

# Christian Malford

## INTRODUCTION

The parish of Christian Malford is situated on the (Bristol) Avon, 6.5 km northeast of Chippenham. The church and settlement developed on high ground near a ford on the river. The hamlet of Avon lies 3 km to the south of the main settlement, also on the Avon, from which it takes its name.<sup>1</sup> The Avon river also formed the western edge of Christian Malford and its boundary with Sutton Benger and Seagry. The parishes of Tytherton Kellaways and Bremhill lie to the south, Lyneham to the east, and in the north lies Dauntsey. The approximate extent of the later parish, as it continued until 19th-century changes, had been established by 940, when it was described by boundary clauses appended to a charter.<sup>2</sup> The area of the parish was 3,104 acres in 1881. In 1884 and 1885, part of Christian Malford was transferred to Bremhill, after which the area was reduced to 2,918.<sup>3</sup> In 2011, Christian Malford civil parish measured 2,686 acres.<sup>4</sup> While the population was centred on the village of Christian Malford, in 1859, it included the small extra-parochial settlement of Avon, with a population of 14 and the parish of Tytherton Kellaways, with a population of 15.<sup>5</sup> In 1895, the civil parish of Kellaways was created from Avon and Tytherton.<sup>6</sup>

The unusual parish name, which means ‘ford by a cross or crucifix’, is first recorded as *Cristemal(l)eford* in 940, and with variants until the 15th century. Although by 1374 the name had been split, *Cristine Malford* with later variants, Aubrey in the 17th century wrote *Christmalford*. By 1791 the present misleading form had been adopted, sometimes abbreviated to Xian Malford.<sup>7</sup>

From 1319, Christian Malford was part of the hundred of North Damerham, probably an organisational consequence of the geographically diverse nature of the property of Glastonbury Abbey within the county of Wiltshire. In the southeast of the county, the abbot held the hundreds of South Damerham; and in the northwest of Wiltshire, he possessed the estates of Christian Malford, Nettleton, Grittleton and Kington St Michael that were grouped into a hundred known as North Damerham. Avon lay within the hundred of Chippenham.<sup>8</sup>

### *Communications*

A turnpike road linking Pucklechurch and Mangotsfield on the Bristol coalfield with Christian Malford (running southwest to northeast through the parish) was established under 29 Geo II c.56, enacted 1756. The reason for the road ending at Christian Malford in the east is not apparent. However, during its passage through parliament, several petitions were raised by trustees of the Sodbury and Marshfield Roads concerned by the economic

---

<sup>1</sup> Avon is derived from the OE *Abon*, meaning river.

<sup>2</sup> *Arch. Jnl.* lxxvi, 255-9; date from *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (ed. P.H. Sawyer, 1968), 183 (no. 466).

<sup>3</sup> F. Youngs, *Guide to the Administrative Units of England*, 1, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1979), 535, fn. 69 and 70, 818 *Census*, 1881, 1891.

<sup>4</sup> *Census*, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>6</sup> Youngs, *Guide to the Administrative Units of England*, 531, fn. 22, 818.

<sup>7</sup> *PN Wilts.* (EPNS), 67; *Domesday*, 167; *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre, 1249* (WRS 16), 158, 159; Abstract of Feet of Fines Relating to Wiltshire 1377-1509 (WRS 41), 122, 181; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 125; Printed Maps of Wiltshire 1787 – 1844 (WRS 52), 8-9. Examples of the abbreviation Xian Malford include WSA, P1/H/371.

<sup>8</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 5, 70; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 124-5; Youngs, *Guide to the Administrative Units of England*, 531, 535.

implications of its construction on their business. A counter-petition alleged that due to actions by Sodbury and Marshfield Road trustees, their sphere of operations had been extended (beyond the jurisdiction of 25 Geo. II, c. 59), and travellers were thus subjected to additional tolls between Christian Malford and Pucklechurch. Subsequent legislation extended the Pucklechurch and Mangotsfield road through Christian Malford to Swindon. A turnpike gate was positioned at Christian Malford. The road was disturnpiked during the 1870s.<sup>9</sup> The route of the old turnpike through the parish (now B4069) is called Main Road.

The central part of the village, including All Saints Church, lies to the south. A street (now called Station Road) ran south just after the turnpike road entered the village from the west. This road splits, Church Road running east towards the river and church and Station Road continuing southwards towards Foxham. A minor road called Friday Street also lies to the south of Main Street, further west of Station Road. This formed the north end of Elde Strete ('the old made-up road'), mentioned in the Saxon charter, that passes Thornend Farm to Foxham.<sup>10</sup> To the north of Main Street (west of Friday Street) is Dodford Lane, a no-through lane intersecting the M4 motorway and ending at Dodford Farm and the River Avon. The M4 between London and South Wales mirrors the trajectory of Main Road across the parish and opened in 1971.<sup>11</sup>

A bridge in Christian Malford existed in 1268.<sup>12</sup> However, the current three-arched bridge over the Avon that links the parish to Sutton Benger was built in the 18th century (possibly rebuilt c. 1756 because of the creation of the turnpike road). A plan by the county surveyor to replace the bridge over the Avon was rejected in 1811. The bridge was widened in the 20th century.<sup>13</sup>

The Great Western Railway (linking London, Swindon and Bristol) was completed in 1841 and intersected the parish. It proceeds southwest to northeast, to the south of Christian Malford church, and crosses the river Avon just south of the site of Avon mill. The nearest station to Christian Malford was at Dauntsey, 5.5 km northeast, which opened in 1868. After encouragement by the Christian Malford parish council, a station halt was opened 1 km south of the village in October 1926.<sup>14</sup> The halt provided accommodation for passengers only (not parcel or miscellaneous traffic).<sup>15</sup> In 1954, the River Avon rose very rapidly and caused the embankment between Dauntsey and Christian Malford halt to subside for an 80 yard stretch 'laying bare the down line.'<sup>16</sup> The halt was closed in 1965 after the withdrawal of stopping services between Bristol and Swindon. No physical reminders are left of the halt on the trackside.<sup>17</sup> The railway still provides a major rail link between Bristol and London.

During the nineteenth century, there were also other attempts to create rail lines that would have impacted the parish. In July 1864, bids sponsored by Midland Railway for a line between Nailsworth and Christian Malford were frustrated by an appeal from the GWR.

---

<sup>9</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 4, 260, 263, 269,273; WSA, 542/4-6. For petitions see *Commons Jnl.* xxvii, 435-6, 445.

<sup>10</sup> *Arch. Jnl.* lxxvi, 258.

<sup>11</sup> WSA F1/250/6/1, report 1971-2.

<sup>12</sup> *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre*, 1268 (WRS 65), No. 231, 52. The case refers to a misdeed on the Christian Malford bridge but does not indicate if this bridge linked the parish to Sutton Benger.

<sup>13</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 5, 176.

<sup>14</sup> WSA, 1563/1. E.g., 1 Oct. 1925, 3 May 1926; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 9 Oct., 23 Oct. 1926. M. Oakley, *Wiltshire Railway Stations* (Wimborne: Dovecote Press, 2004), 40; VCH 14, 66.

<sup>15</sup> *Official Handbook of Stations including Junctions, Sidings, Collieries, Works, &c., on the Railways in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Railway Clearing House, 1938), 130.

<sup>16</sup> *Wiltshire Times & Trowbridge Advertiser*, 18 Dec. 1954.

<sup>17</sup> Oakley, *Wiltshire Railway Stations*, 40.

Other attempts by the North and South Wilts Junction Railway (Basingstoke to Christian Malford) and Wiltshire Railway (Pewsey to Idmiston) likewise lapsed.<sup>18</sup>

The Wilts & Berks Canal was completed in 1810 and followed a similar route to the railway but lay further southeast (and to the west of Melsome Wood). Commercial traffic ceased about 1906, and the canal was abandoned shortly after. No locks or wharves were built along the canal side within the parish.<sup>19</sup>

### *Landscape*

Christian Malford and Avon lie in the basin created by the River Avon, a flat and low-lying area. The principal bedrock geology across both settlements is Oxford clay. Superficial alluvial and gravel deposits occur along the valley. In the eighteenth century, these extensive gravel deposits were used in road construction and 'for drains in the cold clay lands which border upon it.'<sup>20</sup> The parish is well known to palaeontologists because of the discovery of a fossil bonanza in the mid-nineteenth century. Pits in the Jurassic Oxford Clay yielded thousands of specimens of well-preserved ammonites, fish and crustaceans. However, the find became most notable for squid-like cephalopods and belemnites (coleoids). This find continues [2021] to be cited in the scientific press.<sup>21</sup>

In the area around Christian Malford and Avon, lime-rich loamy and clayey soils predominate with slightly impeded drainage. The land is classed as highly fertile. To the east, the drainage is more impeded and seasonally wet, featuring slightly acidic but base-rich loamy and clayey soils. To the west, the soil is free draining loam. In these areas, the land is less fertile.<sup>22</sup>

The River Avon rises in hills on the north Wiltshire border with Gloucestershire, near Malmesbury and Tetbury. At the outset, it flows southwards through Christian Malford to Chippenham. Historically after heavy rain, the meadows adjacent to the river at Christian Malford were prone to flooding. Until the mid-twentieth century, both the fields and bridges could become dangerous from the depth of water and strength of the current.<sup>23</sup> The flooding potentially impacted local farming, such as in the production of hay if it occurred during the summer months.<sup>24</sup> Flooding also disrupted local transport links and other aspects of community life. Severe flooding was recorded in the press in 1880, 1896, 1901, 1928 and 1929.<sup>25</sup> After serious flooding in the previous year, in 1930, the Wiltshire County Council

---

<sup>18</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 4, 288.

<sup>19</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 4, 273-4, 277.

<sup>20</sup> T. Davis, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Wilts*. (1794), 115.

<sup>21</sup> Contemporary accounts include: - M. Pearce, 'On the mouths of ammonites, and on other fossils, found in the Oxford clay, near Christian Malford, on the line of the great western railway', *Journal of the Franklin Institute*, (1842) 34(3), 177-178; R. Owen, 'A Description of Certain Belemnites, Preserved, with a Great Proportion of their Soft Parts, in the Oxford Clay at Christian Malford, Wilts. [Abstract]', *Abstracts of the papers communicated to the Royal Society of London*, (1843) 5, 505-507. The find is still referenced in the scientific press, e.g., P.R. Wilby, *et al.* 'Preserving the Unpreservable: a Lost World Rediscovered at Christian Malford', *Geology Today*, (2008) Vol. 24, No. 3, 95-8; M.B. Hart, *et al.* 'Reconstructing the Christian Malford ecosystem in the Oxford Clay Formation (Callovian, Jurassic) of Wiltshire: Exceptional Preservation, Taphonomy, Burial and Compaction', *Journal of Micropalaeontology*, (2019) 38(2), 133-142; G.D. Price, *et al.* 'Isotopic Analysis of Jurassic (Callovian) Mollusks from the Christian Malford Lagerstätte (UK): Implications for Ocean Water Temperature Estimates Based on Belemnoids', *Palaios*, (2015) 30(9), 645-654.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

<sup>23</sup> *Berkshire Chronicle*, 29 Sep. 1827. See also occasional reports of flooding e.g., *North Wilts. Herald*, 5 July 1879; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 27 May 1950.

<sup>24</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 8 Mar. 1930.

<sup>25</sup> *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts. Chronicle*, 8 Mar. 1880; *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 28 Mar. 1896; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 5 Jan. 1901; *Western Daily Press*,

proposed a series of improvements to the River Avon that would mitigate flooding. According to the engineer, Mr T. Ward Whitfield, the 'chief centre of the trouble was all along the valley at Seagry, Christian Malford and Dauntsey'. Hatches to control the flow of water at Avon mill had failed. The new measures included the removal of trees and silt.<sup>26</sup>

In the nineteenth century, Christian Malford possessed a well that was claimed to have water containing minerals with curative properties. It was never successfully developed as a spa.<sup>27</sup>

### *Population*

In 1332, 53 taxpayers were recorded in Christian Malford.<sup>28</sup> The 1377 poll tax recorded 21 adult taxpayers for Avon; however, receipts do not survive for Christian Malford.<sup>29</sup> In 1676 a total of 340 adult conformists and nonconformists was reported; this indicates a total population of over 500.<sup>30</sup> In 1801, the population of Christian Malford was 938. It fell to 878 in 1821 before rising to 1,179 in 1841.<sup>31</sup> In that year, the total included 150 labourers building the railway. After that, the population fell again to 777 in 1881 and, after the transfer of part of the parish to Bremhill, decreased further to 568 in 1891. By 1931 depopulation had continued to 481 before the number of residents rose slightly to 520 in 1951. However, the population remained largely depressed until the construction of the M4 motorway and nearby junction 17. This likely allowed for easy travelling to Swindon, Bristol and beyond, making the parish attractive to commuters. In 2001, the population was 701.

### *Settlement*

It has been conjectured that the 'Hege Berghes' (barrow by the hedge) mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon charter which describes the boundary of Christian Malford refers to an undated round barrow on the boundary of Bremhill with Christian Malford. It would provide the earliest evidence of settlement in the parish; however, no trace of a barrow has been found in fieldwork surveys.<sup>32</sup>

Instead, evidence suggests that settlement at Christian Malford has origins in the Anglo-Saxon period.<sup>33</sup> In Anglo-Saxon, the word *mal* referred to a mark or sign. Christ *mal*, therefore, referred to Christ's symbol- a cross. 'Christian Malford' meaning the ford of the cross.<sup>34</sup> The 940 charter of Christian Malford indicates the original ford on the River Avon was not at the site of the current bridge but instead at the southwest edge of the parish, approximately 450 metres south of the church of All Saints.<sup>35</sup> All Saints itself is situated at the west end of the village close to the river implying the settlement has also moved. The churchyard has been extended; the former boundary bank is visible to the south of the

---

3 Jan. 1928, 12 Dec. 1929. In addition, several fatalities were reported during the nineteenth and twentieth century after heavy rain or accidents from bathing in the river. E.g., *Frome Times*, 21 April 1880; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 9 Jan. 1915, 17 Mar. 1917, 18 Aug. 1956; *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts. Chronicle*, 12 Sep. 1902, 15 Jul. 1904; *North Wilts. Herald*, 17 April 1880.

<sup>26</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 8 Mar. 1930.

<sup>27</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 4, 386-388. J. H. P. Pafford, 'Spas and Mineral Springs of Wilts.', *W.A.M.* lv. 1-29,

<sup>28</sup> *Tax List 1332 (WRS 45)*, xvi, 59-60.

<sup>29</sup> *VCH Wilts*, 4, 307.

<sup>30</sup> *Compton Census* (ed. Whiteman), 128.

