



Old Evington

by

Jonathan Wilshere

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OLD EVINGTON

“A small and secluded village” was how Evington was described as recently as the 1920s. Despite the development of North Evington from 1880 onwards, it was only in the aftermath of the sale of Evington Hall estate in 1930 that the village heart saw large-scale change. World War II checked this relentless path but things nearly became out of hand in the 1960s, the fashionable decade for demolition in town and village alike. Certain cleared sites remained undeveloped eyesores for all too long. Evington was no exception. Now the village centre is designated a Conservation area.

The ancient parish (formerly in Gartree Hundred) roughly covered an area west to east from Mere road to Spencefield land and north to south from the Uppingham road (A 47) to just beyond the roman Gartree road. A third of the parish was transferred to Leicester County Borough as North Evington civil parish in 1892 with a new boundary, the later Highway road. Part of Thurnby parish, east of Spencefield lane and including Swain’s Lodge farm was transferred to Leicester in 1935. Evington civil parish was dissolved the following year and transferred to Leicester except for two small areas which became parts of Stoughton and Oadby.

Early Evington

It is known that a pre-historic track ran from Tilton through the Crown Hills ridge and early Bronze Age (c2000 B.C.) artefacts – flints, tools, a barbed arrow-head and ‘thumbnail’ scrapers were found in the Spinney Hill area when building was taking place. Other nineteenth century finds, many of them not retained included a beehive quern (corn grinding stone), brass items and stones. These came from the other side of the parish, near the Gartree road, which may have been built as a supply route after 43 A.D. and a settlement nearby cannot be ruled out.

What is more certain is that a Roman villa of some importance stood on Crown Hills. Pottery, tiles and *tesserae* (mosaic floor fragments) have been found on allotments and in gardens in the Broad Avenue district. This villa would have been in the geographic centre of the later parish but it had disappeared before 400 A.D. Whether or not some of its “outposts” survived thereby providing a continuance of settlement is open to doubt, but Roman coins and pottery have been found from other places in the parish, including Rowlatt’s Hill, Blundell road, St. Denys road, and near the later parish church.

Place names ending in ‘*ton*’ are thought to denote settlements founded well before the ninth century Scandinavian invasions. Those with an “*ington*” element are regarded as being earlier and may have been tribal settlements originally, dating back to perhaps the seventh century. Thus, Evington’s name can be considered Saxon, the *tun* of Aefa’s people.* The late Saxon settlement in

*Evington in Gloucestershire derives from a different root – *Giuingtune*, the tun of Geofa’s people.

the area around the church may represent an unbroken line of continuous settlement from the Roman villa estate mentioned above, but firm evidence is lacking. The unusual development of the settlement crammed into the south-east corner of its parish was due to geological factors, use being made of sand and gravel patches in what was predominantly a keuper marl area, otherwise only relieved by lower lias clay and limestone in the valley of the Evington brook.

Domesday and Mediaeval Evington (to 1500)

The Domesday Book provides the earliest description of Evington, as it was in 1086. The relevant extracts, relating to the main manor and a very small secondary manor, read in translation:

“Ivo holds of Hugh (de Grantemesnil) in Avintone 10½ carucates of land. There is land for 7 ploughs. In demesne (the land retained for his own use by the manorial lord) there are 3 ploughs and 6 serfs; and 25 villeins with 2 bordars have 5½ ploughs. There (is) a mill rendering 2 shillings and 20 acres of meadow. It was (in the time of Edward the Confessor) worth 40s; now 100s.”

“Robert (de Buci) holds 1 carucate of land in Avintone. There he has half a plough in demesne, and 4 villeins have 1 plough. It was and is worth 5s.”

There are difficulties in interpreting Domesday and later land measurements, but a carucate was generally reckoned as being the amount of land that could be ploughed by one ox-team in a year. This varied according to the quality of the soil. 100 acres is often taken as a convenient modern equivalent. On this basis, Evington’s total of 11½ carucates would comprise 1,150 acres; with 10 plough teams available, there was obviously fairly intense arable cultivation, most necessary in a largely self-sufficient community.

Domesday population figures also pose problems. If the serfs are excluded, Evington would appear to have had a total of 29 villein households, 2 bordar families and presumably also the households of the two manorial lords. If four and a half persons are taken as being a reasonable average family size of that period, the 33 conjectured families would give a total of 148. Allowance should be made for the 6 serfs (generally regarded as not having families of their own) and presumably also for a priest, who often is ignored in the Domesday survey. Thus, Evington’s population in 1086 is unlikely to have been less than 155.

Although it is known that Evington’s present church was not dedicated until 1219†, it is certain there were earlier buildings on the site; in the 12th century a church was given by Ernard de Bosco and Jorden de Humet to Leicester Abbey†. Before this, Biddleston Abbey in Buckinghamshire had rights to a church in the area, probably in the previous century.

The smaller manor, which was acquired by Richard Basset by 1130 and by the earl of Winton after 1265, was mainly occupied by the Dyve and Bussey families, (both probably from Nottinghamshire) until a local peasant family, the de Evingtons, bought up this property as well as other land after becoming

† see p. 57.

free tenants in the 13th century. It is believed they built themselves a moated homestead at Spinney Hill as evidence of their new station in life. The quadrangular moat, one of the largest in the county, lay by the brook between the later Gwendolen road and Blanklyn avenue, built over nearly a century ago.

The principal manor remained in the overlordship of the earls of Leicester* ; before 1239 subinfeudation to Richard de Grey (of Codnor, Derbyshire, not to be confused with the Leicestershire Greys of Groby and Bradgate) had taken place and this family held as sub-tenants to the end of the 15th century. Since Sir Richard de Grey, constable of Dover castle, fought for Simon de Montfort** at the battle of Evesham in 1265, his lands were forfeited to Henry III's son, Edmund of Lancaster. The manor was worth £30 then, but it was restored to Richard's son John, died 1271, on annual service of 3½ knight's fees, later reduced to 1½ by 1279 and half a fee by 1346. The usual requirement of each knight's fee was 40 days' annual military service.

On the death of Henry de Grey in 1279, there were 11 carucates in Evington, with probably only 4 virgates to a single carucate. Four carucates and a virgate were in demesne and five in villeinage, whilst three free tenants, Adam Clayhel, John de Evington and Alan Ford held one virgate each. The other carucate was held by John The following year Evington, Stoughton, Thurnby and Bushby were collectively described for tax purposes as one vill. Indeed, in the previous century Stoughton church may well have been dependent on Evington and not Thurnby as was subsequently the case. (A. Hamilton Thompson: "Leicester Abbey").

It is not known when the Greys built their moated manor house on a possible Saxon site west of the church. Although there are no surviving buildings and the area today is known as Piggy's Hollow†, the earthworks of the fine moat, 20 metres wide and 3 metres average depth, long scheduled as an ancient monument, has only recently been tidied after years of neglect. The moat was fed by a spring to the north and surrounds an island 80 metres by 25 metres.*** A fine series of fish-ponds lay to the west, but a feature to the south, probably only another fish-pond, was destroyed by the golf course. A large dam further to the south may represent the site of the watermill, which would never have had much water to drive it, even allowing for a faster flow in the days before land drainage. A mediaeval windmill site may be denoted by a mound north of the manor site and a platform north of the fish-ponds suggests possible house building. The bailiff's accounts for 1412–13 include payments to a carpenter for the rebuilding of a house outside the gate of the manor house, blown down *ventu et tempestate* (by wind and storm).††

The mediaeval *Evington Park*, not to be confused with the present park in the

† see p. 53.

†† Middleton MSS (University of Nottingham, Dept. of Manuscripts).

* It was part of the Sibleby (alias Belgrave) bailiwick of the Honor of Leicester.

** de Montfort acquired the larger manor through his marriage to the elder sister of earl Robert Fitzpurnell (died 1205); the younger sister had married Saer de Quincey, baron of Groby, earl of Winchester.

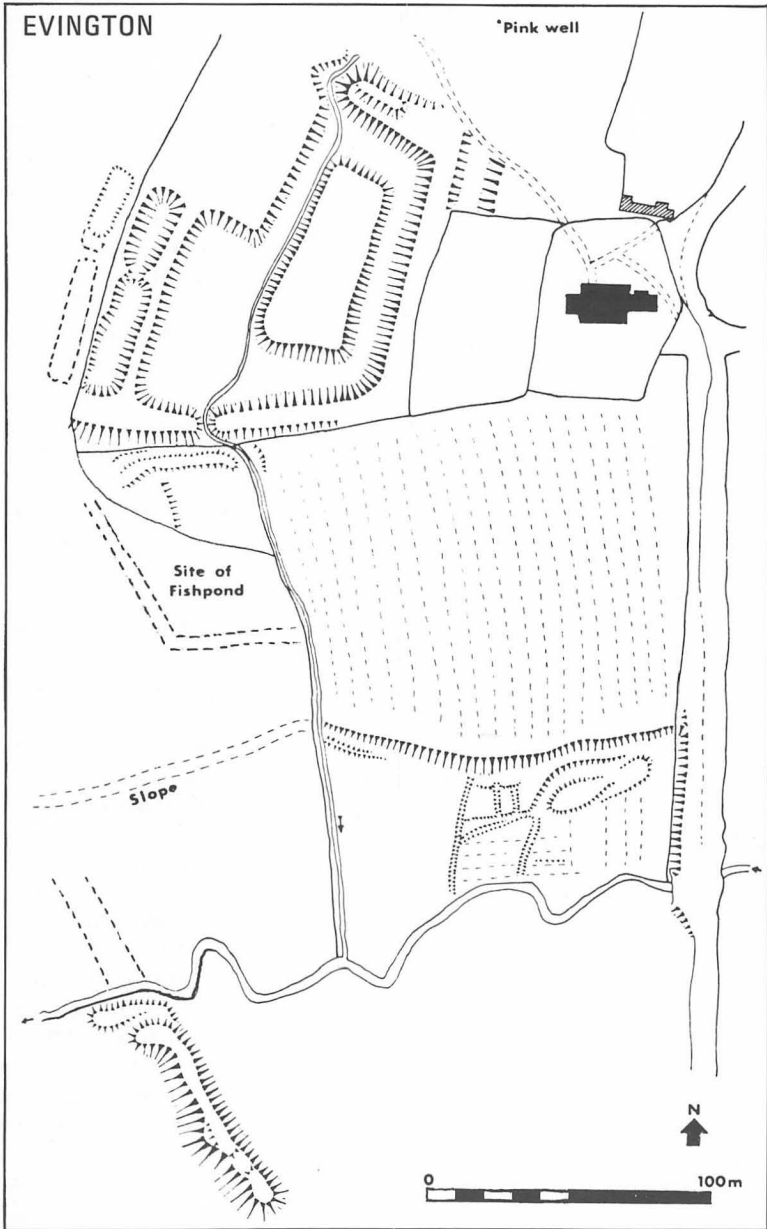
*** P. Liddle: Leicestershire Archaeology, The Present State of Knowledge, Vol. 2.



*1. Piggy's Hollow.
(1983).*

*2. Evington brook,
in full flow. (1983).*



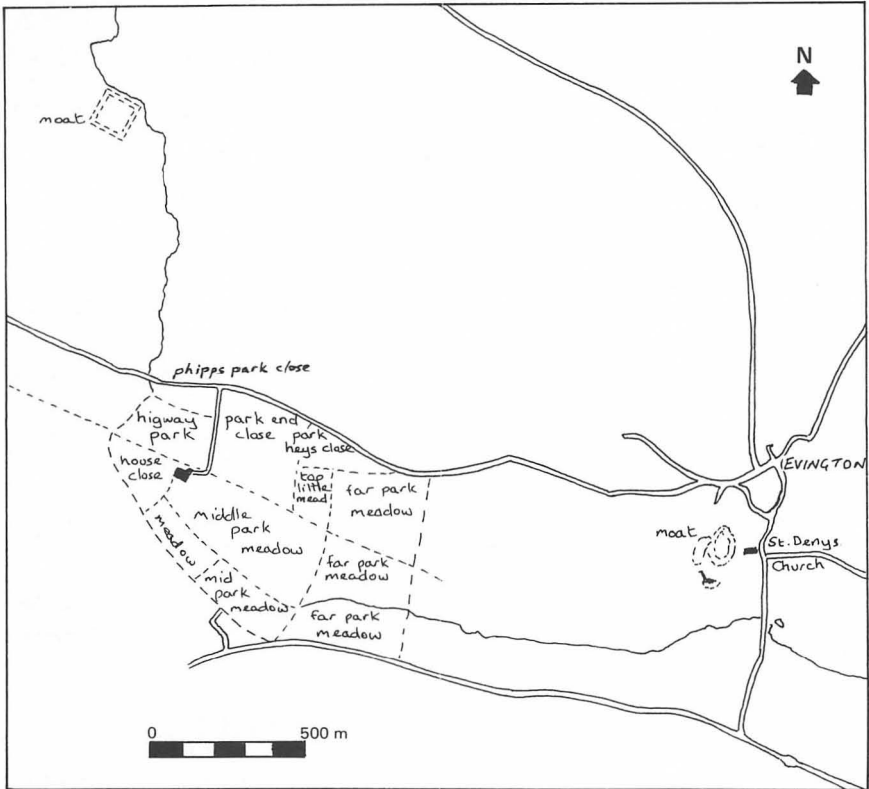


3. Evington Manorial Complex.

grounds of Evington House, lay to the south-west of the parish and was the Grey's hunting ground, stocked with deer. It was sited on semi-marginal clayey ground but exactly when it came into being is not known. Reference to "an enclosed spinney" in 1279 may refer to it; a warren is recorded in the same year. Certain mention occurs in 1335 when "le park" contributed £10 to the annual value of the manor of £63. 19s., and was the equivalent worth of 400 acres of demesne arable land. The park was continually being broken into and several prosecutions are known. A commission of oyer and terminer heard on complaint by Richard de Grey that Robert Hotoft (a manorial lord of Humberstone) and others broke into his park, hunted therein and took away his deer. That was in 1317 and in 1343 John de Grey brought a case three years after the event, whereby he claimed that John son of John Haclut with Thomas Gyllyng and many others, without his leave had hunted in his close on the Thursday after the Nativity of St. Mary, 1340 and took away bucks and does by which he was damaged £200. For some reason, the suit was repeatedly adjourned without judgment. Then, in 1372 Robert de Cautesfeld and Thomas, master of the Hospital of St. Leonard in Leicester were accused of breaking into John de Grey's park, and taking and carrying away his wild beasts. Just when the park ceased is not clear, but certainly the land had been divided into closes by the early seventeenth century, some later names of which are shown on the enclosed plan. The park may well have ceased by 1500, if not earlier.

Reverting to the thirteenth century, a dispute between Lucy de Grey, widow of John de Grey and the abbot of Leicester over a piece of land and a watercourse in Evington had repercussions recorded in the Patent Roll of 6 November 1275. Lucy had sent Thomas, son of Alan, Hugh in the Wro and other of her servants to Leicester "on her affairs". Robert de Ocham, Robert of Shepecheved, Geoffrey Godberd and others, coming out of Leicester abbey killed Thomas, maimed Hugh and beat the others, afterwards returning to the abbey and being received there. Presumably they were acting on the abbot's instructions.

An extent was carried out after the death of Henry de Grey in 1308 and this is important for its valuable detail of the manor as it was at that time. The capital messuage (manor house) was worth 40 shillings annually with easements of houses and gardens. A dovehouse was valued at 2s., the watermill at 20s., the windmill at 10s., 2 (fish)ponds at half a mark (6s. 8d.) and two ovens at 4s. each. Demesne land amounting to 20 bovates (say 2½ carucates) with meadow and pasture was worth £8. The manorial tenants comprised 19 free tenants, 36 customars and 14 coterells. Fifteen of the free tenants paid 37 shillings annually by even payments at St. Thomas' day (26 December), the Annunciation (25 March), the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24 June) and St. Michael's day (29 September). Two other free tenants provided 2 lb. of pepper worth two shillings at Easter and a further two rendered two lb. of cummin worth 2d. at the same feast. The customars, each holding a bovate of land (perhaps only 12½ acres) paid an annual 8s. rent quarterly (total £14. 8s.). Each customar was also required to work in harrowing and reaping (on the lord's estate) for 6 days annually for which work the value was 2s. (total £3.



4. Evington Park in the context of its Parish.



5. The basic arms of the GREY family:

"Barry of six argent and azure."

12s.). Coterells fell into two categories; those holding two acres of land paid 2s. annually (the total is given as 10s. so five may be presumed) whereas a further nine each held merely a cottage at an annual rent of 12d. (Total 9s.) The net worth of the estate totalled £33.11s. 6d., including pleas and perquisites of the court, half a mark (6s. 8d.).

Of the total of 69 manorial tenants, a few perhaps were single people and in estimating the population of the village at this time allowance must be made for the occupiers of the manor house and for a priest, as well as remembering the existence of the secondary manor, which contained perhaps five or six households. Bearing all these things in mind, an estimate of 75 families in Evington in 1308 would appear reasonable. Again, taking 4½ persons to a household as the norm, a population figure approaching 340 is reached and it was the 1870s, five and a half centuries later, before that level was attained again. Although the universal famines of 1315–17 and 1321 were yet to come, Evington's population may well have "peaked" in the late 1200s*; demesne land was being leased by 1308 and its area reduced below its Domesday assessment, pasture land also being increased.

By the time Richard de Grey died in 1335, the manor was clearly in decline, though efforts at maintaining profits had been made through steeply increased rents, leases for money and no fewer than 240 day works. Although the manorial worth is stated to be £63. 19s., the figures quoted add up to 6s. 8d. short; the watermill (which is mentioned up until 1413) does not appear, though it is conceivable it was out of use as the value of the windmill had increased two-fold since 1308. In addition to 'le park' already mentioned as being worth £10, the other stated values were: messuage 6s. 8d., dovehouse 4s., windmill 20s., common oven 10s., 400 acres of arable land in demesne £10 (6d. an acre), 100 acres of meadow £20 (4s. an acre, illustrating its scarcity-value). Rents of an unspecified number of free tenants were 60 shillings in total whilst £13. 13s. 4d. came from the annual rents of 20 villeins, each of whom was required on average to perform 10 days' work on the demesne estate each year. Between the villeins, 40 days' work was required between St. Michael (29 September) and the Purification (25 March) worth 6s. 8d., each work being valued at 2d.; 40 between the Purification and Easter worth 6s. 8d.; 60 between Easter and August worth 15s.; 100 between 1 August and St. Michael (29 September) stated to be worth 50s. but the value of each work is only given as 3d. The court pleas and perquisites were worth 20s.

Hay tithe of 10s. and corn tithe of £17 were payable to Leicester Abbey in 1341.**

There were three changes of incumbent in 1349, the year of the Black Death, two of them on account of the death of the previous man. This provides the only supposed evidence that Evington was afflicted by plague, but it is known that Great Stretton nearby was severely decimated and despite Evington's poor

* The south aisle of the church was probably built around this time.

** R. H. Hilton: *The development of some Leicestershire Estates in the 14th and 15th Centuries.*

road communications (Shady lane was not laid till the mid-nineteenth century) it is unlikely the village would have escaped. Again, another less severe plague year, 1361, shows two local changes of priest, one certainly caused by death, but the reason for the institution of the other is not given in the Lincoln Bishop's Registers. It is well-known that throughout England, one effect of a lower post-plague population was much land going to waste due to a severe labour shortage reflected in the generally diminishing size of settlements.

The Lay Subsidy returns for 1327 and 1332 are included in the appendix and show 16 persons paying 100s. 1d. tax in the earlier and 22 paying 115s. 6d. in the later return. On the basis of the 1335 extent above, it seems it was not just the labouring class but also some of the villeins who were not sufficiently wealthy to be assessable to this tax. Sir Richard de Grey is found in both the 1327 and 1332 lists, taxed at 10s. and 12s. respectively and John de Evyngton's contribution rose from 4s. 6¾d. to 6s. 8d. Henry, son of the reeve, appears in the 1327 list with the heaviest liability, 13s. 2d., but does not figure in the later return. Some were paying proportionately less; John le Clerk's share was reduced from 10s. 5d. down to 5s., Thomas Mantyl down from 8s. 7¾d. to 6s. 4d. and John Prest down from 8s. 5¾d. to 6s. 4d. are just three examples. William, son of Hugh, who appears on the 1327 Roll was one of the jurors at the inquisition post mortem of Henry de Grey in 1308. A Poll Tax list for 1381 (the year, nationally, of the Peasants' Revolt) is the fullest list of names we have for the parish at this period. A transcript appears in the appendix. It is generally accepted that evasion was rife, and the returns for 1377 are usually more complete, but that year does not survive for Evyngton so use must be made of the 1381 one. That subsidy was levied on all over the age of 15 years and shows 53 persons paying a total of 53s. The average payment was one shilling a head, but 20 couples are included, usually rated at 2 shillings but some paid 3s., 2s. 4d., or 1s. 8d. 17 villeins are mentioned, 2 free tenants, 1 cottager, 8 labourers, 3 servants and 2 widows. Clerk, Mantyl, Monk and Smyth are the only names surviving from the Lay Subsidies of half a century earlier. Even allowing for marked evasion, Evyngton is unlikely to have a population much in excess of 150 at this time, a community barely half its size in 1308.

