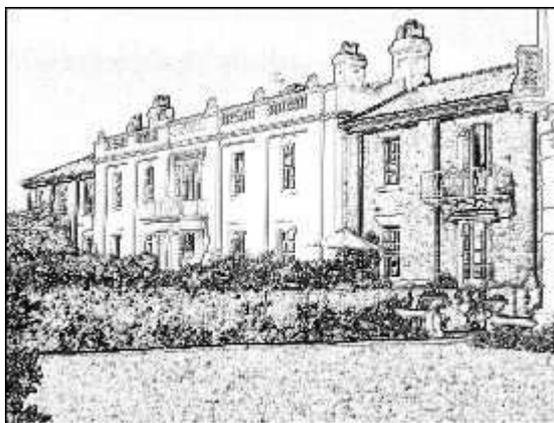


Notes on the Sheriffe Family of Uggeshall, Southwold and Henstead

Merchants, Churchmen, Landed Proprietors
and Public Benefactors

Ruth Downing & Denis Bellamy
(2006)



Centre Cliff Houses: Southwold, 2006

Contents

<i>1 The financial position of clergy</i>	3
1.1 A need for local moneylenders	4
<i>2 The Sheriffes of Uggeshall and Southwold</i>	5
2.1 Thomas Sheriffe, Rector of Uggeshall	5
2.2 Harriet Sheriffe	7
2.2.1 Harriet Sheriffe: public benefactor	9
2.2.2 Centre Cliff Lodge: a model of speculative development	10
<i>3 Origins of the Sheriffe family</i>	13
3.1 Sheriffes of Diss	15
<i>4 Sheriffes of Henstead (Tables 7, 8 and 9)</i>	17
4.1 Thomas Bowen Sheriffe: ‘gentleman of independent means’	21
4.1.1 The next generation	23
<i>5 Social order and economic change</i>	24
<i>6 Bibliography</i>	26

1 The financial position of clergy

“There was always a large class of very poor clergy in England but by the late eighteenth century, as country gentlemen increasingly used livings in their gift to endow their younger sons and other relations and friends, the more affluent clergy became very much identified with the landowning class and for the most part were reliable supporters of landed interests”.

Rachel Lawrence, ‘*Southwold River*’

The conduct of divine service was only one item on the agenda of the nineteenth-century clergyman. He might have to sit on the magistrates' bench, or concern himself with business as a farmer or landowner, or attend a meeting of the Poor Law guardians. He would, in all probability, be closely involved with the day-to-day running of the local school, and he would almost certainly be the principle administrator of the parochial charities. While some of these roles were clearly predestined to bring him into conflict with certain members of his flock, others seem ostensibly designed to operate in their interests. None, however, seem to have earned him much in the way of devotion and respect: instead, each of them at one time or another attracted the direct hostility of parishioners, most particularly those attached to dissenting and/or radical groups. The latter were particularly at issue with the increased wealth of the Anglican rectors, which, through the tithe system that supported it, climbed in line with the economic well being of their captive flock of yeomen farmers.

Historically, Anglican parish clergymen were divided into rectors, vicars, and perpetual curates. These were distinguished according to the way in which they were remunerated. The church was supported by tithes. Tithes were essentially local taxes (traditionally, as the etymology of tithe suggests, of ten percent) levied on the agricultural output of the parish. These were divided into greater tithes levied on cereals, hay and wood, and lesser tithes levied on the remainder. A rector received both greater and lesser tithes, a vicar the lesser tithes only. A perpetual curate received no tithe income and was supported by the diocese. The adjective ‘perpetual’ emphasises, that such a clergyman enjoyed the same security of tenure as his more affluent peers. As all rectors, vicars and perpetual curates were personal representatives of the authority of the church in their parishes, they were generally styled parsons. However, this title was used most often by perpetual curates, more easily to distinguish them from assistant curates, who were not legally parsons.

The 19th century rector being on top of the tithe pyramid, was therefore financially in the upper social ranks of his parish along with the landed ‘esquires’, and in terms of his assured income, was in a position to both support the poor and capitalise on his personal wealth as a money lender and investor. In the latter role, a well-placed rector was able to entwine his way into the top rank of Victorian society through intermarriage, often assuming the role of a private banker and general supporter of the local landed gentry and entrepreneurial townsfolk. Members of the Sheriffe family, who emerged with considerable wealth in north east Suffolk towards the end of the 17th century, provide sharply defined examples of many economic themes of rural life, many of which have a modern ring.

1.1 A need for local moneylenders

The need for lending money and financing trade arose with the beginnings of capitalism towards the end of the 14th century, which for the most part grew around particular entrepreneurs scattered throughout the land. Producer and consumer were out of immediate reach of one another and the need for credit arose. The weaver of Ipswich, whose cloth was sold, say in Antwerp, obviously required the assistance of someone who would pay him at once for his cloth. He could not afford to wait until the cloth was shipped to Flanders and the money remitted from his customer there. It was convenient to be able to turn locally to someone else who could advance him the money at once, and collect it later from his customer after receipt of the cloth. The device used to settle this business was the bill of exchange, which came to be used extensively for international as well as for internal trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Long before this time it was used in Italy, in Germany, and even sporadically in England itself. By Elizabethan times in England the development of capitalism involved credit transactions at almost every stage of the industrial system. The yeoman farmer required loans to tide him over the period between sowing and harvest. The grazier required credit until he received payment for his wool. The domestic manufacturer could not live without credit while his cloth was being marketed. Hence a host of people, scriveners, goldsmiths, yeomen, clothiers, landowners, and even parsons, began to dabble in money lending. The most important of these early financial intermediaries was the scrivener, whose original business of writing bonds, deeds and contracts, gave him important connections. In the early seventeenth century some scriveners, besides managing the investments of men of property, were receiving deposits and lending money. By this time, however, their place was being taken by the goldsmith, who combined with ordinary business a thriving trade in collecting new coins, melting them down and exporting the bullion. In a document written in Amsterdam in 1652 we read:

"It is the goldsmiths, especially those in Lombard Street, who are the greatest merchants and London cashiers, and who will receive any man's money for nothing, and pay it for them the same or the next day, and meantime keep people in their upper rooms to cull and weigh all they receive, and melt down the weighty and transport it to foreign parts" (quoted Feaveryear, 93).

By its disturbance of economic life, the Civil War strengthened the activities of the goldsmiths. Landowners and merchants gladly deposited their money with them for safekeeping. At first they may have had to pay for the service rendered, but very shortly the goldsmiths paid them interest on their deposits. The next step in the story of banking was inevitable. Finding their vaults filled with deposits, the goldsmiths naturally looked for some use to which they might put their funds. They found it among those who wished to borrow. The practice of giving loans received great encouragement from the needs of the Crown. Continually at his wits' end for money, Charles II had frequent dealings with the goldsmiths, who received not only interest, but also profit when they melted down the new coins in which the capital was repaid. The first fully-fledged bank in England was not founded until 1694, and the first in Scotland until 1695. Deposit banking received a new stimulus, and though larger transactions were confined to the greater goldsmiths, the smaller people in the countryside still relied on the local property owners for short-term finance.

2 *The Sheriffes of Uggeshall and Southwold*

2.1 Thomas Sheriffe, Rector of Uggeshall

Most 'country banks' were established from the mid-eighteenth century onward as developments of the existing businesses of local merchants, carriers, brewers or solicitors. From the mid-18th century money was required for rural economic expansion, which for the most part in Suffolk meant the replacement of wooden thatched family housing by larger brick-built live-in shops and houses. The investment required was at first met by loans from other property owners, who were eventually replaced by bankers drawn from the same wealthy category. The Sheriffes of Uggeshall and Southwold were one such family of local financiers who continued this tradition into the 19th century.

At the end of the 18th century, Thomas Sheriffe was Rector of the relatively small parish of Uggeshall tucked into the north-eastern edge of Suffolk's clay plateau adjacent to Wangford. According to the Tithe Apportionment of 1838, in addition to the greater tithes of Uggeshall, he also had a substantial annual income of a £380 rent charge, derived from 43 acres of glebe land. This considerable income was augmented by his possession of the living of the parish of Sotherton, from which he received £275 a year. He made a good marriage with the family of Affleck baronets of Dalham, near Newmarket, and successfully continued the Sheriffe family tradition of dealing in real estate. He died possessed of much land and was in negotiation to purchase estates in Peasenhall and Framlingham.

Thomas also appears to have been good at taking financial advantage of the Church of England's tradition of wheeling and dealing in benefices. We get some idea of how he operated from a Release dated 16th May 1805. In this he acknowledges the receipt of £293 9s., which was repayment of a loan with interest that he made to Thomas Rockhill, who was Uggeshall's miller, and a substantial landowner. Rockhill had recently died and had not entered details of the loan in his 'black pocket book'. Thomas Sheriffe came to an agreement with Rockhill's widow and son that there was such a loan, and that interest was also due on it. Rockhill's son, who was the main beneficiary of his father's will, repaid the loan in full with interest.

