



**A  
SHORT HISTORY  
OF  
WHITEHOUSE  
VOWCHURCH, HEREFORDSHIRE  
AND ITS OWNERS**

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Revised  
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in 1999

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## THE HISTORY OF THE WHITEHOUSE ESTATE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Between the Black Mountains of Wales and the city of Hereford lies the Golden Valley through which flows the River Dore. In the valley, there are several small villages and hamlets and numerous churches nestling among the fertile fields and the woodlands on the hilly slopes. The valley is one of considerable tranquillity and beauty where change comes slowly and only when it has been proved in other places. Here indeed is a valley where one can escape the rush and bustle of city life.

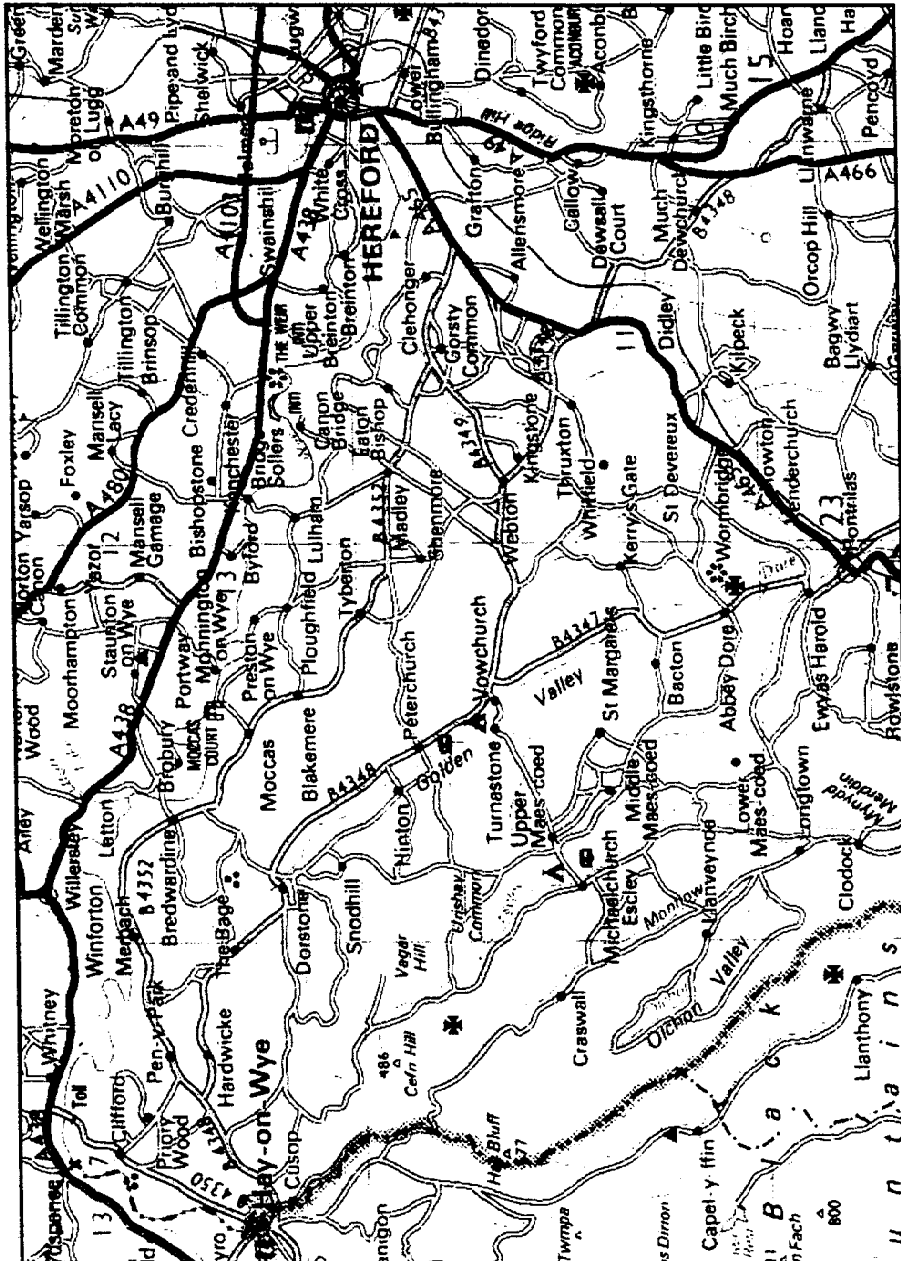
In the Golden Valley, one of the villages is Vowchurch and by that village is a house called Whitehouse. This is an account of that house, its estate and owners.

Near the Whitehouse estate there are three small churches: Vowchurch (the church of St Bartholomew), Turnastone and St Margarets. The first two of these churches lie only a few hundred yards apart with the River Dore flowing very close beside them. St Margarets is considerably higher up above the valley just to the South of the Whitehouse estate and hidden from the house, not least by the substantial woodlands on the upper slopes of the estate.

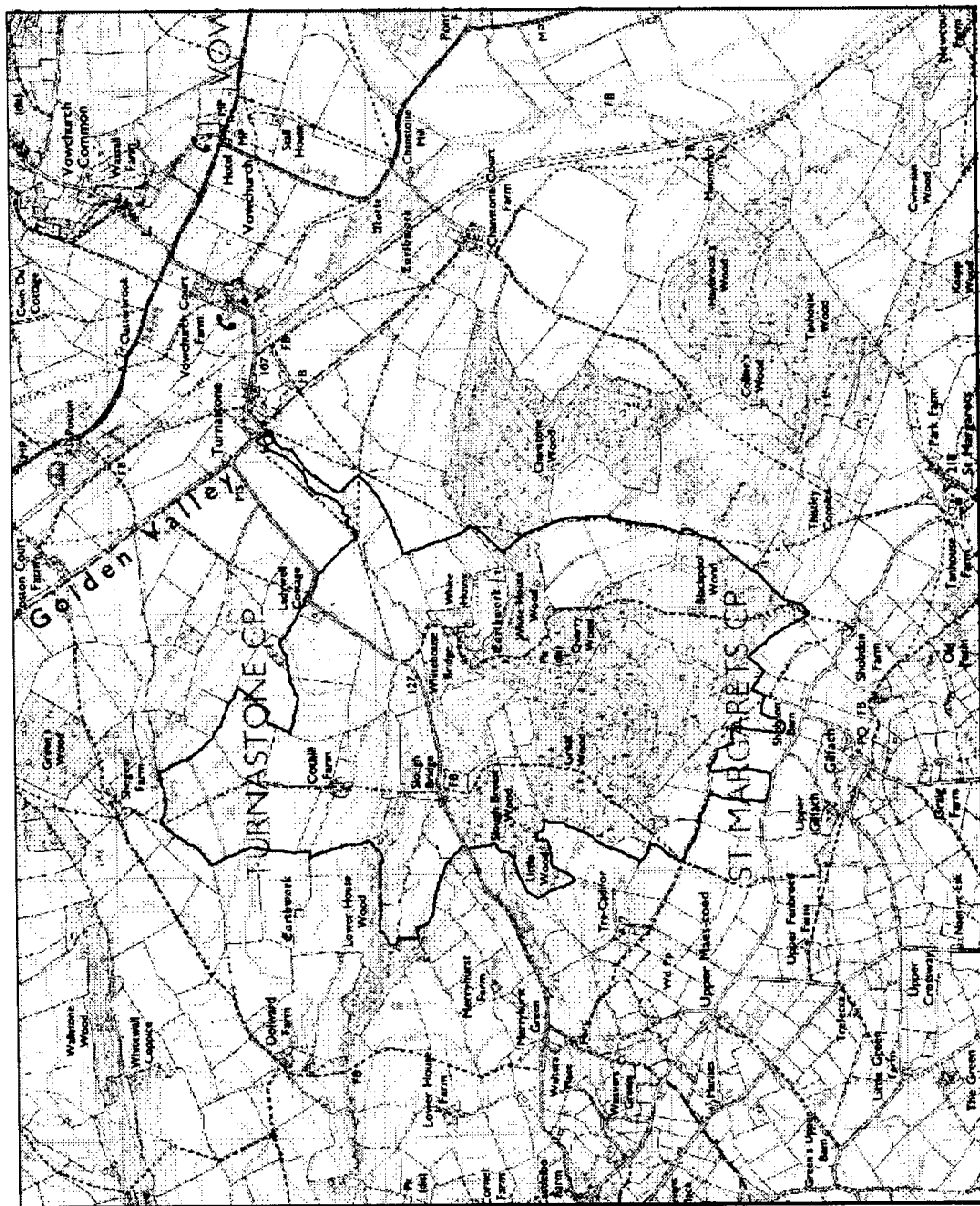
Over the centuries, owners of Whitehouse played an active part in the lives of all these churches and so the churches themselves provide at least some of the insights into the involvement of the owners of Whitehouse in the local parishes.



