

## **Edlesborough 1815-1865: a study of village life.**

by

Jane M. Komaromy (January 1970)

### **Preface**

A hard copy of this 1970 report was given to me during the early part of 2024 by Maureen Shipway, who had heard I was involved with the Edlesborough History Group. She told me to do as I wished with it. Having read it through, I found this apparent thesis to be a most interesting and useful overview of Edlesborough during the early and mid-1800s, so decided to computerize it essentially without alteration, other than pagination, and make it more widely available as seemed appropriate. I do not know who J. M. Komaromy is, but I would welcome finding out!

*Robert Prÿs-Jones, 2024*

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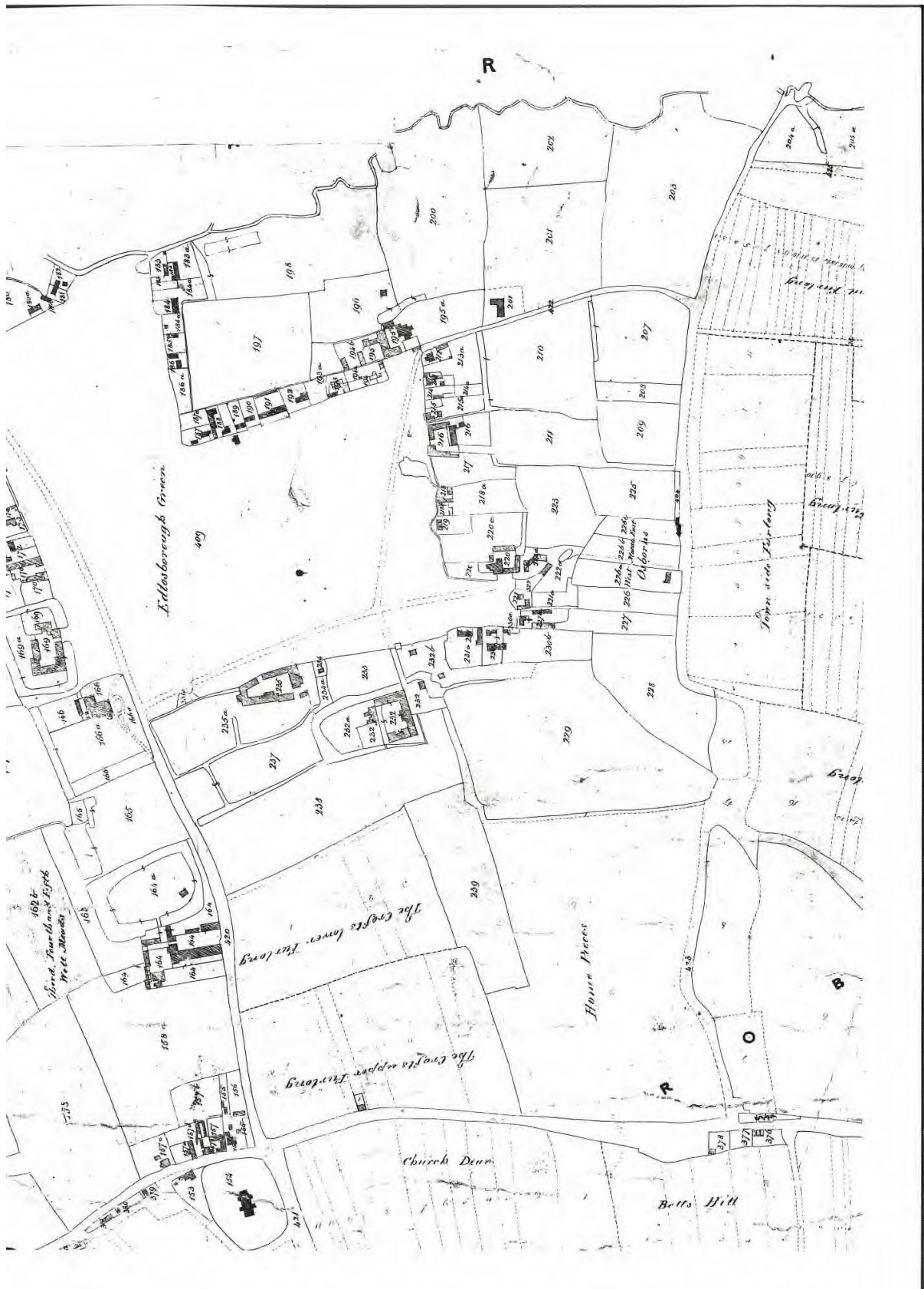
Mr. D. Jarvis

And all the other people of Edlesborough who have given so much of their time.

J. M. K.

Putteridge Bury College of Education

January 1970.



Frontispiece – Section of Tithe Map 1838 (see Appendix II for further details)

## Introduction

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the countryside of England was not wholly agricultural. Many industries existed in the market towns and villages. Local administration was conducted by Justices of the Peace and church officials who rarely accounted to Parliament for their actions. Political views and affairs reached the countryman through the local manor house rather than from Westminster.

By the middle of the century much had changed. Industries had become centred in towns, especially in the Midlands and the North, following the expansion of the coalfields. The population began to flow towards the higher wages offered by these urban areas, which gradually enlarged, encroaching more and more on the bewildered countryside. Middle class dissenters found their way onto magisterial benches and the administrations of the church officials gave way to more centralised control. These were some of the results of the Industrial Revolution.

The early nineteenth century found many villages as yet untouched by the ravages of the Napoleonic Wars and Industrial Revolution. The countryside had only just begun to take on its present familiar shape. In many parts of England close to the village lay the traditional open field, divided into many unhedged strips, owned and farmed by large and small holders alike. Surrounding these open fields were the common lands, mixed areas of meadow and waste, on which the villagers held grazing and other rights. Often unstinted, these lands had to provide food for innumerable animals. Unchangeable cultivation frequently exhausted the soil and the growth of winter crops was often prevented by the age-old custom of grazing the cattle on the open fields from harvest to spring. Thus was progress and increased crop production prevented.

The Napoleonic Wars created the need for more food for hungry mouths. The fantastic rise in the price of a loaf of bread brought an urgent demand for more wheat. So the more enlightened countrymen of England were compelled to realise that the open-field system must be abolished. Enclosure became the fashion and by 1840 was almost complete throughout England, giving the countryside its present pattern of hedges and fields.

Although the open-field system had prevented progressive agriculture, it nevertheless had its advantages for the countrymen. It offered them a stake in the land; most cottagers had one or two strips and rights of common to graze their animals. It enabled them to provide cheap food for their families and gave them the choice of working for themselves or other farmers, thus keeping wages at a reasonable level. Enclosure took away these advantages and men lost their independence. Wages fell. Industry was migrating to the towns leaving the agricultural labourer at the mercy of the farmer.

In 1795 magistrates at Speenhamland in Berkshire attempted to fix a living wage governed by the cost of a loaf of bread but only succeeded in deciding that the difference between wages and the price of bread must be paid to men from the parish rates. This inevitably increased the parish rates and brought more hardship as county after county adopted the system. William Howitt, writing in 1838, says:

“Our poor population stripped of their old common rights, have been thrown upon the parish; their little flock of sheep, their few cows, their geese, their pigs, all gone; and no

collateral help left them to eke out their small savings; and in the case of loss of work or sickness, no resource but parish degradation.”

However, a few parishes and villages remained unaffected by the national vogue for enclosure. They continued much as they had done during past years. Edlesborough parish in Buckinghamshire was one of these.

### **Village Life**

Edlesborough parish, lying in the Vale of Aylesbury, is situated in Buckinghamshire on the borders of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire about six miles west-south of Dunstable and the same distance north-west of Hemel Hempstead. It lies at the junction of the Icknield Way and the Leighton Buzzard to Hemel Hempstead road.