This out of the way spot belied Thomas' wealthy background as senior member of the Sheriffe family. The Sheriffes became associated with the property boom in Southwold towards the end of the 18th century, when, along with several other local rich clergymen, through the Harbour Act of 1789, he was appointed one of the Harbour Commissioners. As to how Thomas became a member of this very influential urban body we need look no further than his ecclesiastical living of Uggeshall with Sotherton, which was in the gift of the Earl of Stradbroke, Uggeshall's major landowner. The Earl was the prime mover in getting Southwold's Harbour Act accepted by Parliament, and Thomas Sheriffe was one of his bondsmen so to speak, and no doubt thereby he was a staunch supporter of the Earl's proposals for the commercial development of Southwold. There was another connection between Southwold and Uggeshall at that time in that John Thompson, probably the wealthiest merchant of Southwold, owned farms in Uggeshall and the adjacent parish of Stoven. Thompson was intent on realising the potential of Southwold as a seaside resort. He would certainly have come into social if not financial contact with Thomas Sheriffe, his local rector.

Thomas Sheriffe used his links with Southwold as an opportunity to make his own investment in the town, and financed the building of the '*Centre Cliff Houses*', a terrace of three substantial neo-classical cliff top dwellings, which still exist today to the north of South Green. These properties were described by Robert Wake, in his book '*Southwold and its Vicinity*' (1842) as follows: -

" *Centre Cliff Houses*, as they are called, present a very handsome and commanding appearance- not less on account of the gracefulness of the buildings themselves, than of the loveliness with which their enclosed shrubberies and tastefully-arranged and very carefully-tended flower-plots, have contributed to their decoration. These have been erected for the accommodation of lodgers, by the REV. THOMAS SHERIFFE; and consist of fine spacious and handsomely decorated rooms; -the group contributing not slightly to our local beauties."

The lodgers referred to, were upper class families who were beginning to visit Southwold for the summer season. The first stagecoach between Southwold, Norwich and Yarmouth was inaugurated in 1822. The central house (known by the name of *Centre Cliff*) is of a more grand design than the two properties abutting either side (*East House* and *South House*). This indicates that *Centre Cliff* was built first and the others added later. According to Bottomley, Sheriffe's *Centre Cliff* development was completed in 1829. In this period the town was developing rapidly as a seaside resort and began to spawn appropriate leisure facilities such as a racecourse and a reading room. As noted above, John Thompson was an important local developer and created the first outdoor bathing pool (Thompson's Folly). He also opened *The Casino* (a subscription reading room) on St Edmund's Hill in 1800, which by the 1840s had become the joint property of a group of eight shareholders led by the Earl of Stradbroke. The shareholders included three clergymen, one of whom was Thomas Sheriffe. Clearly, pressure was growing for the Corporation to release common land for building, and this prompted the formation of what may be described as the town's first conservation group in 1807. The group took a lease on a piece of land called 'St. Edmunds', or the Gun Hill, for the purposes of preventing the erection of buildings on the southern cliffs. Its battery of cannons had been disarmed in 1819. At this time a scattering of fishermen's cottages around the Green was being demolished to provide building plots for many grand villas and terraces.

To all intents and purposes Thomas Sheriffe was an active resident at a time when Southwold metamorphosed from a 18th century front-line naval asset, to a burgeoning 19th century peacetime holiday resort. Although he maintained his base in Uggheshall's rectory, Thomas Sheriffe is actually described as a residential member of an 1837 committee of Southwold, established to supervise enlargement of the seating accommodation of the parish church; a response of the town to increased numbers seasonal visitors and wealthy residents. In the same year he was listed as a trustee of the newly opened 'Southwold Medical and Surgical Institution', which included a dispensary for the relief and assistance of 'the sick poor, lying-in-women and infirm persons'.

After the death of the Rev.Thomas in Uggheshall in 1842, it was logical that his second wife Sarah should move to Southwold. In 1843 she was allocated a pew in the parish church and in the 1844 Whites Suffolk Directory she was listed as living at *Centre Cliff*.

As a rich clergyman involved in speculative property development, Thomas Sheriffe falls into the same category as Rev. Henry Uthoff, Rector of Huntingfield with Cookley, and also absentee incumbent of Aldham (near Hadleigh). Uthoff was another affluent clergyman who invested in Southwold's property boom. According to Munn, Uthoff built the large bow-fronted house facing east on to South Green, now called *Regency Lodge*, in 1828. Munn says that he also built *Park Villa* to the west, which was positioned in extensive grounds overlooking the marshes. In any event, Henry Uthoff was clearly a man of financial and social substance, being related to the Vanneck baronets of Heveningham Hall through the female line. In 1844, his annual rectorial income from Huntingfield and Cookley alone amounted to £800, and in this respect he was ranked as the richest clergyman in the whole of Blything Hundred. Wake states that Uthoff was living in Regency House (circa 1842), but in the 1844 Whites Suffolk Directory he appears in Huntingfield, where he died in 1848 age 90, having spent 65 years as its Rector.

2.2 Harriet Sheriffe

The family of Rev. Thomas Sheriffe LLB. of Trinity Hall, Cambridge is recorded in the parish books of Uggeshall from 1792 and in the 1841 census for the village (Table 1). He was Rector of Uggeshall for 56 years. The Sheriffe's were always looking beyond their day to day horizons. His first wife, Charlotte, was the daughter of the Rev. Gilbert Affleck, Rector of Dalham, to the west of Bury, a considerable landowner and heir to the family baronetcy (Table 1). Their marriage took place at St Mary the Wall, Colchester, 19.09.1787.

Table 1 The Sheriffe Family of Uggeshall

A Baptisms

Thomas and Charlotte Sheriffe (nee Affleck of Lidgate W. Suffolk)

Charlotte	born	5.09.1788	baptised	29.11.1792
Thomas	born	8.03.1791	baptised	29.11.1792
Mary	born	25.05.1792	baptised	29.11. 1792
Harriet	born	25.06.1793	baptised	12.09.1794
Robert	born	20.11.1794	baptised	13.08.1799
Emily	born	15.06.1796	baptised	13.08.1799

B Burials

Charlotte Sheriffe	39	wife of Thomas	7.11.1798
Charlotte Sheriffe	16		12.01.1804
Emily Sheriffe	16		29.09.1812
Thomas Sheriffe	83	clerk, rector of the parish.	31.05.1842 born 1759
Sarah Sheriffe	77	widow from Southwold	27.03.1849
Harriet Sheriffe	76	from Southwold	20.12.1869

C Marriage

Thomas Sheriffe, widower, rector married Sarah Bennett 11.03.1809

D 1841 census

Thomas Sheriffe	80	
Sarah Sheriffe	65	
Harriet Sheriffe	45	
James Dye	45	man servant.
Richard Read	25	m.s.
Charles Sheppard	20	m.s.
Ann Burnett	35	female servant
Hannah Watling	35	f. s.
Elizabeth Dunham	20	f. s.
Mary Ann Debbage	20	f. s.

Harriet was Thomas' second daughter. She lived with her parents in Uggeshall until the death of her father in 1842, after which she moved to Southwold, probably with her stepmother. She was a major beneficiary in her father's will, receiving her father's real and personal estate. Out of this she had to pay an annuity to her stepmother, who also received a legacy of £800. From then on, as a rich money-lending spinster, Harriet played a prominent role in Southwold society. On Thomas Sheriffe's demise, which was shortly followed by the death his wife, the *Centre Cliff Houses* came into Harriet's possession. Sarah Sheriffe, her stepmother,

bequeathed most of her estate to Harriet, providing relatively minor legacies of £100 to her son in law Rev. Thomas Sheriffe of Henstead and £500 to his son Thomas Bowen Sheriffe (262 Womack).

The diary of James Maggs of Southwold for the period 1818-76 is a mine of information about the inhabitants of the town around this time. In Feb 1853 he notes:

“The sea at intervals has made alarming inroads opposite the Gun Hill and as far to the North as the Long Island Cliff (including Centre Cliff) scarcely leaving sufficient width for the standing of the bathing machines opposite the houses of Miss Sheriffe.”

We find Harriet in the town's 1851 census listed as an unmarried lady of South Green, age 58, described as 'land proprietor'.

Her substantial household is listed in the census as: -

Harriet Sheriffe	age 58 yrs	land proprietor	born Uggeshall
Isaac Buxton	age 48 yrs	butler	born Ashfield
Martha Buxton	age 49 yrs	housekeeper	born All Saints
George Danford	age 50 yrs	coachman	born Yoxford
Maria Danford	age 45 yrs	domestic	born Peasenhall
Jane Elven	age 25 yrs	housemaid	born Cransford
Emily Hotson	age 28 yrs	lady's maid	born Southwold
Rachel Reynolds	age 19 yrs	housemaid	born Redisham
Ellen Thurston	age 17 yrs	housemaid	born All Saints
William Balls	age 20 yrs	footman	born Brampton
William Barber	age 12 yrs	errand boy	born Uggeshall

She was still living at South Green in 1861 on a similar scale:-

Harriet Sheriffe unm	age 67 yrs	lady	born Uggeshall
Jane Pratt	age 35 yrs	cook	born Cransford
Charlotte Bokenham	age 36 yrs	ladies maid	born Southwold
Lydia Goodrum	age 20 yrs	general servant	born Henham
Henry Clarke	age 38 yrs	butler	born Loddon
Alfred Girling	age 29 yrs	coachman	born Brampton
David Girling	age 19 yrs	page	born Brampton

She took possession of the Centre Cliff Buildings as part of her father's estate. The following provides firm evidence that she was living in *Centre Cliff* from at least 1855 to the time of her death in 1869. In 1855 Whites Directory she is listed at *Centre Cliff*. In 1856 she entertained the lifeboat crew at *Centre Cliff*. Her will of 1869 states that she was residing at *Centre Cliff*, which, together with *South House* and *East House* was one of her bequests.

