

## POVERTY IN THE HORMEADS

Poverty is a relative term, and many villagers whom we should regard as having been poor, probably never thought of themselves in those terms. Poverty must be assessed by what each generation regarded as a condition of not having a sufficient income to provide all basic needs for a family.

It is difficult at this distance in time to find out the true position, and we must remember that since most of the villagers worked on the land, the work was seasonal, and if their weekly wage did not quite maintain them in a state of solvency, the harvey money plus their womenfolk's gleanings and earnings from sale of eggs etc could bring them to a state of solvency. Very few villagers had just one skill and only one job, and there was a lot of movement between these three villages and the surrounding villages in search of employment.

Rates were levied from Elizabethan days onwards for relief of the poor. An interesting comment on the Little Hormead rates for this purpose was written by the Rector in 1833/4. He said, 'Rates are low in Little Hormead because the Land consists chiefly of four Large Farms Mutfords Stonebury Balance and Little Hormeadbury and these being in the hand of three occupants, they employ all the poor'. However, the poor rate was intended not only for resident paupers, but also to relieve poor persons temporarily in the village – either as residents or passers-by. Once again, the presence of the main highway through Hare Street caused additional problems and an additional burden on the three parishes concerned – Layston, Great Hormead and Little Hormead, though the latter to a smaller degree. To avoid supporting outsiders, a strenuous effort was made to keep a close watch on the residents to make sure they did not harbour any newcomers, and to make sure any indigent person entering the villages was hurried on his way across the parish boundary. We shall see the result of these anxieties to keep down the number of calls on the poor rate of these villages in the following story of the poor in the Hormeads and the cases taken to court at Hertford.

Relief of the poor was first officially legislated for by means of a rate levied on householders in 1597, by an act of parliament which established rate-financed poor relief. Four years later, another act provided for the appointment of overseers of the poor elected by the parish from one of the residents whose responsibilities including seeing that the sick and aged and other temporarily or permanently unemployed were not left to starve. Work and wages were to be provided for the unemployed and sick. After this basic legislation

had been passed, many further acts ensued, catering for further contingencies, and regulating types of pauperism, all pointing to the disturbing growth of the numbers of the poor. Only these acts for which there is evidence of the effects on the poor of the Horneads will be mentioned here.

The actual labelling, or calling, of people in the parish registers, as 'paupers' occurs during a limited period – in the GH register from 1783-93 e.g.

- 1790 Thomas son of Mary Fisher, a casual Pauper not belonging to this parish bap. Feb 28.
- 1790 Jemima and Keziah, daughters of Thomas and Sarah Pegram, pauper, were bap Sep 19 but "N.B. The daughters of Thomas Pegram herein last registered were not born in ye parish of GH – nor does the father, Thomas Pegram belong to that Parish."

This careful labelling of the pauper from outside the parish was a result of Gilbert's Act 1782 which first provided for union of parishes by which the relief of the poor was entrusted to visitors and guardians appointed by the justices. The churchwardens were ex officio overseers of the poor and shared with the overseers the responsibility for the payment of relief to paupers, but more usually to casual paupers. Long term relief to indigent paupers was provided by the overseers, two to each parish, who were nominated by the vestry to the justices of the peace.

The overseers were appointed every year, and had been since 1601, and the GH registers in the first decade of the 17th century, kept by Thomas Taylor, with great care, note parish burials for which he claimed his costs from the poor rate (per parochia soluit).

- 1607 Sepult. (=burial) Maria Hawke filia Johannis & Eliz. Londinensis sepulta fuit decimo die mensis Septtembris quo die per soluit parochia sepultura 010
- 1607 Sep. Richardus Milles filius Richardi Londinensis: sepult fuit 4 februarij P.sol. sepultura 010
- 1608 Sep. Henricus Parnell filius reput. Henrici Parnell et----- sepultus fuit vicesimo die Octobris P.sol.sepult. 004

The first two burials, costing 10d, were the daughter and son of London travellers, perhaps tinkers, and thus non-Hornead paupers. The third example was a bastard born to a villager and left with the father for burial, for which the poor rate refunded the vicar 4d.

The constant stream of travellers, including a large proportion of beggars, gypsies, tinkers and vagabonds, which traversed the Queen's or King's highway through Hare Street constituted a drain on the two Hormeads poor rate fund. The two villages must have viewed Hare Street as a constant thon in their western sides. The parish registers of both LH and GH have numerous entries of burials of these poor wanderers who literally fell by the wayside. There are a few baptisms and marriages but only two notable marriages of travellers with one LH and one GH resident, which probably caused the girls' parents some anxiety:

- LH 1788 Henry Skinner bachelor, travelling man, & Elizabeth Fordham single woman of Little Hormead were married 7 April 1788
- GH 1614 Johannes Etteridge mendicus duxit in uxorem Margaritam Clanuarde Maij 6

I can only find accounts for the poor rate for a few years at the end of the 17th century – had we had preserved a long series we could have assessed what the size of the problem was in the Hormeads. However, the LH Parish Accounts for four years have been preserved and include the overseers account i.e. overseer of the poor:

LH Parish Account	April 5 1697	Due to the Overseer	£2-12-11
	April 25 1698	Overseer's expense for ye year 1697	£12-7-10
		Remains due to ye overseer	£4-10-10
	April 4 1700	Due to ye Parish from Wm Welch overseer of ye poor	£1-7-11

