

# **DROXFORD - A Hampshire Village, its History and its Church**

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## DROXFORD - A Hampshire Village, its History and its Church - (page 1)

### STRATFIELD SAYE HOUSE

#### READING

Turgis Green 218

The villages of Southern England where no foreign invader has set foot for nine hundred years are unique in Europe. Over the rest of the old world war has obliterated history. Droxford might be chosen as the typical English village. Its records go back for eleven hundred years and during that long period local worthies and national figures flit in and out of its history.

The heart of every village is its church. The earliest part of Droxford church dates from 1150 – 1160 and the original chancel arch remains. All through the Middle Ages additions and alterations were being made and the fabric was completed by the erection of the tower in 1599, a rare instance of church building in the reign of the first Elizabeth.

Now serious damage by beetle to the roof timbers has been discovered and a sum of £5000 must be raised. The task is clearly far beyond the resources of a village with a population of five hundred. So this appeal has been launched and I warmly recommend it not only to all Hampshiremen but to all lovers of England and her history.

Signed by:

WELLINGTON

### AN ENCHANTED VALLEY

Midway between the London-Portsmouth and the London-Southampton Main Roads, from Farnham south-westward to the coast, runs one of the fairest roads in all the South of England. It is known as A.32. From Chawton, where Jane Austen lived, southward, it runs through the gentle green heart of Hampshire and not only is the countryside fair but the road is one of the fastest and safest in the south for it is pretty straight and has a wonderful surface.

It is at the southern end of this road, between West Meon and Wickham - after you have crossed the South downs - that you dip down into the enchanted, unspoiled valley of the Meon and it is in the midst of this valley that you run unexpectedly into Droxford.

Once an important centre of local and ecclesiastical government and still a compact and dignified village - though its total population is only just over 500 - it gives its name to the rural district whose administrative centre is now Bishops Waltham and which, not so very long ago, stretched to the shores of the Solent.

Right through the centuries, from the earliest days of England as we know it, great events and great names have been associated with Droxford, as you shall see. Yet it is still a small country village steeped in rural traditions and with the same simple rural interests it has always had.

Farming, flyfishing, foxhunting and wild life are its soul and its life blood. It is an enchanted village in an enchanted valley.

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The river Meon, which runs by and which, in earlier times, brought prosperity to the village - for watermills, until a few short years ago, were vital features of the countryside - is a typical Hampshire chalk stream. It abounds with trout and many lesser fish - loach, stickleback, minnow and so on. To its banks in summer come nightingales, sedge warblers, blackcap warblers and all that concourse of small songsters which make the English summer fair. Reed buntings can always be seen there, hunting in the willows and high in the reeds where moorhens and water-rails skulk and otters lie in wait for trout. And high overhead, on almost any evening of the year, the wild duck flight down the valley together with large battalions of blackheaded gulls and an occasional swan. From the woods of Rookesbury, a few miles down the river the great grey herons flap clumsily up the valley or stand like stone statues at the waterside, watching and waiting ... for fish.

Many hawks frequent the valley. Kestrels and sparrowhawks and, more recently, the great broadwinged buzzards of the West Country hunt ceaselessly up and down and, in summer, the fastest of all, the hobby, can occasionally be seen in pursuit of prey.

But perhaps the most interesting of all the birds which frequent the enchanted valley is the little rufous Dartford warbler, the only non-migratory British warbler. He is very rare and very local but this is one of his localities; and who can blame him.

### A DROXFORD HANDYMAN

Isaac Tommas, Carpenter and Bildier. Tethe pulled oute and Shavin, Land Measured, and Estates look'd over and valeed - Gud Bere and spirital Likers.

(Printed slip pinned at page 80. T. Gatehouse MS 1778).

There is still a carpenter and builder in the village, which today is adequately provided for in the supply of good beer and spirits, but it does not now support a barber, surveyor or valuer.

