

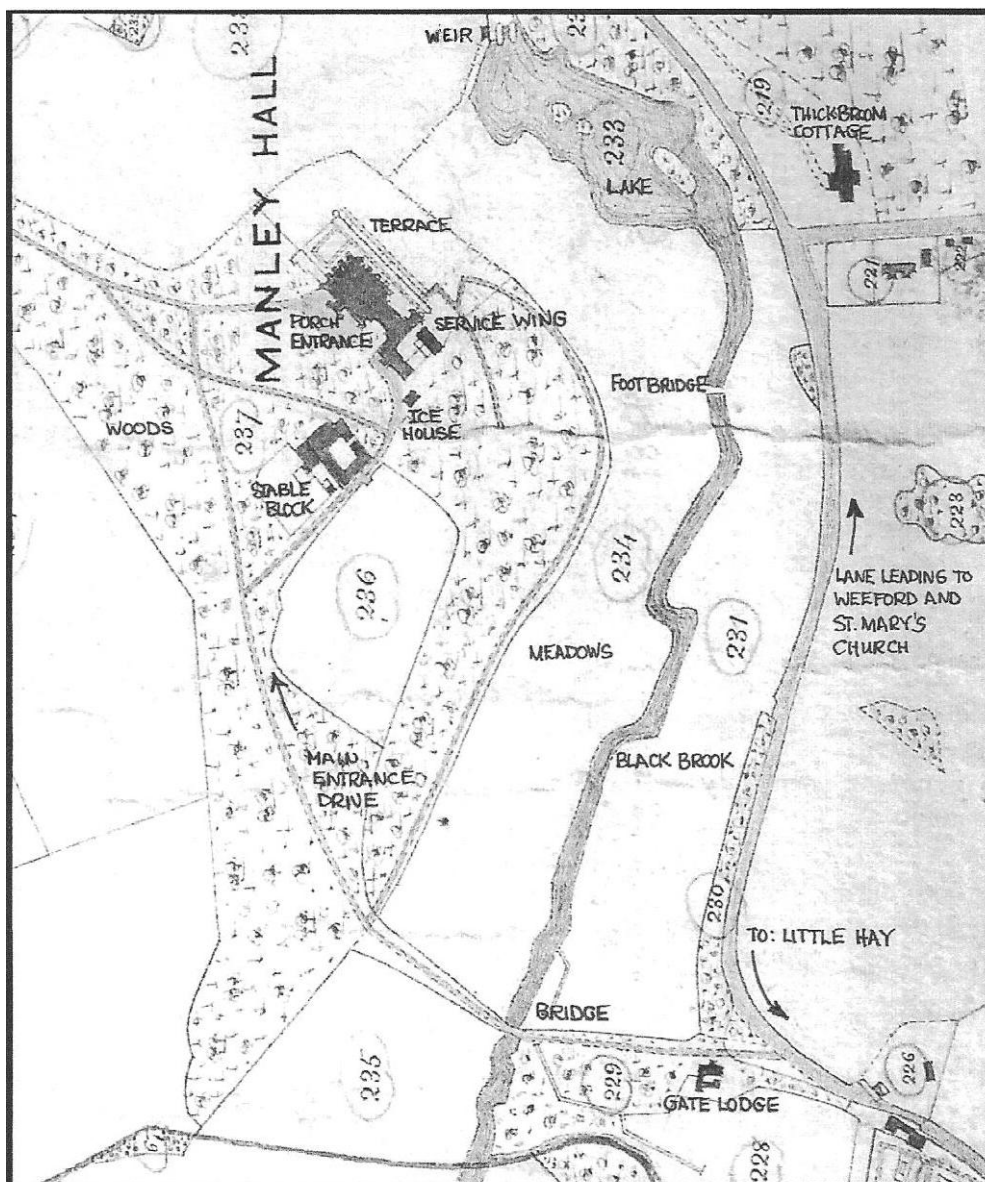
MANLEY HALL & THE MANLEY FAMILY



REAR ELEVATION OF MANLEY HALL CIRCA 1940's.

BY
KEITH JORDAN
(A member of Sutton Coldfield Local History Research Group)

2013



PLAN OF MANLEY HALL AND PART OF THE ESTATE DRAWN UP BY EDWIN HEATON 1868.

INTRODUCTION

I first became aware of the existence of Manley Hall as long ago as 1998, when I was involved in researching an old property situated near to the Weeford Road/London Road junction, which was known as 'Boundary Cottage'. Later the cottage was to come into prominence during the construction of the M6 (Toll) Relief Road.

At this point in time it was unoccupied, due to the fact its position lay directly in the path of the proposed motorway and it had, much earlier, become the subject of a Compulsory Purchase Order under the direction of the Department of Transport.

Anti-road protestors, who were known locally as 'eco-warriors', broke into 'Boundary Cottage' on the 9th March 1998 and, for a period, they were almost constantly in the news as they fought the Government, the Motorway Contractors and the High Court, in an attempt to halt the construction of the Toll Road.

During my research into the property, which was completed towards the end of 2008, (please refer to '*A History of Boundary Cottage, Weeford*'. Ref: BCOL Q942.46 BOU – Sutton Coldfield Library) I discovered that it had been situated on the extreme southern edge of a large country estate. Subsequent investigation revealed this estate was owned by the Manley family.

However, before I could delve further into this interesting development, my attention was diverted down another avenue involving a residence in the Four Oaks area, which proved to be absolutely fascinating (please refer to '*A History of Chalford, Belwell Lane, Sutton Coldfield, including the families who lived there*' – Birmingham Central Library).

This project took until the middle of 2011 to bring to fruition and it was only at this junction that I was able to re-visit the subject of Manley Hall and its inhabitants.

Over the past two and a half years, like most local history research, I found the experience to be extremely rewarding with several unexpected and startling twists becoming apparent along the way.

Many happy hours were spent delving into material held at Lichfield and Stafford Record Offices. Considerably more time was taken up researching on the world-wide web, including the informative ancestry.co.uk and the britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk sites.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to offer my special thanks to the Reverend Fiona Haskett of St. Mary's Church, Weeford, who freely gave of her time and put up with my endless questions with patience and good humour.

I hope readers will enjoy being taken on this journey into the past and the opening of a small window into the thoughts and deeds of our ancestors.

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MANLEY HALL & THE MANLEY FAMILY

CHAPTER 1 THE EARLY DAYS

Our story begins almost 1,000 years ago, when a Norman knight and his supporters crossed the channel and landed upon our shores at a place named Pevensey Bay, near Hastings on the south coast.

As we all know from our school days, the year was 1066 and the subsequent conflict between William the Conqueror, as he was later to become known, and King Harold ended with the English king lying dead on the battlefield.

One of William's followers that day was **John Manley** and he was subsequently granted lands for his '*distinguished assistance*'. His family seat was first found in Cheshire and his coat of arms traces its origin to a registration in the 'Battle Abbey Roll'.



MANLEY COAT OF ARMS.

The family's Latin motto on the Coat of Arms reads '*Manus Haec Inimica Tyrannis*' which translated means 'This hand is hostile to tyrants'. It is thought to have been brought back by one of their ancestors, who came home from fighting in the Crusades.

The 'Battle Abbey Roll' is purported to have been a commemorative list, lost since at least the 16th century, of the 'Companions in Arms of William the Conqueror' which was erected or affixed as a memorial within Battle Abbey, near Hastings.

Various spelling variations of the Manley name were commonplace, even among the most literate of people at the time and the following examples include:-
Manly, Mandly, Mandley & Mannley.

The family, one of the most ancient of the landed gentry of England, is mentioned in 'Holinshed's Chronicles'. Their records and pedigree commence in the year 1157 and have been continued, without interruption, until the present time.

The following brief resumé provides an indication of the power and influence which the family possessed through the centuries.

During the reign of Henry II, **Roger Manley** was the head of the family. As mentioned earlier, his seat was in Cheshire, where his descendants continued to reside for many centuries. They are often mentioned in the histories of that county, having filled the office of sheriff during the reign of Edward III and in many subsequent reigns.

About the year 1520, the Manley's moved from Cheshire to Erbistock in Denbighshire, where they lived for approximately 200 years, in a property which still belongs to the family. The old Hall, however, became dilapidated and has now been converted into a farmhouse.

In the reign of James I, **Sir Richard Manley**, who is mentioned in 'The Life of Lord Clarendon', was controller of the household to Henry, Prince of Wales and a member of the 'Board of Green Cloth'.

This was a board of officials belonging to the Royal Household and it took its name from the green baize that covered the table at which its members sat. It audited the accounts of the Royal Household and made arrangements for royal travel and sat as a court to hear offences committed within the boundaries of the palace.

During the reign of Charles I, **Sir Francis Manley**, who was born in the 1620's at Erbistock, became one of the judges of Wales and married Dorothea Eyton, a daughter of Sir Gerard Eyton. They had one son, **Cornelius Manley**, born between 1650 & 1660, who was later made Constable of Harlech Castle by Charles II. Cornelius left an only daughter named Rebecca, who married the Reverend J Laurence, but she died without having children. **Sir Francis Manley** died on the 17th June 1693.

Sir Francis Manley had two brothers, **Sir Robert Manley**, a captain in Charles II's regiment of guards and Governor of Languard Fort, which is still in existence and is situated close to the port of Felixstowe in Suffolk. He died without issue. In contrast, the other brother, **John Manley**, served on the opposite side as a major in Cromwell's army and afterwards became a Member of Parliament for Bridport and subsequently Postmaster-General in the reign of William III.

John Manley married Margaret, daughter of Isaac Dorislaus, who was later murdered at The Hague, when he was serving as Ambassador to the States of Holland.

The couple had two sons, the elder being another **John Manley**, who became the Member of Parliament for Truro and later on for Bossiney. He also achieved the post of Surveyor General to Queen Ann.

The younger son, **Isaac Manley**, became Postmaster-General in Ireland, during the reign of William III. He married Mary, daughter of William Newland of 'Nursells', Hertfordshire. They had one son, yet another **John Manley** (1683-1743), who became a Commissioner for Customs in London. He married Mary Sedgwick the second daughter of William Sedgwick.

CHAPTER 2 JOHN MANLEY

John Manley and Mary (nee Sedgwicke) had one son, also named **John Manley**, who was born in 1716. He attended Exeter College, Oxford and matriculated on the 6th March 1734 aged 18. He later married Anne, daughter and co-heir of Thomas Hammond of London. He became a successful barrister and was made a bencher of the Middle Temple in London in 1768. He later became Treasurer in 1781. John Manley's shield, with the 'Black Hand', can still be viewed in Middle Temple Hall.

Mr Manley was also a man of property, some of it acquired through various legal actions!

According to the Rev. Stebbing Shaw in his '*History and Antiquities of Staffordshire*', John Manley was involved in a famous law suit in connection with the Manor of Weeford. It seems that a William Betts of Epsom, Surrey by Will dated the 20th October 1737, devised all his real and personal estate to John Manley and John Robins as his executors, so that they might dispose of it as follows:-

They were to pay to Mrs Frances Harrison, widow of the late Edward Harrison, Governor of Fort St. George in the East Indies, the sum of £400 per annum for life; and after her death £400 per annum to her daughter Frances, during her lifetime; and after the death of Frances, the daughter, the testator to give £400 per annum to the Hon. Miss Audrey Townshend, the daughter of Lord Townshend, and her heirs forever.

William Betts died, without altering his Will, the following March.

When the Will was proved, it transpired that he had a very small real and copyhold estate, and a very large personal estate; and the legatees, Mrs Harrison, the widow, and Miss Frances Harrison, the daughter, on their accounts, and the Hon. Miss Audrey Townshend, who was then an infant, by her next friend, Lord Townshend, filed a bill against the executors, praying that a sufficient sum of money should be laid out in land to secure the payment of the annuities. The executors filed a reply admitting that they were ready and willing to do this.

The case came before the Lord Chancellor, who decreed that the lands should be purchased. Estates were accordingly purchased in 1747, one at Dodleston, Cheshire, and the other at Weeford and Thickbroom and conveyed to John Manley in trust, to pay the said annuities; the remainder of the income was to be divided between the heirs of John Manley and John Robins (the latter being now deceased).

From 1747 until after the Hon. Miss Audrey Townshend came of age, and was married to Captain Orme, no alteration (except by the deaths of Mrs Frances Harrison, the widow, and Miss Frances Harrison, the daughter), was made with regard to the annuity. In 1768 Captain Orme and his wife sold the annuity to Mr John Manley and the estates were conveyed to the Hon. J Peachy and Mr J Edison, as trustees for Mr Manley and his family.

Meanwhile, the family of the late Mr John Robins had become scattered and Mr Manley was in treaty with them for the purchase of their part of Weeford, when Sir Robert Lawley, who then resided at nearby Canwell Hall, hearing of the shares being disposed of, quickly purchased some and gave notice of the transactions to Mr Boydell, who was Mr Manley's land agent. Upon hearing of this Mr Manley decided to have no further dealings with the Robins' family and Sir Robert Lawley purchased the whole of their interest.

In 1778 Sir Robert filed a bill in Chancery against Mr John Manley for a division of the estates. The case was heard on the 3rd February 1780, when the Judge declared that Mr Manley was to be considered as a trustee for the persons deriving under the said Robins, as to one moiety of the estates; and as to the other moiety, the said Manley was to be considered as a trustee for himself and his family. He also ordered that the annuity of £400 should remain charged on the estates and Sir Robert Lawley and Mr John Manley should execute mutual conveyances and releases to each other. For the purpose of avoiding expenses which would be incurred by a commission, the two parties agreed that Mr Richard Hill of Cheadle, should draw up a plan and valuation of the properties as a whole and divide it in two and that they should meet on the 24th June 1780 at the residence of Sarah Wyatt, known as

Blackbrook Farm, in the town of Weeford and should cast lots as to which should have the choice, one to have the farm and hall at Dodleston and the other the Weeford farm.

The choice fell to Sir Robert Lawley, who chose Lot A, which contained 1,202 acres at Dodleston and Lot B, which contained 1,318 acres at Weeford, went to Mr John Manley.

Almost certainly, John Manley's legal training as a barrister would have been of immense value to him over this long drawn out saga.

It must also have been a very interesting meeting between the two parties at the end and one wonders whether the two of them ever spoke to each other again, despite the close proximity of their respective estates!

John Manley died on the 5th September 1801 aged 85, but not before having two daughters and three sons. The eldest son was another **John Manley**, who became a Captain in the 33rd Regiment and who, during the American War of Independence, was on the staff of Lord Cornwallis. He married Catherine Lisle of 'Moyle Court', Hampshire, a descendant of the unfortunate Lady Lisle, beheaded during the reign of James II.

The younger brother, **Robert Kendrick Manley**, was born in 1763 and later also entered the army and served with Cornwallis. He married Miss Catherine Soden of County Sligo in Ireland. He died in Cheltenham in 1842 aged 79.

CHAPTER 3 ISAAC GEORGE MANLEY

The middle son, ***Isaac George Manley***, is one of the most important to this research, as he relates directly to the eventual building of Manley Hall.

It was originally thought that Isaac Manley was born in 1756, but a register later found at St. Giles in the Fields, London, showed he was baptised early in March 1755. It is not known where Isaac went to school but his handwriting shows he must have had a reasonable education.

In June 1768, at the tender age of 13, Isaac joined Captain Cook's ship the '*Endeavour*' at Deptford. He was appointed as a servant to the Sailing Master, Robert Molineaux. He was, in fact, an apprentice – one of the 'Young Gentlemen' starting out in the way so many did, with his foot on the first rung of the ladder that would lead to a career as an officer in the navy.

During the voyage Isaac gradually became accustomed to shipboard life, learning to climb aloft to tend to the sails and carrying out lookout duties. He would have been taught by the Sailing Master how the ship really functioned and would have been shown how to take depth soundings and how to use a sextant to calculate the ship's position.

Isaac must have attended to his duties to the satisfaction of the captain, as he was appointed a midshipman in February 1771.

When '*Endeavour*' returned to England the same year, it is in the records that Cook wrote:-

"Mr Isaac Smith and Mr Isaac Manley both too young for preferment, yet their behaviour merits the best recommendation".

After serving in '*Endeavour*', Isaac Manley served for 6 months on the guard ship HMS *Terrible* at Spithead and then another 18 months doing Channel Service, before going to the West Indies for a number of years and then being commissioned as a lieutenant in May 1777.

He was on half pay for a couple of years before rejoining the Channel fleet in 1780 and then, with the outbreak of the American War of Independence, he joined the fleet in North America.

In 1782, he was serving as a second lieutenant in HMS *Prince George*, which took part in a celebrated naval victory gained by Admiral Rodney over the French fleet at the Battle of Saintes in the West Indies. In December of that year Isaac was promoted Master and Commander, serving in various ships in North America, until his appointment in 1786 to the sloop HMS *Fairy*. He subsequently served in home waters doing fairly mundane work protecting the fishing fleet off Shetland and pursuing smugglers, as well as sailing with the fleet off the west coast of Africa and to the West Indies again.



ADMIRAL ISAAC GEORGE MANLEY.

It was in the West Indies that he became ill, presumably of fever, and returned to England in 1790. On the 22nd November of the same year he was appointed post captain of HMS *Flora*. Due to his illness, however, his active naval service came to an end.

At this point in time, one could say that Isaac Manley's career had been an adequate one, though hardly a brilliant one, despite his magnificent start with Captain Cook. Fortune, however, continued to smile upon him.

Firstly, he was extremely lucky to live to 82, a great age at a time when promotion was largely based upon seniority. Isaac therefore continued to rise in the ranks although, as far as it is known, he didn't go to sea again.

His promotions came at regular intervals: Rear Admiral (1809), Vice Admiral of the Blue (1814), Admiral of the White (1830) and Admiral of the Red (1837) only 9 months before his death. At that time, only 14 officers on the Navy List were more senior to him.

In 1785 Admiral Manley purchased a substantial farmhouse named 'Braziers', together with stables, a brew house, an orchard, a 'court garden' and 187 acres of land in the Parish of Checkendon Oxfordshire. It was originally built in the late 17th century and had a date stone of 1688 in the cellar.

Isaac Manley also had good fortune in his private life, as he married well. In 1791, he wed **Francis Pole** who came from a wealthy family. She was the second daughter and co-heir of Charles Pole of the Radbourn family of Derbyshire.

In 1799 the Manleys commissioned Daniel Harris, an Oxford Architect, to enlarge the house and re-model it in the new Regency style, known as 'Strawberry Hill Gothic', made famous by Horace Walpole.

