

EASTLING

‘A Hamlet of Delight’ on the North Downs’



A Brief History of the Village

Commenced by the late Dorothy Neal

and completed by

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EASTLING – A VILLAGE ON THE NORTH DOWNS

A Guide and History



Plate 1. Eastling Street today

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‘A Hamlet of Delight’ on the North Downs’

So wrote Arthur Mee in 1936, describing the village as:

“every year at the beginning of May the shingled spire of the church standing like a ship’s mast rising from a sea of foam. All around are cherry trees”.

BOUNDS OF THE PARISH OF EASTLING

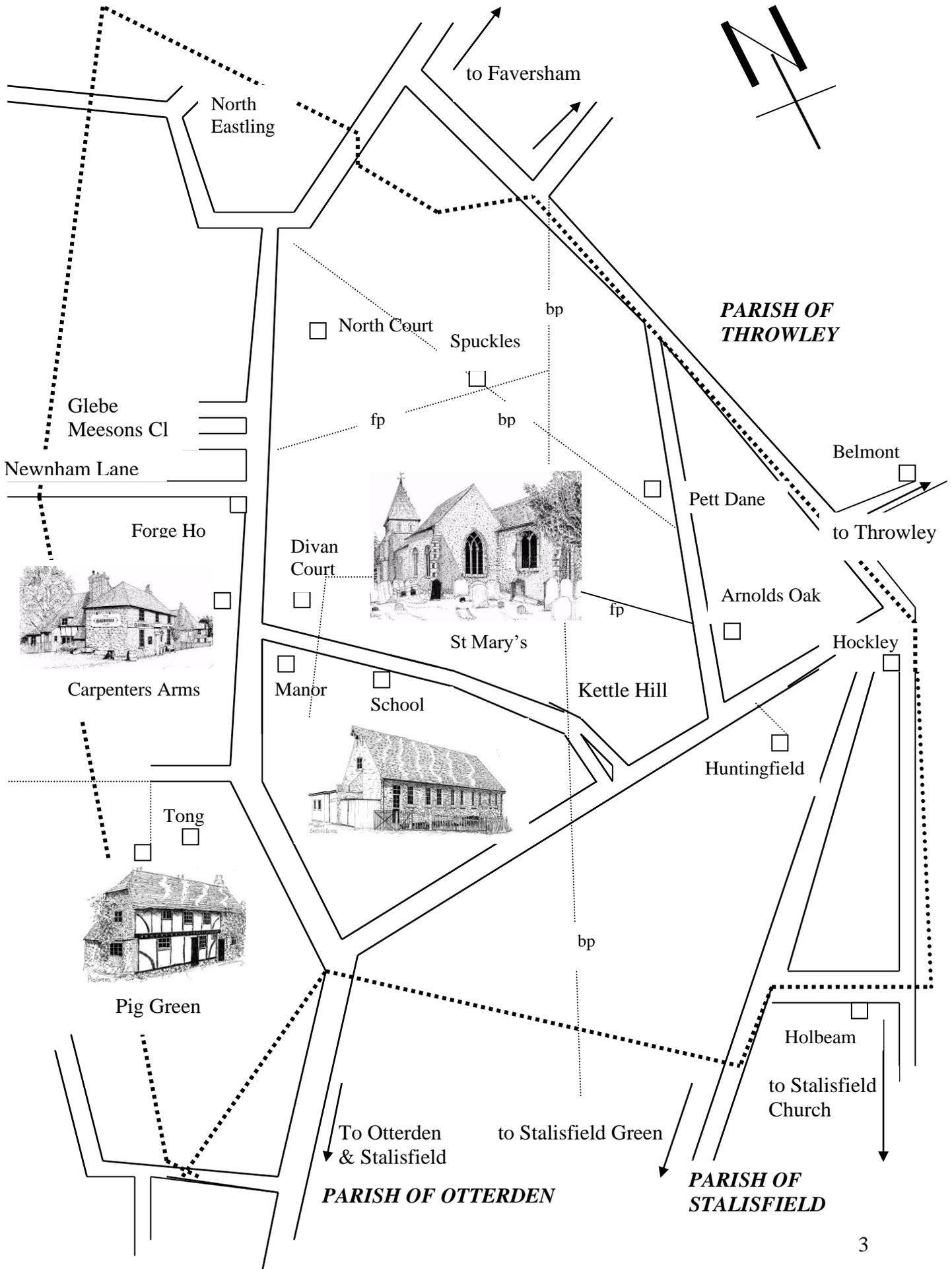




Plate 3. The Eastling Village Sign designed by John Darlington

Introduction

Eastling is a small village on the North Downs of Kent which sits on a plateau at an elevation of between 300 and 350 feet, falling away to the east and west into deep valleys. It comprises just under 100 dwellings and has a population of less than 400 persons. The parish extends to just under 2,000 acres. It has 28 listed buildings, several of them of timber construction, some being of considerable antiquity. Its geology is chalk on which sits some sand.

The suffix 'ling' indicates that Eastling was a 5th century Jutish settlement. Its origins, however, are much earlier. In the 1930's a collection of Neolithic tools was discovered in a field to the east of the church. Sadly these artefacts have been lost, as they were placed in the Maidstone Museum and destroyed by war-time bombing. In the valley bottom to the south-east of the church runs an ancient trackway which connected Faversham with the Downland ridge. Adjacent to this trackway one finds occasional evidence of early occupation, some flint tools and small mounds of oyster shells – suggesting that travellers made camp along the route to consume their fare of oysters, for which Faversham has been noted since earliest times.

The early medieval village may well have been laid out in the form of a Saxon square with the church in the centre. Evidence for this comes from the present layout of the village which is substantially unchanged. The 'square is bounded by only two buildings to the north (although deposits of flint rubble suggest other buildings once existed); the village Street to the west, which contains some 14th century buildings; and Kettle Hill Road to the south with its 13th century Manor House, Divan Court, and two medieval cottages. The south-east side is bounded by woodland, beyond which are the former manors of Arnold's Oak (where an oak sapling grew up through a

mantrap, now high up in the tree), and Huntingfield. To the north is North Eastling, and to the south-west the 15th century Tong House, and a part 13th century cottage at Pig Green..



Plate 4. John Darlington at Pig Green Cottage c. 1972

* * * *

Eastling in Domesday

The Domesday Book makes four mentions of Eastling as it existed in 1086 (from Hasted's 1797 translation):

North Eastling. *“Herbert held of the Bishop of Baieux Nordeslinge. The arable land is one carucate. It was taxed at half a sulung. There two borderers pay two shillings. In the time of King Edward the Confessor, and afterwards, it was worth twenty shillings, now twenty-five shillings. Turgod held it in the time of Edward the Confessor”*.¹ After which it continued in the hands of the Crown until the time of King Richard III.

Huntingfield. *“Roger, son of Anschitil, held of the Bishop Eslinges. It was taxed at one sulung. The arable land is one carucate. There is demanse... and one borderer has half a carucate. There is a church, and one mill of ten shillings, and two acres of meadow. In the time of King Edward the Confessor it was worth sixty shillings, and afterwards twenty shillings, now forty shillings. Unlot held it of King Edward, and could go where he pleased with his land”*.²

Diven. *“Fulbert held of the Bishop, Eslinges. It was taxed at five sulungs, in the time of King Edward the Confessor, and now for two, and so it did after*

¹ The 1983 “Domesday Book, Kent” translates borders as smallholders, Thurgod as Thorgot, and carucate for plough.

² *ibid*. Anschitil is translated as Ansketel and Unlot as Wulfnoth.

the Bishop gave the manor to Hugh, son of Fulbert. The arable land is six carucates. In demanse there are two carucates, and thirty villains having three carucates. There is a church, and 28 servants (slaves), and one mill of ten shillings. Wood for the pannage of 30 hogs. In the time of King Edward the Confessor it was worth ten pounds, and when he received it six pounds, now four pounds. Sired held it of King Edward”.

Arnolton (from the 1983 edition).³ *“It answers for 1 sulung. Land for 3 ploughs. In lordship 1. 8 villagers with 2½ ploughs. 2 salt-houses in the City of Canterbury 1 dwelling at 21d. Value before 1066 £4; later 40s; now 100s. Burgnoth held this manor from King Edward. Of this manor Ranulf holds 10 acres which lie near the city and paid 42s before 1066”.*

Hasted adds confusion to the Domesday account of the village stating “That part of the above-mentioned estates, called in Domesday Nordeslinge, was afterwards known by the name of THE MANOR OF NORTH EASTLING, alias NORTH COURT”... from the family name of Esling, one of whom, Ralph de Esling,... died anno 1297”.⁴

The said Herbert (son of Ivo) of North Eastling also held Gravesend, Hougham, land at Temple Ewell and a mill at Dover. One reasons he was generally unpopular, having given the Bishop a mark of gold to acquire a mill from St Martin’s Priory, against the Priory’s will, and by causing great distress to the King and shipowners of Dover by his mill. He erected at the entrance to Dover harbour which, by its position caused “great disturbance to the sea” and “which wrecked almost all ships”. Fulbert also held Luddenham, Barham and Chilham, while Roger held Hastingleigh.

From these brief descriptions emerges a basic portrait of Eastling as it existed 20 years after the Norman Conquest. The Saxon theigns who held land before the Conquest in the time of Edward the Confessor have now been dispossessed by William, who somewhat generously gave Kent to his half brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who parcelled it out to those Normans who would owe him favours.

From the Domesday account Eastling appears to be a place of some importance, having no less than four manors, two churches, two mills, 30 pigs, land for 20 ploughs, a meadow, and a total of 41 villagers (including three smallholders) and 28 slaves, to which one presumably adds a numbers of what were known as serfs. The manors are easily identifiable as they exist today in altered form, North Eastling (alias North Court), Arnolton (now known as Arnold’s Oak), Divan Court, and at Huntingfield where in addition a church is said to have existed.

Interestingly section D18 of the Domesday Book included Arnolton as among the manors where the King held the penalties of house-breaking, breach of the peace, and highway robbery – as if ever such things went on in Eastling.

* * * *

³ Hasted excludes the Domesday entry for Arnolton. See his subsequent comments.

⁴ Today North Eastling and North Court exist as separate properties ¾ mile apart from each other. Is Hasted suggesting the Domesday manor was North Eastling itself and that North Court later became a manor?

The Medieval Village

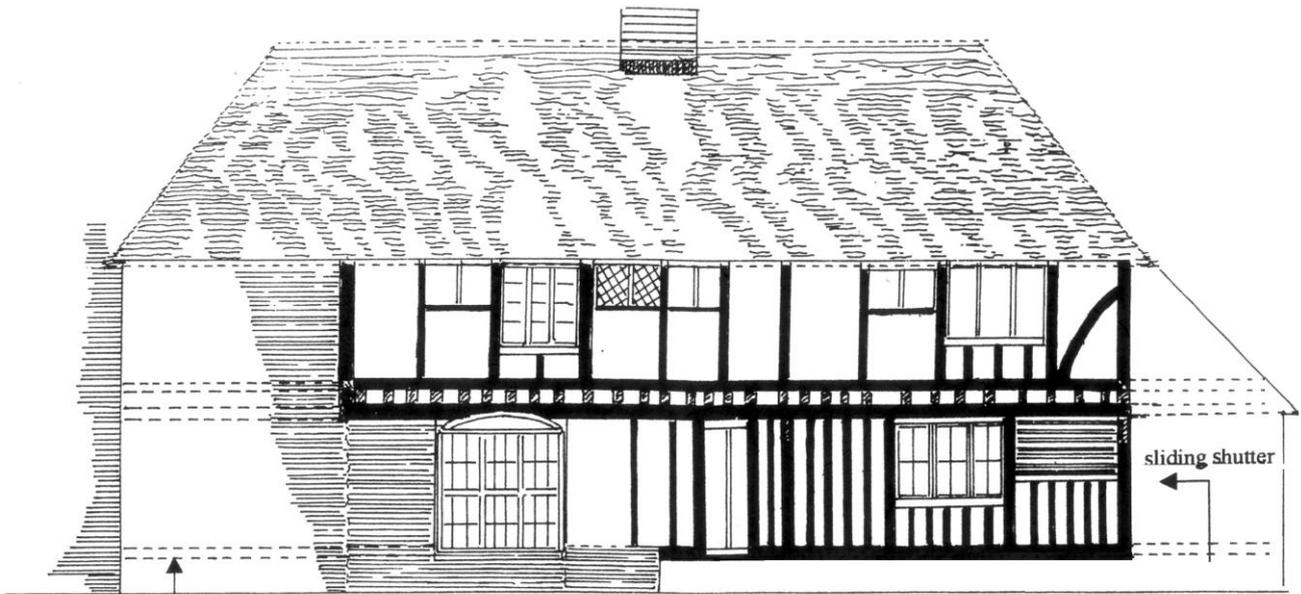
The form of the medieval village remains largely intact, the oldest portion being around the junction with Kettle Hill Road with its group of 13th/14th century buildings, of which Eastling Manor can be reasonably dated to 1275.



Plate 5. Eastling Manor around 1900 (Photograph believed to be by Croseur).

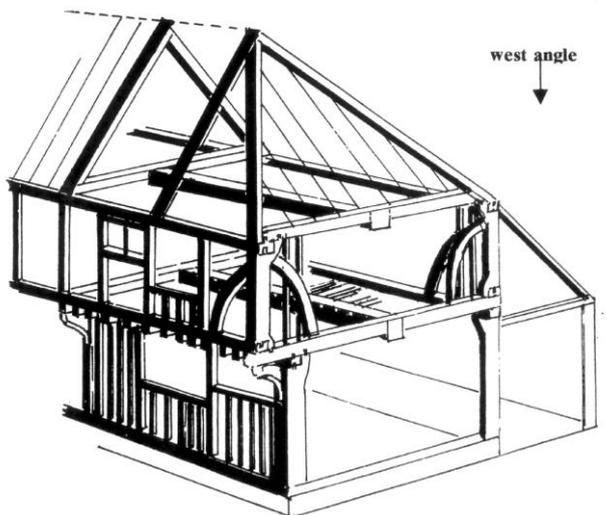
This was an ecclesiastical manor formerly in the ownership of St Gregory's Priory at Canterbury. Following the Dissolution it passed into the hands of the Crown and is said to have been exchanged for land at Dover and subsequently sold. In later documents it is referred to variously as "Gregories" or "Parmenters".

