

The
MANOR of
COOMBE
or
COOMBE NEVILL





Coombe Hill Farmhouse

Plate I. External view of house (Surrey Comet).

THE MANOR OF COOMBE
OR
COOMBE NEVILL

in Kingston upon Thames

L. E. Gent.

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Note about this edition

The original document was scanned in by Colin Rodger for the Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society, using Optical Character Recognition and other software. The document produced in this way was subsequently reviewed by Patricia Smith. It is provided purely as an aid to research; the original document continues to be the definitive version.

All the articles in this document should be understood as work in progress, based on the information available to the authors at the time of writing. There may have been later reports providing further information, or even different conclusions.

Since this document was produced, Ian West and Steve Nelson recorded Coombe Vane in 2018.

Illustrations

Cover design by David Grant of KUTAS, based on an illustration in Pictorial World of 7 August 1880.

Plates

- 1 Frontispiece – Coombe Hill Farmhouse
- 2 Sketch map of Coombe Estate in 1837
- 3 Sketch map of part of Coombe Manor
Sketch map of Coombe House and grounds
- 4 Sale particulars of Coombe Manor (17th century)
- 5 Sketch map – Coombe Estate on modern street plan

The photograph in Plate 1 is by Surrey Comet (as printed in SAC LXIX) and is reproduced by permission.

Mr Gent's maps in Plates 2 and 5, based on 266/1/6a-b, and also Plate 4, are by permission of Dr D B Robinson, County Archivist for Surrey.

His maps in Plate 3, based on maps at Althorp, are by permission of the late Earl Spencer.

Foreword

Robin Kenward, MA, FSA

(President of Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society 1970-79)

Lionel Gent, the author of this Paper, was a founder member of KUTAS. He was a very hardworking Treasurer and Membership Secretary for eight years, until his death in May 1979. More than this, he stood for KUTAS to many people, as he always stood at the door at our meetings and greeted members by name.

He had always been interested in the past of Kingston, but it was only after his retirement that he was able to devote time to study and research. A project presented itself to him in 1969, when Coombe Hill Farmhouse was surveyed. He realized that to complete the work on the building, someone should investigate the documents known to be in Surrey Record Office concerning the Cambridge Estate. He found himself involved in research at last.

This Paper is a fine personal achievement. When Lionel began his work, there were few classes to instruct people how to set about local history research. He had to work by instinct and his own earlier training. He had spent much of his life as an industrial chemist and had learned to be meticulous over details and to be sure of his facts. He simply applied the standards of his chemistry to his local history, analysing documents and sifting facts. He became a relentless searcher, one document leading him on to another, visiting many different places for information. He found it rewarding work, crowned by the discovery of the lease at Althorp.

There is always work to be done in local history. The best possible tribute to Lionel's memory would be for others to be encouraged by his example to begin work themselves.

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Introduction

Coombe Hill Farmhouse, demolished in September 1969, was at that time in a very dilapidated condition, which nevertheless afforded an excellent opportunity for members of Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society to carry out a very detailed examination of the building before final destruction. The result of this survey appears in the report by Mr I J West in Surrey Archaeological Collections LXIX (1973).

It was thought that documentary evidence might exist to prove the accuracy of the survey estimate that the early part of the building should be dated about 1640-50 and this eventually proved to be the case. After several years of searching it became clear, from a lease of 1741, that the farmhouse was originally built by Charles Cockayne, Viscount Cullen, who owned the manor from 1626 to 1651.

During the research so much information was gathered concerning the manor of Coombe (without which it is doubtful whether the significance of the 1741 lease would have been grasped) that it was decided to gather the facts together in this account. There are unfortunately many gaps, but perhaps other documents may be unearthed in future to fill them.

Editor's note

The author intended at this point to add his acknowledgements for the help he had received during his researches.

In particular he often said how much he and Mrs Gent appreciated the kind interest shown by the late Earl Spencer, who himself looked out helpful documents from his family archives when they went to Althorp and who gave permission to use and quote from them.

Mr Francis James Dallett, University Archivist, University of Pennsylvania, USA, during a stay of several years at the American Museum at Bath, Somerset, carried out intensive researches into the history of his family, which included Hugh Pelling and William and John Rose. He kindly provided much of the information concerning them in Appendix 1, together with his references.

Miss M Gollancz, then Surrey County Archivist, first suggested to Mr Gent that he would find documents relating to Coombe Hill Farm in the County Record Office and he subsequently received much co-operation from her staff, from the staff of Kingston upon Thames Central Reference Library and Museum and New Malden Branch Library and from Miss Anne Daly (now Mrs McCormack), then Assistant Borough Archivist of Kingston upon Thames. He was also grateful to fellow members of KUTAS who read the draft upon which he based this Paper and to Ian West for help in preparing the sketch maps for publication.

Mrs Nora Gent kindly made her late husband's work available for publication by KUTAS and handed over all his notes and maps to Joan Wakeford for that purpose. Information which he had acquired after he had written the Paper and had intended to incorporate in a final version has been added to the text in square brackets.

Appendices 2 and 3 have been contributed by other members of the Society.

Chapter 1 – Maps and Names

Maps, especially those of the 17th and 18th centuries, are a very useful source of information and although they may not have the accuracy or detail of the Ordnance Surveys, yet they serve to show that certain towns, villages, gentlemen's houses and sometimes even farmhouses existed at the time the survey was carried out.

R A Skelton in Decorated Printed Maps, 15th to 19th Centuries, (1965) points out that frequently the maps were published under patronage and therefore tended to show the houses and parks of the nobility, rather than roads or streams, for they were not designed to help the traveller. Some cartographers would buy old printing blocks and, with a few changes, publish under their own names. The Surrey maps of John Norden (1607) and J Blaeu (1668) are similar in so many respects that the latter may well have been printed from altered blocks of the former. Fortunately both show Combe Nevill with the symbol representing "a gentleman's house", so that it can be assumed that the Manor House existed at least as early as 1607. The Surrey maps of J Sellar (c 1680) and J Sennex (1729) show both Combe Nevill (called "Comb House, Harvey Esq" in the Sennex map) and also Combe Farm and moreover they are shown in the same positions relative to each other as later in the Ordnance Survey maps.

By far the most useful map of Coombe is the Estate Map of 1837 (Plate 2) measuring 36 inches by 24 inches and annexed to the conveyance of the Manor to the Duke of Cambridge by Earl Spencer (266/1/6 a-b). It shows the positions and boundaries of the Manor House and its grounds, the three farmhouses and the mansions of William Ogle Hunt and Samuel Smith, and the schedule attached gives the acreage of each holding. The map even shows the strip of land sold by Earl Spencer to the London and Southampton Railway Co for the line running at that time from Vauxhall to Woking, officially opened in 1838.

Two other maps (on which the sketch maps in Plate 3 are based) are undated but provide useful information. They are in Earl Spencer's Muniment Room at Althorp in Northamptonshire and the first is entitled "The Manor of Coomb Nevil in the County of Surrey". It probably dates from around 1753, when Frances Harvey and Mary Breton sold the manor, and it shows the position of the Manor House and of a farmhouse on its west side, perhaps a hundred yards away. Adjacent to the farmhouse, and also on the west, are shown three closes of land named as Over Hempstall, Lower Hempstall and Dickerage (these are of great importance in proving the approximate date of the farmhouse building). On the north side of a road now known as Coombe Lane West are three closes of land called Bakers Coppice, with what is clearly a plan of another farmhouse, which can be identified with Robin Hood Farm. The six closes named are important as they all occur in the will of John Rowle, als. Stanton, in 1602 (see Appendix 1).

The second of the two Althorp maps is titled "Comb House and grounds" and shows the Manor House and grounds and two pieces of land, one just below Combe House grounds and the other opposite on the east side of what is now Traps Lane. Both pieces are called "part of Mrs Traps" on the map, which was thus probably made after 1757, when the Poor Rate book (KG3/2/8) first shows a Madam Trap as occupier of a house and garden somewhere in the vicinity. The map may well be connected with the rebuilding of the Manor House at this time. No information has yet been found on the identity of Madam Trap or the precise situation of her house.

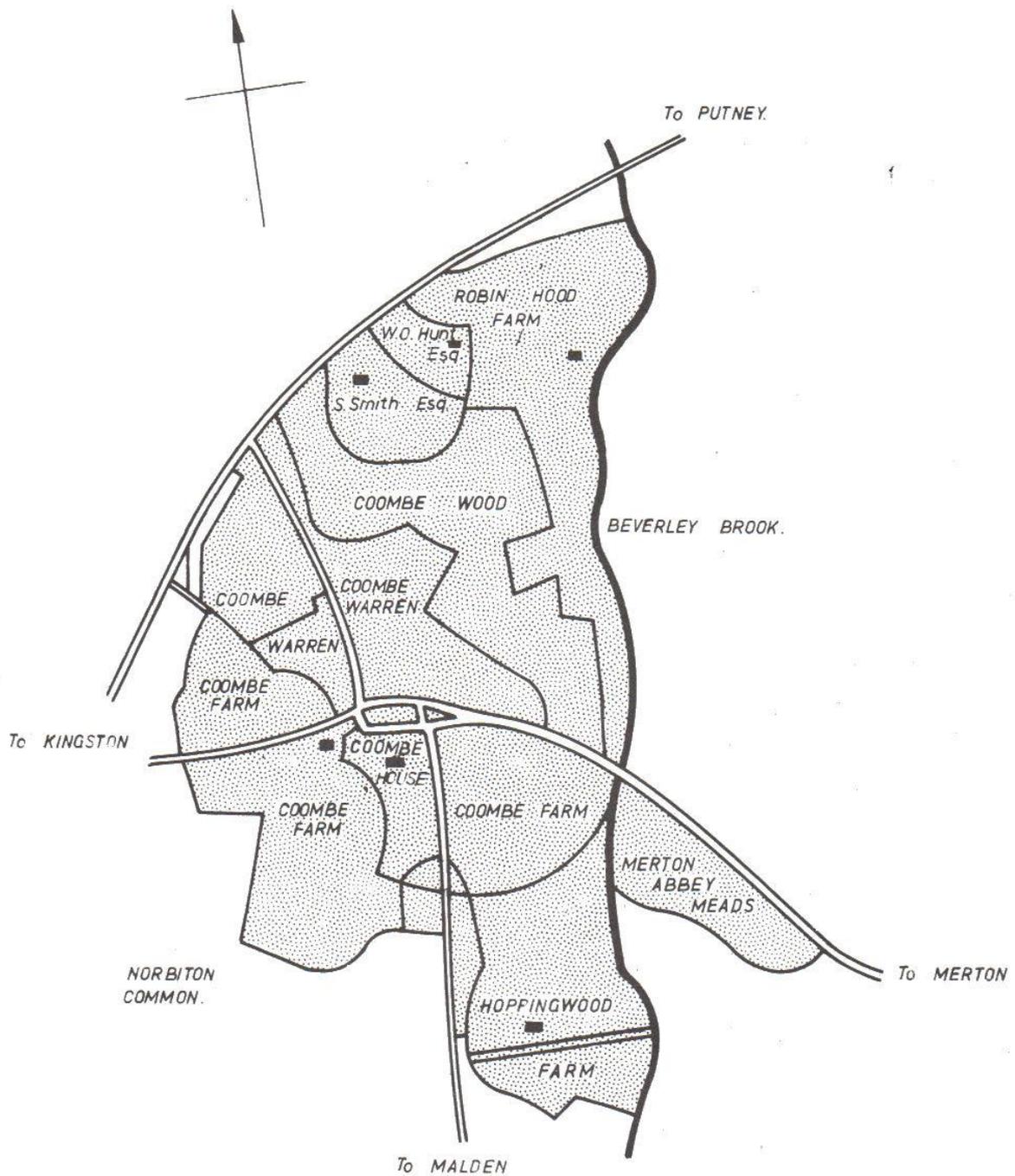
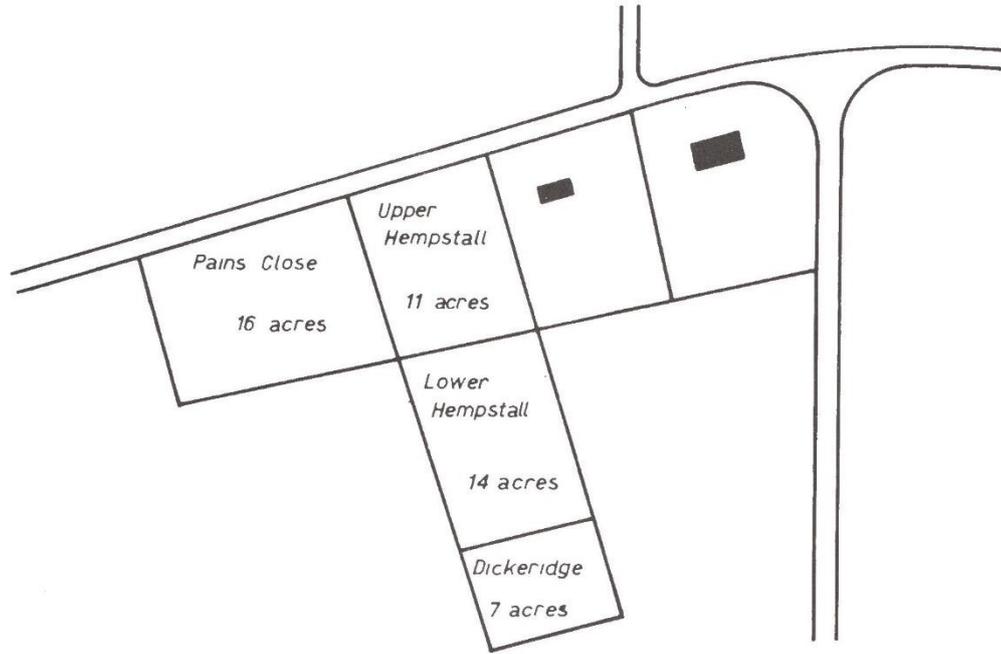