The roof line was castellated and the newly fashionable pointed windows were introduced wherever possible, even to modifying the main windows in the older part of the property. The brick walls were plastered over, so the original farmhouse was transformed miraculously into a fairy castle and it was considered at the time to be '*A stylistic triumph*'.



**'BRAZIER'S', NEAR WALLINGFORD, OXFORDSHIRE,
THE COUNTRY SEAT OF ADMIRAL ISAAC GEORGE MANLEY.**

Admiral Manley did not take to farming himself nor did he avail himself of a bailiff or steward to oversee his land. He continued to let out the farmland and only the woodlands remained in the Manley name. These have always been reserved for the gentlemen of 'Braziers' for the purposes of shooting until recent times.

The house still stands today and is now a community college and Grade II* listed.

Isaac and Francis had two children, whilst they were at 'Braziers'. A daughter **Ann Frances Pole Manley** born in 1794 and named after Isaac's mother and a son **John Shawe Manley**, who was born the following year.

Ann later married Mr Arthur Salwey on the 20th June 1824 at the age of 30. He sadly died at a relatively early age leaving her a widow. She, however, met a Major Mundy Pole and subsequently, at the advanced age of 47, re-married on the 13th July 1841 at Weeford, Staffordshire, almost certainly at St. Mary's Church, which was very close to where her brother lived. She died on the 18th September 1862 aged 68.

After his marriage, Isaac Manley received recognition as a landed gentleman, which opened many doors to him, not least being the fact he was accepted into society. In 1802 he became Sheriff of Oxfordshire and, a few years later in 1810, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Laws from Oxford University. He was also lucky enough to inherit the bulk of his father's estate. His elder brother, **Captain John Manley**, died without issue and, as the next son, Isaac inherited estates in Staffordshire and Cheshire, plus a warehouse and cellars in Coopers Row, Crutched Friars in the City of London and a good deal of other property too.

He died at his country seat at 'Braziers', near Wallingford on the 14th October 1837, shortly after the death of his wife Frances, who passed away on the 29th July aged 72. To quote from an obituary in the Gentleman's Magazine dated December 1837:-

"As a country gentleman, Admiral Manley was highly esteemed and his passing is generally and deeply regretted by all classes of society".

His memorial in Checkendon Church, Oxfordshire reminds us that:

"He was the last survivor of the crew who sailed with Captain Cook during his first voyage around the world".

In his Will, Isaac Manley left to his wife all his household goods, furniture, linen, china, carriages, horses, livestock, utensils & implements of husbandry and other effects in and about the house at 'Braziers'. He also left the enjoyment of all his ready money & monies at his Bankers in London, Reading & Lichfield, in addition to all his Gold & Silver Plate.

His wife was also bequeathed the Debenture of the United Service Club House and any half pay that fell due from the navy at the time of his death.

After his wife's death, the above items were to be inherited by his daughter **Ann Frances Pole Manley** plus the sum of £2,234 (approximately £158,000 by present day values) standing in their joint names in the 3% Consols. Also the watch which he wore, that had the miniature picture of himself within.

The Gold & Silver Plate was to be divided equally between his daughter and his son **John Shawe Manley**. To his brother **Robert Kendrick Manley** he left the sum of £100, in addition to his warehouse & cellars at Coopers Row, Crutched Friars in the City of London.

To his staff he left various amounts, as follows:-

Elizabeth Lewis	an annuity of £60 clear per annum.
Richard Carpenter	" " " £40 " " "
Richard Benwell	" " " £25 " " "
William Goodchild	" " " £25 " " "

To his remaining servants he bequeathed a year's wages and decent mourning.

The remainder of his Real & Personal Estate was left to his son **John Shawe Manley**.

The Will was dated the 29th June 1836.

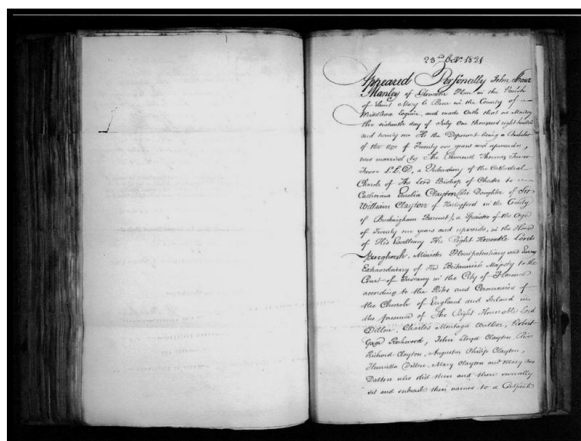
Although now the owner of the 'Braziers' estate, John Shawe Manley, for whatever reason, chose not to live there himself.

For full particulars of the Manley Family Tree between 1755 & 1973, please refer to **Addendum No. 1**.

CHAPTER 4 JOHN SHAWE MANLEY

As previously indicated, Admiral Manley's son **John Shawe Manley** was born at the family seat of 'Braziers', Oxfordshire in 1795. When he was of age he attended Eton College and subsequently matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford on the 22nd October 1812, aged 18, and later he became a student at Lincoln's Inn, London in 1814.

On the 16th July 1821, at the age of 26, he married Miss Catherine Emelia Clayton, in the Italian city of Florence. Catherine was the only daughter of Sir William Clayton (Bart) of 'Harleyford', Marlow, Buckinghamshire.



**MARRIAGE DETAILS OF JOHN SHAWE MANLEY
& CATHERINE EMELIA CLAYTON IN THE CITY OF FLORENCE, ITALY.**

The marriage was re-confirmed a few months later via an English ceremony, which took place in the Parish Church of St. Marylebone, London, on the 29th October.

Shortly after their marriage, the couple moved into Thickbroom Cottage at Weeford. This was a property that had previously been owned by his father, along with 50 acres of land and it is presumed that these were transferred over to them, almost as a kind of wedding gift.

Almost immediately the couple commenced a family and within the space of nine years they had been blessed with 5 sons, namely:-

John Clayton Manley	born 1822
Augustus East Manley	born 1824
William Campbell Manley	born 1825
Robert George Manley	born 1826
Henry Francis Manley	born 1830

After Robert George was born, it is safe to assume that John & Catherine would have been discussing the possibility of moving to more spacious accommodation, to fully cater for their burgeoning family. The arrival of Henry Francis would have made this even more imperative and so, in 1831, work commenced on the building of Manley Hall or Thickbroom Hall, as it was initially called. Thickbroom being a hamlet lying on the west side of Weeford, said to have been derived from the broom which grew abundantly in the area.

Thickbroom was a medieval settlement and was first mentioned in the 14th century 'Lay Subsidy' returns and probably survived until the time of the Great Plague of London around 1665-66, after which it became deserted. The name still survives, however, in places such as Thickbroom Farm and Thickbroom Cottage.

Formerly a possession of the Thickbroom family, in the time of Charles II, it passed to the Bryans, then on to one Walter Rawlins, who sold it to Thomas Alsop in 1674. Eventually the estate passed into the

hands of William Betts, whose Will and connection with the Manley family has been well documented earlier.

John Manley commissioned Thomas Trubshaw of Great Haywood, Staffordshire to design the exterior architecture of Manley Hall. The interior of the mansion was arranged on Mr Manley's own plans.

Thomas Trubshaw was born on the 4th April 1802 and was the eldest son of James Trubshaw (1777-1853) who, as a young man, gained experience by working on Buckingham Palace & Windsor Castle. Having followed in his father's footsteps as an Architect and Landscape Gardener his early death on the 7th June 1842, when he was only 40, cut short a successful career.

In addition to Manley Hall, Thomas Trubshaw was involved in the building of St. Stephen's Church, Great Haywood and Hilderstone Church just to the north of Stafford.

Thickbroom Hall was built in the Elizabethan style of architecture, with Gothic overtones. The latter probably came from the influence of John Manley's father, Admiral Manley, who restored his own seat in Oxfordshire in a similar manner.

It possessed numerous turrets, battlements, decorative chimneys, pinnacles and even a viewing tower. During Elizabethan times the number of fireplaces in a house was acknowledged as a sign of wealth, hence the highly decorated chimney stacks in the 16th century. The chimneys at Thickbroom Hall were decorated in the same fashion and Trubshaw decided to use repeat patterns of 'fish scales'.

The first brick was laid by the Manley's eldest son, **John Clayton Manley** and the second brick by **Augustus East Manley** who was, at the time, about six years of age.

It is almost impossible to pin down exactly when Thickbroom Hall changed its name to Manley Hall, although Pigot's Staffordshire Directory noted that John Shawe Manley, under the heading of *Nobility, Gentry & Clergy*, was residing at 'Thickbroom', both in 1835 & 1842. Slater's Directory in 1850, however, described him as residing at Manley Hall, even though they misspelt it as Morley Hall!



CLOSE UP DETAIL OF CHIMNEYS AND PINNACLES AT MANLEY HALL
BY THE ARTIST THOMAS PEPLIE WOOD DATED 1838.

The large country mansion was situated in the lovely rolling countryside of South Staffordshire, almost equidistant between the parishes of Weeford and Shenstone. Weeford is a small village in the narrow and picturesque Vale of the Black Brook or Bourn River. Shortly after the time Manley Hall was built it included within its parish 425 inhabitants, 289 of whom were actually in the township of Weeford itself.

Manley Hall was also quite close to Lichfield (4 miles) and Tamworth (5 miles). The area was in the 'Offlow Hundred'. Lord Wenlock was the lord of the manor and owned a great part of the acreage, the remainder of the parish belonging to John Shawe Manley, Samuel Swinfen and John Levett.

The mansion was set in an estate of approximately 1,200 acres, which John Manley had inherited from his father. It was built in brick and stone and it took several years to complete. In times past, the work

force were not able to call upon the latest mechanical equipment that we rely on today. Everything had to be done manually using picks, forks, shovels & wheelbarrows!

One thing, however, has not changed over the years and that was the advent of labour disputes. The construction of Manley Hall was hit by one such dispute, which caused a strike amongst the building workers and this subsequently delayed the Hall's completion.

The property was finally finished in 1836 and the official opening took place on the 15th September.



NORTH EAST VIEW OF MANLEY HALL, SHOWING THE VIEWING TOWER, PINNACLES AND DECORATIVE CHIMNEYS.

Miss Mary Bagot made an interesting entry in her diary that same year. She wrote:-

"Took Mr. Mucklestone in my 'Fly' (a one horse hackney carriage) and went about six o'clock to Manley Hall for the opening of that beautiful place – we were about a 100. I did not get home till six in the morning and left them waltzing as if they had just begun, to a fresh set of candles."

Mr Mucklestone, Miss Bagot's escort on this occasion, was the Subchanter – one of the Priest Vicars of Lichfield Cathedral. He was a widower and maintained his cosy bachelor establishment in a pleasant little Georgian house, which is now No. 56 Beacon Street.

Mary Bagot herself was from the well known and influential Bagot family of Pype Hayes Hall and Blithfield Hall. In 1819, at the age of 45, she decided to keep an annual diary of events, which she continued to do until 1843, just three years before her death.

A sepia wash drawing of Thickbroom Hall in 1837 by the artist Thomas Peploe Wood gives a rather romantic, but not entirely accurate view of the mansion.

The building was, however, positioned on raised ground and did overlook the Black Brook, which followed a circuitous route through the estate and which eventually exited via a weir.

In White's Directory of 1851, it described the Hall, as follows:-

'Thickbroom Hall stood on a lofty summit on the north side of the Black Brook and it commanded a fine view of the romantic valley below and the surrounding countryside. The grounds around the Hall having been laid out in terraces and flower gardens, in a style which added considerably to the natural beauty of the scenery.'



**'THICKBROOM HALL' (LATER MANLEY HALL) BY THE ARTIST
THOMAS PEPLOE WOOD, 1837.**

In Kelly's Directory dated 1880, it stated that:-

'The Black Brook was celebrated for its fine trout!'

The mansion was provided with a substantial entrance porch, to enable members of the family and guests to alight from their carriages, without fear of the elements.

In addition to the Hall itself, a large stable block was built to the rear of the property, in addition to a servant's wing with courtyard on the west side. There was also an ice house.

Water was drawn for the Hall via a hand pump directly from its own well, which was sunk behind the property, quite close to the servant's quarters and the ice house.

An ice house is a brick or stone structure, partly or wholly underground, which is aptly named as it is designed for the storage of ice and is often found in association with large country houses.

The construction of ice houses in England was probably introduced from France in the late 17th century, but large numbers were built during the 18th and 19th centuries. Many fell out of use during the late 19th century, but some were still functioning until the early 20th century.

Most ice house tunnels or passages are straight and have a minimum of two doors, to maintain an air lock and temperature control. The ice storage chamber needs to be watertight and were square, rectangular, oval or circular in design. Those examples of an inverted cone shape, as was the case with the one at Manley Hall, were the most effective in withstanding the underground stresses, in providing a minimum wall surface area and for allowing the removal of waste water. A drainage system was essential to remove the waste water from the base of the chamber.

Early ice houses were filled with ice from the house, but by the 19th century, this was available from commercial suppliers.

Ice houses were associated with most large country houses and are therefore reasonably common today. Having said that, however, many have been destroyed and there are a large number in a ruinous state, so the estimated figure of those still remaining is only around 2,500.

The ice house at Manley Hall was a relatively late example and it probably did not remain in use for more than a few decades after it was built. Nevertheless, in common with many new properties of the time, the construction of an ice house at Manley Hall reflects the relative wealth and social aspirations of the Manley family.

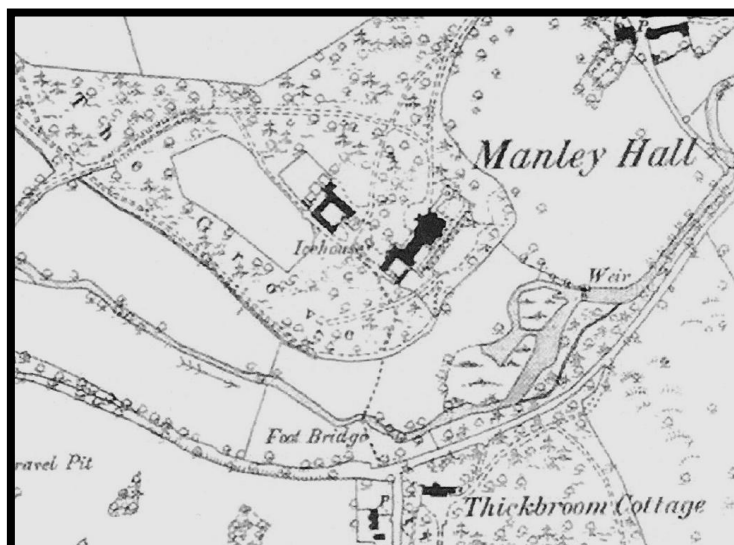


MAIN ENTRANCE PORCH TO MANLEY HALL CIRCA 1850.

Whilst the Hall was under construction, the Manley family were able to gain easy access from Thickbroom Cottage, where they were living at the time, by way of a footpath which led across the nearby lane, over the Black Brook via a footbridge, across the meadows and so up to the rear of the mansion. The route can clearly be seen on the Ordnance Survey Map dated 1888.

The architect Thomas Trubshaw who, as previously mentioned, was also a landscape gardener, arranged for the brook to be diverted and enlarged immediately opposite Manley Hall to form an ornamental body of water, just before it descended down through a weir. He also carried out a tree planting schedule and there are now around 45 differing species on the site where the Hall originally stood, including amongst them a giant redwood.

The site also enjoyed its own micro-climate, due to the protection it received from the prevailing winds by the sloping nature of the ground.



ROUTE FROM THICKBROOM COTTAGE TO MANLEY HALL 1888.

John Shawe Manley resided at the Hall for 21 years after its completion. During the time he spent there, he took a great interest in the property and effected many improvements which greatly added to its character and appearance. In the grounds he was instrumental in the laying out of plantations. The estate was also, in some parts, in great need of drainage and fencing.

In 1843, he was appointed High Sheriff of Staffordshire.

In 1844 a tragedy hit the family when their eldest son **John Clayton Manley**, who had laid the first brick to commence the building of Manley Hall, sadly died on the 29th March aged only 21, in the Italian city of Rome.

John Manley took a very great interest in local affairs, one example being an Archery Society which existed in the area in 1824 but which lost its popularity for reasons unknown. It was, however, revived under his presidency in 1846 and, by 1850, it had 118 members. Competition meetings were held in July and August, using butts on land near to St. John's Hospital in Lichfield. The society survived until the advent of the First World War.

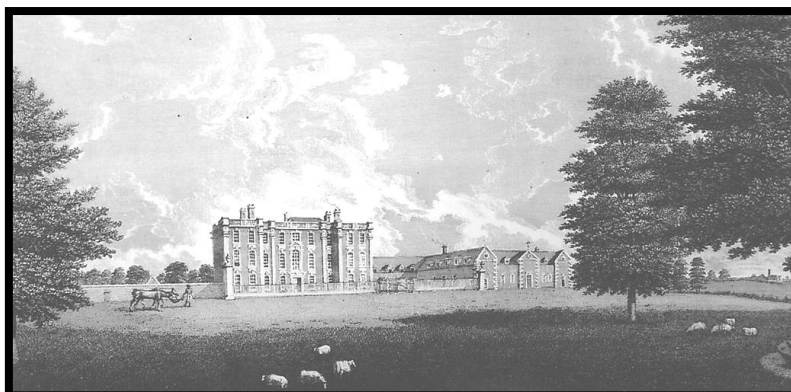
In 1847 Mr Manley was appointed a Governor of Bishop Vesey School. He replaced Sir John Eardley Wilmot, following his death earlier in the year. He continued in this post for quite a long period. In 1854 it is noted in the school records that he gave his apologies for not being able to attend a meeting, due to the fact that he had to go into town on military business on behalf of his son.

In addition, Mr Manley was also the first President of the Shenstone & Weeford Agricultural Association, so life for him must have been very full for one reason or another.

A happy event took place on the 2nd June 1849 for the Manleys, when their second son **Augustus East Manley** married Margaret Christabelle Phillips at St. Marylebone Parish Church in London.

An article, which appeared in the Birmingham Gazette on the 25th November 1850, indicated that John Manley made regular contact with the hierarchy in Sutton Coldfield as well as Staffordshire. He was a steward at the 1st Anniversary Dinner of the 'Sutton Coldfield Association for the Protection of Agricultural & Native Industry' held at the Town Hall on the 17th December. Also attending this function, amongst others, were Vincent Holbeche, George Bodington, Richard Sadler and the Rev. W K Riland Bedford.