### ANCIENT HISTORY OF DROXFORD

The meaning and derivation of the name of the village are, like its earliest history, lost in the mists of antiquity. The Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names suggests that the first syllable is related to the Old High German 'troken' - dry, but a dry ford is surely a contradiction in terms. It is unlikely that there could have been such a place in the swampy malarious Meon valley of ancient times. Dr. Grundy puts forward the theory that the first element derives from 'Drocen', a personal name, but Drocen, if he ever existed, is unrecorded. Perhaps he may have been a pagan deity, whose holy place was later occupied by a Christian shrine, as sometimes happened during the conversion to Christianity of our barbarous ancestors.

Until comparatively recent times the spelling of the name depended on the whim of the writer. In the Domesday Book it appears as Drocheneford. Towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century a certain John is described as "de Drokensford". In 1541 it becomes Drokenfford and Droxydfford, in 1556 Drokensforth and in 1662 Droxford.

The pre-Roman and Roman inhabitants of the Meon valley left still existing traces of their tenancy: then followed the West Saxons who conquered the area and left it to be held by their allies the Jutes. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century Egbert unsuccessfully disputed the succession to the throne with Beorhtric, and took refuge at the court of Charlemagne. Returning to England after his rival's death, he recovered the West Saxon crown, and, having conquered the country as far as Northumberland, made a gift of twenty hides of land to the prior and monks of the old monastery of St. Swithuns in Winchester. The area involved included the present parish of Droxford, part of Swanmore and most of Shedfield. This appears to be the earliest mention of the village: the date is 826 A.D. The charter describes the boundaries of the land, but the landmarks are difficult to find today: many have of course disappeared entirely, but some surviving names enable the area to be identified with fair accuracy. Hazleholt, for example appears as haesel holt, and is the easiest one to locate. Mention is made of stan bursh, the stone fort or camp, and the name is found today in Stanbridge field, part of Northend Farm in the northwest of the parish. Another landmark in this charter is "hethenum birigelsum" - the heathen graves. This is a large barrow a hundred yards south of the junction of the Droxford-Swanmore and Droxford-Wickham roads. In 939 A.D. King Aethelstan gave his sister Eadburga seventeen hides of land: the charter confirming the gift quotes the same landmarks as in the previous one, but there is no explanation for the difference in area. Still later, in 956 King Eadwig granted to a lady called Aethelhild twenty hides of land, which included Swanmore and the south part of Droxford parish.

The Domesday Book, under the heading "in Drocheneford Hundredo" mentions, among other things "ecclesia de xx solidis et ij molini de xv solidis et ij denariis" - a church worth twenty shillings, and two mills worth fifteen shillings and two pence. The present church almost certainly stands on the same site as that which the Norman appraiser valued. One of the mills has disappeared - its site can be identified - and the other has recently been converted to a private house. The Domesday Book clerk adds a note "Ralph de Mortimer holds by force half a yardland of this excellent manor". One can hear his sniff of disapproval at the ungentlemanly behaviour of Ralph, as the Manor then belonged to the Bishop of Winchester.

From the days of John de Drokensford to those of Izaak Walton the village does not appear to have produced anyone of note or notoriety, but some of the inhabitants can be traced by their wills.

That of Agnes Knight, a widow, made in 1541, is witnessed by (among others) "sir Willyam Turner, curat". The title is one of respect, not of knighthood. John Holt's will is witnessed by William Cufade, parson of Droxford in 1556. Three years later the good parson put his affairs in order, describing himself as "William Cufade, alias Cuffold, Clerke, Doctor at Law and parson in Drokensford". Among his dispositions were two to his curate, a violet gown and "such books as be mete for his leryning". He must have been a sporting parson for in the inventory of his property appears "apparel, bowes and arrows" worth four pounds: his estate was valued at £45/18/0. In 1672 the occupant of the Manor House was Lady (Frances) Uvedale, who in her will, left to her daughter Frances the lease of the Manor Farm, valued at £1800. This daughter married in 1683 John Darbyshire, curate of Droxford, and a close friend of Izaak Walton.

