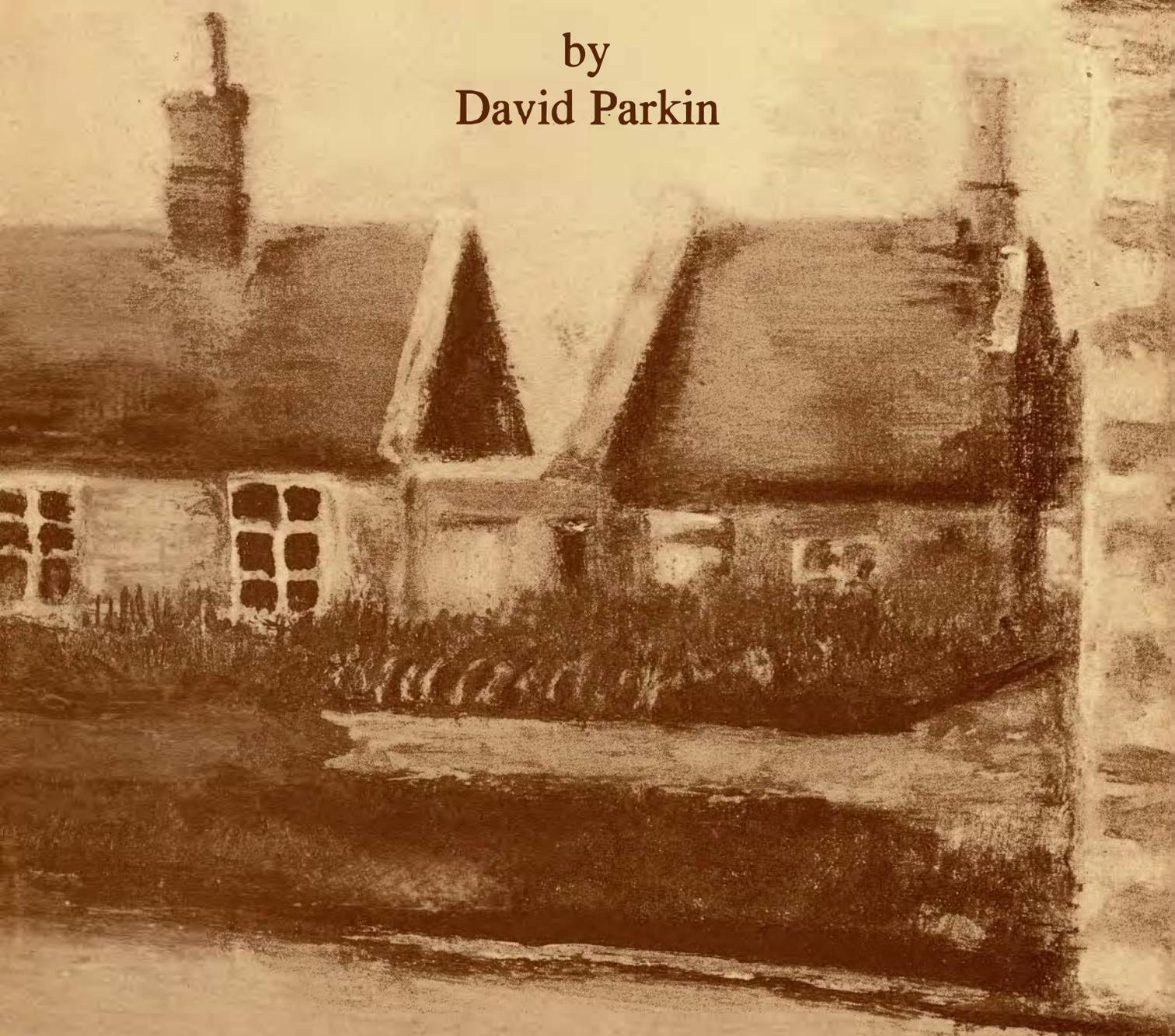


The History of Gilson's Hospital, Morcott

by
David Parkin



Rutland Local History & Record Society
Occasional Publication No 4

Rutland Local History & Record Society

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David Parkin



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1995

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THE HISTORY OF GILSON'S HOSPITAL, MORCOTT

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to Mr Hector Tyler in recognition of his services to the charity. Hector Tyler attended his first meeting of the trustees on 6th July 1939. He followed his father, Edward Tyler, who had been appointed a trustee on 5th April 1895, so that there has been a continuous period of service to the charity from father and son for 96 years. Hector Tyler became chairman of the trustees on 30th November 1966, and served in that capacity until November 1990. He retired as a trustee on 15th March 1991. During his period of service he saw numerous developments:

Consideration and completion of the Charity Commission scheme of 13th March 1942 to vary the administration of the charity.

Consideration in 1944 as to whether Morcott Farm, Scredington, should be sold, the trustees deciding to retain it.

Supervision of routine repairs at the old almshouses on Tyler's Row, Wing Road, Morcott, and improvements there, namely the installation of electricity in 1945, mains water in 1954, mains drainage in 1960, improvements and extensions in 1962 including the installation of baths, immersion heaters and fireplaces with back boilers.

Acquisition and development of land with four bungalows at Gilson's Close. The land was bought from Frank Gilman in 1968. An architect, Mr T E Wilson of Oakham, was appointed and plans were approved, planning permission obtained, and the bungalows built by J S Clark & Co (Oakham) Ltd in 1970. They were first occupied early in 1971. A loan and subsidy were arranged through Uppingham Rural District Council.

Consideration and completion of the Charity Commission scheme of 15th March 1978, which was needed in connection with the provision of new almshouses.

Liaison with David Scott, the Director of the National Association of Almshouses, to see if it was possible to renovate the old almshouses on Tyler's Row. When it proved to be impossible to renovate, the charity registered as a Housing Association. Applications made on several occasions for a grant to redevelop the site were eventually successful and three bungalows were built there.

Reinstating the biennial farm visits which had lapsed.

Dealing with various new buildings and improvements at the farm.

Dealing with subsidence work at Scredington.

Selection of occupiers for the charity bungalows.

These points represent only the salient factors in the administration of the charity. Each one of these involved much detailed work. Perhaps the best way to sum up Hector Tyler's chairmanship would be to say that the charity was prudently and carefully managed under his direction; money was spent where necessary but never wasted. On 11th March 1991, a meeting was held at Morcott Village Hall to make a presentation to Hector Tyler of a silver-plated drinks tray to mark his service to the charity. The meeting was attended by eight trustees besides Hector Tyler, namely his daughter-in-law Mrs Betty Tyler, Mrs Elizabeth Jerwood, the Rev Patrick



Fig 1. Mr Hector Tyler holding the salver with which he was presented to mark his service to the charity.

Lingard, Messrs George Boyle, Colin Crabb, Wilfred Milner, Geoffrey Pridmore and Dennis Tyler. The meeting was also attended by Mr Eric Johnson, one of the farm tenants, and the eight almshouse residents, Mrs Veazey, Mr Burton, Mrs Chambers, Mrs Shelvey, Mrs Cunningham, Mrs Watson and Mr & Mrs Awcock, and by Dick Pope, clerk to the trustees from 1952 to 1973, and by the writer.

*David Parkin
Eggleton, April 1995*

Introduction

This volume is intended to record the history of the charity known as Gilson's Hospital, which was established by George Gilson, a wealthy merchant, on 10th June 1612. By a deed of that date, George Gilson provided for the building of an almshouse in Morcott for six poor aged people, of whom at least two should have lived in Morcott, Rutland, for five years or more before being admitted to the almshouse. He endowed it with income from a farm at Scredington, near Sleaford, Lincolnshire, which he had bought from Robert Carr and Edward Saule.

The history of Gilson's Hospital shows the changes which have affected the charity since 1612. Originally there was an almshouse, where each resident had an individual room or cell for cooking, eating, living and sleeping accommodation. In 1904-05, the almshouse was converted into two self-contained bungalows. Now the charity owns seven bungalows in Morcott, all built within the last 25 years.

The administration of the charity has seen changes too. George Gilson's original trustees and their successors until 1867 were noblemen or landowning gentry. From 1867, a number of local clergymen appear as trustees, and in 1895, the board of trustees was widened to include Edward Tyler, the chairman of the recently formed Morcott Parish Council. From that time until the present day, there has been a gradual change in the trusteeship and the board is now made up of local landowners, farmers and retired businessmen and women, and the rector of the parish. There are several families whose members have served the charity for many generations.

Before proceeding further, it is worth looking at the provision of almshouse and similar charities. Often this type of care was provided by the Church and monastic houses, but as early as AD 937 there is a record of the first known non-ecclesiastical almshouse charity, which was founded by Æthelstan (925-39) and known as St Peter's Hospital at York.

The main work on the subject is Rotha Mary Clay's *Medieval Hospitals of England*, published in

1909, which deals with hospitals founded up to 1547. She states that she found 750 such charitable institutions in medieval England. She records three in Rutland, namely St Margaret's, Great Casterton; St John the Evangelist and St Anne, Oakham; and a hospital founded by John de Tolethorpe at the village whose name he bears. James Wright's *History and Antiquities of the County of Rutland*, published in 1684, only mentions the Hospital of St John the Evangelist and St Anne.

Like Rotha Mary Clay, I feel that it is necessary to explain the term "hospital", and I can do no better than quote her words (Clay 1909, xviiif):

It was an ecclesiastical, not a medical institution. It was for care rather than cure: for the relief of the body, when possible, but pre-eminently for the refreshment of the soul. By manifold religious observances, the staff sought to elevate and discipline character. They endeavoured, as the body decayed, to strengthen the soul and prepare it for the future life. Faith and love were more predominant features in hospital life than were skill and science.

Although this quotation refers to the inmates of hospitals being cared for by the staff of the hospital, there were also smaller almshouse charities, which did not have a resident master or chaplain, and Gilson's Hospital was one of these.

Rotha Mary Clay takes the story of hospitals or almshouses up to 1547, the date of the dissolution of the monasteries. However, it is clear that many such charities were founded after that date. In Rutland alone, there are the Hospital of Christ, Oakham and Uppingham (now known as the Archdeacon Johnson Charity) (founded in the late 16th century); Gilson's Hospital, Morcott, the subject of this study; and also Thomas Fryer's Almshouses, Manton; Royce Eventide Homes, Oakham; James Thorpe Almshouses, Uppingham; and Molesworth Eventide Homes, Ketton. The last four of these were all founded in the 20th century.

The founder - George Gilson

George Gilson was probably born about 1545. He probably came from a wealthy family, who could afford to send their son to St John's College, Cambridge, where the admission records of that college show that he was admitted as a Founder Scholar on 1st November 1561 and matriculated on 12th November 1561. At that time, young men often went to university to make the right social contacts, rather than to pursue a serious course of study. He did not obtain a degree and appears to have gone on to a commercial career in the City of London.

His family came from Hertfordshire and, although he had established a home in Rutland by the time of his death, he still had Hertfordshire connections then, since, in his Will, dated 26th June 1616, he gave land which he owned at Sandon, Hertfordshire, to his cousins, the daughters of his uncle Thomas Gilson. He also gave £50 by Will to the eldest son of John Hammond, late of Newchipping, Hertfordshire (this is presumably the place now known as Chipping, some four or five miles from Sandon). His Will makes no mention of a wife or children.

Wright (1684, 91) refers to the hospital founded by George Gilson at Morcott and says that:

Here is erected in this Town a small Hospital for six poor People, men or VVomen unmarried: Their Provision *6l. per annum* a peice. It was founded in the tenth year of King *James* by one Mr. *George Jilson*, a Roman Catholick (and as some say, a Priest) for the maintenance of which he settled certain lands at **Scredington** or **Screekington** in *Com. Lincoln*, (let at that time for the sum of *40l. 13s. 4d.* yearly, over and above all reprises) on certain Trustees and their Heirs, for the sole use and behoof of the said poor people, twenty shillings onely being yearly deducted for the Church VVardens of the Parish, in consideration of their trouble in collecting the said rents, and quarterly distributing the same. The same Mr. *Jilson* built also about the same time, another Hospital, more considerable than this, (as I have heard) at **Ashby= Fallows** in **Leicestershire**.

The Ashby Fallows mentioned by Wright is now known as Ashby Folville. Wright quotes the source for his statement about George Gilson and the hospital as the verbal account given to him by John Savage, rector of Morcott, in 1684. Savage was correct about the existence of the hospital or almshouse and the number of people housed there

and their income and in the information given about the farm at Scredington belonging to the charity. Savage's information about another hospital at Ashby Folville is incorrect. There was indeed a hospital in that village, but it is unlikely that it was more considerable than the Morcott almshouse, and the only evidence that it was founded by Gilson is the statement above from Wright. It may have been founded later in 1673 when Francis Lord Carrington, a descendant of Sir Francis Smith, created or re-endowed an almshouse charity and transferred substantial assets to the almshouse trustees. Nichols records that, when he was writing, the charity supported or assisted a man, his wife and two children; a widow woman; and a spinster (Nichols, vol III.i, 30, 552).

It is unlikely that George Gilson was a Roman Catholic priest and he was probably not even a Catholic at all. There is no reference to him in the Index and Finding List to Joseph Gillow's *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics* (Bevan 1985). In both the 1612 Deed and the 1616 Will he describes himself as "of London esquire". The fact that he is so described is one reason for saying that he was unlikely to have been a Catholic priest, as pre-emancipation Catholic priests were usually referred to as "Mr". It also seems somewhat unlikely that someone of overt Catholic sympathies should involve the churchwardens and overseers of the parish of Morcott in the operation of the charity. In his Will, he asks to be buried "without pomp or vain glory", a formula for a Puritan to put in his Will rather than a Catholic. Furthermore, he was a wealthy merchant in the City of London, which was aggressively Protestant during Gilson's adult life. However, he certainly had a number of Catholic associates as will be seen from some of the names of the people who owed him money at his death. He was in the business of lending money, a forerunner of the modern banker, and may have been lending money to Catholics who were being fined for recusancy, of whom one was probably Edmond Herenden of Morcott. Gilson's Will shows that he had lent Herenden £500 on the security of a mortgage of the manors of Morcott, Rutland, and Tadworth, Surrey. Another recusant was James Digby of North Luffenham, who was one of the debtors listed in Gilson's Will and also a trustee of the Foundation Deed, and who lost two-thirds of his estate in recusancy fines.

Gilson's Will, which is transcribed below as Appendix 2, was proved in the Prerogative Court

of Canterbury, and the Probate Act book gives his parish as St Dunstan in the West, which is within what we now call the City of London. However, he may only have had a business address there, as he is not recorded in the register of people liable to pay the 1615 Church Tax in that parish. No reference to a monumental inscription to him at St Dunstan in the West can be found in John Strype's revision of John Stow's *Survey of London*, 1720. He was not buried in that parish or at Morcott.

Gilson's Will and the schedule of debtors attached to it show that he was a man of substantial wealth and owned property in Cliffe, near Rochester, Kent, and "Mawling" (either East or West Malling), also in Kent. He also owned property in Cold Newton, Leicestershire, in Kirton in Holland, Lincolnshire, in Sandon, Hertfordshire, in Morcott, Rutland, in Tadworth, Surrey, and in Fleet Street, London. In addition to this, in his lifetime he had given a farm at Screddington to the charity trustees, which comprised 199 acres pre-enclosure with right of common over 1000 acres. On enclosure, this became a farm of 276 acres. Apart from the land and buildings which he owned, he had at least £1800 outstanding in loans which he had made. He may

have been owed money by Sir Rice (Rhys) Griffin, who was presumably his business partner. Sir Rice Griffin, who was knighted at Newmarket on 26th February 1605, and his wife Lady Anne are mentioned as beneficiaries in his Will.

So it can be seen that Gilson came from an affluent family and had a good education and, at the very least, preserved and probably enhanced his wealth as a London merchant and banker. Although he was originally from Hertfordshire, he had clearly established himself in Rutland well before 1612, when he founded the charity which bears his name. The trustees in the foundation deed include five Rutland residents, and the remainder of the trustees were all from adjoining counties. The schedule attached to his Will contains at least seven Rutland names. He acquired the manor of Morcott, no doubt with substantial land to go with it, by mortgage from Edmond Herenden, and was so much a part of the local scene that, when he decided that he should devote a substantial part of his wealth to the relief of poverty, it was natural that he should wish the beneficiaries of this charity to be from his adopted home.

The foundation of the Charity and its development

The charity was founded by "George Gylson of London esquire" by deed dated 10th June 1612. The foundation deed is transcribed as Appendix 1. In this deed, George Gilson appointed Sir Francis Smith of Ashby Folville, Leicestershire, knight, and ten others to be the trustees of the charity, and he conveyed to them his farm land at Screddington, Lincolnshire.

Gilson set out charitable trusts upon which the trustees were to hold the property at Screddington. It was an age when it was common for people of wealth to set aside part of their estates for charitable purposes, a God-fearing age as will be seen from the preamble to the charitable trusts, where George Gilson

doth humbly desire the Almighty and Ever Living God to accept of this his offering of praise and thanksgiving in part of acknowledgment of all the blessings which his divine Majesty hath bestowed upon him his most unworthy and unprofitable servant Not that the said George Gilson hopeth thereby to merit heaven but to the intent to show a godly and good example to others desiring his eternal Majesty that he will be pleased to bless the same that it may have continuance to be ordered and used for the relief

of the poor and to the glory and praise of his holy name for ever and ever Amen.

In the foundation deed, Gilson directed that the beneficiaries were to be "six poore aged people".

Gilson further directed that the income of the charity was to be collected by the churchwardens of the parish of Morcott. They retained a role in the charity until 1963.

The next provision made by the foundation deed was that an almshouse, or "meason [maison] de dieu", should be built in Morcott for the residence of the six beneficiaries. George Gilson retained the right to appoint the six beneficiaries and, after his death, the trustees were to make the appointments. Beneficiaries could be removed from the almshouse "for any disorder [sic] ill behaviour or lewdness." Although the power of appointment was vested in the trustees, the churchwardens and overseers of the poor for the parish of Morcott were required to declare that any Morcott resident to be placed in the almshouse was poor. The beneficiaries were given not only a roof over their heads but also a pension of six pounds per year and a yearly payment of six shillings and eight pence towards heating and clothing. The deed directed that the trustees had the

power to appoint new trustees, being "knights esquires or gentlemen the most worthy honest able and sufficient which shall next and nearest dwell to the parish of Morcott."

