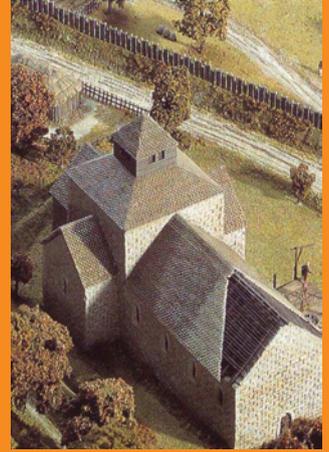
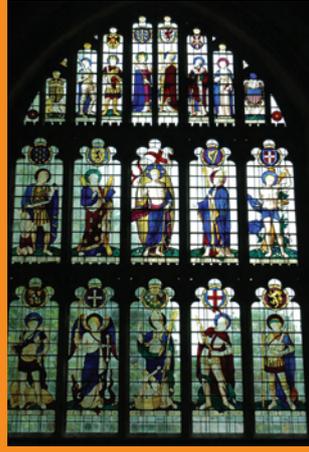


# East Meon



*Guide to historic buildings*

# Introduction to the history of East Meon

Before the Norman Conquest, the Manor of East Meon was granted by the Crown to the Bishops of Winchester. It was the largest of the Bishops' land holdings in Hampshire; the Hundred of East Meon then stretched to the Sussex border and included Steep, Froxfield, Privett, Stroud, Oxenbourne and Riplington. Its importance was reflected in the grandeur of All Saints Church and of The Court House, in which the Manor court was held.

In March 1644, the Parliamentary army under Sir William Waller mustered at East Meon before the Battle of Cheriton, and 12,000 troops marched through the village. Under the Commonwealth, the Manor was expropriated, under the Root and Branch Bill, but was restored to the Bishop in 1660 when Court Farm (including The Court House) and Church Farm were leased to Stephen Fox, who had managed Charles II's finances during his exile. The Bishops maintained substantial landholdings in the parish until the 19th century, although for a long time all these had been leased to tenants.

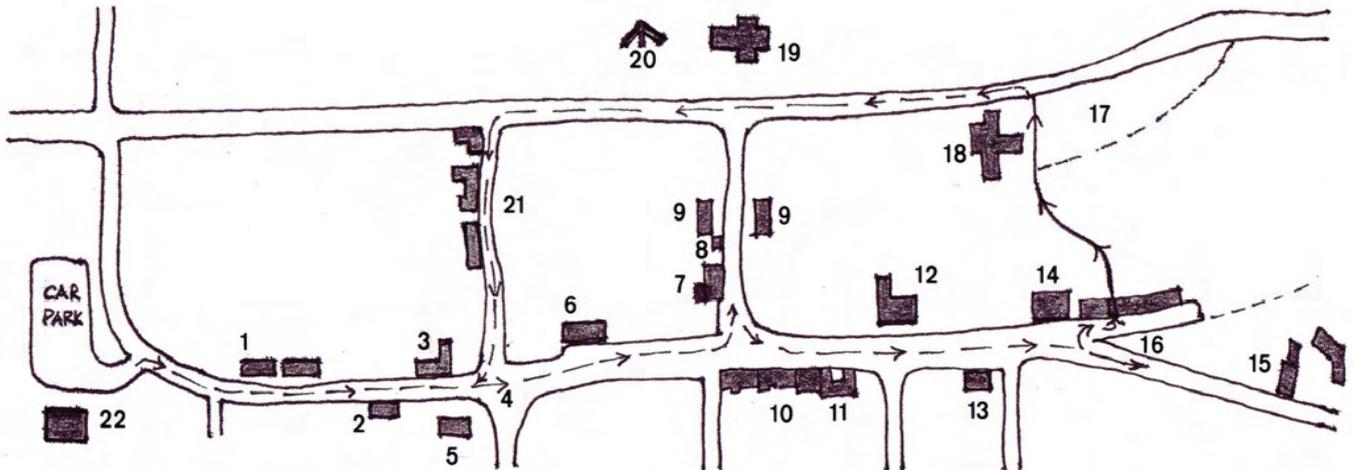
The population of East Meon has remained relatively constant and, until the last century, most of the working population was employed on the land. Especially after the Enclosures and the Corn Laws, unemployment and over-crowding were common in the village. Even small cottages were divided to accommodate more than one household and sanitation was poor. Fire was common and removed many an ancient building.

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, there were dozens of trades and shops in East Meon. Today there is one shop and two pubs. A century ago, two distinguished architects made substantial contributions to the architecture of the village. Sir Ninian Comper was responsible for renovating All Saints Church and Morley Horder bought The Court House and restored The Court Hall, as well as several old village houses which had fallen into disrepair.



