LATE VICTORIAN HANNEY

An Agricultural Community

HANNEY HISTORY GROUP – OCCASIONAL PAPER No. 2

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The inspiration for this work came from Janie Cottis, Archivist at Magdalen College, University of Oxford, who suggested that the 1881 Census of Population would be a good starting point for a study of village history. The result was an exhibition entitled The Hanneys in the 1880s, presented over a weekend in the Hanney War Memorial Hall in November 1988.

Following on from the success of the exhibition the Group continued it's researches and the idea of preserving the knowledge in a published format was developed. This booklet is the result of research by Margaret Adams, Jo Bowen, Pauline Cakebread, Ann Fewins, Sue Smith. Thanks should also go to Frank Poller for the line drawings, Mrs Marion Allin of Hanney School for the loan of the School Log Books, Miss Mary Welch for access to the Parish Registers and Keith Diment for his advice and help in publishing the booklet. Throughout the booklet you will find extracts in boxes from the Hanney Parish News published between 1877 and 1878.

We recognise that there are gaps in our knowledge. Our research has been like a jigsaw puzzle with no picture and some pieces missing. Occasionally we find a new piece which alters our view of the villages. This then is a snapshot of late Victorian Hanney based on our present knowledge. We would we welcome any further information, maps or documents which would give as a greater insight into life in Hanney during this period.

Ann Fewins
Chair, Hanney History Group
January 1994

INTRODUCTION

East and West Hanney are two attractive villages situated in the Vale of the White Horse in what is now Oxfordshire and was until 1974 the northern most part of Berkshire. The villages are within easy reach of the market towns of Abingdon and Wantage. Together they form one ecclesiastical parish, but are separate parishes for purposes of local government.

In the 1981 census the population of the villages was 759 (262 households) in East Hanney compared to 493 (120 households) in 1881. In West Hanney there were 488 (159 households) compared to 369 (85 households) one hundred years earlier. The population today in the Hanneys is rising but the 1871 and 1881 census figures indicate a declining population.

Now the majority of residents work outside the village in a variety of jobs. In 1881 most people worked within the village, mainly in agriculture. Nowadays the old village farmhouses are more likely to belong to businessmen than farmers.

One hundred years ago there was a busy railway station at Wantage Road Station handling both good and passengers within half a mile of East Hanney. Today although high speed trains fly through the old station yard passengers must go to Didcot station eight miles away.

These are some of the more obvious immediate comparisons that can be made between 20th century Hanney and the village in late Victorian times. Before beginning to examine more closely Hanney life 100 years ago we must first of all briefly consider the wider Victorian world.

Setting the scene

By the 1870s, Britain was enjoying her position as the world's leading industrial nation. In addition, her influence continued to spread to every corner of the globe as the great British Empire slowly stained the world map pink. Queen Victoria, who had been on the throne for over 30 years, raised the monarchy to new heights of respectability and through the marriages of her children united the country with many countries of Europe. The Queen became increasingly popular as she grew older, and in 1887 her Golden Jubilee was celebrated.

However, behind the success was a darker side. Many people in Britain, especially in the cities which had grown rapidly in response to industrial prosperity, lived in conditions of squalor. The laissez-faire attitudes of High Victorianism, in which people were supposed to fend for themselves, were in the 1870s and 1880s being questioned. Gradually it became clear that in many fields - housing, education, working conditions - the State had a central role to play. At a local level, too, the old ways of doing things were changing, culminating in the establishment of County Councils in 1889. Abroad, Britain was involved in a series of wars and skirmishes in the Transvaal, Afghanistan, the Sudan, Egypt and Burma.
Ireland was not least of her problems and the papers especially in the 1880s were full of the latest atrocities. The Irish question unseated several governments of the time, as Liberals and Tories struggled with an insoluble problem. Gladstone, 'the People's William' was the most familiar politician of the time, his Liberal government holding office four times. The working man got the vote, the secret ballot was introduced. Married women were allowed to own property. Trade unions started to expand and strikes such as the one at Bryant and May match factory became news. Socialist thoughts and ideas began to percolate through society - the Fabian Society was formed, Toynbee Hall was opened and Keir Hardie stood for Parliament.

Country areas were not isolated from all these changes. The railways had expanded into nearly every corner of the country, and not only transported people but carried goods from all over the Empire. News travelled faster and was available to far more people as a cheap press developed and literacy was accepted as the right of the ordinary man. People were able to read almost immediately of the latest exploits of Jack the Ripper, of the Transvaal Gold Rush, of the death of General Gordon. They could marvel at reports of the first telephone message, a new safety bicycle, the internal combustion engine, electric light, the pneumatic tyre, and a stream of other important inventions which came thick and fast during this period. In their papers they would hear of amusing comic operas by Gilbert and Sullivan, of new novels by Thomas Hardy and R.L. Stevenson, of the poetry of Rudyard Kipling and the plays of Oscar Wilde.

For the first 40 years of Queen Victoria's reign up to the late 1870s farmers had benefited from improvements in farming methods leading to increased yields from the land. Many of these improvements resulted from experiments conducted by gentlemen farmers, such as Lord Wantage of nearby Ardington. Innovations in farming methods were supplemented by developments in other fields such as engineering, so that the combi-

nation of more efficient mechanised tools, better land management through drainage and fertilisation, and specialised livestock breeding meant more grain and fatter stock. The rising city populations had to be fed and so increased output matched the rising demand, and profits were there for the taking. This period was known as the era of Victorian High Farming.

Then, in the latter half of the 1870s, the bottom fell out of the market. Large quantities of cheap grain started to arrive from the American prairies, and prices tumbled. A series of appalling English summers compounded the disaster with poor harvests. Lady Wantage recorded in her diary: 'It was a despairingly wet and cold season; in Berkshire the harvest did not begin until September 1st.' Many farmers tried to respond to the problems by switching from arable to livestock farming, and the acreage of land under arable in England fell by a million acres between the 1870s and 80s. This solution was short-lived, however, for in 1882 the first frozen meat from abroad arrived in London.

CULTIVATING THE LAND

By using contemporary documents such as census returns (1841-1891) and government reports on agriculture we endeavoured to first of all discover who owned the land in the villages, who the farmers were and how the land was worked.

Good land or bad?

The name Hanney with the -ey ending indicates that like some of its neighbours in the Vale of White Horse, such as Goosey and Charney Bassett, Hanney was originally an island settlement surrounded by marshland. The island is lozenge shaped tapering off in the direction of Denchworth. The island soil contains mainly gravelly stone over a clay base, which means that this higher ground has the benefit of holding moisture without becoming waterlogged. Once off the higher points near the centre of the village, however, even today the landscape of flat, low-lying meadows is easily flooded. We know from 19th century accounts in the School Log Book that many of the fields in Hanney were even more prone to flooding in bad weather than today, causing difficulties for the school children.

Fields in flood

In 1858 New College had paid for materials to improve the drainage of 25 acres of its land at Grove Hedge and today's Hanney farmers have come across Victorian drains elsewhere on their land, but on much Hanney land - for example, Manor Farm - adequate drainage systems were not put in until the middle of the 20th century. Waterlogged ground cannot have been good either for livestock, labourers or crops.

These variations in the quality of the land in Hanney at the end of the 19th century are reflected both in contemporary descriptions and in the land values. According to Kelly's Trade Directory, about a third of East Hanney consisted of fertile arable land. In addition, we know from records of the annual grass lettings that there was some high quality pasture such as the meadows on Barnstables Farm lying along the Letcombe Brook. Even in the depressed market of the 1880s these meadows fetched up to 55s an

acre in rent. To put this in context, the best of Lord Wantage's land in the Vale was worth 40s. an acre.

By contrast, West Hanney rentals averaged as low as 22s an acre at the end of the 1880s. This may well be explained by the fact that, as we have seen, a number of West Hanney farms largely lacked meadow land, which fetched the higher prices. A significant part of the meadows on the other side of West Hanney, along the Childrey Brook, belonged to New College and were let to a Denchworth farmer, William Kimber, rather than to West Hanney farms. So West Hanney farmers at least, depending heavily on their income from arable crops, were always destined for hard times during the Agricultural Depression.

Despite the apparently better land East Hanney fortunes were not noticeably happier. The 1983 Royal Commission on Labour - The Agricultural Labourer gathered opinions from several Berkshire villages including Hanney and, making no distinction between East and West, concluded that Hanney was 'poor owing to the heavy nature of the soil not suited for dairy farming and it does not pay for corn'.

Given the other views we have recounted of Hanney land, the inspector's remarks seem overstated. Perhaps he based his opinion on local grumbles expressed at the open meetings he held, of which at least one took place in Hanney. It is certainly conceivable that the village's troubles were blamed by the locals on factors beyond their control such as the poor quality of the land, rather than on any shortcomings of their own. But, as we shall see, there were other factors at work as well, which reflected neither on the abilities and application of the farming community nor on the quality of the land itself.

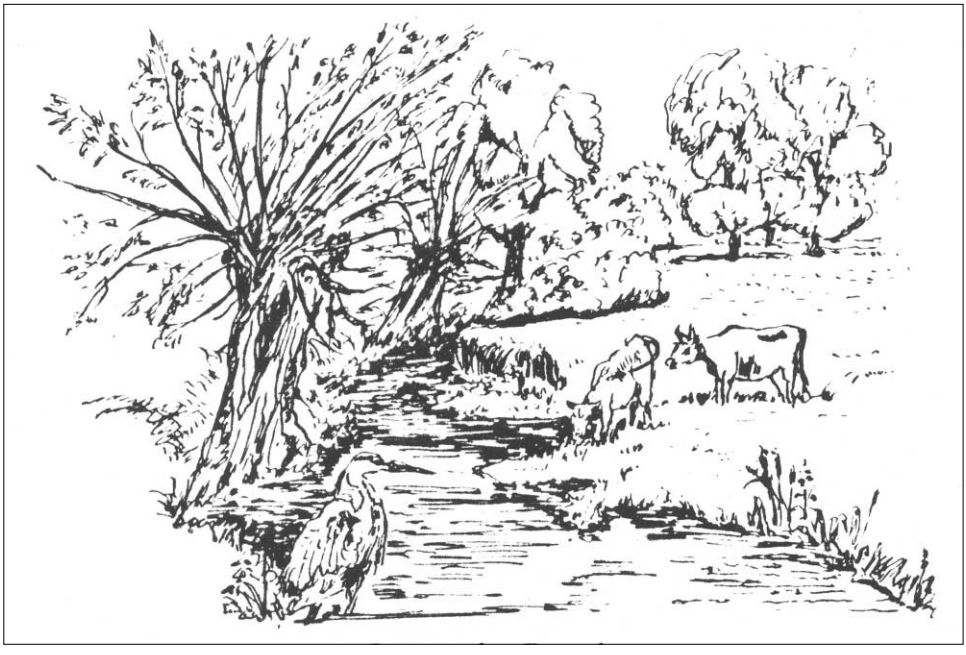
Wheat, water meadows and walnuts

The absence of dairy farming was certainly a serious gap in Hanney's economy. Other nearby villages were able to derive a ready income supplying milk to the London market via the G.W.R. stations at Steventon, Wantage Road and Childrey. Evidently no such income flowed into Hanney.

Overall, about two thirds of the land in both East and West Hanney was given over to arable farming prior to the Depression, with the other third providing pasture for grazing. However, as we know, West Hanney farmers were disproportionately dependent on arable, because 'West Hanney' meadows were not actually part of West Hanney farms. Only North Denchworth Farm, included in West Hanney township, was predominantly pasture. In East Hanney, the majority of pasture land was concentrated in Barnstables Farm, Weir Farm and Poughley Farm, along the Letcombe Brook.

With the Depression, however, significant tracts of arable land in the Vale were laid down to grass. We know that Joseph Greenaway made this change at Manor Farm in West Hanney. Probably other Hanney farmers also followed the trend. The fields laid to grass were generally smaller than arable fields, and during the 1880s new fences sprang

up in Hanney fields to divide the old arable land. Even the grasslands, however, failed to produce any income in some cases. At Barnstables Farm 185 acres of grazing in seven meadows were available for letting in 1881. The auctioneer's notes against each lot tell the tale of the times; 'no bidding' or 'not let' against 119 acres.



Letcombe Brook

The Letcombe Brook was used in East Hanney to irrigate water meadows and it was undoubtedly this land which continued to fetch good prices even during the Depression. The system was to flood the meadows in spring to a depth of about one inch using a series of sluices. This brought on the grass more quickly so that animals could be pastured early in the year. The subsequent growth was also thicker and provided more hay for winter fodder. Consequently a larger number of animals could be kept. Hanney meadows were grazed both by cattle and sheep. One Hanney family, the Lloyds, diversified into farming from butchery, so they may have kept livestock for fattening and slaughter. Sheep could be bought and sold at the great August sheep fairs on the downs at Ilsley.

There was one further source of potential income from the pasture land: timber. This had long been an important product from the Vale, both as a house-building material - witness the abundance of timber-framed cottages in the area - and for gates, fencing and posts as well as furniture making. North Denchworth Farm was sold in 1891 and the bill of sale points out that the farm was 'well timbered', evidently a relevant selling point.

One other significant feature of the Hanney landscape is evident from the maps of the period: both villages were entirely surrounded by orchards, covering about forty acres

in all, which provided crops of cherries, apples and walnuts, and which must have been an attractive sight in spring and autumn, as well as providing much-needed income. The remains of these orchards can be seen today overlooked by The Meads in West Hanney, and behind Deans Farm. In East Hanney parts of the orchards have been built over now and are remembered in the road names - Blenheim Orchard, Mill Orchard.

The seasonal round ...

On the arable land the local practice was to adopt a 'four course' system of crop rotation. This meant that the arable farmland was divided in four and each of the quarters sown with a different crop each year. Wheat would be sown in the spring of the first year. The second year a green crop of beans, peas or clover was sown at the same time as the wheat and harrowed in. The third year crop would be barley or oats and in the fourth year 'turnips or other fallow'. With two grain crops like this, the system meant that no more than half the land was under grain in any one year.

Hanney farm leases are careful to spell out the requirement for this crop rotation so the landlords must have been worried that tenants might otherwise overwork the land. Furthermore there were punitive penalties for ploughing up pasture land. Hanney farmers could be fined by the landlord up to £50 an acre for putting meadows under the till. A 200 acre farm in Hanney could be leased for £200-£300 a year during the Depression so this was clearly regarded as a serious matter.

Nevertheless, some farmers seem to have negotiated departures from the four course system. At Manor Farm in West Hanney up to three fifths of the arable could be grain crops in any one year, rather than the usual half. After the onset of the Depression, Manor Farm leases were relaxed further, with the grain crops limited only in the last year or two of the tenancy. Provided the farmer stayed long enough he could therefore use his own discretion about rotation. No doubt this was intended as an inducement to the farmer to regard his tenancy on a long term footing at a time when many farmers were leaving the land.

'Good rotten dung'....

Root crops, such as turnips, were used as cattle or sheep fodder, and farm leases had invariably stipulated that all produce from the land, with the exception of the grain crops, should be consumed on the farm and worked back into the soil in the way of manure. However, the march of progress shows itself in leases from about 1870 which allowed the substitution of artificial fertilisers, and oil or cake as animal fodder. West Hanney had a resident manufacturer of artificial fertiliser by 1881 - Charles Lloyd , whose father, grandfather and uncle were all tenant farmers in Hanney - so perhaps these options had been included at the insistence of the farmers. These 'artificial' fertilisers were not chemical fertilisers, but ashes of various sorts, such as peat ash from Marcham, coal ash from Milton, soot or soaper's ashes and sometimes stubble ashes. In addition, malt dust from the brew houses in the market towns was sometimes spread on crops and this would have been available from the brewery in Abingdon.

A few miles from Hanney Lord Wantage was conducting large-scale experiments with artificial manure on the downs, but he frowned on artificial food. His results in carrying off many of the top prizes at agricultural shows seem to bear out his methods, but this approach was probably one that Hanney farmers could ill afford. Hanney leases attempted to ensure that at least an adequate quantity and quality of artificial fodder or fertiliser was substituted for organic compost or manure. The farmers on the other hand were clearly looking for alternative ways of feeding livestock and thereby making economies during the Depression.