The fifteenth century showed Evyngton, as elsewhere, to be further in decline. The assessment for both the 1416 and 1445 Lay Subsidies was £5. 16s. but there was an abatement of £2 in the latter year. The fact that the manor was being held in trust for some years from 1434 probably did not help matters at a difficult period. The manor was worth only £40 in 1444, down by over a third when compared with the 1335 valuation. Even so, there were many places worse affected.

There was an interesting dispute over the villein status of two members of the Charyte family in 1434. (A member of an earlier generation, Thomas, was described as a labourer in the 1381 Poll Tax.) Henry Grey, Thomas Chaworth and Roger Wyngeworth "on Monday next after St. Michael, 1433 took and carried away" the chattels of John and Thomas Charyte "viz. 6 plates, 6 brass pots, 2 pairs of sheets and other utensils of the house to the value of £10".

Although Chaworth and Wyngeworth asserted that the two Charytes "were their villeins and belong to their manor of Evington and that they are seised of them as of their ancestors as villeins" the jury decided otherwise saying that they were free men.

A reversionary deed dated 1467 whereby Henry, Lord de Grey confirmed to Richard Somerd and Alice his wife property including one messuage, a toft, croft and virgate of land (except one quadrant) contains mention of Portgate, although exactly where that road lay is uncertain. The situation of the property is described as being "between the king's highway called *Portgate* on the south and my tenement on the north. The annual rent was 4s. 1d. at Michaelmas with reversion if the couple had no issue. A number of Evington men were included among the witnesses — "Thomas Gybson, my bailiff of Evington, William Greneham, Richard Mantell, Richard Watt, Thomas Choune and Roger Horton". Somerd and Greneham were husbandmen, who two years earlier had been in trouble for breaking into the close of John Bussy.

Some evidence of the crops grown in Evington in the second half of the fifteenth century is provided by those collected as corn rents, probably by the bailiff of Stoughton Grange, for Leicester Abbey in 1477, reputed to have been a very wet, though hot year with a poor harvest. The two lists total barley 60qt., pease 46 qt., rye 31 qt., wheat 17 qt., oats 7 qt.†

(Much of the information in the above and succeeding chapter is adapted from G. F. Farnham: *Leicestershire Mediaeval Village Notes*, Vol.II.)

Evington in the Sixteenth Century

After the death of John Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, Sir William Stanley acquired the manor for one knight's fee and 4s. annual rent, in 1491. When he was attainted for support of the pretender Perkin Warbeck in 1494 the property was seized by the Crown, but Robert Orton, bailiff of Leicester, obtained a 40-year lease at a rental of £50 per annum. The lease was assigned to Roger Wigston of the well-known family of Leicester merchants, who surrendered the lease to the king in 1527. Meanwhile, the overlordship had devolved in 1510 on Anne, daughter of Edward IV and wife of Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, as part compensation for lands claimed in right of her great-grandmother. The earl was merely a tenant by courtesy and after his wife's death in 1520, he renounced all rights. The manor was next granted to George Hastings, (created earl of Huntingdon in 1529) in 1526, and it remained in possession of this family until 1616.

Sources are richer for the second half of the sixteenth century than for the first, due to the availability of wills and inventories, which throw light on the families who made up the community at this time. The Lay Subsidy of 1524 can be used to provide insight into the relative wealth of individuals at that date, and a transcript will be found in the appendix. John Somerd and Thomas Heyford paid 9s. and 8s. tax on goods valued at £19 and £16 respectively. Evington's total tax contribution from 20 payers was £2. 8s. 4d. Henry Burley,

† J. Nichols: *History of Leicestershire*, Vol. I.

Richard Winter, William Atkin, John and William Watts and William Palley were each assessed on goods valued between £6 and £7. Next came John Noon paying 2s. 6d. on £5 goods; John Buttery, Robert Wynter and Richard Heyford came in the £3 category, whilst Thomas Bayley, William Blake, William Fellyon and Robert Palmer each paid one shilling on goods of £2. At the bottom of the list, John Bennett, William Gervis, Thomas Hackett and Christopher Palmer were each liable for 4d. tax based on wages of £1. The remainder of the community, perhaps something approaching 40%, were not liable. Few names survive from the 1381 Subsidy. Bayley is the only obvious example.

A further Lay Subsidy in 1545 (see appendix) was not payable on wage assessments and 11 persons paid a total of £3. 6s. 8d. between them, but 26s. 8d. of this was contributed by Peter Bonney (Bunny) whose goods were assessed at £20. The next highest payment was 5s. 4d. from Thomas Burley; Richard Cater and Robert Pawmer (Palmer) each paid 4s. whilst Bartholomew Bailif(f), John Fylkes, Henry and Thomas Noyn (Noon), William Plum(m)er and John Spencer each contributed 3s. 4d. A presumed incomplete 1572 Lay Subsidy listing gives only Richard Nounne (8s. 4d. tax on £5 goods) and Amys Nounne 2s. 8d. tax on lands worth 20s.

It is known that there were 31 families in Evington in 1563† giving a population estimate of under 150. In the light of this, it seems that those enlisted in a muster roll c1537 did not comprise every able-bodied man aged between 16 and 60 years as was the legal requirement for military training. In fact, only nine are mentioned. Richard Watts, John Swetman, William Jervis and Robert Reynolds are listed as archers and Robert Marwere, Richard Swane, John Hille, Robert Palmer and John Saunders as bill-men. Evington was required to find horse and harness for two men, one an archer, the other a bill-man.

The earliest surviving Evington will, a pre-Reformation one of 1527, was left by William Mantell, vicar from 1488 to 1527, and was proved in the Leicester Archdeaconry Court. He remembered various clergy including the vicars of Oadby (his second gown), Thurnby (third gown) and Scraftoft. Evington church was also left a gown and 3s. 3d. and £1 to St. Thomas' light, the only reference known to a light presumably kept burning above a subsidiary altar. Lincoln Cathedral was to receive 12d. A penny dole was to be paid to those at his funeral. Another early will (1540) concerned Nicholas Hynes. Several bequests were made to members of the Abell family including his "best blew coat" to Robert and 13 sheep to Robert's two children, a gold ring to "sister Abell" (presumably his sister-in-law). Anthony was to have his mare and John Hill his russet coat. 6s. 8d. was left to Evington church and 4d. to the high altar, but Lincoln cathedral was to have the paltry sum of 2d.

Sir Hugh Lewyn, clerk, curate of Evington, probably previously displaced from Stoughton Grange due to the dissolution, died in 1557. His will, proved in the Leicester Archdeaconry Court, is chiefly of value in its mention of a dedication of Evington church to St. Richard, the only such reference yet found.

† Victoria County History of Leicestershire, Vol. III.

There can be no doubt that St. Denys has been the patronal saint since 1219 but a second dedicatee may have been added later, although this was an unusual choice of saint, even supposing this curate regarded a secondary altar so dedicated as having a special significance for himself. He bequeathed £6. 13s. 4d. to Evington church for a cope with similar gifts to both Houghton and Knighton churches. The main beneficiary of the will was Stoughton church, which was left £20 for "one coope one vestment and church book" and 6 "yoe shepe to be put unto ye churchwardens' hands" for church maintenance and repair. Four ewe sheep were also left to "4 maydens within my house during my sickness." His inventory, the earliest surviving one for Evington, shows he had at the time of his death "12 woole shepe £3" and 20 lambs valued at £2. 13s. 4d. The will also mentions John Presgrave (who owed Lewyn £30), Robert Bayley and William Lewyn, all described as of Stoughton Grange. Evington men mentioned as debtors include Thomas and Richard Nouné, William Gervice, William Hutchins and Roberte Jolye (Jelly).

One of these, Richard Noone, was a husbandman who died in 1572 leaving a long and detailed will that was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. Most of his farm and house possessions were to go to his son Thomas, at the age of 21 years; these included six draught horses and mares, two carts with cart gears (i.e. harness), plough and plough gears, two pairs of iron harness and two iron draught rakes. His livestock included four kye* at 4 nobles apiece (26s. 8d.), 2 yearling heifers or bullocks at 1 mark apiece (26s. 8d.) and three score sheep (60) at £4 a score. In addition to some malting and brewing equipment, mention is made of "all corne and haie that comes of a yarde lande of the house upon the grene" and his hives of bees. If Thomas was to die before he attained 21 years, one half was to be divided between his sisters Alice and Agnes, with the other half being shared by his mother and "the poor kin of the Noones". Alice and Agnes were each to receive £16 in money's worth at the age of 18 years or at the days of their marriages. If one was to die before then, the surviving sister and brother were to have the amount equally. Richard's brother Harry was to have his best russet doublet, his sister Isabel Burley and godson Richard Burley one ewe each. A pair of russet hose was left to Griffin, probably a servant. Henry Noone "his smith" was to have one ewe and other smiths Robert 12d. and Richard 20d. His sister Katharine and Roger Noone of Oadby were to have one lamb each while every godchild received 4d. Among charitable bequests, one pennyworth of bread was to be given to every poor Evington household, 2s. 4d. to Evington's poor man's box, 6d. to the cathedral church at Lincoln and 6d. to the poor widows of St. John's Hospital, Leicester.

The first known will to be proved in Evington's own Peculiar Court† concerned Henry Noone, husbandman, who died in June 1581. Again, there were several bequests of livestock, which according to his £85 Probate Inventory included cattle worth £17. 5s. 4d., sheep £6. 13s. 4d., pigs £2. 10s. and horses £8. Eighteen acres of white corn were valued at 15s. an acre and a similar acre-

* kine, cattle.

† see p. 62.

age of peas at 10s. an acre. 20s. was donated for church repairs and 3s. 4d. to the poor.

Evidently Evington's grazing land was highly prized for in the 1588 Probate inventory of one of Leicester's most substantial butchers Philip Feake, mayor of Leicester in 1581, is mentioned the various livestock he was keeping at Evington. 23 kye and heifers and 1 bull £56; 2 yearling calves £2. 6. 8d.; 20 hoggerells £3; 200 ewes and hoggerells £80; 2 mares and foales £4; 2 colts and a filly £9. 6. 8.; in total, nearly a quarter of his wealth of £627. 13s. 6d. was grazing on Evington's pastures!

One of Evington's richest men of his day was Peter Plummer, husbandman, who died in January 1591 leaving estate worth £231. 2s. 8d., including hay, peas, wheat, rye and barley totalling £50. 13s. 4d., a little more than his livestock (£49. 17s. 10d.), proving the importance of mixed farming in an Elizabethan economy. His sheaf of arrows with a bow, 7s. 2d., is an interesting feature but the large amount of linen in his house is perhaps more noteworthy. Four sons and 2 daughters meant his household, exclusive of any servants living in, would have numbered eight. He possessed 4 dozen napkins, 14 pillows and 3 towels £3. 0s. 6d.; 11 pairs of flaxen sheets, 10 pairs of hempen, 20 pairs of harden and 12 table-cloths £15. 5s. Some of these would surely have been homespun. As in the 1595 inventory of John Filke, flax and hemp are mentioned and hemp is also found in the 1586 inventory of Edmund Presgrave. In 1551–3 both flax and hemp were included among tithes payable in Evington.

Linen also figured prominently in the possessions of another husbandman, Bryan Worthington, who died in August 1592, leaving estate of £176. 15s. 2d. Seven pairs of flaxen sheets (£2. 6s. 8d.), 14 of hempen (£2. 10s.), 8 of harden (£1); 4 flaxen bordecloths (tablecloths), 6 flaxen and 12 hempen napkins (16s. 8d.) are mentioned.* 37 acres of crops were appraised at £25 and comprised wheat, barley, oats, rye and peas with an additional £10. 5s. for hay. His livestock included cattle £22. 10s., 32 sheep and 21 lambs £17, pigs £3, horses £15 and poultry 6s. 8d.

John Fylke, died 1595, was perhaps the first of Evington yeomen and left possessions valued at £202. 12s. 8d. His 26 cattle were appraised at £27. 6s. 8d., his 87 sheep at £26. 13s. 4d. and his horses £19. He also had 15 hens and a cock (£2. 6s.) and 4 hives of bees (13s. 4d.). His corn and hay was worth £40 plus £2. 10s. for five sown acres of wheat and rye.

A fairly high proportion (£36 out of a total estate of £92) for corn and hay crops is found in the November 1596 inventory of Peter Winter, husbandman. A rather smaller amount (£29) for wheat, rye, barley, peas and hay was included in the £129. 15s. estate of William Burley, husbandman, but with his livestock totalling £31. 1s. 8d. we find the value of arable produce and livestock again well-balanced.

Of the sixteenth century inventories not discussed in detail, two others should not be overlooked; that of Edmund Presgrave, clerk, vicar 1580–86,

* Not including towels, pillowcases and "lynnin in gode wife Worthington's chist."

Some Inuentorie of all the goodes & cattell
of Peter Winter of Kington deceased, taken
the xxij. daie of November. 1598.

Yarde	Imporimē all the troope of roone & hys	xxv
	The two tatted & four harrowes	iii
	The bowelles, spales, and other tooles	xxv
Stable.	The vij horses, mares, & foales	xx
	The stables, mangers, & planchers, raste yeates, plowes & plow	xx
	Limber w th other thinges in the stable.	xx
	The the linte heart & quarres	xx
Stabling	The all in the kitchen	xx
Table	The all in the hall	xx
Parlor	The all in the parlor	xx
	The all in the chamber	xx
	The the in swine	xx
	The ten sheep	xx
	The five Oxen & one calfe	xx
	The all his interest w th in the lordship of Kington	xx
	The his purse & his apparell	xx
	The all thinges remembred & forgotten	xx

Summa totalis id
lxxxvii. iii. s.

Ex p^{te} suis legat^{is} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro}
Cuiusmodi sub p^{ro}
Anno dⁿⁱ 1598 /
p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro}
p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro}
p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro} p^{ro}

totalled £47. 4s. with his featherbed, mattress, two boulders and two pillows contributing £10, more than the £8 value of his 43 sheep. Thomas Jacam, husbandman, with a mere handful of beasts, left estate worth only £28. 7. 10. in 1591, but remembered his relatives and friends in his will including giving his pied cow to Isabel Jacham. Every poor Evington man was to receive 1d. bread and the church was left 12d.

On 6 April 1589 Amye daughter of Peter Winter was called before Dr. John Chippingdale at the church court to state "where and in what place she was married" but the outcome is unrecorded. Other things in the same Act book (to be found among the Archdeaconry deposits in the Leicestershire Record Office) are more interesting. These relate to proceedings held in Evington church before the same man, "Master" John Chippindale, Doctor of Laws, and in the presence of Francis Presgrave, notary public on Wednesday 17 September and Friday 19 December 1589 and on Thursday 8 January, Friday 6 March and Saturday 21 March 1590. Unfortunately, the accompanying papers to the various actions do not survive so the full story cannot be told, but it does seem the unpopular James Hutchins, vicar 1583–1601, was at the centre of the trouble, some of which doubtless stemmed from his efforts at collecting his tithes from his reluctant parishioners. Six actions are reported and one is left wondering what happened in other years, for which no record survives!

1. James Hutchins v. Lawrence Atkins in a cause of withholding tithes.
2. Margaret, wife of Henry Billington v. James Hutchins in a cause of defamation.
3. Margaret Billington v. Thomas Jelly in a cause of defamation.
4. James Hutchins v. Henry Billington in a cause of defamation.
5. James Hutchins v. Elizabeth Noone in a cause of defamation.
6. Henry Billington v. James Hutchins in a cause of defamation.

Among the defamatory statements held to have been used were "a strumpet" and "a slute" in the second case. While on the road between Leicester and Evington, Billington in the fourth case was held to have "spoke and uttered openly and publicly before trustworthy witnesses, with malicious spirit and contrary to good manners certain defamatory and slanderous words sounding and tending to the disgrace and denigration of the good name of the said James Hutchins": "Thowe art a pawltry priest, a dum dogg, asse, dolt and more fytt to keep swyne than to be a minister." It was suggested Billington should publicly before 4, 5 or 6 parishioners of Evington called together for the purpose in the house of Richard Noone withdraw the words "uttered by him with a malicious intent."

The counter-action between Billington and Hutchins (case 6) seemed to arise as a result of Billington being called by the vicar "a palterie pricklouse potticarie" openly and in public. The outcome of that action is unrecorded.

It is interesting to note that Hutchins who died in 1601 did indeed keep pigs. His probate inventory mentions "1 bore, a sowe and 2 shotes* £1. 3s. 4d."

* young, weaned, often castrated pigs.

Evington in the Seventeenth Century

The most important event affecting Evington in the seventeenth century was the purchase of the manor for £900 by William, lord Cavendish, later earl of Devonshire in September 1616, from Henry, earl of Huntingdon and Elisabeth his wife. The manor was then said to contain 20 messuages, 20 cottages, a dove-house, 40 gardens, 40 orchards, 800 acres of land (probably meaning for arable use), 200 acres of meadow, 800 of pasture, 100 of furze and heath and 100 of moor, 40s. rent and common of pasture in Evington. All these are suspiciously round numbers and may tend to overstate the true position.

We have seen how in the late sixteenth century pasture land was being used by outsiders for grazing, thus suggesting at least part of the parish was already enclosed. The names of the three mediaeval open fields have so far not yet been discovered, but a fortunate survival is a nineteenth century copy of a rudimentary manorial map drawn originally in 1627, which clearly shows land use at that time. (See map on page 20). Approximately 1,600 acres out of about 1,950 were enclosed. There was still a little strip farming being carried on mainly south and west of the church, mostly being carried out on a joint basis, and there were pasture closes where two or three were engaged in a kind of co-operative. Where a field name includes the word "mean(e)", joint occupation is generally inferred. Thus, among the closes involved are Meane Park, Meane New Close, Meane Hall Yard and Meane Deepdale. The arable strips varied greatly in size, most from 18 acres to 3 acres. Some of the pasture closes were large: Herald's Close (later Harrold's Closes, divided) was 121 acres, Langhill 114 acres, Crown Hill 89 and Cock Close 74. The name of the latter close may refer not to the woodcock but to its hill-top situation (o.e. 'cocc') but by 1717 the name had become Cox's Close, later corrupted to Cow Close by 1874. Some 35 tenants were occupying land in 1627 including some outsiders such as Mr. Feringham (probably from Humberstone) and Alexander Cotes (from Leicester), who had holdings exceeding 100 acres. Of the local husbandmen, the average holding was around 40 acres; those with over 50 acres were John Chamberlain with a total of 96, Henry Palmer 90, William Gutteridge 89, William Filkes 83, Henry (?) Billington 65, Richard Plummer and William Burley each had 54 and Thomas Noone 53. The village centre shown more clearly in the separate illustration suggests the bulk of the late mediaeval housing was to the south of Main street and east of Church road; it is satisfying to know just where some of the Evington men of the day lived. The parish still had some unenclosed land half a century later, mentioned in terriers of 1678 and 1698 as 24 and 30 yardlands respectively; at 12½ acres to the yardland, this would represent something between 275 and 375 acres still open, little change from the position in 1627.

A Lay Subsidy in 1628 when Charles I was becoming desperate for funds shows goods taxed at 5s. 4d. in the pound. Evington's total contribution was £3. 4s. Rather surprisingly, only four Evingtonians were assessed and all on goods worth £3, despite the different acreages they were farming the previous year. For comparative purposes, these figures are bracketed after each name: Richard Sharpe (19 acres), Peter Plummer (23), William Burley (54) and William

Johnson (38).

