

CHARLTON PARK

BISHOPSBOURNE

HISTORY OF THE LAND, THE HOUSE AND THE PEOPLE

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Bishopsbourne is a peaceful, out-of-the-way place, where nothing much happens for decades at a time. The ancient Charlton estate that forms the eastern part of the parish is even more obscure. Occasionally, some things of interest - or some people of interest - turn up unexpectedly.

1. Caesar's Battle with the Britons 54 BC

On his second invasion of 54 BC, Caesar landed (as in 55 BC) at Deal, having decided that Dover harbour, which was further up the Dour estuary than now , was too well defended.

After a night march of 12 Roman miles (11 statute miles) he was attacked by the Britons from higher ground to the north-east of Bridge on the morning of 8th July. They used their chariots and cavalry effectively, but were easily defeated by superior Roman infantry and cavalry.

Caesar writes clearly (if briefly) of this encounter in "The Conquest of Gaul". He says the Britons advanced to a river (he uses the word "flumen" which means any watercourse; it does not imply the English distinction between "river" and "stream") - clearly the Little Stour - and then attacked him from higher ground. This is an obvious tactic for them, as it would give scope for deploying their chariots. Barham down was relatively open ground at that time; pollen evidence shows that much of the woodland on the Downs between Bridge and Wingham had been cleared during the Bronze Age. After defeating them, Caesar conducted mopping-up operations as they hid in the woods at a well-defended point (possibly in the vicinity of Old England's Hole on Bridge Hill, or an unidentified location). His army stormed their position easily.

The next morning, he sent 3 columns of combined infantry and cavalry to pursue the fleeing enemy, but then had reports that many of his ships had been damaged or lost in a gale, so recalled his troops and returned to Deal.

It is very likely that some of the mopping-up operations were among the woods in what is now Charlton Park and Bourne Park. The noise of the battle would have been clearly heard by anyone who happened to be where Charlton Place is now.

Spurious ideas have achieved some currency that a) the battle was " at the river" - which is the opposite of what Caesar says, and would make no sense for the Britons who expected their chariots to be a key weapon; b) that the battle was at the Great Stour or even (as claimed by Camden) at Chilham, which is twice the distance from Deal; c) that the Britons initially retreated to Bigbury west of Canterbury; d) that the pre-Roman neolithic long barrow in the Stour valley known as "Juliberries' Grave" commemorates Laberius Drusus, who Caesar records as being killed in combat with the Britons, but does not say where.

Some of this seems to come from Camden, who is frequently fanciful and inaccurate. Bede, who is often used by 16th and 17th century historians, merely quotes what Caesar wrote, without speculating further. None of these fictions have any evidential basis.

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2. Bishopsbourne

The name is originally *Bourne* or *Burna* (*Burnes* in Domesday Book) and became known as Bishopsbourne as a result of ownership of the manor by the Archbishop of Canterbury from 811 to 1544.

There are no known remains of Celtic or Roman village settlements in this part of the Elham valley, although there are some individual remains, and a large Roman villa has recently been discovered under the old cricket pitch in Bourne Park. Along the Dover-Canterbury road above there are of course many remains.

The Little Stour valley seems to have been settled in the Jutish period after 500 AD, initially from Wickhambreux (which remained the centre for many years) and then developed up the river via Littlebourne, Bekesbourne and Patribourne. The various subsidiary settlements became communities in their own right over time. Burnes is an Old English word, unlike place-names such as Dover, Cray, Lympne and Sturry, which are pre-Roman Celtic. Wickhambreux was originally simply Wic-ham (dwelling-place in Old English) and added the suffix from the 13th C. owners de

Breuse. Bekesbourne and Patribourne, both originally just *Burna* in OE, acquired their prefixes from, respectively, 13thC. owners de Beche and 12thC. owner Patricius or Patrick.

By 800, Bishopsbourne was clearly a thriving agricultural community, which is presumably why the Archbishop was keen to own it. In 799, Archbishop Aethelheard persuaded King Cenwulf of Mercia (then the dominant English kingdom) to make various endowments and gifts to the Church, some of which had been previously confiscated by King Offa. These included 4 ploughlands in Bishopsbourne to the monks of St Augustine's Abbey. In 811, Archbishop Wulfred (in office 805-33) acquired the Bishopsbourne ploughlands for himself, in exchange giving the Abbey lands in Eastry, Lympne and Old Romney. Wulfred was very acquisitive; in 809 he bought 7 ploughlands at Barham for £30. Bishopsbourne remained in the ownership of the serving Archbishop until 1544. Both the Domesday Book (1086) and the Domesday Monachorum of ChristChurch (c.1100) make it clear that Bishopsbourne belonged to the Archbishop, not the Abbey or the Church as such. Wulfred seems to have gone to some

lengths to establish this. When his nephew Werhard, a senior priest, died in 832, his will says that Wulfred had instructed him to return to the church of Canterbury other lands he had given him, including 44 hides in Bishopsbourne and 36 in Barham.

At the Reformation in 1541, Sir Thomas Colepeper, the elder brother of the Thomas Colepeper who was executed for adultery with Henry VIII's 5th wife, Catherine Howard, and a close associate of Thomas Cromwell, acquired the manor of Bekesbourne from St Augustine's Abbey, which was being dissolved. In 1544, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer agreed with Colepeper to swap Bishopsbourne for Bekesbourne, which he preferred as a location for the retirement palace he planned. So Bekesbourne, not Bishopsbourne, became the site of the palace. Colepeper, who bought and sold property as a business, promptly sold Bishopsbourne to Sir Anthony Aucher. The Aucher family and their descendants owned the manor of Bishopsbourne for the next two centuries. Sir Anthony himself died of injuries sustained while defending Calais in 1558.