An interesting comparison arises between the will of Dr. Cuffold, and that of Dr. Preston: the estate of the latter who died in 1664 was valued at over £1900, a considerable sum of money in those days. Dr. Preston was evicted from his living by the Puritans in 1650 and his church ornaments destroyed

or dispersed. Ten years later he returned to his Rectory, and restored the interior of the church. The existing altar rails were originally installed by him.

In the original text the Domesday Book entry for Droxford is reproduced in its latin form, translation as follows:

The Bishop of Winchester holds Droxford for his Monks, and it was always churchland. It was assessed in the time of King Edward at 16 hides and now at 14 hides. Here are 16 ploughlands, 2 in demesne, and 32 villeins and 13 borderers with 14 ploughlands; also 6 servants, a church of the value of 20s., 2 mills worth 15s. 2d.; the profit of the soil 12s. 10 acres of meadow, and woods for the pannage of 40 hogs. The value in the time of King Edward was, and is now £26, and when it came into possession £20.

Of this manor Hugh de Port holds of the Bishop 2 hides in Binstead, and Agemund held them and could not remove. Here are 2 ploughlands in demesne; and 2 villeins and 3 borderers and 1 ploughland; also 6 servants, a mill which pays 10s. 7 acres of meadow, woods for 5 hogs, and pasture worth 10d. The value in the time of King Edward was and is now 60s., and when it came into possession 40s.

Ralph de Mortimer holds, by force, half a yardland of this capital manor; it belonged to it in the time of King Edward, but the monks discharge it of the geld.

#### JOHN DE DROKENSFORD

Towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century John de Drokensford began to make his mark in history. The son of a local squire, he had a talent for administration, and his ability in this direction earned for him high office under the first two Edwards. Little is known of his birth, education and family. He had three brothers, Michael, Philip and Richard, and three nephews, Michael, Richard and Thomas: the first two may have been named after their respective fathers, but who was the father of Thomas is not known.

By 1294 John was close to King Edward I: in that year he was Keeper of the Wardrobe, and was custodian of the Great Seal pending the appointment of a Lord Chancellor. Nine years later he was still Keeper of the Wardrobe, and deputised for the Treasurer who was abroad in Rome. He retained the confidence of the new king, Edward II (who was crowned in 1307) to such an extent that he was appointed Guardian of the Kingdom during the King's absence in France in 1313: in June of that year John had a commission to open Parliament. At this time he had been Bishop of Bath & Wells for four years, and carried out his episcopal duties as zealously as he did his political ones.

He held many ecclesiastical appointments: he was Chaplain to the Pope, a canon of three Cathedrals, a prebendary of several collegiate churches in Yorkshire and Durham, rector of four parishes, including Droxford, and in addition held several prebends in Ireland.

John de Drokensford travelled incessantly and extensively throughout his diocese and elsewhere, keeping a firm hand and a watchful eye on all administrative matters.

Between 1310 and 1316 he was four times in Droxford: on the last occasion in connection with the consecration of the high altar in the church, as well as other altars newly restored, and portable altars, for which he received a license from the Bishop of Winchester.

John was undoubtedly a man of exceptional ability, but he was as human as his contemporaries in finding lucrative places for his relatives. One of these appointments earned him the displeasure of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but another one was speedily substituted.

In the course of the restoration of the Parish Church in 1316 John erected a magnificent tomb in memory of his parents, but the efficient iconoclasm of the Puritans has left little trace of it.

The marble effigy of his mother was recovered early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is now in the Bishop Lovett Chapel. John de Droksford died in May 1329, and is buried in his cathedral.

#### ISAAK WALTON AT DROXFORD

It was not until 1676, when Izaak Walton had reached the great age of 83, that his association with Droxford began. His greatest work, the one by which he is known throughout the world --- The Compleat Angler, had been published 23 years earlier and was already a literary classic. In 1676 his daughter Anne, who had till then been the stay and comforter of his old age --- his second wife died in 1662 --- was married to Dr. William Hawkins, a Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral and Rector of Droxford.

