

HOUSES IN HARE STREET AND THE HORMEADS

Hormead Parish Magazine 1919:

'The Housing Question: then and now. In 1845 the present Vicarage was built by the Rev Charles Colson at a cost of £1,200. In 1884 the Rectory at Little Hormead was sold for £800. In 1919 a dozen new houses are projected for Hormead at an estimated cost of £800 apiece.'

by

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Amberley, Hare Street

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This short account of the houses in Great and Little Hormead and Hare Street is a summary of the histories of the village houses which I have been piecing together over the last four years. It is written with the hope that interest in the many old and picturesque houses may be stimulated and that any errors may thereby be corrected and new material which could add to our knowledge of the houses might come to light.

Some of the houses are very difficult to date within as much as a couple of hundred years for the basic pattern of timber-framed structure with infill of lathe and plaster and a roof of thatch or tiles was used by builders in the villages from the 16th to 18th centuries. Probably the last house, or bungalow, to be built on this plan was Bull's Farmhouse in 1933. As for the oldest house in the village, it would be difficult to budge between a number of candidates. It is extremely unlikely that anything remains, even as part of later structures, prior to 1475. Up to that time the houses were built of mud and were superseded by timber framed houses from the late 15thC onwards. It has been established by architects that Chapman's Farm (Little Meadow), Judds, Milburns, Oak Cottage, and the Old Swan have elements dating back before 1500 in their structures, and there may be others of which I am not currently aware.

Today (1983) there are some 282 houses in the three villages of Great Hormead (123), Little Hormead (37) and Hare Street (122) of which 161 have been built since the year 1900. The remaining 120 were built over the previous four hundred years.

The oldest of them, yeomen farmers and their workers' homes, were already standing in the year 1500 but few of these have much of the original house to be seen now and have been modernised by successive generations of owners in the intervening years. The oldest houses in the villages are now a mixture of styles from different periods due to extensions and renovations. Judd's Farmhouse is a typical example of this, with a west wing built c1500, some new building extensions in the late 1500s, and a substantial renovation in 1724 when the whole house was encased in plaster.

The best preserved house, in the sense that it is the least altered and renovated and so more near the original structure than any other in the village, is Oak Cottage in Hare Street. This is believed to have been built between 1480 and 1520 and the street facade today must be very similar to the one with which the Tudor and Elizabethan villages were familiar. This was a wealthy yeoman farmer's residence, a hall-house with a cross wing, closely oak studded and with a jettied upper storey on the cross wing.

In Great and Little Hormead the houses were built for farmers and farm workers, whilst in Hare Street there were also tradesmen's houses reflecting the almost entirely agricultural nature of the two Hormeads and the more commercial character of Hare Street, due to the latter's situation on the King's Highway linking London with Cambridge.

Prior to 1950 only one tenth of the houses in the villages had names, but today all but one ('Next the Bakery') have a name. Before the last war everyone in the villages not only knew everyone else, but where they lived. A house was always 'the Bull's' or 'Mrs Dellow's' and there was no need for the house itself to be named. With the turnover in buying and selling of the houses to 'outsiders' so that the villagers no longer knew

everyone else, and the necessity of many more traders and servicemen visiting the village, since it is no longer self sufficient, it has been necessary to give the houses names for the purpose of establishing accurate addresses.

Oldest Houses

The three manor houses stand on some of the longest used house sites. The old name for a manor house 'Bury' is incorporated in the names of Little Hormeadbury and Great Hormeadbury. The second manor house in Great Hormead, belonging to the manor of Hormead Redewells or Clarkes, is Hormead Hall. The Rectory in Little Hormead and the Vicarage in Great Hormead stood on the same site as far back as the records can be traced. The Great Hormead Vicarage broke with this tradition in 1981 when the Vicarage was sold and the Vicar moved to the house then called Field End.

Other old names were Stanes (Stonebury) mentioned in the Domesday Book 1086; the farmhouses of Baluns after Walter Balun 1248; Terre de Mudford, later Mutfords, 1327; Bears Farm after James Bere, 1524; and Judds after Andrew Judd 1544.

Inns

The inns have also retained their names for centuries. In 1596 the inns then described as already being 'ancient inns' were listed as: 'the grayhounde, Thomas Bowness Inkeper there; the dogge head in the potte, Joane Wheler inholder there; Joan Viccas of the Bull'. There was also an alehouse 'put down' for not having a license, which was owned by Henry Brand and this was later to acquire a license and become known as The Swan. Little Hormead had no inn and never seems to have had one within the parish boundaries – officially that is. The history of the inns and beer houses is so much better documented than that of many of the houses that they must be the subject of another pamphlet to do them justice.

Names

Some houses which were bequeathed by their owners in wills in the 16th and 17th centuries have since lost their names, e.g. Rubles in Hare Street, and Mowers, Basiers, and Ginn's with its 34 acres (later absorbed by Houblon of Hormead Hall) in Great Hormead. In Little Hormead, Margerie Smith's was later renamed Mutton Hall and Greene's Farm became Bull's Farm as the Greene family died out and the Bull family retained possession of the farm for many years.

Other lost farmhouse names include Luttes and Pegrum which were out in the fields by Bears, Mutton Hall and Lilly End Farms – all now crumbled away. In Hare Street, Cokes later became known as Red House Farm and was then incorporated into the larger farm called Ashdown Farm. When the farmhouse, formerly Cokes, was sold away from Ashdown Farm c1910 to the owner of Hare Street House, Hugh Benson, it became known as Hare Street Cottage.