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3. Domesday Book 1086

In Barham Hundred (*later renamed Kinghamford Hundred*)

Bishopsbourne

In Lordship (*ie of the Archbishop of Canterbury*)

6 sulungs (*in theory, 200 acres each. These are the taxable amounts; not a summary of the land area as such*)

Land for 50 ploughs (*c.f Maidstone 30; Whitstable 26; Ickham 12; Chartham 15 1/2; Barham 32*)

In lordship 5 ploughs; (*i.e. 45 held by others*)

64 villagers with 53 smallholders have 30 1/2 ploughs (*117 dwellings; c.f. Maidstone 44; Elham 49; Barham 72; Eastry 94; Bekesbourne 29*)

A church (*Saxon; predecessor to the current Norman church on the same site*)

2 watermills (*possibly either side of Frog lane*)

20 acres of meadow

woodland (*no size given*)

15 pigs

from grazing 27 d.

value £30, previously £20

NB: Plough - the taxable amount of land that can be ploughed by a team of 8 oxen.

Sulung - A heavy plough. As an area, the land such a plough could cultivate in a year. 4 yokes or 8 hides. The word is unique to Kent.

Hide - the amount of land that could support a family

- made up of 4 virgates or yardlands ("Hide" appears to derive from a word meaning "family")

Yoke - derives from a pair of oxen - ie 1/4 of an 8-oxen team . 2 hides or 4 virgates.

4. The Little Stour

Clearly, the river along the valley was at one time a permanent stream. The villages would not be there, otherwise, or have had the wealth and importance they had in Anglo-Saxon times and later. In Domesday Book (1086) Bishopsbourne had 2 watermills, and 117 dwellings, making it the 18th largest of 377 locations surveyed in Kent, and a quarter the size of Dover, then the largest town in the county. Barham had 25 commercial fishponds, as well as a watermill. At some time between then and the late 18th century, when surveyed by Hasted and Seymour, the river became an intermittent winterbourne. The village had also declined in population, to the very small number (45-odd) of houses shown on the 1839 Tithe map, and listed in the 1851 Census. Barham , Derringstone and Kingston also became very small, and remained so until into the 19th Century.

John Speed's map of Kent of 1610, which is normally accurate, shows the river as flowing from Lyminge, along the current route of the Nailbourne. Saxton's less accurate map of Kent, Surrey and Sussex of 1575 does not show the

river upstream of Bishopsbourne, but he is often vague about the upper reaches of rivers, as of other things. Norden's map of Kent (1605) which is probably the most accurate of the maps of that period, shows (like Speed) the Nailbourne flowing from Lyminge.

The change was too early to have been brought about by excessive human water use. A possible reason is that the river comes from springs in the chalk body behind Folkestone, which is the UK's most active earthquake zone. Possibly, one or more earthquakes disrupted the flow at some point. There was a major earthquake around Hythe and Saltwood, for example, in 1580. Possibly also, the recent higher activity levels of the Nailbourne may relate to recent earthquakes altering the situation again, although disruption from the building of the Chunnel may have had an effect.

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5. Charlton

The name derives from Anglo-Saxon *Ceorl* (later *churl*) who in Anglo-Saxon times were the lowest and largest class of free men - with considerable status. They had the right to bear arms; attend local courts, and (crucially) paid their dues and owed their allegiance direct to their local King. Charlton is a common English place-name, meaning the settlement (normally a farm) of *ceorls*. The place-name Carlton and the names Carl and Charles also derive from *ceorl*. *Ceorls* formed a relatively independent and powerful peasantry as existed elsewhere in Europe.

Ceorls were a central and important element of Anglo-Saxon society, which was considerably freer and more open than Norman society after the disastrous invasion of 1066. By the 12th century, *ceorls* had lost much status and freedom, and many ended up as *villeins* - the semi-slaves tied to local lords. (*Villein* derives from the Roman *villanus* - employee of a landed estate). Kent, however, was unusual in the Norman period in consisting overwhelmingly of free men, who guarded their freedom firmly - unlike, for example, Sussex, where various levels of slavery and semi-slavery were common. This appears to derive considerably from the Jutish social structures established from around 500 AD. It is no coincidence that the Peasant's Revolt of 1381 was Kentish-led.

The Charlton farmstead before the kingdom of Kent was absorbed into Wessex around 900 AD would have been held by a group of relations owning it in parts, under the Jutish system of gavelkind. Like the rest of Kent, the social and economic structure was that of small hamlets with their own land rights, owing allegiance to the Lathe - in this case, St Augustin, based in Canterbury. The Saxon structure of Hundreds was superimposed on this, but never completely. Speed's map shows both Lathes and Hundreds; Norden's map Lathes only. Saxton shows neither.

Charlton Farm in Bishopsbourne appears in the records as *Cherlton* in 1240, and as *Cherlton* in 1338. It does not appear ever to have been a separate manor, but was an established farmstead within the manor of Bishopsbourne. The name of course is of Anglo-Saxon origin. Bishopsbourne was a flourishing agricultural community from before 800 AD, so it is likely that there have been dwellings and farm buildings on this site for at least 1200 years.

Bishopsbourne was a freehold estate from 1544. Whether the Herringe family, who built the present house around 1570, bought Charlton farm from the Aucher family at some time after that, or - more likely - it was a hereditary holding, with some dues payable to the lord of the manor, but otherwise at the disposal of the owners, has not been established.

6. Herringe family, the builders of the house

James Herringe died in 1598. He appears to have built the current house in about 1570

In his will of 1598 he refers to himself as a "yeoman".

His eldest son John was born in 1563, and apparently died 1565.

David or Daniel Herringe died 1600, and Matthew Herringe in 1594. They were probably James's brothers.