*East Meon from  
the south,  
photographed by  
Chris Warren*

# The Route



- |                            |                             |                              |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Paupers & Kews Cottages | 8) Village Well             | 15) <b>Forge Sound</b>       |
| 2) <b>Bottle Cottage</b>   | 9) <b>Almshouses</b>        | 16) Washer's Triangle        |
| 3) <b>The Tudor House</b>  | 10) <b>Barnards</b>         | 17) Vineyard                 |
| 4) <b>The Square</b>       | 11) Old Bell Cottage        | 18) <b>Court Hall</b>        |
| 5) Heycroft House          | 12) <b>Glenthorne House</b> | 19) <b>All Saints Church</b> |
| 6) East Meon Stores        | 13) White Cottage           | 20) To Park Hill             |
| 7) Ye Olde George Inn      | 14) Izaak Walton            | 21) <b>The Cross</b>         |
|                            |                             | 22) Pavilion                 |

**Buildings in bold were researched as House Histories and are more fully described**

*These notes will take you around seven buildings in the heart of the village, a walk of about two kilometres. It starts in the car park, takes you along Workhouse Lane then along the High Street, with a detour down Church Street, then along a public footpath past The Court House, and joins the road for a hundred yards to All Saints Church. After visiting the Church, the walk brings you along The Cross and then back down Workhouse Lane to the car park.*

*The featured houses were researched for an exhibition of Historic Houses which took place during a Flower Festival held in June 2012; visitors were taken on this walk guided by members of the village History Group.*



East Meon is notable for the number of hall houses whose structure have survived, the oldest dating back to the 13th century. There are around 50 listed buildings in the village.

East Meon was selected in 1986 as 'The Domesday Village'. A model (pictured, left) was built to illustrate the historians' surmise as to the layout of the village in Norman times; it is now at the Musee de la Tapiserie in Bayeux.

# Workhouse Lane

As you leave the Car Park, Workhouse Lane heads towards the centre of the village. On the left lie two thatched buildings, Paupers and Kews Cottages (1). These were built in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century and were saved from demolition by Morley Horder.



*It was the responsibility of the parish to support its poor and in 1722, an Act was passed authorising churchwardens and overseers to buy or rent buildings for the lodging, maintenance and employment of the poor. East Meon had its own workhouse by 1727. The overseers' account books are preserved in full, describing the care provided by the parish for the 'goodies' and 'good-men' who lived there, and of the work they did in return. We don't know exactly when Workhouse Lane got its name – in the mid 19th century it was named Cross Lane and later that century, Little West Street.*

Just beyond the cottages, and probably much like them in appearance, was the workhouse, located where the Police House and Meonside are now. By the 1830s, poverty was so widespread that small village workhouses were no longer viable. Larger units were established in Petersfield and nearby towns and East Meon's paupers were consigned to these distant and very forbidding institutions. In 1906, the site of the workhouse – now described as farm buildings – was sold at auction by John Bonham Carter. In 1910, the derelict workhouse was set on fire by a spark from a passing steam wagon.

## Bottle Cottages (2)

A little further down, on your right, is Bottle Cottage, originally, two labourers' cottages, 1 & 2 Workhouse Lane. Its present name comes from a bottle-end in the wall at the front. The cottages were built before the mid 1800s, but we do not know exactly when. At the time of the Tithe Apportionments Map, they were owned by George Pink and the occupants were "John Lovelock and others". Pink was recorded in the 1851 census as a 'general practitioner'. He lived in what is now Brooklyn, on the High Street.



John Lovelock was an agricultural labourer, as was his wife Hannah. At least two of their neighbours were 'paupers' and may have been among the 'others' occupying the two cottages. Including the gardens, the total area was 24 perches. Before 1930 the properties belonged to Portsea Island Mutual Cooperative Society; then they were bought by Stanley Broadway of Longdown Farm.

In 1965 the two cottages were condemned, and then bought by Ann and Dick Hutchings for £1,900. A long triangle of land adjacent to Chidden Close was bought from Mr. Smith in 1969 and added to the garden. The Hutchings converted the cottages into one dwelling, and re-roofed it using old tiles in place of the slate. They also built garages and outhouses to the rear using brick and reclaimed old oak beams. Ann was a teacher and Dick an architect who renovated old Austin Seven cars, as well as doing much of the work at Bottle Cottage himself.

Susan and David Hull bought Bottle Cottage in December 1982. They transformed the garden into one of the most beautiful in the village today. Susan Hull researched this history of her house.

## The Tudor House (3)

At the end of Workhouse Lane, on your left, is The Tudor House. As you look at it from the street, you can see the extent of the original hall house, which was open from the hearth to the ceiling with no chimney. The central area was open, with floored bays at one or both ends; the owners would have slept in the 'best chamber'. The original truss beam and the smoke-blackened wattle and daub are the only remnants of the original Hall House. The truss beam has been dated by dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) to the spring of 1333.



