

Fairford Flyer

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FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

We hope you are enjoying these online newsletters. If anyone has anything they would like to contribute or any local history questions please email enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk. What about those Fairford memories?

This would have been the weekend of the VE Day Exhibition in the Church and the Community Centre. A concert on the Saturday evening with WW2 songs etc. followed by a 1945 supper of cauliflower or macaroni cheese and rice pudding or jelly and custard.

FHS was contributing displays, artefacts and general assistance for the event.

Chris Peachey has memories of Woodchester Mansion

When I was 18 and looking for a farm job I went for an interview with a man who ran a youth hostel on the hill above and also did some "farming"; the land included the valley around the mansion and the shell of the house itself; there were chickens in the dining room and four Guernsey cows were milked next door; the kitchen area was used for breeding white rats for dissection/experiments; I did not take the job! – but have been back many times since.

Lot Meads by Eric Jones

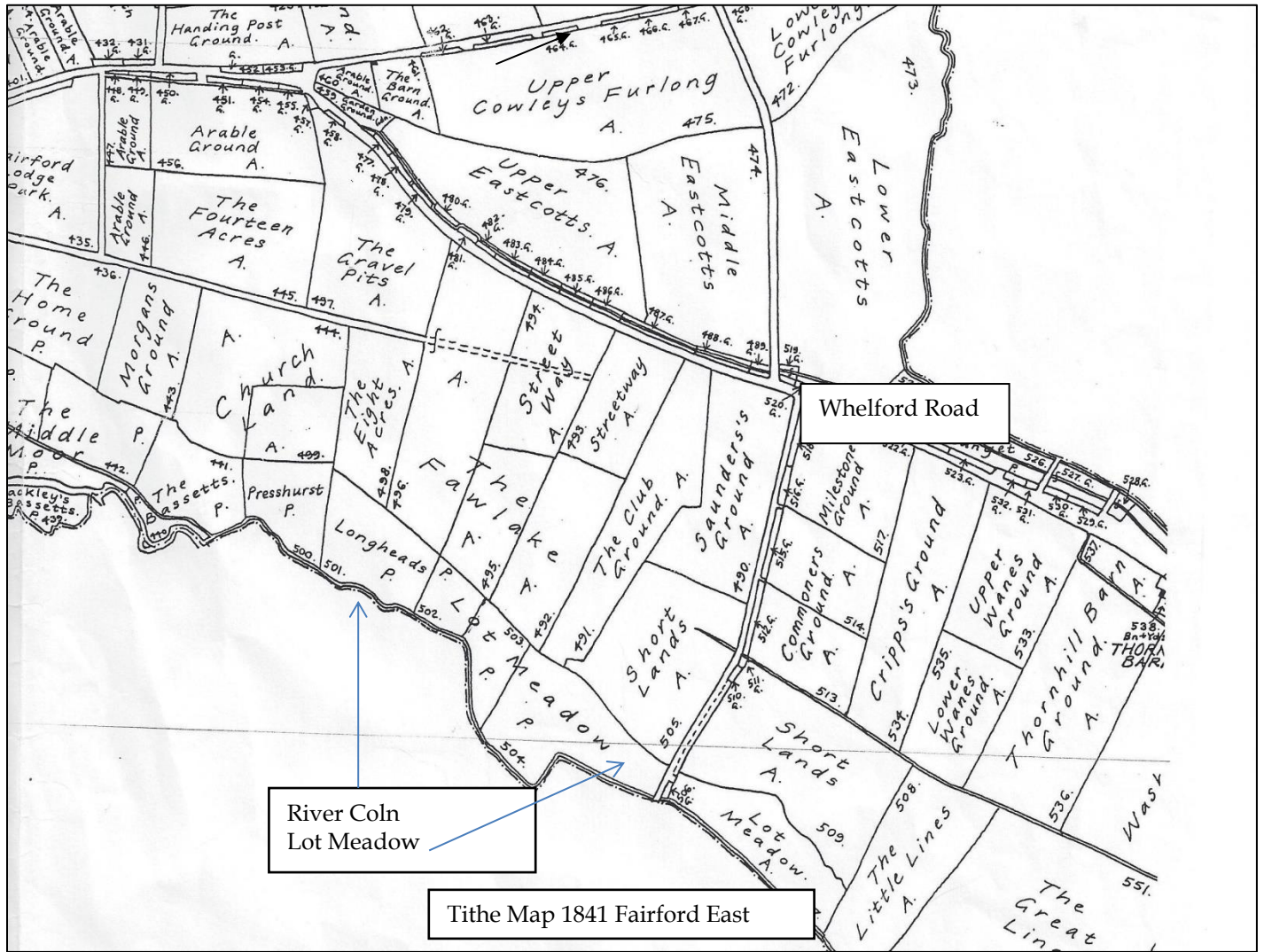
Like many other parishes along the Thames and its tributaries (and elsewhere), Fairford had some lot meads. They were strung out along the Coln east of the town and totalled only a handful of acres. A map of 1841 in the Gloucestershire Record Office shows them clearly enough but the enclosure award of 1769 suggests by that date they had already come into private hands. Little detail is available about them but descriptions of the lot mead system survive for two or three nearby places and during the 1960s I saw the last functioning ceremonies of drawing the lots at Yarnton, near Oxford.

