield Mill. Essex agriculture was in the process of changing from sheep to wheat and although the latter was frequently being sold at famine prices, this was of little benefit to the labourer whose wage increased but little, principally because of the surplus of such local labour.

Skilled farm labour had to be used on road work and in particularly bad periods the parish full time relieving officer directed farmers to use a proportion of the unemployed labour on their land.

Something of the distress in the parish at this period can be seen from the following:

Year	-	1803	1813	1821	1834
Cost of Poor Relief	-	£626	£1562	£1029	£1154
Cost per head of population.	-	12/5	32/8	18/8	17/7

In 1834 a report stated the average labourer's weekly wage to be 10/- including harvest earnings. There was little work available for women and children and even such employment as was available gave a wage of no more than 3/- to 4/-. Cottage rents were about £4 per year and the result of this unemployment, plus low wage for those at work, resulted in some 300 people being dependent or partly dependent on poor relief.

The degree of distress and relief was most closely associated with the price of the loaf.

Some indication of local employment conditions for women and girls was recorded in the Colchester Gazette in 1825. From the Hatfield Silk Mill on the main road and occupied by Moss and Smith, some 50 girls had recently absconded from their contracts. One aged 22 was prosecuted and said she would prefer to go to prison than to return. They worked six days per week from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. with half hour breaks for breakfast and dinner for 3/6 in the first year and 4/- in the second year of their contract. She paid 1/- for lodging, 2/6 for food and clothes, had little but bread to eat and was too tired to carry on. A sentence of 7 days hard labour was imposed.

In spite of these conditions the village population increased until the early 1840's when work on railway construction, the drift to the towns and particularly to the north where, although frightful living conditions became common, wages were much higher because of the expansion of the mine, factory and cotton mill began a decline which was further aided by the emigration which became so popular.

There was a slump in the silk industry from 1846 - 48 and a general decline from 1860 which would lessen the employment opportunities in the village for women and girls, although temporary relief was possibly provided by the straw plaiting industry (reputed to be introduced into the country by Cobbett) which became a big household occupation of the 1870's. For a period farming and living conditions improved, but from 1875 onwards the village must have felt the collapse of the English farming after a succession of bad harvests and the general importation of American corn.

In spite of the falling mortality, due to the increasing efficiency of medical services, the village population continued to decline until the coming of peace after the Boer War, since which time there has been an almost continuous rate of increase.

The greater use of the road, the growth of industry in Chelmsford, Witham and other towns, the local developments in fruit, dairy farming and agricultural machinery supplies, the alternative types of local employment through railway, garages, furniture making and upholstery etc., have combined to give a prosperity greater than in any previous decade.

In its well placed position, with good transport and generally well developed public utility services of electricity, water and drainage, with gas expected in 1953, the village has become a place in which people now seek to live.

THE CHANGING COMMUNITY

(2) - OCCUPATIONS

Although the figures below cover only the last century, they do provide a guide to the changes which have occurred since the almost self-supporting community of earlier times. More specialised activities and improved communications develop a village much more dependent on the efforts of the outside world.

