

WHITEPARISH

SOCIAL HISTORY

Social character

Medieval Whiteparish was composed of several distinct settlements. Abbotstone, Alderstone, Cowesfield and Whelpley were all listed separately in the tax list of 1332. The two largest townships, Cowesfield and Whelpley, were characterised by one large and several smaller taxpayers, while in the smaller settlements of Abbotstone and Alderstone no one taxpayer predominated.¹

Involvement in parish life by major landowners varied. Horatio, 3rd Earl Nelson (1823–1913), though his seat at Trafalgar House, Standlynch, lay outside the parish,² was active in the life of the Whiteparish community and its church, as well as being a leading lay churchman in the diocese of Salisbury.³ William Frederic Lawrence of Cowesfield House served on the parish council for many years from its inception in 1894.⁴ However, by 1918 it was reported that ‘Mr Nelson’ (Thomas Horatio, 4th Earl Nelson) and another major local landowner, Douglas Eyre, were non-resident and had no interest in the parish.⁵

Crime and the law

In 1249 a stranger came to Cowesfield at night, but escaped into Melchet forest when challenged by the watchmen. In the same year two women from Abbotstone reported being victims of burglary, and the son of a Newton man was hung for larceny.⁶ A Frustfield man was acquitted of burglary in 1276, and three men charged with slaying travellers in 1302 were also acquitted. In 1305 four men assaulted a man in Newton.⁷

¹ Crowley (ed.), *Tax List 1332*, 32–4.

² For Trafalgar House see *VCH Wilts.* 11, 70.

³ ‘Wilts Obituary’, *WAM* 38 (1913–14), 118–19.

⁴ *WSA*, 1980/1; 1980/2; 1980/3.

⁵ *WSA*, 1980/3, 97.

⁶ Meekings (ed.), *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre, 1249*, 246 (nos. 496, 497, 498).

⁷ R.B. Pugh (ed.), *Wiltshire Gaol Delivery and Trailbaston Trials 1275–1306* (*WRS* 33, 1978), 45 (no. 79), 86 (no. 367), 104 (no. 515).

In 1754 the parish vestry agreed to bear the expense of criminal prosecutions relating to crime in the parish.⁸ This was reiterated in 1770 and 1784.^{9, 10} In 1799 the vestry resolved to make an annual contribution to an association for preventing thefts and robberies.¹¹

It is unclear when a police constable was first stationed in the parish. In 1866 a man was charged with assaulting a police constable at Whiteparish, and in 1868 a case against two men for being drunk and creating a disturbance was proved in court by a police constable, who appears to have witnessed their behaviour.¹² A police station with one constable in charge is known by 1900, and was still there in 1939.¹³ Police houses were included in 1957 plans for local authority housing in the parish.¹⁴

Rural unrest

In May 1737 an alleged 60 persons near Whiteparish stopped a load of wheat from being taken for export to Redbridge, near Southampton, and the same group were said to have stopped several more waggons in the area.¹⁵ A vestry minute in 1793 recorded that a reward had been offered following a threat made to a tenant farmer to fire his hay rick.¹⁶

In February 1800, a letter was sent to George Yalden Fort of Alderbury, who owned land at Whiteparish. The writer threatened to burn the barns of Whiteparish farmers if they did not reduce the price of wheat, and a subsequent fire damaged property leased by Fort to a tenant. Fort, and several Whiteparish farmers, offered a reward for information leading to a conviction.¹⁷

Tolls charged on the turnpike roads were a source of contention in 1814, when a farmer and his servant made three attempts to break the toll gate on the road leading to Whiteparish Common; the outcome of this protest is not recorded.¹⁸

The Swing Riots in the autumn of 1830 saw widespread rioting across southern England as agricultural labourers protested against low wages, and the introduction of

⁸ WSA, 1980/27, 20 Mar. 1754.

⁹ WSA, 1980/27, 18 Apr. 1770, 9 Feb. 1784.

¹⁰ WSA, 1980/27, 10 Nov. 1788.

¹¹ WSA, 1980/27, 28 Oct. 1799.

¹² *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 24 Mar. 1866, 8; *Salisbury Times*, 16 May 1868, 8.

¹³ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 1 Dec. 1900, 8; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939), 285.

¹⁴ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 30 Oct. 1957.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 19 May 1737, 4.

¹⁶ WSA, 1980/27, 23 Dec. 1793.

¹⁷ TNA, HO 42/49/80.

¹⁸ Hants. RO, 4M92/V4/3/2.

threshing machines which threatened to deprive them of employment.¹⁹ A crowd of 300–400 people assembled at Whiteparish that November, burning a threshing machine belonging to Richard Webb at Melchet, and demanding food and drink from other gentlemen in the locality.²⁰ Three men were tried the following January for the destruction of Webb's threshing machine; one was sentenced to transportation for seven years, and the other two men to terms of imprisonment.²¹

The National Agricultural Labourers' Union (NALU) was active in the Salisbury area by the mid-1870s. An NALU delegate reported little initial enthusiasm in Whiteparish, but eventually 13 men had joined at one meeting.²²

¹⁹ J. Bettey, *Rural Life in Wessex* (Bradford on Avon, 1977), 117–18; E. J. Hobsbawm and G. Rudé, *Captain Swing* (Harmondsworth, 1985), 88–103.