James's other children were;

William, born 28 December 1573, who inherited in 1598 and sold the property in 1606,

Edward, born in 1567 but who appears to have died young

Robert born in 1579 d.1580

Martha born in 1571

Joan, born 1565

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7. Gibbon family

John Gibbon (1557-1617) was the third son of Thomas Gibbon of Bethersden. He bought the farmstead in 1606. He married first, Elizabeth; second Jane, who later married Edward Rolt (d.1625). His son William (1600 - 1632) inherited.

His daughter Mary (d.1680) married Edward Aucher of Willesborough. Edward was the younger son of Sir

Anthony Aucher of Bourne, and brother of Sir Anthony Aucher. Bt.

This was clearly the link by which ownership of the Charlton estate came into (or reverted to) the Aucher family. When Anthony Aucher was forced to sell his manor of Kingston in 1647 to pay a fine, it was bought by another member of the Gibbon family.

The Gibbons were collateral ancestors of Edward Gibbon, the historian.

8. Aucher family in Bishopsbourne

The manor of Bishopsbourne came into the hands of the Aucher family via Sir Thomas Colepeper in 1544. Colepeper was a close associate of Thomas Cromwell, as was Sir Anthony Aucher, who was one of the Commissioners for Kent dealing with the dissolution of religious houses. Colepeper acquired many properties in Kent and elsewhere, and traded a lot in property. He owned Bedgebury Manor, Goudhurst, Kent, from 1541 until his death in 1558. He bought Highams Park, Bridge, in 1534. He acquired the manor of Bekesbourne from St Augustine's Abbey as it was being dissolved in 1541.

When Colepeper agreed to swap Bekesbourne for Bishopsbourne with Cranmer, a specific Act was passed in 1544 giving him the freehold ownership of Bishopsbourne. (Cranmer was obviously very keen to get Bekesbourne). Colepeper also acquired the manor of Kingston in 1544 from Lord Thomas Wentworth of Nettlested, and rapidly sold it to Sir Anthony Aucher.

Kingston was sold by the later Sir Anthony in 1647 to Thomas Gibbon of Westcliffe, who in 1648 settled it on his second son Richard Gibbon. They were collateral descendants of the Gibbons who owned Charlton park 1606 - 36.

Sir Anthony Aucher (1500 - 1558) acquired the manor of Bishopsbourne from Sir Thomas Colepeper in 1544. He already owned the manor of Otterden. He was Marshal of Calais, and was killed defending it when it was lost to the French in 1558 .

His second son Sir Edward (1539 -1568) married in 1560.

Edward's son Anthony Aucher (1562 -1610) married Margaret Sandys, and had 2 sons, Anthony (his heir) and Edwin, who married Mary, a daughter of John Gibbon. His daughter Elizabeth married into the Hammond family, owners of St Albans Court, Nonington.

His son Sir Anthony Aucher (c.1586- 1637) was knighted in 1604, married Hester (d.1637) in 1605, and inherited Bishopsbourne and 3 other Kent manors on his father's death in 1610. He had a colourful life, with many financial problems, which led him and his business partner Sir Thomas Hardres to flee the country in 1623 for several months to escape their creditors. He had transferred his estates to feoffees (trustees for land) to preserve them, and it seems that it was a considerable time before they were all released.

The Aucher family and their descendants owned the manor of Bishopsbourne for over 2 centuries from 1544, acquiring (or re-acquiring) the Charlton estate in 1636 from the Gibbon family.

Sir Anthony Aucher (1614 - 1692) became a baronet in 1666. He was MP for Canterbury from 1660. He married twice; first in 1635 Elizabeth Hatton (d.1648), with whom he had 7 sons, all of whom predeceased him. He married Elizabeth Hewytt (b. 1652) in 1681 , by whom he had 2 sons and 2 daughters. His successors were his son Anthony, who died aged 10 in 1695, and his son Hewitt (b.1687), who died unmarried in 1726. The baronetcy then became extinct. The Aucher estates were inherited by his daughter Elizabeth, who had married John Corbet in 1710.

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Aucher was a Royalist in the Civil War, and was imprisoned in the Tower by Oliver Cromwell for a period in 1643 as a result. It seems that when the Dower House was built in the late 1600's, the tunnel linking it to the cellar of the main house was built also. It is brick, of the same type as the Dower House, and is approximately 5ft 6 inches wide and 7ft high. It has a concealed entrance in the Dower House into the side of a double inglenook fireplace. Its most obvious use is as an escape tunnel - presumably Aucher's experiences gave him a healthy regard for personal security. It is not clear who in the Aucher family lived in the house; typically, it would have been used as the home of one of the sons or another important family member. John and Elizabeth Corbet appear to have occupied the house from 1710 until 1726, when Sir Hewitt died, after which they lived at Bourne Park.

Sir Anthony had a long and eventful life. Apart from his spell in the Tower, his opposition to Cromwell meant that he was forced to flee abroad in 1648, at which time his first wife died at Calais. He was also fined £700 for supporting the King, and had to sell his manors of Kingston and Lyminge in 1647 as a result. He returned from the Netherlands after a while and lived quietly until 1659, when he helped organise a Cavalier movement to support the return of Charles II. Charles was suitably grateful and gave him a baronetcy in 1666.

Sir Hewitt Aucher left Charlton farm among other estates to his sister Elizabeth (b.1682), who had married John Corbet (d.1735) in 1710. On her death in 1764 the estate was inherited by her 5 daughters, who sold individually to Francis Hender Foote and later John Foote. One of the daughters married Stephen Beckingham, and the Beckingham family continued to own Bourne Park for another century.