Before the move to Southwold she was evidently well established as a local money-lender, because in the 1830s she made a loan of £1,200 to William Lincolne, an up and coming young entrepreneur of Halesworth, and his successors, which led to the eventual establishment of Roe and Co's large department store in the Market Place. As shown below Harriet also dealt in Southwold property, like her father. There are also indentures that indicate that she was financing property deals as far away as Fressingfield, and her will describes her extensive property dealings with the manor of Saxtead. However, the days of the private financier were numbered. Banks were being established in market towns and a branch of the Norwich Crown Bank had appeared in Southwold as early as 1819.

The full extent of Harriet Sheriffe's great wealth is revealed in her will. She died possessed of the three Centre Cliff Houses and was residing in the middle property. The bulk of her wealth passed to the family of her late nephew, Thomas Bowen Sheriffe. The family had coalesced around his widow's marriage to Heneage Bagot-Chester and the Sheriffe estate of

Henstead Hall. She appointed Bagot-Chester as an executor along with her constant lawyer John Crabtree.

It is interesting to reflect on Harriet's life in relation to the property rights of women at this time. During most of the nineteenth century they were dependent upon their marital status. Once women married, their property rights were governed by English common law, which required that their husbands legally absorb the property that women took into a marriage, or acquired subsequently. Furthermore, married women could not make wills or dispose of any property without their husband's consent. Marital separation, whether initiated by the husband or wife, usually left the women economically destitute, as the law offered them no rights to marital property. Once married, the only legal avenue through which women could reclaim property was widowhood.

In contrast, women who never married maintained control over all their property, including their inheritance. These women could own freehold land and had complete control of property disposal. The rationale of the law was that if husband and wife are "one body" before God, they are "one person" in the law, and the husband represents that person. In recognition of this law, fathers often provided their daughters with dowries to protect them from unscrupulous husbands. Prenuptial marriage settlements provided a means for separate "pin" money to be put in trust for a bride in order to provide her with income. Pin money is an estate, which the wife was to possess for her sole and separate use, and was not subject to the control of her husband. This dowry was the only separate property that married women could own and control in accordance with the law of coverture. We have an example of this in the marriage of one of the Sheriffes of Henstead, where the husband died relatively young and his wife had a personal income from a trust fund that had been set up as part of the marriage settlement. Her son had to wait until his mother's death before he could lay his hands on the capital.

Married women were legal as well as economic non-entities. Many a husband would consider his wife as his own personal property, as "part of his goods and chattels". The occurrence of a divorce was "extremely rare" in the Victorian era. However, "bigamy, desertion, and other marital offences were probably more common then than now," since women had few rights which they could exercise legally against "bad husbands". Marriage was "a binding contract for life" in the Victorian era. Many marriages were considered a business deal, and because of this, few started with love. As years would go by, "many couples grew tolerably fond of each other, often resulting in a bond almost as deep as love". The evidence suggests that the male Sheriffes renewed their financial base in each generation by making good marriages. All of this shows that Harriet Sheriffe was an exception to the rule of the time.

2.2.1 Harriet Sheriffe: public benefactor.

Harriet died in Southwold in 1869 and was buried in Uggeshall, her birthplace, on 20th December. During her life she was a notable public benefactor. For example, at one time she gave £500 towards the cost of making reparations to the parish church. The burden of financing of Southwold's very large church had been passed from the Corporation to the townfolk at the turn of the century. In the 1870s its total cost of refurbishment was estimated as being between £1200 to £1300. It is a measure of Harriet's social standing in the town and her financial support of its church, that in 1870 a new stained glass East window was dedicated to her memory. This window, which depicted eight scenes in the life of Christ, was destroyed by enemy action during the Second World War.

Miss Sheriffe was a liberal subscriber to the lifeboat station. On October 8th 1852 the station's first self-righting boat, presented to the town by the Royal Lifeboat Society, had been christened Harriett. James Maggs' diary entry for this event states that it was named after 'Lady Gooch and Miss Harriet Sheriffe'. The ceremony included the laying of a foundation stone for a new lifeboat house by Sir E. S. Gooch. Afterwards there was a church service followed by a banquet at the Crown. On several occasions Maggs notes that Miss

Sheriffe made financial contributions to the crew of the lifeboat. For example, in 1856 she presented them with money and entertained them at the Swan and Centre Cliff House. She also provided the station with a silk flag with the town's coat of arms on it. A new boat, also named Harriett, was obtained from the National Lifeboat Institution in 1855. Strange to relate, this boat was renamed 'Coal Exchange' in 1869 to commemorate the award of £700 by the Coal Merchants of London to the Southwold station. The coal trade along the North Sea coast from Newcastle to London was the main beneficiary of the lifeboat emergency service. Maggs records the regular harvest of drowned seamen from Southwold's beaches. As an important member of Southwold's maritime community, Harriet had christened the town's new auxiliary carriage lifeboat, Quiver', a few months before she died. The award and renaming of the Harriett took place in April, the same month that Harriet christened the Quiver. Was the invitation to Harriet Sheriffe to christen the 'Quiver', a civic recognition of her local benevolence, and a sort of compensation for the replacement of her name on the port's main lifeboat?

2.2.2 Centre Cliff Lodge: a model of speculative development

According to Wake, in addition to the Centre Cliff Houses, the Sheriffes owned a prominent residence named *Lenny House*, which at the time of his writing was occupied by a Mr. Skill, for Library and Reading-rooms, a commercial venture which recognised an increasing demand for leisure pursuits. This was *Centre Cliff Lodge*, which was purchased as a lodging house in 1838 by Harriet Sheriffe from John Grimsby Lenny, a local land surveyor and cartographer. The indentures associated with this property give an idea of the kind of deals in which Harriet was involved.

She seems to have transferred *Centre Cliff Lodge* to her stepmother in 1843, and on her death in 1849 it came back into Harriet's possession. After Harriet's death, the subsequent history of *Centre Cliff Lodge* may be discerned from an indenture of 1871 for its sale to a Jane Bosanquet. It then belonged to Mary and Fanny Crabtree, the unmarried sisters of the Halesworth lawyer John Crabtree, who had acted for Harriet and her father in their many financial dealings. The document states that the house had belonged to John Grimsby Lenny before Harriet Sheriffe. It passed in trust to the Crabtree sisters on the death of their brother John, who had purchased it from Harriet Sheriffe in 1866 for £900. When Harriet had sold it to John Crabtree in 1866, Jane Bosenquet, a very rich spinster, was the tenant.

As cited in the 1871 Indenture, Centre Cliff Lodge fronted a Green to the south, formerly called *New York Green*, then known as *South Green*. It was bounded to the west by a lane, formerly called *Captain Killwicks Lane*, and to the north and east by property formerly belonging to Harriett Sheriffe (she had died in 1869). These premises were known as *South House* and *East House*, which shared a water supply with *Centre Cliff Lodge*. *South House* was the southern portion of the Centre Cliff Terrace. The indenture states that *Centre Cliff Lodge* had stables, coach house and yards' situated next to the High Street'.

The Maggs' diary relates that on April 6th 1839 Mr Frederick Skill a stationer of Yarmouth came to reside in Southwold. As noted above, Robert Wake states that he established a library and reading room in a property called *Lenny House*. His stay in the town was a very short one and on October 8th 1840. Maggs says, "I sold by auction Mr Skill's Furniture and other Effects at *Centre Cliff Lodge*". Three days later he left Southwold. This is good evidence that *Lenny House*, then owned by Harriet Sheriffe, was also known as *Centre Cliff Lodge*. In 1843 *Centre Cliff Lodge* was leased to a person calling himself Captain Lewis, with a wife and son. They suddenly disappeared leaving several hundred pounds of debts to local tradesmen.

Further information on *Centre Cliff Lodge* is obtained from another indenture attached to a document dealing with the sales of this property from Harriet Sheriffe to John Crabtree. It

contains references to the following indentures, which together summarise the history of the property from 1831 to 1843:

- 28-29 Sept 1831 Indentures of Lease and Release, the latter made between William Crisp (merchant and maltster) of the first part, Benjamin Burwood (jeweller) of the second part, the said Benjamin Burwood and John Jennings and Esther his wife and Samuel Hurry and Sarah his wife of the third part, John Grimsby Lenny of the fourth part, and Jonathan Gooding (Town Clerk and solicitor) of the fifth part. Some of these persons may have financed the development of the property.
- 8-9 February 1838 Indentures of Lease and Release, made between the said John Grimsby Lenny of the one part and the said Harriet Sheriffe of the other part.
- 29 June 1843 Indenture of Conveyance, made between the said Harriet Sheriffe of the one part and Sarah Sheriffe of Southwold (her step mother) aforesaid widow of the other part.

Centre Cliff Lodge belonging to the consortium of local investors named in the 1831 Indentures, who probably financed its erection, was sold to John Grimsby Lenny in 1831 and then to Harriet Sheriffe in 1838. Lenny lived in Southwold from 1834-8, and then moved to Wrentham Hill after the sale of *Centre Cliff Lodge*. In 1841 Harriet was living with her father and stepmother in the Uggeshall Rectory. Her father died the following year. From the dating of the above indentures it appears that Harriett had taken possession of *Centre Cliff Lodge* from John Grimsby Lenny in 1838, whilst she was still living in Uggeshall. This backs up the conclusion from her financial dealings in Halesworth, that she was already operating from Uggeshall as a property investor in her own right. There is evidence from her father's will that, towards the end of his life, he was relying more and more on Harriet to maintain his many financial interests, which ranged as far afield as Peasenhall and Framlingham.