St Bartholomews Church, Vowchurch



## MAP SHOWING THE WHITEHOUSE ESTATE



## SUCCESSIONAL LIST OF THE OWNERS OF WHITEHOUSE (until its sale by Penelope Bletchly)

	Born	Died	Married
1. Symond Parry	1573		
2. Griffith Joanes		1577	Jane d. of Symond Parry of Moore or Whitehouse
3. Rowland Vaughan	1559 - 1628		(1) Elizabeth, d. of Rowland Vaughan M.P. (2) Anne
4. Epiphan Howorth	1566 - 1647		Blanch Joanes d. of Griffith Joanes of Llowes, Brecon
5. Humfry Howorth		1679	Susanne Shaw (b. 1625) d. of James Shaw of Tregoze, Hereford
6. Thomas Howorth	1653 - 1719		Mary Masters (1656-1739) d. of Herbert Masters of Burghill, Hereford
7. Herbert Howorth (the elder)	1675 - 1728		Margaret Lutley (1675-1744) d. of Bartholomew Lutley of Newhall, Salop
8. Herbert Howorth (the younger)	1695 - 1745		Unmarried
9. Magdalen Howorth	1701 - 1763		Robert Haselden (d.1768) of Over Hulton, Lancs
Isabella Howorth	1702 - 1775		Unmarried
Elizabeth Howorth	1703 - 1769		Unmarried
10/11. Bartholomew Haselden George Pardoe		1783	Mary Howorth (b.1696) d. of Herbert Howorth (the elder)
12. William Wood	1758 - 1833		Frances Haselden (1760-1830) d. of Herbert Haselden and Mary Benbow and granddaughter of Robert Haselden and Magdalen Howorth
13. William Seward Wood	1793 - 1862		Mary Ann Hardwick (1809-1884) d. of Joseph Hardwick of Madley, Hereford
14. Herbert Howorth Wood	1834 - 1924		Alice Wyatt Carrington (1849-1941) d. of Samuel Carrington of Cheltenham
15. Arthur Seward Wood	1880 - 1968		Honora Penelope Madan (1894-1980) d. of Charles S. Madan of Lichfield
16. Penelope Wood	1924 - 1994		John Digby Bletchly (1915-1994)

## THE EARLY BACKGROUND

The first record of the name "Whitehouse" appears in the 1577 will of Griffith Joanes. He was not the first known owner of the estate but such records as there are show that, prior to that date, the estate had the name "Moor(e)". However, there are also uncertainties about when that name first applied to the Whitehouse lands.

It is possible that the area was identified in the Domesday Book of 1096 because there is a reference to a "More" being situated in Stradel Hundred which is believed to have roughly corresponded to the present area of the Grey and Golden Valleys. In the records of the lands belonging to the canons of Hereford there is an entry which states that "*in Stradel Hundred they had a hide worth 5/- in More...*"

The Balliol Domesday Book 1160-1170 repeats this information: "*In Stradel Hundret In More est una hida que valet V solidos. Ipsi canonici habent hidas iij Ibi iij clerici habent iij villanos cum iij carucis. Valet xv solidos. Ipsi episcopus Walterus habuit j hidam Walescum T.R.E. vastatum*".

However, it is at the much later date of 1545 that the first known reference exists specifically referring to the Moore at Vowchurch and identifying Symond Parry as the owner. While it cannot now be proved, it seems more than likely that the manor was indeed identified in the Domesday Book, that it remained in the possession of the church until the dissolution and that then it was sold by the Crown very probably to the Parry family.

### 1. SYMOND PARRY d1573

#### Symond Parry d 1573

The first known owner of the manor was Symond Parry of the Moor, Vowchurch. He was a younger son of Henry Myles Parry of Newcourt and his wife, Alys. Henry Myles Parry was three times High Sheriff of Herefordshire. Alys was the eighth of the thirteen daughters and co-heiresses of Simon Milbourne of Tillington, Herefordshire.

The family of Parry are reputed to have settled in Herefordshire early in the 12th century when their common ancestor Moreiddig of the Golden Vale, son of the Danish earl Idis Wylt and Elinor, daughter of Bleddin ap Maenarch, the last of the Welsh Reguli of Brecon, obtained land in the lordship of Ewyas Lacy by marrying Catherine, widow of Lord Thomas de Laci. Their descendants continued to hold land in the district for several centuries. In 1399, John ap Harry of Poston served as High Sheriff

of Herefordshire, and with his brother, Thomas, fought in the battle of Agincourt in 1415. In the Wars of the Roses, Henry ap Griffith ap Harry of Poston and Bacton fought on the Lancastrian side at the battle of Mortimers Cross in 1461. His son Myles ap Henry of Morehampton was an escheator in 1471 and fought on Richmond's side at the battle of Bosworth Field. A fine coloured glass window to his memory was in the East window of Bacton church, until it was removed to Atcham in Shropshire in 1811.

Symond Parry's eldest brother was Myles Parry of Newcourt. Myles Parry married Elinor, daughter and co-heiress of James Scudamore of Kentchurch, and died in 1544, leaving two daughters, Joan and Elizabeth, who thus inherited both Parry and Scudamore property. At that time, it included Newcourt, Bredwardine and other manors. These heiresses married respectively Watkin Vaughan, second son of Sir William Vaughan of Porthamel, Breconshire, and Rowland Vaughan, MP son of Sir Roger Vaughan of Porthamel.

In Inquisitions Post Mortem 1545 appears: "*Milo ap Harry, Armiger, brother to Symond of the Moore, (Vowchurch), held the Manor of Jenkyn ap Richard, and Manor of Mereguston*". The former Manor comprised copyhold rents only, and were payable to owners of Whitehouse by about sixteen occupiers of land on what is now known as Lower, Middle and Upper Maescoed. This manor, also described as "alias Newton" continued to be part of the Whitehouse estate for at least two centuries subsequently. In 1679, the annual value was £3.3.2 and in 1742 £2.17.5. Thereafter, the amount seems to have gradually diminished until it ceased to be collected. The location of the Manor of Mereguston cannot be identified. The first element of the word in Anglo-Saxon times signified a "boundary".

Symond Parry's sister, Blanch Parry, who died in 1589, was described in her will dated 21 June of the same year as "*Gentlewoman of the Queen's Privy Chamber*". There is a fine monument to her memory in the Chancel of Bacton Church. This refers to "*Blaenche of Newcourte*" and ends "*A MAEDE IN COURTE AND NEVER NO MAN'S WYFE SWORN OF QUENE ELLSBETHS HEDD CHAMBER ALWAYS WYTHE MAEDEN QUENE A MAEDE DYD ENDE MY LYFFE*". It may be of interest to add that she left part of a sum of money "*towards repairing the highway between Newcourt and More*". There can be little doubt that she was well acquainted with the home of Symond, her brother, as well as the road between them!

Of Symond's four children, Miles, John, Jane, and Elizabeth; Miles, John, and Elizabeth are described in his will as *base born*. No doubt, for this reason, his daughter, Jane, inherited his estate.

Symond Parry died in 1573. His will bequeathed the estate to Griffith Joanes and his wife, Jane. The first few lines read: "Symond Parry of the Moor, Vowchurch, Herefordshire. To be buried in the Chancel of Bacton, nearby brother Myles Parry. My mansion house and lands in Vowchurch, Turnastone, St Margarets, and Bacton, to Griffith Jones and Jane his wife;". The will was proved on 24 June 1573, and proved a second time in 1580 by his sister Blanch.

## 2. GRIFFITH JOANES d 1577

### Griffith Joanes d.1577

Griffith Joanes, of Llowes, County of Radnor was the High Sheriff of Radnor in 1567. His wife, Jane, was almost certainly Symond Parry's daughter. They had a daughter, Blanche.