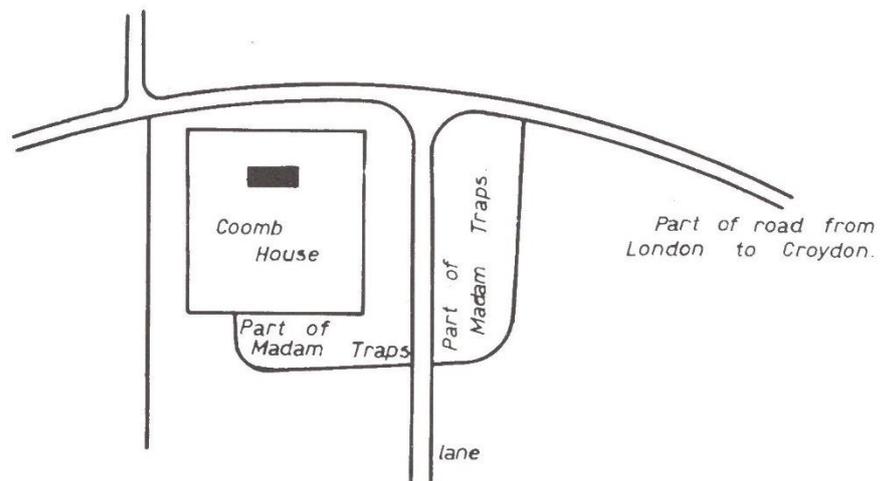
Plate 2

The Coombe Estate in 1837

(based on map annexed to conveyance of 25.4.1837 SRO 266/I/6)



SKETCH FROM UNDATED MAP "THE MANOR OF COOMB NEVILL IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY"
(Althorp muniment room).



SKETCH FROM UNDATED MAP "COOMB HOUSE AND GROUNDS"
(Althorp muniment room)

Plate 3

Until about 1860, when the estate was still sparsely populated and the names of owners or tenants would be well known to local people, the name of a house or farm was of little consequence. The name of the manor itself had variant spellings over the centuries – Come, Comb, Combe, Coomb and finally Coombe. Sometimes Nevill would be added to any of the forms (see Appendix 3). Sometimes the house was described as Manor House, especially on 17th century maps. Usually after 1750 it was named Coomb(e) House. Occasionally in the 19th century Coombe House, and also the later Kenry House, were called Coombe Wood.

There are instances, and it seems right that they should now be recorded before they are forgotten, where houses or farms have disappeared as a result of building development and then later the old name has been resurrected and applied to a property perhaps a mile away.

Hoppingwood Farm until about 1911 was on the south side of Coombe Lane West and its farmhouse was approximately in the region of the present Rosebery Avenue and Orchard Avenue. Today the name has been taken by a building on what seems to have been formerly the site of the Victorian Coombe Wood Farm on the north side of Coombe Lane West, where it joins the fly-over across Kingston By-pass and it is now neither a farm nor a farmhouse, but the offices of a firm of Chartered Architects.

The name Coombe Cottage is given on the 1837 Estate Map to part of Coombe Farmhouse, but on the 1865 Ordnance Survey map it is attached to what was evidently a later building on the north side of Coombe Lane West, to the west of Coombe Bridge (on the 1837 map called Merton Bridge). The bridge has now disappeared and the Beverley Brook has been diverted into a culvert to allow the construction of the flyover. The nearest building now is Coombe Warren (Rediffusion Ltd).

Perhaps the most astonishing example of the misapplication of a name is the new office block on the south side of New Malden Railway Station and on the corner of Dukes Avenue, which has taken the name of Coombe House and is nearly a mile away from the original.

Coombe Lane West (the A238 to Merton) has at various times been called Martin (= Merton) Lane, Combe Lane and also the road from Kingston to Croydon.

Chapter 2 – The Manor and the Lords of the Manor

The manor of Coombe (Nevill) was comparatively small. In 1651 when it was bought from Viscount Cullen by trustees for Daniel Harvey, it comprised 300 acres each of arable and pasture, 60a of meadow, 350a of woodland, 100a furze and heath – a total area of 1110a (PRO,CP W 601). By 1837, when the estate was sold to the Duke of Cambridge, it was made up of 500a arable, 550a rough pasture and woods, 250a meadow, or about 1300 acres in all (266/1/6 a-b). [As only about 32a had been enclosed from the waste, the difference indicates that additional land had been acquired between the two dates. Part (perhaps about 40a) was the land at Amy Downs bought by Sir Daniel Harvey (see Chapter 6), the rest may have been Hoppingwood Farm (about 170a in 1837, excluding enclosures recently made, and excluding Merton Abbey Meads – see Chapter 4). The farm was on the borders of Coombe but within the manor of Kingston (KF 1/6/2; QS6/4/41) and belonged to Earl Spencer by 1780 (QS6/7).]

A study of the many historians, among them Anderson (1818), Biden (1852) and Lysons (1792), who have included an account of the manor in their histories of Kingston or Surrey, reveals that Thomas Vincent (knighted in 1601), who is said to have built the manor house, acquired Coombe manor from Queen Elizabeth in 1579, in exchange for his manor of Bernack, Northants, which he gave up to the Cecils. He also bought Barwell in Hook (VCH Surrey 3 502) and he had become entitled to Stoke d'Abernon in right of his wife. According to Kingston Churchwardens' Accounts (quoted by Lysons 1 237) 3s 4d was laid out in 1602 "when the Queen removed from Sir Thomas Vincent's".

His son Sir Francis Vincent (later Viscount d'Abernon) sold Coombe manor in 1608 to the wealthy merchant William Cockayne (knighted in 1616) (VCH Surrey 3 502), Lord Mayor of London in 1619 and one of the founders of the city of Londonderry. [Sir William died in 1626 at his manor house at Coombe and was buried in St Paul's Cathedral. His widow Mary remarried in 1630 and became Countess of Dover (DNB). She lived at Coombe at any rate until 1633 (KG5/2/1) and gave an annuity of £5 4s payable out of her land in Southwark, to be distributed in penny loaves to the poor of Kingston every Sunday (VCH Surrey 3 514).] Sir William's son Charles, Viscount Cullen (1603-1661), who is said to have lost over £50,000 through his loyalty to Charles I, had to sell Coombe to Daniel Harvey's trustees (VCH Surrey 3 502).

From this time there is ample documentary evidence of changes of ownership of the manor and they can be summarised as follows:-

- 1651 Daniel Harvey (knighted 1660)
- 1672 Edward Harvey (son of Sir Daniel)
- 1736 Michael Harvey (son of Edward)
- 1748 Frances Harvey and Mary Breton (co-heirs of Michael) 1753 John Spencer (later first Earl Spencer)
- 1783 George John, second Earl Spencer
- 1834 John Charles, third do.
- 1837 HRH Prince Adolphus Frederick, first Duke of Cambridge.

It is doubtful if it is correct to refer to the manor after 1837. The Duke of Cambridge immediately began buying land just outside the manor. It is then called the Cambridge Estate and later, when it was being sold for building development, the Coombe Estate. Its later owners were:-

- 1850 HRH George, 2nd Duke of Cambridge
- 1904 Rear Admiral Sir Adolphus and Col. Sir Augustus FitzGeorge (sons of the 2nd Duke's morganatic marriage)
- 1922 Col. Sir Augustus FitzGeorge, the surviving brother.

The estate appears to have remained intact (apart from the sale of land to the London and Southwestern Railway Co in 1868 for the line from New Malden to Kingston) until about 1917. At this time Newlands Farm (56 acres) was sold to the Robin Hood Engineering Works Ltd. Thereafter the sales of land accelerated until the manor and the Cambridge Estate ceased to exist in the early 1930s.

Chapter 3 – The Manor Houses

John Aubrey in his Perambulation of Surrey compiled between 1673 and 1692, says “In this Parish of Kingston is Combe-House, call’d Combe Nevill (the Earl of Warwick’s) [See Appendix 3] with a Park, a fair House looking to the South, not seen from the Roads: This present House was built by Sir --- Vincent: Then Sir William Cockayne had it. Now the Heir of Sir Daniel Harvey”. An early reference to the house is in Kingston Parish Register, which records the baptism of “John Roberts of Combe House” on February 15 1658/9.

All available information suggests that this house was on the corner of Coombe Lane West where it joins Traps Lane. The position was well chosen, just below the crest of the hill, facing south and sheltered on the north by Coombe Woods. Abundant uncontaminated spring water was available and waste disposal presented few problems, compared with the low-lying land of Kingston. It was within easy riding distance of the City of London and Westminster and, if the roads were too bad, there was the river Thames as an alternative.

Two documents (61/5/35-36), which seem to be the 17th century equivalent of a modern estate agent’s sale particulars, give full details of the manor house and estate. They date from before 1679. The earlier (Plate 4) may relate to the sale by Viscount Cullen in 1651, the later to a mortgage, perhaps to raise the portions of £5000 each for Sir Daniel Harvey’s two daughters under his will. The younger of them reached the qualifying age of 18 in 1679.