The old man's life had still seven years to run and, during these years, it seems he divided his time between Dr. Hawkin's house in the Close at Winchester, Farnham and the Rectory in Droxford. Quite how much time was actually spent in Droxford is not known but it is reasonable to assume that it was quite a large proportion of those seven years. Moreover, during this time, Izaak Walton formed very close friendships with both Mr. John Darbyshire, the Curate of Droxford, and Mr. Francis Morley who then lived in the Manor.

There is, to this day, an interesting relic of his friendship with the Morley family for, in the middle of the Old Rectory lawn, stands an old stone sundial on which is carved two heraldic devices. The one coat-of-arms represents the armorial bearings of the Morley family impaled with those of the Tancred's, and the other the Morley arms impaled with those of the Herberts. This sundial commemorates the marriages of father and son --- of Walton's friend Francis with Jane Tancred, which took place in 1652; and of Morley's eldest son, Charles, with Magdalene Herbert, daughter of Sir Henry Herbert and niece of Lord Herbert of Cherbury which took place shortly before the old man's death. And it is assumed, as it is sited in the Old Rectory garden and not that of the Manor, that it was erected at Izaak Walton's instigation.

That the last seven years of the old fisherman's life is shrouded in mystery can not but be admitted but that he had close and affectionate connections with Droxford is made clear in his will. It is therefore pleasant to think of him passing his last years quietly and uneventfully at the Rectory.

The Old Rectory has been considerably enlarged but part of it remains exactly as it was in the closing days of the seventeenth century. Perhaps, in the corner of one of the South rooms stood his fishing rod and tackle. In fine weather, he would stroll down the Glebe to the Meon and try his hand at "catching trouts" in "the swift, shallow, clear, pleasant brook". In cold weather, he would sit indoors and regale his friends, Mr. John Darbyshire or Squire Morley with fishing stories and anecdotes of the great churchmen he had known. Darbyshire on his part would tell how, but a few years before

he had come to Droxford, the quiet village had been affected by the Great Rebellion. He would repeat the story, oft told, of how Dr. Preston "for his eminent loyalty" had been shamefully treated and how the Church had been pillaged and the great altar tomb of the mother of John de Drokensford destroyed and her effigy thrown out in the water meadows. And then the old fisherman would hear how "the beloved Minister" had later set himself to repair the damage having new panelling fitted in the Sanctuary and new altar rails installed.

The village is little changed since the days, now nearly three hundred years ago, when Izaak Walton must have stood by the old mill, recently converted to a private house, watching the moorhens, the shy water-rail and the magic blue flash of the kingfisher over "the gliding stream", of the Meon.

#### TIME STANDS STILL

To the Honora'ble Committee for ye County of South'ton The humble petition of ye inhabitants of ye Parish of Droxford in the said County.

Sheweth,

That your petitioners have beene great sufferers and are much impoverished by the late troubles yet nevertheless have beene ready to satisfye their good affection to ye Parliam't and shall soe continue with our ready compliance in order thereunto according to our poore abilities. May it please this hon'ble Committee that by reason of these late troubles and the extraordinary poverty of your petitioners our parish church has fallen into such decay for want of repaire that we the parishioners cannot meet therein to partake of God's ordinances with convenyence or safetie ye repaire wherof will amount to a greater summe of money than your poore petitioners are able to raise among themselves

And therefore doe humbly pray

That of your bounty and goodness you will be pleased for ye furtheringe and encouraging your petitioners in so pious a worke to allow and order out of Dean and Chapter land or otherwise the summe of one hundred powndes toward ye repaire of ye said church which service will be not only acceptable to God but also a perpetual obligation to your petitioners to adhere unto your honours in the service of ye County Parliament and Kingdome.

And your petitioners shall pray etc.

