

BREMHILL

LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDINGS

[not yet completed]

LANDOWNERSHIP

Before the Reformation the manors of Bremhill, Foxham and Spirthill were in possession of the monks of Malmesbury abbey. The adjacent manor of Stanley belonged to the Cistercian order of Stanley abbey. At the dissolution of the monasteries, these estates were acquired by Sir Edward Bayntun. From the 16th to the 20th century, they were primarily held by non-resident lords. In the 20th century, these estates were sold off as separate farms and small holdings.

Bremhill Manor

King Athelstan gifted an estate at Bremhill to Malmesbury abbey c.935.¹ However, the authenticity of the charter has been questioned.² A confirmation of the abbey's land and privileges by Edward in 1065 is also disputed.³ In 1086 the manor of Bremhill was held by the monks of Malmesbury abbey. It paid geld for 38 hides.⁴ The estate was surrendered to the crown in 1539 and acquired by Sir Edward Bayntun of Bromham (will pr. 1545), vice-chamberlain to five wives of Henry VIII, the following year.⁵

Sir Edward Bayntun was succeeded by his son, Andrew (d.1564).⁶ Andrew briefly lost control of his estates, after which financial difficulties led him to entail them to his brother, Edward (d.1593). However, the financial mismanagement continued, and on Andrew's death in 1564, his brother was involved in a court action to secure the inheritance. Andrew appeared excluded from the accession of Sir Edward Bayntun's estate in the *Visitation of Wiltshire* from 1565 and other genealogical histories thereafter.⁷

Sir Edward Bayntun (d.1593) passed the estate to his son, Henry (d.1616), his eldest son, William, having been alleged to be murdered by witchcraft in 1564.⁸ Henry left money in

¹ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 60.

² The disputed charter was for 60 hides, and it is probably only part of the original estate came into the possession of Malmesbury abbey. *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Ser.), I, 307-9; *VCH Wilts*, 3, 213; Kelly, S.E. (ed.) *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey* (Oxford: British Academy, 2005), 218-222.

³ *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Ser.), I, 321-4. Disputed, e.g. D.N. Dumville, *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar: Six Essays in Political, Cultural and Ecclesiastical Revival* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 41 n. 57, 43; H.P.R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, 2nd edn (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), no. 180.

⁴ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 215.

⁵ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 227; *Hist. Parl., Commons*, 1509-1558, i. 403; TNA, PROB 11/30/431; *New DNA*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

⁶ W. Harvey, *Visitation of Wiltshire, 1565* (Exeter: Pollard, 1897), 4. See also Burke, *Commoners*, iv. 685. Andrew Bayntun's financial problems 1544-1563 included the Bayntun estates being temporarily forfeited to the Crown. TNA, PROB 11/30/431; *Hist. Parl., Commons*, 1509-1558, i. 400; *Hist. Parl., Commons*, 1558-1603, i.409-10; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

⁷ Burke, *Commoners*, iv. 685; *Hist. Parl., Commons*, 1558-1603, i.410; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

⁸ TNA, PROB 11/82/478; Burke, *Commoners*, iv. 685; *Wilts. N&Q*, 4, 72-8; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

his will to the church and poor of Bremhill, where he maintained a substantial house adjoining the church, although the principal family seat remained at Bromham.⁹ The estate then descended to his son, Edward (d. 1657), who was baptised at Bremhill in 1593, with a life interest to his wife, Lucy.¹⁰ The settlement of the manor of Bremhill worth £700 pa was subject to a legal dispute on the death of Lucy Bayntun, as she had transferred the estate to her kinsmen possibly due to ill-treatment by her son who had allegedly stripped the manor house of all its furnishings.¹¹

Edward Bayntun commanded Wiltshire parliamentary troops during the Civil War, although following an argument with Sir Edward Hungerford in 1643, moved briefly to support the king.¹² Royalist troops destroyed the Bayntun houses at Bremhill and Bromham in 1644 and 1645.¹³ They were replaced by one at Spye Park.¹⁴ Edward Bayntun was succeeded by his son, also called Edward (d.1679), who was likewise active in support of parliamentary forces.¹⁵

Edward Bayntun was succeeded by his son Henry (d.1691).¹⁶ Henry Bayntun was only 27 and in considerable debt when he died, leaving the estate to his son John.¹⁷ It was thereafter sold.

Joseph Haskins Stiles (d.1714) sometime merchant of Amsterdam, purchased the principal part of the estate by 1694.¹⁸ It was settled on his son Benjamin Haskins Stiles (d.1739).¹⁹ In 1729 Stiles placed the manor in trust, in exchange for money.²⁰ After his death, it was put up for sale by order of Chancery in 1742.²¹ In 1753 the estate consisting of 3,778 a. was purchased for £57,500 by John Petty, Earl Shelburne (d.1761), who also purchased nearby Bowood Park where he rebuilt the house.²² The Bremhill estate was an attractive acquisition as the land had been neglected and unimproved and it provided significant potential for improvement.²³ The estate became the most profitable part of Lansdowne's holdings raising £1939 in 1786.²⁴

It passed to William Petty (d.1805), who was made Marquis of Lansdowne in 1784, after serving as Prime Minister.²⁵ Outlying portions of the Bremhill estate were sold after 1788 to reduce debt, and by 1850 the holding had been cut to 3,368 a.²⁶ Further acquisitions are likely to have followed, and by 1869 the Bremhill estate was recorded as 4,132 a. the

⁹ TNA, PROB 11/128/544; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021). See also Rev. W.L. Bowles, *The Parochial History of Bremhill in the County of Wiltshire* (London: John Murray, 1828), 197.

¹⁰ TNA, PROB 11/128/544; Burke, *Commoners*, iv. 685.

¹¹ *Hist. Parl., Commons, 1604-1629*, i.?

¹² *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

¹³ *CSP Dom.* 1654, 43.

¹⁴ *VCH Wilts*, 8, 179.

¹⁵ Burke, *Commoners*, iv. 685.

¹⁶ TNA, PROB 11/361/323; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

¹⁷ TNA, PROB 11/405/348; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021); *House of Commons Journal* 1688-1692, x, 10 Dec 1692.

¹⁸ The Bayntuns retained some property in Bremhill, such as Bremhill Farm. Joseph Haskins Stiles is listed as lord of the manor in the Bremhill Manor Court Book 1694-99. WSA, 1171/85; *Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1715-54, ii. 116.

¹⁹ Benjamin Haskins Stiles is listed as lord of the manor in Bremhill Manor Court Book 1699-1737. WSA, 1171/85. [To be completed further]

²⁰ WSA, 212B/695.

²¹ *London Gazette*, 20-23 Nov 1742, 4; *London Evening Post*, 27-30 Nov 1742, 3; *London Evening Post* 13-15 Nov 1746, 2.

²² WAM, 41, 509; *London Evening Post* 13-15 Nov 1746, 2; *London Evening Post* 17-19 May 1753, 4. Acreage information from Lord Simon Kerry, Bowood.

²³ Information provided by Lord Simon Kerry, Bowood.

²⁴ Information provided by Dr Cathryn Spence, archivist at Bowood.

²⁵ *Complete Peerage*, xi, 671; *Complete Peerage*, vii, 438; *Hist. Parl.* 1754-90, i.408.

²⁶ Information provided by Lord Simon Kerry, Bowood.

second largest land holding in the family's Wiltshire portfolio.²⁷ The first Marquis Lansdowne was succeeded by his son, John Henry Petty (d. 1809), who died without issue.²⁸ The estate passed to half-brother Henry (d.1863), who assumed the additional surname of Fitzmaurice, from 1818, to become Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, Marquis of Lansdowne.²⁹ The estate then descended in the male line to Henry (d. 1866), Henry (d. 1927), Henry (d. 1936), and Charles (d. 1944).³⁰

A further sale of 582 a. was attempted in 1912, and another in 1919, when 1,900 a. was sold across the parish.³¹ Bremhill estate holdings, comprising eight farms and 1,500 a. were sold in 1947.³²

Stanley Manor

Cistercian monks from the abbey of Quarr, on the Isle of Wight, moved to a site in Stanley, granted to them by the Empress Maud, from nearby Loxwell in Pewsham in 1154.³³ The land was formerly part of the nearby manor at Chippenham. From the fourteenth century, the demesne lands were leased out.³⁴ Stanley abbey was dissolved in 1536 and the site, with the greater part of the demesne, c. 400 a. was bought by Sir Edward Bayntun.³⁵ The abbey was not intended to be used as Bayntun's primary residence and was instead tenanted.³⁶ It passed through the male descendants of Edward Bayntun until the death of John Bayntun without issue in 1716, and then to his sister, Anne Rolt (d. 1734).³⁷

Anne passed the estate to her son Edward, who took the name Bayntun-Rolt (d. 1800) and was made a baronet in 1762. He was succeeded by his son Sir Andrew Bayntun-Rolt (d.1816).³⁸ On Andrew's death, the baronetcy became extinct, and the estate passed to his daughter Maria Bayntun-Rolt, who had married Rev. John Starky in 1799. It then descended to her son, John Edward Andrew Bayntun-Starky (d.1843).³⁹ He was succeeded by his son John Bayntun-Starky (d.1872), a child at the time of his father's death.⁴⁰ John Bayntun-Starky accrued large debts, and the estate was sold to Sir Gabriel Goldney (d. 1900) by June 1863.⁴¹ Starky was later found bankrupt.⁴²

²⁷ Information provided by Dr Cathryn Spence, archivist at Bowood.

²⁸ TNA, PROB 11/1428/266; *Complete Peerage*, vii, 439.

²⁹ *Complete Peerage*, vii, 439-40.

³⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vii, 441; *VCH Wilts*, 7, 118.

³¹ WMA, SC.14.7. Information on sale in 1912 provided by Lord Simon Kerry, Bowood.

³² This comprised the farms of: - Hazelwood, Charlote, Bencroft, Monument, Bremhill Wick, Bremhill Field, Ash Hill. *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 18 Oct 1947.

³³ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 269-275.

³⁴ G. Brown, *Stanley Abbey and its Estates 1151- c.1640* University of Leicester 2012 PhD, 63-4 & 246-9.

³⁵ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 274; There is some disagreement regarding the date, and it could have been 1537. See *Hist. Parl.*, 1509-1558, i, 403.

³⁶ G. Brown, *Stanley Abbey and its estates, 1151-c.1640: A Cistercian Monastery and its Impact on the Landscape*. 257.

³⁷ TNA, PROB 11/552/6; Burke, *Land. Gent* (1858), ii, 1139. See also *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

³⁸ Anne Rolt m. 1st Edward Rolt 2nd Lord James Somerville. TNA, PROB 11/552/6; Burke, *Land. Gent* (1858), ii, 1139; TNA, PROB 11/1388/131; *New DNB*, no. 71877 (accessed 21 Jan 2021).

³⁹ Burke, *Land. Gent* (1858), ii, 1139.

⁴⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1975/277.

⁴¹ The Stanley court book lists John Bayntun-Starkey as Lord of the Manor in 1861; after that in 1863 Gabriel Goldney is noted. Bankruptcy proceeding were commenced against Bayntun-Starkey in 1868. WSA, 473/61; J. Badeni, *Wilts. Forefathers*, 20. See also, *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 1 Feb 1868, 8.

⁴² *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 13 Feb 1868.

In 1845 the Starky Estate in Bremhill was assessed at 382 a.⁴³ In 1919 the Stanley estate, comprising 700 a. was sold by Frederick Hastings Goldney to Henry, Marquis of Lansdowne (d. 1927).⁴⁴ It was likely sold along with the Bremhill estate by the Lansdowne family in 1947.

Cadenham Manor

According to the Domesday book, William was lord over Cadenham manor in 1086. It was a small estate and paid geld for 2 hides.⁴⁵ The Studley family owned it from the late 13th century. In 1296 it was settled by John, son of Roger of Studley, on Laurence of Studley and Laurence's wife Anne in tail. The estate composed c.137 a. of land.⁴⁶ In 1346 it was settled on John of Studley.⁴⁷ By 1421 it was in the possession of Alice Cricklade (d. c.1457), daughter of John Studley, and wife of Thomas Cricklade, of Cricklade and Studley. On her death her estates, which included the manors of Cadenham and Studley, passed to her grandson, John Cricklade.⁴⁸

Edward Hungerford, son of Sir Edmund Hungerford of Down Ampney, (Glos.), acquired Cadenham and Studley manor from John Cricklade in 1468.⁴⁹ In his will dated 1504 (pr. 1507) Cadenham, with the manors of Studley, Durnford and 'Staunton' (Stanton Fitzwarren?), descended to his son Robert (d.1517).⁵⁰ His son, known as Robert Hungerford of Cadenham (d. 1555/8 will pr. 1558), succeeded him. Robert bequeathed the estate to his eldest son, John, who died young, and it passed to his second son, Walter (d.1601).⁵¹ The estate then descended in the male line, to John Hungerford (d.1636), Edward Hungerford (d. 1667), and Sir George Hungerford (d.1712).⁵² George Hungerford died in considerable debt, at least in part due to legal action against him by younger son, Walter, and the Cadenham estate, of c.400 a. was sold.⁵³ It was acquired by, Devizes M.P., Benjamin Haskins Stiles of Bowden Park (d.1739). In 1766, it was sold by order of Chancery. Haskins's principal heir, his nephew, Sir Francis Haskins Eyles Stiles, was also ordered to dispose of Haskins's manor at Bishop's Cannings.⁵⁴

By 1780 the estate was in the possession of Henry Grant. On Grant's death in 1812, William and Joseph Fry acquired the house and land and jointly occupied the property from 1818.⁵⁵ An estate, known as Cadenham Manor Farm, comprising 185 a. in Bremhill and

⁴³ WSA, TA Bremhill, 1848.

⁴⁴ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, Saturday 15 Mar 1919; J. Badeni, *Wilts. Forefathers*, 20.

⁴⁵ W.H. Jones, *Domesday for Wiltshire* (London: Longman, 1865), 61; C. & F. Thorn, *Domesday Book: Wiltshire* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1979), 22.

⁴⁶ *Feet of Fines* (WRS 1), 42.

⁴⁷ *Feet of Fines* (WRS 29), 82. ?The same year, there was an entry settling it on Ralph of Studley, from John. *Feet of Fines* (WRS 29), 81.

⁴⁸ WAM, 34, 388-9, 392-3; *Hist. Parl.*, 1386-1421, ii. 693-4. For descent of Studley Manor, see *VCH Wilts*, 17, 74.

⁴⁹ *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 95. Check Page No; WAM, 34, 404.

⁵⁰ TNA, PROB 11/14/305.

⁵¹ W. Harvey, *Visitation of Wiltshire, 1565* (Exeter: Pollard, 1897), 25; *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 95; TNA, PROB 11/41/270, PROB 11/171/417; *Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1509-58, ii. 412; *Hist. Parl. Commons* 1604-1629, iv. 833-4.

⁵² *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 95; *Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1690-1715, iv. 438-9.

⁵³ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 63; TNA, PROB 11/539/375; *Hist. Parl. Commons*, 1690-1715, iv. 438-9. The Hungerford family retained the estates of Studley and Great Durnford. See *VCH Wilts*, 17, 74; *VCH Wilts*, 15, 83.

⁵⁴ Sir Francis also disposed of Bowden Manor and an estate at Corsham also owned by his uncle. *Wilts. N&Q*, 8, 150-151; *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 17 Mar 1766; *VCH Wilts*, 7 189; TNA, PROB 11/695/345.

⁵⁵ WSA, A1/345/56.