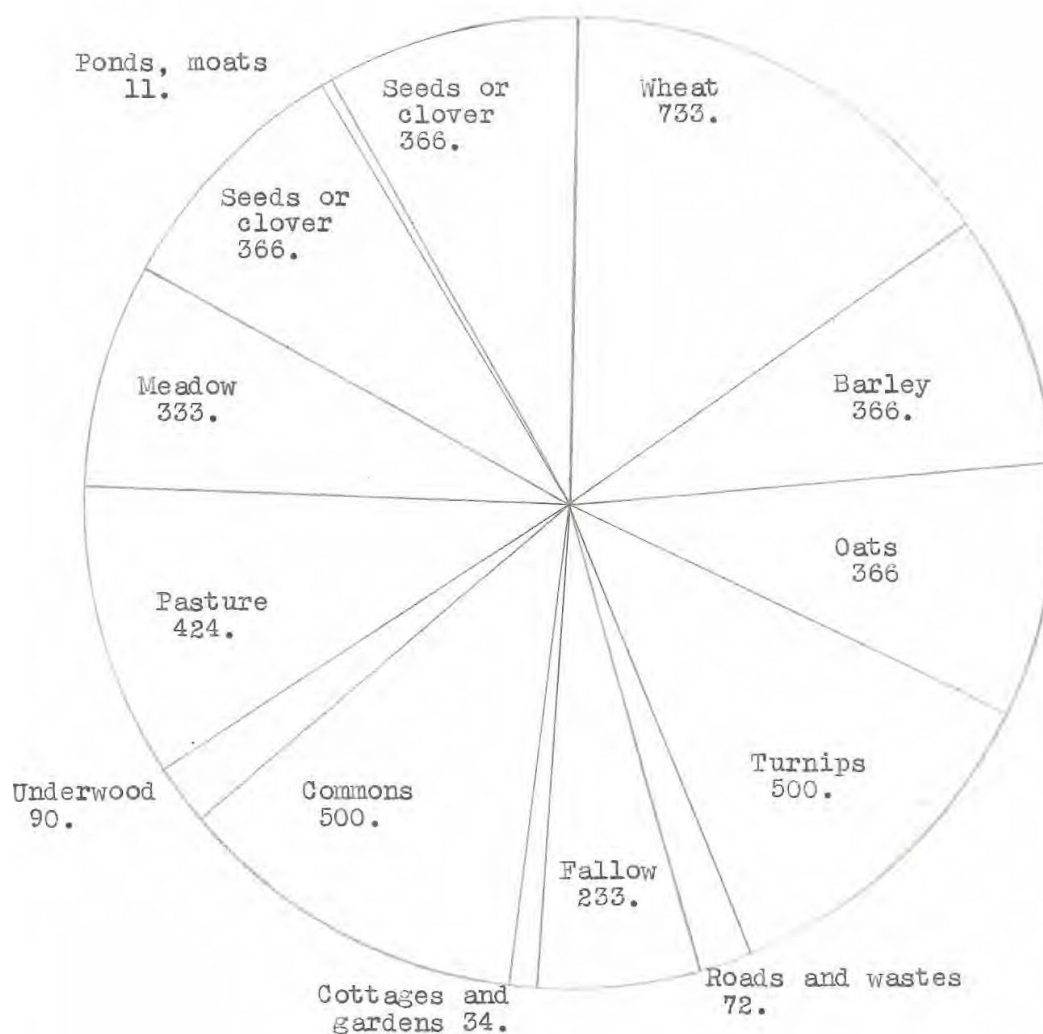
Despite the fact that in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century King Edward III held his Court at Edlesborough, the population at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was only 997, a small number of people for a parish of 4,412 acres. Almost half the parish was owned by the Earl of Bridgewater, whose family had held the rights to the Great Tithes of Edlesborough and the patronage of the benefice since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The Bridgewaters lived at nearby Ashridge, which before the dissolution had been a monastery.

Besides the village of Edlesborough, the parish contained the two hamlets of Dagnall and Northall. However, the life of the parish still centred around the village of Edlesborough. For the most part the houses lay clustered around the green, on which the villagers held common rights of grazing; the roads leading to the green were gated to prevent animals from wandering. Unlike many villages, the common lands of Edlesborough were stinted by mutual agreement between the occupiers of houses and lands. This meant that every occupier of a house or estate was limited to the number of animals he could graze on the common at one time. This was usually two cows, one horse, or three sheep. No geese were allowed on the commons at any time; cows over three years old had to have knobs on their horns and pigs, other than suckling pigs, were not allowed on the commons without rings in their noses. Grazing was conducted on a rotational system, using the green, other small commons and, from harvest to spring, on some of the open fields. Animals were forbidden to graze on the highways unless for any reason the commons were unusable. A hayward was appointed each year to ensure that these rules were carried out and he could be fined up to ten shillings for neglect of his duties. Monies arising from such fines were distributed ‘annually on the Sunday after Christmas Day in bread amongst the poor’. Trespassers also could be fined and their cattle impounded until the fine, not exceeding forty shillings, was paid.

The village had ten homesteads or farms, three of which were moated. Only three farms now remain; one moat is still in existence and the sites of the other two visible on the ground. Just over half the lands of the village remain unenclosed, that is as open field agriculture.

These enormous open fields were divided into many strips and the strips owned or rented by proprietors. Every proprietor’s land was mixed up with that of every other proprietor. The origin of this system is supposed to have given every owner a fair share in good and bad land. However, it is more likely that it arose when land just came under cultivation and was shared between cultivators.

Originally all land was divided in this manner and the incumbents' lands and the lord of the manor's lands were intermixed with those of the other cultivators. Although efforts were made by the influential classes to withdraw their strips of land and form more compact blocks or closes, these blocks still remained scattered between the open fields.



*Land utilization in the Parish in 1838. All figures are in acres.*

This was so at Edlesborough where some lands had been assembled in blocks and enclosed by private agreement between owners over the years. Many of the strips in the open fields were rented from the Bridgewaters and on rent days at each quarter the tenants marched to Ashridge to pay their rents. Once they had paid the Bailiff they were given a meal of bread, cheese and beer before starting the homeward journey.





*Houses bordering the Green in whose gardens the plum trees still flourish*

The general cultivation of the arable land was on a four field turnip course; this prevailed in the open as well as the enclosed ground. Those working the land had departed from the three field system but had not managed to reduce the village to any other regular system, so that crops were very much intermixed. Damsons were grown on unenclosed ground and formed a curious feature of the village. They were not true damsons but small prune plums and were believed to have been imported by refugee Huguenots but there is very little evidence to support this theory. The plums are peculiar to the Vale of Aylesbury and flourished remarkably well in Edlesborough. Every spare piece of ground was planted with these trees and, by mutual consent of the villagers, each resident was permitted to encroach on the common ground forty feet in depth along the frontage of his property in order to plant the plum trees. The trees were not grafted but always grown from maiden stock. They took forty years to mature and in a good year bore much fruit. The plums ripened late in the autumn and supplied not only fresh fruit but also very good wine and jam.

With the development of the railways in the 1840s, the plums were taken by cart to the nearby station of Stanbridgeford and carried to London where their sale provided a valuable source income to the people of Edlesborough. The plums were of sufficient importance to the villagers to be mentioned separately from the other crops during the prayers for the harvest. Another popular belief amongst the villagers today is that the juice from the plums was used for dyeing sailors' uniforms but I have been unable to discover any truth in this. Many damsons are still grown in the village today.

Another extra source of income for many of the villagers was provided by the straw plaiting industry. The plaiting industry was widespread in the Dunstable area at the beginning of the eighteenth century and Edlesborough was amongst the villages who presented a petition to Parliament in 1689 protesting against a bill brought by the Feltmakers to enforce the wearing of woollen hats at certain times of the year. The straw plaiters claimed that nearly a thousand families were dependent on the industry and that passing the Feltmakers' bill would considerably decrease their earnings. "The representatives of the plaiters were heard at the bar of the House and may have been instrumental in bringing about the failure of the bill." (Dony 1942).

Plaiting was mostly a spare time industry and engaged the whole household when they were not required for farm work; it was a seasonal industry and was carried out mainly during the winter months. The men were usually involved with preparing the straw and the women and children with plaiting, The various processes of the straw-plait were as follows:

"The straw dealer purchased from the farmer, making him an offer for an unthreshed wheat stack. He then sent men who sat with a sheaf between their knees and pulled out the straws ear by ear, laying them neatly aside; the ears were then left to the farmer and the straw made up into bundles weighing 60 or 70 lbs each. The straws were next 'stripped', which meant that they were cut just above the knot, and if this was skilfully done it also took off the 'flag' or leaf of the wheat, leaving the straws 9 to 10 inches in length. This was often done by piece-work, the quantity being measured by filling a pottle measure with the cut straws. The next process was bleaching, for which purpose the straws were damped and placed in a box into which a cup of burning sulphur was introduced, and the box was then closed. Sometimes the straws were dyed black or blue. After bleaching, or colouring, the

straw had to be graded; a handful was taken and shaken loosely on end over a series of wire sieves of varying degrees of fineness, the smallest obviously coming out first. Each sieve had a hopper beneath it through which the straws fell into boxes, so that all the straws were graduated in size; they were then examined, and the specked or defective straws were removed, after which they were tied up into bundles four or five inches in diameter and sold to the cottager to plait. The coarsest kinds of plait were made of whole straws, but the finer plaits were made of split straws. Splitting was done with an ingenious little device consisting of a pear-shaped piece of wood four inches high and two inches across at the widest part, where four or five holes are made, each  $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch in diameter. In these holes are steel cutters, radiating like the spokes of a wheel, and with a point projecting at the axle of the wheel. There might be from two to eight spokes; a fine straw would be drawn through the four-cutter hole, and a coarse straw through one with more cutters." (Eland 1921).



*Village women engaged in straw plaiting*

The strips were then passed through a small wooden mill to flatten them. The method employed in plaiting the straw was to tie up the straw into a little bundle which was placed under one arm. The straws were then drawn out and placed in the mouth, the moisture making the straw more pliable for plaiting. Many different patterns were plaited, some more intricate than others. The plait was made up into bundles of scores or half scores; a score took approximately six hours to plait depending on the skill of the plaiter. The price of a score was about 1s. and one person could earn



between 6s. and 12s. per week. A weekly market was held at Edlesborough when the plait dealers bought the plait from the cottagers. The finished plait was used mainly in the hat industry but was sometimes made up into baskets and shoes.



