

CLARE, SUFFOLK

David Hatton

INTRODUCTION

This is a computerised version of a 164 page A4 spirally bound book entitled Clare, Suffolk first published in 1994. The original version, which may still be available for a time from Butcher's newsagents, Well Street, Clare, or myself, also contained illustrations.

The original book came about because there was little information about Clare available at the time. Two source books (the full version of Gladys Thornton's History of Clare and Mrs Barnardiston's book on Clare priory) had long been out of print, their authors deceased, and the publishers out of business, but their material deserved perpetuating, and provided me with a useful starting point. When we moved to Clare I began gathering material from a variety of places – newspapers and other records which came to hand, guides, history books, lectures at the local historical society, conversations with old residents, and many other sources. Often I did not record the origin – which helps to explain the paucity of the bibliography which follows. However, Gladys Thornton's book provides helpful extended bibliographies and information and authentication of many original sources (but only, of course, up to 1928, the year of publication of that book).

I make no claim to be an expert in any field, let alone all those involved in this book. The most I can hope is to be a jack-of-all-trades, gathering, collating and popularising material drawn from many sources. In doing this I have tried to write in everyday rather than academic style, sometimes inserting the meaning of less common words when I think it might help the casual reader.

The book covers four areas:-

An A-Z of Clare's historical features, including potted biographies of the Clare lords.

The old streets of Clare and their buildings.

Clare Priory – its history under the Augustinian friars and private ownership, a description of the house, infirmary and ruins, and stories associated with the priory.

Clare parish church – a detailed account of the church and articles on special aspects.

In more recent years a full and illustrated account of the history and features of many of Clare's houses has been made available via a CD-ROM at Clare Ancient House Museum, where many other records and artefacts are also on view. Anyone wishing to delve into Clare, present or past, should make that a first port of call.

David Hatton
February 2004

WELCOME TO CLARE!

'What a marvellous sunset, considering it is such a small village' a traveller abroad once said. The thought might be amended for Clare – 'What a great place considering it is only a little town!' Not dead, as some small communities appear to be, not with the touristy-look of some, but, with its variety of houses and some spacious streets, very pleasing to view, full of interest to explore, and a great place in which to live. Back in 1943 the government included Clare among Britain's fifteen prettiest villages as an example to the whole nation. Surely it still is. When my wife and I have been away for a day or two and enter Nethergate Street on our return, we say to each other 'It's good to be back - there's nowhere like it'.

A medieval lane to walk and a site possibly of the Iron Age to cross during a short walk to town from one side. Or from the other end, a wooded riverside to stroll by or a cornfield or priory grounds to walk through en route to the shops. Relics from Roman days. A market pre-dating 1066 and All That. A Norman motte still surmounted by the shell of a 13th century keep, and with remnants of castle walls and moats. An Augustinian priory dating back to 1248 with a fine 15th century house and peaceful ruins, but still housing a living community of friars. Beautiful houses and historical inns from the 14th century onwards. Superb pargetting. A magnificent parish church and a little museum in a picture postcard house recalling the past. An iron bridge nearly as old as the one at Ironbridge itself. A sign-posted three-mile walk to sample the surrounding countryside. And a delightful little country park, with a stranded whale of a Beechingised station standing bereft of railway lines where a castle once stood, a millstream which was a 'new cut' in the 14th century, and a little tourist centre recapitulating the history and natural history of the area.

Today, a warm, lovely, lively community where every shopping trip is a social occasion. Doctors and a chemist and shops for all everyday needs. Churches of four different traditions working in harmony (Baptist, Church of England, Roman Catholic and United Reformed). Community groups caring for the less abled, guarding the town's interests and helping finance good activities for young and old. Pensioners' activities sharing a community-owned renovated Victorian school with historical and other societies. Art, drama, music and floral societies and festivals. An occasional visit by a film crew - as when Ian Holm, Bill Owen (of 'Compo' fame) and hundreds of geese graced the High Street, or Lovejoy got up to his tricks around the town and priory for his TV series. The arrival of a prince for a wedding. A helicopter dropping a duke in for a concert. People uniting in beautifying their gardens in the attempt to become top in the 'Britain in Bloom' competition - so near so often. Best-kept village winner.

Occasional visits from Morris dancers to entertain outside an old inn. Antique lovers sometimes gathering to vie with phone calls from the U.S., Germany and Spain for bargains in auction sales which move towards the £½ million mark as a ballet shoe signed by Margot Fonteyn is sold and a world record price is reached for 18th century chairs.

These are some of the delights found in Clare.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? LOTS!

Clare's very name holds out promise. Until Domesday it was called Clara, which some link with the Anglo-Saxon 'Clara's place', but which perhaps comes from the Latin word 'clarus', meaning illustrious, renowned, or clear - the place of light or of clear water. The change to 'Clare' may have come when William the Conqueror translated the speech of his Norman tongue into the written word: it had certainly been made by 1198.

Clare has given its name to a wide range of places and things. Links with County Clare in Ireland are described in the article An Outline History of Clare which follows. The Clarenceux King of Arms, the official controlling all English heraldry south of the River Trent (the major part of England) derives his title from Clare. The dukedom of Clarence originated in Clare. Clare College Cambridge, the one-time royal residence of Claremont at Esher, and Clare Downs (an estate in Essex which belongs to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's) all take their name from this little town. Clare Market, just off Aldwych, London (which continued to exist as a road although trading ceased at the end of the 19th century) was founded in 1657 by one who bore the Clare title. And some, more dubiously, claim that Clare's vineyards were the origin of the name of the beverage claret. The local newspaper Clare Focus has listed other places with the name Clare as including Nova Scotia, South-West Australia, Michigan, and the Bordeaux region of France (where claret is produced), and claims that most Clares are wine-growing areas.

A name to be proud of.

SO, WELCOME TO CLARE !

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- B) Coats of arms and hatchments, and how to read them.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

I regret this is very brief but, as mentioned earlier, this is due to the fact that much of my material has been collected over many years from a wide variety of sources, during which time I had no plans to do anything with it, but just stored it. So, sadly I cannot supply a proper bibliography, but can at least refer the reader to some major books.

MAJOR BOOKS ON THE TOWN AND PRIORY.

BARNARDISTON, K.W. Clare Priory (W. Heffer, 1962, but now out of print).

This was written in manuscript form early in the twentieth century and published as a book by her daughter, Bertha, who added the last chapter. Mrs K.W. Barnardiston was originally Katherine Elves, and in 1902 married her cousin Sir George Digby Barker, a widower, so becoming Lady Barker. In 1916 she became a Barnardiston by a second marriage, to Lt Col Ernald Barnardiston (of the family who had owned the Priory in the 16th and 17th centuries) becoming Mrs Ernald Barnardiston. She therefore had close family links with the Priory over the centuries, and spoke from the inside of a place she knew and loved. No account of the Priory would be complete without some personal stories as she set them down.

HARPER-BILL, C. (ed.) The Cartulary of the Augustinian Friars of Clare (Boydell Press/Suffolk Records Society 1991) *Text and comment on ninety-two late 15th century folios.*

THORNTON, G.A., A History of Clare Suffolk (W. Heffer, 1928, but now out of print). *A masterpiece of wide and deep research.*

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CAUTLEY, H. Suffolk Churches (Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, 1982).

DYMOND, D. and MARTIN, E. (ed.) An Historical Atlas of Suffolk (Suffolk County Council Planning Department and Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, 1988). *This contains articles on many relevant subjects, with very comprehensive bibliographies.*

THORNTON, G.A. (Mrs J.G.S.Ward). A Short History of Clare Suffolk. (Produced in 1963) *A valuable summary and occasional updating of the larger book, available from Butcher's of Clare.*

WARD, J. English noblewomen of the later Middle Ages (Longmans, 1992). *Although not solely on Clare, this contains much about Elizabeth de Burgh, who often lived at Clare castle.*

SUFFOLK PARISH HISTORY (Suffolk Archaeological Unit, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk). *A box of material providing much information in a succinct form.*

RELEVANT VOLUMES OF THE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF ENGLAND, (Clarendon Press).

The list 'BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST from the County Council.

CLARE ANCIENT HOUSE MUSEUM CD-ROM on Clare houses. *Contains much information on history of houses and family details from the archives.*

CLARE: ANNALS OF THE BOROUGH, a series of booklets by David Ridley. *Gives details from archives from different periods of history.*

PASHLER'S LANE: A Clare childhood by Elizabeth Holdgate (Fell Beck Press 2002) *offers a descriptive account of growing up in Clare in the 1930s.*

Many books on Clare, large and small, can be purchased at Butcher's newsagents, Well Lane, Clare.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I trust that in drawing on the writing of Gladys Thornton and Mrs Barnardiston I have acted in the spirit of the hope expressed by Mrs Barnardiston's daughter - that her mother's material '*would form a base for further exploration, and keep on record the care, skill and study devoted to one of the most attractive historic houses in England while it was still the home of Suffolk people*'. I urge anyone interested to try to buy a second-hand copy of the two books.

I appreciate the interest shown in this project by relatives of the authors of the two major books on Clare:- Dr J.Ward, daughter of Mrs Gladys Ward (neeThornton) and Tony de Fonblanque, who had his own memories of the Priory's last stages as a private residence.

I am also very grateful to David Ridley for much information about individual buildings and some other aspects of the town's history, to Roy Sutton for help on points of heraldry especially regarding the Swan Inn sign, to Geof Perry for information about the railway, to speakers at Clare Historical Society and other meetings, to owners of interesting houses who have opened their doors to me (I would like to have talked to more such owners but personal circumstances restricted this), and to other local residents for encouragement and helpful suggestions. I have appreciated the friendly assistance and use of material from the community at the Priory and Fr Benedict Hackett, Augustinian historian, who scrupulously checked the text of Book III. Some other acknowledgements are made at relevant points in the books. Although I cannot now identify many miscellaneous sources I remain grateful to the unknown people on whose material I have drawn. But blame me for errors in what follows, not any of these kind people! If I am told of errors and unforgivable omissions, perhaps I can correct them in due course.

David Hatton February 2004

CLARE, SUFFOLK: BOOK I AN A-Z OF CLARE'S HISTORICAL FEATURES

AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF CLARE

Clare is a living history of England. A thousand years and more have left their trace in a general atmosphere, which one can feel in the town. Leigh Alston, local historian, has claimed that the fact that Clare has many buildings of 13th century origin, whereas most historical towns only go back to the 14th century, places Clare high in the list of interesting historical towns in the whole country. There can be few places in which the unfolding of history can be so clearly traced as in Clare. Its greatest prosperity came with the wool trade, particularly from the 15th century onwards. When that faltered there were ups and downs – but finishing on the up. Clare continued to change and grow through the centuries: seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first centuries – different forms of work and architecture. The railway came, and went. But take a look back.....

Relics from the stone and bronze ages have been found – some details are given later. The old Rum bridge on the road towards Stoke used to be called Rome bridge (a fact sadly now omitted from OS maps) perhaps hinting at Roman days. There were Roman settlements at Long Melford and Wixloe and a map indicates a possible road passing through Clare. The ambushing of the Roman ninth legion by Boudicca (Boadicea) was somewhere not too far away. Clare grew in importance in Anglo-Saxon times. It was a fortress town at the confluence of several streams with established and good trading facilities. Earl Aluric the Saxon son of Wisgar had his 'fortified seat' here, with a small religious community, probably between the Saxon church of St John and the Saxon mill, on what we speak of as the castle site.

The Normans saw the strategic significance of the site, and came to Clare very soon after the conquest. They found the setting was rich and fertile, and referred to it in Domesday – see the entry in the A-Z which follows. It already had status as a borough. Domesday says '*Then as now a market; now 43 burgesses*' and speaks of it as one of the seven boroughs of Suffolk. William the Conqueror normally rewarded those who had helped him carry out conquests with gifts of land. He gave the Honor of Clare to Richard de Bienfaite, a close relative of his. An honor was a cluster of estates or manors, and Richard became 'lord of the manor' for about a hundred and seventy of such areas in Norfolk, Essex, and other counties, with ninety-five in Suffolk. It was these which became known collectively as the Honor of Clare. Clare was one of the largest of the Suffolk manors and became the administrative centre. It was larger than the borough, stretching out to include Chilton and part of what is now Stoke-by-Clare, and running halfway to Cavendish.

Richard was to become the forerunner of a long line of de Clare lords. In the early years they developed the site of the Saxon fortifications into an extensive motte and bailey castle. The Clare lords and their descendants were among the most important men in the nation and were involved in very many of the major happenings of their

times. They built castles widely and fought in Wales and Ireland and Scotland and France. They were involved in the crusades, the struggle between king and barons, Magna Carta, the creation of the first parliament to move towards democracy by involving elected commoners as well as lords, the founding of universities and of Tintern and other abbeys and priories. The seat of the earldom of Hertford was at Clare, and the earldoms of Gloucester and March came here.

When Elizabeth de Clare became a de Burgh through marriage, two families which had been involved with names and events known to every school child were linked. Two de Clares and a brother-in-law were three of the main characters hunting with King William Rufus (there has been a suspicion he was their true prey) when he met his death in the New Forest (see the entry '2. 1090, Gilbert' in Appendix B at the end of this A-Z. Thomas de Clare and Richard de Burgh of Connaught plotted with Robert the Bruce, while Elizabeth, daughter of Richard de Burgh, became the Scotsman's second wife. A de Burgh married into the Mortimer family, a family which sometimes co-operated with and sometimes tussled with the reigning king, and which eventually secured the throne for itself. Chaucer the poet started his working life as a page to Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and brought Clare Hall into his writing under the pseudonym 'Sole Halle'.

The de Clares were closely related to the monarchs from the early days. Richard of Bienfaite, the founder of the Clare family, was, as mentioned above, a close relative of William the Conqueror. Joan (of Acre) was a daughter of Edward I. Elizabeth de Burgh married Lionel, son of Edward III, while one of her descendants, through that marriage into the Mortimer family mentioned above, became king of England in the person of Edward IV. Potted biographies of the Clare branch of these lords and their successors will be found in Appendix B. And the ordinary people: names on the town's war memorial e.g. Bareham, Ellingham, Fuller, Ince, Martin, Twitchett (to mention but a few) are found through the centuries, and continue today.

Regarding civic affairs, much followed on from the fact that Clare became a borough from the time of the early Norman lords. Details of what this implied will be found in the entry The Borough of Clare in the A-Z which follows.

The commercial side was also of great importance. The town had a market in Saxon times, and by the 1200s it was a busy trading place. From the 11th right through to the end of the 16th centuries there was plenty of employment and prosperity in Clare. The castle employed hundreds of men and women. Some of its craftsmen (smiths and carpenters and so on) worked in the town as well as in the castle. Agriculture and trading provided a good livelihood for many others, and the poor and infirm were not ignored. At the height of its glory, in the time of Elizabeth de Burgh, 'the Lady of Clare', an army was maintained at the castle, many of the men being recruited locally. From the late 13th century onwards Clare was closely associated with the Suffolk woollen industry, and this contributed greatly to its wealth and importance. Trade increased enormously in the 15th and 16th centuries, helped by Flemish weavers who settled in the district leading to East Anglia becoming the richest part of the country, with a main highway to London running through Clare. A decline set in during the 17th century. Much trade had also been lost as a result of the River Stour being made navigable as far as Sudbury in 1709. Handloom weaving came to an end about 1800 and the last weaver died in 1825, aged 83. Another local cottage industry over the years was the making of straw-plait for ladies' bonnets. Its main source of income gone, Clare sank into insignificance, becoming just a small agricultural centre. When the railway came, farmers could easily send their produce elsewhere, so the market declined and soon disappeared. One wonders how the passage of great commercial wagons bringing goods to and from the station compared with lorries in the same streets today, when it just bangs its way through. Early in the 20th century policemen controlled the traffic at both the Bell and Well lane corners.

But none of these changes brought things to an end for Clare. Farming continues to some degree. Several small workshops keep wheels turning. Shops and other services draw people from nearby villages. Increased mobility means people can continue to live in Clare although working elsewhere (but access to London by public transport was easier in the first half of the 19th century than nowadays, with passenger coaches leaving the Half Moon at 6.30 and 7.30 a.m. every weekday, and also 5.30 a.m. on Mondays). And hardly a day passes now without visitors looking around the church and wandering along the streets, while cars with foreign registration plates are often to be seen especially in the holiday season.

A few other miscellaneous points.

Sums of money are mentioned several times in the text. Values change over the years, of course, and one cannot easily express in modern coinage the old figures which I have sometimes quoted. It may be of interest to realise that when the Normans came the silver penny ('d.' = denarius) was the only English coin, and represented the value of a day's unskilled labour. Two hundred and forty of them were meant to weigh one pound, but they were often clipped around the edges or cut into halves and quarters for smaller values. The halfpenny and farthing became official coins in 1278.

Did 'our' Clare give its name to County Clare in Ireland? The records of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland contain a lecture given in 1856/7 which quotes from a 1681 publication 'Journal of Thomas Dyneley, giving some account of his visit to Ireland, 1681'. This alleges that one area of the country was allotted to Sir Thomas de Clare '*whence at this time it retains the name of County of Clare*', an assertion of a linkage of County Clare with the de Clare family – a family which over the years had branched out well beyond 'our' town. This

Thomas Dyneley also suggests that the local (i.e. Irish) Augustinian canons' Clare Abbey might have been founded by the Lionel, Duke of Clarence, who is buried at our Augustinian friars' priory – but this cannot be so because, apart from anything else, it was founded in 1189, sixty years before the Augustinian friars came to England and established themselves locally, and also the canons and friars are not related. In fact, probably for centuries before Duke Lionel's time, a local plank causeway across a muddy creek in Ireland may have given its name to the nearby village, Claremore, or Clar atha da Charadh, which might have been the origin of the Clare name in Ireland. An historical lecture on the period, speaking of the activities of Thomas de Clare says 'His surname derived from a place-name in Suffolk, and was unrelated to the (Irish) manor of Clare, or Clar atha da charadh, in the old kingdom of Thomond'. However, there is also a Clare castle over there, and this might well have reflected the de Clares' share in the attempted conquest of Ireland (see the later notes on the Clare lords), so perhaps the Irish 'Clare' place name got married to the Suffolk one, without us being able to claim that their name springs from ours.

The Clare local newspaper 'Focus' has claimed that other Clares are found in Nova Scotia, south-west Australia, Michigan, and the Bordeaux region of France and that these are all wine growing areas. It has been asserted that the name 'claret' also derives from Clare.

But we must stop wandering and wondering. It is a fact that there are volumes of history behind those three chevrons still used as Clare's badge – a badge which was one of the earliest known uses of arms, since its chevrons evolved from the chevronny arms introduced by the 1140s by one of the early lords of Clare. Clare today and yesterday.....to borrow and adapt a phrase used by St Paul of his home city - 'no mean town'.

THE USE OF ASTERISKS. The material in this book inter-relates with that in Book II. *One asterisk means there is another reference to the subject here in Book I, which will be found in its alphabetical position. **Two asterisks indicates a related entry in Book II, which will be found under the address given

ALMSHOUSES. Present-day almshouses exist in Church Lane, approaching the church and at the side of the Ancient House. References to almshouses date back to 1462, when the vicar of the time left a meadow to provide fuel for the poor living there. In 1594 the almshouse residents had cause to complain of improper administration. A reference in 1674 indicates there were several almshouses then, perhaps four. The site of these appears always to have been near the present ones to the south of the church, and a 17th century record relates them to the High Row (High Street). White's directories of the 19th century indicate there were sometimes two and sometimes four additional ones, '*near the common pasture*'. There is also a reference to the '*eight almswomen who were given 2 shillings weekly and a gown and 30 bushels of coal yearly*'.

THE ANCIENT HOUSE. Despite the inscribed date, this house in High Street near the parish church probably originated some time between 1350 and 1450. It provides outstanding examples of 17c pargetting (For more information on this process see the Introductory Notes at the start of book II). The side facing the church contains many other features worth exploring, including the carvings below an upper window. The house is now the local museum but has rooms reserved for holiday lets. For full details see under **High Street in Book II.

ANGEL INN. Ancient rent records mention an inn of this name in the old Market Street before 1650, sited at what is now 6 Market Hill.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS – smaller items. Most information below is from '*5uffok Parish History*', a box of useful material from Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, where computer reference numbers to information on ancient sites will also be found. Dates quoted here are those assigned to each period in general, not to the artefact in particular. The periods overlap each other to some degree.