Christian Malford, was offered for sale in 1828.⁵⁶ It was put up for sale again in 1834, by which time it had been renamed Cadenham Farm.⁵⁷ The entire estate was estimated to cover 267 a. in 1848.⁵⁸ By 1855 it was owned by Thomas and Edward Fry.⁵⁹ In 1874 Cadenham Farm was sold, in lots, on the death of Thomas Fry.⁶⁰ William Henry Fry secured it by 1878, and on his death, in 1883, the estate known as Cadenham Manor, comprising 156 a. was sold.⁶¹ After that it was in the possession of Josiah Pocock from the early 1880s until the early 20th century.⁶² According to the Inland Revenue Assessment for Bremhill in 1910, it was owned by Edgar Shipp.⁶³ It was later purchased by Edward Allen Bryning (c. 1927) and sold on his death in 1945.⁶⁴

Foxham Manor

Foxham is mentioned in a deed of 1065 in which Edward the Confessor confirmed the possessions of Malmesbury Abbey. However, this deed may be spurious.⁶⁵ The manor of Foxham was in the possession of Malmesbury abbey by the end of the 13th century.⁶⁶ Abbot Osbert was granted a ½ hide at Foxham.⁶⁷ In 1422 property at Foxham formed part of the assets of Robert Broke, a London vintner. Later in 1478 property in Foxham was settled on Agnes Lerversegge, widow of Robert Lerversegge.⁶⁸ In 1536 the manor was obtained by Sir Edward Bayntun.

The Marquis of Lansdowne obtained the estate in the 18th century. The family kept the possession until 1888, when Foxham farm was sold to the Small Farm and Labourers Land Company for £4,500, to be divided into small holdings.⁶⁹ In 1910, the rest of Foxham estate c.1050 a. was sold. It included West End Farm, Avon Farm, Avon Mill, Elm Farm, Godsell Farm, Gate Farm, Pasture at Lower Cadenham and Harestreet Farm. The sale raised £34,452.⁷⁰ Foxham Farm was sold by the Small Farm and Labourers Land Company in 1914.⁷¹

Spirthill Manor

Malmesbury abbey owned the manor of Spirthill by the end of the 13th century.⁷² In 1536 it was acquired by Sir Edward Bayntun and retained in the family until the Marquis of Lansdowne purchased it during the 18th century. In 1912, the family attempted to auction

⁵⁶ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 30 Oct 1828.

⁵⁷ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 17 Apr 1834.

⁵⁸ WSA, TA Bremhill, 1848.

⁵⁹ *Kelly's Dir. Hants., Wilts. & Dors.* (1855 edn.), 19.

⁶⁰ *Wiltshire Independent*, 15 Jan 1874.

⁶¹ W.E. Owen & Co.'s *Directory for the Counties of Wiltshire, Somerset, with the Cities of Bristol and Bath* (Leicester: W.E. Owen & Co., 1878), 24; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 25 Oct 1883. See also WMA, SC.7.73.

⁶² *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, Saturday 20 Dec 1919; *Kelly's Dir. Hants., Wilts. & Dors.* (1889 edn.), 864; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 46-7.

⁶³ WSA, L8.1.25. See also *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1923 edn.), 47-8.

⁶⁴ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1927 edn.), 51; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 5 May 1945 & 18 Oct 1945.

⁶⁵ *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Ser.), I, 321-4. It has been disputed by D.N. Dumville, *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar: Six Essays in Political, Cultural and Ecclesiastical Revival* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 41 n. 57, 43; H.P.R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, 2nd edn (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), no 180.

⁶⁶ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 221.

⁶⁷ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 218.

⁶⁸ *Feet of Fines* (WRS 41), 83, 156.

⁶⁹ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 18 Oct 1888; *Salisbury Times*, 23 Mar 1889.

⁷⁰ Information provided by Dr Cathryn Spence, archivist, Bowood.

⁷¹ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 23 May 1914.

⁷² *VCH Wilts*, 3, 221.

several properties in Spirthill and Charlcutt. Spirthill Farm, along with Charlcutt Farm and Tucks Farm failed to reach their reserve price.⁷³ The Spirthill estate was later sold by auction in 1919, part of a sale of outlying portions of the Lansdowne estate.⁷⁴

Tytherton Lucas

According to Aubrey, Tytherton Lucas manor was owned by the Stokes and Barrett families in partition.⁷⁵ The Barrett family owned property in Tytherton Lucas by the 1540s. ⁷⁶ It descended in the male line through John (d.?), Thomas (d.?), Thomas (d.?) to Hugh Barrett (d. 1627).⁷⁷ Hugh Barrett was predeceased by his son, Nicholas (will pr. 1610), and the estate instead passed to his grandson, Edward Barrett (will pr.1644).⁷⁸

The Stokes family owned an estate in Tytherton Lucas from the late 16th until the early 18th century. Edmund Stokes was succeeded by his son Christopher Stokes (will pr. 1607).⁷⁹ The property passed down the male line through, Thomas (d.1654), Edward (d.1667/8) and Abjohn (will pr. 1712).⁸⁰ In his will, Abjohn Stokes left one shilling to his son, also called Abjohn, bequeathing the estate to his son-in-law, John Mereweather.⁸¹ Thereafter it was subject to a lawsuit between Abjohn Stokes and John Mereweather.⁸² Later, John Townsend (d. 1725), a soap-maker from London, purchased the property and passed it to his grandson, Townsend Andrews (d.1737).⁸³ Andrews became an M.P. and left the estate to his wife, Catherine Andrews.⁸⁴

By the mid-18th century Thomas Crook, gentleman, owned a number of properties in Tytherton Lucas.⁸⁵ These lands and properties were extended by his nephew, Thomas Crook, who inherited the majority of his estate. He was succeeded by his son, also Thomas (d.1822), who acquired some properties from the Andrews family.⁸⁶ In the early 1800s, Thomas Crook disposed of several assets. In his will he specified all remaining land and property should be sold to benefit his surviving daughters.⁸⁷ The house and lands, c.100 a. were sold in April 1822.⁸⁸ In 1838-9 Ann Crook still owned 54 a. within the parish.⁸⁹

By 1780 there was no one dominant landowner in Tytherton Lucas.⁹⁰ In 1838-9 Samuel William Bythesea owned 235 a. and three others between 50 a. and 150 a.⁹¹

Other Estates

On the death of Sir George Hungerford in 1712, the Hungerfords of Studley Manor retained a small landholding in Bremhill. This was passed through the family to Henrietta Hungerford

⁷³ Information provided by Dr Cathryn Spence, archivist, Bowood.

⁷⁴ WMA, SC.9.5.

⁷⁵ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 116.

⁷⁶ W. Harvey, *Visitation of Wiltshire, 1565* (Exeter: Pollard, 1897), 2; *Taxation List 1545* (WRS 10), 28.

⁷⁷ *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 9.

⁷⁸ *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 10; WSA, P3/B/285; TNA, PROB 10/641/103.

⁷⁹ WSA, P3/2Reg/15B.

⁸⁰ *Wilts. Pedigrees* (Harl. Soc. cv/cvi), 190; TNA, PROB 11/171/417.

⁸¹ TNA, PROB/11/530/281.

⁸² *Wilts. N&Q*, 6, 99-107.

⁸³ *Wilts. N&Q*, 6, 171-76; *Hist. Parl. 1715-1754*, i. 414.

⁸⁴ TNA, PROB/11/683/132.

⁸⁵ TNA, PROB 11/835/338.

⁸⁶ TNA, PROB 11/1115/227; See land tax assessments for Tytherton Lucas 1780 and 1788. WSA, A1/345/103.

⁸⁷ TNA, PROB 11/1654/210.

⁸⁸ *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 1 Apr 1822.

⁸⁹ *Abstract Wilt. Tithe Apportionments* (WRS xxx), 34.

⁹⁰ WSA, A1/345/103.

⁹¹ *Abstract Wilt. Tithe Apportionments* (WRS xxx), 34.

(d.1820) who married John Crewe (d. 1835), later Lord Crewe.⁹² He was succeeded by Hungerford Crewe (d.1893).⁹³ Crewe's landholding in Bremhill comprised c.92 a. in 1848, a fraction of his total acreage of over 20,000 a. across five counties.⁹⁴ From 1867 until his death, he was reckoned to be one of the largest landowners in Bremhill, along with the Marquis of Lansdowne and the Poynder family.⁹⁵ His Bremhill lands passed to his nephew, Robert Offley Ashburton Milnes (d.1945) (afterwards Crewe-Milnes) who was created Earl of Crewe in 1895 and Marquis of Crewe 1911.⁹⁶ The Crewe land composed of 159 a. in 1910.⁹⁷ It remained in Crewe's ownership until at least 1939 and may have been sold on his death in 1945.⁹⁸ It was then acquired by the Marquis of Lansdowne and subsequently sold with much of his Bremhill property in 1947.⁹⁹

Thomas Henry Allen Poynder (d.1873) of Hartham Park, Corsham acquired land in Bremhill by 1867 and was one of the three largest landowners in the parish.¹⁰⁰ He was succeeded by his brother Sir William Henry Poynder (d.1880) who passed the land to his nephew, John Dickson (d.1936). In 1888 Dickson assumed the additional surname to become John Poynder Dickson and was created Baron Islington in 1910 when his landholding comprised c. 235. It is likely that he sold his property in Bremhill when the Hilmarton estate was put up for sale in 1914.¹⁰¹

ECONOMIC HISTORY

Agriculture

In 1086 there was land in Bremhill for 30 ploughs, 12 a. of meadow and 4 a. of woodland.¹⁰²

In 1422, a grant was made from Robert Broke of London to John Westbury, William Westbury and others. The right of William Westbury was noted. The grant comprised twenty messuages, 8 tofts, 1 mill, 3 carucates, 60 a. of meadow, 300 a. of pasture and 12 a. of woodland in Westbury, Bratton, Milbourne and Foxham. Along with 40s. rent and pasture for one bull, 24 oxen and 200 sheep.¹⁰³ A later grant of reversion, in 1476, was made from Agnes, the widow of Robert Lerversegge, to Edmund and John Lerversegge. It contained the Manor of Rudloe (Ridelawe) and 8 messuages, 200 a. of land, 50 a. meadow, 100 a. pasture and 20 a. wood in Rudloe, Foxham, Box (Boxe), Alcombe, Swinley (Swinley), Biddestone (Budeston) and Kington St. Michael (Kyngton). It was held by John Neuburgh and his wife Alice for the term of the life of Alice by the inheritance of Agnes Lerversegge. The right of Edmund Lerversegge was noted.¹⁰⁴

⁹² *VCH Wilts*, 17, 74.

⁹³ *VCH Wilts*, 17, 74.

⁹⁴ WSA, TA Bremhill, 1848; *Complete Peerage*, iii, 537.

⁹⁵ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 228; *Kelly's Dir. Hants., Wilts. & Dors.* (1875 edn.), 509; *Kelly's Dir. Hants., Wilts. & Dors.* (1889 edn.), 864.

⁹⁶ *Complete Peerage*, iii, 535; *VCH Wilts*, 17, 74.

⁹⁷ WSA, L8.1.25.

⁹⁸ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939 edn.), 46.

⁹⁹ Crewe's Bremhill property comprised Bencroft Farm in 1910 and later formed part of assets sold by the Marquis of Lansdowne. WSA, L8.1.25; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 18 Oct 1947.

¹⁰⁰ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 210, 228. For the Poynder family and their association with their Manor at Hilmarton see *VCH Wilts*, 9, 49-65.

¹⁰¹ *Complete Peerage*, xiii, 115; *VCH Wilts*, 9, 49-65; *Kelly's Dir. Hants., Wilts. & Dors.* (1875 edn.), 509; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 46-7; WSA, L8/1/25. There is no listing within Kelly's Directory for the Poynder family after 1911. See also: - *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 23 May 1914.

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¹⁰³ *Feet of Fines* (WRS 29), 83.

¹⁰⁴ *Feet of Fines* (WRS 29), 156.

In 1776, 389 a. of Stockham Marsh was inclosed, 318 a. of which was awarded to the incumbent, tithes were thereby exonerated on 3,831 a. either by allotment of land or conversion into a tithe rent charge.¹⁰⁵ Under a further inclosure act of 1843, 24 a. of Dole Mead in Christian Malford and Bremhill was inclosed. Of this, 19 a. was awarded to the Marquis of Lansdowne.¹⁰⁶ By 1874 there was no area of wastes remaining in Bremhill parish.¹⁰⁷

The seventeenth-century manor court's proceeding suggests the Bremhill wastes were traditionally used for grazing a variety of livestock that included cattle, sheep, horses, and geese. Pigs were ringed, implying that local people were also using common areas for their foraging.¹⁰⁸

In 1801 872 a. of the parish was under arable.¹⁰⁹ The total area of Bremhill was c 5920 a. of which tithes were charged on 1296 a. by 1850. Farming on this was mixed and made up of 254 a. arable, 939 a. meadow and 102 a. wood.¹¹⁰

In a legal dispute over the payment of tithes in 1676, the incumbent recorded that Sir Edward Bayntun, lord of the manor of Bremhill, annually planted 100 qr. of wheat and 100 qr. of barley, oats, peas and beans on the land he farmed in the parish.¹¹¹ The mix of crops was little altered by the early nineteenth century when the main items cultivated were wheat, barley and oats. Other produce included peas, potatoes and beans.¹¹² Later in the century, wheat, barley and beans predominated local arable production and continued to do so well into the twentieth century.¹¹³ In 1981, arable production was centred on wheat, barley, potatoes and maize. There was also some small-scale market gardening of vegetables.¹¹⁴

During the seventeenth century there was a hopyard in the parish.¹¹⁵

The presence in many probate inventories from the seventeenth century onwards of the utensils of cheese making, such as cheese presses, tubs, vats and racks indicate its local importance to farming.¹¹⁶ By the nineteenth century, Wiltshire had achieved some recognition as a cheese producer. In 1796, William Marshall reckoned the 'narrow loaf cheese' of north Wiltshire was 'high in fashion.'¹¹⁷ Amongst the local producers of this delicacy was 'Mr Rich, of Foxham...a skilful and attentive dairyman, whose cheese has long been held in the highest estimation, and which is, in reality (this year at least), the most uniform, and the most highly flavoured dairy of cheese I have anywhere tasted.'¹¹⁸

Cheesemaking centred in on-farm production until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁹ According to a government report in the 1840s, dairy farms within the parish were generally small, and cheese making was largely the preserve of farmers' wives.¹²⁰ Dairy

¹⁰⁵ WSA, 1154/20, 1154/31, A1/210/27/ EA 10; WMA, 25, 31.

¹⁰⁶ WSA, 1154/34; WAM, 25, 51.

¹⁰⁷ Return of Acreage of Waste Lands Subject to Rights of Common (London: House of Commons Papers, 1874), 226.

¹⁰⁸ WSA, 473/52.

¹⁰⁹ 1801 Crop Return.

¹¹⁰ WAM, 30, 37. Total acreage *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 391.

¹¹¹ *Commonplace Book of Sir Edward Bayntun* (WRS 43), 39.

¹¹² 1801 Crop Return.

¹¹³ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 228; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1889 edn.), 863; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 46; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1927 edn.), 51; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939 edn.), 46.

¹¹⁴ WSA, 3071/40/4.

¹¹⁵ *Commonplace Book of Sir Edward Bayntun* (WRS 43), 46.

¹¹⁶ E.g. WSA, P3/K/29, P1/T/92, P3/IJ/109, P3/K/70, P3/O/24, P3/B/1077.

¹¹⁷ W. Marshall, *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire including its Dairy Together with the Dairy Management of North Wilts*, Volume II (London: G. Nichol, 1796), 161.

¹¹⁸ Marshall, 156.

¹¹⁹ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 224.

¹²⁰ *Reports of Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture* (London: House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1843), 61.