Gilson was concerned for the safety of the foundation deed and other records of the charity and provided that they should be kept in a good strong chest bound about with iron with three good locks, like a church chest. The keys of one were to be held by the rector of Morcott, another by the older of the churchwardens, and the third key by the trustees. The clerk to the trustees holds such a chest and keeps the charity's main documents in it, but it does not give the appearance of being as old as 1612.

The administration of the charity was conducted solely under the provisions of the 1612 foundation deed until the first of a series of schemes for the regulation of the charity was made by the Charity Commission on 14th July 1868. This scheme was the result of an enquiry by Mr Thomas Hare, an inspector appointed by the Charity Commission to investigate the charity. The scheme provided that the beneficiaries should be the six residents of the almshouse and additionally four pensioners. The almspeople were to be poor women of good character, widows or unmarried, 60 years or over, and two of them to be Morcott residents. Each almsperson was to receive ten shillings per week and not more than two tons of coal annually. The payment was to be made by the trustees to the churchwardens and by them to the almspeople. The churchwardens were to report breaches of discipline and were to be paid not more than £3 per year for the work which they undertook. Power was given to the trustees to appoint a Medical Officer to attend the almspeople at a salary of not more than six guineas per year, and also to pay not more than three guineas per year to the Stamford and Rutland Infirmary, although in fact this was never done. The scheme also provided that the pensioners should be poor persons of either sex, married or single, who were to receive between eight and ten shillings per week. The trustees were given the power to increase the number of pensioners if the income of the charity allowed. The power to appoint pensioners as well as almspeople came about because the income of the charity had

increased appreciably in the mid 19th century.

The next scheme was dated 15th July 1904 and provided that the beneficiaries would be two almspeople and six pensioners, and both of the almspeople were to be Morcott residents. The trustees were also empowered to convert the existing almshouse into two dwellings at a cost not exceeding £60 and any excess was to be met from voluntary contributions.

Schemes of 10th November 1922 and 16th July 1926 and 13th March 1942 made minor changes in the administration of the charity.

In 1963, the trustees resolved that the pensions paid by the charity should in future be paid direct to the pensioners rather than via the churchwardens as previously.

The most recent Charity Commission scheme is dated 15th March 1978. This scheme became necessary following the completion of four new bungalows in Gilson's Close in 1971. The 1942 scheme had provided for the first time for an Extraordinary Repair Fund, and now the 1978 scheme allowed for a Cyclical Maintenance Fund. This new scheme set out that the almspeople were to be poor widows or spinsters not less than 60 years old or married couples of whom the wife was not less than 60. For the first time contributions could be collected from the almspeople of not more than £2 per week, although the amount has since been increased.

Apart from the four Gilson's Close bungalows, the charity also owned the two old almshouses at Wing Road, Morcott, which were still standing and occupied at the time of the 1978 scheme. The Wing Road site became known as Tyler's Row at the time of the redevelopment of the site in 1986. The residents of the Gilson's Close bungalows paid contributions from the date of first occupation but the residents of the old almshouses did not pay; this no doubt reflected the poor quality of the accommodation at Wing Road, Morcott.

The pensioners, who had increased to ten after the 1926 scheme, were reduced in number from about 1970, when the Gilson's Close bungalows were being built, until 1978 when the last pensioner died.

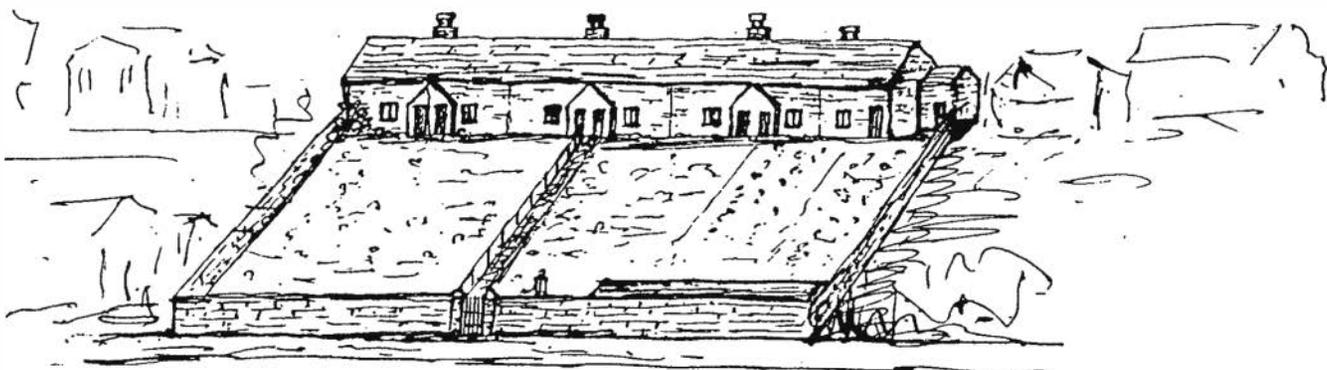


Fig 2. Gilson's almshouses as drawn by William Good in 1891.

The almshouse

It would appear that there was no almshouse when George Gilson founded the charity as he directed his trustees to establish an almshouse. Presumably the first almshouse was on the site which is now occupied by the three Tyler's Row bungalows on the north side of Wing Road, Morcott, near the junction of Wing Road and Fydell's Row. No deeds can be traced for this site and it was probably part of the manor of Morcott which Gilson had acquired from Edmond Herenden.

The first reference to the almshouse which has been found is contained in the Morcott Burial Register, where Widow Quanborrow, who is described as an almswoman, was buried on 2nd April 1655. The register was searched from 1615 to 1721, but it is very difficult to read in places. No burials of almswomen are recorded between 1615 and 1655 and again between 1675 and 1721, but this may only indicate a change of rector with the earlier and later rectors not seeing fit to record the fact. There is no reference to burial of almsmen during the period from 1615 to 1721, so that it would appear that the trustees had decided to allocate places in the almshouse to women only.

The almshouse is referred to in the Hearth Tax Return 1665 (Bourn & Goode 1991, 18) as having four hearths but not being chargeable to the tax on the grounds of poverty of the residents. It comes as no surprise that almshouse residents should be exempt for that reason, but poverty was very widespread at that time as can be seen from the fact that approximately 34.5% of households in Rutland were exempt.

The churchwardens' accounts, including bills for work done on the almshouse between 1725 and 1747, give some interesting details about the almshouse (many names which are still local are to be found among the tradesmen), for instance:

John Dickins his bill
for work done at the Almshouse in Morcott 1725

Sept 3	For one day myself	1.	2.
	My son William two days	2.	4.
	My son Francis one day	0.	6.
Sept 6	For 6 days myself	7.	0.
	My son Francis 6 days	3.	0.
	My son William 6 days	7.	0.
	For 6 ridge tyle	2.	6.
	For a peck of hair	0.	2½.

Sept 16	For 2 days work myself	2.	4.
	My son William 2½ days	2.	11.
	My son Francis 2½ days	1.	3.
Sept 20	For 4 days work myself	4.	8.
	My son William 5 days	5.	10.
	My son Francis 4 days	2.	0.
	For 4 bunches and a half of laths	6.	3.
	For 2½ pecks of slate pins	2.	6.
	For slate	6.	0.
	For 3 strike of lime	2.	6.
	For small beer for 14 days at 2d per day	2.	4.
	For thaken [thatching] the bedas [bedehouse] and [illegible] the yard	2.	2.

The total is recorded as £2 19sh 2d, but this is clearly an error.

This and other bills for that period are held by Leicestershire Record Office under reference number DE 2876/59/1-10.

In 1798 and 1799 roof repairs and plastering and sundry work was carried out by John Sharp, mason, W M Joyce and his two sons, slaters, John

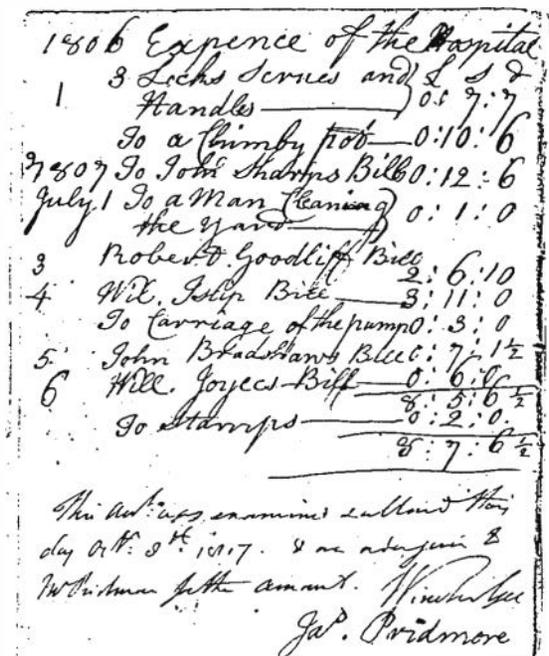


Fig 3. An account for repairs to the almshouses in 1806

Bradshaw, blacksmith, Robert Goodliff and his son, carpenters and decorators, Hugh Pridmore, carrier and Richard Hornsby, gardener. The workmen were well supplied with ale by Isabella Dickens, whose account dated 30th April 1798 shows that she was paid four shillings and three pence for "ale the masons slaters and carpenters had at sundry times."

These bills are held by the Lincolnshire Record Office under reference Misc Don 173.

There is a description of the almshouse in the report made in 1891 by Mr William Good, a Charity Commission inspector. The almshouse provided one room or cell for each resident. They were certainly fully occupied in 1821 when the Royal Commission enquiring into charities examined Gilson's Hospital, but, by 1865, when Mr Thomas Hare, acting on the authority of the Charity Commission, inspected the property, he stated that it had long since ceased to be the general practice for the almspeople to live in the Hospital and that they resided, for the most part, at their own homes or with their relatives. However, two of the almspeople were living in the Hospital at the time of Mr Hare's inspection, one of whom was occupying two rooms and the other one room, and the other three rooms were occupied by poor women receiving parish relief of "about two shillings a week and a loaf each."

It had clearly become difficult to persuade the beneficiaries of the charity to reside in one room. Because this difficulty continued, the trustees resolved on 28th October 1889 to make application to the Charity Commission for their authority to sell the almshouse as the objects of the charity disliked residing alone and being separated from their relatives and friends.

There was a letter before the trustees at that meeting from the Reverend C O Watson, the rector of the parish, requesting that Mary Garrett (elsewhere called Amelia Louisa Garratt), formerly a schoolteacher at Ridlington, might be allowed to occupy two of the rooms in the almshouse.

The proposal by the trustees to sell the almshouse caused quite a controversy in Morcott, and there was considerable activity over the next fifteen years before a solution was reached. For the most part, the trustees were determined to sell and invest the money from the sale and pay out pensions to poor people living in their own homes. The inhabitants of Morcott wanted to see the almshouse repaired and the almspeople compelled to live in it, but that was probably not a practical solution in view of the poor state of the property. However, it was the duty of the Charity Commission to hold a public enquiry into the trustees' application to sell the almshouse and its site. This was duly held at the Morcott School Room on 18th December 1890 and was conducted by Mr William Good, the Charity Commission inspector whose report is referred to earlier.

The original, dated 20th January 1891, is held by the Charity Commission and is a most interesting document. It contains a sketch of the almshouse which is reproduced here (fig 2), and the following description:

The Hospital premises comprise one long, low stone building (90 feet 6 inches) of the date of the Foundation (1612) and apparently substantial, containing six small rooms each 10 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 9 inches and 8 feet high, all on the ground floor, with a small wash house or lumber room and offices adjoining and a piece of garden ground (about 20 perches) in front, enclosed by a stone wall.

At the time of my visit, two of the rooms were occupied (rent free) by a poor woman (Amelia Louisa Garratt) formerly a schoolmistress at Ridlington, near Uppingham, who, being in a destitute condition, was placed in the Hospital in August 1889 by the Reverend C.O. Watson, the rector of Morcott, with the sanction of Mr Benjamin Adam, the late clerk to the trustees.

The other four rooms were locked up, the almspeople to whom they had been allotted declining to occupy them. The windows of these rooms were broken and the whole building had a very neglected dilapidated and comfortless appearance and is, I think, unfit for the dwelling of poor old and infirm people.

The propositions which found favour with most of the 50 or so people who attended the public enquiry were to demolish the existing hospital building and build a new hospital to provide accommodation for two people. Each would have a bedroom, a sitting room with larder or scullery, coal cellar and closet. It was also felt that the income of the charity which was surplus to the maintenance of such two almspeople should be used to pay pensions, and further that the rector of Morcott should be appointed a trustee. It is recorded that these propositions were favourably received by all except three of the five trustees present.

It would appear that the trustees did not take kindly to the interference in their management of the charity affairs. It was another fourteen years before the recommendations of Mr Good's report finally bore fruit. Eventually the trustees decided to modernise the old building, rather than demolish and rebuild.

The trustees made the first move to modernise the almshouse at their meeting of 2nd November 1903, when Mr P C Evans-Freke, one of the trustees, presented a plan and specification for converting the almshouse into two separate self-contained dwellings. An estimate had been obtained for this showing that the cost would be £105. The work was ordered by the trustees and carried out by Joyce Brothers of Morcott, and was completed early in 1905. Mr G F Rowley paid £50 of the cost, and Mr Edward Tyler organised a concert in the village and

the proceeds of this, £3 3sh 0d, went towards the cost. The two bungalows so created continued to be lived in for just over 70 years until Mr Hector Tyler, son of Mr Edward Tyler, who was chairman of the trustees in 1977, reported that the two old almshouses were empty and that he could no longer find anyone wishing to occupy them. They were left empty until it became possible to demolish them and redevelop the site as will be seen shortly.

However, between 1905 and 1977, numerous improvements were made. Electricity was laid on in 1946 by C W Adams at a cost of £13, mains water in 1956 by R A Dodsley & Co for £60 4sh 9d, and mains drainage and other improvements in 1963 by J W Stapleton & Sons at a cost of £1353 13sh 1d. The trustees were considering the purchase of land for further almshouses in 1965 and had two possible sites, namely a site near the cemetery and the site



Fig 4. New bungalows built in Gilson's Close in 1970.

which was eventually chosen and now known as Gilson's Close opposite Fydell's Row, which site was purchased from Mr F H Gilman for £500 in 1967. The trustees engaged Mr T E Wilson, architect, of Oakham to draw plans for four bungalows. Quantity surveyors were Flood & Wilson of Leicester. These were built for the charity by J S Clark & Co (Oakham) Ltd in 1970 at a cost of £13,134 7sh 6d, which was found partly out of accumulated income of the charity from earlier years but mainly by virtue of a mortgage from Uppingham Rural District Council for £11,971. This was repaid out of surplus income over the following ten years. There were Government grants available, but these were quite minimal. These new bungalows were first occupied in January 1971.

The first occupiers were Mr & Mrs Douglas Veazey, Mrs Ellen Hopkins, Mrs Eliza Watson and Mr & Mrs Lawrence Robinson.

When the two old almshouses in Wing Road became uninhabitable in 1977, there were very substantial Government grants available known as Housing Association Grants, but the charity had to

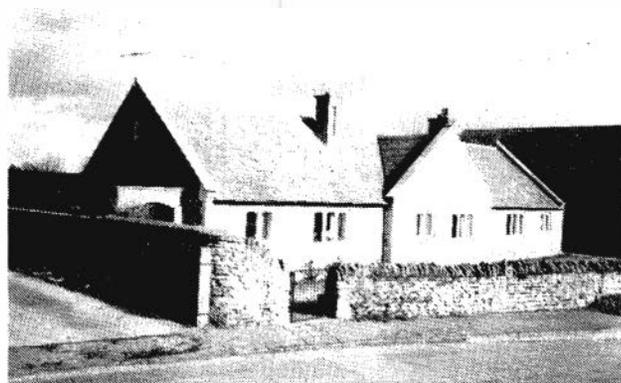


Fig 5. New bungalows built on the site of the original almshouse in 1985.

wait its turn for a grant. It was reported to the trustees on 5th July 1983 that the charity's application for a grant had finally been successful. Messrs W J Hemmings & Partners of Stamford were appointed architects and quantity surveyors for the scheme to redevelop the site of the two old almshouses, and planning permission was obtained to demolish the old bungalows and erect three bungalows in their place. The builders were Mitchell & Hudson of Stamford and the final cost of this scheme, including all fees, was £82,980, of which £68,860 was paid by Housing Association Grant, leaving the trustees with the balance of £14,120 to find on mortgage. Advice on obtaining a Housing Association Grant was provided by David Goodwin of the Nene Housing Society of Peterborough. For a number of years the charity had been a member of the National Association of Almshouses, which was an organisation set up to advise small almshouse charities. The director of that Association, Mr David Scott, had been very helpful in advising the charity how to present their case to get Housing Association Grant, and he was invited to carry out the formal opening ceremony for the bungalows in September 1985. The first occupiers of these bungalows were Mr and Mrs Edward Burton, Mrs Ivy Chambers and Miss Ellen Adams.

The beneficiaries

For 300 years at least, the residents in the charity properties were known as "almspeople", but more recently they have been referred to as "residents" or "beneficiaries." As well as their accommodation, they received a pension, and for 180 years or more the whole income of the charity, after payment of administrative expenses, was divided between the six residents at Morcott. In the mid 19th century when the charity became more affluent the trustees sought and obtained permission from the Charity Commission to make further payments to "pensioners", who were not almshouse residents.

When the charity was originally founded by George Gilson in 1612, the beneficiaries of the charity were to be six poor aged people, of whom two should have lived in Morcott for at least five years before appointment. The beneficiaries were to be single, of at least 50 years of age, their working life over, having been true and honest labourers, men or women, living in an almshouse in Morcott. Churchwardens' accounts from 1693 to 1700 and the charity accounts in 1777 show that the net income of the charity was equally divided between six almspeople who were all women. The foundation deed made no reference to the gender of the beneficiaries. The almswomen in 1777 were Mary Angell of Morcott, Mrs Flour, Widow Gamble of Morcott, Mary Hartshorn, Martha Lambert and Magdalen Mears.

