

Rev Canon Knowles
with the author's kindest
remembrances. ap. 20
1879.

ELSTEAD AND ITS CHURCH.

BY THE REV. CHAS. KERRY,

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THE name of this village signifies the *stead*, *station*, or *place* of *Ælla*, probably of *Ælla* the founder of the kingdom of Sussex. There is another Elstead in the deanery of Midhurst, which is somewhat nearer the scenes of the earlier victories of *Ælla* and his son *Cissa*.

As the city of Chichester, formerly "Andredscester," derives its name from *Cissa*, who with his father besieged and took the town in 491, so there is no reason why these more obscure places may not have derived their name from *Ælla*.

We know that the Hundred of Farnham was a part of the kingdom of *Wessex* in the year 858, when Ethelbald, King of *Wessex*, gave this hundred to the Bishop and Church of Winchester, soon after the death of Ethelwulf, his father, who was interred there. The eastern boundary-line of the Hundred of Farnham passes *very near*, if not through, the south-eastern part of the village of Elstead, which would, therefore, be on the western border of the kingdom of Sussex, the realm of *Ælla*. I see nothing so *natural* as that the place which marked the *limit* of *Ælla*'s conquests should have been called by his name, as a point of demarcation between the two kingdoms of the West and South Saxons.

On "*Charles Hill*," in this parish, there is a remarkable embankment, which runs from the brow along the summit in a northerly direction. It seems to me more like a boundary-line than a relic of early military tactics; but as there are five tumuli close by, it may,

perhaps, be the work of a prehistoric population, and no relic of Ælla, or of the bound-marks of his kingdom.

As I have referred to these earthworks, I trust I shall not be considered digressive if I give some further account of them in this place.

On Saturday, December 3, 1870, I opened three of the five tumuli: the mounds are in a direct line running north and south. The four northernmost are contiguous; the southernmost stands about twenty yards from its neighbour, the only "bowl-shaped" barrow of the series. We commenced with the northernmost, cutting a trench completely through the centre from east to west. This barrow, like the rest, appears to have been formed of small layers of sand of varying hues, apparently brought from different localities, and deposited in small quantities on the mound. We found nothing whatever, save a small narrow flint flake, about two inches in length. The second and third of these tumuli we left undisturbed, as they bore obvious traces of previous examination. The bowl-barrow yielded nothing save a small piece of calcined flint, although we examined the mound most carefully. The last of them was equally devoid of interest. Elstead is not mentioned by name in "Domesday," but is included in the description of the "Land of the Bishop of Winchester." The whole of Farnham Hundred was then held by Ralph, and William, and Wazo.

The earliest recorded mention of this place by name is in the foundation charter of Waverley Abbey, in which its founder, Bishop William Gifford, in 1128 gave to that house two acres of land in "*Helested*."

The court rolls of the Manor of Farnham, beginning 12th March, 159⁸/₉, contain several presentations relating to Elstead, the most interesting of which is, perhaps, the following:—

"Court. 3 Sep: 160j.

"The jury present—

"Mr William Vynes of Shakelforde for keepinge of sheepe in oure comon and keeping of a stafferd in oure comon of Elstede and so contynueth dailie the Saboth daie only excepted, having no righte there so farre as we know. And further, William Hampton one of oure jury doth affirme that John Billinghurst sen^r of Puttenham did saie that

Mr Beeden and Mistris Vyne of Shakelforde did oftentimes drive there sheepe to and fro from Shakelforde to a place called '*Bryttie hill*' in the tithing of Elstede. But upon what righte he could not tell."

From the style of this entry it would seem that "Mr." William Vynes and "Mistris" Vyne,¹ both of Shakelforde, were persons of some consequence, and I think it more than probable that this Mr. William Vynes was a descendant of Ralph Vyne, who purchased the manor of Poyle in Seale, in the year 1503, and whose family resided there until 1581, when Stephen Vyne conveyed the Tongham estates to Sir Nicholas Woodroffe. Henry, son of this Stephen, was baptized at Seale, 17th July, 1580. There are twelve entries of the Vynes in Elstead registers between 1552 and 1690, the only Christian names being Richard, Thomas, and Elizabeth.