What were lot meads? They were grassland divided into strips for which people with common rights drew lots each year. Everyone who was entitled received a few strips. The lottery aspect ensured they would almost certainly receive a mixed bag and different strips from year to year. That was the point: it was an insurance system. No one was stuck only with land liable to flood or that might be too dry in a drought year.

The rights were to mow the grass; then, after the hay was carried, livestock belonging to all those with rights would be let in to graze. It is hard to exaggerate how significant the hay crop was in the past, when stocks of animal feed might well run out at the end of winter – in the 'hungry gap' of April before new growth had sprung up.

The temptation is to think this was an age-old custom, perhaps medieval or earlier. Each cherry-wood ball drawn out of a bag at Yarnton had a supposedly Saxon name painted on it. Alternatively, in some parishes the system may have arisen quite late, even following an enclosure, because haying rights were so important and the insurance function was worth adopting to make sure poorer residents got at least some hay. In Fairford's case we know almost nothing about the management of the lot meads, whether they were a shrunken remnant of the way all the wet meadow

was managed or whether they were devised late in time. No documents may ever be found. We shall have to deduce local arrangements from other examples in the district and guess why lot meads were finally given up at Fairford. My surmise is that new fodder crops had made unimproved riverside grassland progressively less valuable.



Daubeny's, East End

I became interested in this property as the name George Matthews Daubeny appears in the electoral register of 1832 as an owner of property and land in East End and the house name continues today.



George Matthews Daubeny (spelled in various ways) was born in 1800 in Westbury on Trym; he went to Eton College and Balliol College, Oxford and qualified as a barrister at Lincolns Inn in 1827. He married Elizabeth Creswicke in 1830 and they had 13 children, 10 girls and 3 boys. He was living at Hatherop Castle (1836-1847), presumably while he was working for Mullings Solicitors in Cirencester, as he worked on the estate papers of the Mawle/Keble family in 1844/1850. By the 1861 census he is 'not in practice' and living at Lansdown Place, Cheltenham. His wife had died in 1854 age 44; he and the family later moved to Alstone Lodge, Cheltenham, a house that George had bought in the 1830s. He lived there with his six unmarried daughters (ages 31 to 46 in 1881) until he died. Alstone Lodge was eventually sold in 1883 (see

newspaper article below) and the household was disbanded and the sisters went their separate ways. His third son Henry Elias Daubeny inherited the land in Fairford. The land was eventually bought by the Raymond Barker Estate and the final piece of this land, Red Barn Ground, was sold in 1919 after Henry's death. It is interesting that the house name has continued after the family connection has been lost for over 100 years.

A connection with the previous article is that in the 1841 Tithe, George Matthews Daubney is reported as the owner of the, Short Piece (Horcott), Daubeny house and ground. Lot Meadow, Streetway, the Fowlake, Langet, Milestone Ground, Handing Post Ground are on the inset map.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette Thursday 2 June 1881

'Alstone Lodge situate on the immediate outskirts of the fashionable town of Cheltenham, standing in its own beautiful and park-like grounds of about 5 acres, convenient stabling, coach houses, cow houses, cart sheds and greenhouses, etc.'



Cheltenham Looker-On Saturday 2 July 1881

'Alstone Lodge, the residence of the late George Matthews Daubeny, failed to obtain a purchaser by public auction on Thursday last when it was offered for sale by Engall, Saunders, and Co., at their Rooms, in the old Promenade; for although there was a crowded attendance of local solicitors and building speculators, the bidding only reached £3,400 and the property was withdrawn. The contents of Alstone Lodge are advertised to be sold by auction by the same firm of Auctioneers, occupying the whole of the week after next, and will, no doubt, bring collectors and dealers from afar to compete for the rarities which will have to be included in the catalogue. So extensive and valuable a private collection of Works of Art and Articles of Vertu generally has never before been submitted to auction in Cheltenham their late owner having spent a life in their accumulation, sparing no expenses to acquire whatever objects commended themselves to his taste, though his reserved and somewhat eccentric habits precluded their possession becoming know save to a limited circle of personal friends.'

