

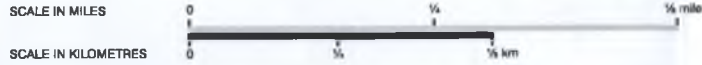
A POSTCARD COLLECTION
OF BOOKHAM

By

Barry Feltham

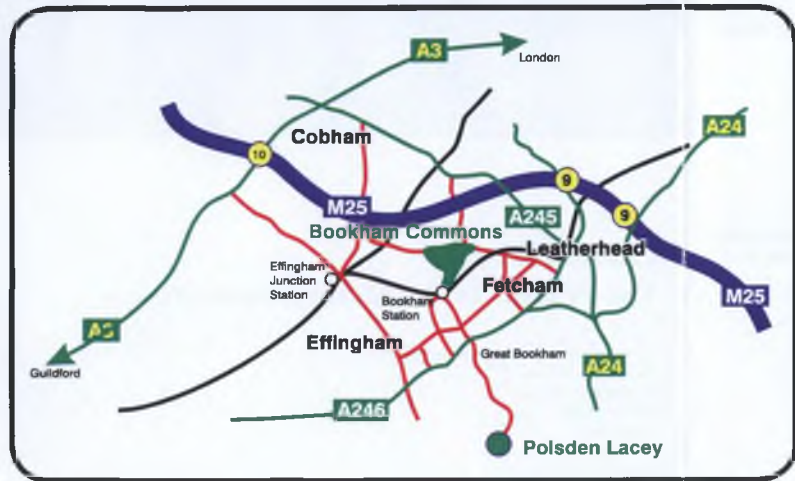
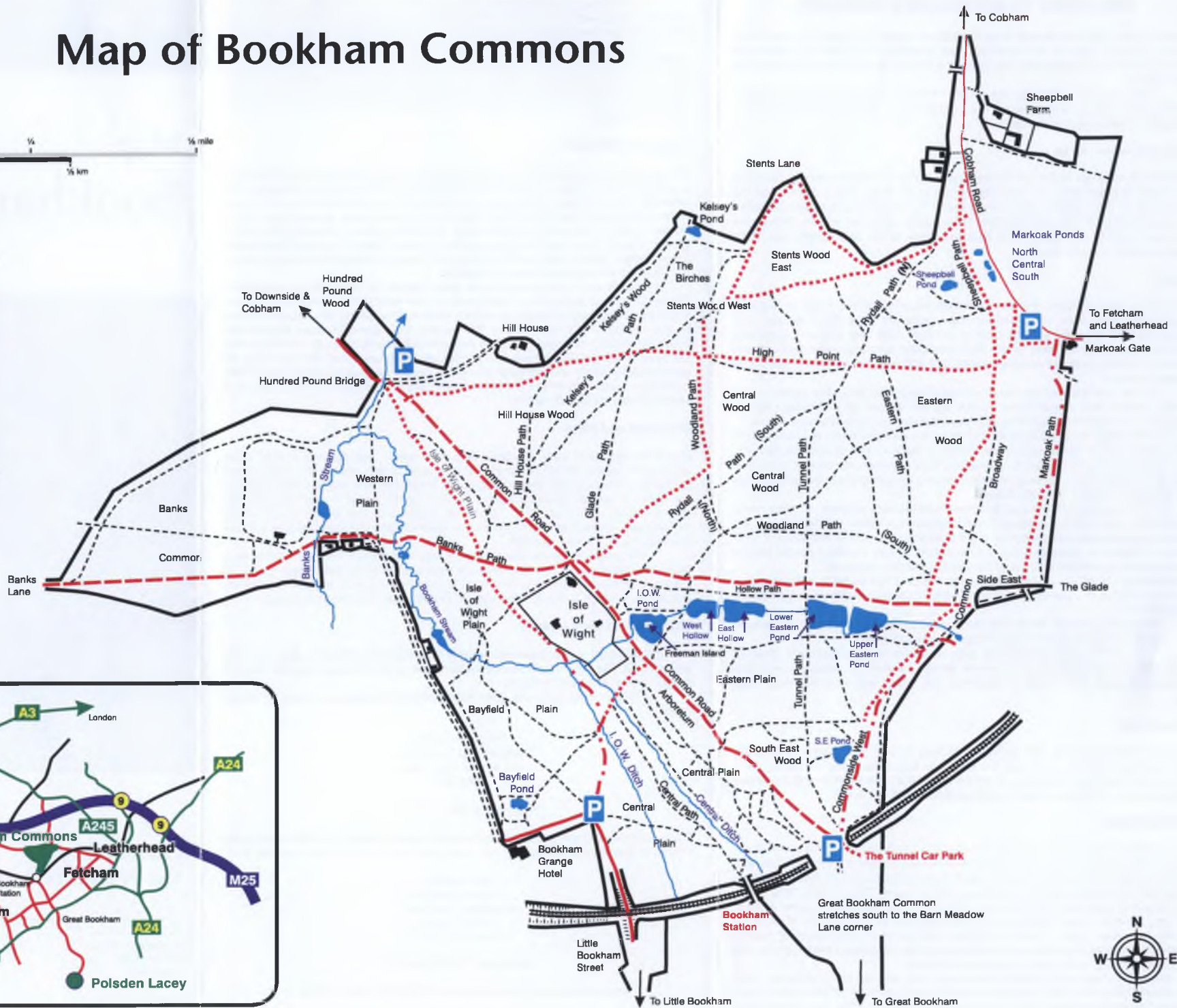
Album 4
(Pages 41 - 60)

Map of Bookham Commons



LEGEND

- Water
- Public roads
- Other metalled roads
- Public Bridleway
- Permissive horse rides
- Footpaths
- Car Park



WELCOME TO BOOKHAM COMMONS

Grassland plains, oak woods and serene ponds are waiting for you to explore on a peaceful stroll, by cycle or on horseback. The commons are home to a wonderful variety of wildlife and have been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by English Nature.

The survey of wildlife by the London Natural History Society was initiated in 1941 and is still running, making the commons one of the best recorded and thoroughly studied areas in the country.