Peter Hawkes worth	Edward Arthur	John Knight
William Barrey	John Heasler	Tho: Clewer
Richard Frinde	Edward Searle	Henry Prowting
Edward Markes	Richard Brewer	William Strugnell
Peter Heath	John Knight	William Smith
Edward Cluere	Robert Barefoot	German Knight
Simon Hatch	William Bensteade	
Nic Paxton	Edward Cleverly	

(Hist. MSS. Com. 5<sup>th</sup> Report p. 119. House Of Lords papers Dec. 1643).

NB: THIS IS THE END OF PAGE 13 OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT. PAGES 14 and 15 ARE MISSING.  
PAGE 16 CONTINUES BELOW.

### SOME NOTABLE MODERNS

The story of Droxford would not be complete without mention of that notable company of moderns whose names and achievements will live on as beacons to the student of the future; beacons as bright and sometimes brighter than those of the distant past of whom we villagers are so proud. Droxford has long been one of those outlying villages of the Portsmouth area in which naval men have had their temporary and, frequently, their permanent homes. It is fitting, therefore, that our first notable modern should be a great Admiral.

In 1914, when a string German squadron of heavy cruisers was ranging the South Pacific and Atlantic oceans at will and had already defeated a British squadron under Admiral Craddock at the Battle of Coronel, a British Battle Cruiser Squadron was sent into the South Atlantic under the command of Admiral Sturdee. The story of how the German Squadron approached the Falkland Islands whilst Admiral Sturdee's Squadron was coaling there, of the subsequent chase and complete destruction of the Germans is well known. What is not so widely known, however, is that Admiral Sturdee's home, at the time, was Meon Lea, the present Rectory of Droxford. Great, therefore, was the village rejoicing when the news of the victory came home to the Meon Valley.

The next occasion for rejoicing was soon after the First World War. In 1919, Harry Hawker, one of the pioneers of aviation, the man who gave his name to the great contemporary Aircraft Manufacturing Firm --- set out to Newfoundland to try to fly the Atlantic in a single engine Sopwith biplane. He took with him a young naval officer, Commander McKenzie-Grieve, as navigator. McKenzie-Grieve's home --- his mother's home --- was Fir Hill, the big house at the northern end of the village. The aviators took off from Newfoundland on May 18<sup>th</sup> and nothing more was heard of them.

Here the story should be taken up by someone who can well remember the occasion. Droxford then had a forge and Mr. Sidney Taylor was the Blacksmith --- although, by then, he had already seen that motorcars had come to stay and was planning his business accordingly. Mrs. Taylor, his widow, still lives at the Forge Garage.

"I can remember it as if it was yesterday", she will tell you. "Of course everyone thought they were lost. Mrs. McKenzie-Grieve --- such a nice lady --- was broken hearted and the village was plunged in gloom. I was standing with my husband out here in the road when a car stopped and a very smart lady --- she had a chauffeur, of course --- asked my husband which was Fir Hill. He showed her which the house was and they turned round here in the road and went back. And I turned to my husband and I said 'I'm sure that must be Mrs. Hawker'. And sure enough, in a few minutes, they all come running down the village and calling out that they were safe and they'd been picked up and were on their way down to London from Scotland".

What actually happened was that, owing to a break in the aircraft's water system, they had had an engine failure when about half way across. They had managed to get down in one piece and, partly through luck and partly because they had had the sense to fly along shipping lanes, had been picked up by a Danish steamer which had no radio. It was not until May 25<sup>th</sup>, when the ship arrived off the north coast of Scotland, that news was signalled ashore and down to London that they were safe.



The airmen were landed in Scotland and came to London where they were welcomed with acclamation and personally decorated by the King with Air Force Crosses. The acclamation in London may have been greater but it was no more sincere and far less grateful than that accorded to the brave young naval airman when he returned to his mother's village.

Adventure, pioneering, the search into the unknown, Droxford takes its fair share even today. Another great aviator, of more recent times, had very close connections with the village. Flight Lieutenant "Wimpey" Wade, Chief Test Pilot to the Hawker Aircraft company who, only a few years ago, so tragically lost his life whilst testing the P.1081, the forerunner of the now famous Hawker Hunter, knew Droxford well --- he was in the village a few days before his death. His sister runs the riding school in the village.