*Engraving of The Tudor House in around 1900 by Robert Bryden*



*The truss beam, dated 1333, is the only original part of the structure of the hall house remaining, along with the smoke-blackened wattle and daub.*



*The original Hall House was built just before the Black Death ravaged Britain; the pestilence killed as many masons and carpenters as other sections of the population and the survivors were therefore able to raise their prices; ornate carpentry was no longer available to those building village houses.*

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the house was owned by a prosperous family, the Wrights, who owned over 100 acres, a mill and eleven houses in the village. They demolished whatever stood at the eastern end of the Hall House and replaced it with a fine cross-wing, demonstrating their wealth by the close-studded walls (lavish use of vertical timbers) and jettied overhang on three sides (pictured, left).



*Arthur Warren's shop, added to The Tudor House in 1892*



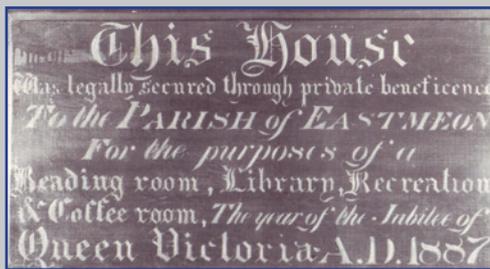
*The Tudor House from the garden side.*

In 1892, The Tudor House was rented by the Warren family who added a Grocer's and Draper's shop. On 31st December 1935 the property was freed from manorial dues and Arthur Warren became the freeholder. In the deeds, it is described as "one cottage with a garden of bondland in the tithing of Meon Manor" on which an admission fine of 2/- was payable – a figure which had remained constant since the 16th century. The grounds were allowed to go into disrepair.

In the nineteenth century, the point at which Workhouse Lane (then Cross Lane) joins The Cross (then Cross Street), Chapel Street, and the High Street was a busy village hub then named 'The Square' (4). In 1887, the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, the East Meon Reading Room, Library and Coffee House were opened where Park Vista now stands, opposite East Meon Stores. There was also a rifle range. The 'Institute' was demolished in 1972 to be replaced by the new Village Hall which you passed as you came down Workhouse Lane.



*The Village Institute, built in 1887.*



*Bryden print of Heycroft*



*Cross House, with the Tudor House*



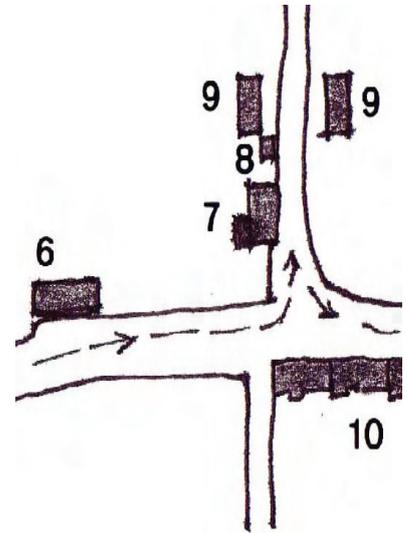
*Heycroft House*

Heycroft House (5) was built in 1575 and has distinctive herring-bone brickwork. It was in very poor condition when Freddie Standfield bought it. Freddie was a long-time resident of the village and wrote *A History of East Meon*, the authoritative chronicle of the village. Cross House and Heycroft were also part of The Square and the Bryden print, engraved in 1905, shows a house in front of Heycroft which no longer exists.

Now proceed past Cross House and East Meon Stores (6) and turn left down Church Street, past the 17th century Ye Olde George Inn (7, pictured below), the village well (8), and stop by the Almshouses.



*Ye Old George Inn, photo by Chris Warren*



## Forbes Almshouses (9)



*The Forbes Almshouses, on the west of Church Street*



*The newer almshouses on the east side.*

On 19 December 1863 Mrs Joanna Agnes Forbes of Bereleigh House transferred to trustees a piece of land “containing 19 perches with almshouse buildings thereon” upon trust to be occupied by persons “above 65 years of age and a parishioner of [East Meon] parish or irremovable from the same, of good character and reputation, but in indigent circumstances”.

Mrs Forbes had purchased the land on the west of Church Street, shown on the 1852 East Meon Tithe Map as “cottages and garden” owned by James Lock and others. She demolished the cottages and built the almshouses in memory of her late husband George Forbes. She endowed the trust with £800 in 3 per cent consols (government bonds) and £300 in new 3 per cent annuities. After running expenses and repairs the trustees were to pay to the “inmates”, in addition to the use of the dwelling allotted, the sum of five shillings a week or seven shillings and sixpence to a married couple.



On 10 August 1904 an additional site on the other side of Church Street was purchased by the then trustees and in 1906 two additional almshouses were built by a Mr Read of West Meon. 4 perches of land cost £80 while building costs and architects' fees amounted to less than £1000 an illustration of the buying power of money in those days. Mrs Forbes's niece, Miss Errington, the previous owner of the plot of land, performed the unlocking ceremony of the two new almshouses with a silver presentation key suitably inscribed. 24 perches of land cost £80 while building costs and architects' fees amounted to less than £1000 an illustration of the buying power of money in those days.

