

HITCHAM and TAPLOW
PRESERVATION
SOCIETY



View of CLIEDEN-HOUSE in Buckinghamshire.

NEWSLETTER No. 40 - AUTUMN 1980

HITCHAM & TAPLOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

The main theme of this issue is History. You will remember that in the Newsletter before last (Number 38 of Summer 1979) we were able to include more than five pages on historical notes. (It might be worthwhile to re-read this section).

This time we are concentrating more on the fields in the area and the effect of the Inclosure Act of 1787.

CLIVEDEN WINE AND CHEESE PARTY

As many of you will know the Society held a Party at Cliveden on Saturday 14th June 1980. This consisted of a very interesting talk, illustrated by slides, by Mr. Philip Cotton the Head Gardener at Cliveden.

This was followed by a conducted tour of a selected part of the gardens but, as the weather was typically June - like being wet, windy and cold - some Members preferred not to go and were entertained by a brief quiz on local places with both the question and the answer on slides.

By the time the intrepid walkers returned they all appeared to have a good thirst and were suitably famished to deal with the wine and the various foods which had been made by the Committee Members and their wives.

Although this was a new venture for the Society the general opinion seemed to be that it was a success and it is hoped that we should be able to repeat this type of 'educational entertainment' each year.

As the weather had been so bad for the conducted tour Mr. Cotton kindly agreed to have a second walk (without the slides or the wine or the food!) on Saturday 5th July; only about twenty attended but it was very worthwhile for those who did.

Notes on the Plans on the following pages

Three parts of Taplow Parish, as it was in 1787, are shown on the three plans. The common land is shown in large print e.g. 'Buffins' and 'Great Common'. The fields etc. already enclosed at the time are shown in small print. The common fields were divided into strips, examples of which are shown by fine dots; these are the only strips marked on the 1787 plan which was prepared for the Inclosure Act. The allotment of the common land under that Act is shown in initial capitals with a Key. The Act laid down the line and width of roads and footpaths; these are shown by broken lines on the plan (for clarity) even though the roads would have become fenced. Some may previously have been meandering tracks. The position of the Parish boundary has been drawn conventionally.

I have used modern road names on the plans to assist the reader.

The Inclosure Act survey was made in 1787. James Rutland made a copy in 1857 and the plans presented here were copied from this by permission of the Rev. John Kemp; the survey bore the names of Nick Wells and James Fougoin.

Philip Cooley.

ENCLOSURE AND THE LANDSCAPE OF TAPLOW

Two hundred years ago, most of the land south of Taplow, right down to Amerden, and Buffins field to the north of the village, was farmed in hundreds of separate strips in the mediaeval open field system. One owner had 45 separate pieces of land, the southernmost down by the river at Barge Farm, the northernmost at the top of Buffins field. North of the junction of Hill Farm Road and Cliveden Road, the fields were already enclosed and the layout of the landscape must have looked much as it does today. But from Taplow Lodge the fields gave way to Taplow Lower Common and Taplow Great Common, around the Feathers; Hitcham's common land was enclosed in 1779 but before that the open land stretched right up to Odds Farm. Sheepcote Farm and Hales Cottage, backed by old enclosed fields, looked out over acres of open land, described by John Evelyn in the 17th century as 'wretchedly barren and producing nothing but fern'.

In 1787, empowered by Act of Parliament, Enclosure Commissioners re-allocated 685 acres of Taplow land, so that the old strips disappeared and the land was divided into larger blocks which were to be fenced and farmed individually. New roads were laid out, and what had been tracks across the common were given new status as forty-foot wide roads, now Cliveden and Taplow Common Roads. The common itself was incorporated into the Cliveden and later the Dropmore estates, and what must have once been well used tracks leading from Hitcham and Taplow to the common land degenerated into the present Hitcham and Hunt's Wood bridleways.

Most of the land by this time belonged either to Lord Inchiquin of Cliveden or to the Rector - Lord Inchiquin was allocated most of Lower Thames Field, Long Meadow and Amerden Field, all south of the Bath Road - and allocations to other landowners were quite small. Some of these smaller pieces were later used as building land; for instance the houses along Boundary Road are built on part of Mr. John Davis's allocation of 8 acres, and the houses in Hitcham Lane on three separate divisions of what was once Hitcham open field. Another part of Hitcham's open field is now being cultivated in 20th century strips, as allotments. All allocation of 3 acres in Taplow, north of Nashdom on the Taplow Common Road, was set aside for the benefit of the poor of the parish, and later some cottages were built here and let at £4 per year.

The Enclosure Map shows that the shape of Taplow Village has not altered a great deal. Then, as now, houses were grouped around upper Berry Hill, Rectory Road and High Street, though the nucleus of the village was then further to the west, around the old church, Taplow Court and the Queen's Head pub, now Queen Anne's House. There was three cottages in the High Street, and the present church stands on what was once Prodiges Mead. Next to the old church the burial mound is drawn, topped by a tree, and to the west of it is a timber yard. The Rectory is shown, as are Elibank and two other larger houses in Rectory Road. Opposite the Rectory are two cottages, one of which is described as 'The Homestead Orchard and Garden, late in the occupation of John Read'. Down on the Bath Road Skindles, then the Orkney Arms, is shown as a substantial place with many outbuildings, and further along the road is the much smaller Dumb Bell.

The Awards and maps from which the above information is drawn are held in the County Record Office in Aylesbury and may be inspected there; the maps in particular give masses of information and are easy to follow.