Palaeolithic (before c.10000 BC). Oddments.

Mesolithic (c.10000 BC to 4500 BC). Stone implements and worked flint.

Neolithic (c. 4500 BC to 2000 BC). Flint and greenstone axes and worked flint.

Bronze Age (c.2000 BC to 700 BC). Axe, dagger, human bone, gouge and stone hammer.

Iron Age (c.700 BC to 43 AD). Stone quern (= a mill for grinding corn).

Roman (43 AD to c. 410 AD). Puddingstone quern, coin, pottery, sepulchral urns, and a bronze figurine (Mercury or a dancing boy). Also, some bricks incorporated in the Parish Church.

Early Saxon (5th century AD to c. 650 AD).

Middle Saxon (c. 650 AD to 850 AD).

Late Saxon (c. 850 AD to 1066 AD).

Medieval (1066 AD to c.1500 AD). Finds in Clare include a crucifix (see entry *Cross, reliquary), coins, a spur, a lead seal, pottery, hearths which probably represented the sites of small huts or barracks in the outer bailey of the castle, and shoe leather, soles and uppers identified with the turnshoe soles of c. A.D.1350-1450.

BAPTISTS IN CLARE. See under *Nonconformist religious groups in Clare.

BAYBRIDGE. Another name for *Pysenebregge.

BEAR AND CROWN. See **Old Bear and Crown hotel, 20 Market Hill.

BEAR INN. Another one time name for the Bear and Crown.

BELL INN. A very old inn, now the **Bell Hotel, 12 Market Hill.

BLACK DEATH IN CLARE. See in the note *The Common.

BOAR AND GRIFFIN, Well Lane. 16th century house, at times an inn or shops, now a speciality book and tools shop. See **Well Lane.

The BOROUGH OF CLARE. Perhaps the most important event in the town's civic history occurred when it was made a borough by grant of one of Clare's lords. No charter has survived to prove the date, and the first definite mention of the borough status is in 1262. This grant meant that the town controlled its own internal affairs, governed by its own elected officials. There were two bailies (the equivalent of a mayor) in 1273 and later on constables and ale-tasters. The borough was carved out of the manor and stretched from fields edging on what is now Callis Street in the north to the bailey and Nethergate Street and the river in the south, and from a short distance along Cavendish Road in the east and the Hawedych (south of High Street) in the west. The borough reached the height of its development during the 14th and 15th centuries, but after the lands of the de Clares became a Royal possession its importance began to wane, and this decline continued throughout the 16th century. The Vestry Meeting took increasing power and gradually took complete control. Although the title 'Borough' continued until the 1800s, by the 17th century burgesses had ceased to be elected, and two different administrative bodies were governing the town. The Vestry remained a power until it was superseded by the Parish Council appointed under the Local Government Act of 1894. See also in the earlier article An Outline History of Clare, and the entries *Courts in Clare and *The Vestry Meeting.

BRICKWORKS. In 1807 John Jarvis used bricks from his own works to re-front his house **20 Church Street. A Mr W. Jarvis was still making bricks early in the 20th century. Clay was dug from low-lying fields near Hermitage Farm and transported by a small railway to the kilns across the road. Here it was made into bricks which were then fired and stacked ready for distribution. The bricks were of a good red colour and bore the name 'Jarvis Clare'. Local builders collected the bricks with their horses and carts. The brickworks were closed during the 1914-1918 war, when it was feared that the glow from the kilns would attract enemy raiders. The works did not re-open afterwards because cheaper bricks were then available elsewhere.

BRIDEWELL. The name 'bridewell' is not just a local name but derives from a famous house of correction near a well dedicated to St Bride in London, and then applied generally to such buildings. Bridewells were set up by an Act of 1576 to house and reform the so-called 'sturdy beggars', the able-bodied or 'undeserving poor', and were often virtually prisons. The first mention of one in Clare is 1700. It used to stand on the south side of the corner of Sheepgate Lane and Bridewell Street, and gave its name to the street. It is known to have been of clay construction with thatched walls. One record shows the three prisoners then in residence being chained to heavy logs and fed on bread and water. The old jailer's house, now 28 Bridewell Street, is still occupied – as a more private house! The Bridewell stood to its west, that is, behind the present house. See also **Bridewell Street.

BRIDEWELL HOUSE. See above for the Bridewell and the jailer's house. The nearby modern house with the same name is not connected historically but has taken its name because of its proximity to the old Bridewell meadow which stood behind it.

BRIDGES. See *Rivers and Bridges.

BULL INN. See **1 Nethergate Street.

BURIAL GROUNDS. There are several old burial grounds. There is a Baptist one along **Cavendish Road by a small entrance to the country park, a Presbyterian or Congregational one by the United Reformed Church off **Nethergate Street, and, of course, the one around the Church of St Peter and St Paul. The Quakers had one, now covered by the garden of **3 Cavendish Road. The cemetery currently in use is reached by a drive near Church Farmhouse, High Street.

Ye BUTCHERRIE. A name sometimes applied in the past to that part of **Church Street which is now High Street.

CAMP. See under *The Common.

CASTLE. This is in the Country Park. A fragment of a Norman castle keep stands on the top of a motte or mound (the motte itself may be Norman although some have claimed it was there in the days of the Saxon castle) and can be reached by a spiralling path. An old curtain-wall runs down an earthwork which is part of the old ramparts separating the inner bailey (where the railway station and sheds now stand) from the outer bailey. Towers and a drawbridge stood nearby. Parts of the old moat, earthworks which protected the outer bailey, and a few other features still exist. Fuller details are given in Appendix A.

CHANTRIES. The word chantry is used both for endowments (money or lands) for the singing of Masses for the dead, and also for the chapels or altars where these took place. There used to be a chantry along the Cavendish road, just beyond the present Highfields estate. See also *St Mary's chantry and *St Edmund's chantry.

CHAPEL COTTAGE, or CHILTON CHAPEL. See *Wentford Chapel.

CHURCHES IN CLARE. There are four:- Baptist, Church of England, Roman Catholic, United Reformed. For further details see ** High Street, Parish Church and *Nonconformist religious groups in Clare and *Priory. A count on March 30th 1861 showed attendance at the three churches then in Clare (the Catholics did not have a building at that time) as:-

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Sunday School
Baptist chapel	300	380	60	70 (afternoon)
Parish church	300	750		160 (morning) 180 (evening)
Independent chapel (now URC)	200	340		75 (morning) 76 (afternoon)

CHURCH OF SS PETER AND PAUL, the Parish Church. The earliest part of the present building is the lower part of the tower, which is 13c. A major reconstruction between 1460-1520 added a clerestorey, west window and aisles, at which time the widening of the church encroached upon the porches. The chancel was almost completely rebuilt in 1617. For fuller details see **High Street and also Book IV, Clare Parish Church.

CLARE CASTLE COUNTRY PARK. See *Country Park.

CLARE COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE owes much to Clare. When the original University Hall failed financially, Elizabeth de Burgh bided her time, then took it over and between 1336 and 1346 re-founded it as Clare Hall, later to be called Clare College.

CLOTH HOUSE. Part of Nethergate House, **8 Nethergate Street.

COAL YARD. See **High Street, St Peter's Close.

COCK INN, **3 Callis Street. A 17th century inn still in business.

The COMMON, with Clare Camp. The earliest Clare common was where Common Street and its houses now stand in the north of the town. That old site appears once to have been the location of a substantial excavation, presumably for flints used in the building of the church and castle. The present lower common can be approached at the end of Common Street and turning right for the site of the camp, or by going up the old Sheepgate Lane and soon turning left across a stile, or by a short footpath and gate between numbers 8 and 10 Bridewell Street.

The move towards common use of the land came after the Black Death, when labour became scarce and the Clare lords leased out parts of the manor. The Black Death reached its peak in Clare in the summer of 1349, when between a third and a half of the population died (although the population was already declining). Apart from this 'natural cause', attempts were made to obtain for the town these manorial pastures which had originally been part of the estates of the Duke of Clarence. In 1509 the townspeople obtained a grant of these lands from Catharine of Aragon when she was queen. The land was to be used for the benefit of the townspeople, enabling them to pasture their cows at a low rent. The church records show that the common was divided into cattle walks, a walk being the assumed area one cow required. Each tenant paid twenty pence for a summer walk and eight pence for a winter walk. Around 1580 the land was to be used for financing relief of the poor, but in 1609 local tradesmen seized it for their own benefit. A long legal action followed, after which the land was let at commercial rates to cover the legal costs. Then the 'industrial poor' (that is, those who could be put out to work) were meant to benefit, but overall it seems not much benefit filtered through to the poor. In 1850 the Common Pasture was '*let in gates for 40 cows for such persons as do not occupy 15 acres of land*' the sum payable for each cow being 25s. In addition the vicar had '*the depasturing of two cows*'. The common is still managed by a Charities Committee, although now with many allotments and fields beyond - a total area of approximately 62 acres (25 hectares).

The most interesting feature of the present lower common is the site of what appears to be an ancient camp. It is one of the most impressive earthwork enclosures in East Anglia, and the best-preserved in Suffolk, although not as large as the one at Burgh, near Woodbridge. Despite the fact that dwellings in Bridewell and Common Streets have encroached on the site, the main features of the camp can be traced. It is D-shaped, approximately 200 metres each way, occupying about 12 acres (5 hectares). It has a wall and ditch. The ramparts and counterscarps are of three to five metres, despite erosions made by centuries of depasturing by horses and cattle. They are most complete on the north and south sides, but are also recognisable elsewhere. There are entrances on the north and south but the main one is thought to have been to the east, where entry can still be gained through a footpath and small gate between 8 and 10 Bridewell Street.

The site may indicate a very early settlement made at Clare, the presence of spring water doubtless helping the choice of its position. Preliminary studies to gain information were carried out in 1994 and at the time of writing it is hoped a proper excavation will be carried out before too long.

The date of the enclosure is still very much a matter of debate. Fantastic guesses have stretched back to 1200 BC. The author's grandchildren were once delighted to find a bone on the site, and did not want to believe it was from a dead bullock, or brought by a dog! At the very least, standing on the top of the earthworks nowadays, with or without grandchildren, it is easy to imagine, if not a fort, huts and their inhabitants inside a strengthened circumference.

Earlier names for the area were Houndwall and Erbury. (Dickinson, archaeologist and one-time resident, suggests the town itself might once have been called Erbury). The word Erbury is stated to mean 'earth fortification' and to be an Old English word, which suggests the earthwork was in existence before the Norman conquest. Are its beginnings to be found in the Iron Age? or Roman days? - or later?

Early in the 19th century it was described as Roman, but it seems most unlikely that the site started as a Roman camp. Certainly Romans were in the Clare area, because coins, sepulchral urns and a bronze figure of Mercury have been unearthed, though not on this site. But Clare's 'camp' has not got the regular form which Roman fortifications had, and its origin has often been assumed to be earlier.

Was the site an Iron Age hill fort or fortified village (for information on Iron Age dates etc see *Archaeological finds and also the note at the end of this entry) possibly taken over later and used by the Romans? An Iron Age date has been suggested by analogy with other, broadly similar, enclosures elsewhere, but no Iron Age artefacts have been found here to confirm this theory, nor traces of the circular buildings associated with that period. Although an Iron Age date is possible, the idea of it being a hill fort is unlikely. There are very few of these in East Anglia, the terrain not encouraging them, and the Clare site certainly cannot be said to command any surrounding area. If it is from the Iron Age it was probably not a fort but served some other purpose. In the similar enclosure at Burgh, human and horse bones have been found arranged in such a way as to suggest ceremonies connected with a cult, and the same may be true of Clare. It is a fact that such cult sites did have banks and ditches.

In the 1970s English Heritage stated they thought the site was medieval, and more definite information exists about these later times. The enclosure was certainly in use in the medieval period, either having only been built then, or an older site having been brought back into use then. The area was an administrative centre throughout the Middle Ages. Early 14th century records indicate the area contained many agricultural buildings, and probing and

surface examination have now provided proof. An earthwork survey by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England in 1994, and a subsequent geophysical survey by English Heritage have confirmed that there was a complex of buildings in the south-west corner of the enclosure which are likely to have been the manorial buildings. These included one of 54 x 14 metres and another of 14 x 13 metres, with partitions within. In all the site seems to have included at least two grain barns (one perhaps comparable to Cressing Temple), sheep houses capable of containing 350 sheep, a dormitory for workers and the manorial bailiff, granaries, a smithy and stables, and other buildings. Walls were of thatched cob and stood two metres high. In 1606 some building was going on in connection with a 'sheepcote barn'. Sheep cot means sheep house and indicates some old buildings were still in existence at that time. *Sheepgate Lane was once known as 'Sheep Cott Lane', a title which appears on a 1809 map presumably continuing the memory of a 'sheep house' here.

The 14th century records also speak of gardens, perhaps in the north-east of the site, and the sale of produce from them including foodstuffs for the castle. When Catharine of Aragon gave land to the people of Clare early in the 16th century the area given was described as Erbury Garden. A reference from 1342 speaks of a house for the Lady's deer '*in the garden*', and there is mention of a sepulchre (perhaps a copy of the Jerusalem sepulchre?) '*in the garden*'. A 1347 reference speaks of '*tilling the garden*', and of turfs being brought in. It is known that the Clare lords who inhabited the castle had ornamental gardens, leisure areas, and lakes. Most of these features have always been credited to the castle area, but the question has been raised whether some, at least, were in the area we now know as the lower common, which, certainly had ponds on the site.

The vista from the Camp towards the castle must have been striking. The town was laid out to create a vast oval market place between the camp and the castle. Wide roads approached the church, and a wide space at that time ran from one side of Market Place to the further side of High Street, the church filling one end and the great castle keep dominating all.

Moving to a later age, the site was re-occupied by 1724 when records show a house next to the churchyard was to be pulled down and re-assembled on the common. In 1746-7 two smallpox houses existed. One was in the northern section, adjacent to the old pond, and this was still there in 1846-7. It had, however, disappeared by 1884, though the platform it occupied can still be seen. The other was in the south-west corner of the Lower Common, and survived until about 1960. The present pond in one corner of the common is a partial restoration carried out in 1994 of a larger one which was mostly filled in over 100 years ago.

General note on Iron Age dates in Britain and hill forts.

The use of iron was introduced to Britain in the 7th century BC but did not immediately change patterns of settlement. The Second Iron Age might be dated from around 500 BC in Britain.

Hill-fort civilisations in general belong to around 110 BC and following. As the Romans moved north of the Alps they moved tribal capitals away from hill forts, which then began to be abandoned, replacing them with provincial capitals in Romanised towns, founded from 15 BC onwards. The Romans occupied the south of the British Isles from 43 AD but in the far north and west, forts continued to be occupied. When the Romans left Britain early in the 5th century, many hill forts were reoccupied.

CONGREGATIONALISTS IN CLARE. See *Nonconformist religious groups.

CORN EXCHANGE. Now the **Town Hall, Market Hill.

COUNTRY PARK (full title, CLARE CASTLE COUNTRY PARK). This was created in 1972 from the gift of Mr Tony de Fonblanque, then owner of fourteen acres of castle bailey areas. The closure of the railway left other available land, which Mr Fonblanque persuaded the West Suffolk County Council to purchase. Other stretches of the former railway track have been added at each end since. Today it is an attractive woodland and riverside area with much wildlife. The castle keep and other remnants recall this was once a great castle. The station (the only one in the country built inside a castle?) and its remaining platforms and sheds also help the visitor to visualise the past. An information centre offers displays and models of historical and natural history features and helps give a good impression of what Clare was like in earlier centuries. An old railway goods truck with contents give a glimpse of that earlier era. See entry *Railway and Station in Clare.

The park offers picnic areas and spaces where children can play and older folk read or paint. Nature and history trails are described in leaflets available from the information centre. An area with swings, slides and climbing frames meets children's needs. At parts of the water's edge, fishermen can snooze the time away and children enjoy feeding the ducks and swans. Amusement fairs and various displays are given space occasionally, and, since 1998, an annual World Music Festival which attracts thousands has been held.

The ponds and moats produce aquatic plants, water insects and amphibians which attract many species of wildfowl and other birds who feed on them. Fishponds, which were originally dug to serve the castle in the 12th century, were apparently still in use in 1847 and were re-stocked when required by lowering the millstream. Regular visitors may wonder why the present main pond varies considerably in level from time to time. The reason is that it is fed via a tunnel running from the Chilton stream, and has an exit via another tunnel which runs under the millstream to join the River Stour further across the meadows. Many birds and small mammals can be seen in the park, sometimes a kingfisher, and the lucky early walker may glimpse the occasional mole or small deer. Over three hundred species of plants have been recorded. There is a butterfly garden, suitably planted with shrubs and flowers to attract these creatures.

The motte is easily climbed and gives wide views especially when the trees are bare, and is a reminder of the great days of Clare's Norman castle, described more fully in Appendix A.

COURTS IN CLARE. In early days several separate courts were held in Clare – that of the borough, of the manor, and of the honor of Clare. There may also have been a separate market court. The ordinary borough court, held approximately every three weeks under the steward, dealt with the keeping of the peace, pleas of debt and trespass and the transfer of land. The manor court dealt with matters beyond the borough's limits and mostly agricultural matters rather than those relating to other industry. The steward was always present to hold the courts of the manor and borough in Clare's Moothall on the same day as the honor court. There is a 14th century report of the lord's court having been held in a house in the town. The Clare lords had gallows available for use when the severest punishment was required. Courts of different kinds were held in the Moothall throughout the 17th century but after 1700 were sometimes held in various inns, perhaps having adjourned there after opening in the Moothall. In 1844 petty sessions were being held at the Half Moon inn every fourth Monday. From 1844 they were held monthly in a new building which also incorporated the town's police station (*13 Nethergate Street). For full details of courts through history see Gladys Thornton's 'History of Clare'. For related matters and a few examples of crimes see the entries *The Borough of Clare and *Moothall.

The CRICKETERS, or CRICKETERS' ARMS. This was the previous name of The Miller's Arms, an inn probably on the site now occupied by two houses in Stoke Road on the outskirts of Clare, founded and named by a noted cricketer Richard Linsell. A story is told that he or another cricketer made a bet that he could throw a ball over the premises and catch it on the other side before it bounced and that this helped give the inn its name. Another version is that someone threw a ball over another inn, the Bear and Crown, and Linsell caught it on his bat. The Cricketers was being run by George Perry until 1964.

CROSS, Reliquary. A treasure of great beauty and value was found in the castle ruins in the 1860s. Walter Lorking, a poor lad of Clare, was working for the railway line then being built when he discovered it in the vicinity of Lady's Walk between the inner and outer baileys. What he found was a gold crucifix attached to a chain about sixty centimetres long, all of exquisite workmanship. The cross itself is five centimetres long, and studded with a large pearl at each intersection of the upright and transverse pieces. It bears a remarkable Christ figure. A small pin fastens a portion of the upper side of the cross, which can be removed. Inside is a small piece of wood and a minute fragment of granite, allegedly parts of the true cross and of the hill of Calvary. Research has concluded that it had possibly belonged to Joan of Acre (1272-1307) then passed to her nephew Edward III, then to his second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence. Presumably Lionel gave it to his daughter Philippa. An old guide to Clare claims that it is on record that in 1378 Philippa gave her son Edmund '*a piece of the true cross*', so it seems possible that this is the same object. Presumably the cross was lost some time after this date. When notified of the find, Queen Victoria indicated her wish to possess the relic. The Queen was well-known for expressing a desire for nice objects owned by others, and sometimes waited for hours until the owner 'voluntarily' offered the desired piece to her! The cross was presented to the Queen by the railway company, and she rewarded the finder with three gold sovereigns. For a time it was at Windsor Castle because of evidence supporting the belief that it had once formed part of the crown jewels. It is now in the British Museum.

CROWN INN. A former inn near the corner of Market Hill, **4-7 Well Lane. Another inn, then the Rose and Crown (now the Clare Hotel) **19 Nethergate Street, was also sometimes called The Crown.