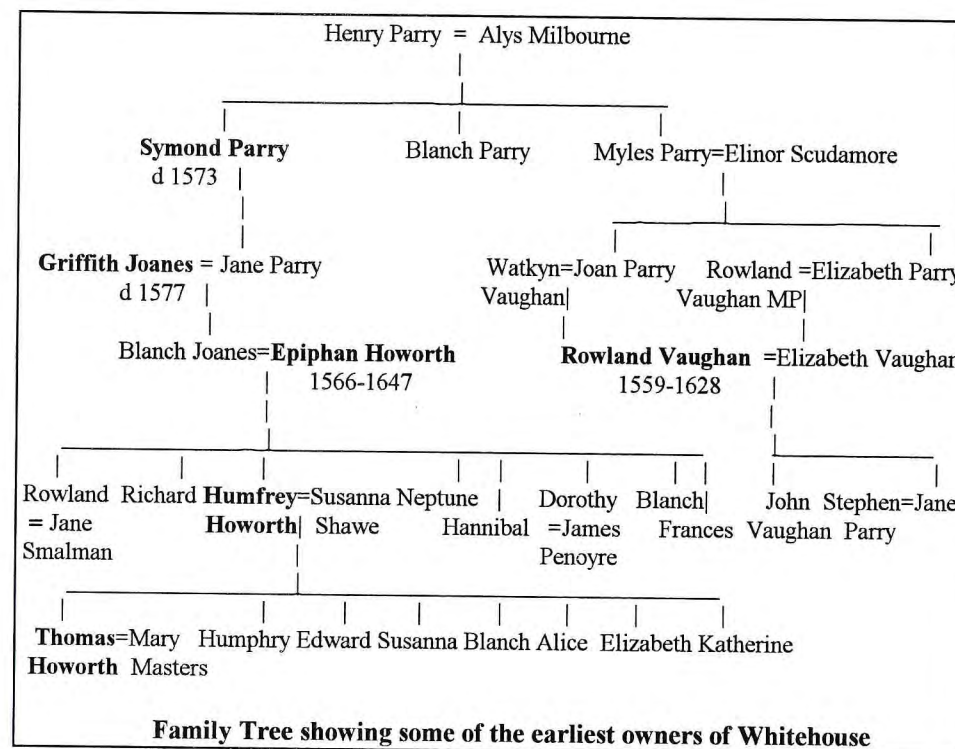
His ownership of the estate was only short for he died just four years after Symond Parry. His will was dated 19 August 1577 and proved the following year in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. It is in this will that there is the first record of the name "Whitehouse" for in the will the estate is described as "*Whitehouse or Moore*".

## 3. ROWLAND VAUGHAN 1559-c1628

### Rowland Vaughan (1559-c1628)

Following the death of Griffith Joanes in 1577, the ownership of Whitehouse for the next thirty years has not been ascertained, but in 1607 it was in the possession of Rowland Vaughan. He was the younger son of Watkin Vaughan of Bredwardine and Joan, his wife. She was the co-heiress (with her sister, Elizabeth, wife of Rowland Vaughan, MP of Porthamel, Brecon) of the Newcourt Parry estates. Joan Vaughan may thus have established her title to the Whitehouse property and it is likely that Rowland inherited it from her when she died in 1603.

Although Rowland Vaughan is more widely known as 'of Newcourt', it is evident that his ownership of Whitehouse must have been of equal importance. In his earlier years, he spent some years at the court of Queen Elizabeth followed by three or four years serving in the Irish wars. There he was taken ill and returned to his home at Bredwardine to recuperate.



Rowland Vaughan married twice. He had been on the point of setting out for the war in the Low Countries, when he met and in 1585 married his relative, and first wife, Elizabeth Vaughan, younger daughter of Rowland Vaughan MP of Porthamel. They had a son and heir, John, a daughter Jane (who married Stephen Parry of Morehampton, Abbeydore) and other children. In 1605, he entered his son, John, as a student at the Inner Temple. His wife, Elizabeth, died in 1611. His second wife was named Anne. There is no further information about her, but she and Rowland had a son, Richard, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Catherine.

There are numerous references to Rowland Vaughan in various documents of the time. In 1588, when the country was arming to resist the Spanish Armada, he was named as the captain of one hundred men, armed with corselets, shot and bows, raised from the Hundred of Webtree, Ewyas and the City of Hereford. In the 1594 list of Vaughans in Webtree Hundred, under Bacton, appears "*Rowland Vaughan, Armiger*".

On April 30 1597, Rowland Vaughan applied through Sir William and Sir Robert Cecil to receive an appointment in Her Majesty's Guards, but despite their recommendation he failed to obtain it.

In 1607, he purchased from John Parry of Poston "*messuages, cottages, lands and tenements situated in the Parishes of Vowchurch and Turnastone*". This included the "advowson" of the rectory of Turnastone and the right of patronage of the parish church. In 1614, he sold the manors of Bacton and Newcourt having previously mortgaged Newcourt and Whitehouse with 500 acres of land.

Rowland Vaughan's chief claim to fame is as author of a book published in 1610 entitled "*Most approved and Long experienced Water Workes. Containing, the manner of Winter and Summer dawning of Meadow and Pasture, by the Advantage of the least, River Brooke, Fount, or Waterprill adjacent: thereby to make those grounds (especially if they be drye) more Fertile Ten for One*" and continued "*As also a demonstration of a Project, for the great benefit of the Common Wealth generally, but for Herefordshire especially*". His book was republished in 1897.

In the book, he describes the elaborate system of irrigation trenches he constructed on his property. It is an account singularly lacking in detail as to the position of the main courses, except for the trench-royall which is stated to commence in Peterchurch Parish, but no names of the farms across which it conveyed water are given.

The remains of many of these trenches together with weirs and sluices can still be seen and some were in continuous use during the earlier days of this century. The trench-royall was fed by taking water of the Trenant brook, a short distance from its confluence with the Dore River, and its course can easily be traced for some two miles down the centre of the Golden Valley through Poston Court, Turnastone Court and Chanstone Court farms. Other trenches, ponds and water courses around Whitehouse and adjoining lands can be traced, and, in fact, every little stream was diverted into irrigation trenches following the contours of the hill sides to enrich the meadow land with the silt carried down in times of flood. In modern times, the chief reason for the disuse of meadow irrigation, has been the difficulty encountered by mowing machines and other farm equipment in crossing the trenches.

Rowland Vaughan died before February 1629, having been engaged for thirty years or more in constant litigation with relatives and neighbours over disputes arising from his numerous transactions connected with the purchase and sale of land, and loans and mortgages advanced thereon. He was buried at St. Dunstons in the West.

#### 4. EPIPHAN HOWORTH 1566-1647

**Epiphan Howorth**, who was born in 1566, was the eldest son of Humfrey and Ann Howorth (or Haworth) of Pryors Court, Widemarsh Moor, Hereford, and grandson of Alexander Howorth, of Burghope, Wellington, Herefordshire who was the first of that family to settle in the county on removal from Hawkesworth Hall, near Rochdale, Lancashire. Humfrey Howorth was Warden of the Marches of Wales.

In 1590, Epiphan married Blanch, daughter of Griffith Joanes of Llowes, County Radnor. It is probable that Blanch had an interest in the property by right of inheritance from her father, Griffith Joanes. A deed in the Whitehouse archives states that in February 1629, Epiphan Howorth of Whitehouse Esq., and Blanch, his wife, purchased "*for a competent sum of money*" the manor of Jenkyn ap Richard alias Newton including all those lands sold to Rowland Vaughan by John Parry of Poston in 1607 from Henry Vaughan of Moccas Esq. (elder brother of Rowland Vaughan), John Walcott, of Sherborne, County Dorset, Esq. and John Vaughan of Whitehouse, Gent. (son of Rowland Vaughan) acting on behalf of Rowland Vaughan's heirs. It is not known how long Epiphan and Blanch lived at Whitehouse before 1629.

An indenture dated 26 November 1630 contains the following extract: "*Elizabeth Vaughan alias Damporte alias Davenport and Katherine Vaughan daughters and heirs of Rowland Vaughan deceased and Epiphan Vaughan*". It then continues by reciting fines levied and declaring the uses of estates comprising "*6 messuages, one water grist mill, 6 gardens 6 orchards 340 acres of land 120 acres of meadow, 400 acres of pasture and 140 acres of wood in Vowchurch, Bacton, Newton, Turnastone, and St Margarets, should stand seized thereafter to the use of Epiphan Howorth in fee*". As the lands listed above total more than 1,000 acres, it is assumed that they included the whole of the Whitehouse estate and Dolward farm.

Epiphan and Blanch had five sons and four daughters. Their eldest son was Rowland Howorth of "*Wigmarsh More in the Citie of Hereford*", who entered his pedigree with the Howorth arms and crest at the Visitation of Herefordshire 1634 made by Sir Richard St. George Clarenceau, King-of-Arms. The wife of Rowland Howorth, of Widemarsh, was Jane Smalman, of Kinnersley Castle, Herefordshire, who figures as one of the eight children depicted on the base of an elaborate monument to their parents in 1632 in Kinnersley Church.

Among a few items relating to Epiphan, is a record that, in 1597, Kilpeck Priory was leased by the Crown to Epiphan Howorth and his two sons, Rowland and Richard. In

the 1650 Parliamentary survey covering this, there is also the comment that in 1650 Epiphan and his son, Richard, were dead and Rowland was about 60 years of age.

There is also a record, in the city library in Hereford, that in 1638 Stanley Jennings and his wife, Katherine, of The Park, St. Margarets, gave grant of pasture and woodland to Epiphan Howorth and Blanch, his wife.