The foundation deed directed that the whole of the income of the charity after expenses should be divided between the almspeople. We only have accounts for a short period prior to 1777. In 1777, the income was being paid in full to the almswomen. The farm rents rose substantially after enclosure in 1797, and were no longer paid over entirely to the almswomen. In fact, money was being held back to clear the debt caused by the costs of enclosure at Screddington. The almswomen therefore complained to James Pridmore, the churchwarden, that they were not receiving the whole of the net rents, and Pridmore wrote on their behalf on 16th March 1801 to the agent to the trustees, John Clementson, as follows:

Sir, I received your letter of the 10th day of February last and have received the money £35 and have paid 5 wimmin and sent to the other in Leicester with submission. Sir, we would like to know the rent and the outgoings as the old wimming grumble and say they told it is let for more than they receive. And Sir, I called at your house in Oakham for the book I gave you but Mr Brown said he could not let me have it.

I should take it as a favour if you will let him send it to me.

From your humble servant, James Pridmore.

The number of almspeople reduced from six to five in 1832, possibly showing that the almswoman nominated to the vacancy in the almshouse declined to reside there and therefore forfeited her right to a pension. However, it should be noted from Mr Hare's report that by 1865 only two of the almspeople were residing in the almshouses. He records that:

The present recipients of the charity are:

1. Mercy Stimson, residing in Oakham, the widow of a small farmer of the County, who failed.
2. Alice Webster, a Morcott widow, living in the almshouse. She was the widow of a laborer [sic] of the parish. He had been a drover. The widow had been a washerwoman.
3. Martha Martin, a Morcott woman, living in the almshouse, the widow of a laborer, aged 79 when she was appointed.
4. Jane Sims, the widow of a carpenter and clerk of the parish of Teigh in this County. She is nearly 80, and was past needlework. She resides at Teigh.
5. Charlotte Adams, appointed in 1857 and then was 60 years of age. This was the last appointment made in rotation. She resides at Wye near Ashford and is said to be a person who had been maintaining herself by needlework, but whose eyesight had failed.
6. There is at present a vacancy which has not been filled up.

There are only two of the almshouses at Morcott in fact occupied by almspeople, but three of the others are occupied by old women of the parish, who receive allowance from the Union, and are liable to removal at a week's or fortnight's notice.

The number of beneficiaries remained at five until Christmas 1868 when the number was increased to seven (five almswomen and two pensioners). The Charity Commission scheme of 14th July 1868 permitted the trustees to increase the beneficiaries to six almspeople and four pensioners. The almspeople were to be poor women of good character, widows or unmarried, 60 years or over, but the pensioners could be of either sex. Power was given to increase the number of pensioners if the income of the charity allowed. The trustees did not use these

powers to the full as there were only eight almspeople/pensioners between 1869 and 1875, and then this number fell to only three in 1881 as a result of the dramatic fall in the farm rents. By 1881 the farm rents were down to £78 per year.

In 1896/7, there were four almspeople (Frances Ann Boyfield of Teigh, Elizabeth Dixon of Morcott, Rachel Berridge of Glaston and Hannah Joyce of Morcott), receiving £26 per year each but probably not living in the almshouse, and four pensioners (Frances Gregory of Cottesmore, Rebecca Walker of Edith Weston, Ann Scott of Morcott, who got her pension as a result of pleas made by the Morcott Parish Council on her behalf, and Thomas Gibson of Scredington, who had previously been one of the smallholders on the charity estate at Scredington), receiving £20 16sh 0d per year each. By this time, the farm rents had risen to £166 per year and the charity had investment income of £47 per year.

It is not clear how appointments of almspeople were made prior to 1806, except that the trustees reserved two of the six almshouse places for Morcott residents, who were nominated by the churchwardens. However, in 1806, the trustees decided that

the right of presenting to the next vacancy which shall occur or shall have occurred after the first day of May 1806 shall be vested in George Finch Hatton esquire and after that in the following order: J.E.D.E. Hatton esquire, Earl of Aylesford, Earl of Winchelsea, Sir J. Palmer Bart. Whenever any new feoffees or trustees shall be appointed the order of presenting to any vacancy shall be vested in them according to the order in which their names stand upon the deed which constitutes them feoffees and trustees to the said Hospital. That whenever a vacancy occurs in the Hospital the Churchwarden shall acquaint the agent who will inform the trustee in whom the appointment is vested.

Although the minutes of the meeting of 31st May 1806 do not record this, the preference for having two Morcott residents out of the six almspeople was still maintained. Prior to 1806, the account books clearly show that two out of the six appointments were made by the Parish of Morcott. For instance, Mary Angell, who died on 14th November 1777, is recorded as having been appointed by the Parish of Morcott and her vacancy was filled by the parish nominating Septima Wright. After 1806, some nominations were clearly made by named individuals. For instance, Elizabeth Jersey was admitted into the almshouse in the place of Alice Wade deceased, on the nomination of Edward Finch Hatton at a meeting on 4th October 1821, and on 3rd December 1823 Elizabeth Smith of Nether

Broughton was nominated by the Earl of Aylesford.

The method of appointing almspeople changed in 1857, when the trustees resolved that almspeople should be appointed by the majority of the trustees

At a Special Meeting of the Trustees of St. John's Hospital held at the Castle at Bakhams on the Fifth day of February 1872 -

Present

Edward Nathaniel Conant Esq. in the Chair

Richard Lucas Esq.

John Henry Lee Wingfield Esq.

George Henry Fitch Esq.

The Reverend John Henry Dwyer

The Reverend Chancellor White

Resolved that Elizabeth Goodliffe of Morcott Widow aged 60 be appointed an Almsperson in the place of Alice Wade deceased her pay to take place from to-day and that her representatives be paid up to to-day -

The Trustees Account for the year 1871 signed by two of them) was approved and confirmed for transmission to the Charity Commissioners.

Ed: N: Conant

Chairman

Fig 6. Elizabeth Goodliffe is appointed almsperson, 1872.

present at the meeting when the appointment was made, according to the directions of the founder.

The Charity Commission scheme dated 15th July 1904 provides that the beneficiaries are to be two almspersons and six pensioners. This is the time when the trustees were converting the old almshouse into two bungalows. This work was completed in 1905 and the almswomen who occupied them were Rachel Berridge and Mary Woodcock. The trustees also increased the pensioners to six in accordance with the 1904 scheme. Schemes dated 10th November 1922 and 16th July 1926 increased the number of pensioners first to eight and then to ten and the accounts show that these powers were implemented. However the farm rents fell sharply in the early 1930s and the number of pensioners was reduced to seven.

The Charity Commission scheme dated 15th March 1978 envisaged a change in the charity's role in that it would revert to its original objects of providing accommodation for the elderly poor and the pensions would be phased out. This scheme had been several years in discussion between the trustees and the Charity Commission and the trustees had previously put into practice the move to discontinue the pensions, so that there were still six pensioners in March 1973, but then they began to reduce in numbers as pensioners died. The last pensioner died in 1978.

A table of beneficiaries up to 1971 is set out in Appendix 4.

The farm at Screddington, Lincolnshire

In the 1612 Foundation Deed, George Gilson gave the charity a farm at Screddington, which is near Sleaford in Lincolnshire. For most of the charity's history, the farm has been the main income producing asset of the charity. It is only in the last 25 years that the trustees of the charity have been able to produce more than a very small surplus of income over expenditure, which could be applied to the purchase of an investment portfolio.

The farm is described in the foundation deed as:

All and singuler the messuages milnes lands tenements meadowes pastures feedings and hereditaments with their app[ur]tenances of him the sayde George Gilson scituate lyinge and beinge in Screddington in the County of Lyncolne heretofore purchased by him the sayd George to him and his heires for ever of Roberte Carr of Aswardby in the aforesayd County of Lyncoln esquier and Edwarde Saule of Screddington aforesayd yeoman or one or bothe of them

The deed says that the trustees paid George Gilson six shillings for the farm, but this was only a legal formality as the rents for the farm in 1612 were forty pounds and a noble per year, and the farm comprised 199 acres with right of common over Screddington Gorse, some 1000 acres.

The only records of the farm from 1612 to 1776 cover the period between 1693 and 1700 when the farm was split into two more or less equal units tenanted by William Day and Thomas Presgrave, who were each liable to pay a rent of £19 10s 0d per year. This total rent was slightly less than the rent of £40 6s 8d per year in 1612. Day and Presgrave were often unable to pay their full rent, and the trustees agreed to a reduction in rent for each tenant to £18 in 1696.

The land was still farmed as two separate holdings in 1777 by John Michelson (otherwise spelt Michalson, Mitchelson or Michison) and William Presgrave. William Presgrave gave up as tenant in 1780, and his farm was taken by his nephew William Tomson, who remained as tenant until 1793, when he surrendered his tenancy. The tenancy of the whole farm (subject to smallholdings) was then taken by Robert Mitchelson, who had been farming the other farm. The farm then continued as one unit, and has done so up to the present day. In 1793, there were four smallholdings, which had decreased to one by 1939, when the last smallholding became

absorbed into the main farm unit.

A detailed survey was made in 1779 for the trustees by Thomas Wilson at a cost of £5 1s 0d, which revealed an estate of 199 acres and 3 perches plus right of common over Screddington Gorse which was estimated to be about 1000 acres. In 1779, William Presgrave's farm comprised 101 acres 3 roods and 35 perches and John Mitchelson's farm comprised 97 acres and 8 perches.

In the 1779 terrier, Presgrave's farm had a farmhouse and three cottages and old enclosures known as Home Close, Long Close and Rough Close, but the bulk of his farm was comprised of 116 strips in the common fields. Only very rarely do the strips of land comprise 2 acres or more and as many as 55 strips are of half an acre or less. Examination of the terrier shows that these strips are enmeshed in jigsaw fashion with the land farmed

(3)
The Farm in Terriere of
Will^m Presgrave.

<i>Home: Tenement: &c</i>	<i>A.</i>	<i>R.</i>	<i>P.</i>
<i>Impt. A Farm House, Yard, &c</i>			
<i>Outhouse, Homestead and Premises</i>	1	2	3
<i>A Cottage House, Yard, Garden &c</i> <i>at the N. E. end of the Town</i>	0	1	10
<i>A Cottage House, Homestead, Yard</i> <i>Garden &c at the S. E. end of the Town</i>	0	1	36
<i>A Cottage House and Garden, near</i> <i>the W. end of the Town</i>	0	0	8
		2	17

Fig 7. The entry for William Presgrave's farmhouse and cottages from the 1779 terrier.

by the charity's other tenant Mitchelson and with the land owned by the other landowners in Screddington. The terrier shows that Mitchelson's farm comprised a cottage and a toftstead and old enclosures known as Vicarage Close, Butt Close and Hambleton Close. The bulk of this farm was in the common fields and comprised 106 strips, 33 of which were of half an acre or less.

In 1793 the Screddington estate was valued by Mr John Crutchley of Burley on the Hill, the farm agent of the 9th Earl of Winchilsea, who was then the chairman of the trustees. This valuation was

undertaken as a preliminary to enclosure, which took place in Screddington in 1797, under the authority of an Act of Parliament (36 Geo. III, 1796). Before enclosure, the farm rents had increased to £70 per year, and enclosure put the rents for

Memorandum: that at Lady day 1792: the rents was raised from forty six pounds a year to seventy pounds a year.

In: Tompson's rent - 37:0:0 a year.
 Robt: Mitchelsons rent - 33:0:0 a year.
 70:0:0

Feb^{ry} 12th 1793: Robt: Mitchelson and John Tompson paid their Mich^{as}mas rent £ 35-0-0

paid to Mr: Crutchley for valuing the Estates at Screddington Feb^{ry} 12:0:0
 Churchwardens is: clerks wages 2-0:12:0
 Tenants and Shamps &c - - - - - 0:4:0
 Money to divide in six parts 22-4:0
 35:0:0

Each persons dividend is - 3-14:0
 Tho: Fabbner }
 Tho: Primore } Churchwardens

Fig 8. Evidence that the farm rents were increased in 1792, and a record of Mr Crutchley's valuation fee.

the whole estate of farm and four smallholdings up to £160 per year.

The system of enclosure was one of the many changes which occurred during the Agricultural Revolution which lasted from 1730 to 1870. This was a period of rapid population increase. There were about six million people in Great Britain in 1750 and this had increased to 21 million by 1851.

The previous agricultural system known as the open field system had the land in each parish farmed in individual strips, so that the two Gilson farms at Screddington comprising 199 acres were farmed as 228 separate pieces of land. Land was wasted by grass baulks which divided the strips. There were continual arguments about encroachments. Time and money were lost in working the scattered strips. Weeds and animal diseases spread quickly. Live-stock kept on the commons was often underfed.

The solution was for owners to be allocated land in a block, with the former common land of a parish included in the new blocks of land, and owners were required to fence their separate holdings. The enclosure system proceeded either by agreement between neighbouring owners or, more often, by Act of Parliament. Enclosure proceeded slowly until 1760, by which time there had been only 250 Enclosure Acts. Between 1760 and 1840,

there were 2500 Enclosure Acts incorporating four million acres of open fields. Besides these, 1800 Acts enclosed nearly two million acres of waste between 1760 and 1899. The rage for enclosure reached a high point during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815).

The Screddington Enclosure Award shows that the total acreage for the parish is 2593 acres 1 rood and 31 perches, which includes 53 acres for roads and drains. The principal landowners after enclosure were as follows:

Lord Willoughby de Broke	620 acres
Earl of Bristol	400 acres
Thomas and John Clark	350 acres
Dean and Chapter of Lincoln	300 acres
Gilson's Hospital	276 acres
Miss Penelope Yorke	150 acres
Vicar for Tithes	125 acres

It will be seen that these landowners had a total of just over 2200 acres out of the total acreage of 2593 acres. Two hundred and seven acres of land were sold to defray the expenses of the Enclosure Act, but none of the land owned by Gilson's Hospital

Memorandum: Screddington new Inclosure took place at Lady day 1797 and the Estate is let as follows

John Mitchelson Farm - 140-0-0
 In: Johnson a house and 2 cow commons - 6-5-0
 Tho: Gibson the lake - 6-5-0
 Edward Morris a house and 1 cow commons } 3-15-0
 Will^m Dain the lake - 3-15-0
 160-0-0

Fig 9. The new rents introduced upon enclosure in 1797.

was sold. After enclosure the farm was let as one unit to John Mitchelson at £140 per year. There were also four smallholdings, let as follows:

John Johnson	a house and 2 cow commons
Thomas Gibson	a house and 2 cow commons
Edward Morris	a house and 1 cow common
William Dain	a house and 1 cow common

The total rent for the smallholdings was £20 per year. The accounts bear a note that

there must be £700 or £800 borrowed on the estate to pay the expenses of the Inclosure, the ring and subdivision fences; the security will be good and the interest regularly paid out of the rents half yearly at £5 per cent.

In fact the amount borrowed on mortgage for the

enclosure expenses was £506. The lender was a Mr Bavins and interest of £25 6sh 0d per year was paid, commencing in 1798. When the new farm agent, John Cragg of Threckingham, wrote to the Earl of Winchilsea on 15th May 1806, he proposed an appropriation of the farm rents which would allow the debt to be discharged at £60 or more per year. There was not only the mortgage debt of £506 to clear but also a sum of £165 12sh 9d, the balance of the cost of a new farmhouse which had been completed in 1806 at a cost of £220 12sh 9d. The original estimate for the bricklayer's part of the work is still held in the charity's papers and is transcribed here:

A Estimate pecised [*precised or calculated*] for
A New hous for Mr Mitchinson of Stridglantoln
[*Scredington*].

26000 of comond brick at £1/8/0d
1300 of prest brick for the 2 front rooms
2000 of pantils
36 ridg tils
7 chalder [*either 32 or 64 imperial bushels*] of lime
256 yards of brick work
72 yards of stone work
the 2 chimney one dubling the kitchin chimney and
hoven
12 squear of Tiling
344 yards of Rendring upon works 2 coats
190 yards of seeling 3 coats
the foundashons pighting [*setting up*]
the cafling [*scaffolding*] for the Job
£116/16/0d
Aded to for the Rise of Brick £1/10/0d
£118/6/0d
To be fineshed for the Above sum
John Newton Brick Layer

The trustees clearly adhered to this repayment policy as the Charity Commission report of 1821 says that the mortgage debt had recently been cleared.

In his letter, Cragg gives a description of the estate as follows:

Scredington tenants.

John Mitchelson Farmhouse, offices with several closes	253a 1r 19p	£190.0.0.
Thomas Gibson A cottage and lands	3a 1r 27p	£6.17.0.
Bridget Johnson ditto	3a 2r 36p	£7.15.0.
William Dean ditto	3a 3r 26p	£5.15.6.
Eleanor Morris ditto	4a 2r 34p	£5.15.6.

The cottage houses are stud mud and thatch and two of them old and bad. The new quick hedges several very good others indifferent. The soil a cold clay chiefly. The roads very bad indeed and the parish rates high. Scredington is 5 miles from Sleaford and the same from Folkingham, the two nearest marketts. The Lordship enclosed in 1797 and made tithe free by a compensation in land.

There was still one farm with four smallholdings on the estate in 1821, as appears from the Charity Commission report which gives the tenants as follows:

John Michalson & Co	253 acres 1 rood 29 perches
James Kirke	7 acres 1 rood 26 perches
Eleanor Morriss	3 acres 2 rood 34 perches
Catherine Gibson	6 acres 2 rood 23 perches
Ann Dean	12 perches
Richard Fields	3 acres 3 rood 14 perches

Between 1806 and 1821, the size of the smallholdings changed considerably, but there is no obvious explanation for this. There may have been a mis-measurement or clerical error in 1806, as the total acreage of farm and smallholdings is 269 acres and 22 perches. The correct measurement as shown in the enclosure award is 276 acres.

Farm rents rose and fell with changes in political and economic circumstances. The Napoleonic war years brought a farming boom and, by 1815, the farm rent had increased to £279 per year, but peace brought a depression and the rents began to fall.

The tenant Robert Mitchelson, son of the previous tenant, John Mitchelson, died in the early 1830s and was succeeded as tenant by a Mr Todhill, but he remained only a short time and, in 1835, the tenant was Thomas Dexter. He was paying £160 per year, a considerable drop from the £279 paid in 1815.

The end of the agricultural depression coincided roughly with the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837. New means of transport, canals, railways and better roads stimulated trade. The farmer could now send cattle and farm produce to market swiftly. Great improvements were made in the theory of farm drainage and in the machinery which was available to put drainage theory into practice.