²⁰ Hants. RO, 21M57/2A1/53

²¹ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 10 Jan. 1831, 2.

²² E. Bellinge, 'Rural Crime and Protest in Wiltshire 1830-1875' (unpub. Univ. of Kent PhD thesis, 1984), 418.

Communal life

In 1439 two Alderstone men were fined for selling beer in unsealed measures.²³ An alehouse is mentioned in 1590,²⁴ and in 1620 two innkeepers were recorded, as well as a ‘tippler’ or keeper of a drinking house.²⁵ By 1675 Whiteparish was described as having ‘some Houses of Entertainment’; its position at the time on the road from Salisbury through Romsey to Southampton ensuring passing trade.²⁶ The Red Lion inn is known by 1697.²⁷ It was still known as the Red Lion in 1773, but as the King’s Head by 1823.²⁸ The White Hart inn is known by 1749.²⁹ A public house called the New Inn is known in 1867, but was no longer there in 1889.³⁰ Un-named beer houses are also known to have existed in the parish.³¹ A White Lion pub is reputed to have been situated in Common Road towards the end of the 19th century; no trace of a pub of that name has yet been found in trade directories, but there does appear to have been a licensed premises there. By 1992 the building had become Lion Cottages, with a lion’s head visible on an external wall.³²

An 1889 trade directory listed both the White Hart and the King’s Head as public houses.³³ The Fountain Inn is known by 1897.³⁴ A public house called the New Inn is known in 1939; it is not clear if there was any relationship with the former establishment of the same name.³⁵ By 1992 there were four public houses in the parish: the White Hart, King’s Head, Fountain and Parish Lantern.³⁶ By 2003 the White Hart had become a private dwelling.³⁷ The three remaining pubs were still open in 2010, but by 2022 only the King’s Head and the Parish Lantern remained, the Fountain having been converted to residential use.³⁸

A number of friendly societies are known in the village. In 1805 the Friendly Benefit Society met in the White Hart, and was still meeting there in 1813. The Whiteparish Phoenix

²³ J.E. Jackson, ‘The Sheriff’s Turn, Co. Wilts. A.D. 1439’, *WAM* 13 (1872), 117.

²⁴ Johnson (ed.), *Wiltshire County Records*, 136-7.

²⁵ J. Chandler, ‘Accommodation and Travel in Pre-Turnpike Wiltshire’, *WAM* 84 (1991), 87; N.J. Williams (ed.), *Tradesmen in Early-Stuart Wiltshire* (WRS 15, 1960), 12 (no. 34), 14 (no. 68).

²⁶ J. Ogilby, *Britannia* (1675), 102.

²⁷ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 830-1.

²⁸ Hants RO, 4M92/D50/4; WSA, A1/326/3.

²⁹ Hants. RO, 2M37/74; WSA, A1/326/3.

³⁰ *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1867), 1132, *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1889), 1049.

³¹ WSA, B18/100.

³² *All Saints’ School Whiteparish*, [43].

³³ *Kelly’s Dir Hants., Wilts., Dorset* (1889), 1049.

³⁴ *Langmead & Evans’ Directory of Salisbury and District* (1897-8); see also WSA, 1980/1, 226-7.

³⁵ *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1939), 285.

³⁶ *All Saints’ School Whiteparish: 150 Years 1842-1992* (s.l.: s.n., [1992]), [13].

³⁷ *Salisbury Jnl.*, 31 July 2003, 35-8.

³⁸ Inf. T. Rossinger, 5 May 2022.

Society was meeting in the King's Head in 1836.³⁹ In 1911 the parish friendly societies paraded with their regalia and banners through the village to celebrate the coronation of George V.⁴⁰

The parish church provided a focus for recreation in the early 20th century, with outings for the Sunday school and teas for the choir.⁴¹ Sometimes a fair or circus would visit the village, setting up in a field next to the church.⁴²

A reading room and library had been established in the village by 1871.⁴³ The first parish council meeting was held there in 1894, which implies a parallel use as a village meeting room.⁴⁴ Funds were raised for the room in 1910,⁴⁵ and it may have functioned as a reading room as late as 1924, when a sale catalogue described it as situated in the former parish workhouse, the building having been divided into three parts, with the reading room in the middle section.⁴⁶ The entire property was purchased by William Frederic Lawrence of Cowesfield House, who was thanked later that year for his repairs to the 'Parish Rooms'.⁴⁷ By 1949 it was referred to as the 'old' reading room, recently used by a youth club.⁴⁸ It may have ceased to function as a community space around this time. By 1974, a description of the former workhouse, known as 'Lynches', made no mention of the reading room.⁴⁹

A village hall was proposed in 1921 and eventually opened in 1929, its construction largely funded by Lord and Lady Melchet.⁵⁰ A recreation ground was suggested in 1934 and proposed again in 1944 as a war memorial.⁵¹ It was opened in 1947, when White Hart Meadow, adjacent to the church, was purchased for the sum of £625 from the Broxmore estate.⁵² The village hall of 1929, on Romsey Road, was demolished in 2013, the sale of the land contributing to the building of a new community building on the site of a pavilion on the

³⁹ WSA, A1/390.