<sup>31</sup> Information in this paragraph comes from *VCH Wilts*, 4, 319, 344-5; *Census 1961-2011*; ONS estimate.

<sup>32</sup> Wiltshire HER, Barrow Bremhill/ Christian Malford, ST97NE600 (accessed 22 Sep. 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Wiltshire HER, Settlement, Saxon (410 to 1065), ST97NE400 (accessed 22 Sep. 2021).

<sup>34</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 125.

<sup>35</sup> *Arch. Jnl.* lxxvi, 256.

structure.<sup>36</sup> The present village cross stands on the former village green northeast of the church and dates from the fifteenth century.<sup>37</sup> The age and location of the monument do not correspond to the example indicated in the naming of the parish.

Medieval earthworks denote settlement through the period.<sup>38</sup> The present settlement pattern is much the same as it was in 1773.<sup>39</sup> The village is centred south of the road between Chippenham and Swindon, called Main Road, that runs from Christian Malford Bridge westwards towards Dauntsey. A 1773 map labels the main section of this road, in error, as 'Friday Street' which is instead a road running south off it to Thornend. The eastern end of Main Road, after the turning to Friday Street is known as Upper Town. At the western end, slightly north of the road was Christian Malford Mill. Most of the settlement lies to the south of Main Street on what is now Station Road and Church Road which runs east to the river off Station Road.

Many of the farms and larger houses are sited on Main Road, some of which date from the seventeenth century. Of the twelve local farms (excluding glebe) listed in the income tax valuation of 1910, the majority were accessed from Main Road. These comprised Beanfield Farm, Mermaid Farm, Malford Farm, Paradise Farm, Swallett Farm, Ridgeway Farm and Selstead Farm. Of those remaining, Dodford Farm was on Dodford Lane to the north of the main settlement and Friday Street Farm and Thornend Farm to the west on Friday Street.<sup>40</sup>

Station Road continues southwards becoming Hare Street at Westend. Avon lies east off Hare Street as it runs towards Charlcutt. In 2021, the settlement (now in Bremhill) comprised several farms and cottages.

During the twentieth century, the area lining Station Road and Church Road at Christian Malford was increasingly developed for housing, including the site of a former nursery that fronted Station Road to the west and an allotment garden to the east. Several new closes and cul-de-sacs were also added including, Coronation Close to the north of Church Road (opposite All Saints) and Lime Trees to the east. Part of the former village green was adapted to form a recreation ground. Development adjacent to Main Road was limited.<sup>41</sup>

### *Built Character*

A number of buildings within the parish are listed. They include the former nineteenth-century mill house on Avon Weir (that adjoined Christian Malford mill now demolished) and the Mermaid Inn, a former eighteenth-century farmhouse on Main Road, formerly the turnpike road to Swindon.<sup>42</sup> Other listed buildings on Main Road include no. 28, 35 and 36, and Malford House, all of which have origins in the seventeenth century.<sup>43</sup> Several listed farmhouses also adjoin Main Road:- Beanhill Farmhouse, Swallett Farmhouse and Great

---

<sup>36</sup> RCHME, 'Avebury Project Medieval and Post Medieval Assessment: Parish Summary Sheet', (1996) No. 104/1996, Sheet: ST97NE. [https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/104-1996/RCHME-AveburyProjectMedievalAndPostMedievalAssessment\\_ParishSummarySheet](https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/104-1996/RCHME-AveburyProjectMedievalAndPostMedievalAssessment_ParishSummarySheet) (accessed 22 Sep. 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Historic England HER, Village Cross, 1018417 [OS: 96451 78753].

<sup>38</sup> Wiltshire HER, ST97NE611, Wiltshire HER, *Upper Town*, ST97NE 612, Wiltshire HER, *Settlement, Southwest of the Homestead*, ST98SE457; Wiltshire HER, ST98SE455.

<sup>39</sup> *Andrews' and Dury's Map of Wiltshire, 1773* (WRS 8), Plate 14.

<sup>40</sup> WSA, L8/1/18, 1208/32.

<sup>41</sup> OS Map 1:2500, Wilts? (2019 Q2 Basemap used from Know Your Place Website).

<sup>42</sup> Avon Weir 1199629 [OS: 95527 79215]. The Mermaid Inn 1022470 [OS: 96203 79191].

<sup>43</sup> Historic England HER, 35 and 36, Main Road, 1199764 [OS: 96704 79445]; 28, Main Road, 1363779 [OS: 97150 79532]; Malford House 1022472 [OS: 98388 80363].

Ridgeway Farmhouse which dates c.1700.<sup>44</sup> Other listed farmhouses are Brights, on the City, Thornend on Friday Street and Dodford Farmhouse, Dodford Lane that dates from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.<sup>45</sup> The church of All Saints, Christian Malford is the only grade I listed building in the parish.<sup>46</sup> Several monuments within the graveyard and the Old Rectory are also listed,<sup>47</sup> as is the former United Reform Church, Avon Weir.<sup>48</sup>

The only listed building in Avon (but now in Bremhill parish) is Carpenters Farmhouse.<sup>49</sup>

#### LANDOWNERSHIP

The manor of Christian Malford was in the possession of Glastonbury Abbey until the Reformation. It was later granted to John De Vere, earl of Oxford. It remained under the control of De Vere's descendants until the death without issue of Anne Wharton in 1685, whereafter it was sold by her husband's son, Philip, Duke of Wharton in 1705. It was sold again in 1733 to William Herbert in whose family it remained until 1873. The estate was divided for sale in 1906 and further in 1913-14 into separate farms and smallholdings. There was also a small rectory manor and an estate that comprised the tithing of Avon.

#### *Christian Malford Manor*

In 940, King Edmund is reputed to have granted 'A place by Avon which by the common people, by a laudable custom, and with a noble allusion, call Christemal-ford to Glastonbury abbey' to Abbot Dunstan.<sup>50</sup> However, the charter is suspect as it was not inventoried in the eleventh-century *Liber Terrarum* of Glastonbury and has not been preserved in its original form. It is also likely that Dunstan was not made abbot until 946.<sup>51</sup> However, in 1086 the manor of Christian Malford was held by the monks of St. Mary, Glastonbury. It paid geld for 20 hides.<sup>52</sup>

The estate was seized by the Crown from Glastonbury Abbey in 1539. In 1544, John De Vere, earl of Oxford (d.1562) acquired the manor from Henry VIII.<sup>53</sup>

In 1575, Sir John Danvers (d. 1594) bought the manor from Edward De Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> earl of Oxford.<sup>54</sup> On his death, it was divided (or passed) between his sons, Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby (1654) and Sir John Danvers (1655), regicide.<sup>55</sup>

The manor was among those formerly owned by Sir John Danvers which were confiscated after the Restoration in 1660. In 1662, it was granted to Henry Hyde, Viscount

---

<sup>44</sup> Historic England HER, Beanhill Farmhouse, Main Road 1199738 [OS: 97340 79710]; Historic England HER, Swallett Farmhouse, Main Road, 1022471 [OS: 98230 79900]; Historic England HER, Great Ridgeway Farmhouse, Main Road, 1283206 [OS: 98460 80490].

<sup>45</sup> Historic England HER, Thornend Farmhouse, 1199699 [OS: 98783 79288]; Historic England HER, Brights Farmhouse, 1363776 [OS: 97340 78488]; Historic England HER, Dodford Farmhouse, 1022466 [OS: 97311 80863].

<sup>46</sup> Historic England HER, Church of All Saints, 1199647 [OS: 95995 78420].

<sup>47</sup> Historic England HER, Old Rectory, 1363773 [OS: 96133 78456].

<sup>48</sup> Historic England HER, United Reform Church, 1022462 [OS: 95758 79122].

<sup>49</sup> Historic England HER, Carpenters Farmhouse, 1022411 [OS: 95696 76729].

<sup>50</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126.

<sup>51</sup> ODNB, **8288**; *VCH Somerset* ii, 82-99; L. Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury: Church and Endowment* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996).

<sup>52</sup> *Domesday*, 167.

<sup>53</sup> 26-30 April 1544. *L&P Hen. VII xix (1)*, 261-287. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol19/no1/pp261-287> [accessed 9 November 2020]. See also *Cal. SP Dom Ed. VI, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80*, 224, 230. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/edw-eliz/1547-80> [accessed 9 November 2020]; ODNB, 28216.

<sup>54</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126; *TNA*, C 2/Eliz/D4/46. See also *VCH Wilts.* xiv, 65-75.

<sup>55</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126. See also *VCH Wilts.* xiv, 65-75.

Cornbury, Sir Ralph Verney and others in trust for Eleanora and Anne Lee, daughters of Danvers's granddaughter, Anne (d.1659) who married Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley (d.1659).<sup>56</sup> Eleanora Lee married James Bertie, Earl of Abingdon and Anne (d.1685), Thomas, Baron Wharton (d.1715). Anne Wharton was a noted poet.<sup>57</sup> On her early death without issue, the estate passed to her husband, Thomas, Baron Wharton. Later Wharton's heir, by his second wife, Philip, was elevated to the duke of Wharton. Philip had a reputation as a rake and is alleged to have lost the manor of Christian Malford in a card game to Thomas Boucher of Twickenham.<sup>58</sup> However, the manor was purchased by Boucher (d.1708) in 1705 for £17,070 from Baron Wharton.<sup>59</sup> It thereafter descended down the male line to Thomas (d.1772), who sold it in 1733 to Robert Sawyer Herbert (d.1769), second son of the earl of Pembroke.<sup>60</sup>

At Herbert's death, the estate passed to his nephew Henry Herbert (d. 1811), from 1780 known as Lord Porchester and 1793 earl of Carnarvon.<sup>61</sup> Although styled 'of Highclere in Hants and Christian Malford in Wilts' Henry Herbert was not a resident of Christian Malford 'for the house was ruinous'.<sup>62</sup>

The estate descended with the male line from Henry George Herbert (d.1833) to Henry John George Herbert (d.1849) who owned 2,325 a. of 2,621 a. recorded in tithe apportionments for Christian Malford (excluding the 150a. of Avon tithing).<sup>63</sup> The manor was later sold by Henry Howard Herbert (d.1890), 4<sup>th</sup> earl of Carnarvon in 1873.<sup>64</sup>

By 1874, the estate was in possession of the trustees of Sir Henry Meux (d.1883), whose Commission of Lunacy hearing in June 1858 made him a *cause celebre*.<sup>65</sup> In 1878, Meux's son, Henry Bruce Meux (d.1900) visited the family's Wiltshire estates and met the major tenants with the estate trustees on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.<sup>66</sup>

By 1889, Sir Henry Bruce Meux of Dauntsey was described as 'nearly the sole landowner' in the parish.<sup>67</sup> In 1906, his widow disposed of the Meux estates in North Wiltshire which totalled over 20,000 a. The Christian Malford estate was offered for sale with Dauntsey estate, which extended to c. 5,600 a. At the auction, separate lots in the parish included Malford Farm 264 a. Mermaid Inn and Farm 109 a. and Beanhill Farm 119 a. However, the greater part of the combined estates was withdrawn from the sale and instead

---

<sup>56</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126; *Burke's Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies*, 304; Oct. 1661. *Cal. SP Dom Charles II, 1661-2*, 103-132. <http://www.British-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/chas2/1661-2/pp103-132> [accessed 10 November 2020]; ODNB, 29163.

<sup>57</sup> *Burke's Peerage* xii pt 2, 606-8; A. Collins, *The Peerage of England* Vol. II (London: Gosling & Wotton, 1735), 356; ODNB, 29163.

<sup>58</sup> *Burke's Peerage* xii pt 2, 609-614; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126; ODNB, 29171.

<sup>59</sup> *Wilts. N. & Q.* vii. 428-9; *Hist. Parl. Commons, 1690-1715*, iii, 275; *Hist. Parl. Commons, 1715-54*, i. 478.

<sup>60</sup> WSA, 1171/97; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126; [HERBERT, Hon. Robert Sawyer \(1693-1769\), of Highclere, Hants. | History of Parliament Online](#) [accessed 17 April 2021].

<sup>61</sup> WSA, 1171/97; <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/herbert-henry-1741-1811> [accessed 20 November 2020]. See also, *Burke's Peerage* iii, 46.

<sup>62</sup> J. Waylen, *A History Military and Municipal of the Ancient Borough of Devizes* (London and Devizes: Longman (London) and Henry Bull (Devizes), 1859), 432.

<sup>63</sup> *Burke's Peerage* iii, 46-8; *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments* (WRS 30), 36-7.

<sup>64</sup> *Somerset Archives*, Taunton, DD/DRU/2/60; *Burke's Peerage* iii, 47-8.

<sup>65</sup> In June 1874, 8 acres from the Christian Malford estate were sold by trustees of Sir Henry Meux to the Malmesbury Railway. *Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard*, Saturday 13 June 1874. In June 1858, the 'lunacy' of Sir Henry Meux was topic of headlines across the country. E.g. *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 24 June 1858; *Morning Chronicle*, 9, 15, 17, 11, 12, 18, 21, 28 June 1858; *John Bull*, 12, 14, 19, 21 June 1858; *Belfast Mercury*, 15, 24 June, 5 July 1858; *Inverness Courier*, 17, 24, June 1858; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 10, 17, 24 June, 8 July 1858. See also ODNB, 97889.

<sup>66</sup> *North Wiltshire Herald*, 25 May 1878.