The two documents, both headed “Perticulare of Come Nevill”, indicate that it was a large mansion house, brick built, with laundry, brewhouse, dairy, slaughterhouse, granaries, barns and stables (one for saddle and the other for cart horses). All were “bilt of brick” and the whole was enclosed with high brick walls. At present two sections of old wall remain, to a height varying between eight and twelve feet. One section in Traps Lane begins at FitzGeorge Avenue and continues southwards to Neville Avenue. The other runs from the north end of Traps Lane along FitzGeorge Avenue at right angles to the first section, both now having gaps in the wall to allow access to the houses behind. Both walls have obviously been repaired and patched many times in the past, yet there is still evidence of Tudor bricks in several of the lower courses.

Thomas Vincent’s manor house, built in the last quarter of the 16th century, must have been an early (for this neighbourhood) example of a private house built in brick. It was probably one of the largest houses in the Hundred of Kingston, for Sir Daniel Harvey was assessed for 46 hearths in the Hearth Tax of 1664 and his widow for 45 hearths in 1674. Although this would no doubt include laundry, brewhouse etc, it compares with the 23 hearths of Richard Lant’s Norbiton Place and the mere 13 of Norbiton Hall (PRO E179/188/481 and 496).

The Harveys evidently lived at the house until the death of Michael Harvey in 1748, when it was let for a short period to the Countess of Orford, whose husband (Sir Robert Walpole’s son) was Ranger of Richmond Park. [Coombe Manor was bought in 1753 by the trustees of the will of Sarah, the famous Duchess of Marlborough, as an investment of part of her residuary estate, settled on her great grandson John, later first Earl Spencer, and his issue in tail male (SRO 133). He had inherited the manor of Wimbledon under her will and lived there in the mansion which she had rebuilt.] No occupants of Coombe manor house are shown in the Kingston Poor Rate books (KG3/2/8) from 1754 till 1764 and according to Lysons it was being rebuilt. Meanwhile John Spencer esq was assessed only on the woods and lands.

The new manor house (the garden front of which is shown on the cover) was let to various tenants, generally for short periods. Most of them were MPs or peers, for whom Westminster was conveniently accessible from Coombe. From 1765 to 1829 (according to Kingston Poor Rate and Land Tax books – KG3/2/9-48 and QS6/7) they were Lord Grosvenor, Richard Vernon esq, the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Rockingham (Prime Minister 1765-66 and again in 1782), the Hon Wilbraham Tollemache, Richard Dawkins and Lord Hawkesbury (later Lord Liverpool).

The Hon Wilbraham Tollemache (1739-1821) was the second son of Lionel, fourth Earl of Dysart (of Ham House, Petersham) and succeeded to the title in 1799. He was a cousin of the first Earl Spencer, then the owner of the manor house.

Robert Banks Jenkinson (1770-1828) was the son of Charles Jenkinson, who was created Lord Hawkesbury in 1786 and first Earl of Liverpool in 1706. Robert succeeded as second earl on his father's death in 1808. He was Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827 and died at Coombe House in 1828, survived by his second wife Mary. She lived for a further eighteen years, died at Norbiton Hall and was buried in Kingston Church. The marble statue by Chantry in the church, however, is a memorial to the earl's first wife, Louisa Theodosia.

Lord Hawkesbury was granted a lease of the house and grounds (but not of the whole manor, as has sometimes been stated) by the second Earl Spencer for the lives of Lord and Lady Hawkesbury at a rent of £225 per annum. The counterpart of the lease dated 9 July 1805, found in the Muniment Room at Althorp, mention that the house was in the occupation "heretofore of Richard Dawkins and the Earl of Dysart".

[The Rev Dr George Biber was the next occupant. He appears in the Register of Electors from 1835 and 1842, qualified as a lessee for years and living at what was then called Coombe Wood House (i e Coombe House itself). Dr Biber (1801-1874) was a German scholar who had taken part in the struggle for German unity, then taken up academic work in Switzerland and Italy and had later come to Britain, where he spent the rest of his life and wrote much on church matters. He ran a flourishing classical school at Hampstead before taking Coombe House, where he had a boarding school. Like many schoolmasters of the time, he was also a clergyman, at first curate of Ham, incharge of the new church of St John at Kingston Vale, then for thirty years from 1842 vicar of Holy Trinity, Roehampton (DNB). At the 1841 Census (copy on microfilm at Kingston Central Reference Library) there were no fewer than 41 people living in Coombe House. Three were described as tutors, but the Irish doctor, a solicitor and others shown as "independent" may also have been concerned with the 27 pupils (boys mostly in their teens, though their ages ranged from 7 to 23).]

Dr Biber was followed at Coombe House by John Sim, who is on the Register of Electors as tenant from 1847 to 1863. Probably John Coysgarne Sim carried on his tenancy, for he was granted a new lease for 28 years from 29 September 1866 (266/16/1) of Coombe Mansion with 46a of land, of which the house and grounds covered no less than 39a. The Duke of Cambridge as lessor reserved certain hunting and shooting rights. This lease was later held by Mr B F MacGeagh and the Pictorial World in its issue of 7 August 1880 described with sketches his Hydropathic Establishment there. This was a luxurious sanatorium with Turkish baths (266/16/13). The lease was assigned in 1887 to Capt Edward Atkinson.

In 1893 the Duke of Cambridge granted a 21 year lease of Coombe House at a rental of £550 to William J Compton, who continued there until 1902 (2 66/17/5). He was followed by Carl von Siemens to 1909 and then Frederick Stark Pearson to 1915. Mrs Evelyn St George was granted a 21 year lease on 11 August 1916 by the FitzGeorge brothers at a rental of £600, increasing to £700, and she remained in occupation until 1931 (264418/76). Shortly afterwards the property came into the hands of building developers and was conveyed on 23 December 1931 by Higgs and Hill to J Gerrard and Sons Ltd (266/18/65).

An advertisement in the Surrey Comet of 10 June 1933 heralded the end of Coombe House and its eventual demolition; -

“Coombe House, Coombe Lane, Kingston Hill.

(Prior to Demolition of the Mansion). The whole of the fixtures and fittings to be sold by auction in 500 lots by Norbury Smith & Co on Wed. June 21st 1933 at 12 o'clock noon”.

A Particulars of the manner of Coombe Nevell in
 The County of Surrey neare Kinson upon
 Theames, which cost purchase and building
 £24000

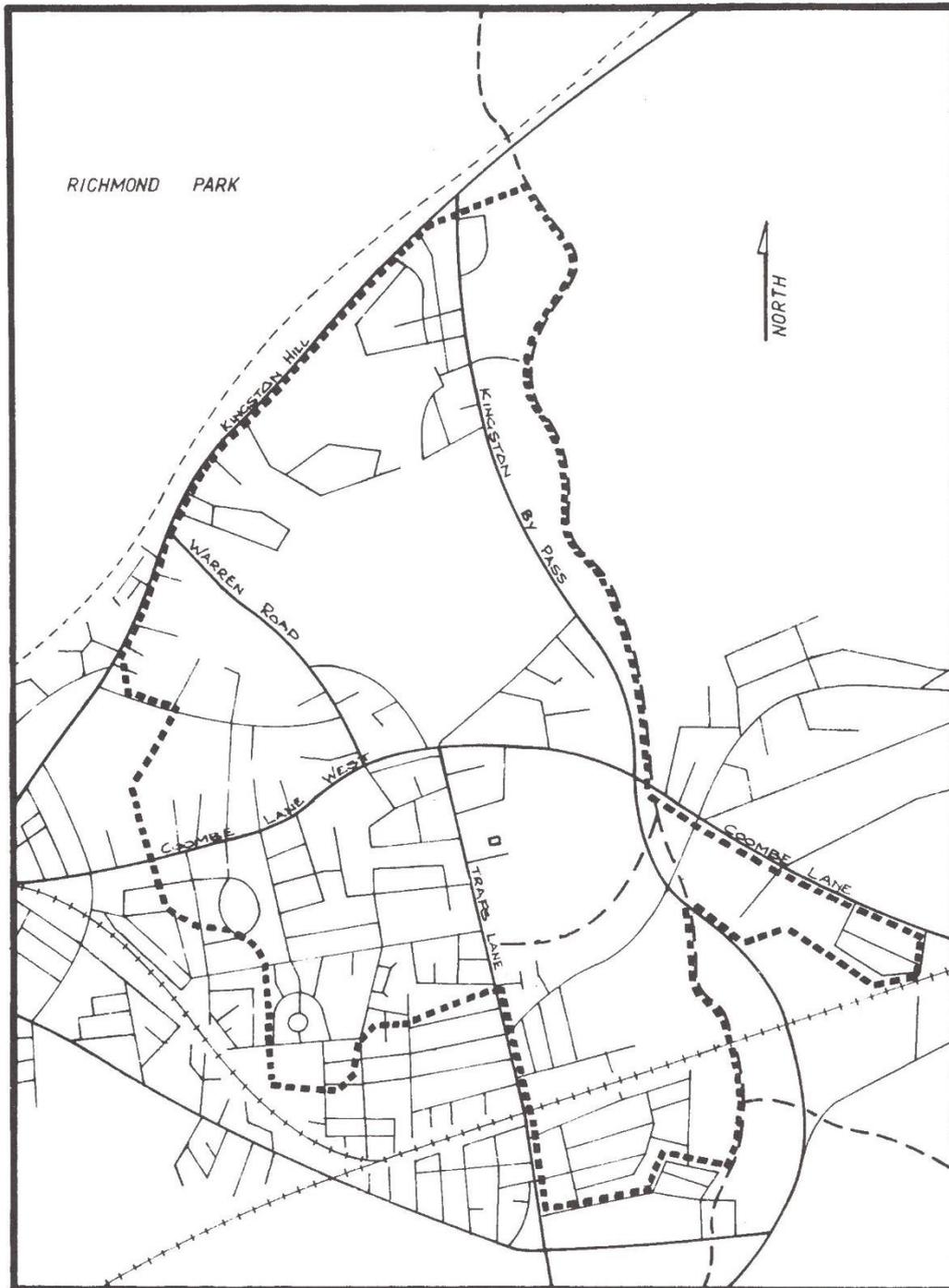
A large mansion house with severall large court yards all well
 planted with fruit, and kept very fine, Gardens and all sorts of
 outhouses belonging to the house, as brewhouse, with all brewing
 vessels in itt, washhouse with a drying ~~yard~~ yard belonging to itt,
 dairy, Landry, and slaughterhouse, and other convenient rooms, a dovecot
 house, well stocked, Grainery, barnes, stables, dogghennell, with a
 faire yard belonging to itt, and a little house for the huntsman
 and severall other convenient outhouses proper for soe great a
 house, all in as good repairs as possible, and kept very fine, all built
 with brick, and all the severall yards and gardens walled in, with
 brick walls distinctly by themselves, and all inclosed borders with
 a faire brick wall the house extremely well ~~watered~~
 water, and an fishhouse belonging to itt

A park well parted in, wherin are severall fishponds, a large
 downe before the house, wherin is a large sheep walk and a
 large coney warren, but destroyed of late, to plough the ground
 but now begun to be stocked againe, all parted in with a park
 fit for a park, when stocked, with ^{the} rabbits, annually sold for 100
 borders what was spent and given away

The house, woods, and warren, and park, and lands in hand reasonably
 worth £ annuum - - - - - £550:00:00
 The land lett wher on is a good ferme house built
 of brick - - - - - £350:00:00

All the woods, and grounds are now parted in with a park pale soe
 that the park may be extended to what extent you please by
 pulling downe the partition pale

900:00:00



ROADS 
 RAILWAY 
 STREAM 
 ESTATE BOUNDARY 

0 0.5 1mile

Plate 5 The Coombe Estate, shown on modern street plan

Chapter 4 – The Farms

Coombe Hill Farm

The later of the two documents headed “Particulare of Come Nevill” discussed in Chapter 3, dating probably from the 1670s, refers to three farms on the estate. The “farme Lett to Mr King with brick house by Lease” at £100 per annum can be identified with the farm of Edward King (who according to Kingston Parish Register died in 1693) and it can be shown that it was known at different times as Stantons Farm, Coomb Farm and finally Coombe Hill Farm.