Eastling Manor House is described in the "Gazette of Medieval Houses in Kent" as an aisled hall. Its construction took the form of an open scissors-truss roof of which some passing braces remain exposed. In around 1320 a cross-wing was added, while the present close-studded timbered front elevation dates from the late 15th century. The only other buildings of this period are Tong Cottage at Pig Green, which has been dated to 1300, Divan Court (also built as an aisled hall) of the late 14th century. Box Cottage appears to date from this period, with North Eastling, North Court, Tong House, 2-4 The Street, Plantation House, Porch House, the Carpenter Arms, Arnold's Oak, and Pett Dane slightly later.



Front elevation

Plate 6. Drawings illustrating the construction of Arnold's Oak



Surveyed & drawn by R.H.Perks

Plate 7. Below left: Tong House in 1966. Photo Dorothy Neal.

Plate 8. Below right: North Court rear elevation





Plate 9. Left: Pett Dane (c.1500) abandoned and derelict, but now undergoing works.

Plate 10. Right: Spuckles
The pronounced gablet may indicate medieval origins.



Plate 11. Below: Box Cottage early 14th century





Kettle Hill

Plate 12. Above: The house at the bottom of Kettle Hill no longer remains. The roofs of Kettle Hill Cottages are just visible far right.

Plate 13. Left: Pinks Farm in the 1920's

Plate 14. Below: Looking up from Pinks to Rose Cottage.





Plate 15. Above: Originally a single timber-framed building Number 2 is clad in brickwork, and Numbers 3 & 4 in hanging mathematical tiles

Plate 16. Below: The Carpenters Arms.



Antiquity

It is common that the most ancient thing in a village is the church, but whereas the oldest part of Eastling church dates from c.800AD the yew tree in front the church porch is older. This tree has been dated by David Bellamy to be 2,000 years old. Its magnificent girth is hollow inside. Generations of children have crawled into the hole and climbed out part way up. Some years ago there was a Winnie-the-Pooh moment with a visiting school when one of the teachers got stuck in the tree with just her head and shoulders poking out of the hole. She was told she might have to stay there until she got thinner. (If you haven't read Winnie-the-Pooh you shouldn't be reading this.)



Plates 17a & b. The Great Yew Tree standing before the porch of St Mary

* * * *

The Saxon Church

Seemingly of the late 12th century investigation reveals the church's Saxon origins. The western part of the nave is typical Saxon having extremely high walls that are absolutely straight, and a tall round-headed west doorcase. The Saxon tower base abuts the south-west angle of the nave. When the light is just right high up above the west window there is a faint circle of irregularity suggesting it might be a blocked-off circular window opening. Also, ashlar ragstone blocks reused on the buttressing exhibit traces of Romanesque carving.



Plate 18. Romanesque carving

From recent archaeological investigation in the tower base of St Mary's church the suggestion is that the lower levels of flintwork probably date from around 800. In its original form the church may have been a single-cell structure occupying either what is now the tower, or the chancel. By the time of Domesday an Anglo-Saxon church was in existence comprising tower, nave and probably chancel. A peculiarity of the present church is that the tower and chancel are out of alignment with the nave by a noticeable degree. The tower may have been a defence structure during the Viking raids, as from its top it afforded a view over the mouth of the East Swale.

In the late 12th century Eastling St Mary became 'Normanised' with the addition of a round-headed Norman west door in chalk, backed on to the original high Saxon opening, visible on the inside. Thereafter the chancel was extended and north and south aisles were added.

* * * *

Medieval Village Accounts

In 1304 Sir Fulke de Peyforer, son-in-law of Ralph de Eslinge, obtained a grant of a weekly market to be held at Eastling on Fridays, together with an annual fair⁵ to be held on the feast of the exaltation of the Holy Cross at Eastling (Hasted volume 6, page 425).

From time to time the manors of Eastling reverted to the King. In 1565 they passed to Martin James who was prothonotary of the court of chancery. His importance is reflected in the fine monument erected to him in Eastling church following his death in 1592. A standing wall monument with Purbeck marble shafts it depicts in alabaster the kneeling figures of Martin James, and behind him his two sons, his wife, and behind her their two daughters. Sadly the monument was defaced when Puritan vandals cut off their hands.

⁵ "Owen's New Book of Fairs" 1834, says Eastling's Fair was held on 14th September. The fair was abolished in 1878.

Edward Hasted had a particular interest in Eastling as on the death of his father in 1740 he inherited the Manor of Huntingfield. Writing about Huntingfield (volume 6, page 431) he notes:

“The foundations of flint and stone, which have continually been dug up near this house, shew it to have been formerly much larger than it is at present. There was once a chapel and a mill belonging to it, the fields where they stood still known by the name of chapel-field and mill-field which answers the description of this estate given in Domesday”.

Hasted kept Huntingfield until 1787, which he at length alienated to John Montresor of Belmont.⁶

Hasted (Folio page 752) described Diven (as written) “*so corruptly called for Dive-court, its more ancient and proper name*”, named in honour of John Dive who held the manor in the reign of Henry III. “*In the reign of K. Henry III John Dive held this estate... in the 20th year of K. Edward III, at the making of the Black Prince a Knight, Andrew Dive paid aid for it, as half a knight’s fee, in Easling, held of William de Wilton, as of the barony of Chilham.*”

The estate passed into possession of Sir James Fines, later under Henry VI he was created Lord Say and Sele and made Lord Treasurer of England. Becoming unpopular, he was seized in a raid by Jack Cade and his followers and beheaded. By the late 16th century this manor included lands in Whitstable, Reculver, Sheldwich and Ulcombe; two-thirds of the estate being alienated to Martin James whose memorial is in the church. The estate later passed by marriage into the hands of Lord Howard of Effingham, whose heir and brother was created Earl of Effingham in 1731. In 1762 the estate came into the hands of a Mr Charles Chapman of Faversham who devised it in his will to the Leese family who continued to hold it into the 1900’s.

The final manor, Arnolton, received its name from Arnold de Bononia during the reign of Edward III. On the death of Mr. William Wickens (son of the Rector of Eastling, who held the manor) his widow parcelled out two parts of the estate. In relation to this Hasted is dismissive (Folio page 757):

“Since which it has become more inconsiderable, by the two parts last mentioned having been parcelled out, so that now it is sunk into that obscurity, as hardly to be worthy of any further mention of it”.

As a result, Arnolton lost its status as a manor.

Medieval documents chart the various spelling of the name of Eastling. The village’s name in Domesday was Eslinges. In 1330 it is mentioned as Eselyngg, fifteen years later as Eselyng, in the mid-16th century as Yessyng, by 1603 as Gastlinge, and in 1606 as Isling.

Medieval Buildings of Eastling

North Eastling Farmhouse (Grade ii)

(1430-90). Pearson says “Much altered 4-bay house” with crown post roof and early 16th century smoke bay”.

⁶ Means ‘Transferred the property to’.

Spuckles (Grade ii)

Not inspected. Substantial gablet south end suggests late medieval or early post-medieval construction.

North Court Farmhouse (Grade ii)

(1450-90). Pearson says "Wealden House with formerly 2-bay open hall". Crown-post roof".

2,3, & 4 The Street (Grade ii)

(1480-1520). Pearson says "Formerly open 2-Bay open hall". Crown-post roof."

Porch House (1480) (Grade ii)

Not investigated.

Plantation House (Grade ii)

(1480-1520). Pearson says "End-jetty house with formerly open 2-bay hall; both ends originally jettied". Crown-post roof. However, may be earlier as when extensive water damage caused by burst pipes revealed exposed timbers indicating construction of open hall."⁷

Carpenters Arms (Grade ii)

(1480-1520). Pearson says "Partial remains of house with formerly open hall. Crown-strut roof."

Tong House (Grade ii)

(1490-1520). Pearson says "Large double Wealden house with formerly open 2-bay hall... both ends formerly jettied at end as well as front".

Pig Green

(1300-40). Pearson calls this Tong Cottage (although her map reference, page 45, is that of Pig Green). Says that a part of an aisled building remains at the rear, with part of an arcade extending in both directions with reversed assembly. The then tenant, John Darlington, pointed out early features, possibly part of an arcade with low tie beam suggesting it may have been an agricultural building.

Newhouse Farmhouse (Grade ii)

Earliest part is 15th century with 18th century additions.

Divan Court (Grade ii)

(1380-1400). Pearson says "much altered medieval cross wing and fragmentary remains of an aisled hall". Crown-post roof."

Eastling Manor (Grade ii*)

(1280-1320) according to Pearson (page 45). An aisled hall, remains of passing braces with one carved capital exist. Evidence of contemporary cross-passage. New north-east timbered front added c.1500. Altered in Jacobean period. Hasted says (Folio page 757:

⁷ Inspection by Hugh Perks at time of damage.

“...a large well-timbered house, called Gregories, formerly of some account, being rebuilt in 1616. It was afterwards possessed by Mr Hoskins, whose hers disagreeing, it was sold in Chancery to Mr Parmenter, many years a Clerk of the Cheque at Chatham..... Mr Samuel Parmenter being the present owner of it.”

Manor Cottage (Grade ii)

Georgian-style house with Georgian roof extending above original. Stumps of slightly curved frames with rafters suggest much earlier. Possibly originally as cruck-framed.

Box Cottage (Grade ii*)

Recent remedial works reveal the staircase and stack was added c.1600 cutting into original framing. Partly built of oak and hedgerow timbers, may date to early 14th century.

Huntingfield (Grade ii)

Former manor. Substantially altered, earliest surviving parts late 15th century or early 16th century. The rebuilding of Huntingfield may date from the time of Martin James.

Arnold's Oak (formerly Arnolton) (Grade ii)

A former Domesday Manor. The southern two bays of the house are jettied to the west in continuous timber framing. Works carried out to the property in the 1990's revealed two out of every three frames to be 'plants', thus taking this section back to the earlier part of the 14th century. Against the south-west angle works revealed a sliding shutter window, indicating the present south wall was a later addition, and that in the 15th century a bay existed to the south (now a lean to). The works also revealed two square windows of about 1500, still with their original glass intact. Staircase extension added to the east side around 1600.⁸

Pett Dane(Grade II)

The original portion of this building is in timber frame, jettied to the side and dated to around 1500. Uninhabited for a while it was recently saved from demolition by being spot listed.

The Church (Grade ii*)

The church of St Mary is built of flint, dug from dene holes or quarries, rather than from the poorer quality surface flint. The earliest portion is the base of the south-west tower, possibly built as a watch tower or defensive location during the times of the Danish invaders, when the "host" often wintered on Sheppey. The nave and the western part of the Chancel are judged to date from the Anglo-Saxon period. The remainder of the Tower and the central part of the Chancel are Norman, and the aisles were built in the 13th century.⁹ The Chancel was extended eastwards in the early 14th century, and the piscina and sedilia were moved from their former positions in the earlier part of the Chancel. The St Katherine Chapel was added to the south-east corner during the mid 14th century.

⁸ From a survey by Hugh Perks. The property is not mentioned by Sarah Pearson.

⁹ The present north aisle dates from 1855 and may not represent its form as in the 13th century.

In 1855, Hussey substantially re-built the Nave, north aisle and the south arcade, added the west porch and completely re-roofed the nave, thus destroying any medieval roof features. With typical candour Pevsner describes the church as "grossly over-restored by R.C. Hussey (as usual)" ("Buildings of England, North East and East Kent", page 293).

What is interesting about the layout of the church is that the nave is noticeably out of alignment with the tower and the chancel. This might suggest that the tower and western part of the chancel were part of an earlier church, and that the nave was built at a later date, but still within the Saxon (Anglo-Saxon) period. Evidence for this is shown in the height of the nave and its uprightness, the width of the arcade walls are only fractionally above two feet in thickness (features common in Saxon, but not Norman churches). The wall thickness cannot be attributed to Hussey's rebuilding as the eastern respond of the south aisle is 13th century.

Norman features are few. The principal one being the west doorcase, carved in chalk block, and taking the form of a keeled roll around the arch, nailhead, with simplified on the shaft capitals and shaft rings, together with a billet-moulded hood. The capitals are formed of heads, possibly those of a king and queen, but now sadly worn. A date of 1180 is suggested. Would the heads be those of Faversham's Stephen and Matilda? Pevsner queries whether the pairs of round-headed belfry openings are also Norman.

More detailed evidence exists for the 13th century. In the early part of this century a south aisle was constructed against the east wall of the tower, of which the only section remaining is the respond (half-pier) mentioned earlier. Culmer, who wrote an earlier guide to the church, was of the opinion that a north aisle was constructed in the late 13th century. Also during the early part of the 13th century the chancel was re-styled.

Over the years the chancel has been extended several times. The 13th century re-styling obliterated all that existed of the Saxon structure. The furnishings for the re-styled chancel, piscine and sedilia, can be dated with some exactitude. The piscina is a stone cill in which are set twin bowls, the one for washing the chalice and the other for the priest's ablutions. Eastlings' piscine is formed in a niche with a trefoiled canopy over. Twin-bowl piscinas date solely from the period of Edward I (1272-1307). The adjacent feature of this period is a three-seat sedilia, again with trefoiled canopies over, on which sat the priest, dacon and sub-deacon during the singing of the Gloria. On the north wall of the chancel are Early English lancet windows set in flint jambs.

Also on the north wall of the 13th century part of the chancel is a section of wall battered out to create a range of choir stalls with carved stone canopies over. These are most unusual, taking the form of four geometric, trefoiled arches carried off caryatids (female busts). The 19th century ecclesiologist Francis Grayling expressed the theory that they were mural recesses. Fragments of wall paintings were found in the 1960s when the Chancel was re-decorated, but they were considered to be in such poor condition that they were covered over. A fragment of the former Chancel east wall can be seen at the east end of these stalls, where the wall reverts to its normal thickness.

During the 14th century the chancel was extended eastwards for the third time by around 22 feet to incorporate a Sanctuary, and the piscine and sedilia were relocate to their present position. A double aumbry was constructed on the north wall: this was a cupboard built into the wall, usually with a wooden door, to house the plate. Next to it is the beautiful Easter Sepulchre with its ogee-shaped canopy and an altar tomb under. The Blessed Sacrament was placed on the altar tomb during the Good Friday morn and was not moved to the high altar until Easter Sunday. The workmanship of the carving is of the geometric form. A bequest of 1475 stated “the Sepulchre Light to have a cow or 6/8d.” A further bequest came from John Farneham on 9 December 1579 “lands at Throwley given for a light in Eastling Church (8d.) (PRO: C66/1193, and see Margaret Post).