*Written by Jane Brown*

Now retrace your steps down Church Street, and turn left down the High Street. The building on the corner was for the best part of a century the village Post Office (right). Keep to the path on the north of the river. On the other side of the High Street are Barnards Cottages.



*Barnards Cottages, photographed by Chris Warren*

## Barnards (10)

Buildings were often named after people and these cottages were probably named after Eliza Barnard, who appears in censuses from 1861 onwards as living at No 5 High Street and described as 'Proprietor of Houses'. We know from the Parish Registers that she was the daughter of John Nathaniel Atkins, the prosperous draper, grocer and postmaster who then

owned Glenthorne House and much other property including the (then) four houses which occupied the plot now known as Barnards Cottages. In 1844, Eliza married James Barnard, son of a neighbouring butcher; James' burial was registered in 1849 so Eliza was now a widow. By 1871, she was living with her father, now a 'retired grocer', and with her daughter, another Eliza. Eliza senior is now listed as a 'stationer'.



*Kate Micklam, one of the little girls, with her mother, a district nurse, c.1900*

As a child, Winifred Kate Lambert (nee Micklam) lived in the biggest of the three houses, Barnards, and the 1901 census shows that her father was a baker; there were five children, a boarder and a lodger in that house. Winifred later recounted to Freddie Standfield how many people were crammed into what is now Middle Barnards. "The tiny cottage next door was occupied by the Nicholsons, who had about 13 children; and in the equally tiny cottage next door but one, Mr and Mrs Albert Luff had seven children."

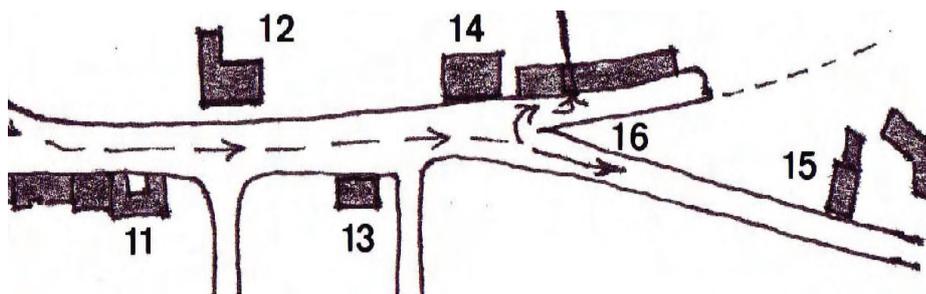


*Barnards in the 1920s, with five doorways. Today the three houses are occupied by three people*

Next to Barnards is Old Bell Cottage (11, pictured right). This was once The Bell Inn. The visiting cobbler would repair shoes here. Many villagers only had one pair in olden times so whilst they waited to have their shoes repaired they would sit and drink in the next-door room. Thus it became a regular drinking place. It is now furnished and available for holiday letting. Further along the river bank you come, first, to a pair of tall gateposts leading to a courtyard, and then to Glenthorne House.



## Glenthorne House (12)



Niklaus Pevsner described Glenthorne House in ‘The Buildings of England’:

*“The Village has a very pretty High Street with a stream running in its middle. On the N side, the finest house, Glenthorne, c 1690, of brick, in red and blue chequer.”*



Glenthorne House sports an ornate, brick-clad exterior typical of the reign of William and Mary. The man responsible for its building, Thomas Cropp, was wealthy; he owned properties as far away as the Isle of Wight. He was also very canny – the rear of the house is of much simpler construction than the front; he must have reasoned that, since nobody overlooked the back, there was no need to spend the money.

This is a Grade 2\* building, and these are extracts from the listing:

*“Glenthorne and forecourt rail. A notable example of William and Mary style, with a symmetrical south front, having a projecting centre, of two storeys. In it, the doorway with a big brick pediment and the window above with lugs and tiny volutes. Raised brick quoins at the angles of the house (left). Red brickwork in Flemish bond with blue headers, red dressings; plinth, rubbed flat arches, 1st floor band, rusticated quoins, eared architrave to centre with cut brick ornament to mouldings.”*

*“The rear elevation is an unusual exposed timber frame (of the same date) with painted brick infill: there are five windows (of irregular spacing) with middle tall staircase light with an arched head”*



*Magnificent brickwork in the pediment over the front door*



*The North side. Not, as some have thought, the remains of an earlier building but an unadorned William and Mary elevation*

Puzzlingly, in such a grand house, there is no sign of accommodation for servants, who would have been a necessary part of such a prosperous household, nor of rooms where cooking and other household activities would have been conducted. There are no traces of dormer windows in the loft, where staff might have slept. The layout of the bottom storey at the rear of the house is not consistent with the upper floors, so there may have been a lean-to building which accommodated the servants and services.