DOMESDAY/DOOMSDAY BOOK, so-called because the strict enquiries made by the Normans struck the people being questioned as being like the Day of Judgment. The survey was carried out 1085-1086. The entry for Clare provides interesting information. It reveals that at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period Clare manor was held by Aluric son of Wisgar, who had granted the lands away to the Church. Wishing to grasp the income involved, William the Conqueror revoked this grant, seized the manor and gave it to Richard de Bienfaite, one of his men. Amongst other information the Domesday book says of the manor of Clare '*Always a market. Now 43 burgesses*' - an astonishingly high number, because at the time very few Suffolk towns had any burgesses, let alone 43. It also lists '*40 villeins (now 30), 10 bordars (now 30), 20 serfs, 12 ploughs on the demesne (now 7) and 36 (now 24) belonging to the men, 37 acres of meadow, woodland for 12 swine, 1 mill, 5 arpents of vineyard (an arpent was four to six acres), 6 rounceys, 10 beasts (now 14), 12 swine (now 60), 60 sheep (now 480), 12 hives of bees*'. The manor included Stoke-by-Clare and the hamlet of Chilton Street, totalling 108 households.

EDUCATION. For schools see the entry *Schools in the Life of Clare. Regarding adult education, records mention a Literary and Mechanics' Institution established in 1850 with 100 members. It had a good library and reading room, and used the Stone Hall in **Nethergate Street. There was also a Young Men's Book Society, with thirty members.

ERBURY and ERBURY GARDEN. See in the article *The Common.

FAIR. Clare's right to hold a fair was granted in 1250-1 and/or 1262. In general such fairs were held annually on the patronal festival day of the local parish church (which would be March 5th in the case of Clare) and the day before and day after that date. Clare's fair was held on Maundy Thursday in 1618, while in 1779 and still in 1844 there were fairs for toys and pedlary on Easter Tuesday and July 26th. The local site was probably a field at Wentford Farm on the Poslingford road. Many fairs which were still in existence were closed by the Fairs Act of 1871, which argued that they were '*unnecessary, injurious, and the cause of grievous immorality*'. Clare's may have survived until 1891 while early in the 20th century fairs of some sort were held around Whitsun on the meadow behind the Cock inn, where homes for the elderly have since been built. More recent ones have occasionally been held inside the Country Park or on the sports field in Cavendish Road..

FARMING. (Details from ' Suffolk Parish History', available from County Library).

1086. See under *Domesday/Doomsday book above.

1500-1640. Described as '*Wood-pasture region, mainly pasture, meadow, engaged in rearing and dairying with some bee-keeping, horse breeding and poultry. Crops mainly barley with some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp*'.

1818. The course of crops varied, with summer fallow as a preparation for corn products.

1937. Main crops: wheat, beans, barley, oats, roots.

1969. More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet. In recent years the fields are more yellow because some have been planted with rape.

FIRE FIGHTING. Clare's fire station is at the end of **Station Road. There have been fire stations of one kind or another in Clare for about 200 years. In the old days the first task when the alarm was raised reads like a page from Mrs Beeton's cookery book - '*First catch your horse*'. A note from 1850 says '*Cash from Mr Pain for engine going to his late fire at Stoke, but arriving too late; £1*'. As a rule firemen were paid 12 shillings quarterly at that time, which they received in rotation at the Bear and Crown, the Half Moon, the Swan and the Cock. In the 19th century one fire engine, a hand-pumped horse-drawn appliance, was kept in Paine's Yard, next to The Grove, Callis Street. An altercation with the Parish Council led to a second one being set up, housed in Skillings Yard in Cavendish Road with two horses kept in readiness at Church Farm.

A vivid description of one appliance at work some time after 1866 is found in documents relating to the Crown hotel (by 1891 known as the Rose and Crown, and in 2003 as the **Clare Hotel, 19 Nethergate Street). The inn was burnt to the ground and a writer says '*The dear old fire engine of the day came along. Here is a description of the engine. It had wooden wheels, rather small. It had no suction or hose, which meant that it could not draw or help itself to water, but had to be fed. The engine had always to be taken to the fire, no matter how far away the water was, so the water had to be taken to the engine. All the man with the pipe could do was squirt the water on the outside of the building. If the fire was inside he could do nothing. The wheels were not suitable to run on the road so the engine was carried on a trolley and taken off when it arrived at the fire*'. It was a different story in February 2001, when a fire at Cliftons, Nethergate Street, was attended by 10 fire crews with very different kinds of equipment from that earlier day. In 1912 the Clare fire brigade consisted of a captain and ten men. During the 1939-45 war the town was served by Auxiliary Towing Vehicles (light vans with seats or adapted cars) each towing a trailer pump, common in the National Fire Service and stationed at what was then Thompson's garage in Nethergate Street. The present fire station was opened in 1954, with a new Commer fire engine. At the time of the first writing of this book there were thirteen retained (i.e. part-time) firefighters, working under a Sub Officer and answering approximately 150 miscellaneous calls a year.

FORT, ANGLO-ROMAN? See *The Common.

GAS WORKS, Cavendish Road, near the river bridge. The works, which were built in 1853, supplied power for those householders who wished to move beyond oil lamps, and for lighting the main streets. The works closed during the 1939-45 war and have now disappeared except that the ring where the gasometer stood can still be seen, as can part of the coke oven wall. When the works were in operation a furnace immediately behind the wall meant the latter was always warm, to the advantage of spectators of football on the playing field opposite, and tramps who huddled against it. There was one labourer who had to unload the carts of coal by hand, and a manager. The gas, which was produced by the burning of coal, was cleansed in large purifying tanks. The fumes were anything but pleasant, but children with whooping cough and chest infections were held over them to assist their breathing. The tar left from the purifying process was pumped out by local residents and used to coat fences and sheds. The coke was sold at 6d and one shilling for different sized bags, and used for domestic fires. The gas works supplied Clare's twenty-seven street lights, naked flares on poles four metres high. The first lamp to be put onto a wall bracket was outside the nearby Flint Cottage. The lamplighter dowsed the lights at 10 p.m., notwithstanding the abuse from those leaving the public houses who were suddenly plunged into darkness.

The **GLOBE**, now **10 Callis Street, was built in 1695, and converted into a pub in the late 19c.

GLOVERS. The name of a house which once stood in Nethergate Street.

GOSEWORTH. A one-time name of Gosford Street, now Callis Street.

GOSFORD BRIDGE, Callis Street. This used to stand at the southern end of what was then Gosford Street, at the narrow entrance to the town from the north. It crossed a stream which ran under the present 32 Callis Street and into the Chilton Brook. There is a record of the new building of a bridge with wood from Hundon Park in 1387-8. The bridge is not mentioned after the end of the 15th century, so the stream it crossed may have been diverted under the road by then.

GOSFORD STREET. A former name for Callis Street.

GOSWELL STREET is shown in a town plan of 1809 as the name of what is now Bridewell Street.

GOSWORTH. A former name for Gosford Street, see above.

The **GREAT BRIDGE.** Old records speak of three or four 'great bridges', but one 17th century record speaks of 'the great bridge'. Which was this? The bridge between the castle and the priory was a fine stone bridge with four or five arches, but was a footbridge. A document from the church chest dated 1573 indicates that on that occasion the term 'great bridge' was used for a bridge crossing the river along Ashen Road, the old road to London, which would have made that one a strong claimant for the title.

GREEN DRAGON INN is a former name of the Bell Hotel, at **12 Market Hill.

The GREEN MAN. This intriguing figure, over 2000 years old, may have found his way into Clare as in the case of countless cathedrals and churches. Usually he is clearly recognisable - either a face peering through foliage, or a face eating or disgorging vegetation, or a strange mixture of a human form and vegetation merging into each other - limbs tapering into foliage or hair and facial features made up of many leaves. At the Parish Church he may appear several times in the stone surround of the doorway leading from the south porch into the church - or have these faces just been given traditional decoration? The half face above that door may be a Green Woman - a rare figure. And the face which looks down on you from the roof as you stand in the porch - Jesus? But is he surrounded by vegetation? - or is that just ordinary decoration again? At the Priory, is he the face in the centre of the carved beams in the main room, or is that just a monster? Cavendish parish church has a more certain one in the vaulted ceiling of the ground floor of the tower. The premises at 37 Nethergate Street present a modern version of this character. Perhaps originally a fertility figure, the Green Man appears in Christian locations at least from 400 AD, his link with death and new life in the cycle of nature making him a useful symbol for Christian ideas of death and resurrection. Today perhaps he can be taken as a symbol for the thought that mankind is part of the whole of creation, to work with it, not exploit it. See Books III and IV for a more detailed article on this subject.

The GRIFFINS. Now a separate house, originally part of the **Boar and Griffin, Well Lane.

The GUILDHALL AND GUILDS IN CLARE. This house (or range of houses) opposite the west end of the parish church with a projecting upper storey and which appears to be late 16th century is in fact a three-phased building. At the rear, its west wing with a crown post roof is generally thought to have been the Old Guildhall, dating from the 14th century, making it earlier than most of the famous guildhalls, which only date back to the 15th century. The room, which is now a surgery waiting room, has moulded pillars which are among the best to be found anywhere. Unusually, the building had a first floor open hall (proved by the type of smoke stained roof) with a fireplace which must have been supported by some mechanism. The public library at the rear has taken over from an ancient barn.

The common understanding of a 'guild' nowadays is an association of men sharing the same interests, such as merchants or artisans of the same trade or craft, joined together for mutual aid and protection and to maintain craft standards. Rural Suffolk's guilds, however, were parish guilds, purely religious and social bodies, whose functions were to help members in adversity and pray for deceased members, and to invite participation in dinners, plays, and religious activities often held at their particular altar in their parish church. Sometimes a consequence of the religious basis of a guild was that their officers inspected members' work to ensure high standards so that membership remained a privilege, and this could lead to our common concept of guilds. However, Clare's guilds apparently remained of the social and religious type, with no evidence that they had trading functions. Guilds in Clare each bore a saint's name.

There were guilds of St Augustine (at the Priory), St John the Baptist, St Peter, St Mary and Corpus Christi. Most were not wealthy, and only required from their members small sums so that they could carry out religious duties and *'mayneteyne the preestes service'*. A record of festivities in which members of the guild of St John joined says they kept *'fyve hockepottes or drinkinges in v stretes or places, namelye, market strete one, nethergate strete kepte another, chalice strete a third, higherowe a fourth, and Chilton strete alwayes kepte the fifte'*. The poor were fed with a part of the money which they collected on these occasions, and the remainder was used at Easter time to make tapers for the sepulchre lights. John Hadley in 1502 left his house and all his land in Chilton, except a few acres, *'to the fraternitie of seynt John Baptiste to be praied for withoute ende'* This guild was specially favoured by the men of Chilton.

The Guildhall was built to facilitate the social and other activities of these guilds, and one can imagine the members moving in procession with their banners from the hall across the road into the church for the great saints' days, entering the church through its west door. The Guildhall was also used for general town meetings. One recorded incident is the hearing of a case against the parson of Yeldham before the court of the Star Chamber in 1541 for speaking treason. His defence was that troublesome men had insulted him and attacked him with swords and he had declared that he had not encountered in other countries anything like the knaves of England.

The guilds continued until the Reformation, when guilds and chantries were dissolved under the 1547 Act, although many had already ceased to function. It is known there had been no meetings in Clare after 1543. In 1550 it was said of the guildhall *'thear was no gilde kepte thear theis eight or nine years: but syns that tyme hath bene kepte for a schoole house for the godly educacon and bringing upp of youth'*. This period of use of the building as a school was confirmed early in the 20th century when some writing was uncovered in a panel between two upright beams apparently dating from that time. See also **20-21 High Street.

HALF MOON. See *Moon Inn and **Half Moon House, 2 High Street.

HALL HOUSES, of which there were quite a number in Clare, were descendants of the Saxon and Medieval houses. A base was made of large balks of oak laid horizontally, and a wooden sill laid on top. Strong upright posts called studs were mortised into the sill, sometimes closely spaced as a sign of the owner's wealth. The upper ends of these vertical studs were tenoned into a horizontal beam, and the whole surmounted by an elaborate roof structure, sometimes with a decorative centrepiece above the hall. Wooden pegs were driven through as necessary. For a house fairly high in the social scale a medieval carpenter usually made a single beam out of each small oak tree. One house could account for 200 trees mostly of 15 to 30 centimetres (6 to 12 inches) in diameter, representing about four years' growth of the oak trees in a 50-acre wood. Often beams were elaborately carved, which again could be an indication of the owner's wealth.

For the walls of lath and plaster houses, narrow cleft oak laths were slotted crosswise between the beams to provide the necessary support for an infilling of plaster, which was often mixed with cow dung, clay, and mud for more effective insulation. There were various methods of infilling. Pre-fabricated infillings were not possible because dimensions always varied. The infilling panels were finished off smoothly on the interior.

An alternative to lath and plaster houses occurred occasionally in what were called stone halls. In these the interstices were filled with flint, brick fragments and areas of conglomerate stone, these taking the place of lath and plaster - and probably proving far more comfortable because this system meant much better weather-proofing. However, the material was often too hard for shaping and when flints were difficult to knap (give a straight surface), interesting irregular shapes emerged. The flints had to be embedded in much mortar. To give further support bricks were sometimes included in the wall. The timbers were sometimes left exposed, both to reveal the status of the occupant, and also for better preservation: being well-ventilated meant they were less vulnerable to insects and fungi. But the wood sometimes shrunk, cracks constantly appeared on the face of the timbers, and draughts were inevitable. Often, therefore, the whole house was given another coat of plaster which covered its timbers. This sometimes also involved a colour-wash.

Jettying of buildings (upper floors projecting forward) led to increased floor space and helped to keep the ground floor more free from damp, but a practical reason for jettying was the difficulty of getting suitable timbers to cope with the full height of the building. In later years jettied upper storeys were often under-built, thus increasing the ground floor area. Before the days of chimney stacks the main hall had a louvred vent in the roof to allow the smoke from the fire, which was built in the middle of the room, to escape. The building of chimneys became practical and fashionable in the 16th century. They were built against the side wall, and a ceiling was often inserted to create a bedroom above, with its own fireplace. At the beginning of the 20th century the neo-Tudor style of house came into vogue, and this led to the uncovering of timbers of old houses - made more practical now because modern synthetic preparations can protect them from crevices which might otherwise develop. For more information see *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, sections 59, 61 and 62..

The HAWEDYCH. See entry *Rivers and Bridges.

HEIGH or HIGH ROW. A former name for High Street.

HILL FARM. A former name for **Clare Hall, Cavendish Road.

HOLBOROUGHES. The former name of an old house, the **Old Maltings, 14 Callis Street.

The HONOR OF CLARE. See earlier, in the article *An outline history of Clare*.

The HORSECROFT. This was the name of the area south (i.e. to the right) of Cavendish Road as it climbs the hill out of Clare after crossing the stream. It was used as arable and pasture land when the castle was occupied. In 1412 one farmer leased it for ten years at forty shillings a year. A windmill once stood at a high point here. Cattle from the castle were also grazed nearby in what is now the town's playing field, an area watered by the Chilton stream.

HOUSE OF CORRECTION. See *Workhouse, for which this was an old name.

HUWES LANE. The name of a little lane which led off Heigh Row (High Street).

INDEPENDENTS IN CLARE. The Independents was the national name of some non-conformist religious groups. The gathering together of such Independents in Clare, which led to both the Baptist and United Reformed Churches, was part of nation-wide events and is described in the entry *Nonconformist religious groups in Clare.

INNS IN CLARE. Some of Clare's inns, notably the Swan and the Moon, can be traced back to medieval times. In the 15th century there were at least five ale-houses, sometimes with consequent brawls. One old reference describes how in 1479 two Clare men had a quarrel with the vicar, who was sitting there, and drew a knife - but no bloodshed is reported. In 1844 seven inns and taverns and two beerhouses were listed.

Inns were used for other purposes as well as the obvious ones. After 1700 courts appear to have been held at various inns instead of the *Moothall, although the Moothall is mentioned in 1773, and even later. Perhaps courts opened there and then adjourned to an inn. Much town business used to be conducted at vestry meetings and the Vestry Book of the churchwardens of Clare church between 1595 and 1784 reveal that these were held in different inns in that period.

Inns, alehouses and hotel names which are mentioned over the years (sometimes referring to the same place) include The Millers Arms (or Cricketers), the Boar and Griffin, the Swan, the Half Moon (or Moon), the Angel, the Bull, the Six Bells, the White Hart, the Green Dragon (or Bell), the Bear (and Crown), the Wagon and Horses, the Globe, the Cock, the Seafarer, the Old Red Lion, the Oak, the Royal Oak, the Rose and Crown, the Crown, the Lion, the Castle and the Swan. There was also a Temperance Hotel. Some of these are mentioned by name elsewhere in this A-Z.

In general, inns' names often reflect history, inns named the Cock perhaps having been the scene of cock-fighting, and the Wagon and Horses being linked with local carriers. For a local story of interest see the entry *the Cricketers'.

The IRON BRIDGE. The bridge which spans the 'new cut' on the Ashen road is one of the earliest of cast iron bridges. The date 1813, visible on the outside of the bridge, is only 34 years after the very first such bridge, which gave its name to the town of Ironbridge in Shropshire. The Ashen road used to be the main road to London. An earlier bridge here was called The Great Bridge, a name which was applied in a different age to the bridge between the Priory and the Castle. There was a railway level crossing near this point, and the house nearby was used by the railway crossing keeper. The entrance to the Priory used to be here.

LEATHER. The production of leather was one of the industries carried out in Clare. For convenience tanning was often located near butchers and knackers. The area around the present Church Street was one local area for this

work - indeed, it was called '*Ye Butcherrie*' in the court rolls of 1624 on account of the existence of butchers there. The industry involved the processing of hides and skins. A tanner converted skins or hides by soaking them in an astringent liquid made from crushed oak bark. A currier dressed and coloured the tanned leather. The output then went to shoemakers and other leather good manufacturers. Old residents at the time of the original writing of this book could recall four premises relating to this trade and two slaughterhouses (one opposite the Bell Hotel and one at the Cock yard) and two saddleries supplying harnesses and leatherworks, one next to the Town Hall.

The LEGEND OF CLARE.

This story and its alleged origin is told at length in Mrs Barnardiston's book on the Priory, and is depicted in the 20th century carving on the mantelpiece in the library there.

Hugh of Bury, the sacristan, had pawned some of the church treasures and was desperate to find money to repay moneylenders, not only because the prior might find out, but especially because a papal messenger who was visiting the Abbey of St Edmund might decide to extend his journey, visit Clare, and wish to inspect the treasures.

Several of the fraternity had been fishing in the nearby River Stour. Hugh was deep in thought over his problem, and stayed on after the others had left - until dark, in fact. A figure in the dress of a monk wearing a cowl and with his feet covered by his habit, approached him. He chatted pleasantly, revealing that he could see that the sacristan had problems, and reminisced about his own feelings when he had held the same office and felt the wish to borrow money - only borrow, of course - for a short time. He went on to suggest an answer. Hugh should hide his stock of candles, say they had been eaten by mice, and ask for a new supply. When they were replaced he could raise money for himself by selling the surplus ones. Also, when money had been paid for votive-offering candles, he should recover them after the worshipper had left and re-sell them several times over, keeping the proceeds. The only condition was that Hugh should always retain the very first candle: if that ever burned down, the visitor would claim him for ever. Hugh agreed to the scheme. When he returned from the river he passed through the passage under the dormitory, turned into the cloisters, and so into the church. He felt somebody was there, and heard a strange clink behind him. Was it the monk? But would he have metallic sandals? When he approached the high altar the sense of that strange presence quickly disappeared - he knew he was alone in the church. He prepared the books and candles for the midnight service, lit the four great cressets, entered the sacristy and removed and hid the stock of candles.

For a time the plan worked and Hugh's financial position improved. Then some of Hugh's other misdemeanours and mismanagement of priory affairs were discovered, and he was put on bread and water and confined to the premises. Late one day, as it began to get dark but the others were still away hunting, he suddenly remembered the need to get salt for their evening meal. Remembering at the last moment that it was dark enough to require light, he grabbed a candle - which happened to be that very first one, the one he had been told never to allow to burn away. Whilst seeking the salt he saw a cooked fowl, and was tempted. His hunger was great, so he ate it. Then he heard the others returning from the hunt and fled, leaving the candle burning. When the prior was served with the bare bones of the carcass instead of a satisfying dish, he committed Hugh's soul to the devil. At that moment the candle gutted out. The other friars heard a ghastly scream, and found Hugh at the foot of the stairs with a look of horror on his face and his flesh seared as if it had been touched by a great fire. There was a smell of sulphur in the air, and a glimpse of a dark shadow departing with the metallic clink of a shod cloven hoof.