Epiphan made his will in 1643, when he was 77. The exact year of his death is not known but his will was proved on 28 April 1649. In it, he bequeathed Dolward Farm to his daughters Blanch and Frances with the stipulation that, if his son Humfry paid his sisters 800 marks within one year then it was to become his property. Hannibal was also to have two messuages in Turnastone. Dorothy, the wife of James Penoyre was to have another and 100 marks. Humfry was also to have Whitehouse and all surrounding land provided he made the payments to his sisters. Neptune was to have some money.

## 5. HUMFREY HOWORTH

**Humfrey Howorth** was the third son of Epiphan and Blanch Howorth. Humfrey married Susannah Shawe, the only daughter of James Shawe of Tregoze, Herefordshire in 1647.

In the marriage settlement dated 28 September 1647, it was provided that £800 should be paid to Humfrey as the marriage portion of Susannah with the intent to provide a proper jointure in case she should survive her husband and for settling the Whitehouse messuages, manor lands and hereditaments therein expressed "*in the blood of the Howorths (if God permits)*" and for other good causes. The property is described much as it existed through most of this century but Dolward was excluded, and is stated to be in the possession of Blanch Howorth, Delabere Winston, and Frances his wife (to whom it had been left under the will of Epiphan Howorth).

Humfrey and Susannah had three sons and three daughters. Humfrey died before 1679 as Susannah was then a widow living at Burlton, Burghill near Hereford.

## 6. THOMAS HOWORTH 1653-c.1720

**Thomas Howorth**, born in 1653, was the eldest son of Humfrey and Susannah Howorth. On 8 August 1674, at Burghill, he married Mary Masters, the only daughter and heiress of Herbert Masters of Burghill. They had three sons and five daughters.

His will is dated 11 September 1711 but the year of his death is not known, although in an almanac in which his name is written the last entry is dated 1719. His widow died in 1739 and seems to have made Burlton, Burghill, her home.

## 7. HERBERT HOWORTH (the elder) 1675-1728

**Herbert Howorth (the elder) 1675-1728** the eldest son and heir of Thomas Howorth was born at Burghill on 2 May 1675. He married Margaret Lutley of Newhall in the county of Salop in 1695. They had three sons and five daughters, the eldest son and heir being Herbert Howorth (the younger).

Herbert Howorth died in 1728, having made a will dated 7 August in the same year (which was proved on 30 March 1732). In this he takes notice that by a deed of settlement made upon his marriage he is empowered to encumber his estate called Whitehouse with a payment of £1,000 to his younger children. He therefore bequeathed the sum of £1,000 as follows:

To Mary, the wife of George Pardoe £10,

To Margaret, the wife of William Deem £70,

£920 to be divided equally between his younger son Bartholomew, and his younger daughters Magdalen, Isabella, and Elizabeth.

These sums were to be paid to them respectively within two years after his decease. As we shall learn, his son, Herbert Howorth, the younger, failed to honour these provisions and indeed Bartholomew died, intestate and unmarried, in 1733 without having received any part of the £1,000 left to him.



## 8. HERBERT HOWORTH (the younger) 1695-1745

**Herbert Howorth (the younger)** was described as of Whitehouse and Burghill. He never married and was the last Howorth in the male line to own Whitehouse.

The legal troubles and financial battles which beset the owners of Whitehouse for nearly a century and were the cause of much anxiety and heavy cost to various members of the Howorth, Haselden and finally the Wood families largely began while he was the owner of the estate. During his lifetime, none of the provisions of his father's will were executed. Problems also arose from the repeated need for loans. For example, a sum of £1,200 was loaned by Somerset Davies of Croft Castle to Herbert Howorth in 1736 and secured on the Whitehouse estate

In March 1737, Herbert Howorth received an advance of £2,024 from William Barnsley secured by a mortgage on the estate. The latter died only a month later, leaving an only son, William, of weak intellect. A certain Mansell Powell of Wellington, near Hereford took control of the affairs of William Barnsley. He was a crook and a rogue and set up a will purporting to be that of the father, whereby he, Powell, would inherit the bulk of the father's estate.

A year later, the mortgage was apparently assigned by Herbert Howorth to Powell. In 1739, a further mortgage was secured on Whitehouse by Howorth and Powell from Lord Carpenter for £3,000. This amount was received by Powell. At the Lent assizes, in 1742, in Hereford, George Pardoe, on behalf of Herbert Howorth indicted Powell for forgery.

Herbert Howorth died in 1745 and by his will, dated 8 February 1745, he left his estate to his three sisters, Magdalen, who had married Robert Haselden of Over Hulton, Lancashire in 1729, and his maiden sisters, Isabella and Elizabeth Howorth. George Pardoe, the husband of Mary Howorth, one of his other sisters, was made the sole executor of the estate.

George Pardoe was instructed firstly to discharge all encumbrances on the estate, and to apply such sums as might be needed in the prosecution of Mansell Powell in the High Court of Chancery and in a prosecution against Mansell Powell for forgery. In 1748, Powell was brought to trial and convicted and he died in Hereford goal in 1775.

Undoubtedly the costs of these matters made a major contribution to the size of the outstanding mortgages and interest etc., on the estates which was put at nearly

£12,000 in 1762 and, presumably, the Burghill and Lyde properties were sold to discharge a portion of Herbert Howorth's heavy debts.

**9. MAGDALEN HOWORTH 1701-1763, ISABELLA HOWORTH 1702-1775 & ELIZABETH HOWORTH 1703-1769** were all supposed to be the beneficiaries of the will of Herbert Howorth (the younger), their brother, as well as beneficiaries under the will of their father, Herbert Howorth. Magdalen, however received no part of the £1,000 provided under the will of her father and died in 1763 apparently in ignorance of her right under her brother's will. Neither she, nor her husband, Robert Haselden, nor her eldest son received any share of what was rightly due to them. However, Isabella and Elizabeth Howorth received the Whitehouse rents in their life time.

Following the death of Herbert Howorth (the younger) in 1745, the absence of a male heir created the opportunity for a challenge to the Whitehouse inheritance. In the year 1755, Thomas Howorth of Worcester, a grandson of Thomas and Mary Howorth of Whitehouse, set up a claim to the Whitehouse estate. In order to obtain possession, he filed a bill in chancery against William Deem, and Margaret his wife, against George Pardoe of Nash Court, Salop and Mary his wife, against Robert Haselden and Magdalen his wife and also against Isabella and Elizabeth Howorth.

The bill claimed that a deed of settlement was made on 1 August 1674 by which the Whitehouse estate was entailed upon the male heirs of Thomas Howorth of Whitehouse. It also stated that, upon the marriage of Herbert Howorth with Mary Lutley, another deed of settlement was made on 28 August 1695 by which the estate was limited to the right heirs of Thomas Howorth of Whitehouse. The bill claimed that the parties to the latter settlement had no right to make it.

As Herbert Howorth, the younger, the lineal descendant, and Bartholomew, his brother, both died unmarried, it was therefore claimed that Thomas Howorth of Worcester was the male heir and had a right to the estate. The bill was dismissed against Thomas Howorth of Worcester in 1758.

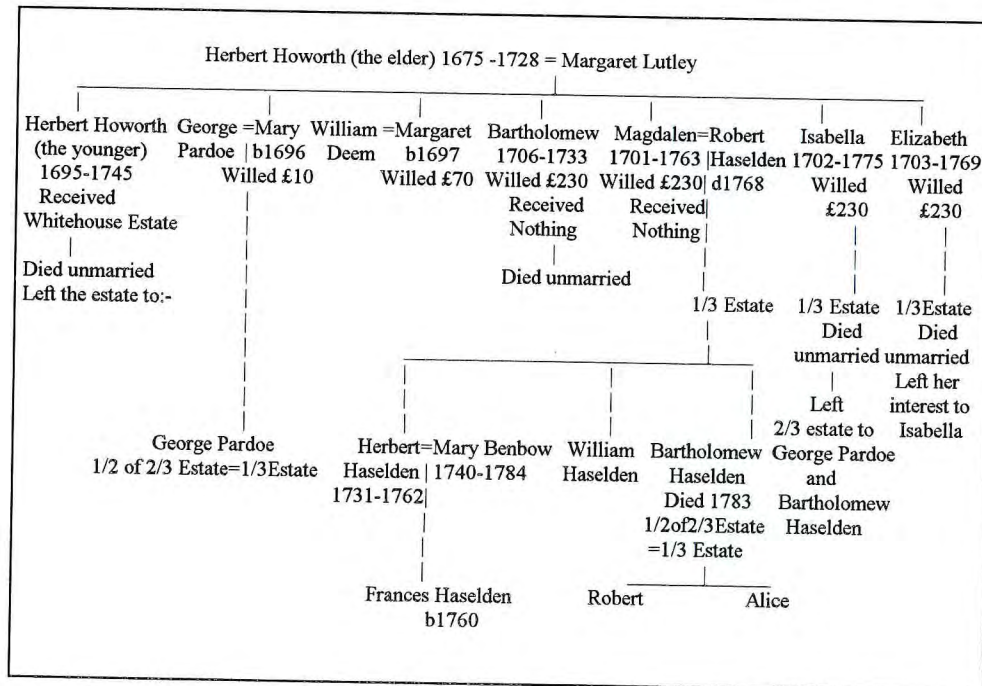
When Elizabeth died in 1769 she left her interest in the estate to her sister, Isabella. She, in turn, died in 1775 and by her will divided the estate equally between her two nephews, George, son of George Pardoe, and Bartholomew Haselden, the younger son of her sister, Magdalen. Herbert Haselden, the elder son of Magdalen and Robert, had died in 1762 leaving an only daughter, Frances, who, being a minor at the time of Isabella's death, had her claim entirely ignored until many years later.