Access and where to go

A network of surfaced tracks can be used year-round to wander circular routes or plan longer distance hikes or cycle trips along quiet lanes. Grassy paths lead the adventurous to even quieter glades and streams but bring stout footwear or wellies if it's been raining. All the common land enjoys open access for walkers, though we have to ask cyclists and horse riders to please keep to the blue waymarked bridle tracks to protect the wild flowers.

History

A remnant of the wildwood that once covered the whole of the South of England, the commons have been influenced by man's activities since the stone age. Our ancestors hunted big wild animals such as red deer, wild boar and very large wild cattle (the Aurochs) that made glades that have since been kept open by hundreds of years of cutting trees for making houses and fuel, together with the grazing of domestic livestock.

All the land around the Saxon village of Bochham (from the saxon boche, meaning beech) was owned from AD666 by the Monks from Chertsey Abbey. Pannage for their swine (foraging by pigs) was mentioned in the Domesday Book.

In 1551 King Henry VIII gave their lands to the Howard family, the various Earls of Effingham, one of whom was in command of the fleet that fought the Armada. Good King Harry was not averse to plundering local commons for timber, as he sent his steward to Bookham, among other commons, to survey them for suitable oak trees for beams to build Nonsuch Palace.

In 1923 Eastwick Park in Great Bookham was sold to a property developer who found that he also held the deeds to Great Bookham Common. Outraged locals got together and raised enough money to buy it back and present it to the National Trust to preserve forever. In those days the Trust was in its infancy and local people formed a management committee that cared for and funded the commons.

Little Bookham Common was presented to the Trust in 1924 by Mr H. Willock-Pollen, Lord of the Manor of Little Bookham, with Banks Common being given by Mr R.R. Calburn in 1925.

During the Second World War the commons were occupied by anti-aircraft guns, a searchlight battery and many troops, lorries and tanks.

In 1994 the National Trust took on direct management and financial responsibility for the property. Local people are still involved by support, advice and fundraising through the Friends of Bookham Commons and their volunteer work party.

Management

One of our aims is to keep the commons looking as wild and natural as possible, whilst keeping the paths open and the car parks tidy. What looks scruffy to some can be a home to many creatures, so we try to get the right balance and are always thinking ahead... 400 years when planning replacement oak trees!

Oak Woodlands

Old and gnarled, twisted, hollow, split and dead trees look wonderful in the woodland landscape and support even more wildlife than the tall straight ones that are valuable for timber. You will find all sorts in our woods, some grown on for timber, some have to be felled for people's safety, but most are left for nature. They all tell a story...

One tree looks very much like any other but if you look closely some of them have been cut above head height up the trunk and allowed to grow lots of branches from the same place again. These are pollards and give even more places for wildlife to shelter, whilst they often live considerably longer too. By cutting them high up, the new shoots avoided being eaten by deer and livestock.

Some of the large old English oaks are very wide with big lower branches. They have grown in the open with lots of light and had grass growing underneath in what was called pasture woodland. Since cattle grazing stopped in 1949 many young trees have grown around them.

On the higher (but not always drier!) ground to the North, many of the shrubs are hazel bushes with lots of stems. These were cut (coppiced) in rotation to provide useful poles for tools, gadgets, shelters and weaving into hurdles or wattle fences.

Look out for the hornbeam trees, especially in Hill House Wood, they look like smaller beech trees but are closely related to hazel. The ground underneath them is favourable for the growth of bluebells and the very quiet or lucky visitor may see a hawfinch feeding on the seeds. Keep a lookout for woodpeckers, Green, Greater and Lesser Spotted can all be seen, though they often hide round the back of a tree if they see you first!

Ponds and Wetlands

The wet ground at Bookham Commons has been both a curse and a blessing. It is probably what saved it from becoming farmland years ago and nowadays with extensive land drainage has become very precious as a special place where many plants and insects thrive. Yellow flags (the wild iris), water mint, spearwort and water plantain revel in the damp ground and at the waters edge, where all three native species of newt, frogs, toads and grass snakes abound. Dragonflies zoom around with a wing design unchanged in millions of years. There are many different kinds such as the Southern Hawker and Emperor Dragonfly.

The ponds vary in size according to their purpose, for nearly all are man-made. The large chain of ponds from Upper Eastern Pond near Combeside to the Isle of Wight Pond in the middle of the commons were dug for rearing fish, almost certainly by the monks from Chertsey Abbey. The medium sized ponds (Kelseys, Bayfield and South East Ponds) have gently sloping sides where livestock could go to drink, whilst the steep sided Sheepbell Pond is a borrow pit where sand and flint were dug for track building. There are triangular ponds on Eastern Plain that cause a bit of head scratching... these are where the anti-aircraft guns were dug-in! ...and all the small circular ponds are bomb craters!!

Grassland and Scrub

Out in the grassland there is a great deal more light... and because of that, there are a much greater variety of plants... and because of that, there are a huge variety of insects... which is why there are so many birds! This and the fact that nearby is the safety of predator-proof clumps of thorn scrub to shelter in and nest, explains why Bookham Commons is so noisy with birdsong in the spring when visiting nightingales, warblers and turtle doves join native finches and song thrushes to make stunning music. Come and listen.

The grassland would change rapidly into woodland if we didn't cut or slow down the coarse grasses, scrub and young trees and by far the best way is the use of grazing animals, cattle that munch down the competitive species and give the smaller, delicate plants such as the Southern Marsh Orchid room to grow and spread.

Thankyou for your support

The National Trust is an independent charity that receives no direct funding from the government. The only reason that we are here able to look after such special places is thanks to your wonderful support.