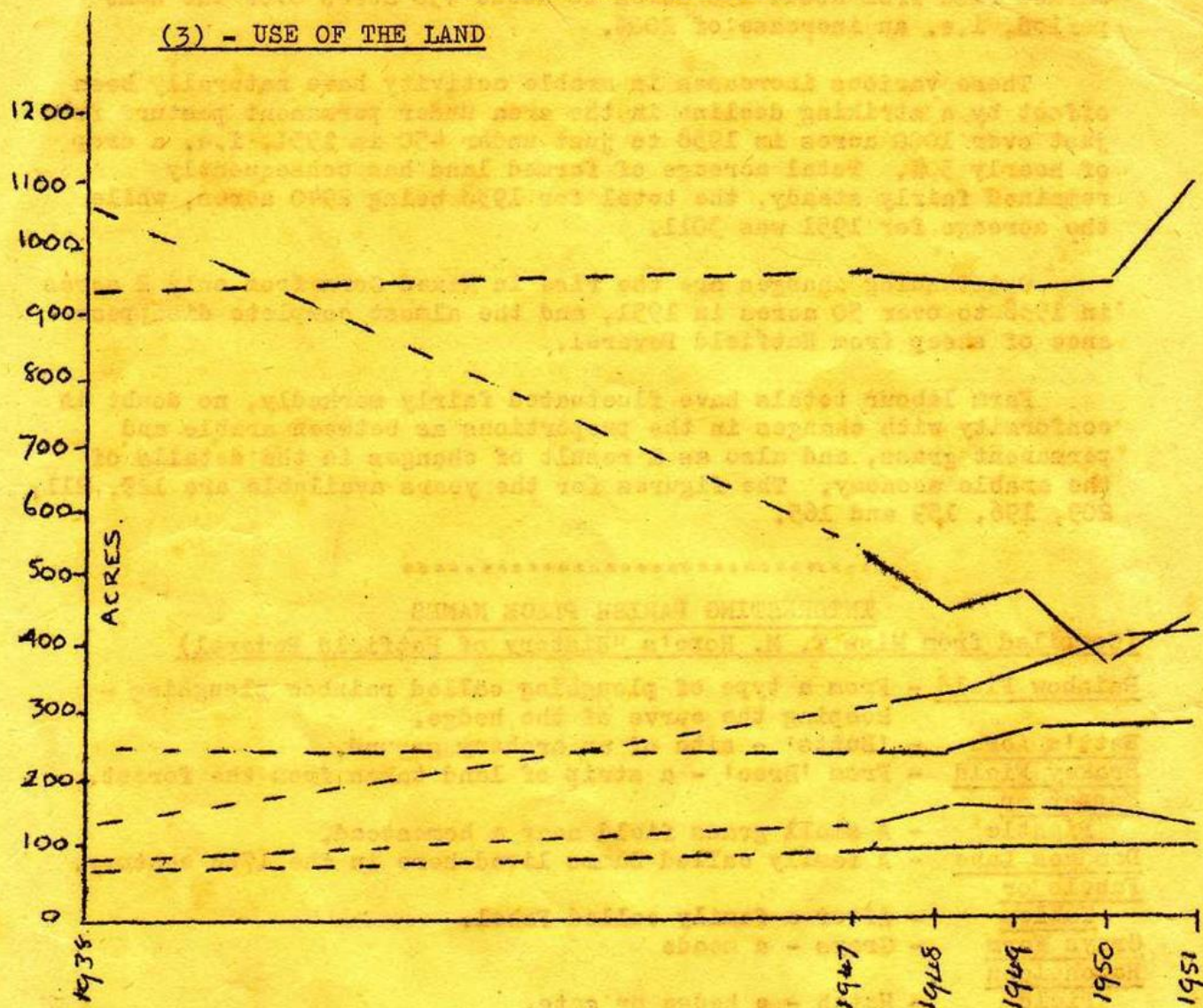
HOW TRADES AND PROFESSIONS CHANGE

Trade or Profession in the Village	1848 Wright's Directory	1861 White's Directory	1881 Steven's Directory	1952 W.E.A. Survey
Saddler	1	2	1	0
Wheelwright	2	2	2	1
Draper	1	1	2	0
Farmer	only 2 ment'd	24	16	22
Miller	Not mentioned	2	2	0
Surgeon	1	0	0	0
Veterinary Surgeon	1	1	1	0
Licensed Victualler	4	4	3	6
Rat Catcher	0	0	1	0
Boot and Shoe Maker	2	2	3	1
Coal Merchant	0	0	1	0
Butcher	2	1	2	2
Beer Retailer	5	4	5	0
Chimney Sweep	0	0	1	0
Carrier	None mentioned		1	1
Grocer (Shopkeepers)	5	1	4	8
Sheep Dresser	0	0	1	0
Painter	0	0	1	2
Postmaster	1	1	1	1
Baker	2	3	1	2
Blacksmith	0	2	2	0
Bricklayer	1	2	2	3?
Horse Slaughterer	0	0	1	0
Builder	1	0	1	1
Station Master	1	0	1	1
Brickmaker	0	2	1	0
Brewer	2	1	1	0
Carpenter	2	3	0	3?
Hairdresser	2	0	0	1
Greengrocer	0	0	0	3
Town Crier	1	0	0	0
Fishmonger	1	0	0	0
Schoolteacher	2	2	1	5

In 1952 out of the total estimated population of 2285, 202 work in Agriculture, 217 in Industry, 82 in Shops, 47 in Offices, 32 in the professions, 54 in Public Services, 34 in domestic work and 14 in the Forces. There are 250 Old Age Pensioners and 39 retired people.

THE CHANGING COMMUNITY

(3) - USE OF THE LAND



Figures relating to Land Use were obtained by courtesy of the Statistics Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture. Statistics covering 1938, and 1947 to 1951 inclusive, enabled us to compare pre-war with post-war land utilization, and also to note trends during the post war period.

Total grain crops have shown an increase in acreage of about 15% from about 950 in 1938 to just over 1100 in 1951. This is accounted for by increases in wheat and barley, although one notes an appreciable decrease in oats. Potatoes and sugar beet have also shown appreciable increases, while "other roots" have remained fairly static. Orchards have increased from 230 acres in 1938 to 270 in 1951, i.e. a rise of about 16%. Fodder grasses have shown a

marked rise from about 150 acres to about 450 acres over the same period, i.e. an increase of 200%.

These various increases in arable activity have naturally been offset by a striking decline in the area under permanent pasture from just over 1000 acres in 1938 to just under 450 in 1951, i.e. a drop of nearly 50%. Total acreage of farmed land has consequently remained fairly steady, the total for 1938 being 2940 acres, while the acreage for 1951 was 3011.

Outstanding changes are the rise in Mixed Corn from only 2 acres in 1938 to over 50 acres in 1951, and the almost complete disappearance of sheep from Hatfield Peverel.

Farm labour totals have fluctuated fairly markedly, no doubt in conformity with changes in the proportions as between arable and permanent grass, and also as a result of changes in the details of the arable economy. The figures for the years available are 129, 211, 209, 196, 159 and 165.

INTERESTING PARISH PLACE NAMES

(Compiled from Miss T. M. Hope's "History of Hatfield Peverel")

- Rainbow Field - From a type of ploughing called rainbow ploughing - keeping the curve of the hedge.
- Bett's Acre - 'Butts' - site of an archery ground.
- Brakey Field - From 'Brec' - a strip of land taken from the forest.
- Hoppet or Pightle - A small grass field near a homestead.
- Damaces Lane - A family called Damms lived here in the 17th century.
- Fabels or Tables - After a family called Fabel.
- Grays Farm - Grays - a meade
- Hatcheldon Field - Hatch - a hedge or gate.
- Haywoods - An enclosed wood.
- Herrings Wood - From Herrige, a former tenant of Mowden Hall?
- Hosiers - After Margaret Hosyer, a widow of 1319.
- Maiden Shot - Plough land, possibly to provide dowries for young girls.
- The Mocr - Waste, barren, or swampy ground.
- Rainbirds - Reynberd - Name mentioned in 1499.
- Saffron Garden - Was Saffron, used as a yellow dye for wool, grown here?
- Shaen's Meadow - The owner of Crix in the 18th/19th centuries.
- Vineyard - Mr. Worraker attempted grape cultivation here about 70 years ago.
- Windmill Downs - On the North side of Church Road, pronounced Willer merdowns, a field which showed a circular mound where a mill may have stood.

EDUCATION IN HATFIELD PEVEREL

The earliest recorded mention of any school in the village was as a result of the bequest of Sir Edward Alleyne who, in 1638, left £100 for land in trust for the schooling of poor children. Together with small sums the whole was invested in lands and cottages, and of the annual income £5 was paid to the Schoolmistress who had the Feoffees School for eleven children. For reasons not known, the school ceased to exist and the income was then used to assist boys in their apprenticeship.

Though detailed records of these are not now available in the village, a Parliamentary Report of 1833 shows Hatfield Peverel to have 8 day schools, including a Charity School. This and others had a proportion of children whose fees were paid by 'benevolent ladies'. Between them were shared 49 boys and 109 girls and considering education was not compulsory and the population of the village only some 1100, these totals at school must be considered as high.

Doubtless a number were the famous "Dames Schools" and some can be remembered in the late 19th century by some inhabitants. One at the Temperance Hotel was conducted by Mrs. Death, the wife of the ratcatcher, another by Miss Evans in one of the three weatherboarded cottages now replaced by the Springfield House stable block. A third was conducted in a cottage opposite the Crown and this still contains the old school bench. The biggest one was held in a long low room South of Stuarts' Cottages and this had sleeping quarters at the back for Miss Hogg, the Schoolmistress.

In the village there is now one Private School known as Miss Isted's Commercial School. In addition to this there is the Voluntary School, catering for children to 11 years of age, children over that age going to the Modern School in Witham, the Grammar Schools in Braintree, Chelmsford and Maldon, or the Technical School in Chelmsford.

The first building of the present Voluntary School, consisting of one room and the School House, were erected in 1851 with money provided by the National Society and a local benefactor, the Reverend Charles Townsend of Berwicks. The school is well sited in the village although a pond preceded the school at this point. The site was presented in 1849 by Peter and John Wright of the Priory. The charity of the benefactors has been a doubtful blessing to succeeding generations because of the drainage problems which have almost constantly risen. The original buildings were enlarged in 1872, in 1884 and again in 1920 and the efforts of the village to improve the school were hastened by the comments of H. M. Inspectors. The original School House is no longer living accommodation but continues in use for Staff and Stores etc.

