

APPENDIX I

RECOLLECTIONS OF TWINEHAM

MRS ELIZABETH SHERLOCK

1846-1936

I was born the year of 1846 on the 31st December in a cottage at the top of Wineham Lane on the Twineham side. The lane divides the Parishes of Twineham and Shermanbury. When I was 15 months old my Father was made Clerk of Twineham Church so he moved to a House called Slipe, as it was near the Church. It was the house where his Father was born and where his Grandfather died. We lived there 40 years (he was Clerk over 20 years), then when Mother died we went to Haywards Heath with my brother when he died at the age of 87 and was brought back to Twineham to be buried where many of his Family lay as far back as the 16th Century, as may be seen by some old stones laying in the Church Porch, which were dug up when the drain was made. My Mother for many years did the Church cleaning and when she died I took it which I did for 46 years, but had to resign for ill health and old age. I loved the old place and I often think how I used to climb the old oak trees to shake the acorns down for Father's pigs. Most every poor man kept a Pig ready for Christmas and I often thing of the games we

used to have in Slipe Plat with other children, but at Slipe alone there was 22 children at one time as Slipe was divided into 3 cottages and on the other side 2 more cottages, now all pulled down. I think our favourite game in Summer was Stoolball and Old Tom Tiddler's Ground in winter. The Boys used to slide on the pond then. The Church is a dear old Church built in 1516 in the reign of King Henry 8th. It is called St Peter. There was 3 bells and on the middle one is the King's Head in brass that is named St Peter, same as the Church and every Sunday morning Father had to go at 8 o'clock to ring that bell for 10 minutes. How I liked to go with him. The third one is named St John and in olden times as soon as the Parson entered the church it was pulled for a few minutes so anyone could tell when he arrived if they were within sound. We always called it the Parson bell. The other one was cracked but a few years ago they were all taken down and recast and 2 more added: when they were brought back I sat on the one called St Peter and ate an apple. The Font used to be under the bells, it has been lately moved near the entrance door. There used to be a nice gallery of carved oak, one side 3 seats for certain Pews, the other side was square with seats all around and a table in the centre, the Choir used to be there. It was

stringed music choir, chiefly composed of working men of the Parish in round Frocks and leather boot leggings. There were 2 Bass Viols, 2 Violins and a Flute. They used to start the singing with a piece of flat wood called a Pitch Pipe something like a Flute, but the singing was beautiful, people come for miles to hear it. The Anthem and Chants were lovely, we had no Hymn Books at that time, it was the new Version of King David's Psalms they used. The old Book is still in old chest in the church that stand inside the Altar rails. On the left hand side of the Church (Chancel) used to be the 10 Commandments on the wall in large letters like 2 tables of stone. On one side was Moses in a Blue robe and Yellow Girdle, on the other Aaron in a Yellow robe and a Censor in his hand with Bells around his waist. Over the Chancel Arch was a large picture of the Lion and Unicorn. Now there is one of the Holy Family.

There is a large square pew in carved oak belonging to the Manor estate, the Woods and the Stapleys of Hickstead Place whose tablets are over a pew and some stones in the Aisle. There used to be 2 square pews in the Chancel. One for the Rector and one for the Churchwardens. Mr John Botting, he lived at Twineham Place, a Farm near the Church, for many

years. The choir seats are where the pews used to be. There is a Pulpit of carved oak with a Banner of St Peter with cross keys on it. It was designed by Miss M. Molyneaux when the choir of string music broke up we girls and boys had to sing. We girls wore White Tippetts and Aprons and Straw Bonnets with a piece of blue ribbon across. We were proud. The boys had round Frocks and check neck handkerchiefs. At first we had only the Pitch Pipe to start us, but soon had a Harmonium. Now there is a nice organ and Surpliced Choir.

In olden times there was no Rectory the Parson used to come from Albourne named Bridger to have a service. As near as I know the Rectory was built a little more than a hundred years ago by Mr Goring whose tablet is in the Church. At his death it was given to Mr W. Molyneaux, whose tablet is also in the Church, was there 34 years. A large Cross of Stone Granite marks his grave at the entrance of the old Churchyard. There is a piece of ground at the East End of the Church where a Grave is dug for 4 people of the Rectory, deep, enough for 4 to be buried but only 2 are buried there. There used to be a iron railing round it but now there is only a few shrubs. There is a vault under the Communion where 3 people are buried. One is the Revd J Goring.

The stone to the entrance to it is just outside the rails, a square piece cut in it for a Brass Plate to be put in but owing to some dispute was never put in. Father always said it was put in the Rectory somewhere as at the time he died it was not built, but it had never been found.

