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QUEEN ELIZABETH II

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*Silver Jubilee
Celebrations*

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*Stanstead Abbots
St. Margarets
1977*

*brief
historical survey*

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10am to 7.30pm

Saturday 9am to 6pm, Sunday 10am to 1pm

Early closing Wednesday

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

| | | |
|------------------|------|--|
| Saturday 14 May | 2.30 | Open Day A.N. Christian College. |
| | 6.00 | Student Presentation at Easneye. |
| Tuesday 7 June | 2.30 | Silver Jubilee Children's Party, 'Jubilee Princess' Competition. Invitation to under 12's. |
| | 7.30 | Teenagers Disco at Scout H.Q.s, Marsh Lane. (Ticket admission) |
| Saturday 18 June | 2.30 | Church Fete. Choosing 'JUBILEE QUEEN' at VICARAGE, ROYDON ROAD. |
| | | Judging By: Lord Lieut. Major General Sir George Burns, KCVO, CB, DSC, OBE, MC. |
| Saturday 8 July | | Badminton Finals, Parish Hall. |

FESTIVAL WEEK BEGINS

| | | |
|-----------------|-------|---|
| Saturday 9 July | 10.30 | Scout, & Guide 1st. Day. Atkins Nursery in Marsh Lane. |
| | 10.30 | Local History Exhibition at Free Church, Cappell Lane. |
| | 10.30 | Sailing Regatta 'Fun on the Water'. An exciting Day with Yacht Club on Lakes down Marsh Lane. |
| | 10.30 | 'Welly Boot Throwing' Championship, Village Club, High Street. |
| | | Dunlop National Competition (Adults & Children) |
| | | Flowers at St. James Church. |
| | 2.00 | Young Farmers Walk. Stansteadbury Farm (Guernsey Herd) |
| | 7.30 | Camp Fire and Village 'Sing Along', Atkins Nursery. The Crownsmen. TICKET ADMISSION |
| Sunday 10 July | 10.30 | Scout & Guide 2nd Day, Atkins Nursery. |
| | 2.30 | Open Gardens Afternoon. 10p Entry, Hill House, Cappell Lane. Abbotts House, Roydon Road. Other Gardens will be open. Till 5.30. |
| Monday 11 July | 10.00 | 'Open School & Coffee Morning' at Amwell View School. Staff & Children will welcome visitors. |
| Monday 11 July | 7.30 | Darts Tournament - Finals at Village Club, High Street. Heats at Dart Centres. |
| Tuesday 12 July | 10.45 | Inter School Sports & Football at St. Margaretsbury Ground. St. Andrew's; John Baptist; Amwell View Schools. |
| | 7.30 | Snooker Exhibition Match at the Village Club. Ticket admission. |

A Brief Compilation of the History of the Two Villages

From the vantage point on the Chalk Bridge over the River Lee, the boundaries of the two Parishes meet; the river flowing below North to South; the road crossing the bridge East to West, might be seen at the present time as forming a Cross on which the villages of Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets are being crucified under the weight of the huge Inter Continental Freight Carriers, which stream day and night through the villages.

Looking East along the length of the High Street, the ancient Grammar School – now the Clock House, is seen, here the road divides sharply North and South.

The North branch Cappell Lane, a subsidiary road, leads to the Free Church, and the Parish Church, on to Easneye and Ware.

The main road branching sharply to the South continues past the Vicarage, turning again sharply Eastwards, rising steeply up Kitten or Cats Hill – the scene of many tragic motor incidents over the past years; a lane at the bottom of Cats Hill forks left to the ancient villages of Hunsdon and Widford.

The Netherfield House is passed on the right towards the top of the hill, and the road proceeds towards Harlow and Sawbridgeworth.

Returning to the bridge over the river, the road crosses the London to Hertford railway, proceeding towards the West via Hertford.

The River Lee flows from its source near Luton, looping and turning many times, in its progress to the River Thames, near Wapping in East London.

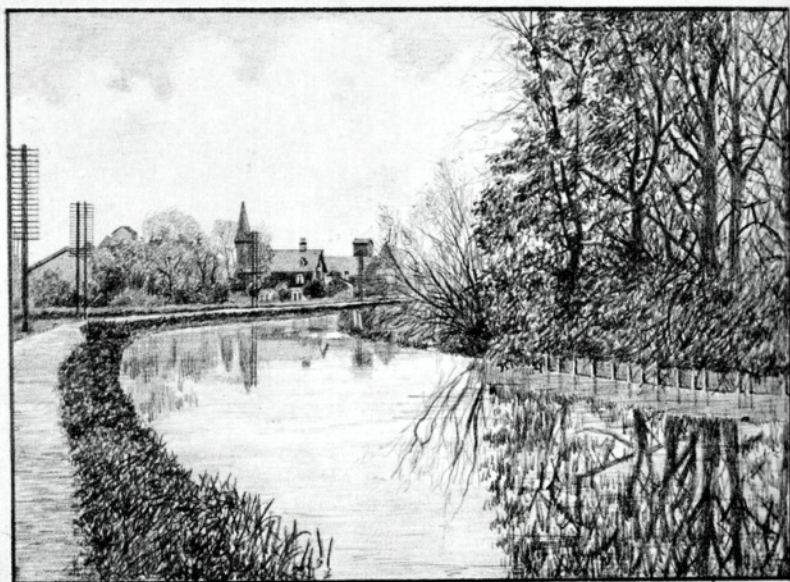
The River Lee has been of some major importance in the history of England, providing one of the ways in which invading tribes have in the long past penetrated into the country, the river has also been the means of transport and the development of trade into the country, as far as Hertford and Ware, and the smaller villages on route.

On a day, seeing a figure up along the river bank, with rod and line, one might in the mind's eye imagine such a figure in a succession of figures in a changed garb or dress, illustrating the changes that have happened during the centuries of time, within the scene of this river;

‘the lost to light ghosts grey-mailed
as you see the grey river mist
Holds shapes on yonder bank’.

For where rivers flow, and the surrounding hills; well wooded, standing over chalk and gravel . . . men were wont to make their habitation.

Long before Queen Boadicea fought bravely, but unsuccessfully against the Roman invasion; indeed at a time when the great Hebrew patriarch Abraham was leading his people from their homeland, to occupy the Land of Canaan or Palestine, men from the eastern Mediterranean – Phoenicians came to this small group of off-shore islands of the great Euro-Asian Continent in search of new lands.



Four Loe. Stanstead Abbots.

W. Smith 52. 1. 32.

Later Celtic tribes from eastern and central Europe came, settling in the eastern and southern parts of Britain, subduing the people and developing the primitive farming methods.

The Roman occupation after 43AD; and lasting 400 years brought further improvements in farming, road building, and Roman culture permeated into the already mixed blood and culture of the now native peoples, inter marriage over 4 centuries inevitably brought changes.

The downfall of the Roman Empire, and the forced retreat from this island outpost, left the people of Britain exposed to the raids of the barbaric tribes of the Angles and the tall fair men from the Teutonic parts of northern Europe.