John Nathaniel Atkins bought Glenthorne in 1837. He added a shop front (pictured, below) and traded as grocer, draper, and postmaster. When the parish was mapped and listed in 1852 (the Tithe Apportionments), he owned significant property in and around the village. His son was also named John Nathaniel Atkins, recorded in the 1861 census as living in Bramdean, running a grocery business; he died in 1866 aged only 44. Another son, Clement Stubbington Atkins, went bankrupt. John Nathaniel Snr spent his later years living with his daughter Eliza; he died in 1879, aged 81.



*White Cottage, photographed by Chris Warren*

On the other side of the river is The White Cottage. In the 1920s this thatched cottage was the home of carrier Noble White. He would leave before dawn and return after dark having taken farm and garden produce down, and brought all manner of supplies up twice a week from Portsmouth. He would also carry passengers,

Cross the river just before the Izaak Walton pub (14) previously known as The New Inn, and past Washer's Triangle (16), on which there was a cottage until it was burned down in the last century. The white, timbered building in front of you is Forge Sound.

# Forge Sound (15)

This is the oldest house in East Meon to have retained its original structure. A 14th Century Hall House, its architecture is unique in Hampshire.

In 1350, England under King Edward III was at war with France and the Black Death raged throughout the land, but for the people of East Meon life continued much as usual – land was farmed, livestock herded and corn milled. There was at that time a ford over the River Meon, leading to the Court House. Forge Sound and Riverside were built on either side of this track.



Forge Sound is a 'single-aisled hall house'; diagonal structural beams ('passing braces') form the framework of the building, leaving a lean-to-space beyond the upright wall beams – the aisle.



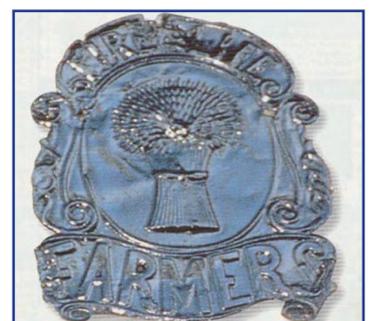
*Passing braces in a bedroom whose ceiling has been removed*

The main chamber had two bays, in which a number of people would have lived (and some animals ...). Smoke from a fire in the middle escaped through a louvre in the centre of the ceiling and smoke 'gables' at the ends of gables; blackened wattle and daub are still visible in the sides of the louvre. A second section would have contained two stories.

The house was built of timber, wattle and daub, with thatch on a flint base. The roof timbers are conformed in a style known as 'sans purlin' – purlins were horizontal structural members supporting the deck. This provides evidence of construction in the early 14th century. The floor was of beaten earth, and recent work reveals that this survived until quite recent times, when tiles were laid directly onto the ground. There was probably no upper floor in the hall area until some two hundred years after the house was built, when a massive longitudinal beam and floor joists were added.

Because the house was the property of the Church, tenanted to the Church's nominees, no title deeds or other transfer documents were originally required. The house remained the property of the Church until 1934, when a deed was signed by the Diocese giving compensation to Laura Louisa Hockley (Widow) on the 8th November.

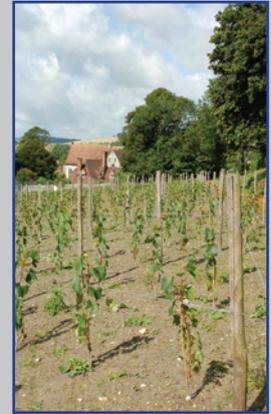
There are two Insurance Marks, small plaques high on outside walls; each cottage may have been insured separately. All too many East Meon buildings have been destroyed by fire. For most of the 18th century, each insurance company maintained its own fire brigade, which extinguished fires in only those buildings insured by the company. (See, right, the mark of 'Farmers Fire and Life Insurance Company'.)



Now retrace your steps and cross the river going towards the Izaak Walton, keeping Washers Triangle (16) on your right. Head towards Hockley and Brook Cottages (pictured, right), white and red thatched buildings alongside the river.

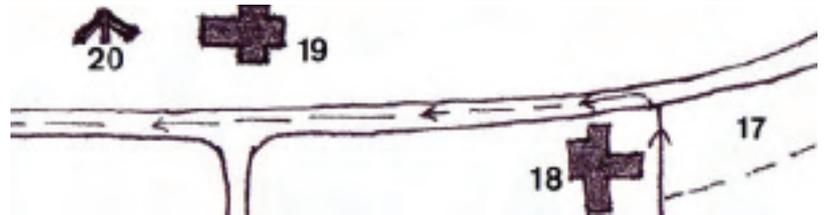


Between these two cottages there is a thatched-covered opening. Walk through it. The cottage on your right was home to Granny Luff who gave herbal advice in the 1920s. More recently, a modern-day Herbal Practitioner, Tina Stapley, lived here and she had a flourishing herbal garden. From here to the main road is private property so please keep to the footpath. Walk up the path keeping the wall to your left; on your right you will see a vineyard (17). The monks who managed The Court Hall in mediaeval times grew grapes and made wine, probably in what is today called Vineyard Hollow, just beyond the old School buildings. Today, pinot noir and chardonnay grapes are cultivated and made into a sparkling white wine.