In summary, the following description of the property called *Centre Cliff Lodge* in AR 847/1 may be used to locate its position on an 1839 map of Southwold: -

- It faces South Green.
- It is bounded on the West by *Killwick's Lane*
- It is contiguous on its North East Corner with South House belonging to Harriet Sheriffe.
- It abuts property belonging to Harriet Sheriffe to the North and East.

It fits the proviso in the sale of *Centre Cliff Lodge* to John Crabtree that, Harriet Sheriffe should: -

Not at any time hereafter erect or cause to permit to be erected or built upon the land on the East or South East sides of the said messuage hereby released, any building or any erection whatever or permit any trees or shrubs to grow up or do any other act whatever so as may obstruct the windows on the east or southeast side of the said messuage hereby granted and released, but will at all times hereafter leave such windows as free for the admittance of light and air as they are at the time of the execution of these presents.

The only property that fits this description is the one marked below as *Centre Cliff Lodge* (Fig 1).

Fig 1 Position of Centre Cliff Lodge



The scale of local wealth associated with South Green housing developments at this time can be gauged from the collection of residents around the green. Caroline Bosenquet, referred to above, is a good example of the very rich. When she died, unmarried and intestate, on 6th January 1886 her personal estate was assessed at £16,000, consisting mostly of stocks in the Great Western, Great Northern and the Great Eastern Railways. She first appears in Southwold as a tenant of *Centre Cliff Lodge* in 1866 at the age of 31. At the time of her death, her only relative was a brother living in Cornwall. She died at 11 Esplanade, Lowestoft, another Victorian development created for the very wealthy. In many ways, Lowestoft was a local model for what a seaside resort should offer to wealthy holidaymakers and retirees. At the other end of the scale in Southwold, in 1851, were Robin Rogers a fisherman and Lydia Martin, innkeeper, who both lived just a stone's throw away from Harriet Sheriffe, who was probably the richest women in the town (Table 2).

Table 2 Extract from the census of South Green 1851

80	Lydia Martin	innkeeper
81	Charles Carter	builder
82	Mary Ann Chaston	independent widow
83	Harriet Sheriffe	
84	Eliza Loupin	(widow of the Town Clerk/solicitor)
3	houses unoccupied	
85	Robin Rogers	fisherman
 followed by other fishermen	

This highlights the principle that this period marked a turning point in Southwold's economic fortunes. The historic port was moving rapidly from a self-contained commercial entity, towards a new future as a tourist attraction, commuter dormitory and pleasant retreat for retirees. This early current of change is particularly discernable in Maggs' diary, and the following newspaper cutting is a humorous and ironic commentary from one townsman who was already regretting the loss of Southwold's ancient identity.

To the Editor
Sir,

In looking through the local papers, I can only find one place that appoints officers who reside at a considerable distance from the parish.

The Vicar of Southwold has appointed a gentleman who resides in London as his churchwarden, the Mayor of Southwold also resides in London, and one of the Borough Magistrates resides in Norwich. The borough has four magistrates, but only one lives in Southwold.

It was rumoured that the Vicar was about leaving and there was a suggestion that his successor should reside in London and his curate in Norwich. There is one policeman only and as at present he frequently walks up and down the High Street, it is proposed that his successor, in common with everyone else, should reside in London. The inhabitants of the town will be free from the annoyance of the presence of any of their officers. It is in contemplation to establish a co-operative store in London where the town will be supplied with every requisite. The little town will then rid itself of all trades-people and be regarded as a most desirable residence for widow-ladies and aged spinsters. Undoubtedly after mature consideration, other towns will follow its example. I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

Southwold, April, 1873, JOHN HONESTY

3 Origins of the Sheriffe family

The Sheriffes had been prominent as merchants and property owners along the border of Suffolk with Norfolk, between Diss and Beccles, for at least a couple of centuries (Tables 3, 4 and 5, Fig 2).

Table 3 Sheriffes in the Norfolk IGI

Person	Event	Date	Place
Joan Sheriffe	m	1543	Lammas with Little Hautbois
Margarett Sheriffe	b	1544	Lammas
Elena Sheriffe	b	1546	Lammas
Brigit Sheriff	m	1574	Carleton Rode
Thomas Sheriffe	b	1608	
Elizabeth Sheriffe	c	1609	Coleby
Judith Sheriffe	m	1633	Norwich St Martin
William Shiriffe	c	1635	Ashmanhaugh
James Sheriffe	c	1637	Ashmanhaugh
Dorothie Sheriffe	c	1640	Ashmanhaugh
John Shiriffe	c	1642	Ashmanhaugh
Elizabeth Sheriffe	m	1656	Thurne
David Sheriffe	m	1672	Norwich St Mary
Robert Sheriffe	m	1672	Norwich
Tomazine Sherife	m	1674	Norwich St Mary in the Marsh
Jeffry Sheriffe	m	1685	Norwich St Simon and St Jude
John Sheriffe	m	1723	Blofield
Mary Sheriffe	m	1727	Blofield
Mary Sheriffe	m	1779	Diss
Mary Sheriffe	m	1832	Clenchwarden

Table 4 Sheriffes in the Suffolk IGI

Person	Event	Date	Place
Thomas Sheriffe	m	1587	Stoke by Nayland
Richard Sheriffe	m	1603	Worlingham
William Sheriffe	m	1603	Worlingham
Tobias Sheriffe	b	1631	Ellough
William Sheriffe	c	1683	Cavendish
Susanna Sheriffe	c	1685	Cavendish
Mary Sheriffe	c	1688	Cavendish
Ann Sheriff	c	1689	Cavendish
William Sheriffe	c	1707	Cavendish
Thomas Sheriffe	c	1709	Cavendish
Giles Sheriffe	m	1710	Wingfield
George Sheriffe	m	1711	Wingfield
John Sheriffe	b	1711	Cavendish
Ann Sherrif	m	1715	Acton
Thomas Sheriffe	b	1791	Uggeshall
James Sheriffe	c	1797	Woodbridge St Mary
Lucy Sheriff	c	1798	Burgh
Phebe Sheriffe	c	1813	Lowestoft
Joshua Cousins Sheriffe	c	1817	Lowestoft
Thomas Sheriffe	m	1823	Beccles

Fig 2 Distribution of Sheriffes of Norfolk and Suffolk from the IGI entries

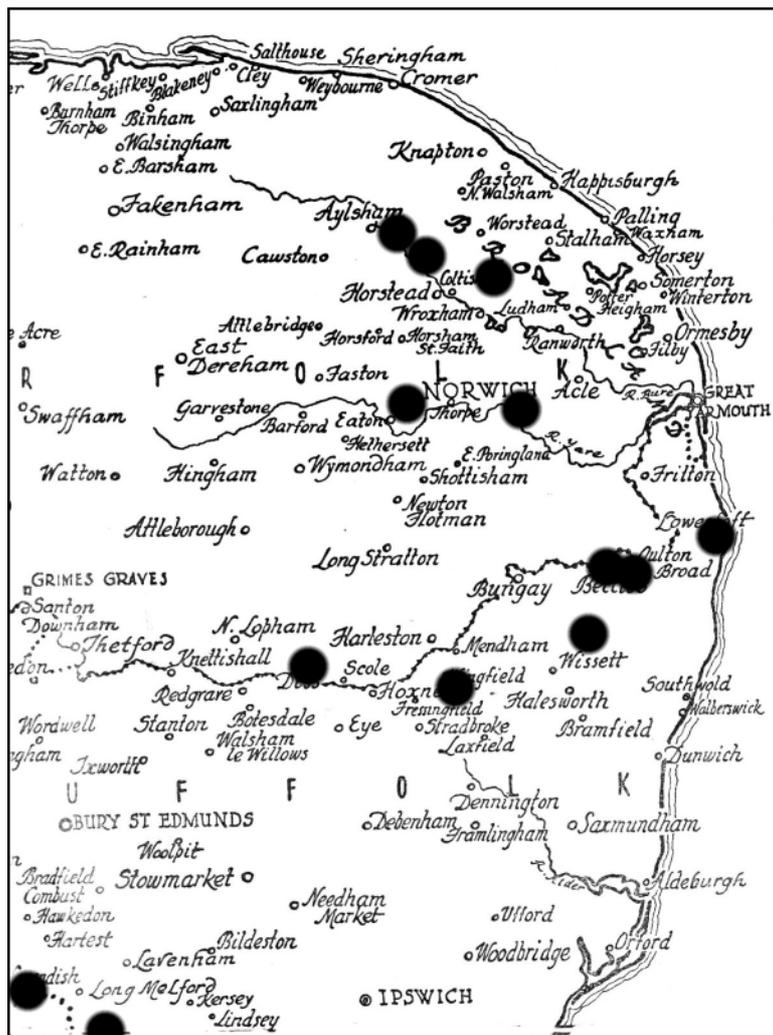


Table 5 15th Century Norfolk Wills

1430 Schereve Edus (Bofield)
1487 Scherive Isabel (Nekton)
1480 Schirreve Maud (Rokelound)
1458 Shyrreve Richard (Elyngham Magna)
1440 Shirreve Thomas (Kykebybidon)
1446 Schirreeve Thomas (citizen of Norwich, cordwainer)
1471 Sheryff William (Palgrave by Diss)

3.1 Sheriffes of Diss

From the middle of the 16th century the Sheriffe family was prominent in the commercial life of the Norfolk market town of Diss, and its members subsequently made their mark as considerable property owners in the neighbourhood (Table 6). In Diss, they owned land in Cock Street and this is where Thomas Sheriffe (III) became associated with the *Lower Brewery*, which was situated in the north-east corner of *Cock Street Green*, now *Fair Green*. The brewery was a very substantial business with several tied public houses in the neighbourhood, which were in fact owned by Thomas Sheriffe. In his will of 1748 he states that he was in partnership as a brewer with Benjamin Coggeshall of Ipswich, and that it was his wish that if possible his wife Abigail should continue in partnership with Coggeshall until his son Thomas (IV) should be able to take it over when he became of age. Benjamin was probably a relative of William Coggeshall from Stratford St Mary who was a Diss brewer at the beginning of the century. When William died in 1714 he estimated that his brewing stock or stock in trade was estimated to be worth at least £1,000. Although it is not known where the Coggeshall brewery and maltings was situated, in view of Thomas Sheriffe's later connection with Benjamin Coggeshall, it is likely that their partnership was a development of William Coggeshall's business.