The following year, it is recorded that John Manley purchased the nearby estate and mansion of Shenstone Park which, at the time, was occupied by the widow of the late owner Edward Grove Esq., who himself bought the property in 1797. It occupied an enviable position overlooking the Black Brook. It was stated in William White's Directory of Staffordshire for 1851 that Mr Manley then owned most of Wood End.



NORTH EAST VIEW OF SHENSTONE PARK – CIRCA EARLY 1800's.



PLAN OF THE SHENSTONE PARK ESTATE.

The same year, at the time of the Census Return, those noted as being at Manley Hall, in addition to the family, were the following:-

Butler.
Footman.
Groom.
Housekeeper.
Two Ladys' Maids.
Two House Servants.
Kitchen Maid.
Scullery Maid.
House Maid.
Two unknowns.

A total of 13 members of staff.

Returning to local affairs, Mr Manley was also the founder of the re-built Parish Church of St. John the Baptist in Shenstone. The old church was demolished in 1852, except for the tower. He laid the foundation stone on the 6th May 1852 and this stone can be found in the Chancel. The Reverend once possessed a sketch of him, drawn by a Miss Atty, who frequently visited Manley Hall. This has, unfortunately, been lost.

The work of building the church went smoothly and without mishap and this resulted in it being completed the following year and the church was consecrated in October 1853. The new tower was actually completed around 1861.

The Rev. R W Essington M.A., who was the Vicar of Shenstone between 1848 & 1895 observed:-

"Despite very inclement weather on the day, there was a very good attendance. Mr Manley, who possessed great influence, mustered many of his friends."

The church organ, built by a Mr Holditch, was presented to the church by Mr Manley. The funds for this had been raised as a result of a concert held at Manley Hall, which took place on the 14th July 1853.

The Rev. Essington stated:-

"It was succeeded by a magnificent luncheon. For this entertainment, each guest had to pay a guinea. The success of the catering was assured, as the hospitality of Manley Hall was famous."

The Birmingham Gazette also commented on the event, as follows:-

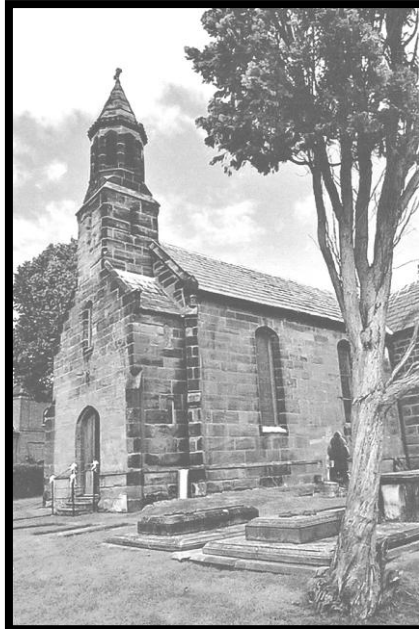
"On Thursday last, John Shawe Manley, with his well known liberality and hospitality, threw open his spacious hall to receive a large company who were admitted by invitation and by ticket to the enjoyment of one of the best amateur concerts that has ever been held in the County."

140 Guests were present when the concert began at 3.00 p.m. and the entertainment went on until 6.00 p.m. Among the guests were John Peel of Middleton Hall, Charles Swinfen of Swinfen Hall, Mrs Negus of Fotherley Hall and Mrs Chadwick of New Hall, along with her daughters."

Afterwards Mr Manley's guests were provided with a sumptuous collation."

St. John's Church is now a Grade II listed building.

Although John Manley was an extremely generous benefactor to St. John's Church, it was St. Mary's Church in Weeford that was closest to his heart.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEEFORD.

The village of Weeford was mentioned in the Domesday Book. It is therefore likely that there had been a church there for many centuries. Old registers for St. Mary's, currently held in the County Archives, date back to 1562 and the church may have been re-built on a number of occasions.

The present building, which is now Grade II listed, was built in 1802 by local and renowned architect James Wyatt and was mainly paid for by public subscription.

When it was first erected there were balconies in the transepts, which were occupied by notable local families – the Swinfens and the Manleys. These, however, were taken down in 1878 and repairs to the stonework indicate where they were originally positioned.

The Chancel was incorporated in 1876 and the fact that there are six memorial plaques and three stained glass windows, along with a presentation plaque beneath the organ, all relating to members of the Manley family, seems to indicate that they were the prime benefactors. (Please refer to **Addendum No. 3**)



**CHURCH ORGAN IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH,
PRESENTED IN 1847 IN MEMORY OF JOHN SHAWE MANLEY.**

Every Sunday morning John Manley and his family would have gathered under the main porch entrance of Manley Hall and waited for their carriage to be brought round from the stable block by their groom. After taking their seats the carriage would have slowly made its way along the mansion's undulating and curving driveway, over the little bridge crossing the Black Brook, before reaching the lane at the lodge gates where it would have turned left and travelled the relatively short distance along the narrow country roads to their final destination.

The Rector of St. Mary's at the time, the Rev. Robert Cowpland, would have been waiting to greet them and they would have made their way into the church and taken their places in the pews specially reserved for them. Robert Cowpland spent most of his life at St. Mary's, serving the parish for a total of 46 years during the period 1833-1879.

The subject of pews was a very contentious issue in the middle of the 19th century and there was an acrimonious exchange of letters on the subject, which took place between Reverend Cowpland and Samuel Swinfen during the period 1842-1844, regarding the 'ownership' of two of the pews. It would appear that the pews in question had become vacant and Samuel Swinfen wanted these allocated to him!

These older pews were not only numbered but also many still bear the original paper labels signifying who could sit there. Pew No. 24, for example, has a label which states 'Servants of Swinfen Hall' upon it.

It is said that there was some significant rivalry between the families and this is evidenced by the fact that the memorials, dedicated to the various members of each family, are to be found in distinct groupings within the church. Family members and staff at the time always ensured that they kept to their own 'side' of the church when attending services.

On the 15th October 1856 John Manley gave a lecture entitled '*A tour in Cornwall, with some account of the fisheries and mines of that county*' to the Shenstone Reading Society. It obviously went down very well as it was published as a book by T G Lomax of Lichfield the same year, at the request of the Society. The original copy can now be found in the possession of Harvard University, USA.

On the 19th August 1857, after a short illness, John Shawe Manley died aged 63. His last Will & Testament, dated 6th June 1857, stated that his wife, having been amply provided for by Settlement, was to be given all his jewels and trinkets, together with a carriage and pair of horses of her choice from the collection in his possession at the time.

His sister, Anne Frances Pole, was left the sum of £50. 0s.0d and to each of his servants, who had been in his employ for seven years or more, he left two years wages over and above any wages which may be owed to them.

The residue of the estate and personal effects were bequeathed to John Manley's four sons, equally divided between them. The will was proved in London on the 1st October 1857.

His wife Catherine survived him by nearly 7 years. She died at 'Loudwater House', Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire on the 7th February 1864 aged 74.

In gratitude for his service during her husband's final illness, Mrs Manley presented a bible to Dr. Thomas Rowley of Lichfield. This bible is now in the possession of a Mr Kenton Kersting, who lives in Kansas, USA, where it was obtained via a local auction.

CHAPTER 5 AUGUSTUS EAST MANLEY

The next owner of Manley Hall was **Augustus East Manley**, who was the second son of John Shawe Manley. As mentioned previously, his eldest son died at an early age, without issue, in 1844.

In 1858, a year after John Manley died, the Hall was struck by lightning and a pinnacle over the entrance turret, near to the billiard room, was shattered. Luckily, the remaining fabric of the building escaped undamaged.

It would appear that his son did not make any major alterations to the property he had inherited, as in 'Mansions & County Seats of Staffordshire and Warwickshire' dated 1899 it was reported that:-

'In the hands of the present owner the Hall has fully retained its character and appearance and is renowned for its handsome apartments, its delightful situation and pleasing surroundings. Superb views were to be obtained from the upper parts of the building.'

'The rooms were spacious and elegantly furnished. On either side of the entrance hall were a number of brightly polished steel-headed javelins. These were formidable looking weapons, which were used by the javelin carriers when his father was High Sheriff of the County.'

The High Sheriff is the oldest secular office under the Crown. The Sheriff was the principal law enforcement officer in the County but, over the centuries, most of the responsibilities associated with the post have been transferred elsewhere, or are now defunct, so that the functions are largely ceremonial.

The book went on to say:-

'The Manley's banner also hangs here bearing the family motto.'

'The Drawing Room is an elegant apartment: it contains a beautiful white marble fireplace and the walls are covered with Indian paper of a rare pattern. The Dining Room is of fine proportions, with a south east aspect, from which a splendid view of undulating scenery may be obtained. The ancestral portraits upon the walls include a portrait of Admiral Manley. In the Study is a curious bible stand, cut out of one piece of wood, probably about 200 years old.'

Mr A E Manley was born at Thickbroom Cottage on the 14th March 1824 and was baptised at St. Mary's Church, Weeford the following month on the 27th April.

He grew up at the family seat, was educated at Hinstock School in Shropshire and Eton and became a country gentleman.

During one of his social excursions around the county he met Margaret Christabelle Philips, who came from a good family. She was the only daughter of John Burton Philips of Wimpole Street, London. He owned Tean Hall Mills, one of the oldest and largest tape & ribbon manufacturing mills in Staffordshire.

He also built 'Heath House' a fine country mansion in 1836, around the same time as Manley Hall was being completed. In fact, Thomas Trubshaw was commissioned to design the Orangery there, so the two families must have known each other.

'Heath House' is still owned by the Philips family and is now a renowned wedding venue. A watercolour of Margaret Philips as a child and an oil painting of her as a young woman can still be found in the art collection at the property.



'HEATH HOUSE', UPPER TEAN.

When Margaret was of age (21 in those days) and Augustus was 25 they married at St. Marylebone Parish Church, London on the 2nd June 1849.

For a number of years they lived at his father-in-law's London home at 65 Wimpole Street and it was there that they had their three children, namely:-

<i>Francis Capel Manley</i>	born 1850
<i>Augustus Frederick Manley</i>	born 1853
<i>Louisa Georgina Manley</i>	born 1855

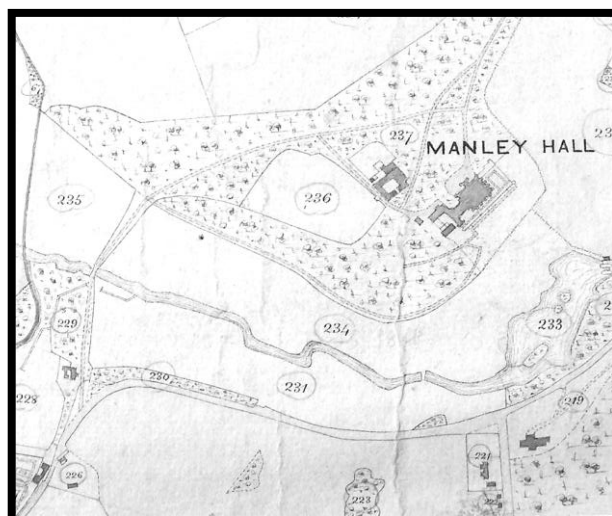
The 1851 Census Return shows them as being in residence there. It is not known when the family moved to Manley Hall, but it is likely to have been shortly after his father's death, because the 1861 Census Return indicates they were occupying the property, together with 10 servants.

Not long after he had been in residence, Augustus Manley became aware that he needed to be in possession of full information regarding his estate, including property, land, tenancies, other businesses and all other ancilliary buildings.

He therefore approached Heaton's, his Land Agent, and requested that they draw up the necessary plan.

The subsequent coloured map was very fine and was given the title of a '*Plan of the Manley Hall Estate situate in the Parishes of Shenstone and Weeford in the County of Stafford and in the Parish of Sutton Coldfield in the County of Warwick belonging to A E Manley Esq.*' It was produced by Edwin Heaton in 1868 and this can still be examined at Stafford Record Office.

Below is part of the overall plan, showing Manley Hall itself and its immediate environs.



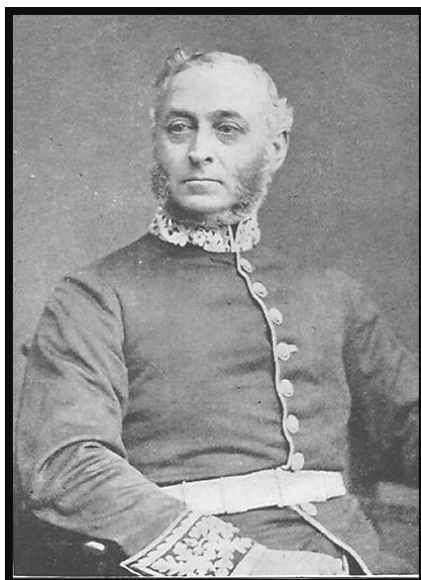
Augustus Manley then settled down to integrate fully into the local society. He served as a Justice of the Peace for the County of Staffordshire for over 51 years and was Chairman of the Lichfield and Brownhills Petty Session Division, whose meetings were then held at Shenstone and Elford.

Following in his father's footsteps he became a Governor of Bishop Vesey School, a post he was elected to in 1859 and he subsequently served the school for many years. In 1879 a rather amusing episode occurred, which was noted in the minutes. Augustus Manley sent his apologies for not being able to attend the annual meeting being held that December, saying:-

"I have promised to attend a meeting of the Commissioners of Taxes at Lichfield, provided we are not able to hunt, that day being the first opportunity I have had this season, and the hounds will be drawing my coverts. I am afraid therefore I shall not be able to attend the Trustees meeting at Sutton".

No doubt there then as to which priority was closest to his heart!

That same year, he was also High Sheriff of Staffordshire (1879-80) and he also served as a Deputy Lieutenant for that County.



MR AUGUSTUS EAST MANLEY.

Mr Manley died on the 26th May 1904 and Probate was granted in London on the 15th July to his elder son **Francis Capel Manley** who, at the time, was a retired Colonel in her Majesty's armed forces.

In his Will he left an amount of £51,478. 17s 5d, which would have been the equivalent of over £4M today. In addition, Heaton's drew up an Inventory of his Household Furniture and Effects the following month, which came to a total of £2,204.19s 10d (£176,000).

His wife Margaret survived him by four years. She died, aged 81, at Brown's Hotel, Albermarle Street, London in 1908, on the eve of her departure to Paris. Her daughter Louisa was accompanying her on the trip.

Her body was brought back to Weeford to be buried in the family plot. She was buried on the 24th November, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. J Eckersley, the vicar of St. Mary's Church.

Her husband and their three children were also buried there. (please refer to **Addendum No. 2**)

Before turning to the next occupant of Manley Hall, it is probably an appropriate time to talk briefly of John Shawe Manley's remaining sons in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 6 JOHN CLAYTON MANLEY

The tragic death of John Shawe Manley's eldest son, *John Clayton Manley*, has been touched upon earlier. He was born at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford on the 20th August 1822.

In 1838, at the age of 15 he went to Eton School and subsequently went on to study at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he matriculated in 1841.

His parents were married in Florence and the family obviously had some connection with Italy, be it friends, relations or property. It was in this country that he was sadly struck down by what was described at the time as gastric fever, at the tender age of 21, on the 29th March 1844.

He was buried at Provincia di Roma, Lazio.



MEMORIAL TO JOHN CLAYTON MANLEY IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEEFORD.

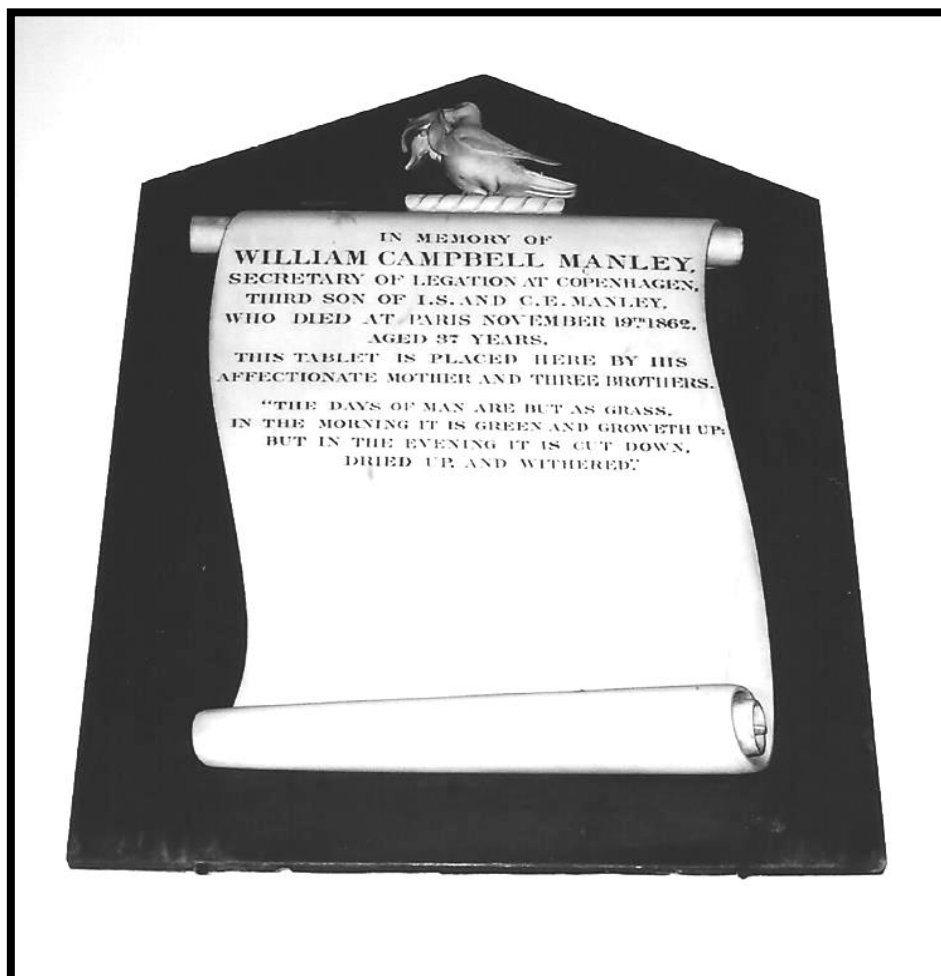
CHAPTER 7 WILLIAM CAMPBELL MANLEY

Very little is known of the third son **William Campbell Manley**. He was born at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford on the 1st November 1825 and he remained a bachelor all his life.

He also died at a relatively early age, being only 37 upon his death on the 19th November 1862 in the Ile-de-France region on the outskirts of Paris, France.