If you know someone who is interested in becoming a member, please contact:

The National Trust
Membership Department
PO Box 39 Warrington
WA5 7WD

Telephone: 0870 458 4000

If you would like to give special support to the commons please consider joining the Friends of Bookham Commons, or come and join one of our volunteer work parties:

The Warden,
Merritts Cottage
Bookham Commons
Leatherhead
Surrey. KT23 3HZ

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and help us keep this precious area FOR EVER, FOR EVERYONE

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THE NATIONAL TRUST

Map of Bookham Commons



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The Bookhams

Bookham Common

Bookham Commons comprise three ancient commons: Great Bookham, Little Bookham and Banks Common. All are part of the Saxon settlement of Bocham - 'the village by the beeches.' They cover 1.51 kilometres in total.

A group of dwellings known as the Isle of Wight is situated within the site, and a track, Common Road, leads to and from the northwest. Little Bookham Common (the smaller of the two parts of the site) lies south and west of this track, whereas Great Bookham Common lies to the east. Together the two commons comprise a Site of Special Scientific Interest, originally notified as such in 1961. The site is owned by the National Trust. A network of public footpaths crosses the site.



Above is a local Stevens postcard of one of the ponds on Bookham Common c1920s. The repro postcard below of the Isle of Wight site is dated 1927.



The Bookhams

Bookham Common

Great Bookham Common was bought by local residents in 1923 to save the oak woodlands, and then given to the National Trust. Little Bookham Common was given to the Trust in 1924 by Mr H Willock-Pollen, then Banks Common in 1925 by Mr R Calburn. Further areas have been added through local appeal funds and bequests from individuals.

The commons are on the edge of the London Clay belt, where it adjoins the chalk of the North Downs, and the site is partly covered with sand and flints. This makes for a variety of habitats including wetlands and damp heath land. There are now a dozen ponds, the five largest man-made for fish production in the 17th century. Woodland covers approximately two-thirds of the site. The majority of this woodland is mature and dominated by **Pedunculate Oak* *Quercus robur*. These woodlands are dissected by a network of rides.

**Quercus robur* (sometimes considered *Q. pedunculata* or "*Q. robur*") is commonly known as the *Pedunculate Oak* or *English oak*. It is native to most of Europe, and to Anatolia to the Caucasus, and also to parts of North Africa.



Two Frith's postcards of the same scene but one in colour. The black and white postcard has been postally used dated 1929.



The Bookhams

Bookham Common

Little Bookham Common is a mosaic of rough grassland and scrub; much of this common is poorly drained and there are several old gunpits and bomb craters. The areas of open grassland are dominated by Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*.

There are several woodland ponds on the site and a tributary of the River Mole runs across it. The site's nature conservation importance (the reason for *SSSI designation - Site of Special Scientific Interest), is due to its plant communities, its community of breeding birds and its invertebrate communities.

Thin-spiked wood sedge *Carex strigosa*, which is scarce in Surrey, is present in woodlands at the site. Two species of rose which are scarce in Surrey, *Rosa micrantha* and *Rosa stylosa* are found in the scrub on Little Bookham Common. The bryophyte flora in the site's woodland is rich and includes one of only two Surrey localities for the moss *Zygodon conoideus*. Notable plants found in the grassland of Little Bookham Common include Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, Pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, Spiked sedge *Carex spicata* and Adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. The flora of the site's open water habitats includes three plants which are scarce in Surrey: Greater Duckweed *Lemna polyrhiza*, Fat Duckweed *Lemna gibba* and Thread-leaved Water-crowfoot *Ranunculus trichophyllus*, while tall-herb fen communities here support two plants which are rare in Surrey, the grass Orange Foxtail *Alopecurus aequalis* and Eared Willow *Salix aurita*.



Two Frith's series postcards, the above has been postally used and is dated in the 1960s and the postcard below has also been postally used dated 1933.



The Bookhams

Bookham Common

Breeding birds which are associated with woodland at this site include Hawfinch, Woodcock and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, whilst those breeding in scrub areas include Nightingale and Grasshopper Warbler.

The site has a very well-recorded invertebrate fauna, which includes 611 species of beetle, 1140 species of fly, 146 true bugs, 201 spiders, 17 dragonflies and over 300 species of butterflies and moths.

Dead oak trees provide habitat for several beetles which are scarce in Surrey including *Nemadus colonoides* and *Aridius nodifer*. Two moths which occur, the Toadflax Brocade and the Broad-bordered Bee Hawkmoth are nationally rare. This is a well-known site for the Purple Emperor, and other scarce butterflies which are present include White-letter and Purple Hairstreaks and White Admiral.

For butterfly lovers, this is one of the main sites for the Purple Emperor. In the 1980s, Ken Willmott made a detailed study of their ecology and conservation at Bookham Common and his work threw new light on all stages of their life cycle.



A Frith's series postcard of Bookham Common with the Bayfield Pond in the distance to the right. Below is a postally used Canon postcard dated 1909.



The Bookhams

Bookham Common

The first postcard is a Frith's series card of the Isle of Wight. The second Real Photo postcard is of one of the ponds which has been postally used, dated 1910.

The ponds are home to all three British species of newt, including the rare Great-Crested Newt. The five largest ponds are man-made, formed for fish-production in the 17th-century.



Bookham, Isle of Wight



The Common, Bookham Common.

J.F. Stevens
P.S. Series No. 2

The Bookhams

The North End - Slyfield Mill

The once thickly wooded and waterlogged manorial waste, studded with oak trees, which are now Great and Little Bookham Commons, formed a natural barrier between the Village and the settlement which grew up along the banks of the Emlyn Stream - the River Mole - where the river could be forded and the water harnessed to drive a mill wheel. The river formed the boundary between the Parishes of Bookham and the Stoke D'Abernon, and a separate community took root on the Bookham side of the river which became known as the North End. Before the river was confined to its banks it would have traversed a marshy area the principal estate came to be known by the terrain which it occupied, Slyfield - a slippery place - and the early settlers became known by the name of the place in which they lived - hence the origin of the Slyfield family.

