For over eight centuries East Meon was a possession of the Bishops of Winchester, who occasionally resided here. The Court House with its noble hall was probably re-built by William of Wykeham.

To discover East Meon for the first time is an experience of a kind unfortunately becoming rare in these days when the quest of unspoilt villages having been raised by photography into a cult, it is only possible to maintain the beautiful illusion by studied selection of the objects of veneration. Mercifully, East Meon is not yet a show village; nor is it necessary to go about it wearing mental blinkers; for modern vulgarity is almost entirely absent, and the place still has a life of its own, not one imposed upon it by urban standards. It owes its immunity largely to its setting—off the main roads and in a great bowl of the downs, which in the rounded mass of Butter Hill achieve one of their highest flights of grandeur.

The River Meon rises at the point where the chain of the Sussex downs meets the chalk system of Hampshire, and the connecting ridge shuts off the valley from the Weald to the east. East Meon lies at the foot of the hills on the north side of this amphitheatre of downland. Rising steeply above it is the flank of Park Down, on the lower slopes of which stands the sturdy Norman church. It is worth climbing the hill to see the village spread out at one's feet (Fig. 2) and so gain a picture of a typical agricultural township which still keeps the integrity of its compact medival plan. The village lies at a lower level than the church, with its main street lining the stream, which flows beside the houses under many little bridges. The cottages show a medley of flint, brick and plaster fronts with roofs thatch or tile. The finest house in the street has a seventeenth century front of brick with brick cornice and projecting porch. Parallel to the main village street and immediately below the church runs the road from Petersfield to West Meon. As it enters the village from the east, it passes on the north side of the old Court House, which, after the church, is the oldest building in the parish. Rescued now from long years of neglect and dilapidation, it stands as a picture of a medieval manor house, the history of which, if it could be written, would be an epitome of the history of agriculture in England.

The lovely Meon valley, at the head of which East Meon lies, has always been a self-contained region. The river finds an outlet from an amphitheatre of hills in a north-westward direction before turning south through West Meon, Warnford, Meonstoke and William of Wykeham's birthplace to reach the sea below Titchfield. Up this valley came the early Jutish settlers, the Meonwara, while St. Wilfrid later converted the inhabitants to Christianity. They appear to have retained in a remarkable manner their tribal individuality; indeed, it is said that even to-day a slightly different dialect distinguishes the inhabitants of the Meon valley from those of other parts of Hampshire.
O discover East Meon for the first time is an experience of a kind unfortunately becoming rare in these days when, the quest of unspoilt villages having been raised by photography into! a cult, it is only possible to maintain the beautiful illusion by studied selection of the objects of veneration. Mercifully, East Meon is not yet a show village; nor is it necessary to go about it wearing mental blinkers; for modern vulgarity is almost entirely absent, and the place still has a life of its own, not one imposed upon it by urban standards. It owes its immunity largely to its setting—off the main roads and in a great bowl of the downs, which in the rounded mass of the Sussex downs meets the chalk system of Hampshire, and connecting ridge shuts off the valley from the Weald to the east. East Meon lies at the foot of the hills on the north side of this amphitheatre of downland. Rising steeply above it is the flank of Park Down, on the lower slopes of which stands the sturdy Norman church. It is worth climbing the hill to see the village spread out at one's feet (Fig. 2) and so gain a picture of a typical agricultural township which still keeps the integrity of its compact mediaval plan. The village lies at a lower level than the church, with its main street lining the stream, which flows beside the houses under many little bridges. The cottages show a medley of flint, brick and plaster fronts with roofs thatch or tile. The finest house in the street has a seventeen-century front of brick with brick cornice and jettied porch. Parallel to the main village street and immediately below the church runs the road from Petersfield to West Meon. As it enters the village from the east, it passes on the north side of the old Court House, which, after the church, is the oldest building in the parish. Rescued now from long years of neglect and dilapidation, it stands on the south side of the road surrounded by gardens, orchards, and completes the picture of a mediaval manor, the history of which, if it could be written, would be an epitome of the history of agriculture in England.

The lovely Meon valley, at the head of which East Meon lies, has always been a self-contained region. The river finds an outlet from the amphitheatrical hills in a north-westward direction by turning south through Wittering, Meon, Warnford, Meonstoke, and William of Wykeham's birthplace to reach the sea below Titchfield. Up the valley came the early Jutes, settlers, the Monevare, with St. Wilfrid later converting them to Christianity. They appear to have retained a remarkable manner their tribal individuality; indeed, it is said that even to-day a slightly different dialect distinguishes the inhabitants of the Meon valley from those of other parts of Hampshire.