The Corn Law of 1815, which had been passed to protect against the import of cheap corn, was repealed in 1846. This could have caused farming disaster as wheat prices fell and, in fact, some farms were abandoned and arable farms turned to pasture. The way out of financial disaster for farmers was high investment and the introduction of improved drainage, fertilizers, superior livestock and new implements. Farming prosperity increased in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and most agricultural prices rose by 30 per cent. However the prosperity felt by farmers was not shared by farm

Morcott Hospital in Account with me John Cragg

1804	D ^r	1804	C ^r
Apr 7	To William Dean for work on 7 Quick Lines & fences	2. 2. 0	Mar 27 By Balance of last Acc ^t
27	To Mess ^{rs} Hall & Robinson half a yrs Int ⁿ on 506 £ due	12. 13. 0	Aug 27 By John Michelson on Acc ^t of Rent - leave ^d 19. 14. 0 due
	Lady Day last		- By Bridget Johnson for half a yrs R ^t due 5 Apr ^l 18 ⁰⁴
June 11	To J Rawlinson's Bill for Nails	0. 6. 6	- By Tho ^s Gibson D ^r
Aug 21	To half a yrs salary for Collecting Rents due Lady Day last	2. 12. 6	- By William Dean D ^r
	- To Mr Dean the rest of his Bill for M ^{ts} on 7 Quickline	0. 4. 0	- By Eleaz ^r Monifs D ^r
	- To Stamps for Ten ^{ts} Receipts	0. 1. 8	Nov 28 By rem ^t of J. Michelsons R ^t to be received
	- To Tenants Dinners	0. 12. 6	
	- To Mess ^{rs} Bellair Stamp	81. 5. 0	
Nov 30	To Mess ^{rs} Hall & Robinson 1/2 yrs Int ⁿ upon 506 £ due	12. 13. 0	
	Mic ^l last		
		112. 10. 2	
	Balance due from John Cragg	7. 7. 10	
		119. 18. 0	

This Acc^t was copied and sent to Mr. Clementson Dec^r 3^o 1804

Fig 10. John Cragg's accounts for 1804, showing expenditure on hedges and fences and on the farm tenants' dinner, as well as rents received.

labourers; their conditions were bad and, between 1851 and 1871, the number of farm workers fell by about 250,000. Most farm labourers' cottages were two-roomed hovels with leaking roof and earth floor, with no sanitation and polluted water supplies. It is not surprising that Gilson's Hospital trustees felt that they should sometimes pay a pension to one of their smallholders or farm tenants. Catherine Dexter, Thomas Gibson and William Isaac were all paid pensions from the charity.

Thomas Dexter was still the tenant at the time of the 1851 census, which reveals that there were 78 inhabited and 5 uninhabited houses in Scredington and the parish had 187 males and 177 females. Thomas Dexter was then 44 years of age, and he was recorded as farming 247 acres and employing 3 labourers; two of those labourers lived in the farmhouse, namely George Tinkler and Joseph Smith, and there was also a living-in house servant, Ann Cox. The household was completed by the tenant's wife Catherine Dexter and their six children.

Mr Dexter was still the tenant of the main farm at the time of the enquiry conducted by Thomas Hare

for the Charity Commission in 1865. Mr Hare recorded that the estate comprised a farmhouse, farm buildings and cottages and just over 276 acres, and was let as follows:

1. Thomas Dexter - A farmhouse and farm buildings and 250 acres 3 roods and 8 perches hitherto let at £217.10.0. a year. This rent under the circumstances appearing in the correspondence of the trustees with Mr Francis Higdon, their surveyor, will be increased by £22.10.0. a year, making up a rent of £240 a year.
2. William Kirk - A cottage newly repaired and good and 7 acres and 13 perches of land let at £13 a year.
3. Thomas Gibson - Cottage, of which the front is good and was built at his own expense and said to want an expenditure of £10 for a kitchen with 6 acres 3 roods and 25 perches of land let at £13 a year.
4. Joseph Isaac - Land 4 acres 1 rood and 15 perches let at £5.13.6. a year.
5. William Isaac - Cottage, very poor and roof nearly fallen in let at £9.10.0. a year.
6. Plantation - In hand.

In 1863, £44 was received for sale of ash poles. The sum of £4.1.6. was paid for felling the poles, for carting £2.13.0. agent £1.10.0. leaving a net balance of about £36 once in 16 years, say £2 a year.

With the possible exception of the cottage occupied by Thomas Gibson, none of the buildings mentioned in 1868 exist today. The Thomas Gibson cottage may well be part of the property now known as Bulwark Farm. The farmhouse occupied by Thomas Dexter is the house built in 1806 but this ceased to be the farmhouse in 1891 and was demolished in 1938. The cottage occupied by William Kirk lay on the left hand side of the road from the village to the Gorse and the site can be easily identified today. The cottage of William Isaac lay on the road out of the village to Helpringham where the road does a sharp left hand and right hand bend; there were three cottages there, but there is no sign of them now and the site of them is incorporated in the adjoining field.

Thomas Dexter died in 1871 and was succeeded as tenant by his widow, Catherine Dexter. The succeeding tenants were Mr Holmes senior, followed by his widow and then his widow and son jointly.

In 1891, the tenant asked the trustees for a new farmhouse as he said that the old house, which had



Fig 11. The new farmhouse built at Scredington in 1892.

been built in 1806, was very damp, mean and uncomfortable. The trustees agreed to this, and engaged John Belton, builder, to build a new farmhouse, which was completed late in 1892. This is the house which still stands on the farm today.

There was a sudden collapse in agriculture after 1875, which was the long delayed result of the repeal of the Corn Laws. In the late 1870s, a series of bad harvests culminated in the disaster of 1879, the worst summer of the century. Cereal prices failed to rise as a massive inflow of cheap American wheat flooded the market. The British Government chose to do little about this as cheap food was of benefit to the industrial cities, whose products were the foundation of British exports. Farming was allowed to fall into decline. In 1857, it employed

one fifth of the work force which produced one fifth of the national product. By 1900, agriculture employed less than one tenth of the working population, producing one fifteenth of the nation's income. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the rent paid by the Holmes, which was £280 per year in 1881, had reduced to £170 in 1885.

After Mr Holmes junior died in April 1904, the tenancy passed to his widow Elizabeth Holmes and her brother Mr G H Foster, and later to Mr Frank Foster who continued as tenant until April 1959. Farming went through a very bad time at the end of the 1920s and through the 1930s and, in 1933, the rent was a mere £123 per year. The rent had increased to £311 per year by the time that Frank Foster gave up as tenant in 1959.

In 1959, Eric Johnson became the tenant. In 1977 his son Richard Johnson joined him as joint tenant



Fig 12. The trustees on a visit of inspection to the farm.

of the farm and they continue as tenants to the present day. The farm had become somewhat neglected and, as a result, Eric Johnson had to undertake major works to improve it. He made a film record of the work which had to be done.

The main problem with the farm was poor drainage. The lowest lying fields nearest to Spanby were flooded to a depth of two feet in places due to lack of drainage, and ditches were badly overgrown with a lot of undergrowth and even ash trees growing in them. These had to be cleared with the use of a dragline.

When the ditches were cleared, drainage pipes had to be laid in most of the fields. These were laid four chains apart; more recently, drainage pipes have been put in two chains apart. The clay was so wet that the narrow trenches for the pipes were in danger of closing in before the pipes were laid. The method of drainage was to dig a trench, lay four inch clay pipes in the bottom of the trench and then fill in with gravel with soil on top for the last 15 to 18 inches. The land was then mole ploughed. After the land had been drained, it was then allowed to lie fallow.

Many small fields were incorporated into larger

fields for ease of cultivation. Some fields had not been cropped for about ten years. Muck heaps around the farm were spread on the fields. To avoid the danger of tuberculosis among livestock, five or six ponds were filled in, using rubble from the old railway line which crossed the farm. Roadside hedges were in poor order and were plashed and laid.

Eric Johnson says that the farm labourers he inherited had not expected to work in very wet weather. He tells the story that, on one particularly wet day, three of the men were trying to plough a field using three tractors. They said that the land was so heavy that the tractors did not have the power to get the plough to break up the land. Eric Johnson suggested that they harness two tractors together but apparently this was not successful and the men expected to be allowed to cease work. Eric Johnson had a final suggestion, namely that they should harness three tractors together and, if this failed, he told the men where they would find three stout spades, so that they could turn the land over by hand. It seems that they did not need to resort to spade power!

We have noticed a long period of tenancy for the main farm in one family, and the same is true among the smallholders. The smallholdings varied from about three and a half acres to eight and a half acres in size.

In 1797, the smallholders are named as John Johnson, Thomas Gibson, Edward Morris and William Dain. In 1821, the names are James Kirke, Richard Fields, Eleanor Morriss, Catherine Gibson and Ann Dean, the latter three presumably being related to three of the 1797 tenants. In 1871, there is still a Gibson, as one of the smallholders is Thomas Gibson, and the other is William Kirke. It is recorded that William Isaac and Joseph Isaac had given up their smallholdings shortly before 1871. There were still two smallholders up to 1908 when Robert Isaac gave up his holding and it was taken by George Thorpe, who was the tenant of the other smallholding. He was succeeded by a Mr Melton who died in or about 1939, at which time this smallholding became amalgamated into the farm.

Before leaving the subject of the farm, there are two other points of interest. First, the churchwardens' accounts for 1696/7 record that the charity paid 10 shillings and 6 pence for "clothing the souldiour." This was a tax which was raised to finance the war against France between 1689 and 1697.

Secondly, the farm contained a moated site known as Hambleton Moat, which was excavated in 1959 by Dr L A S Butler. In his report, Butler (1963, 51-2) notes that there were five moated sites in Screddington. He concludes that the Hambleton Moat site was occupied from about the middle of the 13th century for about 250 years. The moat lay on the

southern side of Hambleton Close, a square enclosure of approximately 230 yards. Hambleton Close was an "ancient enclosure". There were two fishponds serving the site. The moat itself was a roughly square platform with sides 130 feet long, surrounded by a wet ditch 40 feet wide with outer banks a further 40 feet wide.

The main building on the platform was an aisled hall of four bays with overall dimensions of 61 feet by 24 feet. This building stood on a wall-footing of Ancaster type limestone, with half-timbered mud and stud walls and a straw thatch roof. The site also had a buttery or dairy and, perhaps, a brewhouse.

It would appear that the farmer who constructed this hall was not very affluent. Butler comments on

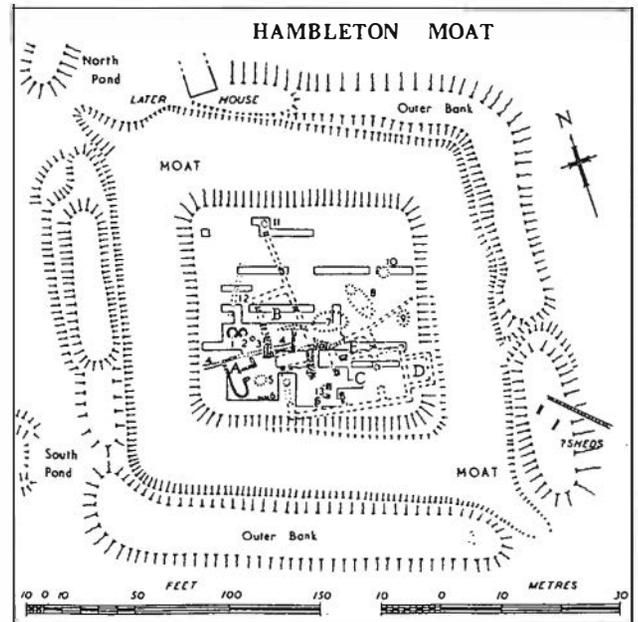


Fig 13. Plan of the medieval moated site on Gilson's Farm, excavated in 1959.

the small scale of the homestead and the comparative poverty of the goods found on the site, and describes the early owner as a member of the future yeoman class who was able to rise a little above his fellows. There is one mistake in Butler's report, as he says that George Gilson bought the farm from Robert Dann and Edward Gaule. In fact, this should be Robert Carr and Edward Saule, and this places the farm in the land owned by Gilbert de Gand at the time of the Domesday Survey. Butler records that

Screddington was an ancient settlement when the Domesday Survey was made and that the village is recorded as two holdings. One of 10½ carucates was among the widespread estates of Gilbert de Gand; the other of 12 carucates was held under Robert of Stafford. On Gilbert's holding, there were forty sokemen and one villein. There was also a priest and a church. Part of Gilbert's fee passed in the sixteenth century into the hands of the Carre family.

The trustees and agents

The trustees

The first trustees of the charity were appointed by George Gilson in the deed of 10th June 1612, and he declared that, when the number of trustees was reduced to four or five, the surviving trustees should bring their number up to eleven again. Appointments of new trustees continued to be by the surviving trustees until 1868 when the first Charity Commission scheme was made, from which time future appointments were to be made under the terms of the Charity Commission scheme and future amendments thereof. The original trustees were as follows:

Sir Francis Smith of Ashby Folville, Leicestershire
Sir William Armyn of Osgarby, Lincolnshire
Sir William Turpin of Horninghold, Leicestershire
Sir Thomas Heselrigge of Noseley, Leicestershire
Sir Guy Palmer of Ashwell, Rutland
Sir Lewis Watson of Rockingham, Northamptonshire
Sir Thomas Tresham of Newton, Northamptonshire
Kenelm Digby of Stoke Dry, Rutland
James Digby of North Luffenham, Rutland
Edmond Herenden of Morcott, Rutland
Thomas Phillipps of Bisbrooke, Rutland

Sir Francis Smith was born about 1570 and died in 1629. He owned the manor of Ashby Folville at the date of his death. He had several sons, the eldest of whom was created Baron Carrington, and a younger son was Major General Sir John Smith, who distinguished himself on the Royalist side in the Civil War and was killed in action in 1644. The Smith family had originally been known as Carrington, but had changed their name to Smith in the 15th century (Nichols, vol III.i, 1800, 29).

Sir William Armyn was married to Mary, daughter of the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury.

Sir William Turpin was the son of Sir George Turpin, and was High Sheriff of Leicestershire in 1585 and again in 1593. He was appointed one of the Commissioners for discovering seminary priests, Jesuits or fugitives, within the county of Leicester, was knighted at Belvoir Castle on 23rd April 1603, and died in 1617. He had an excellent mansion at Horninghold (Nichols, vol IV.i, 1810, 218).

Sir Thomas Heselrigge (variously spelt Hesilrige and Haselrig) was a Member of Parliament between 1615 and 1621 and again in 1624-25, and Sheriff of

Leicestershire in 1613. He died in 1629 aged 66. His son Sir Arthur Heselrigge was better known. He represented Leicestershire as a Member of Parliament in both the Short and the Long Parliaments and was one of the Five Members, a champion of Root and Branch and of Parliamentary control of the militia. He was aggressively Puritan and when the Civil War came, he formed his own regiment of cuirassiers and put them in red armour; inevitably they became known as "Lobsters", and they had a very bad time in the Royalist victory of Roundway Down in 1643, when their foes rolled them helplessly down the steep chalk slopes (*DNB*, vol IX, 743-7).

Sir Guy Palmer was born in 1580 and was Sheriff of Rutland in 1607, 1617 and 1625 (Wright 1684, 13).

Sir Lewis Watson was born in 1584 and died in 1653. He became 1st Lord Rockingham. His grandfather was Kenelm Digby, another of the Gilson trustees. Sir Lewis matriculated from Magdalen College, Oxford, on 24th May 1599 and in 1601 was entered as a student at the Middle Temple. He was knighted on 19th August 1608 (*DNB*, vol XX, 931-2).

Sir Thomas Tresham was not the famous Thomas Tresham who built the Market House, Rothwell, the Triangular Lodge, Rushton and the New Building at Lyveden, all in Northamptonshire, as he died in 1605, but must have been related to him.

James Digby bought a manor house at North Luffenham in 1599. This is now called North Luffenham Hall. He rebuilt a great part of the house about 1616. The Digby arms are over the doorway. He was married to Katherine, daughter of Kenelm Digby of Stoke Dry. James Digby and his son John were recusants and had two-thirds of their land seized under the recusancy laws.

Edmond Herenden was the man who owed £500 to George Gilson at Gilson's death and had mortgaged the Manor of Morcott to Gilson.

I can find no mention of Thomas Phillipps of Bisbrooke. He was one of three of the trustees who are mentioned as debtors of George Gilson in the Schedule to his Will.

It will be seen that the original trusteeship was to some extent a family affair, and this trend continued.

There is no record of the changes of trustee between 1612 and 1736. In 1736, the surviving

trustees were Daniel Finch, 8th Earl of Winchilsea and 3rd Earl of Nottingham (died 1769), Philip Sherard, 2nd Earl of Harborough (died 1750), and Jeffery Johnson of Withcote (died 1742). They appointed the following as additional trustees:

- Lewis Watson, 2nd Earl of Rockingham, great-great-grandson of Sir Lewis Watson, one of the original trustees. He was related by marriage to Lord Winchilsea
- Bennet Lord Sherard, the eldest son of the 2nd Earl of Harborough
- Sir Thomas Palmer of Carlton, Northamptonshire, presumably a descendant of Sir Guy Palmer, one of the original trustees
- The Hon William Finch, brother of Lord Winchilsea
- Richard Halford of Edith Weston, Rutland
- Samuel Barker of Lyndon, Rutland
- Richard Snow of Clipsham, Rutland
- Thomas Roberts of Wardley, Rutland

Over the next 250 years, fifteen other members of the Finch/Winchilsea family were trustees, including one of the present trustees, George Somerset Finch of Ayston, a great-great-grandson of the Hon William Finch. When new trustees were

who were 16 and 8 respectively; George, later 9th Earl of Winchilsea and 4th Earl of Nottingham, the only son of the Hon William Finch, who was 11; the Hon Heneage Finch, commonly called Lord Guernsey, later 4th Earl of Aylesford, who was 12; and the Hon Charles Manners, who was 9, and his younger brother the Hon Robert Manners.

Bennet Sherard, 3rd Earl of Harborough was also a trustee. He was related by marriage to Lord Verney and to Thomas Hill of Tern, who were also appointed trustees in 1763.

The next appointment of trustees took place in 1806, and the Winchilsea family still took a dominant role. The surviving trustees from the appointment made in 1763 were George 9th Earl of Winchilsea; George Finch Hatton (formerly George Finch); John Emelius Daniel Edward Finch; Heneage Finch, formerly Lord Guernsey and, in 1806, 4th Earl of Aylesford; and Sir John Palmer. They appointed five further trustees, namely George Fludyer; John Wingfield; Samuel Barker; Heneage Finch, Lord Guernsey, later 5th Earl of Aylesford; and George Finch Hatton junior, later 10th Earl of Winchilsea. George 9th Earl of Winchilsea was chairman of the trustees at this time, and there survives a copy of the letter which the new farm agent John Cragg wrote to him in 1806.