*Typical cottage interiors*

So that the wives of the families should have more time for plaiting, the children were often sent to other cottages to learn to plait; these cottages were popularly known as plaiting schools.

They were run by old dames or crippled men, some of whom could not plait themselves. One school at Edlesborough was open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. each weekday. Indeed, straw plait was so important to Edlesborough that plaiting was even allowed for three hours a day in the parish school. There were two men in the village who worked full time as straw plait dealers and on market days other dealers came from nearby villages.



*The Village School founded by the Countess of Bridgewater but substantially altered by Lord Brownlow*

Whilst most of the inhabitants were employed on the land, Edlesborough, as other villages, had its tradespeople. Only the blacksmith's shop at the side of the Green was described as a shop, so it must be assumed that most other trades were carried out in the cottages. Shoes could be purchased from John Ginger and groceries from Mary Peppiatt, whilst the family of Costino, who were the carpenters, seemed to spend quite a large proportion of their time supplying numerous coffins. There was a local butcher and dairy produce could be purchased from the various farms or supplied by the cottagers themselves. A carrier went to Dunstable two or three times a week and, besides calling for orders for goods, he also delivered the post to the posting station and collected the incoming mail. To send a letter to London cost 1s.3d. The carrier also transported any would-be patients to the West Hertfordshire Infirmary at Hemel Hempstead. After such a journey one wonders at the possible condition of these patients. The doctor came from Leighton Buzzard and invariably needed to be fetched when needed. The Churchwarden's accounts frequently recorded such entries as: "Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> 1834. A boy for going to the Doctors. 1s.0d." Considering the distance of five miles which the child had to cover, the money was obviously well earned.

If the hardworking village men had any time to spare for relaxation, they could frequent the three public houses in the village: the Greyhound, the Bell and the Axe and Compass. The latter two still remain today. The Bell was sometimes used as an alternative place for the vestry meetings and the Axe and Compass overlooking the Green provided a suitable site from which to view the cricket matches which became popular around the 1860s. The Green was also the place where the May Day festivities were celebrated. The 'man in green' who was dressed completely in leaves performed the ritualistic dance and the children of the village decorated small chairs with garlands of flowers. The villagers also danced round the traditional maypole and these customs have only been discontinued fairly recently. Another old custom observed until a few years ago was the hoisting of an oak branch on the church tower to commemorate Oak Apple Day, the 29<sup>th</sup> May, the anniversary of the escape of Charles II at Boscobel in 1651.



*The old Greyhound Public House – now a private residence but showing signs of its earlier history*

There were also four beer retailers in the village who supplied the beer with which the inhabitants swilled down their customary meal of meat or game cooked in a suet crust and every available type of vegetable.

In the years following the Napoleonic Wars when all England was starving and the price of wheat fell from 110s. a quarter in 1813 to 66s. in 1815, many of the people of Edlesborough existed almost entirely on the turnips grown in the village. At Ashridge Lord Bridgewater did what he could to help the people on his land and made it a rule never to refuse work to any man who asked for it.





*The Bell Public House (above) and the Axe and Compass (below)*



However, the country gradually recovered and in better days home-baked bread nearly always accompanied the meals of the people of Edlesborough. The bread was baked from the local flour ground at Edlesborough mill.

The Domesday survey records the mill at Edlesborough; this was undoubtedly a water mill as windmills did not exist until a century after Domesday. Traces of older buildings have been found on the site of the present mill so it is highly probable that the original mill also occupied this site. The water course itself makes this the only suitable position for a mill in the village. The water comes from three springs which rise in the more hilly parts of the parish and join to make one large stream which forms a tributary of the River Ouzel. There were also two other mills on the same stream but these were actually sited in the next village of Eaton Bray. It is possible that the people of Edlesborough occasionally used these mills.



*Edlesborough Mill*

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the mill was owned by the Lewin family who lived in Watford and who let the mill to various tenants. When William Lewin died his estate was sold and Christopher Buckmaster, a miller in the neighbouring village of Totternhoe, bought the mill in 1830 for £1,850. Christopher Buckmaster conveyed the mill to his brother John, who had been the tenant at the mill for the previous four years. The sale included the neighbouring field in which a windmill had stood but which had fallen into a derelict ruin.



*All that remains of the windmill*

The water mill had an undershot wheel which drove two pairs of grinding stones. The water mill was obviously unable to cope with the amounts of grain to be milled as John Buckmaster rebuilt the windmill closer to the water mill and worked them both with the help of another miller. Buckmaster charged 2s. a load for grinding and the weekly average was 50 loads. Record keeping, however, was not one of his strong points, as commented the Tithe Commissioner, but there are a few calculations which show his expenditure on the mill in 1838.

"Rent:	£80: -: -
Repairs:	31: 4: -
Taxes:	7: -: -
Millers' wages:	39: -: -
Horses:	52: -: -
Wheelwright:	12: -: -
<u>Man's wages:</u>	<u>31: 4: -</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>£252: 8: -</u>
<u>50 loads at 2s.</u>	<u>£260: -: -</u>
<u>Balance</u>	<u>£7: 12: -"</u>



From the balance it would appear that Buckmaster did not make much profit from his business. In 1870 he raised a mortgage on the mill and made several improvements, including demolishing the old mill house and building another adjoining the mill, installing an overshot wheel and later a steam boiler. The water mill continued to be used until the late 1920s but the windmill was struck by lightning in 1890 and never rebuilt.

On the other side of the village close to the Green stood the Methodist Chapel. Methodism, unlike other forms of non-conformity, spread rapidly during the nineteenth century: it appealed particularly to rural populations and many of its chapels are found in villages.



*Edlesborough Methodist Chapel – built 1858*

The Methodists at Edlesborough first gathered for worship in a barn belonging to Thomas Cheshire: they complied with the law by registering the barn with the Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire and paying the required fee of 2s.6d. In 1856 the churchwardens discovered that the tenant at Church Farm, Thomas Twidell, was a Methodist and had him evicted forthwith. He moved to a house he owned by the Village Green and used the land beside it to build the Methodist Chapel.



*Interior of Methodist Chapel*

The Parish Church which the majority of villagers attended stands on top of a hill, dominating the village and easily visible for miles around. The church, built of Totternhoe stone in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, almost certainly replaces an earlier wooden structure as the list of clergy dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The church was well attended throughout the years despite the steep climb up from the village. The congregation must have been relieved when, in 1843, their hearts were warmed not only by enthusiasm but also by the installation of a coal-fired stove. The singing was led by a choir who were rewarded for their services by an annual feast. In June 1841 the choir performed Handel's Messiah and the money collected was sent to the West Hertfordshire Infirmary at Hemel Hempstead.

The church formed the focal point of the village and life revolved around the administrations of its officers.



*Edlesborough Parish Church*



*The choir stalls backing the screen have 'misereres' carved by medieval craftsmen*



*The nave showing the Fifteenth Century pulpit and choir screen*

### **Village Administration**

Until quite recent years the administration of a village fell predominantly upon the vicar and his parochial officers. It may be said of the vicar "... he was often the patriarch of the parish, its ruler, its doctor, its lawyer, its magistrate, as well as its teacher, before whom vice trembled and rebellion dared not show itself" (Church 1894).



The Reverend William Bruton Wroth, M.A., Vicar of Edlesborough, was presented to the benefice on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1815 by John Williams, Earl of Bridgewater. As lay rector, the Earl of Bridgewater retained the right to appoint the incumbent of the parish. The Rev. Wroth was a young man of 24 years of age when he came to Edlesborough with his wife, Anne-Marie. The vicarage, a vast imposing house, stood at the corner of the Village Green. Used occasionally for vestry meetings, it must have been a warmer alternative to the draughty church room where the parochial officers traditionally assembled, but perhaps the atmosphere was not as congenial as "The Bell". By common law the Vicar, if present, is chairman of the vestry meetings and every year within the month following Easter the vestry appoints the churchwardens. There are usually two wardens in a parish, the people's warden and the Vicar's warden. Originally, the wardens were jointly chosen by the Minister and the people, but custom has allowed over the years the selection of the Vicar's warden to be left solely to the Minister. The office of churchwarden carried no salary and often involved considerable personal expense. The various expenditures were considered by vestry meetings and, if approved, were 'allowed'. The vestry meetings also appointed other parish officers such as constables, haywards and overseers for the poor but at Edlesborough the churchwardens also served as overseers. The vestry meetings dealt with every aspect of parish life, both ecclesiastical and civil.