9. The Foote Family and their links

Charlton Park was originally bought in segments by Francis Hender Foote (b.1723), from the 5 surviving granddaughters of the Aucher family, from 1764 onwards, when Elizabeth Corbet, (nee' Aucher) died . He died 1773, and his son John Foote (b.1756) completed the acquisition of the property in 1785. Francis married Catherine Mann in 1749, a sister of Sir Horace Mann MP, a famous cricketer of the time. She died in 1776.

John Foote died in 1800 at only 43, and the property was inherited by his son Robert, at the age of 17. Robert married Charlotte-Augusta Keppel in 1802 aged 19. She was the daughter of the Bishop of Exeter, and her grandfather was Earl of Albemarle. The Keppels had come to England with William 3rd in 1688. She was born in 1771 , so was 12 years older than him. They had one son, Keppel Robert Edward Foote in 1811, who died in 1851. He and his wife Helen or Ellen (nee' Whitfield, who he married in 1834), who died in the same year, had no children. In 1843 he was described as a wine and brandy merchant of 35, Seething Lane, in the City of London, and in 1841 he and his wife were living in Guilford St, St Pancras with a staff of 1.

Robert was High Sheriff of Kent in 1815, and a Gentleman of the King's privy chamber.

The Foote's link to the King - in itself surprising for relatively obscure country gentlemen - most likely arose via Captain (later Admiral) Sir Edward Foote.

Robert and Charlotte-Augusta Foote by the 1840's were living in reduced circumstances in Bedford Place, Sidmouth, Devon, where Robert died in 1845, and his wife in 1852. In the 1851 Census, she still referred to herself as “ Earl's granddaughter” so was presumably fairly snobbish. Robert Foote's death certificate refers to him as “Gentleman of the Queens' Privy Chamber”. They clearly clung to their Royal connections, but appear to have suffered financially from them.

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George IV and Elizabeth, Marchioness of Conyngham.

Their affair apparently started in about 1819, and continued to his death in 1830.

She was his last and very favoured mistress, with her own suite of rooms at Windsor Castle. Her husband, who gained considerably from her liaison with the King by becoming Marquess of Conyngham, was complaisant about the affair. Their country home Bifrons in Patricbourne was close by. Presumably it would have been bad form for the King and his mistress to stay together under her husband's roof, hence the need for an alternative. Elizabeth was 3 years older than George, and similarly plump. He was devoted to her.

There is a verbal tradition that, at a party in the ballroom, an officer of George's household for a bet jumped a white horse out of one of the ballroom windows. The horse is said to have died. Nothing is known of what happened to its rider.

George visited the area frequently from the 1790's, partly to review troops - for whom Barham Down was a frequent bivouac - and also to attend the famous annual races in August on Barham Down. It is likely that he visited Charlton Park from the early 1800's, which would agree with one tradition that the west wing including the ballroom was built to entertain him in about 1811, to a design by Henry Holland.

Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Foote. (1767-1833)

He was born at Charlton Park in 1767. Like many second sons, he went into the Navy, where he did well, becoming a post-captain of the red in 1794 and a favourite of both George III and George IV. He became a vice-admiral of the blue in 1821. In 1798 he was given command of the frigate Seahorse in the Mediterranean at the King's request. In June 1799, he was the senior naval officer in Naples when he signed a convention with defeated French-backed rebel leaders after the collapse of the French-created Parthenopean Republic, assuring their safe transfer to France if they handed over the city peacefully, which they did.

When Nelson arrived, he countermanded Foote's orders. The rebels were handed over to King Ferdinand IV and most, including women, were executed. Nelson had deliberately broken Foote's word. Nelson was criticised for his role in this, which of course may have been influenced by wider political considerations unknown to Foote. Foote loyally maintained silence on the issue until long after Nelson was dead. Foote never had a war command again. Instead, from 1802 to 1812 he was captain of successive Royal Yachts. After that he was semi-retired. He was made KCB in 1831. In 1810 he published a justification of his conduct in Naples. Jane Austen, who knew him well, had a high opinion of him. He is the most likely means by which the Prince Regent became linked to the Foote family at Charlton Park.

Jane Austen (1775 - 1817)

Tantalisingly, JA knew two branches of the Foote family well, and as Charlton Park is between Godmersham and Goodnestone (both places where she spent quite a lot of time), it is unlikely she did not visit the house frequently. However, none of her surviving letters mention Robert Foote, his wife, or the house. Of course, only about 5% of her letters survive.

Her links with the area were extensive. Her brother Edward (1767-1852) was adopted by the Austen's childless relations Thomas and Catherine Knight, who owned Godmersham, and he inherited the estate on their death. He married Elizabeth Bridges (1773 - 1808), sister of Sir Brook Bridges of Goodnestone in 1791. Their eldest daughter Fanny (b.1793) was a great favourite of JA's. They spent the early part of their married life at Rowling, before moving to Godmersham when he inherited. Elizabeth died in childbirth with her 11th child, to the great sorrow of her husband and JA.

JA knew Robert Foote's uncle, Captain (later Admiral) Sir Edward Foote RN, his second

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wife Mary, and his daughters Catherine and Caroline from his first marriage. His four daughters with Mary were still infants when JA died. She refers to dining with him in Southampton, where he lived, and Catherine - who JA liked - visited the Austens in London.