Houses which acquired names in the 19thC include Weston's because James Weston, father and then son, owned it from c1815 for the following hundred years; Chapman's Farm (now Little Meadow) because Thomas Chapman, father and son, owned that for the greater part of the 19thC. Milburn's is rather strange in that this farm was only occupied, not owned, by the Milbourne family from 1804-1824, yet this name has stuck and we still use it today. Dellow's Cottage was named after the Dellow family, the Hormead millers, who owned it c1780-1857. However the cottage in which the Dellow's and subsequent millers lived was Mill Cottage (then Embers and Mill Cottage were one house) from c1780-1873.

The Baker family occupied Baker's Cottage 1840-1962, hence its name. Sworder's Close is a corruption of Sawyer's Close, named after the Sawyer family who probably built it c1698. Further modern names taken from adjoining land, just as Sawyer's Close later gave its name to the house built on the close of land, are Carter's Field, Gelders (built on Guilders Pasture), Harvest Mead and Lombard's Piece (formerly the Great Hormead Vicarage). Lombard's Piece is a field which once extended behind the Vicarage and other houses in Hormead Dane, stretching from Anderson's Lane across to Hormead Hall Lane. In Hare Street, Greatstones, Upstones, Kemp's Close, Highfields and Fayland Cottages, are all standing on part of fields with those names.

Building patterns

The houses in the villages, built since c1475, were often erected in times of national and agricultural prosperity, such as the later Elizabethan period of the 'great rebuilding' c1580-1620; the late 1700s - the Georgian period; and the mid-Victorian period. All the houses, with the exception of the farmhouses out in the fields and the houses in Half Acre (q.v. under the Enclosure Act of 1823) are built along the length of the main roads through the villages forming the distinctive 'linear village' so familiar in this part of Hertfordshire.

In this area there are very few villages where the houses are clustered round the church and village green. Our houses are not even in close proximity to the two churches. The churches are very conveniently placed for the Lords of the respective manors (Little Horneadbury and Great Horneadbury) to walk to church across their own gardens, but most inconveniently situated for the rest of the villagers.

1500-1580

That Great Hornead is such an interesting and picturesque village is due to the number of houses still in existence which were either already standing in the year 1500, or erected within the following century. This is particularly true along the bottom road, Hornead Dean (a dean is a small valley) later corrupted to Hornead Dane. Along this road are the old farm houses, Great Hornead Dane, Judds, Milburns, Chapmans, and Westons on the corner of the road up to the church. Amongst the smaller farmworkers houses we may include Hall House and Hall House Cottage, and perhaps The Halfacre.

In Hare Street, Oak Cottage, The Swan, and probably the Dogges Head in the Potte (later renamed Three Jolly Butchers) were already fine mature houses in 1525. The fact that The Swan and Oak Cottage were built opposite one another nearly at the same time with such a narrow lane between, has influenced the width of the road through Hare Street for five centuries. After crossing a wide track across the countryside from Dassells, the traveller had to negotiate the village at its then southern tip through a nipped in section at the entrance to the village. Later houses, like Shangles/Timbers (built as one house) were built in line with the Doggeshead and Oak Cottage on that side of the road. Even earlier houses had been strung along the track creating a 'Longport' – the Domesday name for Hare Street meaning a 'long town'. Perhaps the Swan and oak Cottage were built on the site of earlier wattle and daub houses which formed part of a much earlier straggling village.

The large yeomen's houses with three rooms which were built in the 16thC were splendid homes for their period – hall houses, usually one bay deep (approximately 13') with a hall in the middle and a small room at either side. The chimney was built at a later date over a hearth in the hall, with the chimney funnelling the smoke up through the roof. The chimney breasts were built of brick pillars at each side supporting a heavy beam of oak across the top of the fireplace. The bricks of the pillars have been identified as being of Elizabethan origin in some cottages, e.g. Baker's Cottage.

When building these timber framed mansions, the timber was cut to shape at the sawpit and all the pieces numbered with roman numerals (we did not use arabic numerals for another century). They were then carried to the building site and erected on top of a low wall built of bricks or flint rubble in order to keep the timber off the wet ground. On top of the brick sill, a timber wall plate was placed and the upright studs fitted onto the wall plate. As the wood, mostly oak at this period, aged, so it hardened and it is so durable that many houses have been preserved and are still in a sound condition four or five hundred years later. In between the studs, wattle sticks of oak were inserted and daubed with a stiff infill of cowdung, hair, chalk, lime, etc. The infill was not so durable as the oak frame but could be replaced at intervals and has often been renewed since the first builder filled in the gaps between the studs in Tudor times. Thatched roofs and shuttered window openings completed the exterior work on these houses except for the decoration. The oak was painted over with red oxide to preserve and colour it, whilst the plaster was smoothed over and painted with earth colours available on the site – yellow ochre clay in our case. A walk through the village in Tudor times would have been a walk down a street full of gaily painted red and yellow houses, not a stroll through a row of black and white houses like today.

Inside, the floors were of clunch trodden down and strewn with rushes and sweet-smelling herbs, for the Elizabethans believed that

'Where chamber is swept and wormwood is strown
No flea for his life dare abide to be known'

If a chamber or loft were built over one of the end rooms of the house, it was reached by a sheer vertical ladder. In the Swan in Hare Street an old ladder staircase is still in place, built over with a new shallower staircase at a later date.

The farmworkers cottage was often only one room, occasionally two roomed. It may or may not have had a fireplace with a hole in the roof to let the smoke out. No-one at this date had glass in their windows but closed out the night, hopefully also the wind and thieves, by the means of wooden shutters.