The friars could never scrub away the bloodstain on the stairs, not even with holy water. 'It is there to this day' said the story as told in 1902. Lady Barker had to amend this phrase when she wrote the story down because the tread, having become too worn, had recently been replaced. But some have no doubt the stain is still there, under the bottom stair of the replacement stairway which leads from where the refectory used to stand, a stair which can still be seen by visitors to the Priory in the ancient groined porch.

It is claimed that this story came to the family then in residence at the priory from an old woman in the town. The man who eventually carried out the early 20th century carving in the present library was the first to hear the story. He told Lady Barker, and she then called upon the woman. The storyteller couldn't read or write, but in the manuscript which Lady Barker subsequently wrote the old woman corrected any deviation from the story, which, it is claimed, had been passed down from generation to generation. The words, phrases etc are obviously the old woman's, not being in Lady Barker's style. The full story she told contained details which could not have been familiar to local people for hundreds of years past. They included descriptions of the ceremonies in the old church, the night office, and even the night boots, all of which were most unlikely elements to find in a Clare tale in 1902. The doors through which the characters in the story passed and the route they followed just did not fit in with what was then believed to have been the plan of the priory. Yet when the buildings were excavated later, their layout proved quite contrary to what had long been believed, and was in keeping with the details the old woman had passed on! Thus told, the story could be taken as an interesting example of oral history, a story passed on - for centuries? - with correct details which could not have been known 'on location' at the time the story was eventually written down.

Sceptics say it is all a modern hoax. If only one could forget the cold facts given in chapter 4 one could imagine that the carving on the ceiling beam near the window in the cellarer's hall, a scene of a devil departing from a church very much like the present one, hints at a 15th century origin for the story. What a pity such an idea is completely unacceptable for the reasons given in that earlier chapter. (But I can vouch for having once heard clanking chains when showing people around the priory grounds at dusk. The fact that it was a party of councillors, and that the mayors from surrounding districts were wearing their ceremonial chains during the tour, may not be completely irrelevant. D.H.)

The LORDS OF CLARE. See separate notes in Appendix B..

MALTING. The making of malt was widespread in Suffolk in the 15th century. Clare had maltings in Bridewell Street, Callis Street, High Street, and Chilton Street. They were frequently small and were often converted from buildings erected for some other purposes (a redundant church was used in Ipswich). The barley grains were soaked for 24 hours, spread on large stone floors to sprout, and turned with large flat wooden shovels to ensure even germination. It was then kiln dried, giving off a rich smell as it baked. The resulting malt was made into a mash with water, boiled with hops for flavour and then fermented with yeast on its way to becoming a beverage. The MANOR OF CLARE. See in the earlier article An Outline History of Clare, and also under *Courts in Clare.

THE MARKET IN CLARE. A market has been held in Clare, with a few breaks, since before the time of William the Conqueror, and was mentioned in Domesday. Market Day was Friday until early in the 19th century. Towards the end of the 20c it was still held on Saturdays and Mondays. Then Saturday dropped out to leave a few stalls on Mondays. Early in the 21st century these reduced to usually not more than one general stall.

The market thrived in the days of prosperity in Clare, especially in the 14th century, when much cloth trading was carried on from its stalls. There used to be pens for pigs in the square, and a cattle ring behind the Bell Hotel. A separate court to deal with market affairs may have existed in medieval days, but this is not certain.

From the late 16th century until towards the mid-19th century part of the present Market Hill was divided into two by a row of small houses or market shops, built on sites originally used for market stalls. These buildings occupied an area approximately 18.5 and 17 metres at the two sides and 6.5 and 4.5 at the ends and ran northwards from the area of the present war memorial towards a market cross opposite the Bear and Crown (see **20 Market Hill). Six of the sites were acquired by St Mary's chantry in the time of Elizabeth de Burgh, and were later owned by the vestry, but converted into four workshops. These, together with other houses on either side of them were demolished around 1820, but two or three further south remained, and were finally demolished around 1880 by the Wickhambrook Highways Board. While these buildings were there it meant that a third road existed, which ran between the present High Street and Market Hill, so the market area itself was not very large. The present High Street was called Heigh Row. The road to the east was first regarded as part of Rotten or Ratten Row (which ran along the east end of the church, the present Church Street) but also bore the names Market Lane and Market Street and Dragon Hill at times. The central road was sometimes just called 'the market'.

At first these shops would have been little more than low hovels, but some were re-built towards the end of the 16th century, and changed their character again over the years. In 1800 there was a row of eleven poor tenements.

A market cross and market house stood towards the southern end of the market area, opposite the Bear. It was probably a small timbered building standing on strong uprights and approached by a ladder or rough steps, with an open space underneath (perhaps like that still at Thaxted). Records show one such structure was built by Roger Barrow around 1586 for those who brought corn and grain to the market *'whereby as well themselves as their corne might be sheltered and kepte drie from the rayne, which might and did fall during the said market'*. But it was illegal to park one's *'carte or tumbrelle'* there. There had been a market house there previously, because an opponent of Roger Barrow complained that there had already been a *'markett howse'* which could have been repaired had not Barrow *'intermedled with the pullinge of the same downe and sellinge the same away'*. The reference to corn may help underline the fact that during the 16th century the clothmaking industry which had made Clare prosperous was in decline. Roger Barrow was an interesting character. A newcomer to the town, he was a church warden (a post which then involved many civic matters) who was over-zealous in his duties, and disliked. In revenge he brought thirteen of the chief inhabitants to court. An account of other alleged misdeeds appears under the note on *Pysenbregge.

The market house chamber was also used for other purposes, records revealing that Vestry Meetings and a school were being held there in the late 17th century.

The row of humble buildings gradually deteriorated into workshops and hovels, and these, then ten in number, were demolished in the late 1830s to make way for pig and poultry pens. This occurred by a group of traders uniting to restore the market to meet the revival which came to the town when corn had brought new prosperity. A cattle market was opened in the yard of the Bell hotel (where **Bell Villas, Cavendish Road, now stand). The old market cross was pulled down in 1838 and a corn exchange built on the eastern side of the road where the Town Hall now stands, at a cost of £400. This in turn was replaced by the present Town Hall in 1912-3 (see **Market Hill).

No doubt the town's Crier was often heard in the market. The Vestry minutes refer to his giving out notices to prevent fireworks, to prohibit bathing in the river, and to give information to gleaners, to quote but a few. Other calls he made were in respect of such things as bonnets having been stolen out of a shop window, and stolen or stray cattle. (Gladys Thornton's 'History of Clare' includes much more information about the market, including, in its appendix, some of the market cries).

For the present buildings see **Market Hill in Book II.

MILLER'S ARMS. See *Inns in Clare.

MILL LANE. The former name for **Malting Lane.

MILLS. Four mills were reported in 1295. *'Le old Melle'* and *'Le Malt Melle'* are mentioned in 1362, described as being by the River Stour. The sites of several old mills in the area are known. There was a corn windmill on the Horsecroft along Cavendish Road on the sharp rise where the Highfield housing estate now stands. Gladys Thornton, writing in 1928, describes this as 'the present corn mill', so presumably it was still functioning then. Another stood along the Stoke road. One other 'recent' windmill or pump with a circle of sails, part of old waterworks, stood on the common: an associated small building is still to be found there.

From the 14th century there was a corn mill operated by the 'new' millstream in the mill meadows, which are situated at the Country Park end of Mill Road, below Mill House and by the weir. A mill still stood here well into the twentieth century, and when I was first writing this book a local resident described her amazement when she awoke one morning, looked through the window, and discovered the mill had gone – destroyed by fire in the night. Remnants of a sluice gate and other elements which escaped that destruction can still be seen.

Before the construction of that mill, indeed, from Saxon days and mentioned in Domesday, there was a corn mill at the end of Malting Lane. This was presumably operated by the earlier course of the River Stour which perhaps was along or near the line of the present depression at the small entrance to the Priory grounds. With the diversion of water to the new mill this became a horse-driven malt mill. An old document tells of a convent being granted ten quarters of malt from *'the mill next to the friars' site'*. The road used to be called Mault Mill Road.

The mills were a source of considerable profit to their owners, and the lords of Clare were very jealous of their rights, requiring everybody to grind corn at mills owned by them. In 1330 two men were hauled before the Lady of Clare (Elizabeth) because they had not ground their corn at her mill. Orders were made in 1598 and subsequently that Clare inhabitants should grind at no other mill than that near the castle, but doubtless such injunctions were not always obeyed. There were disputes about milling in 1572 because one owner had come into *'great welthe and abundaunce through the use of the seid mill which hath bine verey beneficiall unto him'* and had switched it from its use in fulling (an operation concerned with clothmaking) to grinding corn.

MOON INN. Earlier name of the building which incorporated ****Half Moon House, 2 High Street.**

MOOTHALL. A dwelling house in Well Lane on the south side of the market place was taken over for use as Clare's medieval courthouse, the Moothall, and courts were held there at least from 1481. Deeds of the cottage whose name still perpetuates this show that it stands on part of the site of that original house. At the Moothall local tradesmen and others were arraigned for various misdeeds such as illegal Sunday trading, leaving refuse in the streets, and failing to scour the watercourses. Innkeepers were charged with lack of supervision in the alehouses. There were also complaints against those who had *'dugged petts in the hye waye'*: holes in the road have always been with us! Close by stood a pillory for the punishment of offenders. There was a complaint in 1481 against the tenants of a stable under the Moothall who had left their manure against this pillory. Other punishments included the use of a ducking stool (*'le Cuckyngstol'*). This is known to have been in existence in 1357, for records show it was repaired that year. It was used for gossiping women and for women who dared abuse the town's officials - but quite where it stood is not clear. An early record speaks of the house owner being given 16d as compensation for the loss of rent while courts were held there ('d' meant 'penny' in the times before the decimalisation of our money system). Courts probably continued at the Moothall throughout the 17c. The building was said to be in need of repair in 1650, when Mr Trig, as lord of the manor, was rebuked for not repairing the Moothall and stairs *'which are dangerous to those that doe shute and serfic in that place'*, and was given until the following Michaelmas to see to repairs. In 1662 townspeople complained that *'Daniel Borrowes sawed away the groundsel of the Moot Hall, which was the occasion of the upper part falling down'*. Gladys Thornton states that the Moothall is mentioned again in 1700 (although soon after that date it is known that the courts were meeting elsewhere) and also in 1773, and even later, but in view of the dating of the present houses here it is not easy to trace the development of the buildings. Presumably some of the references quoted above relate to the later building known as Moothall, not the original one. For information about the buildings over the years see the note under ****Well Lane.** See also the entry ***Courts in Clare.**

NEW CUT. A descriptive name for the mill stream, the main waterway running through the Country Park – still sometimes referred to as 'new' even though it was already there by the 14th century. See Rivers and Bridges.*

NEW HALL. A former name for the Bear and Crown Inn, ****20 Market Hill.**

NONCONFORMIST (Protestant) RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN CLARE. There are known to have been Protestant nonconformists in Clare in the 17th century. (Roman Catholics were also 'nonconformist' in English church terms, but these are not included in this note). The 'Independents' in Clare can best be understood in the nation-wide context. The newly established Church of England faced many controversies among ritualists, Puritans and others. After 1640, Parliament decreed that the established church should run on presbyterian lines with a new liturgy and a form of government which was more of a committee, including elders, deacons and others as well as the clergy - and this prevailed for a time. Some groups, however, had already broken away to act on more independent lines. Among people who held the presbyterian view in Clare were Roger Cook, Giles Barnardiston, and Francis Crosse (a clothier of Nethergate House).

In 1645 a gathering of religious dissenters or Independents appointed Roger Cook as Minister of Clare. Meetings probably took place in his own home at first. Many churches all over the country have had their beginnings in houses or other informal premises. Even as late as the beginning of the 19th century there were many such: out of 405 licences granted in Suffolk between 1791 and 1810, only 48 were for formal chapels - and even this figure included Roman Catholics. In the earlier years the proportion was bound to be large.

With the restoration of Charles II in 1660 the old influences regained control, and presbyterian-minded ministers in the Church of England were ejected because they would not submit to Anglican discipline. A third of the clergy in East Anglia (about fifty in Suffolk) counted among such rebels, and their existence helped the growth of nonconformity. Some went to America to exercise their freedom. In 1662 the Rev Francis Crow, vicar of Hundon, was dislodged from his church, and went to live in Ovington. He was licensed as a Presbyterian Teacher in 1672 under the terms of the Declaration of Indulgence, but continuing persecution drove him to Jamaica for a few years. He returned to England and came to Clare to become the town's Independent minister in 1687. Ten years earlier

there were already three hundred local recorded nonconformists in Clare, and around this time four houses were licensed as places of worship for Protestant dissenters.

The Act of Toleration in 1689 led to permanent acceptance of nonconformity, after which proper buildings for chapels became more common. In 1690 a Philip Havers was minister of a church meeting in a barn at Clare, and baptised many people in private houses. In 1710 a large meeting house was built, replacing the Presbyterian conventicle already on the site, which is behind Nethergate Street, with an arched entrance round the corner from the pillar box. Its congregation was then known as the Independents.

In 1801 this Independent Church was having difficulty in finding a new minister. Thomas Hoddy, a Baptist of just twenty years of age, was invited to take services one Sunday and then to remain as minister for a few months. He held strong beliefs in favour of believers' baptism (as contrasted to baptism of children) and expressed them forcefully. Twelve members of the church met on November 5th 1801 and decided to form a separate Baptist Church, although the controversial preacher claimed he had not personally encouraged this. Nevertheless Mr Hoddy soon withdrew from the Independent Church and was joined by a few others to hold meetings in barns, and then a house.

The Baptist Church was formally founded in 1803. Its deacon was Lot Crowe, a shoemaker of the family of the Rev Francis Crow who had been Clare's Independent minister in 1687. Lot served as a deacon for fifty years, *'an indefatigable preacher who, though somewhat eccentric in his ways, was greatly loved'*. Eventually they were able to purchase land in the Cavendish road, a site which, although no longer that of a church, is still marked by their old burial ground which is by a small entrance to the Country Park. An unknown historian has written an account of their search for premises. He said *'We applied for and obtained a barn for six Sabbaths, after that another where we met for divine worship until the end of harvest, and during the following winter in a dwelling house which we found very inconvenient being too small for our accommodation, but we trust that the Lord made good his promise that where two or three are gathered together in his name that there he is in their midst. (One of the barns was at the Swan inn). We had many anxious thoughts about what might be the issue. Our design was to have purchased some suitable building and converted it into a place of worship, but this we could not obtain and it was thought injudicious to spend much money after a temporary situation.....We at length providentially obtained a piece of ground, whereon we have erected this chapel....having reason to admire the wisdom of, and be thankful for the goodness of God manifested to us. I have also reason to conclude from the leading of divine providence an attachment to Mr Hoddy and the benefit our souls have received from his labours that he is designed of God to be our under shepherd'*.

The first Baptist Chapel was built in 1805 at a cost of £242 plus £23 for the land. It had Mr Hoddy as its pastor. The group was persecuted but prospered, and had to build a larger church in 1821, costing £365. Finally the move was made to their present site in the High Street, a site donated by Charles Hale, one of their deacons. They literally moved the church, taking its materials to use on the new site and walling in the old site as the Baptists' Cemetery. The present church was opened in 1860 and a manse in 1892. See ****High Street, Baptist Church** for some details of the present building.

Meanwhile, despite the break away, the Independent Church continued.

In the middle of the 19th century like-minded Independent churches throughout the country gave up their old name and became the Congregational Union by Act of Parliament. Later the Union became the Congregational Church, only to change again in 1971 when the Congregational Church nationally merged with the Presbyterian Church under the new title United Reformed Church. For a description of the local building and burial ground see ****Nethergate Street, United Reformed Church**.

Other nonconformist Christian groups in Clare included the Society of Friends, see under ***Quakers in Clare**.

The NUTTERY. This is part of the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Countryside project, and is situated in an area behind the cemetery where hazelnuts were grown for food in an earlier age. A woodland is being developed through the planting of hundreds of young trees. Boundary hedges have been restored and a large pond has been given a new lease of life. Paths now wind through trees and connect two open glades where picnics and birdsong can be enjoyed.

OLD COURT. See ****13 Nethergate Street**.

OLD RED LION INN. See ****45 Bridewell Street**.

OLD VICARAGE. See ****16 Callis Street**.

PARGETTING. See Introductory Notes in Book II: The Old Streets of Clare, and also the entry for the house Netheridge, ****15 Nethergate Street**.

PARISH CHURCH. See ****High Street**.

PERRYES CROSS. A tree at this situation beyond the Chilton Street hamlet and on the way towards Hundon marked the furthest point of Clare, where, amongst other events, processions arrived when beating the bounds and listened to the vicar reading the gospel, and then drank *'ale or drinkings'*.

The PLAYING FIELD, Cavendish Road. This once provided grazing for cattle from the castle. In addition to its present use for cricket and football it has sometimes been the venue for carnivals and other activities.

POPULATION. A few figures, some from census or other records, and some estimates based on other facts, are:-
Population:-

1086 - only 128 apparently worth mentioning!

Early 1600s, probably around 1300.

1676 - 800 adults.
 1801 - 1136.
 1821 - 1487
 1841 - 1700.
 1901 - 1577.
 1921 - 1340.
 1971 - 1660.
 1981 - 1951.
 1991 - 1976.

The numbers of houses/dwellings:-

1674 - 152 (including Wixoe and Chilton).
 1851 - 382.
 1901 - 407.
 1951 - 442.
 1981 - 732.
 1991 - 852.

PRESBYTERIANS. See the entry *Nonconformist religious groups in Clare.

PRIORY. Clare Priory has its main entrance in Ashen Road, but may also be reached across the footbridge from the car park in Clare Castle Country Park. The Priory is the mother church of the Order of Augustinian (or Austin) Friars in England, and was established in 1249. The house is basically 14th and 15th centuries, with additions made over subsequent centuries. The present church was originally the infirmary, and used to have two storeys. The cloister is still recognisable and contains doorways (sometimes now blocked) leading to the former chapter house, to the dormitory (which used to be in a line of buildings parallel to the south wall of the cloister and running to the present church door), and the lavatorium (also now bricked in) - an arcading which was the friars' washing-place and led to the refectory. The refectory lay above the wing which now runs from the house along the west side of the cloister. The only remnant of the great monastic church is its south wall - the wall extending from the east side of the cloister - and two sedilia and a piscina. Its size and shape, however, can be seen from flower beds set as markers in the turf. A 20th century memorial tablet is a reminder that Joan of Acre, daughter of King Edward I, was buried in the church. In 2002 the Richard III Society installed a tablet commemorating other royal burials here - see the note 'Royalty at the Castle' in Appendix A.

Following the Dissolution in 1538 the house became a private residence. In 1953 it reverted to the Austin Friars, made possible by the very generous offer made by the last owners. The house underwent very considerable repair and modernisation in 1992. In 1998 the 750th anniversary of the friars' coming was marked by the unveiling of a shrine to Our Mother of Good Counsel containing a figure copied from a fresco in an Augustinian church near Rome, and a sculpture blending several meanings. In 1998/9 a new block of buildings added to the priory's extensive work of offering help and relaxation for anyone as well as normal parish activities for Catholics of the area. See Book III for a full account of the Priory.

PUDDLE LANE. A former name for Cavendish Road.

The PURPLE HOUSE. In the early 2000s a house in Clare became national news because of its colour - a controversy which nearly reached the European Court. See **5 *Callis Street*.

PYSENEBREGGE or PYSENBRIDGE. This was a medieval bridge on the Cavendish road where it crossed the Chilton stream. This position was particularly important because one entrance to the castle (the Dernegate) was nearby, and a sluice directed water from the stream to the fish ponds within the castle. An old document from 1400 mentions workmen constructing this ditch. An alternative name is mentioned in a 16th century will which speaks of '*Pesonbredge, otherwise called Bayebredge*'. Around this time a certain Roger Barrow obtained a grant of fifty-four loads of timber from the queen, through the court of the Duchy of Lancaster. Although he used part of this to repair this bridge, he was accused of selling the rest. His repair to the bridge was reckoned by some to be useless. '*He tooke upon him to build the baye bridge without the good likinge or advice of myself, who told him all the tyme of buylding of the said bridge that the same was begone to be built to slyghtly and to narrow, whereby the water could have no passage, but the said complainant tooke his owne corse...soe that the next flood that came, the said bridge was carried away*'. There was a turnpike here in the 18th-19th century.