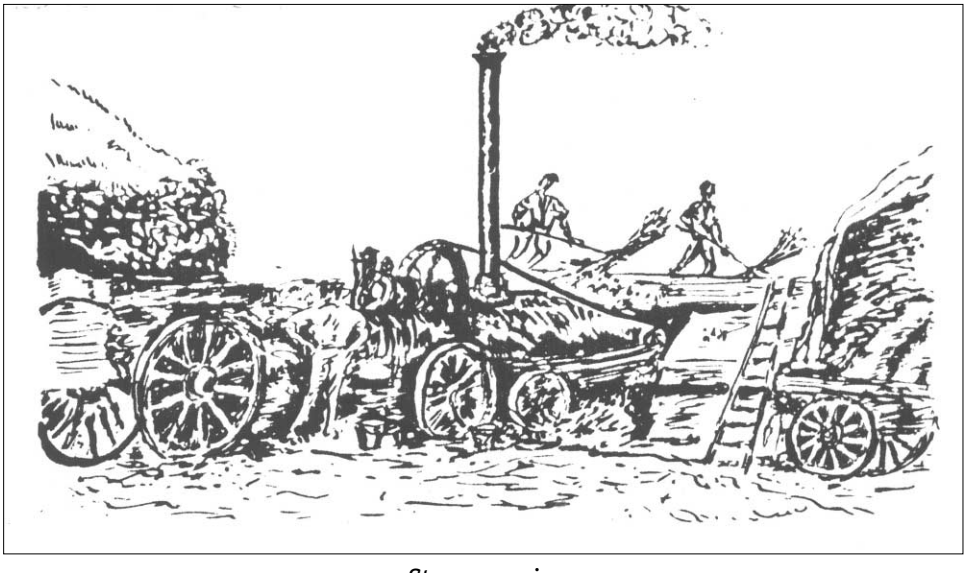
Better prospects ...

One factor however changed sharply with the onset of the Depression: the farm workers began to leave the land. Although work was still being advertised in the local newspapers, and newcomers to the village seem to have been readily able to find employment, the number of labourers employed on the farms dropped dramatically. At the beginning of the 1870s, three West Hanney farms (Church Farm, Manor Farm and West Hanney House (Rectory Farm)) employed between them 24 men, 11 boys and 12 women, making 47 people in total. Ten years later the same three farms were managing with only 14 men and 8 boys, making a total of 22, a reduction of over half. The two census returns were made at the same time of year - April - so the difference cannot be accounted for by seasonal changes such as extra labour for the harvest. Female employment seems to have virtually ceased: only two West Hanney women were listed in farm work in 1881 compared with 10 in 1871, and the three farms we have mentioned apparently had no female labourers at all. Overall, the proportion of the West Hanney working population employed in agricultural labouring dropped from a third to only a quarter over the ten year interval. A similar story emerges in East Hanney.

If we look at specific family examples in West Hanney, in 1871 58 families were dependent on agricultural labouring for their living. By 1881, 16 of these families had disappeared from the village, but new families to the village like Joseph Cox and the Bartholomews were able to get farm labouring work. A number of resident families, such as those of George Akerman, David Dunsdon and Frederick Higgs, remained but switched to alternative occupations: railway work, shoemaking, general labouring. Perhaps most significantly, of the 20 youths in the village employed on the land in 1871, who by 1881 would have been in their twenties, only six had remained in the village. The rest had departed, including a number of the sons of long-standing indigenous families like the Dunsdons, Higgs and Belchers. Poor agricultural wages and long hours of heavy manual work certainly competed badly for the ablest young men when compared with, for example, the G.W.R. at Swindon, horse racing establishments, or perhaps even the attraction of the colonies. Young women increasingly preferred to go into service rather than work on the land. There was still a pool of 'mobile' labour to be taken out at the traditional 'Hiring Fair'. William and Mary Mace who both came from East Hanney are listed as living in East Challow in 1881. Their five children, all under 10, had been born at four different villages in the Vale. In East Hanney the outlying farm cottages at Barnstables and Landmead usually contained agricultural families from outside the village.

It seems unlikely that all these labour 'savings' on Hanney farms were compensated for by greater efficiency or by using machines instead. The conversion of arable land to pasture and the fact that some Hanney farms were acquired by the more efficient large estates of Lord Wantage and E.B. Pusey would account for part of the drop in the work force but even so work must have gone undone. This is borne out by contemporary observations: the government commission reported in 1893 that 'men complain everywhere that land is labour starved' - except on Lord Wantage's estate, of course. Those left on the land were the older workers, which must have further restricted efficiency; 'It is the older women who are still employed hoeing, hay making and harvesting ... the younger men who would become more accustomed to using farm machinery are drawn away and older men are not interested in using it'.

Nevertheless there were modernisations: East Hanney census return of 1881 includes one young man, George Bunce, who describes his occupation as 'portable engine driver', and we know from photographs that by the end of the century Dennis Dandridge at Weir Farm was using a steam thresher which he also hired out to other farms. By 1891 Joseph Steel is listed as a threshing machine proprietor in West Hanney. Of course, this was much less and much later than the changes made by Lord Wantage at Home Farm, where 'the best and newest agricultural machines, such as steam ploughs, mowing and reaping machines etc., were introduced.' But whenever it came, the intrusion of large and noisy machinery into the quiet of the countryside must have ensured that everyone in Hanney was aware of the march of progress!



Steam engine

A time of change...

On the whole, the impression emerges that farming in Hanney was a struggle, despite certain natural advantages in the condition of the land. The small size of farms made it difficult to achieve efficiencies and there was not the capital available to invest early in machinery or other innovations. The combination of these factors meant that a number of Hanney farmers were driven off the land altogether and the character of farming changed permanently. The appearance of the landscape was also altered, with fewer expanses of arable crops and more smaller fenced fields holding grazing animals. Some land was simply neglected, and farm buildings became more dilapidated. Steam power came to the countryside and broke the calm but there were fewer young faces and fewer women labouring in the fields. Agriculture, though still the central feature of life for most villagers, was no longer the only focus.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Background

The 19th century was one of significant changes in the pattern of land ownership in England. Much of the common land of England's villages was enclosed during the early years of the century. East Hanney was enclosed in 1803 but West Hanney was not enclosed until 1839-40. The procedure generally involved mapping the village fields and recording ownership and occupation of the different parcels of land identified. The land was then re-apportioned amongst those people who had established their ownership, consolidating awkward and disjointed small holdings into more workable parcels. The effect was to make more efficient farming possible. However, the Enclosure process is also blamed for excluding much of the peasantry from common grazing, making their living that much harder to eke out.

In looking at land ownership in East and West Hanney it is useful to make a comparison with Ardington which had one single resident landowner, Lord Wantage. He played a pioneering role not only in developing land management and husbandry methods but also in shaping the social fabric of the Ardington and Lockinge villages which formed the Home Farm of his 13,000 acre Berkshire estates.

Hanney Landowners

In contrast the main landowners in East and West Hanney were absentee landlords. They fall into four different groups with varying attitudes to their land holdings.

The first group were Oxford Colleges. The Colleges had held vast tracts of land across the county since medieval times, and even at the end of the 19th century still retained the vestiges of ancient manorial rights in some villages. In West Hanney, New College had owned the Manor Farm and lands (now Prior's Court) since the 15th century, as well as most of the meadow land along the brook at the Denchworth boundary of the village. In all, the College owned more than a fifth of West Hanney land, and continued into the 1870s to hold manorial courts in Hanney to decide matters relating to the College land and tenants.

The Colleges continued to be acquisitive, consolidating and increasing their ownership, and no doubt taking advantage of falling land prices. In 1885 New College purchased a small plot of land to the north of West Hanney green 'surrounded on all sides by other property belonging to the said Warden and Scholars'. The College paid £240 for Wicks Cottage with about an acre of land; twenty-five years earlier the same property had changed hands for £300. By the beginning of the 20th century, New College had added a further 183 acres at North Denchworth Farm to its portfolio of Hanney land, though during this period they also disposed of part of West Hanney House (Rectory Farm). It seems that the College also bought out the copy hold on land held by the Monk family, when James Monk retired from farming at the onset of the Depression.

New College's purchases in Hanney were mirrored by Magdalen College's acquisitions at about the same time. At the mid-century mark, Magdalen did not figure as a Hanney landowner at all. By 1902, the College had purchased from the Aldworth family of Garford the 163 acres of Church Farm on the East Hanney boundary and repurchased the copy hold on 120 acres of Aldworth land at the other side of the village.

The interest of the Colleges in their land was clearly of a long-term capital nature, and to this extent the fortunes of tenants from year to year must have been of only secondary interest provided the rent continued to be paid and the farms maintained. Tenants at New College's Hanney properties were responsible for carrying out their own repairs to the farmhouse, farm buildings, fences and labourers' cottages. The College provided the raw materials in the way of timber (planted and kept by the tenant!), bricks, tiles, mortar and paint or 'gas tar' for weatherproofing. The tenant, however, had to find the cost of carriage of materials to the premises and to provide any straw for thatching, as well as the labour for all repairs. (At Manor Farm the tenant also had to agree to 'entertain and accommodate ... in a comfortable and proper manner' the College's representatives, including their servants and horses up to twice a year, for the purposes of inspecting the property. Perhaps not coincidentally, the College also retained all sporting rights on the land and insisted on tenants prosecuting poachers!

The College was keen to ensure the maintenance and replacement of its assets. In 1861 it stipulated to William Aldworth, then the tenant at Manor Farm, that a planting scheme should be undertaken to re-stock the hedgerows with oak, ash and elm trees. Timber was a valuable additional source of income and, needless to say, the College retained for itself the timber rights on the farm.

Other requirements in the leases also point to the College's careful management. In 1867, William Aldworth was required to have Manor Farm land surveyed and a 'terrier' or written description made of the farm boundaries and land taxes. Elsewhere in Hanney another tenant had to carry out drainage improvements in 1858.

The Depression seems to have brought concessions from the College. With rents falling by almost a half and farmers leaving the land, landlords struggled to hold onto their tenants to avoid their land being neglected. According to the 1881 Census West Hanney had five 'retired' farmers, John Stevens aged 55, James Monk 49, William Heading 70 and his son also William aged 36, and 68 year old Richard Lloyd.

Joseph Greenaway, renewing the lease of Manor Farm in 1881, secured a commitment that the College would spend up to £400 in the following year on 'permanent improvements to the farmhouse, buildings, premises and fencing' together with £50 a year for the next three years to provide more fencing and extra grass seed for permanent pasture. Like many farmers in the Vale of the White Horse, he was attempting to shift the emphasis of his farming away from unprofitable arable cultivation and towards livestock. How far the permanent improvements, particularly to the labourers' cottages, actually went is questionable. Many years later, correspondence between the College and its tenants refers continually to the poor state of repair of many of the cottages, some of which were considered fit only for demolition.

The permanence of the relationship between landlord and tenant was also affected by the Depression. Up to the 1870s New College leases in Hanney were for terms of ten, twelve or even twenty years, with almost stable rentals. After 1880, the usual term was one year. Neither side was willing to commit to longer, the College no doubt hoping for an improvement in the economy, the tenant fearing a deterioration. Furthermore, new clauses appeared in lease deeds giving the landlord the right to repossess the property in cases of bankruptcy or rent arrears. According to Lord Wantage, prior to 1875 rent arrears were almost unknown.

Where it could, the College continued to make use of tenants to spare costs. Tenants remained responsible for dealing with the administration of tax assessments and payments, even where they were entitled to reclaim the tax payments from the College. Misinterpreting this arrangement, the tax collector in Wantage replied in 1901 to one of the Bursar's queries in the following tone of moral indignation: 'I would like to take the opportunity of suggesting the College paying the Sch A and Land Tax. It would avoid any error being made in the assessments and relieve the tenants of making overpayments, some of whom do not know on what basis the assessments are arrived at. I may add that all the other large landowners in my district pay their tenants Sch A and land tax'. This certainly had not been the case in more prosperous times. A bill of sale for Lydbrook Farm of 1861 expressly mentions that land taxes for the property were borne by the tenant.

The second group of Hanney landlords were also extensive landowners in the county with ancient inheritances, although the Hanney land had been bought quite recently. Included in this group were Lord Wantage, Edward Bouverie Pusey and Lord Morrison of Basildon Park. They all held substantial estates in Berkshire and were active farmers.

As already mentioned Lord Wantage's main interests were in Ardington. The Home Farm part of his estate covered about 4,000 acres, gradually increasing in size towards the end of the century as outlying farms which had previously been let became more difficult to furnish with tenants in the harsh economic climate. His estates were also increased by purchases of land and by 1895 he owned Morland and Yew Tree Farms in East Hanney.

There is no doubt that a few miles from Hanney, on his Home Farm estate, the influence and initiatives of Lord Wantage contributed dramatically to the welfare of the agricultural community, and particularly the labourer. The guarantee of work all year round, with a bonus in good years; the provision of comfortable cottages; the establishment of insurance schemes, a savings bank and a co-operative store; and the ever practical Lord Wantage providing a men's club to forestall the spare time evils of alcohol and betting; all transformed the lot of the farm worker. They also of course contributed substantially to the smooth running of a well-tuned commercial operation. Lord Wantage was perhaps above all a good manager and motivator of men. 'He wanted them (the labourers) to realise that they are not mere hired servants but co-operators with their landlord in a joint work in which they both have a personal stake, and to understand the meaning of the various schemes carried out.'

Unlike the Colleges Lord Wantage was directly involved in farming and his philanthropic approach shown in Ardington was no doubt extended to his Hanney holdings. Until quite recently older village residents in Hanney recalled warmly Lord Wantage's personal visits and interest in his farms which distinguished him from many of his fellow employers. The view of one of his men is recorded in Lord Wantage's biography: 'He does not talk to us, as many gentlemen do, of things we don't understand; he seems as a friend like.'

This is something of a contrast with the approach of the Pusey landlords who owned the meadow land along the brook in East Hanney and whose seat lay a few miles in the opposite direction. The Bouverie Puseys' land included the allotments in East Hanney. Lord Wantage had founded a company which acquired land for resale in small plots to labourers and smallholders on terms they could afford. The company made a loss on most transactions. Compare this with the contemporary observation on the Puseys' approach made by a Hanney tenant farmer, William Athawes, to the government commission of 1867: 'Allotments are let at a quarter mile distant by a nearby resident country gentleman at a high rent. The matter wants revision, some having no need from these allotments, others, real paupers, can't get a rood'.

The third and newest group of landlords were men of the professions whose land represented capital investments. F.J. Jackson Esquire, surgeon, of Islington was owner of West Hanney House (Rectory Farm). These men already had their professions to occupy them and unlike Lord Wantage or Bouverie Pusey would have had little time available to develop any extensive interest in farming issues. We may surmise that their influence over farming practices and over the farmers themselves was limited to the terms set out in the farm leases. As with New College leases, these reflected the commercial pressures of the times. Unlike New College this group of landlords enjoyed no ancient privileges. They do not appear in early century documents listing Hanney landowners and we know that F.J. Jackson purchased the reversion on the lease of West Hanney House (Rectory Farm) around 1860 from the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury Cathedral (who themselves had acquired the land probably at the dissolution of the monasteries in the early 16th century).

Despite, or perhaps because of, the newness of his involvement in the village, Mr. Jackson seems to have played his part as a benefactor. He regularly paid for coal to be distributed to the poor during the winter months, and he contributed generously to the church restoration fund at the end of the 1870s. Whether or not he was ever seen in the village is a different question and one to which we unfortunately have no answer.

The fourth and final group of big landowners were successful yeoman farming families turned county gentry with long-standing local connections; Messrs. Aldworth in West Hanney and Messrs. Godfrey and Floyd in East Hanney. The Hanney story seems to show that these families were in decline possible because of the Agricultural Depression.

The Aldworths' family were major landowners with their principal residence in the adjacent village of Frilford, but members of the Aldworth family farmed and owned land in

a number of different parts of Berkshire and like many farming families, moved around the county a fair deal. William and John Aldworth owned between them over 300 acres of West Hanney land in 1840. John's land included that on either side of the Causeway and stretching towards Grove, which now constitutes Church Farm. William's land ran mainly from the other end of the village. At some point over the ensuing 30 odd years William additionally acquired the copy hold interest in 120 acres of West Hanney land owned by Magdalen College, stretching towards Denchworth from the field opposite the house now known as 'Aldworths' which was then the farmstead. William was also the tenant of New College at Manor Farm between about 1840 and 1865, though it is doubtful whether he ever actually occupied the farmhouse himself since he evidently employed bailiffs to run the farm. The brothers together owned over a fifth of the whole area of West Hanney.