Although it was the intention of Thomas Sheriffe (III)'s father that he should follow in his father's footsteps as a brewer, he developed his own business in Bungay. Abigail, his mother, continued with the Diss brewery and in August 1783 there is a draft lease for the brewery, which names the lessors as Abigail Sheriffe and her kinsman Robert Layman. A draft bond for the business in 1793, five years after Abigail's death, bears the names of Robert Layman and Benjamin Wiseman (Abigail's grandson). The Universal British Directory of 1793 lists a Diss brewery of *Wiseman and Layman*. A lease of 1802 indicates that this couple were still brewers with tied public houses. Abigail's will does not mention the brewery so it is not known who actually owned Thomas (III)'s business at this time.

What is certain is that the *Lower Brewery* and maltings eventually came back under the control of the Sheriffes sometime between 1802 and 1840. The evidence is that it was sold as a provision of the will of Robert Sheriffe of Diss, the younger unmarried brother of Thomas Sheriffe (V). It is clear from Robert's will that he was extremely rich. In addition to the *Lower Brewery* with its associated maltings and a granary, he owned 44 inns and public houses, two farms, a couple of mansions in Diss, several parcels of land in the county, and the estate and manor of Henstead Hall. He had purchased Henstead Hall in 1834 from a Mr Barclay, and he held his first manorial court there on the 19 December 1834. Robert died on May 9th 1840 age 75, after which most of his property was sold by auction at the King's Head in Diss, and the proceeds passed to his nephew Rev, Thomas Sheriffe (VI). Robert also bequeathed Henstead Hall and its pleasure grounds to Thomas (VI), so at a stroke the latter became one of the richest clergymen of Suffolk. Thomas (VI)'s father Thomas (V) of Uggeshall held the advowson of Henstead Church, and had already appointed Thomas (VI) as Rector of Henstead. There followed a move from Henstead Rectory to Henstead Hall. His

father bequeathed him the advowson in 1842. Thomas (VI) remained Rector of Henstead, residing in Henstead Hall until his death in 1861.

The personal wealth of Robert Sheriffe highlights an important feature of the economic development of rural East Anglia at this time, which was driven by the demand for malt, produced from locally grown barley. Much of this was exported to London through Yarmouth and the Suffolk ports. Control of the trade in barley and malt was also the source of considerable wealth for those few in the supply chain who could capitalise on the increasing demand for locally brewed beer. Thus did the Lacon family of Yarmouth and Patrick Stead of Halesworth rise to become the millionaires of their day, and it seems that Robert Sheriffe of Diss was of the same ilk. An outward sign of the wealth of these 18th century 'malting barons' was a Regency town house built of expensive white Suffolk bricks. In Halesworth, Stead's Quay Street mansion (now known as *Hooker House*), and in Diss Robert Sheriffe's Mount Street mansion, still stand as indicators of this time of plenty for those who made good through the industrialisation of brewing. They had central control over the purchase of barley and a tight grip on sales through the innovation of 'tied pubs', which obliged the tenant of a public house to buy beer only from the brewery that owned the property. These industrialists are a far cry from the old beer-house brewers, such as Raynolde Shuckforth of Diss, who in his will of 1599 left a brewing house in Kenninghall with its copper, three vats and a cooler, worth about £6, to his eldest son.

Table 6 Sheriffe family time line

16th 17th centuries

Sheriffes first appear in the parish books of Diss in **1567**. The following century they emerge as wealthy townfolk in the person of Thomas Sheriffe (I), a J.P. and prominent anti-royalist. He occupied a 16-room house and was taxed in **1664** for the possession of 'seven hearths'. He died 13th April **1669** aged 61.

Thomas Sheriffe (I) with a wife Mary, made a will in **1669** which lists substantial bequests made to his eight children. Lands and property in are described in Diss, Pulham St Margaret and Roydon. His first-born son was named Thomas (II), and this custom of naming the first-born son to a Thomas Sheriffe, Thomas, continued in the family for the next two centuries (a total of 7 Thomas Sheriffes). Thomas (I) also itemised a gold ring with his coat of arms, which was to be given to Thomas (II). In Burke's General Armory there is only one Sheriffe coat of arms, which was awarded to Lawrence Sheriff gent. of Warwickshire in 1559. In contrast to Norfolk and Suffolk, there are many Sheriffes in the Warwickshire IGI.

18th century

Thomas Sheriffe (III) made a will in **1748**. He was the second son of John (son of Thomas (I)) and Elizabeth Sheriffe.

Thomas Sheriffe (IV) purchased the Bungay Navigation in **1757**. He was the son of Thomas (III) and Abigail Sheriffe, and married the daughter of John Meen the former owner of the Bungay Navigation.

The next reference to a Thomas Sheriffe (IV), as gentleman and merchant of Bungay, appears at the end of the 18th century. There is a map of his house and land to the south of the town dated **1760** (102 acres).

In **1765** Thomas Sheriffe (IV) was named in a deed of covenant concerning the establishment of property rights in Bungay

In February **1768** Thomas Sheriffe (IV) was declared bankrupt. He died in **1769**. The Ipswich Journal says that he accidentally fell in the river and drowned. Local opinion was that he committed suicide because of his bankruptcy.

In **1770** the estate of Thomas Sheriffe (IV) was subject to a Tripartate Indenture of bankruptcy in which he was described as being in the business of buying and selling of corn, coal and other commodities. One of the assignees of the estate was Bozalool Gooch. A considerable proportion of his debt appears to have been discharged by the sale of lands in Bungay to a Nelson Burtset.

The Norfolk Chronicle reported that at Diss, May 7, **1782** a Partnership between Messrs SHERIFFE and GOOCH, Beer Brewers and Liquor Merchants, at Diss, was dissolved. In the same year 27th December, the paper reported, " Sunday last died at Diss, Mrs SHERIFFE, widow of the late Mr Thomas SHERIFFE (Thomas IV), merchant at Bungay". The implication is that it was Mary Sheriffe who had been in partnership with the Gooch family.

In **1785** Thomas Sheriffe (V) Clerk of Woodton, was party to a bond linking him with a group of London businessmen headed by Alexander Adair of Flixton. This Thomas was Harriett Sheriffe's father, and the son of the above Thomas (IV) and Mary Sheriffe. The bond involved Thomas paying the sum of £500 to Alexander Adair and others, of London and Middlesex, to secure his nomination to the Free Chapel or Curacy of Redlingfield, until such time as the infant son of Edward Price 'shall be capable of taking a nomination and license for the curacy'. Alexander Adair was patron of the curacy and Edward Price was one of Adair's associates in receipt of Sheriffe's payment for the privilege of holding the curacy, and receiving its financial benefits pending the coming of age of Edward Price's son. The first entry Thomas made in the Woodton parish books was in April **1785** with respect to marriage/banns. He signed himself as 'curate'. The last entry he made as curate of Woodton was on 31 March **1787**. In September he was married and appears again in Uggeshall as Rector, where his first child Charlotte was born the following year.

Abigail Sheriffe's will proved **1788**. Described as a widow of Diss, she bequeathed money to her grandsons, Rev Thomas Sheriffe (V) of Bungay (this refers to his birthplace) and Benjamin Wiseman the Younger of Diss. Other grandchildren mentioned are Thomas Norgate of Diss, Mary, wife of Benjamin Wiseman and John Lewis son of her daughter Martha Lewis.

4 Sheriffes of Henstead (Tables 7, 8 and 9)

Harriet Sheriffe's brother Thomas (VI) and his son Thomas Bowen carried the male line of the Uggeshall Sheriffes forward.

Thomas (VI) was born at Uggeshall 8 March 1791, baptised privately the same day, and received into the church at Uggeshall 29 November 1792. He was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge, taking holy orders. He married Georgiana Farr(e), eldest daughter of Thomas Farr of Beccles, Suffolk, by Georgiana Gooch his wife, youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Sherlock Gooch of Benacre Hall, Suffolk, and 3rd Bart. She was born at Beccles in August 1795; married at St. Mary's, Beccles, 1st May 1823 and died at Wheatacre, Norfolk, in September 1824. Thomas (VI) was provided with a marriage settlement from his father and on his father's death he was left all the family plate. The marriage produced one son, Thomas Bowen Sheriffe of Henstead Hall, Suffolk, and of Thurmaston Lodge, Leicestershire. He was born at Wheatacre 5th April, and baptised there privately, 9th April 1824.