The Britons unable to defend their territory; many being forced into the West Country, many were enslaved, the invasion once again bringing a further admixture of blood and culture into the people of Britain.

Meanwhile the influence of the Christian religion had taken a somewhat precarious hold on the predominantly Celtic kingdom, but a much more vigorous stand against the paganism of the Saxons began when St. Augustine, sent by the Pope, became the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 567AD.

Then came another invasion by the ferocious Danes, who penetrated deep into the country, the River Lee being a ready means of encroachment for the small ships; and large areas of England were overrun.

The young king Alfred, in spite of his spirited but weak stand against the Danes was forced into the West Country.

Young Alfred certainly allowed the cakes to burn, but he did not 'burn his boats', for he came back and soundly defeated the Danish King Guthrum.

Alfred spared Guthrum's life, who was so overcome at being spared, was baptised, and became a Christian; the two kings agreed on a rough division of the kingdom, but a fresh threat by dissident Danes forced Alfred to march on and capture London; and a more clearly defined boundary was fixed; the Eastern boundary of Alfred's kingdom being the River Lee and Watling Street.

We have noted how over the centuries an admixture of races and cultures had taken place, which has undoubtedly produced characteristics with some predominant features, and it cannot be denied that this admixture of the past centuries has produced men and women whose achievements are unsurpassed; great seamen, explorers, adventurous missionaries, thinkers, poets, second to none in the history of mankind.

The two villages of Stansted Abbot and Stansted Dele; using their ancient names, have also had their part in the great drama of English life.

How the name Stansted originated is still a matter of debate; it may have some relevance to the stone and gravel, the latter of which there is a super-abundance; does it have some relation to the Stone House, in which the Saxon Lord lived, in the vicinity?

It has been suggested that the name was derived from the Roman Way, Stane Street, part of the Vicinal Way which went by way of Sawbridgeworth to Bishops Stortford.

There is evidence that Stansted Abbot was at one time important enough to have had a Reeve, and this would give the Status of a Borough, this it would suppose because of the trade by River traffic from the Thames up to Ware and Hertford, and

also along the Stort to Bishops Stortford.

After William I (the Conqueror) had become King of England, he deputed Officers of his army to go into every County, to towns and villages, there to interrogate the local Priest and four men, to assess the worth of the land.

It is recorded that one named Ranulph was possessed of the Vill, of Stansted Abbot receiving 23 shillings per annum; the Manor thence came into possession of the de Wauncey family and remained in their possession, this in the time of William II (Rufus) and Henry I; about 1153 AD.

Roger de Wauncey, Lord of the Manor gave the Church of Stansted Abbot – presumably a Church stood on the site of the Old Church of St. James' over the brow of the Cat's Hill – to the Prior of Merton in Surrey, who was to offer prayers for the de Wauncey family; this was about 1100 AD.

The prerogative of the Manor came into the possession of Michael de Wauncey, in the time of King Henry I. Michael sold half of the Manor to the Monks of Waltham Abbey, for a yearly rental of twelve pounds.

He sold the remaining half to Henry I; Henry seems to have been quite accommodating, for it is recorded that he bought the half for 240 Pounds (a considerable sum in relation to today), this enabled Michael de Wauncey to repay a debt to one Bruno, a Jew.

Henry I gave the half he bought, to the Monks of Waltham Abbey, who were now possessed of the Manor; the gift also included the Bridge of Theale – the bridge over the River Lee that linked St. Margarets, then known as Stansted Dele, to Stansted Abbot.

Theale seems to have been derived from the Roman word for Tile and, it is thought that the Romans built a bridge across the Lee at this point, where once was a ford.

Four hundred eventful years followed to the time of Henry VIII. Much had happened, the Black Death had decimated half the population of England – and there is a suggestion, that this may be the reason there are no houses in the vicinity of Stansteadbury, since cottages were burned down where there had been cases of the plague.

Henry VIII succeeded his father Henry Tudor, victor of the War of the Roses; Henry VIII an impetuous and pleasure loving king, soon came into conflict with the Pope of Rome, for, apart from his personal interests, Henry was in line with the long struggle of previous kings of England, in their hatred of the Papal interference.

Henry VIII finally broke with Rome, and declared himself Supreme Head of the Church of England in 1534. He was in need of money, and the suppression of the rich Monasteries and Religious Houses soon followed.

At the time of the Dissolution, the Manor of Stansted Abbot was leased to one John Lodes of London, at a yearly rental of 25 Pounds, Six Shillings and Eight Pence.

The Manor was siezed by the Crown and conveyed to a Philip Paris, at a nominal rent of 4 Shillings and 4 Pence per annum, the Manor being a grant of Henry VIII.

Henry's daughter Mary – (Later Queen of England) – daughter by Catherine of Aragon, was Patron of the Church of Stansted Abbot for several years, the Manor however passed from Philip Paris, to Edward Baeshe of Stansted Abbot; Edward Baeshe was General Surveyor of Victuals for the Royal Navy of the time ... he

acquired considerable wealth.

Edward Baeshe married Jane, daughter of Sir Ralph Sadlier of Standon, by whom he had two sons, Ralph and William. Ralph inherited the Manor on the death of Edward in 1587.

Elizabeth I had succeeded to the throne in 1558, whilst Edward Baeshe was still Lord of the Manor, and living at Stanstedburye; Baeshe being an important officer serving the Crown, would doubtless have been known to her Majesty personally.

Queen Elizabeth I, during her reign, made what are known as 'progresses' to many parts of the country, staying at the Houses of the Nobility and the landed gentry.

Recent research (and acknowledgements are made) indicates that Queen Elizabeth I stayed at the home of Edward Baeshe, at Stanstedburye, for several days in 1571; 1576, and for two days in 1578.

During the stay in 1571, September 17th to 22nd, it appears there were several meetings of the Privy Council, attended by her chief Officers of State, with her Chief Minister the Lord Burghley.

On a 'Progress' Queen Elizabeth would be accompanied by a very large retinue, upwards of perhaps 500 persons of varying degrees, and also a considerable amount of furniture, and apparelling; wardrobes, etc.

Public records which have been corroborated in the Public Records Office, give costs and other details for making ready for Her Highness's visit to Stanstedburye perhaps one example from the Cofferers Accounts 1571 18th September Tuesday at Stansted 130 Pounds 17 Shillings, this for just one day.

The Cofferer was the Royal Household cashier, the accounts were kept entirely in Latin.

The Queen was fond of hunting and watching the hunt, and in those times the countryside round about Stansted Abbot would have been well wooded and plenty of deer would be readily available for the royal hunt.

Edward Baeshe died in 1587, and was succeeded by his son Ralph, there is some question about whether Edward or Ralph built the North Chapel which is part of the Old Church of St. James', but the Chapel was built in 1577 AD, being added to the existing building, which had stood there for over 100 hundred years, on the site of an older Church.

Ralph Baeshe died in 1598 and his son Edward who was Knighted, inherited the Manor, this Sir Edward died in 1653 but had no issue, and the Manor passed to his cousin another Ralph Baeshe.