## 10 Whitehouse Ownership Disputes 1775-1811

Following the death of Isabella Howorth there was a period of much uncertainty and great dishonesty regarding the rights to and future ownership of the Whitehouse estate.

In 1784, Thomas Howorth of Worcester, the nephew of the Thomas Howorth of Worcester who had unsuccessfully claimed the estate in 1755, filed another bill. He was a great grandson of Thomas Howorth of Whitehouse and filed the bill against William Bird (a Hereford solicitor) to recover the deed of settlement made on the occasion of the marriage of Humfry Howorth of Whitehouse with Susanna Shawe. His objective was to claim the Whitehouse estate under entail but his claim was dismissed with costs in 1786.

Another more significant set of claims was about to be made, however. These related to Frances Haselden, the granddaughter and sole heiress of Magdalen Haselden (nee Howorth) who should have received one third of the Whitehouse estate under the will of her brother Herbert Howorth (the younger). It may be helpful to give a few elements of the family tree.



On the death of Bartholomew Haselden in 1783, William Bird, the Hereford solicitor endeavoured to deal with the rights of Frances Haselden to the property. This he endeavoured to do without telling her the nature of her potential claim. She was persuaded by him to execute deeds which conveyed, or joined in conveying, her rights to the real estate of Bartholomew Haselden to John Havard Apperley, and the said William Bird upon trust for Bartholomew's two children, Robert and Alice, in consideration for receiving £500. Being worried about the matter and still aged only 24, she contacted William Wood, her future husband about it in 1784. Because of her worries, he asked another Hereford solicitor, William Downes, to investigate and act on her behalf.

William Downes duly discovered that the true inheritors of the Whitehouse estate, in one third shares, should be George Pardoe (by the will of Isabella Howorth), Mr. Apperley as trustee for Bartholomew Haselden's children (again through the will of Isabella Howorth) and Frances Haselden, as the daughter of Herbert Haselden, the eldest son of Magdalen Haselden nee Howorth (by the will of Herbert Howorth). William Downes did not, however, acquaint Frances Haselden or William Wood with the true facts. Instead he formed a scheme for acquiring the estate himself. He assured William Wood that formidable and endless suits would be necessary to deal with the encumbrances on the estate quite apart from the problems in dealing with the other tenants-in-common.

In 1789, Downes made a ten day journey with William Wood to Lancashire to see the Haselden relatives and, in an agreement dated 25 August 1789, William Wood, in conjunction with William Haselden and others, undertook a suit to try the title of the Whitehouse estate against George Pardoe. In 1790 Downes made several trips to Ludlow and elsewhere to negotiate with the Pardoes and other people. In 1790 he obtained possession of George Pardoe's share for the sum of £1300. He then settled the pretended mortgage claimed by Somerset Davies for £630. In the following year, he contracted with William Wood to buy Frances' share for the sum of £1100 in an illegal agreement to which the unfortunate William was sworn to secrecy.

William Downes was, however, unsuccessful in his attempts to purchase from Mr. Apperley the share held by Bartholomew Haselden's children. In 1795 he filed a bill for ejectment against Apperley, in the name of Somerset Davies and, obtaining a judgement in his favour, gained possession of the whole of the Whitehouse estate. William Downes remained in possession of the estate for the next fourteen years, receiving rents and profits and selling timber to the value of £12,000.

William Downes had not, however, paid to William Wood and Frances the full £1100 covered in the 1791 agreement. Under the terms of this agreement, William Downes did pay the agreed initial sum of £100. Downes, at his own risk and expense, was then

to sue for the property then withheld and, when it was recovered by law or compromise, pay William Wood £1,000, defray his own expenses and any balance was to be shared equally. On learning that Downes had secured George Pardoe's share, William Wood claimed £500 from Downes. He was only paid £400 and that under protest "that the whole had not yet been recovered."

Nevertheless, William Wood still had confidence in Downes and, in 1803, when William and Frances were living at Leominster, apparently in modest circumstances, according to another Hereford solicitor, Mr Fallowes: "*Downes, who had never before gone beyond presenting them a little game, or such small beer, sent a cart with a dead fat pig, and ten bushels of old wheat, accompanied by a pleasant bantering letter, beginning with 'My Ambassador the Pig'.*"

Patronage of this type embarrassed Frances Wood, and as the duplicity and cupidity of Downes became clear to her, she prevailed upon her husband to consult the Hereford solicitor, Mr. Fallowes, and request that he should make a thorough investigation of the Whitehouse estate and call Mr. Downes to account for his proceedings. The choice of Mr. Fallowes proved most fortunate. An able and honourable man, he advised and encouraged William Wood to waste no time in suing Downes. It was decided to institute a case and in the ensuing years he was indefatigable in sifting evidence and preparing their cause.

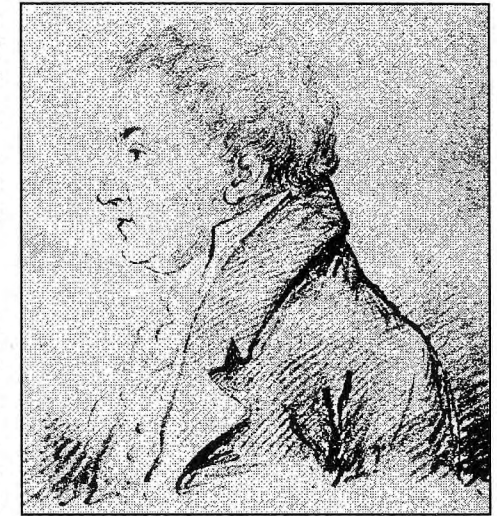
The case was heard before the Lord Chancellor, Lord Eldon, in July and August 1811, occupying six days. Judgement was pronounced in favour of William and Frances. The main points of the decree ordered that:

- I: The contract made between Wood and Downes was void, and should be given up and cancelled.
- ii: The conveyance should stand as security for the money and costs of purchase.
- iii: Downes to have his costs as solicitor
- iv: Downes to refund with costs (£12,000 to £15,000 estimated) and completely to lose the estate
- v: Apperley and parties to redeem on payment of £210
- vi: The estate was to be placed under the temporary management of a Master Extraordinary and all deeds, documents etc. were to be surrendered.

The heavy damages assessed against Downes covered the proceeds of the sale of timber, the rents he had withheld having collected them, and the consequences of the neglect and bad management of the Whitehouse estate.

## 12. WILLIAM WOOD 1758-1833

**William Wood**, who was born on 18 October 1758, was the only son of Nicholas Wood, freeman of the City of Hereford, and Ann (formerly Ann Seward). The family lived at Hereford and Nicholas, a baker, owned valuable property in, and on the outskirts of, the city.



William Wood

William married Frances Haselden at St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, on the 15 April 1787. In a legal document in 1789 he is described as of Little Russell Street, in the Parish of St. George, Bloomsbury, cyder merchant. In another document a project to manufacture casks is mentioned, presumably in connection with the cider business.

Both William Wood and his wife had some antecedents of considerable interest. Frances Haselden's mother, Mary Benbow, was the great niece of Admiral John Benbow, a formidable character who died in 1702 in the West Indies having sustained severe injuries in a sea battle against the French. He was sufficiently known to feature as the name of the public house in "Treasure Island".

William Wood's mother, Anne Seward, was the great granddaughter of a certain Isaac Seward of Leominster who had two wives. With his first wife, he had four children and, with his second wife, no less than twenty four. All twenty eight children were simultaneously living in the early 17th century. Her grandfather, William Seward, one of those twenty eight children, married Elizabeth Smyth. Elizabeth Smyth was the granddaughter of Mary Hereford whose forebears were some of the High Sheriffs of Hereford in Norman times.

A few years after they were married, William and Frances moved to Church Street, Leominster. They had eight children, seven daughters and a son. The two eldest daughters were born in London, one at Hereford, and the four youngest at Leominster. Their only son, William Seward Wood, was born at Leominster on 10 December 1793.