The entry for Henstead in White's Directory for 1844 states:

Thomas Sheriffe jun. Esq. (now a minor) ... is now lord of the manor and patron of the church. His father, the Rev Thomas Sheriffe is the incumbent.'

The Thomas Sheriffe jun. referred to above was Thomas Bowen Sheriffe, son of Thomas (VI) who would have been aged 20 when the information for the directory was collected. The entry implies that Thomas (VI) had passed on the advowson bequeathed to him by his father. This arrangement was probably made in order to overcome the embarrassment of having the impropiator of the rectory being a clergyman and awarding himself the benefice. The relevant section from Thomas (V)'s will is as follows:-

I devise to my dear son the Rev Thomas Sheriffe all that my advowson, donation and right of patronage and presentation now in and to the rectory and parish church of Henstead in the said County of Suffolk, with the rights members and appurtenances thereto belonging. To hold to him my said son and to his heirs and assigns for ever absolutely, and I also bequeath to my

said son all my silver plate of every description to hold to him his executors assigns administrators for his own use absolutely, and I do hereby declare that the said devise and bequest so made to my said son, is intended by me and is to accepted by him in full satisfaction and discharge and all and every provision heretofore made by me for him, or to which he would be entitled from me by marriage settlement, or otherwise I bequeath to my said wife a legacy or sum of £3,500, to be paid to or appropriated by her as soon as convenient out of my personal estate, and I also bequeath to her my said wife a annuity of £400 to be charged upon and payable out of my real and personal estate hereinafter devised and bequeathed to my said daughter.

Thomas (VI) died at Henstead Hall, aged 70, 10th October, and was buried at Henstead, 17th October 1861. His Will is dated 26th June 1855, with a codicil dated the same day, proved at Ipswich 9th November 1861, by Thomas Bowen Sheriffe, the son and sole heir.

Table 7 Sheriffes of Henstead

A Henstead Census 1841: The Hall

Person	Age	Designation
Thomas Sheriffe	50	Clergyman
Anabella Young	50	Female servant
Hannah Murrel	20	Female servant
Louisa Raven	20	Female servant
Sarah Dummas	55	Female servant
John Carter	40	Male servant
Stephen Bottle	20	Male servant
George Gunton	15	Male servant

B Henstead Census 1851: The Hall

Person	Age	Designation	Birthplace	Note
Thomas Sheriffe	60	Widower; Rector	Uggheshall	Signature in registers starts 1838
Anabella Young	62	Housekeeper	Kesgrave	
Elizabeth Waters	42	Cook	Beccles	
Louisa Raven	30	Housemaid	Henstead	
Emma Peck	26	Housemaid	Henstead	
Emma Moss	17	Scullery maid	Rushmere	
Benjamin Carter	19	Footman	Scoulton Nfk	
Harry Crane	22	Groom	Yoxford	
Jonas James	40	Groom	Beccles	

C Henstead Burials

Person	Age at death	Date	Notes
Georgiana Sheriffe	29	8.9.1824	
Robert Sheriffe esq	75	16.05.1840	Of Diss Nfk
Thomas Sheriffe	70	17.10.1861	Rector of Henstead
Thomas Bowen Sheriffe	39	18.02.1864	Of Thurmaston Lodge Leics.
Charles F. Sheriffe	11	20.02.1874	b. Henstead

D Beccles Marriage

Thomas Sheriffe, bachelor, married Georgiana Farr, spinster 23.05.1823

Table 8 Henstead Church Memorials

On the left hand side of the altar there are three marble memorials to the Sheriffe family.

- The one in the centre is saved to the memory of the Rev. Thomas Sheriffe, rector of the parish who died October 10th 1861 in the 71st year of his age.
- To the left of her husband his beloved wife Georgiana Sheriffe who died September 8th 1824 aged 29.
- On the right the Rev. Thomas Sheriffe dedicated a memorial to his kind uncle, a tribute of affection, to Robert Sheriffe esq. of Diss Norfolk, who died May 9th 1840.
- To the right of the altar a memorial to Thomas Bowen Sheriffe esq. of Henstead Hall and of Thurmaston Lodge Leicestershire who was born April 6th 1824 and died February 11th 1864.

Two brass plates behind the choir stalls are dedicated to the children of Thomas Bowen Sheriffe Esq. of Henstead Hall.

- To the memory much loved and tenderly cherished Charles F. Sheriffe whose spirit returned unto God who gave it on the 20th day of February 1874 at the age of eleven years.
- To the beloved memory of Georgiana Mary Bonham who died on July 14th 1904 his eldest daughter

Table 9 Provisional tree of the Sheriffe family

Diss

Thomas (d. 1669) and Mary Sheriffe

- Thomas
- John * (became physician)
- Timothy
- Samuel
- William
- Elizabeth
- Daniel
- Martha

Diss

* John and Elizabeth Sheriffe (d.1702)

- John
- Thomas **
- Susanna d.1735
- Abigail
- Martha d. 1729
- Elizabeth (possibly m. William Miller)

Diss

** Thomas (d.1748) and Abigail Sheriffe (nee Layman)d.1788

- Thomas ***
- John
- Elizabeth
- Martha m. ? Lewis

Bungay

*** Thomas (d.1769) and Mary Sheriffe (nee Meen)

- Thomas 1758 ****
- John 1759
- Robert 1761
- Mary 1761 m. Benjamin Wiseman
- Martha 1762
- Margaret 1763
- Robert 1765 d. 1840

Uggeshall

**** Thomas (d.1842) and Charlotte Sheriffe (nee Affleck) d.1798

- Charlotte 1788 d. 1804
- Thomas 1791 d. 1861 *****
- Mary 1792
- Harriet 1793 d.1869
- Robert 1794
- Emily 1796 d. 1812

Henstead

***** Thomas (d.1861) and Geogiana Sheriffe (nee Farr) d.1824

- Thomas Bowen b 1824 Wheatacre

Thomas Bowen (d.1864) and Madeline Sheriffe (nee Massey)

- Georgiana Mary 1856 b Henstead
- Madeline Harriet 1858 b Thurmaston
- Robert Thomas Oliver 1860 b Thurmaston
- Charles Farr 1863 b Henstead 1863

Table 10 Connections of the Sheriffes with the Gooch family

1770 Bazalool Gooch was assigne in Thomas Sheriffe (Diss) bankruptcy

1780s Reference to a Diss brewery owned in partnership by Sheriffe and Gooch.

1823 The son of Thomas Sheriffe of Uggeshall , also named Thomas, residing at Henstead Hall, married Georgiana Farr, whose mother was the youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Sherlock Gooch of Benacre Hall.

1848 May 14th Died at Mrs Sheriffe's Lodgings in South End, Southwold, Wm. Frederick Sherlock, aged 7 months- son of Mr Ed. Gooch M.P. Interred at Benacre. Edward Gooch was heir to the Gooch baronetcy.

1852 Lady Gooch, wife of Sir Edward Sherlock Gooch, and Harriet Sheriffe were co-sponsors of the Southwold lifeboat.

4.1 Thomas Bowen Sheriffe: 'gentleman of independent means'

Thomas Bowen Sheriffe was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge (B.A. 1847). His financial independence was assured by his marriage to Madeline Elizabeth, only daughter of Richard Mansel Oliver Massey of Tickford Abbey, Buckinghamshire, and of Kinrara, Invernesshire. Massey's wife was named Elise Marguerite. Thomas Bowen's wife Madeleine Elizabeth was born 5th October, baptised, at Ratcliffe-on-Wreke, Leicestershire, 19th December 1831. The marriage took place at St. George's, Hanover Square, London (by the Rev. Evan Nepean), on Wednesday, 24th May 1854. The day before their marriage, Thomas Bowen's father settled £20,000 on the couple; the settlement to be held by them jointly. They set up home at Thurmaston Lodge, Leicestershire, which probably represents Madeleine Elizabeth's dowry from the Massey family. Thomas Bowen thereby became a man of independent means.

The marriage partnership probably originated in Thomas Bowen's passion for foxhunting. Madeline was born in Leicestershire's hunting country. Thurmaston is one of several settlements situated to the east of Charnwood Forest, which is at the heart of first rate hunting country, where three hunts have territories intersecting at Melton Mowbray: Quorn, Cottesmore and Belvoir. In this respect, on the night of 30th March 1851, we find Thomas Bowen as a houseguest of Henley G Greaves Esq., of Cottesmore, Rutland, who was Master of his own pack of foxhounds. Greave's household on this occasion consisted of 44 persons, including hunting guests from the length and breadth of the land with their servants, who augmented Greave's own substantial band of household retainers.

The Thurmaston area was attractive to young male aristocrats of the time, who would spend the whole hunting season in and around Melton Mowbray. 'Meltonians', as they became known, were devoted to hard riding, and would hunt six days a week throughout the winter months. In the evenings they relaxed with cockfighting, dogfighting, gambling and drinking. During one drunken night in Melton in 1837, the Marquess of Waterford and his friends poured red paint over the local nightwatchmen and then painted the walls of the town. This is said to be the origin of the phrase "painting the town red". The growing popularity of hunting led to problems ensuring a supply of foxes. In the early 19th century, foxes were imported from the continent, mainly from France and Holland. Landowners also planted artificial coverts - brushy areas for the foxes to live in. It became socially unacceptable for farmers to trap or shoot foxes - an act known as "vulpicide". There was a country saying: "Better kill a man than a fox".