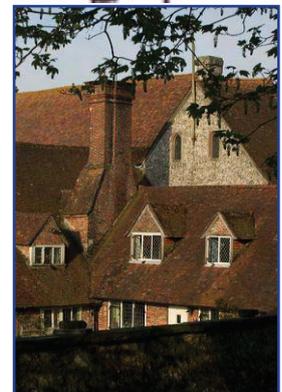
## Court Hall (18)

The vineyard is on land adjoining The Court House (pictured, right). The house and manor belonged for many centuries to the Bishops of Winchester, who held area courts in The Court Hall (18), the best preserved of the residences of the Bishops of Winchester. When you reach the road, turn left; you will soon be able to see the other side of the Court Hall.



East Meon was the largest of the Bishop of Winchester's manors in Hampshire; the Pipe Rolls record the amount spent each year on maintenance and building works at the manor house, Court House.

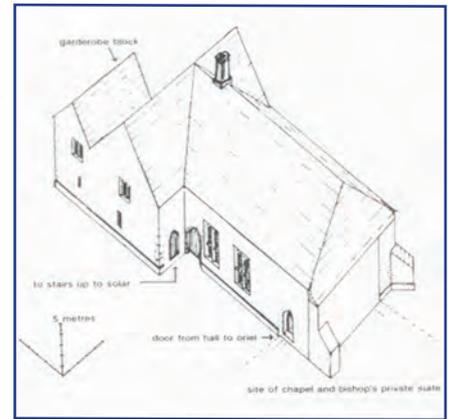
About 20 years ago, the architectural historian Edward Roberts identified the Pipe Rolls (those for 1395-6 and 1396-7) which record the building of the present house. From these building accounts we know where the materials used in its construction came from, how much they cost, and the names of those who did the work and how much they were paid.



*The Court House, by  
Chris Warren*

At the south end, the hall was built on to a wing that had been attached to the earlier building and contained the bishop's chamber and chapel. The doorway at the southwest corner, now blocked up, gave access to a staircase leading up to the chamber. The hall itself is 48 feet long and 26 feet wide and is over 40 feet up to the peak of the roof, which was covered with 35,500 tiles. There would have been an open fire in the middle, with the smoke finding its way upwards to louvres in the roof, as the blackened timbers of the roof show. The walls are 4 feet thick and 20 feet high and are constructed mainly of white malmstone from Langrish and flints from the downs above the village.

The roof, an independent structure that sits on the walls, was constructed during the same months as the great roof of Westminster Hall. The great tie beams came from Durford Wood to the east of Petersfield. The corbels, heads of bishops and kings, were carved in Winchester. There would have been a dais at the south end of the hall with a high table of beechwood that the accounts record as having been made for the new building along with trestle tables for the body of the hall. The bases of the present tables were made in 1736 out of Baltic oak for Middle Temple Hall in London, where they remained until 2000, when they were brought here and new tops added to them.



*Edward Roberts' sketch of the layout of The Court Hall*

At the opposite end of the hall from the fireplace, two doors lead into, respectively, the buttery (or bouteillerie, where drink was prepared) and the pantry (or painterie, where food was prepared). The lath and plaster division between these rooms has gone, but its location can be seen. The kitchen would, because of the fire hazard, have been a freestanding building to the east.

Above the buttery and pantry is the great chamber, 30 feet by 15, with a honey-coloured timber roof of similar construction to that of the great hall, and a large fireplace. Access is by a staircase, with original wood block stairs, through a door on the outside of the great hall. Off the great chamber is a small room, formerly the garde-robe, which had a drop down to a latrine below. The works were carried out almost wholly in 1396, and the total cost was £109 15s 11d, at a time when a labourer's wage was 4d (1.6p). The names of those who constructed the building are commemorated on a board in the great hall.

The building itself has survived virtually unaltered through six centuries of low-key existence.



Under Wykeham's successor, Cardinal Beaufort, the wing at the south end, containing the Bishop's chamber and chapel, was rebuilt, but this was demolished, probably in the early 17th century, when a new wing was built to the east. This became the farmhouse for the 750 acre Court Farm, and it survives today.

In the first half of the 20th century, the house was restored by the architect, P.R. Morley Horder, who had bought the house for himself. He added a north wing, joining the mediaeval house to the 18th century thatched cottage on the roadside, and he laid out the gardens between the house and the 18th century thatched barn on what had become a

farmyard. Morley Horder also bought and restored a number of thatched cottages in the village at a time, before listed building protection, when so many similar buildings were being destroyed.