Not a great deal is known about Evington in the troubled Civil War and Commonwealth period but the church remained open, and, contrary to what the Victoria County History of Leicestershire says, the Parish Registers (see *infra*) appear to be complete for this period. The vicar was described as "insufficient, non resident" in 1650 with "a preacher hired at the charge of others". Joseph Filkes was fined £70 in 1645 "by way of composition for his loyalty" (presumably to the royalist cause). It is after the restoration in 1660 that the only other available tax returns, dating from 1662, throw light on the village at this period. These are the Hearth Tax listings when a "fireplace" tax of a shilling a hearth was levied on every householder twice a year. Some of these returns survive, and that for Michaelmas 1664 will be found in the appendix. 33 persons were paying on 59 hearths, but this total would not include those, mostly widows, who were excused payment "by legal certificate" on grounds of poverty; many of these would have been living in one hearth homes. Joseph Filkes had a 5 hearth house, Thomas Weston 4 at the Vicarage, Will Paine 4, four houses had 3, eight houses 2, the rest only 1. The Lady-day 1666 list shows 32 payers and 61 hearths and in 1670 28 names are mentioned with 18 others excused, thus giving a total of 46 houses in Evington in that year. This fuller listing is badly faded but is summarised after the 1664 list in the appendix. Population at this time may be estimated by using a multiplier of $4\frac{1}{4}$ on the figure of 46 families in the 1670 Hearth Tax list: a community of 196 persons would result. This figure is largely substantiated by the 1676 ecclesiastical census of communicants, non-conformists and recusants, which credited Evington with 121, to which total fifty per cent should be added to allow for children and other non-communicants (that class would have comprised approximately one third of the total population) producing an estimated figure of 182.

A little insight into the background of the ordinary village families in the seventeenth century is provided by the Parish Registers of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, which for Evington only survive from November 1601. Is it mere coincidence that the earlier Registers before the death of the troublesome Rev. James Hutchins do not survive?†

Children were being born at the rate of nine a year in the first decade of the century and in 1602 and 1604 there were 14 and 13 baptisms respectively; thereafter the birth rate fell appreciably, six or seven births a year being the usual. Burials consistently averaged five or six a year; fatal epidemics are not evidenced and in no decade in this century do burials exceed baptisms. The worst years appear to have been 1608 and 1617 with 13 and 14 deaths respectively, yet the pattern of deaths is not concentrated enough to suggest that the scourge of the mediaeval world, plague in either bubonic or pneumonic form, was present nor any other killer disease, for that matter. The general level of infant mortality in Evington does not seem particularly high, although some families did have a higher than average death rate among their infant off-spring; of the older-established families, Atkins, Winter and some branches of the

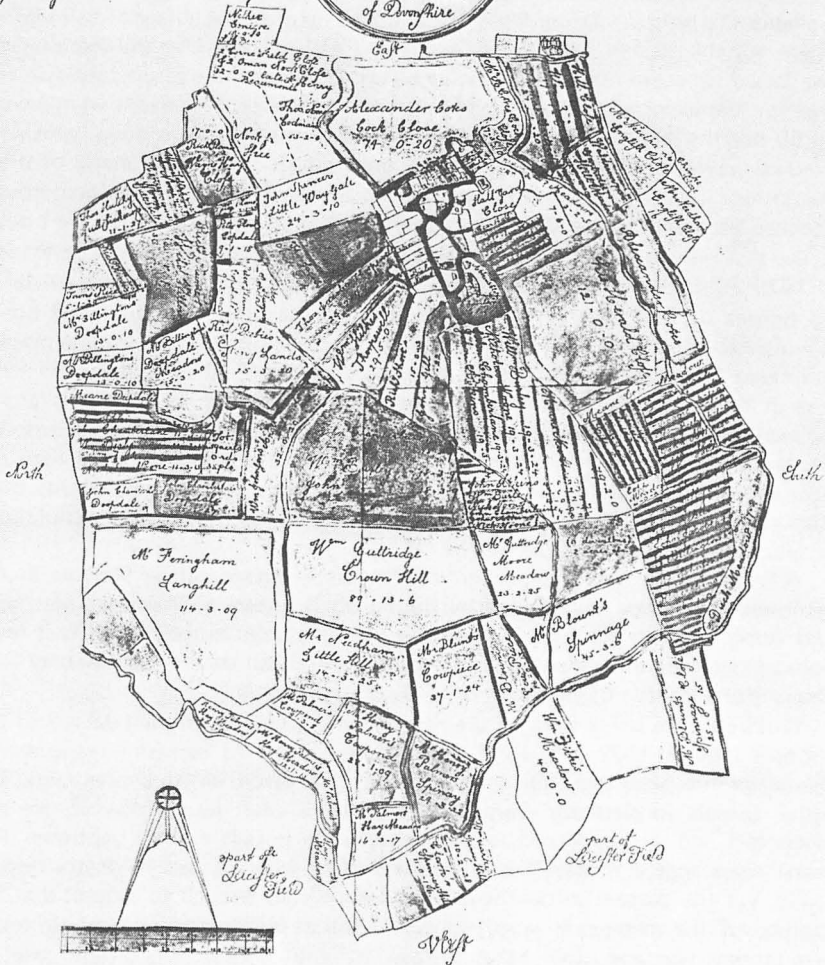
† see p. 11.

Early 19th century copy of an Estate Map of Leighton dated 1627, showing the Manor soon after the last time family sold it in 1616 to William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire.
 There is still evidence of some open-field farming, represented by unstriped square tines in this reconstruction.

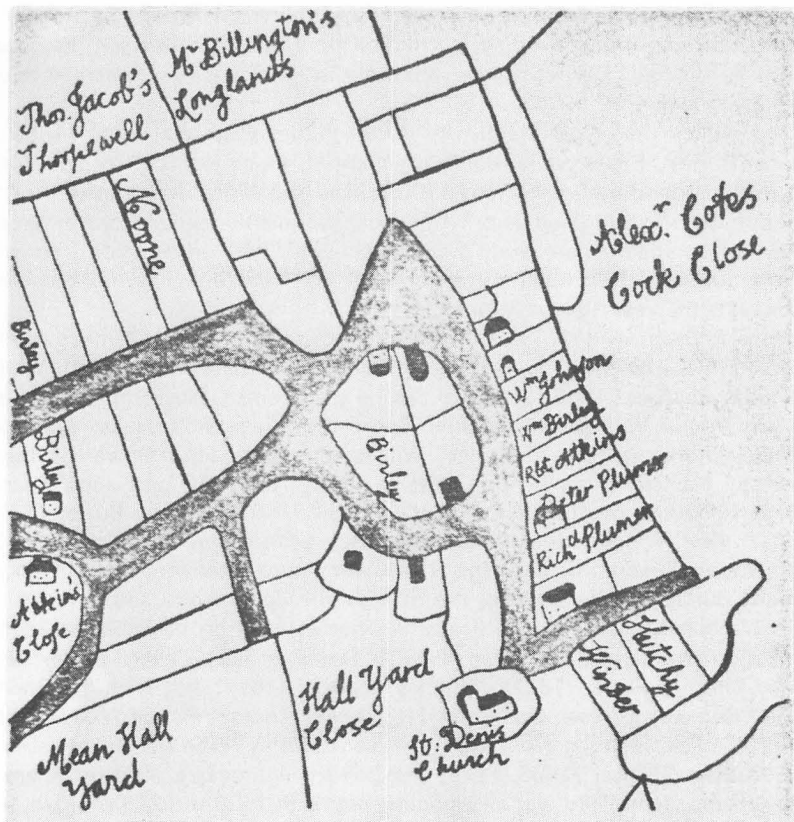
The
 plat of Easing
 is in the Countie
 of Leiceſtre
 belonging to the Right
 Honourable the Counteſſe
 of Devonſhire

done Decemb: 16th 1627 my Honourable Lord gave in the Countie of Leiceſtre the ſhill: tithes and a little piece of the tithes of the manor and being about 20⁰⁰ in for the same field of pasture in the tithes and tithes to myse containing about 67 acres

offard by Will^m Knorr anno dom 1627



7. Manorial map, 1627.



8. Village centre from the above map.

Noones were among those families who fared the worst. Inevitably, too, there are examples of mothers dying in child-birth, although, here again, Evington's record is not bad. Marriages were relatively insignificant in numbers – two or three a year being the average.

The names that most frequently occur in the Registers before 1650 are Atkins, Burley, Filkes, Jelly, Johnson, Noon(e), Plummer, Spencer and Winter and in the second half-century to 1700, Filkes and Winter are no longer numerous but Carrick, Harrison and White now frequently occur. Except around 1636–42 occupations are rarely given, but coupled with information from wills, a fairly full list of occupations can be built up. Dates are given for those who fall outside the years just mentioned.

Robert Belgrave (1607), Edward Chamberlain (1610), Clement Noone, Joseph Filkes (1649), Peter Plummer (1668), William Johnson (1674), William and John Spencer (1686–7) figure among the yeomen. Husbandmen included Edward Noone, William Atkins, John Spencer, William Wells, Henry Billington, Richard Plummer, Edward Burley, William Johnson, John Goward, Thomas Stretton, Richard Sharp, most present during 1636–49 and John Spencer (1678). Labourers mentioned included Peter Hill (1607), Thomas Burley (1626), Michael West, William Monke, William Winter, John Grice, John Spencer, John Jelly, Ralph Austin, Richard Noone, William Savage, William Tafts (1649) and Edward Burley (1685). Among the others were John White and John Burley (1685) shepherds and Brian Taffes and Thomas Mawson described as cottiers in 1633. The craftsmen included Nicholas Beeby, miller; Richard Butler, blacksmith; Thomas Platts (1632), Thomas Spencer (1671) and Nicholas Spencer (1698) weavers; Thomas Scampton (1671) and Thomas Goode (1686) tailors; Henry Carrick, upholsterer (1680); William Burley (1649), William Darker (1650), John Spencer (1663, 1679) and Edward Plummer (1669) figure among the butchers. John Jelly was an alehouse keeper in 1608 and William Pole, right at the end of the century in 1699, is Evington's first known stockinger, the forerunner of the framework-knitters of the next century.

The first recorded* Evington man to be made a freeman of Leicester, in 1665, was Edward Plummer son of Peter, who had been apprenticed to another Edward Plummer, of Leicester, butcher. Other butchers were made free just for market days. William Burley and William Darker paid 20s., for the privilege in 1649–50, and John Spencer in 1663. William Scampton, who had been apprenticed to John Scampton of Evington, now described as mercer, was made free in 1674, the same year as Henry Carrick, son of Henry, upholsterer, who had been apprenticed to Richard Palmer of Leicester, vintner. Another of John Scampton's apprentices, William Davenport, was made free in 1680. Among other apprenticeship records, Richard Noone son of Richard the elder of Evington, husbandman, was apprenticed to a Leicester mercer, Edward Noone, in 1645; William Burley, son of Thomas, deceased, labourer, was apprenticed to Edward Plummer, a Leicester butcher in 1647. Thomas Hutchins son of Richard, labourer, was

* other than several 'de Evington' names in the 13th. century.

apprenticed in the same year to a Leicester fellmonger, Abstinence Pougher and Thomas's brother, Richard, in the next year to another Leicester fellmonger, Robert Langton.

Among the details extracted from wills during this century are the following:

William Jacame, died February 1601, left a sizeable estate of £228. 2s. including wheat, rye and barley, £26, peas £15 and hay £13. 6s. 8d. His livestock comprised 9 kine, 3 heifers, 5 steers and 5 calves £27; 4 horses, 3 mares and 2 fillies £26. 13s. 4d.; 28 sheep £7; 8 swine and 4 shoots £3.

Richard Beeby, husbandman, died 1604, made provision for each of his twenty sheep to be divided among his (named) children and grandchildren, leaving also 3s. to the poor "for bread at my funeral".

William Faulkner, carpenter, died 1607, mentions 2 acres of corn (1 of barley, 1 of pease) lying in the field of Evington. Was this the only "open" field still in evidence at this date?

Robert Belgrave, optimistically described as a yeoman, died in 1607, but his inventory only totals £10. 5s. 2d., his livestock being 1 cow, 1 "white" heifer and 9 sheep. Calves not yet born were even bequeathed and he left the church 6s. 8d. and the "most needful people of Evington 4d. apiece".

Nicholas Noone, husbandman, died 1608, leaving estate of £183. 14s. 4d. including crops £40, 15 "horned beaste" £26. 13s. 4d., 31 sheep £8, horses £9 and 14 swine £4. 10s.

Edward Chamberlain, yeoman, died 1610, left bequests of £40 to son George and £30 and £20 to daughters Sarah and Elizabeth respectively. His £199. 5s. 8d. estate included white corn £30, pease £8 and grass £5. Among his livestock were cattle £21, 4 horses £13. 6s. 8d., 13 sheep £3. 6s. 8d., 6 pigs £2. 6s. 8d. and poultry 5s.

Agnes Plummer, widow, died 1617, had 4 petticoats, 2 safeguards and a cloak 24s. among her possessions not to mention her wearing linens 26s. 8d. (made herself, she had a "lynnon wheele") and her three hats.

William Noone, husbandman, died 1617 had a large estate, totalling £261. 5s. His corn and hay was worth £50, his 14 cattle £32, his 5 cart horses £22, "4 leane swine" £8, and 40 sheep £6. Butter and cheese was valued at £14 and he also had 6 hives of bees.

Even a labourer, Thomas Burley, died 1626, could leave £41. 2s. 2d. including 4 cattle, 10 sheep and lambs, a swine hog, four hens and a cock. He left 2s. to the poor and provided as well as he could for his 3 sons and 2 daughters.

William Filkes, yeoman, died 1626, took care to provide for his large family of 2 sons and 9 daughters. He owned land in Priors Marston, Warwickshire, as well as at Oadby, and his will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. The bulk of his real estate went to his elder son Joseph at the age of 22 years, but John was to be paid £60 at the age of 24. The eldest daughter Sarah was to receive £40 and the other daughters £30 each at the age of 23. The poor were left 10s. as was Richard Butler (see *infra*).

Although Thomas Mauson (died 1633) was only a cottiar, he left 11 hives of bees.

Thomas Noone, husbandman, died 1637, had specialised in sheep. His estate of £124. 11s. 9d. included 65 ewes and 2 rams, value £42. 10s. 9d. with a further £2. 10s. for lamb hogs. 9 tod plus a stone of wool was worth £11. 17s. and his savings in his coffer amounted to £16. 11s.

Thomas Jacombe, husbandman, died 1637, had 35 sheep and 3 lambs £21, cattle £13. 6s. 8d. in his £96. 6s. 4d. estate. 4 acres of newly sown barley were worth £8 and a similar amount of newly sown peas £3.

William Welles, husbandman, died 1639, left an estate of similar size (£90. 19s.). He had 20 ewes and a ram worth £6, 2 cows £6, 4 hens and a cock 4s. 39 fleeces of wool were valued at £4. 10s. and his crops included pease and hay £2. 13s. 4d. and wheat and barley £2. 4s. 8d. In his will he remembered his grandchildren including the four daughters of Thomas and Alice Dorman deceased of Oadby (£10 each at 18). He left his kinsman, Thomas Welles of Leicester, shoemaker, 10 shillings together with his best doublet, breeches, best hat and band, best pair of hose, best pair of shoes and best coat. The poor of

Evington were to be given 5 shillings.

For some reason, the village blacksmith, Richard Butler, was one of the brethren of Trinity Hospital, Leicester for at least a year before his decease in 1639, leaving ten shillings for the repair of the chapel chancel, if he was buried there. His non-cupative will mentioned that nothing was left to his brother since he had cost him £40 and owed 40s. and would not pay. Among numerous bequests were his bible left to John Filkes and a pair of gloves to the vicar, Matthew Gwynn.

William Taffes, died 1640, though only a labourer, left estate valued at £77. 17s., including sheep £18 and 4 kine (£7. 13s. 4d.).

Clement Dakin, husbandman, died 1638, left his eldest son £30 and his four other sons and a daughter £5 each. In appointing his kinsmen John Needham of Illston and Francis Needham of Burton Overy supervisors of his will, he leaves each 10s. for their pains "to buy each of them a small ringe and for a remembrance of my love to them."

Peter Plummer, a substantial yeoman, died in 1668 with £175 of his £321. 14s. 8d. estate "due upon bonds". His livestock comprised 42 sheep and lambs £28, 6 cows £14. 13s. 4d., 2 mares and 3 geldings £15 and 2 swine £1. 10s. His 8 hives of bees were valued at £2. Barley, wheat and malt, pease and grass totalled £30. 18s. 8d. and his nephew, Peter, dwelling with him was left £5 "to set him to a trade to be paid at age 24". £1 was left to the poor.

John Burley the elder, shepherd, died 1684, had 24 sheep £8 and one mare £1 in his £33. 9s. 4d. estate, whilst Edward Burley, died 1685, husbandman, had 35 ewes and 25 lambs worth £20, cattle £12 and a pig 10s. in his £40. 8s. effects.

The long will of Thomas Benington, gentleman, died 1686, included the unusual provision that his friend "Mr. Cadwallader Vaughan Rector of Osgathorpe" should preach his funeral sermon.

William Johnson, yeoman, died 1687, left a large estate of £321. 1s. including wheat, barley, and pease £89, his "teame" £50, Cows £30, Sheep £43. 16s.

Edward Atkins, labourer, died 1697, had a lease of the Hall Yard and included in his £23. 17s. 6d. estate were 1 Brown heifer, 3 ewes and six lamb hogs.

Evington in the Eighteenth Century

The Cavendishes are supposed to have lost Evington manor at the card-table, and in the Devonshire Collections at Chatsworth there is an assignment of the manor (and Buckminster vicarage) from Lord William Manners by direction of his grace the duke of Devonshire, dated 16 July 1735. The purchaser was the famous wealthy botanist, Dr. James Sherard of Eltham, Middlesex, who had been born at Bushby in 1665. When Sherard died in 1737 leaving £150,000 there was provision in his will that the manor was to be divided amongst his five nieces, and this proposal was affirmed by parliament many years later. The deed of separation dated 21 April 1761 has been confused with an enclosure award, which it certainly was not and some land in Stoughton as well as in Evington was involved. The manor was accordingly divided into five equal portions and allotted by the drawing of lots, in retrospect little short of a farcical arrangement! The families involved in this manorial sacrilege of 1,800 acres were Mary and John *Edwyn* of Baggrave; Christian and Richard *Sharpe* of Wing, Rutland; Ann and Henry *Coleman* of Market Harborough; Elizabeth and Samuel *Taylor* of the same place; Susanna and the Rev. Samuel *Statham* of Loughborough.

One effect of the land-ownership upheaval was the decline of the small

freeholder. Although even as early as 1719, George Plummer had been the only resident freeholder out of a total of seven and the position had been unchanged in 1741, by 1775 the only Evington freeholder was Thomas Plummer. Many of the earlier non-residents had, through their families, connections with the village: names such as Cartwright, Cufflin, Davenport, Jelly, Spencer, Vann and Worth occur. The 1773 Land Tax return emphasises the change. Out of a total of £145. 12s. 4½d. assessment, the Colemans were paying £55. 4s. 5½d., the Stathams £27. 12s. 3d., the Burnabys who had succeeded to the Edwyn portion £34. 8s. 3¼d.; the other two portions had also changed hands, but due to purchases by other landowners, the amounts involved were negligible. "Mr. Plummer" was only assessed at £1. 19s.! Graziers were the predominant class of farmer now and they were best able to combat periods of depression as well as amassing reasonable wealth. A summary of some Evington leases 1712–18 appears in the appendix. Most were of twenty-one years' term. It was common for provision of a fine, usually equivalent to one year's rent to be paid on issue, and for an heriot of best beast, or best personal chattel upon determination.

Throughout the century, the population did not fluctuate much beyond the 40–45 families range;* baptisms averaged 7 annually, but were highest in the 1730s, a period when marriages were greatest. In the 1790s, the annual average for baptisms fell to 4. Burials reached a peak in the 1720s averaging 7 a year and over the decade there was an excess of 8 over the number of baptisms. There were 14 burials in 1723 and 12 in 1728, a time of general ill-health. Prior to 1750 Berry, Brian, Cartwright, Harrison, Johnson, Noone, Loseby, Phipps, Plummer, Spencer, Vann and West are the names most commonly encountered in the Parish Registers; between 1750–70, except for marriages, the Registers are almost wholly defective, but Berry, Cartwright, Davenport, King, Loseby and Worth are the most regular names between 1770 and 1800.