The St Katherine Chapel was built around 1350 in an arcade formed on the south side of the earlier section of the Chancel, with the arches springing from an octagonal pier and responds. These were fluted (concave-sided) pillars, a rare design, but one which is also to be found in St Mary of Charity at Faversham, and again at Eastchurch some 60 years later. The suggestion is that the workmanship was by masons from either Leeds Priory or Faversham Abbey.¹⁰ The arcade wall at this point changes direction, and is out of alignment with the rest of the arcade. A plainer arch was inserted to connect through to the South Aisle. The three-light east window of the chapel is in geometric tracery.

The two windows on the south side of the chapel are two-light lancets with cusped heads, illustrating the transition to the Perpendicular window. These contain the surviving pieces of medieval glass, single quarries in each window supposedly representing the Woodstock Oak. The Martin James monument is located on the south wall of the chapel.



Plate 19. The Martin James memorial

¹⁰ Leeds Priory may be a possibility as during the reign of Stephen Alicia de Esling granted the church to the priory of Leeds. The priory seems not to have taken possession of the gift, but later was commuted to the sum of 20 shillings a year to be paid to the priory (Hasted Folio, page 757)

Also within St Katherine's Chapel is a fine oak muniments chest which exhibits the date of "1664 H" carved inside. The "H" is the mark of Michael Shilling, who was churchwarden at the time. The parish registers record the baptism on 14 July 1637 and the death on 6 August of "Jane ye daughter of Michael Shilling and Thomasina his wife, a young child."

The Parish Church Registers date from 1558 and are now held at Canterbury Cathedral Library.



Plate 20. Nave & Chancel in 1920's shewing that the church was then lit by oil lamps

No trace remains of the rood, except for the base of the rood stairs turret at the south-east angle of the South Aisle, where the wall is stepped out externally against the Chapel wall. In medieval times the stairs gave access to the Holy Rood, on which would have stood a Cross with a carving representing our Crucified Lord. The rood was made in the 15th century from the evidence of a will which contained a bequest "to the making of this rood loft of Holy Cross at Eselyng." The position of the rood stair turret suggested that the screen extended across both the Chapel and the Chancel. The rood was destroyed either during the Reformation or more likely by the Puritans, as it is recorded that substantial works to the church were carried out during the 17th century.¹¹

In a Victorian scrap book there exists a watercolour of Eastling church in 1840. It shows a slightly different form to the building later re-styled by Hussey. In the watercolour the roofs of the nave and chancel are in one, as opposed to the chancel roof now being lower, and the tower appears shorter by one stage. But possibly this is artistic licence.

¹¹ Parts extracted from "The Guide to Eastling Church" prepared from Culmer's original guide by Hugh Perks.

Legend holds that around 1850 there was a fire at the church, suggesting a reason for its rebuilding. During the early 1970's the then Rector, Edward Hudspith, said he could find no trace of this ever having happened, there being no visible signs internally of fire-blackening. Into the re-built church box pews were introduced ('pues' being a subject of great debate in "Ecclesiologist"), together with heavy and ponderous nave king-post roof trusses. One feature pre-dating the pews is the wooden wall bench against the south aisle wall. This was used by the elderly and infirm – hence the expression 'the weak go to the wall'.

Hussey re-built some of the windows, hopefully copying the original style. The nave, aisle and chapel window lights are in clear glass. The stained glass in the chancel windows are memorials to the Birch Reynardson family. The east window contains picture panels and grisaille surrounds and was the work of Thomas Willement of Davington.

The cost of Hussy's restoration came to £3,000, a substantial sum in those days. When complete it afforded 350 sittings, of which 150 were free. This was at a time when those who could afford it paid an annual 'pew rent' – illustrating the substantial class division between those who could pay for spiritual guidance, and those who sat at the back for free. The patron then was the Earl of Winchelsea. One of the 'perks' of the patron was to appoint a Rector to the living - a practice which still exists today.¹² The living then was worth £300 which went with a residence, now the Old Rectory, and 36 acres of Glebe of which the Rector held the profit. It later came into the gift of W.Schoolcroft Burton of Childrey in Berkshire, from which it passed in 1892 to the Rector, Rev. Thomas Musgrave Burton, who succeeded George Burch Reynardson. (See Appendix B, schedule of Rectors of Eastling.)

The Tower is of flint with chippings, known as galletting work, set within ragstone quoins, and is heavily buttressed. The base is five feet thick, with walls irregular in shape and direction, giving the impression that the Tower might have been constructed as a form of keep. The tower stages reduce internally. The pyramid spire, now slated, was formerly shingle clad. The Tower door is set in a much taller and wider blanked-off arch. The delightful "Articles" of the Ringing Chamber are painted on wooden boards above this door. The remains of an infilled opening can be seen on the south wall. The parish bier which hangs on the south wall was used to carry coffins into the church. The original floor is some feet below ground level.

The tower has six bells, four of them made by Richard Phelps during the time he occupied the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. The bells are as follows:

- | | | |
|------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| I. | 25 3/4 | "THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FECIT 1793." |
| II. | 27" | "R. PHELPS FECIT 1717." |
| III. | 29" | ditto |
| IV. | 30" | ditto |
| V. | 32 1/2 | ditto |

¹² The Earls of Winchelsea became patrons in 1677. Until quite recently a Rector held what was known as 'the living', and could hold it for as long as he wished. The current patron of Eastling St Mary is the Martyrs' Memorial Trust. Under the new Benefice which came into force in 2014 the Rector is appointed jointly by the patrons of Eastling, Throwley and Stalisfield-cum-Otterden. Hasted (Folio page 758-9) lists previous patrons.

VI. 36" "THE REVEREND Dr Wm WICKINS SEN: RECT: Wm
WICKINS IUN CURAT DAN: KEMP CH: WARDEN R:
PHELPS FECIT 1717."

When a death occurred the tenor bell was sounded as a death knell for adults; the second bell for children. The ringing commenced with tellers, 3 x 3 for a male and 3 x 2 for a female, then chimed for and only two of the bells are chimed today.

Externally two carved stone quatrefoil lights have been re-used in the east wall, one under the gable apex, the other to the right of the east window cill. Culmer believed these to have formed part of an Early English triplet in the Chancel.

A few of the gravestones date from the 17th and 18th centuries. They include gravestones to Mary Tanner who was born in the year of the Battle of Naseby; to Christopher Giles born in 1674 and his wife Susannah born in 1691; and to Thomas Lake of Eastling Gent died February the 19th 1717. Among the Giles family graves we find:

"Here lies the body of Searls Giles Gent of this Parish.
He departd this life Nov 22 1753.
Aged 60 years.
My Soul for Mercy of The Lord doth crave
My Body heving laid within".

And on another gravestone:

"HERE IYETH THE BODI
OF IOHN ROBENVNN
WHO DIED THE 24th OF
IANVARIE ANNO 1635."

Beside the west porch is a 13th century stone coffin slab, incised in the form of a cross with a sword. It is in a reasonable state of preservation, which suggests it may have been uncovered during the renovation of 1855. These coffin slabs are sometimes known in Kent as "Crusader Tombs." and often include armorial bearings.

Among ecclesiastical records relating to Eastling we learn from the "Domesday Monachorum" of AD 1089, that Aeslinge paid 28d to the Archbishop at Easter.¹³ This confirms the importance of the village, as within the diocese only 8 parishes paid more than this. Eastling continued to have a high assessment, as we learn in "William of Thorne's Chronicles" (of St Augustine's Abbey), which record details of a valuation of the Spirituals and Temporals of the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1384 Richard II wrote to the Archbishop holding him to a promise of a tax for the defence of the realm, taken as 1/2 of 1/10th from the taxed benefices, assessed as follows:

"The church of Eselynge	£2.0s.0d.
The church of Otterden	6s.8d"

King John had granted St Augustine' Abbey in Canterbury the chattels of their condemned and runaway serfs wherever they held tenements or land. In 1279 we learn "The City of Canterbury, from the chattels of a man of Esling, runaway 6d."

¹³ Canterbury Cathedral Library.

In the days when candles were burning at every altar and consumed an inordinate amount of tallow we find a number of bequests leaving money for "Lights." They included the "Light before Our Lady in the Chancel;" the "Light of St James"; the "Light of St Nicholas"; the "Light of the Torches"; and "4d to the Light of the Holy Cross on the rood loft." In 1440 a former Rector, Lawrence Ranlyne, bequeathed a piece of land called Skrevynis to be used for the repair of the St Katherine Chapel. The will of John Chorch in 1475 requested that he be buried "in the Church of Our Lady of Easleyng afore the door going into St Katherine's Chapel, a stone to be laid upon me price 20".

* * * *

Eastling worthies and events of the Past

Among the Eastling worthies were the aforementioned Fulke de Peyforer, son-in-law of Ralph de Esling. In 1298 Edward I directed Faversham and other ports to provide him with ships for his conquest of Scotland. One of the Faversham ships is recorded as the *Nicholas* of 34 men. Fulke sailed with the Faversham ship, and in 1300 following the Siege of Carlaveroch, he and his brother, who held the Manor of Otterden, were knighted. Fulke secured for the village an annual fair for toys and pedlary to be held on 14 September.

Also a knight was 'Dominus' John of Eastling. In 1257 he was one of a number of witnesses to confirmation made by his son, John, and a lady called Matilda, of a grant from Matilda's grandmother to permit Canterbury Cathedral Priory the right to maintain a certain watercourse. The annual payment for the grant was settled at 40 pence and a cartload of firewood (CCa-DCC-ChAnt/C/262).

Another Eastling man, John Baker, achieved some fame when he was appointed as one of the Jurors of the Hundred who assisted in the trial of several who took part in the Peasant's Revolt in 1381-2.

Documents held at National Archives, the Kent History & Library Centre, and Canterbury Cathedral Archives reveal some of the secrets of Eastling's past inhabitants. Misbehaviour, sheep stealing, breach of the peace, accusation of murder, wrongful detaining of goods and property, and the begetting of children out of wedlock are among matters which involved the villagers in court action.

Back in 1274 a murder was alleged in Eastling. The deceased was a Philip de Hednesberhe: the alleged murderer was none other than the Rector, J.Clericus (clerk). The friends of the Rev'd. Clericus, which included the Chancellor, petitioned the king that Clericus be not punished since he was not responsible. It would seem that four years previously Clericus had an altercation with de Hednesberhe in the village, resulting in the cleric wacking the latter over the head with a small stick called a 'winchepin'. It was alleged that the wacking caused neither bleeding nor broken bones. The altercation might have been settled had de Hednesberhe not died shortly afterwards. As the word 'winchepin' suggests something to do with a winding apparatus it would have needed to be particularly strong and probably sufficiently heavy to inflict a fatal blow. The account does not relate whether or not the plea by the friends of Clericus was successful. (PRO. SC8/835/15817).

A Chancery case of 1357 involved another clergyman, William de Cherehill (Churchill), parson of Eastling. On this occasion he was the creditor, the debtor being a John son of Alexander Andreu of Canterbury, who owed Churchill the sum of £40 date 22 March 138. PRO. C241/138/32).

A particularly complicated action of the late 14th century involved the manor of Huntingfield. Edward III had appointed in his will that the College he founded of St Stephen's at Westminster was to be endowed with certain manors, lands, rents, reversions, etc., including the manor of Eastling (Huntingfield).¹⁴ By indentured deed dated 16 June 1382 the Dean and Canons of St Stephen's and their successors were granted Eastling for a term of 40 years from Easter 1382 (Parkin, page 487, and Chapman & Knighton, pages 9-10).

The case hinged around the actions of Sir Simon de Bureley (Burley) who by means of false claims had obtained latter patent stating that the king had granted to him certain lands, including Huntingfield. To this manor there were several other claimants, including the Dean and Canons of St Stephen's so recently expelled by Burley, the King, who had seized the property, and Isabel Huntyngfeld who wanted her back her father's manor.

The story is that in 1388 the Dean and Canons of St Stephen's petitioned the king to retrieve what they considered theirs. In their petition they cited that they had demised to Burley the manor of Huntingfield with its goods and chattels at a certain yearly rent. "Which manor with its goods and timber were found in the manor of Elham, from which Burley had unjustly ejected them". However, they were seized into the king's hand by the judgement against them. The Dean and Canons wanted back their stock, goods and chattels¹⁵.

Meanwhile, Isabel Huntyngfeld, daughter of Walter de Huntingfield, was requesting of the king that right is done, as she recovered her manor of Huntingfield against one Pope and other, who had wrongfully disseised her, and Pope had allowed Burley to enter the manor. The 'but' was that the manor had been taken into the king's hand by Burley's forfeiture.

The matter did not rest there. On 15 March 1390 there was a further petition from the Dean and Canons of St Stephen's. Whereas King Richard had returned to them those goods and chattels they sought back, they were now requesting that he give them Huntingfield. Then in 1397-8 John, Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster (John of Gaunt), wrote to St Stephen's releasing his right in several manors, including Eastling, leaving the Dean and Canons to argue it out with Isabel Huntyngfeld (PRO. SC8/250/12460; and SC8/247/12338; and SC8/184/9157; and SC8/146/7277; and E210/2391).

As for Burley, he was no longer concerned, having been executed in May 1388.

¹⁴ Although not stated as such by Parkin in "The Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem" the manor of Eastling so mentioned was Huntingfield.

¹⁵ St Stephen's is variously described as a College, a free chapel, and a Royal Chapel. In 1424 the Dean and Canons were still arguing over property, this time the manor of Winchfield in Hants which had reverted to Edward III, over which they continued to take issue (Parkin, page 487). Built in 1297 in the Palace of Westminster it became after 1547 the debating chamber of the House of Commons until destroyed by fire in 1834.

Debt was a cause for involvement with the law. In 1355 William de Boxted of the parish of Esling of Kent was served with a writ for the debt of £10 by his creditor, William Spicer of Rochester (PRO. C241/136/151).

The writ against Richard Sharp, the son of Richard Sharp, deceased of Eastling, was of the substantial sum of 100 marks. Sharp held the demanse of Holbeme, a property in the parish of Stalisfield on the border with Eastling. His creditor was William Pratt, described as a gentleman of the King's Chancery in London. The writ was served on 22 May 1498, but it was not until 1505 that Sharp's property was seized. Holbeme (now Holbeam) was described as land amounting to 100 acres of land, being 20 acres of meadow, 40 of pasture, and 40 of woodland (PRO. C131/252/36).¹⁶

Eastling churchwarden Josiah Clynych only owned the sum of four shillings and four pence, but in 1601 this was counted sufficient as to be brought to Canterbury Castle before the general sessions. He was summoned for non-payment of this money (possibly to have been paid by the church) to the Constable of the Hundred of Faversham, owing for a half year due at the Nativity of St John the Baptist. On 21 July in that year the sessions made an order against Clynych

Recognizances were bonds by which a person was required to appear before a court in relation to a debt, requirement to keep the peace, or a particular condition, the bond being the sum pledged as security to ensure the condition was kept. Appearances were heard at the Kent Quarter Sessions, or the West Kent Sessions. Such recognizances provide a valuable source of information as to names and occupations of Eastling people at the time.