A unique design and building material for the period, the 1560s, was used for The Brickhouse. It is atypical of both of the local materials then used for other houses and the style of the period. It was built for the Brand family who owned the advowson of Great Hormead Church, the Swan in Hare Street, Bury Farmhouse and the land on which Hare Street House was later to be built by other members of this very wealthy family. One member of the family was a bricklayer which probably accounts for the use of this material up at the Brickhouse. His was such an unusual occupation at that time that the Vicar noted him in the parish registers as a 'bricklayer' when he got married and when he died. Where he got the idea for the arrow slits and the curious crow stepped gabling and strange design of the ground plan remains a mystery. It is one of the earliest brick houses in the county.

1580-1620

At the end of Elizabeth's reign and during the reign of James I, building advanced greatly in technique to supply the demands for better housing by an increasingly prosperous nation. Many of the old pre-1500 houses were swept away at this time. In the new houses the basic design of the hall house with a hall for general use and a room for food preparation and another for sleeping, was supplemented by boarding over the two end rooms to provide a parlous upstairs for sleeping. Throughout all the rooms there was now greater comfort and a little more furniture.

Some impressive Tudor chimneys were built in the villages with over riding courses of bricks in elaborate patterns. They had discovered how to incorporate two shafts within the one chimney breast. After c1625 a staircase was built round these chimneys to reach the upper sleeping quarters. Tiny panes of glass could now be manufactured here in England and the very wealthy bought them and had them fitted into lead strips and had them inserted in their window frames. Examples of Tudor building with the elaborate chimneys include the Old Rectory, Parsonage Farm (now demolished) Lilley End (now gone, but built c1620), the Bury Farmhouse (opposite the Three Tuns), Hormead Hall and Hare Street House.

Small houses from this period include White Ash in Little Hormead and Dane End Farm in Great Hormead and perhaps also Home Cottage, Three Tuns Cottage, Baker's Cottage, Box Tree Cottage, Dellow's Cottage and Shambles/Timbers, though the latter may be of later date. The Pest House (now gone) is first mentioned in 1603 and survived until the 1870s. Hare Street Cottage was bequeathed in a will dated 1608 and was then regarded as a substantial farmer's house with forty acres of land attached.

1620-1700

The basic design of the timber-framed buildings is still the same, but there is a much greater use of glass and plain brick chimneys. More staircases were built after 1625 and replaced the earlier ladders and with them came more boarding-in to form upstairs rooms.

The population increased steadily and some new houses were built, though there is little evidence of much building in the villages during the troubled times of Charles I and the

Commonwealth. Most of the houses which we think were built in this period were erected after Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660.

Houses dated to the last quarter of the 17thC are: Thatched Cottages or the Town Houses of Little Hornead built in 1668; Glebe Cottages in Little Hornead (much retored since); Kemp's Cottage and Mount Cottage in Hare Street; Three Horseshoes Cottage (then called Copplands) and Sworder's/Sawyer's Close; St Anne; Homeside; and possibly Home Cottage in Great Hornead.

18th Century

The 18th century was primarily a period of modernisation and extension rather than of new building. The new fashion for symmetry in the facade made the old timber framed houses with windows and doors placed where the studs most conveniently allowed them look very out of date. Some owners solved the modernisation problem by encasing their house in plaster, at the same time enlarging the windows (using the new sash windows which slide sideways at first and later in the century slid upwards) and re-siting the door to the centre of the front facade. There must have been many such alterations in the village, but the owner of Judds kindly scratched the date into the plaster of his new extension so that we know it as 1724 when this work was done. The house was also encased in plaster and this excluded the draughts which had crept in between stud and plaster and proved so uncomfortable. Chapman's Farm (Little Meadow) was also encased and given a symmetrical facade this century.

Re-facing timber framed houses with an entirely new front of bricks in order to modernise the house was a favourite method of getting up to date without the expense of rebuilding the whole house. Re-facing with red bricks in the Queen Anne period is evident at Dane End Farm and using white bricks late in the 18th century at Girton House. The re-facing of Hare Street House took a slightly different form. The Benn family of Braughing owned it and for a short time, between c1774 and 1780, William Benn lived in the house. Very close to this period he had a new facade built in red brick, but a room width of space in front of the old Jacobean house. By this ingenious method he not only had a new modern looking house, but gained two extra rooms at the front of the house, now the dining room and library. The sash windows, with their very slender wood uprights and cross pieces holding the small panes of glass in place (much of the original glass is still there) are very obviously early Georgian and date from the late 18th century. It is curious to find three early Georgian windows on the front wall of the dining room and then to turn around and be faced with Jacobean panelling and fireplace.

New properties built in the 18th century were in Great Hornead – Embers/Mill Cottage (Embers built c1750 and Mill Cottage added on as an extension in the last quarter of the century); Three Horseshoes, the clapboarded pub halfway up the hill (then called Smith's Hill, later renamed Horseshoe Lane/Hill); and I believe Snow White was built about 1753 and inserted between the Three Tuns and Dellow Cottage.

Little Hornead saw Hill View Cottages built 1713 and the Rectory rebuilt in 1738 at a cost of £390.9.11d.

In Hare Street, Leveret Cottage was built on Swan-owned land at the time of Queen Anne, and since the windows are flush with the wall, probably the date of building is between 1704 and 1709 when a law was passed stipulating that windows must be recessed; Japonica Cottage was built 1755/6; and The Bakery was built by the Haydon family, carpenters, between September and December 1748 whilst battling with their neighbours who were doing their level best to pull it down whilst it was being built. For some reason the Hare Street and Hornead men did not want Henry Haydon to build his house there, on a bit of orchard he had bought, and did everything in their power to prevent him. After some fisticuffs they took him to court in Hertford, but the case was thrown out of court and Henry and his family stayed there for well over a century. Elm Cottage was also built (of elm wood) at Hare Street at the southern end during the last quarter of the 18th century.