She was also very friendly with Robert Foote's cousins, the children of John Foote, a banker in London. John Foote (1747 - 1797) was the son of Francis Hender Foote's elder brother Benjamin Hatley Foote, and was married to Eleanor Martin. His children included several daughters who JA knew well, and who were close - as she was - with the Bridges family of Goodnestone. All will have stayed at Charlton Park frequently, as well as at Goodnestone. Eleanor Foote (b. 1778) married Sir Brook William Bridges in 1800, becoming Lady Bridges, and produced 3 children, but died in 1806. (Bridges's second wife produced no children). Harriet (1781 - 1864) married Sir Brook's younger brother Brook Edward Bridges (1779 - 1825) who went into the Church, in 1809. JA was critical of Harriet in some of her surviving letters, and clearly had a soft spot for Edward. There have been suggestions that JA and Edward might have contemplated marriage around 1805. Lucy Foote (1786 - 1859) was described as also wanting to marry into the Bridges family, but failed, and married William Locker of Newport, Isle of Wight (1773 - 1843) in 1823. Whether JA met the Prince Regent at Charlton Park is an interesting speculation, but her dislike of him seems very personal, so it is likely.

10. General Sir Frederick William Mulcaster

Bought the Charlton estate in 1828 after a successful and lucrative military career. He added the east wing some time between 1839 and 1846. He had the ancient Kingston to Bishopsbourne road moved to the other side of the Nailbourne, building the two small bridges to do so. He also had the lake dug.

Interestingly, the Tithe map of 1839 does not show the road between Kingston and Bishopsbourne, which passed through the park. It is clearly marked elsewhere, for example on the map of the Kinghamford Hundred prepared for Hasted's book in 1799, and on the first Ordnance Survey map in 1819.

The suspicion must be that Mulcaster hoped to close the road, and had sufficient clout to persuade the makers of the Tithe map to exclude it.

The Mulcaster family clearly saw Charlton as the family seat, and several who do not appear ever to have lived there have memorials in the church. In fact, Mulcaster's ownership lasted only 18 years until he died in 1846.

11. Tattersall family.

William, who bought the house in 1868, was born in 1817 and died in Canterbury 1902. His son, John Cecil de Veil Tattersall was born in 1856, and died in 1930. He married Nora Mary Dorothea Beatson in 1910, when she was (apparently) 44. Their son was born in 1915, but died on 11 June 1936.

From 1851, Census returns give full details of individuals. (This started in 1841, but Bishopsbourne is one of a few places in Kent where the 1841 Census returns are missing). Interestingly, from 1851 to 1911, there are always about 10 staff in residence at Charlton Park, but with rare exceptions names do not recur.

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12. Sir John Prestige (1884 - 1962)

One of the more colourful characters who have lived in Bishopsbourne, Prestige was clearly a very effective operator, if somewhat autocratic.

In 1937, when the Tattersall's sold Charlton Park, Prestige wanted to buy it, in order to pull it down, and was annoyed with Sir Francis Humphrys for buying it instead.

The Prestiges were partners since the 1840's in J. Stone and Co, founded by Josiah Stone, who were brass, copper and iron workers and mechanical and general engineers in Deptford. The owners did very well out of World War 1 and later. John Prestige had spent time around 1900 with car manufacturers in Paris as part of his engineering apprenticeship, which left him with a lifelong interest in expensive cars.

He formed the 16th battalion (Deptford) County of London Volunteer Regiment. during WW1 and received the territorial rank of Major.

He bought a knighthood in 1919, one of approximately 1500 men who did so through Lloyd George's agent Maundy Gregory. The going (and well-publicised) rate was £10,000. It was a famous scandal that Lloyd George and Gregory operated during the Liberal Government between 1916 and 1921. (They also invented the OBE for those who could not afford a knighthood, and sold about 25,000 of them.)

He bought Bourne Park in 1927, and is chiefly known for pulling down the historic rectory where Hooker had lived; pulling down part of Oswalds, and trying to have Bourne Park pulled down. Luckily, he did not manage to buy and pull down Charlton Park.

13. Sir Francis Humphrys (1879 - 1971)

He bought the house in 1937 from the Tattersalls on retirement from foreign service. It was requisitioned in 1939, and he never returned to live in it, but when he died in 1971 in Berkshire a memorial was placed on the north wall of the church. He sold the house to Dr Barnardo's at the beginning of 1946. During WW2, the house housed the unit operating the "Boche-Buster" 18 inch gun mounted on a railcar on the old Folkestone line behind the house. The gun was intended to be used to shell invasion forces on the Kent beaches, but was never needed for that purpose. It was hidden in the Bourne Park tunnel, and mostly fired (for practice) from the deep cutting behind Charlton Place.

14. Lt-Col Michael Underwood MBE

Bought the house at auction in 1968 for £24,000. On 31 August 1970, the park hosted a pop concert starring Pink Floyd, Rod Stewart and the Faces and Mott the Hoople among others. The event was partly intended to supply footage for a film about the origins of the Woodstock festival in New York State in 1969. When released, the film did not include any scenes from the event. The festival was not popular in the village, and there were considerable tensions between the Underwoods and local residents. His plans for another pop concert in 1972 led to pressure from the village that forced to its cancellation. The Underwoods sold the house in 1972.

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15. George De Chabris (self-styled "His Serene Holiness the Prince de Chabris")

A very colourful character who bought the house from Underwood.

A Canadian con-man who appears to have arrived in the UK in the 1960's, claiming to be a multi-millionaire. He married Joan Marks in London in 1971, after which he styled himself George Marks De Chabris. His main claim to fame was that Jeremy Thorpe gave him the job of running the National Liberal Club (which was a huge, grand and rapidly deteriorating building) in 1976.

He sold off the library, moved his family into the club, paid his children's school fees from club funds, and ripped the club off for large sums. He was fired after a year, but not prosecuted as the Liberals found it too embarrassing. De Chabris did a midnight flit in 1977, and the vans removing his (and probably others') possessions disturbed the sleep of people in the village as they left. This was the most recent interesting thing to happen at Charlton Park.

De Chabris fled to Florida, where he died in Coral Gables in 2001. A company he set up in Florida (long since defunct) was C.P. Holdings Inc , which may refer to Charlton Park. His two children live in Canada and the USA.