The School ceased to cater for 11 plus children on the opening of the Witham Modern School in 1937 and it is planned that the building, now very cramped for present day requirements, will eventually be replaced by one to be erected on a much larger site near the Priory entrance and drive.

The earliest available accounts of life in the School are of 1870 and make interesting reading. A good account of the general development has been compiled by a former master, Mr. J. W. R. Argent and this is kept in the School. There are, however, some other aspects recorded in the last century worth relating and which make interesting comparisons with conditions of to-day.

Education was made compulsory, but not free for most children, in 1877 and children had to pay 2d per week. The village made light of Parliamentary Regulation however, and in 1878 the Attendance Officer made his first appearance, but he was not alone in attempts to improve attendance. At times the Headmaster sallied forth and returned with truants, it being recorded that one was found 'lying in ambush in the Shrubbery' brought back to school and publicly and severely punished. The Managers also prepared schemes, but all these attempts had little success in raising attendance above 50%.

Work associated with the land took heavy toll of school attendance. There was Pea-picking, which in the 1870's appeared to continue from mid-June to early August, harvest, for which the school closed, followed by gleaning which caused great drops in attendance. But these do not complete the reasons for such absences: Stone gathering, bird scaring and the acorn harvest appear as annual reasons. (The time spent on acorn gathering spreads over a fortnight and is an interesting indication of the much greater wooded area of that period). Possibly the most interesting reason for bad attendance was the staying away to pick up wood frequently blown from trees by the high winds of the previous night!

The inevitability of absence for pea-picking eventually resulted in a 3 - 4 weeks' holiday being granted, to be followed after a short period of return to school by the harvest holiday of four weeks. The holidays were arranged to suit the needs rather than to suit the calendar, and one year the period of school between the two holidays was merely one day!

The Agricultural Children's Act of 1874 did little to improve attendances although the regulations were pressed as far as possible. At one later period the prosecution of two parents for non-attendance of children led to a remarkable renewed interest in school by the village children as a whole.

There were other causes of poor attendance. In present days, when well clad and well nourished children generally make their way

to school regardless of weather conditions, it is interesting to note the earlier effect of rain and snow on attendance. On one occasion 5 children only attended, because of rain. At another time a group returned when the rainy period ceased, including one who had not been seen at school for three months. Even heavy showers caused big attendance drops and on more than one occasion school was cancelled because of the severity of the weather.

A third cause of absence was the epidemics which swept through the village to a degree now unknown. On one occasion a measles epidemic reduced attendance from 124 to 39, when the school was closed by the Medical Office. Mumps, measles, influenza and typhoid in turn affected the attendance so severely that the school was closed at times.

One interesting but unusual cause of disturbed routine was the renovation carried out on the Church, and during this period, from September 1872 to November 1873, the normal Church services appear to have been held in the school. It is on record that at least one wedding was solemnised in school during this period!

The lack of qualified staff, a condition typical of the period, must have been a further contributory cause of irregular attendance. Where to-day staffing shortages have been minimised by the introduction of the Emergency Training Scheme, in the 1870's the problem was met by the use of pupil teachers whose special training was provided by the Headmaster, usually from 7 - 8 a.m. each school day, and by the use of paid monitors, suitable children who had completed the highest standard in school. These staffing problems were frequent. In 1877 there were 150 children with a staff of Headmaster and one pupil teacher only, but at the end of the year there was no pupil teacher and the master had to rely on the assistance of paid monitors. The state of efficiency of the staff and school was examined yearly by Her Majesty's Inspector. The school grant depended on the success of this examination and occasional comments were most pointed.

A restricted and formal syllabus, again typical of the time, did little to encourage interest. School subjects consisted mostly of work directly associated with the three "R's" although needlework occupied the girls most of each afternoon. Songs which were learnt included: "Ring the bell, Watchman", "Watching for Pa", "The Violet", "The Eagle", "Work while you may" and "Light House Keeper". The set poems had similar titles on many occasions and if one would wish to make any comparison between school in that period and to-day, perhaps the best answer could be found in a study of school photographs available of the two periods.

VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

(1) - RELIGIOUS BODIES.

The Church of England. What is now St. Andrew's Parish Church was founded as a Priory by Ingelrica and William Peverel, her son, at the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th centuries. Of the original church only the nave remains, the remainder having been destroyed by fire in 1231. The present East window was made in the Western arch of the Tower, the North aisle was added in the 13th and 15th centuries and the South aisle at the Restoration in 1872 - 73.

The domestic buildings adjoined the South side of the Church and those remaining after the Dissolution in 1536 were demolished at the building of the present Priory in 1764.

The Parish Room in Maldon Road was erected in 1895 at a cost of £547, of which £200 was given by Mr. William Tufnell in accord with the wish of his late wife that such a room be available. Small additions have been made later. (The Village Hall, opened since, has made further indoor recreational facilities available). The Mothers' Union was commenced in 1920 and now has some 60 members. The Parochial Church Council of 19 members was instituted in 1922.

Methodist. Began in the village in 1818 through the preachings of Mr. George Shelley and his brother John. They were assisted by a noted figure "Dicky" Belsham who sometimes came riding two donkeys tandem. The first Chapel was a Mission Hall, built in 1826 on the site of the present 'Urban Cottages'. Public meetings and 'Penny Readings' were also held here. Mr. Edward Cook of Crix, a Non-conformist, was a benefactor in this and in the building of the present Methodist Church in 1875.

Singing was led by a flute played by Mr. Eve, a clarinet played by Mr. Langstone and concertina by Mr. Oliver. The flute and clarinet players used to be part of the Parish Church orchestra before this was displaced by the installation of the organ.

Roman Catholic Mass is offered in the Chapel of the Hatfield Priory, which since 1938 has been the International Headquarters of the Mariann Hill Mission Society, one indirect effect of this being to make the name of the village known in those many parts of the world where the Society has its activities.

Salvation Army. This was formed some 62 years ago, the first officer being a woman, Captain Sadd. The earliest known meeting place was over the old coach-house which is now Mr. Bright's furnishings shop near the Duke of Wellington. The present meeting house in Maldon Road replaced an earlier one on the same site. The musical traditions of the village are part preserved in the excellent Army Band.

(2) - ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES AND SERVICES

The responsibility for the administration of the village is shared by the County Council, the Braintree Rural District Council and the Parish Council.

PARISH COUNCIL.

(NOTE: The Municipal Reform Act of 1835 brought democratic local government by elected representatives to the Boroughs, but it was not until 1888, when agricultural depression had denuded the countryside of much of its former population, that the electoral system was applied to County areas and even later, in 1894 to Urban, Rural and Parish Districts. The function of the Parish Council might be described as the guardian of parish welfare, watching that the responsibilities of the Rural District and the County Councils are carried out by those bodies, that parish rights are preserved and necessities (such as transport services) are efficiently provided by appropriate bodies.)