There was a stream running through Bookham Common, insufficient for a mill, which was dammed to create four ponds and on 29 September 1719 the Rt Hon Thomas Lord Howard let the ponds to Edward Heather, a brick maker. The Domesday Book refers to a mill which is presumably that on the river at Slyfield Sluices and weirs were constructed, and channels dug to control the flow of water. Business prospered and in 1614 when the Slyfields sold the estate there were two corn mills and *fulling mill, the later being necessary in the fabrication of cloth. They continued until the industrial revolution which brought their gradual demise and in 1846 the trustees who then administered the Slyfield Estate obtained an Order in Chancery that the mills could be demolished and that they need not be rebuilt. Although the Mill House appeared to be of late 18th or early 19th century construction it was taken down. The working principle was typical of the majority of early mills - the grain was hoisted to the top of the building and descended by gravity through the grinding and sacking processes to the ground floor. In 1969 when the land around the site of the mill was levelled and landscaped some massive timbers buried three to four feet below ground came to light. These timbers were shaped to form the outer rim of a mill wheel having a diameter of 14 feet and also what appears to be the axle shaft. It may be assumed that these are the relics of a mediaeval water mill wheel (picture below.) Now there is nothing left of the mill but the Mill Pond.



Slyfield Mill in 1822 (Edward Hassell - Minet Library) Below is the outer rim of the mill wheel taken in 1978, and the Mill Pond taken in 1994.

***Fulling or tucking or walking** ("waulking" in Scotland) is a step in woollen cloth making which involves the cleansing of cloth (particularly wool) to eliminate oils, dirt, and other impurities, and making it thicker. The worker who does the job is a **fuller, tucker, or walker**. The Welsh word for a fulling mill is *pandy*, which appears in many place-names.



The Bookhams

The North End - Slyfield Manor House

The Manor House of Slyfield is in the north west corner of the parish of Great Bookham and is one of the most historic houses of Bookham going back to the early days of the fourteenth century and is one of the three great manor houses of Bookham. It would be easy to think of it as part of Stoke D'Abernon whose post code it now shares but its position is very much in the parish of Great Bookham. The present house was rebuilt in the Jacobean period in 1615 in the reign of James I and just after the reign of Elizabeth I. It is uncertain whether it is the existing house, or its predecessor, which was visited by Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) when she was staying at Stoke D'Abernon Manor House on one of her summer progresses on her way from her Palace at Sheen to Guildford. The existing buildings are only part of a very considerable mansion which was built, as was customary at that time, in the shape of an 'E' in honour of the Queen, part being demolished in the early 19th century.

Slyfield was the seat of the family of the same name that held the Manor of Slyfield in very early times probably from the 12th century until 1614, by which time the Slyfields had climbed from being tenant farmers to being Lord of the Manor of Great Bookham. By the time of Queen Elizabeth the house was a considerable mansion. When Nicholas Slyfield succeeded his father in 1329 he was a boy, but he became a man of considerable importance. In 1360 he was Collector of Taxes for Surrey. In 1382-83 he was a Member of Parliament, and 1389 he was on the County Commission of the Peace.

Another notable member of the Slyfield family was Edmund Slyfield (1520-1590) J P, who was Sheriff of Surrey in 1582 being in charge of maintaining the law in the region. His Grandson, also Edmund inherited the estate at the age of 18. He was convicted of felony and murder and his lands were forfeited to the Crown. As a result of Edmund's crimes the family ceased to own the Slyfield Estate. He also had financial difficulties and sold the Slyfield Estate to Henry Breton in March 1614 who in November of the same year sold it to George Shiers, the apothecary to James I, dispensing the medicines of the day. It was under his ownership that the Manor house was rebuilt and exists to this day, some 400 years later.



Slyfield House - Dutch Gable originally centre of south façade.

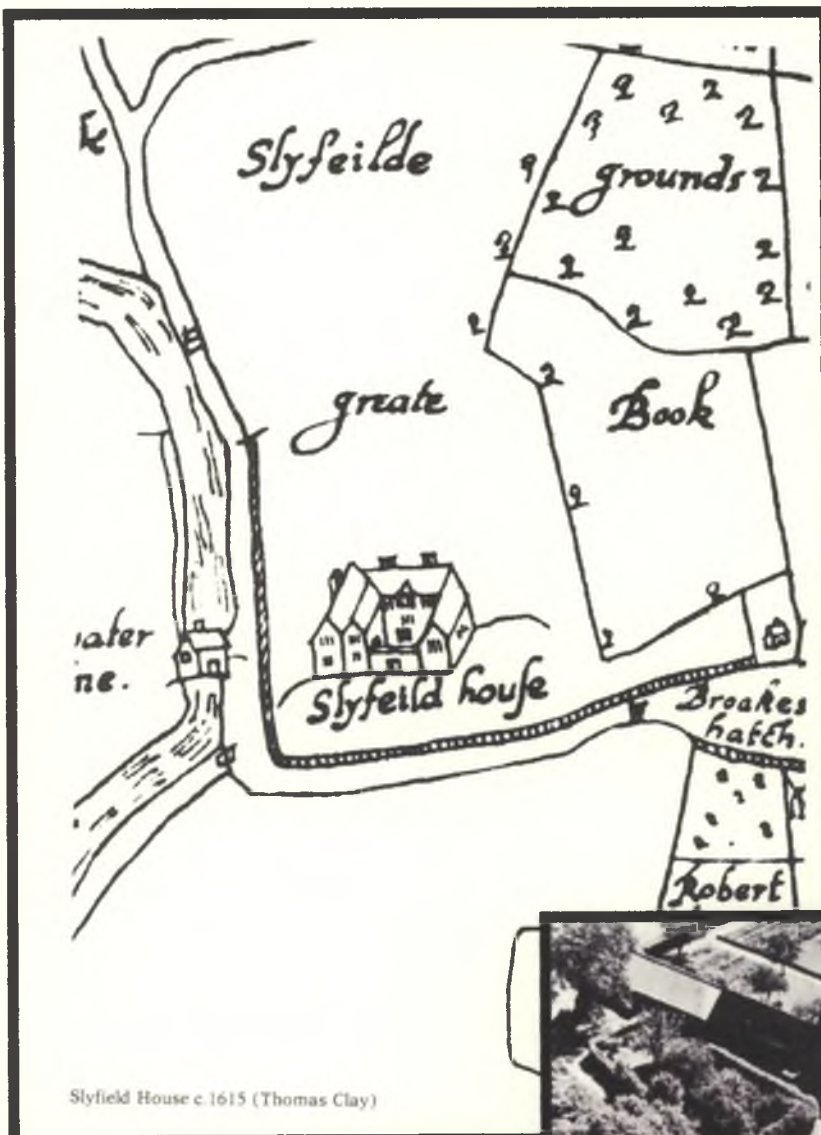
A **Dutch gable** or **Flemish gable** is a gable whose sides have a shape made up of one or more curves and has a pediment at the top. The gable may be an entirely decorative projection above a flat section of roof line, or may be the termination of a roof, like a normal gable.