The early years of the century saw an influx of families into the parish; predominant among these were the Vanns and the Bryans, both framework-knitters. William Vann, born in Wigston in 1660 moved in 1701 and quickly became established, his son marrying Elizabeth Southwell, the vicar's daughter and another son buying Belgrave Hall in 1767. Thomas Bryan came to Evington from the Leicester parish of All Saints in 1709, became a freeman of Leicester in 1714, and he and his son, also Thomas (freeman 1734) took in a number of apprentices in the first half of the century. The first was William Ross, son of William, an Evington labourer, who had to pay 20s. as premium. Other of their apprentices we know about came from Kibworth Beauchamp (three), Thurnby (two), Smeeton Westerby and Tugby. Thomas, senior, had been apprenticed in Leicester to Conyers White, framework-knitter (f.w.k.). Yet despite the influence of the Vanns and Bryans, framework knitting never seemed to establish itself as it did in many other Leicestershire villages, there rarely being more than two or three exponents in Evington well into the next century. William Vann senior died in 1737 and his frames were valued at £57 in his estate of £242. 15s. 6d. Thomas Bryan the younger died in 1747, leaving two frames,

* *Speculum*, 1705–16. (Lincolnshire Archives Office).

nos. 24 and 23½. Another immigrant was Richard Roberts who came from the Leicester parish of St. Martin's and followed the unusual trade for a village of pewterer. William Arnold, tailor, moved from Ratby in 1716. Since families coming into a new parish had to be in possession (after 1697) of a Settlement Certificate, it is often possible to trace their previous parish, since such a parish issuing a Certificate was in effect offering to take the family back should it become, or appear likely to become, a charge on the Poor rate of the adopted parish. Among the Evington records are more than 30 Certificates between 1697 and 1793 and 11 Removal orders between 1719 and 1844 returning families to the parishes of Settlement.

Many Evington children were fixed up with apprenticeships in Leicester and elsewhere. The following are a few examples before 1770:

- 1723 Jonathan Ross, brother of William mentioned above, to Humphrey Warlitt of Leicester, tailor. Consideration £3.
- 1733 Christopher Berry son of Christopher, cordwainer, to George Hartshorne of Leicester, cordwainer. Consideration £5. 10s. (Deserted his service 6 weeks, afterwards returned.)
- 1733 John Arnold, son of John, tailor to William Warburton of Blaby, tailor.
- 1743 John Bagnall, son of John, deceased, f.w.k. to William Brown of Leicester, f.w.k.
- 1744 Thomas Spencer son of Thomas to Robert Bryan of Little Stretton, f.w.k.
- 1754 James Harrison son of James, grazier, to William Jennings of Leicester, carpenter.
- 1754 Richard Loseby son of William, cordwainer to James Towers of Leicester, heel-maker.
- 1758 Charles Loseby, brother of above, to Samuel Wood of Leicester, glover and breeches maker. Consideration £5. 5s.
- 1761 William West son of John, labourer to William Hunt of Leicester, f.w.k.
- 1762 William Hannible son of Benjamin, f.w.k. to Thomas Burley of Leicester, woolcomber. Consideration £5 charity money. (Which charity is not known, presumably a Leicester one — Evington has never had one.)
- 1762 John Harrison son of John, tailor to his father's service.
- 1769 Thomas Berry son of Thomas, f.w.k. to George Lewett of Humberstone, slater, plasterer and bricklayer. (Served only 5 years — the normal apprenticeship term was 7 years.)

In 1763 William Loseby, cordwainer took John Westbury, a pauper boy from Sibleby, as his apprentice, and in 1789 George Loseby, woolcomber, under a private apprenticeship took William Berry.

John Scampton, tailor/mercier, was taking apprentices from outside Evington by 1679, but two local people, William Plummer, son of Thomas, yeoman and John Spencer had both been apprenticed to him and they were made freemen of Leicester in 1701 and 1704 respectively. Other Evington men to become freemen before 1750 included John Noon, who had also been apprentice to Thomas Bryan and William Southwell, eldest son of the vicar, Richard Southwell, both in 1727; two sons of Richard Roberts, pewterer, Joseph and John were made free in 1720 and 1734 respectively. As in the previous century, butchers were made free on Leicester market days, William Frostnell (1704) and William Worth (1740) are two local examples.

36 Indentures of pauper apprenticeships (1707–1828) also survive for Evington; as far as possible, the Overseer(s) of the Poor and the churchwardens arranged apprenticeships for children of pauper families to avoid them becoming

a continual charge on the Parish poor rate. It was usually in their interests to have them apprenticed away from the parish, and among the parishes noticed are Aylestone, Barkby, Belgrave, Birstall, Bushby, Cropston, Hinckley, Kilby, Leicester (All Saints, St. Margaret's, St. Martin's), Mountsorrel, South Croxton and Wigston. Very occasionally, a local apprenticeship might be arranged, usually to a parish officer. Thus, in 1770, Mary West was apprenticed to Thomas Cartwright the younger, yeoman; previously in 1769 John West had gone to John Goddard, husbandman and in 1799 William Arnold, tailor took in John Hickenbotham *alias* Freer. Most of the apprenticeships were arranged with framework knitters, but other trades included carpenter, chandler, gardener, needlemaker, sawyer and woolcomber. Six of the indentures relate to the Pegg family.

The amount expended on the poor could reach sizeable proportions and towards the end of the century was on the increase; the amounts obtained from the poor rate rose from £65. 17s. 9d. in 1775 to £69. 6s. in 1783, £81. 18s. in 1784, and to £88. 4s. in 1785. Anything that could be done to mitigate the liability had to be taken; in 1723 Quarter Sessions permitted the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor to receive the rents and profits of the lands and tenements of John Gilson who "hath lately run away out of the said parish of Evington and hath left a wife and children chargeable to the said parish". The lands were in Thurmaston producing about £4 per annum. In 1760 there was a warrant out for the arrest of John Clarke, of Oadby, woolcomber, whom Anne Harrison of Evington swore on oath to be the father of "a Bastard or Bastards which when born is likely to become Chargeable to the parish".

George Carrick was an inn-keeper in Evington from at least 1683 until his death, at the age of 77, in 1724. Later, among the Quarter Sessions papers, the Licensed Victuallers' Recognisances from 1753 show the following names in the second half of the eighteenth century. 1753–55 Mary Lenton; 1754–60 Margaret Phillips; 1756–61 Thomas Day (died 1762); 1759–62 John Arnold; 1762–4 Joseph Parker; 1765–84 Thomas Berry (died 1792); 1771–91 Richard Bryan (died 1792 aged 49); 1785–1818 Richard Goode (died 1818 aged 74) and 1792–1815 Ann Bryan (died 1815 aged 68).

Thomas Day had come from Quorn in 1758; his Inventory showed 5 barrels in the cellar 2s. 6d., bottles and quarts and pints and pots 1s.; Thomas Berry was for many years parish clerk. Generally there were two victuallers in the village, very occasionally three, but from 1764–70 only one. The trade was rarely regarded as a full-time job. Inn-signs are not given in the records until 1825, so there must be doubt as to which buildings were involved. It seems likely that the *Horse and Groom* which stood in Main Street would have been the main "local": the other was probably *The Bear and Rugged Staff*, which may have been in High Street; *Keck's Arms* in the mid-1800s was in Church road.

Among others not already mentioned in the clothing trades early in this century were John Judd, jersey comber, who had come from St. Martin's, Leicester in 1697, William Pole, stockinger/framework knitter, as were Thomas



9. Four eighteenth-century buildings. High Street Cottages before renovation of nos. 3–7 and demolition of the remainder, c.1966.

9a. 3–7 High Street, (re-thatched 1980), Note the re-sited date-stone.

A
G K
1718



Noon, Daniel Carter and Thomas Burley. Joseph and Richard White were tailors, Nicholas and John Spencer and Edward Stretton weavers; Thomas Hutchins and Thomas Stretton carpenters. Numerous labourers included William Burley, John, Richard and Robert Harrison, Christopher Almey, John Brown, William Ross, Thomas Phipps, John Plummer, William Smith, Richard Stretton, John and William West.

Most of the wills this century are primarily concerned with family bequests and are not of exceptional importance; in passing, however, mention should be made of the long will of John Jelly, grazier, died 1723; this mentions about 30 relatives, most of whom were left either 5 or 10 shillings. A few items from probate inventories are worth a glance and these are summarised below:

John *Plummer*, yeoman, died 1708, left estate valued at £201. 2s. 6d., including sheep £39. 19s. 6d., cattle £14. 10s., lamb hogs £8. 14s. and a mare £3. 10s., in addition to hay and pease.

James *Tomson*, yeoman, died in 1712 leaving no will but property valued at £470. Evidently primarily an arable farmer, his barley was worth £85, wheat £30. 16s., peas £3. 10s., hay £25. His wool was worth £11. 15s., his hogs £48. 15s., and his sheep £45.

Thomas *Burley*, died 1714 and described as a farmer, was part of a co-operative since there is reference to his part of Brook close, half copy barn, etc. He had more than 38 sheep and 9 cattle and 3 calves.

William *Burley*, shepherd, died 1714 had 60 ewes and lambs, 2 heifers and 6 yearling cattle £26, one gelding £2 and one hog pig 6s. 8d.

Job *Bull*, yeoman, died 1715, had 57 lambs £19, 50 ewes and sheer hogs £22. 3s., 16 cows and heifers £30, 3 calves £1. 10s. and 2 mares in his £107. 14s. estate.

Daniel *Carter*, framework knitter, died 1721 had 4 frames accounting for £20 of his £30 estate.

The house of *Rebecca Davenport*, widow, died 1721, had a clock. Her £90. 4s. estate included 24 ewes £14, 27 lambs £10, 2 pigs 9s. 9d.; wheat, barley and oats £16 and hay £10.

Three members of the *Plummer* family can next be considered. Peter, grazier, died 1723, having an estate totalling £286. 10s. with 94 sheep £69, 9 cattle £35, 5 mares £30 and a hog £1. 5s. Wool £18, and an item of £33 "for the greans" is also noted; his hay was worth £10. Elizabeth's estate was even larger: £380. 15s. plus unvalued wheat and barley. Her 75 sheep were appraised at £72, 17 cattle at £44. 5s., 5 mares and a foal at £30 and 4 hogs at £3. Her pease were worth £40. John's possessions totalled £62. 6s. but he was only described as a labourer when he died in 1728. He had 6 cattle £18, 38 ewes and lambs £26. 6s. and a black mare £1, plus £15 worth of hay and £1 of barley.

Richard *Cartwright*, died 1729 was a substantial yeoman. His estate of £545. 18s. included £100 for his purse and apparel, £98 for his wheat barley and pease growing and £38 for the crops in store excluding his hay (£30). His 20 cattle were worth £50. 10s., his 61 sheep £43, his 7 mares and 2 yearling foals £65. Other graziers included William Biddle, died 1748 (£132. 11s.), Thomas Mawson, died 1749 (£61. 14s. 6d.) and James Harrison, died 1762 (£126. 7s.). The most extensive inventory of all was that of Thomas Cartwright, died 1779, where each item in his £177. 0s. 6d. net estate was separately appraised over two days by Richard Roberts Drake, a well-known Leicester auctioneer of the day, who was mayor of Leicester in 1773. It seems the distribution was in dispute between the widow and her son.

The century, particularly the early part, seems to have been a period of house building in Evington, and several still stand and are illustrated in this pamphlet.

Evington in the Nineteenth Century

Population

1801 177	1831 260	1861 275	1891 4,173
1811 222	1841 285	1871 310	(but N. Evington
1821 257 (52 houses)	1851 293 (65 houses)	1881 450	transferred to Leicester, 1892)

These population figures provide a clear picture of the growth of Evington in the 1880s. There had been only a very slow growth between 1801 and 1851 and even a small reduction between 1851 and 1861. Between 1871 and 1881 Evington's size had increased by almost half; in the 1881 Census, a few houses, often described as "New Evington", are evidenced but this is nothing compared with the tenfold growth produced by the development of North Evington between 1881 and 1891. A summary of the 1851 Census will be found in the Appendix, which also contains a transcript of the 1837 County rate return. This latter list provides some indication of land occupation at that date. The parish acreage was then 1,919 with 395 acres of arable comprising only twenty per cent of the whole. The rateable value was £3,063 and there were 42 different holdings between 26 persons. Charles Pettifor with 267 acres (96 arable) was the largest occupier with Joseph Johnson (209 acres including 52 arable) the only other person with over 200 acres.

The main landowners at this time were George Anthony Legh-Keck and Henry Freeman Coleman, who were regarded as the Lords of the Manor, three members of the Burnaby family and John Atkins.

Evington Hall, Italianite and stuccoed, was built around 1830* for Henry Freeman Coleman (1790–1871), although it was its later occupiers, John Harris Cooper (1832–1906) and John Edward Faire (1844–1929), who were perhaps better known. Since 1939 the Hall has been occupied as a Convent school, now designated St. Paul's Aided Secondary School. Cooper occupied the Hall from before 1880 until soon after 1900. He was apprenticed to Edwin Corah 1846–53, hosiery manufacturer, and had become a partner with him by the age of 24, the firm becoming Cooper Corah and Sons after Edwin's death in 1880. Cooper celebrated 50 years with the firm in 1896 when many gifts were showered on him. His health was declining and he later retired to London, where he died at his house in Inverness Terrace, Bayswater at the age of 74 in 1906. He had set up a Convalescent Home for his business employees at Thurnby and also distributed annually half a crown to all Leicester persons over the age of 70 who had applied for one. The number was never disclosed, but was thought to be over a thousand. He was President of the Evington Cricket Club and President of the Leicester Rowing Club.

Evington House, a less austere building, dates from 1836 and will always be associated with the Burnaby family, although after 1890 it had a succession of occupiers, the Sawdays finally selling to Leicester Corporation in 1947. The

* this date is unsubstantiated.



10. Seal's cottage, Mickleton drive, (1979).
 According to its present occupier, Mr. J. D. Brooks,
 the cottage takes its name from a dairyman who lived there.

Date-stone reads H F C
 1822



11. Main Street, semi-detached houses. (March 1983).



12. "Claremont",
Church road.

12a. Evington Hall,
(April 1983).



13. Mr. J. H. Cooper.



present Evington Park was opened at Whitsun, 1948; the House remains, largely devoted to the purposes of the Parks Department staff. Col. John Dick Burnaby, of the Grenadier Guards, who had seen service at Waterloo, was the first occupier, the third son of the Rev. Andrew Burnaby, B.D., of Baggrave Hall, Archdeacon of Leicester.

The early part of the century saw several prosperous graziers: John Goddard, died 1810 aged 88, left estate valued at £979. 12s. 6d., including his sheep £400, cattle £126, horses £40, pigs £10, corn £100, hay £60, and wool £110. Richard Goddard, his grandson, died 1817, left rather less, £495, but this figure included 76 sheep £124, 46 lambs £40, 19 head of cattle £89, 3 horses £20, 8 acres of wheat £60, 6 of barley £35, and 5 of peas £8. His 4 ricks of hay were worth £24. Thomas Peberdy, died 1843, farmer, mentions a number of books in his will including a large family bible, gardening book, "shepperd's" book, poor man's companion, large new testament with commentary thereto, a small bible and two books of services.

The first trade directory to allot a separate entry to Evington is White's Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland, 1846, and this mentions several tradesmen of the time. William Grant was a tailor and Thomas Rowe, born at Hallaton, was a shoemaker besides being a shepherd, John* and Robert Webster, carpenters, but the list is far from complete, although graziers are fully listed. The parish Registers before this time are a more full guide to village occupations. Between 1815–20 Christian Jarvis, Thomas and William Silverwood, and Thomas Thorp appear as framework-knitters; William Stafford, butcher in 1817; Conyers Kirby, tailor, in 1832; Joseph Mee, William Carter and Christopher Rawlings, all carpenters in the 1820s and 30s. George Presson, barber, is mentioned in 1827. Henry Litherland was blacksmith in the 1850s; later on, William Atkins, who lived at Stoughton had succeeded him. By following a series of directories through a period of years, a fuller list could be built up.

As was observed in the last chapter, Richard Goode and Ann Bryan continued as the two licensed victuallers in the village until their respective deaths in 1818 and 1815. Lucy Halloway, widow, followed from 1816 until after the yearly records cease in 1827. Her sign appears to have been the *Bear and Rugged Staff*. She married Thomas Horsepool, a Houghton yeoman in 1830, and he is shown as a publican in 1837 and a beerhouse keeper in Evington in 1863. Dorothy Goode (died 1827 aged 83) succeeded her husband at the *Horse and Groom* and was succeeded by George Webster (name also given erroneously as Wilson or Weston) and this seems to have become the only public house in the village, except for a period in the 1850s–60s when John Grant appears at the *Keck's Arms*, Church road, by 1854, followed by Thomas Peberdy by 1858 and George Crane by 1867. John Atkins had succeeded at the *Horse and Groom* by 1832, although he was primarily a grazier. William Atkins was there in 1846, Mary Ann Atkins by 1849 and William Atkins (possibly a son) by 1867. James Bellamy is found there in 1877, James Williams, also a butcher, by 1882, with Mrs. Lydia Williams continuing in her husband's trade by 1884 until 1900.

* later, wheelwright.

Evington had some sort of postal service by 1846 with letters arriving from Leicester at 8 a.m. and despatched at 6 p.m. The letter-box was in a wall near the chapel. There were various variations in timing from year to year but by 1894 letters were delivered at 7 a.m. and the post-box cleared at 8.25 p.m. with the nearest Money order/Telegraph office at Oadby, 1½ miles away. Thomas Rowe, shoemaker, was probably the first sub-postmaster and his son, also Thomas, succeeded him; Henry Wilson had taken over by 1900.

Although 1841 is the date normally ascribed to the opening of a National (Church of England) school "supported by the Misses Burnaby", it seems there was a school by 1836 and the name of William Parkinson, schoolmaster, first appears the following year. Thomas Taylor, also parish clerk, was there by 1846. The school seems to have been rebuilt in 1858–9 and Daniel and Mrs. Mary Francis Gilbert had taken over by 1882. Miss Louisa Atlee is mentioned in 1894 and Miss Alice Nokes the next year. Miss Lucy Ellen Swinfield was headmistress by 1900 when the school was enjoying peak numbers, 43 pupils and 14 infants in a building that could accommodate 50 children and 20 infants. There were a number of short-lived appointments around this time: in 1909, the Managers appointed Miss Ivy Chamberlain, aged 19, for £35 p.a. to succeed "Miss Pentelow". Miss Lottie Mary Wilkinson (died 1979) was headmistress 1922–1947, a reign embracing changes brought about by the 1944 Education Act. There was also a short-lived British (non-conformist) school in the village in the 1840s and 50s, it had 40 scholars in 1849 and Thomas Litchfield was the schoolmaster.

The problem of the poor remained and two cases illustrate the problems involved in ascertaining a person's parish of settlement. Indeed, counsel of Inner Temple was briefed concerning Ann Throsby in 1818. On Saturday 27 June this pregnant single woman had been removed by Magistrates' Order from Evington parish to that of St. Margaret's, Leicester. The Officers of that parish brought her before a magistrate who ascertained that she was with child by Joseph White; a Warrant was issued to apprehend him, but he had not been taken. Ann Throsby requested permission to go back to Evington till the Monday following to pick up her clothes, and although the Evington Parish Officers were reluctant to allow this "as she was near her time" they gave her "permission to fetch her clothes" she having stated that she had six weeks to count until her confinement. The same evening she returned to Evington and on the Monday morning following was suddenly taken ill and delivered of a bastard. Upon her recovery she went into Service leaving the child at Evington. The Parish Officers of St. Margaret refused to take the child and the Evington officers made an application to the magistrates, who considering it a novel case objected to act. The St. Margaret's officers refused to maintain the child upon the grounds that the Orders of Removal not having been suspended but having been duly and legally delivered and executed notwithstanding the woman returned to Evington on the evening of the day of removal and with the permission of the magistrates to go thither to fetch her clothes, the child being born in Evington belongs to that parish. On the other hand, the parish officers of Evington contended that Ann Throsby, though actually removed by them, having

obtained permission at the time of signing the orders of removal to return to Evington to fetch her clothes and having accordingly returned thither in the evening of the same day without sleeping or inhabiting in the parish of St. Margaret ought to be considered only in a due course of removal delayed from motives of humanity for her reasonable accommodation and that the child, though born in Evington, must under these circumstances follow the mother's settlement which is in St. Margaret. Counsel's opinion was that "the child belongs to St. Margaret's".

A later order of removal, dated 19 February 1844, concerned Joseph Thorpe, an out of work labourer who was living in the parish of St. Margaret, where he was ill in bed. He had lived for more than a year at 1 Dowlings Yard, Upper Charles Street, with his wife Elizabeth, whom he had married at St. Mary's, Leicester, and a one year son, Robert, but he had done nothing to gain a settlement in his own right, and was held to be of Evington parish. His father, Thomas, who lived at St. James' Place, Leicester, said under examination by the magistrates:

"I am the father of the pauper, Joseph Thorp, by my wife Hannah, to whom I was lawfully married about 36 years ago at Humberstone church. I am in the 56th year of my age. When I was about 14 years old, being at that time a bachelor and without child or children, I was hired by and contracted to serve John Goddard of the parish of Evington, farmer, as a farm labourer, for a year namely from Harborough fair to Harborough fair in the following year, that is the usual time of hiring at Evington. I served the said John Goddard for a full year under such hiring and inhabited 40 days and upward during such year's service in the said parish of Evington. I continued in the service of the said John Goddard for four years more after the expiration of the first year's service, under yearly hirings, and inhabited and slept all the time of my five years service in Evington parish. I have not gained any subsequent settlement. My said son, Joseph the pauper was born in the said parish of Evington — he was 25 years old last May — he lived with me as part of my family until the month of January 1835, at which time he first went into service."