The Council consists of nine members and was first elected at a Parish Meeting held in the School in December 1894, the first Council meeting being in January 1895. Election was acceptable by show of hands at the annual Parish Meeting, but it was a right that a poll be taken in the event of supported challenge of this election method. This right was exercised at the first meeting and as a result of the poll, those elected appeared to give a fair cross section of those in village life, there being two farmers, blacksmith, labourer, banker, merchant, coachbuilder and bricklayer appointed.

Interest in the elections varied greatly as these figures show:

<u>Year</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>1896</u>	<u>1897</u>	<u>1898</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>1910</u>
Nominated	17	18	14	9	10	12	8	16	11
Method of election	Poll	Poll	Hands	-	Hands	Poll	-	Hands	Hands
Highest Vote	149	142	75	-	53	145	-	68	41
Lowest successful Vote	89	106	56	-	31	76	-	35	13

(In 1904 a further parishioner was invited to join to make up the required number).

The Council has at various times been instrumental in securing improved village amenities and the following early activities are selected from the original minute book.

- 1895. Request for altered scheme of charities supervision
- 1896. Request for improved station facilities
- 1897. Request for improved postal facilities
- 1898. Campaign against gipsy squatting on the Green
- 1899. Demand for improved surface condition of the Street
- 1900. Request for midday postal delivery
- 1901. Approval for siting of pump on the Green.

Recommendations for Technical Classes are made at intervals.

Footpath improvements, drainage problems, Peoffee Charity, coal distribution and watch on water supplies represented yearly activities. To these were later added demands for improved housing conditions and it is generally obvious that the Council has from its early days broadly and efficiently interpreted its responsibilities as the guardian of parish welfare.

(3) - LOCAL SERVICES

Fire Service. There are no records available of any organisation prior to 1916 when fire badly damaged the two cottages (formerly the Vicarage) at the Priory gate. After this, fire arrangements were made for the attendance of the Witham Brigade, the fee being paid by insurance companies. The engine used to originally come drawn by horses. Volunteers on the spot manned the pumps fixed to the engine (and there was keen competition for the half crowns which rewarded such service). In May 1939 a village fire team was formed with 10 occasional firemen; these were warned for duty by the firing of two maroons set off by Mr. E. G. Claydon, who would then go round in his car collecting the firemen. The fire-fighting equipment consisted of a small pump and truck but this has been replaced by an equipped lorry and trailer pump, and the maroons replaced by the siren.

The headquarters continue to be in the old forge - the firemen, part-time, being paid a retaining fee and fire-attendance remuneration.

Police. The village lock-up formerly existed in the right-hand side of Station Road and is shown on the plan of the Great Eastern Railway dated 1837. There is now a police station with a staff of two, these being assisted by special constables locally recruited.

Nursing Association. This was started in 1904 and intended to be self-supporting. The Nurse's salary was £33. 2. 6. and lodging £11. 3. 0. but expenditure was higher than income and the appointment was terminated in September 1907. It was re-commenced in October 1908 when fees were fixed at 1d. per visit or 6d. per week. The present bungalow for Nurse was given by Mr. Butler immediately before the First World War.

Following the Health Act of 1949 the services of the Association were taken over by the County Council.

County Library. A branch of the County Library, the successor to the original village library, commenced in 1884, is open each week.

(4) - SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BODIES.

Women's Institute. A preliminary notice in the Parish Magazine of January 1918 was followed by the first meeting in February. Sixty

members were present in the March and a committee of eight was formed. A most successful Eighteenth Century Fair was held in the grounds of Crix in May, 1928 and during the last war jam-making, fruit bottling, the running of a local canteen jointly with the W.V.S., together with classes for evacuees, were amongst the activities.

Scouts and Wolf Cubs. Scouts commenced in 1912 and Cubs in 1920. There have been breaks due to various causes but are again functioning.

Guides and Brownies. Guides commenced in 1920 and after a war break the company was re-formed in 1939. The Brownie Pack functions and a Sea Ranger group ceased in 1951.

British Legion. The men's section started in 1928 has a present membership of about 60. The Women's section started in 1929 and has a membership of some 120. Many social events are arranged and needy cases helped.

R.A.O.B. The Sir Frederick Lodge is held at the Wheatsheaf. It was started in 1923 and follows the usual custom of the Order. Members number approximately 100, to which should be added the women's section. Amongst its public activities is the organising of an annual dinner to the old people of the village.

The Hatfield Peverel and Ulting Horticultural Society has a long history in the village. It was a flourishing organisation at the time the earliest records are available (1906). The Annual Show was re-started in 1951 as part of the Festival of Britian celebrations.

The National Union of Agricultural Workers. A village branch was formed in 1941 and has a present membership of some 50.

(5) - SPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Cricket Club. This first started over 60 years ago, originally playing on the field behind Springfield House and for the last 40 years on the pleasant Church Road ground let to the Club at a peppercorn rent. The Club has two teams and a new pavilion has recently been presented.

Football Club. This was originally commenced some 55 years ago but lapsed and was re-formed in June 1937, the new club generously paying off the debts of the old.

Tennis Club. Re-started in 1951 after a lapse of many years. Courts have been made on the Recreation Ground.

(6) - SOME FORMER ORGANISATIONS ETC. OF THE VILLAGE

(The dates refer to the formation, or mention in the Parish Magazine, first issued in 1906).

Lending Library (1884), League of Mercy (1899), Alice Luard's Tuppenny (1906), Rifle Club (1906), Girls' Friendly Society (1906), Choral Society (1906), Mothers' Meeting (1906), Village Band (1907), Pea Pickers' Fund (1907), Young Men's Club (1907), Support for Church Army (1908), Girls' Club (1911), Rayleigh Court of the United Sisters (1911), C.E.M.S. (1912), Special Constables (1914), A gathering for the Bounds (1920).

(7) - MUSIC IN THE VILLAGE

Thirty years ago the village was very musical. There were at one time four bands and the Choral Society, under Mr. and Mrs. Bromwell of Crabbs, was most successful in county competitions. Mrs. Bramwell, known professionally as Hilda Foster, was a sister of Clara Butt and herself had a very good soprano voice. The Bramwells brought well known artists to give concerts in the village and these concerts were well implemented by able local talent.

The tradition continued, it being recorded that the local Scout Troop (in 1937) won the National Scout Championship for Harmonica Bands, the competition being held at the Royal College of Music. To-day, the interest in music is maintained through the Evening Institute Choir, the Church Choir (which has a long tradition of lady members) and the band of the Salvation Army.