On 21 September 1597 Stephen Hope, carpenter of Eastling, appeared before the court in a matter not uncommon in rural areas, that of fathering a bastard (and presumably not settling for its upkeep). He was to "appear and answer concerning the begetting a bastard child in the house of the said Stephen". Surety of £10 was offered by Mathew(sic) Bunce of Throwley.

In 1604 a John Dane of Eastling became subject of a similar warrant He, together with Matthew Dane of Faversham and Jonas Dane of Stalisfield, were summoned on 9 April 1604 for the non-fulfilment of an order regarding the base child of Alice Browne, reputed father John Dane (KH&LC. GM/SB/51). Possibly John Dane was the same person who appears as John Denn (or Dann), labourer of Eastling, on 25 September that year under "Recognizances Discharged, in £10 to answer" (KH&LC. Q/SR/5/M3). John Dane appears before the court again where surety is offered by Richard Yate (or Yates) of Eastling (KH&LC. QM/SRc/1604/38; and Q/SR/5/m3).

Much the same charge against John Dane had been levelled at Henry Lees, yeoman of Eastling.. On 22 July 1598 he was summoned "in £10 to appear and answer for getting Alice? Hany with child, and to discharge any parish where the child might be born". In other words, Lees was to be responsible for paying for the child's upkeep. The following January Henry Lees was again in court, this time

¹⁶ A Thomas Holbem is mentioned in a document of the 50th year of Edward III, as together with William de Haldene and others, granted reversion of certain lands, including the Manor of Eastling or Huntingfield, now held for life by Laurence de Breule knight and Joan his wife, to the prior and convent of Charterhouse (PRO. C143/398/27).

bringing charges against Abraham Harris of Sheldwich, husbandman, and his sister Anne Harris. The Harris's in the sum of £5 each were to appear and answer the charges. Mention of another lady, and given Henry Lees' track record, one cannot help but wonder about the genuineness of this charge (PRO. QM/SRc/1598/53; and QM/SRc/1599/1).

Again, in 1609, a letter held at Kent Archives (QM/SB/816) from John Walsall to Sir Edmund Hoby, seeks to discover the place of settlement of a child begot at Throwley, the mother living at Eastling.

On 7 May 1606 it was Peter Mase (or Mace) of 'Isling', labourer, who appeared before the court. His surety was £10, offered by Thomas Sturges and churchwarden Josias Clynych, both of 'Isling'. In 1617 it was Mase's wife Judith who appeared before the court to answer charges made by Thomas Bunce, yeoman of 'Isling'. Surety of £10 was given by Isaac Greenstreet, yeoman of 'Isling' (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1601/111; and 1617/1).

Appearances for theft (including sheep-stealing) and for keeping the peace were frequent. In 1600 John Motte, a labourer of Doddington, was brought to answer the charge brought by John Braster of Teynham, concerning the taking of two horses out of his pasture. Here surety of £10 was given by Gilbert Parkes, butcher of Eastling (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1600/36).

Under "Indictments, File for Gaol Delivery Session" we find two instances of sheep-stealing. On 3 July 1603 Henry Crippyn, a labourer of Ospringe, was indicted for stealing a 'whether' worth 5 shillings, and 16 ewes worth £4 from Henry Lees of Eastling. In a subsequent indictment at the midsummer sessions in 1605 Robert Highstead and Christopher Ellys, both of Eastling, were charged with stealing five ewes worth 30 shillings, and two lambs worth eight shillings, from William Lewen of Newington. Both Highstead and Ellys were found not guilty (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1603/7; and 1605/11/3).

Also in 1605 a John Whitehead of Eastling was summoned to appear before the court, sureties in £10 given by Richard Wise and Thomas Greenstreet, both of Eastling.

In 1609 it was an Eastling man, John Collyns, butcher, who together with Edward Crowcher of Doddington, appeared to "prosecute and give evidence against Robert Ady of Lynsted, labourer". The two witnesses were each in bond of £5 ((KH& LC. QM/SRc/1610/19).

Among those appearing on matters of good behaviour in 1612 was Samuel Street, a carpenter of Eastling. He may well have had previous as his surety was in £20, offered by Robert Yates of Eastling and Edward Croydon of Thannington (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1612/118). The following year Thomas White, mason of Stalisfield, was required to keep the peace towards Nicholas Loreyman of Challock. James Bunce of Eastling gave surety of £5 (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1613/38).

The final entry for this period concerns John Netter, Chandler of Sittingbourne, who in 1617 was bound in £20 to keep the peace towards Isaac Grynstreete, yeoman of Eastling (KH& LC. QM/SRc/1617/17).

Church visitations give light on the problems affecting St Mary's church.

'1569 Abp Parker's Visitation. Rectory:- In the patronage of Nicholas Sentleger Esquire, in the right of his wife.

Rectors:- Dom. Richard Rogers, M.A., he is not married, lives there, has one benefice, and is hospitable as far he is able, not a preacher or licensed to preach.

Householders 24.

Communicants 87'

'1572. That the church is out of reparation for lack of tileing.

James Parker, farmer of the Court Lodge, suffereth his swine to turn up the churchyard, contrary to all good order. And that he ought to keep the enclosure, for that his occupancy is round about the churchyard; and as by good record it may well appear it hath been enclosed by the farmers of the said Court-Lodge these hundred years. - (Vol 1571-2, fol.134.)

'1576. We present that by reason of the great wind that was lately, our church is at reparation for lack of tileing. - (Vol 1574-6, fol.80.)'

'1603. We, the churchwardens and sidesmen there, present Isaac Greenstreet, and Sicily, the wife of Richard Hayward, and Mary Mynge, the servant of Isaac Greenstreet, for their uncomely railing and scolding; to the great disturbance and offence of their neighbours.' – (Fol. 84.)

Thomas Greenstreet for not performing a legacy of his father, Henry Greenstreet, bequeathed to the poor of our parish, as the same Thomas hath reported, and acknowledged, and as by the will of the same plainly appeareth. – (Fol. 85.)

James Greenstreet who, notwithstanding many warnings, has not yet paid such money as he was cessed to pay towards the church. – (fol. 86).'

'1605 The east end, north side, and south side of the churchyard is fenced only with hedge, through which hogs break, by which the churchyard is defiled and the graves offensively racked; of this no redress will be had because Robert Yate and Richard his son, the occupiers of the land adjoining to the churchyard, refuse to make a sufficient fence, affirming that the parish ought to do it, and the parish plead to the contrary a very ancient custom. We pray that some speedy and lawful action may be taken. – (Vol 1601-6. fol. 150).'

'1612. Some part of the inner wall of our belfry is lately fallen down, and our church porch wanteth some shingles (else all is well), and we crave a reasonable day for the repairing of the same. – (fol. 64.)'

'1665. There is a want of a large Bible of the last translation, a font, and the churchyard fence not in good repair, and the steeple cracked, also the want of a chest to keep the utensils of the church in. – (Vol 1836-81. fol. 124.)'

'1672. Robert Somerscal , for that the church is much out of repair together with the steeple thereof, which he confesseth to be true, and alledgeth that he hath repaired some part thereof , and hath material and workmen now at work

to repair the rest, which work will be finished within a month's time. – (Vol 1670-93. fol. 22.)¹⁷

Stalisfield, by way of comparison, suffered greater ill. In 1560 they had neither parson, vicar or curate; the chancel was in decay for lack of glazing; William Crofte, a notable, malicious, contentious and uncharitable person, sought the unjust vexation of his neighbours; while in the time of divine service one, Henry Wilson, did keep disorderly dancing in his house!

Hyde and Harrington's transcriptions of the Hearth Tax returns for Eastling list the names of those in the village who could afford hearths.

For 1662 (PRO:E179/262/21) These are:

Messrs Samuell Jemmot clerke, Thomas Greenstreete, Henry Bond, Thomas Wootton, Henry Jones, Thomas Greenstreete, Edward Greenstreete, Henry Greenstreete, Thomas Rayner, Edward Clinch, Henry Cadman, Richard Razell, John Grimston, James Penyall, James Browne, Alexander Thompson, Jeffery Bigs, John Terry, Robert Milles, Henry Turner, Henry Burton, Thomas Hodges, Thomas Peniall, James Hubert, George Tilbee, Thomas Spratt, James Gilman, Richard Gately, Thomas Burton, Thomas Ellis, Christopher Allen, John Terry, Widow Shilling, Alexander Tomson, William Clinch, Jon Greenstreete, Philip Payne, John Weldish, John Backbourne, and Moses Rasell. A total of 40 entries, having between them 97 hearths.

Samuell Jemmot has no less than six hearths. Eight households are shown as having 'fower' (4) hearths: these are Thomas Greenstreete, Henry Bond, Thomas Wootton, Henry Jones, Thomas Greenstreete, Edward Greenstreete George Tilbee, and William Clinch. Nine households have three hearths; five households have two hearths; while 18 households have only one hearth.

Two years later in 1664 (CKS:Q/RTh) the return shows several comings and goings in the village, to say nothing of spelling of names. Parson Jemmot is now written as Jemmatt, the Greenstreete's have lost their final 'e', and the unusual surname Backbourne is now written somewhat disappointingly as Blackbourne. Newcomers to the village liable for hearth tax include Bartholomew Swan, William Davis, Anthony Fines, Thomas Leese, Christopher Allen and Matthew Greenstreet. Newcomers not liable for this tax were Thomas Ellis, Richard Rachell, Widow Hooke, Widow Whinder, Widow Adren, Geoffrey Briggs, Widow Ottway, Widow Ansley and Widow Tayler – all of whom had but one hearth each.

The picture for 'Esling Burrough' for 1671 shows that Parson (now) Jemmett has had another chimney built, and has an additional building with one hearth. However, the extravagant Mrs Ann Hogben has no less than eight hearths. Newcomers comprise Matthew Rolfe, Richard ?Bridge, Edward [?H]en[s], Henry Staine, Abraham Shilling, Henry Studwell, John Greenstreet, , Robert Summerset, Arnold Terry, James Bunce, Anthony Hinde, together with several widows.

Among other persons mentioned as of this period was carpenter, Matthew Hope, who lived at 3 The Street. At the age of 64 he died on 9 May 1706. He must have made significant contribution to the village to have been buried in the centre aisle of the church.

¹⁷ From 'Some East Kent Parish History' Peter de Sandwich IN 'Home Counties Journal' 1906 page 88.

The poor of the village, unable to support themselves, sought assistance by way of alms. A 17th century document notes:

“There are 4 persons in this burrough which doe receive the constant almes of the parish and are therefore omitted...” (PRO:E179/129/746)

Hasted mentions one local charity, granted by Edward Greswold in his will of 1677, who gave £20 for the benefit of the poor not receiving alms. The money was to be laid out in land and in 1680 his executors purchased land known as ‘Pinkes-crost’ or croft (Pinks Farm?), containing two acres in extent, of which the rent in 1797 was 15 shillings a year. Hasted (volume 6, page 435) comments that “the poor constantly relieved are about twelve, casually twenty-five”, Stalisfield having thirty.

At the time of Hasted the Rev. Edward Cage was newly appointed as vicar of Eastling. He was supposedly related to Jane Austen by marriage but this cannot be confirmed.¹⁸ Cage was a man with excellent connections. Hasted says about the Cage family that in 1624 Thomas Fludd alienated the former manor of Milgate in Bersted (Bearsted) to a barrister William Cage of Farringdon in Hampshire. Milgate passed eventually down to his descendant Lewes Cage, whose son, also called Lewes married Annetta, second daughter of Edward Coke of Whitefriars in Canterbury. The couple had four sons, of whom Edward was to be appointed to Eastling. Born in 1764/5 the “Gentleman’s Magazine” (volumes 158 to 159) carried a short obituary of him, citing that he took his degree at Cambridge and was awarded his MA in 1786 and was aged 70 at the time of his death. The Rectors’ List in Eastling church lists his tenure as from 1796 to 1835, presumably the year of his death. England was at war with France when Cage came to Eastling, a war in which he had some involvement, having been appointed as a Chaplain to the militia the previous year.¹⁹

Edward Cage married Jane, second daughter of Charles Ven esq of Monmouthshire. In 1813 he was presented to Newnham as Rector by Miss Thorncroft and Mrs Hill, then in 1818 he was presented as Rector of Badlesmere by Lord Sondes, and as Rector of Eastling in the same year by the Earl of Winchelsea. Now holding three livings, of which Eastling was worth £300, Cage was more than comfortably well off. At that date pluralities were common, permitting clergy to hold the livings (thus income) of more than one parish, some pluralists are cited in the “Britannia Magazine” for 1832 (page 48) as having incomes of well over £1,000 per annum. Easy money, considering they could, and grumbled at having to pay curates £60 per annum to do their duties for them. This, however, was to change with the Reform Act which abolished pluralities, and Cage became deprived by the law of the land of Newnham and Baddlesmere.

We know what Cage looked like in later life from an oil painting of him executed by Benjamin Marshall in 1826. It is held at the Tate, but a small reproduction hangs in the vestry of Eastling church. A somewhat benign and stocky figure he looks and is dressed more like a gentleman farmer than a clergyman. Possibly Cage built what is now the Old Rectory, although there appears some dispute as to the date of its building.

¹⁸ According to the 1918 “Kelly’s Directory of Kent”.

¹⁹ Under the heading of (Military) Promotions, in the “Kentish Register and Monthly Miscellany” for October 1795, Cage was to be Chaplain. The “Register” gives no further details.

In Letter 50, Jane Austen makes mention of the second marriage of Lady Sondes. Quite probably Austen knew the Sondes family socially, as she spent long periods with her brother who lived at Godmersham House, and attended balls at the Faversham Assembly Rooms. After the death of the 2nd Lord Sondes his widow, formerly Mary Elizabeth Milles, married General Sir Henry Tucker Montresor. Following her death in 1818 Montresor re-married, choosing as his bride Annetta, daughter of the Rev. Edward Cage and his wife Jane.