*Copy of a sketch drawn by the Rev. Wroth in 1824 showing the church before the fire*

## Church Rates

References to the levying of church rates are frequent in the Edlesborough churchwardens' accounts. Originally the repair of the fabric of the church was a duty which fell upon the tithe owner but by custom the repair of the chancel only was the obligation of the rector and the repair of the nave was the duty of the parishioners. Although never statute law, this ruling dates from as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> Century when the Archbishop of Canterbury stated "that all having any property in a parish except glebe, whether or not they are resident, shall pay with the other parishioners towards the charges incumbent by common right or by custom for the repair of the church, according to their possessions and revenues" (Tate 1969).

The church rates at Edlesborough varied between 4d. and 1s. in the pound and were recorded in the churchwardens' accounts (see Appendix 1). The greatest amounts collected and paid out for the repairs of the church fabric were following the great fire at the church in 1828. The Rev. Wroth wrote the following account of the fire which was printed and circulated throughout the district in order to raise money for the repairs:

"The Parish Church of Edlesborough in the County of Buckingham, distant five miles from Leighton Buzzard and three from Dunstable, is a very lofty Building, situated on an eminence, and forms a picturesque object viewed from every part of the surrounding country. It consisted of a Nave, two side Aisles, with a Tower of stone at the west end, upon which was a Spire of wood, covered with lead and surmounted with a leaden Crown of Thorns and a Weathercock. The Tower contained a peal of five Bells and a smaller one which was rung for the purpose of announcing that the Minister had entered the reading desk.

On Friday, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of March 1828, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, during a violent storm of Hail, accompanied by one awfully vivid flash of Lightning, followed by a tremendous clap of Thunder, the Weathercock of the Church was observed by a shepherd to be struck down by the Lightning and soon after he saw smoke issuing from the Spire, the alarm was immediately given: it was discovered that the electric fluid had set fire to the Spire and in half an hour the flame burst out just beneath the Crown of Thorns.

The Vicar, Parish Officers and other principal Inhabitants (who happened at the time to be assembled in the Vestry) together with the greater part of the Parishioners hastened to render their assistance in extinguishing the flames. Messengers were sent off to Ashridge, Dunstable and Ivinghoe for Fire-Engines. The Fire at first burnt slowly, and could any one have ascended to the top of the Spire whence it proceeded, it might have been extinguished: but the great height of the building, and the extreme violence of the westerly wind rendered this impossible. The inhabitants had therefore the pain of beholding the fire increasing, without being able to do any thing to prevent it; and could only wait with patience the arrival of the Fire-Engines. One from Ashridge arrived in less time than even their anxiety had expected, and not long after, two others from Dunstable and Ivinghoe. Every nerve was now strained to work the Engines and supply them with water, and the most sanguine hopes were entertained that the flames would quickly have been got under: but, unfortunately, the Engines were unable to reach the Spire; and notwithstanding every effort, the fire (aided by



the violent wind) continued to increase. The molten lead began to pour in streams and in a short time the whole Spire appeared in one perfect mass of flame! The wind at the same time rushing through the louvre boarding of the windows, caused the fire to roar more awfully loud even than the thunder accompanying the lightning which caused the conflagration. All hope of saving the Spire, the Bells, or any thing within the Tower, was now at an end, and the whole attention was directed to preserve the body of the Church. The Gallery, and some of the seats were immediately removed, and the Belfry was also attempted to be taken down, but the streams of molten lead still continuing to pour from the upper lofts, and the momentary expectation of the Bells falling, which had now become red-hot, prevented any one from going into the Tower. The Bells fell with a tremendous crash, red-hot, carrying with them the Belfry floor, and setting fire to the lower part of the Tower which had hitherto escaped. The whole of the Tower now presented one body of fire of more than 100 feet in height, which continued to roar with 'deaf'ning sound'. This, with the reports, at intervals, of the bursting of the massy stones of which the Tower was composed (not less loud than cannon) conveyed to the mind of those who witnessed the scene, the very serious injury the building was suffering. The Fire continued its ravages till five o'clock on Saturday morning, when every thing combustible within the Tower, together with the whole of the Spire, were destroyed. The body of the Church was twice on fire during the night, but though the great exertions of persons who ascended the roof (at the imminent danger of their lives), its progress was happily arrested. The Bells, with the exception of the small one, were all broken in falling; and the wall of the Tower burst in several places from the intensity of the heat. During the twelve hours the building was one fire, the greatest exertions were made by all persons present; and it is a pleasing though melancholy reflection, that (though unavailing) every thing was done to stop the devouring element, which human ingenuity could devise.

Thus has been destroyed the Spire of a Church which afforded a striking and beautiful feature through the country for many miles around; – a peal of very excellent Bells; – and a Church, equalled in magnitude and beauty by few country churches in England, so seriously injured as to be unfit for the performance of public worship.

The VICAR and CHURCH-WARDENS would feel themselves deficient in gratitude, were they not to offer their thanks for the great assistance which they received from all ranks of the people. It would be invidious to mention names, since all were so ready to assist; but their thanks are in a peculiar manner due to the owners of the Fire-Engines, and to those persons of Ashridge, Little Gaddesden, Dunstable and Ivinghoe, who voluntarily exposed themselves to the extreme inclemency of the weather and who were so essentially serviceable, by the advice and assistance which they rendered, in preventing the whole Church from being destroyed.

24<sup>th</sup> March 1828

W. B. Wroth

Vicar

John Smith )

Church

Benjamin Gray)

wardens

At a Vestry-Meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> April, the Inhabitants of this Parish, convened by notice duly given, to consider the measures necessary to be adopted for making good the damage done to the Church by the above calamitous event; – it was

Resolved, – that, as the Land Owners, Farmers and Others, resident in the Parish, have already raised, by Assessment, a sum of £490 towards the repairs of the Church, and are under the necessity of raising in the course of the present year, the further sum of £350, or thereabouts, to complete these repairs; it is totally out of their power to defray, by themselves and without assistance, the expenses of taking down and re-building the upper part of the Tower, which is greatly damaged by the fire, – procuring a new set of Bells, – replacing the Gallery, – and the other works that will be required to put the Church into decent order; which, by the survey and estimate of Mr. John Adsetts, the builder at Ashridge, will amount in the whole to £980:17: – .

That therefore, applications be respectfully made to the Trustees of the Bridgewater Estate, John Pedley Esq., Captain Bettsworth, the Trustees of Ashtons and Cartes Charities, the Rev. Moore Halsey, Mrs. Moyer, and all the other Proprietors of Estates who do not reside in the Parish, to assist Tenants and Occupiers with Subscriptions in and of a Parochial Assessment for raising the above sum.”

Although numerous subscriptions of varying amounts were donated, from sums as large £200 from the Countess of Bridgewater to 10s. from a “gentleman”, it was necessary for the churchwardens to arrange a loan of £500 at 5 per cent. interest from Mr. George Garratt.

The following are some of the bills paid by the churchwardens for the repairs.

1828	Mr. Stevens on account for the Repairs of the outside of the Church	£153: 12: 7
1829	Wm. Jones, Carriage of the Bells to London	£4: 18: 9
	Men at the fire	£– : 19: –
	Heley, Melting Lead	£4: 1: 9
	Flint, a bill for advertising and printing bills of the fire	£2: 19: –
1830	Glover, on account in aid of the repairs rendered necessary by the fire	£250: – : –

The repairs continued for many years, The bells were recast and hung; but the spire was never replaced. The last bill paid in connection with the fire was in 1855 –

“Garside, a bill for making Lectern out of remains of a beam burnt at the Fire in the Church Tower 1828

£4: 6: 1½”

The lectern remains today as a memory of the unfortunate incident; it bears the inscription “Ereptum ex igne” – snatched from the burning.



*The lectern carved from a beam rescued from the Church fire in 1828*

### Churchwardens' accounts

Besides the repair of the church, the church rates and rents from church land and property were used to pay an innumerable number of ecclesiastical expenses. The following is a typical example of accounts: –