<sup>67</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1889 edn.), 886.

privately devised to Ferdinand Marsham Townshend.<sup>68</sup> In 1911, Townshend was designated the principal landowner and Lord of the Manor of Christian Malford in Kelly's directory.<sup>69</sup> In 1913, he sold some of his estates at auction. It included Dodford Farm, Christian Malford which was offered 'together with the manor or lordship or reputed manor or lordship of Christian Malford.' The 381 a. dairy farm was described as 'generally acknowledged to be the finest farm in England' and was purchased by James Strong for £11,00.<sup>70</sup> The remainder of the estate was sold in 1914 including, Paradise Farm 200 a, Christian Malford Wood 110 a. and several small dairy holdings 68a. and less.<sup>71</sup> In 1935, the Strong brothers remained the principal landowners in the parish.<sup>72</sup>

#### *Christian Malford Rectory Manor*

According to Aubrey's account of Christian Malford, 'to the parsonage belongs a little mannour in this village'. In 1608, the rectory glebe comprised c.120 a.<sup>73</sup> 'Attached to the benefice are a copyhold of 60 acres held on lives, and a manor of which the rector is lord.'<sup>74</sup> As late as 1923, (two years prior to their abolition in 1925 under 15 Geo. v c.20), there were 21 copyholders. Copyholds comprised small parcels of land totalling c.60 a., 3 cottages, 1 house with orchard and the 'Rising Sun', an inn.<sup>75</sup> Afterwards the rectory estate was put up for auction largely unsuccessfully in 1925; in 1946, the glebe comprising 165 a. of both arable and pasture was sold. The major part, known as Glebe Farm (or Rectory Farm) was sold to Ray Webley Wakefield for £3,250. Wakefield had previously leased the farm.<sup>76</sup>

#### *Avon Manor*

It has been suggested that land at 'Nene' mentioned in a charter from 974, from King Edgar to Ælfric, abbot of Malmesbury, was a mistake for 'Avene', meaning Avon.<sup>77</sup> A confirmation of Malmesbury abbey's land and privileges by Edward in 1065 mentions Avon, but the charter is disputed.<sup>78</sup>

Avon does not appear in Domesday; however, by the late fourteenth century, a manor of Avon, was in possession of Sir Edward of Cerne (d. 1393) from his marriage to Ellen (d.1418), relic of Walter Pavely. On Edward's death, his son Edward (d. 1419), was declared his heir.<sup>79</sup> After Ellen's death, a moiety of the manor was granted to a coheir of Pavely, Cicely wife of Sir William Cheyne.<sup>80</sup> Cecily outlived her husband and their eldest son, Edmund, and on her death the heirs to the estate were Edmund's young daughters, Elizabeth, Anne, and

<sup>68</sup> VCH Wilts. xiv, 65-75; WAM xxxviii, 524; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 7 April, 6 Oct., 20 Oct. 1906; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 75. See also, WSA, 1208/32.

<sup>69</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 75.

<sup>70</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 12 July 1913.

<sup>71</sup> *Reading Mercury*, 20 June 1914.

<sup>72</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1935 edn.).

<sup>73</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 125-6; Hobbs (ed.), *Glebe Terriers (WRS 56)*, 100. See also *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments (WRS 30)*, 36-7.

<sup>74</sup> S. Lewis, [A Topographical Dictionary of England](#) (London: Self, 1848), 607-12

<sup>75</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21.

<sup>76</sup> WSA, 1710/23, 1710/24, 3608/Box 21.

<sup>77</sup> H.P.R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964), no. 310.

<sup>78</sup> *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.

<sup>79</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.* vol xvii, no. 314; TNA, C 138/38/33; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 52-3. - **Check also Wilts. Inq.p.m. 1327-77; Hoare's Modern Wilt on Westbury**

<sup>80</sup> *Cal. Close*, 1419-1422, 177.

Cecily.<sup>81</sup> The manor was later assigned to Anne, who married Sir John Willoughby.<sup>82</sup> [During Anne's minority it was held by her mother, Alice, and later her husband Walter Tailboys.<sup>83</sup>] Anne's heir was son Robert Willoughby de Broke (d.1502), who was created Baron Willoughby de Broke in 1491, his heir was son Robert (d.1521).<sup>84</sup>

The manor was in the possession of Sir Robert Long of Draycot Cerne at his death (d. 1581), when it was left to son, Walter (d.1610).<sup>85</sup>

Walter's brother, Henry Long, was murdered by Sir Charles Danvers and Sir Henry Danvers, later earl of Danby, sons of Sir John Danvers (d.1594), owner of Christian Malford. In the incident, the result of a long-running neighbours' feud, Sir Walter Long narrowly avoided death.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the alleged attempts of Walter's second wife, Catherine, to disinherit Walter's son, John (d. 1636), by his first wife, John Long was in possession of the manor of Avon on his death. His heir was son, William.<sup>87</sup> William Long died without issue and the estate passed to brother, John Long of South Wraxall (d.1652).<sup>88</sup>

By 1688, Avon was in possession of Sir Robert Long (d.1692) and thereafter settled on his widow, Dorothy (d.1710).<sup>89</sup> In 1796, Avon Farm, as the estate was known, was owned by Sir James Tylney-Long (d.1805) and tenanted by Hugh Beames. It comprised 248a. of which 156a. was at Avon, the rest in the parishes of Langley Burrell, Bremhill and Kellaways. The land in Avon comprised largely pasture and meadow, including some water meadow and withy along the River Avon, and 60a. of arable.<sup>90</sup> The farm passed to Sir James's sister Catherine (d. 1825), wife of William Pole-Tylney-Long-Wellesley, earl of Mornington, who was succeeded by her son William, 5<sup>th</sup> earl of Mornington (d. 1863). In 1842, all the land in Avon (c. 153a.) was owned by the earl of Mornington.<sup>91</sup> At that time, Avon Farm was tenanted by Alice Smith who did so until she died in 1866.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.* Vol xxiii, no 510.

<sup>82</sup> Hoare, *Mod. Wilts.* Westbury, 26. The advowson was with Anne's Sir John Willoughby in 1451 and 1455. T. Phillips, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810* Volume 1 (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 143, 146.

<sup>83</sup> The patronage of the chapel of Avon was with Walter Tailboys in 1442. T. Phillips, *Institutiones*, 133.

<sup>84</sup> *VCH Wilts.* viii, 148-163. The advowson of Avon was with Robert, Baron de Broke in 1509. Phillips, *Institutiones*, 186.

<sup>85</sup> TNA, PROB 11/63/502.

<sup>86</sup> *WAM* viii, 239-40; Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. O. Lawson Dick, 170-1.

<sup>87</sup> *Wilts. Inq. p.m.* 1625-49, 393-5; <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/long-walter-i-1594-1637> [accessed 4 January 2021]; Aubrey, *Miscellanies* (London, 1721), 75-6.

<sup>88</sup> TNA, PROB-11-222-685.

<sup>89</sup> WSA, 2943B/1/41. See also, *VCH Wilts.* xiv, 75-82.

<sup>90</sup> WSA, 2062/11. Land tax returns (WSA, A1/345/110) show that Hugh Beames leased the property from at least 1780 when it was owned by Sir James Long (d. 1794), from 1784 Tylney-Long, Bt. (d. 1794).

<sup>91</sup> *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments* (WRS 30), 36-7. See also WSA, 2062/14. It is likely that the 'Long Wellesley', listed as owning 62a. in the tithe award of Christian Malford, was William Richard Pole-Tylney-Long-Wellesley, earl of Mornington.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 1 Feb., 8 Mar. 1866. Alice Smith farmed Avon Farm from at least 1836 when a theft from the farm was reported in the press. *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 June 1836. See also WSA, 969/34.

In 1910, Avon Farm, then part of Bremhill civil parish and comprising 193a., was sold by the Marquis of Lansdowne to Mr G.A.H. White, on behalf of Wiltshire County Council, for £5,350.<sup>93</sup> By 1913, the farm had been broken up and let to seven smallholders.<sup>94</sup>

## ECONOMIC

### *Farming*

The charter of the lands of Christian Malford dating from 940 AD is almost certainly from the post conquest period. However, it is probably based on an Anglo Saxon original. It records a withy bed, woodland with game enclosure and ploughland.<sup>95</sup>

In 1086, Christian Malford had land for ten ploughs, 36 a. meadow, woodland of a league long and ½ league-wide.<sup>96</sup> Farming was dominated by arable. One hundred years later, in 1189, Glastonbury Abbey leased out plots of demesne land at Christian Malford.<sup>97</sup> Their lands at Christian Malford were likely particularly productive. It was ploughed three times a year (rather than the more traditional twice). There is also evidence that the manor of Christian Malford was selling a large proportion of demesne output during the medieval period.<sup>98</sup>

The Abbey of Bradenstoke held a virgate in Christian Malford of Glastonbury Abbey by a knight's service before 1189.<sup>99</sup> In 1236, alongside two mills within Christian Malford, the canons and prior of Bradenstoke held two meadows called Muleham and Scyrevede and a virgate of land on which the prior's withy bed lay.<sup>100</sup> The prior also claimed grazing rights, although this was disputed. In 1241, a final concord was made between the abbot of Glastonbury and prior of Bradenstoke. It allowed the canons to graze four oxen, 20 cows and two bulls with those of the abbot in an enclosure within the woodland. A further 20 pigs could graze the wood, although not during close season or pannage, presumably when other beasts were allowed to forage. Additionally, 60 goats were permitted on the north side of the road between Bradenstoke and the parish, and 100 sheep to the north and the south of the road from the prior's houses to the brook.<sup>101</sup>

During the mid-seventeenth century, part of Avon was owned by Sir Edward Bayntun and collectively cultivated on an open-field type system. Merestones (markers) were used to mark boundaries of the land worked by the Lord and tenants and between the plots of tenants in common fields.<sup>102</sup> The tenants of Bayntun included John Long, owner of the manor of Avon, whether this made the land management of Avon problematic is uncertain, but neither Long nor his heir attended the Bremhill manor court proceedings.

---

<sup>93</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Gazette*, 25 June 1910.

<sup>94</sup> [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1913-01-20/debates/8799c73d-9f92-4f35-8479-00b5cca4f97f/SmallHolders\(Wiltshire\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1913-01-20/debates/8799c73d-9f92-4f35-8479-00b5cca4f97f/SmallHolders(Wiltshire)) [accessed 4 January 2021].

<sup>95</sup> G.D. Grundy, 'Saxon Land Charters of Wiltshire', *Archaeological Journal* 77 (1920), 255-9.

<sup>96</sup> C. & F. Thorn, *Domesday Book: Wiltshire* (Chichester, 1979), 7,4.

<sup>97</sup> *VCH Wilts.* iv, 7.

<sup>98</sup> The ten virgaters and 24 semi-virgaters were obliged to take three loads of grain a year for sale at Bristol and elsewhere. *VCH Wilts.* iv, 16-17.

<sup>99</sup> *VCH Wilts.* iii, 281

<sup>100</sup> These meadows may have comprised the gifts of Silvester Lovel and his father, Ralph, who gave meadow and reed beds to the priory immediately around the mills. *The Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory* (WRS 35), 64- 66 (no. 149, 150, 151, 155).

<sup>101</sup> *The Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory* (WRS 35), 64 (no. 148).

<sup>102</sup> Directions were made at the Bremhill manorial court to ensure this was maintained. WSA, 473/52. E.g., 13 Oct. 1651, 17 Oct. 1655.

The fields used at this time for arable included 'common field', 'middle field', 'Pudnam field' and 'Avon field'. The cereal crops grown at Avon were not specified in the recording of the manor court. A conveyance from the period for property owned by the Longs refers to fields named within Bremhill court records (for example, Dole Mead, common field and middle field). They also refer to areas not referenced by Bremhill court records, such as the north field and south field (likely in Christian Malford, which were likewise managed on an open field system.<sup>103</sup>

Drainage was likely a problem as tenants were regularly directed to gripe (drain) their land.<sup>104</sup> Some grazing of cultivated fields was allowed but strictly managed.<sup>105</sup> Tenants were frequently charged by the acre in common arable fields for the services of a molecatcher, likely in the belief that moles would harm crops.<sup>106</sup> Certain pastured areas at Avon, such as part of Dole Mead (between Christian Malford and Bremhill), were marshland. Dole Mead was communally managed and grazed by cows, oxen, sheep, geese and other fowl. In addition, evidence suggests it was cut for hay.<sup>107</sup> Those with grazing rights were restricted by the number of animals they could graze and when they were allowed to put livestock onto pasture. Tenants of Avon with pigs were required to ring them, probably to prevent the animals from rooting and foraging, thereby causing damage. However, no mention was made of pigs using Dole Mead or areas under cultivation.<sup>108</sup>

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, probate inventories of the Stiles family, yeomen of Avon suggest mixed farming, dairy, sheep and arable. Livestock (which also included oxen and pigs) necessitated large amounts of hay for winter feeding. Crops included oats, and in the eighteenth-century barley. In 1688, the family were also cutting withies.<sup>109</sup> The prevalence of locally grown barley may have encouraged the presence of maltsters.<sup>110</sup> As with most local farms, the family were making cheese.

In 1677, farming on the Christian Malford glebe was likewise mixed with 57 a. of the c.120 a. being arable.<sup>111</sup> The 1712 probate inventory of Thomas Ody who farmed the parsonage lands reveal he was growing barley, wheat, beans, and oats. He also owned a small dairy herd and over 100 sheep.<sup>112</sup>

On the Long Avon manor rent roll of 1688, the withies and rushes along the river Avon were leased to four individuals and raised the half-yearly rent of £1 1s. 9d.<sup>113</sup>

At the computation of tithes in 1842, Christian Malford (excluding Avon) comprised 435 a. of arable that included a few acres of withy beds and 2,044 a. meadow with a further

---

<sup>103</sup> WSA, 473/52. Reference is made to corn or cornfields within Avon, but in this context, the term 'corn' refers to cereal crops in general. E.g., 21 Apr. 1652, 11 Oct. 1652, 16 Apr. 1654. See also WSA, 1081/25. A conveyance from the period for property owned by the Longs refers to fields named within Bremhill court records (for example, Dole Mead, common field and middle field). They also refer to areas not referenced by Bremhill court records, such as the north field and south field, which were likewise managed on an open field system.

<sup>104</sup> WSA 473/52, e.g., 13 Oct. 1651, 21 April 1652, 11 Oct. 2652, 12 April 1654, 17 Oct. 1655.

<sup>105</sup> Restrictions included the number of animals allowed or the dates they could graze. It included Pudnam field, which was used for cereal crops and to graze cattle. WSA, 473/52. E.g., 3 Apr. 1657

<sup>106</sup> WSA, 473/52. E.g., 4 Apr. 1651, 21 Apr. 1652.

<sup>107</sup> WSA, 473/52. Reference is made 4 Oct. 1654 to keeping Dole mead fenced until the hay crop was removed.

<sup>108</sup> WSA, 473/52. 13 Oct. 1656.

<sup>109</sup> WSA, P3/S/1039, P3/S/682.

<sup>110</sup> WSA, P3/B/1119, P1/R/199, P3/S/114.

<sup>111</sup> *Glebe Terriers (WRS 56)*, 101.

<sup>112</sup> WSA, P3/O/76.

<sup>113</sup> WSA, 2943B/1/41.