William had three sons but only the youngest Robert had interests in Hanney who following the death of his father in 1878 purchased from his two elder brothers, for £600, the copy hold interest, left by their father, in the 120 acres of West Hanney land owned by Magdalen College. Apparently in about 1884 Robert emigrated to New Zealand, passing on the Hanney land by way of sub-letting to a Charles Cardwell. The copy hold lease was eventually bought out by Magdalen College in 1902. Church Farm, was sold to Magdalen College some time before 1891. By the turn of the century, much of the Aldworth interest had been taken over by Magdalen College.

The Godfreys had owned land in East Hanney at least since the 17th century and in 1840 Robert Godfrey, gentleman, died and left his land to his three sons, George, Albert and Charles. George, the eldest, received the principal land in Hanney and Grove, and the two younger sons were bequeathed sizeable farms out of the land their father had purchased from the Dewe family in East Hanney. However George seems never to have resided in East Hanney, although Charles and Albert continued farming here until their deaths as bachelors in 1875 and 1872 respectively. The 1803 Enclosure Act shows the Godfreys occupying Grange and Middle Farm (Hanney Farm) but by the later 19th century there were no Godfreys in residence.

The Godfrey family were related by marriage early in the 19th century to the Floyds, who were also local gentlemen farmers. By the latter part of the century Grange Farm was being let by the Floyd family to Edwin Lloyd as tenant farmer. The Floyd side of the family continued as active local farmers throughout the 19th century and owned considerable tracts of land in Marcham, Frilford and Grove. Thomas Floyd, who lived in Frilford, was a leading local non-conformist, being a founder member of the Frilford and Longworth Home Mission which subsequently established the East Hanney Mission in Main Street.

Another East Hanney farming family who owned land in the 1803 Enclosure Act were the Fishers at what is now Poundcroft but until the end of the 19th century was referred to as Fishers Farm. The Fishers as owner occupier working their own land were the last of a dying breed of small yeoman farmers. After Joseph Fisher died in 1877 at the age of 42, his wife Mary was helped by her nephew Richard Fisher Bennett. Interestingly by 1897 Mary Fisher was living at No 5535 Emerald Avenue, Chicago.

Since out last publication Mr Joseph Fisher has been suddenly taken away from us. From a Post Mortem examination, it appears that the cause of his death was tubercles on the brain. He was mostly unconscious during the illness, and we trust therefore did not suffer much. He was greatly respected for his gentle, unobtrusive manners and his loss is deeply regretted.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the Enclosure Awards left a number of families with very small land holdings. These smallholdings, ranging from a handful to a few tens of acres, were no longer viable financially. The smallest farms were the first to the wall, like the Wise brothers in West Hanney who farmed at Wicks Farm, and who went bankrupt in 1853. Mary Wicks, who purchased part of the farm in the ensuing forced sale, and gave her name to it, rapidly followed suit in 1861. In East Hanney small landowning farmers also disappeared in the second half of the 19th century. Thomas Cooke, Thomas Stevenson, Albert and Charles Godfrey were the last of their line.

Other small Hanney farmers seem to have taken the initiative in getting out of farming while they still had sufficient funds to invest in something else. The Holmes family went from owning their land to being tenants and finally left Lydbrook Farm in West Hanney and started a shopkeeping business in East Hanney. The Robins and the Harris also disappeared from the West Hanney farming scene at about the same time.

The pattern of change is clear in the late 19th century with land ownership moving away from the families who farmed the land to absentee landlords who acquired the land as an investment.

THE FARMERS

The 1871 Census records nine farmers plus a farm bailiff in East Hanney and seven farmers in West Hanney. Of these sixteen farmers only Joseph Fisher, James and Joseph Lyford seem to have owned their own land. All the others were tenant farmers. As we have seen this was a remarkable change from the situation thirty years earlier, when eight farmers were recorded in West Hanney and all eight owned at least part of their own land.

For the most part, these new tenants did not originate from the village but moved in from the surrounding counties of Oxfordshire and Berkshire. This was a relatively common pattern for tenant farmers. Denis Dandridge, for example, moved to East Hanney from East Hendred in the 1850s to farm 290 acres and run the mill. By the 1870s, a number of the tenant families in East Hanney were already long established and remained in occupation throughout most of the century. By 1900 the Dormers and the Betteridges had been in East Hanney for sixty years. In West Hanney, there seems to have been a fairly unsettled period after the Enclosure Award in the 1840s, with a number of tenant families and farm bailiffs coming and going before two or three families arrived late in the 1860s as tenants on the principal farms and settled in for long tenures. The Butlers at Church Farm stayed for fifty odd years and the Greenaways at Manor Farm did likewise.

Parish magazines and school and church records of the period paint a picture of these farmers overseeing the welfare of the labouring population by sitting on the School Management Board, acting as Churchwardens, administering charitable trusts, and, at least during the years of plenty, distributing largesse by way of harvest suppers and cakes and ale. The Harvest Supper in East Hanney was regularly hosted by Henry Betteridge at Morlands Farm. The farmers' wives too played their part helping with the school needlework or arranging tasteful floral decorations for church festivals.

Nevertheless, the village hierarchy must have differed significantly from that of villages which did have a resident Lord of the Manor. The well-heeled and well-respected tenant farmers did not have the same social standing. The vicar of the parish, James Macdougall, being an Oxford man and a younger son of gentry, was probably, in Victorian terms, socially superior to all of them and no doubt well aware of this. Certainly he took a definitive lead in most village matters, not always to general approval. As a result unseemly factional differences broke out from time to time between farmers who were 'for' the vicar and those who were 'against', especially in the management of the school. The trustees of the Belchers Bread Charity - all village tenant farmers - also fell out. The trustees met annually in the Black Horse over 'a supper of bread, cheese and onions' (the cost being met out of the charity funds!). The 1886 meeting witnessed a personal difference between Henry Dormer and other trustees after which Henry Dormer ceased to attend meetings. There was also considerable jockeying for position amongst farmers in matters such as subscription lists and church collections where amounts were published against the donor's name in the Church magazine. No doubt this all provided a rich seam of gossip and intrigue!

The life-style of the tenant farmers was probably fairly comfortable, at least during the good times, and far removed from the conditions of the labourers. The principal farmhouses were large, with several formal reception rooms, and were both well-plumbed for hot, cold and soft water, and well-heated with stoves in each room as well as batteries of bells for summoning servants. In the smaller farmhouses the arrangement of rooms was less formal. North Denchworth Farm comprised two sitting rooms and a kitchen, compared with the drawing room, dining room and breakfast room at West Hanney House (Rectory Farm) with extensive kitchen quarters including pantry, kitchen and scullery. Lydbrook Farm comprised a 'sitting room, parlour, kitchen, and five good bedrooms' as well as the usual cheese room and dairy.

Not all the farmers came through the lean years of the Depression in comfort, however: the state of repair of some of the smaller farmhouses suggests that belts were being tightened. The schedule of works for the renovation of Aldworths' farmstead at the beginning of the 1900's is so extensive as to suggest that it had suffered many years of neglect, requiring eventually partial demolition, re-roofing and considerable internal refurbishment.

There is another indication of less than ample funds available to the farmers. There may have been batteries of bells at West Hanney House (Rectory Farm), but these would seem to have rung in near empty servants' quarters. Even the biggest houses in the village had resident only a single young girl for domestic service, who must have been kept very busy indeed. The bachelor or widowed farmers usually had a housekeeper or relative housekeeping for them, but tenant farmers in the smaller farmhouses apparently kept no resident help at all. Farmer Greenaway in West Hanney had a resident governess, but she was certainly the exception to the rule and she was only 17! Probably her classroom was shared by other farmers' children too. In addition, there were also one or two outdoor servants in the village, for grooming horses or gardening.

Servant at work

West Hanney House (Rectory Farm), boasting a butler's pantry, might in more affluent times have accommodated a cook, parlour maid, chambermaid and scullery maid had the farmer's standard of living been better. As it was, the farmer's wife, like all her village counterparts, must have had little time to play the grand lady. There were, on the other hand, numerous unemployed servant girls in the village available for work, so the inference must be that the shortage of servants was down to lack of funds to pay their wages.

The effects of the downturn on the tenant farmers made themselves apparent in other ways. Those tenants who continued farming did so with much reduced work forces. The wages that could be afforded were very low and the more able-bodied and adventurous labourers sought other opportunities outside the village with better pay and prospects. The earlier largesse rapidly ran out and relations with the remaining labourers worsened. Mr. Henry Betteridge of East Hanney reported along these lines to the Government Commission on the Depression. However, there seems to have been no general initiative to challenge the farmers for better conditions, perhaps precisely because there were other opportunities for those who wished to take them up. The Commissioner who visited Hanney noted that he had 'found some difficulty making the object of my inquiry known, owing to the absence of any local paper and my inability to find any known leaders among the agricultural labourers'.

He also commented on the 'marked absence of keenness in the discussions and little or no novelty of suggestion or criticism'.

One West Hanney labourer, however, went so far as to say 'Years ago they gave a chance to earn more. They used to give beer and food years ago but they don't now. Farmers are very independent of the men; they used to encourage them along but now they hunt them. They were more like ourselves but now they are fine gentlemen.'

There seems to be evidence here of a widening social rift between the tenant farmers and the labourers which contrasts with the warmth of the attitude towards benefactors like Lord Wantage. It certainly appears to be the case that some families moved into farming as much to acquire social status as to provide themselves with a livelihood. Indeed, they already had successful small businesses behind them. The Lloyd family had a substantial butchering business in Hanney and Faringdon, before the two brothers William and Edwin acquired the tenure of West Hanney House (Rectory Farm) and Grange Farm in East Hanney. Their father, Richard Lloyd, had started diversifying into farming some while earlier, and his step-granddaughter married into the Monk family of West Hanney who were old yeoman farmers gradually being squeezed out of farming. In East Hanney, John Herman invested the profits of his trade in fruit farming. This social trend is one which Lord Wantage had anticipated: '..if the small landowner ever again appears, he will be a different person [from the yeoman farmer], having other means of maintenance besides what he derives from his ownership of land; he will be either a small tradesman or an artisan, or one of that numerous breed of person who consider that they derive from the possession of land advantages which aid and assist them but which cannot form their chief source of maintenance.'

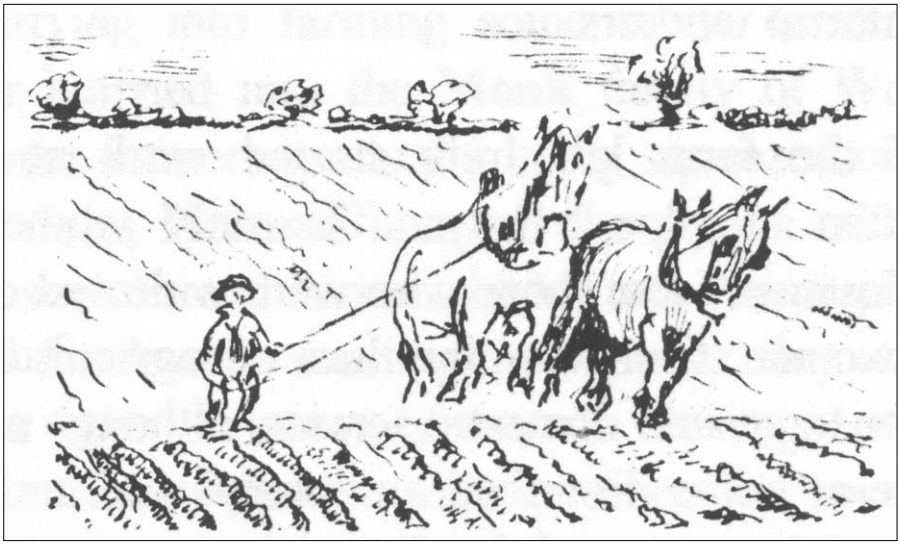
THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

In the later years of the 19th century the majority of the working population of the Hanneys was still employed on the land. In the 1881 Census of Population 44% of the adult male population gave their occupation as agricultural labourers. In addition, a further 10% were described as either shepherds, ploughboys or farm servants. The majority of agricultural labourers (69%) had been born in the village and it is not hard to imagine that many came from several generations of Hanney agricultural workers.

Most of the farm labourers started work at 12 years or younger very often as plough boys. The only women in regular agricultural employment were those who were widowed or single. The younger single women from the families of agricultural labourers appeared to prefer to go into domestic service, although a high number in the Census are at home described as unemployed and out of work domestic servants. The wives of the farm labourers would earn what they could at busy times in the farming year but they are never described as fully employed agricultural labourers.

The agricultural village world was a hierarchical one. If there was no farmer to give orders a farm bailiff would do this instead. Beneath him were the carters, the shepherds and the foggers or cattlemen who were employed by the year and so had a regular income. Agricultural labourers were employed by the week so could find themselves laid off when there was no work. At the bottom of the pile were the day labourers who never knew how long work would be available. For the majority of wage earners in Hanney, therefore, employment was not guaranteed from one week to the next and although labourers would feel much better off at certain times of the year such as harvest when they received extra pay, at other times there could be no income at all.

In 1893 it was reported in a government enquiry[1] that in East and West Hanney weekly labourers were earning 10/- weekly on average - sometimes as little as 9/-. The skilled labourers in yearly employ earned one or two shillings a week more. Women earned 10d/day with extra at hay making and harvest and boys between 3/6d and 5/- weekly. These figures are to be compared with the wages described in the same report as being paid in the Vale of the White Horse in 1876-1880 when labourers earned 12-13/- weekly and cattlemen 14-15/- . The report noted that the Hanneys had some of the lowest earnings in the Vale in 1891 and indeed the Wantage Poor Law Union was reported as having one of the lowest levels of wages in the country.



Horse team

The Royal Commission also gives us exact details of conditions of work which illustrate the long and exhausting day of a Hanney inhabitant 100 years ago. Between March and October the hours worked were 7 am - 6 pm and in winter 7.30 am - 4.30 or 5 pm with one hour for dinner and 15 minutes for 'luncheon'. Women worked from 8 am - 4.30 pm and children the same hours as men. At haytime and harvest, work went on until 8.30 pm. Carters and cattlemen worked from 4.30 am - 6 pm and returned at 8 pm to bed down the animals. They also worked on Sundays. Shepherds worked from 5 am - 6 pm. An earlier Commission on the Employment of Children and Women in Agriculture (1867) [2] reported on the Wantage area. A carter' boy for example would be in the stables soon after 4 am to 'bait' the horses, breakfast at 6 am, 7 am - 3 pm driving the horses in the fields with only a 15 minute break at 12 am, dinner at 4 pm, stabling the horses at 6 pm.

Life must have been very much dominated by work - if a job were available and by making wages stretch to feed and clothe the family. The 1893 Royal Commission report [1] gives a breakdown of expenditure for a West Hanney labourer and his wife earning 10/- weekly:

This hardly seems to be making ends meet! Boots and clothing were paid for out of any extra piece work but there is no provision for insurance or saving against hard times. The example also tells us about the sort of diet of the average family probably supplemented by home grown vegetables, as most cottages had a 10 pole garden attached. The diet is noticeably lacking in milk and eggs. Some cottages kept chickens or bees but the Commissioner found that the milk supply was poor and expensive. As for the pig that Flora Thompson tells us in 'Lark Rise to Candleford' was such an important part of the family economy, the report shows that some villagers in Hanney were not allowed to keep them. This must have been a considerable blow to those concerned as a

pig would improve a monotonous diet tremendously and could be reared for very little on household scraps.

Even in a village such as Hanney there were many extra temptations to strain a tight budget. This period saw the increasing growth of cheap manufactured goods available to all and tempting in their novelty - tinned foods, medicines, magazines, ironmongery, cheap clothing and materials. Travelling clothiers and drapers persuaded people to buy on credit and to remain in debt. The Royal Commission reported that there was considerable debt in East and West Hanney 'due to some extent to the travelling salesman'.

Apart from feeding the family the other main preoccupation for the agricultural labourer was keeping a roof over his head. Some of the better off had a rent free cottage and doubtless some homes were more comfortable than others.

In 1867 the Vicar of Hanney the Rev. James Macdougall gave evidence to another Royal Commission.[2] 'The cottages in my parish are like cottages in other poor parishes, some tolerably comfortable, some very poor'

Henry Betteridge of Morlands Farm was complacent 'we have sufficient cottage room. No lack of ventilation and water'

However the visiting Commissioner was highly critical 'some very poor cottages in East and West Hanney, the worst I visited belonging to the occupier. There are some other very poor ones with one bedroom and no garden, let at a shilling week. The drainage is bad in both villages and several ashpits and dung- heaps are almost over the shallow wells'

Mr W. Athawes, a West Hanney farmer, felt otherwise 'there is a never failing supply of the purest water at a depth of 4-10 ft'

It would seem probable that the farmers who were often owners of the cottages in question did not really want to admit how bad the cottages were.