The next appointment of trustees was in 1813. The trustees were again dominated by the Finch family, which was represented by George 9th Earl of Winchilsea; George Finch Hatton; John Emelius Daniel Edward Finch; Heneage 5th Earl of Aylesford; George Finch Hatton junior; and George Finch of Burley, the son of Lord Winchilsea. The other trustees were Sir John Palmer and John Henry Palmer, presumably descendants of the original Sir Guy Palmer; John Wingfield and John Wingfield junior; Samuel Barker; George Fludyer; and George Fludyer junior.

Trustees were appointed by deed until 1864, when Mr Thomas Hare was instructed by the Charity Commission to conduct an inquiry into the affairs of the charity, presumably in the light of a complaint by the rector and churchwardens of Morcott about the administration of the trust. Mr Hare was not critical of the trustees but he did find that there had been no new appointments since 1813. When he began writing his report, there were three trustees alive, but one of them, Sir John Palmer, died before the report was finalised. This left only two trustees, namely John Wingfield junior and George Finch, described as being gentlemen advanced in years. It was stated that the trustees met once a year but that, for the last 23 years, only three trustees had attended the meetings, namely Mr Fludyer, Mr Wingfield and Mr Finch, and since the death of Mr Fludyer only two had met.

Mr Hare recommended that there should be a Charity Commission scheme which, among other

8th April 1796 Alice Bradshaw
appointed to a place in Hospital
in the room of Susan Maffly
deceased. By Geo. Finch Hatton
Esq^r

Mary Colson in possession of one of
the Morist places dyed October 1st 1798
Ann Sellars appointed in her place

December 5th 1798 Catherine
Herrinden put into one of the
places by the Rt. Hon^{ble} the Earl
of Winchilsea & Nottingham.

Nov^r 1798 Catherine Herrinden dyed
which place was gave to Ann Davis
Widow of the Parish of Morcott. by
the Earl of Winchilsea & Nottingham.

Fig 14. Notes of the appointment of beneficiaries by individual trustees in the late 18th century.

appointed in 1763, the Winchilsea and Harborough connections became very dominant as Daniel 8th Earl of Winchilsea was still a trustee, and also seven other members of his family were appointed. They included six who were under the age of majority, namely George Finch and his brother John Emelius Daniel Edward, sons of the Hon Edward Finch,

things, would appoint new trustees. The Commission duly made an order dated 22nd January 1867 whereby eight new trustees were appointed, namely George Henry Finch MP of Burley on the Hill, grandson of George 9th Earl of Winchilsea; Richard Lucas of Edith Weston; Henry William Heathcote of North Luffenham; the Reverend John Henry Fludyer of Ayston Hall; Edward Nathaniel Conant of Lyndon Hall; the Honourable William Charles Evans-Freke (later Lord Carbery) of Bisbrooke Hall; John Henry Lee Wingfield of Market Overton; and the Hon Gerard James Noel MP.

When these trustees applied to the Charity Commission for a scheme for the regulation and management of the charity, the Charity Commission ordered that there should always be twelve trustees, and the Rev William Wales, Rector of Uppingham,

interference in their affairs.

In the 1865 report, it appears that the rector questioned whether the trustees were getting a market rent for their farm at Screddington, to the extent that he produced to the Charity Commission inspector a letter from a surveyor whom he had asked to comment on the farm rent. The rector and the churchwardens are also recorded as complaining of several other purported failures by the trustees to keep to the correct terms of the trust.

The 1891 Charity Commission report looked into whether the trustees should be allowed to sell the almshouse site or whether they should arrange for the almshouse to be modernised. The inhabitants of Morcott got together a Memorial protesting against the sale and this was signed by the then rector, the Rev C O Watson, and 94 other signatories. This was presented to the inspector by the rector.

Thus it will be seen that the rector of Morcott was very prominent in both complaints to the Charity Commission. As a result, no rector of Morcott was appointed a trustee until 1931, when the Rev M S Kemmis Steinman was appointed, followed by later rectors, namely the Rev E Patrick, the Rev W Grant, the Rev J H Green, and the present rector, the Rev Patrick Lingard.

The next point of note is that no Morcott resident was appointed a trustee until 1880 when George Fydell Rowley was appointed. His successor Peter Rowley is a trustee today. The next Morcott appointment was of Edward Tyler in 1895. Mr Tyler was a local farmer and chairman of the newly created Morcott Parish Council. He was never chairman of the Gilson's Hospital trustees, but the minutes show that he undertook many of the tasks of supervising the bungalows. He served as a trustee until his death in 1939. His son Hector John Tyler was appointed a trustee shortly before his father's death and served until his retirement in 1991, a continuous period of service by father and son of 96 years. Mr Hector Tyler was chairman of the trustees for over 24 years before his retirement.

I have already commented on the long family links for George Somerset Finch, Hector Tyler and Peter Rowley. I should also say that Mr Robert Boyle of Bisbrooke Hall is a fifth generation trustee. Mr W C Evans-Freke, later Lord Carbery, was his great-great-grandfather, succeeded by the Hon Percy Cecil Evans-Freke, then his son-in-law Capt E M G L Boyle, then Mr George Boyle.

Geoffrey Pridmore, another of the present trustees, does not follow other members of his family as trustee, but it will be seen that earlier members of his family served the charity in their role of churchwarden at Morcott.

The present trustees are a mixture of local landowners, farmers, retired business men and women, and the rector of Morcott.

*A Meeting of the Trustees of the
Gilson Charity held at Morcott
on the 20th day of April 1840
It was resolved that Percy
Stimson of Wingham be appointed
to the vacancy in the Hospital occasioned
by the death of Elizabeth Marriott.
The above appointment being
on the nomination of George Finch
Esq*

W. Wingfield
George Fludyer

Fig 15. Some of the entries in the Charity's minute book are attested, as here, by the application of seals by the trustee's signatures.

and the Rev William Belgrave, Rector of Preston, were appointed under the 1868 scheme.

As we have seen, three Rutland clergymen were appointed trustees in 1867/8, but they did not include the rector of Morcott. It is clear that the 1865 and 1891 enquiries ordered by the Charity Commission arose out of representations made by Morcott residents that the charity was not being administered in accordance with the trusts thereof or indeed efficiently. In both cases, the rector at the time was prominent in the complaints made, and the trustees resented what they saw as unwarranted

The agents

George Gilson provided, in the foundation deed, that the trustees should

p[er]mitt and suffer the Churchwardens of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott for the tyme beinge yearly everie year for ever hereafter to collecte receive and gather the rents yssues and profyts of the landes and tenements within men[tion]ed [*i.e. the estate at Scredington*] to bee payed gyven expended and distributed as is hereafter more fully expressed lymited declared and appoynted.

Gilson then went on to declare that the churchwardens should retain out of the farm rents the sum of twenty shillings each year to cover their expenses and the trouble to which they were being put, and then to pay thirty shillings each quarter to each of the six almspeople for their "diet and feeding", and also six shillings and eight pence each year to each of the six almspeople for "their yearely severall fyres and severall apparells."

It is not clear whether the trustees had a clerk to maintain minutes at the beginning of the charity or a farm agent, but it seems quite likely that they did and that he was a member of the household of the most senior or chairman of the trustees from time to time. The only accounts for the period from 1612 to 1777 cover the period from 1693 to 1700 and they are signed by John Savage, the rector of Morcott, and the churchwardens, from which it would appear that they were collecting the farm rents and paying for repairs at the almshouses and at the farm and paying out the balance to the almspeople. These original accounts are held at the Leicestershire Record Office.

In 1799, the clerk to the trustees was a John Clementson of Oakham to whom Thomas Pridmore, one of the Morcott churchwardens, was submitting his

At a Meeting of the Trustees and Trustees of the Estate left by George Gilson deceased for the support and maintenance of the Hospital at Morcott and of six aged Persons therein, held at the House of the Right Honorable George Lord of Winchelsea on the 31st day of May 1806;

Lord Winchelsea stated to the Meeting that upon Mr. Clementsons Death, who was Agent to this Charity, Mr. Cragg who acted under him wrote to Lord Winchelsea saying that a Farm House had been contracted to be built upon the Estate belonging to the said Charity and other Improvements ordered to be made upon the Estate, but that upon the Death of Mr. Clementson he did not choose to proceed without some Authority and that it would be attended with great Loss to the said Charity if these Works were not proceeded upon, whereupon Lord Winchelsea thinking it would materially benefit the Charity that such Works should not be delayed, and it not being possible at that time to have a Meeting of the Trustees, Did order the said James Cragg to proceed with the said Works, and to pay the usual Allowances to the poor Women belonging to the Hospital at Morcott and the other usual Outgoings.

Resolved that this Proceeding on the part of Lord Winchelsea be approved and confirmed.

That Mr. Cragg be appointed Agent to the said Hospital with a Salary of five Guineas Yearly;

Fig 16. An extract from the minutes recording the death of Mr Clementson and the appointment of Mr Cragg as his successor

account of rents collected and disbursed and referring to necessary repairs required at the almshouses in Morcott and to work needed at the farm. The trustees had a farm agent, Mr Crutchley of Burley on the Hill, who was the Earl of Winchilsea's agent; he had sent a notice to quit to one of the farm tenants Mr Mitchelson "as he is too weak to manage the farm." The trustees also had bankers, namely Mr Bellairs (also spelt Billairs) of Stamford, who had been ordered by John Clementson to send £33 11sh 0d to Thomas Pridmore. The bankers today are Barclays Bank plc of Oakham.

By 1803, the farm agent had changed and John Cragg of Threckingham was acting. Whereas previously the churchwardens had gone to Screddington to collect the rents, Mr Cragg was now collecting them and, after paying expenses, was sending the balance to Mr Bellairs' bank, partly for the account of the churchwardens to pay the almspeople and partly for the account of John Clementson, the clerk.

The method of handling cash does not seem very efficient as the churchwardens and John Cragg and John Clementson were all handling money and maintaining bank accounts for the charity. The system clearly came unstuck in 1806 when the trustees had arranged for a new farmhouse to be built at Screddington, for John Cragg writes in a letter dated 15th May 1806 to the Earl of Winchilsea, who was the Chairman of the trustees, that "I am much afraid that Mr Clementson hath not provided and laid by sufficient to discharge" the sum due to the builders. Mr Cragg came to the rescue and lent the trust money to pay the builders. A minute of 31st May 1806 states that Mr Clementson had recently died.

The books of accounts were maintained by the churchwardens from 1777 to 1816, when the accounts begin to be done at the office of the clerk James Torkington, solicitor, of Stamford. There is no minute to record the appointment of Mr Torkington as clerk to the trustees, but the writing in the minute book and the account book suggests that he was appointed in 1806, presumably following the death of John Clementson.

One of the matters which was regularised at the meeting of 31st May 1806 was the passing of a minute that "an account be opened on the part of the trustees with Messieurs Bellairs, bankers, at Stamford to which account Mr Cragg is to pay all monies received by him." This appears to show the influence of James Torkington, who set about tidying up a number of rather slack practices which had obtained hitherto.

In spite of this, the administration of the charity remained rather clumsy, as the trustees are shown year after year as approving the accounts of Mr Torkington and of Mr Cragg and of Mr Barrow.

The latter is described as "steward", but this means that he was the churchwarden who undertook the duties placed on the churchwardens by the 1612 deed. The churchwardens ceased to take any part in the administration of the charity after 1963.

The accounts for the year ended 29th September 1960 record that Mr D H Veazey was the churchwarden who was distributing the pensions to the almspeople. Mr and Mrs D H Veazey moved into one of the Gilson's Close bungalows in 1971, and Mrs Veazey still lives there today.

As far as the clerkship is concerned, this passed from James Torkington to his son in 1868 and then to Benjamin Adam, solicitor, of Oakham in 1875, who was succeeded by his son Benjamin Addington Adam, who continued as clerk until 1932. About this time, the firm of Adam & Son of Oakham was taken over by Phillips Evans & Dalton, Solicitors, of Stamford, and Robert Cecil Dalton became the clerk, to be succeeded by Richard Mason Pope in 1952 and by the writer, David Alexander Parkin, in 1973, all of the same firm.

The first record of a farm agent is that a Mr Thomas Wilson prepared a very detailed survey of the farm, describing it strip by strip with details of ancient enclosures in 1779. He was paid £5 1sh 0d. The original of this document is in the Charity's possession.

The next farm agent is Mr John Crutchley of Burley on the Hill, who was paid £12 for valuing the Screddington estate in 1793. He was agent for Lord Winchilsea, who was a prominent agriculturalist, and he was responsible for the first of the Board of Agriculture's two reports on Rutland. His strictures about the tenant Mr Mitchelson cited earlier are of interest in this context. He continued as farm agent until 1806, when he was succeeded by John Cragg of Threckingham.

John Cragg was an amateur archaeologist and notes of his numerous observations are held at the Lincolnshire Record Office. He made several notes of archaeological observations about Screddington, but none of these relate to the charity estate there. John Cragg was farm agent until 1852 and was succeeded in turn by Francis Higdon of Holbeach, who was involved in the negotiations for the sale of land to the railway company, and his son Francis George Higdon.

In 1904, the farm agency came back to the Cragg family with Captain W A Cragg of Threckingham, followed by Major W G Cragg. The trustees decided to change agents in 1944 and Messrs Earl & Lawrence of Sleaford became the agents and, for many years, Mr J J C Daykin of that firm acted. The agricultural business of that firm passed to Messrs Pygott & Daykin in 1990, the present agent being Mr J F Pygott.

The charity today

In conclusion, it is worth noting how the affairs of the charity stand over 380 years after it was founded.

In the Foundation Deed, Gilson set the ideals to which he wished the trustees of the charity to aspire to ensure its well-being over the years. He asked Almighty God

that hee will bee pleased to directe and guide the hartes and mindes of those that have the ordering and disposing thereof from tyme to tyme that they maye order and dispose the same in everie pointe with uprighte hartes and godly and charitable mindes to the comforte and reliefe of the poore to whose use and good only the same is gyven and intended and not anywayes thereby to dischardge and unburthen the ritche and wealthie of that care and chardge which they ought and are bounde by the worde and will of God to have and take of the poore and needy As they will answer the contrarie at the laste and terrible daye of Judgemente when the secretts of all hartes shall be disclosed and everie man shall gyve an accompte

of his wayes workes and deedes.

Gilson would most probably have been pleased with the state of the charity at the present day. At Screddington, a good farmhouse was built 100 years ago, and the farm is now very well managed. The trustees keep a regular check on the well-being of the farm. The problems experienced in the second half of the 19th century have been overcome. The intervention of the inhabitants of Morcott, which resulted in the two Charity Commission enquiries, has been of long term benefit for the charity. In the absence of the second intervention, which gave rise to the enquiry by Mr William Good, the old almshouse might have been sold and the charity turned into a pension charity. As we have seen, the almshouse was saved and modernised, and now there are seven high quality bungalows for the elderly. The trustees have plans to build further properties, and are confident that the work of providing homes for those in need will continue, as Gilson intended, for many years to come.

Acknowledgements

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David Parkin

Sources

Documents held by Daltons, Solicitors, 35 Market Place, Oakham:

General documents:

Foundation Deed for the charity dated 10th June 1612.

Charity minute books from 1806 to the present date.

Account books from 1777 to the present day, with a gap between 1884 and 1896.

Copy of the Rutland section of the Report of the Commissioners concerning charities in England and Wales, which began the 58th year of the Reign of Geo III and ended the 7th of Will IV. The information relating to Gilson's Hospital in this report was written in 1821.

Copy Charity Commission Schemes dated 14th July 1868, 19th July 1904, 13th March 1942 and 15th March 1978.

Documents relating to Morcott:

Deeds of land at Gilson's Close, Morcott, with four bungalows.

Papers relating to site of three bungalows (formerly the site of the original hospital or almshouse) at Tyler's Row, Wing Road, Morcott. There are no original deeds for Tyler's Row.

Documents relating to Screddington:

Deeds of Morcott Farm, Screddington.

Pre-enclosure survey of Morcott Farm, Screddington by Thomas Wilson, 1779.

Plan of an estate situate in the Parish of Screddington in the County of Lincoln belonging to the Feoffees of Morcot Hospital 1858.

Valuation of Morcott Farm by Messrs Royce of Oakham, 1920.

Documents at the Leicestershire Record Office:

Churchwardens' accounts, bills and vouchers for Morcott almshouses 1693-1747 (DE 2876/59/1-10).

Morcott Town Book, details of trustees and almspeople from 1733 to 1763 (DE 2876/19).

Morcott Parish Registers from 1615 to 1853.

Documents at Lincolnshire Archives:

Screddington Enclosure Award, 1797.

Copy 1851 Census for Screddington.

Miscellaneous papers lodged by Mr Sydney Raine, including churchwardens' accounts from 1798 to 1801.

Other documents:

Probate Copy of the Will of George Gilson dated 26th June 1616 proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 26th March 1617.

Morcott Parish Council minutes from 17th December 1894 to 12th January 1917, held by the clerk of the Council.

Copy Reports supplied by the Charity Commission:

Report of Thomas Hare dated 7th February 1865

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Report of William Good dated 20th January 1891 made pursuant to an Order of the Board dated 18th November 1890.