143 a. of woodland. While at Avon 150 a. comprised 67 a. arable and 83 a. pasture.<sup>114</sup> In 1867, the chief crops were wheat and beans.<sup>115</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, directories described almost the whole of the parish as pasture.<sup>116</sup>

In 1831, 91 families were employed in agriculture compared to 54 chiefly employed in trade manufactories and handicraft.<sup>117</sup> By 1881, of the 182 men with specified occupations in the census return, 93 were employed in agriculture. The majority of women, numbering 22, with occupations were working in domestic service. However, a further 12 were employed in agriculture.<sup>118</sup>

In 1843, Dole Mead in Christian Malford and Bremhill comprising 24 a. was enclosed.<sup>119</sup> In 1874, Christian Malford was listed in government returns on the acreage of common land as having no wastes.<sup>120</sup> However, a further 124 a. of meadow adjacent to the River Avon was enclosed in Seagry and Christian Malford in 1883, the latest enclosure award for the county.<sup>121</sup>

Of the twelve local farms (excluding glebe) listed in the income tax valuation of 1910, ten were owned by the Meux estate. These comprised Malford Farm, Paradise Farm, Dodford Farm, Swallett Farm, Summerhill or Brights Farm, Ridgeway Farm, Friday Street Farm, Bittlesea Farm, Selstead Farm and Thornend Farm. The remaining two were Mermaid Farm owned by, Warn and Sons, the brewery which owned the Mermaid Inn and Beanfield Farm, which had been sold by the Meux estate in 1906.<sup>122</sup> The Meux estate provided 18 a. of allotments in 1910. It also owned 131 a. of woodland in the parish.<sup>123</sup>

During the 1860s, the incumbent, Rev. Vanbergh Law, reported that women usually worked on local farms between 7 am and 6 pm with two hours off for meals.<sup>124</sup>

### *Corn Mills*

In the 1086 survey, two mills were listed in the possession of Glastonbury Abbey who owned the Christian Malford estate. These were valued at £2.<sup>125</sup>

By 1232, the Abbey of Bradenstoke had two mills, meadows and a reed bed nearby, the gifts of Ralph Lovel and his son Silvester. Glastonbury Abbey complained that Bradenstoke did not fulfil their feudal obligations for the property, an issue that was not resolved until 1287. The problem was likely exacerbated by the fact the mills at Christian Malford paid 16s for tithes in 1229 as it suggested their combined revenues were c.£8 or £4 each, and much higher than rents recorded by Glastonbury's other mills.<sup>126</sup> In 1328, a mill,

---

<sup>114</sup> *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments* (WRS 30), 36-7, 72. See also:- WSA, D/1/25/T/A/Christian Malford (to verify information about withy beds etc.)

<sup>115</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 246.

<sup>116</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1889 edn.), 886; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 75.

<sup>117</sup> *Census*, 1831.

<sup>118</sup> *Census*, 1881.

<sup>119</sup> WSA, 1710/50, A1/210/56/EA 161. *Wiltshire Inclosure Awards* (WRS 25), 5 1.

<sup>120</sup> Return of Acreage of Waste Lands subject to Rights of Common; Common Field Lands in each Parish of England and Wales in which Tithes have been commuted under Tithe Commutation Acts House of Commons Paper No. 85 Parliament 1874, 227.

<sup>121</sup> WSA, 1710/51. See also, *Wiltshire Inclosure Awards* (WRS 25), 4, 116.

<sup>122</sup> WSA, L8/1/18, 1208/32.

<sup>123</sup> WSA, L8/1/18.

<sup>124</sup> *Royal Com. On Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture. Second Report, Appendix (Evidence from Assistant Coms)* (Parl. Papers, 1868-9 (231, 4202, 4202-1), xiii), 303.

<sup>125</sup> *Domesday Book: Wiltshire*, 7,4.

<sup>126</sup> A. Lucas. *Ecclesiastical Lordship, Seigneurial Power and the Commercialization of Milling in Medieval England* (London: Routledge 2016), 153-157.

message and virgate of land at Christian Malford was rented by Glastonbury Abbey to Nicholas de Knoel for 40s.<sup>127</sup> Later in 1338, Richard de More gave 9 a. of meadow near the mills to Bradenstoke Abbey. One mill was St Johns by the 'High Bridge'. At the dissolution of the monasteries, the Abbey had one grain and one fulling mill at Christian Malford.<sup>128</sup>

From the 1750s until the 1780s, Christian Malford mill was occupied by the Simeon family.<sup>129</sup> According to land tax returns, Rodolph Simeon was the occupier and John Grant was owner of Christian Malford mill from 1781-1788, after which Rebecca Simeon occupied it until 1792. In 1793 it was in use by William James.<sup>130</sup> The building was later reconstructed as a clothing mill.

A mill at Avon existed in 1268.<sup>131</sup> Although it was used for fulling in the 18th century, land tax returns suggest, somewhat ambiguously, during the last quarter of the century it was owned by the Tanner family or leased by them from Mr Beames, and used to grind grain, until 1798 when it reverted back to its original use.<sup>132</sup>

### *Textiles*

At Christian Malford, thirteen weavers and one fuller were noted in poll tax assessments in 1379.<sup>133</sup> Probate documents indicate cloth making, including serge making was being carried out in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>134</sup>

By 1794, Christian Malford mill had been acquired by Thomas Etheridge and rebuilt as a clothing mill having formerly been used for grain. The mill was exonerated from land tax after 1799, presumably because the charge had been redeemed by the payment of a lump sum (allowed under law after 1798).<sup>135</sup>

In 1813, Christian Malford Mill or 'super fine cloth factory', was placed up for auction.<sup>136</sup> The building was acquired by William Lanfear, who had previously been in business in Calne.<sup>137</sup> After his death, in April 1860, the Christian Malford mill was put up for auction. When it failed to sell, it was put up for sale again in September with the suggestion that the six floored building, with dimensions 136 feet by 24 and powered by two waterwheels (one breast shot and one undershot and that generated 32 h.p., the head of water extending a mile and a half), that it could be repurposed as a paper or flour mill. The estate also included a dwelling house, three cottages, a small farm, 33 a. of grazing and a dye-

---

<sup>127</sup> *Abstracts of Wiltshire Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward III*, 18.

<sup>128</sup> *The Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory* (WRS 35); *VCH Wilts.* iii, 281.

<sup>129</sup> WSA, A1/345/109, P3/S/1371 (will 1758 but mentions mill was acquired from grandfather Richard Burgess will pr.1738 (PROB/11/690/329), however, the mill was not mentioned in Burgess's will.

<sup>130</sup> WSA, A1/345/109.

<sup>131</sup> *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1268* (WRS 65), 117.

<sup>132</sup> Mr Beames was probably Hugh Beames, who leased a major part of the property in Avon. John Tanner or Mr Tanner is listed on the land tax return for Bremhill (Foxham) as occupier sometimes as the proprietor (1785, 1786, 1791, 1793, 1794 and 1795-1798), after which Avon mill does not appear on the return until 1801. Mr Beames is listed as proprietor of the mill in 1781, 1782, 1783 and 1787 – 1790 and 1792. WSA, A1/345/56. K.H. Rogers states Tanner rented Avon mill until 1786. See also WSA, A1/345/110; K.H. Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills* (Edington: Pasold, 1976), 76.

<sup>133</sup> *VCH Wilts.* iv, 122.

<sup>134</sup> WSA, P3/C/350 (Sergemaker, 1671), P1/B/686 (Sergemaker, 1701), P1/T/194 (Mercer, 1686), P1/8 Reg/88 (Clothier, 1735), P1/7Reg/146A (Narrow weaver, 1726); TNA, PROB/11/564/139 (Clothier, 1718), PROB 11/262/517 (Broad weaver, 1657).

<sup>135</sup> WSA, A1/345/109; Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills*, 75.

<sup>136</sup> *Leeds Intelligencer*, 10 May 1813. Noted the building had been erected in the previous 20 years.

<sup>137</sup> Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills*, 75.

house adjacent to the mill building, which had been tenanted.<sup>138</sup> It seemingly did not sell, and by 1885 it had been demolished.<sup>139</sup>

By the early eighteenth century, Avon mill was used as a fulling mill operated by William Fry. The mill's output was the lowest of the five mills operating in the Chippenham area, producing just two cloths in a total of 119 manufactured in one quarterly period. It provided services to one clothier, Robert Fry, likely a relative of the mill operator.<sup>140</sup> The mill was tenanted in the 1750s by the Pinnegar family.<sup>141</sup> After being used for several decades to grind grain, in 1798, Avon mill was converted for the cloth trade and was rented by clothier Uriah Tarrant.<sup>142</sup> It was reported in the 1820s that when shearing machines were first introduced to cut and dress cloth (likely during the adaptation of the mill in 1798), soldiers were stationed around Avon mill to prevent large numbers of out of work 'shearmen' from committing acts of arson.<sup>143</sup>

In around 1821, Avon mill was acquired by the Marquis of Lansdowne, and in the following year, the clothing machinery, cloth and other effects of the mill were auctioned under a distress warrant for unpaid rent.<sup>144</sup> The leaseholder, Uriah Tarrant, was imprisoned for debt.<sup>145</sup> Parish registers reveal Tarrant had fathered a number of illegitimate children by local women.

The lease of the 'lately rebuilt' Avon mill, comprising a ground floor and four lofts, 95 feet by 20 with a capacity of 20 cloths a week, was advertised in both Wiltshire and Yorkshire from April 1822. The announcements advised the trade had carried on in the parish for upwards of twenty years, and 'the children and working people of the neighbourhood are accustomed to the business.'<sup>146</sup> The mill is likely to have ceased operating for several years before William Lanfear occupied it from 1828.<sup>147</sup> The following year it was reported that owing to fluctuations in the cloth trade, the mill had 'not generally done half the work of its waterpower.'<sup>148</sup> The mill ceased operating after 1848. It was sold by the Marquis of Lansdowne in 1910.<sup>149</sup>

Despite a contraction in the Wiltshire cloth industry during the first half of the nineteenth century, in 1821, 61 families out of a total of 205 in Christian Malford or 30% of the total were employed in trade manufactories or handicrafts. It compared with only 11% of

---

<sup>138</sup> *Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard*, 7 Apr. 1860; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 13, 20, 27 Sept. 1860. See also sale particulars, WSA, 137/125/72.

<sup>139</sup> Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills*, 75.

<sup>140</sup> WSA, A1/525.

<sup>141</sup> WSA, P3/P/888, P3/P/1047.

<sup>142</sup> Rogers, *Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills*, 76. Mr Tarrant is listed in land tax returns as proprietor from 1801, 1802, 1805, 1807 (In 1806 Mr Beames is again the owner, Mr George Beames 1808-20). WSA, A1/345/56. Tarrant was described as a clothier in reporting his insolvency, e.g., *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 13 May 1822, 10 Feb. 1823.

<sup>143</sup> *Berkshire Chronicle*, 29 Sept. 1827.

<sup>144</sup> *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 11 Apr. 1822; WSA, A1/345/56. The name of the proprietor is given as the Marquis of Lansdowne in land tax returns from 1821.

<sup>145</sup> Tarrant was discharged from prison in November 1822. *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 28 Nov. 1822.

<sup>146</sup> *Leeds Intelligencer*, 22 Apr., 29 Apr., 6 May, 13 May, 5 Aug. 1822; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 12 Aug. 1822.

<sup>147</sup> Lanfear is listed as the occupier of Avon Mills on land tax returns from 1828. WSA, A1/345/56

<sup>148</sup> *Berkshire Chronicle*, 29 Sept. 1827.

<sup>149</sup> WSA, 1225/36.

families at neighbouring Bremhill. All families within the Christian Malford chapelry at Avon were employed in agriculture.<sup>150</sup>

In 1839, only Christian Malford mill (and not Avon mill) was listed as a woollen manufacturer in government returns. At the time, the mill at Christian Malford employed 3 13–14-year-olds and a total of 3 males and 15 females.<sup>151</sup> Both mills were producing cloth in 1848.<sup>152</sup> However, local cloth manufacture ceased by 1859.<sup>153</sup>

#### *Forestry*

As usual the woodland in Christian Malford was retained in hand by the manor estate (rather than being tenanted). Elm trees were sold from the estate woods 1807-8 and 1811.<sup>154</sup>

#### *Other Trades*

Probate records show edge tool makers and blacksmiths operated in the parish during the eighteenth century; however, these documents suggest that the grinding mill used by tool makers was outside the parish, in Seagry.<sup>155</sup>

Likely due to its good road links, the parish developed a large retail and service sector relative to its size. In the 1620s and 30s, this included alehouses or inns and a retailer of tobacco.<sup>156</sup> In 1859, the parish accommodated five shopkeepers, four inns or beer retailers, four boot or shoemakers, together with a baker, tailor, and post office.<sup>157</sup>

In 1841, about 150 labourers resident in the parish were employed to construct the Great Western Railway.<sup>158</sup> It is likely availability of employment attracted an influx of workers from outside the parish and contributed to a high in the population recorded in the census that year compared to 1801-1951.<sup>159</sup>

## SOCIAL

### *Social Character*

The parish occupied an area of 3,104 acres in 1859, and its population was centred on the village of Christian Malford.<sup>160</sup> Until the twentieth century the parish was primarily owned by one principal absentee landowner. These owners did not take an active interest in support of the community. Their absence was blamed for the lack of educational provision in 1818.<sup>161</sup> Social leadership was instead provided by incumbents, such as rector Rev Robert Vanbergh

---

<sup>150</sup> *Abstract of Answers and Returns for taking Account of Population of Great Britain (Enumeration Abstract; Parish Register Abstract), 1821* (Parl. Papers, 1822 (502), xv),

<sup>151</sup> *Return of Mills and Factories which have neglected to transmit Returns to Inspectors, 1837-38; Number of Persons employed in Cotton, Woollen, Worsted, Flax and Silk Factories of United Kingdom* (Parl. Papers, 1839 (41), xlii), 152-3, 156.

<sup>152</sup> S. Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (London, 1848), 607-12.

<sup>153</sup> There is no listing in Kelly's Wiltshire directory for miller, clothier or associated profession and no mention of a mill.

<sup>154</sup> WSA, A1/345/109, inland revenue assessment 1910 etc. *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 16 Feb. 1807, 22 Feb. 1808, 21 Mar. 1808, 14 Oct. 1811.

<sup>155</sup> The will of William Peacock (pr. 1754) mentions his share in the grinding mill at Seagry. Seagry mill is also mentioned in WSA, P3/P/688 (pr. 1719). Other probate documents of Christian Malford edge tool makers include: - TNA, PROB 11/809/260; WSA, P1/P/449, P3/P/813, P3/P/614, P3/P/752. Blacksmiths include WSA, P3/P/698, P1/P/668, P1/P/611.

<sup>156</sup> *Tradesmen in Early Stuart Wiltshire* (WRS 15), no. 260, 27, no. 276, 28, no. 1275, 100.

<sup>157</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405-406.

<sup>158</sup> *VCH Wilts.* iv, 319.

<sup>159</sup> *VCH Wilts.* iv, 344.

<sup>160</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>161</sup> As blamed by the rector Rev. J E Readon. *Select Committee on Education of the Poor (1818). Digest of Parochial Returns.* Vol. I, II, and III (Parl. Papers, 1819 (224), ix), 1023.