He was a diplomat working for the Foreign Office and had been residing at Copenhagen, Denmark, where he held the position of Secretary of Legation. He took up this post on the 1st April 1858, having previously been an Attaché in Athens.

Letters of Administration were granted to his brother **Robert George Manley** on the 16th January 1863. He left Personal Effects under £25,000.



MEMORIAL TO WILLIAM CAMPBELL IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEEFORD.

CHAPTER 8 ROBERT GEORGE MANLEY

The fourth son was the previously mentioned **Robert George Manley**, who was born at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford in 1826.

Nothing is known about his education but, in keeping with the Manley tradition, it would probably have been public school followed by university.

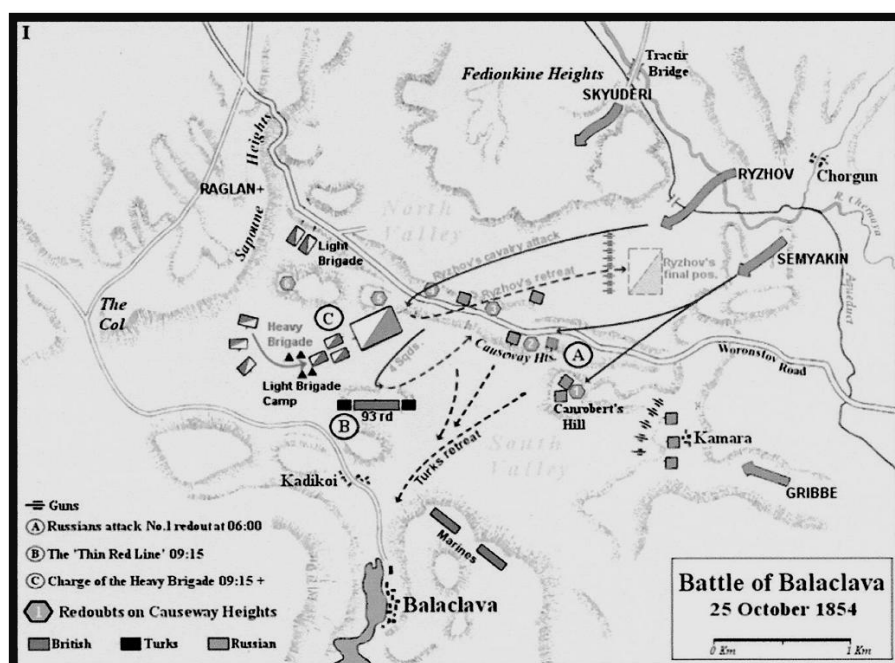
A painful event involving Robert Manley occurred on the 6th August 1846, when he was just 19 years of age. The Morning Post reported as follows:-

'Robert George Manley and his elder brother Augustus East Manley were proceeding in a dog-cart on their way into Lichfield when, upon approaching St. John Street, the horse became restive. Upon attempting to alight to go to the horse's head, he missed his footing and fell breaking his leg below the knee.'

It would seem that he fully recovered from this incident because he later joined Her Majesty's armed services and served in the Crimean War where he was a Captain in the 6th Inniskillen Dragoon Guards between 1854-55 and won a campaign medal.

An article, which appeared in the Staffordshire Advertiser on Saturday 5th January 1856, however, brought to life these few dry facts. It would appear that Robert Manley, now a Brevet Major, was a hero and was involved in the famous Battle of Balaclava and took a leading part in the 'Charge of the Heavy Brigade'.

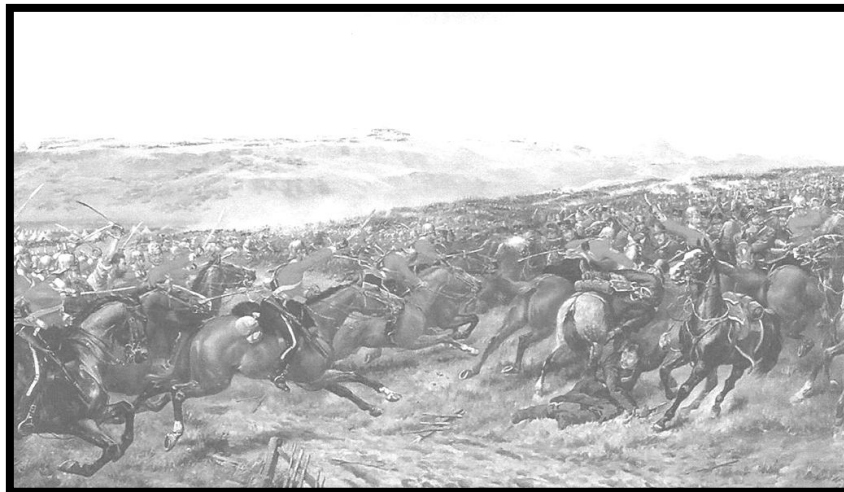
The Heavy Brigade was the main British cavalry force, mounting large, heavy chargers, equipped with steel cuirasses and greaves for both troopers and their horses and armed with cavalry muskets and pistols, designed to be fired on the move and also with sabres for close combat. They were intended as the primary British shock force leading frontal charges against dug-in infantry positions, in order to break the enemy lines.



During the Battle of Balaclava on the morning of the 25th October 1854, the Russians had stormed a series of hills know as the Causeway Heights, beyond which lay the 'Valley of Death', where the Earl of Cardigan would lead the Light Brigade in one of the great military blunders of the 19th century.

Lord Raglan ordered that General Sir James Yorke Scarlett should move eight squadrons of his brigade back to Kadikoi, to support the 93rd Highlanders defence of the British base at Balaclava. As Scarlett led his column of the Heavy Brigade across the sprawling tented camp of the Light Brigade, a Russian cavalry force of approximately 2,000 was spotted just 800 yards away from their left flank, at the top of the heights. It seems that the Russians were just as surprised by the appearance of the British troops and were initially slow to react but they recovered and began to move towards them.

General Scarlett quickly assembled approximately 300 of his Inniskillen and Scots Greys at the foot of the heights, organising them into parade perfect formation and sounded the charge. As astounded onlookers watched from the rear Scarlett led his red-clad 'Heavies' into the grey mass of the Russian cavalry. His attack was soon followed by the rest of the column. This action became known as the 'Charge of the Heavy Brigade' and it caused the enemy formation to collapse completely. The Russians were routed and retreated across the heights into the valley that after would become so infamous. Although successful it defied military doctrine of the time, as the Russians were more numerous and, more importantly, the charge was made uphill against an oncoming force.



PAINTING OF THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT THE BATTLE OF BALACLAVA
BY GODFREY DOUGLAS GILES.

If it had not been for the ill-fated 'Charge of the Light Brigade', which took place shortly afterwards, the above action would have received far more of the credit, which it so richly deserved.

Later, Alfred Tennyson wrote a poem of the action.

The aforementioned report in the Staffordshire Advertiser went on to say:-

WELCOME OF A STAFFORDSHIRE HERO.

PRESENTATION AND DINNER TO MAJOR MANLEY.

'A gratifying instance of the honour which Englishmen delight to give to the brave who fight their country's battles was afforded at Lichfield on Wednesday last, on which day, a public dinner was given to Major Robert George Manley, of the 6th Inniskillen Dragoons, to welcome him on his return from the Crimea where, in the memorable charge of Balaclava, he had the distinguished honour of heading the first troop which crossed sabres with the Russian cavalry.

The tenantry on the estate belonging to Major Manley's father, with whom the intention of giving a dinner originated, also availed themselves of the opportunity given by the occasion of testifying their respect for the gallant Major, by presenting him with a costly and handsome sword, one which it is expected will do good service in the field of battle, to which the Major is about to return.

Major Manley, on his entrance into Lichfield, was cordially greeted by hundreds of persons who had congregated in the streets and, upon his arrival at the Swan Hotel, he was loudly cheered.

The dinner took place in the assembly room of the Swan Hotel which, though sufficiently capacious for ordinary occasions, failed to accommodate the large numbers which had met to testify their respect for Major Manley and his worthy sire. The assembly room had been tastefully and appropriately decorated for the occasion under the superintendence of Adjutant Davis. The wall at the upper end of the room bore the shield of the regiment and in the front of the orchestra were placed the Manley arms, surrounded by the flags of France, Sardinia and Turkey and the Union Jack of England. Swords and muskets, formed into the initials of Major Manley's name, while evergreens, suspended in wreaths, and numerous colours completed the decorations.

The chair was taken by the Hon. J Stuart Wortley M.P. The guest of the evening, Major Manley, sat on the right of the chairman. Among the company, which numbered altogether upwards of 130, we noticed Mr S P Shawe, J S Manley, A Manley, H Manley, W Manley and Colonel Phillips, Rev T O B Floyer, Captain Kynaston and Mr Henry Osborn.

The worthy landlord of the hotel, Mr Dunn, placed a most excellent and abundant dinner on the tables and the wines were also of a first rate description. After dinner entertainment was provided by a party of professional singers, who sang several favourite airs.

The cloth having been drawn, an excellent dessert was placed on the tables, after which the Chairman rose and said the first toast, and which was the first in every assembly of Englishmen, and one which required no recommendation or introduction on his part; but perhaps upon an occasion like this, when they were met to do honour to those who were fighting battles of their country, and especially those who had been spared to come amongst them again (cheers) – he might remind them how much our gracious Sovereign had increased the attachment of her people to her person and Crown by the warm interest she had taken in the army, her anxiety for the welfare and comfort of the men, and her attention to the sick and wounded. (applause) The interest of her Majesty in her army consisted not simply in seeing them in gay and glittering uniforms on review days, but she sought them out in the gloomy recesses of the hospital, and succoured them in their affliction. (great cheering) He begged to give them 'The health of the Queen'. The toast was drunk with the customary enthusiasm, followed by the singing of the National Anthem.

Prince Albert, Prince of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family was next given from the chair and duly honoured.

*The Chairman said the next toast was a toast they ought not to forget. There was no undertaking in life upon which men could set out with advantage unless they relied upon a higher power than any on earth (hear, hear) and they would ill discharge their duty if they did not show their reverence for that power by honouring the ministers of God. (cheers). In the absence of the Bishop and clergy of the diocese, the Reverend T O B Floyer responded.....**at great length** (more cheers)*

*The Chairman said there was another toast he had to propose to 'Our Allies',
.....**which he went on to expound in great detail.***

A further toast to 'The Emperor of the French and our brave Allies' was then most warmly drunk, followed by one of the professional singers in attendance singing 'Sebastopol is Won'.

*The Chairman again rose and said, that before they proceeded to the special business which had called them together, there was another toast which he had to give, and it would be inexcusable on his part if he neglected to introduce it to their notice at an early period of the evening. The toast to which he referred was that of the 'Army and Navy'. (cheers).....**The speech then continued for some time.***

Colonel Phillips very briefly acknowledged the toast on behalf of the army.

Captain Kynaston then replied on behalf of the navy. After expressing his pleasure he experienced at being present on an occasion when they assembled to do honour to a gallant friend of his own, whom he had known for many years, formerly in times of peace and latterly in times of war, he said that the two services had been actively employed together to repel the blows which had been directed against the liberties of the world by a power which aimed at universal domination. The sympathy which existed between the two services was evidenced at Alma, where after the battle the sailors were found carrying off the wounded to their ships and giving up to them their hammocks.

At the attack on Sebastopol on the 17th October the navy had orders to make a diversion so as to keep the fire from the army, and to prove that they did not shrink from their duty he would call upon his friend Mr W Manley, who happened to be on board one of the fleet at the time. They got some uncommon hard knocks, but his friend did not treat it as anything extraordinary. Although shot and shell were flying all about them like hail – they had the honour of being with their ship nearer Fort Constantine than any other ship in her Majesty's navy – (cheers) – his friend Manley took it very coolly, quite as coolly as if he were simply out partridge shooting, only crying out now and then 'Rather sharp work, is it not, Kynaston?' (laughter) He admired his coolness amazingly; and as if it was not already hot enough, he found him in the midst of the action smoking a cigar. (renewed laughter) Whether he got a light from a Russian shell or not, he could not tell; but there he was coolly smoking a cigar, or as some called it, 'Manley's diversion'. (laughter)

With respect to his friend the gallant Major of the Inniskillens, it was his good fortune to meet with him early in the war. When, for some reason the heavy cavalry were left behind at Varna, or, as it was inappropriately called, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, it fell to his (Captain Kynaston's) lot to bear the happy tidings to them that they were not forgotten, and he succeeded in getting them embarked.

During the voyage they met with a worse foe than the Russian army, the elements scattering the transports to the four winds of heaven. The gallant Major lost three chargers in the storm, but he bore his disappointment in such a noble manner, as to excite his admiration. He afterwards heard that his friend had purchased a horse, but how he got it he did not know, but he thought it might be what sporting men called a runaway; it, however, could not have been a runaway as it took him right through the very thick of the Russians and brought him back in safety. (great cheering) His gallant friend had reaped the reward of his noble daring, and was now about again to enter on another campaign and gain fresh laurels. (cheers) He (Captain Kynaston) had also been promoted, but his promotion took him out of his ship, and that was the reason of his appearing amongst them in a black coat. It was not for the want of will that he was inactive at the present time, for he was ready and anxious to go out again. (great cheering)

The interesting ceremony of presenting the sword to Major Manley was then proceeded with. The duty of making the presentation having been entrusted to Mr Henry Osborn.

Mr Osborn then went on to make his speech, which ended in great cheering.

Major Manley, on proceeding to acknowledge the gift of the sword, was greeted with an enthusiastic round of cheering. The gallant Major, who was much affected by the very cordial reception he had met with expressed, in a few words, his gratitude for the welcome they had given him home, and the very handsome present with which they had accompanied that welcome. He felt that they had, by their proceedings that day, not only conferred an honour upon him, but upon the whole family. (cheers) He trusted to be enabled by his future conduct in life, to prove himself, in some degree at least, worthy of the respect which they had been pleased to express for him. (cheers) As it regarded the past, he was not sensible of having done anything to merit the compliment they had paid him, as he had only done, as he believed all the British army had done, and were ready to do again, his duty. (great cheering)

The Chairman rose and said that, after the deeply interesting ceremony they had just witnessed, he was sure he should be blamed by them if he lost a moment in giving them the opportunity of paying a further tribute to the gallant Major by heartily drinking his health.

(cheers) They had witnessed a respectable and ancient tenantry, attached to their worthy landlord, seizing the first opportunity of honouring the worthy son under whom they held in great esteem – and nothing was more in accordance with English habits and feelings than such a demonstration. (hear, hear & cheers) But they wished to show to the gallant Major, and all who like him who held a high and distinguished rank, and to the humbler portion of the army, the privates, who fought their country's battles, that on their return home, they would be received, not only by their families and connections, but by all their neighbours, with the honour that was due to the defenders of their country. (cheers) One of the noblest instincts of our nature was that which led nations, whether barbarous or civilised, to honour those who fight for their country. (cheers) England was not an exception to this principal, and he was sure there was not a heart in that room which did not beat responsive to the feeling which had been manifested for the brave. (applause)

In Major Manley's presence, even if he had had the honour of a longer acquaintance with the gallant officer, he would not presume to enter into a eulogy of his character and career, and he felt that he should best consult his gallant friend's feelings and theirs if he did not long detain them from drinking the toast; he should therefore confine himself to just mentioning the leading facts which attached to his name in the present campaign, and then leave it to them to do fitting honour to the toast.

They had already been informed that Major Manley had the good fortune to be connected with that distinguished regiment the Inniskillen Dragoons, a regiment which, with the heavy cavalry and the Scots Greys, gained immortal honour during the Great War, which ended in 1815. He embarked with his regiment, and arrived at Varna in July 1854. They had been told by the gallant sailor who had addressed them that when our army was removed to the coast of the Crimea, by some fatality the heavy brigade was left on the shores of Turkey. They were brought by Captain Kynaston away from that place, and they had heard from him something of the nature of the storm by which they were overtaken. In a vessel ominously called the 'War Cloud', there were shut up no less than between 100 and 200 cavalry soldiers and 100 horses. Tossed by the most fearful tempest which ever raged on a naturally stormy sea, they could scarcely conceive anything more terrible than the scene which was then presented. There were some 100 horses loose in the hold of the small transport ship, raging violently, and trampling and destroying each other. In the midst of the dangers in the hold was Major Manley, who was alike animated by feelings of humanity as well as a desire to save his beasts.

After these perils the regiment embarked again, and arrived at Balaclava, and they had scarcely reached land when they were called into action, and their gallant friend had the honour of sharing the glory denied to but a few. He led the first squadron into action – he was at the head of the troop which had the honour to first cross swords with the Russian cavalry, and to break their ranks – (cheers) – and he not only broke their ranks, but rushed through them, found himself on the other side of them, and had to cut his way back again through the Russian forces. (hear, hear)

The conduct of the regiment that day had, as it had been truly said, immortalised it. (cheers). If it were not for the presence of Major Manley, he should be inclined to dwell more at length upon his gallant deeds. He might add, however, that they had heard much of the charge of Balaclava, which was spoken of as the 'Charge of the Light Brigade'; but the honour of that brilliant and wonderful charge was equally shared by the Heavy Brigade, whose conduct on that occasion was equal to anything which we had recorded in military history – (cheers) – and that lamented and much injured Raglan, who had had great experience in military matters, having been all through the wars of Napoleon and Wellington, described it as one of the finest and most effective charges which he, veteran as he was, had ever witnessed. (hear, hear and cheers) That was the opinion of Lord Raglan, and he believed it was also the opinion of the entire army. (cheers) He begged pardon for having detained them so long, and he would at once conclude by asking them to drink, up-standing, the health of Major Robert George Manley. (the toast was drunk with three times three most enthusiastic cheers)

Major Manley, upon rising, responded with his thanks. (cheers)

The Chairman next proposed the health of the High Sheriff of the County. (the toast was cordially drunk)

Mr S P Shawe responded. He ended his speech by saying he would not detain them from drinking a toast to a gentleman who was deeply interested in the proceedings of the evening, a gentleman who they all knew and greatly respected, and who was much loved in his own immediate neighbourhood. They would naturally anticipate that the gentleman to whom he referred was Mr Manley.