⁴⁰ WSA, 1980/2, report of coronation festivities 22 June 1911.

⁴¹ *All Saints' School Whiteparish*, [23–4].

⁴² *All Saints' School Whiteparish*, [23–4].

⁴³ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 18 Nov. 1871, 5; 25 Nov. 1871, 8.

⁴⁴ WSA, 1980/1, mins. 4 Dec. 1894.

⁴⁵ WSA, 1980/2, mins. 30 Nov. 1910.

⁴⁶ WSA, 1980/20, 19.

⁴⁷ WSA, 1980/3, mins. 19 June 1924. The property passed to his heir, see WSA, 1980/4, mins. 19 Sept. 1935, 26 Sept. 1935.

⁴⁸ WSA, 1980/5, 108.

⁴⁹ Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd edn), 572. For the history of the workhouse, see Social welfare: poor relief.

⁵⁰ WSA, 1980/3, 145–6; 1980/4, 5–6.

⁵¹ WSA, 1980/4, 89–90; 1980/5, 22.

⁵² WSA, 1980/5, 80.

recreation ground. The recreation ground was by then known as the Memorial Ground, and the new community building, the Memorial Centre, opened in 2014.⁵³

As a large village, a number of clubs and societies were established in Whiteparish from the 19th century onwards. Men of Whiteparish were part of a cricket team in 1810, and in 1817 a match was played between married and single men of the parish.⁵⁴ A football club was active in 1900.⁵⁵ A branch of the Mother's Union was established in 1924, and was still meeting in 2000, but had folded by 2024.⁵⁶ A village youth club folded in 1949, but by the same year an army cadet force had formed.⁵⁷ The parish council did not provide allotments, but six privately-owned ones were recorded in 1950.⁵⁸ A Women's Institute was established in 1946 and was still active in 2024.⁵⁹ A flower show society for the villages of Whiteparish, Sherfield English and Landford is known by 1939. It was wound up in 1956, but separate flower show societies for Whiteparish and Landford had been established by 1958.⁶⁰ Amateur dramatics were popular in the parish; a drama society was putting on plays soon after the Second World War, and a youth group performed in pantomimes in the 1950s and 1960s. The Pepperbox Players put on their first production in 1986, but the society was laid down, following a final pantomime in January 2013, when the old village hall was demolished later that same year.⁶¹ In 1992 village organisations included a youth club and a badminton club.⁶² Sports clubs, women's groups and other societies, including the theatre group, and a garden club that had been established 30 years previously, were active in the village in 2003.⁶³ By 2022 a local archery club had a well-established field archery course on land leased for the purpose.⁶⁴ As of 2022, several clubs and societies were active in the parish, including a gardening club, history society, sports clubs and youth organisations.⁶⁵

⁵³ 'How the Memorial Centre Came Into Being', https://whiteparish.co.uk/amenities/memctr_history.asp (accessed 25 July 2024).

⁵⁴ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 23 July 1810, 4; 21 July 1817, 4.

⁵⁵ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 22 Dec. 1900, 6.

⁵⁶ *Whiteparish: 100 years of an English Village* (Whiteparish, [1999]), 93; <https://www.mothersunion.org/join-locally> (accessed 31 July 2024).

⁵⁷ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 25 Mar. 1949, 3 Aug. 1949.

⁵⁸ WSA, 1980/5, 23 Oct. 1950.

⁵⁹ *Whiteparish: 100 years of an English Village*, 93; <https://wiltshire.thewi.org.uk/find-wi> (accessed 31 July 2024). See also records of Whiteparish Women's Institute at WSA, 2028F/7/1; 4189/8/1; 4189/8/2.

⁶⁰ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 3 Dec. 1956, 27 May 158.

⁶¹ *Whiteparish: 100 years of an English Village*, 92; inf. M. Foster, 26 July 2024. As of July 2024 there were plans to revive the Pepperbox Players, with theatrical productions to take place in the Memorial Centre.

⁶² *All Saints' School Whiteparish*, [13].

⁶³ *Salisbury Jnl.*, 31 July 2003, 35–8.

⁶⁴ Inf. Chair, South Wilts Archery Club, 13 July 2022.

⁶⁵ Whiteparish Community Website, <https://whiteparish.co.uk/index.asp#> (accessed 25 July 2024). Inf. on site current to c.2023.

Education

A boys' school was reportedly founded c.1639 by James Lynch, to teach poor children to read, write, and cast up accounts. He endowed the school with land, the rent of which was to support the school. In 1724 Henry Eyre bequeathed his estate to his brother John on condition that £200 be given to augment the Lynch bequest.⁶⁶

By 1832 the school received £40 rent from the land, and £6 from Eyre's £200, which had been invested. The governors and trustees of the charity were the impropiator of the great tithes of Whiteparish, the owners of New House, Brickworth and Cowesfield, and the vicar.⁶⁷ Boys were admitted to the school from the age of five, and could stay for a maximum of three years, up to the age of nine. Reading, writing and arithmetic were taught without charge, but boys who wrote and cast accounts were charged 3d. weekly for pens, ink and paper. Thirty-five boys were accommodated in the week-day school, but the pressure on places was so great that in 1831 an usher had been appointed to teach younger boys on a Sunday, at a salary of £2, leaving room for older boys in the week-day school. The schoolmaster received a salary of £6.⁶⁸