Friendly Society. This was commenced in the village about the beginning of the 19th century. Rule books in the possession of Mr. W. J. Clarke were printed in 1822 and 1831. The headquarters were at the Crown when the subscription of 2/- and expenses of 5d per head was due. The Society's money and books were kept in a chest secured with three locks, one key being held by the landlord and the others by the appointed stewards. The Chairman and committee of 12 increased their capital by the imposition of fines for degrees of lateness, non-attendance, discussion of religion or politics, quarrelling, swearing, drunkenness or gambling. Before their annual feast there was an official attendance at Church, before and after which the roll was called with fines for absence.

Soldiers, Sailors, porters, those with hereditary diseases and those outside the age limit of 18 - 35 years were not eligible for membership. The sick benefit was 12/- for the first 24 weeks and then from 8/- to 4/- according to length of illness, provided the illness was bona-fide! The patient had to be seen by a doctor after two weeks, be visited by a steward twice a week and observe certain rules before he was discharged "off the box". £6 was paid for the funeral of a member and £3 for that of his wife. Capital was invested in shares or local property and the Society was eventually amalgamated with the Witham Permanent Benefit Building Society.

AMENITIES OF HATFIELD PEVEREL TO-DAY

These fall easily into two groups, viz. internal and external.

(1) - INTERNAL

(a) PUBLIC UTILITIES. With regard to these, for a village Hatfield Peverel is very well served. Piped water is available to all but a very few houses. Nounsley is blessed with a double source of supply - one from Terling and the other from the Southend Water Works at Langford.

Electricity, available to most houses, is commonly used for cooking and lighting. The roads are illuminated from The Crown at the beginning of the Street right through the village to the Sportsman's Arms at Nounsley and to White Gate Corner towards Ulting. Though gas will be available in 1953, the main having been laid through, but not yet into the village, it is questionable if there will be a great demand seeing that most are accustomed to electricity. Up to three years ago, the collection of refuse was somewhat haphazard but now the Braintree R.D.C. has definitely taken the matter in hand and the dust-man calls once a fortnight, most of the refuse being dumped into the Devil's Hole on the Terling road. The village is also extremely fortunate in having main drainage practically throughout, even as far as the hamlet of Nounsley where the sewage beds are situated.

(b) POLICE. There are two resident constables assisted by Special Constables.

(c) POSTAL FACILITIES. Here again, as a village, Hatfield Peverel is luckier than many towns, having both a morning and afternoon delivery. The Post Office is also a telegraph office and obligingly sells stationery. There are seven pillar boxes, three telephone kiosks, while a hundred and fifty telephone subscribers are linked to the village automatic telephone exchange opened in 1951.

(d) HEALTH SERVICES. These are not very satisfactory. There is no resident doctor (although the Parish Council is now attempting to remedy this), dentist, dispensing chemist, veterinary surgeon or chiropodist. Perhaps the people of Hatfield Peverel are exceptionally healthy because of all the amenities aforesaid and do not need these usually indispensable persons. Further mention will be made of this when considering external amenities. However, there is a resident nurse and a clinic is held one day a fortnight.

(e) EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES. The schools are mentioned more fully elsewhere.

For adults there is the W.E.A. local branch (which has been responsible for the production of this booklet), and the Evening Institute where mostly handicrafts are taught and where there is a good choir which gives performances twice a year.

(f) HOUSING. Once again Hatfield Peverel is fortunate in being in the hands of Braintree R.D.C. which built twenty houses on the Green in the 1920's, pleasant to the eye and good to live in, with excellent gardens. Another Council Estate on the south side of the Maldon Road is now being extended to Church Road, making in all nearly 200 houses. A proportion of these are bungalows for aged persons, of whom there are quite a number, due perhaps to the healthiness previously mentioned. Particular praise is due to the planners of the group of Council houses on the Green and to the planners of the Group sited behind the Street in 1951 - 52, both of which present a planning appearance which is a credit to the local authority.

Further extensions are planned for the west side of Church Road. Private enterprise must not be omitted when considering housing. Fourteen old houses and one barn have been reconditioned and made habitable, while three new bungalows have been built. For agricultural workers four cottages have been practically rebuilt and eight new ones set up.

(g) PROVISION FOR LEISURE. Books for reading are made available by a weekly visit from the County Library. There are also two subscription libraries, one being a branch of Foyles. Sport is represented by cricket, football and tennis clubs run separately. There is a fine playing field which is being furnished with swings etc. for children.

Six inns serve the village and Nounsley with liquid refreshment and a game of darts. Various indoor functions performed in the village are held either in the Memorial Hall run by a committee, or the Church Room which belongs to the Church.

(h) SHOPS. All shops are represented except drapers' and fishmongers'. Here is a list:

Grocers	8	Hairdresser	1
Butchers	2	Upholsterer	1
Druggist	1	Cafes, etc.	4
Greengrocer	1	Garages	3
(2 also travel from Witham)		Soft furnish-	
Newsagents	2	ings	1
Antiques	2	Shoe repairer	1
Ironmongery	1)		
Milk	2)	travelling van.	

(2) - EXTERNAL

(a) HEALTH SERVICES. A doctor from Maldon holds surgery once a week, and one from Witham twice a week. Under the regional system the hospital assigned to Hatfield Peverel is Chelmsford, but special cases can be treated at Colchester or Black Notley. If someone has an aching tooth he must bear it till he gets either to Chelmsford or

Witham. The same applies to sick animals as the veterinary surgeon lives at Witham. Prescriptions can be dispensed or corns cut at Witham or Maldon.

(b) LOCAL NEWSPAPERS. The Essex Weekly, The Essex Chronicle a good second, The County Standard and the Braintree and Witham Times all enjoy a good circulation and contain local news.

(c) TRANSPORT. Rail transport is very poor. There are only five trains to London during the morning, then no more. Sunday is better served with three in the morning and four in the afternoon, the last being at 11.6 p.m. From London during the week there is only one in the morning and five in the afternoon, the last being 9.14 p.m. On Sunday there are three in the morning and four in the afternoon. The number of trains have been cut so severely because there is a very good bus service to Chelmsford whence trains can be caught for London. Buses run along the main road at half-hourly intervals between Chelmsford and Colchester and hourly to Maldon, skipping 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Though Hatfield Peverel is on the main line to Yarmouth, no train stopping there goes beyond Ipswich. There was actually a prospect of the station being closed under the new economy scheme but Lord Rayleigh's Dairy saved the situation, placed as it is by the side of the station and needing rail transport facilities.

(d) ENTERTAINMENTS. Hatfield Peverel has no cinema of its own but there is a good choice at Chelmsford for which there are plenty of buses as before mentioned. Witham and Maldon also have one picture house each. Music of every kind, including that of the Cathedral can be enjoyed at Chelmsford, also Amateur Dramatic performances at Witham, Chelmsford and Maldon.