APPENDIX 1

**Charlton Park, Bishopsbourne
Owners**

1 The Herringe family, who built it around 1570. It was probably on the site of, or adjacent to, an earlier farmhouse. James Herringe, the likely builder, died 1598. He had married Margerie Chamber at St George's, Canterbury on 22 January 1563, so was probably born around 1535-40. His eldest son, John, was born in Bishopsbourne on 1st August 1563 and apparently died 2 years later. James describes himself as a yeoman in his will in 1598. His son William (b 1573) sold in 1606 to John Gibbon. There were numerous members of the Herringe family in East Kent, with several living in Bishopsbourne in the 16th century; the first record is of John Herringe's birth in Bishopsbourne in 1563.

2 Gibbon family. John Gibbon (b. Bethesden, 3rd son of Thomas Gibbon) d. 1617
William, his son, d. 1632

William's heirs sold or re-sold it to Sir Anthony Aucher, the lord of the manor of Bishopsbourne, in 1636

Aucher was the owner of Bourne Park, which his family had owned since buying it from Sir Thomas Colepeper (elder brother of the Thomas Colepeper who was executed for his affair with Catherine Howard, 5th wife of Henry VIII) in 1544 after the Reformation.

3 Aucher family, initially Sir Anthony Aucher (1586 -1637), whose male line died out, and with it the baronetcy created in 1666, in 1726. It was inherited by the last Sir Anthony's daughter Elizabeth Corbet, and then by her 5 daughters. The first one sold her share in the property to Francis Hender Foote on Elizabeth's death in 1764, followed by others. He died in 1773. The Foote family gained full control in 1785.

4 Foote Family. - Francis Hender Foote (1723 - 1773)
Son; John Foote (1756 - 1800)
His son ; Robert (1783 - 1845)

It was while owned by Robert that the house hosted several female cousins who were close friends of Jane Austen. King George IV while Prince Regent and later with his mistress Elizabeth, Marchioness of Conyngham stayed at the house on numerous occasions, for which the western extension including the ballroom was built in 1811. George, when Prince Regent, visited the house frequently from the 1800's before his affair with Elizabeth Conyngham started in 1819, which raises the interesting point of whether he and Jane Austen met there. If so, it is likely that any letter she wrote on the topic would have been destroyed by her sister Cassandra as a matter of priority.

Robert and his wife Charlotte Augusta raised a mortgage of £9000 in 1826 from Thomas Rider and George Elwick Jemmett of Ashford, and then sold to Major-General Frederick William Mulcaster for £14,000 on 16.10.1828

5 Mulcaster (1772 - 28.2.1846) and his wife Esther (d. 27.7.1845)
His heirs sold to John Sneller 6.8. 1851 for £12,000.

The 1839 Tithe map shows Mulcaster owning approx 452 acres, of which about 300 acres were tenanted.

Mulcaster added the East wing in the 1840's. He also moved the road to the other side of the Nailbourne, building two bridges to do so, and had the lake dug.

6 John Sneller sold to F W Curteis 26.1.1853 for £8500

12

7 Curteis sold to William Scott 20. 10 1859 for £8625

8 Sold by Scott at auction 4. 6. 1868 to William Tattersall for £3000 (159 acres freehold). One obvious reason for the decline in the price of the estate over this period was that approximately 300 acres (probably the part previously tenanted) had been sold off.

After the death of William's son Capt. John Cecil de Veel Tattersall in 1930, and his only son, Robert Cecil Beatson Tattersall in 1936 at the age of 21, trustees for his widow, Nora Mary Dorothea Tattersall (d. 1942) sold to Sir Francis Humphrys 29.1. 1937. The purchase by Humphrys forestalled an attempt by the then owner of Bourne Park, Sir John Prestige, to buy the property and pull it down.

9 Sir Francis Humphrys (1879 - 1971) raised a mortgage on the property from Samares Investments on 22 5. 1942.

The house was requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence 1939/40 -1945, when it housed the unit operating the 18 inch "Boche-Buster" heavy gun mounted on a railway truck on the Canterbury to Folkestone line that then ran at the back of the house, which was intended to shell invasion forces on the Kent beaches. The gun was hidden in the Bourne park tunnel when not in use, and was fired mostly from the deep cutting directly behind Charlton Place. The property was sold by Humphrys to Dr Barnardo's on 10.1.1946. On 8 12 1947 Humphrys sold another property to Barnardo's - presumably Tudor Cottage. It seems he never moved back to Charlton Park, but when he died in Berkshire in 1971, a memorial to him was placed on the north wall of the church.

10 Dr Barnardo's home 10.1 1946 - 31. 12. 66 The house was then empty for 2 years until sold at auction to Underwood.

11 Bought at auction 23.7.1968 for £24,000 by Lt-Col Michael Underwood and his wife Rosalind together with 47 acres. On 8.7.1968, 107.8 acres of land was sold by Barnardo's to Hubert Henry Smith Roberts, of Ackholt House, Nonington for £19,500. This parcel had been sold by Humphrys to Dr Barnardo's on 10.1. 1946. Barnardo's sold other properties such as the Dower House and Tudor Cottage separately. The acreage involved suggests that it had not changed appreciably since the sale by Scott in 1868. Underwood had been in the Cameron Highlanders, had served in the Malaya emergency, and hoped to make money running pop concerts. One, starring Pink Floyd in 1970, was fairly successful. A later attempt in 1972 was cancelled, after causing disagreement with several people in the village.