QUAKERS IN CLARE. There was a strong Quaker element (official title, Society of Friends) in the town by the end of the 17th century. A deed dated 1686 refers to a group of residents arranging for a cottage to be held in trust for those of the Quaker faith, and when this group was reduced to two, the advice of the local Quakers was to be sought. This cottage stood behind other buildings at the south end of the market place, at the foot of the castle mound, and it seems a reasonable assumption that the Quakers held their meetings there at that time - indeed, a map of 1809 puts a Quaker Meeting House in this locality, just north of the castle mound. A plot of land was given by Francis Waldegrave for a Quaker burial ground, but it was eventually taken over and is now part of the private garden of **3 Cavendish Road. Captain Giles Barnardiston, owner of the Priory from 1679, was a Quaker.

QUEEN STREET. A former name for Church Street.

QUYLTERS. A former name for the **Swan Inn, 4 High Street.

RAILWAY AND STATION. In 1865 a railway line was built through the inner bailey of the castle. The laying of the railway lines and the building of the station destroyed much of the castle remains, but these operations uncovered hidden treasures, including a valuable gold crucifix (see *Cross, reliquary) and various artefacts of archaeological interest. The line was eventually to run from Sudbury through Long Melford, Cavendish, Clare, on to Haverhill and through to Shelford on the Cambridge line. (For much of the following information I am indebted to Geof Perry)

Its conception had been on June 8th 1847 when an Act of Parliament authorised a company called The Colchester, Stour Valley, Sudbury and Halstead Railway to build an extension from Sudbury via Long Melford to Clare. On the same day the company was authorised to lease the line to the Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds Railway, which had already entered a working agreement with the Eastern Union Railway, and was later absorbed. (This was in days when everybody was planning railways everywhere, with no overall planning, leading to a chaotic railway system which could never make sense). On January 1st 1854 the Eastern Counties Railway leased the Eastern Union's lines and took over the working under an agreement made on December 19th 1853, retrospectively sanctioned by an Act of Parliament on August 7th 1854. However, when the Great Eastern Railway took over the Sudbury line on August 1st 1862, the authorising Act of 1847 had lapsed without the line to Clare having been built, and a fresh authorisation took effect under the General Act of Amalgamation on August 7th 1862. The whole of the line was completed and opened for business on August 9th 1865, and so the inhabitants of Clare got their railway. The line remained under the control of the Great Eastern until January 1st 1923, when it became part of the London North Eastern Railway. It was nationalised along with most other railway companies on January 1st 1948.

In 1892 goods traffic amounted to 7900 tons a year. By 1908 the figure was 14400 tons. Coal stood in piles in the goods yard, to be graded and distributed from a site off the High Street, near the Gildhall – now a small group of modern houses. One can picture the old days, strings of wagons drawn perhaps by four Suffolk horses taking goods to and from the station; farmers bringing sugar beet and grain, and taking away massive slabs of steam coal to power their threshing machines. Station Road must have been a much busier thoroughfare in those days, when, of course, it continued through what is now the Country Park to reach the station. The 1950s saw five trains a day each way between Cambridge and Marks Tey, with connections to Norwich and London. 80000 sacks of grain were passing through the station a year. The staff consisted of the station master, a porter, a signaller and freight and ticket clerks.

But freight traffic declined as goods were conveyed more conveniently by road. On January 28th 1963 Clare became an unstaffed halt. By January 1st 1959 steam had already given way to diesel multiple units, rail buses and diesel locos. Freight services were withdrawn from Clare on September 12th 1966, and passenger services on March 6th 1967. But not everything was lost. Although the branch line might be closed and the rails removed, the remaining station buildings were ultimately to become an interesting feature of Clare Castle Country Park.

Relics of the past can still be seen. Walking between the platforms eastwards (that is, away from the car park) the gap beneath the platform on the left side was for the passage of signal control wires and rods coming from the signal box to operate the points. The signal box was probably built in 1890 when block signalling was introduced. Waiting room and main station buildings still stand on either side. One can easily imagine the crossing for pedestrians at the end of the platforms. There is still evidence at one end of the goods platform of the livestock pen where animals waited to be transported by train. The visitor can picture the sidings running along each side of this platform, meeting up to form a single siding going into the goods shed, and a crane standing to the right of this shed to lift heavy goods such as machinery into delivery lorries.

The railway had served Clare for just over 100 years before falling to Beeching's axe but the remaining platforms and buildings survive as a reminder of the days of steam. When the goods shed was converted into the Park Centre attractive reminders of the railway days were included, such as an old wagon with examples of the kinds of things it used to carry. The track of the removed railway lines can be followed to both the east and the west. The track to the west gives views of the Priory between trees. There was a level crossing along Ashen Road, with a railway crossing keeper's house. One story from the railway days tells how a talkative level crossing keeper ignored advice that the train was nearly due and the gates should be opened. Result: the train arrived in Clare station bearing the crossing gates on the engine. Keepers on some lines in those days whiled away the time by providing haircuts and shaves and carrying out various businesses.

Bridges from the railway days survive, including a railway bridge over the water, a road bridge over the course of the old line where it continued towards Cavendish at the far end of the park, and a railway bridge over the mill stream at the foot of Malting Lane, where the unused piers were to carry a second line which never materialised.

The feelings of private residents at the Priory when the railway was built so near their home are described in a letter which is reproduced in Book III, Clare Priory.

RATTEN ROW. A former name for **Church Street.

RIVERS AND BRIDGES. The main river running through the country park is not the Stour. The straightness of the waterway indicates it is a mill stream, specifically cut to operate a water mill efficiently. This 'new cut', or at least one section of it, has certainly existed from the 14th century. There used to be a fine stone bridge with four or five arches where the small footbridge from town now crosses the water.

But where did the Stour run? Its present course can easily be seen, separating itself at the Ashen Road bridge, running through and then around the Priory grounds, and across the meadows to join the main stream near Mill House and the weir. Its earlier course is not easy to trace. Old maps and references indicate a number of streams in the meadows. It is known that the friars tried to ring the Priory with water, and dug ditches to supplement these streams and so achieve their objective.

The original course of the main river has long been queried. The Priory Cartulary (15th century) quotes earlier deeds trying to clarify the issue. *'It is conjectured from old evidence that once next to the site of the old mill there was a small footbridge, whence the great Stour, otherwise called the embankment, led towards the little bridge; it is elsewhere called the Stour running towards Cavendish, and elsewhere again the Stour running towards the old mill, and in the same deed it is called the Stour running towards the malt mill. Be it known for all time that no water divides Essex and Suffolk here at Clare on the further river bank. The friars' meadow is in Essex. Therefore it is evident that the friars' meadow was not only in Clare but also in Ashen and Belchamp St Paul, and within the friars' meadow there was no partition by water.'*

Gladys Thornton's book has a sketch map estimating the situation in the 14th century which gives the simplest explanation of the probable course of the old waterways. It shows the stream splitting at the bridge on Ashen Road, one part continuing along the line of the present mill stream, and the other wandering through fields and ringing the Priory, as mentioned above. Near the malt mill she shows another split in the main flow, a short stream leaving the mill stream and cutting across to join the waterway which has been wandering around the Priory grounds since the Ashen Road bridge. This combined stream then follows the course of the present 'old river', meandering through the meadows to rejoin the main flow near the corn watermill below Mill House. But she wonders whether the stream now called the 'old river' and which wanders around the Priory rounds may be just another ditch cut by the friars. She suggests that the old course of the Stour ran parallel to Nethergate Street as the millstream does now, but a little to the southeast, and is presumably the depression in the ground which can still be seen by the smaller entrance to the Priory near where the Saxon corn mill stood. (See the entry *Mills regarding this mill's conversion to a horse-drawn malt mill when the new mill stream was cut). In this case perhaps the stream she conjectures, described above as a 'split in the main flow', could have been the continuation of the course of the old river? Mrs Barnardiston's notes (early in the 20th century) say the river which still surrounds the Priory was 'doubtless the one the monks constructed', that the railway line had a moat (the original Stour?) on one side and the mill stream on the other, and that part of the real old river was obliterated by the railway.

A 16th century reference speaks also of a '*Seynt Annes Ryver*', of uncertain course even then, and attempts have been made to identify this also with that depression outside the small gate to the Priory grounds, possibly dug by the friars. One document says '*Sir Thomas Welde says he has heard said of the old friars there before him that the water called St Anne's River from the floodgates next to the great bridge unto the lord's meadow was made by the friars of the place*'. When the present church was the friars' infirmary there was a reredorter (toilets) at the back, which must have been serviced by a flowing stream. In the (more recent) wall near the depression just mentioned there is a small archway at ground level. Could this indicate where there was once a ditch, one which ran along the rear of the infirmary and rejoined the river near Priory Farmhouse? It is all a 'don't know' area.

The Chilton or Clare Stream. This runs through Clare from the north, to the east of and parallel to Bridewell and Callis Streets. A stream from the common flows into it under the roadway in Callis Street at what was Gosse Ford, where surplus water from the same area after sustained rain can still give the suggestion of a mountain stream as it rushes alongside Sheepgate Lane. The Chilton Stream turns to run eastwards, parallel to Cavendish Road for a short distance, after which it crosses the Cavendish Road at what used to be the Pysenebregge, before running by the eastern edge of the Country Park to flow into the new cut and River Stour below the Mill House.

The Hawedych. This used to run southwards from the common, passing behind the High Street, and must have been of considerable size. A stream ran from it across what was Gosford Street (now Callis Street) and into the Chilton stream, as mentioned above. Hawedych went on to run south-westward behind Nethergate Street, another stream running from it to cross the street by a ford and then run on into the 'new cut' opposite the corner of the Priory grounds.

River bridges. In 1318 the townsmen as a whole were ordered to repair the great bridges under a penalty of forty shillings. In the 17th century the church vestry authorised payments of £20 and later £14 for repairs to the Great Bridge. A 16th century record describes how, following overflowing rivers, '*iiij or iiij greate bridges within the said towne were altogether overturned and carried away with water, soe her majesties subjectes were greatly hindered in their passage thereby, and were inforsed untill the new building thereof to ride three or ffoure miles about*'. This reference will be well understood by motorists who are occasionally still diverted by floods near the entrance to the Priory. See entries* under:- Gosford Bridge, Great Bridge, Iron Bridge, Pysenebregge, Rombregge, and Wyfont Bregge.

ROMBREGGE. Alternatively called Rum Bridge, this was nearly a mile along the Stoke road. It has been suggested the name derives from 'Rome', hinting at the time of the Roman legions.

ROSE AND CROWN. A former name of the **Clare Hotel 19 Nethergate Street). See *Fire fighting for an account of a fire here.

ROTTEN ROW. A former name for **Church Street.

RUM BRIDGE. See *Rombregge.

ST EDMUND'S CHANTRY. Nothing is known of this. It is merely mentioned on a torn paper in 16th century writing found in the church chest.

ST MARY MAGDALENE CHAPEL. See *Wentford Chapel.

ST MARY'S BARN. This belonged to St Mary's chantry and was situated in **Cavendish Road where the Royal Clarence Masons' Lodge now stands. It burnt down in 1825 and was replaced with the Grammar School.

ST MARY'S CHANTRY. The origin of this chantry is unknown, but it is certain that it existed in 1346 because records show that in that year it was involved in a court action to enforce payment of a debt of eighteen pence. Although in general the gilds in Clare did not have many possessions, the Chantry of St Mary in the church had

considerable lands, valued at least at £1000 - a lot of money in those days. These included a large farm, cottages, market stalls, the Moon inn, St Mary's House in Gosford Street, and various pieces of land. There is also evidence of a chantry along the Cavendish road. The uses to which the income raised by the chantry's possessions was put included repairing the church and highways and bridges, and paying for the singing of 'morowe masse' (the first Mass of the day) in the Parish Church by a priest who also helped the curate there and '*dede teache the youth of the seyde towne whereof is a greate nomber.*' The chantry was dissolved in 1549, and at the end of the 16th century the townspeople were in possession of the lands.

ST MARY'S HOUSE. This belonged to St Mary's Chantry, and stood on the east side of Gosford Street (now Callis Street). It was probably what is now known as ****Norfolks, 29 Callis Street.**

SCHOOLS IN THE LIFE OF CLARE. Various buildings around the town are mentioned in different places in these notes as having at some time been used as schools, so it may be useful to bring together in one place some information about schools in Clare over the centuries.

It seems that during the medieval period some profits from the various charitable bodies in the town were used in one way or another for the teaching of children. Court documents show there was a schoolmaster called Master John in a school in Clare in the middle of the 14th century. This school was run by the church and supported by the Chantry of the Blessed Virgin in Clare and was held in the Guildhall until it was sold into private ownership by orders of the king in 1551. In 1546 a priest from Chilton was said to be teaching '*one Grammar scole to the good and vertuous instruction and educacyon of the vouths there.*' This school may have been that which was held in the Guildhall for some years before 1550, and writing of around that date has been found on the walls of that building. In 1597, when a new Market Cross was built, two upper rooms were added by private subscription as schoolrooms. Also in the 16th century Caius College, Cambridge lists two scholars as having been educated at Clare.

The will of William Cadge, dated 1668, left an endowment in the form of a farm for the provision of education for children who could read but could not afford school fees. This came at the time when the need to educate poor children was beginning to be recognised, and there was more willingness to teach according to mental ability, not just money. In the nation at large, however, Sir Francis Bacon warned that education led to a shortage of servants, and other people opposed '*educating them above their station.*' The free school did not offer free education to everybody, but did make it available to a small number of pupils through the endowment, which guaranteed the teacher a minimum stipend. Fee-paying pupils were additional, and could help to raise that remuneration. The original annual salary for the schoolmaster appointed at Clare was £10. He was to teach ten poor boys of the town, and was to be chosen by the vicar and others. He must be orthodox and of good behaviour, and was to instruct his scholars in English, Latin and Greek, and the art of writing.

In 1811 a Sunday School was opened for the education of all the children of the town, paid for by the ratepayers of the parish. It was intended that this should be held at the Market Cross in the evenings and on Sundays, but numbers were too great and the parish church was used instead. Until 1839, education was the sole responsibility of the Church, and even at the time of the 1945 Education Act, the Church's approval was necessary. A Baptist Sunday School with 29 attending was established in 1832.

1833 saw one endowed school (37 attending), six infants' schools (80 children), four daily schools (51 children), one boarding school (51 girls), two established church Sunday Schools (281 children). Another infants' school was established in 1843.

In 1844 six academies were listed, and these would have included two in ****Callis Street** - one at The Grove, and one at Norfolks which eventually moved away and became Stoke College. Other premises recorded as having schools at some stage are parts of those which came to form the Cock inn in Callis Street and Nethergate House and the Red House in Nethergate Street.

1856 saw the Cadge charity reformed. Free places were abolished and the money went to pay half the fees of all Clare children. Full fees for outsiders at the time were £2 a year up to the age of 12, and £4 after that age. The master was then receiving £50 a year plus half the income from fees, giving him a total of £80.

Not until 1859 was provision for an infants' and girls' school officially required, and a National School was then set up by the church. This was built, at a cost of £600 on part of the site of an old farmhouse and granary which had been demolished in 1858. Built to hold 200, within twenty years there were 367 children, necessitating extensions. It became a Board School after the formation of a School Board in 1875, and in 1886 an attendance of 402 children was registered there. 1891 also lists a Grammar School and a Ladies' school, and the Priory housed a school in the 1870s.

The infants' school continued and towards the end of the twentieth century elderly residents could still tell how in their day there were seven classes of around thirty children each, plus two babies' classes for children under five years of age. The standard of education was very good. This building was in use until 1974, when it was replaced by a modern infants' school.

Moving to more modern times, Clare secondary school was in existence from 1955 to 1972, since when senior pupils have been bussed elsewhere and the premises became a Middle School for 9 to 13 year olds. Today's two schools are a credit to their architects. The Primary school enjoys a pleasant situation on the outskirts of the town along Erbury Place. The Middle school blends agreeably into the landscape despite its prominent position on a high point of Cavendish Road.

In 1990 the old Victorian school returned to a new use, see ****Callis Street, Clare community Centre.**

(For other information about education in Clare see David Ridley's Clare: annals of the Borough, 1800o-1850).

SHEEP COTT LANE. An earlier name for Sheeppgate Lane, meaning 'sheep house' see entry under ***the Common.**

SHEEPGATE LANE is an ancient drovers' way which runs westwards from the site of the old Bridewell (prison) in Bridewell Street, and marked the northern edge of the original borough of Clare. A map of 1809 has the name 'Sheepcott' instead. It leads around the north side of Clare common and camp and, while walking along its route it is easy to imagine the characters of many previous centuries who used it, Romans attacking (or defending?) the fortified area, manorial tenants paying their dues at the barn which stood there, or shepherds on their way back to the **Ship Alehouse, Bridewell Street in pursuit of 'one for the road'. It ran around the camp site, bypassing the town with its main road from Bury St Edmunds to London, eventually joining the road at the other end of the old borough.

SIX BELLS INN. Sometimes said to be in 'the devil's gap' (a name which used to be given to the northern, darker, side of a church) this occupied half the northern part of the churchyard. The name and position suggest it was favoured by the bell ringers in the days when bell ringing was an occupation which only the poorest would undertake and for a fee which they hurried to spend in the nearest pub. Tower screens, possibly including the one in Clare, were designed to protect the congregation from the sight of these dissolute creatures. It was apparently built in the late 16c since the sixth bell, which provided the inn's name, was added to the church peal in 1579. The inn came into the hands of the Rev Matthew Bell in the early 1700s. Inside the church a ringers' gotch (beer jug) dated 1729 can be seen. This bears the inscription '*campana sonant canore*' ('the bells ring in harmony'). This seems to link together nicely the vicar's name, the bell ringers, and the Six Bells Inn.

In 1802 the building was divided into three for professional people. It was sold to the church in 1851 for £380 and demolished to extend the graveyard.

SOUTERES ROW. The name of a little lane which used to join Heigh Row (High Street) to the Market.

STONE CROSSES. See Introductory Notes in Book II.

The SWAN INN AND ITS SIGN. For a basic description see under **High Street. For a fuller account of the carving see the Appendix C.

TEMPERANCE HOTEL. A place for provision for those who couldn't risk 'one for the road'? – a facility dating back to 1869 on the site now **1 Market Hill.

THRONE OF ENGLAND: the Clare claim. In 1399 Henry Bolingbroke seized the throne from Richard II and was crowned king as Henry IV. In doing this he bypassed a senior branch of the family, his father (John of Gaunt) being only the fourth son of Edward III. Edward's eldest son, the Black Prince, had died before his father and a second son had died young. Lionel (who married Elizabeth de Burgh), was Edward's third son and therefore senior to Bolingbroke, and although he also died before his father, it can be asserted that Lionel's descendants had a greater claim to the throne than Henry IV, descendant of Edward III's fourth son.

Lionel and Elizabeth's daughter Philippa married Edmund Mortimer. Before Richard II became king, Parliament had decided that if he remained childless the throne should go to Edmund Mortimer. But Edmund died long before Richard ceased to be king (Richard was ultimately forced to renounce the throne). Edmund's son was Roger Mortimer, and many hoped that he, the seven year old heir presumptive, would replace the unpopular Richard II. However, Henry stepped in to become Henry IV, as mentioned above.

Roger Mortimer's grandson Richard was Duke of York, having descended on his father's side from yet another son of Edward III, Edmund of Langley, the fifth one. This meant that the Mortimers' line of descent from Edward III was now strengthened, having come from the third and fifth sons. In 1460, during the Wars of the Roses, Parliament gave Richard Mortimer a promise of his succession to the crown, but he died too early, being killed at the battle of Wakefield the same year.