Meanwhile, William had been pursuing the suit in relation to the ownership of the Whitehouse estate. On the successful outcome of the litigation, William and Frances decided to remove nearly half the late 16th century timber framed and plaster fronted Whitehouse. It had been in a bad state of repair and, twenty or more years earlier, was said to be in a ruinous condition. An 1811 sketch of the old building shows heavy timber props placed against the walls to prevent collapse.

There was a proposal to demolish the whole house and build a new one on a site about two hundred yards to the North at a lower level and adjacent to the original drive. That plan was not carried out and, instead, only the two North East gables were removed and, on the cleared site, the new North and East fronts were built with stone and timber produced on the estate. The remaining Tudor portion was extensively remodelled, so that only the three gabled North elevation, and a part of the South side retain the original features.



**The remaining Tudor part of Whitehouse**

William Wood carried out other alterations such as erecting a range of outbuildings and demolishing a block of stables and barns situated in front of the house. A “sunk” fence was excavated around two sides of the garden, and a drive made affording a more direct approach with an easier gradient from the main road. The Slough brook

was crossed by a substantial stone bridge (built at a cost of £80) whereas the previous drive had nothing more than a fording place.

Trees of many varieties were planted in the ground near the house and bordering the drive. Some of these, including beech, scots and silver firs, larch and wellingtonia, have grown to a great size while others have been felled from time to time because of excessive shading of the house or obstruction of the view.

Towards the end of the 18th century, the Whitehouse estate must have been heavily wooded. A valuation in 1796 indicated that there was £15,024 worth standing, the bulk of it being oak with a much lower proportion of ash, wych elm and so on. A valuation in 1806 indicated a value of £20,966. In 1812-13, at the time William Wood was building the new part of Whitehouse, he decided to have marked for sale about 3,300 trees valued at nearly £27,000. At the same time, almost an identical number of trees, which would have been of a smaller size, were marked to stand (i.e. be preserved).

During this period, the Napoleonic wars had created a keen demand for timber of shipbuilding quality. An auctioneer’s poster, from 1813, announced a sale to be held on 5th March 1813 at the City Arms Hotel, Hereford. It was headed **“Navy Timber of prime quality, very great lengths, and extraordinary dimensions, situated in the Whitehouse Estate 6 miles from Canon Bridge from whence down the navigable River Wye, it may be conveyed to any of the Ports or Yards of the Kingdom”**. One oak of exceptional length and straightness was transported by road to a point at the coast near Tenby and erected for fixing a lantern at the top to guide mariners out to sea.

It is understandable that William Wood required a considerable amount of cash in 1812 and the next few years. There are records of many hundreds of pounds being spent in building and repairs on the estate and in discharging debts and advances which were due to the heirs of Bartholomew Haselden and George Pardoe and also to his lawyers and other advisers.

In 1812, the estate was 595 acres, including Whitehouse, Cothill, Slough, Broomylooms, Lower Gilvach, Great and Blackpool woods and cottages at Turnastone. As far as can be gathered, William Wood and his family settled in Whitehouse during 1814, but part of the house was shared by a tenant farmer. In 1816, the Whitehouse land, together with Cothill Farm was let on a seven year lease to Richard Skyrme for £410 per annum. The new wing of Whitehouse, and some other buildings, were reserved for the landlord.

William, who had become a J.P. and a deputy lieutenant for the County of Hereford, then lived at Whitehouse with his wife, Frances, until she died and was buried at Vowchurch in 1830. William died in March, 1833 and was also buried at Vowchurch. On the East wall of the chancel of the church is a marble monument to the memory of him and his wife.

In his will dated 11 February 1833, he left his estate of Whitehouse and his properties at Hereford, Holmer and in London to his only son, William Seward Wood. The estate was also charged with the sum of £12,000 for William Seward Wood to divide equally between William's six surviving daughters, only one of whom was then married.

### 13. WILLIAM SEWARD WOOD 1793 - 1862

**William Seward Wood, 1793-1862**, qualified as an attorney-at-law but he does not appear to have practised as such. William Seward was a J.P. and deputy lieutenant for the County of Hereford and was admitted a Freeman of the city of Hereford in 1817.

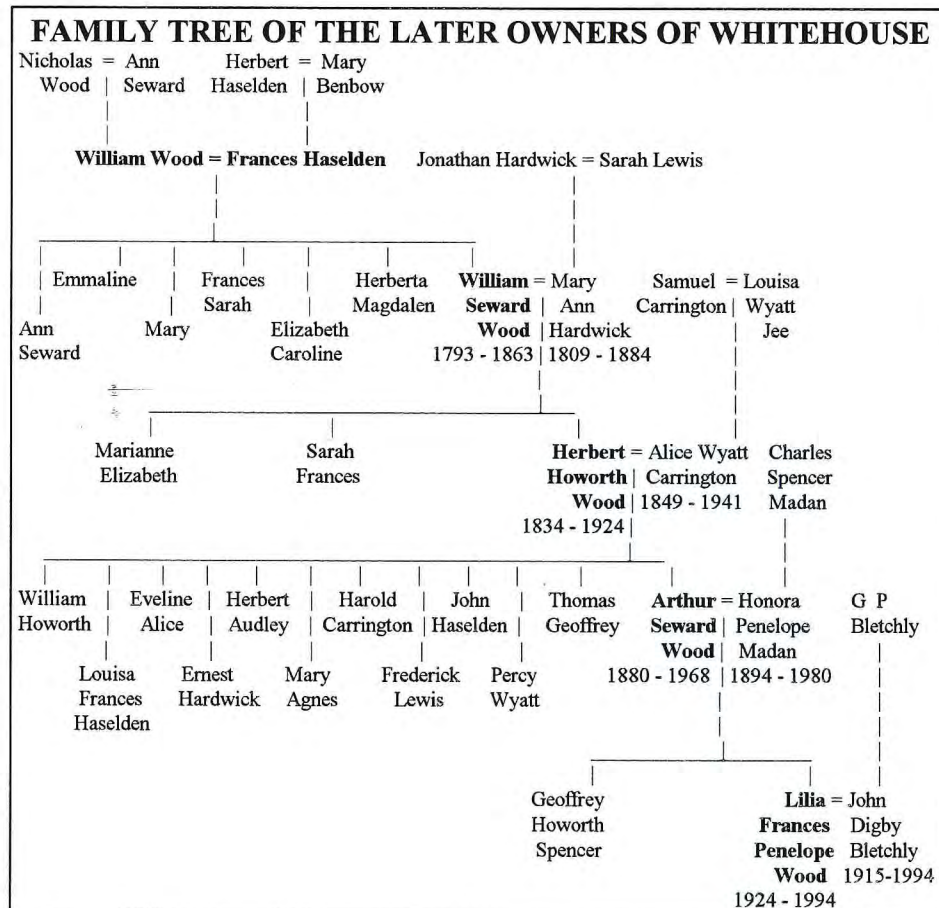
An interesting sidelight on William Seward's life was his fondness for walking. His most notable achievement was to travel to Bath, via Monmouth, Chepstow and ferry across the Severn between 4a.m. and 10p.m. the same day. In 1820, he undertook a two month walking journey and, while travelling, he wrote a fascinating journal. Starting out from Hereford, he walked through Worcester, Birmingham and Nottingham and onwards through Derbyshire to York where he attended a service at York Minster. He went on to Ripon via the petrifying well at Knaresborough and then crossed the Pennines to Lancaster visiting Fountains Abbey and Bolton Abbey on the way. He then travelled on through the Lake District to the Scottish Borders where, having an introduction to Sir Walter Scott, he and his friend John Wathen called at Abbotsford and stayed to lunch. He then proceeded on to Edinburgh, Fort William and Glasgow where, after covering over 1,000 miles, he took a steam packet to Liverpool, and by coach and walking he returned to Hereford.