Sir Edward made several benefactions to the village; he had built, the Alms Houses, which stand at the bottom of Cat's Hill; they were for six poor women of good character, and of the Parish of Stansted Abbot. There were apparently, some quite strict conditions laid down before an applicant was accepted.

Sir Edward had built, a brick house for the local priest, who was required to pay a nominal rent of One Shilling per annum; also a cottage was built for the Parish Clerk.

Another benefaction was that of Twenty Pounds per annum for a Master to teach a Free Grammar School, the School building already in existence; these benefactions were made during the reign of Charles I about 1636.

Sir Ralph Baeshe, who succeeded his cousin, was a keen Royalist, and depleted the estate in defence of that cause; his son, another Edward, Kt. became so impoverished that he was forced to sell the Manor and in 1676 it was sold to Edmund Fielde.

Thus during the 150 years or so that the Manor had been in the possession of the Baeshe family; the war with Spain had ended with the defeat of the Armada by Francis Drake; Shakespeare, Marlowe, Bacon, Ben Jonson, and others had added their immortal works to the annals of the English people, thus illustrating the emergence of the character of the English, owing not a little to that ancient background and mixture of races.

Not least in this period being, that Religious life had been enhanced, by the translations of the Authorised Version of the Bible, but there were still factions particularly about freedom of worship, and men were seeking new places in the New England in North America; the Pilgrim Fathers gathered men from the Fenlands and from the eastern parts of the country and who knows if there were not one or two from these parts.

In 1682 Thomas Fielde became Patron of the Church from Sir Edward Baeshe, whose monument is of great interest on the wall of the North Chapel, which it dominates.

Sir Edward's effigy faces that of his wife; on a lower level, his two sons kneeling — now alas minus their heads — beside, is Sir Ralph in armour, below is the rhyming eulogy, which includes the family motto 'Bould in God'.

The site on which the Church of St. James stands is probably that of an ancient Saxon place of worship, the site is thought to have been a Roman outpost, because of its commanding position for observation of the Lee Valley, stretching away towards London.

The tower of the Church with its circular abutment that encloses a turret stairway, is said to have been designed by Robert Stowell, Master Mason of Westminster Abbey; the tower is surmounted by what is known as the Hertfordshire Spike.

Inside having passed through the 15th century Porch, the uneven rubble faced walls are whitened, and the place is light and airy; the Old Oaken tie-beams, and the king-post stand out against the whitened ceiling.

Looking down the 12th century Nave the church takes on a darker aspect; the dark wood of the Nave Box Pews, probably early 19th century, and about the centre of the church, the 3 Tier Pulpit; what was the sounding board that once hung above the pulpit, is now to be seen as the door in the partition beneath the Bell tower, leading to the West Door.

There are 3 Bells, a 30½" diameter treble, of about 1790 vintage, a 2nd 32½" diameter, and a tenor 36" diameter: these latter are 17th century; the tenor Bell bears the name of Robert Oldfield in full, he was a Hertfordshire man, and the Bell is listed for preservation.

The windows have little to recommend them artistically, but there are two fragments of Elizabethan glass in the two windows in the North Chapel, in one of which is a small figure not unlike the original Punch; Til Eulenspiegel!

Several hatchments are of interest; of the Booth family, and several brass memorials, those that were in the Nave floor, and in front of the Chancel have been badly eroded, large portions have long ago disappeared.

The Bevington Churchwarden Organ, late 19th century, is still in good playing order, it is of small compass, single manual, and is pumped by hand lever, it was renovated in the 1960's.

Music would originally have been played on instruments such as Viols, and small

wind instruments, the musicians sitting in a gallery situated in the Bell tower above the West Door. The acoustics of the Church is very good; the monks of long ago must surely have enjoyed singing the Liturgy there.

Recently two 17th high backed twisted rail chairs were stolen from the Church Sanctuary, they have not been recovered.

The Church was declared Pastorally Redundant in October 1975, and is now the responsibility of the St. Albans Diocesan Authority; the Churchyard remains in the hands of the Parochial Church Council of Stanstead Abbots, and responsible for the maintenance of the Burial Ground which is still in use.

The Old Manor House of Stansteadburye standing on the same eminence, and adjacent to the Church has been in the possession of the Trower family for the past 150 years, Captain Spencer Trower came into possession in the early 19th century; Patronage of the Church remained in the Fielde family until 1824, having possessed it in 1676 AD.

In the Churchwardens & Overseers of the Poor Account Book for 1678, an interesting entry is recorded:-
(the writing is in old English)

'At a public Vestry on the 19th day of September, Anno Domini 1678 it was agreed as follows.

Item. That the officers of the Parish shall take all care possible for the regulating and reforming the right practices of men in the parish especially on the Lord's Day, and for that purpose if they see occasion shall procure a warrant from the Magistrate which shall be allowed out of their accounts by the parish.

Item. That all the Alms people & pensioners in the parish shall receive they'r alms at the Church after Sermon, to encourage to a reverence of Religion.

Item. It was then agreed that there shall be allowed out of the Accounts and Rates of the Overseers of the poor for the further encouragement of people to the practice of Religion and morality the sum of 20 Shillings yearly to buy bread to be brought weekly to Church for the poor at the discretion of the Minister & Officers of the Parish to be distributed to such as shall frequent the Church and that Ten Shillings more be payd by the Minister yearly if it shall have good effect given under our hands.

Ben Wood Minister, Will Grave, Tho Fielde and others.'

The plight of the poor was appalling; the Civil War had torn the country apart, Puritans & Catholics were at each others throats, it was in 1678 that the unscrupulous Titus Oates, claimed he had discovered a Catholic Plot to murder Charles II.

A further attempt on the King's life was made in 1683 – The Rye House Plot – The Isle of Rye, as it was known, was in the Manor of Stansted Abbots; it is in fact the Parish of Stanstead Abbots, Sir Edward Baeshe sold the Manor of Stansted Abbot together with the Manor of Rye to Edmund Fielde in 1676.

Sir Thomas Fielde – whose name is to be found in the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor in the Parish Accounts Book of the time – owned farm land in the Rye House area; one of his tenants was a man named Rumbold or Rumboll, whose name also appears in the Account in 1680, his signature, with others as Officers of the Parish certifying the accounts.

It is recorded that a man named Rumbold or Rumboll, a tenant of Sir Thomas Fielde, was involved in the Rye House Plot; it seems he was a quarrelsome type, having made threats of violence towards Sir Thomas; Rumbold's name does not appear among the Officers of the Parish after 1681.

Rye House is said to have been used by the Overseers of the Poor of Stansted Abbot as a Workhouse, for many years, before the passing of the Poor Law Act in 1834.

From the records in the Account Book from 1663 onwards, the Churchwardens and the Overseers of the Poor, were very much occupied in dealing with poor people; widows and young children, vagrants and the homeless.

In 1714 a process was issued out of the Archdeacons Court held at Ware requiring the Churchwardens as the facsimile below, requires.