Farms included Leekshedge in Spirthill, which composed of 123 acres when sold in 1934.¹²¹ There were still two farms with a dairy herd in the late twentieth century.¹²²

From 1753, until the early twentieth century most farmers were tenants of the Marquis of Lansdowne's Bowood estate. In 1830, a parish committee listed 61 local farmers in an area comprising 6,070 a. which included Bremhill, Wick, Spirthill, Foxham, Studley and Tytherton. Several farms listed were of 12 a or less. Eight women were recorded who farmed a total of 750 a. and employed 26 labourers.¹²³ A trade directory in 1859 recorded 29 commercial residents in Bremhill as farmers out of a total of 45.¹²⁴ In 1890, there were 15 small holders in the parish of which 13 were leaseholders.¹²⁵

In 1910, there were 22 farms of over 100 a. Of these 19 were farmed by tenants of the Marquis of Lansdowne and one by a tenant of Lord Islington. The remaining two farms were Cadenham Manor, owned and occupied by Edward Shipp and Gotshill Farm held by Edwin Hayes of Foxham.¹²⁶ In 1919, the Lansdowne estate put several farms in Bremhill up for sale, only a proportion of which were sold.¹²⁷ These were a combination of dairy and arable properties. By 1943, there were 61 farms in Bremhill parish of which only 22 continued to be over 100 a. The largest were Manor Farm 200 a; Charlcote Farm 215 a. and Spirthill Farm 260 a.¹²⁸ The post-war period saw a decline in agricultural employment and the consolidation of farms. This was likely exacerbated in 1947 by the sale of most of the parish property owned by Lansdowne, including, Hazelwood, Charlcote, Bencroft, Monument, Bremhill Wick and Bremhill Field farms.¹²⁹

By 1981, there were only eight farms remaining in the parish comprising Castles, Vines, Glebe, Pocock, Cubbins, Spechar, Lower Hanger and Mount Pleasant farms. Lower Hanger and Mount Pleasant were owned by the Bowood estate.¹³⁰

In 1821, 286 local families out of a total of 330 were chiefly employed in agriculture.¹³¹ In the same decade the local vicar, Rev. William Lisle Bowles, described his 'agricultural parishioners' observing 'there are scarce any others.'¹³² According to a committee of Bremhill farmers in 1830, the number of able-bodied male labourers who were expected to be employed in the village, including Studley, was 187. Farms also used 20 old men and 45 boys.¹³³ Numbers excluded the children of farmers, women and additional labour employed at harvest time. According to the Marquis of Lansdowne's land agent, in 1843, women made up only a small proportion of the number employed in agriculture in Bremhill but accounted for as much as half the workforce during harvest time.¹³⁴ Men generally worked 12 hours a day and women between 9 and 10.¹³⁵ The majority of the local

¹²¹ WSA, 776/23.

¹²² WSA,, 3071/40/4

¹²³ WSA, 1171/21.

¹²⁴ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 391.

¹²⁵ *Return of Allotments and Small Holdings in Great Britain* (London: House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1890),443.

¹²⁶ WSA, L8.1.25.

¹²⁷ E.g. Charlcote farm remained part of the Bowood estate. WSA, SC.14.7; *Western Daily Press*, 18 Jul 1919; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, Sat 18 Oct 1947.

¹²⁸ TNA, MAF 30/32/12.

¹²⁹ WSA, 1975/134/4; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, Sat 18 Oct 1947.

¹³⁰ WSA, 3071/40/4.

¹³¹ Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for taking Account of Population of Great Britain (Enumeration Abstract; Parish Register Abstract) (House of Commons Papers: London, 1821), 357.

¹³² *Sussex Advertiser*, 19 Feb 1827.

¹³³ WSA, 1171/21.

¹³⁴ *Reports of Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture* (London: House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1843), 61.

¹³⁵ *Reports of Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture* (London: House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1843), 62.

households were dependent upon agricultural earnings. By 1881, most of the adult male population of Bremhill was still working in farming.¹³⁶

Low wages and high unemployment were a sporadic problem in Bremhill in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Levels of deprivation were such that one in three inhabitants were in receipt of parochial poor relief by 1803.¹³⁷ The circumstances precipitated several local initiatives beyond the establishment of local friendly societies (see Bremhill- social history). These included a short-lived 'school of industry'.¹³⁸ The roundsmen system operated in Bremhill in 1816 and unemployed labourers were used to repair the roads.¹³⁹ The parish also habitually paid rent contributions for a large number of poorer households. These payments were made for c. 117 families in 1801 at a cost of £131.¹⁴⁰ Other mechanisms employed included parish sponsored emigration.¹⁴¹

In 1830, with wages for the able-bodied at 8s in the winter and 9s in the summer, parish farmers agreed to employ specified numbers of labourers based on the size of their landholdings. Farmers also requested a reduction of their rents from the main parish landowner, the Marquis of Lansdowne, to enable them to pay better wages.¹⁴² Rev. W.L. Bowles was reported to have raised the wages he paid on the glebe land to 10s and 12s, respectively. Other local farmers followed.¹⁴³ However, the effects were likely short-lived as wages generally remained low and poor rates remained high.¹⁴⁴

Indeed, wages contributed to local action during the Anti-Corn Law agitation that took place in the county in 1846; although, there were efforts in the 1840s to improve the condition of the poor. These schemes included the provision of allotments by the Bowood estate, who made 500 a. available across Calne and Bremhill, in 1843, to nearly 700 tenants.¹⁴⁵ According to a government report, by 1885, this had risen in Bremhill alone to 527 a. which were let to 777 tenants.¹⁴⁶ Allotments were between 0.5 a. and 2 a. and tenants chiefly grew potatoes, cabbage, wheat and barley.¹⁴⁷ Tenants of allotments at Foxham were given notice prior to the sale of Foxham estate in 1910.¹⁴⁸ In 1947, a number of plots were sold by the Bowood Estate.¹⁴⁹ By this stage, some of the allotments were rented out to local farmers.¹⁵⁰ However, real wages improved considerably between 1870 and 1914.¹⁵¹

¹³⁶ http://www.visionofbritain.org/unit/10400338/cube/OCC_ORDER1881

¹³⁷ There were 26 in the workhouse and a further 102 adults and 228 children relieved in the community permanently. A further 93 were occasionally relieved. The population of Bremhill was 1 303 in 1801. *Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for Procuring Returns Relative to Expense and Maintenance of Poor in England* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1803-4), 560-1; http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10400338/cube/TOT_POP [accessed 25 Jul 2019].

¹³⁸ The presence of a school was noted on returns in 1803 but absent when the next were published in 1818.

¹³⁹ WSA, 1171/21; WSA, 1154/80, 16 Dec 1816, 17 Oct 1831, 1 Dec 1841.

¹⁴⁰ WSA, 1154/38; WSA, 1154/39.

¹⁴¹ WSA, 1154/80. E.g. 28 Feb 1839.

¹⁴² WSA, 1171/21.

¹⁴³ *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 9 Dec 1830; *Hampshire Advertiser*, 11 Dec 1830.

¹⁴⁴ Despite the resolution to raise wages being passed in Nov 1830, by the end of Dec 1830, an additional rate was required to relieve the poor. WSA, 1154/80. 29 Dec 1830.

¹⁴⁵ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 24 Apr 1843.

¹⁴⁶ *Morning Chronicle*, 12 Feb 1846; *Wiltshire Independent*, 12 Feb 1846; *Morning Post*, 12 Feb 1846; *Reports of Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture*, (London: Houses of Commons Papers, 1843) 63-4; *First Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners for Inquiring into the Housing of the Working Classes* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1884-5), 539.

¹⁴⁷ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 24 Apr 1843.

¹⁴⁸ Information provided by Dr Cathryn Spence, archivist at Bowood.

¹⁴⁹ WSA, 1975/134/4.

¹⁵⁰ WSA, 1975/134/4. This included tenants of Manor Farm, Hazeland Farm and Mr W.E. Godwin, who had a small farm at Ratford.

¹⁵¹ *VCH Wilts*, 4.

Mills

In 1086, there were three mills in Bremhill valued at £2 6s. There were also two parts of a mill at East Tytherton and one part of another at either East or West Tytherton (Tytherton Lucas).¹⁵² An early fulling mill belonged to Stanley Abbey in 1189.¹⁵³ A mill at Avon in Bremhill also existed in 1268.¹⁵⁴ By the early eighteenth century, there were four fulling mills in the parish; - Hazeland, Scott's (see Tytherton Lucas), Stanley (see Stanley) and Avon (see Christian Malford).¹⁵⁵

Hazeland Mill formed part of the Bremhill estate of Malmesbury Abbey. In 1534, it was listed as a grist and tucking (fulling) mill.¹⁵⁶ At the dissolution of the monasteries, the mill came into the possession of Sir Edward Bayntun. By 1643, it was leased by the Bayntun family to Robert Taylor, a clothier.¹⁵⁷ It remained in Bayntun possession and appeared on the manor rent roll in 1659–79. The mill was leased to Mr Sheppard (1659–61), Gabriel Brabbins (1670–71), Robert Brookes (1671–78) and John Hale (1678–9). It was described as a grist mill. However, fulling stocks at the site were rented out 1670–2; this and local probate evidence suggests, either a continuation of its dual usage in the seventeenth century for both agriculture and textiles or short-term adaptation to counteract trade disruptions or slumps.¹⁵⁸

Hazeland Mill was acquired along with other property in Bremhill by the Bowood estate in whose possession it remained until the twentieth century. After the demise of the cloth trade, the building was used solely as a grist mill until 1965.¹⁵⁹

In 1855, the miller was Jacob Archer.¹⁶⁰ For much of the early twentieth century, the miller was Francis Pavy.¹⁶¹ The Pavy family employed several workers at the mill and also farmed 14 a. attached that may have been the site of the original fulling racks.¹⁶² The machinery remained in working order for several decades despite the conversion of the building to a residence.¹⁶³

Textiles

Hazeland Mill was used for fulling cloth in the seventeenth century and until c. 1838, when it ceased, presumably due to the collapse of the local trade.¹⁶⁴ Along with the majority of the

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¹⁵³ K.H Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills* (Edington: Pasold, 1976), 89.

¹⁵⁴ *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1268* (WRS 65), 117.

¹⁵⁵ WSA, A1/525.

¹⁵⁶ Historic England HER, Bremhill, Hazeland Mill, 1022431 [OS: ST 97190 72328].

¹⁵⁷ TNA, PROB 11/191/381.

¹⁵⁸ *Common Place Book of Sir Edward Bayntun* (WRS 43), 46–7. Michael Feats, described as a 'fuller' in his 1679 will, was, according to the manor rent roll of the same year, in possession of the Stanley Abbey 'grist mill'. The inventory of 'fuller' William Hort from 1672 suggests that he too was probably not only working cloth but also working grain on his death. WSA, P3/F/161; *Commonplace Book of Sir Edward Bayntun* (WRS 43), 44; WSA, P3/H/468.

¹⁵⁹ Historic England HER, Bremhill, Hazeland Mill, 1022431 [OS: ST 97190 72328].

¹⁶⁰ *Kelly's Dir. Dors., Hants., Wilts...* (1855 edn.), 19; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 228.

¹⁶¹ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1915 edn.), 47; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1927 edn.), 51; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939 edn.), 46.

¹⁶² *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 19 Apr 1924. Mentioned in the obituary of Mrs M.A. Pavy. See also WSA, L8.1.25.

¹⁶³ WSA, 3071/40/4.

¹⁶⁴ As evidenced by fullers and clothiers located at Hazeland Mill. E.g. WSA, P1/T/92, P3/W/846, P3/L/422, P3/W/627; TNA, PROB 11/191/381. Fulling appears to have continued until at least 1838 when a quantity of cloth was stolen from the mill. *Wiltshire Independent*, 4 Jan 1838; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 18 Jan 1838. See also K.H Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills* (Edington: Pasold, 1976), 88–9; J. De L. Mann, *The Cloth Industry in the West of England 1640–1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

county's cloth production, the cloth was almost certainly sent directly from the mill to London for export or finished for the home market.¹⁶⁵ The inventory of Hazeland clothier, John Taylor, in 1635 listed large amounts of wool, yarn and textiles.¹⁶⁶ In 1727, 47 pieces were milled at Hazeland by miller and fuller, Peter Lane, in the period April to October, the most significant output of any mill in the area.¹⁶⁷ On his death in 1748, Lane left a good-sized estate that included bonds, securities, capital and several cottages in Calne.¹⁶⁸ The will of Thomas Wells, fuller, of Hazeland Mill, proven in 1742, suggests the mill was also being used for agricultural purposes.¹⁶⁹

In 1828, Rev. W.L. Bowles' *History of Bremhill* was probably describing Hazeland Mill when it referred to, one of the locations of the three parish mills mentioned in the Domesday Book, 'at the bottom of the hill, on the river Marden, where there is now a mill for cloth.'¹⁷⁰

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, broadcloth and serge weaving were taking place in the village predominantly by men.¹⁷¹ There is also evidence that silk throwing was carried out.¹⁷² Many local women, during the seventeenth and eighteenth-century, supported textile manufacture and contributed to household incomes by spinning wool into yarn.¹⁷³

Forestry

At Domesday, the area around Bremhill was heavily wooded. The manor of Bremhill contained an area of woodland of 2 leagues by 2 furlongs in an expanse with an addition 4 a. of 'spinctum'.¹⁷⁴ Stanley Abbey exploited the woods for its timber and minerals and as pasture for livestock.¹⁷⁵ In the thirteenth century, much of Bremhill lay within the bounds of Chippenham Forest.¹⁷⁶ However, in the following century, the forest was increasingly cleared for cultivation.¹⁷⁷ By 1257, East Tytherton and Tytherton Lucas were deemed outside the forest.¹⁷⁸ In the seventeenth century, only 2 a. remained within its 1300 a. bounds.¹⁷⁹ On the OS map of 1899, the most expansive woodland remaining was Bremhill Grove.¹⁸⁰

The Bowood estate sold small parcels of woodland in 1863.¹⁸¹ In 1910, the extent of the woods owned by the Marquis of Lansdowne was estimated to be 151 a.¹⁸² On the sale of his Bremhill estate in 1947, Hazeland Wood, comprising of c. 47 a. and Bremhill Grove c. 31 a. made up of oak trees with coppice were auctioned.¹⁸³ Unlike Bowood's local farming assets which were tenanted, its forestry was directly managed. Timber felled in Bremhill and

¹⁶⁵ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 113.

¹⁶⁶ WSA, P1/T/92.

¹⁶⁷ WSA, A1/525. Lane was described by his will as a fuller. WSA, P3/L/422.

¹⁶⁸ WSA, P3/L/422.

¹⁶⁹ WSA, P3/W/846.

¹⁷⁰ Rev. W.L. Bowles, *The Parochial History of Bremhill in the County of Wiltshire* (London: John Murray, 1828), 20. Historic England HER, Bremhill, Hazeland Mill, 1022431 [OS: ST 97190 72328].

¹⁷¹ WSA, P3/S/12, P3/T/89, P3/T/176, P3/T/322, P3/W/81, P1/12Reg/317, P1/T/513, P3/H/457, P3/D/116, P3/B/1294, P1/T/513.

¹⁷² WSA, P3/H/1189.

¹⁷³ This is revealed in the probate inventories of local widows. E.g. WSA, P3/K/70.

¹⁷⁴ Brown thesis, 56-7.

¹⁷⁵ Brown 126.

¹⁷⁶ *VCH Wilts*, 4 408.

¹⁷⁷ Brown 132-3.

¹⁷⁸ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 408.

¹⁷⁹ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 413.

¹⁸⁰ OS Map 1: 2500, Wilts. XX.SE (1901 edn)

¹⁸¹ This was Hazeland Wood and Honey Bed, both of 7.5 a. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 1 Jan 1863.

¹⁸² WSA, L8.1.25.

¹⁸³ WSA, 1975/134/4.