### **ENTRIES OF BURIALS OF PEREGRINANTES AND TRANSMIGRANTES**

Many Londoners were buried after failing to reach home and collapsing in these villages: 1590 Sara Carter Londinensis sepulta fuit 24 die Junij. This is a typical entry and there were many – the volume of traffic through the village of Londoners and people going to Cambridge and through to Norwich is astonishing – and we hear of those who did not safely complete their journeys only; the following are some of the more interesting entries:

- 1574 GH Richardus Stephanus paup. Obijt per via sup. Gelden acer et dixit qd natus erat apud Norwiche, sepultus 12 Septembris. [This pauper died on the road (with a black horse?) and said that he was born at Norwich].
- 1596 GH Johannes Tomson pauper versus London. Itinere iacent. Mortem subivit in Harestret et supult. Xv februarij. [John Tomson, a pauper, was travelling towards London when he died passing through Harestreet].
- 1607 GH Ignotus Homo sepult. Fuit in Silkmead diche versus re: via Occid: per Johanne Paitwin. Peregrinarus versus London a Cant. [Traveller to London from Cambridge, an unknown man was buried in a ditch by Silkmead (farm) on the west of the road (or high road) by John Paitwin]
- 1685 GH Buried a traveller who had died at 'the bules at hoostret lanes'. This entry occurs in the period when the registers were kept by an odd character with weird notions of English spelling. This may mean at the Bulls house at Harestreet Lane i.e. what we now call Worstead Lane.
- 1715 and 1716 GH Children of a travelling tinker, who evidently regularly passed this way Mary his daughter was buried 14 March 1715/16 and Matthew son of Robert Ratsford on 7 Dec 1716.
- 1720/1 GH Thomas Baker (a traveller from Maldon in Beds) buried 23 March.

## **Entries of Baptisms of children of travellers born in or near the Hormeads**

- 1598 Richardus filius Evans Griffen et Joannae bapt fuit vj die Septembris peregrinantes versus Cantabrigin. A civitat. London ubi ut aivnt cohabitavere. [travellers to Cambridge from city of London where they were also inhabitants)
- 1616 Margareta filia Nicholai Yongman de Deepehom in Com. Norfolk et Susannae Eldeme de Elingham com predict. Vicesimo 3 nata in Doggeshead et bapt. 26 Martij. [This infant, base-born, was born at the Dog's Head in the Pot (later renamed Three Jolly Butchers) in Hare Street whilst her parents were on the road to London. They were both from Norfolk, though of different villages.]
- 1728 Isaiah son of John Boswell (a travelling gypsie) bap Dec 22
- 1739 Priscilla dau of a travelling Gypsie bap Oct 7
- 1731/2 John the son of James and Mary Morral (Note the mother of this child was a travelling woman, and was found in a lane towards ye evening with ye child just delivered) Bap March 19

Most of the above were paupers, but for some of them travelling was a way of life and they earned their living on the roads. Others, however, were forced onto the roads because of destitution and no parish wanted them to become a burden on its own poor-rate. The constables and overseers pushed them on, over the parish boundary, before they could become a nuisance. However, it was inevitable that some of these sick and ailing people would die in someone's parish one day, and from the Hormead registers, it is apparent that a fair proportion ended their miserable lives within the Hormead boundaries.

Cripples appear in sudden abundance in the 1630s – war veterans?

- 1622/3 A creeple who was a prentice in London, travelling to his freinde in Cambridgeshire was burief ffeb:23
- 1631/2 A creeple was buried Jan 11
- 1632 A creeple was buried Nov 23
- 1634 A creeple was buried Maye 29
- 1635 A creeple was buried Sep 9
- 1637 A creeple who was brought by pass buried 14 Mar.

The 'pass' mentioned in the last entry was a means whereby the authorities sought to restrict and regulate the numbers of beggars, cripples and poor travellers in general, on the roads. Begging had been prohibited in 1576 and the vagabond who begged was ordered to be whipped in each parish as he was passed on to his place of birth (or if that was unknown, to the place where he or she last lived). Later begging was permitted but a pass had to be obtained and shown to the parish authorities. Obviously it was preferable to settle in a parish where they could find employment and somewhere to live, and a lot of paupers attempted this, but few seem to have succeeded. A clamp down on their movements resulted and in 1662 an act was passed with the preamble:

*"People are not restrained from going from one parish to another and therefore do endeavour to settle themselves in those parishes where there is best stock, the largest commons or wastes to build cottages, and the most woods for them to burn and destroy, and when they have consumed it, then to another parish and at last become rogues and vagabonds..."*

The effect of this law of settlement of 1662 was to guard parishes against strangers with families settling within their boundaries. Temporary workers, such as harvest employees, were allowed to move, provided they had a certificate from the minister of the parish, one of the churchwardens and one of the overseers. There were ways and means of obtaining a settlement e.g. by securing an apprenticeship in the parish; being hired as a servant for one year; or paying parochial rates. Women gained settlement by marriage, and children took that of their father until the age of seven. Illegitimate children were settled where they were born and no parish wanted them since they were almost sure to be paupers.

In the Hormeads, as elsewhere, a lot of difficulties arose from this act, which had to be settled in the courts at Hertford and we can see from the parish registers and the Hertford Session Books what the impact was on the people of Hormead and Hare Street. It also created a lot of ill will between neighbouring parishes. The problems were four main trouble spots for the overseers and constables of the parish:

1. Passes had to be checked and anyone holding them escorted to the boundary
2. to prevent anyone settling in the parish who was liable to become a candidate for poor relief
3. To keep out of the parish pregnant women who were not parishioners

4. To prevent bastards being born here and if they accidentally arrived in this parish, then to get them sent back to the parish of one of their parents – preferably the father's parish, as quickly as possible.