The farm is not identifiable in the Hearth Tax of 1664, but Edward King, described as yeoman, of Combe, was fined for failing to appear before the Court Leet and Baron of Kingston in 1667 (KF12/9) and for failing to clear his ditches in Combe Lane in 1668 (KF1/2/10/1). He appears in the Hearth Tax return for 1674 (PRO E179/188/496) with four hearths (this agrees with Mr I J West’s conclusions from his pre-demolition survey of 1969). Edward King is assessed to various taxes and rates in 1680, 1683 and 1684 (KD8/2/1, KH1/1/3 and KG4/1/2) and again in 1689 (KH1/1/4). After his death in 1693 his widow Barbara evidently occupied the farm for some years, though the last surviving Poor Rate assessment for this period is for 1702 (KG3/2/5). In the next available assessments, for 1724 and 1737 (KG3/2/6-7) George King, presumably their son, is rated for his house and land.

Coombe Nevill, like other parts of Kingston Hundred, had to send a constable to the court leet and it appears that for almost the whole period from 1691 to 1750 the farmer of this farm was the constable (KF1/1/41-88). The exception is the years 1705 to 1714, when Vincent Arnold, the warrener of Coombe, performed this duty, perhaps because Mrs King was then the farmer.

Documents relating to the time when the King family held the farm do not name it. When the full series of Kingston Poor Rate assessments begins in 1744 the farmer is Hugh Pelling, until 1746 when he is followed by William Rose until 1769 and then by his son John Rose (according to Land Tax records until 1808). Counterparts of three leases granted successively to these three tenants are in the Muniment Room at Althorp and together they prove that the farm house was built between the years 1626 and 1651 and help to link Stantons Farm with the change of name to Coombe Farm by 1829. The question of the origin of the name Stantons Farm is dealt with in Appendix 1.

The first of these leases is dated 16 September 1741 and is from Michael Harvey esq (then owner of the manor) to Hugh Pelling, gentleman, of

“All that Messuage Tenement and Farm heretofore erected and built by the Right Honourable Charles Lord Cockayne Viscount now called or known by the name of Stantons Farm” and

“Two other closes or enclosed grounds called Paines Close or Comb Piece All those two closes or enclosed ground called the Hop Ground adjoining the said Stantons Farm on the west part”.

The lease was to expire at Michaelmas 1761. The position of these closes is shown on the estate map at Althorp referred to on Plate 3.

Viscount Cullen owned the manor from 1626, to 1651, [but the Countess of Dover was taxed on it, in 1633 (KG5/2/1). He married Lady Mary O'Brien, co-heiress of the fifth Earl of Thomond, and was created Viscount Cullen, Co. Tipperary, on 11 August 1642. It may be that he occupied the manor house himself after his marriage and built the farmhouse between 1642 and 1651.]

The second lease is that of 6 June 1763 by which Viscount Spencer granted to William Rose for 19 years from Michaelmas 1763 "all that messuage or farmhouse now late or heretofore called or known by the name of Stantons Farm heretofore in the tenure of Hugh Pelling or his undertenants and now in the occupation of William Rose or his undertenants". The rent was £93 per annum clear of all taxes except Land Tax. In fact William Rose according to the Poor Rate books was in occupation from about 1745, the reason being explained in Appendix 1 dealing with the Rose family.

The third lease was granted to John Rose, son of William, by the Right Honourable Earl Spencer and ran from the expiry of the previous term at Michaelmas 1782 for 31 years. This lease, dated 2 January 1785, names the farm as Stantons Farm and the rent as £113 per annum. A fire may have occurred at the farmhouse during John Rose's tenancy. In documents (266/7/8-9) relating to the purchase in 1852 by HRH the Duke of Cambridge of 11a of land which had been left to Thomas Rose on the death of his father John Rose in 1827, is a Statutory Declaration made on 22 March 1852 by a Mrs Gutteridge, then aged 69. She stated that "she remembers in June 1803, when she was living in the service of John Rose, that a destructive fire happened at the dwelling house of the said John Rose who then resided at Coome in the parish of Kingston. She had heard that books, papers and documents belonging to the said John Rose were destroyed".

According to the Land Tax assessments (QS 6/7) Francis Garner began his long period as the farmer in 1808. At this time the farm is referred to in documents as Coombe Farm. On 14 October 1829 Earl Spencer mortgaged to Sir William Knighton (266/1/4) the Mansion House and grounds and the three farms, including "Combe Farm messuage or dwelling house buildings Francis Garner tenant year to year. 310 acres".

Eight years later when the estate was purchased by the first Duke of Cambridge, the conveyance included the excellent estate map and schedule of the lands, referred to in Chapter 1. Francis Garner is the tenant, but the size of Combe Farm has been increased to 535a by enclosing land from Coombe Warren. Biden, published in 1852, says "The summits of the hills are gravelly and poor; but not incapable of cultivation; for a portion of the worst part, at the top of Combe Hill has been, within the last few years very successfully brought into cultivation by Mr Garner, and proves that skill and energy alone are required to redeem" other unproductive land in Kingston.

The Register of Electors shows that Francis Garner, with the qualification of "Land as occupier", remained at Combe Farm until 1857, but he evidently retired in the following year, as he is entered for a "freehold house in the Fairfield, Kingston" is succeeded at Combe Farm by James Page (KG3/2/49), then Jas B Page, who obtained a lease in June 1897 of both Coombe Farm and Coombelane Farm for 21 years at a rental of £650 per annum. Coombe Farm had then an area of 399a and this reduction is almost certainly due to the fact that from 1864 to at any rate 1883 leases of land in Coombe Warren, near the present George and Warren Roads, had been granted to many people who then built large houses with gardens of several acres.

Schedule 1 to the 1897 lease includes: -

“Part of Farm House Homestead and Garden 2 acres
Part of Farm House and Garden 1 acre”.

The explanation is to be found in Phillipson’s Directory for 1884, where the name of Lord Archibald Campbell is bracketed with James Page as the occupants of the farmhouse. In Kelly’s Directory for 1895 Lord Archibald is shown as living at Coombe Hill Farm and James B Page as living in the other part, called Coombe Farm, and farming the land. This arrangement, according to the directories, continued until 1905, when Dunbar Kelly took over the farm until 1915. It is assumed that James B Page died about 1905, as Mrs Page continued to live at the farmhouse until 1912, Lord Archibald remaining in the other part until 1914 and Lady Campbell until 1923.

The later tenants may be summarized as follows: -

Coombe Farmhouse

1905-12	Mrs Page	1922-25	H L Williams
1916-19	Alex. Patton	1927-31	John Howell
1917-21	No record	1932-35	Mrs Howell

Coombe Farm

1905-15	Dunbar Kelly	1925-27	A R Mitchell
1916-19	W M Edwards	1928-33	E J Newman
1921- ?	John Manser		

There is no mention of Coombe Farm after 1933, which implies that the land had passed into the hands of developers who were in process of building the large housing estates of the district. After 1935 Coombe Farmhouse also disappears from the directories and the whole farmhouse, with the small amount of land left to it, is then called Coombe Hill Farm, where it seems that for a short time small scale chicken and pig farming was carried on.

Coombe Hill Farm

1915-23	Lady Campbell	1941-47	No record
1924-26	Mrs Parsons	1948-51	Hedley Cheshire
1927-30	Maj Gen Sir G Boyd	1954-55	Charles A Pyne
1931-34	W H Barribel	1956-62	F R Warner
1935-37	B C Newman	1963-65	No record
1938-40	Mrs C Harding	1966-68	Daniel O’Brien

In 1969 the farmhouse was demolished. On its site now stands a fine new school called Coombe Hill Junior and Infants School.

Robin Hood Farm

This farm probably ceased to exist about the year 1937. It had been bisected, north to south approximately, by the new Kingston By-pass in the early 1930s and at its northern end the housing estate of Kingston Vale was built. The farmhouse, which once stood in the area now bounded by Bowness Crescent, Keswick Avenue, part of Robin Hood Lane and Robin Hood Way (the A3), cannot be traced in the directories after 1936.

The Kingston Poor Rate book for 1737 (KG3/2/7) shows Joseph Stedwell as the occupant and this is the earliest positive evidence of the existence of the farm. However, the “Perticulare of Come Nevill” of the 1670s, already mentioned (61/5/36) refers to leases of two farms, one at £100 per annum clearly the later Coombe Farm, the other let to Mr Hambleton at £110. [The Hambletons at this time were butchers, which in Kingston meant also graziers. The butchers often lived in the town but rented pastures in different parts of the neighbourhood. Robin Hood Farm was mainly a long narrow strip, largely alluvial, beside the Beverley Brook and must have been pasture land for cattle. It seems likely that Mr Hambleton’s farm at Coombe in the 17th century was the predecessor of Robin Hood Farm.]

That name occurs on a map of 1777 by John Andrews, to be seen at the John Evelyn Society Museum, Wimbledon. In the Althorp Muniment Room is the counterpart of a 12 year lease of Robin Hood Farm, granted on 10 November 1792 by Earl Spencer to Mr George Selby. The Land Tax books from 1828 to 1832 also name the farm.

It is not known when the farmhouse was built. A house is not mentioned in the 1737 rate book, but in 1753, when the Spencer trustees took over the estate, the rateable went up from £50 to £60 and it may be that a house was built at this time. The Althorp map of the manor (see Plate 3) shows three closes of 8a, 5a and 9a, collectively called Baker’s Coppice, with a farmhouse and buildings in the position occupied by Robin Hood Farmhouse. The map probably dates from the 1750s. [It is of interest that on the 1837 map, near the homestead and the two Home Closes (of about 9a each) is a close of 7a called Sawpit Field (by that time arable). The word “coppice” and the field-name probably indicate that some land was cleared of trees to make or extend this farm between the slopes of Coombe Wood and the meadows by the Beverley Brook. By the 1830s it was a farm of over 190a, of which 129a, presumably the cleared land, was arable and 59a meadow.]