The village is fortunate in being situated in a triangle of three towns, two small and one the county and market town. It is natural therefore that Hatfield Peverel should go to the market at Chelmsford for most of the amenities not found at home. A trip to market, with a visit to the pictures afterwards, is a weekly jaunt to be anticipated with pleasure. Maldon, however, is most visited during school holidays when a "day at the seaside" is a treat for the children.

To sum up, the village is singularly blessed in that it possesses access to many of the amenities of town life in addition to those of the country and seaside.

(e) BANKS. Beyond the Post Office Savings Bank, Hatfield Peverel has no bank. Maldon, Witham and Chelmsford between them possess branches of all the great banks which are well able to meet the needs of the village!

Legal advice is sought mostly in Witham and Chelmsford.

MEMORIES OF HATFIELD PEVEREL -

collected from some of the older inhabitants

VILLAGE GREEN

There was much more open land in the village in 1777 - A broad strip of green ran on either side of the Maldon Road from Ivy Barns up to the Duke of Wellington, across where the playing fields are now, and on either side of the road to the Church. Gipsies used to camp there, and horses roam. There was a pond where the School now stands, and no house on either side from Church Road upwards, until the old Workhouse and the ones near the Duke. The old line of houses can be seen behind Mr. H. Lawrence's shop.

The Street had fewer houses then than it has now and until the present Vicarage was built about 1912, Yew Tree Cottage was the only house in Station Road. Chestnut trees and a wall enclosed the Street Farm and opposite, the ground was fenced and children could play there near a pond. Many of the houses and cottages built in the last hundred years have been built on common land. An attempt was made by Squire Wright to enclose the present Green, but the offending notice was repeatedly torn down and then burnt.

OLD HOUSES

Gates Farm, Nounsley, Mr. Bennett's house and Mr. Cracknell's shop contain part of the oldest houses in the village, dating back to the fifteenth century, although within the last fifty years many equally old or older ones have been taken down or re-built. There was, for instance, a row of old almshouses near the Duke, called Feoffees Cottages, with good oaken doors, where old folk lived for one shilling a year. The house recently pulled down, opposite Mr. Lawrence's shop in the Street, was an Inn called the Golden Lion or Red Lion. Mr. Bennett's house in Maldon Road was once the White Hart Inn. Mr. Lawrence's shop, the former forge, and the adjoining cottages were once one business which traded under the name of The Cock, and the teashop (the Walnut Tree) opposite the Crown and the adjoining cottages are the site of another trader under the name of The Star, once a cord-wainer's. It has also been an Inn, and a Dame School, a draper's and a butcher's. The deeds of the original houses are said to go back four hundred years. The old Bury House probably dated from the fourteenth century.

TOPPINGHO HALL

This was a favourite place for picnics and Sunday School Outings. There were fourteen fine cedars there, an ilex tree, smooth sward and little ponds and streams with the old house in the background. In 1881 on the 18th of January, during a violent storm, the King of the cedars fell and much damage was done. The tree filled all the meadow, was 60 feet long and the stump about 12 feet across.

THE RAILWAY EMBANKMENT

The Railway Embankment, big and bare as it first was, so annoyed Mr. Shaen who lived at Crix, that he got permission from the railway authorities to plant the bank with trees.

The Reverend Charles Townsend, who eventually owned Crix, tried to maintain rights over the timber, but the railway authorities did not allow this.

THE MILL AND MILL HOUSE

What looks like the main river bed here, flowing on the east side of the mill dam, is actually a new cut, which also runs under the railway and was designed to relieve flooding.

The Mill House was built in 1715 and has the letters A. A. (for Arabella Alleyne) on the chimney stack.

The Mill was probably older and is supposed to have belonged to the Priory, with an underground passage between them, though this probably refers to a 'barrel drain' for diverting flood water. It towered white among the trees, at least five storeys high, with high pitched gabled roof and walls 1½ feet thick and 3 bricks thick at the bottom. 17th century bricks were used and all the original wood was deal. Opposite were white railings and a rustic bridge which spanned the stream to a pleasant island. There were boats, and shadowed by an enormous chestnut tree, now gone, a hexagonal summer-house, the remains of which can still be seen. The stream was clear and wide; there were lilies, kingfishers, swans, wild duck and herons. The water flowed with a pleasant sound through the old eeltrap which was said to have caught 7½ cwt. of eels in a night. It was a charming and beautiful spot when the road was still peaceful and echoed only to horses' hooves. Colonel Arkwright, the owner, thought he would like a few bullrushes and got a couple of roots from Mr. Tuffnell. The result can be seen to-day!

The Mill turned from grain to silk weaving somewhere about 1800 and the industry was a feature of local life. Later it became a flour mill again but was taken down between the wars.

FISH-CURING AT THE CROWN

About 150 years ago, big wagons used to bring fish from Lowestoft and Yarmouth to a building behind The Crown which was a fish-curing station. It was run by a family called Ong whose names can be seen on tombstones in the Church. Sawdust was used as fuel and village people found it useful to bring hams there to cure.

HILL HOUSE

There is a story that this was built with a system of cellars by smugglers. The Excise men became suspicious, organised a raid, and Hatfield Hill ran with spirits which the villagers lay on their stomachs to drink!

THE BURY POUND

Near the entrance to the Bury House was an oblong building with strong posts and gates with a padlock, in which stray animals were impounded and their owners fined before release was granted. The last occupant is said to be an old chimney sweep who was wheeled there one night in a wheelbarrow - "I woke up in the night," he said, "and the stars were shining. I felt quite comfortable, so I went to sleep again."

THE VILLAGE HALL

Mr. Walter Butler was the main benefactor of the scheme but money was collected from all over the village in 1920. Mr. W. T. Clarke was instrumental in buying the hut which cost £280. It was divided and faced by bricks from Mr. Marriage's brickfield. The whole cost of building and equipping the Hall was well over £1,000 and the provision of better accommodation than the School for all the concerts and entertainment at that time was a great benefit to the village. The Hall was run by a Committee of thirty.

THE DEVIL'S PIT

This deep pit on the road to Terling is now used as a refuse pit. There is fine silver sand at the bottom in which Mr. W. T. Clarke once found an arrow-head, now lost. Was the sand used for making mortar taken from here when the Church was being built?

CLAYPIT HILL

On the main road past the Duke towards Witham, the road is built through a deep depression. This was a pocket of very stiff clay difficult to cultivate by the old methods. It may have been the source of clay in wattle and daub houses. There used to be a brickfield also near the Terrace.

VINE HURST

There was an old cottage of this name near Ivy Barns, in which lived Jack Ketch, the Chelmsford Hangman. He notched one of the beams in his house every time he hanged a man (the notched beam has been seen by Mr. Owers), and he used the rope in between times for a stair rail.