A girl's school was established in the parish after Elizabeth Hitchcock left £200 in her will to trustees to support a school for teaching 10 or more poor girls needlework and reading. A separate bequest of £50 provided for the poor of the parish. By 1746 neither bequest been paid. It was agreed between Anna Hitchcock of Cowesfield Esturmy and the trustees that the money be commuted for a rent charge of £12 annually on her estate. The charity was to be overseen by the impropiator of the great tithes of Whiteparish, the vicar and churchwardens, and the persons entitled to the freehold or inheritance of the estates of Newhouse, Brickworth and Cowesfield.⁶⁹ Of this £12, £10 was to go towards the school. The remaining £2 was to be distributed to poor housekeepers of the parish.⁷⁰ Anna Hitchcock left £200 in her own will for the upkeep of the school, which was invested by the trustees in annuities.⁷¹ The mistress was to be paid £10 annually, out of which she was to provide books; this income was augmented by Anna Hitchcock's gift. No girl was to be admitted until six years of age, or to remain after the age of 12 years.⁷²

⁶⁶ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 827–8.

⁶⁷ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 827–8.

⁶⁸ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 827–8.

⁶⁹ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30.

⁷⁰ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30.

⁷¹ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30.

⁷² *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30.

In 1832 it was reported that dividends from Anna Hitchcock's gift amounted to £7 1s. 6d. and this sum, with the £10 rent charge on the Cowesfield estate, was paid to the schoolmistress. Twenty girls were taught in her own house.⁷³

By c.1839 there were 35 boys and 30 girls on the books of each school, the buildings being inadequate to hold a greater number. As well as the two charity schools, a daily and Sunday school was run by the Wesleyan Methodist church, and there were two dame schools in the parish, but it was claimed that there were still 90 children aged between 4 and 14 years who were not being educated.⁷⁴

In 1842 Frances, countess Nelson, conveyed land on Whiteparish Common to be used for a parish school.⁷⁵ The new building was situated south of the parish church and was funded by public subscriptions and other contributions.⁷⁶ By 1859, 40 boys were taught in the parish school by an elderly man. The boys' school received an endowment of £36 annually through Eyre's gift of 1724. Thirty girls were taught in the school by an elderly woman. The girls' school received an endowment of £17 8s. 4d. annually. Neither teacher was rated as particularly competent, but both were shortly to retire.⁷⁷

There were two dame schools in the parish in 1859. At Cowesfield, 50 to 60 children were taught in a cottage by the widow of a labourer, the former master of that school. Some of the children who attended the school came from Sherfield English (Hants.), and from Earldoms and Melchet. At another school, also at Cowesfield, 20 farmers' children were taught by a schoolmistress in her own home.⁷⁸ There were three daily schools in the parish by 1864, presumably two being the boys' and girls' schools, with the third school being a dame school.⁷⁹

In a largely agricultural economy, attendance at both the boys' and girls' schools could be affected by the need for labour. In July 1864 several girls went absent to go gleaning, and in July 1868 attendance at the boys' school was so low due to the harvest that the master closed the school.⁸⁰ In 1878 the summer holiday was extended by a week at both schools owing to the late harvest.⁸¹

⁷³ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 830.

⁷⁴ WSA, D/625/1.

⁷⁵ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 837.

⁷⁶ TNA, ED 103/86. For school plans see WSA, 782/110.

⁷⁷ W. Warburton, *Warburton Census of Wiltshire Schools* (1859), 48.

⁷⁸ W. Warburton, *Warburton Census of Wiltshire Schools* (1859), 48.

⁷⁹ H. Taylor (ed.), *Returns to the Bishop of Salisbury's Visitation Enquiry 1864* (WRS 76, 2023), 351–2.

⁸⁰ WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 98; F8/500/284/2/1, 41.

⁸¹ WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 216; F8/500/284/2/1, 239.

By 1888, the average attendance was 63 pupils in the boys' school and 56 in the girls'. A separate infants' class had been established by 1892, and a new room added to the boys' school by April of the same year. The boys and girls remained in separate schools until 1897, when the two schools were mixed, though the infants remained as a separate class.⁸²

By an order of 1898, the sum of £10 intended for the school was to be called the Ecclesiastical Charity of Elizabeth Hitchcock. The annual rentcharge of £12 was, by 1906, paid regularly by W. F. Lawrence, owner of the Cowesfield estate.⁸³

By 1906 the parish school had been taken over by Wiltshire County Council, and was run by a committee consisting of six managers.⁸⁴ The schoolmaster lived in a house on a long-term lease from Earl Nelson.⁸⁵ No trust deeds of the land gifted by James Lynch were known to have survived, but the land, of around 30 a., was known as 'the School Ground', and let on a yearly tenancy.⁸⁶ The income from this land, with other dividends and income from the gifts of Henry Eyre, Anna Hitchcock, and the Ecclesiastical Charity of Elizabeth Hitchcock, was used for repairs to the school, and for other purposes unspecified.⁸⁷