It was in fact the spread of the railways in the 1840s that transformed fox-hunting. For example, a Londoner could now catch an early morning train to Melton Mowbray with his horse in a box, and get there in time for the day's meet. Between the 1840s and 1870s, the number of people hunting foxes increased tenfold. Women also began to hunt, riding side-saddle in thick skirts. For the first time, the sport attracted large numbers of people with little connection with the countryside where they hunted.

Thomas Bowen's marriage produced four children; two daughters, Georgiana Mary and Madeline Harriet, and two boys, Robert Thomas Oliver and Charles Farr, who died on the 20th February 1874, age 11 years. They were born variously at Thurmaston and Henstead.

Thomas Bowen Sheriffe died prematurely at Thurmaston Lodge, only three years after his father, aged 39 years and 10 months. His death occurred, on Thursday, 11th February 1864 and he was buried at Henstead on the 18th February. A will dated 25th October 1862, has two codicils dated respectively 3rd November 1862, and 1st February 1864, proved (Prin. Reg., 204, 64) 21st March 1864, by Herbert Whitaker of Little Shelford, Cambridgeshire, one

of the Executors, and on 13th June 1864, by Charles Magniac, of 10 Upper Brook Street, Middlesex, the other Executor.

About a year after Thomas Bowen's death, his wife Madeline Elizabeth moved laterally in the rural social strata to which she was accustomed, marrying for the second time at the Chapel of the British Embassy, Paris (by the Rev. Hogarth John Swale, Chaplain to the Embassy), on Saturday, 11th March 1865, Colonel Heneage Charles Bagot-Chester of Zetland House, Maidenhead, Berkshire, and of Southwold, Suffolk. Colonel Bagot-Chester was the younger son of Lieut.- General John Bagot-Chester, R.A., of Ashted, Surrey, by Sophia Elizabeth his wife, daughter of Charles Swede Stuart of Kincaid, Stirlingshire. Born 12th February 1834, he was Colonel Reserve Forces, formerly of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, and served throughout the Indian Mutiny 1858 (medal with clasps). He was a J.P. for Suffolk.

We can get a glimpse of the position of Heneage Bagot-Chester and his new family in 1869 because they are the major beneficiaries of Harriet Sheriffe's will of that year. When Harriet died Thomas Bowen Sheriffe's widow had been married to Heneage Bagot-Chester for four years. It is intriguing that Heneage was chosen by Harriet to be one of her two executors, the other being her long time lawyer John Crabtree. Heneage Bagot-Chester appears to have had property in Southwold, which may have brought him into contact with Harriet before his marriage to her nephew's widow. In this context, the very short interval between Thomas Bowen's death and his wife's remarriage, implies that Bagot-Chester already had good social relations with the Sheriffes of Henstead.

When Harriet died, Thomas Bowen's four children were between 7 and 9 years of age. She gave instructions to her executors that all her property was to be sold and the bulk of the proceeds placed in trust for three of these children, Robert Thomas Oliver, Georgiana Mary, and Madeline Harriet until they reached the age of 21. She also included in this arrangement Greville Bagot-Chester, who was the first child of Madeline Elizabeth's remarriage to Heneage Bagot-Chester. In the 1871 census he is at Henstead Hall with his parents aged 4. These four persons were to be tenants in common and have an equal share of the bulk of her estate. All children were to have up to £100 (to age 10) and £150 (to age 21) per annum in their minority for their on-going expenses of maintenance and education. Special provisions were made for the two girls to each have £10,000 in trust to be paid either when they reached the age of 21, or if they married before the age of 21, providing it was with the consent of their guardian. Harriet was very generous to their stepfather, Heneage Bagot-Chester. He was to receive £5,800 from her estate, separate from his role as an executor, and have possession of the three Centre Cliff Houses during his lifetime. It was her wish that 'Centre Cliff' itself was to be maintained more or less as it was when Harriet was alive. She was not so concerned about the furnishings of 'South House' and 'East House'. After Heneage's death, all three properties were to be sold and the proceeds divided between Georgiana Mary, Madeline Harriet, Charles Farr and Greville Bagot-Chester.

This raises the position of Charles Farr. He was not included along with the other children as a major beneficiary with respect to the bulk of his great aunt's estate. Apart from the long-term benefit from the sale of the Centre Cliff Houses on the death of his stepfather, Charles Farr is singled out in a codicil for Harriet's silver plate to be placed in trust for him until he reached the age of 21. It subsequently turned out that he died at the age of 11. Charles Farr was clearly not in the same category as the other children. We may relate this to the unusual benefactions in Harriet's will to the 'Royal Hospital for Incurables', the Infant Asylum at Wanstead and the 'Asylum for Idiots' which was located in the Bagot Chester's Surrey heartland. In other words, it may be assumed that Charles Farr Sheriffe had a profound mental disability, which was the cause of his premature death.

Another interesting issue is that Harriet does not refer at any point in her will to the mother of the Sheriffe children. Madeline Elizabeth was personally in a good financial position with regards the Sheriffe marriage settlement, and her marriage to Heneage Bagot-Chester must have given her financial security. However, Harriet was so precise in devising legacy items for her friends and servants, such as clothes, a silver tea service and her pictures, and we are left to contemplate the possibility that she had 'got wrong' with her nephew's former wife. Madeline Elizabeth is something of a shadowy figure in the Sheriffe story in that the papers say nothing about her family the Masseys. Her brother Augustus Shakespear Oliver had died on 7th August 1865 so she may have been the heiress of her parent's estate. The fate of the Thurmaston property, where she began her married life is unknown. It may be that she brought nothing to the Bagot Chester marriage except her settlement bond.

4.1.1 The next generation

Robert Thomas Oliver Sheriffe was born in 1860, and in subsequent census returns his birthplace is variously described as Wrentham, Henstead and 'Lesters' Thurmaston. He is recorded; age 7 months at Thurmaston in the 1861 census with his sister Madeline Harriet aged 2. The butler, housekeeper, a nurse and two housemaids were in charge of the children. Their parents were staying with Madeline's parents at Wing in Buckinghamshire. In the 1881 census Robert Thomas Oliver is an undergraduate at Magdalene College Cambridge. In this census, his sister Madeline was a visitor at the Hotel Prote in George St, Westminster.

Robert Thomas Oliver had been left the Manor of Henstead by his father, and in his minority it was the home of the Sheriffe children with their mother and stepfather. It is not known what happened to the Thurmaston property.

By the 1880s, although there is no direct evidence that Robert Thomas Oliver actually lived at Henstead, there are signs that his financial position was somewhat shaky. An indenture dated 1st May 1884 contains the details of a loan of £2,000, which Robert received from George Edward Lake on the security of his parent's marriage settlement. After Thomas Bowen's death, the £20,000 settlement was held in trust on behalf of his mother until her death, when she had stipulated that it passed to Robert. In the document Robert is described as being 'of Henstead'.

However, in the 1890s he was still moving in the county set which had been the province of his father. In the 1891 census, Robert Sheriffe is one of four visitors at Haselbeech Hall, Northamptonshire, a guest of William G Middleton, Captain in the 12th Lancers. Robert, aged 29 years, is described as a J.P. and Lieutenant in the Norfolk Artillery Company.

At this time Robert once again turned to his mother's trust fund, because it appears that in the 1890s he took out a mortgage for £20,000, again using his mother's settlement fund as collateral. Ten years later the census tells that he is back in Leicestershire as head of the household at Asfordby House (Asfordby All Saints) with a wife. The loan was paid off in 1908 when the mortgagees confirmed and released the sum of £20,000 to which Robert Bowen was entitled on the death of his mother. She was recorded in the 1901 census living with her husband Heneage and four servants in Maidenhead, so the conclusion is that she died between 1901 and 1908.

So far no information has been obtained on the fate of his siblings except his eldest sister Georgiana Mary, who was born at Henstead 4th October, baptised there 26th October 1856. She was married at Henstead 26th August 1875, to Lieut.-Colonel Harry Walter Musgrave Bonham. Harry was the eldest son of Colonel Henry Frederick Bonham of the 10th Hussars and of Carlton Hall, Suffolk, by Augusta Sophia his wife, and daughter of the Rev. Sir Christopher John Musgrave of Edenhall, Cumberland, Bart. It is to be hoped that, since she married at the age of 19, it was with consent of her guardian, so that she would benefit from the £10,000 bequest from her great aunt.

The army was clearly still a social force in the countryside. Harry Bonham was born at Carlton Hall on Thursday, 11th November 1852, baptised at Kelsale, Suffolk, 9th January 1853. He was Lieut.-Colonel Grenadier Guards; served in the Sudan Expedition 1884-85, on special service at the Nile, and at the actions of Abu Klea and El Gubat (medal with two clasps and bronze star). He also served in the Imperial Yeomanry in the South African War 1900-1901 (mentioned in despatches); J.P. for the counties of Hertford and Suffolk. His mother Augusta Sophia maintained her upper class Suffolk trajectory when after her husband's death she married the Earl of Stradbroke. Georgiana Mary died July 14th 1904.

Greville, the first child of Madeline Elizabeth Sheriffe's marriage to Heneage Bagot Chester, also made a career in the army, and in the 1991 census is recorded as a Lieutenant in the Foot Guards, which included the Castle Guards, at Windsor Victoria Barracks. The entry highlights a Suffolk connection in that his Colonel was the Hon. Joshua Vanneck a scion of the Lords Huntingfield of Heveningham Hall.