The North End - Slyfield Manor House

The Shiers were a local family and the last member of the family to reside at Slyfield was Mrs Elizabeth Shiers, who was bequeathed the property by her son George who died in 1685, aged 24, without issue. Elizabeth Shiers, a widow, bequeathed the house to Dr Hugh Shortrudge who was Rector of Fetcham and the Vicar of Great Bookham. The memory of the Slyfields is preserved in the fifteenth century Slyfield Chapel of St Nicolas church where members of the family lie buried.

Dr Shortrudge lived in Slyfield from 1700 until his death in 1720. In 1715 Dr Shortrudge formed a Trust to carry out the wishes of Mrs Shiers' Will and empowered the Trustees to pull down Slyfield House. Fortunately this provision was not carried out for about 100 years and then only part was demolished, and the remainder converted into a farmhouse. The Estate remained in the hands of the Shortrudge Trustees until the 1870s. There are tablets recording the Charities he created in St Nicolas Church.

A map below dated c1615 of Slyfield House was drawn by Thomas Clay, and shows the house as a three-sided building with gables and steep pitched roofs with a wall and entrance gate enclosing a courtyard. Sometimes conventional representations are made in respect of houses as to whether they are a large house or a small house, but this sketch does appear to include some of the buildings which are left today which forms part of a once great 'E' shaped house. It was customary at that time to build in that shape to honour Queen Elizabeth I.



Slyfield House c.1615 (Thomas Clay)



An aerial view taken in 1960

The Bookhams

The North End - Slyfield Manor House

What remains is the house itself together with farmhouse and barns. In its original form there was a large Great Hall attached to the side of the house which linked to what is now known as the farmhouse. It is likely that much of this large farmhouse provided the living quarters for the many servants of the house. Nothing remains of the Great Hall.

When entering the house there is no sense of grandeur and size. It is relatively narrow as houses of that date did not have corridors leading to rooms - rooms took up the width of the house and a door from each leads into the next room. The ceilings, though magnificent, are not particularly high.

The overall impression is of being surrounded by oak panelling and magnificent wood beams, all produced with extraordinary skill and carving. There are deep plastered ceilings executed with great craftsmanship and the downstairs main room sports a marvellous ceiling with symbols of 'plenty'. The arms of the Shiers' family appear in the ceilings and on the walls. At the base of the staircase are two magnificent carved gates standing some five foot high. Much of the carving gives the appearance of brickwork. The gates were there to contain the fierce guard dogs allowed to roam downstairs to mind the house. The staircase is beautifully carved in oak.

The bedrooms upstairs are in the same panelled style with plastered ceilings. The ceiling of the main bedroom is arched or vaulted but plastered similarly to the downstairs room. Another bedroom ceiling has a plaster figure symbolising 'peace'.



Some of the original windows remain with their oak surrounds and sills including the large windows in the hallway and stairs and a small window still in place with wide oak frame and small glass panes. Some have been replaced with larger eighteenth century windows and in some cases original glasswork can still be seen. Most of the original windows would have been relatively small. In places some of the old windows have been bricked up on account of the window tax - a tax introduced at the end of the seventeenth century according to the number of windows in a house. Six windows represented one level, nine another and so on, an early form of council tax.



The main staircase is a fine Jacobean work, heavily rusticated with a dog gate at the bottom of the stairs. According to local legend, a blue donkey jumps over the dog gate at midnight on certain dates, goes up the stairs and vanishes at the top of the staircase!

Below left is an example of a bedroom plaster ceiling possible representing Queen Anne.



The North End - Slyfield Manor House

A house of this age must have its ghosts. A picture of a donkey surrounded by a blue haze hangs downstairs next to the staircase. On certain dates at midnight the blue donkey is supposedly seen leaping over the gateway barring the stairs and vanishing at the top. Sleepless nights could well have been spent awaiting the event but certainly, recently, it has not been seen. It is suggested that a sighting may require a good previous visit to the local alehouse! An even longer visit may produce donkeys of even more extraordinary colours!

And then there is the haunted bedroom - there are several stories of disturbances - the bed apparently being shaken and moved by no visible force. Domestic servants have stated that after the bed has been made, indentations, the shape of a body, appear. A third presence is that of a lady wearing a long gown who is occasionally seen wandering around the house but is of benign disposition. Another curiosity is of a coach and horses being heard clattering over a courtyard very early in the morning. When guests have remarked on this to their hosts, their hosts have asked them to look out of the window and all they will see is a green lawn!

The Shiers, who had purchased the property from the Slyfields, were Royalists, left the house secretly to avoid arrest by Cromwell's roundheads who were billeted in the house. To quote Sir Richard Harris, "the Shiers subsequently turned Jacobite and a Jacobite friend from Northumberland, Sir John Fenwick, used to stay with them at Slyfield." Tradition has it that in 1689 Fenwick was implicated in a plot against King William III on Putney Heath. He fled back to Slyfield but was pursued, arrested in bed, taken to the Tower, tried for Treason and beheaded.