## 1. Passes

The justices examined paupers and authorised their removal where a legal settlement was not proved. Armed with the certificate, the pauper was then sent from parish to parish, back to his or her place of birth or where he or she last lived.

1600 GH            Johannes Stonarde filius Edwardi et Annae ux eius,  
Bap.                bapt fuit 26 Decembris. Peregrinantes ab oppido  
                      Cambridge, versus London habitantes in Sancti  
                      Georgij paraochi: apud Southwark, testante duo:  
                      Arthur Capell, et Tho: Hanchett Justii eadem. Anna  
                      examinatione collecta 20 die Novembris 1600.

This couple, on their way from the town of Cambridge to London where they were inhabitants of the parish of St George, Southwark, had a pass issued in November by two justices Arthur Cappell and Thomas Hanchett. We are not told if they needed help whilst in this parish, but at least they were allowed to pass unmolested.

1680 GH            Elizabeth Hands cuming to the towne of Trumpington  
Burial              in Cambridgesheare and shee wanted relefe shee was  
                      taken up december the last. And sente forward  
                      ratleye with a pase and was buried at hormead  
                      magna ianuari the 5th.

What sad tale is here! Did she get the relief she needed before being urged on 'rightly'? and in what condition was she to be sent on? Sadly she never reached Trumpington and we can only hope that the Hormead people were not too unkind before she died in their midst.

1608/9            Johannes Branch de Burwell in com. Camb being  
Burial              taken beging in the parish of St Martin's in the Field,  
                      having his passe to the said parish of Burwell, dide  
                      and was buried in the croft of titus Chapman  
                      Cunstable the 7th of March Anno Dni 1608.

This is interesting in that the Constable had found John Branch in this parish en route for Burwell, equipped with his pass, and had decided to keep him overnight probably since he must have been ill. The only place to keep him safe and under surveillance was in his

own house. Thus John Branch came to die 'in the crofte of Titus Chapman Cunstable...'

## **2. Preventing settlement of outsiders within this parish.**

In the abstract of cases which appeared at the Hertford Sessions, (see typed list at end of this session) are many cases of the different parishes trying to move families back to Hormead and Hormead trying to get families settled back in parishes from which they came to Hormead. The story of Ann Salmon can be pieced together from these entries and the parish registers. In 1638 9 July Ann Warman a widow was presented at court for receiving Arthur Samon and Ann his wife as inmates. The parish authorities obviously did not want them to settle here, but they did settle and were a mighty troublesome family.

*Hertford Sessions 11/12 Jan 1641*

*Order for the apprehension of Thomas Cathmar of Great Hallingbury, co Essex, the reputed father of a bastard child of one Ann Salmon, born in the parish of GH, who has escaped from the custody of Richard Kirbye, constable of Stortford.*

*Ditto 3 May 1641*

*Richard Kirby, Simon Fabyn and John Jones all of Stortford, shall pay to the Overseers of the poor of GH the sum of £7 for allowing Thomas Cathman, the reputed father of a bastard child of Ann Salmon to escape out of their custody.*

*GH Baptisms: Maria dau of Ann Samon base born bap 1 Jan 1638/9.*

Arthur and Ann stayed on in the Hormeads and a son caused trouble next. A servant could claim residence in his place of servitude, and Sandon thus became involved with this family:

*Hertford Sessions 7 Apr 1662 Order that Anthony Gray of Sandon be discharged from keeping Jeremiah Salmon, a lunatic late his servant...further order that---Salmon of LH father of the said Jeremiah shall pay the overseers of Sandon 12p(d???????) weekly towards his relief.*

Arthur Salmon was bired at GH 15 Oct 1664 and 'widow Salmon' at LH 20 Dec 1696, but not before she too had got into a scrape.

*Hertford Quarter Sessions 1672: 1 Jan. Ann Salmon of Hare Street in Little Hormead, widow, has not repaired her fences which lie near the lands of Margaret Coell, widow.*

The Sessions records give accounts of the wrangles between parishes over the removal of other families, and orders of maintenance if they were allowed to stay, e.g.

- 1657/8 Agnes and Dorothy Wilkinson to be sent from Sawbridgeworth to GH for settlement. Order that certain justices shall treat with John Wigge of GH concerning the maintenance of Dorothy and Agnes Wilkinson.
- 1687 William Cotton tried to settle himself, wife and child, at Barkway, last settled at GH and now ordered that they were to remove back to GH,

Anyone receiving these would-be settlers got into hot water from the authorities. Some spiteful person alleged that a frail widow called Jane Wheeler had taken in a man called Thomas Davies. It was also a spiteful act against Davies, since he was believed to be a dissenter, having been up at court himself on a charge of not receiving the Sacrament for some time, in 1665. On 1st December that year the presentment against Jane Wheeler was made and the Vicar had to intervene to sort it out and made sure that in 1666 there was sent to court

*'A Certificate of severall of the inhabitants of GH in behalf of Jane Wheeler, widow, of the same parish, that whereas the said Jane stands indicted for 'keeping & inhabiting of one' Thomas Davies as an inmate, they certify that she doth not inhabit the said Davies or any other person as inmate and that she is a very aged and infirm person and not able to travell to the towne of Hertford to make her appearance before the Court of Sessions. Signed by William Cage, vicar etc.'*

That had a happy ending, but the bickering this act of settlement caused was most unfortunate.