Law, under whose instigation a school was eventually built in 1856, and the church was renovated 1860, 1870-2. In the first half of the nineteenth century, against the decline of the local cloth trade and pressure on agricultural wages, the parish was prone to exhibit social agitation. At times this may have been tacitly directed against the rector. In November 1830, a mob of 2-400 men (depending on the report) assembled in front of the rector's house at Christian Malford to protest low wages, a protest that was associated with the Swing riots. They were persuaded to disperse by magistrates suggesting that their wage demands would be met. According to reports, later refuted, the yeomanry was also called.<sup>162</sup> Four years later a group of men, women and children occupied the church and later burnt a hay rick in a disturbance in opposition to the New Poor Law.<sup>163</sup> There was likely some temporary economic respite for local labourers with the possibility of work on the construction of the Great Western Railway through the village, but the presence of 'navigators' in the parish also caused friction.<sup>164</sup> With the opening of the railway in 1841 this employment opportunity abated. While no Anti—Corn Law meetings took place in Christian Malford, residents from the parish were noteworthy in their speeches at meetings in neighbouring villages.

In 1846, the *Wiltshire Independent* sent a reporter to Christian Malford to test the veracity of claims made in the *Morning Post* that local wages were good, and that the poor were in a satisfactory condition, supported by a branch of the Wiltshire Friendly Society and a 'Provident Society' established by the rector. The *Wiltshire Independent* found wage rates for agricultural labourers at a 'miserable' level of 8s and suggested that by encouraging labourers to subscribe to societies the effect would be to deprive the poor of their ability to pay local traders.<sup>165</sup> These challenging economic circumstances may have contributed to nine people, including four children, being sponsored, in 1845, to emigrate to Australia.<sup>166</sup> In 1857-8, a further three men were supported to do the same.<sup>167</sup>

It was reported that in the late eighteenth century Avon mill was grinding wheat gleaned by local labouring families. Gleaning was likely one of the ways in which local people attempted to makeshift rather than resort to parish relief.<sup>168</sup> There was no charitable provision for the poor according to returns made in 1786-8.<sup>169</sup> In addition, no local friendly society was noted in poor law returns in 1803 or 1818.<sup>170</sup> In the absence of these alternatives to poor relief, community action was sometimes taken. In an extremely cold January in 1838, parishioners collected nearly £30 which was used to purchase coal that was distributed amongst the poor.<sup>171</sup>

---

<sup>162</sup> *London Courier and Evening Gazette*, 1 Dec, 3 Dec 1830; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 6 Dec 1830. See also, E. Newman, 'The Anti Corn Law League and the Wiltshire Labourer, Aspects of the Development of Nineteenth Century Protest', in G. Mingay (ed.) *Land, Labour and Agriculture, 1700-1920* (London: Hambledon, 1991), 101.

<sup>163</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 13 Nov 1834.

<sup>164</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 21 Nov 1839.

<sup>165</sup> *Wiltshire Independent*, 26 Feb. 1846.

<sup>166</sup> Poor Law Coms.: Appendices to Eleventh Annual Report (Parl. Papers 1845 (Cd. 660), xxvii), 129..

<sup>167</sup> *Poor Law Board: Tenth Annual Report* (Parl. Papers 1857-58 (Cd. 2402), xxviii), 234.

<sup>168</sup> As reported by a correspondent to *Berkshire Chronicle*, 29 Sep. 1827.

<sup>169</sup> *Abstract of the Returns of Charitable Donations for the Benefit of Poor Persons, made by the Ministers and Churchwardens of the several parishes and townships in England and Wales 1786-1788* (Parl. Papers. 1816 (511) Parliament 1816, 1344.

<sup>170</sup> *Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3; Poor Law Abstract, 1818, 494-5.*

<sup>171</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 11 Jan 1838.

## Communal Life

During the 17th century, John Aubrey reported that Christian Malford was ‘famous’ for its midsummer revels. These took place at the church house on the village green.<sup>172</sup> While little aside from the revels is known about leisure activities within the parish before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the village had alehouses from at least the 1620s and one inn from the 1660s. These hostelries, along with the church and later chapels, are likely to have been the focus of communal life.<sup>173</sup>

In 1727, a vestry meeting agreed that four men ‘and no other person or persons’ could sell ale and beer within the parish. At the same meeting and likely a similar attempt to regulate the consumption of alcohol, a plan (possibly not followed through) was made to create a parish lockup. The lockup was to be built at the end of the church house.<sup>174</sup> Efforts to control alcohol consumption continued in the nineteenth century. In 1828, William Wheeler was fined over £12 for selling alcohol without a licence.<sup>175</sup> Later in 1837, the incumbent, Rev. Vanbergh Law, reported the keeper of the Jolly Butcher beer shop for serving alcohol after hours.<sup>176</sup>

The Rising Sun on Station Road was in use as a beershop from at least 1867.<sup>177</sup> By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it was owned by the rector of Christian Malford and tenanted by Ushers Brewery who later acquired the freehold.<sup>178</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> century organised leisure activities took place at the Rising Sun including darts.<sup>179</sup> The principal parish hostelry was the Mermaid Inn, which during the 19<sup>th</sup> century provided the location for the meetings of tithe commissioners, auctions, coroners inquests, political meetings and hunt meets.<sup>180</sup> It was sold by the Meux estate in a major sale in 1906.<sup>181</sup> A converted eighteenth-century farmhouse, on Main Road, the inn is currently [2021] closed.<sup>182</sup>

The parish had a village cricket team from the 1850s and a football team from at least 1905.<sup>183</sup> In the 21<sup>st</sup> century part of the old village green was still in use as a recreation area that provided a venue for village cricket and football, as well as a children’s play area.<sup>184</sup> In 2012, ‘Malford Meadow’ a 11a. community meadow, orchard and allotment was opened adjacent to the church.<sup>185</sup> Other community leisure facilities included a reading room closed

---

<sup>172</sup> Aubrey and Jackson, 125.

<sup>173</sup> *Tradesmen in Early Stuart Wiltshire* (WRS 15), 31. An unnamed inn is mentioned in the will of John Hatherell, 1666. WSA, P1/H/371.

<sup>174</sup> WSA, 1710/32. See back of volume. 31 May 1727.

<sup>175</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 4 Dec. 1828.

<sup>176</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 6 Apr. 1837. Later, the Jolly Butcher was in the care of Samuel Stokes. By 1938, the site of the Jolly Butcher had become the post office. *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 406; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 7 May 1938.

<sup>177</sup> Listing in Kelly’s notes a George Oram as a beer retailer, in the 1871 census George Oram is listed in an establishment called the Rising Sun, his occupation is given as cooper and beer housekeeper. *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1867 edn.), 246.

<sup>178</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21; 1710/22; 1075/400/133a.

<sup>179</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 8 Nov. 1952.

<sup>180</sup> E.g., *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 2 Nov 1837, 20, 27 June, 18 Oct. 1839, 12 Feb 1846, 31 Sep. 1857, *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 5 Oct. 1885; *North Wilts Herald* 16 Dec. 1872, 26 Jan. 1880, 29 Nov. 1880.

<sup>181</sup> WSA, 106/3.

<sup>182</sup> Historic England HER, Christian Malford, The Mermaid Inn, 1022470 [OS: ST 96203 79191].

<sup>183</sup> Mentions of teams include *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 2 Sep 1858, 26 Jul 1866; *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts Gaz.*, 10 Feb 1905; *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 25 Mar 1933, 2 Dec 1933.

<sup>184</sup> [Recreation Ground – Christian Malford Village](#) [accessed 7 Oct 2021].

<sup>185</sup> [Malford Meadow – Christian Malford Village](#) [accessed 7 Oct 2021].

by 1925 and a village hall, opened in December 1925, after a period of fundraising events including fetes.<sup>186</sup>

### Charities and Friendly Societies

No charities for the poor were recorded by charity commissioners in 1908.<sup>187</sup> However, in 1842, a Christian Malford branch of the Wiltshire Friendly Society was opened. Within four years its membership had grown to 200.<sup>188</sup> In 1886, membership still stood at 127, by which point a youth section had also been created.<sup>189</sup> The society was still celebrating its anniversary in 1895 by a procession around the village followed by sermon and members dinner.<sup>190</sup> The Septennial Club Friendly Society, based at the Mermaid Inn was established in 1853.<sup>191</sup>

### Education

In 1818, four 'schools' of between 6 and 12 pupils were operating under the care of an old woman. A fifth school was provided by a schoolmaster with between 30 and 40 in attendance. The rector lamented that due to the lack of local gentry, he could not raise money to provide a schoolroom large enough 'for the adoption of the new system of education' or enough income to cover a salary for a schoolmaster. Many local children were also employed in two local cloth manufactories. A Sunday school (previously supported by poor rates) instructed 100 local children supported by a legacy from Rev. William Willes.<sup>192</sup>

However, a national school was opened by 1834, instructing pupils on religion, reading, writing and accounts and the girls in needlework.<sup>193</sup> Overseers' accounts indicate the salary of a schoolmaster was being met by poor rates in the late 1820s and early 1830s.<sup>194</sup>

A new building was added in 1856 financed by funds raised locally at the prompting of the incumbent, Rev. Robert Vanburgh Law.<sup>195</sup> Law and other members of his family contributed £111 of the £238 raised. The total building cost was £268. However, the most significant single contributor was the Earl of Carnarvon, who owned Christian Malford

---

<sup>186</sup> WSA, 1710/42/36. Dated 8 Jan. 1925; North Wilts Herald, 24 Dec. 1925.

<sup>187</sup> However, a legacy by Rev. William Willes was recorded that established a Sunday school. See above Religious History and Education. *Endowed Charities*, 1908, 280-1.

<sup>188</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 23 July 1846.

<sup>189</sup> *North Wilts Herald*, Friday 30 July 1886.

<sup>190</sup> *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts. Chronicle*, 3 Aug. 1895.

<sup>191</sup> *Friendly Societies, Industrial and Provident Societies, and Trade Unions. Reports of the Chief registrar of Friendly Societies, for the year ending 31st December 1876* (Parl. Papers 1877 (?)), 461. This society may have been the one referred to as the Mermaid Club based at the Mermaid Inn which commemorated its anniversary on Whit-Tuesday. *Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts Chronicle*, 17 June 1878.

<sup>192</sup> *Select Committee on the Education of the Poor (1818). Digest of Parochial Returns*. Vol. I, II, and III (Parl. Papers 1819 (224), ix), 1023. The salary of the Sunday school teacher and other expenses such as coal for the school is noted in overseers accounts. WSA, 1710/46. E.g., 12 Oct. 1788, 7 Dec. 1788.

<sup>193</sup> *Commission of Inquiry into Charities in England and Wales: Twenty-eighth Report* (Parl. Papers 1834 (606), xxii), 328.

<sup>194</sup> WSA, 1710/47. Mr Warry's £5 salary was paid yearly E.g., 3 June 1827 and yearly accounts 25 Mar. 1831.

<sup>195</sup> WSA, 1710/30; *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 75.

manor, and who donated £50.<sup>196</sup> According to notes at the back of the churchwarden accounts, the builder Mr Millar made no charge for his services but accepted a 'present' of £5.<sup>197</sup>

By 1859 the school included a schoolroom and separate classroom 'with board floor, parallel desks and good light and ventilation', it provided accommodation to between 100 and 130 pupils, taught by a trained master and three pupil teachers. The school was deemed successful in both discipline and instruction which had the effect that children were drawn from the surrounding areas and tended not to leave school prematurely. The establishment was also able to send pupil teachers out to neighbouring schools.<sup>198</sup> However, in 1868, the Rev C. R. E. Awdry, of nearby Draycot Cerne, claimed that boys educated at Christian Malford 'are not nearly so useful for fieldwork as others; the farmers won't have them.'<sup>199</sup>

In or about 1876, Rev. Law applied the capital of Rev. Willes' endowment against the costs incurred in building the school; he resigned the living soon after.<sup>200</sup> After Law died in 1884, the Charity Commissioners tried for several years unsuccessfully to reclaim the amount of the endowment from the executors of Law's estate.<sup>201</sup> In 1898/9, 81 children regularly attended the school. Its operation was funded by government grants and £60 from voluntary contributions from the community, it did not benefit from any endowments.<sup>202</sup>

There was a night school in the parish in 1868 with 65 (including three under the age of 12) on the register, the largest reported in the county. However, several difficulties were recorded as impeding its administration, these included the distance required to travel to the site and the problem of finding teachers, 'especially for girls.'<sup>203</sup>

Questions arose over the ownership of the school premises in the absence of formal title papers.<sup>204</sup> Between the 1920s and 1940s the likely owner of the site Hugh Marsham Townend refused to co-operate over the issue. Although he was not prepared to claim the site nor considered himself entitled to it, he refused to give away the property he never thought was his in the first place.<sup>205</sup> The ownership of the site was finally invested in the rector and churchwardens under the statute of limitations.<sup>206</sup>

A small cottage was provided for the accommodation of the teacher under the control of the rector. However, it was not always needed. Consequently, it was occupied by farmworkers employed by the rector or by the tenant of the church farm for long periods. In 1953, the rector had a debt of £112 on the cottage. He appealed to the parochial church

---

<sup>196</sup> WSA, 1710/30. See also WSA, 1710/33.

<sup>197</sup> WSA, 1710/33.

<sup>198</sup> *Account of Schools for Children of Labouring Classes in County of Wiltshire*, by Rev. W. Warburton (Parl. Papers 1859 Session 1 (27)), 15.

<sup>199</sup> *Royal Com. on Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture Second Report, Appendix (Evidence from Assistant Coms.)* (Parl. Papers 1868-9 [Cd C.4202], xiii), 660.

<sup>200</sup> *Endowed Charities (County of Wilts) Report* (Parl. Papers 1908 (273), lxxx), 281.

<sup>201</sup> *Endowed Charities (County of Wilts) Report* (Parl. Papers 1908 (273), lxxx), 281-2.

<sup>202</sup> *Return for each Public Elementary School inspected in England and Wales, of Denomination, Accommodation, Average Attendance, Annual Grant, Income and Expenditure, 1898-99* (Parl. Papers 1900 [Cd C.315], ??), 856.- verify vol no.

<sup>203</sup> *Royal Com. on Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture Second Report* (1867). Appendix pt. 1. (Parl. Papers 1868-9 [Cd C.4202], xiii), 231, 322.- verify page numbers and formatting of title.

<sup>204</sup> WSA, 1710/42.

<sup>205</sup> WSA, 1710/42. 3 Jun. 1925, 10 Dec. 1947.

<sup>206</sup> WSA, 1710/42. 18 Dec. 1947.

council who took on the responsibility of the property and discharged the debt.<sup>207</sup> In 1978, the cottage was sold.<sup>208</sup>

The school was granted controlled status in 1951.<sup>209</sup>

There was no separate educational provision for Avon.