Daphne du Maurier who stayed at Slyfield on an annual holiday from May to August 1913 recalls that her family rented Slyfield and she aptly describes it as having "the River Mole running through the garden, Slyfield with the big cedar tree on the lawn, Slyfield with the farm buildings and the farm animals alongside." She would ride on the great farm horses and a Miss Bishop from the village of Stoke D'Abernon came every morning to give her lessons. Sometimes she was taken to tea at the parsonage as her father was a clergyman. She relates that when it came to bedtime "the staircase of Slyfield was not straight up; the hall of Slyfield was larger, darker somehow and the staircase was wider turning to a broad landing above." She recalls her journey to bed "up one step at a time my heart thumping while the staircase creaked, a picture of a man on the wall - I must not look at him or something terrible would happen. The landing at last and pushing open the door I was through to a place of safety." "Yet later, bath over, teeth brushed, rags in my hair and the light turned out, I was not so sure. The staircase would still be dark, the picture hanging on the wall, shadows on the landing - where had they all gone, the people who had once lived at Slyfield." Perhaps Daphne du Maurier was aware of the story of the blue donkey!



Left is the passage of the Great Hall. Bottom, the Dining Room with the arms of the Shiers.



The Bookhams

North End - Bookham Lodge

Unlike most of the land at the North End and on the west side of Cobham Road, the cottage called Fryse Hill, later known as Bookham Lodge, was within the reputed manor of Eastwick. Fryse Hill appears to have been built on a site occupied at least as early as the first half of the 14th century and probably earlier and was a small cottage with little land attached. Over the course of time several parcels of land were acquired until c1810 ten fields went with the property then known as Bryants Farm. For a brief period from 1937 to 1955 it was known as The Grange.

The farmhouse known as Stamells with six parcels of land was also incorporated into the Bookham Lodge Estate. Stamells appears to have been an occupied site since 1542. The house was later known as Hantscomb Farm, for a short period The Cottage, and has now reverted to Hantscomb Farm.

Bookham Lodge was a small cottage with a central chimney and an area of lower ceilings which are thought to originate from the cottage. The house included a strongroom for silver and valuable. Each shelf in the strongroom was baize-covered and there was an additional secure inner cupboard. There is a door giving access to the cellar beside the strongroom.

The small cottage was in the course of many years enlarged to a four-bay house one of the bays containing the cottage chimney with an entrance on the south side, a parlour at the east end and the service quarters at the west end. An enlarged house was created by building additions to the south side and to the west and east ends. The whole now forms an elegant and charming Regency mansion with Gothic windows and a contemporaneous veranda on the south side with a leaded roof and lattice-work in the frames. A castellated room at the west end of the front was known as Lord Waldegrave's Parlour and there was also a castellation at the east end.

In 1930 modernisation was carried out including the removal of the castellated parapet at the east end. Lord Waldegrave's Parlour was taken down and rebuilt to form the present castellated entrance porch. In 1955 a new staircase was installed with slender fluted banisters. A curious feature of the house is that the south facing rooms are on two floors whereas the north rooms are on three floors, which of course gives high ceilings for the principal rooms. The Regency veranda has four equally spaced openings from the drawing room with french windows.



Lord Waldegrave's Parlour on the left. On the right is what was left of the once Stamells farmhouse in 1975.

The Bookhams

North End - Bookham Lodge

The occupation of the property would have been by small farmers until 1780 when Samuel Castle purchased Bryants Farm and Hantscomb Farm presumably as an investment as both were let to James Stent after whom Stent Lane, which served his farms, was named. Samuel Castle was made bankrupt 25th January 1786. It is recorded however that he held land in 1798 and again in 1809 and 1816. Presumably his affairs were then being administered in bankruptcy.

Price Blackwood rented Bookham Lodge in the late 1820s. He married R B Sheridan's granddaughter Helen Selina on 4th July 1825. Price Blackwood was the youngest of three sons. Price's two elder brothers predeceased him and so he became heir to the tile and estates in Ireland of his Father. His parents opposed the marriage as he only had his pay as a Commander in the Royal Navy and she only had her charm.

For two years they lived in Florence and then returned to England where they lived in a cottage in Thames Ditton for a short time and then acquired Bookham Lodge. He inherited the title in 1839. In the early days of this marriage, Helen Selina and a friend dressed up as highwaymen. On horseback they would waylay carriages in the local lanes and request money for charity.

Price Blackwood died in 1841. A few years later the Earl of Gifford - he was the son and heir of the Marquess of Tweeddale - fell madly in love with Helen. She refused to marry him. On his deathbed when he was 82 he begged her to marry him. She relented and did so on 13th October 1862 and became the Countess of Gifford. He died a few weeks later on the 22nd December 1862. She died on 13th June 1867.

Another great family had some association with Bookham Lodge - the Waldegraves. The founder of the family was Sir Edward Waldegrave, a royalist baronet who was M.P for Sudbury. His grandson Henry was created a baron in 1686. On his death three years later he was succeeded by his son James, a Roman Catholic, who was ambassador in Vienna and Paris - he had conformed to the requirements of the Church of England and took his seat in the House of Lords in 1722. He was created an earl in 1729 taking the titles of Viscount Chewton and Earl Waldgrave. His eldest son James succeeded in 1741. He held several court appointments and was Governor to George III when Prince of Wales.

Frances Viscountess Chewton, niece by marriage of Frances Lady Waldegrave, sought a dwellinghouse in the country. She wished to be near her sister, Lady Eversley who lived in Cobham. She purchased Bookham Lodge in 1854. She was Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria. She died at Bookham Lodge on 11th April 1902, aged 79. She was buried at her parish church, St Nicolas but later re-interred in the parish churchyard at Chewton Mendip where there is a memorial to her. A wood to the south of the house is named after her, and is known as Lady Chewton's Wood.



Bookham Lodge taken in 1955.

North End - Kelsey's Farm & Hill House

Kelsey's Farm

Hayles (variously spelt Hailes and Hales) subsequently known as Great North End Farm and later Kelsey's Farm, which included all the land lying to the west of Stents Lane (formerly known as Fryse Lane) and the boundary of Great Bookham with that of Little Bookham excluding two fields called High Field. At some time the small farm known as Argetts was absorbed.