It seems from local directories that from about 1913 the farm house was occupied by the farmer and others, with the principal part used as a gentleman’s residence. The occupiers, with approximate dates, were as follows: -

Robin Hood Farm

1737-47	Joseph Stedwell	1798-1801	Nathaniel Hodges
1748-51	James Spooner	1802-1804	Clarke & White
1752-56	Mr Chapman	1805-1832	Wm Patterson
1757-69	Mr Martin	1843-1840	John Pickering
1777-82	Joseph Bradshaw	1838	Col Thos Wemyss
1783-88	Charles B Lane	1851	H L Patterson
1789-94	George Selby	1866-1904	Gen T H Clifton
1795-97	Jeremiah Howard	1906-1907	Geo Wright
		1908-1909	Geo Mitchell
		1910-1913	Gavin Mitchell

The Farmhouse

1913-18	Maj W Fox Pitt
1921-22	Lady Sybil de Vere
1923-31	Brassey Maj Sir A Sinclair
1933-37	Adrian Pritchard

The Farm

1913-1930	Gavin Mitchell (dairy farmer)
1931-1933	John Mitchell

The house was bought from Col Sir A C F FitzGeorge in 1924 by Sir Archibald Sinclair, later well-known as leader of the Liberal Party and a member of Mr. Churchill's wartime government.

Hoppingwood Farm

Rocque's map of Surrey (1762) seems to be the first to show the farm with a name, Hopping Farm, but his map of ten miles round London (1745) shows farm buildings, with no name, on the same site, which is also the site of the farm on the 1837 Estate Map. [The name "hoppinge" is however of much older origin. It occurs in the bounds of Merton, near where they meet those of Wimbledon and the Beverley Brook, in a charter of the year 967. It has been suggested that it may be the old name for the flat land on either side of the river there, perhaps land where hops grew wild (Place Names of Surrey p 62 and p 25, n).] (and see App. 1)

The farm is first traced in Kingston Poor Rate books as Handfords Farm in 1724 (KG3/2/6). In 1829 it was a farm of 196a and there was a separate piece of 67a on the other side of the Beverley Brook, called Merton Abbey Meads, with a different tenant. By 1837 Hoppingwood Farm was 255a, about equally divided between meadow and arable and it included Merton Abbey Meads. The Merton Land Tax books from 1780 show Earl Spencer as owner of Merton Abbey Meads, but it is not known when they were acquired by the owners of Coombe. The tenants of the Meads were Thomas Watney (1780-1803) and Matthew Watney until 1831, when this land was let to the tenant of Hoppingwood Farm, Richard Chaundy.

The farm was bisected by the railway opened in 1838 and it was the first of the three farms to disappear. It is not traceable in local records after 1911. A large part of it is now taken up by Malden Golf Course, Malden Wanderers Cricket Club and Beverley Park. The remainder, including Merton Abbey Meads, is occupied by houses. The approximate site of the farmhouse is bounded by Hoppingwood, Orchard, Alric and Cambridge Avenues (Rocque's 1745 map shows an orchard adjoining the farm).

Summary of Occupants of Hoppingwood Farm

1724	Handfords Farm
1737	Wm Handfords Farm, now Crew
1744	Mr Chinnor
1749	Richard Isted
1770	Thomas Whittle
1805	Mrs Huccaby
1827	Richard Chaundy
1857	James Mitchell
1869	William Horlick
1895	Exors. do.
1899	Robert Horlick
1907-1911	Albert S Horlick

Other Farms on the Cambridge Estate

Several farms and pieces of land on the perimeter of the estate were bought by the first two Dukes of Cambridge. They were all relatively small and only Coombelane Farm is of any real importance for the purposes of this study.

Coombelane Farm

This farm is of interest as it serves to illustrate the confusion that can arise when the name of one property is taken by another.

In 1778 a handbill (181/15/18a) advertised the “Sale by Auction on 25th May 1778 at the Sun Inn Kingston of 6 closes of arable land lying under Combe House, estimated at 40 acres. Let on lease to Thomas Tucker for 21 years from 1762. Rent £50 a year”.

When later, in March 1839, (266/7/9) the Duke of Cambridge bought this farm from Thomas Dickins, the title documents included an “Abstract of Title of Thomas Dickins to freehold land and premises called Combe Farm Kingston on Thames” dated 11 January 1839 (266/3/8), from which some interesting details emerge. The farm had been purchased at the 1778 auction by Anthony Dickins from Thomas Page for £1380 and in 1790 he conveyed it to his youngest son Thomas, but “the Indentures were lost”. In 1837 Thomas sold to the Kingston Union 5a 1r 14p of the farmland, on which was built the Workhouse, which later formed part of Kingston Hospital (Report on the new Poor Law in the Kingston Union by William Sells. 1841). It is clear from this that although this farm was called Coombe Farm in 1790, its situation is not that of the Coombe Farm later known as Coombe Hill Farm.

Among the Cambridge Papers is a late 19th century plan of the Cambridge Estate (266/21/1), in the form of manuscript boundaries drawn on part of the first edition of the 6 inch Ordnance Survey map, with the dates of purchase and names of vendors of land bought by the Dukes of Cambridge. This farm is shown on the north side of Coombe Road and just to the west of the boundary of the old Coombe estate, with the name Coombelane Farm. When it was sold by Sir A C F FitzGeorge in 1932 it consisted of 50a with two cottages and farm buildings (266/20-1n).

Wanderings Farm

was purchased by the first Duke of Cambridge in August 1840 from Elizabeth Hopkins and Thomas Hall and then consisted of 69a with farmhouse, stables and outbuildings. It was formerly in the tenure of Anthony Harden, proprietor of the Griffin Inn, Kingston, from 1800 to 1824, then of C N Pallmer, who owned Norbiton Place, and at the time of the sale, of Matthew Waters. The farmhouse was situated just to the east of Hampden Road (266/5/11 a-b: 266/20-1n).

Chapter 5 – Kenry House and Coombe Hurst

Kenry House

In the year 1832 William Ogle Hunt was granted by the second Earl Spencer a 99 year lease of 25a of land in the north-west corner of the Coombe estate (266/1/6a-b). Building of the house must have begun shortly afterwards and the Register of Electors lists William O Hunt, qualified by “Lease of House and Land at Coombe Wood” from 1835 to 1852. A “Draft Copy of a lease of a villa and land at Coombe Wood” of September 1841 (266/17/1) states that William O Hunt cleared land and erected a villa or messuage and outbuildings, then at great additional expense made large additions to the said villa or messuage. The term of this lease was 111 years. Mr. Hunt is described in the 1841 Census return as a solicitor.

In the Register of Electors, where Robert Campbell is shown as the owner from 1857 to 1859 and William J W Baynes until 1873, the house is described as Coombe Wood, no doubt because it had been built on part of Coombe Wood. The directories name it as Kenry House from 1874, with the Earl of Dunraven as occupant until 1926. An entry in Burke’s Peerage, explains the name Kenry. It shows that the third Earl of Dunraven (an Irish peerage) was created Baron Kenry in the United Kingdom and when he died in 1871 was succeeded by his son Windham (1841-1926). On the 4th earl’s death the barony became extinct, but meanwhile the name had been given to his house.

The freehold of the house was conveyed in 1927 by Col A A F FitzGeorge and others to F S Oliver (266/20/217-294) and he remained there until 1933. The first entry in the directory for Gipsy Hill Training College is in 1950.

Brayley and Walford (A Topographical History of Surrey, c 1870) state “Kenry House, formerly called Coombe House, once the property of the Duke of Cambridge but now belonging to the Earl of Dunraven. It was here that the former owner, the Earl of Liverpool, the Premier, when High Steward of Kingston, entertained in their progress to Portsmouth in 1814, the Prince Regent of England, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia and the Generals Blucher and Platof”. This statement is full of errors. Kenry House was never called Coombe House and the Earl of Liverpool never owned it. In fact he died in 1828, four years before building of this house commenced, and could not have entertained here in 1814.

Coombe Hurst

In 1835 the third Earl Spencer granted to Samuel Smith esq a 999 years lease of 43a of land adjacent to that of William O Hunt. By 1836 Samuel Smith is in the Register of Electors, with the qualification “lease of house and land at Coombe Wood” and he remained in occupation until his death in 1881 at the age of 86. His was an interesting family, for his sister Fanny was the mother of Parthenope and Florence Nightingale and he himself married Mary, a sister of their father, called “Aunt Mai” by them. The Census returns for 1841 and 1851 show Samuel Smith as living at Coombe Hurst and in 1841 Parthenope, then aged 20, was staying there. He is described as “Barrister not practising. Examiner of Petitions of Private Bills, House of Commons. Magistrate for the County of Surrey”. They had five servants living in the house and Mr Smith’s sister Julia Smith was also living there. [She was a very early campaigner for women’s rights. There is a portrait photograph of her in Gordon Winter’s Past Positive (1971) p 23, where the story is told that she was so vague that she once stepped out of a second-floor window by mistake and landed on the lawn unhurt. It is not known whether this happened at Coombe Hurst.]

After Samuel Smith's death in 1881 Henry F C Vyner appears in the Register of Electors and according to the directories Capt R C de Grey Vyner (grandson of the first Earl de Grey and brother in law of the first Marquess of Ripon) was at Coombe Hurst from 1885 until 1914. He was a landed proprietor, owner of 26,700 acres and of racehorses and stud farms (Who's Who, 1914). Coombe Hurst was one of his five residences. He died in 1915 and for eight years the directories show no occupants at the house. The Surrey Comet of 24 June 1933 printed an aerial photo of the house and grounds and reported that it was for some years the home of Baron de Forest and was to have been demolished, but, had been bought by Mr S E Parkes, Chairman of Wandsworth Greyhound Stadium, who had had the whole interior rebuilt and modernised. Baron de Forest, who lived there from 1923, was a baron of the old Austrian Empire and had been a Liberal Member of Parliament.

Mr Sydney Parkes seems to have lived at Coombe Hurst until 1940 and from 1948 Gipsy Hill College of Education was there.

Both houses are now part of Kingston Polytechnic.

Chapter 6 – Miscellaneous

During the study of the many documents concerning the Manor of Coombe, several interesting facts emerged. To some problems a solution is available, but to others no answer has been found and they are included here in the hope that at some later date further relevant documents will be found.

The Conduit Houses

Ivy and Coombe Conduit Houses are without doubt the oldest buildings standing within the boundaries of the Manor of Coombe. They (and also Gallows Conduit, just outside the manor) are said to have been built by Cardinal Wolsey in the early 16th century to supply fresh spring water to his house at Hampton Court. Gallows and Ivy Conduits are at present (1972) in a reasonable state of preservation, but Coombe Conduit House has one of its towers in a ruinous state. When inspected two or three years ago [i.e. about 1970] spring water was still issuing from a delivery pipe into a large leaden settling tank at a rate of perhaps twenty gallons an hour, to disappear no doubt into a nearby surface drain. It had long ceased to supply Hampton Court Palace.

In 1896 the Duke of Cambridge bought the three conduit houses, feeders and pipes for £75 from the Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings, who released the right to supply water from Coombe to the Palace (266/15/1). The conveyance also shows that the owner of Coombe was entitled to “two fat bucks and two fat does annually in lieu of rent for the water supplied”. Edward Harvey had petitioned Queen Anne in 1712 for the revival of “a pretension to a brace of bucks and a brace of does yearly out of some of Her Majesty’s parks neighbouring upon his manor of Combe Nevill in Kingston, in consideration of the conveyance of water out of his said manor for supplying the offices of Hampton Court Palace” (PRO Cal Treasury Books XXVI 169).