Formation of the Belmont Estate

Although Belmont is just outside Eastling and within the parish of Throwley the Belmont Estate now holds much of the land within the parish of Eastling. The original Belmont House was built in 1769 for John Wilkes, store-keeper at the Royal Gunpowder Works. In 1780 Wilkes sold Belmont to Colonel John Montresor, father of General Sir Henry Tucker Montresor. Between 1789 and 1793 Montresor engaged architect Samuel Wyatt to build what is now the main part of the house. Wyatt also landscaped the gardens. This commission came at the right time for Wyatt whose finances were at a low following the fire which destroyed the Albion flour mill (adjacent to Blackfriars Bridge) which he built in partnership with, among others, Boulton and Watt.²⁰

In addition to Belmont, Montresor purchased Syndale at Ospringe in 1781, and in 1787 Huntingfield in Eastling, alienated to him by Hasted. Colonel Montresor was a distinguished engineer serving in America, where he made a great number of surveys.²¹ On his return to England it was claimed that while in America he had embezzled Army funds. Belmont was seized by the state to recover disallowed expenses and Montresor was sent to prison. He died in Maidstone Jail on 26 June 1799 before he could clear his name.

Belmont was put up for auction in 1801 and was purchased by General George Harris, later Lord Harris, who defeated the Sultan of Mysore at Serangapatam in 1799 on behalf of the East India Company.²² Ultimately the Belmont Estate (now a trust) acquired the four manors of Eastling, as well as North Eastling, together with their lands. More recently both Arnold's Oak and Divan Court were sold to their occupiers.

In addition to the people mentioned earlier Everitt (1985) cites that in the 16th century there were four Bensted, each one a smith, having smithies at Eastling, Stalisfield, Nwnham and Doddington.

Post-Medieval Buildings

The Greeting in Otterden Road, Orchard House and Kettle Hill Farmhouse all date from the 16th century. Forge House is 17th century, and a suggested date for Number 6 Kettle Hill (Grade II) is c.1700. Among 18th century buildings are Skiltons, Briar Cottage, and King's Cottages, although these, and possibly other buildings in

²⁰ The fire almost bankrupted James Watt and Matthew Boulton. The rage of the fire was intense. It is thought that William Blake, who dwelt near by, based his "Inferno" on the fire (Perks & Craig, 2006, pages 14-17).

²¹ D.N.B. 1885-1900, volume 38. Montresor's plan of Fort Niagara and maps of Nova Scotia are held at the British Museum. He also built a house near Belmont which he named New York after his adventures in the Americas.

²² The looting of jewels from the Sultan of Mysore following Harris's victory forms the opening scene of 'The Moonstone' by Wilkie Collins.

the village, may contain earlier portions. Several other houses in the village date from the early 19th century (possibly late 18th century) including Wiltons. It appears that Wiltons at one time came under the ownership of the Parmenter family (as did Eastling Manor). In 1762 one Henry Chapman tenanted a farm in Eastling that was owned by a John Parmenter of Bristol. The Tithe Return for 1840 mentions land in Newnham Lane known as "Wiltons Parmenters". There is some doubt as to the date of the Old Rectory, either 1814 or 1840. A later Victorian wing was subsequently demolished.

The Georgian Village

Among villagers' names appearing in public records for this period we find John Bates, victualler, occupying the Carpenter's Arms in March 1789. The property was owned by Julius Shepherd, the Faversham brewer, and was insured with the Sun Fire Office (PRO. Sun Fire Office records). A document of the same year mentions a woman with a somewhat un-ladylike occupation "Widow Brown – Blacksmith".

Under his entry for Eastling Hasted mentions a particular pastime with which he held no truck - squirrel hunting.

"On November 30th being St Andrew's, there is a yearly diversion called squirrel hunting, when the labourers and lower kind of people assembling together, form a lawless rabble, and being accoutred with guns, poles, clubs and other such weapons, spend the greatest part of the day in parading through the woods with loud shoutings, and under the pretence of demolishing the squirrels, some few of which they kill, they destroy numbers of hares, pheasants, partridge and in short whatever comes their way, break down the hedges, and doing much mischief, and in the evening before betake themselves to the alehouses, finish their career there in drunkenness as is usual with such gentry".

Some thirty years later much mischief, but of a more violent form, was being inflicted on farms and land in Kent. The background to what has been called the "Swing Riots" was disaffection by farm labourers with their lot. Unemployment was high, caused by soldiers returning earlier from the War with France, and in consequence wages were low. In August 1830 the first riots appeared in Kent, labourers complaining about the lowering of wages, the payment of tithes and the introduction on farms of the steam threshing engine. Although there is no evidence that 'Captain Swing' ever visited Eastling the "Gentlemen's Magazine" records that in 1830 he visited General Montessor at Denne Court near Canterbury, where aggrieved labourers wrecked his machine.²³

As far as unusual occupational names are concerned George Hills' had one of the strangest – he was a higgler, holding a Higgler's Licence. Such licence, issued to him at the West Kent quarter sessions for the years 1758-9, and 1761-66, entitled him to sell certain foodstuffs at any fair or market in the County of Kent. These were usually defined as being among other things eggs, fowls, and other dead victuals, including badgers, but excepting game. Perhaps a modern variation on 'road kill'.

Of particular concern to the poor man was his having to pay tithes. A tithe of one tenth of crops, local industry and personal income was payable to the Rector of

²³ 'Captain Swing' was the generic name for labourers disaffected by the introduction on farms of steam threshing and ploughing engines.

the parish as his wages and expenses, whether or not a person actually went to church. As illustrated *passim*, the living of Eastling was worth £300 a year to the Rector. This was a considerable sum of money in those days, especially as the Rev'd. Cage added to his income the tithes of Newnham and Badlesmere. A farm labourer at that time received a weekly wage which varied from between nine and thirteen shillings a week, out of which he had to pay rent for his cottage.²⁴ Matters were exacerbated by the poor harvest of 1830 (see Matthews, "Captain Swing in Sussex and Kent").

Discontent over lack of Parliamentary representation and general lack of reform led to legislation. First, and known as the Reform Act of 1832, the "Act to amend the representation of the people in England and Wales" abolished 'rotten boroughs'. The second important piece of legislation came in 1834 with the "Poor Law Amendment Act" which set up workhouses. The third important piece of legislation abolished the tithe system as it had been by introduction of the "Tithe Commutation Act" of 1836.

There was much debate in Parliament and in newspapers and magazines on the subject of pluralities. The debate on the "Plurality of Benefices Bill" in 1832 engendered much heated argument. Eventually, with the loss of their pluralities, Rectors of Eastling became poorer men. The poor did not, however, become richer.

Until 1835 when workhouses were established the poor of a parish were the responsibility of the relevant parish Board of Guardians. Previously village paupers were accommodated in three pairs of back-to-back cottages located near the windmill (now Mill Cottages). Among the responsibility of Overseers of the Poor was establishing settlement or removal to ensure that the parish did not bear the burden of those rightly belonging to other places. This is evidenced by one George Monk and his wife Elizabeth, George (at least) coming from Eastling. On 3 April 1780 the Parish of Mayfield in Sussex issued a removal order in respect of the Monk's, that they be removed back to Eastling, while in 1714 Wormshill appealed against a removal order of Sarah Osbourne from Eastling (ESRO. PAR422/32/2/42, and KH&LC. Q/SB/32413).

With the establishment of workhouses Eastling came under the Faversham Union which was obliged to house its paupers. The vestry meeting in 1842 agreed to sell the Parish Cottages, the monies providing contributions to the Faversham Union Chapel. Among the residents of the Faversham Union Workhouse in their list for 1881 only one name appears under Eastling Paupers – Rosa Higgins, unmarried, age 18, farm servant.

On a sad note the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1835 (volume 157, page 222) relates an unhappy encounter with the sea. H.Smithe esq., late of Eastling, having crossed the Atlantic to settle in Jamaica, his vessel was shipwrecked on the coast of America, drowning Smithe and 16 others.

Victorian Eastling

The entry for Eastling in "Melville's Directory of Kent" for 1858 gives a population of 414, as in the 1851 census. Three persons are listed as being Gentry: Mr John Bird at Pink Hall (now Pinks Farm), the Rev. George Burch Reynardson,

²⁴ Holdings were shown on parish Tithe Maps.

Rector, and Roger Henry Smythe. Among the farmers, John Barling worked Arnolds Oak, Mrs Maria Clinch at Hockley Hole, Benjamin Leese at Divan Court, John Maxted at Tong, John Rowland at Huntingfield, Baker Murton at North Court, and John Drewry who was shown as being farmer and market gardener.

The population of the village had decreased over the previous ten years down from 437 inhabitants. The village's extent was given as 1,912 acres, of which 30 acres was given over to a hop garden.

Local business people were James Clark, miller; James Drewry, surveyor and parish clerk; William Hills, baker and grocer; John Gibbs, butcher; James Bensted, smith & farrier; Thomas Pettman, harness maker; Horace Robbins, carman and fruiterer; William Terry, boot and shoe maker, while George Shilling kept the Carpenters Arms.

The windmill was located two-thirds of a mile south of the church on the Lenham road. According to William Coles Finch (page 198) it was a "tared stageless smock mill of three stories, with four spring sweeps and two pairs of stones". He lists the millers/owners as being:

John Hill (1823-1823)

James Godden (1835-1868) presumably as owner

Rev. H.A. Barrett (1868-1870)

Thomas Court (1870-1879)

James Hawkins (1879-1899)

Thomas Read (1899-1904)

The mill's last user was Thomas Elvy, but not having been worked for several years and become dangerous in condition was pulled down about 1912 with the aid of a wire and a traction engine. The mill cottages which exist adjacent to the site were in fact nothing to do with the mill, but formed the back-to-back parish workhouse.

By the time of the 1861 census the population had decreased further to 399 persons occupying 87 houses. Aspects of the village's life for this year were reported in the pages of the "East Kent Gazette". On 11 July the Eastling Friendly Society celebrated its Jubilee, an event: "which for years will furnish pleasing reminiscences to the inhabitants of the retired and peaceful village of Eastling".

The notion of forming such a Society came in the first place from Eastling itself. Other villages copied the idea and by 1860 the various societies amalgamated into the United Men of Kent Friendly Society, under its Secretary and Eastling parish clerk, James Drewry.²⁵ In 1861 Drewry decided to celebrate its Jubilee in the village of its founding.

The entire village took part in the celebrations, with representatives attending from all over the county. Banners were stretched across the Street, with jollifications and events taking place in the meadow provided for the occasion by Mr Leese of Divan Court. A church service was held at St Mary's, the procession to the church being led by Mr Holland's band. At the church a sermon was preached by the Rector,

²⁵ Rules of enrolment, registration, and deposit, dated 1827 are held at KH&LC Q/RSf/1/10).

Rev. G.B.Reynardson. Following the service, it is reported that members and their friends repaired to a spacious booth provided by Mr Shilling of the Carpenter's Arms.

In March, when preparations for the Jubilee were already underway the 'retired and peaceful village' was shattered by the news that a murder had taken place. It was a tragic case. The victim was an infant, murdered by her mother, who died from natural causes shortly afterwards.

The Victorian period was an age when working men or women were bound to their employers. Breach of Service was treated harshly and carried severe penalties. In that year one George Gillham, a servant in husbandry to Benjamin Leese, was brought before magistrates charged with misconduct in his master's service. The charge levelled against Gillham was that he had refused to obey an order of his master. For this he was sentenced to 14 days hard labour at St Augustine's Lunatic Asylum.

Gillham's punishment was slight by comparison with another villager who absconded from his master's service. His punishment was two months hard labour, spent at St Augustines's and thus unable to participate in the Jubilee celebrations.

Village grocer, William Hills, did not have an enjoyable Jubilee year either. He was prosecuted for having a set of scales which weighed 6 drams against the purchaser. Other crimes for which he received sentence included having an unstamped half gallon measure, and for a further set of scales which were not in order.

Communication between the village and Faversham, Lenham and Charing was achieved by means of a carrier's van. Stephens' Directory of 1881 make mention of a regular van to Faversham which conveyed both goods and passengers.

Among notable Eastling people of the time was Thomas Spillett (1849-1919) who was born in Eastling. In 1874 he entered the Bible Christian Ministry, and spent 40 years preaching in the home (Methodist?) circuit. An Eastling lady, Mary Smithe (possibly the sister of H. Smithe above) married John Walter (1776-1847), proprietor of "The Times". Their son, Sir Edward Walter, is noted as having founded the Corps of Commissionaires (DNB).

The Chapel

Now barely remembered as a place of worship, having been converted into a dwelling some years ago, the Methodist Chapel was located to the south of the village on the Stalisfield Road.

The Village School

The original School was a flint building located part way down Newnham Lane. Constructed in 1841 on Glebe lands it was built by the Rev'd Lushington. In 1879 a School Board was formed, and the following year Lord Harris gave land for a new school in what is now Kettle Hill Lane. The new school was built as a Public Elementary Mixed School for 150 children was opened in 1881 with John Smith as master. The former school became the church hall.



Plate 21. Eastling Street around 1900 photographed from the corner of Newnham Lane shewing the Forge and Sadler's shop. Photo Faversham Society collection.

Plate 22. Below: Plantation House in the days when the village had two policemen. Photo Croseur.





Victorian Eastling from Croseur photographs Plates 23 & 24.
Above: Box Cottage with a bicycle parked against the hedge with Manor Cottage behind.
Below: The edge of Porch House with Kings Cottages and the Forge beyond.





Plate 25 Above: Eastling Street from the corner with Newnham Lane. In the foreground the Old Forge with the saddler's shop behind. Photo published by Doughty's.

Plate 26 Eastling Street looking north from the Carpenters Arms to Plantation House, the shop at Orchard House, and centre the gable end of No 2 The Street.



Early 20th Century Eastling



Plate 27. Polling Day at Eastling December 1910 when Hastings Wheler was returned to Parliament as the local member.

A card advertisement in the Faversham News for 5 January 1901 announced a new service from London to Faversham by sailing hoy-barge under a Mr. Edward Knowles. His vessel, which departed from the Pool of London every Monday, carried a wide range of domestic and shop goods, among which are mentioned wines, spirits, drapery, and petroleum in barrels. Knowles listed his tariff showing villagers paid a premium for their goods:

“From London (per ton)
To Faversham. Goods 8 shillings.
To Ospringle 9 shillings and 6 pence.
To Newnham 12 shillings and 6 pence”.

(Eastling would have been at the same rate)

In addition Knowles carried wines, spirits, and drapery to Faversham at 13 shillings, and petroleum oil at 2 shillings and 3 pence a barrel.

After farming at Arnold's Oak Harry Frederick Boucher took the tenancy of Divan Court in 1901. In 1916 his wife Esther Dawn composed a poem about life at Divan Court in particular and the village in general. Their granddaughter, Janet Wood, who was born at Divan Court, keeps the original Among the persons mentioned was the wagoner at Divan Court, a man named Hills, and Charlie Skinner, the gardener at the Manor House. The poem records that Charlie was a “tremendous man”. His mate was “a tall, lanky boy who couldn't join the army”.