About the same time the farm barn belonging to Dane House in Great Hornead was converted into a cottage and has since been christened and renamed a number of times,

viz: Sideways 1938, Hulmers 1938-63, Ship's Timbers 1963-77, and Carter's Field in 1977.

19th Century

As far as house building in the villages is concerned, this century may be divided into three distinct periods: 1800-1830 when a few houses were built and those still on the old timber framed pattern; 1830-1875, a period of prosperity when the new houses were built mainly in brick; and 1875-1900, a period of disastrous harvests and agricultural decline when many houses were left unoccupied and allowed to fall into ruin.

1800-1830

During these thirty years the process of re-facing old houses continued with The Bakery being refaced with white bricks and tuck-pointing in 1805. Between 1806 and 1818 Cockes farmhouse was refaced with red bricks and renamed Red House Farm (now Hare Street Cottage). A new front was built onto the Elizabethan Little Hormeadbury between 1806 and 1824, whilst at the Bury in Great Hormead Colonel Edward Stables very largely rebuilt the house in white bricks retaining a small portion of the Tudor house only, during the short period in which he owned it from 1810 until his death at Waterloo in 1815.

Small two-roomed workers' cottages were built in the timber framed style for farm employees such as the gardener of Hormeadbury whose new home Bury Lodge was built next to the Hare Street to Hormead road. The 'Gardener's Cottage' in Hare Street was built between 1806 and 1823 but this is a 20th century name for a cottage built initially for farmworkers employed by Hare Street House owners.

The Warren in Layston Parish section of Hare Street was built between 1806 and 1823, also Layston House c1820. The New Cottages, built on ground in Little Hormead parish by Worsted lane, were erected between 1806 and 1823. The Haydon family was busy again, unopposed this time, building tiny dwellings on either side of Henry's own house (now the Old Bakery) and I think the pink-washed cottage to the south was built c1818. Ashdown Cottage was built between 1827 and 1832 for the sister of the owner of Ashdown Farm.

The Haydons also built The Beehive c1820, partly of brick and partly lathe and plaster, and another cottage which incorporated some brick with stud and plaster is Hill View c1818 in Hare Street. This later was extended in the 20th century and now appears to be two identical semi-detached cottages.

The most important occurrence in the life of the village in this period however was the passing of the Great Hormead Enclosure Act in 1823. The award of land and the map showing all the fields and houses and to whom they belonged, with the acreage, is a fascinating document. It is possible to see who owned nearly every house in the village and by working from this date, both backwards and forwards, I (Christine Jackson) have pieced together what is known now about the village houses.

All those who had held rights of pasturage, pannage etc. on the commons were compensated by small allotments of land being given to them. Most of the allotments were of 16 perches or 32 perches in extent and nearly all were situated in a strip of land in the south eastern corner of the huge field called Millfield. This stretched from the windmills down to the Hormead/hare Street road. A small lane bordered this field to the east and at the top of the lane was a solitary house (now called The Halfacre) owned by Colonel John Owen who lived in Hormead Cottage. Since he owned other land and property in the village and had to be compensated for rights in the common fields, he was allotted plots of 16 perches and 32 perches immediately south of the house he owned at the top of the lane. Adding all his land in that area together, it amounted to just over half an acre. This is perhaps the source of the name of the house and lane The Halfacre. Beneath his allotments of land there were four other small allotments to other owners being compensated for loss of rights in the commons. A further small plot of land was awarded, situated to the east of Box Tree Cottage, and later White Cottage was built on this allotment.

1800-1830

The population was increasing much faster now and new accommodation was needed for them. Apart from the new building which followed in the 1840s, some of the old yeomans' houses were divided into two, even three, workers' dwellings. An old barn behind Hall Cottage was also pressed into service as a home in the 1830s. This is now much extended and modernised and called Quiet Cottage.

The new era of building in brick is signalled in Hare Street by the substantial square Georgian house we know as Ashdown House, but which was built as a gentleman farmer's farmhouse to replace an older farmhouse. It was put up 1832/3 by the London merchant who owned Ashdown Farm, William Robert Palmer, but he died just as it was being completed. His widow lived there however and when she died the south chancel window was placed in Great Hormead church by their son to commemorate 'Robert and Martha Palmer'.

The main evidence of prosperity of the early Victorian years occurs in Hare Street. These years of good trade, heavy traffic from stage coaches playing between London, Cambridge and Norwich, private carriages and waggoners' carts laden with barley, brought much prosperity to the hamlet. The wheelwrights, blacksmiths and shopkeepers benefited and all the hard work and dust raising traffic created a great thirst which at one time it took five pubs in Hare Street to satisfy. To house the workers adequately old tenements were torn down and new houses built in brick, or at least partially in brick. Some of the bricks might well have come from the brickfield worked in the middle of Hare Street by the farmer of Ashdown Farm, Francis Caton Piper c1860-1890, or the brickfield on the road to Buntingford operative about the same period.

A whole row of brick-built cottages was started in 1838 at the northern end of the row containing Stores and Vine Cottages. The first to be built was Woodstock and to this was added a shop to the north so that the clothier who lived at Woodstock had only to open a door out of his house and walk into his shop. To Woodstock was added three small cottages c1851. These matters rested with the block of five, shop, Woodstock and Stores Cottages, until 1867. In that year William Wells had an old air of cottages pulled down and replaced with two small and one larger cottage attached to the previous row of Stores Cottages. The last three are called Vine Cottages and stand on a strip of land in the parish of Little Hormead. On the wall of Vine Cottage is a dated wall plate 'WW 1867'. It is thought that Thomas Thoroughgood, the local builder, put these cottages up and he lived for some time in the largest of the Vine Cottages. He also built a new farmhouse where there had not been any building before, Bradbury Farmhouse, which bears a wall plate 'BRADBURY 1859'.