### **3. The moving on process**

This was at its most inhumane probably with pregnant single women. Since the act stated that the child took the parish in which it was born as its place of settlement where no father or putative father could be established and his parish made responsible. The next step, was to try to make the father pay for the child and so take it off the poor rate. Between 1770 and 1790 there were at least seven maintenance orders against the fathers of bastard children. James Bully of Standon and Sarah Chambers of LH got into difficulties over their son James and ended up by being married twice within eight months!

The Hertford Sessions books tell part of the story, the rest can be filled in from the parish registers:

LH Marriage: James Bully of Standon = Sarah Chambers of LH married, by Licence 8 Feb 1759, and married by Licence again 30 Oct 1759, the first time by Francis Gulston, Curate of LH, a second time by John Gelder Curate of Aspeden. The second marriage was to make sure everyone knew that they had been married, an important fact to the little boy who was baptised at LH: James Bully son of James and Sarah bap 19 Aug 1759.

The Hertford Sessions book has three references to this family, all in 1759:

- a) adjournment of appeal of Standon against a warrant removing James Bully & Sarah his wife from Little Hormead (23 April/10 May 1759)
- b) order allowing adj. Appeal, but so far only as the wife is concerned, on the ground that she is not his lawful wife (9 July/4 Aug 1759)
- c) Maintenance order against James Bully of Standon, labourer, and Susan Chambers of LH, single woman in respect of their bastard son James. (1,13 Oct/3,24 Nov 1759)

Since marriage certificates were not given to, and kept by the couple concerned in those days, problems could arise in proving that a marriage ceremony had taken place – especially if the minister had moved away in the meantime.

## **Vagabonds**

Vagabonds on the main high road through Hare Street were escorted to the parish boundary to the north and passed on to Anstey and then to Barkway. The constables at Barkway were incensed at the number they were having to deal with and took their complaint to the Sessions court at Hertford in 1657 April 6th and 7th. There they made a 'Complaint by the parishioners of Barkway against the constables of Anstey, Little Hormead, Braughing and Great Hormead for not following the directions of the law 'in conveying divers vagabonds' out of the road through which they ought to have been conveyed'. Whereby great charge hath occurred to the said parish of Barkway.' Presumably, the Barkway parishioners would have much preferred all vagabonds, beggars and the like pushed across the eastern boundary and so on to the Pelhams.

## **Mentally sick**

They were put onto the poor rates from the earliest days and proved to be a singularly difficult group of paupers to deal with because their needs were special and the attention they required was constant and long term. The overseers had to find a place for them in the workhouse among the other poor or send them elsewhere to an asylum. Separate asylums were not available until the second half of the 18th century. Few references occur in the Hormead records to such cases (apart from Jeremiah Salmon (page 6) but two may be noted here:

GH Burial 1599	John innocens filius Henry Hawke sen. Sepult 26 July
GH Burial 1617	Agnes Perry Anc. (illa=maid servant) et innocens sepulta fuit vicesimo primo Marcij.

The Hawke family was relatively well-off (yeomen) and the maid was obviously capable of doing a job to maintain herself. How many more of these people there were in the village we do not know. The Rev C Colson mentions a lunatic at the Brick House mid 19th century. Perhaps there were few cases here.

## **The Overseers of the Poor**

The Overseer was chosen at the parish vestry meeting to serve for one year as the parish Overseer. He was a householder and was given the responsibility after being approved by the Justices when his name was presented to them by the vestry meeting. The duties of the overseer were many: paying for medical attention and organising the isolation of the sick; handing out casual relief; paying pensions; arranging for pauper children to be put to work or an apprenticeship; relieving widows and one-parent families. After the establishment of the Town House or Workhouse, he had oversight of this and had to keep an eye on the inhabitants.

## **Town House and Work House**

1723 The Workhouse Act permitted parishes to build and manage workhouses making it lawful 'for two or more parishes to unite in purchasing having or taking such a house.' This was because the parish was duty bound to provide work for the poor and some parishes were too small to afford a stock of materials to set them to work. By 1830 only 924 parishes had combined to form a here 67 unions.

1782 creation of workhouse unions allowed under Gilbert's Act.  
1834 Poor Law Board appointed (but vestry still acted as agents for the Union)  
Workhouses built for containing and employing all the paupers in the parish.  
1925 Overseers abolished by Rating and Valuation Act as from 1 April 1927  
1929 Local Govt Act abolished boards of guardians as from 1 April 1930 and transferred the care of the poor to local authorities  
1948 System abolished when Welfare State took over.

There was a Town House for the poor in the Hormeads, but no one knows now where it was, or which house site was that of the town house. I have found few references to it:

GH Burials: The widow Dines from the Town House an ancient woman buried Dec 11 1741  
Richard the husband of susannah Brooks, from the Town House Dec 16 1741

Herts Sessions Books: 30 Mar 1668 Order that the inhabitants of LH shall pay the rates for the building of a Town House lately erected on the waste of the lord of the Manor by the consent of the inhabitants.

The Work House was at Buntingford, at Bridgefoot, a large Victorian house recently renovated. It was erected after the 1834 Act when parishes were grouped together in unions, each under a Board of Guardians, elected on a rate-paying franchise. Guardians were controlled by the Poor Law Commission. Buntingford had a Union by 1839, the first burial of a Hormead resident from the workhouse being noted in the GH register of 1844. It is variously referred to in old records as the Buntingford Workhouse of 'The Union', still being remembered by the oldest members of the villages today by the last name.