An inspector's report in 1905 was generally positive, but noted poor reading skills in the upper school and infants' classes. There were four members of teaching staff.⁸⁸ In 1907 the school had 140 registered pupils. Education now being provided by the state up to age 13, the parish discussed how to use the charitable funds originally intended for the boys' and girl's schools. In 1908 a scheme was approved under the name of the Whiteparish Educational Foundation to provide grants and prizes to Whiteparish school pupils, to which these funds were appropriated.⁸⁹ By 1930 the school had a head teacher and three other teachers; the school inspection that year noted that the school was capably managed, and the children orderly and industrious. Although some areas for improvement were noted, the inspector singled out for especial praise the work undertaken in the school garden.⁹⁰ The garden continued to flourish under successive head teachers during the 1930s. Poultry were

⁸² WSA, F8/600/284/1/13/1, reports for 1888, 1892, year ending 3 March 1898; F8/500/284/1/1, 403; WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 352.

⁸³ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 834–5.

⁸⁴ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 837.

⁸⁵ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 837.

⁸⁶ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 833.

⁸⁷ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 834, 835.

⁸⁸ WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 484.

⁸⁹ WSA, 1980/2, 86–7, 94, 95, 136, 208–10, 266; WSA, 1980/14; *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 23 Mar. 1907, 5.

⁹⁰ TNA, ED 21/42424.

introduced, and the children marketed the produce; by 1939 bees and goats were also being kept.⁹¹

By 1960 most Whiteparish children were going to Downton for their secondary education. That year, the parish council heard that it was alleged that when the new secondary school was built in Downton, Whiteparish and Alderbury children would have to go to Salisbury for their secondary education, rather than remain at Downton. The council resolved that Whiteparish children should continue to go to the Downton school.⁹² By 1962, owing to increased rents, the Whiteparish school charities had a greater disposable income. Grants were to be made once a year to pupils going on to secondary schools who needed assistance to purchase school uniform;⁹³ this may have particularly been the case with young people who had won places at the grammar schools in Salisbury.

By 1992 the primary school, known as All Saints' School, had three classes, with a total of 67 children.⁹⁴ There were three full-time teachers, a part-time teacher, and the school was assisted by the special needs teacher for the local area.⁹⁵ By c.2019 the school had 105 children in four classes, though with capacity for 150 pupils in five classes.⁹⁶

Education: Night schools

By 1862 an evening class was being held in the boys' school on three evenings a week for boys over 12 years. This continued at least to 1872, meeting in the winter months only.⁹⁷ A log book survives for an evening continuation school in the parish from 1897–1913. Subjects taught varied each year, but could include arithmetic, with other academic subjects, and practical subjects such as woodwork, first aid and cookery.⁹⁸ The continuation school eventually folded in November 1913 owing to the small numbers attending the classes.⁹⁹

Social welfare: poor relief

Poor relief was administered by the parish prior to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. In 1726 the vestry agreed that one new overseer be appointed annually, the other overseer being

⁹¹ TNA, ED 21/63422.

⁹² WSA, 1980/5, mins. 30 May 1960. Downton secondary school opened in 1964, see *VCH Wilts.* XI, 51.

⁹³ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 14 Mar. 1962.

⁹⁴ *All Saints' School Whiteparish*, [10–11].

⁹⁵ *All Saints' School Whiteparish*, [47].

⁹⁶ <https://www.allsaints.wilts.sch.uk/prospectus/> (accessed 28 Feb. 2022).

⁹⁷ WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 1, 164; H. Taylor (ed.), *Returns to the Bishop of Salisbury's Visitation Enquiry 1864* (WRS 76, 2023), 351–2.

⁹⁸ WSA, F8/500/284/3/1; 1980/1, 192, 201.

⁹⁹ WSA, F8/500/284/3/1, 81.

confirmed in his office, so that each overseer served for a total of two years.¹⁰⁰ The vestry minuted in 1739 that those receiving poor relief from the parish should wear an identifying badge; refusal to do so would result in the cessation of relief.¹⁰¹ This requirement was reiterated in 1770.¹⁰²

The 17th century house known as Lynches, or the Lynches, was re-purposed in 1771 as the parish workhouse, being rented for £12 12s. annually.¹⁰³ In 1776 the workhouse was recorded as able to accommodate 60 persons.¹⁰⁴ In 1811 the vestry minuted the conditions for receiving poor relief. No persons living outside the parish were to be admitted into the workhouse. The infirm poor of the parish were to be relieved by the overseers in their own homes, if they had one, as were widows, but other poor persons were to be received into the workhouse.¹⁰⁵

Overseers' accounts from 1728–33 were recorded in the vestry minute book of 1725–1819, and an overseers' account book survives for 1806–12.¹⁰⁶ The 18th century accounts record payments for rent and to the sick, as well as one-off payments to individuals for taking and maintaining a person, probably a child, and relieving the parish of the expense thereafter.¹⁰⁷ The length of time for which poor relief was paid varied from one or two days upwards; some individuals received long-term relief.¹⁰⁸ In 1816 the parish agreed to operate a 'stem' system, whereby out-of-work labourers were placed with local farmers, all or part of their wages being paid by the vestry and overseers of the poor.¹⁰⁹ Stem account books survive from 1820 to 1836.¹¹⁰ Between Lady Day 1832 and Lady Day 1835, some 20 to 30 able-bodied men were out of work in the winter.¹¹¹ Rural unemployment may have led to emigration; between 1801 and 1841 some 40 persons are believed to have emigrated to Canada, though it is unclear whether or not they received parish assistance to do so.¹¹² A charity subscription was set up to provide coal to the poor of the parish during bad weather in

¹⁰⁰ WSA, 1980/27, 23 Apr. 1726.