By 1891 Mr Burnham, the sanitary inspector for the area was reporting 'In Denchworth, East Hanney and Harwell, over- crowding has existed for a long time and remains' [1]

'there is a scarcity of decent cottages, the rest are in a most dilapidated condition and many contain only one bedroom and a sort of closet quite unfit for sleeping purposes - there are instances of 6 or 8 sleeping in one room' (Assistant Overseer for the Poor West Hanney) [1]

'the worst villages for bad cottages are East and West Hanney, Harwell, Denchworth..... most wretched, roofs and floors out of repair, no air space behind and only one bedroom. Doors 5ft high, ceilings 5ft 6ins often built on waste land out of mud with thatched roofs and small windows' (Cecil M Chapman, Commissioner) [1]

Typical cottage

Certainly the poor physical condition of most of the cottages in the villages must have in some cases have been exacerbated by gross overcrowding. Families could be very large. We looked at the Ebbs Lane area of East Hanney and a group of 20 households, 70% of whom worked directly on the land. By consulting the 1871 and 1881 Census returns and the parish records the size of some of the families became clear (number of children in brackets) the Robins (12), the Breakspears (8), the Faulkners (9), the Pullens (11), the Nobes (10) and the Maces (11) were some of the larger families. It is hardly surprising that children had to grow up quickly and leave home at about 12 to go into service or to work on a farm in a neighbouring village where accommodation was offered. Of the 11 children of John and Mary Mace, for example, by 1881 all the older children apart from Alfred have left home. 16 year old Mary is in service to John Lyford further down the village and 13 year old John is already an agricultural labourer helping the family finances. Mothers appeared to go on bearing children throughout their childbearing years and sometimes a grandchild produced by an unmarried daughter was also added to the end of the family. Women became weakened by so much childbearing and hard work, Aurelia Faulkner, for example, was another Ebbs Lane occupant who died in 1883 at the age of 36 after at least 10 children and probably more pregnancies. Her two last children John and Ada both died in infancy and just predeceased her. One of her children was Bertha, the mother of the late Mrs Mary Wilkinson, who remembered her mother's tales of her childhood which ended at the age of 11 when she went into service in London. What an enormous change this must have been for her. In the 1881 Census Bertha's elder brother James aged 14 had found a position as a groom at Stockham Farm, Wantage.

Death was far more common in the first year of life in the villages than today. Diseases such as scarlet fever, measles and diphtheria occurred fairly regularly and took their toll. In the winter months between November 1877 and February 1878 the burials of five children under one year are recorded in the church registers. The school records also mention epidemics of serious diseases and record the occasional death of a pupil. Efforts were being made to improve sanitation and water supply which in turn helped decrease disease. The Medical Officer of Health reported in 1893 that the 'drainage is not all that could be desired but it has been improved noticeably in East and West Hanney'. In the same report however, it was noted that the water supply was poor 'East and West Hanney being dependent on water 10ft below the surface, nothing in reality but rainwater percolating through a stratum of gravel known as land springs'. The water in the shallow wells based on these springs could be easily impregnated by the cess pits, privies and dungheaps which could drain into the springs. The villagers appeared to become immune to the water. 'Strangers are apt to be poisoned by the water at Grove although the people get hardened to it'. One Hanney labourer told the 1893 Commissioner 'they don't want any tea to make the water dark in the kettle'.[1]

When it came to the treatment of illness the village labourer either relied on the old home cures, which had been the mainstay for centuries or on patent medicines. Eleanor Hayden travelling round the Vale at the beginning of the 1900s reported 'that patent pills and syrups had largely superseded calamine and tansy tea'.[3] Among the few surviving remedies were hemlock water and cowslip ointment to remove freckles and sunburn, elder flower ointment for cuts and sores, an infusion of nettles for colds and dandelion tea as a tonic. We know that one of the Miss Piggots who lived in East Hanney at 'The Old Post Office' was very good at curing ailments and Jane Higgs was relied on as the village midwife.

Other treatment was expensive and this of course was not within the budget of many labouring families - only the better off could contribute to insurance schemes. Some help could be given by the Poor Law Guardians and the endowment in 1885 of the Wantage Cottage Hospital and its opening a year later with Mark Dugald Stark M.D. as Surgeon in Charge would have been welcomed in the villages of the Vale.

Hospital care, however, had to be paid for. The Vicar of Hanney, the Revd. James Macdougall, must have seen the problems caused to the poor of the parish in the treatment of serious illness. In his will of 1896 he bequeathed £400 to the Vicar and Churchwardens of East and West Hanney to invest and out of the proceeds to 'purchase in and out patient recommendations to the Oxford Radcliffe Infirmary for the benefit of the parishes of East and West Hanney'. [4] In 1905 recommendations cost 2 guineas (£2.10) for in-patients and 10 shillings and 6 pence for out-patients and about 10 patients yearly belonging to East and West Hanney were recommended.

The more prosperous agricultural labourers contributed to 'slate' clubs or Benefit Societies which could pay out during times of sickness. In Hanney there was a branch of the Foresters Friendly Society. Contributions were 6½d a week and benefit was paid out at 12s a week. The Hanney Foresters had their headquarters at The Crown in East Hanney.

In 1893 it was reported that few could afford to belong in West Hanney and others dropped out of the scheme when their families grew too large. Not only could they no longer afford contributions but the Relieving Officer gave evidence that a local custom had grown up of giving outdoor relief when a man had three children or more so that they no longer faced the degrading admission to the Workhouse.

The Workhouse doubtless cast a shadow over the lives of many of the agricultural labourers and the label 'pauper' was to be avoided at all costs. However, with so little opportunity for savings for many of the populace the 'Union' was all that stood between them and starvation in times of sickness, unemployment and old age.

In 1834 the country had been divided into Poor Law 'Unions' each with a workhouse. The emphasis was to be on relief in the workhouse rather than 'out relief' paid to people in their own homes. Hanney was in the Wantage Union and had overseers of the poor to collect a poor rate to go towards the cost of running the Union. The Overseer of the Poor was normally an influential member of the village community and he and the Board of Guardians decided on the amount of out relief which could be allowed. In the 1871 Census seven heads of household in East Hanney and seven in West Hanney are described as 'paupers'. As they were still living in the village they were in receipt of 'out relief'. They were mainly elderly aged between 58 and 86. By 1881 there are no paupers returned in the Census. Looking at returns for the Workhouse itself, there are two Hanney residents in 1871 and three in 1881. In 1881 two are over 75 and one is an 'imbecile' of 28. The majority of elderly in both Censuses are still working. In East Hanney, for example, Robert Spindloe (76) and George Godfrey (81), William Giles (70) Charles Stevenson (74) are still described as working in 1881. Some have moved in with their children such as Joseph Whitfield who at 81 was living with his son and was retired. Another 'former agricultural labourer' Ann Orpwood (75) had her son living with her. Pauperism could be avoided if you were fit enough to work or had a sympathetic employer who could keep an elderly person on 'light duties'.

The chilling words of the Chairman of the Wantage Board of Guardians speak volumes about the attitude of some of the decision makers 'people should be compelled to pay into a benefit scheme and if they don't do so they should suffer the penalty of having the workhouse offered to them'. [1] Interestingly total numbers in the Workhouse dropped from 120 in 1871 to 83 in 1881 - a policy of deterrence was clearly working.

The poorer residents of the Hanneys were to some extent helped by village charities, a complicated selection of moneys left over the centuries by various individuals and administered by trustees. The Charities covered the 'Ancient Parish of Hanney' i.e. East and West Hanney and Lyford. During the agricultural depression there must have been an obvious need for more help as in 1884 Percy Smith of Letcombe Bassett bequeathed £500 to the churchwardens of East Hanney 'to be distributed among such poor and deserving inhabitants of the township of East Hanney and that either in money, or in fuel or in provisions, clothes or otherwise'. [4]

The villages also had cause to be grateful to the Belchers Bread Charity (established

1713). Income came from the rental of land in East Hanney. The charity bread was distributed at both East and West Hanney churches after morning service to those who attended. If attendance was low one person could receive several loaves. If times were hard the church congregations doubtless rose!

Through the liberality of Mr Jackson, of London, 19 Tons 8 Cwt of Forest coal were supplied to the poor at West Hanney at 8d per cwt.; Messrs W. and R. Lloyd, Greenaway, Butler and Heading kindly giving the carriage.

The other main village charity was the Ashcombe Charity which was used to finance the Lyford Almshouses for 20 elderly people from the 'Ancient Parish'. However not all elderly residents could peacefully retire there. From the 1905 Report of the Endowed Charities of Berkshire to the House of Commons [4] it is clear that preference was given to applicants with some income of their own or a family to support them, indeed those who had received poor law relief in the previous year were excluded. For the really poor recourse must have been the Workhouse or, if they were lucky, out relief.

Eleanor Hayden writing at the same time as this report said that the alms folk with an allowance of four shillings a week, two faggots a week and half a ton of coal during the winter had an easy life compared to a pauper on outdoor relief who 'has to provide food, clothing, fuel and rent out of 2 shillings and 2 loaves a week' .[3] In 1881 there were nine residents from East Hanney in the Almshouses (strangely none from West Hanney). Residents included 81 year old William Herman, 75 year old James Manders and 86 year old Thomas Higgs who had his 60 year old daughter Mary living with him.

Not only had men to toil long hours on the land but if they were to supplement the family diet they had to produce vegetables and fruit in their gardens and allotments. The village allotment land belonged to the Bouverie-Pusey family and covered an area which today includes the village school, village hall, community shop the allotments and all the land bounded by the Green Lane. This whole area was divided into allotments of varying sizes and it seems likely that families by working several allotments together would have a reasonable area of land for producing crops.

The 1893 Government Report comments that the allotments are not often used because the rents are too high so that only the better off could afford them, not the poor who need them. In addition the allotments had very heavy soil and were troubled with a weed known as 'cat's tail' impossible to destroy.[1]

It is hardly surprising that the labouring families sometimes resorted to drowning their sorrows in beer! Life would have had its high spots but for the majority of agricultural labourers and their families life from a material point of view was hard.

It is quite difficult to assess how much the position of the agricultural labourer in Hanney changed in the last decades of the 19th century and it is easy to be simplistic. At the end of the 'golden age of farming' as depression began wages were certainly higher (1867) than 20 years later. Because the farmers were also finding life hard they

stopped supplying some of the perks of the job, such as beer and spare food. The workers questioned in Hanney in 1891 by the Commissioner felt they were worse off whilst the farmers and officials tended to disagree.

'Going round the cottages I commonly find a nice pudding and bacon on the table. Twenty years ago we were seldom free from 'itch'- now there has been no case in years. We don't give away one third of what we did and have nothing like the same amount of sickness. Clothing, shoddy is much cheaper and an old smock frock a rare sight' (Mr Read Relieving Officer)

Mr Robert Barnby, Master of Wantage Workhouse reported 'all food stuffs within reach of labourers are 15% cheaper than 10 years ago and clothing in 17.5% cheaper'[1]

One factor that must not be overlooked in considering the life of the agricultural labourer is the closeness of the community. Although there would doubtless be family disputes support must have been easily accessible in times of crisis and the majority of families were all experiencing the same poverty.

We looked at a small area of East Hanney to discover what we could about the families who live there. Ebbs Lane is at the north end of East Hanney and today is a reverse L shaped development of 20th century houses with six old cottages scattered amongst their more modern counterparts. It is a quiet cul de sac with footpaths leading to meadows beyond.

In 1881 the geographical layout followed the same pattern but to the right where Meadow House and St Ebbes House now stand was a track with four terraced cottages and two large cottages edging it. On the right parallel to Ebbs Lane was a 'Back Lane' which has since almost disappeared. There was a pair of cottages next to the Bakery at the entrance to Ebbs Lane, further cottages on the left hand side and round the bend beyond 'North End Cottage' were two pairs of semi detached cottages and a separate cottage.

There were 25 cottages at the time of the 1881 Census. However, a sign of the move away from the agricultural employment might be in the five cottages which the enumerator noted were uninhabited, i.e. 20%. The cottages were built of stone, wattle and daub, or brick and thatched. Although picturesque, some were probably in poor condition as upkeep for the owners whether landlord or owner-occupier would be an expensive luxury in times of agricultural depression. We do not know how many houses were tenanted in 1881 but certainly some of the tenanted houses must have remained in the same families for several generations. It seems likely from tithe details that families like the Maces and Giles did own their own houses. Indeed the Enclosure Award Map of 1806 shows houses in Ebbs Lane owned by these families. Two cottages 'The Hanney Poor Houses' at the bottom of Ebbs Lane belonged to one of the Hanney charities the rent being used to help the poor of the parish. All the cottages drew their water from several wells around the settlement and all had their privy at the bottom of the garden.

Twenty householders are included in the Census in the Ebbs Lane area. In terms of age the community leant towards late middle age perhaps suggesting that younger members of the community were seeking their fortune elsewhere rather than taking over the empty cottages and living in the village. All families in the Census apart from one had links within the villages of East and West Hanney if they were not actually born there. Three of the men had for example come to live in the village of their wife's birth.

Examining the place of birth of heads of households in conjunction with previous available Census returns (1841-1871) 60% had been born in East Hanney and 35% of these had almost certainly been born in Ebbs Lane. 20% of the total number of householders appear in all five Census returns (1841-81) and so had probably lived in East Hanney all their lives.

A picture emerges of an extremely stable community with a noticeable loyalty to remaining in the Ebbs Lane area. There were numerous inter-family ties through marriage and families must have been close-knit and mutually supportive. It seems likely that sometimes young men left the village to work on other farms in their teens and returned to the village later to take over the 'family home'.

Despite sadness and hard work there must have been good times for the Ebbs Lane children. In cold weather people could skate and slide on the frozen water meadows and in hot summers the brook which edged the Dandridge's meadow was a popular bathing spot and there were plenty of children in the large families living there to field a couple of football teams in the 'Nursery' meadow between the houses and the brook.

The main source of employment lay all around the area - the pasture land, arable and farms of the village. 70% of the working male population of Ebbs Lane was employed on the land, the majority classified only as agricultural labourers (this includes one shepherd and three ploughboys). Of the remainder Benjamin Weston who was 76 was a gardener. There were two general labourers, one road labourer, and one railway labourer. Eliza Froud's son and grandson who both lived with her were carpenters doubtless trained in their skills by Eliza's husband who was a carpenter in Hanney in 1851. The only occupant of Ebbs Lane who came partly from outside the village was Aaron Nobes who had seen the world in the army and was a 64 year old Chelsea Pensioner. Perhaps he is the old soldier, described by Eleanor Hayden, who won a Mutiny medal with the Lucknow bar rescuing English men, women and children from the Residency and still bearing the marks of the canon ball which injured his leg.[3] The rest had to keep on working for as long as they could.

In 1891 the census enumerator records only eighteen households. By 1914 the only remaining 1881 householder in a list compiled by the late Mr Eddie Tarry was William Breakspear and the only other family name occurring in both is Higgs. Mr Tarry lists only 16 households and several of the 1881 cottages have disappeared from the map. Of the 16 Mr Tarry remembered a further nine disappeared in his lifetime. The 'Hanney Poor Houses' were in such poor condition by 1901 that they were demolished.[4] It

seems likely that all of the cottages in Ebbs Lane could have disappeared if it had not been for James Holmes who at the beginning of the 20th century bought what are now called North End Cottage, Sunrise Cottage and The Cottage. He kept them all in good repair and let them at reasonable rents.

[1]The Royal Commission on Labour - The Agricultural Labourer. 1893
[2]The Royal Commission on the Employment of Children and Young Persons and Women in Agriculture. 1867
[3]Eleanor Hayden: Islands in the Vale
[4]Endowed Charities return to the House of Commons. 1905

SHOPS, TRADES and CRAFTS

Late Victorian East and West Hanney were still virtually self-sufficient in terms of shops and trades. The villages must have hummed with noise and activity - the sounds of blacksmiths, wheelwrights, working mills, delivery vehicles, builders, carts, sawpits in addition to all the farm traffic.

Shops and Shopkeepers

Charles Dormer ran a grocery shop at Idian Cottage in West Hanney, which remained a shop until the late 1980s. The Dormers were a well-to-do family who like the Monks had owned land in the village for several generations, although they do not seen to have been farming it themselves during the 1880s. Charles Dormer had been born in Brentford, Middlesex, returning to West Hanney in about 1870 to assist his uncle Stephen Higgs, in the grocery business which he subsequently took over. Charles's business prospered sufficiently for him to employ the two Monk brothers as assistants as well as an errand boy and a domestic servant. A second grocery business belonged to Henry Barrett further along Back St. (now Main St.).