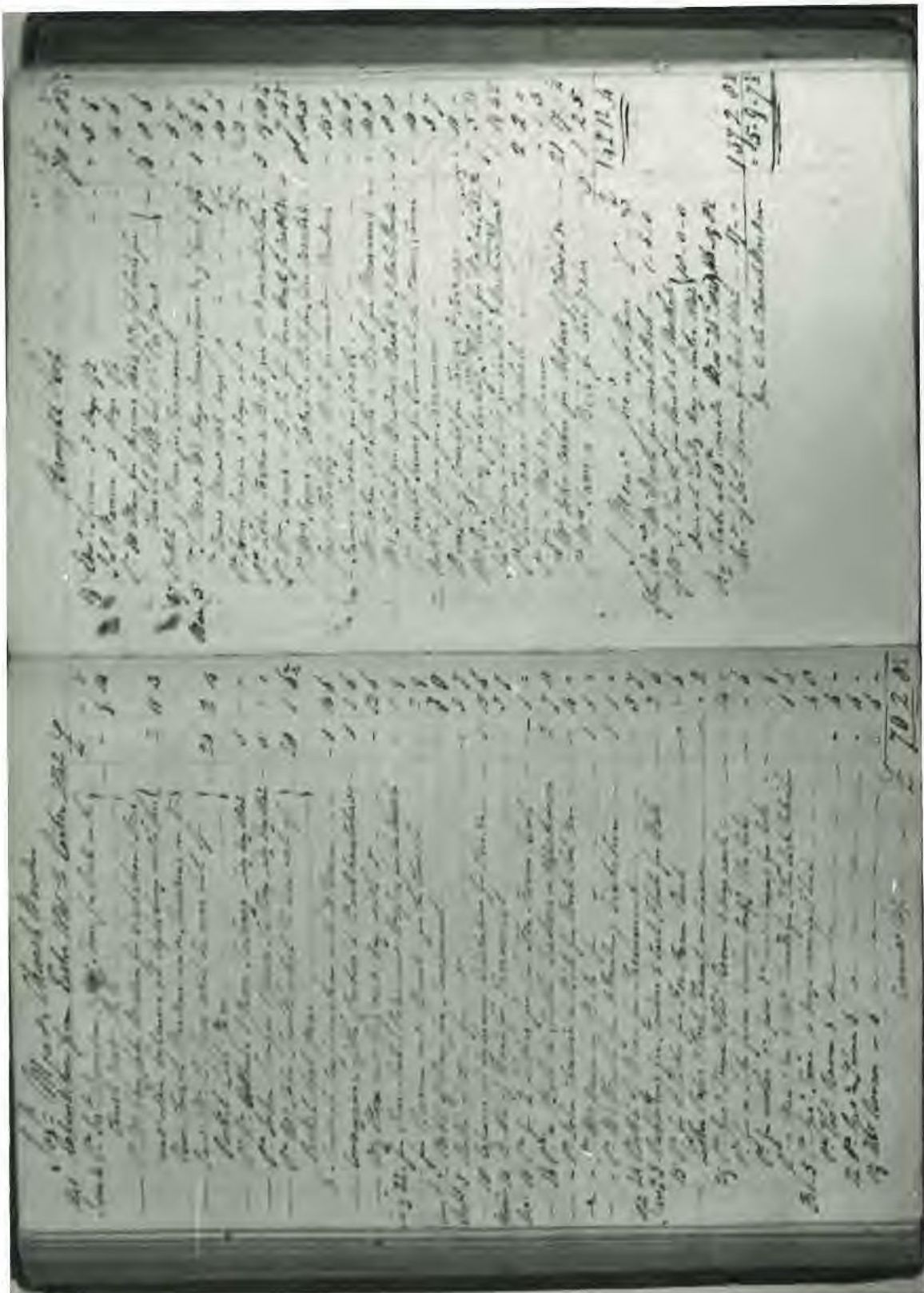
“Joseph Mead, Churchwarden

Expenditure from Easter 1841 to Easter 1842

1841

June 4	Pd. Joseph Brandon & George Stone for work in the churchyard path	£ – : 9: 10
	Pd. Mr. Gray late warden for Visitation fees and other expenses at Aylesbury with the new churchwardens and swearing	£ 2: 11: 3
	Pd. Mr. B. Gray what he was out of Pocket last year	£26: 2: 4
	Pd. Wm. Atthest (Sexton) 1 years Salary	£ 3: – : –
	Pd. John Ginger (Clerk) 1 years Salary	£ 5: – : –
	Pd. Mr. John Smith what he was out of pocket last year	£20: 1: 6½
June 16	Pd. At confirmation with 21 persons	£ 1: 10: 6
	Conveyance of the parties to Berkhamstead	£ 1: 1: 6
	My Horse and Gig and day with do.	£ – : 12: 6

July 22	For Pens, Ink, Paper and Wafers for the Church	£ – : 1: 9
	For Beesom and Brush for the Church	£ – : 2: 9
Aug. 7	Bottle of Wine for Sacrament	£ – : 7: –
Oct. 3	Bottle of do. do.	£ – : 3: 7
Oct. 15	Expenses at Aylesbury, Visitation Fees, etc.	£ 1: 13: 6
Nov. 14	Bottle of Wine for Sacrament	£ – : 3: 7
Dec. 10	Pd. for 2 Letters for the Fee Farm Rent	£ – : 1: 1
Dec. 16	Pd. a bill to Tithe Valuers and Apportioners	£ 2: 7: 11
	Pd. John Cheshire for work last year	£ – : 4: –
	Pd. Mr. Drage a bill for do.	£ 1: 1: –
	Pd. Mr. Wroth for attending Visitation	£ 1: 1: –
Dec. 24	Bottle of Wine for Sacrament	£ – : 3: 7
1842		
Jan. 3	Publishing for tenders to cart Flints for wall	£ – : 2: 6
Jan. 15	Pd. for a letter for Fee Farm Rent	£ – : – : 6
	Letter, Paper and Post Stamp in answer	£ – : – : 2
Jan. 29	Pd. Geo. Stone and Thos Room 6 days each	£ – : 14: –
	Pd. for a letter from Railway Comp. (per rate)	£ – : – : 6
	Pd. for another do. and Stamp for rate	£ – : – : 9
	Pd. a man 1 day to Mr. Howeds for Tithe Rate Particulars	£ – : 1: 6
Feb. 5	Pd. Geo. Stone 4 days moving flints	£ – : 4: 8
	Pd. Thos. Room 6 do. do.	£ – : 6: –
Feb. 12	Pd. Geo Stone 6 do. do.	£ – : 6: –
Feb. 19	Pd. Thos. Room 6 do. do.	£ – : 6: –
	Pd. Edwd. Jones 3 days 1/3	£ – : 3: 9
	Pd. Jas. Warren 3 days 1/6	£ – : 4: 6
	Pd. 10 men for digging 164¼ yds. of Flints for Church Wall at 2s. per yd.	£ 16: 8: 6
Feb. 27	Bottle of Wine for Sacrament	£ – : 3: 7
Mar. 5	Pd. J. Mead 10½ days Boreing Tower, etc. of Church 3/6	£ 1: 16: 9
	Pd. Amos Head 10½ days do. 1/-	£ – : 10: 6
	Pd. John Ginger 6 days do. 2/-	£ – : 12: –
	Pd. Levi Costin a bill for do. and mending pews	£ 3: 19: 10¼
	Pd. Wm. Janes a bill for iron work for cradle, etc.	£ – : 7: 4½
	Pd. Mrs. Janes a bill for iron cranks	£ 8: 18: 5
	Geo. Healey a bill for mending windows	£ – : 15: 11
	James Proctor for coals	£ – : 14: 6
	John Adsetts a bill for measuring	£ – : 10: 6
	Mr. Flint for Bunding Book & 3 Rate Books	£ 1: 8: –
	Pd. Joseph Janes for time at Church Tower	£ – : 10: –
Mar. 24	Bottle of Wine for Sacrament	£ – : 3: 7
	Barrell of compo' for Tower and Carriage	£ – : 11: –
	Mr. R. Gray for carting 100 yds. flints for Wall at 1/5½ per yd.	£ 7: 5: 10
	John Ginger a bill for candles, washing surplice and bread	£ 1: 19: 4½



The pages of the Churchwardens' Accounts from which the text was taken

Mar. 24 Pd. Land tax at Northall	£ 2: 2: –
Pd. for a Mat and a Broom	£ – : 1: 3
Pd. Mr. John Costin for repairs of Church	£ 21: 17: –¼
Pd. Mrs. Janes a bill for last year	£ 1: 2: 5
	<hr/>
	£142: 12: 4
 J. Mead recd. as follows	
of Rev. W. Wroth for small bell	£ 1: 6: –
of Mr. J. Smith for rent at Northall	£ 18: – : –
By Rate at 6d. made Nov. 26 <sup>th</sup> 1841	£116: 19: 8½
Recd. of James Green for rent	£ – : 17: –
	<hr/>
	£137: 2: 8½
Due to churchwarden	£ 5: 9: 7½

Other common items were bills for vermin and bills for ringers and ringers' beer. These were not included in the preceding accounts because the bells were still in the process of being rehung.

In 1532 an Act was passed that every parish should provide itself with a net for the destruction of vermin such as rooks, crows and choughs. In 1566 the Act was renewed, making the wardens responsible for paying certain sums of money to parishioners who destroyed the vermin.

The bells at Edlesborough were rung at 8 a.m. for the celebration of Holy Communion and for twenty-five minutes before Matins and Evensong. On New Year's Eve the tenor tolled for the last quarter of an hour before midnight, followed by ringing for the New Year. The bells were also tolled for any celebrations such as the Queen's birthday or victories in battle. The ringers were seemingly encouraged by a plentiful supply of beer. By the number of entries for ringers' beer it would appear that ringing the bells was thirsty work! Deaths in the village were made known by the tolling of the tenor bell, or by the second for a child under thirteen years of age.

The churchwardens were also responsible for letting the church lands and houses, and at Edlesborough this was done every seven years. The rents paid for the church lands helped to supplement the church rates.

### Tithes

Another valuable source of income for the church were the tithes.