Kelsey's Farm was on a site inhabited since c1500. Lady Lanesborough acquired the farm c1708. The farm eventually came into the hands of her great grandson, James Fox, who shortly after coming of age sold it in 1778 to Robert Mackreth who in 1779 sold to Thomas Page of Cobham.

When James was in ownership the farm was in the occupation of Thomas Richbell, a substantial farmer in Great Bookham Manor who at one time occupied Bookham Court, which had been the Manor House close to St Nicolas Church, until the Howard Family moved to Eastwick.

Part of the land to the west of 'Hayles' was acquired by Harry Combe in 1807 and Kelsey's Farm by the Combe Family on 30th January 1849. The Farm House being in a remote situation had no mains services. Some modernisation was carried out but the cost of laying services to the house was unjustified once farming became mechanised and the farm buildings unnecessary. The buildings then became the prey of vandals and were demolished in the early 1960s. Only a few courses of some stone walls remain (picture below.) The land continues to be farmed by the Combe Family.

Hill House

Sometimes referred to as Hill Place, stood in the boundary between Great and Little Bookham, between Kelsey's Farm and Hundred Pound Bridge. It appears to have been a small cottage with a few acres of land in fields named Bottom Field, Upper Field, Hill House Field and West Hill Field, part in Great and part in Little Bookham Manors, the later occupying the whole width of Little Bookham in that vicinity. Several further parcels of copyhold land were occupied by an Admiral and in 1837 by Sir James Langham, Bart. In the 1881 census it was recorded that the property was occupied by Absalom Cooper, a labourer, and his wife Ann Cooper, both aged 60. A cottage continued on the site until the 1940s. It has now been demolished.



The Bookhams

North End - Millfield

There was a cottage on the site from c1300. Thomas le Wodeward was granted a croft of land by Abbott Rutherwyck of Chertsey in 1342.

An early reference in the Records of the Abbey of Chertsey, and noted in a survey of 1548, states that a lease dated 20th April 1519 for 99 years had been granted to Philip Stephens for a piece of land called "Wodewards." Philip Stephens assigned the lease to Rolf Stephens in 1519 and the property had been occupied by John at Wod, formerly by John Barnesdale, and at one time by John Wodeward. John Barnesdale is the John Barnesdale whose name is on a brass plate in St Nicolas Church. John Wodeward must be the descendant of Thomas le Wodeward.

The name "Wodewards" is probably derived from the occupation of an early forester - a wood warden who had adopted the name. Later it was called "North End Farm" and now "Millfield." The spelling of the name of the property "Wodewards" had become "Woodwards" by 1721 - it is so named in a deed entered into by the Rt. Hon. Thomas Lord Howard of Effingham in that year. It would seem however that from c1700 to 1811 the property was known as "North End Farm."

The Lordship of the Manor of Great Bookham remained with the Howard family until 1801 when it was acquired by James Laurell. There was a Lease and Release of the property in favour of Hugh Smith of Stoke House, Lord of the Manor of Stoke D'Abernon in December 1811. Hugh Smith also acquired adjoining land held by the Powell family. Smith added to the estate eight acres he held under an ancient freehold title and he purchased another 4 acres in Fryse Hill. Smith demolished the farmhouse and the farm buildings and built a new house in 1814.

The Manor of Stoke D'Abernon had now acquired a substantial estate in Great Bookham and it appears from the time the village became orientated to Stoke D'Abernon and was regarded as part of it. The North End today has the Stoke D'Abernon postal address.

Smith sold the house and land to Lewis Bayly Wallis who sold it on to William Robert Hodges of Lambeth. Then on 26th August 1862 he sold the property to Henry Hansard of Park Square, Regents Park, a Member of the Stationers Company and the printer of Hansard, the Parliamentary Record founded in 1774. It is strange that the lands of Hansard which were referred to in the Domesday Book should come back to a Hansard 800 years later.



Millford House taken in 1900 and a family picture of the Hansards c1905.



The Bookhams

North End - Millfield

Hansard had Millfield House substantially enlarged in 1863 by the building of the south wing which gave the property the appearance of two houses interconnected and giving rise to the curious turret at the inner connection. The interior was however remodelled giving the effect of one spacious house with five reception rooms and thirteen bed and dressing rooms; along with the domestic offices including pantry, kitchen, scullery, servants hall, dairy with marbled and tiles shelves, cycle store, wood and coal house and coke store. Outside the heated greenhouse included an orchid house; the *bothy contained eight rooms, a cottage for the cowman of five rooms and numerous garden and farm buildings with a Japanese summerhouse transported from Japan and re-erected, and an ice-house. The porch still retains its Horsham slab roof - this is roughly the farthest north that Horsham slab roofs are found.

Hansard died on 1st August 1904, aged 84 leaving the house to his widow, Elizabeth Ann, for as long as she wished to remain there and thereafter to his son, Henry Luke Tite Hansard, who died on 26th January 1916 having appointed as executor amongst others his wife, May Hansard. Elizabeth Ann gave up possession on 28th October 1920. The property was sold to Henry Randall on 18th October 1921. May Hansard rented Preston House from the Little Bookham Manor Estate from 29th September 1919 for 30 years.

Randall on 12th November 1923 sold part of the land fronting Cobham Road with two cottages, Rydal and Twin Oaks, then recently erected to Alfred Sidney Newnham and William Fitzgerald Gambier Sandwith. Later Randall on 15th November 1926 sold all the estate lying north of the entrance drive to Bookham Lodge to Aline Lee.

It was then sold on to Frederick Middleton Hornsby in October 1930, then in 1935 to Arthur Ryder Bastard Owen of Hove. Owen sold the bothy to Edward Laurence Carter and Louise Eleanor Carter on 17th October 1952 and a small parcel of land by the entrance lodge to Bookham Lodge to Geoffrey Robert Rickman and Margaret Helen Rickman of Bookham Lodge on 16th July 1956.

During WWII Millfield was used as offices and as a military centre. In 1947 it became a fifteen bedroom hotel and country club and in 1955 a riding centre. Yehudi Menuhin founded a school there in 1963 which bears his name. The magnificently restored barn on the opposite side of the road belonging to a neighbour, Sir Ronald Harris, and being part of the Slyfield Estate, was put at the school's disposal in 1971 to be used as a concert hall in the summer months.