Possibly the most valuable piece of information from the above evidence is the use made of Harborough "mop" fair for the hiring of employees by Evington farmers.

In the 1870s, Green Lane and Mere Road were the only hard-core roads away from the village, but they were little more than muddy tracks. East Park road was not in being; it was then merely a path with a plank over the brook near the later site of the Chilprufe factory. The area had clay and limestone pits filled with water. Gwendolen road was a country lane with only one gas light from East Park road. It was an area noted for picnics, especially at haymaking time. There was a bottleneck at the brook caused by a huge spreading chestnut tree, which occupied much of the road. It was driven into many times in the dark and a broad whitewashed band appeared around its scarred side. The brook was also dammed at sheep-wash times. Spinney Hill might have been slag-heaps and pit-heads, but only poor seams were revealed by test borings for coal. In 1885 the Corporation secured 36 acres from Mr. C. S. Burnaby at a cost of £18,000 on condition that the council should construct and maintain the road known as Mere road, *mere* meaning 'boundary'. Spinney Hill Park, with a fine spinney of old trees on its heights contrasting with the flat grounds by Evington brook at

Spinney Hill Park, Leicester



14. *Spinney Hill Park.*



15. *Mr. A. Wakerley.*



15a. Chapel showing the old manse, c.1950.

the lower end, was laid out emphasising the undulating nature of the terrain in the area. (Mere road/Buxton street corner at 277 feet was the highest point.) The Park was opened on 24 August 1886 by Sir Israel Hart, Lord mayor and Alderman Thomas Windley, chairman of the Sanitary Committee (then responsible for the town's parks) was presented with a gold watch, silver tea and coffee services and an illuminated address in recognition of his services to the town. The Imperial Hotel (originally built as a temperance hotel), Mere road, was the first licensed house in Leicester to have a music licence and also had Leicester's first public clock away from the town centre.

The development of North Evington is closely associated with the work of the Leicester architect, Arthur Wakerley (1862–1931), who made it his life-long interest. Messrs. Rolleston and Burnaby* started the development in a small way in 1880 in an area that frankly did not invite development. They had to contend with disused flooded clay pits, huge muddy escarpments on the east slope of the Spinney and non-existent roads. The ridge on which Spinney Hill and Crown Hill were situated was capped with rhaetic/liassic limestone, but the keuper marl by Evington brook, though formerly quarried for brick clay, was wet and muddy in all but the driest conditions. Wakerley as a pupil articulated to James Bird and Son, surveyed streets and buildings and himself bought five acres of brick pits in 1885. He became 1st prizeman of the Leicester and Leicestershire Society of Architects and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He entered politics at an early age and in 1897 at the age of 35 became Leicester's youngest lord mayor. He twice unsuccessfully contested the Melton Parliamentary Division as a Liberal candidate. He was a Wesleyan local preacher and President of the Temperance Union, which meant an absence of licensed premises in his development plans and restrictive covenants into the bargain. He also owned for a time the Gedding Hall estate in Suffolk, where he became interested in rare breeds of cattle on the 2,000 acre estate. He suffered a breakdown in health in 1909, but despite the death of his only son in the First World War in 1917, he returned to active politics in 1919 becoming chairman of Leicester's first Housing and Town Planning Department. With his vested interests, such a position would not be tolerated in local government today. He formulated the widening of Charles Street into an 85 foot wide thoroughfare, and believed Leicester's motto should be changed from *Semper eadem* to "Progress or Perish", a surprising viewpoint from a non-conformist visionary. Away from Evington, Wakerley is chiefly remembered for the former Singer building (1904) in High Street and the former Turkey Cafe (1910) in Granby Street. Two notable buildings, the Freeman Hardy and Willis headquarters in Rutland Street destroyed in the 1940 blitz and the former Wyvern (Temperance) Hotel in London road demolished and replaced by the high-rise Elizabeth House in the 1970s, were also his work. His revolutionary £299 houses to alleviate the post-World War I housing shortage afforded Wakerley national recognition, and will be mentioned in the next section.

Wakerley envisaged North Evington as a self-contained community with

* Roads were named after the two men.

Market Square, bakeries, coffee palace, bank, blacksmith, wheelwright, model dairy, cowsheds, shops, fire station and even the Salvation Army. The police station in Asfordby street was reopened in 1983 after being closed for 20 years. The market was altogether too ambitious for a new suburb and the Leicester Extension Bill, 1891, incorporating North Evington in the Borough boundary, did not permit a private market there. Wakerley accordingly offered to donate his market place to the Corporation provided it maintained a market *in perpetuo*. The market was never a success and permission to hold a market was withdrawn in 1947.

Leicester had built 10,000 houses in the first sixty years of the nineteenth century but 30,000 were erected between 1861 and 1901 with Leicester's population rising from 39,904 in 1831 to 211,579 in 1901. The time could not have been more opportune for Wakerley's extensive self-financed schemes, although a rapid rise in population brought its own problems, notably in the disposal of sewerage; in 1891 North Evington suffered a typhoid outbreak, directly traced to untreated sewerage being discharged into Evington brook. Halstead street was Wakerley's earliest venture into artisan housing and he also formed a Freehold House Society with easy term purchase arrangements. He believed industry should be kept separate as far as possible from housing (as in St. Saviour's road), and his best known commercial concerns were perhaps the Anchor Boot and Shoe Factory (corner of Atkinson Street) and the Vauxhall Outer Wear factory (1889). A co-operative Anchor Tenants Ltd. built Humberstone Garden suburb, but due to transport difficulties, this proved rather too distant to the factory. Nos. 216–234 East Park road were built by Wakerley to house his factory managers.

The Coleman road area and Crown Hills development by Wakerley belongs to the next century and are considered in the following section. It is perhaps worth recalling here that in June 1879 a 21 year old girl, "Poll" Bromwich, had her throat cut by her boy friend on the track (the lower part of which was to become St. Denys road) between Evington and Humberstone (the later line of Coleman road) and this was afterwards known as "cut-throat lane". Many came to view the blood-stains around the base of a tree where the murder had taken place.

The story of nineteenth-century Evington would not be complete without mention of non-conformity. "A small but commodious place of worship" first mentioned on 29 May 1811 was a loft over the stables at "The Lawn", then occupied by Thomas Bryan but it was a quarter of a century later before a proper chapel was built. This was sited just across the other side of High Street. Cottages and outbuildings on the site were demolished. The Gothic-style building, with pinnacled tops to its buttresses, is scheduled by the Department of the Environment as a building of historical interest. It was endowed by Edward and Samuel Davenport and Thomas Bryan "for the faithful preaching of the gospel" as the marble plaque states. The building was opened on 11 April 1838 by the Rev. Roland Hill and Mr. Thomas Charles Dymock, minister through until January 1881. In the ecclesiastical census of 1851, 30 attended the morning and

74 the evening services on 30 March. 25 attended morning Sunday school. It was not attached to any denomination and although not in any way linked to the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, it did follow that form of liturgical service. After being closed for repairs, it was re-opened as a Strict Baptist Chapel on 14 June 1881, in accordance with the articles of faith "including the five points of Calvinism" with a signed agreement from the acting trustee, Mr. F. T. Bryan. The Rev. John Ashworth was the minister of long standing from September 1884 until his resignation at the age of 87 in 1914. Centenary services were held in 1938.

The building, which had 170 sittings in 1851, is chiefly noted internally for the organ which had been built in 1838 by John Gray for the Prince Consort, Albert, at Windsor. When he needed a larger instrument, it was bought and installed in Evington chapel on 20 March 1842, at the expense of Samuel Davenport. The organ has 389 speaking pipes and has only been electrically-blown since 1977. The chapel has a hammer-beam roof, and a pulpit carved out of the wall without visible means of support. An old clock strikes 'one' at each hour and for the first 67 years of its life the chapel was lit by candles hooked in roof candelabras. Gas lighting, then electricity followed. Under the gallery, there is a Nichodemus pew: latecomers could enter unobserved through a rear access.

When Main Street was widened, it was necessary (in 1964) to demolish the adjacent manse, which in any event had been used only as a Sunday school for some time. The replacement building serves a similar purpose and is also used for week-day playgroups.

Years ago, the chapel was famed for its Sunday school outings to the east coast. Train tickets to Skegness from Thurnby station once cost 3s. 3d. return!!

Evington in the Twentieth Century

Again, the population figures say more than any words can express.

1901 – 248; 1911 – 958; 1921 – 1,072; 1931 – 1,802 and in 1936 Evington was incorporated with Leicester. In 1961, Evington Ward had a population of 16,242 and in 1971, 18,196 (6,145 houses).

In the first decade, the main house-building was in the Evington Lane/Hawthorn Drive area. Village transport was still primitive, trams at East Park road corner being the nearest public transport. There is a photograph of a small horse bus in Evington but this was probably a short-lived service. Rarely did Evington have its own carrier, having to rely on through services, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, usually from Illston-on-the-Hill; at times it is hard to believe the village was only 3½ miles from the centre of Leicester. It was not until the late twenties that Herbert Errington operated the first motor bus service with four trips daily; this was taken over by Leicester City Transport in 1930.

By 1928 there were two garages in Evington, Errington's in Main Street and A. H. Soar's in High Street, with Mrs. Ruth Soar occupying part of the premises as a post office, Percy Rowe, grocer and sub-postmaster, having died in 1928, aged 57. Over the years, the post office had moved around a great deal, and only



16. Main street looking towards the Common, c.1905.



17. Main street looking towards the Common on a wet day, c.1930.

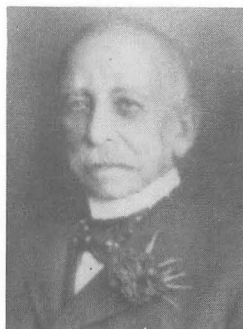


CORONATION DAY 1911, AT OXBOW, NEW BRUNSWICK

18. Coronation Day 1911, with Mr. J. E. Faire.



19. Samuel Hanson holding faded photographs of the Horse and Groom and a deserted Main street.

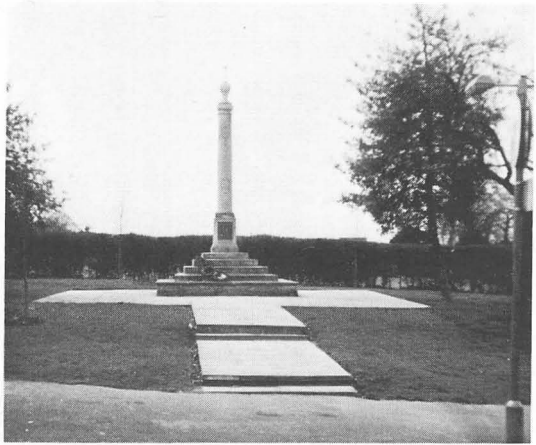


21.
Mr. J. E. Faire.



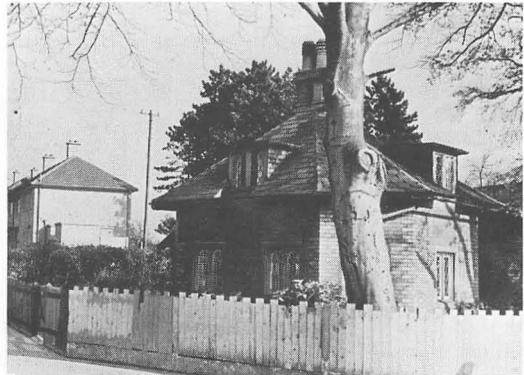
20. The Cedars, (1980).

22.
*War Memorial after
landscaping.*



23. *Evington House,
(March 1977).*

24.
Lodge to Evington House.



from the mid-sixties have the present premises in High street been used as a post office. Best known as William Walter Cotton's newsagency in the thirties, this shop was always changing occupiers. The old Main Street premises for the post office have included the present fashion shop; (William Webb, a builder, and his wife, Edith May, were there at the start of the Second World War), the present butchers, and the former Worthington's Stores premises (previously Brown's). The Main street pillar box remains outside the old post office.

Walter Cayless had been landlord of the *Horse and Groom* from before 1904 until his death, aged 64, in 1934. He was succeeded by Samuel Frederick Hanson, who had the unique distinction of being both the last landlord of the old and the first landlord of the new, the *Cedars*, previously a private house, just across the road. The old premises closed after lunch on 18 June 1938 prior to demolition, and the licence was transferred to enable a 6 o'clock opening at the *Cedars* on the same day. The *Cedars* was chiefly remembered as the home for some years at the turn of the century of the novelist, E. Phillips Oppenheim (1866-1946); other occupiers were the three Misses Moore and Disney Barlow of Liberty Shoes Ltd. The imposing Regency frontage of the house still survives more or less untouched; all necessary new building has been done out of sight at the back. In the freak weather of April 1981, one of the house's cedars was uprooted.

Although the Kecks owned 3 farms and 988 acres in Evington in 1907, this was only part of their huge estate which covered, in its heyday, 10 square miles, out to Houghton and almost to Illston. A number of Evington people were employed at Stoughton Grange, but the sale of the estate in 1913 did not cause much change, although its effects were probably lessened by the outbreak of war, the main farm sales not taking place until 1919. It was the family at the Hall who seemed closer to the village and John E. Faire, J.P., of Faire Brothers Ltd., elastic web manufacturers and smallwares to the shoe trade, was the largest employer of the villagers on the Hall estate. His firm made everything from shoe and corset laces to suspenders and garters, although it was for corset accessories that they were probably best known! Faire had come to Leicester from Derby in early life and with his brother, Sir "Sammy" Faire (of Glenfield Frith) built up the firm to become one of the best-known in Leicester; it became a limited company in 1900. Soon after, John Faire moved to Evington Hall and lived there for the rest of his life until he died at the age of 86 in 1929. He had become an Honorary Freeman of Leicester in 1926. In his early days, he started work at 6 a.m. and even at the age of 83 was reported to be usually at his desk in Rutland Street by 9 a.m. The writer's grandfather, Herbert William Wilshere, was part-time Secretary of the firm and was one of four executors of Faire's will, which ran to 27 folios. Among numerous bequests, some of £5,000, were gifts to Leicester University College, the Royal Infirmary, the John Faire Hospital, the Leicester Maternity Hospital and the Leicester Provident Dispensary.

Evington remembers Faire for being largely instrumental in financing the building of the village hall, erected in 1912 as the King George V Hall, and still run by an independent Committee, and also for the gift in 1919 of what is

now the recreation ground in the centre of the village. This was intended as being given in memory of the fallen in World War I. The ground in question was then called King's Orchard and it is interesting to find that the "Round Orchard" of 2 acres plus was occupied in 1795/6 by a George King paying rent of £13. Earlier, it seems the orchard may have been divided into four crofts. The War Memorial was originally sited on the land where the swings now stand, and is so depicted in postcard views of the 1920s. It was presumably moved when the Corporation assumed responsibility for the ground in 1937. It now stands at the corner of Church road opposite "Claremont" and in February 1983 the site was landscaped to advantage. A nearby seat was given by the local branch of the British Legion to commemorate the diamond jubilee of the Legion, 1921-81. The memorial records the names of the eight of the parish who died in the First War and the 24 who did not return from the Second. Many envy Evington's central green, but do not realise it is a relatively modern concept: it is not, as many suppose, the traditional mediaeval village green, despite its appearances!

After the death of John Faire, the Hall estate was sold on 13 May 1930 in 21 lots comprising the Hall and its own 23 acres and 28 houses and cottages and 97 acres in the village. The Hall itself was withdrawn at £8,300 but a 10 acre site between Spencefield lane and Coleman road (St. Denys road) sold for £1,670. The cricket club were one of the tenants at will, but their pavilion was not included in the sale. Nine acres adjoining Spencefield lane fetched £3,300 and £570 was paid for 8 brick and slated or thatched cottages in High Street; Pink Well close and Hall Yard close totalling 5.6 acres fetched £680. The Hall was later occupied by a Mrs. Poston and used to house Spanish Civil War refugee children, before it became a school in 1939.

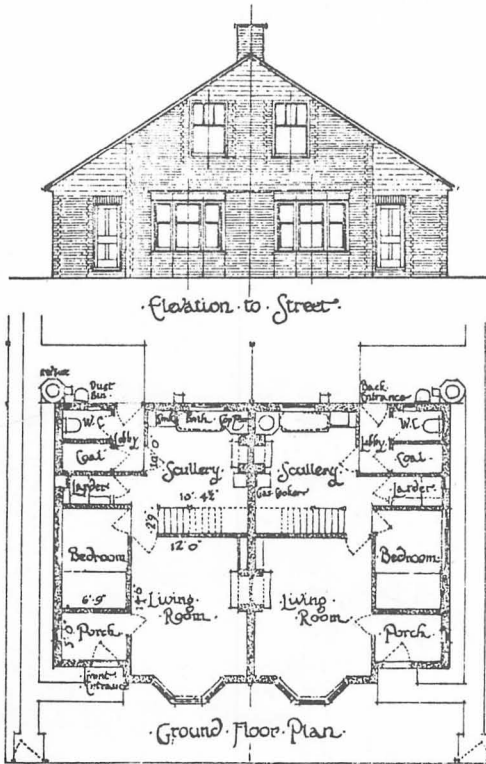
Spencefield lane, sometimes called Mile long lane in its early days, takes its name from Spencer's field. Today, it is essentially a tree-lined avenue of generally pleasant, mixed if architecturally often unexciting, houses of the 1930s with a little post-war in-filling. Two tone blue lamp standards do not enhance the scene in winter. Reputedly the highest point within the city boundary, at 356 feet above mean sea level, lies near the entrance to Evington Hall. As early as 1915 there were plans for an Uplands estate on half acre sites of five-bedroom houses costing £1,500; only the attractive "Uplands" itself was built, standing at the corner of Uppingham road and Spencefield lane, its grounds partially developed now. At the same time 35 properties between the golf course and the village (Hillcrest estate) were also envisaged. War-time was perhaps an inappropriate time for such projects. The first houses (from 1930 onwards) on Spencefield lane, then still a pathless country road, had only cesspit drainage. They may have had an open aspect, but in winter, snowdrifts were disruptive to the residents, who had to rely on Toone's buses from Billesdon along the Uppingham road for their public transport. Whitehall road was the first road to be built off Spencefield lane and the Davenport road area had previously been used by Coles' Nurseries, founded in the area in 1913.

Evington house had a long line of occupiers, many of them renting for only a short period, after the Burnabys. John Henry McCall was there in 1895,



25. Burnaby Cottages, The Common, (March 1983).

CHEAP LEICESTER HOUSES



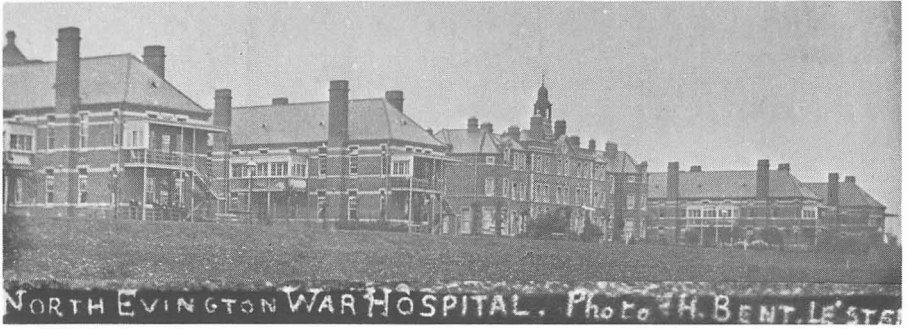
26. Wakerley's cheap (£299) houses, (in search of an architect).



27. Shady Lane, c.1905.



28. Shady Lane camp showing solitary tap, (March 1958).



29.—31. Leicester General Hospital as a War Hospital.

followed by John Langmore, John Dearden and the Misses Redfern. It was used as an auxiliary hospital during the First World War and was afterwards occupied by Frank Harold Pochin, a manufacturer of inks, stains, waxes and polishes, who died in 1930 aged 55. Tom Trevor Sawday, a son-in-law of Arthur Wakerley, then lived there and it was the Sawdays who sold to Leicester Corporation in 1947.