Foxham, by Bowood, was sold several times in the nineteenth century.¹⁸⁴ In 1947, timber to the value of £4,768 was offered for sale from the estate woodland in Bremhill.¹⁸⁵

A number of farms also held small parcels of woodland, some of which were used for 'poles and coppice of considerable value'.¹⁸⁶

Sir G Goldney owned 21 a. of woodland in Avon in the early twentieth century.

Other Trades

Shoemaking was carried out in Bremhill during the eighteenth and nineteenth century.¹⁸⁷

In 1831, 59 adult males were engaged in retail and handicrafts.¹⁸⁸ In a trade directory of 1859, several Bremhill parish inhabitants were employed across the parish as craftsmen. Trades included those of blacksmith, wheelwright, carpenter, and basket maker.¹⁸⁹ Fifty years later, wheelwrights and basket makers had disappeared, and farmers continued to dominate the commercial listings.¹⁹⁰ By 1981 there was little handicraft or industry left in the village.¹⁹¹

In 1956, the firm of Jenkins and Lancefield were engaged in coachbuilding at the stable yard and coach house of Bremhill Vicarage.¹⁹²

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Manorial

The lord of Bremhill manor held a court and view of frankpledge. Direct records exist for 1545-1557, 1565-1612, 1615-1638, 1651-1657 and 1694-1742.¹⁹³ In 1651 a view of frankpledge and court baron was held in April; the manor court met in August and December, and both a view and manor court were also held in October. In 1653-7, the view of frankpledge and manor court was held in April and October.¹⁹⁴ A tithingman was selected for each of the tithings of Bremhill, Foxham, Spirthill and Charlcutt. Infractions presented were largely minor, and selection to the post of tithingman may have been used to encourage good behaviour. In October 1651, on the day Thomas Hayward was elected as tithingman for Foxham, he was fined by the court for not doing his share to repair local roads and warned that unless he 'scoured' (cleared) his ditches by November, he would face another fine.¹⁹⁵ A single hayward was annually appointed for Foxham and four for Stockham. This was later reduced to two. A hayward for Hanger Marsh was also nominated in 1657. As well as maintaining hedges and fences, haywards also served notice when livestock should be taken on and off the wastes and collected fines for infringements. Overseers were additionally named for the commons at Foxham in 1653, 1655 (with Dolemead), 1657; Stockham 1654-5, Catcombe and Charlcutt with Siderow in 1657. Overseers were authorised to impound cattle grazing without rights. The most manorial business was tenurial. However, the homage also

¹⁸⁴ E.g. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 17 Mar 1806; *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 11 Apr 1850.

¹⁸⁵ *Western Daily Press*, 17 Oct 1947.

¹⁸⁶ WSA, 1975/134/4. E.g. Bencroft Farm and Hazeland Farm.

¹⁸⁷ WSA, P3/D/116, P3/1856/53, P3/T/572; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 391; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 228.

¹⁸⁸ http://www.visionofbritain.org/unit/10400338/cube/OCC_PAR1831

¹⁸⁹ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 391.

¹⁹⁰ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1915 edn.), 47.

¹⁹¹ WSA, 3071/40/4.

¹⁹² *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 16 Nov 1956.

¹⁹³ WSA, 84/35, 473/52, 122/1, 1171/85; BL, ADD MSS 37270.

¹⁹⁴ An additional manor court was held in Mar 1655.

¹⁹⁵ WSA, 473/52.

presented defaulters and those who neglected to repair boundaries, fences, highways, bridges or scour ditches.¹⁹⁶

At Stanley manor, meetings of the court were recorded 1545-1557, 1565-1612, 1615-1638, 1651-1657, 1735-1782 and 1783-1879.¹⁹⁷ The court leet and view of frankpledge annually took place each October 1735-1799. In some years, this was combined with the court baron. A separate court baron was held in some years.¹⁹⁸ The manor court's main business was conveyancing of copyholds and recording the death of tenants. Issues concerning the lack of a stocks, land encroachments, dilapidated roads, bridges and public nuisances were occasionally presented. A tithingman was annually appointed until the late eighteenth century. From 1755, one or two haywards were also selected.¹⁹⁹ There were no courts held 1800-1817, and thereafter, manor courts were held only sporadically until the last in 1879.²⁰⁰

No direct record of a court held for Cadenham, Foxham or Spirthill manor has survived.

Parish

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, parochial administration was divided into the four tithings of Bremhill, Foxham, Spirthill and Tytherton with Studley. Access to parish meetings to set poor rates was often restricted to churchwardens, overseers and sometimes 'paymasters'. Meetings were held in the church vestry at Bremhill until the 1860s, after which Bremhill School was principally used.²⁰¹

Until the early 1830s, vestry recording and overseers and highway accounts were regularly audited by two magistrates, mainly at the Quarter Sessions.²⁰²

In 1819, a select vestry was established.²⁰³ If initiated under the Sturges Bourne Acts (58 Geo III c.3 and 59 Geo III c.12), the vestry did not strictly follow their provisions. It may have been a short-term measure. No select vestry minutes have survived.

Constables. Following the Parish Constable Act 1842 (5 & 6 Vic c.109), the role of tithingman was abolished. Instead, a constable was selected for each of the four parish tithings.²⁰⁴ By 1868, the parish had increased the number of annually selected constables to eight.²⁰⁵ However, the use of parish appointed constables became defunct by 1874.

Overseers of the poor. Bremhill parish appointed overseers from at least 1649.²⁰⁶ By the late eighteenth century, four overseers were annually selected principally from amongst local farmers, one each for the tithings of Bremhill, Foxham, Spirthill and Tytherton with Studley.²⁰⁷ They were responsible for collecting poor rates and disbursements to those receiving relief within the community.²⁰⁸ A parish workhouse was separately maintained. In 1841, the overseers included one woman, Sarah Hancock, who was selected for Foxham.²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁶ WSA, 473/52.

¹⁹⁷ WSA, 84/35, 473/52, 473/53, 473/61, 122/1; BL, ADD MSS 37270.

¹⁹⁸ This was held in 1734, 1741, 1744, 1747, 1748, 1752 and 1767.

¹⁹⁹ WSA, 473/59; 473/61.

²⁰⁰ WSA, 473/61.

²⁰¹ WSA, 1154/80, 1154/29.

²⁰² WSA, 1154/80, E.g. 31 Dec 1806, 27 May 1807, 5 Apr 1815, 3 Apr 1816; 1154/81. E.g. 22 Oct 1823, 26 Oct 1826, 28 Oct 1829. See also WSA, 1154/38, 1154/39, 1154/40, 84/36.

²⁰³ WSA, 1154/80. 17 Dec 1819.

²⁰⁴ WSA, 1154/80. 3 Nov 1842.

²⁰⁵ WSA, 1154/29. 25 Mar 1869.

²⁰⁶ *Wiltshire Quarter Sessions Order Book 1642-1654* (WRS 67), 170-1.

²⁰⁷ WSA, 1154/80.

²⁰⁸ WSA, 1154/38, 1154/39, 1154/40.

²⁰⁹ WSA, 1154/80. 23 Mar 1841.

Four overseers continued to be appointed into the twentieth century and remained primarily made up of local farmers.²¹⁰

From 1828, a general overseer was appointed, John Rawlings, at a salary of £50. Rawlings was responsible for 'the care of the workhouse, and of the roads, in the different tithings and the care thereunto'.²¹¹ In 1831, James Hancock was employed in the role at an increased remuneration of £60. However, the following year Henry Hodges was contracted for only £20.²¹² Hodges had previously served as an overseer.²¹³ He continued in post until 1835 when poor law administration passed to the newly formed Calne Poor Law Union. The Union later alleged Hodges had made false accounting entries, a prosecution was dismissed, but he was ordered to pay back £53.²¹⁴ In 1836 he became parish clerk.²¹⁵

The parish employed an assistant overseer to collect in the poor rates from the 1880s, if not before. In 1884, Joseph Carpenter was employed in the position, on a salary of £20. He was replaced by D.M. Eatwell in 1884, who later combined the role with that of parish clerk.²¹⁶ Eatwell remained in post until 1918.²¹⁷ In 1926, the parish increased the salary of assistant overseer to £49.²¹⁸

From 1835, two guardians were selected for the board of the Calne Poor Law Union.²¹⁹

Surveyors of the highways. Up to six surveyors of the highway were selected. Like parish overseers, surveyors were responsible for particular tithings and were often local farmers. Unlike overseers, they could remain appointed for several years. Women occasionally served in the role, including Ann Pegler selected in 1857 who ran a farm in Foxham.²²⁰ Meetings of surveyors took place in the church but occasionally in other venues, such as the Dumb Post Inn.²²¹ In 1836, the parish rejected an offer to join with Hilmarton and Calne to employ an individual to superintend their highways.²²² The annual selection of surveyors, later known as waywardens, continued until 1880, but the number of appointees was reduced to two from the 1860s.²²³

Surveyors were responsible for the construction and maintenance of local highways and bridges. Their expenditure rose and fell dramatically, dependent on need.²²⁴ Rates

²¹⁰ WSA,141/9. E.g. 17 Mar 1919.

²¹¹ WSA, 1154/80. 18 Apr 1828.

²¹² WSA, 1154/80. 25 Mar 1831, 12 Apr 1832.

²¹³ WSA, 1154/40.

²¹⁴ WSA, H/4/110/1. 12 Aug 1835, 14 Aug 1835, 19 Aug 1835, 26 Aug 1835.

²¹⁵ *Return of Officers Whose Incomes are Paid from Poor Rates in England and Wales* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1849), 233.

²¹⁶ Eatwell replaced Edward Hodges who had died. *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1915 edn.),47. WSA, 1154/29. 27 September 1884, 26 Apr 1886; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, Saturday 12 January 1895.

²¹⁷ WSA, 141/9. 17 Apr 1918.

²¹⁸ WSA, 141/9. 5 Nov 1926.

²¹⁹ There is something of a discrepancy in dates. The first mention of a selection of guardians to the Calne Poor Law Union in vestry minutes is not made until March 1837. However, two guardians representing Bremhill were present at the first meeting of Union guardians in 1835. It may be that this was in an 'unofficial' capacity. WSA, 1154/80. 30 March 1837; WSA, H/4/110/1. 27 Mar 1835. See also, *Return of Number of Parishes in every Union formed under Poor Law Amendment Act, Number of Guardians, and Number of Contests at Annual Elections* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1876), 95.

²²⁰ WSA, 209/3-209/6.

²²¹ WSA, 1154/80, 1154/81.

²²² WSA, 1154/80. 21 Apr 1836.

²²³ WSA, 1154/29.

²²⁴ In 1786 highway expenditure was over £90, but subsequent years were generally much smaller, and only £17 in 1806. WSA, 1154/81.

chargeable for work also fluctuated.²²⁵ Stone was quarried locally, often within the tithing itself. In 1837, the vestry agreed to pay damages to ‘persons occupying land wherein stones are quarried for the repair of the roads.’²²⁶ During a period of high unemployment, local men were employed on the roads.²²⁷ Disbursements suggest labourers were provided with beer while working.²²⁸

In 1831, the vestry decided to create one account for improving the roads rather than continue raising funds within the separate hamlets. However, the occupiers of each tithing were only expected to assist with the haulage of materials within their settlement.²²⁹ The fund was sometimes used for expenses unrelated to highways, including payments for sparrows’ heads.²³⁰ In 1839, Joseph Hatherell was paid £10 from this account towards the costs associated with his emigration to America; the reason for this was not given.²³¹ These disbursements may reflect an acknowledgement that highway maintenance had a broader remit within local government which included welfare provision.

Churchwardens. Two churchwardens were annually selected.²³² Their responsibilities mostly pertained to church maintenance, but their presence was generally requested at meetings of overseers. It is likely they often acted alongside overseers to relieve local poverty.

Poor Law Administration

Poor relief was the preeminent concern of local government throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The parish did not resort to ‘farming’ the poor, and instead, relief was administered by unpaid overseers and salaried parish officers. The amount spent on poor relief rose from £738 in 1776 to £1 688 by 1803.²³³ However, it fluctuated sharply during the latter stages of the Napoleonic Wars from £2 423 in 1813 to £1 220 in 1815, while expenditure for other parochial purposes remained static.²³⁴ In part, variations can be attributed to a local economy dependent on agriculture and good harvests rather than good governance. For example, in 1831, the wheat price hit a high of £3 6s. *od.* a quart; the cost of Bremhill’s welfare likewise hit £2852, and when wheat prices plummeted to £2 6s. *od.* shillings in 1834, the value of relief fell to £1930.²³⁵ However, rates generally decreased after the Calne Poor Law Union was formed in 1837. In the four years to 1842, the amount collected in poor rates averaged £1,197.²³⁶

Post- 1894 Local Government

²²⁵ E.g. in 1838, the rate was 1/2d./ £, and in 1840 it rose to 7s. 1/2d./ £. WSA, 1154/80. 15 Feb 1838, 21 Apr 1840.

²²⁶ WSA, 1154/80. 31 Aug 1837.

²²⁷ E.g. WSA, 1154/80. 28 Nov 1828, 1 Dec 1840.

²²⁸ WSA, 1154/81.

²²⁹ WSA, 1154/80. 7 Oct 1831.

²³⁰ WSA, 209/3-209/6.

²³¹ WSA, 1154/80. 28 Feb 1839.

²³² WSA, 1154/80.

²³³ *Abstracts of the Returns Made by the Overseers of the Poor*, (London: House of Commons Papers, 1776), 188; *Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 560-1.

²³⁴ Other expenditure was £320 for both 1813 and 1815. *Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 494-5.

²³⁵ T. H. Barker, *Record of Seasons of Prices and Phenomena* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1911), 271-275; WSA, 1154/40.

²³⁶ *Return of Value of Property Assessed to Poor Rates, 1840-41; Amount of Money levied for Poor Rates on each Parish in England and Wales, 1839-42* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1844), 184.

The Bremhill parish council's first meeting took place in January 1895, with Mr C.T. Pavy was elected as chairman.²³⁷ It was made up of six elected councillors.²³⁸ In 1901 the local councillors were Jacob Vines (farmer), Charles Pavy (miller), Frances Freegard (farmer), John Palmer (carpenter), Charles Knapp (mason) and John Summers (labourer). In the early twentieth century, matters discussed by the parish council primarily centred on the provision and upkeep of locks, bridges and roads, delivery of water supplies and the management of Maud's Heath Trust.²³⁹ At the end of WWI and WWII, housing provision for the working class was a particular concern.²⁴⁰ [To be completed]

SOCIAL HISTORY

Social Character

Bremhill is characterised by dispersed farms and settlements across its nearly 6000 a.²⁴¹ In 1249, the Wiltshire Eyre referred to the townships of Bremhill (Breml, Bremel, Brembre), Tytherton Kellaway (Tyndelinton Calew), Tytherton Lucas (Tyndelinton Lucas) and a settlement at Stanley (Stanleg, Stanlegh).²⁴² Bremhill, Stanley and Tytherton Lucas were described as separate townships in 1268.²⁴³ In 1332, 76 taxpayers were recorded in Bremhill (Bremul) including 11 assessed at over 7s. 1 1/2d. There were a further 14 in Stanley (Stanleghe) and 19 at Tytherton (Tudryntone).²⁴⁴

In the 1545 taxation list, Stanley and Tytherton Lucas were again recorded separately to Bremhill; the list named nine taxpayers in Bremhill, including the vicar and Robert Hungerford esquire of Cadenam.²⁴⁵ In 1576, Stanley and Tytherton Lucas were shown singly, but Bremhill was listed with Foxham. Across the settlements, there were 43 taxpayers of which 11 were based 'in lands.' Taxpayers included six women, all widowed. Principal residents included the owners of the local manors, Sir Edward Bayntun [Bremhill, Stanley, Foxham], Walter Hungerford [Cadenham], Hugh Barrett and Edmund Stokes [Tytherton Lucas].²⁴⁶

From the seventeenth century, the estate owners, apart from the Hungerford family on the Cadenham estate, were non-resident. In their place, vicars of Bremhill such as Rev. William Lisle Bowles provided social leadership within the community.²⁴⁷ Bowles in particular provided a link between the Marquis of Lansdowne and the parish. This probably contributed to the Lansdownes' support of local causes, such as the establishment of a school in Foxham.