**Extracts from Hertford Sessions Books**  
**Legal References to the poor, residing in, or passing through,  
the Hormeads**

- 1638 9 July On 1st Nov 1637 Alice Piggott of GH, widow, received John Phillipps, labourer and Ann his wife and that Ann Warman of the same, widow, received Arthur Samonn and Ann his wife as inmates
- 1640/1 11 & 12 Jan Order for the apprehension of Thomas Cathmar of Gt. Hallingbury, cc. Essex, the reputed father of a bastard child of one Ann Salmon, born in the parish of GH who has escaped from the custody of Richard Kirbye, constable of Stortford
- 1641 3 May Richard Kirby, Simon Fabyn & John Jones, all of Stortford, shall pay to the Overseers of the poor of GH the sum of £7 for allowing Thos. Cathman, the reputed father of a bastard child of Ann Salmon to escape out of their custody
- 1654 10 July Order that some of the chief inhabitants of Tharfield shall appear at the next Quarter Sessions and show cause why the churchwardens & overseers there should not receive and provide for Richard Day, Mary his wife and their son, Daniel, who are now resident at Hormead
- 1657 6 & 7 April Complaint by parishioners of Barkway against the constables of Anstey, LH, Braughin & GH for not following the directions of the law 'in conveying divers vagabonds' out of the road through which they ought to have been conveyed' whereby great charge hath accrued to the said parish of Barkway
- 1657/8 11 Jan Agnes & Dorothy Wilkinson to be sent from Sawbridgeworth to GH for settlement. Order that certain justices shall 'treat' with John Wigge of GH concerning the maintenance of Dorothy & Agnes Wilkinson
- 1662 7 Apr Order that Anthony Grey of Sandon be discharged from keeping Jeremiah Salmon, a lunatic late his servant...further that - Salmon of LH, father of the said Jeremiah, shall pay the overseers of Sandon 12d weekly towards his relief.
- 1665 1 Dec Presentment that - Wheeler of GH. Widow, received Thomas Davies as an inmate. (Thomas Davies was presented at Court in 1665 for not

		receiving the Sacrament – hence animus against him
1666		Certificate of several of the inhabitants of GH in behalf of Jane Wheeler, widow, of the same parish, that whereas the said Jane stands indicted for 'keeping & inhabiting of one' Thomas Davies as an inmate, they certify that she doth not inhabit the said Davies or any other person as inmate' and that she is a very aged and infirm person and not able to travell to the towne of Hertford to make her appearance before the Court of Sessions. Signed by William Cage, vicar et al.
1687	11 July	Wm. Cotton tried to settle himself, wife and child, at Barkway, last settled at GH now ordered that they were to remove to GH.
1727	2 Oct	<p>In accordance with a 'justices' warrant, Witham-Brooks overseer of LH, seized the following goods of Mary Wrenn widow who had forsaken her children and left them chargeable to the parish.</p> <p>2 beds &amp; bedsteads with blankets, bolsters &amp; pillows 1.10.0.</p> <p>3 trunks or boxes, 5 sheets, 3 chairs &amp; a stool &amp; a looking glass 10.0</p> <p>The wearing apparell belonging to her late husband 1.15.0</p> <p>A cupboard &amp; dresser 24 Earthen plates &amp; dishes,</p> <p>2 pewter dishes, 6 pewter spoons, 5 porringers, 4 salts &amp; 9 trenchers 16.0</p> <p>A gridiron, spit, cleaver &amp; chopping knife, a warming</p> <p>Pan, a lanthorn, a fire shovell, a pair of tongs &amp; bellows,</p> <p>A candlestick, 6 Potts &amp; Pitchers, a table, 2 stools &amp; 5</p> <p>Chairs, 15 two vessels, 2 tubs, 2 brass kettles, 2 Skillets &amp; an iron pot, a frying pan, a kneading trough,</p> <p>A wheel &amp; reel, a forth &amp; sith, a weedstook, a spade,</p> <p>A Bill and a Hatchett, and Glass Bottles 2.2.0</p> <p>Wood for fireing 1.0.0</p> <p>Order that the goods be kept until the next session when the court will make some order concerning them.</p>

1731	26 July	Order dismissing the appeal of GH against a warrant removing James Dale & Elizabeth his wife, from Braughin.
1732/3	10 Jan	Order allowing the appear of GH against a warrant removing James Dale & Mary their daughter, from Braughin.
1734	15 July	Order dismissing the appeal of Yardley against a warrant removing Wm.Bradshaw & Sarah his wife from GH.
1756	Apl/May	Order allowing the appeal of LH against a warrant removing John Brown, Catherine his wife & (Catherine) their child from GH but only so far as the wife and child are concerned
1759		(a) Adj. Of appeal of Standon against a warrant removing James Bully & sarah his wife from LH. (b) Order allowing adj. Appeal, but so far only as the wife is concerned, on the ground that she is not his lawful wife (c) Maintenance order against James Bully of Standon, labourer, and Susan Chambers of LH, single woman I respect of their bastard son James.
1762	11 Jan	Order allowing appeal of GH against a warrant removing James Arnold & Alice his wife from Standon.
1766	Oct/Nov	Robert Fordham committed for leaving his family chargeable to the parish of LH, to be discharged.
1770	9 July	Maintenance order against Edward Cowell of Epping, Essex & Ann Brooks of LH. Single woman in respect of their bastard daughter Mary.
1771	7 Oct	Maintenance orders against John Trussell of LH. Labourer & sarah Wallis of GH. Single woman in respect of their bastard son.
1772	5 Oct	Maintenance order against John Lawrence, labourer & Mary Baker, single woman, both of GH, in respect of their bastard daughter Alice.
1779	Apr/May	Maintenance order against Joseph Knight of Enfield, Mx. Labourer, & Ann Anthony of LH. Single woman in respect of their bastard daughter Keziah.
1783	6 Oct	Wm. Dellow to be discharged upon finding sureties in respect of the bastard child of Hannah Cain of LH.
1784	Oct	Maintenance order against Philip Truman, cordwainer & Ann Lawrence, singlewoman, both of GH in respect of their bastard daughter.
1785	3 Oct	Maintenance order against Tabitha Winter of GH & John Day of Exing in Suffolk, labourer, in