Wakerley's work in the twentieth century centred very much on Crown Hills and the Coleman road area. His own house, Crown Hills House (now a Teachers' Centre) in Gwendolen road was occupied by him from 1914 until his death in 1931. The name he took from a farmhouse on the other side of the road. Plans to give the house to the Corporation as a Museum failed due to the conditions attached, but as an example of his positive interest in conservation he arranged for High Cross House under threat of demolition in Highcross street to be moved to his grounds in 1923 and to be re-erected there. He also moved a shaft of the old High Cross itself from in front of the Crescent in King Street to his garden. That shaft later went to the gardens of Newarke Houses Museum, but was placed in the pedestrianised part of Cheapside, Market Place at the expense of the Leicester Rotary Club in its Diamond Jubilee year, 1976, which was also European Heritage Year.

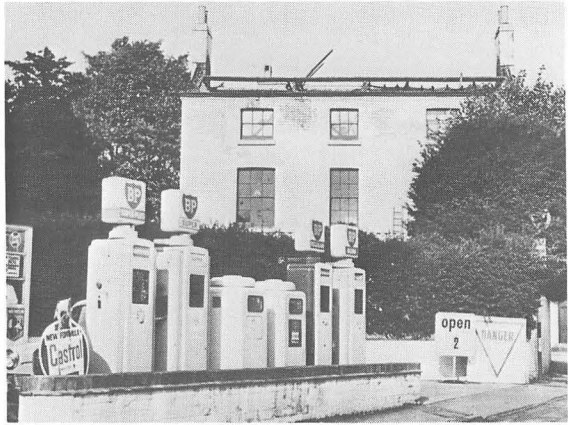
Many streets commemorate Wakerley and his family and friends. Wakerley road itself; Gwendolen, Dorothy, Constance and Margaret roads were named after his daughters; Ethel road after his invalid sister; Gedding road after his Suffolk manor house. Nansen road was named after a Norwegian explorer and humanitarian who had visited Leicester in 1920; Brightside road was named after his friend, Sir Tudor Walter, himself a builder/developer, who was Member of Parliament for Sheffield's Brightside division; Bannerman road after Sir Henry Campbell-Bannermann, (1836–1908), Liberal Prime Minister 1905–08. Linden Drive, with its planned avenue of 60 lime trees, was also Wakerley's inspiration.*

It was in the midst of the housing shortage after World War I that Wakerley evolved his £299 house; the Corporation were receiving requests for 5,000 houses by 1923. Many said Wakerley could not build a house at this price, but his pairs of semi-detached had a central chimney, with one water inlet pipe, a straight rain water gutter, unfaced bricks and Bangor slates to keep costs to a minimum. Admittedly, there was a general lack of beauty but they were utilitarian at a time when houses were desperately needed. The Coleman road estate, Green lane, Deepdale road and many others bear the Wakerley hall-mark, but it is in Gedding road that you will find Wakerley's mixed designs. Wakerley also donated land for the building of the Institution of the Blind and Wycliffe Society's premises (Margaret street), and laid out Gwendolen Gardens nearby, in 1924. Parts of North Evington were declared a Housing Action Area in 1978 by Leicester City Council, and the provisions have been renewed until 1985.

Wakerley envisaged Leicester having a population of 600,000 by 1975 with Oadby, Birstall, Stoughton, Scraftoft, Thurnby and Hamilton all within the City Boundary. He fully foresaw the problems of the motor-car age and thought

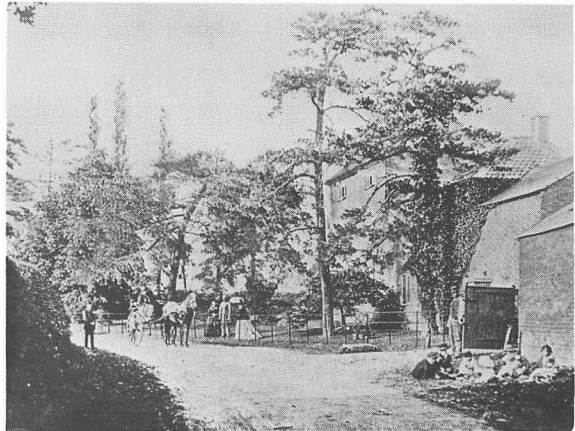
* 1908.

32.
*The Lawn in
demolition,
(October 1966).*



33. *The School in
demolition, (July
1964).*

33a.
The Elms, c. 1895.





36.—37. *Two views of Hyssop's Lane, 1933—6.*

there would be a by-pass road from Oadby to Belgrave, and a new through road linking Charles Street with Evington. He also thought there would be a 101 acre park site at Shady lane: with the Arboretum, still in its infancy, planted there, his prophesy is partially true. The area has become an attractive open space despite the ravages of the 1975 and 1976 droughts. Shady lane itself, with its fine avenue of trees, was laid out in 1850 by Sir Anthony Legh-Keck of Stoughton Grange. It is thought he believed an avenue of trees would afford some privacy to his rather exposed mansion. It is worth mentioning that Shady lane very nearly became the site of a crematorium and not an arboretum. During World War II the American 50th Parachute Infantry Regiment were stationed in huts, with just one water stand-pipe between them, at the Gartree road end of Shady lane. After D-Day the site became a Prisoner of War camp with the inmates working on building sites, farms and gardens in the area; then came the squatters. The huts were not demolished until 1958, after they had been an eyesore for years and a disgrace to the landscape.

The Leicestershire Golf Club was formed as the Leicester Golf Club (9 holes) in June 1890 on the present Oadby racecourse. It was established in Evington before 1908; the course record is 63 (professional) and 66 (amateur).

At the turn of the century, the need to relieve the over-crowding of Hillcrest and the adjoining Poor Law infirmary in Sparkenhoe street was acute: the Guardians of the Poor decided to build away from the centre, 336 feet above mean sea level, on a 62-acre site, purchased from five local landowners; Wakerley was one and he continued to have some of the land farmed for some years. The Loughborough builders, William Moss and Sons, brought materials from Loughborough, almost to the site, on a portable railed-way, a not inconsiderable feat. Giles, Gouch and Trollope were the London architects employed. "The Palace on the Hill", with its 194 yard long corridor, was opened on 28 September 1905 but its initial use as a Poor Law Institution ceased in 1914. During the First World War, soldiers were occupying as many as 1,000 beds. The War Office built a chapel, later donated to the Hospital, on condition it was always used as a chapel. The name of the hospital was Leicester City General from 1930, the "General" being dropped in 1948, although the colloquialism "City G" took a long time to die. The hospital had no electric light until 1925. The first kidney transplant carried out there was in 1975; the hospital has always maintained a reputation for personal attention. Further particulars of its history and development are in a booklet, Leicester City Hospital 1905-76, published in 1976.

Although this present pamphlet is concerned with Old Evington, a few words about the post-war changes since 1945 are necessary. The largest housing development in the mid-50s, was of more than 800 houses based on the 100 acre Swain's Lodge farm, although in most people's minds, it was Charles' farm. Until the boundary revisions in 1935, this was in Thurnby parish; indeed, John Swain, who died in 1875, was a Thurnby churchwarden, and at least three generations occupied the Lodge, sometimes known as Thurnby Lodge, which often caused confusion with the "proper" Thurnby Lodge on the other side of

the Uppingham road. Edward Charles first occurs at Swain's Lodge just before 1900. New roads, such as Downing Drive and Ethel road were not fully completed until the 1960s,* and many of the street names in the area were based on English place-names. Although industrial development was not allowed, a concentration of schools did occur resulting in increased peak hour traffic. The main new amenity in the area was the construction of Evington Pool, swimming baths opened in 1975. A garden for the disabled was completed in Evington Park in 1982, hard on the heels of a new bowling pavilion. The men's bowling club had been founded in 1956. The Old Evington Women's Institute, formed in 1932, reached its golden jubilee in 1982.

The village itself underwent a transformation in the mid-sixties. Main street was widened as was Evington lane, which was also re-aligned.** The old National school was demolished and a new parade of shops constructed. "The house on the Common" site was replaced by a new library opened in 1966, then having a stock of 10,000 books. "The Lawn(s)", where A. H. Soar had lived for some years, was demolished for an extension to his adjoining garage. A last-ditch attempt to put a conservation order on the house was too late, although a few trees were saved. Situated as it was on an inconveniently shaped site, the house had been under risk for some years. Home farm, on the Common, was also demolished, as were some of the cottages on High Street. The Elms, in Church road, the village's last farm, was demolished a few years later after the death of Mrs. Kirby, who after the death of her husband, was a well-known figure on her tractor. Earlier in the century, much of Evington's milk came from Kirby's farm. Thankfully, the replacement houses blend in reasonably well when viewed from across the green. Over recent centuries, there seems no-one in Evington who was specifically described as baker; in the 1930s, Garfoot of Houghton-on-the-hill is known to have supplied bread to the village, 1½d. being his price for a cottage loaf.

Puck lane was a centuries-old name for the village end of Evington lane, and appears as such on Ordnance Survey maps into this century; its name suggests mediaeval Evingtonians believed a goblin was to be found there. Piggy's hollow is more modern, although to preserve the fairy-tale image, there are those who think it is a corruption of pixie's hollow. It may simply be that pigs were traditionally kept here, although local folk-lore has it that it was a favourite sledging place and that one "Chiggy" Wilson plastered the sides with pig-manure to deter children from frequenting the spot, which, when the pigs were not there, was a favourite picnic area. Nearby, there was Pink well, now filled in, so famed for the medicinal qualities of its pinkish waters that in the last century there were plans to set up an Evington hydro. In at least one document, the name appears as Finch well (1761). There remains the enigma of Hyssop's or Hissop's lane, which may well be a figment of the Ordnance Survey's imagination, since

* The branch of *Waitrose* was (with *Oadby's Woolco*) an early experiment in "out of town" supermarkets.

** fears that wholesale destruction of trees would take place were allayed, but only after protests.

traditionally the name was Aesop's lane, even as late as 1907 in the Keck estate records. Aesop itself may be a variant of Alsop, which is mentioned in 1717. The lane was a grass track, wide enough for carts, that led across fields from Stoughton grange in a straight line with the (later) Evington hall, but it turned towards Evington village. Newhaven road was laid out on its northern path, but the name was unfortunately not perpetuated. There seems every reason to suppose this was originally a lane used by monks from Stoughton Grange in pre-Reformation times. It was well photographed between 1933–6 by Mr. A. G. Moulden, who issued a well-produced and unusual photographic essay in a very limited edition in 1979.

The parish church is dealt with in a separate section, but to finish with brief mention should be made of the three other Anglican churches in the parish. St. Stephen's was built by Stockdale Harrison in 1897 (300 sittings), St. Phillip's was designed by Pick, Everard and built at the cost of I. L. Berridge in 1913 (700 sittings) and St. Chad's was originally an iron and brick hut that had served as a base chapel in France during World War I and was re-erected in 1922. The new church dates from 1968 (250 sittings).

It is believed enough has been written in these pages to show readers something of Evington's varied, if rarely exciting, past and the richness of the archival material available. It is worth remembering that the present will be the history of tomorrow and in this respect the community newspaper, *Evington Echo*, founded in June 1981 and producing eight issues a year, may become a rich source for local historians of the next century!

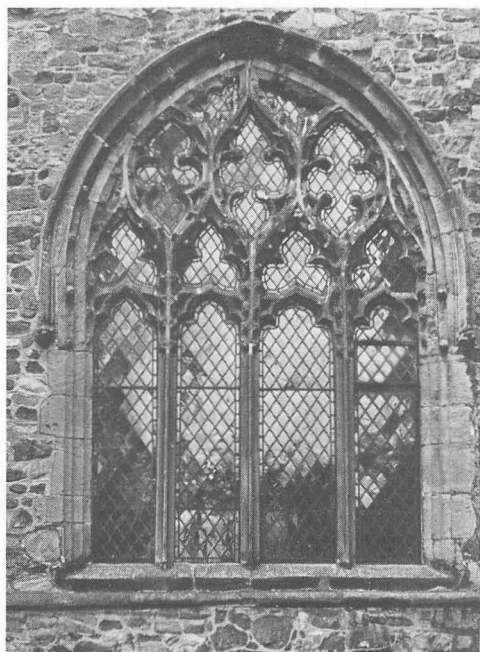
Evington Church

The present church dates from the early 13th century with a three stage battlemented west tower and short octagonal spire of that time. It is unusual for an "original" spire to survive as long. The font, too, is most probably original, having served at baptisms for over seven and a half centuries since it is known the church was consecrated on 9 October 1219. It is only rarely that dedication dates are known; in Evington's case, the church was consecrated to St. Denys by the Bishop of Lincoln, Hugh de Welles, who had served in the abbey of St. Denys in France. Denys, saint and martyr, first Bishop of Paris, was tortured and decapitated with two companions for the converting of pagans to Christianity. The bodies, thrown into the Seine, were recovered by their disciples and buried and it was on that site that St. Denys' abbey was built centuries later. There are four other dedications to St. Denys in Leicester Diocese: Eaton, Goadby Marwood, Ibstock and Stonton Wyville. At the last count, there were only 41 such dedications in the country. The Patronal festival is the first Sunday after 19 October.

The church when first built would have consisted of only tower, nave (approximately 50 by 18 feet) and chancel. It probably replaced an earlier timbered church. The north four bay arcade of pointed arches rest on massive foundations of what was once the north nave wall; the earlier roof-line is visible



41. Evington church, c.1904.



42. North aisle east window tracery.

above the tower arch; the blocked doorway in the north wall once gave access to the rood loft. The ironstone clerestory was added in the 15th century. The plain south aisle was slightly earlier than the north manorial aisle of the Greys, which is notable for the superb mixed tracery of the east and west windows and the heraldic glass fragments of around 1380.* Outside, at the east end of this aisle St. Denys looks out from a pinnacled canopy towards Stoughton. The remains of piscinas in both aisles suggest there were side altars before the Reformation. No chantries are known but money was left to St. Thomas' light in 1527, indicating this was kept burning above one of the altars; whether or not one of these altars was dedicated to St. Richard, a name mentioned in one will of 1557 is uncertain. (The south aisle altar would more probably have been dedicated to St. Mary.)

The three bay chancel was rebuilt in 1867 to plans by Joseph Goddard with much of the cost (£1,200 out of £2,000) defrayed by Miss H. A. Burnaby, the east window** being given in memory of Col. and Mrs. J. D. Burnaby. One marble wall-memorial removed from the old chancel, that of James Sherard, died 1727, was re-erected, but an incised slab showing a priest in the full vestments of the mass, possibly John Butler, died 1559, was covered. A few mediaeval floor-tiles did find their way to the museum.*** The north porch was rebuilt as a memorial to parishioners who died in World War I.

The church's first organ, probably by Nicholson of Worcester, was installed in 1866; a century later, a new organ by Hill, Norman and Beard was opened by Dr. Francis Jackson, then director of music at York Minster, in December 1965. The organ console was placed on the north side of the chancel arch with the pipework installed over the tower arch at the west end of the nave. This may not be an ideal arrangement and the writer has reservations concerning the voicing of the instrument.

Only two of the church's four bells are ancient. These are dated 1605 and 1637 and were made by Hugh Watts I and II respectively. It was not until 1797 that a third bell (on which the vicar's name is wrongly spelt as Coltman instead of Coulton) was added, made by Edward Arnold of Leicester. The fourth (tenor), cast by Taylors of Loughborough in 1907, was given by the then vicar, Rev. Edward Berridge, in memory of his wife. The bells and frames underwent maintenance in 1983; it has also been suggested two more bells be added by recasting, lessening the weight of the tenor, but a light-weight ring is rarely satisfying, even if having only 4 bells does impose practical limitations in ringing. In the last century, a Pancake bell was rung on Shrove Tuesday.

The 16th century church chest is 7 feet in length, made of oak planks and hooped iron bands. Most of its historic contents including the Parish Registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, dating from 1601, and much poor law

* The glass in these windows in 1622 included arms of *Grey* (4); *Clare*; *Fitzpaine*; *Genville*; *Gifford*; *Leighburne*; *Matravers*; *Sherland*; *Somery* and Leicester Abbey (W. Burton: History of Leicestershire).

** seen to better advantage now the sanctuary has been "uncluttered".

*** one shows arms of *Despencer*.

material, is in the custody of the Leicestershire Record Office. The churchwardens' and highways' accounts do not survive before 1800. The oldest church plate, a silver chalice and paten date back to 1632.

The old part of the churchyard is partially cleared and 30 headstones were moved when new vestries were built in 1956–7. It is unfortunate that the slate headstones were rearranged under the trees, since this has caused "greening". The earliest surviving headstone is to John Plummer (a husbandman) who died at the age of 24 in 1708; there are several other early ones, including family groups of the Plummers, Burleys and Cartwrights. The largest headstone is to the 19 year old personal maid of Mrs. Elizabeth Legh-Keck, Lucy Hallowell, who died of rapid consumption in 1827. In length its inscription rivals one to the writer's great-great-great uncle, Thomas Hardy, died 1833, in Kirby Muxloe churchyard.

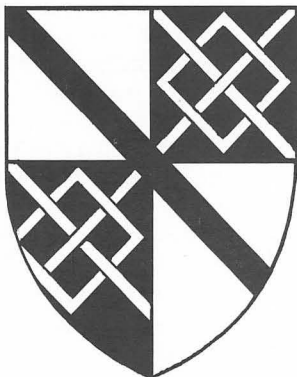
Of the early vicars, apart from the misdemeanours of James Hutchins, the first we know much about is the Rev. Matthew Gwynne, M.A., born in Middlesex on Christmas Day 1603. He went to Merchant Tailors' school and Christ Church, Oxford. At the Metropolitan Visitation in 1634 he presented Richard Plummer "for refusing to stand upp in tyme of divine service att the reading of the Glorie be to the Father &c. by the Minister according to the laudable custom of the church of England excepting him the aforesaid Richard Plummer by which refusell the rest of the p'ishoners were much scandalised and offended and the sd. Mr. Gwynn privately and gently admonishing him the sd. Plummer to stand upp as aforesaid he replied he would not observe evie order brought in by ev'ie fantasticall fellowe."

The Rev. Richard Southwell, an M.A. of Clare College, Cambridge, ministered equal longest at Evington, from 1686 to 1733, keeping his registers well throughout; the Rev. William Burton Moore, one and a half centuries later, served the parish from 1846–93, another 47 year stint. The least said about the Rev. George Coulton, vicar 1742–69, the better; he seems to have left Emmanuel College, Cambridge, without a degree and after he became rector of Houghton in 1746, he made no effort to record anything other than marriages in his registers. His son, the Rev. Richard Coulton, M.A., vicar 1769–1808, was more reliable, but certainly not infallible in this respect.

Nor must we forget the churchwardens; the first names to survive are Henry Burley and Richard Wynter, who reported '*omnia bene*' (*all is well*) at the Archdeacon's Visitation in Gumley church on 16 April 1510. The name Burley occurs into the 1700s, and the names Johnson, Plummer and Spencer all often recur into that century too; Jelly, Mawson, Noone, Pole and Stretton also appear regularly, if a little less frequently.

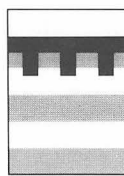
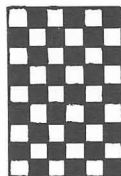
The ecclesiastical census on 30 March 1851 showed that the church then had 240 sittings with only 45 attending the morning and 41 the evening services and 24 the morning Sunday school. There was no afternoon service that day, but the averages given suggest there was an attendance of 80 when one was held. Today the church is one of the few in the diocese where the number on the electoral roll exceeds the church accommodation.

DESPENCER



43. *DESPENCER Arms:*
"Quarterly argent and gules, in the second and third a fret or, over all a bend sable.

44. *Ancient glass in the church (St. Denys). (a) in a window N. wall of nave; remainder in E. window of N. aisle of nave. The shape suggests they were originally banners or quarterings.*

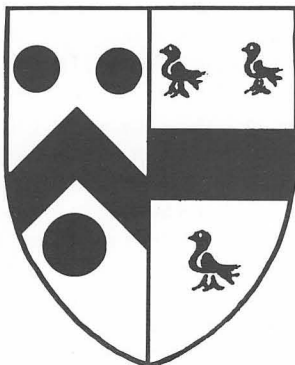


- (a) *Or, three chevronels gules (CLARE).*
- (b) *Checky or and azure (WARREN).*
- (c) *Barry of six argent and azure, a label of three points gules (GREY).*
- (d) *Ermine a lion rampant gules (*).*
- (e) *Gules three lions passant in pale argent, all over a bend azure (FITZPAYNE)*



* said to be *GENVILLE* but cannot be substantiated.