¹⁰¹ WSA, 1980/27, 9 Mar. 1738 [1739].

¹⁰² WSA, 1980/27, 18 Apr. 1770.

¹⁰³ WSA, 1980/27, 7 Aug. 1771, 3 Oct. 1771, 7 Nov. 1771. The Ly

¹⁰⁴ *Abstract of the returns made by the overseers of the poor*, (House of Commons Papers, vol. 31) [1777], 189.

¹⁰⁵ WSA, 1980/27, 29 Apr. 1811.

¹⁰⁶ WSA, 1980/27, 1980/28.

¹⁰⁷ WSA, 1980/27, ff. 1v–2v (from reverse of volume).

¹⁰⁸ WSA, 1980/28.

¹⁰⁹ WSA, 1980/27, 31 May 1816.

¹¹⁰ WSA, 1980/29–31.

¹¹¹ Bellinge, 'Rural Crime and Protest in Wiltshire 1830-1875', 369.

¹¹² Hoare, *Mod. Wilts.* Frustfield, 121.

the winter of 1840–1.¹¹³ In 1871, a decline in population was attributed to young people leaving the parish to travel to towns in search of higher wages.¹¹⁴

Clothing clubs allowed the parish poor to make regular subscriptions towards the purchase of clothing and textile items. A Whiteparish club was established by 1868 and was still meeting in 1897.¹¹⁵

During the First World War Belgian refugees were supported in the parish.¹¹⁶ A fund for the unemployed was established, probably sometime after the First World War. By 1940 it was no longer needed, and appears to have been wound down.¹¹⁷ In the 1950s parish council minutes recorded occasional cases of parishioners assisted by the Salisbury and South Wilts Sick Poor Fund.¹¹⁸

Social welfare: medical care

A ‘barber’, probably a barber-surgeon, was resident in the parish in 1633, but otherwise the provision of medical care in the parish is unknown until the 18th century.¹¹⁹ In 1755 the vestry agreed to subscribe a guinea annually to the hospital in Winchester, there being no infirmary in Salisbury at that date.¹²⁰ In 1768 the vestry resolved to subscribe two guineas annually to the new Salisbury infirmary.¹²¹ A doctor was appointed by the parish vestry in 1792.¹²² In 1802 it was agreed to inoculate all persons in the parish workhouse against smallpox.¹²³

In 1811 the vestry agreed that the person appointed as the parish doctor and surgeon would receive an annual salary of £21. He would attend the sick in their own homes, be available one day a week at his own house for consultations, and refer cases to the infirmary at Salisbury as necessary. A midwife was also working in the parish and was required to attend to the poor, though the surgeon was only to attend births in emergencies.¹²⁴

A concert was held in 1883 to raise funds towards providing a nurse for the sick poor of the parish, but it is unclear if a nurse was appointed at the time.¹²⁵ In 1896 a parish nurse

¹¹³ *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 4 Jan. 1841, 4.

¹¹⁴ *VCH Wilts.* IV, 325.

¹¹⁵ WSA, F8/500/284/1/1, 102, 405.

¹¹⁶ WSA, 1980/3, 60, 68.

¹¹⁷ WSA, 1980/4, 236–7.

¹¹⁸ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 5 Mar. 1956, 11 Sept. 1956, 1 Apr. 1958, 27 Jan. 1959, 24 Nov. 1959.

¹¹⁹ WSA, D1/62/Collins, 1633; ‘Early Modern Practitioners’, <https://practitioners.exeter.ac.uk> (accessed 22 Nov. 2024).

¹²⁰ WSA, 1980/27, 26 Dec. 1755. On Salisbury Infirmary, see *VCH Wilts.* VI, 183.

¹²¹ WSA, 1980/27, 6 Apr. 1768.

¹²² WSA, 1980/27, 11 June 1792.

¹²³ WSA, 1980/27, 6 Dec. 1802.

¹²⁴ WSA, 1980/27, 29 Apr. 1811.