Whereas a process has been issued out
of the Archdeacons Court held at Ware
requiring the Churchwardens of this
parish to provide plate & linnen
for the Communion table & other things
wanting in the church: And we are
of opinion if a rate of ~~the~~ six pence
in the pound will be necessary for
providing such plate, linnen & other
things, we do therefore order, at
a public vestry held this first day
of September 1714 of a rate of
six pence in the pound be forth-
with made accordingly

Edm. Fielde
Hm. Nelson
John Dowling
Wm. Clarke
William Fritham
John Traykane
Mich. Poyser

It was about the 1830's that Captain Spencer Trower owned the old Manor House, Stansteadbury, where Queen Elizabeth stayed on three occasions at the end of the 16th century; strangely there appears to be no local records of the visits; that her Majesty did stay here has been established. It was here that Captain Trower's family were born and lived, Miss Charlotte Trower became a well known authority as a Botanist, she wrote what became a text book on British Brambles, her gift as a flower painter proved to be of exquisite value in the botanical field, her elder sister Alice was a very talented landscape painter.

Their mother was from the Guernsey family of the Gosselins, so perhaps it is not surprising that their brother Spencer had a celebrated herd of Guernsey cattle which were the first Guernsey's to be bred in England – they were brought here in 1880; the herd was continued by his two sisters after his death, and the herd is still proving a success, having produced several champion Dairy Cows; having passed through the hands of the late Sir William Trower, they are now in the care of his son Anthony, who farms the Stansteadbury land.

The Manor was once in the hands of the monks of Waltham Abbey; and below, in the cellars of the house there was evidence of a secret chapel having been in use, for after the Dissolution of the Monasteries; and in later times, Roman Catholics received no mercy from those, who would have no Popish celebrations; the evidences were in the form of a Piscina – a bowl shaped niche in the wall containing water for the Priest to wash his hands before celebrating the Mass, and a recess for an altar.

In the grounds of the Manor House there were some fine examples of Elm and Cedars of Lebanon, one of the Cedars is still standing, there were also some Chestnut trees, and close to the borders of the Church, one of the tallest Chestnut trees in England grew to the height of 112 feet, with a girth of 16 feet, this tree unfortunately had to be felled in 1966, an ancient moat now covered, was served by a spring which gave from 3 to 4 thousand gallons a day, this too has gone.

In the Church of St. James there is a large marble memorial to Sir Felix Booth, who was Knighted by William IV, bestowed for fitting out at his own expense an expedition to discover the North West Passage into the Arctic ocean in 1829. The Magnetic Pole was discovered off the northern most part of Canada, now named Boothia Felix.

The Booth family originally came from Cheshire and settled in London, founding the Booth Gin Company.

Charles Booth, nephew of Sir Felix, built the Netherfield House, which was his home; the house came into the Prior family by marriage, and the farmland was for many years farmed by Miss Alice Prior; a most energetic and forthright character, she died in the 1950's and bequeathed Netherfield House to the Salvation Army; by which organisation it is now run as a Home for retired men.

It is known that the Booth family had a small distillery in Stanstead Abbots; it is said to have been situated in a building at the rear of the large house in Stanstead Abbots High Street, known as Stanstead Hall; this house is mid 18th century; the front entrance; has a stone stairway leading up to an impressive Ionic doorway. At the West side of the house is a curious circular stairway and turret with an embattled parapet, like a fortified house.

It is not known if a member of the Booth family occupied the house in Stanstead Abbots High Street, but there was a Philip Booth of Stanstead Abbots, whose grandson

Sir Williamson Booth; was born in Stanstead Abbots in 1810 AD and brother Charles born in 1812, who made his home at Netherfield House.

The Farmland of Netherfield is now in the hands of Lt. Col. Henry Prior, of Highfields, who has built up a Champion herd of Charolais cattle that are from the Dordogne in France, these were the first of their kind to be allowed into England, permission to do so was given to Col. Prior in 1961.

Thus there are in Stanstead Abbots two Champion herds of cattle; the first Guernsey Dairy; bred in England (1880) and the latest herd of Beef producing Charolais (1961) – photograph plates of Champions from both herds, are shown in this booklet.

In 1866 Thomas Fowell Buxton bought the Manor and built a large residence in the densely wooded park formerly known as Isneye.

Thomas Fowell Buxton was the second son of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, who became a partner in the Brewery firm of Hanbury, Truman, early in the 19th century.

Sir Thomas became a Member of Parliament, keenly interested in the Poor Law, in the anti-slavery movement, and also in Prison reform, he was a deeply religious man, a member of the Anglican Church, but he was closely associated with the Quakers, the Society of Friends.

Sir Thomas's strenuous efforts in Parliament together with William Wilberforce, came to final victory with the passing of the Act of Total Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Empire.

A monument to Sir Thomas stands in Westminster Abbey, close to that of William Wilberforce.

The residence at Easneye was occupied by Thomas Fowell Buxton and his family in 1869, an interesting letter written by Hannah Lady Buxton to her grandson John Henry about their new home:-

‘my desires and hopes concerning it –
that it may ever be inhabited by faithful
servants of God in Christ Jesus
. . . . and this place be a fountain of
blessing to the Church and to the World.’

The house at Easneye is now the All Nations Christian College, where men and women are trained for service in the Church throughout the world!

Thomas Fowell Buxton gave the site on which a new school was built in 1869, public subscription raising £2,000 for its construction.

The School was in use for just over 100 years, when in 1969, plans for a new school were finally approved after several years of discussion; the old building being vacated for the new premises in 1971–2; which has proved to be inadequate for the school population, and the Old School building has had to be brought back into use.

The site given by Thomas Fowell Buxton is not far from the ancient Grammar School, for which Sir Edward Baeshe provided a £20 per annum stipend, for a Master to teach a Free Grammar School.

The old Grammar School, now known as the Clock House is thought to have been built during the period 1440–50 AD.

The house has played many parts in the life of the Village during its long history; Grammar School, a general meeting place, no doubt used by the Parish Officers, and



Netherfield Havoc



Cheerful Rose 9th

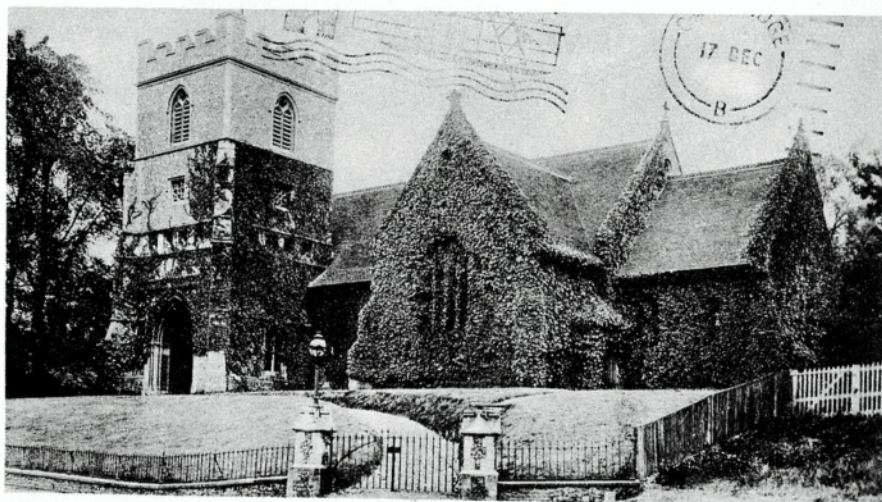
the Overseers of the Poor; evidences of a pulpit, point to its use as a Chapel, other uses are in the 'lost to light time'.