Perhaps he needed his daughters to dust the artefacts! More likely they were very comfortably situated with the prospect of enough money for each of them. The house eventually sold in 1883 but was demolished in 1904. For more information about Alstone Lodge see

http://www.historyofhestersway.co.uk/vola1/ha1_13.php The advertisement above was not overstating the extent of Daubeny's art collection as another advertisement (shortened) in the same issue of the Cheltenham Looker-On reveals:

CHELTENHAM

Engall, Sanders & Co will sell by Auction at Alstone Lodge July 12-20, 1881

The whole of the excellent FURNITURE and EFFECTS in the above Residence, comprising the appropriate Appointments of Four Reception Rooms, Eleven Bed and Dressing Rooms, Entrance all and Offices, with usual Out-door Effects; the valuable Library of 2,400 Volumes, including County Histories, scarce Illustrated Works, Standard Literature, and Old Engravings; 2,500 ozs of Silver, magnificent Plated Goods; Choice Cellar of Wines; Bed and Chamber Linen; Worcester Table Services; Oriental and Other China Ornaments; Old Majolica Ware, Bronzes and Rare Articles of Vertu, many of which were secured at the dispersal of the celebrated Collections at Stowe House, Buckingham, Beckford's, Lansdown Tower, Bath; Shugborough Hall, and at other noted Sales; the other interesting and costly OIL PAINTINGS, WATER COLOR DRAWINGS And SKETCHES obtained but the late Owner, with much judgement, principally from the Historic Collection of Lord Northwick, Horace Walpole (Strawberry Hill), Sir C Codrington (Doddington Park), W Beckford (Lansdown Tower, Bath) – Hon Anson (Shugborough Hall), and other Connoisseurs, and embracing examples of the following Masters, viz – Albano, Artois, Asselyn, Byckhuysen, H Barker, Bassano, Brauwer, Brocking, Borgogne, A and L Carnecci, Casali, Chignaroli, Crome, Dolci, Agnese, Dusart, Richards, Francken, Van Goyen, S Gomez, Jervas, W Kalf, V Kessel, Sir T Lawrence, Louthembourg, Luny, Marvo Ricci, Palamedes, Pannini, Poussin, Rothenhammer, Rosa da Tivoli, J Ruysdaci, Salvator Rosa, Santi di Titi, Sassaferate, Il Titiano, Tiepolo, Van Ulivet, Vandermoulin, Van de Velde, Van Os, Vermuelin, J Vernet, P Wenceslau, G A Williams, Zuccherelli &c &c &c

May be viewed by private appointment, a week prior on application to Engall, Sanders & Co, No 1 The Promenade, Cheltenham

Whilst on the subject of the Daubeny family there is another connection with Fairford. George Matthews Daubeny's father had a cousin John Daubeny who was a lawyer. He worked in the Ecclesiastical Department of the College of Doctors of Law, known more usually as Doctors' Commons. This was a society based in London for lawyers who specialised in civil law and the Ecclesiastical Department was responsible for the examination of wills as part of the probate process. Between 1805 and 1845 John Daubeny examined 13 wills of Fairford residents including that of John Raymond Barker, lord of the manor, who died in 1827, his sister Britannia Morgan (1829) and four of John's children as well. Other wills examined by John Daubeny include those of Dutton Price, a servant of Esther Lambe (1805); Richard Honeybone, clock maker (1832); and Thomas Jones, school teacher (1841). John Daubeny died on 16 February 1847 and is commemorated by a stone tablet in St Benet's church in Paul's Wharf, a church used by members of Doctors' Commons.

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

George Matthews Daubeny – yes, that man again!

Local newspapers reported, as they still do, the proceedings of local courts. The Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard of 7 May 1844 contained the following report:

“FAIRFORD PETTY SESSIONS, Wednesday May 1 – Before G. Milward, Esq., Captain Cole and Mr. Crowdy, Esq.

Hannah Tawney was charged by George Matthews Daubeny, with having taken illegal toll at Little Faringdon turnpike gate. The case being proved to the satisfaction of the Bench, she was fined £5 and costs.

Elisha Slatter, of Kempsford, was summoned by William Drummond for non-payment of 5s 11d due for wages. Payment was ordered, with costs.

Sergeant Webb preferred a charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct against William Rogers, who was fined 5s for the offence.

William Goodman alias Bowley, of Fairford, was charged by Mr. Luke Cross [of the White Hart] with drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and also with assaulting Mary Haines – Fined £2, and in default of payment, two months' imprisonment. [He paid up]

Sarah Kibble, of Southrop, was fined 1s and costs, for an assault upon Richard Baxter, at Fairford.”

Daniel Clarke, of Quenington, was fined £20 for a breach of the game laws.”

It is interesting that breaching game laws and taking tolls, misdemeanours that affect the authorities or land owners, attract a much greater financial penalty than assault.

PS I hope you find the field names on the Tithe Map fascinating. They each have an historical meaning as to the position, use, type of soil, shape etc. e.g. Lot Meadow