PRIORY PONDS

There was a well-defined line of ponds starting behind the present playing field and going down to the Priory House. These must once have been the fishponds of the monks and possibly connected with a moat system round the old Priory and Church in the days when they were joined together. These ponds used to be very pretty, with deep water bordered by trees and paths, and full of the noise of rooks above. An old dovecote stood in the spinney which points towards the Priory Lodge and comes off at right angles from the pond there. It was a clay building with a Norman shaped arch, and stood on a little island surrounded by deep water. It is reported that unclassified pottery remains have been found there a few years ago.

REUBEN REDGRAVE'S COTTAGE

Reuben Redgrave is buried on the site of his stone cottage which once stood outside the old churchyard. It was eventually pulled down and the churchyard enlarged, and on his death in 1877 he was buried where his cellar used to be. The grave can be seen surrounded by iron railings near the junction of the paths.

THE CHURCH - Miscellaneous information

The present clock was put up in 1891 to commemorate the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Tuffnell of Hatfield Place, benefactors of the Church. It was found to have a cracked bell, so the bell, dated 1724, from the old clock was fetched from the Priory stables and used instead. The old clock was fixed to the south nave wall at a time when parishioners were free to walk all round the Church. This clock is said to have been sold for a shilling to a Witham clockmaker in the sale of the Priory House possessions in 1911.

Most of the old glass in the Church was collected by John Wright of the Priory in the 18th century, who made a hobby of collecting. In 1764 he had repairs to the Church executed and a window of old painted glass put in his family pew on the south side. At the Priory Sale in 1911, Josiah Weston, the overseer, instructed that some old glass found in the cellar should be thrown away, then changed his mind and put it in with the lot containing old beer stalls. To the general amazement, instead of fetching a few shillings, the bidding reached nearly £8. A Mr. Thomas, the purchaser, picked out one panel of glass only to take away. It appeared to have embedded in it stones like rubies. This has never been traced.

In the restoration of 1872, male and female bones were found in a coffin in the wall below the monument said to be Ingelrica's. The story has it that the Devil swore he would get Ingelrica's soul if she was buried inside or outside the Church, so she was buried in the wall. Workmen who opened the coffin said there was a wisp of hair done up like a bun of old days and kept together with a gold pin.

(If the bones are those of Ingelrica and her son, her coffin would have been moved and placed there when the north aisle was built in the 13th century. Possibly the figure and bones belong to Thomas de Ulting who founded a chantry in the north aisle in 1317).

The altarcross and almsdish are set with polished cornelian brought from a Scottish sea-shore by Mrs. Tuffnell of Hatfield Place.

There are various traces of colour which once adorned the white-washed walls of the Church. A small mural painting on the pillar facing the pulpit was destroyed by workmen when cleaning.

Church Music up to the beginning of the 19th century was supplied by a choir and orchestra which sat in a gallery at the back of the nave. A small organ, however, was installed there and this discomfited the band, some of whom left the Church and went to lead the music of the newly-opened Chapel. The flute of Fiddler Eve who lived opposite the Crown, is still in the village. Joe Langstone played the clarinet. By 1869 the organ had been placed in its present position and the modern organ was presented in 1891 by Mrs. Tuffnell.

In August 1881 there were twelve boys in the choir, most with plaid mufflers round their necks. By next Easter they were all in surplices and cassocks. Women members sat in the organ pews. The choir gradually increased under the care of Mrs. Toulmin and the choir stalls were sawn in one place and a piece added. There was a professional organist and trainer and the services became sufficiently well-known to draw people from other parishes.

THE OLD CHURCH

The traditional site on Church Hills field, the other side of the railway embankment by the Bury, is still known in the village. Big stones have been ploughed out at intervals and in years of drought it was possible to see by the different colour in the corn the outline of the foundations. The timbers in a barn at Bovingtons are supposed to have come from the old Church, also a stone sheep's head belonging to Mr. Charles Shelley. Mr. W. T. Clarke has in his possession an identified 14th century fragment of a church window discovered while digging the foundations of Mr. Sorrell's shop. As there were indications of a pond having been there, it is possible that the squire at the Bury would have drawn on the Church ruins to repair his stretch of road. but his men threw this piece of stone into the pond as being too big! Set into the south side of the Mill House are a stone-winged angel, a Tudor rose and formerly a gargoyle, but the origin of these is uncertain.

TRANSPORT

There were no regular buses at one time, only carriers. For instance, a Mr. Havis from The Green would fetch and carry parcels,

medicine, etc. for 2d. He was lame and blew a whistle so that you knew when to go out to him.

The original Moore's bus from Kelvedon was a van drawn by two donkeys. In the 1920's Mr. Bright ran a bus on Fridays twice a day to Chelmsford market. It was nicknamed "The Parrot House" as passengers sat facing each other, an arrangement well suited to conversation. Mr. Wilkinson also ran buses and Springetts' had a service to Notley and Braintree, their garage being opposite The Crown.

THE POST

When the Post Office was where Mr. Cleave's shop is now, the postman, Tom Bailey, lived at Springfield next to the Plough. He walked into Chelmsford at 6 a.m., collected the letters and delivered them through Springfield, Boreham and Hatfield, as far as the Post Office. Mr. Moore, baker and postmaster would take them out with the bread. Most people expecting a letter would call. All letters had to be posted at the Office. Telegrams usually had to wait for the bread-cart and a charge was made beyond a certain distance. Bailey repaired shoes during the day in the old schoolroom near Mr. May's present office, would pick up the letters at 6 o'clock and walk back to Chelmsford. Use was also made of the railway for long distance mail.

EARTHQUAKE AND STORM

On April 22nd, 1884 an earthquake shock which damaged many churches in the Colchester area knocked the cock from the top of the Chapel steeple in Hatfield Peverel. The spindle was bent and it was never replaced.

Mr. Oliver remembers that in the severe snow storm of January 18th, 1881 which destroyed timber at Toppingho Hall, the blockage of roads was so complete that flour from the bakery had to be carried sack by sack from Wickham Bishops.

GHOSTS

A big dog with glaring eyes was said to haunt the road between Crix Corner and the Mill. A waggoner who lashed out at him was consumed with fire, he and his waggon! Men avoided passing Cut-throat Lane on the Witham Road at night for fear of spectres. The Church porch was said to be haunted and people thought twice about using the Church Road at night.

VILLAGE WELLS

It is possible in the village to dig a well a few yards from an existing one and yet find no water because one has struck a pocket of clay instead of gravel.

Pollution of wells caused cases of typhoid in the village in 1901.

There is said to be a series of wells sunk along the main road (one for instance near The Duke and one near Mr. Cracknell's) used once for the watering of horses.