Semaphore Station

In the year 1821 a piece of land on Coombe Warren was conveyed by the second Earl Spencer to the Principal Officer of Commissioners of H M Navy (266/6/1a-b), to provide a Signal Station and Signal House. Its position is shown on the Kingston Tithe map of 1840 as lying back from the roadway (now called Warren Road) on its west side and almost opposite to the position now occupied by Telegraph Cottage, which is on the east side of Warren Road, but did not exist at the time of the Tithe map. The Semaphore Station and House have disappeared and the Duke of Cambridge bought the land on which they stood from the Admiralty Commissioners for £141 in 1849 (266/3/6).

Amy Downs

This is the name of some land (apparently 15a and 18½ a) which Sir Daniel Harvey bought from Robert le Wright in 1663. Although it appeared in documents over a period of two hundred years, its location was difficult to identify. The title documents (250/6/4-5) show that Robert le Wright had purchased the land from Ephraim Gilpen and John Chelsham in 1641 and 1659 and that part at least had belonged to Margaret Modgett in the late 16th century. The description “all that parcel of Amye Downes and lying on the east part of the said Amye Downes” is interesting but does not help in locating the position.

[In 1667 and 1668, soon after buying the land from Mr le Wright, Sir Daniel Harvey was presented and fined at the Court Baron of Kingston manor for enclosing 6a of common called Amy Down Common belonging to the manor (KF1/1/18 and 19). The manorial records of this period have not all survived

and it is not clear whether Sir Daniel bought the 6a from the Corporation (owners of the manor). The owners of Coombe estate paid an annual quit rent of 1s to Kingston Manor for land at Amy Down Corner until well into the 19th century (KF1/3/24).

Through 18th century leases noted in the Corporation's Ledger, of land at Kingston Hill belonging to Cleave's Almshouses, it proved possible to identify Amy Downs Corner as the area where the present George Road joins the main road over Kingston Hill, near the George and Dragon. The inn was formerly the Fox and Coney, which with its orchard and an adjoining close of land, all "in or near a lane called London Lane in the parish of Kingston on the south side of the same lane" and also a house, orchard and two closes of land adjoining on the north side of the lane, belonged to the Almshouse charity. The whole was leased to John Rowlls esq, the famous Kingston brewer, in 1747 and the Corporation also let to him a small piece of waste ground called Amy Down Corner, adjoining the Fox and Coney (KB9/1, pp 333 and 334).

The house on the north side of London Lane let in 1747 had formerly been occupied by Robert Arnold, warrener, to whom it had been let in 1698 (KB9/1, p82). His lease had provided that the house should be put into tenantable repair and Robert Arnold gave a bond for Robert Latimer's dwelling in one of the ground floor rooms gratis. By the time of the Tithe map of 1840 the Almshouse charity owned no land on the north side, so this property cannot be traced with certainty, but it seems that it may be the site of Coombe Bury Cottage (see Appendix 3). On the map the site of Coombe Bury Cottage is No 65 (slightly over one acre), owned and occupied by Louis Pouchee, who also held another acre of garden (No 64) from the Duke of Cambridge. It is not possible to identify the land bought by Sir Daniel Harvey from Robert le Wright, but it is interesting that No 63 on the Tithe map, then a gravel pit (now partly golf course and partly Renfrew Road) is just over 6a and may well be the 6a he had enclosed from Amy Down Common in the 1660s. If so, it is outside Coombe manor, though within the "Old Estate" of Coombe sold in 1837. In 1837 the lane from the George and Dragon, which may have been the London Lane referred to in the leases of 1747/8, did not follow the same line as the present George Road, but (as a footpath) turned south-east near the later Coombe Croft and Coombe Springs, to join Coombe Lane opposite Coombe Farm. On the Rocque map of 1745 it is shown very clearly as a road, beside which in earlier times (before it was moved to the other side of the main road) stood the gallows, probably on open common land belonging to Kingston manor.]

Halks Farm

It seems possible that the Harvey family, sheep farmers in Kent, introduced or reintroduced sheep farming on Coombe manor. The two 17th century sale particulars discussed in Chapter 3 list in the earlier "a large downe before the house wherein is a large sheep walk" and in the later "Halks farme". Now Halke was not previously a local name. It does not appear in the Kingston or Malden Parish Registers, except a single entry, the burial of John Halk at Kingston on 4 Aug. 1728, nor has it been found in any other local records examined. Nevertheless Sir Daniel Harvey's grandfather married the sister of his partner Thomas Halke of Folkestone and there were two John Halke's in the next generation. [In 1689 there was a place called Sheepphouse accessible from Coombe Lane ([Guide to Surrey Records: quarter Sessions](#) Surrey C C 1931 p 72). Later Hugh Pelling, then farming Stantons Farm, was fined at the Kingston Manor Court of 4 June 1745 for "putting 500 sheep in Surbiton Common having no right to do so" (KF1/1/83).]

The Moat

On the east side of Traps Lane and about 200 yards from its junction with Coombe Lane West is a small close called The Moat. In it several houses have been newly built and in the centre is a green which contains a small piece of ground surrounded by a moat. Although the moat still holds water there is no sign of a house above ground on the “island”, which seems rather small for a dwelling.

It is shown on the Tithe map of 1840 (KG1/3) as lying in Napps Meadow. In the 1837 Coombe Estate map and schedule it is a pond and wood (2r 32p) and is in the Napper Meadow. No explanation has been found for the feature or for the name of the meadow. It is roughly in the position of Madam Traps land (referred to in Chapter 1) and may have formed part of the garden on which she was rated from 1758 to 1764. Nothing has been found otherwise about this curiosity.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

Earl Jowett in The Dictionary of English Law (1959) says in defining a manor “A Court Baron was an essential part of a manor, and this court could not be held without at least two freeholders as suitors. If there were not two suitors the manor became a reputed manor and continued to have manorial rights and franchises”.

All records studied indicate that, at any rate from the 17th century, there were no freehold tenants of the lord of the manor of Coombe. Therefore it was a “reputed manor” and it is so described in the 1837 conveyance (266/1/6a-b), though before this it was called, with various spellings, “manor of Combe”.

However the estate was described, the old farmhouse, altered and with additions from time to time, which in the first place was responsible for this account, remained during all the changes which came to the estate and was still there in 1969.

The changes were indeed startling. Commencing about 1860, when long leases were granted, mainly of land on the north side of Coombe Lane West, on which were built several very large houses, the estate which previously had perhaps no more than a dozen houses with one hundred inhabitants, including servants, has now after about a hundred years, many hundreds of dwellings of all types and sizes, and thousands of residents, but comparatively few servants. The farms have disappeared but nevertheless there are still large acreages of open space which includes three golf courses, a public park and many acres of playing fields. It is noteworthy that the effect of present day increases in land values and inflation can be seen in the fact that so many of the houses individually cost far more than the £38,250 paid for the whole Manor, including manor house and farmhouses, in 1837.

Thus the Manor of Coombe, or Coombe Nevill, has followed so many other manors into oblivion, absorbed by the needs of ever expanding towns, and it will certainly not be the last.

Appendix 1 – Manor Families

A considerable amount of information on the families who are known to have lived on the manor of Coombe, has been collected from many sources and being of some interest, it is recorded below.

The Harvey Family

Thomas Harvey (1549-1623)

Grandfather of Sir Daniel Harvey who later owned Coombe, he was a yeoman of Folkestone, Kent and had a prosperous sheep-farming business, trading in wool with the French and the Dutch. He and his partners established a post house serving Canterbury and Folkestone, and later the Dutch and French coasts and London. This brought them into contact with the Merchant Adventurers of London and their woollen business was extended to Turkey and the Levant. The Harvey arms, (or, on a chief indented sable, 3 crescents argent) seem to refer to this connection.

Thomas married Juliana Jenkin, a daughter of one of his partners, and on her early death, married her cousin Joan Halke, the sister of his other partner. From this marriage there were six sons, William (1579-1657) the famous physician, John (1582-1645), Daniel (1587-1642), Eliab (1580-1661), and twins Matthew (1593-1642) and Michael (1593-1641).

Daniel Harvey (1587-1647)

Like all the brothers (except William), he joined the family business and became very wealthy, leaving to his son Daniel his Croydon estate and lands in Kent, Suffolk, Rutland and Leicestershire. His two daughters Elizabeth and Mary married respectively Sir Edward Dering and Sir Heneage Finch, both of whom appear in many of the legal documents of the Harvey family (and also in the diary of Samuel Pepys). Sir Heneage was Solicitor General, Attorney General and finally Earl of Nottingham.

The earlier Harveys can be studied in greater detail in two excellent books (listed in the Bibliography) on the life of William Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of blood.

Sir Daniel Harvey (c 1631-72)

(knighted in 1660) was the first of his family to own Coombe manor, which was bought by his trustees from Viscount Cullen in 1651 (PRO CP 25(2) 601) [and was settled by him by an Ante Nuptial Settlement dated 24 January 1651/2 (Bodleian Ms DD Shrewsbury 26) to secure a jointure of £700 for his intended wife Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Montagu of Boughton, Northants, in consideration of the marriage portion of £9000 paid to him by her father. The manor was settled on himself for life, then on Elizabeth “for her jointure and in lieu of her dower” and then on his sons in tail male, with an ultimate remainder on failure of heirs male (which appears to have happened on the death of his grandson Michael) to Daniel’s right heirs.] In his will dated 26 March 1666 (PRO PROB 11 340 136) Sir Daniel suggested that it might be of advantage to his wife, in view of the cost of upkeep and repair of the manor house at Combe Nevill, to accept an annuity of £700 from his manor of Downbarton in Kent and by a deed of 20 January 1672/3 in the Muniment Room at Althorp, Elizabeth accepted the Downbarton lands as her jointure in place of Coombe.

Samuel Pepys says in his diary in 1667 that Sir Daniel was “a friend and confident of King Charles II” and in 1665 that the King used Sir Daniel’s house (presumably his town house) as a place of rendezvous with Lady Castlemaine. The manor house at Coombe was apparently his main residence outside London and he contested (it was stated as the King’s nominee – KB 16/7/28) the election in 1660 for High Steward of Kingston. The election was declared illegal, but at the fresh election after an enquiry he failed to secure the office.

Sir Daniel also held land in the manor of Kingston and is listed as tenant in its records between 1653 and 1672 (KF1/1/16-17; KF1/4/1-6 etc). For the purpose of the court leet of Kingston he was constable of Combe Nevill, and he was fined there in 1663 for failure to scour ditches leading from Combe Park to Norbiton Common (KF1/2/6).

According to John Evelyn’s diary Sir Daniel was appointed ambassador to Turkey in 1668. In view of the family business interests in Turkey and the Levant this appointment would have been rewarding to him. A trust deed executed by him on 20 July 1668 (250/6/23) did not affect Coombe, which was already vested in the Marriage Settlement trustees. He remained ambassador until his death in 1672.

His will indicates his wealth. He refers to lands in Oxfordshire, Kent, Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire and elsewhere and bequeaths (beside his wife’s annuity of £700) £500 per annum for his son Edward during minority and portions of £5000 each to his daughters Elizabeth and Anne the latter christened at Kingston in 1661) at 18 or on earlier marriage (though if either married without the consent of the trustees she was to receive only £1000).

Edward Harvey (1658-1736)

(son of Sir Daniel) was a minor at his father’s death, but in 1679, at 21, he registered his claim to the manor by means of one of the fictitious lawsuits of the age (PRO CP43/385). In 1674 Lady Harvey was assessed to Hearth Tax as occupier of the manor house, but the tax and rate assessments from 1680 show Edward as the occupier (KD8/2/1; KH1/1/3; KG4/1/2: KG3/2/1-6).