Inside, access to the picturesque Turret, surmounted by a square shaped cupola, is via a uniquely constructed door of ancient origin — the door is listed for preservation — as is the house.

Parts of the old stairway to the turret are still in existence, as are the pulleys to the Bell chamber, where there is an old striking clock made by a Hertfordshire man.

The house is now a private dwelling, the large room (school, meeting place, Chapel) has been expertly transformed, by the late John Burt Esq., Glass Merchant and factor; and Churchwarden from 1952–1962.

Thomas Fowell Buxton obtained Ecclesiastical permission to build a new Church in Stanstead Abbots, and a site was chosen on rising ground in Cappell Lane, once known as Park Lane: leading towards Easneve.



The new Church St. Andrew

The new Church St. Andrew, was consecrated in 1881, it was built under the direction of A. Waterhouse, the architect who built the residence at Easneye.

The Ecclesiastical Rites were removed from the old Church of St. James in 1882. The new Parish Church of St. Andrew can hardly be compared with the Old Church of St. James, historically nor architecturally, but there is a simple dignity in its comparative plainness.

It is of traditional shape in the form of a Cross, with the tower at the base of the cross, the interior walls are Red Brick, the windows are plain glass, diamond shaped in fluted lead, framed by stone surrounds and supports, recessed in the walls.

There is however, a fine Hammer Beam support to the roof, built by local craftsmen, the Organ built by Nicholas Ingram was installed in the alcove in the Chancel in 1923. In a recent re-ordering of the Chancel, and the transepts, the Organ was restored taken from the alcove and re-built in the South Transept; a new Swell mechanism replaced the old, and an additional set of pipes were installed, it is a two manual pipe organ with tracker action.

Four Bells were installed and dedicated in 1905, the bells are fixed, the hammers being pulled by ropes in the lower chamber in the Tower, where the mechanism for the single-faced striking clock is installed; the clock was made by T. M. Hartley of Reading; it was given by the Stanstead Abbots Parish Council, as a memorial to Villagers who died in the two World Wars, and placed in position in 1948-9.

The outside walls of broken-flint facing, presents a false aspect of antiquity, for the Church will not reach its centenary until 1981; it is thought that the flints came from an old Hertford Gaol demolished in the late 19th century.

The recent re-ordering of the Chancel, allowed the Communion Table which stood under the East Window, to be placed in the centre of the Chancel; the Communion rails removed from the Sanctuary Step, and rails made by members of the Church, were arranged on three sides around the Table, which stands upon a Carpet, subscribed for by members of the Church and Parishioners, as a memorial to Mrs. Joan Stephens, who died in 1973, wife of the present Vicar, Ronald Stephens.

The Free Church Chapel in Cappell Lane was built in 1810, it is owned by the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection; the Chapel has been enlarged and added to, having suffered partial demolition by a landslide about 1906.

It is interesting to note that the Chapel was built midway between the Battle of Trafalgar 1805 when Napoleon of France, sought to invade England, and his final defeat, by Wellington in 1815 at Waterloo.

Standing on the junction of the High Street and Cappell Lane is the old Inn, The Red Lion, built in 1563; untold quantities of liquor, from the many malting houses in the area, must have been consumed during its existence, it is paired off with its overhanging gables, by the ancient house next to it; both are listed buildings, and it is hoped that the heavy traffic passing so closely will not cause irreparable damage, to these historic buildings.

Along the Roydon Road stands, the Victorian Mill, where once the Mill Stream turned the great pinions in the millhouse, the stream running beneath the roadway, turning down towards the River Lee, past where the old wharf once dealt with the grain for the Malt Houses, that stood behind the Abbots House some distance away. The Mill is now a factory.

About halfway between the Mill and Abbots House is a tall wooden structure that once housed the old Fire Appliance, manned by volunteers, some of whom are still around to tell the tale of the fire at Little Briggens Farm; and manhandling the old appliance there. The fire started in the stables and much of the farm buildings were destroyed; the fire was subdued just as the water in the pond gave out; fortunately the Farm House was not involved — this happened about 1920. Marks of the fire are still visible on part of the barn which was saved.

Stanstead Abbots has been the source from where many millions of tons of sand and gravel has been dug, for building and road construction, and where once it lay below ground, there are now large lakes, on which may be seen a wide variety of water fowl, both indigent and migrant species; and the water filled sandpits, provide rewarding haunts for Bird Watching.

The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority now developing the Lee Valley throughout its length, for leisure and a sporting activities, plans the area adjacent to the River here, as a Marine and Boating centre.

The Scout Headquarters in Marsh Lane must be worthy of mention, for it took 40

years of effort, and saving, that one day the Scout Group might have its own meeting place, it does now belong to the Group, protected by the Scout Association.

The Guide Company share its use, and is of great value to the benefit of young people in the village, who belong to these units.

The Parish Hall in the village, was built in 1911 by the descendents of Thomas Fowell Buxton and his wife Rachel, as a memorial to them; alongside the site that Thomas gave for the School in 1869.

The Hall has served the village community as a meeting place for many varied purposes, and is in use daily throughout the year, as Welfare Clinic; Play Groups; Badminton; Judo training; and social functions; it is a Charitable Trust and run by a management Committee.

The Village Club in the High Street dates back to the 1870's, and this also serves the needs of the village, as a Social Club, and meeting place for a number of local organisations.

The Village High Street has been under flood water many times, a local record in 1900 Stanstead flooded ... 58½ hours continuous rain, heavy flood 1903, again in March 1914 ... 1916 ... again in December 1916, 1919 heavy flood, periodic flooding of streets and homes seemed almost a way of life, 1947; 1958; 1968; brought flooding in streets and homes, homes flooded in some cases up to 4 feet.

Flood alleviation virtually through the whole length of the River, it is hoped, will remove the danger; unless a catastrophic rainfall occurs.

Considerable development in housing, both Council and Private, housing provision for elderly people has been a prominent feature of Council House building, with a small Community Centre in the Chapelfields Estate; a Warden is also in permanent residence, and all elderly peoples Flats are connected to the Wardens residence by signal in case of emergency.

In the 1860's the population of Stanstead Abbots was about 1,000, at this present, it is about 2,000, having had a high influx during the past 30 years, this illustrated by the increase in the school population which has grown, as compared with many other areas where there are fewer children having to be catered for, by Education Authorities.

Local government at all levels enters into so much of daily affairs for everybody, that it will be of interest to note the inception of a Statutory Body in the administrations of the public institutions of the village.

It has already been noted how the Lord of the Manor together with the officers of the Church carried out obligations of a civil nature in trying to maintain the poor at a subsistence level by levying a Poor Rate, in the 14th century there were attempts to make vagrancy a crime, but the vast numbers of poor made this unworkable.