The Mead Villas in Hare Street were built in red brick on the site of some old tumbledown houses by the village wheelwright, George Choldcroft, who lived at Shangles/Timbers. He had 'GC 1874' engraved on a smooth wall plaque placed in between the semi-detached cottages. The Clock House was built between 1841 and 1851 by people who owned the gravel pit behind it and extracted gravel for roadmaking.

Layston Cottages, built in the Layston parish section of Hare Street, were erected in 1870 as their wall plate 'LAYSTON COTTAGES 1870' plainly tells everyone passing by. A sketchbook of drawings by James Wilcox (who lived in Hormead Cottage) shows two sketches catalogued as 'Norris's house Aug 22 1857 a few days before it fell down' and 'Court behind Norris's house after that fell March 1858'. Norris owned the old Layston cottages (four of them at one time). Apparently his house fell down but not the other one on the site housing two other families. That too much have given rise to some concern c1870 for it was demolished and new brick cottages built instead. It was not unusual for houses just to fall down and two decades after this it became an even more familiar site.

A builder called William Little bought Bradbury House (now White House) in 1840 and rebuilt it to live in after his retirement in 1848. He enjoyed his new house until his death on Christmas Day in 1862. This house was renamed the White House by Mr Rice c1920 after he had repaired the damage soldiers had done there whilst billeted in it 1914-18.

German PoWs occupied the house and were locked in the tiny lodge as a punishment cell when they misbehaved.

Brick Cottage on the road from Hare Street to Buntingford was first in use as a home for the brickmakers working in the adjacent fields in the 1860s. This cottage (at one time split into two) was built for the brickmakers, the Howlett men, who lived and worked there until the turn of the century.

Two semi-detached cottages built on land known as Sparrow's End in Hare Street were for the Ashdown farm labourers. They were made of stud, plaster and tiles, between 12844 and 1876, while F C Piper owned the land. Since they were not built in brick, they were probably put up prior to 1862 when the brickfields were in full production.

In Little Hormead, Yew Tree Cottage as we now know it replaced an older house in 1861 and between 1865 and 1876 Stone Cottages were built on a tiny piece of land next to the Town Houses (now Thatched Cottages). William Benson Wyman had bought the Town Houses in 1865 and squeezed Stone Cottages in beside them. He was also the owner of Stonebury Farm whose farmhouse was rebuilt in 1848 while the Wymans were owners and lived there. The Stone Cottages would take their name from Stonebury, not their building material, for they were brick built.

In Great Hormead there was also much building activity in Victoria's reign. The first important house to receive a complete rebuilding was the Vicarage. This had been sublet by absent vicars to tenants, but when the Revd Charles Colson was presented to the living of Great Hormead, he determined to live in the parish. He discovered, however, that the old vicarage was in a very bad state and so he went to live at Owles until he could get it rebuilt. This cost £1,200 and over the Christmastide of 1845/6 it was completed and he moved in.

The little cottage tucked behind St Anne Cottage up Anderson's Lane, was built by the owner of St Anne's Cottage between 1841 and 1851. It is called Burton Garth now. White Cottage was built in the 1850s on a small piece of ground allotted in the 1823 Enclosure Award. This Victorian cottage is in the old Church lane, now Horseshoe lane. The small allotments made by the Enclosure Award Commissioners in 1823 to various people in Halfacre Lane area were also built on during the 1860s and 1870s. Cleveland Cottage at the bottom of the lane was built between 1867 and 1871 and Halfacre Cottage between 1867 and 1876. brick/Rose Cottage was built about the same time.

We are nearing the end of prosperity in the villages. The last two houses which belong to this period were built by a harness and collar maker who lived in Hare Street and his relations in Great Hormead, all keen Congregationalists. Whilst other trades were suffering from the decline in agriculture, Charles Wright seems to have kept his saddlery business healthy. It paid for Wedlands being built between 1864 and 1866 and he moved his shop to the new house and ran the post office from it too. The handsome square house was built of white bricks. His relations in Great Hormead, the Warrens of the shop (then in Three Horseshoes Cottage) and the Warrens' aunts, the Cannons, owned the shop and also a cottage between the shop and the Congregational Chapel. In 1880 the old cottage next to the chapel was pulled down, starting with lifting off the thatch and then pulling out the plaster and finally dismantling the old wooden beams and studs. A new house was built with white bricks, almost identical in style and frontage to Wedlands. The Warren ladies moved their shop into the new house and leased their old home, Three Horseshoes Cottage, first to Charles Brett and then later to their brother James Warren. That house (now called Holly House) was the last new house in Great Hormead for some years.

1880-1900

Apart from an involuntary piece of rebuilding in 1890 due to a fire, there was no new building in Hare Street during these years, for the disastrous agricultural slump was affecting everyone by then. The 1890 building – a thoroughly Victorian redbrick house, replaced the very old Three Jolly Butchers which was probably some four hundred years old when it caught fire and burnt to the ground. The Choldcrofts, acting as both

wheelwrights and publicans, owned it. When the need for wheelwrights passed with the coming of the seam engine, they concentrated on the pub alone.

There was one exception to this dearth of new building, and this occurred in Little Hormead. W T R Patten farmed Little Hormeadbury and built two brick farm cottages next to the church in 1899, and had his monogram and the date inscribed on the wall 'WTRO 1899'. This was contrary to the practise of all the other farmers at that time who were paying off men and allowing houses to become derelict. How did Mr Patten manage to thrive in these circumstances and even to have such faith in the future that he built two new cottages? The answer probably lies in the fact that the Patten family owned some of the new steam engines and were teaching men from miles around how to drive them.