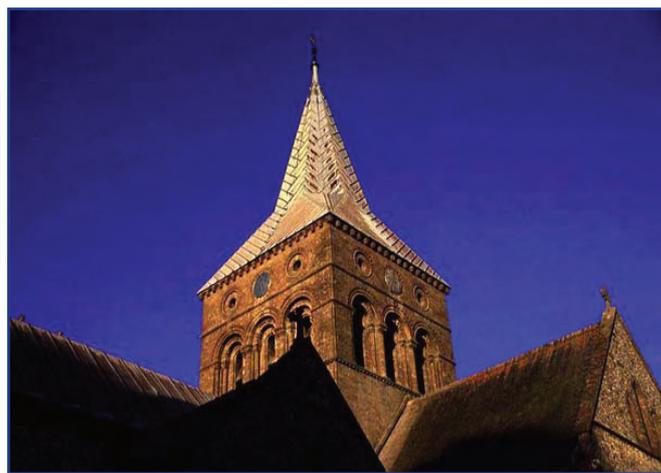
*Engraving, from the Victoria County History, of The Court Hall with farm buildings, before Morley Horder's restoration*

*Written by George Bartlett*

# All Saints Church (19)

Now walk to the lych gate of All Saints Church, described by Pevsner as 'one of the most thrilling village churches in Hampshire'.

The size and majesty of this Norman church, which was completed in about 1150, reflects the importance in mediaeval times of East Meon parish. The original church was cruciform in shape, consisting of nave, chancel, and transepts, and the original work is clearly identifiable in the round-topped arches (below) typical of Norman or Romanesque style, and in the West and South doorways.



*All Saints Church, photographed by Chris Warren*

The only major addition to the church subsequently was made in about 1230, when the South Aisle and Lady Chapel were added, in the new Early English style, with its pointed arches and larger windows. The spire was probably added at this time.

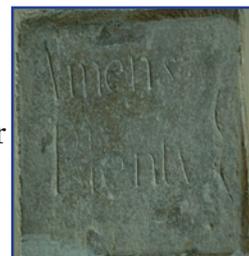
Among the church's most important treasures is the black marble Tournai font dating from the church's completion and one of only seven in the country. The font was probably a gift from the Bishop of Winchester, Henry of Blois, grandson of the Conqueror. The carvings on the four sides are illustrations



*The Tournai Font with, left, the creation of Adam and Eve and the temptation of Eve.*



In 1869-1870, there was a major internal and external restoration. The vicar, William Brodie, enlisted the help of the well-known Victorian architect, Ewen Christian (1814-1895). The obvious external signs of this restoration are gutters and down pipes. Christian worked on the roofs, especially the Lady Chapel, chancel and transepts, and also on the spire. The three-faced clock came at this time. Internally, the box pews and gallery were removed, and were replaced by the pews as we have them today. Christian's restoration also uncovered the remains of the four soldiers from the Civil War period who were curiously buried upright, and whose remains are marked by the 'Amens Plenty' stone (right) now in the South Transept.



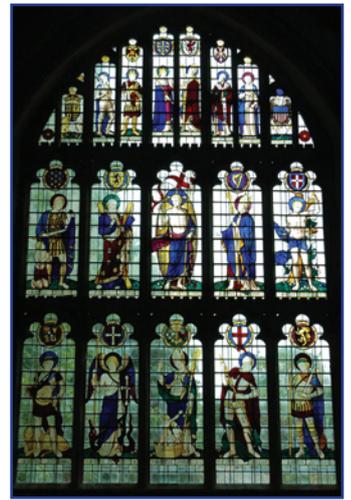
The church internally owes its greatest debt to the work of the distinguished church architect, Sir Ninian Comper (1864-1960). Comper was much influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement associated with William Morris, and had an interest not just in architecture, but also in church fabric and furnishings.



*The screens in the Lady Chapel, part of the restoration work designed by Sir Ninian Comper*



*Comper's archway from the Lady Chapel to the South Transept, and, right, the East Window commemorating the Great War.*