Thus in 1894 the Local Government Act (which is commented about elsewhere) brought the Parish Meetings into an official status, the first Parish Council in Stanstead Abbots, was instituted in June 1895, and comprised nine Councillors:- William Miller; Joseph Lyndsell; Alfred Blackaby; Joseph Pearce; Nathaniel Davies; Spencer Trower; Thomas Fowell Buxton; ... Walsingham; Fred Bryant, it seems that Joseph Pearce was the first Chairman.

It is probable that they had very quickly to provide help during the winter of 1895, when a cold hard winter, caused the River Lee to freeze completely over, there was much privation in the country.

Some relief perhaps came in the way of an Ox Roasting on the frozen surface of the River, there are those amongst us still who remember the fun, the slipping and sliding about on the ice whilst the Ox was roasting.

There was also a Billy (Graham) Richardson a Cornet playing Evangelist, who vied with the local clergy for the souls of the faithful; he would gather a crowd on the railway side of the bridge, and there play the Cornet and sing, and preach the Word, the children enjoyed the singing sessions.

A periodic diversion were the elections, the children shouting election slogans for such eminent Conservative candidates as Cecil Rhodes; parliamentary candidate for this area, the man who gave his name to Rhodesia.

A weekly diversion during the summer months were the excursions by horse-drawn Brakes from London, who caused profound deliberations in the Council chambers, because of the annoyance, by reason of their stopping at the Pied Bull and other hostelrys in the village; this did not apparently deter the children running in the races organised by the visitors.

From a dilapidated old note book kept by a well known personality – now departed this life – some entries going back to 1880 notes of floods names of dozens of people who died but in 30 years not a single whisper of anyone being born!

Several old time Receipts (Recipes) one of which must be quoted – for all one knows may have been quite effective one way of the other!!

A Receipt for Colic, take:-

1 Ounce of Sweet Nitre; 1 Ounce of oil of Peppermint;

1 Ounce of Laudanum;

Mix all these into a Quartern of Gin

give it to the Horse in one drink

it will give ease in 20 minutes!!

There is the story told by one of the old farm workers, of how in 1930 he led two full grown Bulls from St. Margarets to Stansteadbury up Cat's Hill, followed by another man leading two females (they must have been cows) and this at midnight to avoid the traffic??

The mystery of Elephant Lane has still to be solved, Netherfield Lane is of course more elegant, but it is the old names of things and places that remind us of the heritage from the past, maybe not all is worth while trying to preserve but we should not fall too readily into the trap, that is sowing the seeds of death for the environment, that every little pocket of land must be 'tidied up' by putting a couple of odd looking houses on it of course places must be kept free from litter but it may not be generally known that for every tree that dies or is felled, in order to keep the countryside alive and beautiful for every tree that goes, 9 trees must be planted; or else the country will be denuded in a very short time, in Hertfordshire which at the present looks good, only ONE tree for ONE is being planted, no apology is made for putting in this note, for it is hoped that many who enjoy driving out into the countryside will somehow help to get the right ratio put into effect particularly in this Jubilee Year, and especially because they may read this short survey, about two villages through which they may occasionally pass.

It would be more than gratifying to be able to make mention of all those colourful characters that still make up the life of the village, not all of course, quite so eccentric as old Archie Miller, whose rehearsal for his interment, is shown in one of the pictures



.... 'it pinches a bit at the sides! but I'm no bigger'n rabbit when I'm stripped!'.... he kept some strange things in his cottage, the double head of a double headed calf, stuffed birds, and a glass pistol over his bed, he was England's Champion Otter catcher, it is just 40 years since the picture was taken when he was 69.

Of those from the villages who died in the two devastating World Wars, we can say little, except that as each year we remember them, so may the determination grow, to see that the utmost is done to prevent such things happening again.

Stanstead St. Margarets one of the smallest parishes in East Hertfordshire, bounded on three sides by the parish of Gt. Amwell, its eastern border is the River Lee, which is also the western boundary of Stanstead Abbots.

The name Stansted seems to have been used when speaking of either of the two villages, but the distinctions came in the early feudal times, Stanstead Abbot, and for this western side of the river Stansted Dele or Thele, this latter being changed again to St. Margarets, thus it is now Stanstead St. Margarets.

The Romans are said to have built a bridge over the river, using Tiles, for its construction, calling it Pons Tegula, it being an important crossing in their campaign and operations during the occupation.



From early records it seems that the Lords of the Manor, owned parcels of land on either side of the river, and this fact causes some confusion, when attempting to place events and persons in their proper context.

Estates and property are constantly changing ownership, for very obvious reasons; William I (the Conqueror) no doubt had this in mind when he charged his Officers to carry out a survey of lands and property, after his accession in 1066 AD.

To trace every change is not within the compass of this brief historic survey but coming to the 14th century the record shows that a William de Goldyngton came into possession of the Manor of Stansted Dele.

On taking ownership he found the Church here impoverished, and unable to provide properly for a minister or priest. Sir William obtained a licence from the king Edward II, to install a Custos, a Chaplain Custodian, with several other chaplains, these were primarily to 'sing prayers daily' on behalf of the good Knight himself, for his wife Margaret, their family, together with prayers for the faithful departed.

Of the latter there were very many, for the Black Death was carrying off nearly half the entire population, mostly in the larger towns; but the effect was felt in the countryside as well.

Conflicts in the political sphere; quarrels concerning the Royal succession, were leading to the troubles, that brought about the 100 years War.

The Church here in St. Margarets had proceeded as a Collegiate Church, until in the 1400's the then Bishop of London, obtained a Licence from the King – Henry VI to dissolve this College of Chaplains.

This Bishop had been doing this in other places where the revenues had improved, and by dissolving the religious house, had thereby added to his own endowment, ostensibly to the Prior of the Blessed Mary of Elsing Spittle, London.

At the time of the Dissolution of Monasteries and Religious Houses about 1536 by Henry VIII, who then conveyed Manorial rights to whomsoever he would, the possessor of the Manorial rights of Stansted Thele or Dele is somewhat confused in the records; one Nicholas Baeshe resided in the Manor, but the Lord of the Manor appears to have been a member of the Ogard family.

The Church here had now become known as Margarets Church, supposedly after the wife of Sir William Goldyngton.

The Chantry was dedicated to St. Margaret of Antioch, Virgin and Martyr; she is said to have suffered martyrdom at Antioch in Pisidia, in Asia Minor, a place near the inland lakes in Central Turkey.

St. Margaret was a favourite saint with women in the middle ages, being specially invoked against the pains of childbirth.

The Church building as now, is but part of a larger building of the Collegiate days.

The entrance to the Church is by a 14th century doorway in the South wall, a blocked up doorway is passed near the east end of the wall.

The entrance opens into the Church beneath a Gallery; looking down the Nave towards the East Window there is a sense of intimate worship, there is a completeness; there is no intrusion into the approach to the Sanctuary.

The Nave is the oldest part of the Church, probably of Norman origin; the large East Window sheds light into the Chancel, and it can be seen that the stone frame has had much restoration work during its long life.