In East Hanney Esther Darling and her daughter Louisa ran a shop at Tamarisk in Main St. There was another shop at Chapel Cottage. The house which was until recently East Hanney Post Office was a small sweet shop and grocery in 1881 also selling a few groceries. It was referred to as 'The Ring of Bells', dating from when it was a pub. William and Sarah Talmage ran this business which had previously been in the hands of George Herman's older brother John, who had moved into farming. The Hermans had this shop certainly as far back as 1841. William Talmage had previously been a dealer further along the village. The Talmages had at least eight children. Mrs Talmage is remembered as still running the shop after her husband's death in 1908.

The main East Hanney emporium however, was at Church Green (Darden House) run by the Herman Family, who clearly had the gift of running successful businesses. In the first full census of 1841 Hermans owned 'The Black Horse' and ran a bakery and grocery business (Benjamin), a grocer's shop (Henry), 'The Plough' (Bernard who was also a small farmer) and a bakery and grocers business (Charles). It was Charles' family who stayed in Hanney and continued the shopkeeping line into the later years of the century.

Charles Herman had four children whom he established in various businesses. One son Henry, continued to run his father's bakery business on the site of Ted Carter's old bakery. (Ted Carter's bakery was the last bakery in East Hanney and closed in 1988). Another, John kept a grocers shop and later moved into farming and fruit dealing, clearly moving into a more prosperous area of production at a time when land was cheap to buy. His sister, Ann, ran a grocer's shop and brother George was perhaps the most successful member of the family.

In 1871 21 year old George Herman was a 'dealer' living with his in-laws and his wife

Ellen at 'The Plough' (now La Fontana). By 1873 he was a publican so presumably in charge of the pub and by 1878 he was running the business at Church Green House. This business expanded with George selling groceries, buying, slaughtering and selling meat and providing all sorts of other necessary items from coal and faggots to pea and bean sticks. He also ran a carrier service to Abingdon each Monday and to Wantage on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The shop continued until the beginning of the 20th century.

Both East and West Hanney had bakeries. Martin Shepherd was the West Hanney baker at the Old Post Office next to the church. In East Hanney apart from Henry Herman already mentioned there was Philip Long, whose son Philip continued the business after his father's death in 1909. The Longs also had a large family of at least seven children. Philip Long had moved to these premises sometime before 1871, originating from Stadhampton. The bakers often appeared to extend their range of activities. In Kellys Directory of 1887 Martin Shepherd was described as 'baker, grocer and provision dealer' and by the end of the century his business included a boot warehouse and drapery.

James Holmes was also a baker for some years and also similarly expanded to become a 'grocer, baker, seeds man and ironmonger'. However, James Holmes was involved in a much more unusual profession by the 1890s. In 1891 he published 'True Morality, The Theory and Practice of Neo-Malthusianism'. He was a passionate believer in birth control. He felt so strongly about the necessity for public education on the subject and accessibility to contraception, that not only did he introduce and run a mail order contraceptive service from the village for many years, but he ran into trouble with the law for his publications. This fascinating man is the subject of Hanney History Group Occasional Paper no 1 'Holmes of Hanney'.

Both villages contained Post Offices. In West Hanney the Burson family had run the Post Office from at least 1861, which was then in the far corner of The Green at Wicks House. In 1881 John Burson a 45 year old bachelor was resident there and he remained Postmaster well into the 1900s. In East Hanney John Piggott was based at what is now 'The Old Post Office'. He was not only the Postmaster, receiving letters from Wantage at 8 a.m. and dispatching them at 6.20 p.m., but he was also a bootmaker. John Piggott died in 1886 in his 80s and his daughter Mary Piggott took over as Postmistress adding that responsibility to the drapery business she already ran. She is remembered in later life not only for delivering the mail, hopping along on her 'cork' leg but for her skill in curing simple aliments. The Post Office moved in the 1890s to a new position at Cross Tree House.

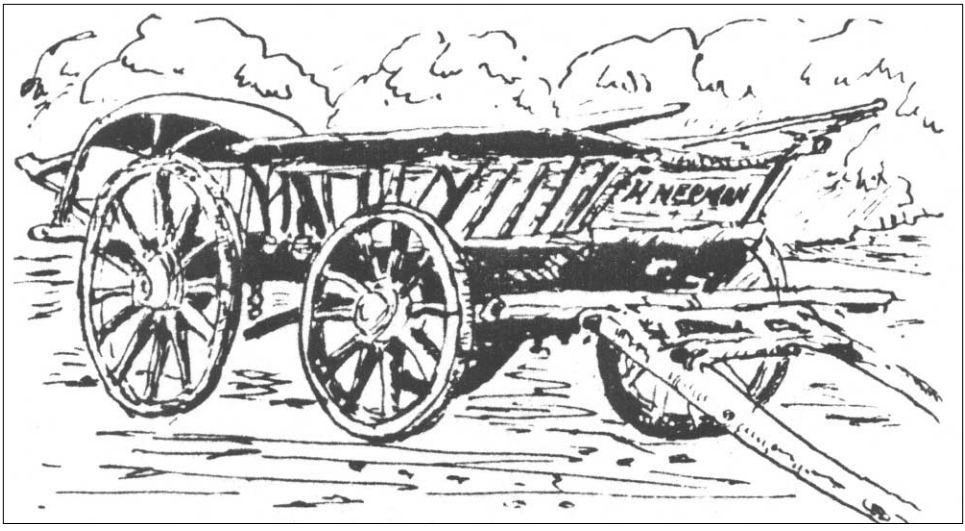
Crafts and Trades

The village smithy still had a dominant place in both villages in late Victorian times. The West Hanney smithy (a modern house The Old Forge stands on the site) was a picturesque long low thatched building with a walnut orchard behind. The blacksmith was William Cox, who lived and worked with his wife Ann, at the smithy for over

forty years. William had always owned the smithy himself, which was unusual because the majority of property in the village, including both big farmhouses and the tinier labourers' cottages, were rented to tenants by absentee landlords. The Coxes had been blacksmiths in the Hanneys for as long as we have written records - that is since 1540 - and William was probably the uncle of William Cox the East Hanney blacksmith. William, of West Hanney, died at the age of 76 and the smithy was demolished in 1928. In East Hanney the smithy stood at Four Shoot at the entrance to the village on the site of the Holmes Memorial Garden. In 1881 William Cox was the master blacksmith at the age of 24, employing his nephew Henry (14) as apprentice. William was the son of Charles Cox, who had trained three of his sons as blacksmiths. Sadly, William was the last of the blacksmiths, dying at the relatively young age of 43 in 1900. His eldest son William (Bill) Cox was too young at the time to take the business over and the house was bought by James Holmes in 1901 and demolished.

Blacksmith at work

In close proximity to each smithy was a wheelwright's business. In West Hanney at Castlacre opposite the forger was the business of James Belcher. James and his wife Caroline were both 72 years old in 1881 and James was still working: he had been the village wheelwright for over forty years. In all, there were four Belcher families living in West Hanney in 1881 and together with the Coxs, the Lambells, the Higgs and the Dunsdons, these five old village families accounted for almost a third of the village population. Alfred Booker was the wheelwright and carpenter at Fiveways Cottage in East Hanney. The wheelwright was an important craftsman in the village turning out such items as the beautiful Berkshire farm wagons.



Berkshire farm wagon

East Hanney also had two sets of sawpits, a very ancient means of sawing large pieces of timber. There were sawpits on the village green and also in Mill Orchard, where a modern house of that name stands. These pits belonged to the Aldworth family. In 1881 Charles Aldworth a carpenter who had come from Wantage in the 1850s, took over Charles Robey's business. Charles Aldworth lived with his son Thomas at Hale Cottage, his other son lived with his family at Mill Cottage. In 1881 the business employed six men including the sons and two boys in the workshop. They were a respected firm working for both the church and school. They also made coffins and Alfred Aldworth is remembered as 'doing a beautiful funeral'. There were big wood yards next to Hale Cottage. Charles and Elizabeth Aldworth had at least eight children. In 1881 the youngest girls Rose (16) and Miriam (14) were both employed at the School as Monitors, they were nearly always late and did not last long in their jobs. The Aldworth family shows the close and complex inter-family ties which existed within the village. Elizabeth, Charles' eldest daughter, like many Hanney girls, left home to go into service in Reading. She returned to the village to marry Thomas Giles, son of the East Hanney dame school teacher. Elizabeth's brother Thomas married Thomas Giles' sister Elizabeth.

Water was extremely important within the villages. The Letcombe Brook worked hard to keep the two mills going and the mills controlled the level of the water according to their needs. Sometimes there were only a few inches in the villager's favourite bathing place, at other times several feet. Sluices also controlled a water system which went through East Hanney, both bringing water to the draw holes outside houses for washing and cooking; and filling the pond by Lower Middle Farm and the moat by Manor Farm. In fact the brook was a vital part of the village economy watering the animals and flooding the hay meadows. There are still two mills on the Letcombe Brook although they have both been silent for many years. 100 years ago they were thriving noisy businesses. Dandridges Mill, which stands by the bridge on an ancient mill site dates from the early 19th century. It was originally most likely used for weaving textiles

probably silk but by 1881 it was used for agriculture. Dennis Dandridge the 61 year old owner used both steam and water in his business and he employed two journeymen millers. His carter, Jonathan Collins, carried his produce all around the district. Dennis Dandridge who came to Hanney some 30 years previously from East Hendred was also a farmer taking over land as some of the old tenant farming families died out. He lived in the Mill House with his second wife Mary, who belonged to the established farming Lyford family. Three of Dennis's four sons appear in the Census. Like their father all three went on to play a large part in village affairs. By 1887 Dennis Dandridge was a retired 'gentleman' and his sons Alfred and Edgar were running the mill. They were good businessman prepared to diversify to combat the depression of the time and they built up a thriving business. Even today the mill bears the words DANDRIDGES BROS-MILLERS MALTSTERS, STRAW, HAY, CORN & SEED MERCHANTS. By the 1890s Dennis junior had joined his brothers in the business which also had several other millers employed.

At the other end of East Hanney at the end of Halls Lane, West's Mill had been in the West family for several decades. Daniel West was master miller. He had learnt his trade from his father, also Daniel, who had been miller here before him. His sister Roseamelia was married to the son of Martin Shepherd, the West Hanney baker. The Wests lived in a house adjacent to the mill, which was burnt down in a fire in 1906. The fire also destroyed the interior of the mill.

West's Mill

The Bunce family were well known as masons. James Bunce was a 'master mason' and as such responsible for much of the village stonework of that period. He was fortunate in having at least six sons who all trained as masons or bricklayers. In 1881 his three younger sons, Robert, Sam and Frank were all listed as journeymen bricklayers. James Bunce who lived in Back St. West Hanney was also the Parish Clerk for more than 30 years. In East Hanney, Charles Robins was a builder whose work is frequently mentioned in church and school records. In the 1881 census he is still working in his late 60s. By 1891 John P. Barrett come from London to start up his building business in West Hanney.

Apart from these main groups of tradesmen the census returns tell of other Hanney skills. In Winter Lane West Hanney lived Dennis Higgs a thatcher whose father and grandfather had been thatchers before him. Nearby was John Coleing, a castrator, whose son also worked in the business. Thomas Fuller had a shoemaking business in Back St. and two of his sons took up their father's trade. Thomas died aged 86 in 1913 and is still remembered as the village cobbler. Henry Lloyd, who lived opposite Lydbrook Farm House moved through several occupations - publican, higgler, poulterer and by 1881 'general dealer'. The Lloyds perhaps moved with the time, as mentioned earlier Henry's nephew, Charles Richard Lloyd, was the manufacturer of artificial manure employing four men and three women.

In Church St. old tradesmen such as Charles Wicks, dry stone wall builder and Edwin Clinch, harness maker mixed with new skills such as Charles Smith, who by 1881 was a Great Western Railway signal man. Presumably he was responsible for the signal box at Wantage Road Station. He was representative of a newer breed of resident whose work had taken him to a variety of locations. Born in Ramsbury, Wiltshire he married a girl from Eastbury, Berkshire. His children were born variously in Marlborough and Newbury before the family came first to East Hanney in about 1875. At that time he is described as a G.W.R. Railway Policeman in the Baptism Register. James Wiblin, a coachman, also shows a marked mobility. Born in West Hanney, where his 75 year old parents still lived in 1881, he had married a girl from Liverpool and his children had been born in Newport and Oldham. Later in 1881 the school log book records the Wiblin family on the move again to Wolverhampton.

East Hanney too shows a similar mixture of old skills and traditions mixed with newer mobility and employment. The Froud family who lived on The Green are mentioned as carpenters in all the census returns, whilst George Bunce had a far more up to date occupation of 'portable engine driver'. The census returns and parish registers show that there was always a resident policeman. Although the records indicate that they did not stay for long periods, for example, George Brown was a policeman in 1875, Albert Stanford in 1878 and Edwin Hearness was the Police Sergeant in 1891. The police house was in Ashfield Lane. Some families had obviously liked the village they stayed longer than they intended. Mansfield Fletcher described himself as a 'travelling whitesmith' (tinsman). He and his family lived in a caravan in the orchard behind the Black Horse for at least 14 years. His son, also Mansfield, was a hawker and there were at least five younger brothers and sisters crowded into the caravan. His sisters Louisa and

Alice joined the 'hawking' business unlike many of the village girls who preferred to go into service.

Although most villagers needs could be catered for in the village itself the village carriers were happy to arrange deliveries, take messages or perform commissions Stephen Higgs (and later Henry Barrett) and George Herman ran carrier services to Wantage and Abingdon on market days. To travel further afield the Great Western Railway was only a mile away. Apart from an efficient passenger service a large amount of freight was also despatched from the station. Thomas Maunders was an East Hanney man who worked there helping send the milk (so much milk travelled on the line that it was known as the Milky Way) and unload the coal from Wales. The coal was collected by local coal merchants such as Benjamin Richards who lived next door to the chapel in East Hanney.

The Wantage Tramway connected Wantage Road Station with Wantage so if people could afford it they could ride in style. Many villagers walked using the many well worn tracks which spread out across the Vale often walking several miles to work in a neighbouring village, where there was more employment.

Employment in the Hanneys at this time showed a mix of old and new. The older skills were still passed on in traditional ways by apprenticeship. Sometimes sons were apprenticed to their fathers, such as Alfred Aldworth who was a journeyman apprentice to his master carpenter father Charles. Other sons went off to be apprenticed elsewhere then returned later. By 1881, for example, William Cox had returned to take over his father's Charles business. Other young men came to the village to be apprenticed. William Stevens a journeyman miller from Grove and George Palmer a journeyman baker from East Challow were both lodging with Alfred Aldworth's family.

In the period under study there seemed to be no overall decline in the number of tradesmen and craftsmen in the villages. The only skills which declined or disappear between 1871 and 1881 are the flake hurdle maker and the cordwainer. Shopkeepers too did relatively well in a period of recession as long as they were prepared to experiment with new goods and find new needs to cater for in the community.

The wheelwright at work

HANNEY SCHOOL

Hanney School was built in its present position in the 1840s on a piece of allotment land owned by the Bouverie-Pusey estate. Before that we believe that there were small dame schools in East and West Hanney which taught elementary reading, writing and arithmetic and these continued to function for younger children.

Richard Belcher in his will of 1713 gave lands in East Hanney the rent of which was to be used to buy bread for the poor and to pay for the teaching of reading to the children of the poor of East and West Hanney. In 1819 £7 of the annual rental of £26 was being used to teach eleven boys and girls to read. The Trustees of the Charity always seemed more inclined to spend the rental income on bread for the poor rather than their education.

Only gradually did education become regarded as more of a national state responsibility. In 1811 the Church of England formed the 'National School for Promoting the Education of the poor in the Fine Principles of the Established Church' The schools thus promoted were called National Schools. The Hanney National School was one of a large number of voluntary-aided schools paid for by private subscription and supported by the National Society.

It is interesting to speculate on the influence of the Vicar, James Macdougall, on the setting up of the school, as it was around this period that he arrived in Hanney as a curate. Certainly he must have been involved in its administration from the beginning and hopeful of its counteracting the growing influence of dissenting chapels in the area.