From A.D. 787 compulsory tithes (One tenth of all produce) were extracted from the laity by the Church. Tithes were classified in three ways: predial (arising from the produce of land), mixed farming (coming from the stock on land) and personal (from personal industry, e.g., mills). The "Great" Tithes were usually corn, hay and wood and the "small" tithes all other produce. Where there was both a rector and a vicar, as at Edlesborough, the rector, the Duke of Bridgewater, took the "Great" Tithes and the vicar the "small" tithes. The payment of tithes had for a long time been a cause of a great friction between the farmers and the church. This reached a head during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when any improvement in productivity only involved the



farmers in increased tithe payments. Some districts had already substituted money rent for payment in kind. At Edlesborough some tithes were taken in kind and, although the Rev. Wroth was prepared to accept money rents in lieu of tithes, there were still frequent disagreements, such as the one in 1825 with Mr. John Head, a village farmer. The Rev. Wroth claimed his tithe of potatoes which Mr. Head refused to pay. He had in fact already sold several bushels before the claim was made. Finally, after legal proceedings, Mr. Head was required either to pay £18 or to hand over 200 bushels of potatoes or to set out the potatoes, accounting for those sold and allow the Rev. Wroth to collect his tithe. He eventually settles for the payment of £18.



*The Sixteenth Century Tithe Barn at Church Farm*

In 1836 the Tithe Commutation Act was passed, which substituted a money rent based on the average corn prices for the past seven years, to be paid by all landowners in commutation of tithes (West 1962). The Tithe Commissioners carried out the apportionments in each parish.

The first notice telling the inhabitants of Edlesborough of the intended apportionment was fixed to the church door on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1838 by John Ginger. The first meeting to discuss the apportionment with the Tithe Commissioner was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1838 at the Bell Public House in the village. This proved to be a somewhat stormy meeting when the villagers heard of the proposed rent charges. They requested time to consider them and the meeting was adjourned. Several meetings followed during which the Commissioner heard and considered many objections. One of the principal objectors was Mr. John Buckmaster, owner of the mill, who claimed that since he had taken over the mill he had paid no tithe and saw no reason why he should pay a rent charge.

After a long argument it was finally decided that he should pay a sum of £8: 5: 9. The Commissioner commented "I found the question of these mills to be one of very great difficulty and indeed the same remark applies to the entire apportionment of this parish. The very great number of the parcels which lie dispersed in the open fields on which no apportionment has been made rendered any accurate comparison of the rates charged therein impossible, and in the absence of any satisfactory evidence I felt myself compelled to overrule the objections on the score of inequality." The final assessment of the Commissioner was that the tithing of Edlesborough be assessed at a gross rent charge of £1,614 per annum, valued at: –

1531.58161 Bushels of Wheat at 7s. 0¼d. per bushel  
 2718.31580 Bushels of Barley at 3s. 11½d. per bushel  
 3912.72727 Bushels of Oats at 2s. 9d. per bushel.

The detailed survey which the Commissioner made of the parish provides valuable information as to the ownership, occupancy and type of property present in the village at the time (see Appendix II).

### The Poor

Another rate which had burdened the parish for more than two centuries was the Poor Rate. Originally the poor were the concern of the church and were cared for by the giving of alms and charity by the monastic houses. But the lack of church funds led to a number of Acts of Parliament which placed increasing responsibility for the poor upon the civil authorities. Following the Reformation the responsibility was passed over to the parish. The giving of alms was still voluntary though incumbents and bishops were required to remind parishioners every Sunday to show charity to their neighbours. Gradually the giving of alms became a legal obligation until the Great Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601. This Act was intended as a temporary measure but in 1640 it was made permanent and formed the basis of poor law administration for the next two centuries. The most important section of the 1601 Act ordered "the churchwardens and four, three, or two substantial householders to be nominated each year as overseers of the poor, and imposing on them the duty of maintaining and setting to work the poor, the funds being provided by taxation of every inhabitant, parson, vicar, and other and every occupier of lands, houses, tithes ..." (Tate 1969). Various other Acts followed, one in 1662 which made it almost impossible for the poor to move from their parish of settlement, and another in 1723 authorising the building of workhouses to provide work for paupers. Persons who refused to work in the workhouse were not allowed any further relief. The nearest workhouse for the poor of Edlesborough was at Leighton Buzzard but it would appear that very few people were ever sent there from the village.

There were three overseers at Edlesborough, two of them churchwardens and one a landowner who was responsible for keeping the accounts. Generally, the overseers do not appear to have been too harsh towards the poor people and there are many items entered in the accounts which could hardly be classified as essential.

In 1834 there were 22 people receiving regular weekly allowances ranging from 1/6 – 5/6. The widows of the Janes family occur frequently and entries such as this are common: –

"1834

July 19	James Janes ill	£ – : 7: –
Aug. 2	The Men for sitting up with James Janes	£ – : 13: 6
Aug. 9	The Women for doing for James Janes	£ – : 8: –

His burial is recorded for August 8<sup>th</sup> and followed by a weekly allowance of 1s. 6d. for his widow and family.

Numerous entries in the accounts deal with sickness and genuine efforts appear to have been made by the overseers to help the infirm.

“1834

Apr. 26	Francis Seabrook his daughter ill	£ – : 2: 6
	Francis Seabrook expenses with his daught.	£ – : 5: –

July 12	James Hawkins illustrates	£ – : 3: 6
	For half a pint of Gin for Jas. Hawkins	£ – : 1: –

“1835

Jan. 17	Thom. Room his wife confined	£ – : 3: –
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The funeral expenses and coffins were frequently paid for by the overseers.



*Taskers Row – cottages which traditionally housed the takers who flailed the corn*

Farmers often agreed to take poor men as labourers, the farmers paying a certain amount towards their wages and the parish making up the residue as follows: –

“1834

Apr. 26	James Turpin to make up his pay	£ – : 1: –
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May 17	Wm. Saunders, Wm. Green to make up their pay	£ – : 2: –
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Occasionally a humorous note creeps into the harassed overseers' accounts: –

“1834

May 24	David White 1/6, Wm. Cripps 1/6, Wm. Cook 1/6 to keep off the Parish till Michaelmas	£ – : 3: 6”
--------	--	-------------

Clothing was another item supplied: –

“1834

Dec. 20	for a round frock for David White	£ – : 3: 10
Mar. 7	Wm. Tompkins (orphan) pair of shoes	£ – : 10: –
Mar. 28	For making gown and 2 caps for King's wife	£ – : 2: 8”

Even lawbreakers were not denied parish aid: –

“1835

Mar. 28	Part of expense of Wm. Newman being bailed out of Prison	£ – : 9: 4”
---------	--	-------------

Illegitimate children could be the cause of great expense to the parish. If the father was discovered, he was required to pay the overseers for the maintenance of his child or, if he was single, to marry the mother. Should he refuse either of these alternatives he could be charged and committed to gaol, as was “George Howes committed on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1827 by the Rev. W. B. Wroth for want of sureties to answer the Parish Officers of Edlesborough for begetting Ann Rogers, single woman, with child.”

Although the overseers of Edlesborough apparently conducted the administration of their poor in a satisfactory manner, there was growing discontent with the rising poor rates throughout the rest of the country. A Royal Commission was set up to enquire into the administration of the poor. As a result of their enquiries the Poor Act of 1834 was passed. This Act abolished the old parochial system and amalgamated the parishes into unions, to be governed by boards of guardians elected by the ratepayers and established the central board of Poor Law Commissioners who held supervisory powers.

Edlesborough was administered by the union at Leighton Buzzard from 1835 and the overseers' only task was to collect the poor rates and deliver them to the auditor of the union.

### Charities:

Charitable bequests were usually entrusted to the incumbent or churchwardens for administration. Edlesborough had five charities which continued to be administered during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Report of Charity Commissioners 1819 – 1837).

**Randell's Charity:** – In the Parliamentary returns of 1786 a donor of this name is stated to have given, by deed dated 1597, five quarters of wheat and money for the poor. Forty-nine bushels of wheat are yearly sent by Lady Bridgewater to the mill in respect of this charity. They are ground and the flour baked at her expense; the bread is made up into four-pound loaves which are given away by the parish officers on Easter Monday.

**Burghope's Charity:** – George Burghope, formerly Vicar of Edlesborough, made an agreement with the Duke of Bridgewater in 1723 that certain lands should be conveyed to the Duke and the proceeds from these lands given to the churchwardens to distribute to the poor who

complied with the requirements of the charity. The Charity Commissioners had this comment to make: –

“The directions in the deed regarding the preaching of certain sermons are not now attended to in all cases, it having been found impracticable to obtain a congregation on some of the days mentioned. The only direction now attended to is as follows – ‘and likewise yearly pay the clerk of the said parish 3s. 4d. upon St. John’s day for the tolling of the bell; and also after the death of George Burghope on the day of his funeral and every year for ever afterwards on the anniversary of the same after Divine Service is read, preach a sermon in commemoration of the said George Burghope, and within 10 days after the funeral distribute 20s. and so yearly for ever afterwards distribute 20s. amongst poor widows and other poor inhabitants of Edlesborough that should attend the last mentioned service and sermon.’”