### *Social Welfare*

In 1653, the inhabitants of Christian Malford complained to the Quarter Sessions that so many people required relief within the parish it was impossible to relieve them all. However, it suggested to the court that the neighbouring parish of Seagry had so few that it might contribute to the cost of the poor within Christian Malford. Two justices were asked to investigate.<sup>210</sup>

In 1776, the cost of parochial poor relief was £337 which rose to £791 by 1803.<sup>211</sup> Disbursements were particularly high in times of high food prices, such as in the year to 5 April 1800 when welfare expenses reached £888.<sup>212</sup>

In 1803, those in receipt of permanent relief from the parish of Christian Malford were overwhelmingly children.<sup>213</sup> A total of 183 people received support which equated to 20% of the 1801 population.<sup>214</sup> However, the level of deprivation was below that of neighbouring Bremhill, whose economy was more heavily reliant on agriculture. Fifteen people also received relief who were from outside the parish, a possible consequence of Christian Malford being located on an important transport route.<sup>215</sup>

Relief was generally given within the community, in the form of weekly payments and rent and one-off expenses, particularly shoes. Medical expenses, such as a surgeon and the services of a midwife or incidentals related to smallpox were also covered.<sup>216</sup> During a particularly hard winter in 1796/7, over 50 individuals were given clothing in the form of serge or linen cloth or both. Several also received shoes, waistcoats and blankets.<sup>217</sup>

In 1833, government returns showed Christian Malford had agreed on a plan with local magistrates under the Agricultural Labourers Employment Act (2 and 3 Will. IV c.96) to employ the poor.<sup>218</sup>

The rising cost of relief in the eighteenth century probably contributed to the decision to convert the church house to a workhouse in 1764. It was in operation in 1776 and had a

---

<sup>207</sup> WSA, 1710/33.

<sup>208</sup> WSA, 1710/42. 20 Feb. 1978, 16 May 1978, 11 Oct. 1978, 17 Oct. 1978, 2 Nov. 1978, 21 Dec. 1978.

<sup>209</sup> WSA, 1710/42. 12 Jun. 1951.

<sup>210</sup> *Quarter Sessions Order Book 1642-1654* (WRS 67), 302.

<sup>211</sup> *Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3.*

<sup>212</sup> WSA, 1710/46.

<sup>213</sup> Of 153 in receipt of permanent relief, only 30 were adults over the age of 14. *Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3. Separate figures are not given in subsequent poor law returns in 1818 etc. to evidence whether this was a regular situation in the parish.*

<sup>214</sup> The population figure was recorded as 938 in the 1801 census. *VCH Wilts. iv, 344; Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3.*

<sup>215</sup> *Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3.*

<sup>216</sup> WSA, 1710/44-46.

<sup>217</sup> WSA, 1710/46.

<sup>218</sup> *Return of Parishes which have agreed Plans for Employment of the Poor* (Parl. Papers 1833 (144), xxxii).

capacity of 30 inmates, but was discontinued by 1803.<sup>219</sup> In the late 1820s some incidental overseers' expenses suggest there was an attempt to reopen the workhouse prior to the enactment of the new poor law.<sup>220</sup> However, there may have been considerable local opposition to the use of workhouses - up to 100 local people were involved in a riot in 1834 to protest the adoption of the new poor law which made workhouses the only support available to the poor.<sup>221</sup>

## RELIGIOUS

The church of All Saints, Christian Malford, was originally in the possession of Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset.<sup>222</sup> In 1199, the manor of Christian Malford and advowson were apportioned to the Bishop of Bath and Wells.<sup>223</sup> Later the manor was restored to the Abbey, but the advowson remained with the diocese.<sup>224</sup> In 1829, its patron continued to be the Bishop of Bath and Wells.<sup>225</sup> However, by 1859, it was in the gift of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.<sup>226</sup> Following the severance of the sees of Gloucester and Bristol (47 and 47 Vict. c.66), in 1898, it was with the Bishop of Bristol where it remained until the 1980s. However, by 1989, the patron of the church had become the Dean and Chapter of Sarum.<sup>227</sup>

Avon was a chapelry of Christian Malford.<sup>228</sup> In 1333 and 1348, its patron was John Pavely, and in 1349 his son, John. Sir Edward of Cerne, owner of the manor of Avon, presented it in 1383.<sup>229</sup> After lapsing to the bishop of Salisbury in 1441, in 1442, it was with Walter Tailboys, of Kyme, Lincolnshire. In 1452, Avon chapel was the gift of John Willoughby of Broke. In 1509, the advowson was again briefly with the bishop, before patronage was with Robert Willoughby.<sup>230</sup> The chapel was mentioned in the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535 when it was worth 33s 4d.<sup>231</sup>

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, Avon chapel was leased out by the Long family owners of the manor of Avon.<sup>232</sup> In 1622, it was leased to John Hungerford of nearby Cadenham manor.<sup>233</sup> In 1646-7, the Avon chapel, including tithes and glebe lands were sold by John Long to Robert Hungerford (grandson of John Hungerford).<sup>234</sup> Later, Walter Hungerford's (d.1754) will bequeathed 'my parsonage of Avon' to Robert Blaake, son of his sister Katherine. Robert Blaake died childless.<sup>235</sup> In 1796, the

---

<sup>219</sup> WSA, 1710/45, 19 May 1764; *Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 562-3; *Poor Law Abstract, 1777*, 484.

<sup>220</sup> WSA, 1710/47 e.g., 11 Mar 1827, 13 Nov. 1829.

<sup>221</sup> *Devizes and Wilts. Gaz.*, 13 Nov 1834.

<sup>222</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126.

<sup>223</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126.

<sup>224</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126.

<sup>225</sup> R. Gilbert, *The Clerical Guide or Ecclesiastical Directory* (London: Rivington, 1829), 62

<sup>226</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>227</sup> *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, (1898 ed.), 1769; *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, (1889/90 ed.), 751.

<sup>228</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 53.

<sup>229</sup> T. Phillipps, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810 Vol. 1* (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 28, 45, 49, 68; Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 53.

<sup>230</sup> T. Phillipps, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810 Vol. 1* (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 2, 132, 133, 186, 187.

<sup>231</sup> According to Canon Jackson. Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 53.

<sup>232</sup> WSA, 1081/18, 1081/16, 1081/21, 1081/23.

<sup>233</sup> WSA, 1081/23

<sup>234</sup> WSA, 1081/25.

<sup>235</sup> TNA, PROB 11-809-256; WAM, 24, 219.

Avon estate was mapped and surveyed, no chapel or parsonage was recorded.<sup>236</sup> Thereafter, tithes for Avon tithing were commuted to a rent-charge payable to his successor Hungerford Crewe, Lord Crewe in 1842.<sup>237</sup>

The 1672 Christian Malford glebe terrier listed a residence with an adjoining 80 a. of arable, pasture and meadow and a further 15 a. of pasture. The glebe also included eight other houses with land and five cottages.<sup>238</sup> In the terrier of 1704, two cottages were listed in dispute, something the rector, Rev. Henry Margetts, refuted.<sup>239</sup>

In 1711, the living was valued at £27.<sup>240</sup> Following the Tithe Commutation Act, in 1842, the tithes of Christian Malford were commuted to a tithe rent-charge of £730 to the vicar Rev. Robert Vanburgh Law for great and small tithes. It included £30 for tithes on 122 a. of glebe.<sup>241</sup> Around 10 a. of land had previously been sold to the Great Western Railway.<sup>242</sup>

In 1851, the living of Christian Malford was worth £730, plus £200 income from the glebe.<sup>243</sup> Later, in 1859 the living was worth £800.<sup>244</sup> By 1911, this was reduced to a net income of £600, including the revenue from 100 a. of glebe.<sup>245</sup>

There was a small manor attached to the rectory of c.60 a.

In the early twentieth century, some glebe was farmed, as Glebe Farm, by the incumbent.<sup>246</sup> There were plans to sell Glebe Farm and other property, including 'The Rising Sun' inn, which comprised the glebe, at auction in 1925. At this time, the annual value of the glebe was recorded as £270.<sup>247</sup> Although the Glebe Farm was not sold and remained tenanted, some glebe property, including the Cottage and Glebe Cottages, were sold through the 1920s. The Rising Sun was sold to Ushers Wiltshire Brewery, to whom it had previously been leased, for £900.<sup>248</sup> In 1928, the tenant of Glebe Farm or Rectory Farm was Ray Webley Wakefield of Sutton Benger. Wakefield purchased the farm when it was eventually sold in 1946. Several other lots were also offered, the whole totalling 165 a. It included 52 a. known as Botany and Lushes Leaze, which was sold to Jesus College, Oxford.<sup>249</sup> According to an inventory of church property in 1956, all that remained of the glebe from the 1946 sale was 3 a. comprising part of Malford farm.<sup>250</sup>

---

<sup>236</sup> WSA, 1001/3, 2062/11.

<sup>237</sup> *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments* (WRS 30), 36-37.

<sup>238</sup> *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS 56), 101.

<sup>239</sup> *Wiltshire Glebe Terriers 1588-1827* (WRS 56), 101-102.

<sup>240</sup> J. Ecton, *Liber Valorum & Decimarum* (W. B. for Is. Harrison, W. Freeman, and George Sawbridge, 1711), 344.

<sup>241</sup> *Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments* (WRS 30), 36-37.

<sup>242</sup> WSA, D/1/25/T/A/Christian Malford.

<sup>243</sup> TNA, HO 129/253.

<sup>244</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>245</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.), 75.

<sup>246</sup> A sale of the livestock from 'Glebe Farm' was made in 1912 by the estate of the late incumbent Canon Jonathan Mayne. *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 21 Sep. 1912; *North Wiltshire Herald*, 4 Oct. 1912. See also WSA, 3608/Box 21.

<sup>247</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21; 1710/34. The Rising Sun Inn or Beerhouse was leased by Rev Arthur Law (son of the late incumbent Rev. Robert Vanbergh Law), in 1913 to Wilkins Bros and Hudson Limited for 14 years.

<sup>248</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21.

<sup>249</sup> WSA, 1710/23, 1710/24, 3608/Box 21.

<sup>250</sup> WSA, 1710/34.

Christian Malford was in the rural deanery of Chippenham.<sup>251</sup> In 1966 the benefices of Christian Malford, Sutton Benger and Tytherton Kellaways were joined.<sup>252</sup> The parish is currently (2021) part of the benefice of Draycot, comprising Christian Malford, Kingston Langley and Draycot Cerne, Seagry, Sutton Benger, and Tytherton Kellaways.<sup>253</sup>

### *Clergy Houses*

The rector of Christian Malford was provided with a glebe house or rectory fit for a residence to the east of All Saints Church.<sup>254</sup> It was remodelled in 1816 by John Provis of Chippenham. The structure is Grade II listed.<sup>255</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, mortgages were taken out to repay loans for improvements to the rectory and the Glebe Farm.<sup>256</sup> By the late 1940s, the rectory was reported to be in a ruinous condition and proposals were drawn up for its sale.<sup>257</sup> In 1953, a new rectory was built, designed by Oswald Brakspear of Pickwick Manor, Corsham at a cost of £4,500. The old rectory was sold with some difficulty at a cost of £1,600.<sup>258</sup>

In the seventeenth century, John Aubrey noted that the parish had ‘a very faire church howse’.<sup>259</sup> It was later used as the parish workhouse and was subsequently demolished.<sup>260</sup>

### *Religious Life*

According to Rev. William Willes’s returns for the bishop’s visitation queries for Christian Malford in 1783, religious services were conducted at the church twice on Sundays throughout the year and on the three feast days of Christmas, Easter and Good Friday. The congregation was between 20 and 30 in number.<sup>261</sup> Later, possibly exaggerated figures, given for census Sunday in 1851, stated 300 congregants attended the morning and afternoon service, and there were 90 Sunday scholars in the morning and 80 in the afternoon. The seating capacity of the church was recorded as 542.<sup>262</sup> The capacity of the church was later documented as 330.<sup>263</sup>

Pews were built for church singers in 1719.<sup>264</sup> A barrel organ was bought with money raised from contributors in 1839, who included the Earl of Carnarvon and the rector, Rev. Robert Vanbergh Law. Another organ, built by Bevington and sons was bought following further fundraising in 1860.<sup>265</sup>

---

<sup>251</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21; etc.

<sup>252</sup> *VCH Wilts.* xiv, 221-229.

<sup>253</sup> *Crockford’s Clerical Directory*, (2020-21 ed.), 966.

<sup>254</sup> *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>255</sup> Historic England HER, The Old Rectory, 1363773 [OS: ST 96133 78456]. For 1816 plans to remodel structure see WSA, D/1/11/27. Note that plans were not carried out precisely.

<sup>256</sup> WSA, 1710/25.

<sup>257</sup> WSA, 1710/26.

<sup>258</sup> WSA, 1710/27, 1710/33.

<sup>259</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 125.

<sup>260</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 126.

<sup>261</sup> *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishop’s Visitation Queries 1783* (WRS 27), 66-67.

<sup>262</sup> TNA, HO 129/253.

<sup>263</sup> *Kelly’s Dir. Wilts & Dor.* (1889 edn.), 886.

<sup>264</sup> WSA, 1710/32.

<sup>265</sup> WSA, 1710/30. 21 July 1839, 2 Dec. 1860, 10 Dec. 1860.

The first recorded rector of Avon was Henry Attenforde in 1333, slightly before an incumbent was recorded at Christian Malford in 1348. The last rector at Avon may have been Henry Hawke in 1535. The Avon chapel was subsequently destroyed.<sup>266</sup>

In common with many, incumbents of All Saints had notable or challenging experiences through the civil war and interregnum. Rev. John Still had his £250 preferment in Christian Malford sequestered in 1644.<sup>267</sup> His position was taken by William Dolman, reputed to have been a soldier who was 'rough and careless in the parish.' Dolman allegedly maintained his position by force, levying whatever rates he chose collected by armed servants.<sup>268</sup> He died and was buried at Christian Malford in 1653.<sup>269</sup> Rev. Still regained his benefice in 1661, but only after the parsonage had been left 'ruinous' and, 'havock' had been made of the timber on the glebe.<sup>270</sup> Still died the next year and left the poor of Christian Malford £20 in his will.<sup>271</sup> Still's successor was Rev. William Piers, Archdeacon of Wells and son of William Piers bishop of Bath and Wells, who had his preferments similarly sequestered. Thereafter 'being forced out of mere necessity for subsistence...to marry an ordinary woman with very small estate, to turn farmer or rather day-labourer upon it.' Piers was purportedly imprisoned at Ilchester for being godfather to a child named Charles, and 'he was forced to hang out a glove and beg the charity of the town for subsistence.' Piers became the rector of Christian Malford in 1662. He later provided a fund for overseers and churchwardens, most probably to be loaned to parishioners in times of need.<sup>272</sup>

A curate at Christian Malford was employed from 1679.<sup>273</sup>

Several incumbents had successful careers in the church. Rev. Baptist Levinz was made the rector of Christian Malford in 1682 but later awarded the see of Sodor and Man in 1685. Rev. Levinz was evidently unhappy with his diocese, which remunerated him an amount only equal to his Christian Malford living.<sup>274</sup> Levinz was described as 'a handsome but intolerably proud man.'<sup>275</sup> Unlike many incumbents, he did not leave anything in his will (proved 1693) to the benefit of his parishioners.<sup>276</sup> In the early twentieth century, the incumbent, Canon Jonathan Mayne, was an honorary canon of Bristol cathedral and the rural dean of Chippenham.<sup>277</sup> Mayne was active in the community as chairperson of the Chippenham Board of Guardians and the Christian Malford parish council. On his death in 1912, after 22 years as the rector of Christian Malford, churchwardens collected

---

<sup>266</sup> T. Phillips, *Institutiones Clericorum in Comitatu Wiltoniae, Ab Anno 1297, Ad Annum 1810 Volume 1* (Worcestershire: Middle Hill Press, 1825), 28, 45; Aubrey, Topog. Colln. ed. Jackson, 53.