The William Hampton, "juryman," was of Hampton in Seale, where the family had been settled for many years. He was the son of William Hampton and Elizabeth. His father, *William* (of Hampton), was buried at Seale, 13th April, 1582. The Hamptons were at Seale until the middle of the last century.

Branches of this old yeoman family, descended from three brothers, settled at Compton, Worplesdon, and Puttenham. They were the sons of William Hampton, of Seale, and Elizabeth Smallpiece his wife (married at Puttenham). *William Hampton*, the eldest, born at Seale in 1612, died at Compton, April 2nd, and was interred in the Quakers' burial-ground at Binscomb, on April 4, 1685 (*Compton Reg.*). His son William mortgaged his Compton property to Thomas Collier, of Elstead (waywarden there in 1674 and 1690), and ultimately sold it to William Purse, of Compton, in 1713 for £430. He left issue Samuel (born 1694), whose son William was baptized at Compton in 1720. There are members of the Hampton family still resident at Farncomb and the neighbourhood.

¹ Both forms of this name seem to have been current:—*e.g.* "Richard Vines the sone of Richard Vines was baptized March 28, 1663." "Richard Vine the sonne of Richard Vine sepultis June the 9th, 1676." (*Elstead Reg.*)

John Hampton, the founder of the Worplesdon branch, was baptized at Seale in 1626. Four of his sons, John, William, James, and Thomas, were living at Worplesdon in 1685.¹ *James Hampton*, head of the Puttenham family, was baptized at Seale in 1628, and the baptisms of five of his children, with the burial of his wife Joan, are recorded at Puttenham—John, 1664; James, 1666; William, 1670; Elizabeth, 1673; Joan, 1677.

“Anno Mccccc lxxiiij.

“The xiiij day of November was maryed Henry Boxhold to Margret Hampton.” (Elstead Reg.)

1586. “The xxix daye of September was baptysed Henrye Hamtone the sone of John Hamtone.” (Elstead Reg.)

In 1576 a John Hampton was living in Elstead. He had a son William, baptized and buried here in that year. His name occurs again a few months afterwards:—

“The xxi day of January
was baptysed the douter of

Wyllyam Sporge sayde to be the chyllde of *John Hampton* and named amyss.” (Elstead Reg.)

John Billingham, senior, of Puttenham, mentioned in the court roll of 1601, must have lived somewhere between Shakelford and “*Bryttie*” Hill. I suppose at *Rodsall*, from the nature of his evidence; for the Billinghursts resided here in 1507, when William Billingham paid the sum of 8s. per annum to Thomas Parvoche (you have just seen his brass in Godalming Church) for certain lands which he held of him in *Rodsall*. (*Rent-roll of Thomas Parvoche in his own handwriting.*)

I take this opportunity of referring to *Britty Hill*, a well-known eminence in this parish, on the west side of Puttenham Great Common. On the summit of this hill I have found about thirty flint “scrapers,” three barbed arrow-heads, a fine leaf-shaped spear-head, and a celt of Devonshire granite, the whole of which are now in the Charter-house Museum. Does the name *Britty Hill* in any way refer to this early occupation?

¹ Probate of William Hampton's will 1685; in writer's possession.

Elstead Mill may have formed one of the six mills in the Hundred of Farnham at the Domesday Survey. It occurs in the church register in 1591:—

“The xix day of Aprell was take vp one at ovre Mylle whose name was *Foveth.*”

Robert Peyto, miller, was fined in 1599 for taking excessive toll.¹

Robert Aston or Ashton, gent., held the mill in 1600.¹ Edward Beedle was miller in 1624.

In 1647 the mill was burnt down, as appears from an *old* note-book, formerly belonging to the Paynes of Dye-house, and now in the possession of Mr. Fred. Stovold, of Lidling Farm. It was then the property of William Tribb, William Eldridge being tenant. As one of the Paynes of Dyehouse undertook to pay the workmen for Tribb, who lived at Hambleton, the note-book has many curious particulars.

“Oct. 17, 1647. Paid to W^m Eldridge to buy a new milstone 9£ 15 0.”