We have little information on the early days of the school, but in 1862 the government of the day in trying to impose some control over Voluntary Schools, brought in a Revised Code requiring head teachers to keep a log book, which was to be made available for inspection. Possibly an earlier document has been lost, or maybe it took three years for the news to reach Hanney - in either event the School Log Book available to us dates from 26th June 1865 and was started by the then master James Stone.

The Code of 1862 was designed to improve school attendance and to assess progress in the 3 Rs. In the hope of achieving these aims an annual grant of 4/- was to be paid for each child who attended school regularly; a further 8/- was to be paid for each pass in the 3 Rs. In addition each infant under six who satisfied the inspectors would earn the school a further 6/6d. The school was to be inspected annually and the grants awarded on results. These grants could also be withheld if the premises did not come up to the standard set. Another change was made to the system of paying salaries; these could now be paid through the school managers thus giving them greater control over staff.

The School Day

Children came from not only East and West Hanney but from Grove, North Denchworth and some of the outlying farm cottages which no longer exist. Barnstables Farm was in the meadows to the north of the School and further away still was Landmead Farm which was to the right of the A338 before Venn Mill.

A long walk may have been pleasant in summer but not in winter when the paths were frozen, muddy or flooded and feet had to be squeezed into tight leather boots. The School itself was often not very warm in winter as a shortage of coal is sometimes reported in the log book. The following are extracts from the Log Book.

There also did not appear to be any form of efficient lighting as if it was gloomy outside the children had to be sent home early. When attendance was good the classroom was very crowded and there were frequent shortages of slates, pencil, ink and even chalk.

The curriculum was confined mainly to the Three R's and Scripture because of the payment by results system. As there was often a shortage of staff the Vicar frequently found himself teaching subjects other than Scripture. He must have been a practical man for the School Log Book tells of him 'forming a school library, sorting out books and putting up shelves', then later 'sawing boards to make more shelves and fixing another curtain', 'nailing up pegs and repairing classrooms' and 'pulling things out from under the gallery'. The 'ladies' of the village helped out by taking needlework. Towards the end of the period studied the subjects covered included Singing and 'drill' which was taught by Mr George Dunnett, a retired Army Officer.

School attendance

In villages like the Hanneys, parents were slow to see any advantage to education - the day to day needs were more immediate. If the children were needed for harvesting or the preparing of fields for new crops then they would be found in the fields and not in the classroom. The school log records:-

In the winter poor health was a frequent cause of absence.

The headmaster wrote to Mr Stevenson, Receiving Officer, who reported on

Attendance was also affected by the fact that children had to bring their 'school pence' to pay towards the cost of their education every Monday.

School Management and Finance

The 1870 Education Act was an attempt to make education more universally available. In areas without a school or where the National School had its grant withheld, the ratepayers could elect a school board to establish a compulsory rate-aided school. These school boards had limited powers to compel attendance. In 1876 the Boards were empowered to fine parents if their children did not attend regularly, but it was not until 1880 that an Education Act made school attendance compulsory for all under 13. It was 1891 before the 'school pence' was abolished. The payment by results system remained in force until the 1890s thereby forcing the curriculum into a narrow straitjacket leaving little incentive for a broadening of outlook. The school managers sought to economise by hiring poorly qualified staff.

We are fortunate that the Hanney National School minutes book is available to us. From this we can ascertain that on March 1st 1871 the Rev. J. Macdougall met with Mr W. Aldworth and three tenant farmers: Messrs H. Betteridge, Wm. Heading and Thomas Dormer and decided to call, together the parishioners '... to take into consideration the best plan of supporting the school under the new Act (of 1870)'. This was duly done and on March 30th 1871 it was resolved that '...a committee be formed to carry out all matters connected with the School'

The committee was made up mainly of farmers with the vicar and the curate, and yet the children of the farmers do not seem to have attended the school. At least their names never appear in the log books. A social gulf almost certainly existed between farmers and agricultural labourers, though where the children of the former were educated we can only guess at. In the 1881 Census a Lucy E. Randall is listed as a private governess in the employ of Mr Greenaway, of Manor Farm West Hanney. It is possible that several farmers shared a governess for their children - certainly a practice found in the village this century.

The School Management Committee was responsible for the finances of the school, whose income included the government grants already mentioned, some money from the Belcher's Parish Charity, 1d or 2d rate collected with the poor rate and finally the school pence. The managers also appointed and dismissed staff, agreed salaries and all purchases for the school. They ordered repairs and cleaning of the school (usually just before an inspection).

The Managers' lot was not an easy one. As we have already seen the system of government grants ensured that there were not enough funds to employ the staff of sufficient quality to raise the standard of learning and so attract more grant. Nor was there sufficient money to vastly improve accommodation for the pupils. Any improvement in attendance therefore led to gross overcrowding.

School Premises

The school buildings consisted originally of only two classrooms. The master's house seems to have been used as a classroom for the older infants. In the Inspectors Report of 1865 there was a query as to why the master was not in residence as a grant had been given for it. The younger infants were housed elsewhere as is recorded in a letter to the Education Department: '... the Committee of Management respectfully request to inform their Lordships... .that they support two infant schools, one in each village, for the younger children. That these infant schools are well attended, but that if the infants are required to attend the National School lying so far from their homes it will be almost impossible for them to do so during the winter months, and very inconvenient during the summer... (they) therefore earnestly hope that their lordships will not require the proposed accommodation to be provided'

Their lordships obviously did for a letter was later sent '...that the managers are willing to build a classroom for the infants 20ft by 16ft'. The plans being approved, Charles Aldworth was commissioned to build the same. The school log records for Jan. 4th 1875 '...new classroom used for the first time'

The two separate establishments referred to were also known as Dame Schools. Ann Giles, shown in the 1881 Census as an infant mistress living in Snuggs lane, taught in a Dame School. The standards were variable - the school log records: '... several children ignorant of arithmetic admitted from the Dame School, East Hanney'. Despite the excuses of the Managers it was the admitting infants from the age of three to the main school that exacerbated the overcrowding. Often there were 50 or more infants with one mistress. The same mistress would have to take the older girls for needlework leaving the infants with a poorly trained monitor. This poor grounding in infants led to problems later in schooling as the children never made up the time lost.

To return to the main premises we find over many years H.M. Inspectors reporting '... the coldness, dilapidation, lack of ventilation etc. of the school buildings.' These were not fully put to rights until the late 1890s.
Headmasters and the problems they faced

The first master we meet in the log books is James Stone who spent two and half years doing his best in the battle against poor attendance, measles and a quick turnover of assistants. In January 1868 he is replaced by Robert Frost - Probationary Certificated Officer. The school log for the next two years starts with 'Edwin Booker sent home to be made clean and tidy'. (The message was sent back that 'he should come again when he had some more clothes'). It continues with an endless list of punishments and confinements (detentions) for truancy, swearing, disrespect, talking, playing with marbles after the bell, stubbornness, insubordination, laughing, inattention. No misdemeanour can have been overlooked and missed recording.

Unfortunately all this punishment did little for the standard of the school. H.M. Inspectors report of March 1870 'general work untidy and inaccurate' and in April

Robert Frost resigned. An unsatisfactory three years followed with Thomas I. Gaze master. These ended in June 1873 with the school grant reduced by two tenths and the rest of it being totally withheld.

On September 29th 1874 Charles Watling took up residence as master. He was a married man of 28 who originated from Cambridge. He had a second class teaching certificate. He was assisted by two sisters, who were paid monitors and had only recently graduated from the upper grades themselves, Rosie Aldworth was 15 and Miriam aged 13.

The master was supposed to instruct the monitors before or after school in the lessons which they were then to teach the next day. Like most monitors, Rose and Miriam were frequently absent from school. They failed to satisfy the inspector in 1881 and left. As assistant teacher, Mary Ann Talbot, was appointed at a salary of £15 p.a. Poor Mr Watling's salary was reduced from £35 to £25. By December 1881 Miss Talbot had left, the new assistant Harriet Ames receiving a £5 increase in salary. The school made progress gradually under Mr Watling. In 1878 H.M. Inspectors were reporting 'decided advance. General results are fairly good. Classes orderly and classwork business like'. And Mr Watling was finally awarded his first class certificate. By 1882 Charles Watling had taken his certificate elsewhere no doubt where he was better remunerated.

By August 1882 the school house was being newly papered and whitewashed for Charles Manning. He must have held out for a salary increase, as by 1884 it was agreed that he should have £10 a quarter and £40 out of the government grant. Assistant mistresses and masters continued to follow each other in quick succession. The only constant figure apart from Mr Manning was the Vicar, the Rev. Macdougall, who was in school nearly every day and frequently taking subjects other than religious instruction - as well as doing a large number of maintenance jobs around the school himself. Mr Manning's school log reflects his increasing desperation with the impossible task given to him. Apart from his staff and school attendance problems, he had to cope with a dilapidated dirty and untidy schoolroom, old and awkward desks, a want of blackboards, easels, textbooks and even 'no chalk'. Mr Manning does not appear to have had much sympathy from the managers for his problems and finally in December 1890 he is disposed of, with Mr Dandridge producing 'horses, men and wagons' to move his goods!

The same horses, men and wagons went to Wantage Road Station to collect the furniture of the 'first class' master and mistress of the school, Mr and Mrs Joseph Smith of Parsons Drove Board School, Wisbech, Cambs. A new decade and a new regime had started. The School Managers had high hopes of their 'first class married couple'. Their hopes were to be short lived. True enough H.M.I.'s report for 1891 showed grounds for optimism especially in the infant teaching, but rising rolls led once more to overcrowding, a second infant classroom was slow to materialise and the final blow, Joseph Smith fell in ill in the summer of 1893. Standards went into slow decline culminating in the H.M.I. report in January 1894 when the mixed school was declared inefficient. The Managers were given formal warning under Article 86 of the Code that the grant might be withheld at the next annual inspection if the school was again reported inefficient.

This was regarded by the Managers as an emergency - the Parish was in imminent danger of the formation of a School Board. The general opinion was that the health of the Headmaster was a contributory cause and Mr and Mrs Smith were given three months notice. Joseph Smith regarded this as poor repayment for three years hard work during which the teaching of infants has greatly improved and the people of the parish had come to appreciate the school and had begun to cooperate in sending their children regularly and on time. He thought his dismissal due to the new vicar, the Rev. Herbert Johnson, wanting to install his own man. In fact the two men came to exchange words in front of the school. Joseph Smith confided his feelings freely to the School Log Book and this later led to a dramatic cancellation in red ink by the Rev. Johnson.

Mr Smith has his followers amongst the parents as his successor, James Miller found to his cost as he expressed in his summary of 1894: 'not only had I to contend against the crassest forms of ignorance in school work....but the parents, led on by the late master, were most annoying'. Mr Smith was not one to leave the scene of his humiliation as an entry in the school log shows: 'The late master, taking advantage of the good weather, walks up and down the bank outside the school at the recreation times'. By June 1895 Mr Miller had enough and tendered his resignation finding things '...not in keeping with the dignity of a schoolmaster as everything concerning the school is acted upon from instructions issued by certain people in West Hanney....I am simply here till they see fit to get a cheaper and more economical master'

In January 1897 Mr H. Leslie Edwards arrived as headmaster, just in time to turn things around for the new century.

CHURCH AND CHAPEL

Background

The growth of population in England in the early to mid-19th century and the many social and economic changes which occurred were accompanied by an evangelical revival within the Anglican Church and by an expansion of the nonconformist movement. The Methodist Church especially grew rapidly in the new industrial areas.

The system of pluralism in the Anglican Church (one clergyman nominally in charge of several parishes) was abolished in the early 19th century. Clergymen, resident in the parish, were now encouraged to marry and to regard themselves, not as rulers of the parishioners, but as their servants and instructors.

The middle decades of the century saw increasing numbers of new churches built in rapidly growing towns and cities; in the country areas the old churches were restored. Services were held more regularly than in the past. Worship was made more attractive with new stained glass windows and music. Organs were installed and the singing of hymns became popular. In the high churches the use of vestments and candles added to the beauty of worship.

Increasing social awareness within the Church led to the establishment of schools and to an emphasis on charity work. This doubtless became more necessary in the country parishes during the lean years of agricultural depression towards the end of the century.

The Parish Church - St. James the Great, West Hanney

A stone church was built in West Hanney in the 12th century, probably on the site of a Saxon church. Throughout the centuries rebuilding was sometimes necessary, and many alterations and extensions have been made to the fabric. Some of the history of the parish is engraved on the famous brasses set into the chancel floor, on the memorial tablets on the walls and on the gravestones in the churchyard.

In the early years of the 19th century little appears to have been done to the church beyond minor repairs. In 1854 the Vicar reported that the church was '...in tolerable repair, but needs being fully restored'. Twelve years later he indicated that the church was not in good repair and '...the parishioners, I am sorry to say, are opposed to its restoration'. But the Vicar must have persuaded the parishioners. By 1868 the diocese had granted permission for restoration, Mr James Brooks of Lincoln's Inn, London, had been appointed architect, and the Vicar was appealing for funds.

The work then carried out included the removal of rough cast from walls, repointing and in places rebuilding them. Several old windows were blocked up and new windows opened. The pillars between the nave and south aisle were renewed. The floor was levelled and retiled and much of the roof was renewed. The tower was lowered in height

by 20 feet, crenellated and reroofed, and a new ringing floor was constructed. The north wall of the porch was taken down and rebuilt. The gallery and the old pews were removed and new pine seating installed.

Local craftsmen were involved in some of this work. Charles Robins, a bricklayer of East Hanney, laid the floor. Charles Aldworth of East Hanney, a carpenter, installed the new seats and also worked on the flooring. The West Hanney blacksmith, William Cox, did a small amount of 'iron work'.

Care was taken to keep the valuable furnishings safe during the work of restoration. The font was '...removed to a place of safety...', the monuments and tablets were '...carefully covered up... and preserved from injury'. 'All carved panels and other portions of carved woodwork...' '...and fragments of carved stonework...' were '...deposited with the Vicar'. The old glass was taken out of the windows '...and the pieces of stained glass laid aside and deposited with the Vicar'. One can imagine the difficulties which the Rev. and Mrs Macdougall must have had living in a Vicarage cluttered up with carved woodwork and stonework and medieval glass.

The restoration work of 1868-70 was confined to the nave and transepts. In 1884 the Vicar reported that the chancel had been 'entirely' restored the previous year '...with grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and private benefactions'. We have no details of the work carried out then as there is no further mention of it in the diocesan papers.

Later in the 19th century stained glass was put in several of the windows. In the 20th century the pipe organ was installed, the south transept chapel was furnished and the crenellated top of the tower, again unsafe, was replace with a tiled apex roof.

The Chapel of Ease - St. James The Less, East Hanney

Records indicate that there was a chapel attached to the Manor of Philberds between the 12th and 16th centuries, but this probably disappeared at the time of the Reformation. In the mid-19th century, villagers living in East Hanney had to walk more than a mile to attend Sunday services in the parish church in West Hanney. In 1858, with money raised by subscription and using designs of the famous architect G.E. Street, a chapel of ease was built in East Hanney, consecrated to St. James the Less.

The building of the chapel of ease at East Hanney and other major restoration of the parish church in 1870 were financed by special appeals which appear to have been the responsibility of the Vicar rather than the churchwardens. East Hanney chapel cost £656 5s 6d to build. Grants of £70 were received from both the Diocesan Society and the Incorporated Society, and most of the rest of the money was raised by subscription from village inhabitants (in cash and kind) and from friends and contacts outside the village. Substantial amounts were donated by the Godfrey family and by the Vicar.
The chapel with seating for 150 people, played an important part in the life of the village for over a century. It was modernised in 1912, but by 1977 it was felt to be no longer needed and was made redundant. It is now a private house.

The Vicar - The Rev. James Macdougall

James Macdougall was born in 1813 at Abbots Langley in Hertfordshire, the fifth son of Alexander Macdougall who was entitled to bear heraldic arms. In 1830, at the age of 17, James became a student at Brasenose College, Oxford, and he graduated in 1834 with a degree of B.A. (3rd class Literis Humanioribus). His ordination as a deacon in 1835 and as a priest in 1836 were carried out by the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. This suggests that his first posting in the Church was somewhere in the north Midlands. Possibly at this time James Macdougall met and married his wife, Elizabeth, who was born near Wirksworth in Derbyshire.

In 1841 James Macdougall received a M.A. degree from the University of Oxford. He was appointed to the living of Hanney, which was in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury, in 1849, having been curate to the Rev. Richard Henry Baker, since 1846. He was to remain in the village for more than 40 years.