Mr Manley had endeared himself to all by whom he was surrounded, by the care he manifested for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his poorer neighbours. (the toast was drunk with three times hearty cheers)

*Mr John Shawe Manley rose and responded to the toast. **Amongst other things he said:-** he had lived for a long period in that neighbourhood, and during the whole time he had experienced nothing but kindness from all classes – hospitality and friendship from the higher classes, and from the poorer classes, gratitude and respect. (cheers) He was deeply indebted to his tenants, who had come forward upon this occasion in so noble a manner to do honour to his son; and especially was he delighted at the presence of a tenant of his in another county, who had come above two hundred miles to testify his respect for his son.*

*The Rev. R W Essington then rose and said a toast had been put into his hands which he had pleasure in proposing in as much as it was one which would speak for itself ‘Our gallant soldiers and sailors, who have fought our battles for us during the present war’. **The Rev. Essington then continued at length before ending his speech by proposing a toast to Mr. Barber of the Marines.** (the toast was cordially drunk)*

Mr Barber briefly responded to the toast.

*Mr Henry Osborn next rose and said he had been entrusted with the next toast, **which he continued to expound.** He had great pleasure in calling upon them to drink ‘The good health of their much respected Chairman’ **when Mr Osborn’s speech finally ended** the toast was drunk with three times three hearty cheers.*

*The Chairman on rising to respond to the toast was greeted with renewed applause. **After a while his speech ended in great cheering***

Mr Manley then rose to propose the health of his tenantry, for the kindness which prompted them to make the demonstration. His ambition was to live in the affections of his tenantry. So long as the tenants farmed well and paid a proper rent, he considered that their holdings ought to be looked upon as a kind of inheritance for their children. For himself he could say that he was opposed to changing his tenants, except on good grounds. With the toast he begged to couple the names of Mr Pallett and Mr Osborn. (the toast was cordially drunk)

Mr C Pallett, in acknowledging the toast spoke in gratifying terms of the harmony which existed between the tenantry on the Manley estates and their worthy landlord.

The Hon. Captain Lawley next rose and proposed ‘The Militia of the County of Stafford’. With the toast he coupled the name of Major Tennant.

*Major Tenant, in replying to the toast, said that the militia of the county had been established for about 200 years **and then went on to provide further information about them.** (cheers)*

The Vice-Chairman then proposed ‘The yeomanry of the County’ (cheers)

Captain Webster, as the senior officer of the Yeomanry Cavalry present, acknowledged the toast.

Mr Manley proposed ‘The health of the Vice-Chairman’

The Vice-Chairman acknowledged the toast.

Captain Webster then gave 'Fox Hunting'.

Mr Shawe, whose name was coupled with the toast replied.

The Rev. R Cowpland next rose and proposed 'The health of Mrs Manley'. (cheers) The reverend gentleman paid a well merited tribute of respect to that excellent lady, whose life consisted in the exercise of the active charities and the duties of religion. The toast having been properly honoured with three times three cheers, was acknowledged by Mr Augustus Manley.

The health of Mr William Manley and the junior branches of the family' having been drunk, Mr W Manley briefly replied.

The ladies' was next given by Mr Oakley.

The Rev. R W Essington, who replied on behalf of the ladies, alluded in glowing terms to the devotion of Miss Florence Nightingale, whose name had been coupled with the toast.

The chair was then vacated, and as he left the room three cheers were given for the Hon. Stuart Wortley; a similar compliment was paid to Major Manley.

The company separated at an early hour after spending, what everyone acknowledged it to be, a most agreeable evening.



PHOTOGRAPH OF ROBERT GEORGE MANLEY 1858.

Robert Manley next appears on the 1861 Census Return when he is living with his mother at her family home, 'Loudwater House', Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, together with his two brothers. At this point in time he is aged 34 and his occupation is described as a 'Retired Major in the Army'.

Two years later he married Augusta Oakley on the 20th October 1863 at St. George's Parish Church, Hanover Square, London. She was the daughter of Sir Charles Oakley, Bart and was the widow of Henry Hugh O'Donel Clayton.



'LOUDWATER HOUSE', RICKMANSWORTH.

She was born in Liege, Belgium of British parents and married Henry Clayton when she was only 20. Her husband obviously died at a reasonably early age to enable her re-marry Robert Manley when she was 37.

Her father, at one time, was a senior member of the Council of Fort St. George, the first English fortress in India, which was founded in 1644 at the coastal city of Madras, now Chennai.

The couple went on to live at Mancetter Lodge, Atherstone, Warwickshire, where Augusta died on the 15th November 1879 aged 53. Robert Manley died 10 years later on the 12th March 1889 aged 62, leaving a Personal Estate of £41,343 8s 8d, equivalent to approximately £3.5M today.

There were no children from the marriage.

CHAPTER 9 HENRY FRANCIS MANLEY

The 5th and last son was ***Henry Francis Manley***, who was born at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford in 1830 and christened on the 6th October.

Like his brother, William Campbell Manley, Henry joined the diplomatic service and, at one time, was based in Washington in the United States of America.

He married a Miss Rose Anne Finch, who came from Redheath, Watford. They lived at various addresses in Somerset, before settling at Bishops Hull House, a beautiful Georgian residence in Taunton. The couple had six children.

His wife died in 1892 aged 50. Henry Manley died three years later in 1895, aged 65.



BISHOPS HULL HOUSE, TAUNTON 2013.

The Census Return, dated 1891, provides full details of Henry Manley and his family, whilst they were living at Bishops Hull House. They include himself, his wife, three of his sons, his daughter, Alexander W Thompson (a visitor) and 5 servants.

What must have been a very traumatic time for Henry occurred shortly after the census was compiled. His wife sadly died the following year and this event was closely followed the year after by the death of his son Robert George Clayton Manley, aged only 26.

This particular census also shows that the information contained from the returns cannot always be taken for granted. Mrs Rose Manley was noted as being 46 years of age at the time of the census. However, it is known that she died in 1892 aged 50, which means she should have been noted as being 49.

Administrative County of Somerset

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

Page 22

Civil Parish	Municipal Borough	Municipal Ward	Urban Sanitary District	Town or Village or Hamlet	Rural Sanitary District	Parliamentary Borough or Division	Ecclesiastical Parish or District	Apocryphal Parish or District	Apocryphal Parish or District						
No. of	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES in the Schedule	No. of Persons in the House	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birth	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employed	Where born	(1) English or Welsh	(2) Scotch or Irish	(3) Foreign	(4) Indian or Chinese	(5) Other
Schedule	No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES in the Schedule	No. of Persons in the House	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birth	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employed	Where born	(1) English or Welsh	(2) Scotch or Irish	(3) Foreign	(4) Indian or Chinese	(5) Other
135	Village	1	1	Arthur Landon	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
136	do	1	1	Henry Williams	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
137	Long Cottage	1	1	Arthur Landon	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
138	Village	1	1	Henry Williams	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
139	Brannigan	1	1	Arthur Landon	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
140	Brannigan	1	1	Arthur Landon	Head	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
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				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					
				Ann	Wife	27	27	Farmer	X	Worcester					
				John	Son	10	10	Schooler		Worcester					

CHAPTER 10 FRANCIS CAPEL MANLEY

As mentioned earlier, upon the death of Augustus East Manley, probate was granted to his elder son ***Francis Capel Manley***.

Francis Manley was born on the 18th May 1850 at 65 Wimpole Street, Marylebone, London and christened on the 28th June.

On the 1861 Census Return, when he was living at Manley Hall, he is noted as being a scholar, but no evidence has been found to indicate where he attended school. He does not appear to have followed in the footsteps of his peers and studied at university, but rather he decided to embark upon an immediate career in the army. He purchased a commission into the Coldstream Guards on the 16th March 1870 at the age of 20 and commenced life in the armed forces as a young Subaltern stationed at Hartley Wintney in Hampshire.

His career blossomed and eventually he was sent to serve overseas in Egypt from the 1st August - 16th November 1882. During this short period he was present in the actions at Mahuta and Kebir.

Egypt, at this point in time, became a hotbed of revolution, brought about by modernisation and overt European influence, which was so predominant in the late 19th century.

Britain used Egypt as an overland route to access its empire in India. As Egypt became more dependent on them economically, native Egyptian leaders became less powerful within the government. Finally, Ismail Pasha ran up enormous debts which he could not manage and had to turn over most of Egypt's finances to the Europeans.

It was in this climate that Arabi Pasha, an Egyptian General, was able to persuade most of the army and much of the Egyptian parliament to join him. They rose up against the Khedive (viceroy) and attempted to assume control of the country. With so much at stake, Britain assumed responsibility for putting down the rebellion.

On the 24th August 1882, at the battle of Tel-el-Mahuta, the Egyptians attempted to oppose the march of the British advance guard under Major-General Sir Gerald Graham VC. They were, however, no match for the modern British forces and were decisively beaten.

At the subsequent battle of Tel-el-Kabir on the 13th September 1882 the British under, Lord Wolseley, after a night march across the desert, attacked Arabi's entrenchments and defeated the Egyptians once more, inflicting upon them heavy casualties.

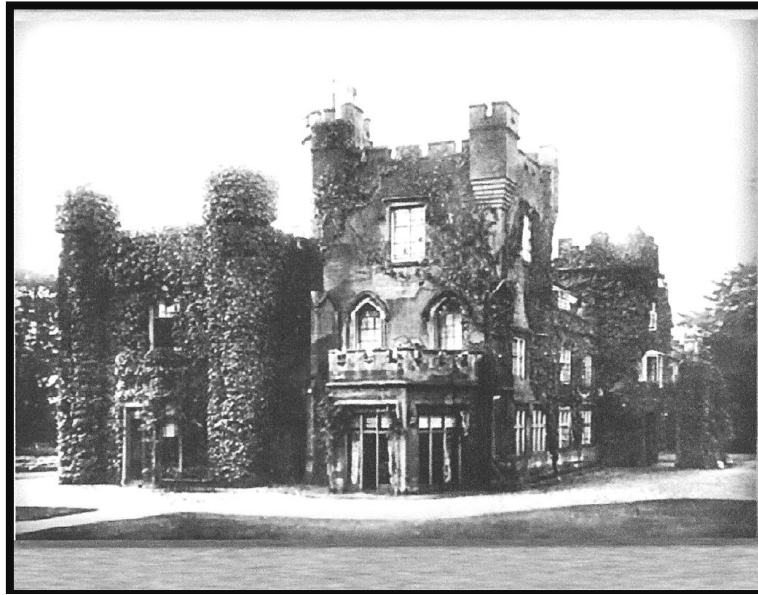
Francis Manley also served in the Sudan until 1889, during which time he was involved in another insurgency this time instigated by Osman Digna, a follower of the self-proclaimed Mahdi. In 1885 he was present in the Suakin Expedition, including the action at Hasheen and the attack on the British convoy on the 24th March 1885.

Just over a year after the battles in Egypt, he was promoted to the rank of Captain on the 7th November 1883. He was advanced to Major on the 29th September 1886 and, five years later, was placed on half pay as Colonel. During the above mentioned campaigns, he was awarded the Egypt & Sudan medal with 2 clasps and the Khedive's Star.



MEDALS PRESENTED TO COLONEL F C MANLEY.

With his prospects secure, he met and married Edith Mary Shawe, the eldest daughter of Mr Henry Cunliffe Shawe of Weddington Castle, Nuneaton, Warwickshire and Georgina Wilmot Shawe (nee Gresley). The marriage ceremony took place on the 15th February 1887 at St. Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London.



WEDDINGTON CASTLE, NUNEATON, WHICH WAS DEMOLISHED IN THE 1920'S.

The couple had three children, namely:-

Margaret Georgina Manley	born 1888
Katherine Mary Manley	born 1890
Roger Shawe Manley	born 1891

By 1891, Colonel Manley's career with the Coldstream Guards was coming to an end and he finally retired from the army on the 29th July 1896.

Several years before this, Colonel Manley was placed on the 'Commission of the Peace' in 1887 of the Lichfield and Brownhills Bench. He eventually became the senior member. He, however, seldom acted as a Justice of the Peace due to his involvement with the army and, after succeeding his father, his health prevented him from exercising the duties of the office.

As far as can be ascertained, Colonel Manley and his wife lived a peaceful and relatively uneventful life at Manley Hall until his death there on the 4th January 1915, aged 64.

He was buried on the 7th January at St. Mary's Church, Weeford, the ceremony being carried out by the Rector.

He was succeeded by his son **Roger Shawe Manley**, who came of age on the 24th August 1912.

Probate was granted on the 27th February 1915 to his wife Edith Mary Manley and Personal Effects totalled £94,059 9s 1d, equivalent to approximately £6M, based upon present day values.

The Lichfield Mercury covered the funeral and described the event, as follows:-

Quietly and unostentatiously the remains of the deceased Colonel were laid to rest in the peaceful little churchyard of Weeford yesterday afternoon.

Rain fell incessantly and, in this respect, paralleled the weather experienced when the funeral of his deceased's father took place nearly eleven years ago.

The service was conducted by the Rector, the Reverend C P Koelle, who met the cortege at the church gates on its arrival from the Hall and recited the opening sentences of the Burial Service.

The choristers were in attendance and the hymn 'Peace, perfect peace' was sweetly sung to the accompaniment of the organ. The Rector conducted the last rites at the graveside.

The deceased was buried in a double brick vault, adjacent to the vault in which his father, mother and brother are laid. The coffin was of plain oak, with brass fittings.

The mourners were his widow, son (Mr Roger Manley), Miss M Manley, Miss K Manley (daughters) and Mrs E S Pipe-Wolferstan (sister-in-law). Behind them came the tenants on the estate.

Amongst those present in church or at the graveside were the following':-

*Sir Villiers Forster, Bart.
Mr Philip Foster, M.P.
Mr Worthington of Maple Hayes & Miss Worthington.
Colonel Swinfen-Broun.
Mr H Parker-Jervis.
Mr George Levett.
Mr H N Shawe of Weddington.
Mr Spencer Madan.
Captain Townsend.
Mr Richard Hanmer.
Mr J A Thomas (Clerk to the Lichfield Justices).
Mr C H Morris.
Mr G H Heaton (Estate Agent for Manley Hall).
Mrs Bulwer.
Mr E Kendrick.
Mr J Hathaway.
Mr F W Rudgard.
Mr J T Hodgkins.
Mr W G Foden.*

Colonel Manley's wife was, for many years, Chairwoman of the Lichfield Division of the Women's Unionist and Conservative Association and also took an active interest in the Women's Institute movement.

She survived her husband for many years until her death, aged 77, at 'Trent Valley House', Lichfield on the 26th December 1941.

The funeral also took place at St. Mary's Church, Weeford.

CHAPTER 11 AUGUSTUS FREDERICK MANLEY

Augustus Frederick Manley was the second son of Augustus East Manley.

He was born on the 29th January 1853 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire and baptised on the 9th April at St. Marylebone Parish Church in London.

After spending his childhood at Manley Hall, he attended Eton College between 1869/70. Under the system appertaining at the time, the parents of boys wishing to attend the college could be registered at birth. Nowadays a new procedure applies, in that interviews have to be attended and examinations taken. A group photograph in existence, circa 1870, shows him outside a Miss Gulliver's house.

He then went on to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Alban Hall in 1877. St. Alban Hall had, at one time, been an independent academic hall until it was finally annexed by Merton College in 1881.

He became a very good cricketer and a noted batsman, who played for his county Staffordshire. He also played for the Free Foresters and the MCC between 1874 and 1879.

Augustus Manley followed in the footsteps of his brother and joined the army. He soon made progress and was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in the Kings Own Staffordshire Regiment on the 18th December 1877 when he was aged 24.

He did not, however, make the army his career, as he resigned his commission less than 3 years later on the 23rd March 1880. Perhaps army life did not suit him and he decided to explore pastures new.

The 1881 Census Return found him, aged 28, living in Farringdon, Hampshire, where he was boarding out and studying as an agricultural student.

Augustus Manley was obviously a free spirit, because he did not continue along this path to being a Gentleman Farmer. During the 11 year period between 1883 -1894 he was known to have been mountain climbing with a friend Thomas Bland.

He kept diaries and, in one of them, he talked about his feat in climbing the Matterhorn in 1893.

Other diaries, covering the years 1885, 1887, 1891, 1892, 1893 & 1894, were published in his name under the title 'Swiss Travels and Ascents of Mountains', a copy of which is held in the Alpine Club Archives. The original being in the possession of Anne Batchelor.

After these adventures he returned home to Manley Hall, but a tragic turn of events one day resulted in him being found dead in the grounds.

Details of his death were reported in the Lichfield Mercury dated 12th October 1894, under the headline:-

MYSTERIOUS FATALITY NEAR LICHFIELD

SAD DEATH OF MR A F MANLEY.

The article went on to say:-

'We greatly regret that this week it is our painful duty to record the death of Mr Augustus Frederick Manley, second son of Mr A E Manley J.P. of Manley Hall, which occurred on Tuesday 9th October, under very sad circumstances.

The deceased, who was 41 years of age and unmarried, has for the greater part of his life resided with his parents at Manley and, until recently, enjoyed excellent health. His father found his son in the grounds lying on his back in a pool of blood, near a seat.

A gun, one of the barrels of which it was afterwards found had been discharged, was lying across the deceased, and the left side of his face, was completely blown away.

There is, at present, nothing to show the manner in which the deceased was shot, but it is evident that no violence had been used by anyone, inasmuch as there were no signs of a struggle and the deceased clothes were not at all disarranged, a gold watch, which he was carrying at the time, being in its proper place.

The sad news arrived in Lichfield on Tuesday afternoon and was, at first, put down as merely rumour, but when the report was confirmed on Wednesday morning, regret was expressed on all sides and much sympathy felt with Mr & Mrs Manley in their sad bereavement.'

An inquest was hastily arranged and this took place on Friday 12th October.

A week later The Lichfield Mercury followed the story with another article under the headline:-

FATALITY AT MANLEY HALL

'An inquiry was held at Manley Hall on Friday morning by the Coroner Mr Edwin Hooper, in respect of the death of Mr Augustus Frederick Manley, second son of Mr Augustus East Manley J.P. of Manley Hall, who was found shot in the grounds on Tuesday afternoon. Mr John Hathaway was foreman of the jury.

Mr A E Manley, father of the deceased, was the first witness called and having given evidence of identification of the body said:-

"My son was 41 years of age last birthday. He had no calling and resided chiefly with me at Manley Hall. He was living at the Hall at the time of his death and his health had been very good indeed, his spirits also being generally good.

I last saw him alive on Monday, about 11.00 a.m., when I left home for Shropshire. I remained away all night and returned on Tuesday about 1.15 p.m. When I arrived my son was not in the house and I learned from the domestics that he had gone out after breakfast.

After lunch I went out. I did not particularly go to look for him, but merely went for a walk on the farm. I thought he had gone to see the hounds and took no notice. About 3.30 p.m. I was returning through the wood, when I saw my son lying straight out on the ground near a seat, which had been erected in a recess near the embankment.