Tenant farmers and farm workers made up the bulk of Bremhill population in the post-reformation period, with social continuity provided by such long-standing families. These included the Norbonne (C16-C17), Oliff (C16-17) and Gingel families.²⁴⁸ In the 1820s,

²³⁷ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 12 Jan 1895.

²³⁸ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 22 Dec 1894.

²³⁹ WSA, 141/9.

²⁴⁰ WSA, 141/9. E.g. 6 Sep 1919, 19 Dec 1919, 6 Sep 1946

²⁴¹ The acreage is given as 5665 by the vicar in 1866 (WMA, MSS.438) and 5920 a. (*Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 391).

²⁴² C. A. F. Meekings (ed.), *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre, 1249* (WRS 16), 183, 188, 193, 260.

²⁴³ B. Farr and C. Elrington (eds), rev. H. Summerson, *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1268* (WRS 65), 117, 126.

²⁴⁴ Crowley (ed.), *Tax List 1332*, 97-8.

²⁴⁵ *Two Sixteenth-Century Taxation Lists* (WRS 10), 27-8.

²⁴⁶ *Two Sixteenth-Century Taxation Lists* (WRS 10), 55, 58-9.

²⁴⁷ Bowles was also a local magistrate until he resigned from the bench in 1831. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 6 Jun 1831.

²⁴⁸ *Two Sixteenth-Century Taxation Lists* (WRS 10), 27-8, 55, 58-9; WSA, 473/52.

Bowles reported the village was made up of some 'independent English freeholders farming their own estates- some renting tenants- all supporting numerous agricultural labourers and their families.'²⁴⁹ He blamed early marriages and associated local population growth with a 'superabundance of labourers' and the pushing down of wages. There were high levels of local deprivation during the early nineteenth century with up to 1 in 3 residents receiving permanent or occasional relief.²⁵⁰ However, there is limited evidence of class conflict. The agitation associated with Swing Riots in 1830 may have been avoided by Bremhill farmers voting to raise labourers' wages on the same day civil disorder was reported in Christian Malford.²⁵¹ Although Bremhill was the location of one Anti-Corn Law League meeting in 1846, its effects were not long-lasting.²⁵²

In 1866, the Bremhill vicar characterised local people as 'sober, honest, social-able' but as 'poor scholars' and hinted at their slow intellect.²⁵³

Communal Life

The low population and scattered settlements restricted community life until the nineteenth century, although the church at Bremhill provided the venue for local government and a few public events. The church choir or Sunday school pupils were often the primary focus for these activities. These included the communal Christmas celebrations sponsored by Rev. Bowles between 1819 and 1837.²⁵⁴ In the 1880s, the congregations and choir of Bremhill and Foxham churches enjoyed an annual excursion sponsored by the Marquis of Lansdowne.²⁵⁵

Local friendly societies observed their own feast days. The Dumb Post Friendly Society's festivities included dinner and procession from the Dumb Post Inn twice around the Cross outside the church to the Bell and Organ Inn. A 'Foxham revel' traditionally took place the Sunday after the feast of St. John the Baptist, probably to commemorate the dedication of the local chapel. A Spirthill feast was also observed 'when all neighbours interchange visits.'²⁵⁶

There was a temperance club run amongst the Moravians at East Tytherton in 1866.²⁵⁷

During the nineteenth century, the increased availability of public buildings facilitated more activities taking place. Village concerts took were held in Bremhill School.²⁵⁸ Bremhill Reading Room was used during the early twentieth century as a meeting room for the Conservative Club and as a venue for pursuits, such as whist drives.²⁵⁹ Members of the Reading Room also enjoyed outings, for example, a "Char-a-Banc" trip to Weymouth.²⁶⁰

Friendly Societies. By the early nineteenth century, there were two friendly societies with a combined membership of 105. It rose to 130 during the Napoleonic Wars and 186 in 1863

²⁴⁹ W.L. Bowles, *A Parochial History of Bremhill in the County of Wiltshire* (London: John Murray, 1828), 21.

²⁵⁰ There were 26 in the workhouse and 102 adults and 228 children relieved in the community permanently. A further 93 were occasionally relieved. The population of Bremhill was 1 303 in 1801. *Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for Procuring Returns Relative to Expense and Maintenance of Poor in England* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1803-4), 560-1; http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10400338/cube/TOT_POP [accessed 25 Jul 2019].

²⁵¹ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 25 Nov 1830, 2 Dec 1830; WSA, 1171/21.

²⁵² *Morning Chronicle*, 12 Feb 1846; *Wiltshire Independent*, 12 Feb 1846; *Morning Post*, 12 Feb 1846.

²⁵³ WMA, MSS.438

²⁵⁴ E.g. *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 6 Jan 1820; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 3 Jan 1825; *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 4 Jan 1836, 16 Jan 1837.

²⁵⁵ E.g. to Weymouth in 1883. *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 16 Aug 1883

²⁵⁶ WMA, MSS.438.

²⁵⁷ WMA, MSS.438.

²⁵⁸ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 16 Jan 1890.

²⁵⁹ WSA, 1154/51.

²⁶⁰ WSA, 1154/51. E.g. 10 Oct 1921.

when funds were valued at £359.²⁶¹ One friendly society was based at the Dumb Post Inn.²⁶² According to a later government report the Dumb Post Friendly Society was founded in 1815. However, the Inn was likely the venue of the Society from 1770. In 1837, some of its funds were stolen.²⁶³ The Society was dissolved in 1865, although the local vicar stated two friendly societies were in operation in 1866.²⁶⁴

A society called the Young Friendly Society existed at Bremhill in 1855.²⁶⁵

As well as friendly societies, there were 'penny a week clubs.' Local labouring families paid subscriptions for clothes, shoes and blankets.²⁶⁶ In the 1860s there were also clothing and coal clubs in Bremhill and Charlcutt.²⁶⁷

Inns and Alehouses. In 1781 the vestry complained about 'the swarm of ale-houses.'²⁶⁸

The most important inn in the parish was the Dumb Post. The name 'Dumb Post' has been a source of conjecture. In 1878, it was reported it was the tradition of the house that, while the Inn originally had no sign, 'the landlord of that day, compelled by circumstances though against his will, to give his house a distinctive sign named it- perhaps in jest, perhaps in annoyance- from some old post that stood near.'²⁶⁹ In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Inn was the meeting place of various bodies, including the Dumb Post Friendly Society. It provided a venue for local auctions and hunt meets.²⁷⁰ In 1845, the Inn was the meeting place of the Tithe Commissioners.²⁷¹ The following year, newspaper reports suggested that it was the planned location of an Anti-Corn Law League Meeting, which instead took place outside the church.²⁷² From 1859, the landlord was William Palmer, and from 1877 his widow, Sarah.²⁷³ By 1889 it was run by his son Francis who ran it until c. 1911.²⁷⁴

The Dumb Post was owned by the Bowood estate until 1947 when it was sold along with most of the estate's Bremhill assets.²⁷⁵ The original pub sign was replaced by the brewery in 1954 and precipitated a protest by some residents.²⁷⁶ In 2021, it was one of only two public houses in the parish.²⁷⁷

²⁶¹ *Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 560-1; *Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 494-5; *Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies in England* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1864), 159.

²⁶² *Return Relating to Friendly Societies enrolled in Counties of England and Wales and Scotland* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1837), 27.

²⁶³ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 Feb 1837.

²⁶⁴ *Registrar of Friendly Societies in England: Annual Report* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1866), 10; WMA, MSS.438.

²⁶⁵ *Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard*, 27 Oct 1855.

²⁶⁶ *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 6 Jan 1820.

²⁶⁷ WMA, MSS.438.

²⁶⁸ WSA, 84/36.

²⁶⁹ WMA, xvii, 318.

²⁷⁰ For example: - *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 19 Sep 1808; *Wiltshire Independent*, 7 Mar 1839; *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 20 Mar 1851; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 18 Oct 1947, 11 Dec 1948, 3 Dec 1955.

²⁷¹ *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 22 Mar 1845.

²⁷² *Sheffield Independent*, 14 Feb 1846.

²⁷³ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.),391; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 24 Nov 1877.

²⁷⁴ *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 24 Jan 1889; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.),46-7.

²⁷⁵ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 20 Sep 1947; WSA, 1974/134/4.

²⁷⁶ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 17 Apr 1954.

²⁷⁷ The other was the Foxham Inn. <https://thedumb-post.com/> [access 10 Mar 2021].

The Foxham Inn was established by 1947.²⁷⁸ During the 1950s it had a popular darts team and was the location of a local thrift club.²⁷⁹ In 2021, it also provided bed and breakfast accommodation.²⁸⁰

Village Halls, Reading Rooms and the Women's Institute. Three reading rooms were established in the parish at Bremhill, Charlcutt and Foxham, by Lord Fitzmaurice with his brother the Marquis of Lansdowne.²⁸¹ The Bremhill library and reading room were opened in 1882, the Charlcutt reading room in 1883 and one at Foxham the following year.

In 1915, the Bremhill reading room librarian was John Palmer. It was later run by his wife. Its membership was in decline by the 1920s but was still in use during the 1930s.²⁸² Up until 1918, it was still financially supported by the Lansdowne family as well as subscriptions from members.²⁸³ The institute thereafter was in a weak financial position, and fundraising took place.²⁸⁴ The situation was partly blamed on 'disorder which frequently prevails.'²⁸⁵ Due to the small number of members and rising costs, the Committee voted to close in 1925 temporarily.²⁸⁶ The structure is now part of a residential property.

In 1915, the Charlcutt library and reading room librarian was Miss Aspeck.²⁸⁷ It was still a charity in 1952, but the building is now in other use.²⁸⁸ The Foxham Reading Room was operating as a village hall and free library in 2020.²⁸⁹

Despite an identified need for a village hall expressed in 1924 by Lord Fitzmaurice the co-sponsor of the parish reading rooms, there was no village hall in Bremhill until the closure of Bremhill school in 1969, when the old school was converted for the purpose.²⁹⁰ In 2020 Bremhill village hall was providing a venue for community events, such as concerts and drama productions.²⁹¹ A village hall was opened at East Tytherton in 1924.²⁹²

In 1959 the Spirhill and Charlcutt Women's Institute was formed.²⁹³ It became the Bremhill and District WI by 1969.²⁹⁴ Events were held regularly, including talks and activities such as carol singing, skittles and bring-and-buy sales. In 1981, a Royal Wedding Tea took place in the Vicarage Garden to celebrate the marriage of Lady Diana and the Prince of Wales. Each committee member was 'to prepare two loaves of sandwiches each in addition to offers of cake.'²⁹⁵ By 1960 there were 26 members.²⁹⁶ However, attendance dwindled by the late 1980s.²⁹⁷ The Bremhill WI folded in the early 1990s.

²⁷⁸

²⁷⁹ E.g. *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 13 Jan 1951, 12 May 1951, 15 Dec 1951, 24 Oct 1951, 30 Jan 1954, 26 Nov 1955.

²⁸⁰ <https://thefoxhaminn.co.uk/> [access 10 Mar 2021].

²⁸¹ I. Slocombe, *Wiltshire Village Reading Rooms* (Sailsbury: Hobnob, 2012), 59.

²⁸² I. Slocombe, *Wiltshire Village Reading Rooms* (Sailsbury: Hobnob, 2012), 59, 61-2, 68; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1915 edn.), 47. *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939 edn.), 46.

²⁸³ WSA, 1154/51.

²⁸⁴ WSA, 1154/51. E.g. 9 Mar 1920.

²⁸⁵ WSA, 1154/51 17 Oct 1921

²⁸⁶ WSA, 1154/51 8 Mar 1925

²⁸⁷ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1915 edn.), 47.

²⁸⁸ I. Slocombe, *Wiltshire Village Reading Rooms* (Sailsbury: Hobnob, 2012), 61-2.

²⁸⁹ <https://www.bremhillparish.org/foxham> [accessed 24 Feb 2020].

²⁹⁰ *North Wiltshire Herald*, 5 October 1924; <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1283562> [accessed 05 Mar 2021].

²⁹¹ WSA, BRE.004; <https://sites.google.com/site/bremhillvillage/village-hall> [accessed 05 mar 2021].

²⁹² *North Wiltshire Herald*, 5 October 1924.

²⁹³ WSA, 2283/17.

²⁹⁴ WSA, 2283/17; 2283/9 The same accounts book was used from 1959- 1970 without note of the name change.

²⁹⁵ WSA, 2283/6

²⁹⁶ WSA, 2283/9.

²⁹⁷ WSA, 2283/2.

The Tytherton Women's Institute was created in at East Tytherton in 1924 and met at the newly created East Tytherton village hall. Its regular activities included demonstrations, talks and excursions.²⁹⁸ In 2020, it was still regularly meeting. In the twenty-first century, membership was drawn from both the village and the wider Chippenham area.

In the 1960s a Tytherton Village Hall Club met twice a week for activities, including skittles; a bar was also opened on those nights.²⁹⁹

Social Welfare

In 1692, 22 people were in receipt of outdoor relief at a monthly cost of £2.³⁰⁰ In 1776, the cost had risen to £738. Of this £81 was spent on the provision of rents.³⁰¹ Overseers accounts suggest that in 1801 the parish was paying rent contributions for c. 117 households which totalled over £131.³⁰²

In 1781 the vestry planned to provide poor relief only within a new workhouse, created from the conversion of a church house.³⁰³ Its stated objective was that 'the aged and other impotent maybe with all humanity protected: the able kept to reasonable labour and employment: the industrious encouraged: the idle coerced: the profligate, as far as practicable, reclaimed: and the contumacious and incorrigible up to the Justice of the Law.'³⁰⁴ The workhouse quickly proved inadequate at accommodating all those seeking relief. In 1803 only 26 were relieved in the workhouse compared to 330 on permanent outdoor relief. Another 82 were occasionally relieved.³⁰⁵ In 1829 the vestry directed that no able-bodied person should be admitted into the workhouse.³⁰⁶ This seems to have been adhered to; at the creation of the Calne Poor Law Union in 1835, there were only 18 inmates and the population was exclusively made up of children and the aged.³⁰⁷

Aside from rent contributions, outdoor relief was given in several ways, such as by 'pays' and one-off expenses, predominantly for clothing and shoes.³⁰⁸ It also included medical care which was provided from at least 1763.³⁰⁹ In 1782, the doctor was paid £16.³¹⁰ During periods of high unemployment, men were employed repairing the public highways.³¹¹ For example, in winter 1835/36 when labourers were paid in money and bread.³¹² In 1816 a roundsman type system was used, whereby the unemployed were sent in rotation to local farmers who paid labourers 6d. a day. It was made up by overseers with a daily contribution of 10d. Different rates applied to single men and women. Labourer were warned 'all those

²⁹⁸ WSA, 2276/8. See also 2276/9-13, 23.

²⁹⁹ WSA, 2276/14.

³⁰⁰ It appears that the parish, occasionally, paid for apprenticeships, one of which is recorded within the parish register and dated 1662. W.L. Bowles, *A Parochial History of Bremhill in the County of Wiltshire* (London: John Murray, 1828), 199. S. Hobbs (ed.), *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS, 63), 26, 293.

³⁰¹ *Abstracts of the Returns Made by the Overseers of the Poor*, (London: House of Commons Papers, 1776), 188.

³⁰² WSA, 1154/38.

³⁰³ WSA, 84/36.

³⁰⁴ WSA, 84/36

³⁰⁵ *Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for Procuring Returns Relative to Expense and Maintenance of Poor in England* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1803-4), 560-1.