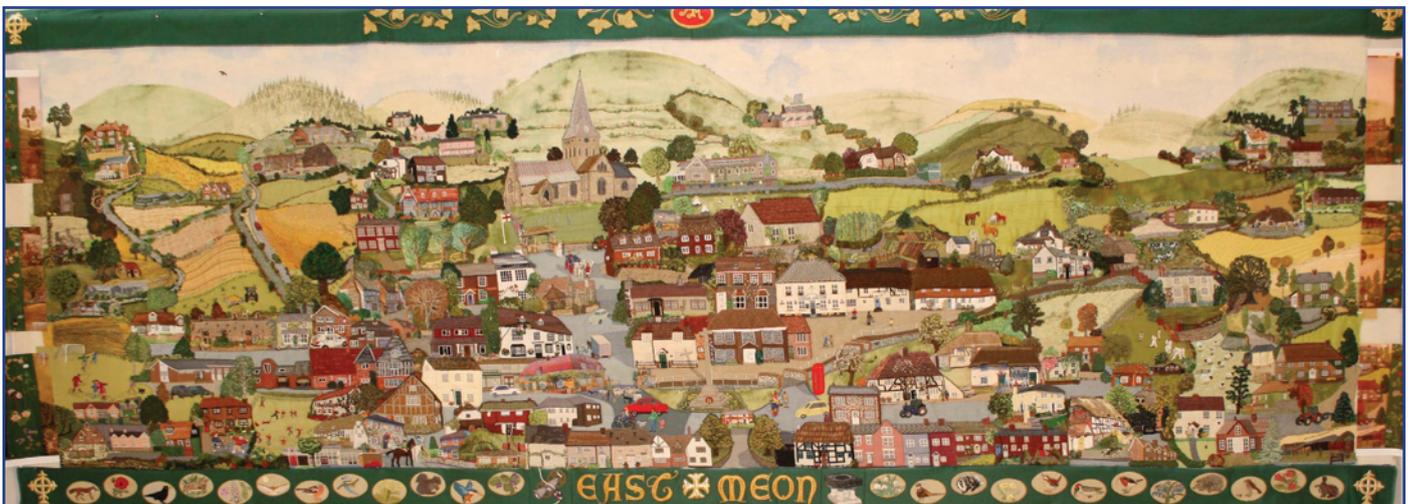
Comper was employed here by Thomas Heywood Masters, vicar from 1902-1921. He was responsible for the two altars in the Sanctuary and the Lady Chapel, the reredos behind the Lady Chapel altar and the timber screens surrounding the Lady Chapel. This work expressed Comper's emphasis, as an Anglo-Catholic, that the primary purpose of a church as a place of worship is for the celebration of the Eucharist.

After the First World War, Comper designed the great East window depicting the coats of arms and patron saints of those countries who formed the alliance which defeated Germany and its allies. The window was dedicated in 1921.



The building of the Church Hall (pictured, left), completed in 2000, and designed to be in sympathy with the Norman church, speaks of a desire to serve community needs, which is both modern and also as old as the Middle Ages. Visitors now come to admire the magnificent Millennium Embroidery (below), illuminated in its huge oak display case, which depicts the village in the year 2000 and was the work of a team of forty skilled needleworkers over several years before its installation in 2008.

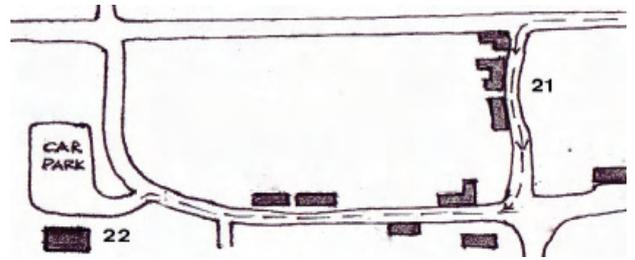
*Written by the Reverend Terry Loudon*



If you feel energetic, you could walk up a path through the woods at the northwest corner of the church-yard and climb Park Hill (20). You get a magnificent view of the village and surrounding countryside from the top.

# The Cross (20)

Retrace your steps and leave the churchyard through a small gate at the southwest corner, known as Freda's Gate.



Until recently there were only three houses facing onto The Cross. The first you see is Vicarage Lodge (pictured, left), an 18th century double-fronted house, built of flint and brick which has been colour-washed and plastered. Its Grade II listing mentions its tiled roof, and notable pent hood to the front door. The original deeds still exist, dated 1795. The house was almost certainly built as a single dwelling and the 1851 Census names Mary Guy as 'Head of House, Pauper & Freeman's Daughter'. The windows which project into the main road led to suggestions that this was once a toll booth. However, there is no record of a toll road through East Meon.



At the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, the house was extended to the west; the smaller cottage had single rooms on three floors, which were occupied by curates attached to All Saints Church while the landladies who catered for them lived in the part facing Cross Lane. Well into the 20th century, East Meon parish remained very large, including churches in Langrish, Privett and Froxfield. (One of the curates had a second job, as curate at West Dean, a journey of 18 miles by horse or on foot.)



Cross Keys (pictured, left) was originally two buildings. The Flemish bond brickwork in the main building indicates that it was probably built at the turn of the 17th century, at roughly the same time as Glenthorne House. Built as the house of a prosperous family, by the middle of the 19th century Cross Keys was occupied by several families, mostly agricultural labourers and domestic servants (including one butler) and also some 'unemployed' and 'on parish welfare'. In the early 20th century, what is now the garage of Cross Keys was the workshop of Coles, the coffin maker.

What became numbers 1, 2, & 3, The Cross was originally the Angel Inn (pictured, right). The close studding (beams placed close together) indicates a construction date c. 1600, roughly the same as the Tudor House. The three doorways may be equally old. In a village ale house, the wife of the proprietor would usually brew the beer, which was served at the family's table. A farthing coin exists which was issued by the publican in 1666, bearing the text 'John Whitcombe at Ye (picture of an angel) in East Meane'.



At the end of The Cross, turn right down Workhouse Lane towards the car park. The pavilion you see (22) on your left was built as part of the 'planning gain' when new houses were built, in 2003, on The Green.