I saw blood on his face, but did not see a gun, nor did I go up to him. I returned to the house and told the butler. I don't know how long it was before his body was brought in by the Coroner.

My son was usually in good spirits and health and I have never heard him threaten to destroy himself. He had been suffering from insomnia and was taking sleeping draughts for it. He was very much accustomed to shooting and had made an appointment to go shooting at a friend's in Hampshire. He was also to have been at a shooting party here on the 25th and afterwards he would have gone on down Hampshire.

He was in Yorkshire about a fortnight ago, shooting with Mr Chance. I have this week received a letter from Mr Chance."

The letter was then read out and was to the following effect:-

*Imperial Hotel,
Great Malvern.*

Dear Mr Manley,

I have just seen the Daily Post and cannot say how shocked I am at the news of your son's accident. That it was an accident I have no doubt at all, as when he was with us in Yorkshire, he showed no signs of depression as hinted at in the Post.

I do not know what to say further in the matter, except to offer you and Mrs Manley my most sincere sympathy.

Continuing his evidence, Mr Manley said:-

"My son was to have shot with Mr Anson at Cotton Park on Monday. He was thoroughly well acquainted with guns and he knew nothing whatever to lead him to suppose that he would commit an act of that kind of his own will.

On the Sunday evening before I left for Shropshire I asked my son to kill some of the wood pigeons, as they had done a great deal of damage and he believed that his son was trying to carry out his request when he met with his death.

My son had shot with Colonel Levett and other gentlemen in the neighbourhood, but had never had an accident with his guns before."

Alfred Bertram, butler in the employ of Mr A E Manley, was the next witness called. He said:-

"I have known Mr Manley's son for 11 years, during which time I have lived in Mr Manley's service. Mr A F Manley's state of health has been very good. I saw him on Tuesday morning at 8.30 a.m., at which hour I called him. He did not say anything to me when I called him. He had breakfast at about 20 minutes past nine. He breakfasted alone and was not a married man. There was nothing unusual in his manner. I did not see him after breakfast, as he went out.

His gun was usually kept in the gun-room and I did not see him take it out, nor did I hear any shooting, but found out after a shot had been heard. The keeper knew that the gun had gone, but that was nothing unusual for Mr A F Manley to take a gun out in the morning.

About 3.30 p.m. Mr A E Manley came in and told me that he had seen his son lying on the ground shot. On hearing this I went straightaway to the stables for the coachman, but he was not there and I immediately went to the place mentioned by Mr Manley and found his son there quite dead. The place where his son was lying was at the bottom of the 'Grove' and the recess at the back of which was a seat. It is near the gravel pits and only about 2 minutes walk from the Hall.

Mr Manley's son was on his back, with his arms straight by his side. I saw his gun, which was lying just across his chest. One barrel of the gun was discharged, but I did not examine it. The policeman did that when he came. I am quite sure the deceased was dead, as the body was quite cold. Mr Manley said I had better send for the policeman and the doctor and they came nearly at the same time. The doctor then pronounced life to be extinct."

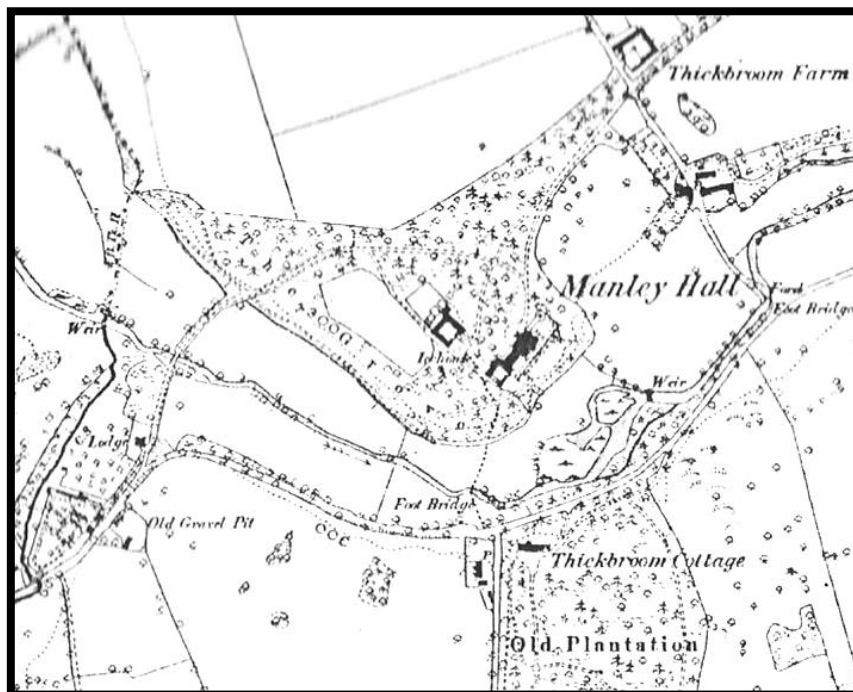
The Coroner then said:-

"Mr Manley was the last person I should have thought would have been likely to take his own life and I don't know of any reason why he should have done so. As far as I know the deceased was living comfortably with all his family.

He was too far away from the seat to have been sitting down when it happened. I should think he was standing. There were no bushes close to him, but there was a rhododendron just in front. It is possible that the deceased was standing at the time with the gun in his hand and the stock on the ground. There are a lot of stones about and he might have stumbled over some of them. He might have been waiting for pigeons or cranes. Had he been standing with the stock of the gun on the ground the gun might have gone off and it might have fallen on the deceased."

Police Constable George Fisher, stationed at Shenstone said:-

"About 4.00 p.m. on the 9th inst. I was asked to go to Manley Hall and was told that young Mr Manley had been found shot in the 'Grove'. I went to Manley Hall and I saw the body of the deceased near the gravel pits. The gun was lying across the body."



I asked the keeper to examine the gun and he found the right hand barrel was discharged. I found two cartridges on the deceased and he was wearing a gold watch and scarf pin. There is not the slightest suspicion of anyone having committed the act. I knew the deceased very well and I last saw him shooting down near Mr Hathaway's."

At this point of the evidence, the Foreman asked permission of the Coroner to view the scene. The request was granted and the jury proceeded to the spot which had been described by the butler, about 2 minutes walk from the house.

One of the jurors said:-

"He had carefully examined the trees around, but could find no trace of the shot."

The spot marked by the fall of the body was about a yard and a half from the seat, the side of which was marked by bloodstains. Except for this and a few disturbed dead leaves, there was no sign of anything unusual.

The Coroner then observed:-

“It was a likely place for the deceased to have been waiting for birds.”

On the return of the jury, the Coroner asked if any of the jurors wished to question the witnesses who had been called and a reply was given in the negative.

The Coroner then asked Colonel R T K Levett (Packington Hall), who was present, whether he wished to give evidence as to his connection with the deceased and a reply was given in the affirmative.

Colonel Levett, having been sworn in that he was a friend of the deceased, added that:-

“He had shot with him for 30 years – in fact, ever since the deceased was old enough to carry a gun.”

He went on to say that:-

“He was with the deceased at church on Sunday and he was apparently in perfect health and in good spirits. He had examined Mr Manley’s gun carefully and, in his opinion, it was perfectly sound and safe in every respect, but he did not think that he ever took one in his hand with such a light, and he should term it, dangerous trigger.

It was not generally known, but the weight that was required to pull a gun off in the service for a military rifle, was about 7lbs. This gun, however, would pull off at just over 3lbs. It was like a hair trigger.

The deceased was a person he should think of as not at all likely to commit suicide and he had not the slightest doubt in his own mind as to the occurrence being a pure accident.

He had made all the enquiries he could, heard the evidence and had seen the place where the accident occurred and, accustomed as he was to know the way in which the deceased was shooting, it was the simplest thing in the world for an accident to occur.

After shooting, the deceased was in the habit of putting his gun down in such a manner that the stock came into contact with the ground somewhat abruptly and on the place where the deceased apparently stood at the time of the accident, if he let the gun fall with the least undue weight, an explosion would be most likely to take place.

He could see nothing that did not point in the most conclusive manner to an accident. Again, if they took the length of the gun, the trigger would be perfectly beyond the deceased’s reach and the accident undoubtedly took place where the deceased was standing.”

Coroner:

“Do you think it likely that if a person desired to commit suicide he would shoot himself below the chin? Would he not do it on the side of the head?”

Colonel Levitt replied:

“Certainly, I have no doubt that this was an accident.”

A juryman:

“Can you account for the blood on the barrel of the gun?”

Colonel Levett answered:

“Certainly, the explosion would drive blood and brains in all directions around.”

Colonel Francis Capel Manley then gave evidence to the fact that his brother, as far as he was aware, was in excellent physical and muscular strength.

The Coroner then summed up the evidence and requested the jury to find their verdict, but not before saying, in his own opinion, death was purely the result of an accident.

The jury at once returned a verdict of ‘Accidental Death’.

If one was of a cynical nature, the opposite view could easily be taken.

The deceased did not have a profession, being purely a ‘Gentleman of Leisure’.

He was not married and therefore did not have a wife and family to offer support.

He had just spent many exciting years climbing mountains and was, perhaps, getting too old for that type of extreme physical activity at the age of 41.

He now only seemed to spend most of his time going to various shooting parties with friends and acquaintances and, perhaps, he had looked into the future and seen very little that gave him much room for optimism in his later declining years

Would Augustus Manley, experienced around guns since a very young age, really have been careless enough to shoot himself.

Great store was given by the evidence provided by Col. Levett and his opinion, even though he was not even present on the day the shooting took place. He was, however, a close friend of the family.

The Coroner gave his opinion that the incident was an accident, just prior to requesting the jury to consider their verdict – no pressure there then! He was also a friend of the family.

Another consideration was the fact that the Manley’s were a well respected and influential family, not only in the immediate vicinity, but wider afield. A verdict of ‘Accidental Death’ would be far more acceptable than Suicide, which not only would have become the subject of great gossip amongst their peers but also damaged their reputation.

Finally, if ‘Suicide’ had been found, Augustus Manley would not have been able to be buried with his family in consecrated ground.

What actually did happen that fateful day will never be known, but it will always be open to conjecture, despite the outcome!

The funeral took place at noon the next day at St. Mary’s Church, Weeford in the family plot. The Rector, the Reverend F C Beaumont, officiated. The Tamworth Herald dated the 20th October 1894 stated that *‘The gentry of the district sent their carriages’*.

The main mourners also present were the deceased’s father, brother & uncles, in addition to the tenantry on the estate and the servants of Manley Hall.

In his Will Augustus Frederick Manley left Personal Effects of £3,307 (£294,000 based on today’s standard) and Probate was granted on the 10th December 1894 to his father Augustus East Manley.

CHAPTER 12 SPINSTER LADIES IN THE MANLEY FAMILY

LOUISA GEORGINA MANLEY

Augustus East Manley's oldest child was a daughter named ***Louisa Georgina Manley***, who was born in 1855 at 65 Wimpole Street, Marylebone, London and was baptised on the 21st July.

Nothing is known of Louisa, other than the fact she remained a spinster during her lifetime. Her days were probably taken up doing various types of charity work, undertaking sewing & embroidery, receiving her circle of friends at Manley Hall and making reciprocal visits.

Young ladies at the time had to be chaperoned at all times and it was very difficult to find a suitor with the view to marriage. Very often, as in the case of Miss Manley, life would have revolved around the home.

She died, aged 80, at Manor Cottage, Kings Bromley, Staffordshire on the 16th April 1936.

She was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, Weeford, next to other family members.

She left in her Will an amount of £35,069 2s 7d and Probate was granted to Gerald Percival Heywood, who was a retired Lt. Colonel in the army.



'MANOR COTTAGE', KINGS BROMLEY.

MARGARET GEORGINA MANLEY

Francis Capel Manley's elder daughter, was born in October 1888 at 55, Lower Belgrave Street, Knightsbridge, London.

She too remained a spinster throughout her life. She died on the 7th March 1948, aged 59, at 'Inverness Lodge', Roehampton, London SE 15.

Probate was granted to her brother Roger Shawe Manley on the 16th July. She left in her Will an amount of £7,153. 9s 0d.

KATHERINE MARY MANLEY

Her sister was born in 1890, also at 55 Belgrave Street, Knightsbridge.

She never married and tragically died at the very early age of 25 in July 1915 at Weeford, Staffordshire, only a few months after attending the death of her father.

The ceremony at St. Mary's Church was presided over by Rev. C. Philpot Koelle, the Rector at the time.

CHAPTER 13 ROGER SHAWE MANLEY

The final occupant of Manley Hall was **Roger Shawe Manley**, who was the son of Colonel Francis Capel Manley.

He was born on the 24th August 1891 at 55 Lower Belgrave Street, Knightsbridge, London.

He was educated at Eton and went on to Trinity College, Cambridge. Whilst at Eton he joined the Officers' Training Corp and had obviously made the decision to enter the armed services, in the footsteps of his father.

On the 24th August 1912, shortly after leaving university, he was given a 'Coming of Age' party at Manley Hall by his parents. All the tenants and employees on the estate were invited and a large marquee was erected in the grounds adjacent to the hall.

At 2.00 pm dinner was served to the principal tenants and their wives. Unfortunately, his father, Colonel F C Manley, was not able to attend due to an indisposition and his place as chair was taken by Mr G H Heaton, the agent for the estate. He was supported by Mrs Manley.

Among others present were Roger Manley's sisters Miss Margaret Manley and Miss Katherine Manley, together with Lt. Colonel & Mrs Pipe-Wolferstan and Mr & Mrs H N Shawe of Weddington Hall.

An excellent meal was provided by Mr H B Castle of the George Hotel, Lichfield, who arranged and organised the proceedings with the assistance of a staff of waiters.

Upon completion of the meal, the obligatory toasts were said and these were followed by the Chairman, who proposed the health of Mr Roger Manley.



**PHOTOGRAPH OF Mr ROGER SHAWE MANLEY,
TAKEN AROUND THE TIME OF HIS 21ST BIRTHDAY.**

Mr James Marler of Littlehay, as one of the oldest tenants, made a presentation of a gold watch & chain to Roger Manley. The watch bore the inscription:-

'Presented to Mr R S Manley on his attaining his majority, by the Tenantry on the Manley Hall Estate.'

In his speech, he noted that Mr Manley was making a special study of agriculture and the management and development of land and he wished him every success and felt that the knowledge would tend to strengthen the pleasant relationship which existed between the Landlord and the tenants of the estate.

After the speeches were concluded, there was entertainment in the form of a ventriloquist and a conjurer, together with music which was provided by the Lichfield City Band.

A programme of sports was also organised and these went on through the afternoon and continued until dusk. Prizes were presented by Mrs Manley.

Two more presentations were made to Roger Manley during the course of the day. The staff at the hall gave him a gold mounted walking stick with his monogram inscribed thereon and the outdoor staff presented him with a silver match box, also similarly inscribed.

Almost exactly a year after these celebrations took place; an article appeared in the Tamworth Herald that Roger Manley had been granted a commission in the Queen's Own Royal Regiment of Staffordshire, as a 2nd Lieutenant.

Not long after this, of course, the terrible conflict of the 1914-18 war began, known by some as the Great War. Lieutenant Manley was, however, fortunate in this respect as he was posted to serve in Egypt, thus avoiding the carnage that was to follow on the Western Front.

In 1915 he was awarded the Star and this would have been followed by the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Campaigns - 1914-18				(A) Where decoration was earned	
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Medal	Notes
(A) MANLEY, Roger Shawe	Staffs Regt	2nd Lt	1014	Star	1915
(B) MANLEY, Roger Shawe	Staffs Regt	2nd Lt	1014	British War Medal	1915
(C) MANLEY, Roger Shawe	Staffs Regt	2nd Lt	1014	Victory Medal	1915

Actions taken
1915 STAFFS
1915 STAFFS
1915 STAFFS

10-11-15
EF 9/15/17

BRITISH ARMY WWI MEDAL ROLLS INDEX CARD.

Further details are not known as to the remainder of Roger Manley's war service, other than the fact he was promoted to Captain in 1917.

A newspaper article in the Lichfield Mercury dated the 2nd January 1920 indicates that he survived the war without mishap.

The article said:-

'On Tuesday evening last, at the Bull's Head, Shenstone, Captain Roger Shawe Manley was entertained to dinner by the tenants on his return from the war. The chair was occupied by Mr T J Hodgkins who, in the course of the evening, presented Captain Manley with a massive three handled silver cup bearing the inscription:-

Presented to Captain R S Manley by the tenants on his Manley Hall estate to commemorate his safe return from the Great War, December 23rd 1919.

As with previous members of his family, he involved himself in local affairs and, amongst other things, he served as a Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Staffordshire and was also a Justice of the Peace.

A few years later, on the 22nd November 1924, it was announced that Captain Manley was to become engaged to Miss Eleanor Constance Gresley, daughter of Mrs N B Gresley. Miss Gresley, who was born in 1904, was the elder daughter of the late Mr Nigel Bowyer Gresley of Netherseal who, by some strange coincidence, died in the same year as Captain Manley's father Colonel Francis Manley.

The couple married on the 20th January 1925 at Tamworth Parish Church. As the couple were leaving the church at the end of the ceremony they passed under an archway of swords formed by a contingent of the Staffordshire Yeomanry. There followed a reception held at Statfold Hall, near Tamworth, the residence of Lt. Col. and Mrs E S P Wolferstan.

The couple spent their honeymoon at Pontresina in the Swiss Alps.

It was at this point in time that the family's connection with Manley Hall changed forever. The question of where Roger Manley and his new bride were going to live after they married had obviously been discussed previously and a decision was made to move away from the country mansion.

The residence was getting on for 100 years old, was large and rambling and was probably rather cold and draughty for the young Eleanor and costly to run too. They therefore moved to a smaller property known as Twycross House, situated near Atherstone.

This meant that Captain Manley had a lot of work to do to find someone who would take over responsibility for the Hall. In the end he had limited success in this respect. He was unable to find a buyer for the property but he was able to lease it out and he entered into an agreement with the Reverend William Canner for use as a private boarding school for boys. On the 6th March 1925 an *'Inventory of Articles & Effects about the premises of Manley Hall, the property of Captain R S Manley'* was drawn up.

Captain Manley next tried to persuade the Rev. Canner to take on the shooting and fishing rights for the estate, but in this he had no luck.