12 Bought by George de Chabris, the Canadian conman, despoiler of the National Liberal Club and friend of Jeremy Thorpe, in 1972

He lived at the National Liberal Club as well as in Bishopsbourne. He had married Joan Marks in 1971, after which he referred to himself as George Marks de Chabris. He also awarded himself an ill-defined European title. He sold off most of the National Liberal Club in 1976 for personal gain, and nearly bankrupted the party. They did not prosecute because it was too embarrassing. He fled to Miami, where he died in 2001.

13 Bought by Valerie Bailey 1 9 1978

14 Bought by Jonathan Ewart and Heather Hay Ffrench 1980

15 Bought by Kenneth Brown 20 11 1981

16 Bought by Mr and Mrs P. A Twigg 25. 8 1988

13

APPENDIX 2

Foote family relationships

Francis Foote (b.1696) and his wife Mary Hatley, heiress of Benjamin Hatley (1695 -1770)
Malling Abbey, Kent.

1	2	3
Benjamin Hatley Foote (1720 - 18.1.1791)	John Foote (d. 1767)	Francis Hender Foote (1723 - 4. .2. 1773)

m. Mary Mann (1717- 1778)
of Linton, Kent

children

1 George Talbot Hatley Foote

2 John Foote (b. Chart Sutton 18.1. 1747)
(d. Clifton 31.10. 1797)
Banker in Lombard St, London
m. Eleanor,* d. of Joseph and Eleanor
Martin (4.6. 1755 - 19.5.1831) 17.2 1775.
at Great Bookham,, Surrey

John Foote (London) 's children

1 George (b. 25.1 1776)

2 John (b. 2.3. 1777)

3 Charles (b. 26.1 1780)

4 Eleanor (1778 - 1806)*

5 Harriet (1781 - 1864)*

6 Lucy (1786 - 1859)*

7 Anne

8 Mary (? b . 1784)

* Well-known to Jane Austen

m. 18.1.1749 Catherine Mann
(1720 -17.5.1776) of Linton Kent

children

1. Francis Hender 4.1 1755 -
8.4. 1762)

2 John Foote (2.11.1756 - 5.9.
1800). m. Mary Baldwyn
(1760-1806) 26.4.1777

3 Robert (1757 - 1804)

4 Sir Edward, RN (1767-1833)*

5 Caroline (26.1.1753 - 1778);
died unmarried)

6 Catherine (2.1 1754 -
4.1.1808)

7 Mary (23.4. 1772 - 1789;
died unmarried)

John Foote (Bishopsbourne) 's children

1. Francis Hender (3.9.1782 - 14.4. 1793)

2. Robert (1783 - 1845)*
m. 1802 Charlotte-Augusta Keppel
(1771-1852)

3. Edward James (Major) (b. 1.7.1784
d. Trincomallee, India 1824)

4. John (Capt. RN) (b. 22 . 9 1785
d. Devon Oct.1853)

5. Mary (1791 - 1848)

6. Adeline (27.7.1800 -18.2.1881)

1. Robert Foote inherited Charlton Park at 17 in 1800, and married Charlotte-Augusta Keppel (1771 -1852) at 19 in 1802. They sold Charlton Park in 1828, and ended their lives in reduced circumstances in Bedford Place, Sidmouth, Devon.

They had 1 son; Keppel Robert Edward Foote, b.1811. He married Helen (or “ Ellen”) Whinfield 1.8.1834. They had no children. Both died in Southampton in 1851, possibly from the same cholera epidemic.

2. Benjamin Hatley Foote and Francis Hender Foote married sisters, the daughters of Robert and Eleanor (nee' Guise) Mann of Linton, who were themselves sisters to Sir Horace Mann, MP (1706-1786). The Foote's other brother John was rector of Yoxall, Staffs, and died unmarried.

Francis and Catherine married at West Farleigh, Kent. She died in Bishopsbourne 17.5.1776.

Francis and Catherine's daughter Catherine (1754 -1808) married (1) Colonel John Ross, who died; (2) Sir Robert Herries MP (1730 - 1815). on 12 8. 1777. They retired to Cheltenham in 1798, where they both died. Admiral Sir Edward Foote's first wife was Herries's daughter, Nina.

3. George Talbot Hatley Foote died unmarried.

4. John Foote of Charlton Park was born at Boughton Malherbe. His wife was Mary Baldwyn of Middlesex, whom he married 26 April 1777. Some other but incorrect research suggests his wife was Mary Cockett, the daughter of

Edward Cockett of Hertfordshire , who married a different John Foote in Southwick, Hants in 1782.

John, like his father and cousin George T H Foote were at Oxford (John at Merton; George at St Mary Hall; Francis at St Edmund Hall)

Adeline Foote married Henry Barrington, a major in the army 16.8.1825, at St James's Piccadilly.

Her sister Mary married 1) Daniel Libson; 2) Charles Patrick

Their brother John RN married Fanny Pengelly and moved to Devon where they both died.

5. Of John and Eleanor Foote's children, George Foote, a banker, was drowned at Gravesend.

John died in the East Indies. Charles was a captain RN. All died unmarried.

Eleanor Foote (1778 - 1806) married. Sir Brook William Bridges (1767 - 1829) on 14 August 1800 at Boxley, Kent

It seems that after their father died in 1797, John Foote of London's daughters lived a great deal at Goodnestone and Charlton Park.

Harriet (b 17 12 1781) married .Brook Edward Bridges (7.9.1779 - 23.4.1825) on 22. 11. 1809. She died a widow in Southampton 1864.

Lucy Mann Foote married William Locker (1773 - 1843) in 1823.

Their widowed mother Eleanor died at Walmer 1831, while living in Canterbury. She had previously lived in Ramsgate. Her will of 1825 (proved 1831) lists the surviving members of her family as Harriet, Lucy, Anne and Mary. The last two were unmarried at that time. The three sons were all dead by then. The executor was a cousin, John Martin, of Lombard Street.