		respect of their bastard son, John.
1790	11 Jan	Maintenance order against James Ginn, labourer & Ann Lawrence, singlewoman, both of GH in respect of their bastard daughter
1790	12 Apr	Order allowing appeal of Clavering against a warrant removing Elizabeth Byatt from LH.
1791	Oct/Nov	Adj. Of appeal of LH against a warrant removing Elizabeth Cain from Layston.

### **Land farmed 'for the Hormead poor'**

#### **Land Tax Great Hormead**

1812/13	Poors land	Occupied by Lee, Samuel	6-0 tax
1814/16	Poors land	Occupied by Lee Mrs	6-0 tax
1818/29	Poors land	Occupied by John Bullman	6-0 (down to 5-10 in 1827)
1830-32	Poors land	Occupied by Thomas Wisbey	5-10

There is no mention of any poor land in the tax return prior to 1812, i.e. 1809.

#### **Land Tax Layston**

Land which belonged to John Johnson and his heirs (1746-1812) and taxed at 12-0 up to 1812, appeared as:

1813	Poor of GH owners	S Lee occupier	12-0 to 1815
1818	Fooffes Hormd Poor	Jn Bullman occupier	12-0 to 1828
1829	Fooffes Hormd Poor	Chas Nicholls occupier	12-0
1830/2	Fooffes Hormd Poor	Thos Wisbey	12-0

## CHARITIES

A number of bequests of 20s to be distributed to the poor were made in wills, in the 16th and 17th centuries, later beneficiaries tended to leave some land to be farmed for the benefit of the poor.

### Great Hormead

1580 The Ten shillings that was given by Nicholas Westwood was paid by his wife the 27th days of November.

Nicholas Westwood maritus Bitterise sepultus 4 die Aprilis 1580  
Nicholas Westwood husband of Beatrice was buried 4 Apr 1580

1582 Thomas Brand the elder, buried 12 May 1582, left 20s per annum to be given to the poor.

The first distribution was made 20 May 1583:

1.	Thomas Blackabye	xij <sup>d</sup>
2.	Margaret Dellowe "	
3.	Michaell Growte "	
4.	Thomas Whitsey "	
5.	Margaret Brand "	
6.	Clemence Edmund	"
7.	Alice Marten	"
8.	Joane Mason	"
9.	John Perye	"
10.	Clemence Togood"	
11.	Agnes Colte	"
12.	John Campin	"
13.	Robert Halden	"
14.	Richard Dunne	"
15.	Michaell Ginne	"
16.	John Halden senr.	"
17.	John Everet	"
18.	Joane Smith	"
19.	Williame Browne "	
20.	Thomas Warman "	

In these days of private charity, we have a note of two Hormead recipients in the PR:

1577 Roger Powell vetus. Ho. Qui vixit de elemosinis sepultur 22 Decembris

1578 Hugo Broke vetus. Ho. Qui vixit de elemos. Sepultur 15 die Sep. vetus. Ho (mo qui vixit de elemosinos = an old man who lived and was dependent on charity).

1614 Francis Delawood, Lord of the Manor of Hormead Redswell (Hormead Hall) died and left money to be distributed to the poor of Hormead. A brass plate, most beautifully engraved and preserved was placed in the church giving details of this charity.

Rev Charles Colson's Notebook 1843-72 had a sheet pasted in the end of the book, written in another person's hand, and with the date 1834, states:

Charities:

1. £10 the Gift of Dellowood to the poor to buy a dinner and Christmas (old) from
2. the Hormead Hall Estate in Mr Houblyn's family. The Brass Plate in Hormead Church is an extract from the Founder's will.
3. £10 a Rental from about 9 acres of Land in Great Hormead, a Michaelmas Rent when founded, or by whom, is not known, for no particular purpose. The Land is now held by Mr Wisbey. It is given away about Christmas or Lady Day.
4. Hormead Parsonage farm pays £1 a year to the poor. When founded is not known.

The Church Wardens & Overseer, for the time being, are Trustees to the two first of these charities.

### **Little Hormead**

"Peirce Powel gent dyed at Stonebury and was buried ye third of September in the year of our Lord 1667" at Little Hormead. He left a will in which he gave –

"Item I give to the Parson and Churchwardens of the said Parish of Little Hormead for the time being, and their successors for ever, to be issuing out of myforesaid Messuage Lands and Premises beforementioned to be in the occupation of the said John Davies, one other Annuity or yearly Rent-charge of twenty shillings per Annum, Fifteen shillings whereof I will to be yearly paid to the use of the poor of the said Parish of Little Hormead, and 5/- residue I will to be yearly also paid unto the Clerk of the same Parish for the time being and his successors for ever, so as he and they from time to time keep my grave handsomly and decently covered with Turf..."