The reason the building had to stop was that the last twenty years of the 19th century saw a long series of very wet summers and poor harvests. At the same time the effects of industrialisation of the area caught up with the village and the men left work on the land to go to work on the railways or to help build the northern suburbs of London. Many Hormead men assisted in the building of Tottenham houses.

The census figures for the number of inhabitants in the Hormeads tell the story of the decline in the villages' population. The figures for Great and Little Hormead include the houses in Hare Street within their parish boundaries. Hare Street houses in the Layston section of the hamlet, about twelve houses, are not included in the census figures here.

Census 1851	Gt Hormead	601	Census 1861	Gt Hormead	660
	Lt Hormead	87		Lt Hormead	103
	Total	688		Total	763
Census 1871	Gt Hormead	631	Census 1881	Gt Hormead	519
	Lt Hormead	143		Lt Hormead	127
	Total	774		Total	646
Census 1891	Gt Hormead	431			
	Lt Hormead	116			
	Total	547			

Over the two decades 1871-1891 over one quarter of the population had left the villages. As a result in the 1880s and 1890s the following farmhouses fell into disuse and became derelict:

Bears, Lilley End, Mutton hall, Parsonage Farm, Howlett's Farm (this was just past the Brickhouse further up the lane).

Even cottages were left standing empty until they collapsed and crumbled to dust. In Little Hormead the cottage in the grounds of Balons, by the roadside, suffered this fate.

In Great Hormead the following cottages were allowed to disintegrate:

Church End Cottage (in the grounds of the present house of that name), the Pest House, two at the top of Horseshoe Hill which had formerly housed two families each, one east of Maidshot, and one on the Three Tuns car park.

20th Century

In the first decade things improved very slightly, and newcomers to the villages built a few new houses. The family at Hormead Hall were backed financially by another business were able to have six new cottages built in Hall Lane. The Close was built in Hare Street for Miss Lyall the friend (and critic of the novels) of Hugh Benson of Hare Street House. Also in Hare Street, Rosemary/Melgum were rebuilt on the site (or close to it) of some earlier cottages between 1910 and 1919. In 1908/9 Rosebank was built on the site of the tumbled down houses formerly owned by the Dew family at the top of Horseshoe Hill. The shape of the road was much altered and widened at the top of the hill as a result of the old houses having been demolished.

In between the wars a rash of bungalows broke out in Hare Street – in order of building they were: Upstones c1923 by a field of that name; Bradbury Field Bungalow c1924; Hillcrest between 1924 and 1929; Lilac Cottage and North End Bungalow c1927, both as retirement homes for Miss Lyall's servants; Lamorna in 1931 (and then the factory alongside); and Greatstones in 1937. East View was built by the widow of Fred Moule 1919 for £90 in a cottage style as a house, not a bungalow, and there were two more houses – Highfields, wood-clad and built c1930, and The Garage built by Archibald Bentley in timber and plaster with an iron roof and dated on the wall 'AB 1931'. The County Council built on Fays Land, some pasture at the southern end of Hare Street and so the eighteen Fayland Cottages appeared between Elm Cottage and the now hundred year's old New Cottages.

In Great Hormead the Council built the Jubilee Cottages, twelve of them to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of George V and Queen Mary. Alfred Wick built his black and white bungalow of timber and infill in the 1920s.

The Council also built six cottages for Little Hormead residents in 1921, now called Park Cottages. Bull's Farmhouse was abandoned in favour of a new bungalow in 1933 and part of the Glebe Barn was converted into a house c1926. Altogether over fifty new homes had been built this century before the second world war.

To offset these gains, some older houses had been pulled down: one opposite Thatched Cottage on the Brent Pelham Road (c1826-1930); one opposite the village hall demolished c1935 (built c1850); the Almshouses east of the Old Stores in Great Hormead (c1741-1920s) and the nearby 'Long Mary's'; the cottage in the grounds of Church End Cottage by Pest House lane, pulled down c1925; and in Hare Street two old cottages behind Oak Cottage, demolished in 1935 when the inhabitants removed to Fayland Cottages.

1945-1983

After the second world war the pattern of home ownership changed. Far fewer houses were rented, whilst many dilapidated old houses in urgent need of repair were bought by new people coming into the villages, repaired and restored, and greatly altered inside. The smaller cottages were extended and though some have been sensitively treated, others have been modernised with little regard for historical records and knowledge as to how and when the original building was erected. These alterations, and the destruction of older elements in these cottages, make it impossible now to date the cottages from evidence derived from original materials and structures.

Since 1945 there have been some fifty more new houses and bungalows and flats built in Great Hormead (including 21 new houses and 30 houses and flats in Willow Close) and the Congregational Chapel has been converted into a house.

Little Hormead has acquired ten new homes and the rebuilding of Balons in 1963 after a fire had destroyed one of the oldest buildings in the village.

Hare Street has twenty new houses and bungalows, all built after 1950. These may be picked out of the following list of houses which are given alphabetically by village, with the dates of building. These dates are as accurate as current information allows, and I should be pleased to be shown any document which could help to date the houses more precisely, or to be told of any corrections which need to be made. The history of each house and its owners and occupiers will be deposited during the course of 1984 at County Hall, Hertford, in the Record office and Local Studies Library. Anyone wishing to see them in future may ask the Archivist and Local History Librarian.