The Nave Roof is supported by some 15th century trusses and King Posts, and Tie Beams.

Niches in the walls are 14th century, as are the supports to the sills – the grotesque heads are typical of medieval decoration.

The other recesses – Piscina's are for the Priestly ablutions, when celebrating Holy Communion, and are of similar date.

In the floor of the Chancel is the engraved Cresstt family memorial stone –

anyone looking for some fascinating and unusual names for christening must surely find inspiration here.

The stairway to the Gallery has on its side wall a carved decorated Cross, which may indicate the position of a tomb of one of the custodians of the old Collegiate Church.

In the Gallery is a Chamber Organ, of 18th century vintage; it was converted in Victorian times for Barrel playing, some of the Barrels are still in keeping of the Church, in the 1960's an Electric Organ was installed, the Console being placed in a Box Pew below the Pulpit.

A Single Bell is housed in the Georgian Bell Cupola on the roof; the Bell is by John Bryant.

The Church has recently been cleaned and re-decorated, and presents a delightful appearance, conducive to modern forms of worship, and also for quiet meditation.

The memorials in the Church, as well as the deposited records give important clues about those who lived in the Manor.

A memorial to Joanna Smith, wife of George Smith Esq, who was Lord of the Manor here, he came as an Equerry to King James VI of Scotland, on his becoming James I of England in succession to Queen Elizabeth I, in 1603.

The estate was passed on through several successive descendents by George Smith leaving much of the estate to a nephew, and the estate remained in the family for nearly 200 years.

The Estate was eventually sold to John Mackay a tallow chandler of London, he was buried in the Chancel.

It appears that his residence as Lord of the Manor was in a Mansion which stood on the east side of Hoddesdon Road, about 150–200 yards south of the Church, in the vicinity of what is now the Clock House.

The Manor House, Mansion which was surrounded by a Moat, was demolished about 1824, but the Stable Block was converted at a later date into a residence called the Clock House above.

From the records — of the Hamlet of St. Margarets, as the Manor is called — in the Rate Assessment papers of the 1700 and 1800's, there were but few houses of any rateable value, rates were about 4 shillings in the pound, and there was just one house rated at 39 Pounds, probably the Manor House.

A Hearth Tax was levied during these times, but what the Tax was, is hard to discover, there were three houses with 12; 11; and 9 chimneys, and one or two others with three; and also the names of families of the Smith, Cressett, Westrow, and Walker, among these records.

There is a record of Tax paid by the Great Eastern Railway, 5 shillings for land, presumably for the land on which the railway was to be built from Broxbourne to Ware, via St. Margarets.

The Railway was extended to Ware by 1856, and in 1858 a proposal to extend the line from Ware to Buntingford was opposed by several land owners in and around Ware, and the idea was dropped.

However, a man named Mickley of Buntingford, prevailed upon the authorities to re-consider the proposed extension in order 'to save Buntingford from further decline' apparently lack of adequate transport had reduced the livelihood of the Town.

His fight was rewarded and the G.E.R. was given permission to build a Line from St. Margarets and it was opened in 1863.

The Line carried passengers and freight via Mardock, Widford, Hadham, and out through the delightful Rib Valley to Buntingford for just about 100 years, before the Beeching Axe fell in 1965, which seems to have been a quite short-sighted thing to do, in view of what is now happening to road transport.

Another important achievement was the cutting of the water channel from the Springs at Chadwell and Amwell to enable water to be fed to London, and places en route, passing through the Manor estate of St. Margarets.

Powers were granted by Parliament in 1606 and 1607 and assigned to Hugh Myddleton, who completed the channel to London in 1613; it was called the 'New River'.

The supply was obtained from the River Lee as well as from the springs, and was supplied 'neat or raw' deposits merely being left in reservoirs but the Chief Engineer was confident the water was good for at 70 years of age he told Counsel at an enquiry into purification, that though he possessed a filter, he drank a glassful of river water every morning!

One of the memorials in the Churchyard is that of Harriet, wife of Rev Charles Pratt, who was possessed of the advowson and manorial rights of the village.

In 1889 the rights were sold to Mr. Septimus Croft, who lived in the residence at St. Margaretsbury, which may have been built on the site of an old Rectory.

In 1894 an Act of Parliament; The Local Government Act, provided for setting up of Statutory local government, in the form of Parish Meetings or Parish Council's.

The Act had taken over a year to pass through Parliament; much excitement and controversy had been raised both in and out of Parliament; Mr. Gladstone's government having to deal with over 800 amendments; for the proposal to create Parish Councils, created an uproar.

This was a radical change, for as we have written, the administration of parish relief and other functions, had been dealt with by the Parson and his churchwardens of the parish, with the largesse of the Lord of the Manor.

These functions were now to be administered by laymen; although it took a very long time before the system worked as intended.

On the 4th of December 1894 in the Vestry Room, at 6 o'clock pm, a Meeting was held for the purpose of Electing a Chairman of the Parish Meeting for the Year, and Mr. Alexander Renwick was voted to the Chair for this meeting. Present the following:-

Messrs W. Gardner; A. Stevens; W. Stevens; I. Clark; I. Serensky; H. Smith; C. Turner; G. Cook; I. Wells; I. Aldridge; C. Baulk; A. Oliver; I. Coe; J. Adams; W. Macer; W. Fincher; C. Saben; Septimus Croft.

Mr. Septimus Croft was elected Chairman for the year.

Mr. Septimus Croft was Patron of the Church and Lord of the Manor.

It was not until the 1st of April 1902, that it was resolved by the Parish Meeting, to request the County Council for powers to establish a Parish Council; an order was made on the 1st of August 1902 a Parish Council was established; 5 Councillors were to be Elected.

There were 7 nominations, and the following were elected:- Septimus Croft; Escombe Rowland; Alex Renwick; Arthur Stevens; Charles Turner.



The Corner, St. Margarets.

At a special meeting on Wednesday, September 11th 1901 a year before Parish Council status, the meeting was held in St. Margarets Barn, it was to discuss the annoyance caused to inhabitants by the London Excursionists who visited the district.

The Chairman reported that inhabitants of the Parish had 'been greatly annoyed by the numerous 'Beanfeast Parties' during the Summer.

The meeting was to decide what steps to take to prevent the annoyance, both Publicans were present, and both Mr. Wormell & Mr. Turner asserted that they did all they could to maintain order.

'Parties be not allowed during prohibited hours' the proposal was lost 10 votes to 8. 'Stops be limited to 20 minutes' lost as above. 'Better Police supervision during the season' was agreed and the Chief Constable to be written to.

The matter did not end there, nor then, for Parish Council Minutes right up till this present time, shows this problem to be a plant of Perennial character, not now so much to do with 'Beanfeasters' as to do with the 'internal combustion engine' and where to park it; the present Parish Council has also had to talk with the Publicans, and with the Chief Constable!

Stanstead St. Margarets is classified as a 'primarily residential area' Green Belt, and whatever that may mean, in terms of sustaining some semblance of rurality; there is however some industry nearer to the river side.