The farm held by John Davies, was held in 1713 by Thomas Andrews.

This claim being disputed by Mr Piper of Hare Street, the proprietor of the Lane, it was tried at the County Court, Royston May 7th 1851; and was rejected by the Judge (Collyer) for want of the Will

to establish the Claim – the Church Register was not considered legal Authority.

### **The Town Acre in Jeffrey's Field**

Note by the Rector Stephen Nye and Thomas Judd Churchwarden: there is also an Acre of Arable in Jeffries-field in this Parish, commonly called the Town-Heath, anciently given to the use of our Poor; and the which the Rector and Churchwardens are to occupy, or to let to some other, and the Rent thereof to give at the Communion Table in the Church to the Poor of LH the Sunday after Michaelmas Day.

PR of LH 1669

"This is to sho who hoald the towne Aker att this present tim which aker in Geifrays feeld belongs to the poor men of hamead pva and I Daniell fuller doe pay for the same aker by the towne one bushell wheat yearly

witness Robart Gillet.

Note Thomas Palmor entered as Tenant to the Town-acre at the Feast of St Michael in the year of our Lord 1738 for wch he pays every year six shillings.

Witness Leonard Chappelow, Rector  
Samuel Mason, Churchwarden.

### **John Walls Porter Charity**

His will was proved in London 21 Jan 1824 and set up this charity. "As relates to my personal Estates I give the same to the Rector Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parish of LH to be laid out in their names in the three per Centum Consolidated Annuities and to be continued in the name of the Rector Churchwardens and Overseers of the said Parish for the time being for ever upon trust to apply the Interest half-yearly at Midsummer and Christmas in the purchase of bread and clothing at their discretion to be distributed among poor and needy persons inhabitants of the said Parish of LH for the time being for ever with power nevertheless to apply £10 part of such Interest in any one year from time to time in putting out a poor boy belonging to the said Parish of LH as an apprentice to any trade or business."

A note on this charity in 1834 stated that between £40 and £50 annual interest of funded Property was being administered.

This charity is still in existance today (1980).

The Church has always been a source of charity and help for the poor, and the alms collected at the communion service on the first Sunday each month were devoted to their aid.

The Rev. Charles Colson left a detailed notebook about the church and charities and life in Great Hornead from 1842-72. His notes on the alms collected, their distribution to families with 7,6,5,4,3,2, and 1 children were detailed and showed his deep interest in his parishioners. He also organised the distribution of cheap coal, the gifts of clothing, etc. The following extracts are fairly comprehensive, though I have not listed the recipients as he did. One interesting fact which these reveal, is the number of times when he, out of his own pocket, makes up a deficit or gives a healthy contribution as an example.

Notes taken from the Rev Charles Colson's notebook. He was Vicar of GH 1842-74.

### **Alms collected at Communion**

During the year 1843 these amounted to £4-0-6 and the Vicar was thus permitted to distribute this amount

To 6 communicants – either 4/- or 3/-  
To 8 widows – non communicants 2/6 each  
To 7 old men 2/6 each  
To 9 men with large families or old, or with sick children 1/- to 2/6

During the following years, the needy were constantly in the Rev Ch. Colson's mind – and notebook – and their needs recorded and gifts of money from the communion alms were shared out.

In the spring of 1844 he organised the distribution of coals – with the numbers 5, or 4, or 3, against their names. These were explained in his note of the next distribution in 1844 & 45 where 6 pecks or 5 pecks or one bushel of coals were delivered each time to listed persons.

In this year "There were 29 tons of coals, sold out in this way, at different times of which 2 were paid for out of Mrs Boswell's money with the carriage – the other 27 were carried by the farmers, gratis – and the difference between the selling and cost price paid for chiefly Mr. Higgins – and partly by me.

Capt Gould also distributed 4 tons gratis.

The price of the coals this year was      fr: Pages      27/- a ton

Fr: Chucks 30/- a ton

Mrs Barnett gave £2-10-0d in the Autium of 1844, of wh: I spent £1-17-6 in buying 2 additional tons of coals, for sale /6 a bushel and the remaining 12-6d I distributed.

Alms collected in 1844 £8-3-5½.

These were distributed to the needy as usual, including 11 widows.

1845.46. There were 8 distributions of coals, but all the people did not get them every time. Altogether 703½ (=23 tons about) bushels were sold at 6d.

Money taken: £17-11-9

King's payment was £ 1-3-0

25 tons were bought by Mr. Higgins at 265/- - the remaining 2 tons (about) were added to the school stock.

Alms collected in as Sacramental offerings	1845	£
1846	£9-9-6	
1847	£10-0-0½	
1848	£10-5-3	
1849	£10-6-6	
1850	£9-6-10	

1847.8 Coal distribution – now receiving 1¼ or 1½ bushets at a time.

23½ tons of coals was distributed at 8 different times besides

134 cwt of wood and 113 faggots.

1849 Alms collected at Communion – first Sunday of each month – the Vicar noted persons present and offering: and totalled it up for 1849 at £10-6-6. Average attendance: 25-30.