¹²⁵ *Salisbury Times*, 10 Feb. 1883, 8.

was briefly employed, funded by the Gamblings' trusts and private subscriptions.¹²⁶ After this, the parish council did not involve itself in providing a parish nurse, but agreed to pay for nursing care through the Gamblings' trust funds.¹²⁷ By 1905 an independent local committee had been established to provide a parish nurse for Whiteparish and Landford, and this had appointed a nurse by 1906.¹²⁸ As the Whiteparish, Landford and Nomansland Nursing Association, it was still providing nursing care in 1927.¹²⁹

A mobile foot clinic was visiting the parish, c.1980.¹³⁰ There was a doctors' surgery in the parish by 1982.¹³¹

Charities for the poor: Evelyn, Hurst and Hitchcock charities

Sir John Evelyn (d. 1685), by a codicil to his will, gave the poor of Whiteparish £4 yearly, charged on his manor at West Dean. The money was to be given in money, food or clothing at the discretion of the owner of that manor. By 1832 it was distributed by the churchwardens and overseers of Whiteparish, usually in money, and sometimes in fuel.¹³² By 1906 Sir John Evelyn's former manor of West Dean was owned by the Baring family of Norman Court (Hants.), who paid rentcharge of £4 each year. The Barings sold West Dean in 1906.¹³³

The Hurst charity was funded by a rent charge of 10s. yearly, made on a public house known as the Red Lion in 1697. By 1833 the premises were known as the King's Head, and the money distributed by the vicar in equal sums to four poor widows of the parish.¹³⁴ By 1906 the owners of the King's Head were the brewers Messrs Strong & Co of Romsey (Hants.), who paid the sum of 10s. each year.¹³⁵

In her will of 1722 Elizabeth Hitchcock left £50 to provide an income, the proceeds to be distributed among poor householders of Whiteparish on St Thomas's Day (21 Dec.) as the trustees saw fit. By 1746 neither this money, nor the £200 left by Elizabeth Hitchcock to establish a girls' school, had been paid. It was agreed between Anna Hitchcock of Cowesfield Esturmy and the trustees that both sums be commuted for a rent charge of £12 annually on

¹²⁶ WSA, 1980/1, 38–40, 55–6, 62–3; *Salisbury and Winchester Jnl.*, 25 July 1896, 2.

¹²⁷ WSA, 1980/2, 55, 78.

¹²⁸ WSA, 1980/2, 55; *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 838–9.

¹²⁹ WSA, 1980/3, 261.

¹³⁰ WSA, 2191/4, mins. 22 Jan. 1980.

¹³¹ *Salisbury Jnl.*, 31 July 2003, 35–8.

¹³² *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 830. Sir John Evelyn (1601–85) was cousin of the diarist John Evelyn (1620–1706). *ODNB*, Evelyn, Sir John (1601–1685) (accessed 11 May 2021).

¹³³ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 835.

¹³⁴ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 830–1.

¹³⁵ *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 835.

her estate. Of this £12, £10 was to be for the benefit of a girls' school, and £2 was to be distributed to poor housekeepers, not already in receipt of alms, on St Thomas's Day (21 Dec.).¹³⁶

In 1832 it was recorded that the £2 from Elizabeth Hitchcock's gift had formerly been distributed in bread, but no distribution had taken place since 1820. In 1832 the arrears were spent on the purchase of 109 blankets, with the remaining arrears reserved for distribution when needed.¹³⁷ By an order of 1898 the sum of £2 was to be called the Eleemosynary Charity of Elizabeth Hitchcock, and by 1906 this was paid regularly by W. F. Lawrence, the owner of Cowesfield Estate.¹³⁸ The parish council undertook administration of the Evelyn, Hurst and Hitchcock charities by 1895.¹³⁹

By 1906 the income from Elizabeth Hitchcock's Eleemosynary Charity, and from the charities of Sir John Evelyn and Hurst, was administered by the parish council. The income was expended in buying sheets. Twenty-six pairs were usually given away in December each year, at a cost of 5s. a pair. The beneficiaries were selected by the parish council from among old and deserving parishioners, although there had been objections that some of the recipients were in receipt of good wages.¹⁴⁰

The value of the rent charges declined in real terms over the years, and, with higher prices charged during the First World War, by December 1917 only 16 pairs of sheets could be distributed.¹⁴¹ The number of sheets that could be purchased continued to decline, until in December 1941 it was decided to replace the sheets with a cash gift of 10s. each to 13 persons.¹⁴² The annual rent charge of 10s. payable to Hurst's charity was commuted in 1947 in exchange for a single payment of £20, which was invested to provide the income.¹⁴³ Despite this, from 1948 onwards there was no mention of Hurst's charity in the parish council minutes referring to the annual distribution, although cash gifts continued to be made at least to 1959.¹⁴⁴

Charities for the poor: Gambling Trusts

¹³⁶ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30. See also Education.

¹³⁷ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 829–30.

¹³⁸ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 834–5. See also Education.

¹³⁹ WSA, 1980/1, 15–16.

¹⁴⁰ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 835.

¹⁴¹ WSA, 1980/3, 83–4.

¹⁴² WSA, 1980/4, 250–1, 253.

¹⁴³ WSA, 1980/5, 57, 61, 68–70, 78–9.

¹⁴⁴ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 24 Nov. 1959.