Richard's son Edward succeeded to the Clare lands and his father's titles and claims in 1460. This was a time when there was much dissatisfaction with the reigning king, Henry VI, sometimes described as being incompetent, sometimes as having bouts of insanity. At a time of jockeying for position, claims and counter-claims, and battles, Edward entered London and in March 1461 was declared king by acclamation of the people - Parliament not being in session at the time - although Henry was still alive. But warring continued despite this acclamation. Edward had to flee the country in 1469 and Henry VI's title was once again recognized by Parliament - parliamentary U- turns are not new. Edward returned to England in 1471 with an army which rapidly grew in numbers, took Henry VI, 'the imbecile', prisoner, soon to die in the Tower, and gained a decisive victory at Barnet in 1471. So Clare can claim it ultimately had a hand in producing a king. (See also in Appendix B 'The Clare Lords' in the entries 1368 to 1460).

TOILETS are at the end of Station Road, just inside the country park.

TOWN HALL. See **Market Hill.

TOWN WALLS. A right-angled line of these exists behind and parallel to High Street and Nethergate Street. Their fabric includes 19th century bricks, but probably also older material perhaps including remnants from the castle when it fell into ruin.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH. This stands back from the road, near the shops in Nethergate Street. For its history see the entry *Nonconformist Religious Groups in Clare. For a description see under **Nethergate Street.

VERANDAH HOUSE. A former name for Thornton House, see under **10 Nethergate Street.

VESTRY MEETING. The Vestry Meeting (so-called because meetings were often held in the parish church vestry) took increasing control in Clare in the 16th century. This meeting was open to any ratepayer, which meant that 150 men were entitled to attend – an exceptionally high number compared with other boroughs - although

usually only about a dozen did so, and the squire and parson were particularly strong figures there. By the 17th century the vestry had taken virtually complete control. It elected a church warden to look after the church fabric, an overseer to ensure the poor were provided for, a surveyor of highways to see roads were looked after, and a constable to keep law and order, in addition to organising activities in many areas. (See also the note *Borough of Clare).

VICTORIAN POLICE STATION. This was part of the building now known as Old Court. For details see **13 Nethergate Street.

WAGON AND HORSES PUBLIC HOUSE. See **20 Church Street.

WATERWORKS. A guide to Clare published some time between 1907 and 1910 says 'Water works were erected and water mains laid throughout the town in 1906. A sewage scheme was carried out in the present year'.

WENTFORD CHAPEL, or CHILTON CHAPEL, now known as CHAPEL COTTAGE. This building on the Newmarket road, just beyond the turn to Poslingford, used to be a Norman Chapel, and is dated about 1190, although close study is needed to recognise its older features. For details see under ** 'Bridewell Street and Beyond' in Book II.

WHITE HART INN. This was probably at the south-west corner of Market Hill, where houses numbered 1 and 2 now stand. It was later used for a *workhouse*. There was also a White Hart Inn in Chilton Street.

WINDMILL HILL FIELD. A former name for the *Horsecroft*.

WOOL HALL. This is claimed by some as possibly having been situated on the site later occupied by the Bear and Crown, for which see **20 Market Hill.

The WOOL INDUSTRY IN CLARE. During the Middle Ages Clare was a prosperous town, its main trade being that of cloth making. Probably the town had developed such an industry by the 13th century, and soon after this there is increasing reference to the spread of the woollen industry in the town. Clare women were supplied with wool for spinning and weaving to meet the needs of the household of Elizabeth de Burgh in the early 14th century. In the 1470s Suffolk produced more cloth than any other English county. Much of Clare's raw wool at first came from the immediate neighbourhood.

A number of premises in Clare are known to have been centres of manufacture, with many of the processes being carried out in cottages. Clothiers organised and financed the work, which was put out to a wide range of specialist workers. There is a fair amount of information about Clare clothiers of the 15th century, some of whom used their wealth to help maintain roads and assist the Priory and the Church. Noble churches such as Clare's are called 'wool churches' because it was profits from this industry which helped build them. Products were sold in the local market, at the fairs in towns round about, and at Clare's own annual fair held possibly on March 5th, probably in one of the fields of Wentford Farm on the road to Poslingford.

In earlier days wool was spun using a distaff, a cleft stick about a metre long, tucked under the spinner's left arm. Thread was drawn from unspun wool, held in the distaff, onto a spindle that turned under gravity. After the thread was spun it could be used for weaving and finally put through a process called 'fulling'. This was an operation of washing and beating the cloth to give it a good finish. A fast flowing river was essential and the swift flowing Stour encouraged this industry along its valley in towns such as Clare, Cavenish, Glemsford and Sudbury. Dyers added colour.

In 1530 the invention of the spinning wheel changed the traditional way thread was spun, and this fact, together with other social and economic circumstances, led to the decline of the manufacture of broad cloth, the 'old draperies', along the Stour valley, and the general move was towards agricultural pursuits. Before the century finished, however, a revival in the cloth industry came about in the form of the 'new draperies', a coarse cloth, lighter and cheaper than the old. This was helped from around 1564 onward by the arrival and settling in East Anglia of immigrants, especially Dutch, fleeing from Spanish persecution, and these newcomers introduced new techniques. This development involved 'bays' and 'says': a bay was lighter and finer than modern baize, and made of a worsted warp and a woollen weft; a say was a fine durable cloth, made entirely of wool with a texture resembling serge.

The Crosse family, associated with **Nethergate House, Nethergate Street, were among prominent figures who stretched, dyed, and finished cloth. Their product was taken to London, or sometimes marketed locally.

See **The Bear and Crown, 20 Market Hill, for a suggestion (unsubstantiated) of premises which might once have been a wool market.

This industry in turn decayed during the 18th century. Its demise in Clare was hastened, in his own interests, by Mr John Poulter, a figure of power who allegedly used every means to destroy the industry locally. He was so held in terror that local people could only acquiesce in his wishes. A lawyer of dubious practices, he was ultimately struck from the Rolls for issuing false writs, after having to go on his knees begging pardon from the Commissioners. He had altered names and dates and so on. Nonetheless, he managed to finish up by getting himself buried very near the altar in the Parish Church! (Some of the above is from Gladys Thornton's booklet 'A Short History of Clare' - still available in Butcher's newsagents in Clare, and a good purchase for anyone interested in this subject and others relating to Clare).

WORKHOUSE. Sometimes called the House of Correction, (a phrase also used for prisons, a workhouse often being virtually a prison), this was a set of premises used as a work place for the poor. One existed in Clare before 1659, for in that year its keeper was dismissed and in Quarter Sessions, orders were given for a new house to be built. Houses were sometimes rented when more accommodation was needed. The workhouse of which we know any details was one bought by the town in 1780 for £105. This was a substantial building facing the Market Street

and backing on to the High Street which had previously been the White Hart, the site now occupied by **Nos.1 and 2 Market Hill. It accommodated 35 people on occasion. An inventory in 1833 reveals that at that time it had eleven beds in two bedrooms for women, one for men, and a governor's suite. The chief work to which the poor were put was the spinning of yarn. Its workroom at that time consisted of nine spinning wheels. There were also four shove ha' penny boards and a pig trough. Buildings at the rear included a brew house. In 1836 a district workhouse was provided at Haverhill, the building here in Clare then being demolished and replaced with two brick houses.

WYTFONT BREGGE. A bridge mentioned in 1334. Its position is unknown.

BOOK I APPENDIX

A) CLARE CASTLE

The fragment of a 13th century stone keep on the summit of a Norman motte (mound), the 15c stone wall which descends it along the line of Lady's Walk, and the remains of the inner and outer baileys (the outermost walls or courts of a castle) are the sole remnants of what was once a grand castle. Gone are the great gates through which our forebears entered the castle precincts: now it is cars which drive into the castle area. Once inside, people with muscle and wind may climb up the spiral path to the remnant of the keep, and enjoy a wide view while appreciating the value of this motte as a lookout post in olden days. A history trail notice board there (and repeated outside the information centre) gives the probable appearance of the castle as seen from the keep. The less energetic may wander around lakes and occasional earthbanks for their reminders of the past.

A castle of sorts in this area of Clare probably dates back to Anglo-Saxon days. It seems a remarkable fortress to have been found necessary in this area, and eventually covered twenty acres. Doubtless Earl Aluric, who held Clare manor at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, considered Clare strategically positioned. The site of the castle was presumably chosen because it was easily defended, having rivers and marshy lands at the south and east and possibilities for defence ramparts to the north and west. However, in some places castles were thought of not so much national defences but rather fortified homes for the nobility, the potential enemies being just the local 'natives'. Castles also demonstrated the owner's wealth and power. A major purpose of many of them was to protect knights and safeguard their horses - which were valuable and hard to replace.

The earliest the castle is actually mentioned in Norman days is 1090 in a grant made by Gilbert de Clare to the monks of Bec (in Normandy) giving the monks various privileges locally including the right to fish in the river. However, Richard of Bienfaite, the first lord of Clare, had already begun developing the site of the existing Saxon earthwork into an extensive Norman castle. At first the structure on top of mottes of such castles as Clare's was a circular stockade made of timber, and when such a mound settled often a shell keep of stone was built in place of the timber keep. (In the case of some castles, the original timber was painted to look like stone, to give a suggestion of invulnerability before the stage of a stone construction was reached). By the 13th century, stone was being extensively used, and by that time a circular shell stone keep, strengthened with buttresses, stood on the motte at Clare, with curtain walls flanking it on either side and reaching down to the castle below. The present walls are probably 15th century.

The motte we see today is an earth mound twenty to thirty metres high. The keep surmounting the top is said to have been nine metres high and sixteen in diameter. It was a valuable refuge, and, being so high, commanded a wide view of the surrounding countryside. A lookout would have been stationed here in times of unrest. Memorials to 20th century owners of the Priory whose ashes were buried here when they owned this area have been affixed to the remaining shell of the keep.

The castle became the baronial seat of the earls of Hertford (a title which had come to the de Clares) around 1140, and developed during the 12th and 13th centuries as a strong fortress and a centre for governing the huge Clare estates in East Anglia, and the place where the Great Court of the Honor of Clare was held. (For a note on the Honor of Clare see the Outline History at the start of this A-Z). The castle was used as a royal residence or became a royal possession during the minority of an earl or when the lands were forfeited for a period. During one such time some letters of Henry III emanated from here. The main entrance to the castle grounds was from what is now Station Road. From there the road led along the present tarmacadammed way and through a gate called Crowedhouse. Other gates were the Dergate, which may have been near the entrance by the Pysenebregge (off the present Cavendish Road), the Nethergate, and the Redgate.

The castle had outer and inner baileys. The northern or outer bailey had earth ramparts surrounding the site (still recognisable especially in winter) on which stood a wooden stockade, and beyond this its grass lands stretched to the market and Cavendish Road, with grazing lands for its livestock reaching to the present playing field across the road. These earth ramparts remain around two sides of the bailey. In later days, but while the castle was still in use, encroachments occurred as houses were built near the moat. Walking along the path from the Station Road entrance, the hill which is up on the left surmounted by a tree is part of the outer bailey ramparts. Gates allowed folk to go to and fro about their daily tasks whilst keeping their animals safely enclosed within. As well as containing gardens and being used for livestock, the outer bailey was an area where workers such as the potter, basket maker, and blacksmith worked. Tournaments, archery and swordplay practice would also take place here.

Stone walls and moats formed defences between the outer and inner baileys. The path just mentioned passes parts of the moat. The moat probably flowed parallel to the Chilton stream from the vicinity of its junction with the present main waterway, swung westward to pass close behind (to the north of) the rampart and wall beside the path

still marked as Lady's Walk, circled the mound with its keep, and ran through the present car park area back to its starting point. Parts of it can still be seen in various places along this route, and these probably date from the 15th century. The Lady from whom Lady's Walk is named was undoubtedly the Elizabeth who became a de Burgh through marriage to John de Burgh. She inherited the Clare lands and was known as the Lady of Clare. She lived for many years at the castle, and died in 1360. It was another Elizabeth de Burgh, her granddaughter, who married the Lionel who became Duke of Clarence. The main gateway from the outer bailey into the inner or southern one (which contained the castle buildings) was situated where Lady's walk drops down. Remains of the moat can be seen either side of the entrance. A drawbridge was situated here, raised when required to keep intruders out. The gatehouse consisted of two large stone towers, and a portcullis may have been used for extra defence. The inner bailey, now partly occupied by the railway station and sheds, was strongly defended by an earth rampart with a stone curtain-wall on top. The sloping path leading to Lady's Walk is part of this original earth rampart. There were sturdy stone towers along the walls, built for defence. Their names included Auditor's Tower and Constables' Tower (probably linking them with officials of the castle), Oxenfordestour (Oxford's Tower?) and Maiden's tower.

This area covered almost four acres. Within it were all the domestic buildings. By the 14th century 250 people lived at the castle, and with their many horses their needs must have been considerable. (Records show that at one point there were also 387 ewes at the castle - and one ram!) The buildings were made of timber, with roofs of clay tiles and lead. They included the Great Hall in which the de Clares lived and its overspill Clarettehall, servants' quarters, the Great Kitchen and kitchen alley (a walkway to the Great Hall), bake- and brew- houses, store houses, malthouses, a wood yard, a horse mill, stables, a smithy, an armoury, a chapel served by a resident chaplain, and a jail with an execution place. A college of secular priests (i.e. a group of clergy who lived as a community but were not restricted like monks in a monastery) had already been founded by Aluric the Saxon, who *'had put in Ledmar the priest and others with him. Having made a charter he committed the church and the whole place into the hands of Leustan the Abbot to keep, and into the keeping of Wisgar his own son. But the clerks could neither give nor alienate this land away from St John. However, after King William came he seized it into his own hand'*. In 1090 the college was given by the first Gilbert of Clare to the monks of Bec in Normandy, whence Clare's friars came, thus becoming a small Benedictine priory within the castle site. The monks were moved to Stoke by Clare in 1124, and their church at Clare continued in use as the castle's chapel.

Beautiful gardens were laid out, and included flint paths, seats, a glass aviary, a deer enclosure, and a lion house (foreign animals were brought to the country out of curiosity at that time). Here (or possibly in the Clare camp area, which also included gardens at some stage) there was also a sepulchre with a canopy above, possibly based on that in Jerusalem. There were fountains, swans on the castle's waters, and a horse driven mill. Ponds well stocked with fish were supplied with water through a ditch specially cut from the Chilton stream in the Cavendish Road area or by lowering the millstream. A map of 1847 shows the fish ponds which were dug to serve the castle in the 12th century were still in use. They were apparently five neat rectangles, varying from three by ten metres to ten by forty metres. A survey in 2003 revealed that some ponds had been sited near the end of what is now Station Road. There were also vineyards - whose existence is mentioned in Domesday.

Ongoing work at the castle and related activities in a wide area around Clare led to work for a large number of townfolk. Carpenters and smiths were among others for whom work was always available, and there is a record of two hundred men from the area being sent to make five new stalls in the market place at Bury St Edmunds. Despite the military strength of the castle there is no knowledge of its being involved in fighting, and no siege, but it was kept in fighting order - in 1322 ammunition was held there because of disturbances, and there are other records of soldiers there.

From one corner of the castle a fine stone bridge of four or five arches provided access to the Priory, the two communities having close links. The present bridge may be adequate, but is hardly a worthy replacement.

Daily life in the castle.

(Details taken from the Clare Castle Country Park Information Centre).

In 1275 Clare castle was owned by Gilbert, 9th lord of Clare, who was one of the most powerful barons in England. He had other estates and castles in Kent, the West Country, and Wales, and visited each in turn, with his large household. The household numbered about two hundred, who spent only part of the year at Clare. It included the steward, a high ranking knight or cleric who acted as general manager in charge of his lord's estate; knights and men at arms for protection; the treasurer; and the marshall, in charge of horses and wagons.

The Great Hall was the centre of castle life. The household ate there, and gathered there for entertainment and ceremonies. There was little furniture, and men slept in the hall on benches or the rush-covered floor. It must have been a smelly place, smells from food thrown to the dogs, from smoke from the fire and from a crowd of unwashed bodies.

In the morning Lord Gilbert rose very early. After shaving with a pumice stone and having a breakfast of bread and ale, he and his lady would go to mass in the chapel. Then with his steward he would deal with the affairs of the estate and castle. The main meal of the day was taken at eleven in the morning. Lord Gilbert and his guests ate well. In the 14th century the delicacies at Christmas would include hundreds of oysters brought by cart from Colchester. The shells may still be found in the grounds today. After the meal there might be hunting (there was a deer park at Hundon specially set aside for this purpose) or a tournament - a mock battle in which knights might be killed as they fought for prizes. After supper Lord Gilbert might be entertained by musicians, story tellers, or visiting jugglers.

The end of the castle.

After the death of the second Lady Elizabeth the castle passed through her daughter's marriage to the Mortimer family. An account for the year 1387-8 indicates that Roger Mortimer, 4th Earl of March, put it into good repair that year. It continued to be occupied until at least the beginning of the 15th century. In 1495 it became a crown possession. Edward VI gave it to Sir John Cheke.

Through the sixteenth century the castle fell into ruin. When the market square was enlarged and the streets widened to accommodate the large wool wagons, much of the castle's timber, flints and stones were embodied in the new houses and shops. Some probably also went into the old town walls, which can still be approached by a path beside the Swan Inn. The spectacular structure now used as the sign of the Swan inn was probably once the base of a window at the castle, and there are guesses that other beams and window sills still to be seen in the town could have originated there. Miscellaneous material must have found its way into various premises in Clare until little was left. A report by Robert Reyce early in the 17th century described the castle site then as '*nothing but lamentable ruins upon a most beautiful situation*'.

Towards the end of the 17th century the area passed to the Elwes family of Stoke-by-Clare, with whom it stayed until 1825. There is an engraving from around this time which shows the gate-tower and keep in a good state of preservation, but this is undated and seems an example of artistic licence and imagination. In 1825 the location was bought by John Barker of Clare Priory, and the ashes of later owners, Sir Henry and Lady May, were buried at the top of the mound, marked by a tablet on the remnant of the keep. The coming of the railway in 1865 had added to the mutilation of the area, but in 1971, after the railway had gone, the land it had occupied came into the possession of the West Suffolk County Council. After improving it scenically, and greatly assisted by the gift of much more land then in the possession of Tony de Fonblanque, the Council opened it as a country park in 1972. A beautiful crucifix found here is described under the entry 'Cross, reliquary' earlier in this A-Z, and other discoveries are among items mentioned under 'Archaeological finds' in the same section.

Royalty at the castle and town.

At one time, Joan of Acre, one of the daughters of Edward I, lived at the castle and was a great benefactor of the people at Clare, particularly the friars. Her brother Edward II was entertained here. Joan was buried at the priory, as recorded on a 20th century tablet there, and a vast assembly of nobility converged on Clare for her funeral. Lionel, Earl of Ulster, Duke of Clarence, and son of Edward III, played his part in Clare's history, and was also eventually buried at the Priory. The pageantry at his funeral must have been considerable, as seemed fitting for one of his high status, for the expenses had not finally been defrayed nine years later. Some of his descendants who married into the Mortimer family, and who aspired to and ultimately gained the throne of England (see entry under that title in the A-Z) were also buried here.

In the year 2002 the Richard III society came to install a plaque to the ancestors and relatives of King Richard III and Queen Anne Neville who were buried at Clare Priory. In addition to Joan of Acre, Elizabeth de Burgh and Lionel, they included Edward Baron Monthermer (1303-1340), Edmund Mortimer Earl of March (1391-1425) and Lady Margaret Neville (Scrope, Cressener), (died 1463).

A more recent royal visit to Clare was George VI who visited the priory to meet General Montgomery. The general had a base there at the time, and the king came to discuss the invasion of Normandy which was to take place in June 1944. Another royal visit was in 1994, when Princess Margaret and Prince Edward attended the wedding of Lord Ivar Mountbatten at Clare parish church.

B) THE CLARE LORDS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

William the Conqueror created earls (a select group which included the fourth and succeeding lords of Clare) for a definite purpose - the defence of the realm against attacks, particularly from Wales, Scotland and across the English Channel. Several, for example, were settled along the Welsh border and had almost unlimited power, not only for defence but also to attack Welsh independence. They marked their advance by erecting and garrisoning castles, which in turn were the bases for further advances. The de Clares played a prominent part in all this. Indeed, for over 250 years after 1066 the Clare lords were among the greatest in the kingdom. Through battles, wars, intrigue and marriage they amassed great power and wealth. After 1141 the earldom of Hertford came to them, from 1217 that of Gloucester, and then that of March. They held great estates in the West country and Wales. The Clare lords were involved in almost all the major happenings of the period - the crusades, pilgrimages, conquests in Wales and Ireland, the wars in Scotland and France, the long struggle between the kings and the barons, Magna Carta, the first 'democratic' parliament (i.e. one including elected commoners as well as lords) and the founding of universities and church buildings.