Plate 28 Above: Divan Court around the time that Harry Boucher took the tenancy.

Plate 29. Below: Eastling Manor in 1896 shewing the timber yard in the foreground and on the right the Manor Barn with several children in front. The photographer's carriage is seen far right with its liveried coachman and lady in a large bonnet. Both photographs are believed to have been taken by one of the Croseur brothers.



It was in 1906 that architect St John Diamant purchased Eastling Manor. The house had been in multiple occupancy and Diamant converted it into a single dwelling. Both the house and the barn were in poor state of repair. The timbers of the barn were dismantled, numbered and stored for eventual rebuilding. Diamant was practicing in Egypt at the time and so let the house. On his return he found that the former tenants had made good use of the generous supply of firewood, burning many of the barn's timbers.

The woodyard, pond and green in front of the Manor House was land owned by the church. When St John Diamant bought this from the church it displeased Charlie Skinner and many of the villagers.²⁶

* * * *

The Great War Period

A number of Eastling men served at sea at one time or another, particularly in the Great War. Among them was Frank Gilham born in the village in 1884, who served as mate aboard the Thames Barge *Guy Fawkes*. As the vessel's name suggests she was built to carry gunpowder away from Faversham – a risky occupation as several gunpowder barges were known to have blown-up, and indeed, when laden with explosives in 1907 she had been sunk in collision. During the Great War Gilham and his skipper, James Harris, were engaged in carrying armaments from Faversham (National Maritime Museum BT400/3381/23).²⁷

During the Great War innocent-looking merchant ships were converted to decoy boats whose task was to lure German submarines into close proximity then open fire on them. Sometimes known as Q-ships' or 'mystery ships' one such vessel, the barquentine-rigged sailing barge *Zebrina* of Faversham, herself became a mystery that in nearly a century has never been solved. The *Zebrina* was commanded by Captain Archibald John Martin whose mother, Jane Howland, an Eastling lady born at Yewhedges, married William Martin at Stalisfield in 1878. On 17 October 1917 the 185-ton *Zebrina* was found abandoned in Channel off Rozel Point near Dielethe. No trace has ever been found of Captain Martin or his crew of 22 men, most of whom were Royal Navy (Harvey pages 74-76).

The Inter-War Period

"Kelly's Directory of Kent" for 1918 provides much information about the village in the immediate post-Great War period. The then two manors, North Court and Divan Court both belonged to Lord Harris, he together with Alured Faunce-de-Laune, of Sharsted Court, Doddington, being the principal landowners. The chief crops grown in the village were listed as wheat, barley, peas, beans, fruit, hops and oats. The population was now 451 persons and the Parish extended to 1,934 acres.

The village had a number of shops located in The Street – a grocer's, Post Office cum grocer's, a saddler, and a village forge. Being five miles equidistant from

²⁶ St John Diamant was the first person to bring water, gas, electricity and telephone to the village. The gas and electricity supplies coming over the Downs from Lenham. However, before these could be connected World War 2 broke out and these services were not connected until after the war. Until main supplies were laid villagers were reliant on wells for their water. Even into the 1980's some properties were without any electricity or mains water.

²⁷ It is somewhat ironic that the *Guy Fawkes* ended her days in 1941 being bombed by the RAF for target practice

Faversham, Charing and Lenham there were regular carter's services to these places which also took passengers to and from the village. Carrier James Feakins advertised that he operated a service to Charing every Friday.

The directory informs that Lord Harris's bailiff, Albert Henry Ditcher, was based at Hockley Hole, Harry Frederick Boucher, farmer and hop-grower, tenanted Divan, Charles and Jesse Offen were the tenants of Arnold's Oak, William Clark was tenant of North Court, while his farm bailiff, Thomas Garner, lived at North Eastling, and Lt. Colonel Bradley-Dye occupied Huntingfield. Others in agriculture were Maylem Long, fruit-grower, at Wiltons, Thomas Elvy, fruiterer, lived at The Limes, and John Wheeler was a fruit-grower at Pink Hill (now Pinks Farm). A James Robins is listed as farmer and fruit-grower, but with no address given, and Albert Hillman was shown as being a dairyman.

Those in trade were saddler Mrs Jane Chippenham, grocer Thomas James Doughty kept the Post Office, Foster & Norrington were also listed as grocers, the blacksmith was James William Pay, and John Bushell was the local builder.

The centres of Eastling's social life at that time were the church, the pub and the village hall. This latter structure was a timber building constructed as a barrack block at near by Throwley Aerodrome. A further barrack block was re-erected at Stalisfield as their village hut. Correctly known as Eastling Village Hall and Social Club, this structure was erected in 1920 on a small parcel of land opposite the school playing field for which a small rent was paid to the Belmont Estate. It served the village for nearly 90 years, offering a range of social activities including whist drives and old-time dances which were led by Mr & Mrs Pleasance.

This is not the only structure from Throwley Aerodrome to have been erected in Eastling. A former hanger was moved here and converted into a pair of semi-detached cottages known as Aerodrome House, in which Mrs Bushell once lived. These survive today, albeit subsequently bricked over, their origins unrecognisable. It was altered.



Plate 30 Above Left: Former WW1 aeroplane hangers from Throwley Aerodrome. Photo Dorothy Neal

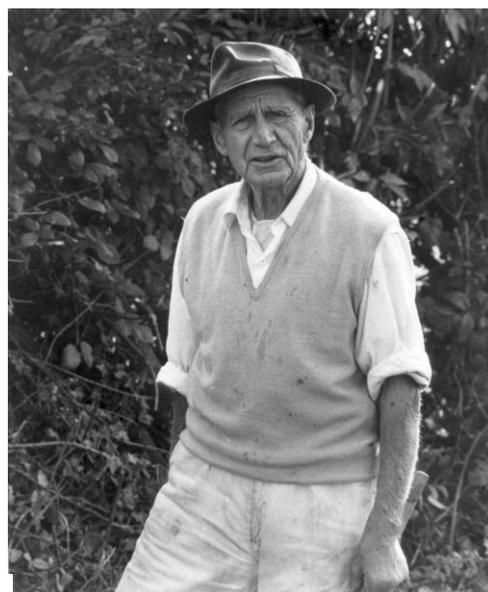


Plate 31. Above Right: Bill Hawkett. In 1972. Photo Hugh Perks

Among the villagers Frederick Thomas Pincott was headmaster of the school, his wife, Adela, acted as mistress, and their daughter, Grace, was a teacher. Robert Cackett acted as Parish Clerk, while Ernest Burren was constable-in-charge, living at the Police House. The Carpenter's Arms was kept by Arthur Cornfoot. Divan Court employed several people. Vie Gibbs, who lived at Briar Cottage, was a maid there, and in later life Bill Hawkett and Bert Beales worked on the farm, Bill being an expert hedge layer.

Bill Hawkett was an enterprising chap. Janet Wood remembers being told that after the Great War Bill bought the village shop, which was then in the southern part of Orchard House. Bill had a horse and cart with which he ran a daily service taking people into Faversham and collecting them after they had done their shopping. When the telephone came to Eastling Bill operated the telephone exchange. The exchange had all of 16 subscribers! Among Bill's recollections was that of Dr Porter, who had his surgery at Orchard House. On one occasion Dr Porter operated on a patient in the front room of Orchard House, removing an appendix.

Doughty's the butchers had a shop and slaughterhouse (now demolished) in front of The Nook in Eastling Street. This was an old established business, which continues now in Doddington. Further along the Street was the saddler's shop and forge, also now demolished.



Plate 52. The village midwife in front of Doughty's shop in Eastling Street in the 1920's.

Voile & Robertson's "Faversham Directories" for 1928, 1929, 1937 and 1939 provide a comprehensive overview of the village during this period. Albeit that some dwellings are in multiple occupation, the 1918 directory gives the names of 115 householders. By 1937 the number was 108, falling to 105 for 1939, however, there are some omissions in each directory, and over this period the names of some properties have been changed.

Plantation House is not mentioned in the earlier of these four directories, but Plantation Bungalow does appear. Some persons' addresses are simply given as The Street, or as with H. Woolley "near Wingfield". Strangely the Post Office is not listed until the 1939 directory. Among the more unusual house names given is "Mussel Pond" at Newnham Bottom!

Appendix 'A' makes comparison between householders in the 1928/9 and 1937/9 directories.

At this time a certain lady living in the village was married to a 'remittance man' who lived, not far away in the South Seas, but closer to home in Newnham.

World War 2 Period

The start of World War 2 brought dramatic change to Eastling, as well as it did to every village in the country. Land not previously under the plough was put into the production of crops. With the more able men volunteering or being called up the task of farming fell to their elders and, increasingly, to women, sometimes in the form of Land Girls.

In the early years of the war Eastling's held a dark secret. With the village's proximity to the coast an invasion was considered likely. A select number of villagers, one group led by Robert Boucher, who famed Divan Court, were charged with holding up any invasion. To this end they were provided with arms and ammunition which was secreted in nearby dene holes, tunnels and quarries. Among these hiding holes was perhaps the tunnel which is said to run from Porch House to the church.²⁸ Thus armed it was hoped that an invasion could be contained for up to two weeks. Robert Boucher and his men were, in effect, a suicide squad.

With the war over many of the younger men had no wish to return to the land and sought employment in the towns. The tractor was replacing the horse and the ordered way of rural life was never to be the same again.

Much of the land in the village centre had been given over to cherry trees, in orchards which stretched from North Eastling to Tong and Churchfields on both sides of the road and across to Arnold's Oak – hence Arthur Mee's description of the "church rising like a ship's mast from a sea of foam". Travellers came in horse-drawn vehicles to pick the cherry harvest. Among them Tom and June from Brighton who came each year until the mid-1960's when most of the cherry orchards were grubbed-out and laid to the plough. One of the travellers was a short chap whose ambition was to be a jockey but was assessed as being too small. A few orchards survived into the early 1970's, with the last commercial orchard being at Arnold's Oak into recent years.

Divan Court was a diverse farm. Old photographs of the farm show hay making, with the new-mown hay being built up into haystacks. Hops were also grown at Divan Court which had its own oast house, designed by Mr Clinch in the 1860's, the plan and drawing for which are held at the Sussex Record Office. More recently the oast was converted into a residence and is now known as 'Flintstones'.

²⁸ The entrance to the tunnel was in the cellar of Porch House. After the war Mr Worsfold had this entrance bricked-up. The route of the tunnel is said to be under the church path, but no exit has been found at the church.



Boucher family photographs
Plate 33. Above: Haystack
beside the driveway at Divan
Court.

Plate 34. Left: The Boucher
family in front of Divan Court
early 1900's.

Plate 35. Below: Two scenes of
apple picking in the early years
of the 20th century.





Plate 36. Above: Hay baling at Divan Court farm was a job for all hands

Plate 37. Below: Neatly thatched haystacks at Divan Court farm.



The Post-War Period

The presence of vermin was a traditional nuisance on farmland as it threatened crops. To this end a local institution The Rat and Sparrow Club had been formed in the village. Its purpose was to exterminate rats from farmyards and storage barns, and to cull the then enormous flocks of sparrows which fed off the corn. With the prevalence of the grey squirrel they also became classified as vermin. The Rat and Sparrow Club held its annual dinner at the Carpenters Arms of which photographs used to hang in the pub. The Club was disbanded in the late 1950's with the introduction of modern silos and the disappearance of large flocks of sparrows.

A Boys' Brigade flourished in the village, holding their activities in Newnham Lane on Glebe land. The lads who formed the Brigade doubtless being the same ones who, on other nights, presented sparrow heads and rats' tails to the Club – a useful means of augmenting their meagre pocket-money.

In 1977 Eastling celebrated the Queen's Jubilee in grand style with an extensive sports programme on the school field, together with a variety of events such as a Coffee Morning at the Police House, Fancy Dress Party, Musical Concerts, Morris Dancing and country dancing, beetle drive, cricket match and darts tournament, among others. A lavish programme of events was published, illustrated with old photographs of the village and amusing cartoons by the cartoonist Rod Frazer. At that time the village still retained one shop, kept by Mr & Mrs Worsfold.

The Worsfold's lived at Porch House and during their time there had the tunnel bricked-up which supposedly led under the church path to the church. It was possibly in this tunnel that Bob Boucher and his men secreted their weapons and ammunition. The village contains a number of holes in the ground, known as Dene Holes. Their origins are obscure. Some suggest they were pre-medieval flint-workings or places where crops and other valuables could be held, or possibly just sink holes in the chalk. During the 1970 one such sink hole opened up when a tractor drove over it near Churchfields.

In numbers of buildings Eastling remained fairly constant from the Victorian period through to the post-war period. A number of concrete frame Airey houses were erected on the Glebe. In the 1960's part of the Old Rectory grounds provided land for a new development, which was named Meeson's Close, after a local farmer. In the 1980's when the Airey houses were found to be in deteriorating condition they were demolished and a new estate was built at the Glebe.

An obituary held in the Norfolk Record Office is that of naturalist and diarist Judith Ferrier, born 1902, described as a resident of Eastling in 1965. Formerly of Blakeney in Norfolk, she was the driving force behind the establishment of Scott Head as an important bird sanctuary. Rather delightfully, the obituary describes her spelling as phonetic! In the light of her work, it was a pleasant co-incidence that the co-author's daughter was proposed to on an extremely windy winter's day at Scott Head. She accepted.

In motoring circles Joe and Bunny Turner, who lived at the Manor House, were held in the highest regard. Joe was one of the famous 'Bentley Boys'. Following 'Tim' Birkin's death in 1933, Joe drove his car to victory on several

occasions. He also excelled in speedboat racing, and was for many years churchwarden. Bunny also raced.

The “Eastling Village –Villagers’ Memories” website contains some accounts of people who formerly lived in the village. One was Mr Albert Childs, whose family moved to No 6 Prospect Place in 1931, for which his father paid 7/6d a week in rent. Mr Cecil Harris was the headmaster of the school, and after Mrs Pettit died Albert’s mother took over cleaner at the school, church and village hut. He remembers Joe Cornfoot, who after he left the Carpenter’s Arms came to a sad end. When war was declared he was drafted into the Home Guard, and was finally called up in the Army.

James Meeson was then the local farmer with four farms. North Eastling, North Court, Spuckles Farm and Tong Farm where Admiral Penny lived. During the war some bombs were dropped on North Eastling. Herbert Whibley took over the forge when Mr Pay retired. During the weekends Albert used to help Mr Spillett in the oast houses. Among the incidents recalled was Mrs Tong, the wagoner’s wife who fell out of a cherry tree while pregnant. Albert wrote that she could not be saved.