James Macdougall was part of a large family. His younger brother Henry, the seventh son, was also an Oxford graduate who entered the Church. Another brother, Gilbert, who died in 1852 in the Cape of Good Hope, is commemorated by a stained glass window in West Hanney church. From the list of contributors to the church restoration fund in 1870, we infer that James Macdougall had at least three unmarried sisters. Although none of them appeared to have lived in the village, a window in the chancel is dedicated to '...Helen Macdougall born Oct 26 1816 died June 21 1887'.

The family was probably relatively well off. James Macdougall's gross income from the living was about £250 per annum, with rent free accommodation. But his generosity to church appeals and running expenses, to village charities and to the school, suggests that he may have had independent means. His brothers and sisters also contributed generously to church appeals.

For over 40 years James Macdougall appears to have been energetically involved in many aspects of village life. From the School Log Book we learn that the Vicar was a regular visitor to the school. He called several times weekly to take Scripture classes and once each week to collect the 'childrens's pence'.

Copies of the Hanney Parochial Magazine shed more light on the Vicar's activities in the village. At the annual parish meeting on Easter Tuesday in 1876, and again in 1877, he was elected Waywarden for West Hanney, responsible for inspecting the local roads and supervising their maintenance.

The Vicar's support for the newly formed Society of Handbell Ringers is mentioned in the Parochial Magazine of December 1876. We can assume that he contributed financially towards the purchase of a set of 12 hand bells, which were rung in the village on Christmas Day.

We get the impression that James Macdougall was a conscientious and caring Vicar, probably greatly respected by his parishioners, but distanced from them by both social status and by education. In a village which had no squire the Vicar and his wife would be the only people from an upper class background. The Vicar's university education would also set him apart from the other inhabitants of the village, few of whom, even the tenant farmers, would have stayed at school beyond the age of 12. We do not know what his parishioners thought of his publication of a tract entitled 'Sleeping at Church'.

James and Elizabeth Macdougall had no children, but had a long life together in Hanney. Elizabeth Macdougall died several years before her husband and is commemorated by a stained glass window in the chancel: 'In memory of the beloved wife of the Rev. James Macdougall the Vicar of Hanney died March 13 1886'. James Macdougall resigned on November 21st 1882, aged 80. On December 13th of that year, the Rev. George Herbert Johnson was appointed Vicar. About a month later the Rev. G. Herbert Johnson wrote from West Hanney Farm to the Secretary of the Bishop of Oxford, asking: 'How long does the law permit a resigning incumbent to continue in the Vicarage? The late Vicar...shows no signs of moving yet. I believe he is quite well enough to do so. It is of course a delicate matter on which to move but I should very much like to know my exact powers in the matter.' But the late Vicar was still in the village on January 25th, 1893, when he attended a meeting of the School Managers to be thanked for the '...kindness and liberality shown by him during his long incumbency'.

James Macdougall was living at Somerset House, London Road, Reading when he died on March 25th, 1896, aged 84. His grave is in Hanney churchyard. He left £400 to the parish, but not until 1907 was this money used to set up a charity to provide for villagers who needed treatment at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford. He also left £400 to Wantage Cottage Hospital. The Rev. G. Herbert Johnson left the parish in 1895 and was succeeded by the Rev. C.A. Pinkhorn.

The Curate - The Rev. Charles Ashfield Joy

Charles Ashfield Joy was appointed Curate of Hanney in October 1864 and remained in that office for over 30 years. He was a deacon, and was probably never ordained as a priest. The charming story has been handed down, that the Curate said the letters of his surname were a reminder of the Christian precepts: 'Jesus first, Others next, Yourself last'. It is also said that he was lame in one leg, and his Vicar, the Rev. James Macdougall, in the other, so they made an unsteady pair as they walked down the aisle.

The Rev. C.A. Joy, who had previously been Curate of Charney Bassett, lived in the house known as Dunsdons on the Old Green in West Hanney. He rented it from Charles Booker, a wheelwright of East Challow, until Charles Booker's death on 9th September 1882, and thereafter from Charles's brother John and sister Martha. In the conveyance of 1894 whereby Martha and her nephew Gabriel Booker sold Dunsdons to Alice Barrett, wife of John Parker Barrett, it is stated that the house was '...now and for many years past in the occupation of the Rev. Charles Ashfield Joy'.

The Curate played a full part in the life of the village. His name often appears in the parish magazine and in the School Log Book. He remained in the village until his death in 1897. A pew in the church is inscribed with a brass plate in his memory.

The Church in the Community

An important event in the parish was the annual Visitation by the Bishop or Archdeacon. The Bishop came himself every third year; the Archdeacon deputised for him in the intervening years. Before the Visitation took place the Vicar had to send to the Bishop written answers to a series of questions. These records provide some insight into church life in Hanney in the latter part of the 19th century.

In 1854 James Macdougall was carrying out all the parish duties by himself as there was no Curate. In June 1859 the Rev. Alexander Goalen was licensed Curate at Hanney. He did not remain long, as we find Charles Ashfield Joy in office by 1864.

In the early years of James Macdougall's incumbency church services were held in the parish church three times each Sunday throughout the summer. The Vicar conducted a 'full service with sermon' both in the morning and in the evening, and Holy Communion was celebrated once a month. In the afternoon the service comprised 'litany with catechising'; presumably the congregation then consisted largely of children. During the winter there was no evening service, and a sermon was preached in the afternoon. After the building of the chapel of ease at East Hanney a total of four services were held each Sunday and there were additional services on Saints' Days. Sunday morning service was at 11am in both the parish church and chapel. In winter the service at 3pm was in the church and that at 6pm was in the chapel. This arrangement was reversed in the summer. A sermon was preached at every service, except on Saint's Days. Holy Communion was celebrated once a month in each church and also on '...most of the Great Festivals...'

In the early 1870s Sunday services followed a similar pattern, and daily services had been introduced in the morning at East Hanney chapel and each evening in the parish church. There were no services on Saturdays. By the mid 1880s the number of Sunday services had decreased in the parish church from three to two and at East Hanney chapel from two to one.

Thanksgiving Services, for the late Harvest, were held
in each Church on Sunday, Oct. 14th.

Both Churches were tastefully decorated, the Parish Church by Miss Lloyd, the Misses Greenaway and their Governess, and the Misses Butler; the Chapel by Miss Lailey and her friend, Miss Childs. The designs for the Altar at East Hanney were particular admired.

The Vicar preached in the morning, the Rev. C. Joy in the afternoon, and Dr. Camilleri delivered a very impressive address in the evening. The collections, including Mr Dandridge's donation of 10s., amounted to £4 2s 8d., of which, £2 0s 8d had been forwarded as a donation to the Radcliffe Infirmary, the remainder being reserved as a subscription for next year.

We have little further information about the conduct of the services. We know that the church choir sang anthems at Easter and Harvest Festival and probably at other services as well. In 1877 copies of the anthem to be sung on Easter Sunday were sold at 1d each, so maybe some of the congregation joined in. Occasionally special sermons were preached, usually with a collection for charity. In 1854, in the Crimean War, the church responded to '...the Queen's letter in aid of soldiers' wives and families'.

The size of the congregation appeared to vary between 100 and 200 during the middle years of the century. The number of communicants was less than 100, but peaked in 1860, shortly after the building of the chapel of ease at East Hanney. In 1872 the Vicar stated that a third of the adult population were habitually absent from church. He was usually optimistic about the size of his congregations, informing the Bishop that numbers attending church were '...increasing'.

From his questions to the Vicar, the Bishop seemed very concerned about the education of the young people of the parish. In 1854, the children were catechised in church only on Saints days, and a few years later not at all. But by the mid 1880s we learn that the children are again regularly catechised in church '...on Sunday afternoon at 2.30pm just before the regular service'. We know from the School Log Book that religious instruction was at that time a regular feature of school life.

The Bishop obviously considered it important that young people continued attending Sunday school after they had left day school. When questioned on this the Vicar usually gave rather vague replies indicating that only a few children continued in Sunday school. In 1866 he was more forthcoming, saying that Sunday school was held in the same buildings and under the same master as day school. There were then 106 children in day school and 91 in Sunday school. Of these 16 attended Sunday school only and 75 both schools. Probably not all of these 16 were older children, as the Vicar then went on to say that children did not remain in Sunday School after they had left day school '...to any extent except in the parish choir.'

Continuing secular education was also regarded as desirable. In 1860 we read of an evening school for young people. In 1872 the Vicar '..set them copies and sums to do at home and it has done them good'. Five years later members of the Church of England Temperance Society were being encouraged to improve their writing and arithmetic.

Church Government and Finances

At a Vestry meeting held annually on the first Tuesday after Easter, the churchwardens presented their accounts for the year which was ending, and churchwardens for the coming year were appointed. Normally only about eight of the more important men of the parish - usually farmers - attended this meeting, although it was likely that all householders were eligible. The parish had two churchwardens. The Vicar appointed the churchwarden for West Hanney (the Vicar's Warden), but the officer for East Hanney (the People's Warden) was elected by those attending the meeting.

Who did hold the offices of churchwarden during the latter part of the 19th century? In West Hanney there were frequent changes in the 1860s, the names of J. Powell, William Heading and William Athawes all appearing. Richard Lloyd was appointed in 1870, held the office continuously until about 1884 and was followed by Joseph Greenaway and, about 1891 by Henry Dormer. These men all lived in West Hanney and were either tenant farmers or farm bailiffs. The People's Warden was always an East Hanney resident. Early in the 1860s we find Dennis Dandridge in office. Thomas Dormer took over the post in 1866. He was followed in 1873 by Joseph Lyford, and, in the 1880s by Edwin Lloyd and then Edgar Dandridge.

The churchwardens were responsible for the regular running expenses of the church - for buying oil, candles and coal, for paying the salaries of the parish clerk, the sexton and the man who '...attended to lamps and firing', for paying the organist and the women who cleaned the church, and for Visitation expenses. They had to arrange for any necessary maintenance, hiring and paying the tradesmen, or sometimes whitewashing and even doing minor repairs themselves. In his replies to the Bishop's Visitation questions the Vicar appeared somewhat critical of his churchwardens. When asked if the churchwardens regularly performed their duties, he replied, on one occasion, '...as far as one can expect' and, on another, 'Yes, tolerably'.

The church income prior to 1868 was obtained by the levy of the church rates. Rates were paid by all householders (with some exceptions for the very poor) and were based on annual rental value of the house or property. During the 1860s, in Hanney parish, the church rate varied between 1d and 4d. In 1868 church rates were abolished nationally. Subsequently, the churchwardens in Hanney had to rely for their income on annual collections in church and on donations. The Vicar's name invariably appeared on the list of donors, in some years giving as much as £7 or £8.

Despite the Vicar's generosity the church income during the early 1870s frequently did not meet the expenditure. At the Vestry meeting in 1874 it was minuted that '...it was unanimously agreed that voluntary subscriptions be collected in each village towards the church expenses, and that each ratepayer be requested to subscribe according to their rates and to enter the amount of their subscriptions in a book provided for the purpose'. This idea for increasing income does not appear to have been successful as the accounts presented at Easter 1875 were again in the red. So a collection was '...proposed for next Sunday towards paying off the balance required, and for providing for the current expenses of the year'.

In 1876 drastic measures were still needed. 'It was agreed that as the church rates have been abolished and the collections in church have been so scanty, that the Clerk's fees for the ensuring year shall be reduced to £2 12s and no other expenses be incurred by him without the Churchwarden's sanction'.

During the early 1870s, James Bunce, the parish clerk, had been receiving a salary of £3 10s. From 1876, when his salary was reduced, until 1889 James Bunce remained clerk with an annual salary of £2 12s. He is not mentioned by name again, but in 1900 the clerks in West and East Hanney each received £2 12s, a sum which remained unchanged until at least 1912. In the 1870s and 1880s James Tombs the sexton was also paid £2 12s per annum.

During the 1880s the main sources of income continued to be donations and annual collections. Regular donors were J.T. Jackson Esq. who gave £3 annually and New College which gave £2. From 1884 there were two collections each year in both the parish church and the chapel of ease at East Hanney, and from 1893 collections towards church expenses were taken more frequently.

The total cost of the parish church restoration was £1714 4s 6d, and again largely raised by subscription from 'Tithe Owners, Land Owners, Inhabitants and Friends' as well as by collections at bazaars and concerts and collections by individuals. To complete the restoration the Vicar had to send out a second request for money, as an insufficient amount was raised initially. The Vicar, as a Tithe Owner, contributed £425 to this appeal; other members of the Macdougall family gave a total of £167, and Mrs Macdougall paid for the restoration of the font.

Collections were also made for Charity, often at a service when the Vicar preached a 'charity sermon'. Money was given for the schools, for the Radcliffe Infirmary and Wantage Cottage Hospital, for the Diocesan Spiritual Aid Society, for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and for other charities. In 1872 the total sum collected for charity was £12 6s 11d, yet in the same year the income shown in the churchwarden's accounts was only £13 12s 1d.

Nonconformity

The Bishop, in his Visitation questioning to the Vicar about 'dissenters', reflected the concern of the established church concerning the threat of nonconformity. In 1854 the Rev. James Macdougall estimated that there were about 100 dissenters in the parish of Hanney. 'There is a small (Independent) place of worship but, I believe, few attend. Several go to Abingdon and Grove'. He said in 1860, that there was '...no regular place' where dissenters worshipped, but, by 1866, there was '..one attended by about 30 or 40 people'. In 1866 he was uncertain of the total number of dissenters in the parish, but, in 1872, he again suggested that there were approximately 100.

Mr Henry Leake of Headington Hill was a preacher who held services in villages round Oxford during the 1830s. As his following grew chapels were built - in Frilford and

Longworth in 1840 and in Wootton in 1850. In 1854 a group of men including Henry Leake, Thomas Dewe of Longworth, Thomas Floyd of Frilford and Ziba Sumner, a grocer of East Hanney, formally founded a society for the purposes of religious worship and education. This was the Frilford and Longworth Home Mission. The Mission opened a school in Longworth in 1854 and also, in that year acquired property and land in East Hanney. This property was '...a cottage or tenement, with outbuildings and garden thereunto belonging, and a piece of land containing about 12 poles, bounded on the West by the garden belonging to the cottage, which piece was formerly the north corner of an orchard of John Fisher, called the Upper Orchard, all situate at East Hanney...' '...the dwelling house and hereditaments at Hanney were placed upon special trust, until a chapel was erected there, to let the premises, use the rent to keep the premises in good repair, and to give the surplus to the school at Longworth for the expense of lighting and repairing the chapel and school...'

A chapel was erected on the land in East Hanney in 1862, the chapel said by the Rev. James Macdougall to be attended by 30-40 people. The history of the Frilford and Longworth Home Mission between this time and the beginning of the 20th century is fragmentary. There were other chapels in Appleton and Cumnor. Mr Henry Smith was evangelist to the circuit from 1842 until 1889. He was followed in 1892 by the Rev. Brooke Dand William Gregory who remained until 1895.

In 1910 Henry Broughton was the preacher. He lived in the cottage adjoining the chapel on a yearly tenancy at a rent of £7, and the Mission was known in the village as 'Broughton's Chapel'. After Mr Broughton died towards the end of the first World War, the Mission was closed down. It was reopened in about 1943, and today, although it no longer has a pastor, it still has an active congregation.

In conclusion

The church from earliest times had great influence over the lives of ordinary people. This was still true in the 19th century especially in village communities like Hanney where the Vicar knew everyone. We feel that James Macdougall must have kept a benevolent eye on, and extended a helping hand to, all his parishioners including those whom he regarded as dissenters.

Sources for Church and Chapel
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Presentation of the Rev. George Herbert Johnson MA
Berkshire Record Office
D/P 63/5/one Churchwardens accounts
New College Archives

1368 Hanney Church Restoration Fund (appeal)
Alumni Oxoniensis 1715-1886
Crockford's Clerical Directory 1860
Victorian Wantage. Kathleen Philip 1968
A brief history of East Hanney Mission (from Mr Richard Bernard)
Kelly's Directory of Berkshire 1847-1887
Hanney School Log Book
Hanney Parochial Magazine 1876-1877
Conveyance of sale of Dunsdons (in private hands)

LEISURE

Some copies of the Church Magazines for 1870s and 1880s which were loaned to the group give a very good indication of the social life of the village and we have included some parts of them in this chapter. Social life did appear to centre around regular yearly events such as the Hanney Feast and Flower Show. The men certainly patronised the pubs.