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Appendix 1

Foundation Deed dated 10th June 1612

THIS INDENTURE made the tenth daye of June and in the yeare of the raigne of o[u]r sov[er]aigne Lord James by the grace of God of England Ffraunce and Ireland Kyng Defender of the Ffaith etc the Tenth and of Scotland the Ffyve and Ffortieth BETWEEN GEORGE GILSON of London esquier of the one parte and Sir Ffraunce [Francis] Smith of Ashbi Folvell in the County of Leycester knyghte Sir William Armys of Osgarbye in the County of Lyncoln knyghte Sir William Turpin of Harmingould and Sir Thomas Heselrigge of Noselye in the aforesayd County of Leycester knyghte Sir Guye Palmer of Ashwell in the County of Roteland knyghte Sir Lewys Watson of Rockingham and Sir Thomas Tresham of Newton in the Countye of North[ampton] knyghte Kelln [Kenelm] Digbie of Stoke drie James Digbie of North Laffenham Edmonde Herenden of Morcott in the County of Roteland aforesayd esquire[s] and Thomas Phillipps of Pisbrooke in the sayd County of Roteland gentleman of the other parte WITNESSETH that the sayd George Gilson beinge moved in Christian charitie to bestowe yearely for ever hereafter some parte of such his estate wherewithall it hath pleased God to blesse him upon poore and needye people in such manner and sorte as hereafter in this p[re]sentes and in a Scedule hereto annexed is expressed appoynted and declared And for and in considera[t]ion of the some of Sixe Shillings of lawfull money of England to him in hand payed at the sealinge hereof by the sayd Sir Ffraunce Smith Sir William Armys Sir William Turpin Sir Thomas Heselrigge Sir Guye Palmer Sir Lewys Watson and Sir Thomas Tresham knyghts Kellmn Digbye James Digbie Edmonde Herenden and Thomas Phillipps or some or one of them whereof and wherewith the sayd George Gilson doth acknowledge himselfe fully satisfied and payed and thereof and of everie parte thereof doth acquite and discharge the sev[er]all p[er]sons aforesayd and everie of them for ever by this p[re]sentes hath gyven graunted bargayned sould alyened infeoffed and confirmed and by this p[re]sentes doth gyve graunte bargayne sell alyene infeoffe and confirme unto the sayd Sir Ffraunce Smith Sir William Armys Sir William Turpin Sir Thomas Heselrigge Sir Guye Palmer Sir Lewys Watson and Sir Thomas Tresham knyghts Kellmn Digbie James Digbie Edmonde Herenden and Thomas Phillipps their heires and assignes for ever All and singuler the messuages milnes lands tenements meadowes pastures feedings and hereditaments with their app[ur]tenances of him the sayde George Gilson

scituate lyinge and beinge in Screddington in the County of Lyncolne heretofore purchased by him the sayd George to him and his heires for ever of Roberte Carr of Aswardby in the aforesayd County of Lyncoln esquier and Edwarde Saule of Screddington aforesayd yeoman or one or bothe of them TO HAVE AND TO HOULD All and singuler the afore- sayd messuages mil[n]es lands tenements hereditaments and all and singuler other the p[re]misses aforesayd with their and everie of their app[ur]tenances whatsoever unto the sayd Sir Ffraunce Smithe Sir William Armys Sir William Turpin Sir Thomas Heselrigge Sir Guye Palmer Sir Lewys Watson Sir Thomas Tresham Kellmn Digbie James Digbie Edmonde Herenden and Thomas Phillipps their heires and assignes for ever Of the cheife Lord or Lordes of the ffee or fees by the rents and services therefore heretofore due and of righte accustomed NEVERTHELESSE upon truste and confidence and to the severall use and uses intents and purposes men[t]ioned conteyned expressed and declared in a Scedule Indented and to this p[re]sentes annexed and to noe other use or uses intents or purposes whatsoever AND THE SAID George Gilson All and singuler the p[re]misses aforesayd and everie of them and everie p[ar]te and p[ar]cell thereof with their app[ur]tenances unto the sayd Sir Ffraunce Smith Sir William Armys Sir William Turpin Sir Thomas Heselrigge Sir Guye Palmer Sir Lewys Watson Sir Thomas Tresham Kellmn Digbie James Digbie Edmonde Herenden and Thomas Phillipps and their heires against him the sayd George Gilson and his heires shall and will for ever hereafter by this presentes warrante defende and harmlesse keepe IN WITNES whereof the parties first above named to this p[re]sente Indentures interchangeably have putt their hands and seales the daye and yeare ffirst above written
ANNO GR[ATIAE] D[OMINI] : MILLESIMO
SEXCENTESIMO DUODECIMO.

At the end of the first page of the deed, the following Latin subscription appears:

Recognit vicesimo tertio die Junii anno infra scripto coram me Henric Thoresby cancell magistro vic
[signed] He. Thoresby

Translation:

Examined the twenty third day of June in the year within written before me Henry Thoresby Deputy Master in the Court of Chancery.

The Schedule referred to and attached to the Indenture reads thus:

A Schedule Indented wherein is set forth limited appointed ordered expressed and declared by George Gilson esquier within named howe and in what mann[er] the landes and ten[emen]ts men[t]ioned in the Indentures hereunto annexed together w[i]th the psytte [site] of the same landes and ten[emen]ts shalbe let set gyven ordered and disposed for ever hereafter accordinge to the minde intente and true meaninge of ye s[ai]d George Gilson the feoffer or gyver

Ffirst the said George Gilson doth humbly desire the Almightye and ever lyvinge God to accepte of this his offeringe of prayse and thankesgyvinge in parte of Acknowledgem[en]te of all the blessinges which his dyvine Ma[jes]tie hath bestowed upon him his moste unworthie and unprofytable servaunte Not that the sayd George Gilson hopeth thereby to meritt heaven but to the entente to shewe a godly and good example to others desiringe his eternall Ma[jes]tie that hee will bee pleased to blesse the same that it maye have Contynuaunce to bee ordered and used for the releyfe of the poore and to the glorie and prayse of his holy name for ever and ever Amen And the sayd George doth most earnestly beseech his dyvine Ma[jes]tie that hee will bee pleased to directe and guide the hartes and mindes of those that have the orderinge and disposinge thereof from tyme to tyme that they maye order and dispose the same in everie poynte with uprighte hartes and godly and charitable mindes to the comforte and releife of the poore to whose use and good only the same is gyven and intended and not anywayes thereby to dischargde and unburthen the ritche and wealthie of that care and chardge which they ought and are bounde by the worde and will of God to have and take of the poore and needy As they will answere the contrarie at the laste and terrible daye of Judgemente when the secretts of all hartes shalbe disclosed and everie man shall gyve an accompte of his wayes workes and deedes.

2. Item the said George Gilson doth declare lymitt order appoynte and desire that six poore aged people whereof two shall have dwelte and inhabited fyve yeares at the least within the Towne of Morcott in the County of Roteland of good name and fame and noe drunkardes beinge single and not maryed of the age of ffyftie yeares at leaste or upwardes such as their worke is past and those that have beene true and honeste labourers men or women (excepte they bee lame or diseased) then their age or youth to bee noe ympedimente to receive benefytt by this guifte maye bee the p[er]sons that for ever hereafter maye receive the benefytt and profytt of this his guifte in such manner and forme and for such parte and p[ar]cell and at such tyme and tymes as is hereafter more p[ar]ticularly expressed lymitted appoynted and declared.

3. Item the said George Gilson doth further order lymitt declare appoynte and desire his sayd ffeoffees and everie of them their heires and assignes for ever hereafter to

p[er]mitt and suffer the Churchwardens of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott for the tyme beinge yearly everie yeare for ever hereafter to collecte receive and gather the rents yssues and profytts of the landes and tenements within men[t]ioned to bee payed gyven expended and distributed as is hereafter more fully expressed lymited declared and appoynted.

4. Item the said George Gilson doth further order lymitte appoynte declare and desire that for as much as hee doth desyre by God's permission forthwith to make builde erecte and provide within the sayd p[ar]ishe or towne of Morcott One sufficiente Almshouse or meason [maison] de dieu for the sayd six severall poore people to inhabite and dwell in That the sayd ffeoffees and their heires shall permitt and suffer the sayd George Gilson duringe his life solely and wholly to no[m]i[n]ate putt place and appoynte All and everie the sayd six poore people and everie of them in the sayde Almshouse And that the sayd Almshouse or meason de dieu maye for ever hereafter [be] used ordered and ymployed for the dwellinge and inhabitinge of the sayd six poore people And after the death of the sayd George Gilson that then the ffeoffees or bargaynees their heires or assignes for the tyme beinge or the most or greater parte of them when and as often as any of the sayd six poore people shall dye and departe this life or bee removed and displaced out of the sayd Almshouse for any misorder ill behaviour or lewdnes (which the sayde George doth desire and appoynte maye bee likewise the power of the ffeoffees their heires and assignes for the tyme beinge or the more parte of them to doe remove and putt out upon good cause) at the first and nexte feaste eyther of the Natyvitie of our Lord God the Anunca[t]ion of o[u]r blessed ladye St Marye the virgine of St John the Baptiste or the feast of Sainte Michaell the Archangell which of them shall firste and nexte happen nexte after such deathe or remove of all or any such poore people soe to bee placed or within tenne dayes then nexte insuinge the sayd ffeasts or any of them shall and maye under their handes and seales no[m]i[n]ate and appoynte one other poore p[er]son such as afore is sett forth and declared to bee which the Churchwardens and overseers of the poore of the sayd p[ar]ish of Morcott for the tyme beinge (yf any such overseers bee) or the moste of them shall and maye at their willes and pleasures soe putt and place in the sayd house in the lodginge and roome where the last poore p[er]son soe deceased or removed did use and abide.

5. Item the said George Gilson doth further order lymitt declare appoynte and desire that the ffeoffees their heires and assignes for ever for the tyme beinge shall permitt and suffer And the sayd George Gilson doth in the bowells of charytie intreate and desire the Churchwardens of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott for the tyme beinge for ever hereafter to receive the yssues rents and profytts of all and singuler the landes ten[emen]ts and hereditam[en]ts within men[t]ioned and to reteyne and keepe to their owne use and uses everie yeare for ever twenty shillings thereof for and towards their paynes industry costs and travell to bee taken in the premisses

and with the assistance of the ov[er]seers for the poore of the same p[ar]ishe for the tyme beinge (yf any such overseers be otherwise not) well and trulye in the presence and viewe of sixe or more of the most credible and substantiall inhabitants of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott for the tyme beinge out of the reste of the rentes yssues and profytts of the premisses within men[t]ioned to satisfie contente and paye everie yeare yearlyly for ever hereafter to everie of the sayd sixe poore people severally Thirtie shillings a quarter beinge in the whole yeare Sixe Poundes a peece for everie of the sayd severall Sixe poore people at the foure severall feasts afore men[t]ioned to bee accompted the ffeast of the byrth of our Lord God the Anunca[t]ion of our blessed lady St Marie St John Baptist and St Michael the Archangell or within Thirtie dayes after at the farthest which sayd Six poundes yearlyly the sayd George Gilson doth gyve lymitt and appoynte to the sayd poore towards the dyett and feedinge of the sayd sixe severall poore people afore men[t]ioned in the aforesayd Almeshouse to bee placed And that further the sayd Churchwardens for the tyme beinge everie yeare in the like presence of suche credible p[er]sons afore men[t]ioned out of the rest and residue of the rents and profytts of the landes ten[emen]ts and hereditam[en]ts within men[t]ioned shall satisfie contente and paye or cause to bee payed unto the sayd six severall poore people and to everie of them upon the ffeaste of St Thomas the appostle yearlyly everie yeare for ever sixe shillings eighte pence a peece for and towards their yearlyly severall fyres and severall app[ar]jells.

6. Item the said George Gilson dothe further order lymitt declare appoynte and desire That whereas the yearlyly rentes and profytts of the premisses within men[t]ioned is at this p[rese]nte fortie poundes and a noble a yeare yearlyly rente over and above all chardges and reprises whatsoever due or goinge out thereof and wilbe hereafter of a better yearlyly value viz ffyftie poundes a yeare or thereabouts that out of the rest and residue of the yearlyly profitts thereof not alreadye lymited gyven or disposed the sayd ffeoffees and their heires and assignes for the tyme beinge for ever hereafter shall suffer a competente and reasonable yearlyly som[m]e or som[m]es of money to be kepte and retheyned and used expended and employed towards the necessarie repayringe and mayneteyninge the sayd Almeshouse or meason de dieu And that the overplus surplusage rest and remaynder of all and singuler the rents and profytts of the landes and tenementes within men[t]ioned yf any such yearlyly bee (all other reasonable expenses costs or chardges eyther by any sute in lawe for necessarie writte or by any other chance or otherwayes to bee necessariely expended and layed out defaulted retheyned and out thereof alwayes deducted) at the sayd foure severall quarter dayes aforesayd to satisfie contente and paye by the hands of the Churchwardens aforesayd and as aforesayd to the sayd sixe severall poore people for the tyme beinge therein in the sayd Almeshouse placed and admitted rateably share and share like everie one a rateable share and propor[t]ion towards their and everie of their better

releife confortes and maynet[en]ances.

7. Item the said George Gilson doth further order declare lymitte appoynte and desire that when and as often as it shall fortune all the ffeoffees or bargaynees within men[t]ioned or any other that shalbe named or made hereafter from tyme to tyme to dye or departe this life savinge foure or fyve of them that then and ymediatly the sayd foure or fyve ffeoffees or bargaynees survivinge shall make a new feoffem[en]te or graunte of the premisses within men[t]ioned unto as many other knights esquiers or gentlemen the most worthie honest able and sufficiente which shall nexte and nearest dwell and reside to the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott aforesayd as were in the feoffem[en]te or graunte hereto annexed first specified and declared or more at their will and pleasures to the selfe same and verie use and uses intente lymita[t]ions and purposes as is in theis p[rese]nte Schedules men[t]ioned expressed and declared and to noe other use intente or purpose whatsoever].

8. Item the said George Gilson doth further order declare lymitte appoynte advise and desire that if in case the ffeoffees or bargaynees of the premisses w[i]thin men[t]ioned for the tyme beinge or the Churchwardens of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott or the overseers of the poore there for the tyme beinge (yf any such there bee) shall att any tyme hereafter neglecte or refuse or not faythfully relygiously and charitably p[er]forme the severall trusts and confidences in them reposed by theis p[rese]ntes and the entente and true and charitable meaninge and purpose of the sayd George Gilson herein contained men[t]ioned expressed and declared severally and respectively as aforesayd that the inhabitants of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott or some of them for the tyme beinge shall exhibite their Bill or peti[t]ion to the Lord Chancellor of England or the Lord Keeper of the greateseale of England for the tyme beinge That it would please his good Lordshipp out of his tender compassion and charitable devo[t]ion to order and helpe establish this charitable worke that it maye not perishe or bee abused but remayne and contynue for ever and bee p[er]formed accordinge to the first founders will and disposi[t]ion And that his Lor[dshi]p wilbee pleased to allowe to such inhabitants (leaste they should travell of there owne chardges and soe make could [*cold*] their charities) such reasonable costs chardges and expenses for their travayle chardges and paynes to bee taken in the premisses out of the yearlyly rents and p[ro]fytts of the p[re]misses within men[t]ioned as to his Lor[dshi]ps wisdom and good discretion shalbe thoughte meete and conveniente rather with the moste than the leaste.

9. Item the said George Gilson doth further order lymitte appoynte declare and desire that to the ende and purpose theis p[rese]ntes maye remayne safely kepte and not bee defaced forgotten purloyned or ymbesilled that theis p[rese]ntes shal bee inrolled in his Ma[jest]e[s] High Courte of Chauncery yf it bee thought fytt And that afterwarde theis p[rese]ntes and all other writings or evidences concerninge the p[re]misses within written shalbe safely fayrely and decently preserved and kepte in

one good stronge cheste bounde aboute with yron with three good lockes at least and keyes to the same which sayd three severall keyes or more shalbe kepte the one of them by the minister p[ar]son or vicar of the sayd p[ar]ishe of Morcott for the tyme beinge and one other by the oldest of the Churchwardens of the same p[ar]ishe for the tyme beinge and the other by the ffeoffees or bargaynees or some or one of them and the sayd chest to bee placed in some conveniente roome or place within the sayd Almeshouse or the p[ar]ish church or chauncell of Morcott aforesayd where they shall thinke it shall remayne and bee in moste safety.

In Witnes whereof the sayd George Gilson hath hereunto likewise subscribed his name the daie and yeare within written Anno gr[atiae] D[omi]ni 1612.

by me George Gylson

Sealed and Delivered in the p[rese]nce of

Edm. Randolph

John Filmer

John Yardley

John Barringtone script

The following Latin inscription is endorsed on the deed:
Qua in dors claus cancellarie infra script dni regis quarto decimo die Novembr ann infra scr Per Ricum Butt

Translation:

This document has been registered in the Rolls of the Court of Chancery on the fourteenth day of November in the year within written. By Richard Butt.

Notes:

1. Original spellings and orthography have been retained, such as words which have been run together; for example, "shalbe" and "wilbe" should read "shall be" and "will be".

2. The deed has many abbreviations in the original, and square brackets have been used to amplify words which were incomplete as well as to transcribe certain less obvious spellings.

Appendix 2

Will of George Gilson dated 26th June 1616

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN I GEORGE GYLSON of London Esquire beyng of whole and perfect memorye (thanckes be to God) do this six and twentieth of June in the yere of oure Lord God One thousand six hundred and sixteene make and ordayne this my last Will and Testament hereby revoking and making voyde all and every my former will and willes whatsoever ffirst I bequeathe my soule to Almightye God my Savyoure and Redeemer and my bodie to be buried at the discretion of my executors without pompe or vayne glorie

Item. I will that yf those that owe me money allready due by bond covenant promise or iudgment do paye to my executors suche sommes as are due by condition of their bondes covenants and promises (except yt shall appeare a greater or a lesser somme to be due by a Noate or Schedule hereunto annexed within six monethes after my decease) that then their bondes covenants and promises to be voyde soe they keepe covenants hereafter and they to be discharged of judgments

Item. I give to Robt Marshe my nephue and his heires all my lands tenements and hereditaments set lying and beyng in Cliffe in the Countie of Kent or elsewhere within the sayed Countie and allso one close of pasture called Perthill in Could Newton in the Countie of Leicester together with all my tenements and hereditaments lying and beyng in Ffleetestreete in the

parishe of St Brides neere Ffletebridge London paying to Alice Bland Elizabeth Catmer and Mary Barfield my Nieces tenne pounds a peece yerelie during their lyves And to my Nieces Jane Ffrancis and Anne Edwardes one hundred poundes a peece yf they remain widowes All my tenements and hereditaments lying and beyng in Kirton in Holland in ye Countie of Lincoln I give Sir George Gill and his heires

Item I give and leave to discend all my righte title and benefitt that I have or may have in or to certayne coppiehould landes called Southfield lying in the parishe of Sandon in the Countie of Hertford to my uncle Thomas Gisons daughters and their heires

I forgive Sir Rice Griffyn all he oweth me and all the wronges he hath done me And I give hym one hundred poundes in money

I forgive my Ladye Ann Griffyn all the wronges she hath done me and I give her fiftie poundes in money

I give to my sayed nephue Robert Marshe his three younge children To my Niece Alice Blandes three children to my nephue Edward Marshe his two children and to my Niece Barfield her sonne one hundred poundes a peece and all my Annuities and Leases whatsoever equallie to be divided amongst them

I give to John Hamond his eldest sonne late of Newchipping in the Countie of Hertford fiftie poundes

I give to Dudley Hawkes of Bucklers Burye in London

and his heires All my righte and title that I have in or to certaine houses which I had of hym lying and beyng in Mawlyng in the Countie of Kent so he paye to my executors one hundred and fortie poundes within six monethes after my deathe and then the judgment I have against hym shalbe voyde

I give to Mr Edmond Herenden of Morcott in the Countie of Rutland and his heires all the Mannor of Morcott aforesayed togeather with the Mannor of Todworth in the Countie of Surrey which I had of hym so as he paye to my executors on May daye next the somme of fyve hundred poundes

I make executors of this my last Will and Testament Sir ffrauncis Smythe of Ashbie ffolevyle in the Countie of Leicester knyghte and John Randall of Preston Baggott in the Countie of Warwick gent to whome I give for their paynes twentie pounds a piece

The residue of all my goods (debtes and legacies beyng payed and my ffunerall dischargd) I give to Sir ffrauncis Smythe aforesayed to paye suche sommes to suche persons as I shall give hym a Noate of their names and sommes in writing And what shal be left to bestow yt of suche friendes of myne as he shall thincke good

GEO GILSON. CHRISTOFER GARLAND. HENRY COXE. RICHARD BROOMFEILD. MATHEWE MONCKE.