³⁰⁶ WSA, 1154/80. 4 Jun 1829.

³⁰⁷ WSA, H/4/110/1. 5 Apr 1835.

³⁰⁸ WSA, 84/36, 1154/38.

³⁰⁹ WSA, 1195/28.

³¹⁰ WSA, 84/36. 1 Apr 1782.

³¹¹ E.g. WSA, 1154/80. 28 Nov 1828, 1 Dec 1840.

³¹² WSA, H/4/110/1. 4 Nov 1835.

that go out of the parish to work in the SUMMER is not to expect so great a pay as them which work constantly at home in the parish.' The parish used a similar system in 1828.³¹³

Charities for the Poor

Charity provision to the poor within Bremhill parish was limited until the nineteenth century. According to government returns made in 1786, there was only one charity created for the benefit of the poor. It had been created by the will of Dr John Townson or Tounson to provide several alms-houses in Calne for use by residents of Calne, Bremhill, and Highworth parishes. However, the return suggested it had been withdrawn by 1786.³¹⁴ In 1834, another report stated 'it does not appear that Bremhill parish ever received any benefit from this charity.'³¹⁵ According to a Charity Commissioners Report in 1905, the provision had since been made available by the Trust to local people, however, 'there appears to be no desire on the part of the inhabitants of Bremhill to be admitted to the almshouses.'³¹⁶ Three cottages which had by popular tradition been given over by the Hungerford family for similar use had also never been utilised.³¹⁷ The average amount of charitable donations for the poor under the direction of parish officers between 1813-1815 was nil.³¹⁸

There were occasional one-off gifts from the estates. In 1789, The Marquis of Lansdowne gave £20 to the poor of Bremhill.³¹⁹

Education

There was a school at Bremhill in the late sixteenth century run by Mr Collier who later became vicar at Bremhill around 1596.³²⁰

In 1803, poor law returns listed a school of industry in the parish with 25 children.³²¹ By 1818, educational provision was relatively good. There was a school established by the Marchioness of Lansdowne at Foxham of 72 children; another run by the wife of the local parish clerk which served 20; and two or three dame schools each containing eight or nine. In addition, Rev. William Lisle Bowles ran a Sunday school for 40 boys and Mrs Bowles another for 50 girls. At East Tytherton, a Moravian school accommodated four boys and girls.³²²

In 1835 three Sunday schools were identified, one each for the Church of England, Wesleyans and Moravians.³²³

³¹³ WSA, 1154/80. 13 Dec 1816, 4 Jan 1828.

³¹⁴ *Abstract Returns of Charitable Donations for Benefit of Poor Persons by Ministers and Church Wardens of Parishes in England and Wales, 1786-1788 (Parts I and II)* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1816), 1340-1.

³¹⁵ *Coms. Of Inquiry into Charities in England and Wales: Twenty-Eighth Report* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1834), 307.

³¹⁶ *Endowed Charities (County of Wilts) Report* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1908), 138. For further information on this charity see *V.C.H. Wilts*, xvii, 114.

³¹⁷ *Coms. Of Inquiry into Charities in England and Wales: Twenty-Eighth Report* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1834), 307.

³¹⁸ *Abridgement of Abstract of Answers and Returns relative to Expense and Maintenance of Poor in England and Wales...*, 495.

³¹⁹ *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 12 Feb 1789.

³²⁰ Mentioned in the court recording of a defamation case. According to Bowles a school was held within the church until the Reformation. WSA, D1/42/20; W.L. Bowles, *A Parochial History of Bremhill in the County of Wiltshire* (London: John Murray, 1828), 169.

³²¹ *Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for Procuring Returns Relative to Expense and Maintenance of Poor in England* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1803-4), 560-1.

³²² *A Digest of Parochial Returns Made to the Select Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Education of the Poor: Session 1818*. Vol. I (London: House of Commons Papers, 1818), 1020.

³²³ *Abstract of Answers and Returns on State of Education in England and Wales*, Volumes I., II., III (London: House of Commons Papers, 1835), 1030.

A new Bremhill National school was built in 1846 which included accommodation for a schoolmaster, paid for by a parliamentary grant of £150 and £173 raised by local promoters.³²⁴ The simple design comprised of one school room 30 x 15 feet with an area adjoining of 15 x 12 to provide for 100 children. Pupils had use of a small schoolyard with toilets at one end. The master's accommodation was connected to both the schoolroom and the schoolyard.³²⁵ Ten years later, the school was deemed fair. There were 40-50 children taught by 'an untrained mistress of fair abilities.' The curriculum was narrow, primarily comprised of reading, writing and arithmetic. Pupils regularly attended church services, and scripture lessons were given at school several times a week. The children also had regular singing practise.³²⁶ The school at Foxham which had been established by the Marchioness of Lansdowne accommodated 40-50 scholars and was rated 'satisfactory though the standard of attainment is not very high.'³²⁷

By the early 1860s, both schools were supported by an annual government grant.³²⁸ In 1875, there were three state-maintained schools in the parish. These were the Bremhill National School, Foxham School and another at Charlcutt, both affiliated to the Church of England.³²⁹ The capacity of local schools was 345 although attendance was considerably lower, at 160. The most popular was at Bremhill.³³⁰

By the end of the 1890s, the school at Charlcutt had closed, attendance having declined to seven.³³¹ Foxham was shut in 1930. Bremhill school also came under pressure to close from 1967, the accommodation was deemed inadequate with little opportunity for development. The proposition met with local opposition as the school was 'an integral part of our rural community where many of us were educated, and our parents and even grandparents before us' and its removal 'would tend to diminish the sense of community, not only in our children as they grow up, but also in the adult population too.'³³² However, after sustained pressure, in 1969, the school was closed.

³²⁴ *Committee of Council on Education: Minutes, Correspondence, Financial Statements, and Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, 1854-55* (London: Command Papers, 1854-5), 234; Board of Education. Statement, under administrative counties and county boroughs, of public elementary schools which have received building grants, showing in each case the amount of such building grants and the amount subscribed by the promoters at the time (so far as records exist). Also, in the case of schools which have been transferred to the school board or closed, the year of transfer or closure, with explanatory memorandum and appendix (London: Command Papers, 1902), 138.

³²⁵ WSA, 782/14.

³²⁶ WSA, F8/500/37/1/1; *Account of Schools for Children of Labouring Classes in County of Wiltshire, by Rev. W. Warburton* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1859), 10; *Committee of Council on Education: Minutes, Correspondence, Financial Statements, and Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, 1854-55* (London: Command Papers, 1854-5), 235.

³²⁷ *Account of Schools for Children of Labouring Classes in County of Wiltshire, by Rev. W. Warburton* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1859), 10; *Committee of Council on Education: Minutes, Correspondence, Financial Statements, and Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, 1854-55* (London: Command Papers, 1854-5), 235.

³²⁸ *Committee of Council on Education: Report, Appendix, 1862-63* (London: Command Papers, 1863), 502-3.

³²⁹ *Committee of Council on Education: Report, Appendix, 1875-76* (London: Command Papers, 1876), 647-8.

³³⁰ Attendance was 65 at Bremhill, 12 at Charlcutt, 45 at Foxham and 44 at East Tytherton. *Statement of Schools in receipt of Parliamentary Grants, Grants paid to School Boards under Section 97, Elementary Education Act, School Board Accounts and List of Loans, 1895-96* (London: Command Papers, 1896), 244; *Endowed Charities (County of Wilts) Report* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1908), 138-9.

³³¹ *Statement of Schools in receipt of Parliamentary Grants, Grants paid to School Boards under Section 97, Elementary Education Act, School Board Accounts and List of Loans, 1899-1900* (London: Command Papers, 1900), 255.

³³² WSA, F8/600/37/1/3/1.

In 1866, night schools were operating over the winter months in Bremhill and Charlcutt.³³³

A Moravian girl's boarding school and day school was opened at East Tytherton in 1794, under head mistress Ann Grigg, with six boarders and seven day-pupils. The school admitted children from Moravian and non-Moravian families alike.³³⁴ In 1859, a government report stated, 'At the hamlet of East Tytherton there is a Moravian Settlement, and about 20 to 30 children are taught in a nice little thatched room with a wooden floor, by a mistress of the Moravian persuasion.'³³⁵ The commitment by the local Moravian church to providing education to local families was reinforced by the building of a new day school in 1870/1 on the site of the old school room.³³⁶ Ten years later Her Majesty's inspector of schools for Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset, Rev. S Fraser was able to declare it one of the few he had assessed which were deemed efficient. While the school had been scrutinised by an inspector, they still declined government funding.³³⁷ However, by the end of the 1880s the school had begun to accept a small parliamentary grant.³³⁸ A decade later this amount had increased six times over and the number of children in regular attendance had more than doubled. The school buildings could accommodate 102, and at the turn of the twentieth century, it was the most popular school in the parish with an average attendance of 52, which rose to 69 in 1906.³³⁹ That same year, the local education authority took over the running of the school.³⁴⁰ It was later named Maud Heath Primary School.

The Moravian boarding school for girls at East Tytherton continued to operate into the twentieth century. In 1921 the school had 60 pupils of which 43 were boarders. The premises comprised a dwelling house, schoolhouse, South View (a secondary residence) and an army hut fitted up as a gymnasium which also doubled as an assembly room for lectures, concerts and clubs.³⁴¹ The school closed just before the outbreak of WWII. By the twenty-first century school roll of the Maud Heath School had dwindled. In 2005, the school was also closed.³⁴²

RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Malmesbury abbey controlled the religious life of Bremhill until the early thirteenth century when the patronage of Bremhill church was transferred to the Bishop of Salisbury along with those of Highway chapelry, annexed to Bremhill, and a chapelry at Foxham. It was one of the

³³³ WMA, MSS.438.

³³⁴ C. Figes, *1743-1993: 250 Years of the Moravian Settlement at East Tytherton* (London: Vision Training & Research, ?); N. Pocock, *Wiser than we Deserve* (London: Vision Training & Research, 2009).

³³⁵ *Account of Schools for Children of Labouring Classes in County of Wiltshire*, by Rev. W. Warburton (London: House of Commons Papers, 1859), 15.

³³⁶ Pocock, *Wiser than we Deserve*, 125.

³³⁷ *Report of the Committee of Council on Education (England and Wales); with appendix. 1881-82* (London: House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1882), 285.

³³⁸ *Return of Public Elementary Schools 1888-9* (London: House of Commons Papers, 1890), 282.

³³⁹ *Statement of Schools in receipt of Parliamentary Grants, Grants paid to School Boards under Section 97, Elementary Education Act, School Board Accounts and List of Loans, 1897-8* (London: Command Papers, 1898), 254; *Board of Education. List of Public Elementary Schools and Certified Efficient Schools in England (excluding Monmouthshire)*, on 1st Au 1906 (London: Command Papers, 1907), 666

³⁴⁰ *Newbury Weekly News and General Advertiser*, 11 Oct 1906.

³⁴¹ WSA, BRE.004.

³⁴² <https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/7412011.ghost-school-set-to-be-closed/> [accessed 27 November 2020].

most valuable livings in the diocese. Non-conformity flourished from the mid-seventeenth century, despite local persecution, firstly with the arrival of Quakers, and then by Methodists and Moravians who established chapels during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. However, by the late twentieth century, only the Moravian chapel at East Tytherton remained in use.

Church Origins and Parochial Organization

King Athelstan gifted an estate at Bremhill to Malmesbury Abbey c.935.³⁴³ However, the authenticity of the charter has been questioned.³⁴⁴ Nonetheless, by 1086, the manor of Bremhill was in their possession.³⁴⁵ Although there was no mention of a church at Bremhill in the Domesday Book, the presence of Saxon masonry and an enclosure around the structure suggest it may have been a tenth-century foundation by the Abbey or an earlier Anglo-Saxon minster, a royal foundation serving *villae regales* at Calne or Chippenham or both.³⁴⁶

The position of Malmesbury Abbey within the diocese was unusual. Under the abbacy of Aldhelm during the seventh century, the Pope had granted the Abbey at Malmesbury a privilege which was understood to place it under papal jurisdiction and thereby to exempt it from the control of the local Bishop. In 1191, during the time of Abbot Robert of Melûn, the Pope confirmed the appropriation of several churches, including one at Bremhill. After Melûn's death and particularly the translation of Richard Poore as Bishop of Salisbury a move was made to end the exempt position of Malmesbury Abbey. Poore argued the exemption undermined his position. In 1218, Pope Honorius III ordered an examination. A compromise was reached whereby the Abbey's exemption remained, but the Bishop was given the manor of Highway and the advowsons of Bremhill and Highway and a chapel at Foxham.³⁴⁷ The first recorded vicar of Bremhill is from 1299.³⁴⁸

The Bremhill living was supported by great tithes and considered to be a good one. In 1677, two glebe terriers were taken for Bremhill and Highway. These show the vicar had various plots in Bremhill that were composed of - Cunniger (later Conyer) 6a., Furlong 9a. with a plot adjoining it of 4a., land neighbouring Whitly Brook 5a. and a 30a. plot called Broad mead. Added to this were parcels of land in Highway totalling 22a. with a further 30 sheep leazes, 5 beast and 1 horse leaze, together with a house and barn; evidently for the use of the curate who provided duties at Highway chapel. Bremhill had its own parsonage.³⁴⁹ The median income for Wiltshire clergymen in the late seventeenth century was a little over £80 whereas John Tounson, vicar 1639-1687, earned £300 from the Bremhill living.³⁵⁰

In 1775 the enclosure of Stockham Marsh commuted the tithe for land and payments fixed at 5 shillings per acre, on 3,831 a. Fixed payments were less valuable as time went on.³⁵¹ However, on the appointment of Rev. Nathaniel Hume in 1782 it remained the most valuable

³⁴³ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 60.

³⁴⁴ *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Ser.), I, 307-9; *VCH Wilts*, 3, 213; Kelly, S.E. (ed.) *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey* (Oxford: British Academy, 2005), 218-222.

³⁴⁵ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 215.

³⁴⁶ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 215; WAM, 96, 82. [Article requires further examination] S. Draper, *Landscape, Settlement and Society: Wiltshire in the First Millennium AD* (Thesis: *Durham University*, 2004), 113.

³⁴⁷ *VCH Wilts*, 3,... *VCH Wilts*, 7, 197-8; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 60.

³⁴⁸ T. Phillips, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810* Vol. 1 (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 2.

³⁴⁹ *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS, 56), 53-4.

³⁵⁰ D.A. Spaeth, *The Church in an Age of Danger: Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 40.