In 1894 George Wing of West Harnham established the Robert and Mary Gambling's Trust and the Mary Gambling Trust, in memory of Robert and Mary Gambling, former residents of Whiteparish, and grandparents of his late sister Mary Wing.¹⁴⁵

The income from investments made by George Wing, and vested in trustees of the Robert and Mary Gambling's Trust, were to be used for the benefit of the poor of Whiteparish, without distinction of creed or party. Two-thirds of the income was to be used in supplying medical comforts, appliances, extra nourishment, and nursing for the poor. The remaining third was to be paid in December each year to five poor men and five poor women of the parish. The trustees were at liberty to pay the income to Whiteparish parish council, to be applied to the purposes of the charity.¹⁴⁶

The Mary Gambling Trust was financed by a rent charge of £2 10s. on a house and garden in Whiteparish. The rent charge was to be paid to the five poor Whiteparish women, again without distinction of creed or party, annually in December.¹⁴⁷ The fund was often referred to as 'Wing's', to distinguish it from the Robert and Mary Gambling fund, or 'Gambling's'.¹⁴⁸

Payment of the rent charge was unreliable, and by 1925 the parish council had to instruct a solicitor to recover the arrears.¹⁴⁹ By 1929 the payment to the selected recipients had to be deferred, the rent charge not having been received,¹⁵⁰ and in 1933 the recipients received 9s, rather than 10s, as solicitor's costs had been deducted.¹⁵¹

The parish council had taken on the administration of the Gambling trusts by 1895.¹⁵² It supervised the annual payments each December, and administered grants during the year.¹⁵³ In 1909 it was made clear that those in receipt of an old age pension were not entitled to receive aid towards medical comforts,¹⁵⁴ and in 1930 that those receiving parish relief were not eligible for assistance.¹⁵⁵ This policy was debated in 1932, when the parish council received a request for assistance from a family with four children, one disabled, surviving on relief of just £1 a week; the council agreed to assist the family.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁵ WSA, 1980/24.

¹⁴⁶ WSA, 1980/24, 1–4; *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 838–9.

¹⁴⁷ WSA, 1980/24, 25–31, 33–8, 42; *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 837–8.

¹⁴⁸ WSA, 1980/1, 38–9, 229–31; WSA, 1980/2, 194; WSA, 1980/3, 83–4.

¹⁴⁹ WSA, 1980/3, 227, 251.

¹⁵⁰ WSA, 1980/4, 10, 12.

¹⁵¹ WSA, 1980/4, 79.

¹⁵² WSA, 1980/1, 32–3.

¹⁵³ WSA, 1980/1, 38–9.

¹⁵⁴ WSA, 1980/2, 161.

¹⁵⁵ WSA, 1980/4, 21.

¹⁵⁶ WSA, 1980/4, 62, 63.

In 1954 the Gamblings Trust Fund provided cash gifts of 22s. each to five men and five women, and 23 persons received a grant of £1 each. Five women received 10s. each from Wing's Gift. The Gamblings Trust distribution varied from year to year; in 1955 five men and five women received 25s. each, and grants of £1 were given to 34 sick and poor persons, with one case receiving an exceptional grant of £5.¹⁵⁷

Charities for the poor: Other charities

Margaret Blechynden, by her will of 1682, founded an almshouse in Salisbury for six poor widows.¹⁵⁸ Elizabeth Lee, by an indenture of 1755, endowed the almshouses with an additional £300, on condition that two of the six places be reserved for widows from Whiteparish or a specified part of Downton parish.¹⁵⁹ By 1907 the parish council received notification of vacancies, though admissions to the almshouses were at the discretion of the trustees, not the parish council.¹⁶⁰ Not all eligible candidates wished to take up the offer of a place; in 1917 three widows in turn were approached regarding a vacancy, but none wished to leave their old home.¹⁶¹ A public notice in 1925 regarding a vacancy attracted no response.¹⁶²

Hayter's Almshouses in Fisherton Anger were established by an indenture of 1797. In 1869 Street farm and Blaxwell farm at Whiteparish were purchased by the almshouse trustees, and there was a further purchase of Whiteparish land in 1876,¹⁶³ but the charity did not specifically benefit residents of Whiteparish.

The Wiltshire Society was established in 1817 to apprentice poor children from Wiltshire living in London; from 1859 children resident in Wiltshire were also able to benefit from the charity. In 1885 the Society enabled a Whiteparish-born widow living in London to place her daughter with a London draper.¹⁶⁴

In 1627 William Stockman of Downton gave six cottages and 60 a. of land in Whiteparish, known as Chadwell Grounds and Stillman's Moor, to be held in trust to benefit the poor of Downton parish, but none of the rents were to benefit Whiteparish inhabitants. By 1823 five of the six cottages had been demolished, leaving a cottage, barn and 60 a. of land. By 1833 the trust's property comprised a farm house and farm buildings with 40 a. of land,

¹⁵⁷ WSA, 1980/5, mins. 5 Dec. 1955.

¹⁵⁸ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 399; *VCH Wilts.* VI, 169.

¹⁵⁹ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 401, 545–7.

¹⁶⁰ WSA, 1980/2, 107, 108.

¹⁶¹ WSA, 1980/3, 75.

¹⁶² WSA, 1980/3, 238.

¹⁶³ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 592–603.

¹⁶⁴ H.R. Henly (ed.), *The Apprentice Registers of the Wiltshire Society 1817–1922* (WRS 51, 1997), ix, xi, 77 (no. 611).

which was leased for £40 a year. The land had never been surveyed, and it was unclear what had happened to the original acreage. By 1908 the land, by then known as Chadwell farm and comprising just under 54 a., was let for £42 a year on a yearly tenancy.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ *Endowed Charities, 1908*, 145–6, 149–50; *VCH Wilts.* XI, 52.