1850 Coal distribution in 1½ bushels, 1¼ bushel, and bushel lots. 30 tons were sold wh: measured only 887 bushels.

There were 10 distributions 5 tons sold at 6d a bushel  
5 tons sold at 4d a bushel

The money realised was £18-5-8d.

1851 Coal distribution – 29 tons distributed – the 1st dist. At 6d, second at 4d per bushel.

Money realised by sale 15-6-0½  
Expenses 1-11-0

13-15-0½

Price of coals about £29-0-0.

- 1852 Distributions of 1½, 1¼ and 1 bushel lots. This year 17 had 1½, 18 had 1¼ bushels, 55 had 1 bushel regularly & 2 irreg. 28 tons were bought by Mr. Higgins and the carried paid by him entirely. Of these 808¾ bushels were sold out at 4d per bushel and about 12 bushels left.
- 1853 Same for 6 pecks, others 5 pecks or 1 bushel. 623 bush, sold at 4d.
- 1854 Usual list of names for 6 pecks, 5 pecks, 1 bushel.  
Sold 456½ bushels @4d. 7-12-1  
262¾ " @6d 6-11-4½

14-3-5½ 8 times

1855 Apparently Mr Higgins was no longer supplying the coal with the results:

6 distributions  
565 bushels sold at 4d 9-7-8  
Measuring & unloading 1-5-0  
£8-2-8

(20 tons) (37 bush.) short.

Expense 19 tons at £1-0-6 £19 -9-6  
Carrier of 13 tons at 6/- (7 free) 3-18-0  
1 ton of Lawrence (-unpaid)  
Subscriptions: Mr. Allen 10-10-0  
Mr. Wilas (?) 12-0  
Mr. Dellow 5-0  
Mr. Stratford 1-0-0  
C. Colson 2-0-0

- 1855 & 1856 6 distributions - 570¾ bushels
- 1856.57 573½ bushels sold 6½ distributions
- 1857.58 525¾ bushels sold @ 4d in 6 distributions
- 1858.59 638 bushels sold @4d. Being 7 deliveries
- 1859.60 26 tons sold in 9 distrib. 828 bushels & 3 over
- 1860.61 667¼ bushels sold at 4d each in 7 distributions. N.B. Allen, J. Ganwell, J. Tolfts, A. Allen (in Layston) 1 turn.
- 1861.62 722 bushels sold 7 times.
- 1862 683¼ bushels sold in 7 distributions
- 1863 One distribution free - 96 bushel  
Six distributions @ 4d bushel 562  
658
- 1864 Not entered.
- 1865 21 tons at about 31½ bush. To the ton. 7 distrib. Of which 2 free.
- 1866 5 sales at 4 & 2 free distrib. - 21 tons.
- 1867 No details.

1868 17 tons – 189 bushels give, 353 sold at 4d.

### Alms

1850	The usual 30 or so communicants contributed alms on the first Sunday in the month, and had their names noted by C.C. – except on 3 May and in July when no names appear, the reason being "I at Tavistock".
1851	Collection at communion £9-1-5½ (a small note inserted before list of attenders at the service on 2 Feb says "Ernest born Jan 16" C.C.'s son.)
1852	£10-16-5
1853	£11-9-0½ -
	the account of the communicants month by month is followed, as usual, by a list of names of persons to whom the communion alms were distributed, and the amount, varying from 4/- down to 1/-.
1854	£16-1-2
1855	£15-19-1, but in March, the vicar spent a £1 from the first quarter's colln "on coals for widows".
1856	£16-7-9
	Taken from com: fund Dec 1856
	Towards deficiency in coal club fund £2-10-0
	Balance £13-17-9
1857	£13-19-3
1858	£13-14-8
1859	£14-4-3
1860	£15-15-8
1861	£20-12-2
1862	£17-4-0
1863	£16-6-9 of which £9-6-9 was distributed & £7 reserved for 1864
1864	£18-8-0
	(transferred to coal fund to provide for one free contribution 96 bushels at 4d £1-12-2)
1865	£18-11-4
	(transferred to coal fund for free distribution £1-11-4 out of total)
1866	£16-5-0
1867	£17-11-6
1868	£16-17-4
1869	£17-4-7

1870	£18-16-0
1871	£20-1-2
1872	£17-12-9
1873	£16-10-7
1874	Entries to July

17 and then a note at end "£2-0-0 early con.alms handed to Mr. G.A. Piper a church warden.

May 18 1874

C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>1</sub>

And here his notebook ended.

## **Clothing for distribution**

An unexplained note occurs in the middle of the other 1856 entries:

### Shirts, stockings etc.

J. Scutt, T. Thorogood, W. Watson, J. Spicer, W Cane)

H. King - Ward - Allen - Foster ) Shirts and stocks

Wid. Hicks - Kemp - Lawrence

- chemises

1. Robinson = Les Bardwell

## Boys shirts

Xmas 1857 -

Xmas 1857  
the usual Christmas list of families with

7 children under 14

7 children under 1  
6 " " "

5 " " " etc

Then "widows", is followed this year by a list of clothing distribution. There were men's shirts, women's shifts, 1 boy's shirt, 5 small shifts 2 or 3 years; 4 small shirts 2 or 3; 1 pr stockings; 1 pinafore list cape, 2 babies long frocks, 1 frock 3 or 4 yrs; 1 frock 2 or 3.

Xmas 1858 – again a gift of stockings or shirt or frock was given to many of the villagers, - about 45 of them, & following Christmases.

Xmas 1862 (& others in between 1858 and then) still distributing shirts (5) and shifts (6).