A first born son has not always had the automatic right to assume primacy with all its inheritance implications, but this system evolved slowly from 1066, and was established by the 13th century as law. A sample of how things often worked out in families can be seen in the case of the brothers of Gilbert the Red. Bogo, Gilbert's younger brother, entered the Church. This was a popular course for younger sons. Often there was no intention of actually doing the job, but it frequently proved to be a way of attracting great wealth, which led to a luxurious life style, with a free ticket to heaven thrown in. Bogo was only eleven years old when he began acquiring benefices. By the time of his death he held nearly fifty rectorships, canonries etc., making him the greatest pluralist in the English Church. There is no trace that he had the slightest interest in religion. The archbishop of Canterbury said he '*was a ravisher, not rector, of his churches*'. On one occasion a clerk of the archbishop who called on Bogo to serve a writ on him was beaten up and compelled to eat the letters and seals. Thomas, the middle of the three brothers, worked

in the services of the crown and was a friend of Edward (later king) from early days. He went on a crusade, and also went to Ireland, where he held much power.

The following notes list the lords of Clare and their successors. They are obviously not full accounts of their lives, but potted biographies giving enough points of interest to set these prominent people who were linked with Clare against the historical background of their times. See the Bibliography for a book with much information on some of these characters.

Key: the first figure indicates their succession as lords of the Clare lands. e.g. 1) means this was the first lord of Clare and so on through to 10). The date which follows is when they became lord of the borough and manor of Clare. Earldoms came to some of the lords of Clare through marriage and then descent.

1). 1066. RICHARD OF BIENFAITE. Son of Gilbert, count of Brionne in Normandy so sometimes called FitzGilbert (= fils de, son of, Gilbert - a form of name which is generally thought to indicate illegitimacy at the time of naming) was the founder of the de Clare name and family. The son of a cousin of William the Conqueror, he fought well in the Conquest, and was rewarded with 170 lordships including 95 in Suffolk, among which was the manor of Clare where he started building his castle, becoming the first lord of Clare. He was one of the small group of barons closest to William the Conqueror who formed a kind of standing baronial council. He played a prominent part in establishing Norman control of England and became one of the wealthiest barons, with land in ten counties. He ended his days in a monastery c.1090 – a common occurrence then, as mentioned in the additional Note on Elizabeth de Burgh which follows this list.

2). 1090. GILBERT. Son of Richard.

Gilbert gave the church in Clare castle to the monastery at Bec, Normandy. He became prominent in Cardigan c.1110 by taking the place of Cadwgan, who was of a rebellious family. This opened the way for more control of Wales, with the building of castles. He and his brother Roger were present with Prince Henry when the king, William II (Rufus), was shot dead with an arrow fired by Walter Tyrrell, Gilbert's steward, while the party was hunting in the New Forest in 1100. A plot is often assumed, but not proved. Gilbert had already been involved in revolts against Rufus in 1088 and 1095. Tyrrell fled immediately (he later denied even being present) and the tradition is strong that the de Clares had staged an assassination. Certainly Henry's part seems pre-meditated, for, wholly disregarding his dead brother, he rode straight to Winchester and seized the treasury - always the first act of a usurping king. The body of the king was left deserted and unattended until peasants took it to Winchester on a farm cart, where it was unceremoniously buried. Three days after the death of Rufus, Henry was crowned King Henry I. Gilbert died c.1115.

Walter de Clare, Gilbert's brother, founded Tintern abbey.

3). 1115. RICHARD. Son of Gilbert.

Richard removed the Benedictine priory from Clare castle to Stoke by Clare in 1124. He was killed in an ambush by the Welsh in 1136. Richard's brother Gilbert became Earl of Pembroke in 1138, and both he and a descendant, another Richard, were known as Strongbow.

4). 1136. GILBERT. Son of Richard. First Earl of Hertford.

Gilbert was given the title Earl of Hertford by Stephen before the year 1141. He joined the revolt against the king, but later returned to support him. He died in 1152.

5). 1152. ROGER, Gilbert's brother. Second Earl of Hertford.

One interesting little sidelight on how things operated in his day is the fact that Roger is known to have retained a professional engineer in his service, engaged to carry out building operations, an office which became hereditary in the family for at least three generations. In 1157 Henry II granted Roger whatever lands he could conquer in Wales. He took Carmarthen and Aberdovey castles, but then his stronghold, Cardigan castle, fell to the Welsh c.1168 and Welsh princes regained virtually all of South Wales. Roger died in 1173.

6). 1173. RICHARD. Son of Roger. Third Earl of Hertford.

Richard was a leading figure in the barons' fight against King John. He was involved in drawing up Magna Carta in 1215, and was one of twenty-five barons appointed as its guardians. He married Amice, who was heiress to the enormous estates of her father William, Earl of Gloucester, and one of three sisters the youngest of which, Isabella, married King John. Richard fought in Wales, and another kind of fight (still familiar to us in the earlier part of the 20th century) - over Sunday trading. Sunday had been the traditional day for markets. Pope Innocent III sent an emissary to have this changed, but in 1207 Richard bought the right to have his own market at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, restored to Sunday. He died in 1217.

7). 1217. GILBERT. Son of Richard. Sixth Earl of Gloucester and fourth Earl of Hertford.

Having inherited from his father, Gilbert gained much more through his wife's father, William Marshall, Earl of Gloucester. He duly became 6th Earl of Gloucester with vast estates in England including in the west country, and in Wales and Ireland. He was one of the most important men in England. After the death of King John, Gilbert sided with Louis of France but was taken prisoner at the battle of Lincoln in 1217. He died in Brittany in 1230 fighting for Henry III.

8). 1230. RICHARD. Son of Gilbert. Seventh Earl of Gloucester and fifth Earl of Hertford.

Richard seems to have been married secretly at Bury St Edmunds to Meggotta de Burgh when both were aged eight. The wedding came to light when a bride for him, now the king's ward, was being sought in 1236. Megotta died in 1237, and two months later Richard was married to Maud de Lacy, daughter of the Earl of Lincoln. He was prominent in the baronial movement of 1258, and a member of one of the groups of very influential men pledged to stand by each other in attempts to gain more power. He became one of the most powerful of the lords, although his claims (and those of his son) to Bristol were not granted. He loved tournaments - picture him in the outer bailey of Clare castle! It was Richard who invited the Augustinian friars to come to England, so leading to the founding of Clare Priory in 1248. He died in 1262.

9). 1262. GILBERT ('the Red'). Son of Richard. Eighth Earl of Gloucester and sixth Earl of Hertford.

Directly he entered his inheritance Gilbert showed dissatisfaction with the king's powers, and became one of leading barons seeking reforms from Henry III. At first he supported Simon de Montfort and accepted the king's surrender at the Battle of Lewes in 1264. He attended what is regarded as the first democratic English parliament (see in the introductory notes above), summoned by Simon de Montfort in 1265. ('Parliament' is a French word - the aristocracy still used Norman French language: it was only the serfs and other peasants who spoke in Anglo-Saxon, which was evolving into Old English). But Gilbert fell out with Simon. There is a colourful description of him camping outside Gloucester, his fires lighting the countryside by night, while messages passed to and fro. He changed sides to join Prince Edward and led the army at the battle of Evesham where Simon de Montfort was killed. There were graphic events in London, ditches being dug around its walls, access from the Tower cut off, and Southwark fortified. In 1267 Gilbert seized and held London for a time against Henry III. He was one of a group who were described as 'taking the cross' (which means going on a crusade) although he did not actually carry this out. He became an ally and counsellor (though never a trusted one) of Edward I, and married the king's daughter, Joan of Acre, in 1290. On his marriage he surrendered his lands to the king and then received them back to hold jointly with his wife. He was the wealthiest of the de Clares. Besides vast estates in Wales and Ireland he held land in twenty-six English counties and had started building Caerphilly castle in 1268. He had a daughter, Elizabeth de Clare, who married John de Burgh (see below). He died in 1295.

----- 1295. JOAN OF ACRE. Widow of Gilbert the Red, second daughter of Edward I and Queen Eleanor, and sister of Edward II.

Joan was born at Acre in Israel while her father was on a crusade (her mother was there too!) She took over the Clare lands on the death of her husband Gilbert, and married one of his household knights, Ralph de Monthermer, guardian of her son. She initiated new buildings at Clare Priory, especially the chapel of St Vincent, and was buried there on her death in 1307. Joan was the kind of character around whom stories could be told, and Austin chroniclers record miraculous events after her death. Capgrave states that fifty-two years after her burial the grave was opened and her body was found to be incorrupt. Osborn Bokenham speaks of the body lying whole and incorrupt on the south side of the friars' choir, and of the many miracles '*wrought by God's grace through her, especially in the cure of toothache, back-ache and fever.*'

There is an interesting ancient poem relating an imagined dialogue at her tomb. It is entitled '*Dialogue betwix a secular askyng and a Frere answering at the grave of Dame Johan of Acres.*' The purpose of the poem is to relate the lineal descent of the Clare lords from the foundation of the Priory until 1460, and it was written around the latter date. It also gives some information about the buildings, and ends with praise of Richard, Duke of York, whose royal descent through the de Clares the poem may be proclaiming. (A copy of the poem may be found in Barnardiston's book 'Clare Priory') and was reproduced in the original photo-copy editions of this material.

10). 1307. GILBERT. Son of Gilbert the Red and Joan of Acre. Sixth Earl of Gloucester, seventh Earl of Hertford.

Gilbert supported Edward II in attempting to conquer the Scots and personally equipped 500 soldiers against Robert the Bruce at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. The Scots had prepared all sorts of traps for the English, including pits dug beside the road and covered with branches to trap the horsemen. Bruce's men were arranged in four packed oblongs, walled by their shields and presenting hedges of 18-foot pikes in all directions. Although not yet ready to attack they moved towards the English. Gilbert was one of several English commanders who recommended resting on better ground before going to battle. He was accused of cowardice, so, despite his better judgment, led the charge, and was one of the first to be killed. The English army was routed, and many who were not killed in battle lost their lives in the marshland or river - it was perhaps the biggest defeat ever for the English. Gilbert had no sons so his death in 1314 brought the male line of the de Clares to an end, closing the period when they had been a major force in English history.

THE CLARE LORDSHIP THEN WENT THROUGH AN UNSETTLED PERIOD. Gilbert's death in 1314 left his three sisters as co-heiresses. For a time control of the lands was retained by the king, who gave it to various tenants temporarily. A great scramble began as the brothers-in-law pushed to increase their respective shares, and the king's dithering lasted for nearly three years before he finalised the settlement. Despenser, husband of the eldest sister, had wanted the title of Earl of Gloucester and all the Clare property in Wales. He took a lot of this by force, but was eventually checked when barons of more senior rank were displeased at his growing strength in that area. King Edward was forced to withdraw his support and bring Despenser to judgment. In 1317 the estates at last passed to the youngest sister, ELIZABETH de BURGH (third daughter of Gilbert the Red and Joan of Acre, so granddaughter of Edward I) and her third husband, Roger d'Amory (she retained the name of her first husband, John de Burgh, despite having remarried twice since). In 1322, however, the lands were forfeited because

d'Amory rebelled (soon to die in battle). As a consequence of her husband's rebellion, Elizabeth was captured at Usk and detained in Barking Abbey. Later in 1322 the English and Irish lands were returned to Elizabeth, with the Usk property being restored to her in 1327. Elizabeth's colourful life is described in greater detail in a separate note at the end of this list.

----- WILLIAM de BURGH. Son of Elizabeth and John, Earl of Ulster.

As Anglo-Norman control in Ireland declined, William was assassinated at the ford of Carrickfergus in 1333 by his Irish cousins, leaving an infant daughter, another Elizabeth de Burgh.

---- ELIZABETH. Daughter of William. Married Lionel - see following note.

1360. LIONEL. Third son of King Edward III.

Born in 1339, an important marriage had to be arranged for Lionel as the King's son, and he was married before reaching the age of four to the infant Elizabeth, only child of William de Burgh. (Young marriages were contracted or even performed before the age of seven, often for political reasons. Confirmation by the parties was usually required at maturity. The girl was normally brought up in the boy's family. Teen-age marriage was more common. Love often developed after marriage). This marriage brought him the Clare inheritance and led to his becoming Earl of Ulster and controller of the de Burgh lands in Connaught, although neither of these now meant much. The title Duke of Clarence was created for him in 1362. He was made the Clarenceux king of arms, with power to adjudicate on claims to arms. He served as regent during one of the king's absences abroad, and spent five years trying to secure control in Ireland, but had to draw up terms which tacitly recognised English control was fading away. Chaucer the poet started as a page to Lionel before moving on to become valet to Edward III. Lionel's wife Elizabeth died in 1363. In 1368 Lionel married again, his bride being Violante, niece of Bernabo Visconti of Milan. She brought a fortune of 2,000,000 gold florins as well as towns and castle in Piedmont to the marriage. There were wild rumours in England that he was about to become king of Italy, or even emperor. Possibly he could have carved out some kind of Mediterranean principality for himself, but he died a few months later, in the same year as his marriage. He was buried in Italy, but afterwards his dying wish to return to Clare was honoured: his heart and bones were returned to England and buried with his first wife before the high altar at Clare Priory in 1375. Sir William St John Hope excavated their bones in 1904.

----- PHILIPPA. Daughter of Lionel and Elizabeth. Became Countess of March.

Philippa was her parents' sole heir, so on her marriage to Edmund Mortimer, third Earl of March (see the following note) the estates she inherited passed to the Earls of March (and later to the Dukes of York).

1368. EDMUND MORTIMER. Husband of Philippa. Third Earl of March, became Earl of Ulster.

Edward entered his inheritance as a young man - he did not attain his majority until 1373. He was married while still young (before 1368) to Philippa, daughter of Lionel and Elizabeth. Prior to Richard II's becoming king in 1377, parliament had decided that if the king remained childless, the throne should go next to Edmund, he being married to a descendant of Lionel, second son of Edward III (Edward III's eldest son, the Black Prince, had already died). Edmund was active in Ireland and achieved much, and was made the king's lieutenant there in 1379. He met his death crossing a ford in Ireland in 1381. His death came before Richard was compelled to renounce the throne (which was in 1399) so Edmund did not become king, and this stage in the line of succession was temporarily lost in the usurpation which followed.

1381. ROGER MORTIMER. Son of Edmund. Fourth Earl of March, Earl of Ulster.

Roger was seven years old when he entered his inheritance, and he became a royal ward. He went to Ireland with Richard II, and shared conquests there. He was allowed wardship of his vast estates in 1393, two years before coming of age, and was soon made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Roger was the most dangerous potential rival claimant to the throne as against the House of Lancaster (which had descended from the third son of Edward III) at the time when Richard's grip was weakening and Henry Bolingbroke's position was strengthening. One of his badges was a white rose, which later became the symbol of the Yorkists in the Wars of the Roses. At Shrewsbury in 1397-8, where a parliamentary session was to be held, the people met Roger joyfully, wearing his colours and hoping they would obtain deliverance from the unpopular King Richard through him, the heir-presumptive to the throne. But this did not happen, for Roger met his death prematurely in Ireland in 1398, aged 24, while Richard was still king, and so another Mortimer heir-presumptive missed succeeding to the throne. Henry stepped in in 1399 to become Henry IV, a usurpation which was to lead to the struggle between rival claimants and ultimately to the Wars of the Roses.

1398. EDMUND MORTIMER. Son of Roger. Fifth Earl of March.

Edmund, too, inherited at an early age, being eight years old, but his rights to the throne were already being supplanted. Henry Prince of Wales was Edmund's guardian, and supporters of Henry secured the removal from power of King Richard and his replacement by Henry through a body that had no claim to be a parliament but was summoned as one and looked like one. Edmund assumed his responsibilities as earl in 1413. In 1415 there was a plot to make him king, but Edmund himself warned the new king, Henry V, of this. Edmund was involved in an attack on France c.1418 (this was the period of the Hundred Years War, 1337-1453). When Henry VI came to the throne in 1422 he was a minor, and Edmund remained the hope of the disaffected people, but died in Ireland in 1425.

----- ANNE MORTIMER. Sister of Edmund, daughter of Roger Mortimer, succeeded Edmund on his death. She married Richard of Conisbrough, Earl of Cambridge, who died in 1415.

The Swan Inn sign comes from this period – see Appendix C.

1425. RICHARD. Son of Anne. Third Duke of York.

He married Cicely Neville. He was a ward 1425-1432. After a stormy adult career, he decided to press to the full his claim to the throne. In 1460 a settlement was reached whereby Henry VI would retain the crown for his lifetime, but succession would then come to the Yorks, descendants of the fifth son of Edward III, who had now been joined through marriage to the descendants of Lionel, Edward III's second son, thus strengthening the claim. But Richard was killed at the Battle of Wakefield before the close of that year, and his widow Cicely retained actual possession of the Clare lands until her death during the reign of Henry VII.

1460. EDWARD. Son of Richard. Later became King Edward IV.

Edward inherited his father's titles and claims to the throne. For an account of how he became king see the note 'Throne of England: the Clare claim' earlier in this A-Z. By 1480 Edward's grip was weakening. He died in 1483, leaving two young sons, the princes who died in the Tower. Edward IV's daughter Elizabeth of York, married Henry of the Lancasters who, after the reign of Richard III, came to the throne as Henry VII, leading to the House of Tudor, but this account must end there. Tumultuous days - and part of the background of Clare's castle and prominent families.

MOVING AWAY FROM MORE GENERAL HISTORY and back to local affairs:-

CICELY continued to hold the Clare lands, although they were in the name of her deceased son, Edward IV. (See above).

In 1495 KING HENRY VII became lord of Clare borough and manor, but after Cicely's death he granted the lands to his wife Elizabeth. The castle began to decline.

In 1509 KING HENRY VIII, son of Henry VII, took over Clare, and granted the lands to each of his wives in turn. Catharine of Aragon handed the common to some of the people of Clare.

In 1547 KING EDWARD VI. Henry's son, took the Clare lands over, and granted the borough to his tutor Sir John Cheke. However, this was revoked by Queen Mary in 1554, and the lands of Clare Honor were transferred to the Duchy of Lancaster.

THE NAME OF CLARE CONTINUED TO APPEAR IN TITLES IN SOME SUBSEQUENT CENTURIES.

The Clare title was reinstated in 1564 when it was granted to John Holles and held by him and his descendants until 1711. From 1711 to 1768 it was held by Thomas Pelham, who became Prime Minister. The holder from 1795 to 1802 was John Fitzgibbon, who helped unite the British and Irish parliaments in 1800. The title became extinct again in 1864. The title of Duke of Clarence was not used after 1477 until 1789, when George III gave it to his third son, but it became extinct again in 1837 when he (then William IV) died. Prince Leopold, fourth son of Queen Victoria, was created Earl of Clarence. There is a brass to him in Clare parish church, marking the fact that he was the Worshipful Master of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons, Clare. He died in 1884.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON ELIZABETH de BURGH

ELIZABETH de BURGH, often known as 'The Lady of Clare', the figure from whom the path in Clare Castle Country Park known as Lady's Walk is named, lived a life so colourful and well recorded that it deserves recounting in greater detail than the preceding brief note on de Clare lords.

Her father, Earl Gilbert, had the wealthiest noble household outside the royal family, and a third of his lands came to Elizabeth. With inheritances from her grandmother and from her first and third husbands she was very wealthy, controlling much land in the eastern counties, Dorset and the Midlands, and also in Wales and Ireland - as much land as many of the wealthiest noblemen. Her ranking was among the highest nobility in the land. Although she married and was widowed three times she retained the name of her first husband. There is a colourful (but probably imaginative) story that one of her husbands was killed before her eyes while participating in a joust to celebrate their wedding.