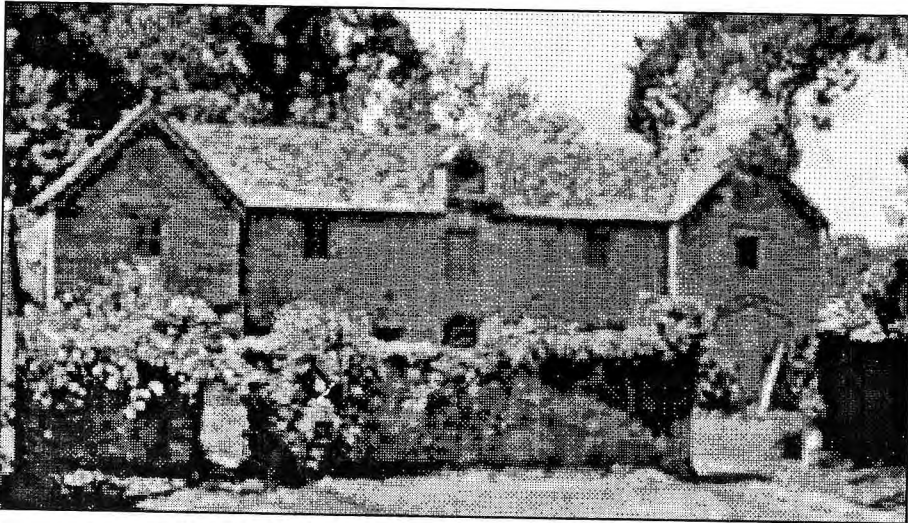
At the age of 40, he inherited the Whitehouse estate, and on the 1 August of the same year, 1833, he married Mary Ann, the only daughter and heiress of Jonathan Hardwick of Lulham, Madley, Herefordshire. They had one son, Herbert Howorth, born 2 May 1834, and two daughters, Marianne Elizabeth, born 12 December 1835, and Sarah Frances, born 11 May 1843.



Mary Ann Wood

William Seward Wood sold all the Hereford and London properties but acquired a 306 acre half share in Dolward Farm and later acquired the other half from a distant relative. Cothill farm house was added to the old cottage in 1839 and the stable and cider mill block at Whitehouse was built in 1843.





**Whitehouse cider mill and stable block built in 1843**

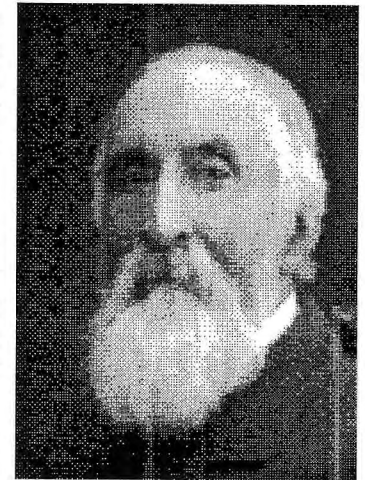
Among other public offices held by William Seward was a trusteeship of the turnpike road from Peterchurch to the Bowling Green, 4 miles from Hereford. When portions of the road were being realigned, he made strenuous efforts to have it carried through the Holstey Gap and thus avoid the long uphill gradient of the Batcho Hill. However, the governors of Guy's Hospital refused to sell any and the project fell through. However the road was improved from the previous condition which was so bad that parts of it in winter time were almost impassable to wheeled vehicles and drovers of animals had to walk along the field sides and rely upon their dogs to urge the animals forward.

William Seward Wood was a very big man and was said to have weighed 19 stone at middle age. He attended the Great Exhibition at Hyde Park in 1851. Among the novelties was a personal weighing machine, on to which he stepped having paid the penny charge. The attendant then said "You are the heaviest gentleman so far weighed. You can have your penny back!"

He died on 11 April 1862 at Lawncroft, Hereford, which had been bought as a residence for his sisters. He was buried at Vowchurch. His wife died in 1884 and there is a monument to their memory on the North Wall of the chancel of Vowchurch.

#### **14. HERBERT HOWORTH WOOD 1834-1924**

**Herbert Howorth Wood, 1834-1924**, was educated at Shrewsbury School and St John's College, Oxford. He married Alice Wyatt, the youngest daughter of Samuel Carrington of Cheltenham on 1 August 1867. They had nine sons and three daughters.



**Herbert Howorth Wood**

Herbert Howorth resided at Whitehouse all his life. He was a J.P. and deputy lieutenant for the County of Hereford as well as being an original member of Herefordshire County Council and latterly an alderman. He was also an hereditary freeman of the city of Hereford.

He served on many public bodies, including Dore Board of Guardians and Rural District Council, local charity trusts, and school managers.

The building of the Golden Valley Railway was one of his chief interests in middle life. He and his contemporary local landowners, Rev Thomas Powell of Dorstone, Gavin Robinson of Poston House, Capt. Freke Lewis of Abbeydore Court, and Sir George Cornewall, Bt. of Moccas Court ensured that any land required for the construction of the line running through their estates was granted free of cost to the company. The first ticket, No. 1, issued at Pontrilas, on the opening day of the railway in 1885, was taken by William Howorth Wood, his eldest son.

Financially the venture was a failure and on numerous occasions required financial and other help from local landowners and other supporters of the service. In 1883, this resulted in Herbert Howorth Wood becoming the part owner of a railway engine which was then hired to the Golden Valley Railway Company. The engine was a 2-4-0 side tank, a "Crewe Goods" converted to a tank engine, and purchased from the London and North Western Railway for £700. Eventually, after the loss of much money by investors, the Golden Valley Railway was taken over by the Great Western Railway from 1 July 1899. Although it then ran rather more successfully for some time, British Railways dismantled the track in 1952-54 and offered to sell the land to the adjoining owners.

In conjunction with other local residents, Herbert Howorth Wood founded the Vowchurch and Turnastone school in 1872 assisted by a grant from the National

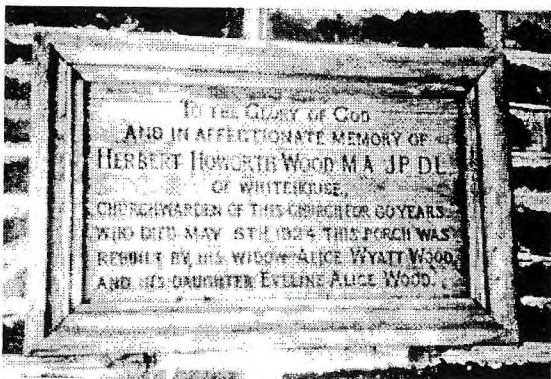
Society. A difficulty arose about the selected site, on which a tithe barn originally stood, as the Church Commissioners were unwilling to sell it. The difficulty was overcome when Herbert Howorth offered to give in exchange another piece of land of equal area free of cost. This piece of land was in the Turnastone Parish and much later was purchased by the Whitehouse estate.

Herbert Howorth Wood also took an active part in restorations to St Margarets Church and in the foundation of Newton Church.

Herbert Howorth Wood's children departed to many parts of the world. His eldest son William Howorth Wood served as a major in the Boer war in which he was awarded the MC. After some time in South Africa, he eventually moved on to Kenya where he died in Nairobi in 1936. The third son, Herbert Audley Wood, also went to South Africa, where he died at Kroonstad in 1945. The fifth son, Harold Carrington Wood, spent much time in Germany. Frederick Lewis Wood was sent to Australia and the seventh, John Haselden Wood, emigrated to Canada, living there until he died in Hamilton, Ontario in 1958, while the youngest, Thomas Geoffrey Wood, after serving with the South Wales Borderers in Salonica in the first world war, then spent twenty years working in forestry in Nigeria before returning to Britain in 1942.

Herbert Howorth Wood died on the 5 May 1924 and was buried at Vowchurch. He was survived by his wife and all his children. His wife, Alice Wyatt, died on the 19 December 1941 at Hereford and was also buried at Vowchurch. A tablet to their memory is placed on the South wall of the nave.

Herbert Howorth Wood's will did not provide for the estate to pass to his eldest son, Major William Howorth Wood MC, who was living in East Africa. It provided that, following his and his wife's death, it should be offered for purchase to each son in turn with the benefits of the purchase being passed to the family as a whole. Through this arrangement, Arthur Seward Wood, the fourth son of Herbert Howorth Wood, acquired by purchase the Whitehouse estate in 1943.



Plaque in the porch of St Margarets Church

## 15. ARTHUR SEWARD WOOD 1880 -1968

Arthur Seward Wood was born at Whitehouse on 17 February 1880. He was educated at Hereford County School and the School of Mines. On 15 October 1921 he married Honora Penelope Madan, the daughter of Charles Spencer Madan. They had two children, Lilia Frances Penelope Wood who was born on 9 June 1924 and Geoffrey Howorth Spencer Wood who was born on 12 August 1927.

Arthur Wood devoted his energies to management of the Whitehouse estate from the time of the death of his father in 1924. He and Honora had a house, Ladywell, built for them on the estate and from there they were able to maintain a close watch and interest in the work of the estate and also in the affairs of Vowchurch more generally.

During the second world war, the main part of Whitehouse was vacated in favour of a school. Alice Wyatt Wood, Arthur's mother therefore did not die at Whitehouse but died in Hereford on 19 December 1941. Whitehouse was never thereafter lived in by members of the Wood family.

Arthur and Honora Wood hoped that their son, Geoffrey Wood would inherit the estate. He was educated at Clayesmore School, Blandford, and Keble College, Oxford, where he obtained degrees in both forestry and botany. Tragically he was fatally burnt in a camp fire while pursuing botanical research in Kuala Belait, Brunei. As a result, after Arthur's death on 20 January 1968, the Whitehouse estate was managed by Honora, his widow until her death on 26 February 1980 when the estate passed to their only surviving child Penelope Bletchly. Ladywell House, in which Arthur and Honora had lived for most of their married life was left by Honora to her elder grandson, Arthur Bletchly.