Albert Childs recalls that they used to have a Young Farmers’ Club at the school and kept bees. He remembered that one afternoon he was called from work to collect a swarm – six swarms in all, one in the orchard where the new village hall is now built. [Note: This recollection was written in 2000, shortly before his death at Snodland, and has been paraphrased].

On the subject of bees, the late Donald Sattin, then at the time farm foreman at Deerton Street, had the job of moving a large number of beehives, with bees, to a new location. The hives were loaded on to a lorry. As the vehicle rounded the bend by the Carpenter’s Arms the lorry swerved and a number of the hives fell off. There were bees all over the village! Donald collected up those hives and bees he could and continued on his way.²⁹

Today there are still several beekeepers in the village who have formed themselves into a local society.

By the mid-1960’s the Hut Committee was virtually moribund. Within ten years there was concern over its condition. In 1974 the Rev’d Edward Hudspith, acting on behalf on the hall committee, conducted correspondence with Lord Harris about the possibility of acquiring land from Belmont Estate for a village green and site for a new hall. Unfortunately no progress could then be made. In the early 1980’s the Hut was given a further lease of life when a local farmer drove his tractor against it, pushed the wall back upright and the tie beams were refastened. The Hut was then used for some years as a playgroup organised by Tish Neaves and Sue Perks. From time to time in the early 1980’s Eric Bland held regular auctions in the Hut. Eventually the Belmont Estate provided land adjacent to the school playing field for a new village hall.

The Clergy of Eastling

For the greater part of the Victorian period the Rev’d. George Burch Reynardson held the ‘cure of souls’ in the village. His tenure from 1842 to 1892 constituted the longest of Eastling’s clergy. There is a fine plaque to him in the

²⁹ As told to Hugh Perks, 2008.

chancel.³⁰ He was succeeded by the Rev'd. Thomas Burton who held the incumbency for 45 years. This is surely a record –two clergy holding office in 104 years.

Photographs of the church show that until electricity was installed the interior was lit by magnificent oil lamps hung from chains. The largest lamps were in a run following the centre of the nave and chancel, with smaller lamps on either side between the arcade arches. The chandelier in the chancel was reputed to be in solid silver. After the war when electricity was introduced into the church this object disappeared, though to have been stolen.

Since 1937 Eastling has had thirteen incumbents. Janet Wood (néé Boucher) remembers the Rev'd. William Lamb (who baptised her), holding office during and after World War II. A subsequent Rector, Edward Hudspith, was the last to conduct the ancient service of Churching of Women. Gabby Turner recalls being the last woman in the village to have been 'churched' following the birth of her daughter. In 1985 centuries of Eastling's ecclesiastical tradition came to an end with the creation of a combined Benefice of Eastling, Stalisfield-cum-Otterden and Ospringe (the Church of England's way of re-introducing pluralities without pecuniary advantage). To service the new benefice an American priest was appointed, Paul Storm Mayerson, who brought new and lively ideas to our churches. With the combined benefice the rectorship of Eastling was suspended.

In 1997 the first woman priest was installed in the benefice – the Rev'd Penny Fenton, a local lady, who was daughter of the late headmaster of Ospringe School. A second lady priest joined us when Dr Angela Cheeseman was ordained as a local minister (OLM). Penny was succeeded by the Rev'd (now Canon) Caroline Pinchbeck. Her induction on 13 September 2006 was an occasion not to be forgotten by her former parishioners who had travelled up by coach from Truro. The equinoxial gale brought sheet lightning and torrential rain, the water running off the fields turned Kettle Hill Road into a river. During Caroline's tenure the combined benefice was nominally disbanded, with Eastling, Stalisfield and the chapel at Otterden operating as a benefice of its own. This changed in 2013 with the appointment of our second overseas minister, Canon Donald Lawton from Nova Scotia. After several years of the mills of God grinding slowly Canon Lawton was installed as Rector of the new Benefice of High Downs comprising Eastling, Stalisfield-cum-Otterden and Throwley in 2014. After Lawton's retirement the High Downs Benefice amalgamated with the Benefice of Creekside and Kingsdown under the Rev'd Canon Steve Lillycrap.

For a village with a population of 365 persons (2011 census) Eastling has had not just one but two canons. In January 2014 Pamela Baxter was installed as a Lay Canon of St Paul's Cathedral. Pamela is married to Andrew Baxter, who for the past 40 years has been Eastling's church organist.

The turn of the Century Village

By the start of the 21st century Eastling village school had outgrown its Victorian premises and 1960's extensions. Doddington school had been closed and with an increased demand for school places locally Eastling school was extended with new buildings. Although with only around 100 pupils, the school has been

³⁰ Reynardson married Julia Trollope, daughter of Sir John Trollope, 6th baronet.

awarded the accolade by the Government of being within the top best performing 100 Primary Schools in the Country. The news was given to the school in 2014 in a letter from the Minister of State for Schools, the Rt. Hon. David Laws.

The village hall was now beyond all hope of repair and restoration. Under a committee headed by John Coultrip, Gilly Freed, Eric Bland and others, and with a substantial grant from the Council, a new village hall was constructed on land granted by the Belmont Estate in 1998.. The new hall offers a wide range of facilities for local people, including short mat bowls.

Eastling was long bereft of a village sign. Local artist, John Darlington, designed such a sign which was made locally in oak and erected opposite the Manor House. It depicts the village church with its magnificent 2,000 year old yew.

In recent years, as Eastling has become more heavily trafficked, people became concerned that the 40 mph speed limit through the village was no longer fit for purpose. After many years of campaigning the village was granted 30 mph speed limits. Unfortunately, for some drivers, 30 still means 40, and hopefully one day we can have a 20 mph restriction through the Street and Kettle Hill Road to the school, as has been granted to some other villages in Swale.

Community Activities

The village is blessed by having a church, pub, school, village hall, and, unlike so many villages today, a bus service connecting Stalisfield and Eastling with Faversham. No village activity runs itself and we are fortunate that people of ability live in the village to ensure a lively annual programme of events. The monthly 'what's on' programme is publicised in the church magazine Good News which was started up, and continues to be run, by Mark and Hilary Harlow.

In the 1970's Pippa and Jimmy West organised a number of village fetes. This later became the school fete run by the energetic members of FOES (Friends of Eastling School), who continue to run regular jumble sales and wine & wisdom evenings in aid of the school. Other activities have included the occasional Flower Festival, concert and Youth Festival at the church. The Youth Festival in July 1977 introduced puppets. Organised by master puppeteer, Dr Angela Cheeseman, with assistance from Pim Baxter, and operated by the children, the shows continue to enthral both children and adults.

The village is fringed by woodland which in May time offer outstanding displays of bluebells and several varieties of orchid. For many years a Bluebell Walk was organised attended by over 350 people and a considerable number of dogs. Autumn sees the annual tug-o-war between Eastling and Stalisfield either on the school playing field or on Stalisfield Green, and the Harvest Auction at the Carpenters Arms. Norman and Marina Neaves started the tradition of the Christmas lunch for senior citizens.

Our year concludes with a candlelit Christmas Carol Concert with carols sung by the village choir under Andrew Baxter. The church can seat 200 people. Invariably it is standing room only.

Eastling – a Hamlet of Delight. A fine place in which to live.

* * * *

Acknowledgements

The notion of producing a history of the village came from a retired school teacher Miss Dorothy Neal who moved here in 1966. She made a number of notes about the church and the village, but was sadly unable to travel to record offices to pursue further detail. On her death in 1982 these papers passed to Dr Charles Turner. Miss Neal took a number of photographs of village buildings, and these provide a valuable 'then-and-now' comparison. She was also able to collect one view of The Street taken around 1900 which none of us had seen before.

Our object has been to provide no more than brief snapshots of Eastling over time. Most of the material has come from National Archives and the Centre for Kentish Studies. The exigencies of time (and old age) have prevented me from examining records of the Parish, School, PCC and church registers. We acknowledge assistance from several villages in providing photographs and their own recollections of the village and its buildings, particularly the photographs from Janet Wood (née Boucher) of Divan Court in its farming days. of Eastling.

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Plate 38 Eastling Street in 1968 photographed by Dorothy Neale at a time when the village boasted a shop, a policeman and a road mender.

Appendix 'A'

Property	Occupiers in 1928/9	Occupiers in 1937/9
Spuckles Farm	Mrs M.A.Bartlett	Mrs M.A.Bartlett
Spuckles	H.Davis	Bertha Graham
North Eastling	G.A.Burbridge	V.S.Barrett, E.A.Hover
North Eastling Cotts	A.Barton, Mrs W.Tolhurst,	A.Tong,
North Court	A.J.Meeson	A.J.Meeson & G.Amos
North Court Cottage	T.Coppins, A.White,	R.Clark, T.Coppens,
North Court Cottages	J.T.Samson, E.Whibley	Miss Pincott, H.S.Roalfe,
	A.Tong,	J.T.Samson, A.G.Tong,
Council Houses		E.D.Clackett, A.H.White,
Glebe Cottage		J.F.Shepherd
The Rectory	Rev. T.M.Burton	W.A.Lamb
Forge	J.W.Pay	n/a
Forge House	n/a	H.Whitley (or Whibley)
Forge Cottages	N.H.Pay	A.W.Wright then Emily Roalfe
Kings Cottages	Mrs M.A.Franks	S.Whale & Ada Whale
		E.J.White,
Little Kings	n/a	Mary Wigley, T.Patterson
Porch House	H.Hosband & Mrs M.Long	Mrs F.Long & Mrs M.Long
Porch Cottage	Mrs F.Long	n/a
Laburnham Cott	H.A.Jones	J.W.Humphrey then J.Ruffle
The Street	J.B.Bushell, J.Chesson,	T.J.Doughty, Mrs R.A.Gammon.
	A.H.Eason, C.Forster, G.Wraight,	A.Gammon, W.H.Godden,
	R.W.Selby, C.J.Skinner	W.W.Hawkett,, C.J.Skinner,
	Mrs S.J.Walton, E.J.White,	A.H.Eason, J.Knowles
The Cottage (Street)	F & W. Court	n/a
Post Office	T.W.Doughty	M.Fletcher,
The Red House	A.Hillman	A.Hillman
Grocer (Orchard Ho)	Mrs E.J.Norrington	Mrs F.W.Hawkett
Plantation Bungalow	Mrs E. & Mrs M.H.Morrison	n/a
Plantation House	n/a	J.E.Lacey then H.J.Wortham
Carpenters Arms	A.Cornfoot	A.Cornfoot
Prospect Place	E.Herman, J.E.Mills, A.G.Pettit,	A.J.Mills, E.Childs, A.G.Pettit
	DH. & W.Shrubshall, H.Whibley,	
1 Prospect Place	S.H.T.Latter	A.P.Coull, then L.J.Taylor
2 Prospect Place	-	W.G.Hills
5 Prospect Place	-	G.R.Swain
Tong House	D.F.Henley	H.L.Penney
Tong Cottages	G.Stone, A.D.Horden, F.Hutchinson	S.C.Paine
	S.C.Payne(s),	
Tong Cottage	C.Cleaver	Florence Black then Edith Burton
Pig Green	G.Record	H.E.Harrison & Patrick Casey
		F.C.Williams
Pig Green Cottages	G.Tong, A.Edwards,	Annie Edward
Newhouse Farm	R.Butcher	A.E.Chapman
Newhouse Fm Cotts		I.M.Foreman
Nr Newhouse Farm	A.G.Piles	A.G.Piles
Cottage, Newhouse	H.Payne	T.S.Champ
Dunstall Cottage	C.H.Robbins	C.H.Robbins
The Limes	T.Elvy	A.T.Coultrip
Skiltons	n/a	H.Richards
Mill Cottages	A.Jenner, Mrs E.Jordan,	A.Jenner
Mill Lane	E.Clackett,	Emma Dodd, H.Payne

Property	Occupiers in 1928/9	Occupiers in 1937/9
Mill Row	H.Elvy, M.Shoebriidge, J.Shrubshall,	R.C.Croucher, W.D.Smith, A.J.Russell, R.V.Selby, H.Woolley
Fair View (Wingfield)	n/a	-
Newnham Road	Mrs H.E.Barton, G.Burbridge,	A.Denyer,
Newnham Lane	R.Cackett, S.Horne, W.D.Smith, S.G.Philpott,	J.E.Mills Mrs E.Long Daisy Harland, R.Huckstep P.Wigg Ethel Clakett
Old School House	W.T.Doughty	
Wiltons	Mrs E.Long	
Bankside	-	
2 Bankside		
4 Bankside		
Edgemore Hatch	Mrs J.Reynolds, A.H.Sherlock,	G.Spillett, then Ellen Hayward, Caroline Kerry & F.W.Kite H.Wigg A.Emily Brenchley E. & Margaret Morrison E.F.Prall, then Margaret Stewart W.Fowle A. St.J.Diamant E.A.Orr L.F.Hutchinson R.W.Boucher & Janet Morrison H.A.Atkins C.A.Harris F.G.Wheeler Mrs Tolhurst Deborah Perris
Edgemore Cottage	n/a	
Mussel Pond	H.G.Harrison	
Greenhythe	n/a	
Woodcot	n/a	
Little Cott	n/a	
Newnham Bottom	n/a	
Manor	A. St.J.Diamant	
Manor Cottage	n/a	
Box Cottage	n/a	
Divan Court	Mrs E.A.C.Boucher & Mrs M.Bell	
Divan Cottage	G.Harland	
School House	C.A.Harris	
Pinks Hill	N.Gibbs then J & F.G.Wheeler	
Pinks Hill Cottage	n/a	
Kettle Hill	Mrs D.Elvy, J.T.Kemsley T.Perris, W.H.Cooksley, G.Swift, Mrs H.Thomson	
1 Kettle Hill	n/a	E.Foad
2 Kettle Hill	R.W.Smith	R.W.Smith
3 Kettle Hill	n/a	C.F.Skinner, then G.Watson
7 Kettle Hill	D.Skinner	T.Skinner
Hill Crest	n/a	E.L.Batson-James
Arnold's Oak	P.S.Springer	H.W.Coultrip
Arnold's Cottage	J.Collins	n/a
Huntingfield	H.Carter	F.W.Robbins
Huntingfield Cottis	E.Feakins, E.H.Hills, S.Wellard, R.H.Gambell	H.Keen
2 Huntingfield Cottis	n/	J.H.Watts
Nr Huntingfield	J.Godden	J.Godden
Hockley	C.Brenchley	C.Brenchley, J.P.Barnard, E.J.Morris
Hockley Farm	n/a	A.J.Burchett, then R.W.Keeler
Hockley Cottages	C.E. & R.Huckstep W.Smith H.Thompson, G.Ralph, A.H.White, J.Wood,	S.J.Lawrence P.Stears
Feakins Cottages		
Listed as Eastling	W.Hooker, G.Spillett,	