There used to be a small house near the Pond near the Rectory Stables where a man lived, his name was Hamshar, he was a Butcher and what is now the School Playground was called Butchers Plat as any spare cattle used to be put there and what is the School now was a Barn. It was build to put Corn or anything in for the Parson, as at one time some of the Tithe was paid in that way. There is an old saying "Like the Parson Barn - Receive all that comes". The road past the Rectory up to the Church was always kept in repair by Church money, and there was a gate to (opposite) the shrubbery gate to part it from the public road. One farmer used to go with waggons to fetch it (shingle) from Brighton beach. The Rectory is a pretty place. My Father was gardener there for several years. I used to go weeding some time for 1/2d an hour. There is a stained glass window in the Communion "The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary", - and a carved reardos, a beautiful cross and some Brass

Candlesticks. There used to be a piece of red velvet hung across with a card with God is Love painted on by the Revd Molyneaux. There is another stained glass window at the side of the Church of St Michael in memory of a son of Col McKergow who was killed in the Great War. About 40 years ago the Churchyard was enlarged and a Confirmation was held the same day, the first one that was ever known to be held there. A small piece of ground near the entrance gate where some Quakers was buried - it had a little hedge to part it - with the consent of the Society of Friends it was made level but boundary stones are put to mark the spot. There was a Sunday School on Sundays for boys and girls in the mornings at 9 and 2 in the afternoon. We had 15 lessons to learn.

There is a Post Office not far from the Church where it had been for many years. A Mr Simmons lived there. He was a Tailor and he had 2 men to work for him. The House has been rebuilt but the old Tailor workshop is still there and the old Poplar trees.

There was an old Postman that used to walk from Cuckfield to Twineham every day to bring letters. His name was Lines(?) and when he got too old his son did (it) but he had a Donkey and Cart as he was lame.

Men used to come all the way from Brighton to hawk fish^h in small carts not much bigger than boxes drawn by dogs.

Some farmers used to plough with oxen, it was a sight to see a team of oxen instead of horses, and the splendid Oxen in Slipe field belonging to the Woods of Hickstead - we were never afraid of them. That is by the Manor ground of the Woods and Stapleys of Hickstead Place. A fine old place and very interesting, where Miss Davidson, a descendent of the Woods lives. It has an old building in the grounds called the Castle.

The Stage Coach used to run up that road to London and there is a Hotel called Castle Hotel up a little higher and there was a Toll Gate at the top of the Lane. Down by the Brook there was a Mill built by the Woods. It was built of Brick and near the top was a Balcony you could walk round. There were 2 water wheels, a wind mill and an Engine to work by steam. The water came from the River Adur. There was a Wheelwrights Shop and 2 Blacksmiths Shops and a Bake House that supplied Bread for miles around. It was built on a plan of some Mills of the Emperor of France. As Miss Davidson's Great-Grandfather was an engineer and he had been

in France with Louis Phillipe and had done the work for him, and when the Revolution broke out he came away and lived in Brighton and he gave the Emperor shelter when he had to flee. Now all the Mill has gone except an old Cart shed.

Above that there is a road called Twineham Green. There was a strip of Green at one time all up one side. When the enclosure act was passed it was all added to the Manor ground. Now some of the old cottages that was there are gone and some new ones built and some council houses. One old house was called the workhouse as in olden times every Parish had their own Poor House. There was an old house where there was a Day School taught by a married couple. We had to pay 3d a week a child. I remember the whacking we had. They left when I was 8 years old, after that there was no school for some time, so our Parson used to take us for a few hours when he could. There is a lane that turns off Twineham Green called Bob Lane. There is a little farm called Crewes. It used to be thatched. Now it is rebuilt and also some cottages. A little below it is a Lodge. It used to be only a small gate and footpath; now it is a nice carriage drive up to the House. It used to be called Knawes where a farmer named Dav'ey lived many years. It used to be a small farm house, now there is a wide road and a Park on

each side and a Lodge at the North and East entrances and the house has been rebuilt into a very nice Place, named now Twineham Grange, the residence of Col McKergow Esquire.

Then on the other side of Bob Lane is a road in some distance to a large house called Court, for many years the home of Lady Smythe. It was a mansion almost, but it was built of bad material. It was only built a little over sixty year ago. There is an old house up the drive called Riddens that was there before the Court. A workman called Waller used to live there, a bit more had been added to it but the old front is just how it used to be. There is lovely trees up there and fruit trees.