## 16. LILIA FRANCES PENELOPE BLETCHLY 1924 - 1994

Lilia Frances Penelope Bletchly was the elder child of Arthur and Honora Wood. She was born on 9 June 1924 and was educated at Tregoed School, Breconshire, and the University College of Wales. She married John Digby Bletchly on 22 April 1950. They spent most of their married life in Little Kimble, Buckinghamshire and had two children, Lawrence Arthur John Bletchly, born in 1952, and Francis Edward John Bletchly, born in 1956.

After Penelope's mother died, the Bletchlys moved to Dorstone, Herefordshire for a brief period but after various difficulties decided to return to live in Buckinghamshire. Shortly thereafter, in the mid 1980s, they decided to sell Whitehouse and the farms but retained most of the woodland which had been part of the estate.

## APPENDIX

### 1 Further notes on the Parry family:

In the 16th century, branches of the Parry family were living at Poston, Newcourt, Morehampton, Dulas, Wormbridge, Kingston, Hinton in Peterchurch and Moore (or Whitehouse), but during the reign of Elizabeth, James Parry of Poston on marrying Jane Morgan of Llandevaillog-tregraig, County Brecon, returned to the county of his ancestor and his descendants continued to live there until recent times. As stated elsewhere, the Newcourt branch of the family ended in the two heiresses who married the Vaughans. Poston Court remained in the occupation of the descendants of James Parry by a first marriage until 1645 when it was sold to the Earl of Worcester. The civil war may have accounted for the disappearance of many of the ancient families from these parts. Morehampton was sold to Serjeant Hoskyns in 1621 and the Parrys of that branch removed to Arkstone in Kingstone where they continued to live until the death of Thomas Parry in 1774

HPW

### 2. There are many references relating to Roland Vaughan in documents in the City library in Hereford and elsewhere. Some of these are given below:

2a. Feet of Fines, Hereford E.3 Jas. I 1605 "*Between Henry Vaughan, Armiger, plaintiff and Roland Vaughan, Armiger, defendant, Manors of Backton, and Newton with perts and of the park of Newcourt with perts also of 3 messuages 1 mill 3 gardens 40 acres of land, 140 of meadow, 120 of pasture and 60/- rent with perts in Backton, St. Margarets, Newcourt and Newton*".

2b. Snodhill Manor 5 March 1606/7 deed. Conveyance of Rowland Vaughan of Whitehouse and John his son to Thomas Prosser of Mowbach of a moiety of Bullace lands, part of the Manor of Snodhill granted by George Parry by copy of court roll 31 May 1575 to George ap Richards and his sisters for their lives. A bond by John Vaughan is attached to the deed. (Under Peterchurch, City Library, Hereford)

2c. Dated 1607: a tearear (sic) of the lands and possessions belonging to the Rectory of Turneston contains Rowland Vaughan's name three times, spelt '*Vahens*', '*Vahan*', '*Vahaen*', as having land adjoining certain glebe enclosures. (Whitehouse archives).

2d. Cardwardwine v. Vaughan 1612. 12 May. C. 2 Jas I c 4/7.

Bill of Jas Cardwardine of Basham, Co. Hereford.

Whereas Rowland Vaughan of Whitehouse, Co. Hereford, and Elizabeth his late wife about twenty seven years past were seized in their demesne as in the right of Elizabeth, of and in the Manor of Bacton, Hereford, and of one messuage called Newcourt and all that Parke called Newcourte Parke and of divers other lands, meadows, etc. in the Parish of Bacton.

And the said Elizabeth in performance of the agreement made with Rowland Vaughan before their marriage together with Rowland Vaughan her husband by Indenture between Rowland Vaughan and Elizabeth and Roger Vaughan of Cliro, Radnor, Esquire, and Henry Vaughan of Bredwardine Esquire dated 1 Aug. 26 Eliz: 1584 did covenant to levy a fine of said manor, etc.

to Roger Vaughan and Henry Vaughan, and to the heirs of their bodies and in default of issue to the right heirs of Rowland Vaughan and the Fine was levied in the next Term by force whereof the said Rowland and Elizabeth were duly seized of said manor etc.

And they have issue John Vaughan son and heir and other children and after the said Elizabeth died... Since whose decease that is about one year past the said Rowland Vaughan and John Vaughan in consideration of £3,000 paid by your orator, did sell manor and lordship of Bacton with park etc. together with deeds, etc. (Extracted from B & B papers, City Library, Hereford).

2e. Chancery Proceedings C.2 Jas I H 16/3 1618 Feby. 8. Herbert v Vaughan.

Wm. Herbert of Oldstock, Monmouthshire, claimed ownership of Herbert's Dayeries (house and land) in Craswell and in consideration of £600 did convey to Rowland Vaughan.

Said Rowland Vaughan having made some estate to Henry Vaughan his brother, refused to allow redemption, etc. Rowland Vaughan stated that among others, Kynnard Delaber Esq. had £200 invested in the property. Agreed that Wm. Herbert should convey to Rowland Vaughan the property on payment of £600 at his house called Newcourt Lodge in the Parish of Bacton on All Saints Day 1597. (Pitman Papers Vol, 5 City Library, Hereford)

2f. In 1623, Rowland Vaughan brought a suit in Chancery against John Walcot, in which he describes himself as late of Whitehouse in the County of Hereford, Esq, and recites that the defendant, late of Sherborne, Dorsetshire, took to wife one Joan Wynston, one of the daughters of Sir Hy. Wynston, of Standish, Gloucestershire, Kt. deceased, without the consent of her father or Rowland Vaughan he being Uncle on the mother's side (and her guardian) she having a portion of £1500 in land and money. (Bradford "An Unknown Elizabethan")

2g. Feb. 11 1629 Feoffment between Henry Vaughan of Mockas, Esq., John Walcot, Esq., and John Vaughan, Gent. on the one part and Epiphan Howorth of Whitehouse, Esq. and Blanche his wife of the other part being a conveyance in consideration of a competent sum of money, etc. for the Manor of Jenkin ap Richard alias Newton and all lands thereto belonging, and several Farms, Houses, etc. in Newton, St. Margarets, Clodock, Bacton, Turnastone and Vowchurch, and all the lands and tenements which Rowland Vaughan thentfore purchased of John Parry of Poston, Esq., etc. and all the lands, etc. which were the Manors of the said Rowland Vaughan, decd. Father of John and brother of Henry, which had been conveyed by the said Rowland and John to Wm. Pennymore Esq., etc. etc... To the uses of said Epiphan Howorth and wife as joint tenants in Fee. (Whitehouse archives).

2h. The marriage settlement drawn up between Humfry Howorth and James Shaw dated 28 Sept. 1647, Elizabeth and Catherine, daughters of Rowland Vaughan of Whitehouse by Anne his wife, are described as his heirs:- their brother Richard being deceased.

**3. A reissue in 1897 of Rowland Vaughan's book on waterworks** contained an introduction by Miss E. B. Wood (no relation to the owners of Whitehouse) which suggested that no vestige of the waterworks remained. This was quite wrong. In 1943, Mrs L.F.P. Bletchley made a comprehensive survey of all the recognisable watercourses between the Trenant Brook and Newcourt and in the Whitehouse area and incorporated them in a report and plan.



**4. The transfer of property by "fine"** was abolished in 1833. Previously it could take the form of a collusive action to recover the land to be alienated, in which the defendant acknowledged the plaintiff's title. Thus, if you sold to Mr Smith under this old method, Mr Smith would have to commence an action in the High Court against you for the land, alleging that it was his. He would obtain judgement accordingly. It appears to have been a fairly common practice, and provided a means of surmounting difficulties in relation to the transfer of land, which, for instance, might be settled land.

**5. The spellings of Vowchurch** over the years have been many. They include: Bowchurch, Cowchurch, Dowchurch, Foochurch, Fowerchurch, Fowchurch, Howchurch, and Nowchurch. "Vow" may be derived from the old English "fag" meaning mottled or many coloured or it could simply mean dedicated to a deity.

**6. In Vowchurch church** on the easternmost pillar on the South side of the nave is a painted shield bearing the initials "R.V." (Rowland Vaughan and dated 1613). Hung on the east side of the screen is a Howorth shield. The latter, together with a number of other shields of former incumbents and local families, was placed in the church in about 1840 by the Rev Bersford Lowther, vicar of Vowchurch.

**7. At Whitehouse** in the 1950s there were large oil portraits of Herbert Howorth (the elder), Margaret Lutley and Isaac Seward of Leominster.