Romney Sedgewick, History of Parliament, gives the following information about him: -

Born March 1658. MP for Bletchley 1679 and Clitheroe 1705 -1713 and 1715-1722. Married (1) 8 May 1679 his cousin Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Eliab Harvey (died 15 January 1696). (2) July 1702 Lady Elizabeth daughter of 1st Earl of Bradford and widow of Sir Henry Littleton. She died 7 March 1724. (3) 6 July 1725 Mary daughter of Edward Carteret.

John Evelyn, writing in his diary for 20 April 1705, says, “I sent my grandson with his party of my freeholders to vote for Mr Harvy of Come”. This refers to the Parliamentary election for Surrey and he came bottom of the poll.

There is ample evidence that he participated in local affairs. According to Kingston Vestry Book (P33/4/1) he often attended the vestry between 1695 and 1714 and in 1730. He and other local gentry were at the meetings in 1703 which had to take the decision to demolish the spire, and as much of the tower as necessary, of the parish church, already decayed and presumably placed beyond repair by the famous Great Storm of November 1703. Until recently a stone tablet in the tower walls on the south side stated “This Tower was rebuilt Anno Domini 1708. Gideon Hardinge Vicar Henry Lidgould and Terence Mahon Churchwardens”. During rebuilding of the tower in 1973, this stone was found to be eroded and it is to be retained within the church.

Edward Harvey's signature (as a tenant of Kingston Manor) is on an "Agreement for inclosing 7 acres of Common called Norbiton Common in a place called the Dickerage on the north side of the said Common to be sown with flax and hemp seed for employing and setting to work the Poor of the said Parish of Kingston" in 1696 (KF1/5/11).

In 1714 a tragedy occurred on Coombe manor and the inquest recorded that "Hanna Vincent tossed by a bull in a close of pasture belonging to Edward Harvey esq of Combe Nevell as she was milking cows". It happened on Friday morning 20 August about 6 o'clock and she lived to 5 o'clock the next morning (KE3/1/33).

The bailiffs of Kingston as JPs had to examine strangers as to their place of legal settlement. Their Minute Book (KE2/5/1) records in 1705 that "Jane Boyd said that the place of her last Habitation was at Belfast in the County of Antrim in the Kingdome of Ireland where she was borne and that she came from thence to Kingston to see her husband who she heard was at Mr Harvey's at Combe and was a Trooper in Major Generall Harveys Regiment of Horse. Sent by a pass to the said parish of Belfast with her five children". Major General Harvey was Edward's brother Daniel.

Edward Harvey was High Steward of Kingston from 1707 to 1736 (Biden) and as a compliment to him in his office the Corporation offered him a lease of a pond in Norbiton Common (Court of Assembly Book KB1/1). The lease, dated 27 September 1708, was for 71 years and the pond was for making a fishpond "with a drain from it to the common sewer, he to maintain a bridge over the causeway" (KC1/1/154).

Several of the children of Edward Harvey's first marriage were christened at Kingston, but of these only Michael is mentioned in his will (PRO PROB 11 679 221), as are his daughters Frances, Anne and Mary. The will states that his brother Daniel had left him an (unnamed) estate and that settlements had been made on the marriage of his son Michael in 1715. He requests "my body be laid as near as possible to my dear and most loving wife Elizabeth and my father Sir Daniel Harvey now interred in the Vault at Hempstead Chappel in Essex or the vault in Bradford Church Dorset whichever is the cheaper and more convenient to my loving wife Mary". Visits made to both churches failed to prove that his wish was carried out or that his father was buried in the vault, but Elizabeth "wife of Edward Harvey of Comb in the County of Surrey" is recorded there. The references to his father, wife and son in his will, and the facts below about Michael, show clearly that the pedigree given in Manning and Bray I 402 (and followed by later historians) is incorrect on the descendants of Sir Daniel Harvey.

Michael Harvey (1694-1748)

According to Romney Sedgewick, Michael Harvey of Coombe Surrey and Clifton Maybank near Milborne Port Dorset was MP for Milborne Port in 1717, 1722-41 and 1742-47, was the only surviving son of Edward Harvey of Combe by his first wife and married Rebecca Wolstenholme in 1715. He succeeded the widow of his cousin Michael Harvey to Clifton Maybank in 1717 and his father to Combe in 1736.

His will has not been traced and it seems that he died childless. His half-sisters Frances Harvey and Mary Breton succeeded to Coombe on his death and sold it in 1753 (Chapter 2). So ended just over a century of ownership of the manor by this branch of the Harvey family.

Hugh Pelling and William and John Rose

This family had leases of Stantons Farm from 1741 to 1813.

Hugh Pelling (1691-1777)

About 1716 he married Barbara Loach (1693-1767), daughter of Matthew Loach (c1660-1721) freeholder, of Long Ditton, and seems to have lived there with the Loach family. He is listed in the Long Ditton Vestry Minutes in 1728 and was living there in 1735 (PRO C 24 1511), but he was at the same time in business in London, and is described as of Queen Street, Upper Moorfields, in 1741 (PRO C24 1559) and as late of South Sea House, London, Gentleman, in 1748 (Middlesex Deeds 99 of 1748, Bundle 3 172). He retired to Wandsworth and died there (Will PRO PCC 34 Collier, with armorial seal).

Between 1723 and 1743 he was an official of the South Sea Company in charge of the books and he invested heavily in the stock (see Chancery proceedings PRO C 24 1511 and Bank of England records). In 1741 he entered into protracted Chancery suits against the heirs of his stepmother (PRO C 11 2275/29 et al.).

William Rose (1708-89)

The son of John Rose, yeoman, headborough, constable and surveyor of Hook in Kingston, who died in 1740. William appeared at the Kingston court leet as constable of Combe Nevill from 1742 to 1769 (KF1/1/80-107) and is rated for the farm in Kingston Poor Rate books from 1742 to 1769 (KG3/2/8-9). In 1770 he moved to a house and farm on the west side of Church Road, Wimbledon and he appears in the Wimbledon Vestry Minutes in 1773. He was Overseer of the Poor there in 1773 and 1774, Churchwarden 1776-78, Parish Auditor 1781, Keeper of Wimbledon Common 1785 and on the Vestry 1788. His will (PRO PCC 513 Macham) describes him as a large freeholder and "gentleman".

He married about 1734 Henrietta (1718-90), only daughter of Hugh Pelling. Their tomb can be seen outside the porch of Wimbledon Parish Church and the burials are recorded of William Rose aged 80 (or 81) and Henrietta widow of William Rose aged 72, in Wimbledon Parish Register (John Evelyn Club 1924).

John Rose (1748-1827)

Son of William Rose, he married Catherine Bowry on 19 November 1769 at Kingston. He was constable of Combe Nevill from 1784 to 1807 (KF1/1/109) – the court leet records for earlier years are missing. He is assessed to Poor Rate from 1769 to 1784 (KG3/2/9) and also to Land Tax from 1780 to 1807. He owned 11a of land on the borders of Coombe manor and leased them to Francis Garner on 31 August 1808 (266/7/6/). The land passed to his son Thomas Rose (266/7/9).

A daughter Catherine was married on 14 November 1795 at the parish church and Kingston Parish Register records "Arthur Ormsby esq Batchelor of Grove House in the Parish of Great Stanmore, Middlesex and Kitty Rose of Coomb Farm in this Parish". This is the first occasion found where the farm is named Coomb Farm and not Stantons Farm.

John Rose's will of 20 November 1826, proved 10 October 1827 (PRO PCC 608 Heber) states that he had previously lived at Rockingham Row, Kent Road, Surrey (he died at Chiswell Street, Middlesex) and owned a large number of freehold, copyhold and leasehold lands and houses in Southwark, Lambeth and Esher.

MR F J Dallett, to whom many of the above references are owed, considers that the Pelling family were not too pleased at the marriage of their daughter Henrietta to William Rose, whose station in life was below theirs, and that for this reason Hugh Pelling took the lease of Stantons Farm and the farmhouse for the couple. By this means William was able to improve matters.

The Stantons

This family is included because of the probable connection with the name of Stantons Farm, first found in the 18th century leases to Hugh Pelling and William and John Rose (see Chapter 4). It is not uncommon for a farm to be known locally by the occupant's name and for this to continue even after he has ceased to be connected with the farm.

Members of the family appear in Kingston records from about 1580 to about 1636 and they are always called "Rowle alias Stanton" (or Staunton). No explanation has been found for this. The first known is John, a woodbroker and brewer. [He, and afterwards his son John, had a "berebrewhouse" in West by Thames (now High Street), Kingston and lived in the same area (KC3/2/49-50 and 56). The brewhouse is called Stantons long after they ceased to hold it (KB 21/4/2 and 3).]

The first John Rowle or Staunton died of plague in 1603. In his will of 1602 (PRO PCC Bolein 94; KB39/1 and 2; [Guide to the Borough Archives](#) p 53) he refers to leases of 5 closes at Beverley Bridge near Coombe Park, 2 closes called Hempstalles, all held of Sir Thomas Vincent, and to other leaseholds (all coppices and totalling 120a) entailed on his grandchildren (presumably by settlement) also held of Sir Thomas. Among these is Bakers Coppice (see Chapter 4 under Robin Hood Farm) and others on the far side of Beverley Brook. The will also states that he had leases, jointly with George Snelling, of Great Hoppyngs, Hoppyngs next West Barnes, Middle and North Hoppyngs, Little Long Copsyce near Cowgate, Ashen Grove, Long Copsyce and two dickridge coppices, totalling about 167a. The "hoppyngs" land on both sides of the Beverley Brook must include Hoppingwood Farm (the name is discussed in Chapter 4) and it is interesting that the tenants were both brewers.

Two closes called Hempstall and another called Dickeridge are shown on the Althorp map of Coomb Nevill manor (see Plate 3) as adjacent to a farmhouse later called Coomb Farm. Two closes called Hempstalles (and incidentally a nearby Hop Ground) are in the lease of Stantons Farm to Hugh Pelling. This then is the case for believing that the name Stantons Farm in the leases of 1741, 1763 and 1785, derives from this Stanton family, not proved but highly probable. It seems likely that in Sir Thomas Vincent's time the farming land and some of the woodland of the manor (or belonging to him on the other side of Beverley Brook) were let to John Rowle or Staunton, perhaps for growing barley and hops for his brewery as well as timber for his woodbroker's business. As he lived in the West by Thames area, there may have been no farmhouses on the manor at this time and the Coombe Farmhouse built by Viscount Cullen in the 1640s was probably the first.

Appendix 2 – Early Buildings on Coombe Estate

Based on reports by Ian J West after his surveys with members of KUTAS

It emerges from Mr Gent's account of Coombe that 150 years ago there were very few buildings on the estate. Coombe House itself, the farmhouses on Coombe, Robin Hood and Hoppingwood Farms, a cottage on the Warren, two on Robin Hood Farm and a gardener's cottage in the kitchen garden of Coombe Cottage (itself apparently part of the Coombe Farmhouse building) and the Signal Station and Signal House then just built – together they occupied only a very small proportion of the 1100 acres.

Ten years ago Coombe Hill Farmhouse was almost the only survivor of those older buildings. Since its demolition only parts of the out-buildings of Coombe House remain, adapted and extended over the years to become attractive and interesting houses. Even good illustrations of most of the lost houses are lacking. But at least it was possible to examine and survey the greater part of Coombe Hill Farmhouse before its final disappearance and a full report was published in Surrey Archaeological Collections LXIX (1973). A summary of the main stages of construction of the farmhouse follows.