And --- what is it about horseflesh? --- Barbara Wade's partner is Mary Alcard whose brother Edward Alcard is just setting out to circumnavigate the world single handed in his now famous boat Sea Wanderer. Who says that the spirit of adventure is dead and who says that the horse is an animal of the past? Whoever it is, we cannot agree in Droxford.

Somehow Droxford seems not only to have produced great men but to have attracted them. In the earlier part of this century Studwell Lodge, at the southern end of the village, belonged to Lieut. Colonel John Bower, to whose memory there is a memorial plate in the Bishop Lovett chapel. His son Graham, later Sir Graham Bower, was a diplomat of some standing and while serving in South Africa he became firm friends with that great foe and friend of England, General Smuts. Between the wars, whenever he came to England and whenever he could spare the time for a few days holiday, that wonderful old warrior used to come and stay in Droxford with his friends the Bowers at Studwell. Mrs. Taylor of the forge can again enlighten the inquisitive. She has a charming story of how, in about 1925, when she and her husband had just acquired their first two hire cars, they received from Studwell a summons to drive General and Mrs. Smuts to the station to catch a train to London on the following day. All that afternoon and most of the night they polished the cars --- both of them --- for two cars would be required, one for the luggage and one for the general and his wife. The next morning two shining wonders of modern engineering entered the gates of Studwell but, alas, they had forgotten to fill up with petrol. "And you can imagine", Mrs. Taylor will say, "what my poor husband felt like. There were no petrol pumps in those days --- two gallon cans all to be humped up to Studwell. I don't think the general was best pleased but Sir Graham was very nice about it afterwards --- when it had all blown over".

The last time General --- by then Field Marshall --- Smuts visited Droxford was with his friend Winston Churchill in the latter's special train just prior to D-Day in the last war. Sir Graham had gone but Smuts must have felt very at home. Maybe that is why he is described by Sir Winston in his memoirs as being "at his most entertaining pitch".

"On the morning of Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>", writes Sir Winston, "I set off in my train for our siding by Eisenhower's Headquarters near Portsmouth with Field Marshal Smuts, Mr. Ernest Bevin, General Ismay and my personal staff . . . " 'Our Siding' was the goods siding of Droxford Station and of course, inevitably, within an hour of the train's arrival, everyone in Droxford knew. But the secret was kept. People in the village were well aware of their great responsibilities and kept faith though, as a precaution, Mr. McIntosh the postmaster will tell you, only official mail was allowed to leave the village during the four days the train was there. And, as though there weren't already enough

famous people there, Anthony Eden and General de Gaulle came down to visit the Prime Minister and the Supreme Commander.

This historic visit of all the heads of the Allied Invasion force is commemorated for all time in the form of a rustic seat on the green, suitable, one feels, for the oldest inhabitant in say 2025 A.D. We can picture him sitting smoking his pipe in the glow of the evening sun beneath the huge chestnut trees which spread out over the Manor House wall. "I remember", he will say to visitors, "I were just a nipper then . . . ." And he will go on to tell, with his own embellishments, of the eve of the greatest combined operation of all time when the Armada sailed from Britain; not to Britain.

Last, but certainly not least, among this cavalcade of notable moderns, Droxford treasures the memory of Dr. Neville Lovett, First Bishop of Portsmouth and 71<sup>st</sup> Bishop of Salisbury. It was in 1946, the stress of the war years having past, that Bishop Lovett retired from the see of Salisbury, at the age of 77, and came to live at Meon Lea --- now the Rectory. With some of his family close to him, he lived here until his death in 1951, beloved of every man, woman and child in the village.

In 1309, one of Droxford's sons --- John de Drokensford --- went out and became Bishop of a far off see. In 1946 a Bishop returned to Droxford, to well earned retirement. And now those two great men are linked for all time in our Church; for the effigy of John de Drokensford's mother and what remains of the great altar tomb which John erected to his family are side by side with the new altar and form a part of the Bishop Lovett Chapel.