Records show that around this period the estate had a rich variety of game and details of the 'Game Bag' for the years 1920-24 were, as follows:-

	Pheasants	Partridges	Hares	Rabbits	Woodcock	Snipe
1920/21	246	227	154	685	8	22
1921/22	469	627	229	300	10	7
1922/23	300	473	105	350	3	23
1923/24	615	587	151	200	3	14
Totals	1630	1914	639	1535	24	66

Finally, the leasing of shooting and fishing rights was arranged with individual parties. An examination of a document dated 28th May 1941 shows that a lease granting fishing rights, rod & line only, for 5-year periods was made by Roger Manley, in relation to the Black Brook. This particular lease was granted to W Sherwood Esq. of 'Derrymore', Sutton Coldfield and H H Sherwood Esq. of 'Ivy House', Shenstone.

It has been mentioned previously that the Black Brook was a source of very fine trout.

In 1924, although there are no details of what servants actually worked in the Hall itself, it is known that Roger Manley employed 6 estate workers, as follows:-

Head Gardener with house provided.
 1 Assistant Gardener @ 37/= per week.
 2 Assistant Gardeners @ 42/= per week.
 Head Gamekeeper with house provided plus 40/= per week.
 Underkeeper @ 37/= per week.

Roger Manley continued to be associated with the Staffordshire Yeomanry after he left Manley Hall and Kelly's Directory of Staffordshire in 1936 described him as residing at Twycross House, his rank being that of Major.

After moving into the area, it is known that he became the area secretary of the Atherstone hounds. Roger Manley was further promoted to that of Lieutenant Colonel, although the exact date is not known. He went on to actually command the Staffordshire Yeomanry for the four years prior to 1941, at which point he was promoted again, this time to full Colonel and placed on the Army Staff. The following year he was made Governor of Jerusalem at the age of 51.

He died in December 1973 in Surrey, aged 82. His wife Eleanor survived him by just over 2 years. She died also in Surrey in March 1976, which brought the Manley dynasty to an end, in relation to Manley Hall.

CHAPTER 14 REASONS BEHIND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MANY OF THE LARGE COUNTRY ESTATES

Throughout English history this country has been a land of great estates, dominated by a few hundred families who wielded much of the nation's political and economic power.

The age old concept of primogeniture, which ensured that the eldest son inherited all, was the key reason for the continuing dominance of the landed aristocracy.

By 1914, the growing wealth of the middle classes had deprived the great families of much of their political weight and, even then, had diminished much of the power of the House of Lords. However, the supremacy of the aristocracy in much of the countryside remained relatively unscathed, although the next decade was to mark a turning point in this respect.

The worst blow was the First World War itself and among the 'flower of youth' which died in Flanders were the eldest, and indeed many of the younger, sons of the great families. By the end of 1918 therefore, in many instances, there was no longer an heir to inherit the estates.

Equally severe was the effect of economic and political change. Since 1894 there had been some degree of liability upon the estates, in the form of Estate Duty. This was chargeable upon all property, whether land, money or valuable collections such as paintings, silverware, porcelain etc. In the years immediately after its inception the level of duty payable was relatively low but, by 1914, the cost of the social policies of the Liberal government had been met by tax increases, including a hefty rise in Estate Duty. Before 1908, on an estate of a million pounds, the amount payable was 8%. In 1914 that had almost doubled and, by 1918, the cost of the war had pushed up the rate to 30%.

To the landed aristocracy the growth in this duty was a major blow, not so much because the large amounts payable upon the death of the head of the family were unaffordable, but because of the nature of their wealth. Much of this was tied up in capital assets, particularly land. So, whilst the money was there, in most cases, it became increasingly impossible for a family to find enough cash to pay a debt to the Inland Revenue which, for a large country estate might well amount to several million pounds. Often there was little alternative but to sell assets to raise money and frequently this meant that all, or part of the estate, had to be sold.

Economic conditions were also changing. The war had dramatically increased both prices and wage levels. It had been a boom time for industrialists but, for the landed gentry, life was by no means easy.

In the years after the war, land was paying a return substantially below the base rate offered by banks and so, in real terms, the aristocratic landowner was actually losing out. As a result, there was an increased tendency to sell one or more of the family estates and to convert the proceeds into bonds and equities.

There was also a problem with the large country house mansions themselves. All had been built in better times, when wages and running costs were lower. The families simply couldn't afford any longer a staff of 20 or more in both town and country, as well as the vast number of outdoor workers needed to keep a country estate in good order. In addition, it was no longer certain that suitable staff could even be found. Young people were far less inclined than previously to go into service and without spending money to improve the servant's quarters one could not hope to attract a better type of employee.

Because of these various reasons, many families chose to sell off all or part of their estates. More land changed hands in the post war years than at any time since the Norman Conquest!

To sum up, it is safe to say that the First World War dealt a death blow to the England of great estates and landed aristocracy. Many estates were broken up and others acquired by people whose money came from commerce and industry and who had no traditional ties with the countryside.

Though many estates weathered the economic storms of the 1920's and some of the old landed families survived with their ancestral heritage intact, in general the heyday of life on the estate was over.

All saw their staff contract and few escaped having to sell off some of their vast acreage and it was apparent that the old world had gone forever and a new one had arrived.

The Manley estate and Roger Shawe Manley in particular were no exception, as can be seen from the previous chapter, Roger Manley having had to rent out Manley Hall and lease out the shooting and fishing rights on his land.

Unlike his father Francis Capel Manley who, at one time had many servants, he and his wife had far fewer employees and lived a more simplistic lifestyle.

CHAPTER 15 THE REVEREND WILLIAM CANNER AND MANLEY HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS

As stated previously, the presence of a Manley at Manley Hall ended with Roger Shawe Manley when he vacated the Hall in 1925. It is perhaps pertinent, however, to write a few notes on the period the Hall was occupied as a school under the control of the ***Reverend William Canner***.

Reverend Canner was born in June 1882 at Willesden in the Parish of Kilburn, London, the son of John & Elizabeth Canner. He had a good education, which culminated in a course at King's College, London.

The Census Return of 1911 shows him, aged 29, as being a Clerk in Holy Orders in the Church of England.

At some point in time after this date, he became a Member of the Royal Society of Teachers and got married.

The Rev. Canner also moved into the area to run a boys Preparatory School at Hints Hall, Hints, Near Tamworth, Staffordshire, between 1922 & 1925.

How he and his wife became involved initially with Manley Hall, is open to conjecture. However, it is a fact that Roger Manley wanted to move away and it is reasonable to assume he placed advertisements in the local newspapers to the effect that the Hall was available to lease. Hints being a village very close to Weeford, it is possible that the news just travelled by 'word of mouth'.

What is not in doubt, however, is the fact that on the 25th March 1925 the Rev. Canner entered into an agreement with Mr Manley to lease Manley Hall for use as a boys' school, at an annual rent of £200.00.

It would appear from correspondence that Mr Manley originally wished to lease the Hall, together with the 'shooting rights' on the estate, as a complete package. This proved to be impossible for whatever reason, probably because the mansion was just too large for most potential candidates at the time to use as a private residence and it was also unsuitable for business use. Eventually, agreement was reached with Rev. Canner and the 'shooting rights' were negotiated separately with other individual parties.

Manley Hall Preparatory School for Boys therefore came into being.

Records show that, by the year 1947, the annual rental was £230.00. A very modest increase indeed over a period of 22 years!

The school was described in its Prospectus as:-

'A mansion which stands on high ground amidst lovely and healthy surroundings, in every way ideal for the happiness and well-being of the boys. It is so built that each side of the building receives its due amount of sunshine. The house has electric lighting, central heating and telephone'.

Boys at the school were aged 6 and upwards and were prepared for the Common Entrance Examination to Public Schools or, if especially desired, for other examinations.

Over the years boys successfully passed to many of the chief Public Schools including Rugby, Repton, Bromsgrove, Oundle and King Edward's Birmingham. Subjects taught at the school were Classics, Mathematics, French, English, History, Geography and Scripture.

Religious instruction, in accordance with the tenets of the Church of England, were given by the Headmaster himself and he also personally conducted the morning and evening prayers and the school service on Sundays.

The boys were encouraged to take part in organised games, Cricket and Association Football being the main sports. An annual cricket match always took place between the boys and their fathers during the Summer Term.



MANLEY HALL SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD AND PAVILLION.

The boys were divided into three Houses (or colours) – Blues, Greys and Greens

School trophies, presented at various times by parents, comprised 5 Silver Cups and a Silver Shield. Two of the cups were given for outstanding work, two for games and one for boxing and gymnasium. The shield was awarded for general good conduct.

The school time table for the day was, as follows:-

8.15 am	Rise
8.50 am	Prayers
9.00 am	Breakfast
9.45 – 11.15 am	Lessons
11.15 – 11.30 am	Physical Drill
11.30 – 1.00 pm	Lessons
1.00 – 2.00 pm	Dinner
2.00 – 2.30 pm	Rest Period
2.30 – 4.30 pm	Games
4.30 - 5.00 pm	Tea
5.00 – 7.00 pm	Lessons
7.00 pm	Prayers
7.10 pm	Supper & Bed (according to age)

Throughout the Summer Term, lessons were given during the afternoon and Games took place after Tea.

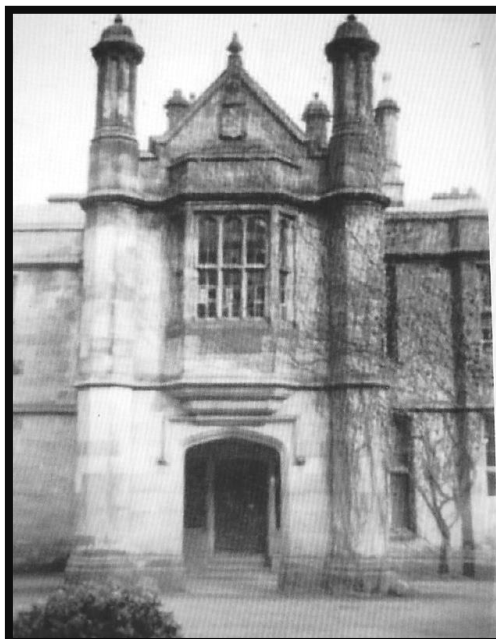
All the domestic arrangements were under the control and personal care of Mrs Canner.

The food was described as '*wholesome and as varied as possible*'. A typical daily menu would have been:-

Breakfast	Porridge with hot milk. Bacon, sausage, fish, eggs. Toast with butter & marmalade. Tea.
Dinner	Hot meat & vegetables. Pudding or fruit pie.
Tea	Bread, butter, jam & cakes. Tea.
Supper	Soup & sandwiches. Milk.

The School Year consisted of three terms:-

- 1) **Christmas Term** (mid-September – Christmas)
- 2) **Easter Term** (mid January – Easter)
- 3) **Summer Term** (end of April – end of July)



MAIN ENTRANCE TO MANLEY HALL SCHOOL.

Holidays comprised 4 weeks at Christmas, 4 weeks at Easter and 8 weeks in the Summer. There were no half-term breaks, but the boys could be taken out by their parents on two Sundays in each term, from 12.15 pm – 7.00 pm.

The school had a Tuck Shop, under the supervision of Mrs Canner, at which the boys were able to spend a maximum of one shilling per week.

Schools Fees, payable in advance, were 35 guineas per term, making an annual figure of 105 guineas. In addition, £1.15s per term was charged for laundry and 8s 6d per term for stationery, stamps and the Barber. Text books were charged for, as needed. Optional charges were made for Piano Lessons (£2. 5s per term) and Riding Lessons (£3 3s per term).

The school seemed to have been well run and adopted a caring attitude towards the boys under their control.

One former pupil remembered his Latin master at Manley Hall as being Hugh Murray-Richards. He would appear to have been somewhat of a character. The pupil went on to say that:-

“He took some of them to Weeford Parish Church on Sunday afternoons and played the organ to them.

He also had a very unusual way of teaching, in that he often gave individual tuition in the sports pavilion, whilst other pupils were playing a cricket match!”

Another former pupil named Dafydd Llywelyn also remembered him as

“An amazing teacher.”

He went on to say that,

“Upon arriving at Manley Hall in a somewhat traumatised state, coming from a ‘patchwork’ family, he entered a new and friendly atmosphere and was treated with the utmost respect and dignity.”

He further said,

“It was thanks to Hugh Murray-Richards, the Rev. William Canner and piano teacher Miss Treadgold that he developed into a professional musician & composer.”

He continued,

“Manley Hall was a wonderful old ‘castle-like’ building and to have it pulled down and demolished, in his opinion, was senseless destruction.”

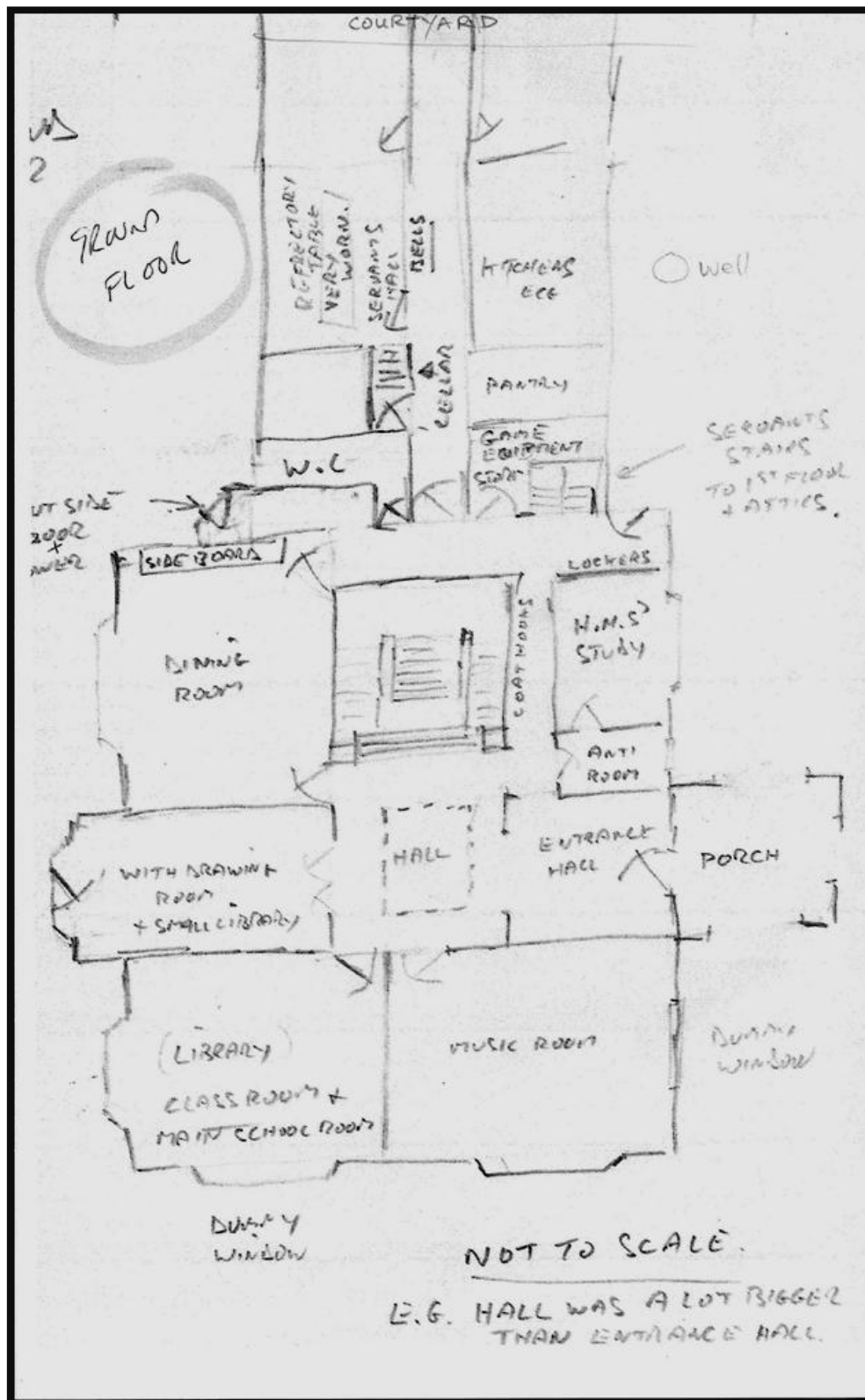
As a result of his stay there, another ex-pupil managed to produce freehand sketches of the Ground and First Floors of the school from memory, which is quite a feat considering the time which had elapsed in the interim period.

The porch on the sketch relates to the front elevation of the building, as per the photograph on the previous page. The room directly above, with the stone mullioned bay window, would therefore indicate the Billiard Room (Gym).

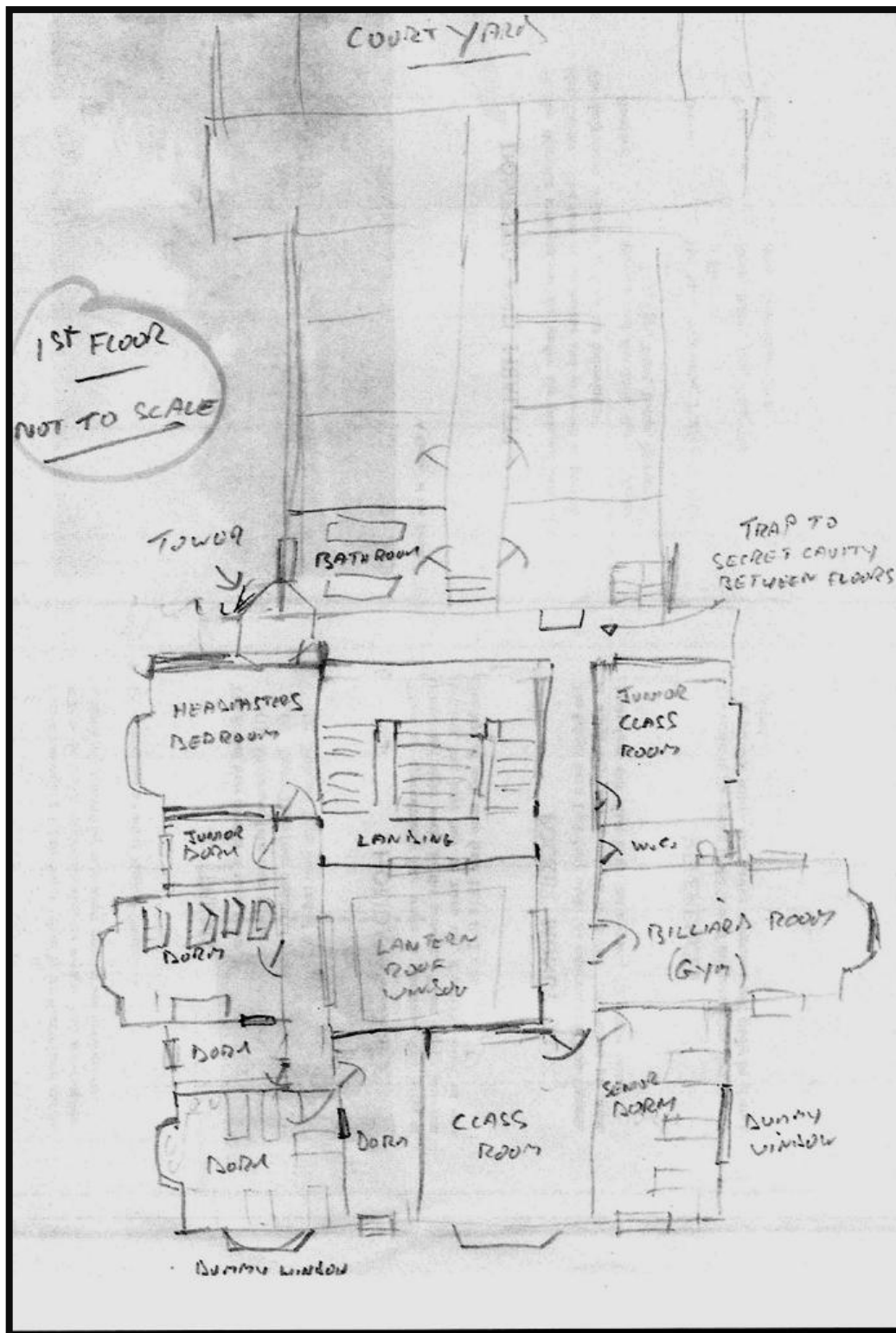
In addition to the Headmaster’s Study, the Ground Floor mainly comprised the Dining Room, Library/Classroom/Drawing Room and Music Room. Another interesting feature is the Dummy Windows.