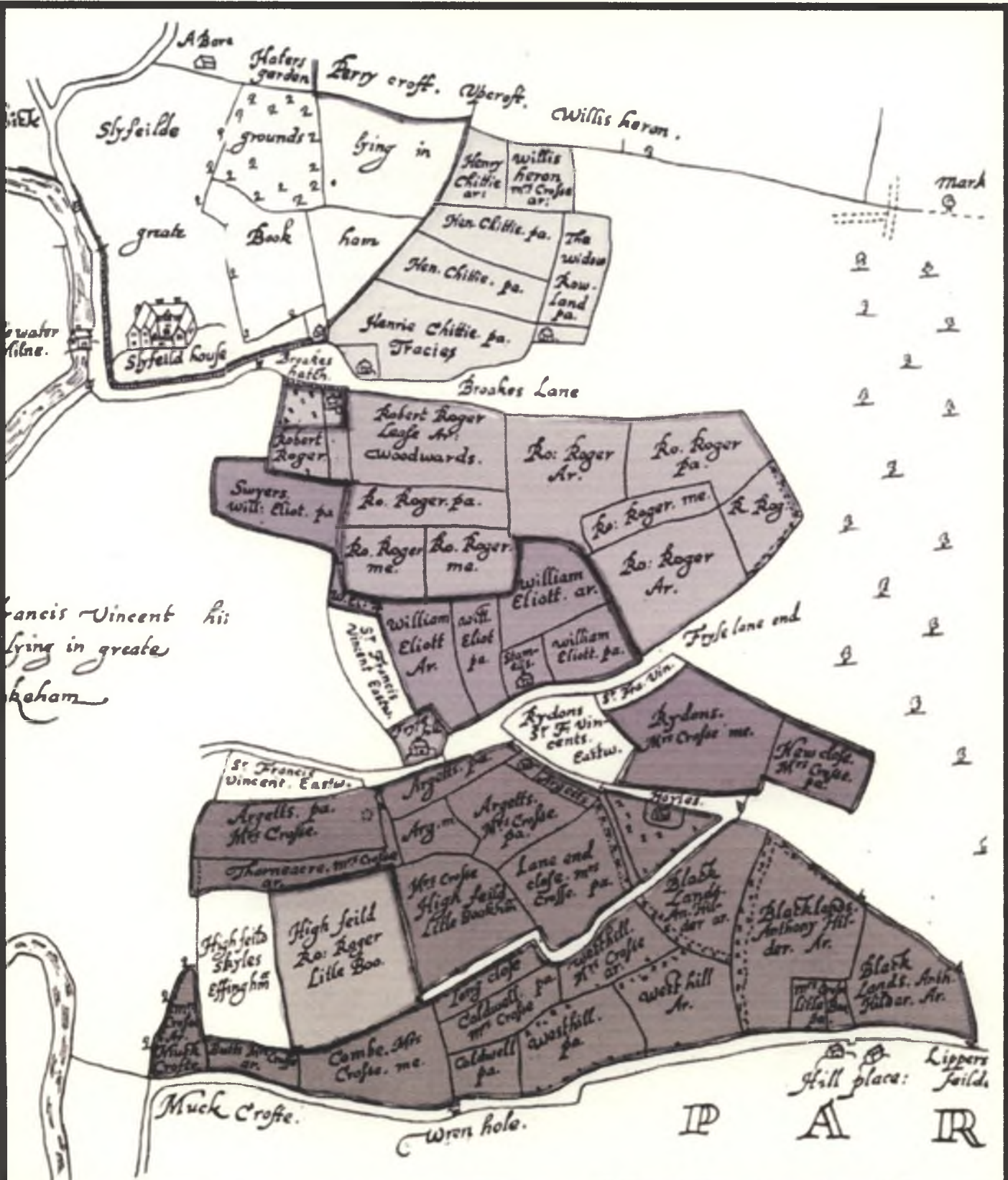
The gallery at Millfield, a typical feature of architect P.F. Robinson. Below is the entrance to the stables.

*A **bothy** is a basic shelter, usually left unlocked and available for anyone to use free of charge. It was also a term for basic accommodation, usually for gardeners or other workers on an estate.









The Bookhams

North End - Map of Land Occupation in 1618



d 1615 - 1618 From the original planimetric to the National Trust L. T. C. (1918)

	Lower Slyfeilde Farm (Slyfeilde)		Millfeilde (Woodwards)		Hantscomb Farm (Stamells)
	Upper Slyfeilde Farm (Sheepbell)		Bookham Lodge (Fryse Hill)		Kelsey's Farm (Hayles)

The Bookhams

Polesden Lacey

Polesden Lacey, a 1400 acre estate owned by the National Trust is situated on the North Downs and commands some of the finest views in Surrey. The Edwardian Garden extends to 30 acres with 10 acres of lawns and elegant grass terraces, including a walled rose garden, summer border and winter display. Although the house has never become the ancestral home of any great family each owner has contributed something to make the estate one of the finest and the house one of the most liveable in the country.



The postcard view of Polesden Lacey is from the south east. Below are pictures of Polesden in 1824.



The Bookhams

Polesden Lacey

The name 'Polesden' is Saxon and early records from the end of the twelve-century until 1332 refer to Herbert de Polesdene, Richard de Polesdene and John de Polesdene, who between them had developed the farmstead so that by 1317 it comprised 40 acres of land and 2 acres of woods, and it appears that in 1336 there was a dwelling house in being. In 1470 it was in the ownership of Thomas Slyfield and was a sub-manor of Great Bookham. The 'Lacey' suffix probably derives from the family of John Lacy, who owned Polesden in 1387-93, but it is first described as 'Pollisdon Lacy' only in 1562.



This Frith's postcard has been postally used with the stamp stuck on the wrong side. The card was sent to Paris and is written in French. It was also cancelled by the Post Office on the other side.