The mill was reared by the 30th of October, when the workmen had 6s. 2d. for “bear.” Here is another entry:—

“The oak at Costford is for the ‘*Hedsill*’ it is 123 foote and the top peese is 25 foote, the whole is 3 loode wanting 2 foote.

Paid for beere for the carters that broughte this *Hedsill*—two shillings.

Paid toe Rob: Numan for grub-ing it. 2^s 0^d.

Which oak grew in the banke in the lower sid the path which ledeth from Costford stone to Goodman Yaldings (*Yalden's*) about 4 rods, and the stile upon the left hand of the lane which goeth from Costford toe Bowled greene, in the close called the *Nappers lefe.*”

John Tice held the mill in 1674.

(Note. “John Tice, *Mealman* of Oking was buried March y^e 11th 170^½”—at Elstead.)

July 5, 1724, Thomas Kelsey, of Elstead, miller, and Jane Flutter, of Guildford, were married at Puttenham. (*Register.*)

¹ Farnham Court Roll.

THE CHURCH of Elstead is dedicated to St. James. Before the year 1872, when the south aisle was added, it consisted of nave and chancel only. The earliest portions of the structure date from the commencement of the thirteenth century. During the recent restoration foundations of a wall were discovered running across the nave, a little to the east of the centre, as though the church had been extended eastwards at some later period. Be this as it may, it is rather remarkable that the opposite windows of the nave corresponded very nearly with each other. Near the west end were the Early English lancets. Little more than halfway came the flat traceried windows of *c.* 1320, whilst eastward of these were the flat-headed Perpendicular windows of *c.* 1460. The chancel arch is probably coeval with the Early Decorated windows of the nave; so that, if any extension of the original structure took place, it must have been about 1320, when the Early English work eastwards was removed.

If this theory be thought improbable, the foundations may then indicate the basement of the front of the ancient rood-loft, which, as in the small church of Greywell, near Odiham, might have been constructed entirely within the nave; and this conjecture receives additional strength from the smallness of the chancel.¹

At the eastern extremity of the south wall of the nave was a small brick-headed window of post-Reformation times, obviously inserted to throw a little more light on the pulpit.

On each side of the south porch, which had been converted into a vestry, was a narrow lancet, exactly like those on the opposite side.

The east window of the chancel is a good specimen of Perpendicular work, and is obviously coeval with the flat-headed windows in the nave. In the head of the centre light is a fragment of the old glass, consisting of a portion of a canopy.

¹ This arrangement made provision for two additional altars beneath and within the screen,—a clever adaptation for small village churches.

The ceiling of the chancel was decorated with choice plaster medallions, each about five inches square, bearing devices of the "*Pelican in her piety*," *fleur-de-lis*, and *crose fleury*. As far as I can recollect, they were arranged in the form of crosses on either side.

The bell-turret at the west end is probably coeval with the wooden porch on the north, and the Perpendicular work at the east end *c.* 1460. The wooden campanile of Hogston Church, Bucks, is the only structure of the kind which I can compare with this, the timbers rising from the very basement; but, whilst *this* leans for support against the walls and timbers of the *nave*, *that* is constructed within the western corner of the *north aisle*. The belfry stair at Elstead is composed of one heavy slab of oak, the steps being cut into it.

There were three bells in 1549, weighing respectively 2½, 3, and 4 cwt. "by extimacion."

There should have been three bells in 1865, when the present peal was made by Warner at a cost of 46*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.*, the old metal being appraised at 37*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.*; *but* the churchwardens had sold the second bell and a fragment of the tenor, to defray some of their church expenses. The treble and tenor of the old peal were thus inscribed:—

"1—BRYANUS ELDRIDGE FECIT ME. 1653."

"3—JOHN BAYLEY, JOHN MARTIN C.W., RICHARD PHELP MADE ME. 1717."