Obviously the Rev. Burghope intended that the poor should not be allowed to forget their benefactor!

Other charities were Colemare’s charity which left 10s. for prayer books for the children of the Sunday School; Ginger’s charity which provided 20s. for the poor of the parish; and the Church Estate of two houses and eight acres of land, left by Sir John Sorrey on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1504, the rent of which was to be used for the relief of the poor.

### **The School:**

In 1849 the Countess of Bridgewater opened the village school which she had endowed; with her at the opening was Viscount Alford, the future Lord Brownlow. He presented the school with £1 to mark the occasion. The school had one room with a gallery and benches for the children to sit on. Straw plaiting was allowed for three hours a day at the request of the parents. About 80 children attended the school but absences were frequent during the bad weather. In addition to the usual holidays, the school also closed at harvest time to allow the children to help in the fields. Many children started school at the age of three years and for some this was too soon; the master wrote of Joseph Janes “Mother will send him again when he is older”. The school had both a master and a mistress. The vicar visited weekly to teach the children their catechism. Previously, the only teaching that had taken place was at the Vicar’s Sunday School and possibly at a small cottage at Eaton Gate, marked as a schoolroom on the Tithe Map, for which no records exist.

### **Prosecution of Felons:**

During the eighteenth century, many Acts of Parliament declared that when a person broke the law half of the penalties paid by him following conviction should be given to the informant of the crime. Property owners formed Associations to provide a fund for the payment of additional rewards to reformers (Tate 1969).

Such an Association was formed between Edlesborough and the neighbouring parish of Ivinghoe. The members published a notice in 1815 which offered the following rewards: –

“Wilfully setting Fire to any House, Out-house, Barn, Stable, Stack or Rick of Corn, Hay, Straw, Wood or Furze	£10: – : –
Burglary or Housebreaking	£ 5: 5: –

Stealing or Killing or Maiming any Horse, Mare or Gelding, Ox, Cow, Calf, Sheep, Lamb or Swine	£ 5: 5: –
Stealing Corn or Grain, thrashed or unthrashed, or stealing Hay out of any Rick or Hovel, or stealing Corn, Grain, Grass or Hay, either growing or in Stacks, Cocks or Trusses	£ 5: 5: –
Highway or Footpad Robbery	£ 3: 3: –
Buying or receiving any Stock, Goods or Effects, the Property of a Subscriber, knowing the same to have been stolen	£ 3: 3: –
Breaking or entering any Barn or Outhouse with intent to steal	£ 2: 2: –
Breaking or stealing any Gates, Hedges, Hurdles, Stakes, Posts, Rails or Pales, or any Ironwork belonging thereto	£ 2: 2: –
Cutting the Manes and Tails of Horses, Mares or Geldings, or Cutting the Tails of Bulls, Oxen, Cows, Calves, Sheep or Lambs, or otherwise disfiguring them	£ 2: 2: –
Robbing or maliciously damaging any Garden, Orchard or Fish Pond	£ 1: 1: –
Stealing or maliciously killing any Poultry or Dogs	£ 1: 1: –
Stealing or damaging any Waggons, Carts, Ploughs or other Implements of Husbandry, or any Ironwork therefrom	£ 1: 1: –
Stealing Turnips, Turnip Tops, Green Peas, or other Vegetables from the Fields	£ 1: 1: –
Stealing a Mule or Ass	£ – : 10: 6
Stealing Haulm	£ – : 10: 6
And for every other Offence not before specified, such Rewards as the Committee shall think proper.”	

It was, of course, the duty of the Parish Constable to apprehend the offenders and bring them before a Magistrate. The local Justice of the Peace was the Rev. Wroth; he took up his office in 1822 and held it for over thirty years. On the whole the villagers appeared to have been quite a law-abiding community. Maybe the presence of a Magistrate in the village discouraged many would-be offenders. A few, however, took the risk and for those convicted the penalties were often severe.

“Midsummer 1839.

William Scrivener charged with having feloniously stolen a quantity of straw platt of the value of six shillings upwards.

Verdict – To be transported for ten years”

also

“William Emerton alias William Plomer charged with having on the night of the 10<sup>th</sup> May last, at the Parish of Edlesborough, feloniously stolen a stone bottle, of the value of one shilling and five quarts of rum of the value of ten shillings upwards the goods of William Holland.

Verdict – To be transported for 15 years”.

Some of the cases were rather pathetic and were treated more leniently, as was: –

“Emma Hawkins charged with stealing 3 herrings and 4 ozs. Butter value together 5d. property of Charles Thorn at Edlesborough on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1855.

Verdict – Imprisonment for one month in the House of Correction at Aylesbury.”



## Highways

Another unpaid parish officer was the Surveyor of the Highways. The upkeep of the highways was originally the responsibility of the manor but, like so many other duties, it was passed over to the parish. The Surveyor inspected the roads of his parish at regular intervals and arranged for the repairs. The inhabitants of the parish were legally supposed to undertake 'statute labour' which meant that they should contribute towards the repairs by physical labour or by providing raw materials for the purpose. Besides supervising the repairs it was also the Surveyor's duty to collect the Highway or Stone rate which was levied on the parishioners to pay for the upkeep of the roads. At Edlesborough the repairs were carried out by the labouring poor which helped to solve the employment problems of the overseers. The Highway rate was collected annually and varied from 10d. to 1s. 6d. in the pound. In 1840 it was agreed at a Vestry Meeting "that from hereafter all cottagers be exonerated from paying any Stone or Highway Rates except such as keep or draw a cart or any suchlike carriage on the Roads."

There was a small public chalk quarry about half-way between Edlesborough and the hamlet of Dagnall which was used by the people of the village for supplying chalk rag to repair both of the roads and the paths on their property.

Generally the village appears to have been efficiently and economically administered by its parochial officers, despite their many difficulties. By 1851 it had developed into a thriving community of 1,838 people, a figure which was not reached again until recent years. The Rev. Wroth, leader of the village in so many capacities during the time of its expansion, was finally laid to rest in the churchyard in May 1863, having served as Vicar of Edlesborough for nearly half a century.

## APPENDIX I

A Rate for the Repair of the Church in the Parish of Edlesborough at Six Pence in the Pound Made at a Vestry held December 15<sup>th</sup> 1820. (1<sup>st</sup> column – each payment; 2<sup>nd</sup> column – cumulative payments by individual.)

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Edlesborough Division						
Ashwell, Richard				–	1	9
Batchelar, John	–	6	6			
do. Tithe	–	1	7½	–	8	1½
Bliss, John				–	1	6
Bliss, Joseph	–	4	–			
do. Glebe Land	–	1	6			
do. Tithe	–	–	6	–	6	–
Battams, James				–	2	–
Barnard, Joseph	1	–	–			
do. Tithe	–	–	9	1	–	9
Bird, Wm. And Janes				–	1	6
Cheshire, George				–	1	10½
Cheshire, Mrs.	–	9	6			
do. Tithe	–	1	3	–	10	9
Faulkner, Joseph				–	1	6
Ginger, Mrs.	3	9	–			
do. Leaches	–	–	6			
do. Own	–	3	–			
do. Northall	–	1	6			
do. Tithe	–	15	–	4	9	–
Gray, Robert				–	3	–
Hawkins, Joseph	–	10	–			
do. Lotts	–	–	6			
do. Tithe	–	3	10½	–	14	4½
Heylers, John				–	3	–
Howes, John				–	1	–
Hawkins, William	1	8	1½			
do. Own	–	17	6			
do. Deans land	–	9	6			
do. Tithe	–	6	7½	3	1	9
Horn, Francis				–	–	1½
Horn, Daniel	–	–	4½			
do. Tithe	–	–	3	–	–	7½
Horn, Thomas				–	–	3
Janes, James	–	2	6			
do. Seabrooks	–	–	10½	–	3	4½
Janes, William				–	1	3



## APPENDIX II

Description of the land and dwellings shown on the portion of the Edlesborough Tithe Map illustrated opposite the title page of the study (Frontispiece). In the Tithe Award they are listed under landowners, but for easy reference I have re-arranged them in numerical order.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
153	Nathaniel Peppiatt	Mary Peppiatt Thomas Stanbridge	2 Cottages and Gardens
154	Rev. W. B. Wroth	Thomas Twidell	Church Yard
155	John Groom	Robert Gray	Bell Public House, Garden & Commons
156	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
157	John Peppiatt	Himself	Greyhound Public House, Premises & Commons
157a	Thomas Peppiatt	Nathaniel Peppiatt Joseph Emerton Thomas Tame	3 Cottages and Gardens
157b	John Peppiatt	Himself	Orchard – Meadow
157c	Richard Gadsden	Joseph Room	House and garden
157d	John Peppiatt	Himself	Orchard – Meadow
158	Countess of Bridgewater	Thomas Twidell	Part of Barn Close – Arable
159	Jane Cartes Charity	John Deeley Richard Ginger	2 Cottages and Gardens
160	do.	John Peppiatt	Dodds Close – Arable
161	Dean of Windsor	Thomas Twidell	Well Close – Arable
162a	Countess of Bridgewater	do.	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Well Meads – Meadow
162b	do.	do.	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> do. do.
163	do.	do.	Home Close – Meadow
164	do.	do.	Homestead, Yard, Moat, Common
164a	do.	do.	Orchard & Rickyard – Meadow
165	do.	do.	Beech Close & Pond
166	Rev. W. B. Wroth	Himself	Vicarage House & Garden, Commons, Frontage & premises
166a	do.	do.	Lawn – Meadow
167	Countess of Bridgewater	Rev. W. B. Wroth	Town Close – Meadow