There are several little farms in Twineham. One called New House is about half a mile below the Post Office. One called Park up a field opposite the Post Office. People name of Wood lived there 2 or 3 generations. One called Wapses beyond the Church in some fields. The people named Wood were related to the others as they had married first cousins; they lived there for fifty years I lived as a servant to one of them in Brighton for many years - then came back to Twineham. Fifty years ago she said the roads were so dirty in winter she had to ride on the Headlands to

get any where and in some places (they) had to lay faggots on the road to get out. The Farmers wives and ladies had to wear Pattens to Church in my time - 4 inches high and rings as large round as - (?). She used to tell me how boys as soon as they could work, the Parish gave them a suit of clothes and (sent them) to a Farmer's house to work whether they liked it or not and had to stay 12 months. She told me of the one boy when the first Saturday night came he had worked through one week. He had on only 11 months and 3 weeks before he had served his time, poor boy.

I am afraid he had not got much of a place. Girls had to do all the milking in a Farm House. Very seldom a man knew how to milk. I learnt to milk at 11 years. Twineham used to be very troubled with Scarlet Fever, no wonder as it was very bad about water. There was plenty of it, but mostly in Ponds unless you fetched it from the Brooke, no other to drink or cook with. It is much better now.

Twineham people as a rule was very fond of the Church and most time very good in doing any little kind act in illness even if they did have a little tiff some time, - which you may be sure they did.

E.S.

Comment

Elizabeth Sherlock lived in retirement for nearly twenty years in a farm cottage at Twineham Grange. As her garden lay alongside the drive she was perfectly placed to have a chat about old times with those who passed her fence. Madge evidently persuaded her that she ought to put her recollections on paper. She eventually handed in some pages from an Exercise Book which turned out to be two copies of her memories written in pencil - neither easy to read. Madge wrote in some words and no doubt congratulated the Author, who was about 80 years of age at the time.

There are a few occasions when other versions exist of what she writes about, but she does cover in some detail a period of enormous change in village life - particularly in Mid-Sussex where the London - Brighton railway attracted new residents. For example, between her birth and the year 1900 five new "gentlemen's residencies" were built in the Parish. The new owners were promptly invited to subscribe to local organisations and to join their governing bodies. Considering there were only about 400 inhabitants this totally altered the way the Parish was run. When Elizabeth Sherlock (nee Parson) was born in 1846 the only fully educated people were the Wood family of Hickstead, the

Rector and his Curate. The majority of the villagers would not have had any education at all. Nevertheless there were tradesmen and labourers who could cope with the "three Rs" and they were quite eligible for jobs like the Parish Clerk, or running the Working Men's Club, or the Savings "Club" or the Cricket. By the end of the Century such men were more or less sidelined. It is true that Bob paid his Church rate in 1893 to the Parish Clerk who was a labourer, but for most activities the villager had a subordinate role.

It is tempting to think of the Parson memorial stones mentioned by Mrs Sherlock, as illustrative of a village life that changed very little over the centuries but was now disappearing. The stones themselves are simple sandstone rectangles 8 inches tall, flat on one side to fit against the Church wall and bevelled on the other with the name, date and inscription on the front carved into the stone. All three commemorate burials towards the end of the 17th Century (not 16th) and would have severely weathered if they had remained in position. Perhaps they mark a high point in the family history which probably embraced numerous trades over the years including the inevitable "labourer" every now and then, but still holding respect and the chance to take a part in the government of the village.

Further, we can speculate that if the family were in the village or nearby from, say 1650 to 1936 there is always the possibility their ancestors were around to watch the new brick Church being build in 1516 - an attractive idea.

It is not surprising that Mrs Sherlock records with sympathy the experience of a boy conscripted to work on a farm for a year where he was not well treated. The system was most unpopular and thoroughly resented. Even as late as 1900's ^b it was possible to meet men who had been summoned out of school to do their year with a local farmer. One man remarked "He was not too bad to work for, but it was not what I wanted so I left at the end of twelve months."

"Pattens" get a mention as they were a necessary part of the equipment of village women who needed something to get them fairly dry shod over the country lanes in winter. A sole of wood had an iron frame fixed to the underside to which two iron rings were attached - one below the tread of the sole and the other at the heel. The upper had two strips of leather nailed to the wooden sole which would be laced at the ankle. To put them on the wearer poked their shoe under the leather upper and laced the ankle. Mrs Sherlock claims

to have been four inches above the road - unusually high. It required a lot of practice to walk in them. "Ladies", of course, had no need of them - or not often! One writer on country affairs mentions that Pattens had a great attraction for puppies and recall the anger and excitement of the women when the puppies ran way with their pattens.