The following is a list of some of the earlier curates of Elstead:—

- 1513. "St William Nox parish priest." (Will—quoted by Manning and Bray.)
- 1543. "Lancelotus Haulton presbiter⁹ erat sepult⁹ 5 die Augusti A^o D^o. ut sup." (Elstead Reg.)
- 1549. "James Sucante curate of Helsted." (Reg.)
- 1607. "Edward Welshe curate of the par of Elstead was buried xiiij April." (Reg.)
- 1629. "Gulielmus Parris minister." (Reg.)
- 1674. "Edmond Parker minister." (Reg.) ("he baptizied Nich: Wheeler aged 24 at *Farnham* Castle Feb: 169¾.") (Reg.)
- 1716. "Martin Gruchy curate." (Reg.)
- 1749. "Henry Strudwicke curate of E. to 1757." (Reg.)

I have the names of forty-eight other curates gleaned from the registers between this period and the appointment of the first incumbent in 1838, but they seem to have been attached to Farnham. The names of the incumbents are as follows:—

“John H. Stephenson, 1838.

George Harrison, 1842.

Thomas A. Docker, 1846.

John Ryland, 1849.

Joseph Rhodes Charlesworth was appointed to the charge 24 March, 1854.”

The chapelry of Elstead was published as a rectory in the *London Gazette*, December 1, 1865.

Registers.

The oldest register of Elstead is of paper, and was in a very sad state of disintegration and decay, until, through the kindness of Mr. Charlesworth, I was permitted to undertake its restoration. The first entry is not very perfect; the second is as follows:—

“Cherity Mychenall was crystened in Elstede cherche xxiiiij die martii An^o M^o cccce tricesimo octavo.” (1538.)

The last entry in this book is dated 1625.

The second register, of parchment, extends from March 23rd, 1627, to 13th March, 169 $\frac{2}{3}$.

The third register, also of parchment, extends from 1693 to 1758.

The fourth is a parchment book, but the remainder are of paper.

The oldest register contains about 200 different surnames, and there are entries relating to 176 local families.

Of the Wheelers there are 93 entries; Michenalls, 46; Bookhams, 32; Boxholds, 30; Bicknells, 27; Webbs, 24; Stovalls, 14; Gretesses, 13; Howykes, 13; Petos, 13; Grovers, 12; Laborns, 12; Bartons, 12; Stent, 11; Gawysdon, 11; Machwick, 10; Langford, 10; Riyeman, 10; Whals, 10; Baker, 10; Shakelford, 9; Bromhome, 8; Ancell, 8; Mathue, 7; Sporge, 7; Edwards, 7; Tanner, 7; Marlyn, 6; Avenell, 6; Billinghamurst, 6; Page, 6;

Smither, 5; Jackman, 5; Gander, 5; Bromall, 5; Sneling, 5; Trigg, 5.

Of these, the families who are *also* illustrated by the “P”uttenham and “S”eale registers of the sixteenth century are—Wheelers (“S.”), Michenalls (S.), Bicknell (P.), Ancell (P. & S.), Marlyn (P. & S.), Avenell (P.), Billinghamurst (P. & S.), Page (S.), Gander (S.), Sneling (P.).

In the year 1568 is a memorandum, probably made by the son of one of the churchwardens for the time:—

“Be y^e knone that I Rycharde Grover haue fully Parsed out of my yerse of prentyst wyth my father Johne Grover all thyngs payde aned dyscharged the xv daye of August.”

The family of Shakelford occurs between 1542 and 1586.

William de Shakelford, temp. Hen. VIII., was the owner of Hall Place, in Shakelford, close by the old ‘ford’ through the ‘shakel’ (= *a pool for surface drainage*) in that hamlet. The daughters of the Elstead branch married into the families of Machwick, Labourn, Bickenell, and Rance.

No families above the rank of yeomen farmers seem to have resided in the parish in the 16th century.

The second Register records the interment of seven members of the Smyth family of Royal, in Peper Harow, between 1634 and 1689.

Amongst the marriage entries is the following:—

“Thomas Holford Esq of the Par: of Newbrough in the county of Cheshere & M^{rs} Mary Wroth spinster of Farnham in Co: Surrey were married Sep: 18 1683.”

The third Register seems to show that Elstead was the Gretna Green of the neighbourhood from 1693 to 1754. It records marriages of persons from no less than thirty-six different places.