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
167c	John Cartes Charity	John Peppiatt	In 4 <sup>th</sup> Platt – Meadow
168	William Pratt	Himself	Home Close – Meadow
169	do.	do.	Homestead, Commons, Frontage & Moat
169a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
170	Joseph Hawkins	Samuel Hawkins	Homestead, Commons, Frontage & Moat
170a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
171	do.	do.	Home Close – Meadow
172	Robert Hawkins	William Barker Henry Hawkins Thomas Shillingford	3 Cottages and Gardens
172a	do.	Himself David Hawkins	Orchard, Outbuildings, Commons & Frontage
173	Jesse Pearson	Himself	House, Cottage, Barn, Garden & Frontage
173a	do.	Hannah Mead	Orchard and Commons
174	Countess of Bridgewater	Robert Hawkins David Hawkins	Jacksons Close – Meadow
175	Edmund Fearnley Whittingstall	Henry Eustace	Axe and Compasses, Commons & Frontage
175a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
176	Bartle Pearson	Himself Thomas Purton Edmund Scott	3 Cottages and Garden & Frontage
176a	do.	Himself	Close and Commons
176b	do.	William Room Cabel Tasey	2 Cottages and Gardens
177	Countess of Bridgewater	John Tompkins	Cottage, Garden, Commons & Frontage
177a	do.	do.	Orchard



<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
178	Thomas Tompkins	Himself James Tompkins Susan Carter Thomas Warren George Tompkins George Arnold Francis Reeve William Carter Jesse Neal William Janes Thomas Copleston	11 Cottages and Schoolroom and Frontage
179	Joseph Bliss	Himself	Homestead, Garden, Commons & Frontage
180	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
180a	do.	Ezekiel Turvey Isaac Barsford James Saunders	3 Cottages and Gardens
180b	do.	Joseph Anstee Joseph Smith	2 Cottages and Gardens
181	George Heathcoat	John Impey	Cottage and Garden
182	Thomas Cheshire	Ann Saunders	Cottage, Garden & Frontage
183	Rev. W. B. Wroth	James Janes William Atthews	2 Cottages and Gardens
183a	do.	Ann Janes	Orchard and Barn, Commons & Frontage
184	Countess of Bridgewater	Benjamin Bliss William King	2 Cottages and Gardens
184a	do.	Thomas Twidell	Orchard – Meadow
185	do.	Thomas Emerson	Cottage, Garden & Frontage
186	John Peppiatt	John Dyer	Cottage, Commons & Frontage
186a	do.	do.	Garden
187	Thomas Howes	James Battams	House, Garden, Commons & Frontage
187a	do.	do.	Orchard
188	Ann Janes	Herself	House, Blacksmiths Shop, Garden, Homestead, Commons & Frontage

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
189	Thomas Ginger	James Stanbridge Samuel Basford George Sear	3 Cottages and Gardens
190	Mary Crow	William Sear Jonathan Gaden	2 Cottages and Gardens
191	Joseph Mead	William Bodsworth John Smith Thomas Seabrook Thomas Janes James Terpin George Read Tabes Tall	7 Cottages, Gardens & Frontage
192	Countess of Bridgewater	John Mead William King	2 Cottages and Gardens
193	Mary Hales	Herself Joseph Watts William Smith Joseph Suet Ann Smith	5 Cottages
193a	do.	Herself	Orchard – Meadow
194	John Batchelor	William Watts	2 Houses, Gardens & Frontage
194a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
194b	do.	Robert Thorn	Orchard & Buildings – Meadow
195	Ashtons Charity	Thomas Ginger	Homestead, Gardens, Commons & Frontage
195a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
196	do.	do.	Dove House Close – Meadow
197	do.	do.	Square Close – Meadow
198	do.	do.	Fish Pond Close – Meadow
200	do.	do.	Meadow
201	John Batchelor	Robert Thorn	Hogs Lower Croft and Barn – Meadow
202	do.	do.	Barns Close – Meadow
203	do.	do.	Hogs Upper Close – Meadow

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
204	John Buckmaster	Himself	Mills, Homestead and Commons
204a	do.	do.	Meadow
207	Countess of Bridgewater	Robert Hawkins & David Hawkins	Great Close – Meadow
208	do.	do.	Pightle – Meadow
209	do.	do.	Spring Close – Meadow
210	do.	do.	Cherry Tree Close – Meadow
211	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
212	Richard Parry	Henry Vasey	House, Garden & Commons
213	Countess of Bridgewater	William Cripps Thomas Sherman John Brinklow William Ginger	4 Cottages and Gardens
213a	do.	Thomas Twidell	Orchard – Meadow
214	John Buckmaster	John Tippett & James Tippett	2 Cottages & Gardens
214a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
215	Frederick Burr	Thomas Field	Beer Shop & Premises
215a	do.	do.	Orchard
216	Countess of Bridgewater	Robert Hawkins & David Hawkins	Homestead, Gardens, Commons & Frontage
217	do.	do.	Rick Yard & Close
218	do.	Benjamin Gray, Jnr.	Cottage, Gardens & Frontage
218a	James Hedges	Richard Cheshire	Orchard – Meadow
218b	do.	do.	House, Gardens, Commons & Frontage
219	Countess of Bridgewater	William Green Empty Joseph Impey	3 Cottages, Gardens & Frontage
220	Arthur McNamara	Joseph Crawley	Homestead, Garden, Commons & Frontage
220a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
221	Thomas Twidell	John Hales Elizabeth Burt Rebecca King William Burt	4 Cottages, Gardens & Frontage
221a	do.	William Burt	Orchard – Meadow
222	Arthur MaNamara	William Saunders	Cottage & Garden
222a	do.	Joseph Crawley	Close – Meadow
223	do.	do.	Home Close – Meadow
225	do.	do.	Further Close – Meadow
226	Rev. J. Halsey	Thomas Ginger	Little Public Moar – Meadow
226a	Ann Pratt	Hannah Janes Robert Thorn	2 Cottages & Gardens Osborns West Robins Field
226b	Arthur McNamara	Joseph Crawley	Middle Osborns Robins Field – Meadow
227	Countess of Bridgewater	Robert Hawkins David Hawkins	Home Close – Meadow House & Buildings
228	Rev. J. Halsey	John Peppiatt	Great Public Moar – Meadow
229	Ashtons Charity	Thomas Ginger	Mead Close – Meadow
230	John Cheshire	Himself	Beer Shop & Premises
230a	Edward Cheshire	Himself Iabez Bates	2 Cottages, Premises and Commons
230b	do.	Samuel Hawkins	Orchard & Commons
231	Countess of Bridgewater	John Ginger John Watt Richard Janes	3 Cottages & Gardens
231a	do.	John Ginger	Orchard, Frontage & Commons
232	Ashtons Charity	Thomas Ginger	Homestead, Garden & Moat
232a	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
232b	do.	do.	Orchard – Meadow
234	do.	Joseph Hassard	Cottage & Garden
234a	do.	do.	Orchard
235	Jane Cartes Charity	John Peppiatt	Homestead, Commons & Frontage
235a	do.	do.	Meadow

<b>No.</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Occupiers</b>	<b>Description</b>
236	Rev. W. B. Wroth	Himself	Site of cottage
237	Ashtons Charity	Thomas Ginger	Orchard & Culver Close – Meadow
238	do.	do.	Walnut Tree Close – Meadow
239	do.	do.	Sanfoin Close – Meadow
376	Robert Casten	Himself	Cottage and Garden
377	William Casten	Himself	Cottage and Garden
378	Thomas Room	Himself	Cottage and Garden
379	Matthew Janes	Himself	Cottage and Garden
380	William Janes	Himself	Cottage and Garden
381	Thomas Janes	Himself	Cottage and Garden
404	Charles Scrivener	Himself	Cottage and Garden
409			Edlesborough Green
420	Road from Church to Edlesborough Green		
421	Road from Church to Bean Furlong		
422	Road from Edlesborough Green to Totternhoe		
425	Roadway to the Mill		

NOTE The Earl of Bridgewater died in 1829 leaving no heirs. The Countess and Trustees administered his estates until 1853 when the second Lord Brownlow assumed the title of the estates.

### **Bibliography**

The majority of this study has been compiled from original documents, records, and letters relating to Edlesborough and its inhabitants. The following books have also been used.

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