³⁵¹ 15 Geo.III c.72; WAM, 25, 31; J. Britton, *The Beauties of Wilts*. Vol. III (London: Longman, 1825), 170.

of the livings in the gift of the Bishop of Salisbury.³⁵² By 1828 the living was still described as ‘very considerable.’³⁵³ In 1848, the vicar’s remaining tithes were valued at £88; they were commuted in the same year.³⁵⁴ By 1859, the joint living of Bremhill with Highway was worth £506.³⁵⁵ By 1915, it was £360.³⁵⁶ In 1939, its net yearly worth was £450 with 209 a. of glebe.³⁵⁷

According to Rev. William Lisle Bowles, Foxham chapel was built for the convenience of the Hungerford family whose seat, Cadenham manor, was nearby. However, a structure pre-dated Edward Hungerford’s acquisition of Cadenham in 1468, although it was, thereafter, endowed by both the Hungerford and Bayntun family (who owned the manors of Bremhill and Foxham after the dissolution of Malmesbury Abbey).³⁵⁸ In 1558, Sir Andrew Bayntun gifted the chapel of St John the Baptist, two houses called Church House and Priest House and parcels of land, Chapel Hay and Butt Hay.³⁵⁹ A further endowment by the Hungerfords, Sir Edward Bayntun and Mr Essington from the reign of James I, included land assigned for the maintenance of a minister. However, the minister of Bremhill came under no legal obligation to provide one, although this was disputed in a long-running court case between Sir George Hungerford and Rev. John Tounson that began in 1666 in the consistory court and ended at the Exchequer court.³⁶⁰ Later reports suggest this endowment was lost for want of trustees.³⁶¹ In 1783, the vicar reported the chapel was ‘endowed by a private person with £3 a year, but being no part of the original endowment, and the stipend by no means adequate, it has been for several years given up’.³⁶² The duties at Foxham were sometimes supplied voluntarily by the Vicar of Bremhill.³⁶³ After the chapel was rebuilt and re-consecrated, in 1880, regular services resumed.³⁶⁴

The chapel at Highway was converted into residential accommodation during the 1970s.³⁶⁵

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and until 1974 Bremhill was part of Avebury deanery; in 1974 the parish, renamed Bremhill with Foxham in 1952, was transferred to Calne rural deanery. ³⁶⁶ In 1983, a new benefice was created of Bremhill with Foxham and Hilmarton.³⁶⁷ Later, in 1993-4 Derry Hill, Bremhill and Hilmarton were amalgamated in another.³⁶⁸ From 2010, the churches of St Martin’s, Bremhill and St John

³⁵² *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries* (WRS, 27), 11.

³⁵³ *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 7 Aug 1828.

³⁵⁴ WSA, TA Bremhill, 1848.

³⁵⁵ *Kelly’s Wilts.* 1859, 391.

³⁵⁶ *Kelly’s Wilts.* 1915, 46.

³⁵⁷ *Kelly’s Wilts.* 1939, 46-7.

³⁵⁸ Sir George Hungerford (d.1712) referred it as “my chapel”. Bowles, 26, 158, 201; *VCH Wilts*, xx...

³⁵⁹ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 63; Bowles, 264. See also, WSA, 1154/26, 1154/91.

³⁶⁰ *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS, 63), 26; Bowles, 158. For the court case, see D.A. Spaeth, *The Church in an Age of Danger: Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 81, 86-97.

³⁶¹ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 17 Apr 1834.

³⁶² *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries* (WRS, 27), 45.

³⁶³ For example, by Mr Collier in the seventeenth century and Rev. William Bowles and Rev. Henry Drury in the nineteenth. Bowles, 201-2; *Kelly’s Directory, Hants., Wilts., Dorset.* 1855, 19; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 17 Apr 1834; WSA, 1154/27.

³⁶⁴ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 15 Feb ary 1883.

³⁶⁵ Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale, 2002), 268; For a history of St. Peters at Highway see *VCH Wilts*, 7, 197-8.

³⁶⁶ **[Requires verification from churchwarden presentments]** *Kelly’s Directory, Hants., Wilts., Dorset.* 1855, 19; *Kelly’s Wilts.* 1867, 228; *Kelly’s Wilts.* 1915, 46; Youngs, Admin Units, I, 532.

³⁶⁷ WSA, 1154/65.

³⁶⁸ WSA, D/166/18.

the Baptist, Foxham have been part of the Marden Vale benefice along with Christ Church at Derry Hill and Holy Trinity and St Mary the Virgin at Calne and St Peter at Blackland.³⁶⁹

Clergy Houses

The Bremhill parsonage lies to the south of the church. In 1677 it included a house, orchard, barn and stable.³⁷⁰ The structure has a fifteenth century core and was altered in the seventeenth century.³⁷¹

On the appointment to Bremhill in 1804, the Rev. Bowles, 'rendered [the parsonage] famous in his verse.'³⁷² Following Bowles's gothic embellishment of the house and garden the parsonage became extolled by other poets, such as Robert Southey, and in the press of the period.³⁷³ However, the additions were not to all tastes, in describing his grounds, poet, Thomas Moore commented that Bowles 'had a good deal frittered away its beauty with grottos, hermitages and Shenstonian inscriptions...'³⁷⁴ Most of Bowles's garden adornments have subsequently been removed.³⁷⁵ In 1952, the vicar Rev. Bradbury felt the parsonage 'far too large in size'.³⁷⁶ It was subsequently sold. By 2020 the vicar of Bremhill lived in Derryhill.³⁷⁷

In 1607, it was asserted 'there is a house at Foxham for the vicar to dwell in.'³⁷⁸ However, there is no mention of a vicar or curate living at Foxham after the seventeenth century.

Religious Life

To provide duties within the church and two chapels, at Highway and Foxham, the employment of curates was necessary. In 1677 one curate was based at Highway but by 1835 two were employed at the cost of £150.³⁷⁹

In the late eighteenth century, two services were held each Sunday during the summer but only one in the morning during the winter.³⁸⁰

The most notable incumbent of Bremhill was William Lisle Bowles (1762-1850), who was appointed in 1804. He gained notoriety as a poet during the late eighteenth century,

³⁶⁹ <https://www.mardenvale.org.uk/> [accessed 27 May 2020]. See also, "The Benefice of Marden Vale, Comprising Bremhill, Calne and Blackland, Derry Hill, and Foxham." *Crockford's Clerical Directory*. Church House Publishing [accessed 13 Jul 2020]. <<https://www.crockford.org.uk/places/19792/the-benefice-of-marden-vale%2c-comprising-bremhill%2c-calne-and-blackland%2c-derry-hill%2c-and-foxham>>.

³⁷⁰ *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS, 56), 53.

³⁷¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1022418> [accessed 29 May 2020].

³⁷² *The Saint James Magazine* Vol.ii (London, 1850), 52.

³⁷³ E.g. 'Bremhill Parsonage Wilts., The Residence of The Rev. William Lisle Bowles', *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement and Instruction*, No. 854, 1837, 193-95; 'Description of Bremhill Wilts, Seat of The Rev. W.L. Bowles', *The Weekly Entertainer*, 24 Oct 1814, 841-844; *Gentleman's Magazine*, Sep 1814, 203-4. See also C.C. Southey (ed.), *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1851), 544.

³⁷⁴ J. Russell (ed.), *The Diary of Thomas Moore* Vol. ii (London; Longman, 1853-6), 153. It is evident Bowles was not aware of Moore's private feelings.

³⁷⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1022418> [accessed 29 May 2020]; Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale, 2002), 141.

³⁷⁶ WSA, 1154/66. [Requires further elaboration?].

³⁷⁷ <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/9617/> [accessed 29 Jun 2020].

³⁷⁸ *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS, 63), 26.

³⁷⁹ *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS, 56), 54; *Report of the Commissioners Appointed by His Majesty to Inquire into the Ecclesiastical Revenues of England and Wales* (House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1835), 826-7.

³⁸⁰ *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries* (WRS, 27), 44.

known particularly for his sonnets.³⁸¹ Bowles influenced several notable poets, including the young Samuel Taylor Coleridge. However, according to a later assessment by The Royal Society of Literature ‘the subsequent poems of Mr Bowles did not belie the promise of his youth’, sentiments Coleridge reiterated.³⁸² Bowles was also known for his prose; which incorporated works on church matters, education, antiquities and history, including a history of Bremhill.³⁸³ Some of the sermons he preached at Bremhill were also published.³⁸⁴ He is most remembered for his ten volume collected works of Alexander Pope that included his somewhat pugnacious commentary. On its publication he engaged in a public and somewhat ill-humoured debate with Lord Byron on the topic of Pope.³⁸⁵

Bowles took an interest in music, particularly church music, although he was not an accomplished musician the Bremhill choir was particularly active during his ministry.³⁸⁶ In 1834, he composed a hymn which the choir sang at a service in aid of a fund for building and enlarging churches.³⁸⁷ Bowles used his poetry within his ministry and in his broader work within the community. His *Little Villager’s Verse Book* incorporated verses initially written for use in the instruction of children at Sunday school in Bremhill.³⁸⁸

In 1836, it was reported that Bowles spent £400 a year on supporting charities.³⁸⁹ Earlier he had reduced the tithes paid to him by Highway.³⁹⁰ His sermons were sometimes published for the benefit of causes close to his heart, such as national schools.³⁹¹ In 1828, Bowles was appointed canon residentiary at Salisbury Cathedral, where he resided each winter. In 1845, he resigned from the living at Bremhill and retired to Salisbury.³⁹²

On his death in 1850, an obituary noted, ‘His poetry, always good, in style and pure in sentiment, bears the stamp of a virtuous and reflective mind; its deficiency lies in the

³⁸¹ Bowles’ published poetry included *Sonnets Written Chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Journey* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1789); *Coombe Ellen* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1798) and works which reflected his broader social concerns *Verses to John Howard, F.R.S. on his State of Prisons and Lazarettos* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1789); *Verses on the Benevolent Institution of the Philanthropic Society, for Protecting and Educating the Children of Vagrants and Criminals* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1790).

³⁸² As quoted by *Gentleman’s Magazine* Vol. 187 (Jun 1850), 674. For the relationship Bowles had with other poets such as Coleridge see G. Garland (ed.), *A Wiltshire Parson and his Friends: The Correspondence of William Lisle Bowles* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), 17-26.

³⁸³ *A Parochial History of Bremhill* (London: John Murray, 1828); *Hermes Britannicus* (London: J.B. Nichols, 1828); *Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey* (London: J.B. Nichols, 1835); *Thoughts on the Increase of Crimes, the Education of the Poor, and National Schools* (Salisbury: Brodie and Dowding, 1815); *Vindiciæ Wykehamicæ; or, A vindication of Winchester college* (Bath: Richard Cruttwell, 1818); *The Life of Thomas Ken D.D. Deprived Bishop of Bath and Wells* in two volumes (London: John Murray, 1830-31). His religious work included: - *Paulus Parochialis; or, A plain ... View of the Object ... of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans: in a Series of Sermons* (London: 1826) and *On the Positions and Incomes of Cathedral Clergy (A Final Defence of the Rights and Patronage in Deans and Chapters* (London: John Murray, 1838).

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³⁸⁵ W.L. Bowles (ed.), *The Works of Alexander Pope in Verse and Prose... in Ten Volumes* (London: J. Johnson etc., 1806). For the debate see J.J. van Rennes, *Bowles, Byron and the Pope Controversy* (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1927); R. Moody, *The Life and Letters of William Lisle Bowles: Poet and Parson* (Salisbury: Hobhouse, 2009), 118- 133.

³⁸⁶ Garland, *A Wiltshire Parson and his Friends*, 7-11.

³⁸⁷ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 24 Apr 1834.

³⁸⁸ *The Little Villager’s Verse Book* (London: Mary Stockdale, 1826), see preface.

³⁸⁹ *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 5 May 1836. This fact was also reported by papers across Britain and Ireland, e.g. *Limerick Chronicle*, 18 May 1836; *Gloucester Chronicle*, 7 May 1836; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 May 1836.

³⁹⁰ E.g. *Bristol Mirror*, 1 January 1831.

³⁹¹ W.L. Bowles, *The Church and Parochial School: A Sermon* (Calne: Baily, 1823).

³⁹² G. Garland (ed.), *A Wiltshire Parson and his Friends: The Correspondence of William Lisle Bowles* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), 9.

absence of passion, or the stronger emotions of the heart.³⁹³ His replacement as vicar, Rev. Henry Drury observed on his death, 'I imagine his prose will survive his verses.'³⁹⁴ Bowles was, however, described as 'unremitting in his professional duties, zealous in the education of the poor and in every respect an exemplary.'³⁹⁵

The first recorded Bremhill incumbent was Johannes Hackenye in 1299.³⁹⁶ Bowles noted his weekly provisions in 1308 that included 21 loaves of bread, 42 gallons of ale, 6 cartloads of hay, 7 bushels of oats and 2 quarters of wheat. Seemingly finding the grant excessive, he quipped 'such a vicar might be considered the prototype of [Alexander] Pope's parson, "much bemus'd by beer"'.³⁹⁷

Incumbents often combined the post with other roles with the diocese. Bowles' predecessor, Nathaniel Hume, was precentor of Sarum and his successor Henry Drury archdeacon of Wiltshire from 1862. Drury had previously been appointed chaplain to the house of commons in 1857.³⁹⁸ He died suddenly in 1863 and was commemorated by a new stained-glass window at Bremhill in 1864.³⁹⁹ Drury's replacement, Charles Harris was also made archdeacon of Wiltshire before being promoted to Bishop of Gibraltar.⁴⁰⁰ Rev. Edward Eddrup, incumbent from 1868 until his death in 1905 was canon of Salisbury and had been a principal of the Salisbury Diocesan Training College.⁴⁰¹ His death was memorialised by a new east window in 1927.⁴⁰²

Several vicars produced literary works of a religious nature. These included the sermons published by Rev. Matthew Frampton, vicar of Bremhill 1747-1782, and Edward Eddrup.⁴⁰³

Some incumbents had a good relationship with local elites (see also Bremhill- social history). These included Rev. Thomas Collier who was vicar for 40 years until his death in 1639. Collier entrusted Sir Edward Bayntun (owner of the manor of Bremhill) his 'ever honoured' friend and 'benefactor' to be the overseer of his will.⁴⁰⁴ However, the Bremhill vicar did not always enjoy the most cordial relations with local elites or their parishioners. Rev. William Nauseglose was deprived of the role in 1554, in favour of Rev. William Hand whose patron was Robert Hungerford of Cadenham.⁴⁰⁵ During the seventeenth-century Rev. John Tounson, was 'one of the most litigious clerics in Wiltshire'. He raised many complaints during his tenure, these included actions over the non-payment of tithes against nineteen

³⁹³ *The Saint James Magazine* Vol.ii (London, 1850), 52.

³⁹⁴ As quoted by *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 20 January 1866.

³⁹⁵ *Gentleman's Magazine* Vol. 187 (Jun 1850), 675.

³⁹⁶ T. Phillips, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810* Vol. 1 (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 2.

³⁹⁷ Bowles, 142.

³⁹⁸ G. Goodwin and M.C. Curthoys. "Drury, Henry (1812-1863), Church of England clergyman". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Sep 23, 2004. Oxford University Press. [accessed 13 Jul 2020]. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-8094>; J. Britton, *The Beauties of England and Wales* Vol. xv (London: J. Harris, Longman & Co., J. Walker etc., 1814), 534.

³⁹⁹ *Kelly's Wilts.* 1867, 228; *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 19 Nov 1864.

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⁴⁰¹ *The Salisbury Times*, 17 Nov 1905.

⁴⁰² *Kelly's Wilts.* 1939, 46-7.

⁴⁰³ M. Frampton, *A Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1769); M. Frampton, *A Sermon Preached at the Anniversary of Natives of the County of Wilts in St Augustine's Church*, Bristol (Malborough, E. Harold, 1776).

⁴⁰⁴ TNA, PROB 11/182/408.