A Noate of their names that owe me money by bond covenant or promise nowe dewe and of the somme therewith yf they paye within sixe monethes after my deathe their bonds covenants promises and judgments shalbe voyde

Clement Barton Three poundes

James Digby A hundred poundes

Anthony Ffawkener Six poundes

Mathew Garland Twentie poundes

Dudley Hawkes A hundred and fortie poundes

Sir Richard Cole A hundred and twentie poundes

Sir Guye Palmer Fiftie poundes

Sir Robert [*illegible*] One hundred and twentie poundes

Mr William Ffitzwilliams Threescore poundes

Sir John Ffitzwilliams Three poundes

Thomas Phillipps with what he hath received of Mr Randall and Mr Shute Two hundred poundes

Edward Payne Fower poundes

James Hamond Twentie poundes

Sir George Hyde Fower hundred poundes

Edmond Randolph Eight poundes

William Smythe Thirty poundes

Thomas Cave Six poundes

Sir Edward Noelle A hundred and fortie poundes

Mr Chisseldyne Tenne poundes

Sir Leonard Hyde Fiftie poundes

John Randall as by his accompt [*no amount stated*]

John Marricot Two hundred and fortie eight poundes

Sir Ffrauncis Pentrice Twentie poundes

Thomas Welles Sixtie poundes

GEORGE GILSON

Probatum fuit testamentum supra scriptum una cum schedula annexa coram venerabili viro Dno. JOHANNE BENET milite legum doctore curai prerogative Cant. magistro custode sine commissario legitime constituto vicesimo sexto die mensis Martii Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo decimo septimo iuramento Francisci Smythe militis et Johanni Randall generose executorum in eodem testamento nominati quibus commissa fuit admo. bonorum iurium et creditorum dicti defuncti de bene et fideliter administrand. ad sancta dei evang. vigore commiss. mea parte als. emanat iurat.

English translation of the Probate:

The above written Will was proved together with the schedule annexed in the presence of the honourable Master John Benet knight Doctor of Laws at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury Master and Custodian without commission lawfully appointed on the 26th day of March 1617 on the oath of Francis Smythe knight and John Randall gentleman the executors named in the said Will to whom the administration of the goods rights and loans of the said deceased was entrusted well and faithfully to administer.

Notes on George Gilson's Will

The original spelling of words has been retained. Note that Gylson is spelt with a "Y" at the beginning of the Will but with an "I" in the signature and where Thomas Gilson is mentioned.

1. Cliffe is five miles north of Rochester, Kent
2. Cold Newton is nine miles east of Leicester
3. Kirton in Holland is four miles south of Boston, Lincolnshire
4. Sandon is seven miles east of Letchworth, Hertfordshire
5. Newchipping may be Chipping, about four miles from Sandon, Hertfordshire, where George Gilson also had property
6. There is a Bucklersbury Street today in the City of London - see the address for Dudley Hawkes.
7. Mawlyng may be East or West Malling which lie west of Maidstone, Kent
8. Morcott is five miles east of Uppingham, Rutland
9. Todworth, now called Tadworth, is five miles east of Leatherhead, Surrey
10. Ashby Folville is ten miles north east of Leicester
11. Preston Baggott is ten miles west of Warwick
12. A number of beneficiaries in the Will or debtors to George Gilson appear as trustees in the Deed dated 10th June 1612: Sir Ffrauncis Smythe of Ashby Folville, Sir Guye Palmer of Ashwell, James Digby of North Luffenham, Edmond Herenden of Morcott, Thomas Phillips of Bisbrooke
13. Among the debtors are found other names with Rutland connections: Anthony Ffawkener, Mr Chisseldyne, Sir E Noelle
14. The modern spelling of Rice Griffin's Christian name would be Rhys

Appendix 3

Table of trustees and agents

The following is a list of the trustees originally appointed to administer the charity in 1612 and those that served as trustees from 1734 to 31st December 1994. No record of the trustees in the period between 1612 and 1734 has been found. This is followed by lists of clerks and farm agents to the charity. Their places of residence, where shown, are in Rutland unless otherwise indicated.

		First mention	Last mention
Sir Francis Smith	Ashby Folville, Leicestershire	1612	-
Sir William Armyn	Osgarby, Lincolnshire	1612	-
Sir William Turpin	Horninghold, Leicestershire	1612	-
Sir Thomas Heselrigge	Noseley, Leicestershire	1612	-
Sir Guy Palmer	Ashwell	1612	-
Sir Lewis Watson, later 1st Lord Rockingham	Rockingham, Northamptonshire	1612	-
Sir Thomas Tresham	Newton, Northants	1612	-
Kenelm Digby	Stoke Dry	1612	-
James Digby	North Luffenham	1612	-
Edmond Herenden	Morcott	1612	-
Thomas Phillipps	Bisbrooke	1612	-
Rt Hon Daniel Finch, 8th Earl of Winchilsea		1734	1769
Rt Hon Philip Sherard, 2nd Earl of Harborough		1734	1750
Jeffery Johnson	Withcote, Leicestershire	1734	1742
Rt Hon Lewis Watson, 2nd Earl of Rockingham		1736	1745
Bennet Lord Sherard, later 3rd Earl of Harborough		1736	1770
Sir Thomas Palmer	Carlton, Northamptonshire	1736	1765
Hon William Finch, brother of 8th Earl of Winchilsea		1736	1766
Richard Halford	Edith Weston	1736	1742
Samuel Barker	Lyndon	1736	1759
Richard Snow	Clipsham	1736	-
Thomas Roberts	Wardley	1736	-
Rt Hon Ralph, 2nd Earl of Verney		1763	1791
George Finch, eldest son of the Rt Hon Edward Finch, later known as George Finch Hatton		1763	1819
George Finch, only son of Rt Hon William Finch, later 9th Earl of Winchilsea		1763	1813
Sir John Palmer, son of Sir Thomas Palmer		1763	1817
Rt Hon Heneage Finch, commonly called Lord Guernsey, later 4th Earl of Aylesford		1763	1812
John Emilius Daniel Edward Finch, later known as Edward Finch Hatton		1763	1841
Rt Hon Edward Noel, 1st Viscount Wentworth		1763	1774
Rt Hon Charles Manners, commonly called Lord Roos, later 4 Duke of Rutland		1763	1787
Edward Palmer	Withcote, Leicestershire	1763	-
Thomas Hill	Tern, Shropshire	1763	1776
Hon Robert Manners, brother of Charles Manners		1763	1782
Charles Tryon		1763	-

		First mention	Last mention
Samuel Barker	Lyndon	1806	1835
George Fludyer I	Ayston	1806	1836
John Wingfield I	Tickencote	1806	1839
Heneage Finch, commonly called Lord Guernsey, later 5th Earl of Aylesford		1806	1859
George Finch Hatton II, later 10th Earl of Winchilsea		1806	1858
George Finch, son of 9th Earl of Winchilsea	Burley	1813	1868
John Wingfield II	Tickencote	1813	1868
Sir John Palmer II		1813	1843
George Fludyer II (Lt Colonel), son of George Fludyer I		1813	1854
Rt Hon George Henry Finch MP, grandson of 9th Earl of Winchilsea	Burley	1867	1905
Richard Lucas	Edith Weston	1867	1887
Henry William Heathcote		1867	1872
Rev Sir John Henry Fludyer, brother of George Fludyer I		1867	1896
Edward Nathaniel Conant		1867	1901
Hon William Charles Evans-Freke, later 8th Baron Carbery		1867	1888
Rev William Belgrave	Preston	1868	1870
John Henry Lee Wingfield	Tickencote	1867	1879
Hon Gerard James Noel MP		1867	1906
Rev Chancellor William Wales	Uppingham	1868	1879
Maj Gen William Fludyer, brother of George Fludyer I	Ayston	1857	1863
Thomas Tryon Esq	Bulwick, Northamptonshire	1857	1857
Hon Gilbert John Heathcote	Normanton	1857	1857
Richard Paget	Clipsham	1857	1857
Major Thomas Tryon	Bulwick, Northamptonshire	1857	1857
Charles Fludyer, first son of Rev J H Fludyer	Thistleton	1857	1857
Rt Hon Gilbert Henry Heathcote-Drummond- Willoughby, 2nd Lord Aveland, later 1st Earl of Ancaster		1880	1904
George Fydell Rowley	Morcott	1880	1903
Rev Harry Lancelot Wingfield	Market Overton	1880	1891
Rev Charles Halford Lucas	Edith Weston	1880	1885
Rev Philip Gretton Dennis	North Luffenham	1885	1900
John Maurice Wingfield	Tickencote	1885	1891
William Wing	Market Overton	1885	1886
Robert Heathcote	Manton	1888	1906
George Vere Braithwaite		1889	1894
Sir Arthur John Fludyer, second son of Rev J H Fludyer	Ayston	1895	1906
Edward Tyler	Morcott	1895	1939
Evan Hanbury		1895	1919
Rev Frederick Baggaley, Vicar of Oakham		1895	1911
Rev Folliot Lynch Salusbury, Rector of Market Overton		1901	1915
Hon Percy Cecil Evans-Freke, son of W C Evans-Freke, Lord Carbery		1902	1915
Ernest William Proby Conant, son of Edward Nathaniel Conant	Lyndon	1905	1920
Rev James Hamilton Charles		1905	1931
Edward Worrall	Wing	1911	1929

		First mention	Last mention
William Henry Neill	Wing	1911	1947
William Belgrave	Preston	1915	1923
Henry Randolph Finch, second son of George Finch I and son-in-law of Rev J H Fludyer	Manton	1915	1936
Rev E V Hodge, Rector of Lyndon		1915	1932
Col C H B Norcott		1917	1920
Maj Henry Cecil Noel	Catmose, Oakham	1919	1931
Rev Frederick John Winder Taverner	Wing	1920	1939
Roger John Edward Conant	Lyndon	1920	1955
Lt Gen Sir Alfred Edward Codrington KCVO, KCB		1923	1938
W L Sargant	School House, Oakham	1929	1946
Rev M S Kemmis Steinman	Morcott	1931	1946
E Guy Fenwick	North Luffenham	1931	1937
Rev A E Fraser		1931	1936
Rev C C Aldred	Uppingham	1932	1949
Rev Canon R H Fuller		1935	1939
Rev C O R Wormald		1936	1947
Miss W P Bouverie		1936	1968
Mrs E Fenwick		1937	1946
William Melville Codrington		1938	1947
Hector John Tyler	Morcott	1939	1991
J T Pridmore	Morcott	1939	1954
Rev C A Brown	Exton	1939	1942
Rev L G Bartlett	Exton	1942	1962
Rev E Patrick	Morcott	1946	1955
Charles Pelham Welby	South Luffenham Hall	1946	1959
Capt E M G L Boyle RN, son-in-law of Percy Evans-Freke	Bisbrooke Hall	1946	1979
John Lee Shelton	Wing	1947	1963
Rev F J Boss	Oakham	1947	1951
Rev Cuthbert James	Wing	1949	1959
Rev S C Woodward	Uppingham	1949	1964
Rev H V Prytherch	Oakham	1951	1964
Rear Adm Stuart L Bateson	Ridlington	1955	1979
Miss C B Ellis	Lyddington	1955	1967
Rev George Purdy		1956	1958
George Somerset Finch, great-great-grandson of 9th Earl of Winchilsea	Ayston Hall	1959	still serving
John Geoffrey Pridmore	Morcott	1959	still serving
Rev D E Havergal		1960	1961
Rev W Grant	Morcott	1963	1965
Maj J A Warre	South Luffenham Hall, later Barrowden	1964	still serving
Mrs M A Christian	Wing	1964	1972
George H Boyle, great-grandson of W C Evans-Freke, Lord Carbery	Bisbrooke Hall	1964	1993
Rev J H Green	Morcott	1965	1974
Mrs M G Symington		1968	1979
Mrs J Davis	Lyddington	1973	1976
Rev Patrick Lingard	Morcott	1975	still serving
Mrs Elizabeth Tyler	Morcott	1975	still serving
Peter W Rowley	Morcott Hall	1975	still serving
Mrs Bullard	South Luffenham Hall	1979	1982
Dennis Tyler	Barrowden	1981	still serving
Mrs Elizabeth Jerwood	Morcott	1982	still serving
Mrs Wendy Thorneloe	Wing	1985	1988

		First mention	Last mention
Colin Crabb	Morcott	1990	still serving
Wilfred Milner	Morcott	1990	still serving
Mrs Patricia Joyce	Morcott	1992	still serving
Robert Boyle, great-great-grandson of W C Evans-Freke, Lord Carbery	Bisbrooke Hall	1993	still serving
<i>Clerks</i>			
John Clementson	Oakham	1799	1806
James Torkington	Stamford, Lincolnshire	1806	1868
James Torkington junior	Stamford, Lincolnshire	1868	1875
Benjamin Adam	Oakham	1875	1890
Benjamin Addington Adam	Oakham	1890	1932
Robert Cecil Dalton	Stamford, Lincolnshire	1932	1952
Richard Mason Pope	Stamford, Lincolnshire	1952	1973
David Alexander Parkin	Oakham	1973	1994
<i>Farm agents</i>			
		-	1803
John Crutchley	Burley on the Hill	1803	1852
John Cragg	Threckingham, Lincolnshire	1852	-
Francis Higdon	Holbeach, Cambridgeshire	-	1904
Francis George Higdon	Holbeach, Cambridgeshire	1904	-
Capt W A Cragg	Threckingham, Lincolnshire	-	1944
Major W G Cragg		1944	1990
Messrs Earl & Lawrence	Sleaford, Lincolnshire	1990	-
J F Pygott	Sleaford, Lincolnshire		-

Appendix 4

Table of beneficiaries

The following is a list of the almspeople and pensioners who were beneficiaries of the charity up to 1971. This list is compiled using the Morcott Burial Register from 1615 to 1721 (but it is only during the period from 1655 to 1675 that the rector for the time being chooses to identify burials of almswomen), the Morcott Town Book which records almswomen from 1733 to 1760 (this book is held at the Leicestershire Record Office and appears to have been compiled by a Morcott resident to record significant information of parish affairs), and the charity's minute and account books from 1777 to 1971. It will be seen that there are gaps in the list. Their places of residence, where shown, are in Rutland unless otherwise stated.