<sup>267</sup> WSA, 1710/31; J. Walker, *An Attempt Towards Recovering an Account of the Numbers and Sufferings of the Clergy of the Church of England* (London: WS,1714), 373.

<sup>268</sup> Wilts Notes & Queries, 7, 548; J. Walker, *An attempt towards recovering an account of the numbers and sufferings of the clergy of the Church of England* (London: WS,1714), 373.

<sup>269</sup> *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS 63), 59.

<sup>270</sup> Walker, 373; WSA, 1710/31.

<sup>271</sup> TNA, PROB 11/308/365.

<sup>272</sup> J. Walker, *An attempt towards recovering an account of the numbers and sufferings of the clergy of the Church of England* (London: WS,1714), 73; *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS 63), 59.

<sup>273</sup> WSA, D/1/17/3/4.

<sup>274</sup> ODNB, 16554.

<sup>275</sup> *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 8 (Oxford: Oxford Historical Society, 1907), 65.

<sup>276</sup> These included Rev. Henry Margetts, who left the poor of Christian Malford £5 in 1704 (pr. 1705) and Rev Francis White, who left a legacy in 1755. See also above. TNA, PROB 11/416/124; TNA, PROB 11/484/24; TNA, PROB 11/819/188.

<sup>277</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21.

contributions for a stained-glass window to be placed in the church in his honour. It was unveiled by the bishop of Bristol the following year at a memorial service in his honour.<sup>278</sup>

Another notable incumbent was Rev. William Willes, who was rector of Christian Malford for over 60 years until his death in 1815.<sup>279</sup> In 1762, Rev. Willes was made chaplain to James, Earl of Salisbury.<sup>280</sup> Later, in 1789, his father also granted him the office of Registrar and Scribe of the Acts of the Archidiaconal Court.<sup>281</sup> Willes took an active interest in the local community, attending vestry meetings, Christian Malford manor court proceedings and providing to the physical needs of his parishioners, such as by repairing the home of Nathaniel Pinker in 1776.<sup>282</sup> On his death, Willes was commemorated in Christian Malford church with a large monument by T. King of Bath.<sup>283</sup> He left £10 in his will to the poor who frequently attended church and a £100 mortgage taken out by the local turnpike, in trust with the minister and churchwardens, to support the Sunday school with prayer books.<sup>284</sup> The Sunday school was still in operation in 1836, despite a letter to the local press by correspondent, 'Home missionary', who alleged the parish had no Sunday school and therefore submitted that local children would grow up "and practice every species of diabolical wickedness". This was refuted by correspondents that included Rev. William Lisle Bowles of nearby Bremhill.<sup>285</sup> The Christian Malford incumbent, Rev. Vanbergh Law, did not appear to join the debate.

The Rev. William Itchener entered a pamphlet discourse with the theologian William Whiston.<sup>286</sup>

### *Non-Conformity*

In 1676, Compton's census recorded just one non-conformist in the parish of Christian Malford.<sup>287</sup> However, in 1684 seven parishioners were excommunicated for not attending church. One of the seven, John Bernard, was absolved from the excommunication thirty years later by Rev. Itchener.<sup>288</sup>

Quakers were living in the parish during the 1660s.<sup>289</sup> A Quaker meeting house was eventually registered in the parish in 1707 by Walter and William Pryce.<sup>290</sup> Ten years later, they were among several Quakers prosecuted for the non-payment of church rates.<sup>291</sup> On

---

<sup>278</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21; Wiltshire Times, 31 Aug. 1912.

<sup>279</sup> See WSA, 161/124, 161/144; *Alumni Oxoniensis* (1715-1886), 4, 1558.

<sup>280</sup> WSA, 161/144.

<sup>281</sup> WSA, 161/144.

<sup>282</sup> WSA, 1171/97; WSA, 1710/45. Willes repair of Pinker's house was later reimbursed by overseers- 12 May 1776.

<sup>283</sup> Historic England HER, Church of All Saints, 1199647 [OS: 95995 78420].

<sup>284</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1571/82.

<sup>285</sup> *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 23 June 1836, 30 June 1836, 7 July 1836, 15 June 1836

<sup>286</sup> Itchener's tract was a direct response to Whiston's *A Supplement to Mr. Whiston's Late Essay Forwards Restoring the True Text of the Old Testament* (1723). W. Itchener, *A Defence of the Canon of the Old Testament* (London: Richard Wilkin, 1723).

<sup>287</sup> *Wiltshire Notes & Queries* Vol. iii, 536; A. Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 128.

<sup>288</sup> *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* (WRS 63), 60.

<sup>289</sup> As evidenced by a number of Quaker burials are recorded for residents of Christian Malford from the 1660s. *Wilts Notes & Queries*, 5,6,7.

<sup>290</sup> *Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 14.

<sup>291</sup> *A Brief Account of the Many Persecutions of the People Called Quakers in the Exchequer, Ecclesiastical and Other Courts* (London: J. Sowle, 1736), 150.

Walter's death in 1733, he left money to the local poor and the Quaker congregation in nearby Charlcutt.<sup>292</sup> However, no Quakers were noted in the parish in 1783.<sup>293</sup>

An unlicensed meeting house for 'Methodists', most likely referring to the local independent or congregationalist assembly, was recorded in the parish in the bishop's visitation queries in 1783. According to the vicar of nearby Sutton Benger, their meetings were addressed by a 'variety of illiterate preachers.' He continued, 'many of their followers seem to be regular well-meaning but mistaken people.'<sup>294</sup>

The description was disingenuous. The Congregational minister, Rev. William Jay, was minister at Christian Malford before moving to the Argyle chapel at Bath in 1791. In Bath, he became one of the most admired preachers of his day.<sup>295</sup> Jay trained for the ministry under Cornelius Winter and while his student often preached at Christian Malford.<sup>296</sup> In later coming to the parish as an ordained minister during the 1780s Jay stated, 'I hoped to find abstraction and to pursue my improvement.' However, he did not get the solitude and reflection he evidently required. A lack of access to books and his great popularity as a preacher meant 'I was [ ] urged constantly to preach abroad', meant Jay later recollected 'my design and expectation failed me in no small degree.'<sup>297</sup>

Another dissenting minister with local connections was Cornelius Winter, who was ordained at Christian Malford and later created a seminary within the parish, 'I had my eye upon them [the congregation] as a proper people with whom my young friends might with advantage take their first exertions.' While Rev. William Jay was employed in the village after ordination, Winter stated, 'I never supposed he would continue with them.'<sup>298</sup> At the suggestion of Winter, Rev. Jay's farewell sermon at Christian Malford in 1789 was published.<sup>299</sup>

According to the 1851 return for census Sunday and completed by the 'Independent' chapel, the old chapel had been 'taken down' and rebuilt. The new building had a capacity of 170 sitting and 40 standing, and on census Sunday had attracted a congregation of 50 in the morning and 56 in the evening. There was no Sunday school.<sup>300</sup> The chapel was built in 1836. A schoolroom was added in 1909.<sup>301</sup> The structure is Grade II listed and is now converted for residential usage.<sup>302</sup>

A Wesleyan meeting house was registered in 1822. Later in 1827, a dwelling was registered in Avon at the home of John Cole for Wesleyan Methodists and endorsed by Rev John Baker of Salisbury.<sup>303</sup>

---

<sup>292</sup> WSA, P1/P/704.

<sup>293</sup> *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishop's Visitation Queries 1783* (WRS 27), 67.

<sup>294</sup> *Wiltshire Returns to the Bishop's Visitation Queries 1783* (WRS 27), 67, 192. \*\*\* Check see V.C.H. Wilts. iii. 131 on Winter, Rowland and Jay.

<sup>295</sup> ODNB, 14672.

<sup>296</sup> ODNB, 14672; C. Jay, *Recollections of William Jay* (1859), 49.

<sup>297</sup> C. Jay, *Recollections of William Jay* (1859), 49. See also *VCH Wilts.* iii, 133-4.

<sup>298</sup> A Farewell Sermon Preached at Christian Malford, on Sunday November 29, 1789 (Bath: S. Hazard, 1789), vi. See also J. Waylen, *A History, Military and Municipal, of the Town (otherwise Called Malborough...)*, Volume 1 (London: John Russell Smith, 1854), 486-; *VCH Wilts.* iii, 131.

<sup>299</sup> The tract was advertised in *Bristol Mercury*, 1 Mar 1790. *A Farewell Sermon Preached at Christian Malford, on Sunday November 29, 1789* (Bath: S. Hazard, 1789).

<sup>300</sup> TNA, HO 129/253.

<sup>301</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 7 May 1938.

<sup>302</sup> Historic England HER, United Reform Church, 1022462 [OS: ST9576179122].

<sup>303</sup> *Wiltshire Dissenters Meeting House Certificates* (WRS, 40), 98, 114.

A primitive Methodist meeting was recorded at a dwelling house in 1851. The preacher, Thomas Taylor, took services morning and evening, and his congregation averaged 34.<sup>304</sup> A Thomas Taylor, agricultural labourer, is listed in the 1851 census residing on Friday Street. He is listed as both a woodman and primitive preacher in 1861. The chapel was later reported to have occupied two cottages near Bright's Farm. It was demolished by 1938.<sup>305</sup>

### *Church Architecture*

John Aubrey described the church of All Saints, Christian Malford, as having 'nothing of antiquity left but some stalls left around the chancel'. These stalls were removed by the mid-nineteenth century, but the assessment remains, nonetheless, inaccurate.<sup>306</sup>

All Saints has twelfth-century origins, with construction taking place c.1300 and during the fifteenth century. A west tower was added in the eighteenth-century.<sup>307</sup> In 1722/3, the five church bells were sent to Gloucester to be recast as six. The rector Rev Itchener contributed £20. After the bells were rehung, it was agreed to give Ambrose Pullen 40s annually for the rest of his life to look after the bells. Money was also made available to provide a 'good floor' to the belfry.<sup>308</sup> The bells were rung each year on 5 November to mark the gunpowder plot.<sup>309</sup>

In 1860/1, the gallery was removed and substituted with open pews. Additionally, the aisles were paved, and work was completed on the tower. The £151 cost was covered by church rates and several donations, including those from the rector, Rev. Vanbergh Law and the Earl of Carnarvon.<sup>310</sup> Despite this work, in 1870 the church was described as 'in a dangerous condition: the north wall threatens to become a speedy ruin.'<sup>311</sup> During the subsequent renovation, under architect Ewan Christian, services were moved into the Lady Chapel and south aisle. The extensive restoration involved the rebuilding of the west gable and window and most of the north and east walls, 'new and open roofs' to the nave and chancel, a new chancel arch, two new windows in the chancel and other windows in the nave were restored. The church was also re-pewed with open benches, a north porch and buttress, a new pulpit, reading pew, lectern, new pavements, hangings under east window and curtain from the belfry door. The £1487 cost was raised by subscribers, from church rates (£300), contributions from the diocese (£100) and money raised at village concerts (£38). The biggest single contributors were the Earl of Carnarvon (£250), Trustees of Henry Meux (£160), Rev Vanbergh Law (£100), T H R Poynder and William Poynder (£100 each) and the Marquis of Lansdowne (£50). The builder, 'Mr Millar', had formerly undertaken repairs gratis in 1860, in 1872, while again making no charge, he accepted a 'present' of £20. The restored portions of All Saints Church were opened 5 May 1872.<sup>312</sup>

During the 1930s, cracks appeared in the church's structure, and plans were made to underpin the tower.<sup>313</sup> In 1945 the new incumbent, Rev WH Barbswell found the Lady Chapel in a deplorable condition, with its walls propped up, both outside and inside. These

---

<sup>304</sup> TNA, HO 129/253.

<sup>305</sup> *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 7 May 1938.

<sup>306</sup> Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 125-6.

<sup>307</sup> Historic England HER, Church of All Saints, 1199647 [OS: 95995 78420]; WSA, 1710/32. See notes at back of volume.

<sup>308</sup> WSA, 1710/30. See back of volume. 7 Aug., 13 Nov., 22 Nov. 1722, 19 Apr. 1783 as well as accounts for 1723 and 1724 at front.

<sup>309</sup> WSA, 1710/33.

<sup>310</sup> WSA, 1710/30. 23 June 1860.

<sup>311</sup> WSA, 1710/30. News clipping dated 22 Sep. 1870 but title unspecified.

<sup>312</sup> WSA, 1710/30. See also WSA, 1710/33, 1710/37.

<sup>313</sup> WSA, 1710/36.

were subsequently underpinned, and a new altar and floor added. Renovations were completed the following year to the design of Oswald Brakspear. The cost was met by local donations, a diocesan grant £100 and loans of £500 and £300 from the Pilgrim Trust. Many human remains were discovered and re-interred.<sup>314</sup> In 1959, new churchyard gates were gifted to the parish in the memory of Gwendoline Marion Wakefield.<sup>315</sup> Heating was installed in 1977.<sup>316</sup>

Several incumbents are commemorated in the church; they include Rev. Vanbergh Law, rector 1835-1877, memorialised in a north-side chancel window.<sup>317</sup>

There is no recorded dedication or a description for the chapel at Avon which was built by 1249.<sup>318</sup> The structure disappeared by the eighteenth century, but correspondence from Rev. Willes in 1781 suggests it had 'formerly stood somewhere near Farmer Beames's Dwellinghouse', probably Hugh Beames, the tenant of Avon Farm. It is likely the chapel was small and stood in a farmyard, like the chapel at Bremhilham.<sup>319</sup>

The parish registers for christenings, burials and marriages at All Saints, Christian Malford, survive from 1653.<sup>320</sup> Earlier volumes were allegedly burned in a fire at the curate's lodging in 1693.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### *Manorial government*

A court book or rolls have survived for Christian Malford manor 1314-1316, 1500-1699, 1749-1825, 1837, 1841, 1852.<sup>321</sup> In the mid-eighteenth-century, court leet and views of frankpledge for the manor generally took place annually in April and October. By the end of the century this had typically become an annual occurrence. A court baron was held sporadically.<sup>322</sup> A tithingman was annually selected.