#### ST. MARY & ALL SAINTS

The Parish Church of Droxford is about eight hundred years old: the oldest parts which can be identified with certainty date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In its original condition it is believed to have been simply a nave and chancel; in the 13<sup>th</sup> century the north aisle and chapel were built, and in the 14<sup>th</sup> century the south aisle and chapel. In the course of these additions openings were cut through the walls of the nave, forming the present square massive pillars and arches, so that what were the outside walls are now enclosed within the building. At the same time the north and south doorways were moved and rebuilt in the new exterior walls.

The square tower bears the date 1599, but nothing is known about it. There may have been a tower previously, which was rebuilt at this time, or it may commemorate the actual date of erection. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century John de Drokensford was responsible for many improvements to the inside of the church at least, and probably improved the outside as well. From what we know of him, he would be generous with the church of his native parish, of which he was Rector at the time.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century extensive alterations were made in the interior of the church --- the roofs and ceilings were renewed and two galleries were built: a hundred years later these were removed and in installing new pews, the original woodwork was discarded.

The pulpit came from St. Matthews, Denmark Hill during the incumbency of the Rev. Stephen Bridge (1868-86) who had been vicar of that parish before accepting the living of Droxford. It was offered to Mr. Bridge by his previous congregation (who were building a new pulpit) and it was fitted in its present position in Droxford Church.

The parish owes much to the skill and energy of the late Canon John Vaughan who was Rector from 1901 until 1910. During his incumbency the Church was extensively and most carefully renovated and many old features were found and preserved. They include a piscina in the Bishop Lovett Chapel. The staircase leading to the rood loft was uncovered, and the Jacobean communion rails, which had survived their long stay in the Rectory lumber room, were replaced. It should be mentioned here as a matter of interest that the Droxford Church Beetle Crusade really started from the finding of a death watch beetle in these rails. The Communion Plate now in use was bought by public subscription in 1813 to replace that which had been stolen. An entry in the Vestry Minute Book dated July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1813, reads:

“At a vestry meeting this day held after notice being given it was agreed that no further steps should be taken for the detection and conviction of the persons who are suspected of having stolen the Communion Plate from this Church. It was agreed also that the said Communion Plate should be replaced by subscription”.

The north chapel is now used as the vestry and the south chapel, now called the Bishop Lovett Chapel, perpetuates the memory of the late Bishop Neville Lovett, first bishop of Portsmouth and 71<sup>st</sup> bishop of Salisbury, who spent his last years in Droxford.

#### RECTORS OF DROXFORD

1288	Nicholas.
1298	Richard de Audeby.
1322	Michael de Drokensford.
1367	Richard de Hamptone.
1374	John Dounye.
1375	Richard Gomfray.
1377	Roger de Bryclesworthe.
1390	John de Swafham.
1394	William Nortone.
1553	Dr. Cuffoldes.
1596	John Harmer.
1628	Richard Neile.
1642	Nickolas Preston, D.D. (sequestered 1650).
1650	Mr. Robert Webb, Independent Minister.
1660	Nickolas Preston, D.D. (restored).
1664	William Hawkins, S.T.P.
1691	George Fulham.
1700	Thomas Goodwin.
1701	Peter Nourse, S.T.P.
1722	Lewis Stephens, D.D.
1746	James Cutler, M.A.
1782	James Chelsum, D.D.
1801	William Garnier, M.A.
1831	James Adair Griffith Colpoys, M.A.
1868	Stephen Bridge, M.A.
1886	Robert Everson Harrison, M.A.

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1902	John Vaughan, M.A.
1910	Jacob Stephenson, M.A.
1926	Leonard Sumner Etheridge, M.A.
1946	Gerald Webster Page, A.K.C., R.N. (Retd.).

N.B. THIS BOOKLET WRITTEN IN OR SOON AFTER 1951.