By the time of the very detailed Tithe survey of the parish in 1839, there were no members of the Foote family still living in Bishopsbourne.

Sir Brook William and Eleanor Bridges' daughter Eleanor (1805-92) married Henry Western Plumtre (1803-63) of Eastwood, Notts, at Goodnestone on 10 April 1828. This was how the ownership of the Goodnestone estate passed from the Bridges family to the Plumtre family.

APPENDIX 3

Bishopsbourne and the Wealden dens.

From Jutish times (and probably earlier) until at least 1400, settlements in north-east Kent used traditional areas (dens) in the otherwise largely uninhabited Weald for pannage - fattening pigs in the autumn - and had traditional drove routes to reach them. Some of these links such as that of Thanet with Tenterden, are well researched.

Records of Bishopsbourne's involvement in this transhumance are scanty - possibly because there was considerable local woodland for fattening pigs. (Cows cannot be fed on beech-mast). However Domesday Book lists Bishopsbourne and Petham as owing pannage dues to the Archbishop, and in 1285 Bishopsbourne is recorded in the list of the Archbishop's drof-dens (beechmast feeding areas) as owning part of "Bisshoppenden" (Great Bishopsden in what is now Benenden parish) and Lollesden (apparently Leesden or London, also in Benenden parish). The area now covered by Benenden parish apparently had 30 to 40 dens in the Anglo-Saxon period. Petham was also part-owner of some of these dens. Presumably, the drove route from Bishopsbourne went to Petham, from where both made their way to Benenden.

APPENDIX 4

Relevant books, documents and maps

A. General and specific history

- 1 Caesar; The conquest of Gaul (54 BC) (short account of battle against Britons on Barham Down)
- 2 Bede; Ecclesiastical History of the English People (c.730 AD)
(recounts Caesar's account of the battle)
- 3 F R H. Du Boulay; The Lordship of Canterbury (1966)
(re agreements and charters on the ownership of Bishopsbourne 600 -1300)
- 4 Alan M. Everitt; Continuity and Civilisation – the evolution of Kentish settlement (1986)

(re the period 500 – 1500)

- 5 Domesday Book; Kent (1086)
 - 6 The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury (c. 1100)
 - 7 Christopher Saxton; map of Kent, Surrey and Sussex (1575)
 - 8 John Norden; map of Kent (1605)
 - 9 John Speed ; Map of Kent (1610)
 - 10 Charles Seymour; Topographical, historical and commercial survey of Kent (1776)
(aspects of Bishopsbourne, Charlton Park and related history 800 – 1770)
 - 11 Edward Hasted; History and Topographical survey of Kent Vol. 9. (1799)
(similar, including map of Kinghamford Hundred)
- 16
- 12 Ordnance Survey Old Series; Kent (1819)
 - 13 Tithe Map and field, crop and ownership analysis of Bishopsbourne parish (1839)
 14. Thomas Robinson; The Common Law of Kent; the customs of Gavelkind (1858)
 - 15 Frederic Seebohm; The English Village Community (1883)
(re Anglo-Saxon and later village social structures and holdings)
 - 16 F T Vine; Caesar in Kent (1887)
(reconstruction of Caesar's battle against the Britons, July 8, 54 BC)
 - 17 H F Abell; History of Kent (1898)
(repeats several earlier errors)
 - 18 Charles Igglesden; A saunter through Kent (1923)
 - 19 C W Chalklin; Seventeenth-Century Kent (1965)
 - 20 Frank Jessup; A History of Kent (1974)
(general historical summary)
 - 21 Terence Lawson & David Killingray; An Historical Atlas of Kent (2004)
(general historical summary, with some data on Bishopsbourne)
 - 22 Stuart Brookes and Sue Harrington; The Kingdom and People of Kent AD 400-1066 (2010)
 - 23 Judith Glover; The Place Names of Kent (1976)
 - 24 Peter Heather; Bishopsbourne (Unpublished thesis, University of Brighton 1979)
 - 25 P F Reaney; Place-names and early settlement in Kent (Archaeologica Cantiana vol 76, p.58)
 - 26 F R H Du Boulay; Dens, Droving and Danger (Arch .Cant. vol. 76, p.75)

B. The Jutish period (c.450 – c.800)

- 1 J E A Joliffe; Pre-Feudal England – the Jutes (1933)
- 2 K P Witney; The Kingdom of Kent (1982)

- 3 K P Witney; The Jutish Forest (1976)
(re the Weald of Kent 450 – 1380)
- 4 John H Williams; The Archaeology of Kent to AD 800 (2007)
- 5 C F C Hawkes; The Jutes of Kent (Dark Age Britain, ed. D B Harden 1956 p 91)

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C. Memoirs etc

- 1 Jane Austen; Letters (Folio Society 2003)
- 2 Admiral Sir Edward J. Foote RN; Captain Foote's Vindication (1810) (re; Naples 1799)
- 3 Christopher Scoble; Letters from Bishopsbourne (2010)

D. Well-known geographical and historical surveys which **do not** have any useful material on Bishopsbourne or Charlton Park.

- 1 John Leland; Itinerary; Kent (1545)
- 2 William Lambarde; A Perambulation of Kent (1570)
- 3 William Camden; Britannia; Kent (1586)
(Discusses Caesar's battle 54 BC inaccurately. Sloppy on some other history)
- 4 John Ogilby; Survey of the principal roads of England and Wales (1675)
(includes the London-Dover road)
- 5 Celia Fiennes; The Journeys of Celia Fiennes (1685 – 1703)
- 6 Daniel Defoe; A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain (1726)
- 7 William Cobbett; Rural Rides (1830)