The Churchwardens' Accounts

commence in 1591, and contain little else of importance than the successive nominations of parochial officers, and the lists are tolerably perfect down to the present time.

There are four notices of the punishment of vagrants

in Elstead, and their subsequent provision with passports to travel to their respective homes. Their names were, Thurstian Blackstone, of Kingsley, Dorset, which he was bound to reach in six days, anno 1616; Joan, wife of John Brown, of Yarmouth; Edward Lanaway, of Mebourn, Sussex, and Ralph Locke, of Epsom, anno 1617.

There is also a list of subscribers in Elstead to the building of St. Paul's, London, Oct. 18, 1678. The total donations amounting to 11s. 4d.

Some of the churchwardens' accounts for this parish are in the possession of the heirs of Henry Lawes Long, Esq., of Hampton Lodge. A notice of these has been printed in the Society's Reports (vol. ii. p. 43).

In these papers are particulars of payments made from Elstead towards the support of the garrison of Farnham Castle, Sir Thomas Fairfax's army, the Scottish army, and the militia. The payments begin May 1st, 1644, and continue until 1654.

The following particulars relating to this troublous period are from the old "Note Book" previously mentioned:—

"July 10, 1647. A rate amounting to 13£ was made (on Elstead) for Farnham Town, the County Troop, & other uses. John Ansell & Edward Collyer, collectors."

James Payne records his own default of 3s. for the Royal Subsidy.

There is "A note of money laid out by Richard Payne for taxes from Michaelmas 1646, to Lady Day 1648 for St. Thomas Fairfax's Army, The British Army, & the Militia—2£. 11s 6d."

From the same book it appears that the people of Elstead were required to pay one-eighth of their respective valuations in the time of the civil war.

Several of the officers and men were at times quartered at Payne's, of Dyhouse Farm; and in this book are preserved six receipts for their billeting from the principal officers of the time. They are too valuable to be passed over.

No. 1. "September the 4 : 1647. Thes ar to certifi that I James Payne quartered liffenant Euans & his man and 2 horse 16 days w^{ch} were vnder the cõmand of Capt : Freemane in Col : Ockly Reagement.

"Witness my hand

JESPER EVANS."

No. 2. "These are to certifie all whome it may concerne that James Payne of Elstead in the countie of Surrie did q̄ter John Saunders Clarke to Coll Okly & his horse 21 dayes in Testimony whereof I haue heere supscribed my name this 30th of September 1647. JOHN SAUNDERS."

No. 3. "Thes are to sartefie that he quartered 2 hors and men aleaven dayse att free quarter upon James pain and had halfe a packe of wootes a day whoe belonge to capt. Larewnce troope in the gentallos (? Gen' Taylor's) reagement.

"JAMES THOMPSON, cornet."

No. 4. "Thes are to sertyfey that the quartered 3 horse and men 10 dayes at ffree quarter at James Paine having had 5 buchell of otes whoe belong to Capt Ffreeman in Col Okley Reagement.

"F. SMYTH HENRY RAYLES."

No. 5. "Thes are to sertify that James Payne of Elsted in the county of Surry did quarter three men three horse 11 days vnder the cõmand of Captin Morginne Troope in the Reagment of Coll : Ierton [Ireton] witness my hand this 3th day of December 1647."

No signature; but immediately underneath in the same hand—

No. 6. "James Payne did quarter on man & on horse at free quarter from the 6th of December toe the 13th of January 1647 w^{ch} was in Captine Grove Troope of the Ridgment of the Coll : Whelley.

"THO. TOMLINSON."

With the draft of a letter from Mr. Payne to Henry Martin, who was churchwarden in 1658, I shall conclude my paper:—

"Mr Martin you are behind toe pay for you' own Tyeth that you have detained into you' one Custady for Seven yeare past 24^h 16^s 0^d. w^{ch} I hoop you will make it good I never had it, and you are toe pay halfe the charge of the reparacions of the Barne belonging to the parsnage which cost 7^h 10^s 3^d glassing of the chancell and all."

As it has been my chief aim in this paper to bring *new matter* to light, I trust that the omission of anything from the county histories will not be considered a defect.

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