SHERARD



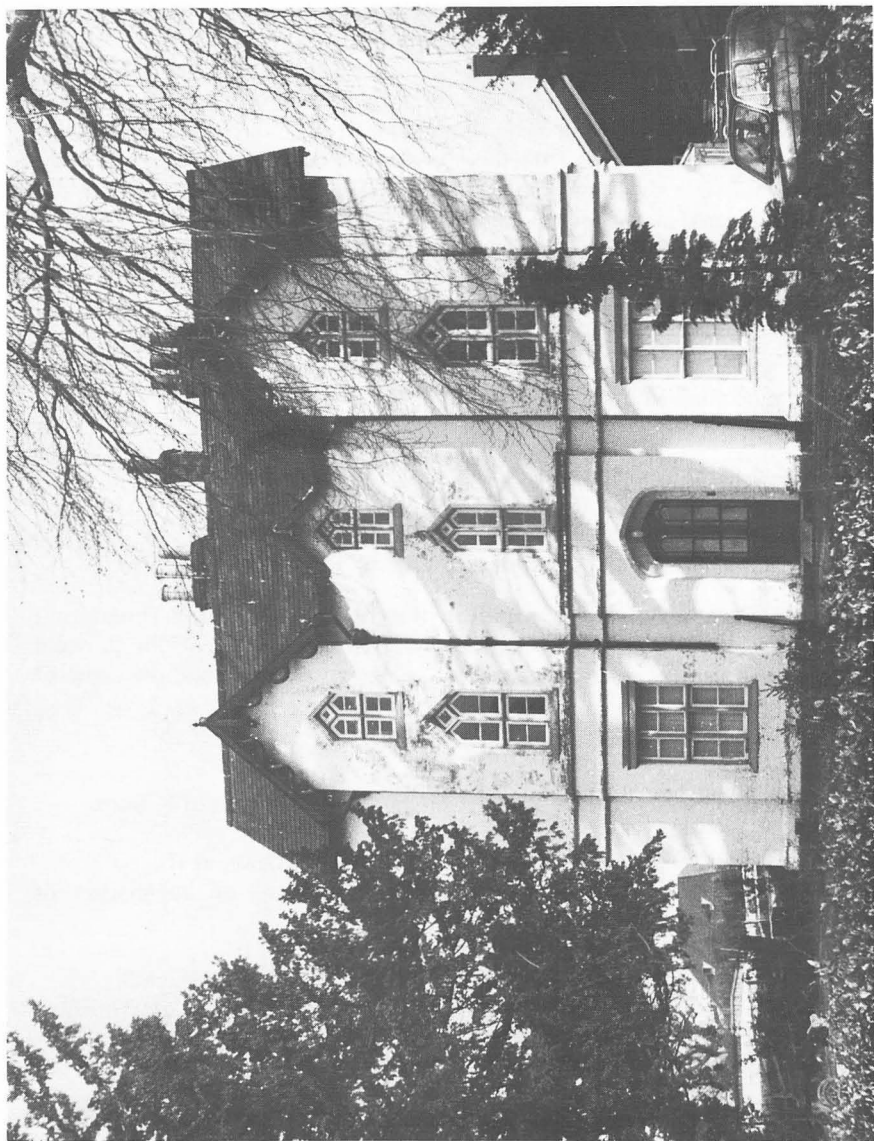
45. *SHERARD Arms:*
Argent, a chevron gules between three torteaux (SHERARD); impaling: Argent, a fesse between three martlets sable, (LOCKWOOD).
Crest: Out of a ducal coronet or a peacock's tail erect proper.
Marble monument on S. wall of nave, arms in colour. Records James Sherard, M.D., Fellow of London Medical College and F.R.S., died 13 Feb. 1737 aged 72; and his wife Susanna, dau. of Richard Lockwood, Gent., died 27 Nov. 1741 aged 72.

After the Reformation, Evington enjoyed a Peculiar jurisdiction whereby the Lord of the Manor usurped the church's authority, so that Court fees for the proving of wills and the issue of marriage licences attached to the manor, then owned by the Hastings. John Standishe, vicar 1559–80, was probably the first to act as registrar, the commissary was usually the lord of the manor and the apparitor, the parish clerk. The manor's authority was doubted in the 1630s and 40s when some wills were proved in the Archdeaconry Court at Leicester. The officers were still appointed to the Court until 1846 and the Court theoretically remained in being until 1857.

Advowson

The "rectory" and advowson (the right to appoint to the living) was granted by Ernald de Bosco and John Humet to Leicester Abbey and the grant was confirmed by Robert, earl of Leicester c. 1168–90; the church itself was appropriated c.1209–19, although it is likely that the consecration of the new church in 1219 was a convenient time for this change. The position remained the same until the dissolution, when the advowson passed to the king, and from him to the duke of Somerset who exchanged it with the Bishop of Lincoln and soon after a Peculiar was created as noted above. The Bishop of Peterborough obtained patronage when the Leicester Archdeaconry was transferred from Lincoln in 1839; after the re-constitution of Leicester Diocese in 1926, the patronage passed to the Bishop of Leicester.

A vicarage was endowed by Leicester Abbey and was worth 6 marks (£4) in c.1220, income being derived from various dues, altarage, small tithes, rent of 4s. from land of the church and corn tithes from a carucate of land, probably given in the first place to offset the cost of church repairs (not mentioned in the Charity Commissioners' Report, 1837). The vicar was to bear all episcopal charges but not the archdeacon's entertainment, the monks of St. Evroult in Normandy were to have a half share of the sheaves from the demesne of Sir John de Humet. By 1258/9, the value of the vicarage had declined to 40s. The vicarage was described in glebe terriers of 1679 and 1690 (a composite summary) as being of 5 small bays with 5 upper rooms and 5 below with one barn and coalhouse of 3 bays, a little stable of a very small bay and 3 other small bays for fuel and hogstyes, one small orchard with one pear tree and five apple trees in it, one small fold yard and a little garden (with a bee-hive in 1690). The great tithes were originally claimed by Leicester Abbey and, after the dissolution by the Bishop of Lincoln, until they were purchased in 1840. The small tithes consisted of corn from 5 yardlands and wool, lambs, eggs, apples and pigs and other offerings from 24 unenclosed yardlands. These were commuted by 1698, old demesne being valued at 5s. 6d. a yardland, new demesne at 32s. a yardland and vacant land at 2s. 6d. a yardland. Cottages paid 4d. a house at Easter. In 1690 a list of the Rate tithe totals £34. 11s. 8d. (see appendix). The main payers were William Johnson £2. 7s., Widow Burly £2. 4s., Mr. Cutler £2., Thomas Plummer £1. 17s., and Richard Plummer £1. 15s. The tithes were exchanged on the division of the manor in 1761 at an annual payment of £45.



46. *The old Vicarage, c. 1975.*

The living had been valued at only 11 marks (£7. 6s. 8d.) in 1217, 20 marks (£13. 13s. 4d.) in 1291, £8 in 1535 and £47. Its value was increased by a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty in 1840. A new vicarage was built to designs by William Parsons (1796–1857) in 1839. The estimated cost was £598. 10s. and architect's commission £28. 10s. That building, still having only cess-pit drainage, became redundant when a move was made to the new vicarage in 1975, and difficulties were experienced in selling it, although it was a few years before it was demolished. The new vicarage had been built as part of a new development, amazingly called Rectory gardens. A suggested solution to overcome the result of this extraordinary bureaucratic muddle was to rename the area "Bardsley gardens" after the first Bishop of the reconstituted diocese of Leicester in 1926. Thankfully this obviously meaningless alternative was not accepted by the residents. At the time of Mrs. Alice Bardsley's death in 1932, Evington was the nearest churchyard open to the Bishop's Lodge (then "Brookfield", London road, Leicester), so both the Bishop (who did not die in Leicester) and his wife are buried in Evington churchyard, but they had no personal connection with the parish. The name "Rectory gardens" remains since no serious effort was made to change it to "Vicarage gardens", not just an irritation for its historical inaccuracy, but a permanent reminder to later generations of 20th century incompetence.

List of Incumbents

(The Pre-reformation period is based on the list in A. Hamilton-Thompson's "Leicester Abbey"; the later period on Bishop's Registers in the Lincoln Diocesan Records, and other sources after 1839.) Where available, the cause of change is given.

c. 1219/20	W., chaplain
1242/3	Philip, chaplain
1258/9	John de Ayleston, chaplain, on death of P. Bum.
I.n.r.	Roger
1310	John de Eppewell, deacon, on death of R.
1311/12	Roger de Leycestre, chaplain, on resignation of J. de E.
I.n.r.	Roger de Shepesheued
1330	John de Scraftoft, priest, on death of R. de S.
1331	Walter de Kirmington, priest, vicar of Thurnby, exchange with J. de S.
1333	Hugh son of William de Greseley, priest, on death of W. de K.
I.n.r.	William de Humberston
1342	Philip Damary, rector of S. Michael, Northampton, exchange with W. de H.
I.n.r.	John Brykhill

1348/9 (21 Mar)	Walter Irland of Hungerton, on death of J. B.
1349 (2 Jun)	John de Rammeseye, priest, on death of W.I.
1349 (27 Dec)	John Wodecock, rector of Baxterley, Warwickshire, exchange with J. R.
1359	John de Boyleston, on resignation of J. W.
I.n.r.	John Scherart. (Might be the same man as J. de B.)
1360/1 (10 Mar)	Richard atte Birches, vicar of Basford, Notts, exchange with J. S.
I.n.r.	John Keilmersch
1361 (21 Sep)	John de Radcleve, on death of J. K.
1377/8	Thomas Northampton, deacon, on death of J. de R.
1384	John Wylughby, priest, vicar of Slipton, Northants, exchange with T. N.
1390/1	Thomas Constant, rector of Cranoe, exchange with J. W.
1393	William Robinson, priest
1396	John Wright, priest, rector of Badenham, Bucks, exchange with W. R.
I.n.r.	John Soweter
1407	Richard son of William de Segrave on resignation of J. S.
1408	John Gynger, chantry chaplain at Brixworth, Northants, exchange with R.
1423	John Thymelby, vicar of Beeston, Notts, exchange with J. G.
I.n.r.	John Burton
1455	Richard Kempe, chaplain, on resignation of J. B.
1458	Richard Twycors on death of R. K.
1461 (25 Jun)	Henry Wodehowse, priest, on resignation of R. T.
1461 (26 Jul)	Thomas Barow, priest, on resignation of H. W.
1466	Robert Gayte, priest
1471	William Wynton, priest, on resignation of R. G. (<i>alias</i> Sclater)
1479	Thomas Bothway, priest, on death of W. W.
1486	Thomas Webster, on resignation of T. B.
1488	William Mantell on resignation of T. W.
1527/8	John Butler, priest, on death of W. M.
1559	John Standish on death of J. B.
1580	Edmund Presgrave
1586	James Hutchins on death of E. P.
1601	Edward Presgrave on death of J. H.
1628/9	Nathaniel Gwynn on death of E. P.
1630	Matthew Gwynne, M.A.
before 1662	Thomas Weston, M.A.
1684	Alexander Clarke, M.A.

1686	Richard Southwell, B.A.
1733	William Parson, M.A. on death of R. S.
1734	Joseph Kilby, M.A. on resignation of W. P.
1739	Thomas Sanderson, M.A. on resignation of J. K.
1742	George Coulton on resignation of T. S.
1769	Richard Coulton, M.A. on resignation of G. C.
1808	John Allinson on death of R. C.
1819	Jemson Davies, B.A. on death of J. A.
1843	Thomas Bradley Paget, M.A. on resignation of J. D.
1846	William Burton Moore on death of T. B. P.
1893	Serocold Skeels, M.A. on death of W. B. M.
1900	Guy Landon, M.A. on resignation of S. S.
1902	Edward Berridge, M.A. on resignation of G. L.
1914	Edward Lloyd Simpson, M.A. on resignation of E. B.
1934	Arthur Richardson on resignation of E. L. S.
1948	William Oliver Chantler, M.A. on resignation of A.R.
1955	Cecil George Thorne, M.A. on resignation of W. O. C.
1961	Douglas Reginald Mitchell, M.A. on resignation of C. G. T.
1981	Christopher Finch, B.A., B.D., A.K.C., on resignation of D. R. M.

The majority (by far) of Evington clergy graduated from Cambridge University.
 I.n.r. = Institution not recorded.

Manorial Court Rolls

Proceedings of the Manorial Court Baron survive for a few years in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the best series covering part of the early 1600s. The court was probably held every half-year. The original documents are in the Leicestershire Record Office, with the exception of those for 1511–12, 1562–4, 1574–96, which are in the Public Record Office (Chancery lane section). John Watts, Henry Burley and William Atkyns are among the names mentioned at the October court, 1511, when the fines totalled 4s. In the following May, John Noan presented William Webb for owing suit of court since he did not come. (Manorial tenants were obliged to attend each court, usually on pain of 4d. Essoins, or excuses were not usually accepted.) In 1562 when Bartholomew Bayllye was the tithing man, the wife of Robert Bynnington broke the assize and two years later she is again in default and is fined 2d. for brewing beer and breaking the assize. At the same court William Bygge was fined 4d. for breaking the assize, being described as "not an honest baker of bread".

Genealogically, particularly before the parish Registers commence, manorial customs of land tenure may assist in finding out when a certain individual

died and the name of his heir. Thus a Court record in 1601 states that William Jacame had departed since the last court. The lord claimed, as heriot, a mare valued at £3. 6s. 8d. Jacame's son, Richard, "was left in full estate". Again, in 1608, Thomas Sharpe is recorded as dead since the last court, his son Richard succeeding him.

A few examples of offences and fines follow:

The Michaelmas Court in 1601 records a dozen offenders overcharging the commons in respect of pasturing foals, above the allotted number allowed, (usually from one to three). The fine was one shilling for each foal "overcharged". (Probate inventories do show there were many horses in Evington at this period.)

1600 Thomas Huchins was fined 12d. for his fence "betwixt the pasture and the coppice".

1601 Jhone Beeby's sheep breaking the wheat field. Fine 3s. 4d.

Henry Billington doth offend for not repaying of his barnes 20s.

Thomas Swetman & Ellen Mugge breaking hedges of other men's 2s.

Thomas Atkins "plowin" on Wm. Johnson's land. 6d.

Thomas Atkins for fellying certain young ashes in the Hall Yard to value of 4d.

Richard Jacam, Richard Sharp and Thomas Wynter for felling of 4 ashes to value of 8d. Fined 12d. each.

Complaint was also made that Mr. Beaumont's men had caused a disturbance "hunting and hawking with their hounds".

1608 Christopher Sutton, water courses, 12d., fence out of repair 10s., scouring of ditches 20s.

William Taffes encroached with plow 2s.

1609 Tenants adjoining Long lane had not scoured their ditches. Given time to do so "to feast of John's day . . . payne of 20s.". Names included Richard Sharpe, Anthonie Clarke, John Par, Robert Stamford, Edmond Needham, Christopher Sutton.

Henry Palmer and Richard Plummer must amend their water course before midsummer.

Henry Palmer took in coult not his 6s. 8d.

Henry Noone not carted away dung 3s. 4d.

Christopher Sutton's fence not kept betwixt parke and Harrould close 2s.

Henry Palmer encroached on Thos. Hutchins 2½ ft. x ½ ft.

William Filke's pavement 4d.

Richard Beeby refused to advise steward 3s. 4d.

1610 Richard Sharpe had straightened passage in Pick's lane by layeing of certayne stones in it. Till Monday next to carry them away.

Various tenants including Henry Palmer, Richard Plummer, Edward Chamberlaine fined 6d. for ditches in decay.

Henry Palmer and Richard Plummer for fence betwixt parke and harrould's close. 16d. each.

"No man shall offend by laying of manuer in the streete after mid-summer next."

There are various lists of manorial tenants, the most complete being that for 1608, which divides the tenants into free tenants, tenements held at will, (The Victoria County History regards this category as tenants in demesne and also considers that all mentioned are defaulters, but this, from the heading, would appear not to be the case), leaseholders, and cottars.

The following list is based on the Michaelmas 1608 names with one or two additions from later lists. The names are in Latin in some cases in the original.

Free Tenants (6) — Thomas Beaumont, knight,* John Chepingdale, L.D.D., Leonard Dent, (these first three non-resident), Roger Noone, Thomas Nedham, Thomas Noone.

Tenants at will (10) — Clement Deacon, gent., Robt. Eyrick, ironmonger, Edward Needham, gent., Thomas Hutchens, John Pare (Thomas Pare crossed out), Henry Watts, Peter Jervis (John Spencer jnr. crossed out), Henry Palmer, Peter Sutton, John Noone. The name Richard Walton appears by 1613.

Leaseholders (24) — Edward Chamberleyn, William (Nicholas crossed out) Noone, Thomas (John crossed out) Atkins, Henry Bennington, Alice Burley, William Burley, William Filks, Richard Jacam, Peter Plumer, William Johnson, Richard Sharpe, Richard Plumer, Thomas Wynter, William Wells, John Jellye, John Spencer, Richard Winter, Henry Watts, Roger (Peter crossed out) Jervas, Ellen Mugg widow, William Northam, Maria Atkins widow, Robert Atkins, Richard Beeby.

Cottars (5) — Richard Baylye, Thomas Mawson, Agnes Warner, widow, William Allen, Richard Walton.
Mathew Simons, Thomas Burley, Anthony Clarke appear by 1609.

The list of jurors in October 1608 comprised William Fylke, William Burley, Richard Jacam, Robert Atkin, William Noone, Peter Plumer, John Jellye, William Wells, Richard Beeby, Richard Sharp, Thomas Hutchens, John Spencer.

Seven of the above served in 1609, Henry Noone, Thomas Atkins, Thomas Winter, Richard Plumer and Richard Winter replacing Richard Jacam and Peter Plumer (both crossed out), Robert Atkin, William Noone and Richard Beeby, from the previous year.

Two Suit of Court lists, essentially the names of manorial tenants attending court, survive for 1746 and 1759 in the Leicestershire Record Office (1D32/20, 21).

10 Apr 1746: The Rev. Mr. Coulton, Thomas Cartwright, William

* miles (latin) in the original.

10 May 1759:

Worth, Richard Cartwright, James Harrison, Mr. Thomas Vann, John Jelly, Mr. William Vann, John Wheelwright, Mr. Thomas Plummer, Mr. George Plummer, John Arnold, Thomas Sanderson, Robert Cuffling, William Loseby, Thomas Spencer, George Durant, John West, William West, Widow Smith, Thomas Phippes, Thomas Brian, David Bull, Widow Parker, William Biddle.

The Rev. Mr. Coulton, James Harrison, Mr. Vann's house, Ben Howard, Richard Cartwright, William Vann, William Worth, Thomas Cartwright, John Wheelwright, Arthur Watkins, Thomas Plummer, George Plummer, John Arnold Sen. and Jnr., Widow Brian, Thomas Sanderson, Widdow Davenport, Thomas Berry, Margaret Fips, Samuell Adkins, Edward Stretton, Thomas Clark, William Loseby, John West, John Pegg, Joseph Parker, Fanen's Lodge, Thomas Adcock.

APPENDIX (1)

TAX LISTS

These lists are based on those in Farnham's *Leicestershire Mediaeval Village Notes*, volume 2 and on his MSS notes, but a few corrections and amendments have been made. In some cases, Farnham altered the order of entries. Where some names appear in latin in the original, these have been changed. The original returns are in the Public Record Office.

1. Lay Subsidy 133-1. 1 Edward III. 1327.

From Sir Richard de Grey	10s.
John de Evington	4s. 6¾d.
Richard, son of Hugh	3s. 5½d.
William, son of Hugh	6s. 5½d.
Thomas Mantyl	8s. 7¾d.
Thomas en le Wro	3s. 4½d.
John the clerk	10s. 5d.
John Alyy	2s. 11¾d.
John Balle	7s. 8½d.
Thomas le Fissher	7s. 9d.
Henry, son of the reeve	13s. 2d.
Robert Mantyl	3s.
John Prest	8s. 5¾d.
William Bole	4s. 1d.
John, son of the reeve	3s.
Richard Monke	2s.
	Sum 100s. 1d.

2. Lay Subsidy 133-2. 6 Edward III. 1332.

From Sir Richard de Grey	12s.
John de Evington	6s. 8d.
Robert, son of Robert	3s. 1d.
Richard, son of Hugh	3s.
Richard Moncke	4s. 4d.
Adam, son of Adam	3s.
William Bole	3s.
William Hemery	3s.
John Mantel	5s.
Thomas Mantel	6s. 4d.
Roger Derlyng	3s.
John le clerk	5s.
John Aley	6s. 4d.
Joan Prest	6s. 4d.
Amice Mantel	6s. 4d.
Thomas Fysshere	6s. 4d.
Robert Smyth	6s.

John Balle	3s.
William, son of Hugh	6s. 4d.
William in the lane	6s.
Henry Hawot	5s. 4d.
Adam, son of Adam	2s.
	Sum 115s. 6d.