CHARITY

Mrs. Tuffnell from Hatfield House, the district visitor for the Nounsley area, arranged that soup could be fetched by Nounsley children from Mrs. Thurgood at the Mill Cottages. The children used to sit on the bank on the way home and spear out tit-bits with a pointed stick or drink some and fill up the can with spring water.

THE PARISH MAGAZINE

This was first produced in January, 1906, and almost continuous numbers from that date are in the possession of Mrs. R. J. Steele. Not only do these contain Church news, but the early ones give valuable local history of that period. There are summaries of changing social services, e.g. The Balfour Education Act 1902 and the Old Age Pension Scheme of September, 1908. Reports on the school activities and visits of H.M. Inspectors are given and of the activities of various village organizations.

Some extracts of interest are given below:-

(1) January 1910. CHURCH OF ENGLAND MISSION TO PEAPICKERS (ESSEX)

The difficulties are two-fold:-

(a) Spiritual. "Many of the pickers have lost all but vague recollections of spiritual aspirations and are the less inclined to received the message of the Gospel, because they have been looked upon by a Christian community as a 'scourge' and a 'pest'."

(b) Social. "Lack of housing accommodation for a large and temporary surplus population results in conditions which tend to immorality and drink; and uncertainty as to the date of commencing work brings an immigration of unemployed for weeks before the peas are ready."

(2) January 1910. SALE OF WORK TOWARDS NURSING FUND -

Produced £30 which was enough to furnish the Nurse's Home and leave a balance of £2. 0. 8!

ADVERTISEMENTS

(3) "Wanted - A home for two black long-haired kittens."

(4) An offer of a right hand glove to the person who found the left hand one, made by Mr. Havis, the carrier, is possibly the most cryptic of all.

(5) 1906. BABY CARE

"For the first three months of life they should be fed every two hours during the day and mothers should never let them sleep past feeding time."

"A baby of two must on no account be given meat or what we eat."

"Babies may be given a teaspoonful of castor oil."

"Babies should not be taken out after 3.30 p.m. in the winter."

(6) October, 1915. CONSECRATION

"The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford paid his first visit to this parish on Sunday, October 10th, when he consecrated the new portion of our churchyard, which had been presented by Mrs. J. Wright."

(7) Churchyard was again extended to the east in September, 1937, after many attempts had been made to buy land to the south of the Church on the Priory Estate.

GENERAL

(8) February, 1933. The Parish Advisory Unemployment Committee report forty unemployed.

(9) April, 1934. Electric light installed in the Church.
September, 1939. Three hundred evacuees in Hatfield Peverel.

(10) July, 1924. There is comment on the successful Hatfield Peverel Pageant which was an outstanding communal effort portraying the history of the village.

(11) May, 1940. The old Brewery was used as a store for waste paper.

ROADS

The main road has always been a feature of Hatfield Peverel life since the time when it was built by the Romans from whom we get the name "The Street". Along it have come kings and queens, preachers and soldiers, a pageant of history passing before the generations of villagers who witnessed these things in fear, excitement, or the indifference of ignorance.

To-day we are more conscious of the speed and noise of traffic than of anything else. Motor cars and the macadamised roads have destroyed village peace and brought the thunder of goods traffic and especially on fine summer week-ends, streams of Londoners in cars and coaches making trips to the coast, so that crossing the road is difficult. There are three garages on the main road and five stopping places for coaches and lorries. Local people set up stalls at peak periods to sell garden produce outside certain of the inns.

Before the road surface was metalled however, hedges and passengers would be white with dust in summer and thick with mud in winter and in 1917 the Parish Council was still making arrangements about the open ditches beside roads in the village. The opening of the railway in the 1840's provided an easier method of transport than roads in this condition, and village children could play in the street until the advent of the motor. Motor traffic was just starting to raise problems here in 1914, but this time it was the awkward siting of a warning notice to motorists at the top of Hatfield Hill making the way dangerous for pedestrians.

Before the coming of the railways, the London to Harwich road had been a busy one and the first to have a turnpike as early as 1695, though the Turnpike System was not nationally well organized until about 1840. The toll that was levied on the passengers at different stages was used to maintain that strip of road. Surfaces improved from what they had been and coaches sped through at 8 m.p.h. up to the beginning of the 19th century. Goods traffic went in wagons to the musical accompaniment of their horse bells.

In 1831 and 1832 widow Kitty Rush was nominated by the Hatfield Peverel Vestry as Surveyor of Highways for the year, but did not receive the necessary Magisterial approval. This seems to go back to the earlier system of road maintenance when parishes were responsible for the repair of their own roads under an overseer appointed by themselves. Inhabitants were supposed to give so many days work in the year on the roads. There was a right to appropriate suitable road material and once nominated and approved by the magistrates, the overseer had to take office. As a consequence of such unskilled and unwilling labour, the English road system had fallen into so deplorable a state that travel was probably more difficult than in the Roman times. Packhorses rather than wheeled vehicles had often to be used for goods traffic and footpads and robbers were a menace. The important London to Colchester road however was one of the first to be improved as we have seen, although such improvement and increase of traffic encouraged the presence of highwaymen and Turpin's name is connected with these parts.

To-day there is a proposed plan for a by-pass in Hatfield Peverel in the next 10 years, starting from the present main road at Crix, cutting across Station Road and rejoining the existing main

road beyond the Vineyards. This will involve the destruction of some houses and the dislocation of some local trade, but should bring something of the rhythm of village life back to The Street.

(NOTE: Traffic Census figures taken on the main road at Boreham in 1951 - 52 from the graph made available by courtesy of the County Council Surveyors Department, show generally that in the winter months the traffic during the week averages about 5,250 vehicles per day, falling to an average of below 4,000 per day at the week ends. In the summer months the mid-week average is approximately 6,250 per day, rising to a very peak of 12-13,000 on the busiest of Saturdays. This is an indication of the large amount of tourist traffic carried on the road. It should be realized that these figures are approximations in very round figures only, the estimates having been taken by the writer from the graph mentioned above. They do however confirm the need of determination and great speed in the legs of anyone wishing to cross the Street at most periods of the day!)

ERRATA

Our apologies are owing for these errors, caused by proof reading against time!

Introduction: Mr. A. J. Steele, Miss T. M. Hope,
Mr. W. J. Clarke, Mrs. A. J. Steele.

P.1. bottom: World's End, not Wolds End

P.5. line 5: "caused" not "began"

P.6. 4th line up: Insert "approx" before 202 etc.

P.7. Graph: Reading vertically at "1938" the graph lines are: Sugar Beet, Potatoes, Temporary Grass etc., Fruit, Grain, Permanent Grass.

P.8. line 6: 60%, not 50%

P.13 centre: add "Brewer"

P.14 line 1: "were" not "are"

P.15 Guides and Brownies: existed, not commenced

P.16 Sec.(6) last line "Beating of the Bounds."