Messrs Woods is located in St. Margarets, the company which was founded in London in 1882 by Ebenezer Wood manufactures specialist paints and coatings, it is now part of an international Group. Work began here in 1948.

There is too Messrs Austin, dealing with various aspects of industrial building & construction equipment, and associated Fuel Oils etc; the company occupies a site which was formerly a Rubber Tyre dump, which was destroyed by fire in the early 1950's.

The Parish Council are very much concerned about the continuance of the Village as residential area, and are determined to do all in their power to maintain it as such.

In 1960-1 Gt. Amwell, Stanstead Abbots, and St. Margarets, Parish Council's, were parties to a Trust Deed, in connection with a scheme for a Recreation Ground, with support from the Rates.

The Scheme is the St. Margaretsbury Recreation Ground Trust, to be for the recreational benefit of the residents of all three parishes.

There is now a well provided Pavilion; a house for the Groundsman.

A Cricket Club, with a very long history, for it traces back to a match played in 1737 on the Stanstead Marsh (in the region of the Car Park or TownMead) against the Gentlemen of the Hertford Corporation, whom the local team defeated; the match being played so it is reported for the astonishing sum of £1000! some little while before the famous Hambledon game.

Football teams; Tennis Club; Table Tennis; and a very successful Social Club — source of very useful income towards the upkeep of the Trust.

A long awaited Bowls area has yet to be achieved but the idea for such a project persists and it is hoped that before long this facility will provide recreation for a wider range of people, over against the more robust activities.

Thus as we reflect on what may be regarded as more leisurely times of the past, but certainly not as affluent, and remember that six Monarchs have come to the throne of England, since that recipe the horse's colic was written, and two devastating war's have changed the pattern of living for men and women throughout the world.

Many readers will of course be acquainted with the historic background written in this brief survey but it is hoped that it will be of value perhaps to remind ourselves of a past so varied so filled with drama and incident.

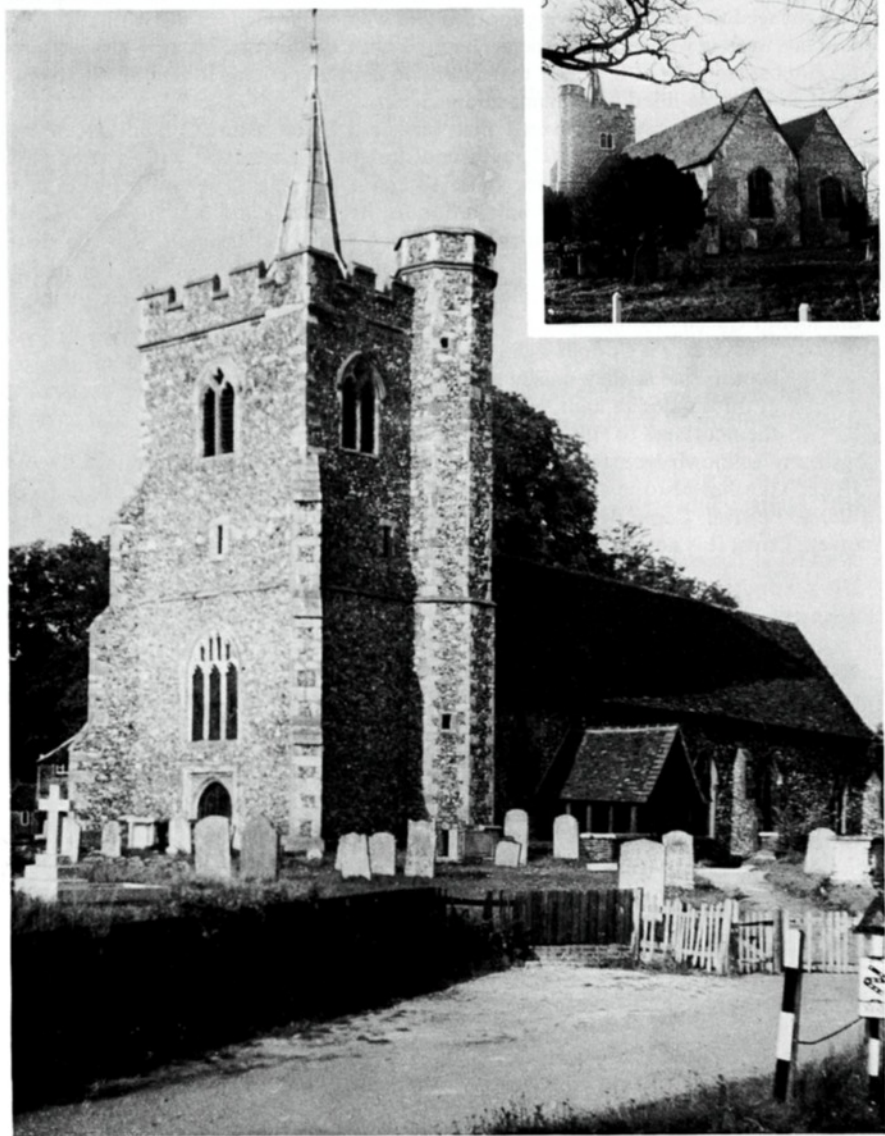
It is worthy to have discovered that Elizabeth I, that astute 'Virgin Queen' who ruled England from 1558—1603, with cool insight and wisdom, with a strength of character, more than a match for those so clever politicians; her suitors were manipulated with a skill that demands admiration for its amusing and deft virginal touches.

Her 'progresses' into the country were indeed a personal triumph, that she stayed at Stansteadbury on three separate occasions, and that this had not been remarked in local records is almost impossible to understand for to quote Neville Williams 'Elizabeth I Queen of England:-

'They made a glorious sight, bringing a blaze of colour to the countryside as they noisily wended their way across England at three miles an hour, and humble folk would come out of their cottages to stare in amazement and cheer'

Again my acknowledgements to Marion Colthorpe M.A. to Hertford County Records Office. To other historic sources: Church Records 1663 Public Records Office. To the Jubilee Festival Committee who entrusted the task to me, to compile this brief survey. I trust it is not too inadequate.

Fred Eva.



St. James the ancient Parish Church of Stanstead Abbots

The Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II has brought together in 1977 the many organisations of Stanstead Abbots & St. Margarets, to celebrate this great event with a Village Festival. The book which has been specially compiled to mark the occasion brings to its readers parts of our local history.

A special thank you is extended to Mr. F. J. H. Eva who, as a member of the Festival Committee, has been responsible for producing the Festival Book which now becomes an item of historical record.

I wish to record here thanks to the numerous people in the Village who have given so much time to ensure that 'Festival Week' 9—17th July is a time to remember.

The Festival Committee members who were elected to plan and co-ordinate the programme and have given many hours to this end are:

Mrs. Iris Clarke (Secretary

Mr. Fred J. H. Eva (Treasurer)

Mr. W. Lyon

Mrs. V. Burt

Mr. L. Cann

Mr. P. Smith

Mr. R. Atkins

Mrs. D. Brace

Mr. B. Newey

Richard T. Greenhill

Chairman,

Festival Committee.