C. E. Jackson
December 1983

HOUSES IN GREAT HORMEAD, LITTLE HORMEAD AND HARE STREET

UPDATED JUNE 2009 (by Heather Moore)

HOUSES IN GREAT HORMEAD

Almshouses see Town House

Bakers Cottage Elizabethan? Named after the Baker family there c1840-1962

Bears Farm named after James Bere, owner 1524, fell into disuse c1871-81

Bennet's Castle House c1969 on site of earlier cottages (now named Saffron House)

The Bungalow (Black and White Bungalow) 1920s (demolished circa 1980s now called New Cottage)

Box Tree Cottage Elizabethan?

Brick Cottage see Rose Cottage

Brickhouse 1560s

Brickhouse Farm 1940s

Brickhouse Farm bungalow 1982/3 (now called Hornbeam Springs)

The Bungalow (between Westons and Three Horseshoes pub) c1964 (demolished circa 2000) (new house presently un-named (2009))

Burton Garth 1841-51

Bury Farmhouse early 17thC formerly The Tithe Barn, Hormeadbury Farm 1812

Bury Farm Cottage pre-1823

Bury Lodge early 19thC

Carter's Field converted from barn end of 18thC

Chapman's Farm now Little Meadow C1500, new3 front 18thC

The Chapel formerly Congregational Chapel built 1890 on site of earlier chapel built 1810

Church End Pest House Lane corner built before 1746 demolished 1925

Church End Cottage 16thC?

Cleveland Cottage between 1867 and 1871

Coniston 1958 - Bungalow (demolished circa 2000) and rebuilt as house

Cosy Cottage pre-1746 but 18thC

The Cottage see Hormead Cottage

Craven House c1953

Dane End Farm 1580-1620 with Queen Anne brick front and extension at the back (1702-14)

Dane House 17thC – named by Mrs Oyler in 1930s

Dellow's Cottage Elizabethan?

The Elms see Mill House

Elmside bungalow 1965

Embers see Mill Cottage

Field End 1969 until 1981 when it became The Vicarage

The Firs - Bungalow c1965 – (demolished 2007 – and now rebuilt as house)

Gelders 1950s

Great Hormead Dane 16thC? – named by Mrs Oyler in 1930s

Halfacre 17thC?

Half Acre Cottage 1867-1876

Hall Cottages 1a and 1b – built 2007

Hall Cottages 1-6 c1912

Hall Cottages 7-8 c1950

Hall House 16thC – Wheler family c1545 – named by Mrs Oyler in 1930s

Hall House Cottage 16thC separated from hall House ownership c1780 – named by Mrs Oyler in 1930s

Harvest Mead 1971

High Trees 1966

Hillside bungalow c1970 on Three Horseshoes site

Holly House 1880 on site of old thatched cottage

Home Cottage late 16thC early 17thC plus cottage in grounds 1850s-1935

Homeside earliest reference owned by Mary Benson who married 1682

Hormead Bury early part Elizabethan new part c1812

Hormead Cottage 17thC

Hormead Hall late 16thC on site of earlier house. Separate manor by 1303

Hormead Parsonage Farm 16thC to 1880s, unoccupied 1890, burned down 1920s

Howlett's Hall Wheler family owned 1740 lived in it to 1861, derelict 1890s

Jubilee Cottages 1-12 1935

Judds West wing C1470-1530, other part late 16thC, renovated 1724.
 Andrew Judd owned 1544. 19thC referred to in deeds at Dane
 End Farm and Dane Farm Estate. Later Judd occupiers – William Judd died 1808, wife
 Ann Judd died 1816
 Judds Farm Barn – farm buildings which fell into dilapidation and were demolished in
 1991.
 Lilley End Farm (also Little End in an Elizabethan rental). uninhabited 1890s
 Little Meadow so named 1949 - previously Chapman's Farm
 Lombard's Piece see Vicarage
 Long Mary's behind Old Stores built post 1823 demolished 1930s
 Maidshot Cottage owned by Judd's Farm owners 1820, not on estate plan 1815.
 Early house burnt and new house built onto old 1950s –
 +cottage east of Maidshot built pre-1716 fell into ruins 1881
 Mantree Bungalow built on Three Horseshoes site c1970
 Milburns c1500 named after Milbourne family, occupiers 19thC
 Mill Cottage with Embers was the miller's house. Embers built mid 18thC extended late
 18thC. Split into two 1922.
 Mill House built 1960 and named The Elms. Renamed 1980 as close to site of windmills
 Muster bungalow on site of Three Horseshoes c1970
 Mutton hall formerly Margerie Smiths, built pre-1586 disused after 1884
 Old Rectory late 16thC formerly Tudor Cottage c1944-54 named Old Rectory 1954
 Old Stores once the village stores and post office until 1970s. Western part was shop
 built 1902, eastern part the house built 18thC
 Parsonage Farm earliest reference 1581. Burnt down 1920s but uninhabited
 since c1890
 Pegrams Farm Cottage empty 1746 land assimilated into Lilley End Farm 1812. Older
 name Pickerings, near Luttes, owned by Wheler family
 Pest House (in Sparksfield) first mentioned during plague year 1603 derelict 1870s
 Quiet Cottage the Hall House barn 16th – 17thC converted to house 1830s
 Quin House c1964 (Quin Rise)
 Raffles, formerly Judds Farm Barns – 1992 – renamed Judds Farm Barn, then renamed
 Briarswood
 Rosebank 1908-9 built on site of old cottages derelict 1890s. Empty land 1897
 Rose Cottage c1870
 St Anne Cottage late 17thC so named 1950
 Schoolhouse 1846-70 in school itself. After 1870 rooms used as classrooms
 Shambles 17thC traced in documents 1746
 Snow White Cottage 17th C (architect's opinion). First record in documents 1753
 Sparkesfield After John Sperke 1296, Sparkesfield in 1626 rental
 Sparkesfield Cottage 18thC
 Springfield c1971
 Stonelands built between 1959-1963. Named after field behind.
 Swedish Houses i.e. wooden houses built 1947 in Willow Close
 Sworder's Close originally Sawyer's Close from Thomas Sawyer's Close adjoining c1698
 Tara 1952/6 on site of old bungalow dating from 1870s – now renamed Hartley
 Thatched Cottage 17thC
 +cottage opposite side of road built of 'clay bolts and straw' c1826 derelict 1930s
 Three Horseshoes earliest ref 1746 clapboard used mid 18thC demolished 1970
 Three Horseshoes Cottage 16thC in documents when called Coppland
 Architecturally second half of 17thC. Now renamed Bay House
 Three Tuns 16th – 17thC. Cottage bought 1726 by Wm Wigg, inn C1736
 + cottage on car park c1800-1890
 Town Houses first mentioned in parish registers 1741 pulled down 1920s
 Upper Downs bungalow on Three Horseshoes site c1970 name of field behind
 Vicarage since 1981 see Field End; prior to 1981 built 1845/6 and now called Lombard's
 Piece from field behind
 Westons old hall house early 16thC Westons owned it 1815-1910, lived there 1815-22
 Westons barn – being built 2009
 White Cottage between 1823 and 1876
 Willow Close named after two parish councillors Mr Wilson and Mr Low
 1-12 concrete rendered houses 1952; 13-18 woodclad houses
 1947; 19-30 brick flats 1971