3. Lay Subsidy 133-35. 4 Richard II. 1381. Poll Tax.

From John Stareson and Alice his wife, nat.,	2s.
William Monke and Amice his wife, nat.,	2s.
Robert Housbond and Agnes his wife, nat.,	3s.
John Fox and Joan his wife, nat.,	2s.
John Mantyl, nat.,	12d.
Joan, his maid servant,	12d.
Richard Saunsun, nat.,	16d.
John Somerd and Alice his wife, nat.,	20d.
Margery Beby, cottager,	12d.
John Grantham and Alice his wife, labourer,	12d.
John Odam and Agnes his wife, free tenant,	2s. 4d.
John Crondon and Juliana his wife, free tenant,	20d.
John Smyth and Matilda his wife, nat.,	2s.
Robert Wygyn and Matilda his wife, nat.,	2s.
William Saunsun and Amice his wife, nat.,	2s.
William Schowne and Agnes his wife, nat.,	2s.
Robert Clerk and Amice his wife, nat.,	2s. 4d.
Thomas Fox and Alice his wife, labourer,	20d.
John Role and Joan his wife, labourer,	16d.
Thomas Scharite and Agnes his wife, labourer,	20d.
Richard, the servant of John Mantel,	12d.
Agnes Parker, widow,	16d.
Richard Dorman, labourer,	12d.
William Hassard, labourer,	12d.
Isabel Colvile, nat.,	20d.
John Heyne and Lettice his wife, servant,	2s.
John in the lane, nat.,	12d.
Humberston and Alice (sic), nat.,	2s.
William Stretton, labourer,	12d.
Amice Fox, widow,	12d.
Gardner and Alice (sic), nat.,	2s.
John Shyrlok, shepherd,	12d.
Richard Bayley and Agnes his wife, nat.,	2s.
Sum of persons	53.
Sum of subsidy	53s.
nat. = <i>nativus</i> (villein)	

4. Lay Subsidy 133-109. 14/15 Henry VIII. 1524.

From John Somerd	in goods	£19	tax	9s.
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Will. Watts	"	£6	"	3s.
Ric. Wynter	"	£6 13s. 4d.	"	3s. 4d.
Henry Burley	"	£7	"	3s. 6d.
Will. Alkyn*	"	£6	"	3s.
John Watts	"	£6	"	3s.
Ric. Heyford	"	£3	"	18d.
Thos. Hakett	in wages	20s.	"	4d.
Cris Palmer	"	20s.	"	4d.
Will. Gerves	"	20s.	"	4d.
John Bennett	"	20s.	"	4d.
John Noon	in goods	£5	"	2s. 6d.
Will. Palley	"	£6	"	3s.
Will. Fellyon	"	40s.	"	12d.
Thos. Heyford	"	£16	"	8s.
Will Blake	"	40s.	"	12d.
John Buttery	"	£3	"	18d.
Robert Wynter	"	£3	"	18d.
Thos. Bayley	"	40s.	"	12d.
Rob. Palmer	"	40s.	"	12d.
		Sum 48s. 4d.		

5. Lay Subsidy 133-152. 37 Henry VIII. 1545.

From Peter Bonney	in goods	£20	tax	26s. 8d.
Richard Carter	"	£6	"	4s.
Thomas Burley	"	£8	"	5s. 4d.
John Fylkes	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
Thomas Noyn	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
William Plomer	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
Robert Wynter	"	£6	"	4s.
Barth. Bailif	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
John Spencer	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
Robert Pawmer	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
Henry Noyn	"	£5	"	3s. 4d.
		Sum £3 6s. 8d.		

APPENDIX (2)

Hearth Tax. Michaelmas 1664. Lay Subsidy.

	No. of hearths	Comments in Collector's book
Thos. Weston, clerk	4	
John Filkes	5	it is Joseph
Peter Plumer	2	now widow Plumer
Wm. Johnson	2	

* Atkyn?

John Jelley	3	
John Filkes	3	now Ric. Johnson and Scampton and Filkes is gone out of ton into Ireland
William Spencer	1	
John White	1	
Wm. Burley	1	
Elizabeth Plumer	2	
Thomas Maston	1	
Ralph Oouston	1	
Thomas Frostneale	1	it is Francis
Thomas Guod	1	
Joseph Spencer	1	
Wm. Darker	1	now Peter Plumer sen.
Edward Burley	1	
Robert Almey	2	
Richard Beeby	2	
John Noone snr.	2	
John Spencer	2	
John Noone jur.	1	
Thos. Hutching	1	now Rich. Stretton not liable by reason of his poverty
Alice Bosworth	1	
Edward Atkins	3	
Thos. Billington	2	
Thomas Scampton	3	
Richd. Noone	1	
Thomas Jacombe	1	
Henry Carricke	1	
Wm. Burley	1	now Jone
Thomas Groocke	4	now Will Paine
John Burley	1	

33 names; 59 hearths. Tax paid £3 3s. 0d.

Note re Michaelmas 1670 Hearth Tax return:

Of the 46 names (75 hearths) the following 18 were excused payment (discharged by legal certificate) : Widow Brigs, John Atton, William Monke, Mary West, William Mag, Wm. Harrison, John Noon sen., Ralph Astell, Morris Powell, Widow Jervis, Eliz. Bayly, Richard White, Richard Stretton, John Spencer, Edward Mawson, Widow Burly, Ann Scampton, Widow Savage. All these were rated at 1 hearth except for John Noon sen. (2).

Of those paying, the main changes (overlooking minor spelling variants) between the 1664 and 1670 returns are the inclusion of Thos. Hutchins (1), John Spencer sen. (1). Peter Plumer sen. and John Noone do not appear. Ralph Astell in the excused list is presumably Ralph Oouston in the 1664 list. Henry Carricke now has two hearths and John Noone sen. is excused. Joseph Filkes has only 4 hearths in 1670 and William Burley and Thos. Scampton 2 each. Widow Plumer is replaced by Thomas Plummer, as is Francis Frostneale replaced by John Frostneale. John Scampton has the former smaller Filkes house. Joseph Spencer and forge has 2 hearths. Billington is now shown as the time-honoured alternative of Benington and the correct spelling 'Mawson' is given for 'Maston'.

John Spencer, yeoman. £13. 10s.
 William Smith, labourer. (X) £1. 2s.
 William Ross, labourer. 13s. 4d.
 Thomas Burley, yeoman. 11s. 4d.
 Thomas Mawson, labourer. £1. 12s.
 Jane Tomson, widow of James, gent. £27. (Fine £60.)
 John Astell, labourer. 15s.
 Thomas Sanderson, cordwainer of Humberstone. (X) 13s. 4d.
 William Burley, yeoman. £16. (12 year lease dated 7 March 1717)
 Peter Plummer, husbandman. £12.
 William Neale of West Wickham, Bucks, gent. £19. (dated 23 Feb 1712)
 Richard Cartwright, yeoman. £12. 13. 8d.
 Mary Noone, widow. (X) £1. 2s. (dated 10 March 1712, but effective from Michaelmas 1708)
 Samuel Davenport, yeoman. £12. 13s. 4d. (dated 6 November 1713, effective from Michaelmas)
 Richard Stretton, carpenter. £6. 10s. (dated 18 March 1712)

A further bundle of counterpart leases are mainly dated 1717 and include the following. The terms are for 21 years, except as stated.

Thomas Barker of Daventry, Northants, gent and David Hammell (signs Hammall) of Leicester, linen draper. Rent £20. Fine £50. 15s. 14 Jan 1717.
 Thomas Plummer, yeoman. £70. 18 years from Ladyday 1718. (Cox's Close)
 Simon Marten, of Leicester, bookseller. Rent £40. 15s. 60 years from Ladyday 1718.
 Peter Plummer, husbandman. Rent £19. 12 years from Michaelmas 1718. (Bull Leyes)
 Robert Spencer of Leicester, butcher. £11. 13s. 4d. 7 years from Ladyday 1717.
 Joseph Jelly, husbandman. Rent £14. 7 years from Ladyday 1717.
 Elizabeth Spencer, widow. (X)
 and John Judd, woolcomber. Rent £30. 7s. From Michaelmas 1717. (English Close)
 Thomas Barker, of Daventry, gent. Rent £80. 25 years from Michaelmas 1717. (Park & Coppice)
 Thomas Barker, of Daventry, gent. Rent £20. (Fine £40) From Michaelmas 1717. (Harrold's Close)
 { Thomas Plummer, Peter Plummer. Rent £86. (Fine £150) From Michaelmas 1717.
 { George Plummer and John Barfoot, yeomen. (Harrold's Close)
 William Biddle, shepherd. Rent £47. (Fine £10. 15s.) From Ladyday 1718 (Brook Close)

(Some of the above leases were dated in 1717, well in advance of their date of commencement.)

(X) Signed with a mark.

APPENDIX (5)

County Rate Return 1837: Evington (Leicestershire Record Office QS 27/2/188) (Abbreviated details)

Owner	Occupier	Arable			Pasture			Rateable Value	
		a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.		
G.A. Legh-Keck esq.	G.A. Legh-Keck esq.	40	0	30	72	0	30	199. 2.10.	
" "	William Atkins				34	3	26	71. 3. 6.	
" "	Joseph Johnson	52	0	0	157	2	18	356.14. 2.	
" "	Joseph Bent				46	3	10	61.14. 3.	
" "	John Gilbert	25	3	2	92	3	12	225. 5. 0.	
" "	William Swain	21	22	12	12	2	31	61. 5. 9.	
" "	Thomas Peberdy				68	2	18	108.19. 2.	
" "	John Goode				21	2	2	41.14. 3.	
" "	Thomas Parr				46	0	26	63.11. 3.	
" "	Charles Simpkin	30	0	0	12	0	0	54. 5. 7.	
" "	Elizabeth Worth				2	1	15	5.15. 9.	
" "	Charles Pettifor	61	0	8	117	2	38	301. 2. 5.	
" "	Joshua Haines				44	1	4	76. 2.11.	
H.F.Coleman esq.	H.F.Coleman esq.				94	2	12	151.17. 8.	
" "	Samuel Barrens				76	3	37	103.16. 2.	
" "	John Hinks				91	1	33	103.18. 4.	
" "	Thomas Birlhley	35	0	0	39	3	8	100.19. 4.	
" "	William Atkins				49	3	38	62. 1. 9.	
John Atkins esq.	John Atkins				15	0	38	23. 8. 3.	
" "	Joseph Wand	61	0	0	83	0	4	210. 9. 2.	
" "	Thomas Kilby				65	0	9	103.19. 0.	
" "	John Bramley				7	3	39	18. 6. 7.	
" "	William Rowlatt				65	3	24	107.15. 2.	
" "	Robert Clarke	18	0	36	9	3	28	48.17. 5.	
J.D.Burnaby esq.	J.D.Burnaby esq.				25	1	8	43. 1. 6.	
" "	Robert Clarke	5	3	24	5	0	31	21. 9. 9.	
" "	William Withers				39	3	1	56. 0.11.	
Dr. Burnaby esq.	J.D.Burnaby esq.				3	2	30	8.19. 5.	
" "	William Atkins				9	1	38	23.10. 0.	
Capt.Burnaby & Others	William Withers				55	1	18	91. 8. 7.	
— Harris esq.	Charles Pettifor	35	0	0	53	0	37	152. 6. 9.	
Edward Davenport esq.	Edward Davenport esq.					1	2	27	4. 7. 6.
					<u>1 2 27</u>			<u>4. 7. 6.</u>	
		395	2	2	1523	2	0	£3063.10. 1.	

Total rateable value after including tithes to the Bishop of Lincoln £13. 6s. and tithes to the Rev. J. Davis £44. 16s., £3121. 12s. 7d.

Tax at 6d. in the pound = £75. 8s. 4½d.

The above totals do not include Bennett Lodge (later Swain's Lodge) which was in Thurnby parish until 1935. William Swain farmed Arable 45a. 1r. 6p., and Pasture 34a. 2r. 3p.

There is a separate list of house properties, total tax payable only £4. 14s. 5½d. Only three were assessed on an annual value exceeding £10 — J. D. Burnaby £28 (Evington House), Edward Davenport £19. 4s. (?Cedars) and Thomas Bryan £12 (Lawn). There appears no reference to Evington Hall, unless it is included with H. F. Coleman's holdings or it was not built until after 1837. Trade uses include Henry Litherland, blacksmith, William Atkins and William Horsepool, public houses, Dinah Stafford and William Grade, trade not specified. The whole return was signed by William Atkins, Overseer of the Poor.

The names of the house occupiers (some appear twice and two houses were unoccupied) assessed at below £10 annual value were: William Horspool, George King, Henry Litherland, William Cox, William Love, John Freeman, John Greasley, Martha Bennett, William Hastings, Joseph Johnson, William Tilley, John King, Thomas Silverwood, James Hutchinson, Robert Webster, John Ball, Abel Lowe, George Coleman, John Howard, Joseph Weston, William Maltby, James Harbutt, Richard Kirk, Sarah Jelley, Thomas Perkins, John Hinks, William Mee, William Parkinson, Mary Lane, Maria Mee, Hannah Ireland, George Burgess, John Bramley, John Worth, Mrs. Knott, Dinah Stafford, Richard Goddard, John Page, William Grant, Robert Throsby, Joseph Johnson, John Gilbert, Thomas Birkley, William Atkins, Thomas Peberdy, John Goode, Elizabeth Worth, Charles Pettifor, Joshua Hawes, Josiah Wand, William Rowlett, Robert Clarke, William Withers, Charles Pettifor.

APPENDIX (6) — 1851 CENSUS (30 March)

EVINGTON in 1851

<i>Head of Household</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Birth-place</i>	<i>No. in Household</i>
1. (Evington House) John Dick BURNABY	M 75	Colonel in army.	Kent - Greenwich	11
2. William ATKIN	M 67	Inn-keeper & grazier (of 98 acres)	Evington	5
3. Thomas POSNUTT	U 27	Agricultural labourer	Anstey	4
4. Sarah FOWKS	U 26	Housekeeper	Leicester	3
5. William GRANT	M 54	Tailor	Stoughton	4
6. William GOODMAN	M 32	Framework knitter	Glen Magna	4
7. (Vicarage) William B. MOORE	M 29	Vicar of Evington	Leicester	7
8. William DYE	M 48	Schoolmaster	Leicester	2
9. Thomas MOTT	M 38	Agricultural labourer	Laughton	7
10. Mary Ann LINTHWAITE	U 45	Grazier's daughter	Stretton Hall	3
11. Amos MALTBY	W 35	Gentleman servant	Lincs - Benniworth	3
12. Thomas LITCHFIELD	M 29	Schoolmaster	Nthants - Weston	6

	<i>Head of Household</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Birth-place</i>	<i>No. in Household</i>
13.	William LOVE	W 60	Agricultural labourer	Sproxton	1
14.	Harriett JOHNSON	W 62	Farmer, 200 acres, 4 lab.	Oadby	10
15.	George MEE	M 28	Agricultural labourer	Evington	7
16.	Thomas Chas. DYMOCK	M 45	Minister of Evington chapel	Gloucs - Stroud	3
17.	Mary WEBSTER	W 77	Parish relief	Swannington	4
18.	Mary Ann NEWTON	W 45	Glover	Wigston	3
19.	John HOWARD	M 46	Agricultural labourer	Wigston	4
20.	Mary GOODE	W 73	Grazier of 20 acres	Owston	2
21.	Thomas SILVERWOOD	M 67	Gardener	Evington	3
22.	Edward Davenport BRYAN	M 34	Annuitant	Evington	4
23.	Susanna WEBSTER	M 41	Carpenter's wife	Evington	4
24.	Thomas PEBERDY	M 36	Grazier of 57 acres	Evington	6
25.	Thomas THORSBY	M 40	Agricultural labourer	Evington	8
26.	William HEASLEWOOD	M 46	House servant	Asfordby	2
27.	Thomas BURGESS	M 44	Blacksmith	Evington	5
28.	William ALDGATE	M 47	Gardener	Norfolk - Tottenham	6
29.	Elizabeth PEBERDY	W 34	Parish relief	Evington	5
30.	William CHAPMAN	M 31	Agricultural labourer	Kilby	3
31.	(Ev. Park) William WAYTE	M 58	Farmer, 425 acres, 7 lab.	Gt. Peatling	9
32.	James HUTCHINSON	M 44	Agricultural labourer	Sibleby	5
33.	(Lodge) James HANDLEY	U 21	Formerly under-butler	Gumly	3
34.	Elizabeth KIRK	W 69	Parish relief	Oadby	2
35.	Thomas HORSEPOOL	W 77	Parish relief & par. clerk	Houghton	1
36.	William GRANT	M 27	Butcher	Evington	3
37.	Robert CLARKE	M 57	Farmer, 70 acres, 1 indoor lab.	Bruntingthorpe	6
38.	William ROWLATT	M 53	Farmer, 115 acres, 2 lab.	Nthants - Weston	5
39.	Elizabeth FREEMAN	W 42	Poultry woman	Gt. Bowden	4
40.	Ann COLEMAN	M 53	—	Evington	2
41.	(Lodge) William MEE	M 47	Carpenter	Evington	5
42.	(Lodge) William HAYCOCK	M 41	Agricultural labourer	Stretton	6
43.	William WORTH	M 23	Agricultural labourer	Rutl. - Esendine	3
44.	Joseph WARD	M 27	Agricultural labourer	Ashby Folville	3
45.	Mary LANE	W 76	—	Kent - Huntle	2
46.	Richard KIRK	M 34	Agricultural labourer	Stoughton	7
47.	Maria MEE	W 52	Laundress	Stoughton	5
48.	Samuel FOSTER	M 30	Gamekeeper	Staffs - Marchington	6
49.	John CHAPMAN	M 32	Ag. lab. & Night keeper	Kilby	2
50.	John GILBERT	M 59	Farmer, 130 acres, 1 lab.	Evington	8
51.	John ATKINS	M 28	Cordwainer	Slawston	4
52.	Benjamin HOWARD	M 48	Agricultural labourer	Evington	3
53.	Mary DAVENPORT	W 88	Annuitant	Middx - London	5
54.	William PAGE	M 38	Coachman	Sibbertoft	7
55.	Ephraim MARTIN	M 28	Agricultural labourer	Kilby	3
56.	Robert THORSBY	M 80	Parish relief, formerly Ag. lab.	Evington	2
57.	John GRANT	M 32	Tailor and publican	Evington	6
58.	Ann MALTBY	W 72	Parish relief	Loughborough	2

<i>Head of Household</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Birth-place</i>	<i>No. in Household</i>
59. (Ev. Hall) Henry Freeman COLEMAN	M 61	Justice of the Peace	Mkt. Harborough	8
60. William MEE	M 22	Agricultural labourer	Stoughton	2
61. John HARRISON	M 32	Agricultural labourer	Skeffington	2
62. George CLARKE	M 51	Agricultural labourer	Walton-on-Wolds	7
63. Ann BURGESS	W 70	Parish relief	Great Glenn	1
64. Simeon STRETTON	U 28	Farmer, 92 acres, 4 lab.	Leicester	7
65. William BARRATT	M 41	Agricultural labourer	Smeeton	7

Notes.

Total Population = 293 (146 male + 147 female). 65 occupied houses and 2 uninhabited, average 4.5 persons per occupied house. 104 persons born in Evington (35.5% of total).

Only 25 were born in Leicester itself and 40 were born outside the county; the other 124 were born in 61 different Leicestershire parishes, Oadby (11) and Houghton (8) having the most. Of the 65 households, 13 had three persons in them, 11 had two, 9 four, 8 six, 8 seven, 3 had eight, 3 lived alone and there were single households each having 9, 10 and 11 persons in them.

The average age of the males was 25.9 years, that of females 29.1 years. The full breakdown reads:

Male		Female	Total	
39	10 years and under	36	75*	*only 9 babies under the age of one year.
29	11 — 20 years	24	53	
39	21 — 35 years	37	76	
21	36 — 50 years	22	43	
10	51 — 65 years	18	28	
8	over 65 years	10	18	
<u>146</u>	(Average age 27.5 years)	<u>147</u>	<u>293</u>	

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Other works consulted are mentioned in the text.

Among manuscript sources deposited in the Leicestershire Record Office, 57, New Walk, Leicester are the following:
Wills and Inventories (Peculiar of Evington and Archdeaconry of Leicester)
Maps and Valuations including the Keck Collection (DE 112), 1D54, DE 43/35/28, Deeds (DE 256), Coleman MSS (12D 43/52 to 56)

A few manuscript records, mentioned in the text, are to be found in the Lincolnshire Archives Office, the Middleton MSS in the Dept. of Manuscripts, Nottingham University, the Devonshire Collections at Chatsworth and the tax return and some manorial records at the Public Record Office, London and Kew.