The First Floor was mainly devoted to Dormitories and the Headmaster’s Bedroom.

The Rev. Canner died on the 16th March 1958, aged 75, and the lease was finally surrendered on the 16th December the same year. He was buried in St. Mary’s Church, Weeford by the Rector Mr Unwin.



FREEHAND SKETCH OF THE GROUND FLOOR OF MANLEY HALL SCHOOL.



FREEHAND SKETCH OF THE FIRST FLOOR OF MANLEY HALL SCHOOL.

CHAPTER 16--THE DEMISE OF MANLEY HALL

After the death of Rev Canner in 1958 the school closed down and the property was boarded up and left vacant.

Inevitably, the fabric of the building suffered over the next two years and also its unattended and isolated nature drew the attention of vandals. At some undetermined point in time a fire broke out, which severely damaged the mansion causing the roof to collapse and leaving the stonework blackened in places.

During the demolition stage, the family motto *Manus Haec Inimica Tyrannis* was found to be carved into the stonework above the main entrance, together with a simplified shield.

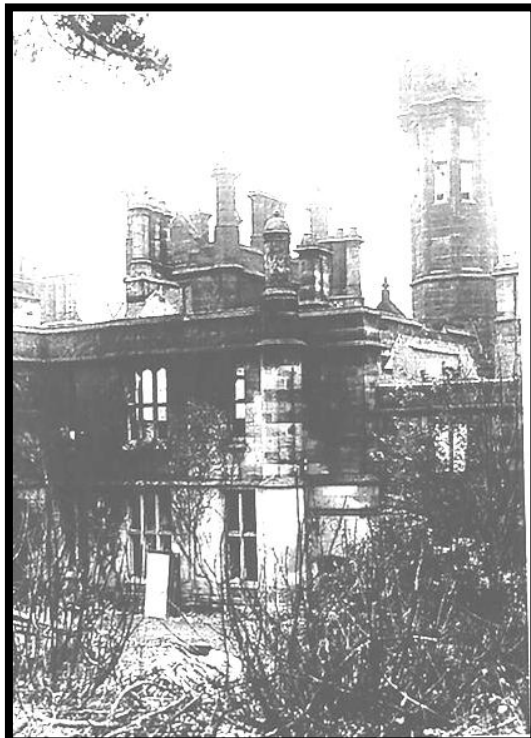


MANLEY FAMILY MOTTO ABOVE THE MAIN ENTRANCE.

The following photographs were taken by Staffordshire County Council (Archaeological & Historical Buildings Survey) in February 1961, just prior to the Hall's demolition.



REAR ELEVATION OF MANLEY HALL.



MANLEY HALL SHOWING VIEWING TOWER.



MAIN ENTRANCE TO MANLEY HALL.

For some reason, unknown at this particular point in time, the old service wing to Manley Hall, together with the stable complex escaped demolition



SERVICE WING TO MANLEY HALL.



ENTRANCE GATES AND BRICK BOUNDARY WALL TO STABLE BLOCK.

CHAPTER 17 – MANLEY HALL GATE LODGE

Another building which survived demolition is the old Gate Lodge, which can still be found at the entrance to the main driveway where it meets Little Hay Lane.

This is a substantial property, which was built in the same style as Manley Hall itself, with elaborate pinnacles and chimneys.

It is not known who occupied the lodge in earlier times, but it was probably a gatekeeper or a gardener and his family.



MANLEY HALL GATE LODGE 1962.

The original building has been much altered and extended over the years and is now a private residence. It was Grade II listed in 1978.



MANLEY HALL LODGE AS IT IS TODAY.

CHAPTER 18 THE MANLEY NAME LIVES ON

In conclusion, it is perhaps fitting to reveal that the name Manley still survives today in the immediate vicinity.

The Birmingham Post dated 6th September 2013 included an article on a restaurant in Weeford under the following heading:-

MANLEY BRASSERIE INVESTMENT BRINGS FEUDING FAMILIES TOGETHER

The report went on to say:-

'Records show there were three notable families among those associated with St. Mary's Church, Weeford – the Swinfens, the Manleys and the Wyatts.

There were Wyatts in Weeford at least as early as 1562, with a number gaining reputations as noted architects.

Edward Wyatt was heavily involved in major alterations to the previous church building and Benjamin Dean Wyatt (1775-1852) built the Royal Drury Lane Theatre and was also Surveyor at Westminster Abbey.

However, it was Benjamin's father, James (1746-1813), born half a mile away at Blackbrook Farmhouse, who was the most acclaimed and influential architect of his age. His first major building in the UK, the Pantheon in Oxford Street, was described by Horace Walpole as "the most beautiful edifice in England." In 1792 he was appointed surveyor-general, a post which effectively made him the most prominent architect in the country.

More recent members of the Wyatt family remembered in St. Mary's Church are Warwickshire, Worcestershire and England cricketer Bob Wyatt (1901-1995) and politician, journalist and Chairman of the Tote, Woodrow Wyatt – Lord Wyatt of Weeford (1918-1997), who is also buried in the churchyard.

There are also tablets in the Nave in memory of John Wyatt (1735-1797). He was the first person in the world to produce a thread of cotton by machine and it was another sixty years before Richard Arkwright invented the Spinning Jenny.

Turning now to the Manleys; the first Manley to live in Weeford was John Shawe Manley, who built the imposing Manley Hall on a 1,200 acre estate he had inherited from his father Admiral Isaac George Manley, the last survivor of Captain Cook's first round the world voyage.

John Shawe Manley was later to become High Sheriff of Staffordshire.

There is a plaque in the chancel to his son William Campbell Manley, who was Secretary of Legation at Copenhagen in the mid 19th century. A number of other plaques and windows are also dedicated to members of the Manley family.

The Wyatts and the Manleys, both with historic lineages in the region, are said to have harboured a 'significant rivalry' centred on the picturesque village. The clash of dynasties is highlighted in the local church, according to experts from the area.

All memorials and windows dedicated to members of the Wyatt family are situated on the south wall, while those for the Manleys are on the north wall. It is claimed that family members and staff always insisted that they kept to their own side of the church when attending services.

A £250,000 facelift of a long-established restaurant has finally re-united the two blue-blooded families at the Old School House Restaurant.

Proprietor and chef Nigel Dobson, whose parents Ted & Valerie bought the Old School House and turned it into a restaurant in early 1984, said:-

“Apparently the Manleys and Wyatts never got on. It was staring us in the face. The Wyatt Pavilion has been here for seven years and now we have linked the two families together.

Following a quarter of a century of trading as the Old School House Restaurant and our popular Wyatt Pavilion Weddings & Functions Suite, we thought it was time for a change. So we asked customers to help us with a new name and we were inundated with over 400 suggestions and finally landed on Manley’s Brasserie!”

Although Weeford is such a small place, there is a lot of history here.”

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ADDENDUM NO. 1

MANLEY FAMILY TREE (1755-1973)

Isaac George Manley

Born: 1755.

Died: 14th October 1837 aged 82 at 'Braziers', Wallingford, Oxfordshire.

Married: Frances Pole.

His wife was born in 1765. She died on the 29th July 1837 aged 72 at 'Braziers', Wallingford, Oxfordshire.

Children:

Ann Frances Pole Manley

Born: 1794 at Checkendon, Oxfordshire.

Died: 18th September 1862 aged 70 in Middlesex.

Married: Arthur Salwey on 20th June 1824.

Re-Married: Major Mundy Pole on 13th July 1841 at Weeford, Staffordshire. He died on the 30th November 1900, aged 96.

John Shawe Manley

Born: 1795 at Checkendon, Oxfordshire.

Died: 19th August 1857 aged 63.

Married: Catherine Emelia Clayton in the Italian city of Florence on the 16th June 1821. Later this was confirmed by way of an English ceremony, which took place at Marylebone, London a few months later on the 29th October.

His wife was born on the 13th November 1789 at 'Harleyford', Marlow, Buckinghamshire. She died on the 7th February 1864 aged 74 at 'Loudwater House', Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire.

Children:

(i) John Clayton Manley

Born: 20th August 1822 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire.

Died: 29th March 1844 aged 21. Buried at Provincia di Roma, Lazio, Italy.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(ii) Augustus East Manley

Born: 14th March 1824 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire.

Died: 26th May 1904 aged 80.

Married: Margaret Christabelle Philips on the 2nd June 1849 at St. Marylebone Church, London.

His wife was born on the 3rd December 1827 at Checkley, Staffordshire. She died on the 20th November 1908 aged 80, in London.

Children:

(a) Francis Capel Manley

Born: 18th May 1850 at 65, Wimpole St., Marylebone, London.

Died: 4th January 1915 aged 64 at Weeford.

Married: Edith Mary Cunliffe Shawe on the 15th February 1887 at St. Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London.

His wife was born in August 1864 at 'Southwell', Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire. She died on the 26th December 1941 aged 77 at 'Trent Valley House', Lichfield.

Children:

(1) Margaret Georgina Manley

Born: October 1888 at 55 Lower Belgrave St., Knightsbridge, London.

Died: 7th March 1948 aged 59 at 'Inverness Lodge', Roehampton, London SE 15.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(2) Katherine Mary Manley

Born: 1890 at 55 Lower Belgrave St., Knightsbridge, London.

Died: July 1915 aged 25 at Weeford, Staffordshire.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(3) Roger Shawe Manley

Born: 24th August 1891 at 55 Lower Belgrave St., Knightsbridge, London.

Died: 1973 aged 82 in Surrey.

Married: Eleanor Constance Gresley in March 1925 at Tamworth, Staffordshire.

His wife was born in 1905 and died in March 1976 aged 71 in Surrey.

Children: None.

(b) Augustus Frederick Manley

Born: 29th January 1853 at 65, Wimpole Street, Marylebone, London.

Died: 9th October 1894 aged 41 at Weeford, Staffordshire.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(c) Louisa Georgina Manley

Born: 21st July 1855 at 65, Wimpole St., Marylebone, London.

Died: 16th April 1936 aged 80 at 'Manor Cottage', Kings Bromley, Staffordshire.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(iii) William Campbell Manley

Born: 1st November 1825 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire.

Died: 19th November 1862 aged 37 at Ile-de-France, Paris.

Married: No.

Children: None.

(iv) Robert George Manley

Born: 12th November 1826 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire.

Died: 12th March 1889 aged 62 at 'Mancetter Lodge', Atherstone, Warwickshire.

Married: Augusta Oakley on the 20th October 1863 at St. Georges, Hanover Square, London.

His wife was born in Liege, Belgium in 1826 of British parents. She died on the 15th November 1879 aged 53 at 'Mancetter Lodge', Atherstone, Warwickshire.

Children: None.

(v) Henry Francis Manley

Born: 1830 at Thickbroom Cottage, Weeford, Staffordshire.

Died: 9th September 1895 aged 65 at Taunton, Somerset.

Married: Rose Ann Finch in 1864 at Watford.

His wife was born on the 27th September 1842 at Redheath, Watford. She died in 1892 aged 50 at Taunton, Somerset.

Children:

John Henry Manley

Born: 1866.

Died: 1914 aged 48.

Robert George Clayton Manley

Born: 1867

Died: 1893 aged 26.

William Pole Manley

Born: 1868

Died: 1883 aged 15.

Roger Harbin Manley

Born: 1870

Died: 1921 aged 51.

Henry Lamont Manley

Born: 1873

Died: 1927 aged 54.

Mary Dorothy Manley

Born: 1881

Died: 1939 aged 58.

ADDENDUM NO. 2

HEADSTONES OF THE MANLEY FAMILY IN ST. MARY'S CHURCHYARD, WEEFORD.



**Augustus Frederick
Manley**
(Son of Augustus East Manley)



Augustus East Manley
(Son of John Shawe Manley)



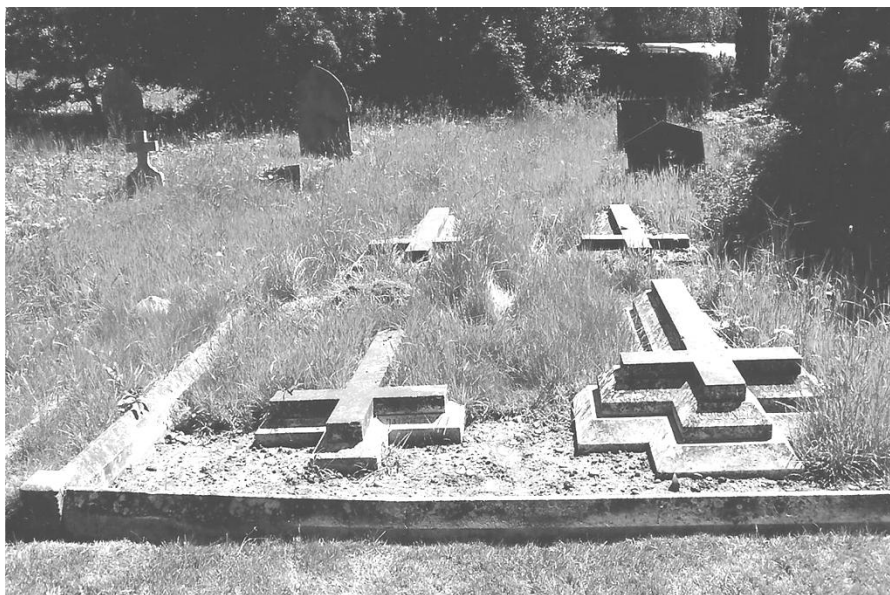
Katherine Mary Manley
(Daughter of Francis Capel Manley)



**Colonel Francis Capel
Manley**
(Son of Augustus East Manley)



Louisa Georgina Manley
(Daughter of Augustus East
Manley)



**HEADSTONES OF THE MANLEY FAMILY IN ST. MARY'S
CHURCHYARD, WEEFORD.**

ADDENDUM NO. 3

MEMORIAL PLAQUES & STAINED GLASS WINDOWS, DEDICATED TO THE MANLEY FAMILY, IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WEEFORD

Augustus East, Robert George & Henry Francis Manley (Stained glass window)

Inscription:

*This window is dedicated to the glory of God
and in memory of the surviving sons
Augustus, Robert & Henry Manley, 1877.*

Robert George Manley (Stained glass window)

Inscription:

*To the glory of God and
in memory of Robert
George Manley, Major
Inniskikkin Dragoons.
Died March 12th 1889.
By an affectionate brother.*

Anne Francis Pole Major Mundy Pole Manley (Plaque)

Inscription:

*To the memory of Anne
Francis Pole. Wife of
Major Mundy Pole and
only daughter of Admiral
Isaac George Manley. She
departed this life September
18th 1862 aged 70 years.
also
Major Mundy Pole husband
of the above who died
November 30th 1900 aged 96.*

John Clayton Manley (Plaque)

Inscription:

*Sacred to the memory of
John Clayton Manley
eldest son of John Shawe
Manley and Catherina
Emelia Manley of Manley
Hall in this Parish, who
departed this life at Rome
on the 29th of March 1844
aged 21 years.*

Augusta Manley (Stained glass window)

Inscription:

*Dedicated to the glory of God
and in memory of Augusta, wife
of Robert George Manley. Died
November 13th 1879.*

John Shawe Manley Catherine Emelia

(Plaque)

Inscription:

*Sacred to the memory of John
Shawe Manley Esquire of Manley
Hall in this Parish, who departed
this life August the 19th 1857 aged
63 years.*

*also of
Catherine Emelia, his wife who
died at Loudwater House, Near
Rickmansworth, Herts. February
7th 1864, aged 74 years.*

Augustus East Manley Margaret C Manley (Plaque)

Inscription:

*To the memory of Augustus East
Manley J.P. D.L. of Manley Hall
in this Parish. Born March 14th
1824. Died May 26th 1904.*

*also of
Margaret Christabelle Manley his
wife, daughter of John Burton
Philips of Heath House,
Staffordshire. Born December 3rd
1827. Died November 20th 1908.*

Interior of Church (NOT TO SCALE)

MEMORIAL PLAQUES AND STAINED GLASS WINDOWS (CONT'D)

Interior of Church (NOT TO SCALE)

Francis Capel Manley Edith Mary Manley (Plaque)

Inscription:

*In memory of Francis Capel
Manley J.P. of Manley Hall,
Colonel Coldstream Guards.
Born May 18th 1850. Died
January 4th 1915. He was in the
Coldstream Guards from 1870 to
1892 and served in the Campaigns
in Egypt 1882 and Suakin 1885*

*also in
fond memory of Edith Mary
Manley, his wife, who died
December 26th 1941.*

William Campbell Manley (Plaque)

Inscription:

*In memory of William Campbell
Manley, Secretary of Legation at
Copenhagen. Third son of John
Shawe Manley and Catherina
Emelia Manley, who died at Paris
November 19th 1862, aged 37
years. This tablet is placed here by
his affectionate mother and three
brothers.*

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