5 Social order and economic change

The Sheriffes and their dealings with kin, neighbours, property, religion and the military were representative of the social currents and issues of their times. From Thomas Sheriffe of Diss, the champion of parliamentary government, to Harriet Sheriffe an exceptional spinster property financier, the prevailing mood was one of change, with continuity reflected in loyalties, and embodied both in institutions and routines within an historical long view of everyday life. This was expressed by an anonymous essayist of 1771:-

‘If ever God Almighty did concern Himself about forming a government for mankind to live happily under, it was that which was established in England by our Saxon forefathers.’

Within the Sheriffe clan, the dominance of family ties made for both order and continuity in their neighbourhoods. In this connection, through their various activities, we see that the Sheriffes believed that land belonged to families rather than to individuals and was gathered and held from generation to generation. Decisions relating to its ownership were usually made in terms of family ‘interest’ with complex legal instruments of family control. There was no limited liability and no national capital market, so commercial initiative frequently depended on loans from brothers and cousins or individuals who had been fortunate in accumulating surplus wealth. This meant sailing close to the wind with the ever-present possibility of the wreck of bankruptcy. By maintaining their exceptional wealth and social position through eight generations, the Sheriffes demonstrate that they were good with money. They also demonstrate that a good marriage was as important as a good legacy, and that those great proprietors who were entitled to use armorial bearings, were not separated from other non-titled proprietors by any thick walls of caste. The Sheriffes semi-aristocratic neighbours the Gooches of Benacre had gained immeasurable wealth by marrying the heiress of a small deer park belonging to an insignificant manor in the Midlands village of ‘Brummagem’. This rapidly developed as the commercial centre of Birmingham and assured the Gooches a steady flow of premium market property rentals. There were repeated connections between the Gooches and Sherrifes, which began before the latter arrived in Henstead (Table 10)

However, the society in which the Sheriffes were embedded was something more than a vast cluster of families, some born to property, others to poverty. It had its ranks and orders and its necessary degrees of subordination and authority. They were rarely called in question. Good order was deemed the foundation of all good things, of ‘politeness as well as peace and social relationships’, which when they were talked about were conceived of in moral as well

as social terms. Here, the two Reverend Thomas Sheriffes would have no difficulty in justifying their outstanding wealth and what they should do with it.

The Sheriffe family tree leads us steadily into the age of Victorianism, which was not a completely new phenomenon, but rather the culmination of tendencies going back well into the 18th century. By the time the Sheriffes had passed away from Henstead Hall and Southwold, Britain had a stratum of squalor existing alongside a ‘steam-nurtured, steam-borne and gas-enlightened race’. We can add to this the jostling between science and religion about the nature of the Universe, which eventually gave way to new debates about how society should rise to challenges of increasing dominance of mass production. The scientist Thomas Henry Huxley coined the word *agnostic* in 1870, and predicted that after a struggle of unknown duration, free thought would conquer and organise itself into one coherent system, embracing human life and the world in one harmonious whole. This old battlefield of ideas is now centred on the concept of ‘sustainable development’, which was even stirring in the minds of the group of Southwold’s townsfolk who, foreseeing the coming destructive impact of industrialism, took a lease on part of their cliff top green to preserve a valued vision of sea, sky and natural vegetation. Economics, biology and landscape management had to merge, and it is significant that these three branches of enquiry have roots in East Anglian Victorianism and its distinctive environment.

Robert Thomas Oliver Sheriffe sold his manor and estate of Henstead at Michaelmas 1894 to Robert H Inglis Palgrave. Inglis, as he was known, was the son of Francis Palgrave and his wife Elizabeth Turner, daughter of the Yarmouth banker Dawson Turner. Inglis’ brothers Francis, William and Reginald all became eminent scholars like himself. The Palgrave boys had a long association with this part of Suffolk. Although brought up in London, they would holiday with their very strict grandfather, Dawson Turner at the Bank House in Great Yarmouth. The boys would play in an upturned boat in his garden, probably wonder at their grandfather’s astounding art collection, and suffer the disciplines of being obliged to speak only Latin and French at meal times. Their grandfather packed the boys off to holiday in France, and instructed them to send him a note every day with their adventures described in French. Inglis went straight from Charterhouse at the age of 16 to join the business of Gurney & Co, the great Quaker banking family in Yarmouth. His maternal grandfather had been a partner in the bank, and Hudson Gurney, a family member, was a close friend of his father. Inglis himself subsequently became a partner, and married Sarah Maria Brightwen daughter of George Brightwen of Saffron Walden who was related to the Gurney family.

As a young boy Inglis was given a copy of *The Wealth of Nations* by his father, which, it is said, he treasured throughout his life. It certainly fostered an early interest in economics, which evolved and grew with his daily banking activities.

In 1870 he received the Statistical Society’s Taylor Prize for his essay on local taxation in Britain and Ireland. He published articles which dealt with statistical analysis of central banking, and the results are largely summed up in *Bank Rate and the Money Market* (1903), which was reviewed as, “a masterpiece of the art of making figures speak”.

In 1877 Inglis became financial editor of *The Economist*, eventually taking over the editorship, which he held until 1883. He also edited *The Banking Almanac* until his death, and for a time was editor of *The Bankers’ Magazine* to which he was a regular contributor after 1880. Inglis was also closely involved in bringing economics to bear on the public affairs of the nation. In 1882 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. His lasting monument is his *Dictionary of Political Economy*, which is one of the finest achievements of Victorian scholarship. He was knighted in 1909. Leading directly from Inglis Palgrave’s contribution to economic theory are various indices of community deprivation, which bring together data on income in relation to health, housing, education, and employment.

Sustainable development is now using a national index of multi-deprivation to target economic policy on the most deserving communities.

Through Inglis Palgrave, Henstead Hall was connected with a line of illustrious scholars and artists who had long flourished in this small corner of East Anglia. At the beginning of the 19th century this had centred on Dawson Turner and his Yarmouth household, which became a forum of science, economics and art. This think tank included important national innovators such as the water colourist William Cotman and William Jackson Hooker, the famous botanist and academic. Cotman brought landscape appreciation to the eyes of the nation and Hooker, who began life as a wild-flower collecting brewer in Halesworth, eventually stabilised an embryonic Kew Gardens with science, making possible its present role as a guardian of the world's diminishing botanical resources. It is difficult today to appreciate the importance and widespread influence that the Great Yarmouth group wielded, particularly as the borough entered the 21st century ranked fifth in the intensity of deprivation and 43rd in terms of its scale, with seven of its wards in the top 10% of the most deprived. In reality nothing has changed since the 1840s, when social cleavage was first attributed to the rapid rate of economic change. This carried the Sheriffes to their leisured affluence as 'the other nation'. Then it was the railways that were both a symbol and a cause, but the fundamental questions of social cleavage were the same as today's; the position of the individual in a new society, the relationship between different social groups and the fate of the nation, which then, as now, was itself broken up. The counterbalance for individuals in a fragmented world is a sense of place. The Sheriffes clearly had this in their attachment to the Suffolk -Norfolk borderlands. The Palgraves imbibed it through their childhood experiences in Yarmouth and its surroundings. Its final expression for the Sheriffes appears in the opening words of Harriet Sheriffe's will, where she states her wish to be buried in Uggeshall's churchyard, next to the rectory where she had lived for half a century.

6 Bibliography

Books

Munn, G. (2006) *Southwold: An Earthly Paradise*, Antique Collectors Club.

Wake, R. (1842) *Southwold and Its Vicinity*, Dalton.

Bottomley, A. F. Ed. (1883) *The Southwold Diary of James Maggs, 1818-1848*, Suffolk Record Society.

Bottomley, A. F. Ed. (1884) *The Southwold Diary of James Maggs, 1848-1876*, Suffolk Record Society.

Lawrence, R. (1990) *Southwold River*, Moxon.

Archive Materials

Extensive use has been made of records held in the Lowestoft Branch of the Suffolk County Record Office. Where wills of individuals are referred to they were consulted, either on-line from the National Archive, or from the Norfolk or Suffolk County Record Offices. The authors are particularly grateful for the generous help of the staff of Lowestoft County Record Office. The following documents were particularly useful in defining the history of the Sheriffe family:

Indenture 1866 - Harriet Sheriffe and John Crabtree 847/1. Indenture 1884 - Robert Thomas Oliver Sheriffe and George Edward Lake 1038/2/1. Will of Thomas Sheriffe of Diss gent 1669 - 93 Proctor GSO 166884. Will of Elizabeth Sheriffe widow 1702 - 367 Edwards GSO 166893. Will of Martha Sheriffe sp.1729 - 605 Rudd GSO 166905. Will of Susanna Sheriffe sp. 1735 - 138 Suckling MF RO 283/2 . Will of Abigail Sheriffe widow 1788 - 129 Littlewood GSO 0166931. Will of Sarah Sheriffe widow 1849 - 262 Womack GSO 166986. Will of Harriet sp 1870 - under £30,000. Declaration by Madeline E. Bagot Chester 1893; 1038/2/1 Wiseman and John Lewis son of her daughter Martha Lewis. 1038/2 Sheriffe Family. Papers contributed to Early Victorian Diss, Ed. N. Evans & Aspects of Diss History. Ed. N. Evans.