Pubs

As today, the villages were well supplied with public houses. In West Hanney the Lamb Inn (a 20th century pub of that name stands on the site) was an attractive old thatched building which was burnt down in the 1930s. There was a regular changeover on landlords in the late Victorian period, Oliver Clinch, was succeeded by a Yorkshire man Joseph Steel in the 1870s. On the death of his first wife, Joseph married Mary Watts from the village and records show the baptisms of four children in the 1880s. The Steel family moved in the 1880s and John Boor took over. The Boor family kept the Lamb well into the 20th century. Surprisingly there is no mention in the censuses of The Plough in West Hanney until 1891, when Henry Bunce is described as the landlord, aided by his wife Barbara.

East Hanney villagers could choose between The Black Horse, The Crown (both still thriving) and The Plough which is now an Italian Restaurant. The Black Horse belonged to the Herman family until late in the century when it was bought by Morlands Brewery. Charles Arthur who was also a carpenter moved into the area to run the pub from Lower Swell in Gloucestershire. He and his wife Martha had at least six children. The Crown on the main road had several large elm trees in front and was a good watering place for dusty travellers. It was also the "home' of the Hanney Foresters Benevolent Club. For those who could afford it the Club was a good reason for an occasional evening out. Licensees at The Crown included Thomas Newman and James Batten Monk.
June 8. East Hanney Club Feast was held at the 'Crown'.
The Members, headed by the Wantage Band, marched in procession to the Parish Church, where a sermon, against Drunkenness, was preached by the Vicar. After Church the Band played at principal houses in West Hanney, and at 2 o'clock the Members and their Friends at down to an excellent dinner provided by Hostess Sarah Betteridge.
The number of members is 101 and the balance of funds £306.11s 11d. All passed off very quietly, and, what is very gratifying, there were no cases of drunkenness.

Further along the road at the 'Four Shoot' The Plough was run by John Johnson who had four daughters, Agnes, Ada, Alethea and Alida. The Johnsons moved to London and the pub was taken over by John's cousin James Tombs. The Tombs had seven children, one of whom Sarah married Edgar Dandridge and lived at Manor Farm. Her niece Mrs Bevan still treasures some of the fine needlework Sarah made at Hanney School.

The Temperance Society and Reading Room

During our research we have found regular references to the problem of excessive drinking. The 1893 Royal Commission said 'that there was less drinking than 10 years ago but in East Hanney, Childrey and East Ilsley the report is still not encouraging.' Brewers made a habit of coming to the village from outside the district and selling kegs of beer to labourers on trust taking payment from time to time. The Rev. Macdougall set up a branch of the Church of England Temperance Society in 1876.

TEMPERANCE. The Temperance Meeting was held at the School on Tuesday, Oct. 30
There were a good many children present, but few adults.
In the juvenile branch 17 were duly entered and received cards of membership as Non-abstainers and 5 as Abstainers; in the adult Branch there are 14 non-abstainers and 2 abstainers. Lists of the Members will be hung up in the School.
The following officers etc. were appointed:- President, The Vicar Secretary, Mr, Watling; Committee, Rev Dr. Camilleri, Rev. C. A. Joy. Mr Edward Clinch, Mrs Macdougall, Mrs Camilleri. Chas. Fuller, Henry Bunce and Frank Bunce, with power to add to their number. It was also arranged that there shall be quarterly meetings, and that the next meeting shall be in January. It is earnestly hoped that more of the influential inhabitants will join the association, and so help to put down the fearful and ruinous sin of drunkeness. The Vicar and Secretary will glady receive the names of those who wish to join.

After initial reluctance among the villagers and meetings postponed because of inclement weather, the Temperance Society appears to have become popular. By early summer of 1877 the Temperance Room (in a cottage rented by the Vicar) was open every night except Sunday for the use of members.

The Temperance, Reading, Washing. and Ironing Rooms
at West Hanney are now open.
The charges are as follows:-
For the use of the Library books, papers and periodicals,
one Penny per Month: for the use of the Reading Room from 6 to 9 p.m., including, in addition to the above, fire, lights, games and night-school, 2d per Week; including the
use of the Harmonium, 3d per Week: for the use of the Laundry including fires, tubs, hot water, ironing-stove, and irons, mangle and patent washer, one Penny per Hour.

The Vicar also tried to encourage self improvement by creating a village reading room but which again only received minimal support. The 1893 Royal Commission noted the lack of interest in
recreation in the area 'scarcely any cricket grounds and only the
volunteer corps promoted by Lord Wantage'. Perhaps the truth was there was little energy left at the end of a long working day.

The Flower Show

This was a popular event from about 1875 and was held in Feast Week. It appears to have been planned and directed by the ladies and gentlemen of the village but 'cottagers' were allowed to take part and enter special classes. Cottagers were probably those holding allotments. At that time there were more allotments in the villages and the Flower Show meant they all had to be in prime condition as they were inspected by the show judges and interested friends and neighbours.

The Flower Show was subsidised by subscription. A list of subscribers and the amount they gave was published in the parish magazine. The largest subscription of £1 was from the Lailey family and there must have been pressure on other families to keep up with this.

Aug.8. The second Horticultural Show was held at the School. The day was beautifully fine, the only drawback being the intense heat. The room was tastefully decorated by Miss Lailey and her friends. The flowers were arranged with admirable effect on the middle table by Mrs Lyford, Mrs Dandridge and Mrs Fisher. The Vegetables, which, considering the season, were for the most part, excellent of their kind, were set out on the side tables, by Messrs. Clinch and Watling.
A list of the prizes will be given next month.
The Wantage Brass Band played during the afternoon. At 4 o'clock the School children having assembled on the green at West Hanney, marched in procession headed by the Band to the School ground, where they were regaled with cake and tea. Prizes of books were afterwards given to the most deserving, in the following order of merit, viz.
First Class.
Eliza Fuller, E. Greenaway, F. Higgs, Henry Higgs, R. Aldworth, J. Pullen, P. Belcher, P. Barrett, K. Whitfield, E. Breakspear, Wm. Payne, M. Wheeler.

Second Class
E. Higgs, Dorcas Mace, M.A. Mace, E. Prior. H. Church, A. Parker, H. Simmons, E. Prior, Mary Dawson, Price Spendloe, Charles Barrett, Fanny Booker, Rhoda Tombs.

In the evening there were Athletic sports in an adjourning field kindly lent by Mr. A. Stevenson consisting of foot-races etc.

Hanney Feast

Amusements and celebrations were infrequent and greatly looked forward to in the Hanneys. The biggest event of the year was the Hanney Feast. West Hanney feast was originally the first Sunday after St. James Day, July 25th, the church's patronal festival. After St. James the Less was built in East Hanney in 1856, their feast was pushed forward three months to be held concurrently. Families were reunited, new outfits bought and often the whole time was treated as a holiday.

The fair firstly visited West Hanney for a week and then moved on to East Hanney on the Sunday morning after church to take up positions around the chestnuts near the cross-roads and on the village Cross Tree Green. On the Tuesday of Feast Week it was Club Day at the Crown Inn, where after a procession and service at West Hanney, great revelling took place. On the Thursday the Flower Show and sports and cricket match took place in Weir Meadow.

The full flavour of this event of the year is best seen through the eyes of Bill Cox, who was born in 1886 and wrote this poem about Hanney Feast based on his early memories as a small boy. Living at the blacksmith's actually by the Green the fair must have been all around his house. Bill gave a copy of his poem to Gwen Mulford formerly licensee at the Black Horse when he was in his ninetieth year.

Reflections of Hanney Feast by Bill Cox

Many years ago in the 19th century, which they called the good old days,
Men and women too, worked mighty hard for a stringent pay,
The poor children had no pleasure much, or very little joy,
They all has set jobs to do, and errands to run, to earn themselves a toy.

But there was a great attraction, which came once a year at least,
It drew in to the Fourshoot Green and they called it Hanney Feast,
An exhibition of Roundabouts, Coconuts, Hoopla Shies and Swings,
In those days, in the children's eyes, there seemed magic in those things.

The Feast originated from the Church July 25th, St. James Day they say,
When Mass was read, and Bells were rung to commemorate the Day,
The schools would have their Annual Sports, and Break Up Tea and Treat,
And the winners receive their prizes, for Behaviour, Good Work and Books so neat.

Then on the second Sunday in August, the Feast was really on its way,
The folk all rising early and looking for a very joyful day,
Mother would make a big dough rich cake and cooked the Xmas ham,
And thus provide a smashing Tea for Feast, with Sandwiches, Cake and Jam.

Yes, and the Landlords all ordered extra stocks, you may guess they all did well,
For many walked in from the Villages around, which made the crowds swell,
A pint of Ale only cost two-pence, and a pint of Bitter three,
And if Mother wanted her pint of Stout that'll cost three as well.

This is the time the Always all come Home, if only for one night,
And many would have their whole Holiday, the family to reunite, and
After Tea all the Mums and Dads put on their very best,
Dress up the Kids and Lambs and Prams, and go out to join the rest.

You may stroll down to the Fourshoot Square, and there find Friends 'a lot',

And still the Spreading Chestnuts, that shaded Bill Cox's Blacksmith Shop,
The Ladies all turned out in long gay skirts and Victorian Hats so grand,
Standing in little clusters talking, or listening to the Band.

The Plough and Crown have reopened now, and the crowd starts to disperse,
All the Toms and Dicks and Harrys move in for a Pint to quench their thirst,
They'll soon be very merry for they're out on a drinking spell,
And how in Devil some walk Home after Ten, I could never never tell.

Tomorrow is the Fun Fair day and I shall get up with the lark,
To see the building of the roundabouts for they'll make an early start,
Also Proprietress Louisa Dallaway, with a walnut shape kind of face,
All wrinkled up and weather tanned, pointing out its usual place.

Then there's her son Tommy, he is strong but rather small,
Its Tommy that swings the heavy sledge, for putting up the stalls,
And Sukie his charming wife, a good worker without a doubt,
Busy as any Bumble bee, sorting the Balls and Coconuts out.

And every coconut she puts in its little iron arm chair,
And fling how the devil you like they'll still stick there,
They're rounded and bearded, full of milk, and ever so sweet,
If you do ever manage to get one to eat,
She says throw the balls harder lad, throw, throw, throw,
Come along my Lucky Lads, and have another go.

Well next we come to the Hoopla stall, which Sukie helps to run,
And by the look of the lovely prizes she intends to make some fun,
Its three rings a Penny lads, and play for what you like,
And if you don't win a prize from Sukie, you've had one over the eight.

And next in line are the Swing Boats, you can give the girl a swing,
From my experience of Swing Boats, they're not too good a thing,
You may have a rolling stomach, and a sweating, swinging her high,
And if you've taken someone's Fiancé up, you could get two black eyes.

And now the Wooden Horses, which please the Kids down to the ground,
Its a little Bay Pony named Susie that pulls these round and round,
Susie trots for fast, and walks for slow and a bell tells her when to go,
And when to stop she can always tell, just one Ding from her Masters bell.

And now the last, by no means least, we come to the Jumble Feast,
Brandy snaps and liquorice sweets, Jumbles Fat Sticky and Sweet,
Perhaps covered with wasps, but O such a treat.

Now Tommy is hanging the Paraffin flares all in space,

These with the darkness, seem to alter the whole place,
The shadows all mingle among the people and stalls,
It don't seem like the Village Green at all,
It's like some place I do not know,
Well, I'm feeling very tired, so away Home I go,
And tomorrow, I shall be coming to an empty Green,
(almost as though it had never been)
But there on the grass, I know it was true,
(for there are the footprints of dear little Sue)
Her feet have worn all the grass away in a big round circle and its there to stay,
Till next year about August Ten when the old Hanney Feast will come back again.

Now my Friends, we are all living in a new age today,
And Old Hanney Feast, is long since dead,
And in our Hearts, some remember it
and sometimes talk about it to our new Friends,
We talk of all the wonderful things, we can see or do today,
But the joys of those old Hanney Feasts ought never to have passed away.

I wonder did they miss us old Louise, Tommy, Sukie and Joe,
But of course they'll all in green pastures now, Ah it was so long ago,

But O my friends do believe me, what happiness we had,
With a very small pile of coppers, and a little friendly lass,
A ride and swing and Jumble to chew,
I wonder if you remember me, as I remember you,
But the old Trees and the Green still stands there and no Horse Hoofs mar the grass,
And I believe Hanney a much poorer place now that old Hanney Feast has passed.

Further extracts from the Church Magazines
Feb 13th 1877. A fire broke out in Mr. Thomas Dormor's rickyard.
Fortunately it was observed in time or half the village, most likely, would have been burnt to the ground; but owing to the praiseworthy exertions of John Saunders, John Barrett and others and the speedy arrival of the Fire Engine from Wantage, which, under the direction of the Brigade, performed its work most admirably, the fire was speedily got under, and only two ricks were destroyed.

On Saturday, April 21st, Mary Talmage, her son Edward, John Barrett, A. Booker and Caleb Belcher were thrown out of a cart at Charney. Mrs Talmage was very much bruised about the body; John Barrett had his collar bone broken, and Caleb Belcher his arm put out; the other two escaped without injury.
On the following Tuesday, Mr. Dandridge was sitting on the bridge, watching the moving of some timber into Charles Aldworth's orchard, when, a when, a horse and trap passing, the horse was frightened and running against him and dreadfully crushed his leg. Other men standing near escaped without injury.

On Saturday, Aug.18 we were sorry to hear that the Vicar met with a rather serious accident; On jumping from a fence, he sprained his ankle, in consequence of which he was laid up for several days, and his duties had to be taken undertaken by his Curate.

Nov 1 1877. We have, unfortunately, another case of drowning to record this month. The body of Charles Froude was discovered, Oct. 12th, lying under the bridge by Mr. Dandridge's Mill.
It appears that he had been at the 'Lamb' the night before, and it is supposed, that, on his return home, he had missed his way the night being very dark, and fell into the water.
The same evening, or rather next morning, a furious gale of wind swept through the village doing immense damage in the orchards, and to the thatched ricks and houses. A number of large trees were torn up by the roots, slates blown off the School house.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has looked at all aspects of village life in East and West Hanney in the late years of the 19th century. This was a time of agricultural depression which especially affected arable farming. The Hanneys were a farming community whose farms mainly consisted of good arable land. The smaller farmers appeared to suffer most and the period under study saw the final demise of the yeoman owner farmer in Hanney. Land became increasingly concentrated in the hands of absentee landlords. The tenant farmers undoubtedly felt worse off during the late years of the 19th century - this can be seen in the way the largesse they dispersed to their workforce was reduced as were the numbers they employed.

It is very noticeable that the Hanneys lacked any resident Lord of the Manor. The absentee landlords occasionally contributed to village appeals or charities but the Hanneys did not receive many of the benefits of decent housing etc. which Ardington or Pusey gained. The Hanney landlords had to reduce rents to their tenants because of the depression but as they in general had other resources, they were able to do so and also to expand land holdings at the lower prices on offer. In the absence of a Lord of the Manor the Vicar seem to have had a strong influence in the village and he together with the farmers, more or less ran the village.

The agricultural labourers formed the majority of the population. From government reports of the time it has been possible to obtain very good accounts of their lifestyle this has helped us resist the temptation to romanticise the good old days! What is difficult is to assess exactly how much the labourers were affected by the agricultural depression. It is very likely that conditions always had been hard for the workers on the land and that government reports on agricultural housing, sanitation etc. in the light of the general move in the late Victorian times towards social improvements, highlighted a situation which was not new and not particularly exacerbated by economic depression. Although life was less likely to be cushioned by handouts from their tenant farmer employers, there were several factors at work improving the lot of the average Hanney farm worker. Prices had undoubtedly fallen but to a lesser extent so had wages. The Vale of the White Horse and especially villages like East and West Hanney had a very low wage compared to the national average.

Housing was in general in very poor condition, but the opportunities to better oneself, through education and a move to other jobs and areas were increasing all the time. Teenage girls left the village in large numbers to go into service and some married in the cities and stayed there; others returned but brought with them new ideas and expectations which contributed to the changes to old village traditions.

Countryside communications had been improved by the mid century with the arrival of the railway and Wantage Road Station was a thriving centre of movement of goods and people. Newspapers and magazines were widely available and could be enjoyed by the increasingly literate village population. They brought new ideas, influences, advertising and the pressures and events of modern life.

The shopkeepers of Hanney prospered during the later years of the century if they were prepared to expand and cater for 'modern' tastes. Whilst the villages were still very self contained for day to day commodities an ever increasing range of goods from the industrial areas of Britain and the Empire were becoming available.