Coombe Hill Farmhouse

1. The house which Viscount Cullen built, probably in the 1640s, was two-storeyed, with basement and attics, and cruciform in plan, with the main axis running east-west. It was built of soft orange-red bricks laid in a random bond and the external walls were 13 inches thick. It had twin chimneys and was probably roofed in peg-tiles.
2. About 1700 a two-storeyed wing was added, projecting from the south-east corner of the main axis. The house thus extended was the one let to George King, Hugh Pelling and William Rose.
3. About 1780 a new facade was built on the north and west walls of the original house – this might indicate that the farmyard was on the east side of the house. The re-fronting may be associated with the period around 1769, when William Rose gave up the farm and it was taken over by his son John, who married in that year.
4. About 1790 there were two small extensions and alterations to windows.
- 5a. About 1810 there was a major reconstruction of the existing buildings with extensive additions to the south and west. To cover the bricks of different colours and periods, the walls were covered with the fashionable stucco. Another Regency feature was a canopy over a new door. It was covered in sheet metal and had a decorative wooden fascia. This work was undoubtedly associated with the arrival of Francis Garner in 1808. He evidently farmed on a larger scale and had greater social pretensions than his predecessors. A topographical work, Surrey Described – An enumeration of the Seats and Residences of the Nobility, Clergy and Gentry of the County 1823) on p 61 mentions Coombe Farm, as a farm, then on p 63 says of Coombe House “a superb mansion, pleasantly situated 2 miles east of the town of Kingston, near the beautiful eminence of Kingston Hill and Richmond Park, with beautiful pleasure grounds etc; the seat of the Rt Hon the Earl of Liverpool”, and then adds “Near Coombe House, a smaller mansion, the seat of Francis Garner esq”.

- 5b. After 1810 there was a small extension to the east of the entrance, perhaps a re-building of work of 1810.
6. About 1840, soon after the Duke of Cambridge bought the estate, were extensions to the south of the second phase and re-modelling of part of the interior.
7. About 1860 a large wing was added to the east of the sixth phase, and a single-storeyed room in the courtyard. Mr Garner left the farm in 1857 and it was taken by James Page. At this time the acreage was reduced by the sale of land near George and Warren Roads for building large houses and it may well be that this was the occasion for making the arrangements to divide the farmhouse and make a separate gentleman's residence of part of it.

Coombe House

The mansion built in the 1750s was demolished in the 1930s, having been a boys' boarding school and later a sanatorium. A schedule of "landlord's fixtures" attached to a lease of 1867 (266/16/1), when it was again a private house, gives a vivid impression of a Victorian household. Most of the rooms had bell-pulls and in the basement there were no fewer than 19 bells. There were four bedrooms for servants on the top floor and a staircase up to them from the basement. The only two WCs were on the principal or first floor and there were at this time no bathrooms. The house had a heated conservatory outside the dining-room, two drawing-rooms, billiard room and library. In the basement were 15 service rooms, which had evidently been modernised, for the old kitchen was being used as a coal cellar. There must have been a little turret with an 8-day clock, approached by an 11-step ladder to the "Turret or Clock Room". In the kitchen yard was an alarm bell with a cupola roof over it. In the grounds the hot-houses were 56 yards long and there was a brick and glazed "Mellon pit".

Near the ornamental entrance gates, hung on massive oak pillars, there was a stable yard in which were two weather-boarded granaries. The inventory next deals with "Laundry and Gardener's Cottage" and after listing the equipment of the washroom and drying-room and four other rooms, mentions the copper vane and weather-cock in the roof of the building, which is thus undoubtedly that described below. In a fire policy of 1888 (266/16/12) relating to Coombe House (there called Coombe Wood House), with two lodges, stables, coach-house and harness room with loft over, carriage shed and coach-house under one roof etc, the laundry block is differently described as "Bailiff's Dwelling House including the laundry and wash-house (a well-secured stove allowed therein) all under one roof". The Coachman's house which follows immediately after the copper vane in the 1867 list is probably, the same as the Bailiff's House of 1888, and under the same roof as the laundry etc.

Coombe Vane and Vane House, Warren Rise, New Malden

This road runs southwards between the sites of Coombe House and Coombe Hill Farm and the complex of building forming these houses is that last referred to above. Incorporated into the north end is a mid-17th century cottage built of brick under a gabled roof, with a fireplace in its south-west corner. It has two floors, the upper now being divided into two rooms.

To the south of the cottage (and projecting slightly more to the west) was built in the 18th century a brick laundry, the height of its one storey being almost equal to that of the two-storeyed cottage. Over the previous two phases was added accommodation for staff, with a new rectangular roof over the

whole block. Access to these second-floor rooms was from the laundry only. This addition appears to date from the early 19th century. To the south of the laundry is a 19th century cottage which was self-contained.

The laundry has been divided into two parts (the division being to the south of the central door). The southern part was incorporated into the 19th century cottage and the northern part into the original cottage. Access to the added floor over the 17th century part is still separate from the cottage, with stairs from the former laundry.

It is not possible to identify this 17th cottage with any of the buildings in the "Particulare" in Plate 4, unless it was the "little house for the huntsman" mentioned with the "doggekennell, with a faire yard belonging to itt".

Coombe Bury Cottage

This building is not on the Coombe Estate, but as it is of some interest, it is mentioned here. It appears to have as its core a 2-bay timber-framed cottage of the 17th century, which had a brick-built end chimney. It has evidently been much altered and extended over the years and re-furbished in the late 18th century, leaving the original cottage encased in the later work.

It has not yet proved possible to identify this site in the local records with certainty and no title deeds for the property have been seen. At present it seems that it may be the messuage north of London Lane which was let to Robert Arnold in 1698 (see Chapter 6, under "Amy Downs").

Appendix 3 – Notes on the early history of Coombe

by Joan Wakeford

“The olde monumentes of the town of Kingeston be founde yn the decluyving doune fron Come parke towards the galoy; and there yn ploughyng and diggyng have very often beene founde fundation of waulles of houses, and diverse coynes of brasse, sylver and gold, with Romaine inscriptions, and painted yerthen pottes” (Leland, *Itinerary*, ed. L T Smith 1964, IV 85). This was what local people told Leland in the 1530s and he adds that when the new town was built in Saxon times, materials for the purpose were taken from the slopes of Coombe. From this and from such finds as have been recorded in the past, the impression is that the site of an Iron Age/Romano-British settlement was recognisable when the Saxons settled in the district. They even named an area north of Coombe Lane “Waleport”, which means “British town” and there is also a “Walehull” somewhere in the vicinity in medieval times. Some writers (e g Thomas Gale, *Antonini Iter Britanniarum*, 1709, p 72) have considered that this settlement was the Tamesa of the Ravenna Cosmography, never identified with certainty. There was evidently also a Bronze Age settlement on Kingston Hill, discovered mainly through gravel workings in the last two centuries

All recorded finds from these early settlements have been accidental and few have been precisely located. The fact and the nature of the development of the area has precluded archaeological excavation and modern field archaeology. It is therefore important that any finds here, or indeed elsewhere, should be reported to Kingston Museum, so that their nature and the precise site may be noted, to supplement the imperfect records of the past.

The urban development of Kingston in Saxon times excluded Coombe, but Domesday Book shows that in the time of Edward the Confessor there were already two small estates called Cumbe (the name means “a narrow valley”), both held of the king. In 1086 the one later called Combe Nevill was held by Ansgot the Interpreter and had six tenant farmers and one “bordar”, sharing one plough, whilst there was another plough on the lord’s demesne. The estate also had four acres of meadow and some woodland. The bounds of this manor are in effect defined by those of Kingston manor (Kingston Enclosure Act 1809 KF1/6/1). The southern boundary of Coombe was marked by a stream running into Beverley Brook near Combe Bridge. The Mount Pleasant area and Hoppingwood Farm were both on Kingston manor, though long part of the Coombe estate. On the west (south of George Road) the boundary was “an antient hedge and watercourse between the lands of Thomas Dickens esq and Earl Spencer to Coombe Lane, crossing the lane and keeping the direction of the said watercourse ... to Norbiton Common”. The fields outside the hedge were in the East Field of Norbiton (later called Coombe Field) and were called Longhedge closes. The watercourse was presumably that referred to (significantly) as Burghdiche in deeds of 1426 and 1429 (KC2/1/42-43), the earlier dealing with 1a land upon le Downe at Burghdiches, having Thaddewelrythe on the south. The 1429 deed was for 3a land in le Estfeld upon Taddewelledowne next Burghdiche, bounded on the east by land of the lord of Cumbe Nevyle. Thaddewelle seems to refer to toads; the name is still in use in the late 18th century in the form Adwell, usually associated with the Longhedge closes and the close called Waleport in 1323 (Cat AD B1609). The name appears also, in the East Field of Norbiton, in Rentals and Surveys SC 12 629 and by the late 17th and the 18th century it is Wallpits or sometimes Wallpleate (KF1/1/26 of 1676; 266/3 and 181/15/72).

The other Cumbe estate in Domesday Book was held by Humphrey the Chamberlain and was later a serjeanty for collecting the queen's wool, associated for several centuries with the name of the Postel family who were early tenants. In 1299 it was 60a called la Combe (Cal Inq P M III No 518). When later it disappears as a separate unit, it must have merged with Kingston manor rather than with Combe Nevill. Part at least may have been the Chapel Farm of St Mary Magdalene chapel (Heales, Early History of the Church of Kingston upon Thames, 1883, p 197).

The devolution of the Combe Nevill manor can be followed in VCH Surrey III pp502-3. It changed hands in accordance with varying political fortunes and the tenant in chief might never know the manor except in his estate accounts. Local people living on the land are scarcely mentioned in surviving records. One of the lords should be mentioned. In 1215 King John gave Combe to Hugh de Nevill and it was thereafter known as Combe Nevill. This led to some confusion later, as the most famous Nevill is Richard Earl of Warwick (1428-1472), called the Kingmaker, who is not known to have held land in Coombe (though he is said by John Aubrey to have owned Hircomb's place on the south corner of Heathen street). He was born after Combe Nevill was given to Merton Priory in 1423 and a century after the Nevills of Combe had died out in the male line. In the 1360s, when the estate was in the king's hands during the minority of the heir, the manor was accidentally burnt by the king's servants and John de Hadresham was given the wardship to use the revenues of the estate to repair or if necessary rebuild the houses and buildings of the manor. This sounds like a small settlement, but there is no indication where it was.

After the Dissolution the king granted the manor in 1547 to the Duke of Somerset. On his execution it was given to William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, who in 1579 exchanged it for the Vincent manor of Bernack.

The name Hempstalles in connection with Stantons Farm, often meaning a place where they grew hemp (used for rough clothing), may be a corruption of "hamstedel", the equivalent of the later "home farm", i e the land kept in hand by the owner, often the farm next to the manor house.

Bibliography and References

The source of information obtained from documents is shown within brackets in the text. References with numbers only are in the Surrey Record Office. Where a number has PRO or K before it, this indicates that the document is in the Public Record Office or Kingston Borough Records.

The main source of information has been the Cambridge Papers in the Surrey Record Office. These had only an accession number when the author used them, but a researcher's task has since been made much easier by their being listed, under the number 266.

The following printed sources have been used and are generally referred to in the text by the author's name or by the abbreviations listed below.

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