Name, status, and age at entry, where shown	Previous address	Almsperson or pensioner	Date appointed to benefit	Date ceased, usually at death
ADAMS Charlotte	Wye, Kent	almsperson	19/01/1857	07/12/1878
ADLAM Sarah	-	almsperson	03/1819	29/12/1846
ALLEN Susan, widow	Pickworth	almsperson	09/09/1865	1868
ANDREW Mrs Elizabeth	Edith Weston	pensioner	04/03/1912	29/04/1915
ANGEL Anne	Morcott	almsperson	pre 1733	21/01/1737
ANGELL Mary	Morcott	almsperson	pre 1760	14/11/1777
ATKINS Arthur	Station Road, Morcott	pensioner	18/11/1948	12/1956
ATKINS Mrs C J	Morcott	pensioner	1955	10/1966
BADLEY Miss Maria	Uppingham	pensioner	10/11/1949	12/1964
BAINES Mary Ann, widow	Wing	pensioner	30/10/1885	01/06/1891
BAINES Mrs Mary Ann	Preston	pensioner	03/02/1921	29/02/1928
BANBURY Bridget	Teigh	almsperson	11/09/1733	20/12/1739
BARBER Susannah	Westwell, Kent	almsperson	17/02/1825	1858
<i>Received no almsperson's pension after April 1832, but a pension was reserved for her until her death in 1858. See minute dated 17/11/1858.</i>				
BARNET Sarah	Morcott	almsperson	17/09/1791	15/01/1796
BATE Alice	-	almsperson	03/1760	pre 1778
BEASLEY Ann	Morcott	almsperson	01/06/1816	1830
BEECROFT Mrs Mary Jane	Market Overton	pensioner	03/02/1921	31/10/1925
BEHOE Elizabeth	Morcott	almsperson	15/05/1744	12/06/1756
BERRIDGE Fanny or Louisa	South St, Oakham	pensioner	14/10/1929	02/05/1933
BERRIDGE Mrs Louisa	-	pensioner	06/07/1939	03/1942
BERRIDGE Rachel, widow	Glaston	almsperson	01/04/1886	22/12/1905
BIGGS Mary	Preston	almsperson	25/06/1734	09/1746
BILSDON Mrs Sarah	Preston	pensioner	04/06/1928	10/1935
BOYFIELD Frances Ann, widow	Teigh	pensioner, later almsperson	05/01/1874	16/03/1902
BRADSHAW Alice, widow	-	almsperson	08/04/1796	03/1819
BRADSHAW Elizabeth	Morcott	almsperson	26/04/1851	09/1859
BRADSHAW Katharine	Gretton, Northamptonshire	almsperson	20/12/1739	-
BRADSHAW Mary	Morcott	almsperson	03/12/1823	06/1826
BRAMPTON Miss Eveline May	Morcott	pensioner	26/11/1953	12/1967
BRIGGS Elizabeth	5 Gaol St, Oakham	pensioner	02/08/1932	31/03/1934
BRITTON Sarah	Glaston	pensioner	05/04/1906	05/01/1912
BROUGHTON Anne, widow, 75	North Luffenham	pensioner	26/10/1893	13/03/1895
BROUGHTON Louisa	Oakham	pensioner	15/11/1927	09/1931

Name, status, and age at entry, where shown	Previous address	Almsperson or pensioner	Date appointed to benefit	Date ceased, usually at death
BROWETT Mrs Julia, 75	Morcott	almsperson	11/07/1907	07/08/1919
BROWN Elizabeth, widow, 71	Oakham	pensioner	04/12/1899	26/06/1903
BURBIDGE Mr F	High St, Morcott	pensioner	30/11/1966	-
BURDETT Sarah, widow	-	almsperson	02/01/1847	09/1860
BURTON Edward	-	pensioner	06/04/1916	21/12/1921
BURTON John	Oakham	pensioner	01/07/1920	03/08/1927
BUSSINGHAM Mrs Rose	-	almsperson	02/11/1950	06/1951
BUTTERIS Elizabeth or Isabel	Morcott	almsperson	11/06/1756	23/08/1769
CARTER Hannah	-	almsperson	12/05/1804	15/03/1808
CATLIN Miss Edith Mary	Uppingham	pensioner	02/11/1939	06/1948
CAVE Ann, widow	Preston	pensioner	28/10/1887	pre 1896
CHAPPELL Mrs Elizabeth	-	pensioner	18/01/1912	29/05/1920
CLARKE Ann, widow	Morcott	almsperson	07/01/1835	15/11/1844
CLARKE Charles	Morcott	pensioner	25/08/1913	07/01/1914
CLARKE Mrs J	Lyddington	almsperson	23/11/1965	06/1968
CLIFFE Elizabeth	Morcott	almsperson	06/12/1844	1850
CLIFFE Mary Rebekah	-	almsperson	16/07/1945	29/08/1948
CLIPSON Mrs Beatrice, 79	9 Fydells Row, Morcott	pensioner	29/11/1967	after 1971
CLOSE Sarah, 78	Morcott	almsperson	11/11/1859	1860
COCKMAN Margaret, widow	Paddington, Middlesex	almsperson	1808	19/03/1810
COCKMAN Mary	Goodnestone, Kent	almsperson	23/04/1810	03/1822
COULSON Miss Mary	Morcott	almsperson	1778	01/10/1788
CROOK Mrs Sarah Elizabeth	Empingham	pensioner	1967	-
CROWSON Mrs E	South Luffenham	almsperson	03/12/1964	12/1967
CUNNINGTON Edward	-	pensioner	25/08/1913	09/03/1916
CUNNINGTON William	Morcott	pensioner	02/11/1939	06/1946
DALBY or DAULBY Ann	Morcott	almsperson	1805	09/1812
DALBY Miss Elizabeth	Wing	pensioner	17/02/1936	16/08/1939
DAVIS Ann, widow	Morcott	almsperson	11/1798	1816
DEXTER Mrs Catherine, widow, 64	Scredington, Lincolnshire	pensioner	03/09/1877	27/04/1879
DEXTER Mrs Elizabeth Ireland	Oakham	pensioner	08/10/1934	19/06/1939
DEXTER Mrs Maria	Oakham	pensioner	14/12/1925	28/01/1927
DICKENS Elizabeth	Morcott	almsperson	07/07/1751	29/09/1753
DING Ann	Whissendine	almsperson	-	16/05/1754
DINSDALE Mr F A	Oakham	pensioner	10/11/1949	24/08/1955
DIXON Elizabeth, spinster, 72	Morcott	almsperson	06/03/1891	07/03/1903
DOLBY Mary, widow	Glaston	pensioner	14/03/1884	pre 1896
DOLBY Mary	Morcott	almsperson	10/04/1902	10/02/1905
DYER Daniel	Morcott	pensioner	26/11/1953	02/1955
DYER Mrs M E	High St, Morcott	pensioner	23/11/1965	after 1971
ELLCOTT Miss	-	almsperson	1952	09/1958
ELLINGWORTH Elizabeth, widow, 70	Preston	almsperson	14/10/1869	14/06/1881
EUSTACE Miss Fanny	-	almsperson	1953	12/1960
FALKNER Elizabeth, widow, 77	Preston	almsperson	05/01/1874	26/06/1878
FLOAR or FLOWER Elizabeth, widow	Somerby, Leicestershire	almsperson	17/02/1831	04/1843
FLOAR Elizabeth, 71	Somerby, Leicestershire	almsperson	08/12/1860	13/05/1862
FLOUR Mrs	-	almsperson	-	1777
FREEMAN Benjamin	Morcott	pensioner	17/11/1955	06/1969
FREEMAN Mrs C M	Church Lane, Glaston	almsperson	29/10/1958	06/1964
FREEMAN Daniel	Station Road, Morcott	pensioner	03/12/1964	29/08/1966
FREEMAN Mr J W	-	pensioner	06/11/1952	03/1955
FRYER Phoebe	Preston	pensioner	15/06/1911	19/04/1912
GAMBLE Mrs, widow	Morcott	almsperson	-	25/07/1778
GARLEY Mrs Betsy	Morcott	almsperson	02/08/1932	25/01/1933

Name, status, and age at entry, where shown	Previous address	Almsperson or pensioner	Date appointed to benefit	Date ceased, usually at death
GIBSON Thomas, 80	Scredington, Lincolnshire	pensioner	29/10/1891	09/09/1897
GODFREY Rebecca, widow, 78	Great Easton, Leicestershire	almsperson	05/08/1878	13/11/1883
GOODLIFFE Elizabeth, widow	Morcott	almsperson	05/02/1872	02/1873
GOODWIN Eleanor Laxton, 60	Preston	pensioner	16/12/1898	05/06/1911
GORE Frances, widow, 65	Morcott	almsperson	15/10/1868	03/1880
GORE Mrs Hannah, widow	Morcott	almsperson	01/09/1919	25/05/1935
GORE William	Morcott	pensioner	02/02/1914	20/11/1917
GOSSLING William	Morcott	pensioner	18/11/1954	1962
GREATOREX Mrs	-	almsperson	1952	1952
GREENBURY Ann, widow	Bisbrooke	pensioner	04/08/1879	*
GREGORY Frances	Cottesmore, later of Whittlesey	pensioner	30/10/1885	24/12/1898
HACKET Hannah	Seaton	almsperson	23/03/1754	03/1760
HAMES Mary, widow, 71	North Luffenham	pensioner	01/02/1869	1877
HAND Mr J T	Morcott	pensioner	16/05/1968	after 1971
HARTSHORN Mary	-	almsperson	pre 1777	04/05/1786
HERRENDEN Catherine, single woman	Glaston	almsperson	05/12/1778	11/1798
HIBBITT William, labourer	Edith Weston	pensioner	16/10/1890	01/09/1893
HILL Roland	Morcott	pensioner	1954	11/08/1955
HIRCOCK Alice	Wing	almsperson	17/11/1858	1860
HIRST William Lewin	Oakham	pensioner	02/11/1939	04/1940
HOLLIN Mrs Elizabeth	John St, Oakham	pensioner	07/06/1915	13/04/1917
HUBBARD Mrs Eliza	Wing	pensioner	04/01/1923	03/04/1926
ISAAC William, 70	Scredington, Lincolnshire	pensioner	06/06/1870	12/02/1884
JERSEY Elizabeth	-	almsperson	04/10/1821	1825
JOHNSON Ann	-	pensioner	06/07/1911	06/02/1912
JOHNSON Reuben	Oakham	pensioner	09/07/1917	09/12/1920
JOYCE Hannah, widow, 64	Morcott	almsperson	03/03/1873	02/05/1897
JOYCE Henry	-	pensioner	03/03/1927	15/01/1935
KENDALL Mrs M	Blue Bell Cottage, Morcott	almsperson	1967	12/1970
KEW John Mantle	Market Overton	pensioner	07/09/1903	20/06/1911
KNIGHT Mrs Mary	Pimlico, London	almsperson	1778	30/12/1803
KNOWLES Moses	Morcott	pensioner	15/11/1927	31/12/1932
LAMBERT Martha	-	almsperson	pre 1777	1778
LAMBERT Mary, widow, 75	Morcott	almsperson	25/03/1869	12/1873
LANSDALE Mary, spinster, 62	Morcott	almsperson	30/03/1860	1864
LAXTON Mary or Elizabeth, widow	Morcott	almsperson	19/12/1826	1834
LEE Mrs, widow	Corby, Northamptonshire	almsperson	pre 1733	19/01/1738
LONG Mary Ann, widow	Glaston	pensioner	06/04/1905	10/03/1906
LOVE Ann, widow, 68	Glaston	almsperson	15/10/1868	09/02/1886
LOWE Charles	-	pensioner	02/12/1917	01/05/1933
MAPLEY Susan	Burley on the Hill	almsperson	12/04/1790	26/01/1795
MARRIOTT Elizabeth, widow	*	almsperson	16/05/1843	1848
MARTIN Martha, widow	Morcott	almsperson	29/03/1864	12/02/1869
MEADWELL Mrs Katherine	*	almsperson	13/11/1928	12/07/1932
MEARS Magdalen	Uppingham	almsperson	16/05/1754	05/12/1778
MESSING Ann	Morcott	almsperson	1813	1831
MITCHELL Fanny, 67	Orton Waterville, Cambs	pensioner	06/05/1901	13/09/1927
MORRIS Ann	Morcott	almsperson	07/05/1757	17/06/1762
MORRIS James	Morcott	pensioner	14/12/1925	05/04/1929
NEWMAN Mary	Morcott	almsperson	*	18/08/1666
NICOLAS Anne	Morcott	almsperson	*	06/02/1664
NORRIS John	10 Hill Road, Oakham	pensioner	09/03/1942	10/01/1947
OLIVER Miss Lily	Burley on the Hill	pensioner	17/11/1955	03/1970
PATSTON Anne	Morcott	almsperson	pre 1733	09/07/1751

Name, status, and age at entry, where shown	Previous address	Almsperson or pensioner	Date appointed to benefit	Date ceased, usually at death
PAYNE Elizabeth, widow	Morcott	almsperson	1796	07/04/1805
PEACH Ann	Morcott	almsperson	29/09/1753	20/04/1757
PEACH Mary	Morcott	almsperson	1802	1816
PENN Elizabeth	Morcott	almsperson	01/06/1816	09/1823
PHILLIPS Elizabeth	-	almsperson	02/01/1740	1744
PITTS Mrs Mary Ann	Oakham	pensioner	02/05/1912	29/06/1913
PRESGRAVE Miss N	-	pensioner	12/04/1966	03/1970
PRETTY Diana, widow	Lyddington	almsperson	02/07/1833	1857
PRETTY Jane, widow	Morcott	almsperson	13/02/1843	1851
QUANBORROW Mrs, widow	Morcott	almsperson	-	02/04/1655
RATE Mrs Kate	23 Finkey St, Oakham	pensioner	03/03/1927	03/09/1929
RAWLINGS Mrs Alice	Oakham	pensioner	06/07/1939	02/11/1939
RAWLINGS Mrs Charlotte	17 John St, Oakham	pensioner	02/08/1932	1953
RAWLINGS Mrs J H	-	pensioner	20/11/1944	09/1950
ROBERTS Bridget	Morcott	almsperson	09/01/1738	28/12/1739
ROBINSON Mr L H	Station Rd, Morcott	pensioner	30/11/1966	03/1971
ROYCE Miss Noel Mary, spinster, 67	Great Easton, Leicestershire	pensioner	06/03/1891	20/05/1894
SADDINGTON William, labourer	North Luffenham	pensioner	28/10/1887	01/09/1890
SANDFORD Martha, widow, 77	Tickencote	almsperson	30/03/1860	1865
SCOTT Ann, 81	Morcott	pensioner	11/04/1895	31/08/1900
SELLARS Elizabeth, widow	Morcott	almsperson	17/02/1831	1843
SELLERS Ann	Morcott	almsperson	1788	1802
SELLEY or SELLERS Mary	-	almsperson	21/06/1762	pre 1777
SHARP Mrs	-	almsperson	-	1733
SHARPE Sarah	Morcott	almsperson	17/12/1850	1864
SHELVEY W W	Morcott	pensioner	02/11/1939	10/1947
SIMS Jane, widow	Teigh	almsperson	21/11/1862	05/01/1874
<i>The books of the charity state that she ceased to be a beneficiary on 5th January 1874, she being afflicted with blinding.</i>				
SIMPSON Reuben John	Wing	pensioner	22/07/1929	1931
SKERRITT Jane, widow, 74	Morcott	almsperson	05/04/1880	10/12/1890
SKINNER Mrs Mary	Morcott	almsperson	02/02/1933	11/01/1936
SMITH Elizabeth	Nether Broughton, Notts	almsperson	03/12/1823	1828
SMITH Henry	Morcott	pensioner	10/11/1949	1954
SMITH Mary Ann	-	almsperson	02/12/1917	15/10/1928
SNOUCH Hannah	Caldecott	almsperson	19/01/1738	23/03/1754
STEVENS Miss Mary Ann	Morcott	almsperson	18/11/1948	22/09/1950
STEVENS Willie	Morcott	pensioner	20/06/1935	09/04/1949
STIMSON Mercy or Esther	Oakham	almsperson	20/04/1848	1865
STIMSON Rebecca, single woman	Oakham	almsperson	09/09/1865	1876
<i>Ceased to be almsperson in 1876, but did not die until 1884. No reason is given for the termination of her pension as an almsperson.</i>				
STONEX Mrs Eliza	Morcott	pensioner	09/06/1926	16/08/1939
STUBBS Thomasina	Preston	almsperson	-	1734
SUMPTER Alice	Whissendine, later of Morcott	almsperson	03/03/1737	-
SUTER Thomas, farmer	Brooke	pensioner	29/10/1888	22/01/1891
TALLIS William	-	pensioner	05/01/1922	15/10/1925
TAYLOR James	-	pensioner	03/03/1927	14/01/1936
THOMPSON Mary	Morcott	almsperson	06/02/1911	09/11/1917
THOMPSON Mary Anne, widow	Morcott	almsperson	09/02/1906	03/06/1907
THORNTON Ann, widow	Cottesmore	pensioner	06/01/1879	08/11/1883
THORPE Mrs Sarah Ann	-	pensioner	07/11/1904	13/08/1913
TODD Mrs B A	32 Northgate St, Oakham	pensioner	13/11/1951	12/1960
TOMBLIN Mrs Annie	-	almsperson	20/06/1935	03/1945

Name, status, and age at entry, where shown	Previous address	Almsperson or pensioner	Date appointed to benefit	Date ceased, usually at death
TOMBLIN Miss Annie	Uppingham	pensioner	17/11/1947	1952
TOMBLIN Elizabeth, widow	Morcott	almsperson	20/06/1826	10/1826
TOMBLIN Henry	Morcott	pensioner	04/01/1923	12/1932
TOMBLIN Mrs Sarah Ann	Morcott	pensioner	07/11/1904	13/08/1913
TYLER Mrs Nellie	Morcott	almsperson	29/11/1962	06/1965
VEAZEY Mary	Morcott	almsperson	13/03/1903	06/04/1904
VEAZEY Mrs Sarah Ann	-	pensioner	12/06/1933	03/1945
WADE Alice	Weldon, Northamptonshire	almsperson	1786	09/1820
WADE John Thomas	Morcott	pensioner	17/02/1936	24/07/1939
WADE Mrs Lucy	Morcott	pensioner	29/11/1962	03/1967
WALKER Rebecca, widow, 76	Edith Weston	pensioner	25/10/1894	03/11/1898
WEARE Mrs Harriett	Morcott	pensioner	12/11/1945	12/1965
WEBSTER Alice, widow	Morcott	almsperson	29/07/1864	01/1872
WILCOX Jane, widow	Ayston	almsperson	16/08/1828	06/1833
WILEMAN William, 77	Oakham	pensioner	25/10/1900	06/01/1912
WILLIAMS Miss Florence	-	almsperson	11/11/1968	after 1971
WITHORM Dorothy	Morcott	almsperson	-	08/06/1675
WOODCOCK Mary, 69	Morcott	almsperson	01/07/1897	03/02/1911
WOODS Alice	Morcott	almsperson	pre 1733	23/12/1737
WOODS Wilhelmina	-	almsperson	-	1754
WOODWARD Harriet Ruth, 68	Whitwell	pensioner	01/05/1899	02/02/1901
WOODWARD Miss Lavinia	-	almsperson	17/02/1936	25/12/1950
WRIGHT Hester	Oakham	almsperson	1781	10/06/1789
WRIGHT Septima	Morcott	almsperson	1777	15/09/1791
WYVILL Mary	Paddington, Middlesex	almsperson	30/09/1777	17/04/1781

RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY & RECORD SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 700273

The Society's publications, with their main contents, are currently available as follows:

Rutland Record 1 (£1.00 post free)

Emergence of Rutland; Medieval hunting grounds; Rutland field names; Illiteracy in 19th century Rutland

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Transitional architecture in Rutland; Family of Rutland stonemasons; Restoration of Exton church

Rutland Record 7 (£1.50)

Rutland place-names; Rutland Domesday; Lords and peasants in medieval Rutland; Shakespeare in Rutland

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The Honorary Membership Secretary,
Rutland Local History & Record Society,
c/o Rutland County Museum, Catmos Street,
Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW, England

The History of Gilson's Hospital, Morcott

This history tells the story of an almshouse charity founded in the 17th century by George Gilson. The original almshouse at Morcott, Rutland, was substantially renovated in 1904-05, but has since been replaced by seven modern bungalows, three of which occupy the site of the old building.

Gilson endowed the charity with a farm in Screddington, near Sleaford, Lincolnshire, which is still owned by the trust and provides most of its income today. The farm records are of interest, not only as an account of changes and developments there, but also because they reflect the varying fortunes of agriculture in this country.

The charity's documents also provide a wealth of information about its beneficiaries, trustees and agents, most of them being local people.

The author, David Parkin, is a retired solicitor, formerly practising in Oakham, who was clerk to the Gilson's Hospital trustees from 1971 to 1994. He has also written a history of the Briggs' Pension Charity.