Her first husband was John de Burgh. This was a double de Burgh and de Clare wedding, Elizabeth's brother Gilbert marrying John's sister Matilda at the same time. John died four years later in 1313, leaving Elizabeth a widow at the age of 18. Usually the king chose brides for women of her status, but Elizabeth showed her independence in her second marriage, which was to Theobald of Verdun and was a runaway affair, said technically to be by abduction although Theobald denied this - but she was a widow again by 1316. The third marriage, to Roger d'Amory, met the king's approval, but Roger was edged out of favour at court and took arms against the king in 1321-2. During this period the lands were forfeited. D'Amory was mortally wounded before the Battle of Boroughbridge in 1322, when the king defeated the rebels. Elizabeth was captured at Usk and detained in Barking Abbey for a time, and made to promise that she would not re-marry without the king's permission. The English and Irish parts of her inheritance were restored to her in 1322, while Usk and other areas were returned later, after Edward II was deposed in 1327. Still aged only 28, Elizabeth remained a widow the rest of her life. She also remained in mourning ever afterwards, with a black chamber and furnishings. A gate of Clare College in Cambridge bearing her coat of arms also contains gilded tears, symbolising her widow's grief. The link between the college and Clare is that after University College in Cambridge suffered financial collapse in 1338, Elizabeth

restored it as Clare Hall, with endowments for up to twenty fellows, although there were never more than ten in fact. In 1856 this became Clare College.

She spent time at Anglesey, Great Bardfield, and Usk, but made Clare her main base. This was in contrast to her predecessors, who perhaps found the town too quiet. Elizabeth lived in great style. Records show her household at one time included 15 knights, 7 ladies-in-waiting (ladies formed a very small proportion of the household), 22 clerks, 93 esquires, 45 yeomen, 50 grooms, 12 pages, and others to a total of 254. She entertained frequently and lavishly. On May 28th 1340, when her cousin king Edward III was on a visit, the menu included boar, veal, several types of poultry, five swans, six herons and three bittern. On a fish day the types of fish provided included herring, stockfish, various sorts of salted white fish, salmon, crayfish, and crabs and whelks. The Black Prince visited quite frequently. Henry of Lancaster was a friend and frequent visitor, as were many others of the highest rank of nobility, and foreign emissaries were also entertained. When such people came they brought their own army of retainers. Food was brought from many places. There are records not merely of fish from Southwold (which she owned), but also of pigs being driven from Warwickshire (six days on the road), oxen and cows from Usk, and other food arriving from all parts of the country. Supplies on one particular day included 290 loaves of bread, 100 gallons of ale, and 488 herrings. In one year household accounts include wheat for 106,248 loaves, and malt for 40,682 gallons of ale. Some of her purchases were obviously of advantage to the local economy.

Elizabeth's visitors included friends and relatives who founded three Cambridge colleges - Pembroke, Gonville and Caius. With her own contribution by way of Clare Hall, between them this group of friends played a significant part in the growth of the university.

This great lady initiated new buildings at Clare Priory, notably the chapter house, dormitory and refectory. Her interests and education are shown in that she possessed a copy of the Vulgate version of the Bible, had manuscript illuminators working in her household, and borrowed books of romances from the royal collection - stories of knights' adventures and the like. Her goldsmiths at both Clare and Walsingham made jewellery, plate, images and religious vessels.

In addition to being very fond of her house at Great Bardfield, Elizabeth divided much of her later life between the two castles at Clare and Usk, the centres of her two groups of estates. Making the journey between them was a gigantic operation. She took not only a large number of retainers but also many furnishings including her bed and draperies and hangings. One report shows the 200 mile journey from Usk taking 17 days. On another occasion it was done in 13 days. On such a journey, 80 gallons of ale a day would be bought and consumed. She travelled in a great chariot, perhaps something like a glorified Wild West carriage - long, with a canopy, and openings along the sides and in the back and front to give a view, and pulled by five horses in line. She also sometimes used a litter carried by two horses, one at the front and one at the back. On one visit to Canterbury she had 65 horses and 21 hackneys, while one from Usk (admittedly after a long stay away because of the Black Death) involved 130 horses, 28 hackneys and 22 oxen. Today we complain (very properly) as we have to watch international articulated lorries manoeuvring round the Bell Hotel and Well Lane corners, but how the townsfolk of the time must have gawped at the kind a procession they sometimes saw in the streets of Clare! The horses used for such journeys were of the kind used by knights wearing heavy armour. When somebody died their best beast had to be given to Elizabeth. At the time of the Black Death, when several generations might be wiped out soon after each other, this was a particularly great blow to a family.

Much of her religious life would have been centred on the chapel at the castle. If she lived as did many noblewomen of her day, religious observances would have played a considerable part in her life. Two friars from the Priory were engaged as resident chaplains and sang mass daily at the castle, for which the Priory was given ten quarters of wheat and ten of malt per annum. There is a reference in 1351-2 to her presence at Clare Parish Church on an occasion when a baptism took place, when she gave two children five shillings each. Almsgiving also had a place, some examples being bread and herrings to the poor on the anniversary of the death of her husband Roger d'Amory, and nine pence to each of 50 poor people on Maundy Thursday in 1352. Many widows took a vow of chastity at some stage of their widowhood, and Elizabeth did this in 1343.

Elizabeth founded a House of Franciscan friars at Walsingham in 1345 despite opposition from the Augustinian Canons at the existing Shrine of Our Lady, who feared loss of profits. Since the 12th century the Clare lords had been associated with this shrine, which is still a place of pilgrimage. Indeed, the de Clare household had had links with Walsingham from the original shrine's earliest days. Lady Richeldis de Faverches had a vision of Our Lady in 1061 (there were many Normans in this country before 1066, often in positions of considerable power) and set up the original wooden Holy House, allegedly a copy of Mary's house at Nazareth. Geoffrey, Richeldis's son who had charge of the sanctuary, was a vassal of the de Clares, to whom the Manor of Walsingham later passed. In 1130 an Augustinian chapel was founded as a more permanent memorial, and this became an Augustinian priory c.1153. (This earlier priory was of Augustinian canons: it was the Augustinian friars whose first establishment in England was at Clare). Earl Roger of Clare and his descendants assisted it. It developed into a great centre of pilgrimage after c.1250 and was patronised by Elizabeth de Burgh as the family priory. Nonetheless, as noted above, she had asserted her independence by founding a Franciscan 'rival' in 1345.

Later on Elizabeth stayed in London for months at a time. She had become acceptable by the Minoreesses (Franciscan nuns) at their house, The Minories, outside Aldgate, and had built a house for herself in the outer precinct. The community was one with a strong aristocratic element among the nuns and abbesses. When she died in 1360 she was buried in their church, a favoured burial place for noblewomen. (In some cases nobility became members of an Order as death approached, and were then treated as such). Her advance plans for a very lavish funeral included 200 lbs of wax for lights around her body. Her will included not only large sums for masses to be said for many relatives but also a very long list of charitable beneficiaries, down to gifts to her pages. She provided for five men-at-arms to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land for the benefit of her own soul and those of her three

husbands. She had earlier hoped to go there herself, but had not accomplished this by the time she became too old. She also made provision for religious houses, four parish churches (including Clare), other poor churches, and poor scholars and prisoners. She might be said to have been a universal aunt. It is no wonder she became known as the 'Lady of Clare' - and Clare residents can surely still think of her affectionately.

(Except for information on the founding of Walsingham shrine, **the above note owes much to a lecture given in Clare by Dr J. Ward**, who kindly checked them later. I have since supplemented them from her book 'English noblewomen of the later Middle Ages' [Longman's, 1992], which is crammed with interesting information and will be greatly enjoyed by anyone interested in the subject. References to the original documents authenticating much of the detail will be found in Dr Ward's book).

C) THE SWAN INN SIGN - A FULL CONSIDERATION

INTRODUCTION.

The present sign outside the Swan Hotel is generally thought to have originally been a window corbel (that is, the supporting structure beneath an oriel window) and to have come from Clare castle, which fell into ruin during the 16th century.

Papers on the subject were read to the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology, a short one in 1848 and a longer one in 1849. These stated the carving had been made visible again early in the 19th century after having been covered with plaster for years. This means we cannot be sure of some original details.

The 1849 paper begins *'The sign is remarkable in combining insignia of the Houses of York and Lancaster'*. Regarding the crescent with a star between its horns, it states *'These stars are with wavy rays; the suns of the Yorkists of later date have commonly, if not always, straight rays. This portion, therefore, of the carving was in all probability a compliment to one of the sovereigns of the House of Lancaster.'* This paper also declares *'Until the Duke of York asserted his right to the crown about 1450, it would not have been politic or safe for the heirs of Lionel to add the royal arms to their paternal coat in any manner. When Edward Duke of York became Edward IV in 1461, the coat of Mortimer and de Burgh quartered merged in the crown - so that is the latest possible date.'*

Regarding the label and its possible indication of a Prince of Wales etc, the paper states *'If the label has no charge, as is the case now' (i.e. 1849) 'it is the coat of a Prince of Wales. The most likely of these is Prince Henry, later to become Henry V (who had a seal with three fleurs de lys and two swans gorged and chained), but the sign was probably that of his father, as the arms are subordinate to the swan, and on Prince Henry's seal the swan has a feather in its beak, perhaps to differentiate it from his father's swan. And how was Prince Henry connected with Clare? Edmund Mortimer was only six years of age when his father died in 1398; Henry IV had a great interest in keeping the young Mortimer out of "wrong" hands, so the Prince was appointed his guardian, to manage the estates and in effect be lord of Clare for a time. No other Prince of Wales suits all the details. So there is sufficient evidence to suggest the arms on our left were those of Henry V while still Prince of Wales, executed in the reign of Henry IV, viz between 1399 and 1413.'* The presenter then considers the position if there was an original charge on the label indicating someone other than a Prince of Wales. He looks at a) Lionel, b) Thomas Duke of Clarence, c) the Dukes of York. He suggests Richard, Duke of York (1411-1460), as the most likely of these *'and the carving was executed during this period of harmony between the Houses of York and Lancaster. In this case the swan may have been a cognisance (= badge) of Henry VI as already noticed, or the renewal of a previous sign which had been a compliment to his father or grandfather; while the arms on the sides were the paternal and maternal coats of the Duke, thus arranged to occupy these two spaces in preference to marshalling them all on one shield, and placing them side by side. The disposition of several coats was in those days much more left to the fancy of the artist than the modern practice of heraldry would allow'*.

Before these papers came to my attention a local resident, Mr Roy Sutton, kindly set out his interpretation of the signs, and it is this which is the basis of the following.

THE USE OF SQUARE BRACKETS AND ITALICS:- I have interrupted Roy's discourse by inserting in square brackets occasional explanatory notes for others who, like myself, are laymen in this area, and I have also inserted the everyday names of colours, as opposed to their heraldic names. A few comments from the 1849 paper have also been added at relevant points, in italics and within brackets.

Although some readers may feel the article remains rather specialist in character, its points seem worth keeping on record here.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SIGN.

THE SHIELD ON OUR LEFT -THE ROYAL ARMS: FRANCE MODERN QUARTERING ENGLAND. ['Quartering' means the bringing together of coats of arms from different families, as happens in marriage].

The label.

There is a label [the band along the top] of three points argent [silver]. The label's horizontal bar has nine torteaux [spots] in a single row. This cannot be correct and indicates that repainting was carried out at some time by somebody without heraldic knowledge. If the number of torteaux is correct but they have been put in wrong positions, it would make sense heraldically for three of them to be on each of the three points, and this account assumes that to have been the original pattern. (The 1849 paper states *'It cannot now [1849] be ascertained what was the original colour of the label, and whether it was charged in any way'*, and again *'In 1849 the label had no charge'*)

The French arms.

[The inclusion of French arms in the English Royal Arms was an assertion of the traditional claim made by England to the French throne. The Normans had bases in both countries: marriages and inheritances led to claims and counter claims - and wars. In 1339 Edward III assumed the title of King of France and brought the French emblem into the English Royal Arms. The claim to the French throne lasted until 1801]

The version of French arms in this carving is the one known as 'France Modern' - an azure [blue] field with three gold fleurs de lys. ['Fleur de lys' means 'the Flower of Louis']. This contrasts with 'France Ancient' which is in a version known as *semy*, an all-over pattern formed by the regular repetition of a single charge, here fleurs de lys. The change to France Modern occurred about 1376, and most representations of the arms after 1400 are in the modern form, e.g. in a seal of Henry IV cast c.1405, so the use of France Modern here helps to date the carving.

THE SHIELD ON OUR RIGHT: MORTIMER QUARTERING DE BURGH/ULSTER. [The de Burghs had become also Earls of Ulster, so shared the arms].

This quartering came about through the marriage of Edmund Mortimer 3rd Earl of March, to Philippa Plantagenet. Philippa was the daughter of Lionel Plantagenet of Antwerp, Duke of Clarence, and his wife Elizabeth de Burgh, through whom Philippa inherited the title of Countess of Ulster. [In non-heraldic terms, the coat of arms with blue stripes on gold and a small central shield is the Mortimers', and that which looks like a St George's cross on a gold background is the de Burghs']. But the arms in the form depicted are not those of either Edmund or Philippa. Their form shows they represent the children of the marriage, in particular on the male side, Roger Mortimer 4th Earl of March.

THE SWAN - gorged [that is, encircled around the throat with a crown] **and chained.**

The swan was prominent in arms of the Bohun family, one member of which, Mary, married Henry IV, and the swan was his accepted badge. [The 1849 paper says *'Is it too much to suppose that the swan chained has some allusion to the subjugated, usurping line of Lancaster, the swan being one of the supporters of the arms of Henry IV?'* (Henry IV lived 1366-1413, and reigned from 1399). This is a colourful suggestion by the lecturer but the editor of the published paper gives sound reasons for rejecting it].

Thomas of Woodstock also used swans, but he is unlikely here.

A CRESCENT HOLDING AN ESTOILE [that is, a star with wavy rays] **BETWEEN ITS HORNS.**

The Royal use of the crescent with a star or sun above it or between its horns dates back to John and Richard I. Henry III used it, so its inclusion here could be an allusion to the founder of the Plantagenet line.

AN OAK TREE. Hanging from its branches are two suns 'in their splendour' [that is, with wavy rays].

[The 1849 paper comments, *'Probably the suns and the crescent and star on the sign have some allusion to the three suns, afterwards conjoining in one sun, seen at the battle of Mortimer's Cross, Herefordshire'* (see Shakespeare's Henry VI Part 3, Act 2 scene 1) *which gave the crown to Edward IV and was the reason for his using the sun as his badge'*. The story is that three shining suns were seen hanging in the freezing sky, which Edward, Duke of York, took as a sign that the Holy Trinity would protect him from the Tudor army advancing across the deathly cold ground to meet them at Mortimer's Cross. Fighting went on until the afternoon and left more than 3000 dead strewn across the fields. Edward, only 18 years old, marched to London and was crowned king a month later].

A GRAPE VINE. This is probably only decorative, possibly indicating Clare was a good wine growing area.

AN ATTEMPT AT INTERPRETATION

Assuming, then, the time of the later Plantagenets, it is Richard 3rd Duke of York's arms which come the nearest to the Royal Arms shown here, being France modern quartering England with a label of three points argent and nine *torteaux* shared between the three points. If originally there were no points on the label they would be the arms of a Prince of Wales, the most likely being Henry V before he became king. If there were three points ermine (white) they would be those of Thomas Duke of Clarence (who had local connections). The other two sons of Henry IV are less likely, having other differences on their shields; and earlier generations of the Royal family are ruled out on other grounds.

WHAT IS CELEBRATED BY THE CARVING?

It could be in honour of any of the royal family of previous generations. Several possibilities exist:-

One is EDMUND LANGLEY, son of Edward III and uncle of Henry IV, born 1341, created Duke of York in 1385 [which was during the reign of Henry IV]. But his seal in 1391 still shows France Ancient.

Another possibility is one of his two sons, both of whom died in 1415:

EDWARD, 2nd Duke of York, born 1373.

RICHARD of Conisburgh, Earl of Cambridge, born 1375.

[Both of these would have inherited their father's arms, but each would have shown individual differences from their father's].

Or in the next generation, RICHARD, 3rd Duke of York, son of Richard of Conisburgh and Anne Mortimer. The arms are very like his. He married Cicely Neville [a marriage which led to two children who became kings, Edward IV and Richard III]. But it is unlikely that the coat is actually celebrating this marriage because her arms are not shown at all, and also because the Mortimer/de Burgh arms are given as much prominence as the Plantagenet [Royal] arms.

PERHAPS THE MOST LIKELY OCCASION FOR THIS CARVING AND ONE WHICH MEETS SEVERAL NEEDS IS THE MARRIAGE OF RICHARD OF CONISBURGH, EARL OF CAMBRIDGE, TO ANNE MORTIMER.

Richard was a son of Edmund Langley, 1st Duke of York.

Anne was the only daughter of Roger Mortimer 4th Earl of March.

But they are not the bride and groom's own arms. Being an unmarried woman, her arms would have the same basic details as her father's, but set in a lozenge [diamond]. Also, the two arms would not be quartered but be shown 'per pale' [side by side, a vertical line putting the husband's arms on the right as we see it, and the bride's on the left].

THE OCCASION COULD BE THIS WEDDING, BUT WITH THE PERSONS HONOURED BEING THE TWO FATHERS. The arms on the left, the Royal Arms, would honour Richard's father, EDMUND LANGLEY, 1st Duke of York and son of Edward III. Those on the right, the Mortimer/de Burgh coat, would honour Ann's father, ROGER MORTIMER, 4th Earl of March, who was lord of the Manor of Clare from 1381. [He had been born in 1373, became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and was killed in battle in 1398 - see his entry in the earlier section 'The Clare lords and their successors'].

THIS LARGE CARVING. THEN, WAS POSSIBLY PART OF A WINDOW IN CLARE CASTLE SHOWING PLANTAGENET ARMS, THE BADGES OF THE PLANTAGENETS AND POSSIBLY THE YORKIST FACTIONS (SUNS ETC), THE SWAN BADGE OF HENRY IV OR DE BOHUN, AND THE QUARTERED COAT OF MORTIMER AND DE BURGH. SUCH AN ASSEMBLY OF ARMS MEETS THE NEED OF A PLANTAGENT HUSBAND AND A MORTIMER WIFE SUCH AS RICHARD AND ANNE.

[SOMETIMES A DIFFERENT OCCASION HAS BEEN SUGGESTED - that perhaps it was to record the wardship of Edmund Mortimer by Henry Plantagenet (later Henry V) and the question of friendship or hostility on the two sides - but the basis for this does not seem as sound as the argument outlined above. Gladys Thornton refers to this argument in her brief note on the carving - on page 83 of her History of Clare. She says *'This carving may have been executed for one of the Mortimers: but, as one writer has argued, they would not have been likely to use the royal arms at a time when they were suspected of plotting for the throne, and it has been suggested that the carving was made during the time when Henry, Prince of Wales, was guardian of Edmund Mortimer, before 1413'*. The source she quotes may be the 19th century Institute of Archaeology papers.

The background to this argument is that relationships between monarch and subject varied. Friendly ones existed in that the boy Edmund Mortimer was allowed in due course to take up the earldom of March, fought in France for Henry V, and was made Lieutenant of Ireland by Henry VI in 1422. Strained ones were revealed in that before his death in 1424 he had been imprisoned, undoubtedly because he was actually declared by Parliament to be heir presumptive to the throne.

The previous Mortimer plottings were nearly a hundred years earlier, and there were no more problems until after Edmund's death, when the Yorkist line was handed on through his only sister, Anne Mortimer, to her children, with their stronger claim to the monarchy as described in the first section of this document, in the entry 'Throne of England: the Clare claim.']

Reverting to the main line of argument above, if that is assumed to be correct, Richard and Anne must have had the royal consent for their marriage. Presumably the reigning monarch, Henry IV, was happy for this couple to merge two of the most powerful families in the country. It therefore seems quite acceptable that all these heraldic symbols should come together on this carving.

THE DATE OF THE CARVING.

Richard and Anne were married in 1406. It would seem feasible that the carving was made within a year or so of that date. Anne died in 1411, presumably in childbirth (her son Richard was born at that time). This date is also in keeping with the date that the French arms became France Modern.

[Their son Richard, third Duke of York, was heir to the Honor of Clare, and heir presumptive to the crown of England. He laid formal claim to this but failed to proceed by being killed in battle in 1460. His son became king of England as Edward IV].