The chief post holder of the manorial court during the eighteenth century was the manor bailiff. The bailiff was generally appointed for several years; appointees included Richard Bath 1749-55, Ralph Gale 1755-1775, Charles Weston 1775-1789, Henry Viveash 1789-1798 and William Collins 1806-1825.<sup>323</sup> The Christian Malford court selected both a tithingman and a constable. The distinction in their roles was not made apparent. A hayward was also designated.

The issues presented often concerned the construction and repair of bridges, maintenance of stiles and scouring of ditches. In 1803, 23 were submitted to the court for making repairs to buildings. Many had not complied by the following court.<sup>324</sup> The court occasionally asked the surveyors of the highway (appointed by the parish) to make specific

---

<sup>314</sup> WSA, 1710/33, 1710/36.

<sup>315</sup> WSA, 1710/33.

<sup>316</sup> WSA, 1710/36.

<sup>317</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911, edn), 75.

<sup>318</sup> *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre, 1249* (WRS 16), 190.

<sup>319</sup> WSA, 2943B/2/83.23 Nov. 1781; *VCH Wilts*, xiv, 9-13.

<sup>320</sup> WSA, 1710/1-14, 3403/1-4.

<sup>321</sup> TNA, (PRO, SC 2/200/56A), C 116/273. WSA, 1171/97, 663/14.

<sup>322</sup> WSA, 1171/97. Court Baron occurred e.g., 3 Aug. 1752, 24 Oct. 1783.

<sup>323</sup> In the first reference to Ralph Gale, he appears to have been erroneously named Richard.

<sup>324</sup> WSA, 1171/97, 29 Apr. 1803, 14 Oct. 1803.

improvements to the highway or bridges.<sup>325</sup> Much of the business transacted concerned the admittance and surrender of copyholds.

Customs of the manor were presented in 1614. These included several where the rights of women were more actively upheld than elsewhere. A widow enjoyed her husband's estate even if he had been 'stained' by treason or felony. A copyholder's daughter who was named heir could also marry without licence, nor by so doing did she break the agreement, 'for she is a headholder her husband is not.' Furthermore, 'our Custom is that when a widow doth live unchaste that appertaineth unto the Ecclesiastical Court for that our Custom have not to do with it, but for her Living she shall Injoy it by Our Custom'.<sup>326</sup> However, this latter provision was removed from customs transcribed in the court book of Christian Malford Manor 1749-1825.<sup>327</sup> In both versions of the customs, a tenant could lose his copy without forfeiting his agreement.

There was a separate manor court for the rectory estate.<sup>328</sup> The rector was the lord of a manor. The business at the court baron held in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was almost exclusively tenurial. It was often held when required, such as by the death of a tenant.<sup>329</sup> This meant several years could elapse between courts being held. No court baron was held between 1808-1836. Several courts were held so that Rev. William Willes, the incumbent for over 60 years until he died in 1815, could organise the tenurial arrangements of his children.<sup>330</sup> In 1745, Charles Trimmell was admitted to the copyhold of his father who had hanged himself.<sup>331</sup>

A bailiff and occasionally a tithingman were appointed for the Christian Malford rectory manor. The homage presented the customs of the estate in 1744.<sup>332</sup> The last entry of the court was in 1904.

There are no surviving court sources for a manor of Avon. However, part of Avon was owned by Sir Edward Bayntun (of the manor of Bremhill), and areas of Bremhill were tenanted by John Long (owner of the manor of Avon); the Longs thus owed suit of court to Bayntun.<sup>333</sup> Reference is, therefore, made to tenants at Avon in manor court records from Bremhill 1651-1657.<sup>334</sup>

### *Parish government*

No separate vestry minutes for Christian Malford have survived; however, complete overseers accounts are available for 1665-1721, 1773-1779, 1788-1800, 1824-1834 and churchwardens accounts 1666-1761, 1766-1921.<sup>335</sup> These also contain information on a number of vestry meetings, particularly the annual selection of parish officers.<sup>336</sup>

---

<sup>325</sup> WSA, 1171/97, 20 Oct. 1749, 9 May 1753.

<sup>326</sup> WAM xli, 174-177.

<sup>327</sup> WSA, 1171/97. They are listed on the inside cover.

<sup>328</sup> Court rolls exist for 1474-1476, 1505-1509, 1518-1520, 1526-1557 (Hampshire Archives, Winchester, 11M59/C1/22/1-8) and a court book for 1727-1904 (WSA, 1761-1904 (3608/Box 21 - currently miscatalogued as Box 1 in online listing). See also WSA, 161/32, 3958/1, 415/210.

<sup>329</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21. The court book covers the years 1727-1904. Court rolls are also available 1474-1476, 1505-1509, 1518-1520, 1526-1557. See *Hampshire Archives*, Winchester, 11M59/C1/22/1-8.

<sup>330</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21. E.g., 6 Oct. 1775, 9 Dec. 1785, 8 Nov. 1804.

<sup>331</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21. See the back of the court book and 16 Sep. 1745.

<sup>332</sup> WSA, 3608/Box 21. 19 Oct. 1744. See also, WAM xli, 176-177.

<sup>333</sup> WSA, 473/52. Reference is made to the John Long (d. 1652) and his heirs, owners of the estate of Avon, owing suit of court to Sir Edward Bayntun. E.g., 13 Oct. 1651, 11 Oct. 1652, 18 Apr. 1653.

<sup>334</sup> WSA, 473/52.

<sup>335</sup> WSA, 1710/44-7, 1710/32-33.

<sup>336</sup> E.g., WSA, 1710/32. 30 Mar. 1730, 7 Apr. 1729, 22 Apr. 1728, 3 Apr. 1727.

The close collaboration between manorial, parochial and ecclesiastical authorities is evident in the churchwardens accounts. These contain some lists of tithingman and petty constables from 1681 (although listing of tithingmen is damaged), but crucially annual references to vestry meetings during the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century at which both parochial and manorial postholders were elected.<sup>337</sup> Some disbursements to the poor made at parish meetings are also noted within churchwardens accounts.<sup>338</sup>

Overseers accounts indicate two overseers were selected during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, which rose to four overseers by the last quarter of the century. By the 1810s, the numbers had been reduced to two. Overseers were sometimes women.<sup>339</sup> Close co-operation between parochial and manorial bodies persisted in the late eighteenth century. Signatories suggest that officeholders under the manorial court were also taking an active role at the vestry; for example, Charles Weston, bailiff 1775-1789, often signed off on monthly disbursements.<sup>340</sup> The manorial constable and tithingman often attended the selection of overseer which continued into the 1830s.<sup>341</sup>

In 1713, it was agreed that the parish clerk be paid 40s annually to provide a barrel of beer for inhabitants on Easter Monday for the selection of parish officers.<sup>342</sup>

In May 1665, a total of 19 people received poor relief. In the year ending 28 May 1668, relief totalled £79 19 06 which rose to £85 19 07 by the year ending 26 March 1704.<sup>343</sup> The cost of those in receipt of relief increased during the eighteenth century to £341 in 1776 and £791 in 1803.<sup>344</sup> After climbing to £1,142 in 1814 (during the Napoleonic Wars), costs were reduced to just £752 in the following year. The number relieved also fell dramatically from 104 to 58.<sup>345</sup> During the early 1830s, the cost of poor relief remained well below 1814 levels at between £658 and £876.<sup>346</sup>

In 1704 disbursements included a number associated with a smallpox epidemic, including a pest house in a building owned by Mr Stratton. These included a payment to Stratton of over £1 'for the house and firing when people had the smallpox' and the provision of fuel and food.<sup>347</sup> Later, in 1792 the parish poor rates bore the cost of a mass inoculation of 150 by Dr Underwood.<sup>348</sup> The parish bore the cost of a doctor attending the poor from 1776.

---

<sup>337</sup> WSA, 1710/32. For example, 'parish' or vestry meetings noted in churchwarden accounts that took place 1 Apr 1689, 13 Apr. 1696, 6 Apr. 1702, 18 Apr. 1704, 22 Apr. 1717, 15 Apr. 1723 selected two churchwardens, overseers, a constable and tythingman. Other minutes also show the election of surveyors of the highway at the same meeting e.g., 23 Mar. 1667.

<sup>338</sup> WSA, 1710/32. Se back of book e.g., 3 Nov. 1720,

<sup>339</sup> Examples include Rebecca Peacock, selected in 1675, Widow Barnard in 1677, Alice Skuse in 1723, and Mistress Gotley in 1789. WSA, 1710/46, 13 Apr. 1789; WSA, 1710/44, 5 Apr. 1675, 16 Apr. 1677, 28 Apr. 1723. See also 1047/47.

<sup>340</sup> WSA, 1171/45.

<sup>341</sup> E.g., WSA, 1710/45, 3 Apr. 1774, 8 Apr. 1776, 20 Apr. 1778, 5 Apr. 1779. E.g., WSA 1710/46 5 Apr 1790 25 Apr 1791, 25 Mar 1799. WSA, 1710/47. E.g., 30 Mar 1832.

<sup>342</sup> WSA, 1710/32. Memorandum dated 6 Apr. 1713 (set down in back of volume) 2 May 1711, 1 Apr. 1715.

<sup>343</sup> WSA, 1710/44.

<sup>344</sup> *Poor Law Abstract, 1804, 562-3.*

<sup>345</sup> *Poor Law Abstract, 1818, 494-5.*

<sup>346</sup> *Poor Rate Returns, 1830-4, H.C. 444 (1835), xlvii, 210.*

<sup>347</sup> WSA, 1710/44, May 1704.

<sup>348</sup> WSA, 1710/46, 25 Mar 1792.

In the 1790s, some quarterly expenses of a Sunday school were met by the poor rates.<sup>349</sup> The necessity of charging the school to the parish may have prompted the incumbent, Rev. William Willes, to leave a later legacy to the school in his will.<sup>350</sup>

A number of expenses for warrants and removal orders suggest that the parish was actively using settlement legislation to ensure relief was paid only to those with an appropriate settlement. It is likely that the location of the parish (on significant transport routes) meant that it received a higher proportion of the transient poor.

Two churchwardens were annually selected, one of whom was nominated by the incumbent.<sup>351</sup>

Two surveyors of the highway were selected from 1667.<sup>352</sup> However, accounts for surveyors have only survived 1831-2. While in 1831, disbursements were made for the repair of highways, the activity the following year focused on the construction of 'the new arch bridge.' Consequently, costs rose from £14 2 11 to £38 4 10.<sup>353</sup>

The status of Avon in local governance terms was ambiguous. Although not listed in poor law returns for 1776, it was recorded separately as an extra-parochial place in the Chippenham hundred in poor law returns 1783-5, 1803 and 1818.<sup>354</sup> A survey of the estate of Sir James Tylney-Long at Avon, in 1796, also denotes the land holding was extra-parochial.<sup>355</sup> During this period, in ecclesiastical terms, Avon was considered part of the living of Christian Malford (in the North Damerham hundred).<sup>356</sup> In the 1821 and 1831 census, it was listed as a chapelry of Christian Malford.<sup>357</sup> However, Avon was treated as a parish in the creation of poor law unions after the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 (4 and 5 Will. 4 c.76) and joined the Chippenham Poor Law Union, formed in December 1835. Avon was, thereafter, described as extra-parochial in Kelly's Directory 1859.<sup>358</sup> However, by this time, the term was a misnomer as extra-parochial places effectively became parishes under 20 Vict c.19. The parish of Avon was abolished in 1895 to help make Kellaways civil parish.<sup>359</sup>

There are no surviving *parish* records for Avon, if any existed. However, a highway rate was collected in 1690, and disbursements 1690-3 show the highways of Avon were repaired by Sir George Hungerford of nearby Cadenham manor.<sup>360</sup> In 1796, the repair of 'the road' was completed by the tenant of Avon Farm.<sup>361</sup>

---

<sup>349</sup> WSA, 1710/46.

<sup>350</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1571/82.

<sup>351</sup> WSA, 1710/32-33.

<sup>352</sup> Sporadic reference is made to the selection of surveyors of the highway within churchwarden accounts. WSA, 1170/32. E.g., 4 Apr. 1670, 5 Apr. 1672. The names of postholders are listed on overseers' accounts 4 Apr 1681, WSA, 1710/44.

<sup>353</sup> WSA, 1710/45.

<sup>354</sup> The amount raised for poor relief in 1815 was £5; one adult received permanent relief, and a further three occasionally. *Poor Law Abstract, 1804*, 530; *Poor Law Abstract, 1818*, 494-5.

<sup>355</sup> WSA, 2062/11.

<sup>356</sup> *Account of Benefices and Population; Churches, Chapels and their Capacity; Number of Glebe-Houses; and Income of Small Benefices*, 1810-16 (House of Commons Papers: London, 1818), 178.

<sup>357</sup> Abstract of Population Returns of Great Britain, 1831, 694; Abstract of Answers and Returns under Act for taking Account of Population of Great Britain (Enumeration Abstract; Parish Register Abstract), 1821, 357.

<sup>358</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1859 edn.), 405.

<sup>359</sup> F. Youngs, *Guide to the Administrative Units of England*, 1, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1979), 531.

<sup>360</sup> WSA, 2943B/1/27.

<sup>361</sup> WSA, 2062/11.

*Post -1894*

Parish council minutes are only available from 1919. Footpaths were a regular item at meetings during the first half of the twentieth century which necessitated the provision of a footpaths and stiles committee.<sup>362</sup> The parish supported the provision of council housing in the period between the wars. It was active in pressing for improvements in water, sewerage, electric lighting and the provision of public telephones. These efforts were sometimes frustrated by costs, such as the arrangement of streetlights in 1931 or a lack of support from other stakeholders, such as the Rural District Council.<sup>363</sup> However, the parish council more successfully approached the Great Western Railway to create a railway halt.<sup>364</sup>

The council meetings took place at the schoolroom during the early twentieth century.<sup>365</sup> In 2021 meetings took place at the village hall.

---

<sup>362</sup> WSA, 1563/1.

<sup>363</sup> WSA, 1563/1. 25 Oct. 1931, 13 Nov 1931.- Check dates

<sup>364</sup> WSA, 1563/1. E.g., 1 Oct. 1925, 3 May 1926

<sup>365</sup> WSA, 1563/112.