Voile & Robertson's Directory EASTLING. 1939

Amos, G., North Court
 Atkins, H. A., Divan cottage
 Barnard, J. P., Hockley
 Barrett, Mrs. M. A., Spuck's farm
 Barrett, V. S., North Eastling
 Boucher, R. W., Divan court
 Brenchley, C. Hockley
 Brenchley, A. Emily, Greenhythe
 Breninn, Phyllis, Ivy cottage
 Burton, Edith, Tong cottage

 Coultrip, H. W., Arnolds Oak
 Coultrip, A. T., The Limes
 Croucher, R. C., Mill row
 Diamant, A. St. J., Manor House
 Dodd, Emma, Mill lane
 Doughty, T. J., The Street
 Eason, A. H., The Street
 Fletcher, M., Post office
 Foard, E., 1 Kettle hill
 Foreman, I. M., Newhouse farm
 cottages
 Fowle, W., Newnham Bottom
 Gammon, A., The Street
 Gammon, Mrs. R. A., The Street
 Gibbs, W., The Street
 Godden, J., Huntingfield cottages
 Godden, W. H., The Street
 Harland, Daisy, Bankside
 Harris, C. A., School House
 Harrison, H. G., Tong cottages
 Harrison, E. H., King's cottages
 Harrison, H. E., Tong cottages
 Hawkett, W. W., The Street
 Hayward, Ellen, Egmore hatch
 Hayward, Emily, Newnham lane
 Hillman, A., Red House
 Hills, W. G., 2 Prospect place
 Hover, E. A., North Eastling
 Huckstep, Rg., Bank side
 Hutchinson, F., Tong cottages
 Hutchinson, L. F., Pig green
 Jenner, A., Mill cottages
 Keeler, R. W., Hockley cottages
 Keen, H., Huntingfield cottages
 Kerry, Caroline, Egmore Hatch
 Lamb, W. A., The Rectory
 Lawrence, S. J., Hockley cotts.
 Long, Mrs. E., Wiltons
 Long, Mrs. F., Porch cottage
 Long, Mrs. M., Porch House
 Meeson, A. J., North Court
 Mills, A. J., Prospect place
 Mills, J. E., Old School House

 Casey, Patrick, Pig green
 Champ, T. S., The Cottage, New
 House farm .
 Childs, E., Prospect place
 Clackett, E. D., Council Houses
 Clackett, Ethel, 4 Bank side
 Clark, R., North court cottage
 Cooksley, W. H., Kettle hill
 Coppins, T., North Court cottage
 Cornfoot, A., Carpenter's Arms

 Morris, E. J., Hockley farm
 Morrison, E., Woodcot
 Morrison, Janet, Divan court
 Morrison, Margaret, Woodcot
 Neaves, T., Newnham lane
 Orr, E. A., Manor cottage
 Paine, S. C., Tong cottages
 Patterson, T., Little King's
 Payne, H., Mill lane
 Penney, H. L., Tong House
 Perriss, Deborah, Kettle hill
 Pettit, A. G., Prospect place
 Piles, A. G., near Newhouse farm
 Pincott, Miss, North Court cottage
 Roalte, Emily, Forge cottage
 Roalfe, H. S., North Court cottages
 Robins, C. H., Dunstall cottage
 Robins, E. W., Huntingfield
 Ruffle, J. F., Laburnham
 Russell, J. A., Newnham lane
 Samson, J. T., North Court cotts
 Selby, R. V., Newnham lane
 Shepherd, J. F., Glebe cottage
 Skinner, C. J., The Street
 Skinner, T., 7 Kettle hill
 Smith, R. W., 2 Kettle hill
 Smith, W. D., Mill row
 Stears, P., Feakins cottages
 Stewart, Margaret, Little cot
 Swan, G. R., 5 Prospect place
 Taylor, L. J., 1 Prospect place
 Tolhurst, Mrs., Pinks hill cottage
 Tong, A., North Eastling
 Tong, A. G., North Court cottages
 Watson, G., 3 Kettle hill
 Whale, S., King's cottages
 Wheeler, F. G., Pinks hill
 Whibley, H., Forge House
 White, A. H., North Court cotts
 White, E. J., King's cottages
 Wigg, H., Mussel pond
 Woolley, H., Fair View
 Wortham, H. J., Plantation house

EASTLING –	
Philip	c.1200
Gervaise	c.1206
James de Eslinges	c.1245
Stephen	c.1256
J.Clericus	c.1270-1274
John Dyne	1279
William de Warmyington	1321-1322
Galfrid Dyne	1322
Peter de St. John	d.1348-1356
Robert de Strede	1362
William de Churchulle*	r.1362-1371
William Capellanus	1365
William Fitz Thomas	-1403
William Marton	1403-1405
William Ardern	1405-
John Steyle	1422-1425
John Smith	1425-1429
John Lofthous	1429-
Laurence Ranlyn	d. -1460
Roger Greneforde	d.1460-1474
Thomas Sondez	d.1474-1478
William Aubrey	r.1478-1479
William Clifford	1482-
Thomas Modley	d. -1506
Roger Churche	r.1508-1510
Nicholas Hillyngton	r.1510-1514
Edward Bowdon	d.1514-1545
Thomas Slayne	d.1545-1558

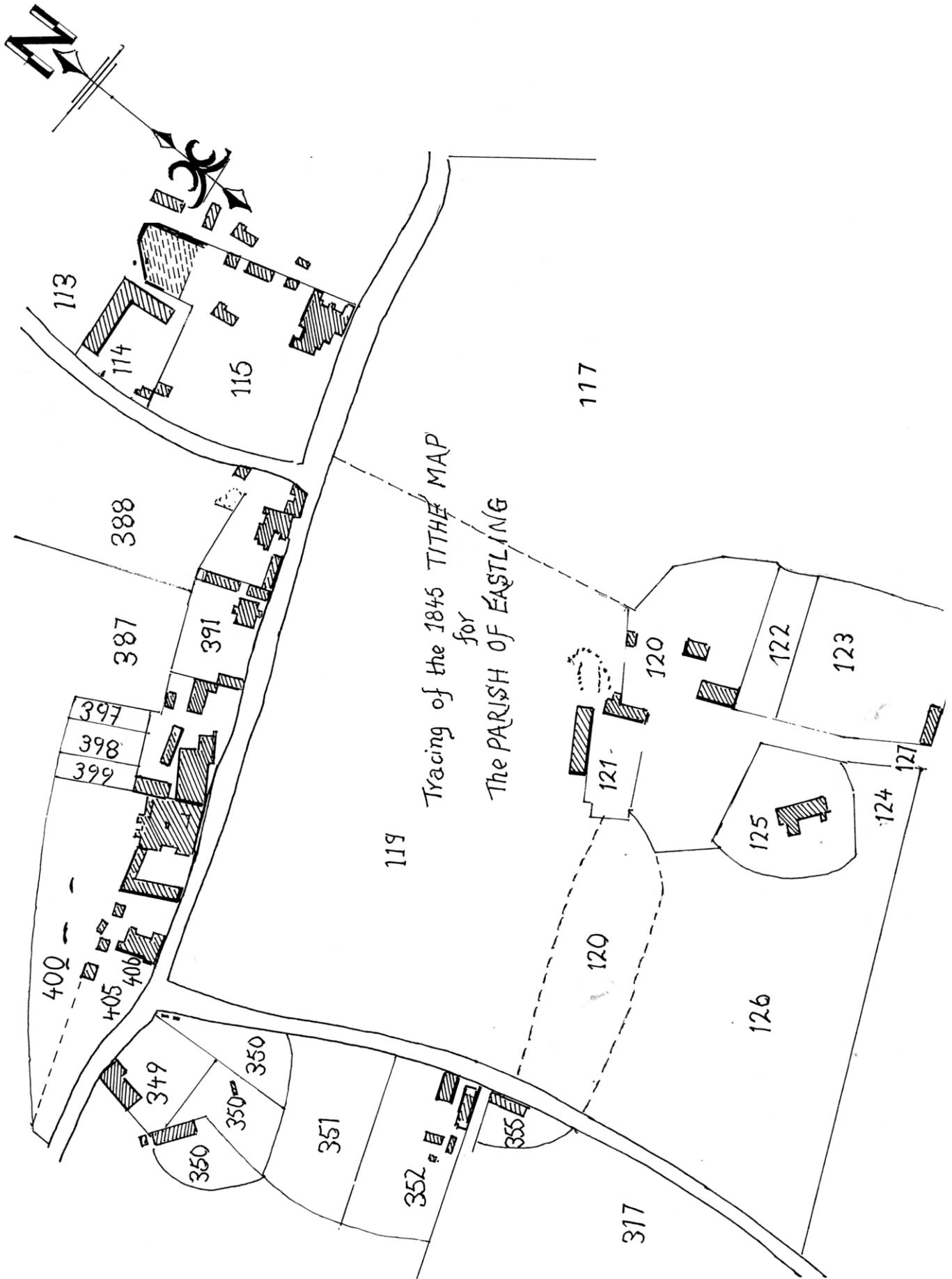
The Clergy of St Mary	
Richard Rogers	1558-1575
John Walsall	d.1574-1617
Edward Simson	1617-1651
Samuel Jemmatt	1651-1677
William Wickins	d.1677-1718
Richard Bowes	d.1718-1745
Philip Twisden	r.1745
Roger Mostyn	r.1746-1752
Maurice Gleyre	d.1752-1781
Anthony Shepherd	1782-1796
Edward Cage	d.1796-1835
William Lushington	1835-1842
George Burch Reynardson	d.1842-1892
Thomas Burton	d.1892-1936
William Lamb	r.1937-1947
Henry Blake	r.1947-1952
James Golder	d.1952-1953
George Mountford	r.1954-1962
Edward Hudspith	r.1962-1977
Peter Letford	r.1977-1979
Ian Hawkins	r.1979-1985
Paul Mayerson	1985-1990
Douglas Turton	1991-1996
Penny Fenton	1997-2005
Caroline Pinchbeck	2006-2012
Interregnum	
Canon Donald Lawton	r.2013-2018
Canon Steve Lillicrap	2019 -

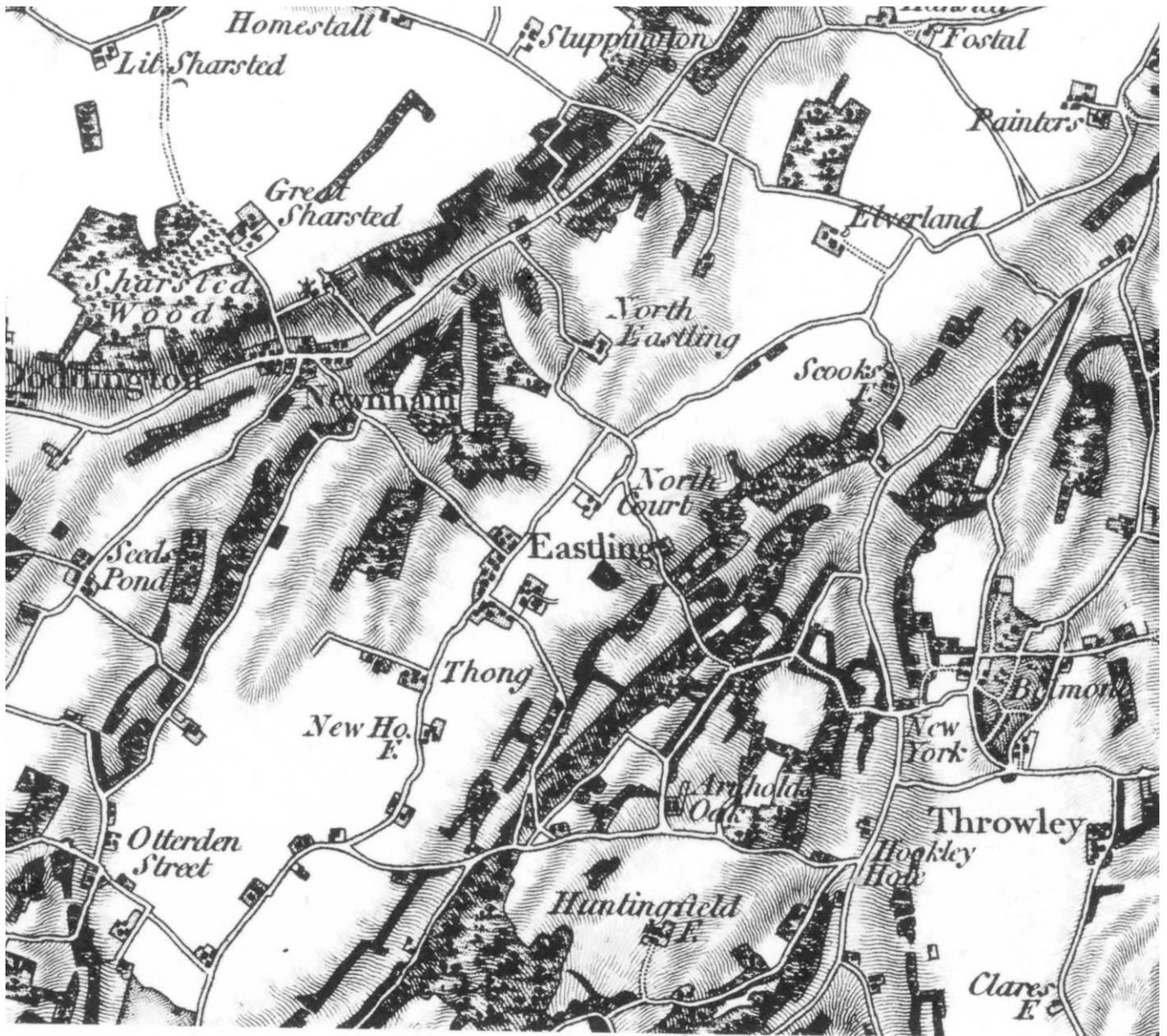
Notes:

The list of Clergy may or may not be accurate.

1. J.Clericus is not mentioned in the Eastling Register, but at the time, 1270-1274, was described as 'Rector of Eastling'.

2. In the Chancery case of 1357 Churchulle is described as 'parson of Eastling'.





THE VILAGE OF EASTLING 200 YEARS AGO

from the 1 inch OS Plan

Several highways shewn on the old map no longer exist for traffic. Some have become bridlepaths, or footpaths, while others are private tracks.