⁴⁰⁵ WSA, D1/2/16.

defendants over twenty years from 1664. These involved cases against Sir George Hungerford and Joanne Hale, leader the local Quaker meeting house.⁴⁰⁶

Protestant Nonconformity

Quakerism was present in Bremhill at Charlcutt by the 1660s. Local Quakers were persecuted from the 1660s-1750s.⁴⁰⁷ However, there is some evidence that local elites were prepared to be sympathetic.⁴⁰⁸ In 1690, shortly after the enactment of the Act of Toleration, a Quaker meeting house was licenced at Charlcutt.⁴⁰⁹ It was administratively important within north Wiltshire, alongside weekly 'particular' meetings, 'monthly' meetings provided a governing body to congregations in Bromham, Calne, Charlcutt, Devizes, Marlborough and Purton.⁴¹⁰ However, by the first half of the eighteenth-century the position of local Quakerism had begun to be encroached; as Methodist evangelists preached in the open air at Foxham during the 1740s and a Moravian church was established by 1745.⁴¹¹ Nonetheless, monthly meetings continued in Charlcutt until 1775. By that time, the local popularity of Quakerism had diminished so significantly across Wiltshire the decision was taken to merge all the county's monthly meetings into one.⁴¹² In 1783, the incumbent reported that the meeting house was disused and only 3 or 4 Quakers were left in the parish.⁴¹³

In the period 1790- 1852, 17 dissenter meeting houses were licenced for the parish of Bremhill.⁴¹⁴ These were primarily domestic or adapted buildings, and not all premises were registered for a particular sect. Some such as the Mormon establishment at Charlcutt licenced in 1849 under the influence of the controversial Mormon Elder, John Halliday, are likely to have been short-lived.⁴¹⁵

The first Methodist establishment registered for Bremhill was at Studley in 1812.⁴¹⁶ Wesleyan Methodists were reported to have held services at Foxham in the open air from 1821.⁴¹⁷ Later, a red-brick Wesleyan chapel was constructed at Spirthill in 1828.⁴¹⁸ In 1844, it provided a meeting place for labourers and farmers to discuss agrarian distress.⁴¹⁹ By 1851, the minister was Philip Hadrill, an agricultural worker, and likely to have been related to

⁴⁰⁶A. Spaeth, *The Church in an Age of Danger: Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), quote, 87, see also 87-.

⁴⁰⁷J. Bese, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, Vol. 2 (London: Luke Hind, 1753), 41-42. See also *VCH Wilts*, 3, 116; *Wiltshire Notes & Queries* Vol. ii, 168-9; WSA, 1699/18; WSA, 1699/17.

⁴⁰⁸These included Sir Edward Bayntun and Sir Edward Hungerford: - *VCH Wilts*, 3, 120; K. Taylor, Society, Schism and Sufferings: the first 70 years of Quakerism in Wiltshire (Thesis: *University of the West of England*, 2006, 64-68. In the churchwarden's presentments in 1674 it was noted Bayntun had not attended communion at Easter or Whitsun for the proceeding five years. WSA, D/1/54/6/3/ 30.

⁴⁰⁹*Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 3.

⁴¹⁰WSA, 1699/115, 1699/75-78; *VCH Wilts*, 3, 126-7.

⁴¹¹One of the preachers at Foxham, was John Cennick, originally a Wesleyan but later a Moravian. He established the Moravian church at East Tytherton. J. Cennick, *The Life of Mr J. Cennick* (Bristol: Author, 1745), 38; *VCH Wilts*, 3, 130-1.

⁴¹²*VCH Wilts*, 3, 127; WSA, 1699/78.

⁴¹³*Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries* (WRS, 27), 44.

⁴¹⁴*Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 40, 51, 52, 63, 70, 73, 93, 117, 121, 154, 157, 161, 165, 167, 168.

⁴¹⁵*Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 165. For an account of the reception of John Halliday locally see *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 29 May 1845. No mention of the Mormon establishment was made *Kelly's Hants., Wilts. & Dorset* 1855, 19, although reference was made to a Primitive Methodist chapel, one of those established during the 1840s.

⁴¹⁶*Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 40, 70

⁴¹⁷*Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 05 Jun 1880.

⁴¹⁸*Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 121.

⁴¹⁹*Wiltshire Independent*, 26 Sep 1844.

members of the Hadrill family associated with an earlier meeting house in the settlement.⁴²⁰ On census Sunday 1851 the attendance was 40 for the morning service and 60 during the evening.⁴²¹ From 1912 the chapel solemnized marriages.⁴²²

A second red-brick Wesleyan chapel was built at Foxham in 1855.⁴²³ The chapels were overseen by local boards of trustees who appointed the posts of treasurer and steward, responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the chapel.⁴²⁴ By 1958 there were 17 trustees of Spirthill Chapel.⁴²⁵ In 1977, many of the responsibilities which had been the duty of the trustees at Spirthill were acquired by the local Church Council at Monkton Hill, as the Spirthill society was deemed too small to have its own.⁴²⁶ It is likely that the Foxham board of trustees were likewise superseded. The trustees of Foxham chapel had already been meeting at Monkton Hill for many years prior to this date.⁴²⁷ From 1978, the Spirthill Property Committee which dealt with the maintenance of the fabric of the chapel was merged with that of Foxham.⁴²⁸

Spirthill chapel was reportedly in need of renovation in 1960.⁴²⁹ A new organ was brought, electric lighting installed and some renovation took place in 1960-1.⁴³⁰ However, further repairs were quickly required and by 1964 the new organ was riddled with woodworm and unrepairable.⁴³¹ The problems continued.⁴³² In 1982, with diminishing numbers of congregants and the chapel again requiring repair, the decision was taken for Spirthill chapel to close.⁴³³ It was sold for £2,800 and converted for domestic use.⁴³⁴ The structure was Grade II listed in 2020.⁴³⁵

At Foxham lighting was installed in 1957.⁴³⁶ Foxham chapel likewise experienced problems with declining numbers and many congregants coming from outside of the parish.⁴³⁷ By 1962 the trustees (only one of whom lived in the settlement) identified that Foxham chapel 'was in need of help'.⁴³⁸ It later closed and is now a private house.⁴³⁹

Both Spirthill and Foxham chapels were part of the Wiltshire Missions circuit and from [to be completed] in the Chippenham and Brinkworth Methodist circuit.⁴⁴⁰

Two properties were licenced for the Primitive Methodists during the 1840s, one is likely to be the chapel listed by *Kelly's Directory* in 1855 for the Primitive Methodists in

⁴²⁰ *Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 51.

⁴²¹ TNA, HO 129/254.

⁴²² WSA, 2053/41.

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⁴²⁴ Spirthill Chapel: - WSA, 2783/10. Foxham Chapel: - WSA, 3083/187.

⁴²⁵ WSA, 2053/44.

⁴²⁶ WSA, 2783/10. 29 Sep 1977.

⁴²⁷ WSA, 3083/187. All meetings between 1948 and 1970 are listed as taking place at Monkton Hill.

⁴²⁸ WSA, 2783/10. 29 Sep 1978.

⁴²⁹ WSA, 2783/10. 24 Oct 1960 see also 19 May 1961.

⁴³⁰ WSA, 2783/10. 19 May 1961, 23 Oct 1961 see also 19 Oct 1964.

⁴³¹ WSA, 2783/10. 19 Oct 1964. See also 18 Oct 1965. Further repairs were completed, and the chapel was reportedly in a good state of repair in 1966. See 8 Nov 1866.

⁴³² E.g. 29 Sep 1978, 13 Nov 1981,

⁴³³ WSA, 2783/10. 23 Oct 1982. There is some confusion over dates with the date noted of the next annual meeting on 13 Oct 1983 (as it is noted as taking place in 1982) [Not examined and possibly pertinent WSA, 2053/40-45].

⁴³⁴ WSA, 2783/10. 13 Oct 1983. See note above.

⁴³⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1199325> [accessed 30 Jun 2020].

⁴³⁶ WSA, 3083/187.

⁴³⁷ WSA, 3083/187. 18 Feb 1958

⁴³⁸ WSA, 3083/187 13 Mar 1963.

⁴³⁹ WSA, 3083/187.

⁴⁴⁰ Requires verification.

Bremhill.⁴⁴¹ A chapel was later built at Stanley for them c.1865.⁴⁴² It formed part of the Mid-Wiltshire Methodist circuit. It was later converted for residential use.⁴⁴³

From 1896 both the Stanley and Foxham chapels were active in the promotion of teetotalism, through the Band of Hope movement.⁴⁴⁴ Until 1910, weekly meetings took place at Foxham, and children and teenagers were encouraged to sign pledges of abstinence.⁴⁴⁵ Both Stanley and Sprithill chapels also supported a Sunday school in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.⁴⁴⁶ At Spirithill the building of a school room was planned which came to nothing.⁴⁴⁷ From 1903, Stanley Methodists was linked to the Christian Endeavour youth movement which by 1904 had an active local membership of 25.⁴⁴⁸

A Moravian settlement was established at East Tytherton in 1745 by John Cennick. The chapel and manse were re-built 1792-3, and shortly after a girl's school was added.⁴⁴⁹ The chapel had a capacity for a congregation of 200. In 1783, Rev. Nathaniel Hume stated the Moravian congregation was large.⁴⁵⁰ On census Sunday 1851, 105 people attended morning service and 128 in the evening, a further 19 children were at the Sunday school.⁴⁵¹ The Moravians were active in the promotion of good causes.⁴⁵² The Moravian church, manse and church cottage are Grade II* listed.⁴⁵³

Rev. Bowles noted that, in an extensive parish such as Bremhill, the Moravian establishment at East Tytherton provided 'no officious intrusion' and could be considered subsidiary to the Church of England.⁴⁵⁴ He was friends with the Moravian minister, Lewis West, however, he was less tolerant of other non-conformist sects.⁴⁵⁵ Occasionally, sentiments were expressed by local non-conformists against the established church, but it is likely that the day-to-day relationship between those who followed the Church of England and dissenter sects were amicable.⁴⁵⁶ Indeed, evidence suggests congregations moved quite freely between the dissenting chapels and Church of England.⁴⁵⁷ In 1921, the Bremhill vicar, Rev. Arthur E.G. Peters, was given leave to use Spirithill chapel for weeknight worship with

⁴⁴¹ *Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS 40), 157, 165; *Kelly's Hants., Wilts. & Dorset* 1855, 19.

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⁴⁴⁴ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 04 Dec 1897; WSA, 3083/189.

⁴⁴⁵ WSA, 3083/188. Children as young as 5 signed or the book was signed on their behalf. This was in breach of Band of Hope guidelines. WSA, 3083/189

⁴⁴⁶ Stanley chapel: - WSA, 1907/143; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 15 May 1897.

Spirithill chapel: - *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 14 Aug 1880; WSA, 2783/11.

⁴⁴⁷ WSA, 2783/11.

⁴⁴⁸ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 12 Mar 1904.

⁴⁴⁹ Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale, 2002), 234;

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1363796> [accessed 3 Jul 2020].

⁴⁵⁰ *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishops Visitation Queries* (WRS, 27), 44.

⁴⁵¹ TNA, HO 129/254.

⁴⁵² For example, collecting money for the *Patriotic Fund* during the Crimean War for war widows and orphans. *Wiltshire Independent*, 14 Dec 1854.

⁴⁵³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1363796> [accessed 3 Jul 2020].

⁴⁵⁴ Bowles, 153.

⁴⁵⁵ Despite the long tradition of non-conformity with the parish, Rev. Bowles only mentioned the Moravians in his *Parochial History of Bremhill*. His religious intolerance was noted by biographers and his personal feelings are notable in a pamphlet which discussed the circumstances concerning the death of a local non-conformist in 1816. The pamphlet is *Plain Narrative of Some Circumstances Attending the Sickness and Death of Ann Nichols, A Poor Woman, Late of the Parish of Bremhill* (WSA, BRE.922); see also Bowles, 153-7; G. Greever, *A Wiltshire Parson and his Friends* Vol. ii (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), 10.

⁴⁵⁶ For example, as expressed by Mr Turk by a meeting at Spirithill chapel. *Wiltshire Independent*, 26 Sep 1844.

⁴⁵⁷ *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 05 Jun 1880.

proviso it 'must not be used for the teaching of any doctrines or practices contrary to Methodist Standards.'⁴⁵⁸

Church Architecture

St. Martin's Church comprises a western tower, north and south aisle, nave and chancel. It is constructed of ashlar and ironstone rubble, and the roof is of stone slate. The tower was likely to have originally been built in the thirteenth century, and then buttressed and re-fronted in the fifteenth. The church's origins are Anglo-Saxon with construction taking place c1200 and in the thirteenth and fifteenth-century.⁴⁵⁹ It was 'restored' and reopened in October 1850.⁴⁶⁰ This renovation included the removal of a singing gallery and rebuilding of the nave and chancel arches.⁴⁶¹ It is likely the rood-loft was removed at the same time.⁴⁶² An addition was made to the churchyard in 1856 and a new window by Hardman was added in 1864 to commemorate Rev. Henry Drury.⁴⁶³ St. Martin's has six bells, all cast at different times.⁴⁶⁴ It is grade I listed.⁴⁶⁵

Questions over the obligation of the vicar of Bremhill towards St. John the Baptist chapel at Foxham probably contributed towards it declining periodically into decay.⁴⁶⁶ By the 1820s, the original chapel had again fallen into disrepair.⁴⁶⁷ Rev. Bowles paid for repairs to its roof in 1825.⁴⁶⁸ In 1833, money was raised locally, partly through the efforts of Bowles, and the structure was extensively repaired.⁴⁶⁹ At its reopening, it was reported that nearly 1000 people attended, including 300 within the edifice. The Marchioness of Lansdowne made a gift to the chapel of a bible, prayer book and cloths for the pulpit and communion table.⁴⁷⁰ The chapel was not consecrated for burials until 1838.⁴⁷¹

Although identified as 'picturesque', the building was later deemed to have no architectural features worth saving, and the edifice was rebuilt to a design by William Butterfield, 1878-80 at the cost of £2,300. These were covered by subscriptions which included £850 from the Marquis of Lansdowne, £400 from the vicar of Bremhill, Edward Eddrup and £100 from the former vicar now Bishop of Gibraltar, Charles Harris.⁴⁷² The structure comprises a stone single-roofed nave and chancel, a slender west tower and wooden porch. It has a stained east window which was previously in Bremhill church. In 2020, it had grade II* listed status.⁴⁷³

The parish registers for christenings, burials and marriages at St. Martin's, Bremhill survive from 1590.⁴⁷⁴ According to a memorandum in the glebe terrier of 1588 there were 43

⁴⁵⁸ WSA, 2053/42.

⁴⁵⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1199069> [accessed 26 May 2020]; Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale, 2002), 140-1.

⁴⁶⁰ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 60.

⁴⁶¹ H. Lewis, *The Church Rambler* (London: Hamilton, Lewis & Co.,1878), 412.

⁴⁶² This was still standing in 1828 but had disappeared by 1878. *The Church Rambler*, 413.

⁴⁶³ *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 19 Nov 1864; *Kelly's Wilts.* 1867, 228; WSA, D/1/60/5/53.

⁴⁶⁴ H. Lewis, *The Church Rambler* (London: Hamilton, Lewis & Co.,1878), 415. See also, WSA, 1154/25, 1154/50, 1195/30.- Not yet examined.

⁴⁶⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1199069> [accessed 26 May 2020].

⁴⁶⁶ E.g. in 1672 a case was brought against the vicar for neglecting the chapel and allowing it to decay.

⁴⁶⁷ Bowles, 158.

⁴⁶⁸ Bowles, 202.

⁴⁶⁹ *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 21 Apr 1834; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 17 Apr 1834.

⁴⁷⁰ *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 21 Apr 1834; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 17 Apr 1834.

⁴⁷¹ *Wiltshire Independent*, 11 Oct 1838; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 18 Oct 1838; WSA, D/1/60/2/22.

⁴⁷² <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1283495> [accessed 26 May 2020]; Kelly's *Wilts.* 1915, 46; *Wiltshire Times & Trowbridge Advertiser*, 22 May 1880. See also, WSA, 1154/58.

⁴⁷³ Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd ed. New Haven and London: Yale, 2002), 251.;

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1283495> [accessed 28 May 2020].

⁴⁷⁴ Bowles, 195-6. See also, WSA, 1154/1-12, 1154/41-9, 1154/61-64.

baptisms, 20 marriages and 38 burials in the three years to May 1588.⁴⁷⁵ For sixty years, 1590-1659 entries were recorded by Jeffrey Pinnel (sic) and Robert Jenkins.⁴⁷⁶ Parish registers also survive for christenings and burials 1850-1911 at St John the Baptist, Foxham.

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⁴⁷⁵ *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS, 56), 53.

⁴⁷⁶ *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS, 63), 26.

⁴⁷⁷ WSA, 1154/13-14. [Not examined].