Yeznaby c1971

HOUSES IN HARE STREET

Amberley bungalow 1978

Ashdown Cottage c1827-1832

Ashdown House 1832-3

Bakery 1748, refaced 1805

The Beehive c1819 (first classed Beehive 1871 Census. Beerhouse c1850)

Beehive Cottage was 'old in 1666' demolished 1966

Bell 16thC

Bell House Yard 3 bungalows built 1976

Bradbury Farm 1859

Bradbury Field bungalow c1924

Bradbury House c1600 rebuilt c1848. Renamed White House 1920

+ cottage south of Bradbury House pre 1746-` 890s

+ lodge house c1898 built on site of cottage above

Brickfields Cottage 1860 or late 1850s

Clock House between 1841 and 1851

The Close 1909

East Bank bungalow 1978

East View 1918-19

Elm Cottage last quarter 18thC

Epping Bungalow 1967 adjacent to site of burnt down cottage

Fayland Cottages 18 council houses built 1935 so named c1955 from land on which they were built

The Garage 1931

Gardener's Cottage between 1806 and 1823 by owner of Hare Street House

Girton House 15th -16thC refaced late 18thC

Greatstones bungalow 1937 converted into house 1979

Hare Street Cottage 16thC called Cockes 1608-1805, Redhouse Farm c1818, Hare Street Cottage 1910

Hare Street House 17thC i.e. late Tudor, refaced 1780s

+ tar-boarded house by road in grounds of Hare Street House, demolished 1966

+ Hare Street House flat c1962

Heatherdown c1978

Highfields c1930 built on part of field of that name

High View bungalow 1958

Hillcrest bungalow built between 1924 and 1929

Hill View c1818

Japonica Cottage 1755-6

Kemps Close bungalow 1959 on field of that name. There was a Kemp House on this site, destroyed between 1700 and 1782

Kemps Cottage c1640

Kenton House c1952

Lamorna bungalow 1931

Layston Cottages 1870 on site of earlier cottages

Layston House c1820

Leveret Cottage Queen Anne 1702-09

The Leys 1972-3 partially on site of 2 tar-boarded cottages destroyed by fire 1959 (ex-army huts erected after World War I, one called Treeside)

Lilac Cottage bungalow c1927

Mead Villas 2 semi-detached cottages 1874 on site of earlier cottages

Melgum see Rosemary/Melgum

Mill View between 1932 and 1939

Mill View Lodge 1972-3 partially on site of 2 tar-boarded cottages see The Leys

Moorfields 8; townhouses c1970 site of earlier house late 18thC/early 19thC

Mount Cottage last half of 17thC

New Cottages 4 in a row between 1804 and 1823; 1+2 amalgamated 1980, another built on 1982

'Next the Bakery' c1818

North End bungalow c1927

Nurses House (Bell Hill) 1967

Oak Cottage between 1480-1520

+2 cottages behind Oak Cottage, pre-1823 demolished 1935

Old Stores Cottage built as a shop between 1848 and 1856, as a shop to 1967, converted into house 1967

Old Swan Cottage c1500 (before rather than after). An inn between c1600-1909

Police House (Bell Hill) 1967-8 adjacent to earlier police house built pre-1823 demolished 1967

Quinta c1953-8

Rosemary/Melgum between 1910-1919 adjacent to site of earlier cottages

Roseneath bungalow c1925-1976-7

Shangles/Timbers built as one house 16th -17thC

Sparrows End or Cottage between 1844 and 1876

Stores Cottages 3 built onto Woodstock 1856

Three Jolly Butchers 1890. Earlier 16thC Dogges Head in the Potte renamed by Abigail Smith 1786 burnt down 1890

Timbers see Shangles/Timbers

Upstones c1923

Vine Cottages 3 built 1867 on site of earlier cottages

The Warren between 1806 and 1823

Wayside Cottage 17thC took name from Wayside Garage late 1940s

Wayside House 1809 took name from Wayside Garage late 1940s

Wedlands/Well House between 1864 and 1866 called Wedlands, renamed Well House c1980

White House and Lodge see Bradbury House and Lodge

Woodstock C1838

Planned 1983 for building 1984 4 pensioner's bungalows on Fayland allotments

HOUSES IN LITTLE HORMEAD

Balons Walter Balun 1248 17th C