HEDSOR PARISH

Road to Hedsor Wharf & Marlow

part of COW FIELD

CAPTAIN'S FIELD

HITCHAM

GREAT

COMMON

TAPLOW COMMON ROAD

RIVER

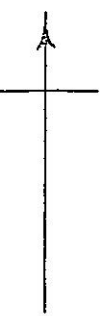
CLIFFDEN HOUSE

MAPLE HILL

GAGE MEADOW

GAGE CLOSE

GAGE COPPICE



TAPLOW PARISH north part

THAMES

0 Feet 500

KEY TO ALLOTMENTS

- I EARL OF INCHIQUIN
- P THE POOR
- Q FOR PITS
- M FOR MANORIAL RIGHTS
- W W. WOGAN

Allotments

ELM WOOD

SPRING COPSE

COPPHOLD

ELM CLOSE

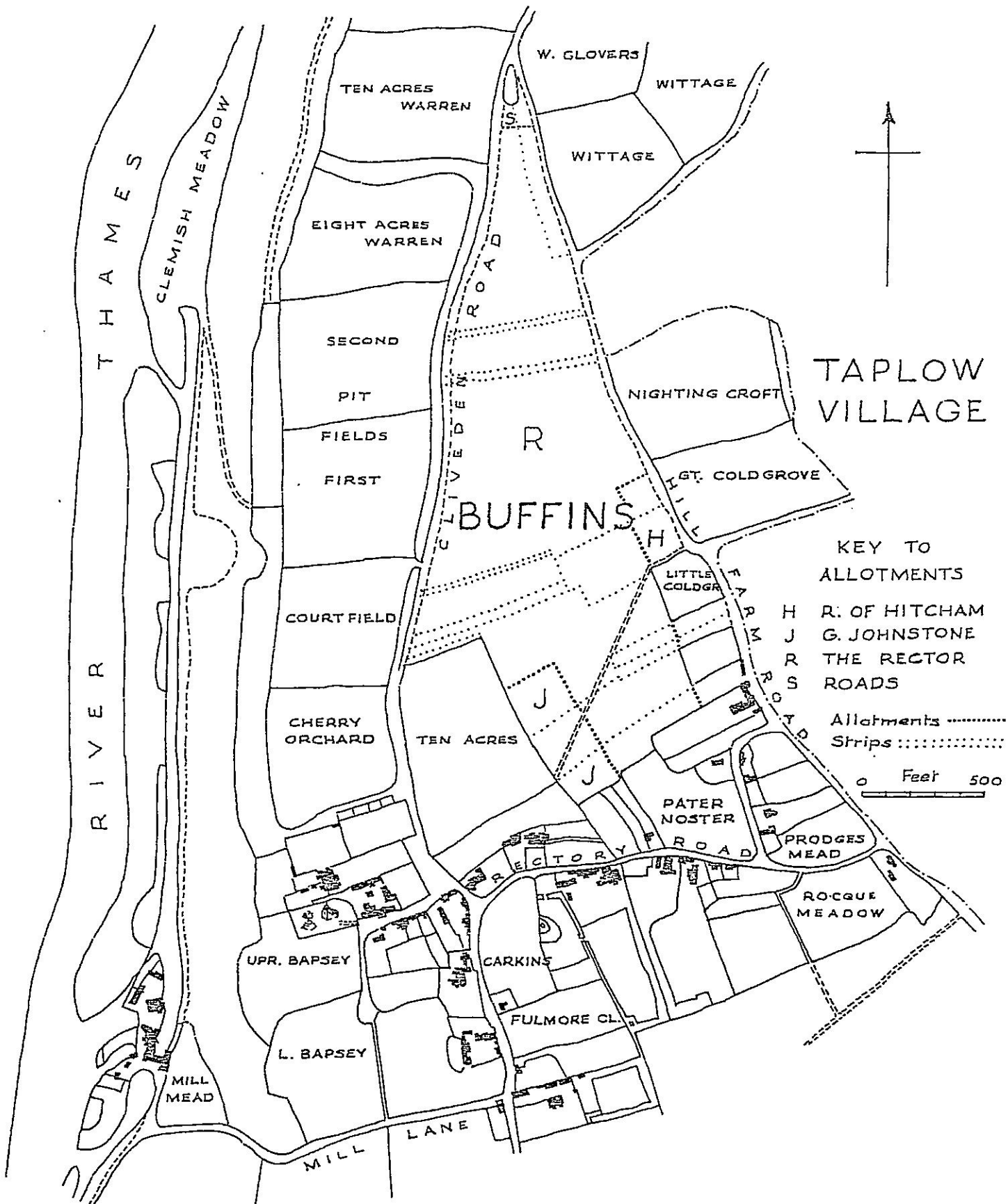
FURZE CLOSES

CLIVEDEN ROAD

JACK IN THE WOODS

PARLIAMENT CLOSE

PARISH



TAPLOW VILLAGE

- KEY TO ALLOTMENTS
- H R. OF HITCHAM
 - J G. JOHNSTONE
 - R THE RECTOR
 - S ROADS

Allotments
 Strips

0 Feet 500

TAPLOW
PARISH
south part

KEY TO ALLOTMENTS

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| A H. COLSELL | K M. JOSLIN |
| B G. COLSELL | N N. NEWBERRY |
| C E. COLSELL | Q FOR PITS |
| D DAVIS | R RECTOR |
| G M ^{rs} GALLY | S ROADS |
| H R. OF HITCHAM | T R. STYLE |
| I INCHQUIN | V ANN VIGER |
| J G. JOHNSTONE | |

Allotments
Strips

0 Feet 500

