

Send her victorious, happy and glorious,

Souvenir Brochure



*of the
Silver Jubilee
of Her Majesty
Queen Elizabeth
the second*

1952 — 1977

Long to reign over us: God save the Queen

FOREWORD

This brochure describes a wide cross-section of the properties and activities in our parish, and we hope that you will enjoy seeing them. There are other features of at least equal interest which would have been well worth a visit – for instance Aldermaston Court, but for various reasons it has not been possible to arrange visits on this occasion.

We would like to thank all those who have given permission to walk around their gardens etc; also those who have assisted by lending items for the Exhibitions; and we would ask everyone to show their appreciation by taking great care when handling the various exhibits, also by showing care and respect when walking around the gardens.

SPORTS AFTERNOON, TEA PARTY AND BARBECUE

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 4th there will be a Sports Afternoon and Tea Party for the children of the two parishes, at which all children under the age of sixteen, who have previously applied, will receive a Jubilee Crown Piece. Proceedings will be opened by the Lord of the Manor, Dr T.E. Allibone, at 2.30 pm. In the evening, from 8 pm until midnight, a Barbecue will be held. Both of these functions will be held at Collier Macmillan Ltd. Sports Ground.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE IN CHURCH

On Sunday, June 5th at 10.30 am a Thanksgiving Service will be held in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston, for the Queen's Silver Jubilee. There is a special service for this occasion, which will be fully choral, and the Aldermaston bellringers will ring a quarter peal.

EXHIBITIONS

ALDERMASTON PARISH HALL. An Exhibition of the "Life of Aldermaston during the Past 25 Years", together with a display from the Aldermaston Pottery, a feature on "The Life of a Cricket Bat", and other items of interest will be on show on 6th and 7th June, from 2 pm until 7 pm.

ALDERMASTON CHURCH. Many of the treasures of Aldermaston Church, together with other items of interest, will be on view in the Church on the 6th and 7th June, from 2 pm until 7 pm.



ALDERMASTON COURT

The early history of Aldermaston Court still lies undiscovered. Certainly a Manor House has been there for many hundreds of years – the earliest recorded reference being a visit by Edward II in 1321. It is also known that Queen Elizabeth stayed at Aldermaston Court in 1558 and 1601.

An early Manor House, on a site near to the Church, was rebuilt in 1636, and this building was largely destroyed by fire in 1843.

Two years later, in 1845, work started on building Aldermaston Court as it stands today. This present house includes the 1636 oak panelling and carvings in the entrance hall, staircase and gallery. It also features the chimneys from the 1636 house, and much of the stained glass.

Two features of the grounds at Aldermaston Court are due to the Congreve family who lived there from 1752 to 1843. These are the 11-acre lake and the wrought-iron gates which face down the village street (see Eagle Gates).

During the War, the Government took over the house and grounds and at one time used them as a training centre for Women's Services. It was here that the then Princess Elizabeth, our present Queen, learned to drive.

Aldermaston Court therefore has connections with both Queens Elizabeth: Elizabeth I who stayed here in 1558, and Queen Elizabeth II, now celebrating her Jubilee.

MAP KEY A



CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, ALDERMASTON

Items of Interest:—

Flower Display.

Fine Collection of Communion Plate.

12th century Stained Glass Windows.

11th century Norman West Door.

16th century Triptych.

Early 14th century Scratch Dial on south-west buttress of tower — used in those days to mark the times of services.

Mediaeval Wall-paintings in the Lady Chapel.

Very good specimen of Jacobean seven-sided (an unusual shape) Pulpit with excellently carved panels and sounding board.

Fine 16th century large Alabaster Tomb of Sir George and Lady Forster.

Wall Paintings by Mr Newman, R.A., carried out in 1898 when a large portion of the Church was restored by Mr C.E. Keyser.

Church Registers, Plan and Record of Graveyard and Tombstones, Scrap Books of York Nativity Play and Candle Auction, details of Peal of Eight Bells, old and interesting paintings and photographs.

B



LYCHGATE

The Lychgate was erected in 1920, by Messrs. Hoskins Bros. of Newbury, at a total cost of £275.00 collected by subscriptions from parishioners. An oak tablet, bearing the names of the men who fell in the First World War, was placed on the west wall of the Church and, although Mr Keyser defrayed the cost of this tablet, he asked for it to be looked upon as part of the Parish Memorial.

Over 100 men served in the 1914-18 war from the parish of Aldermaston, of which 22 made the great sacrifice. This in fact represented the highest average per head of population for any village or town in the whole of the United Kingdom.

Peace celebrations were held on Saturday, July 19th, 1919 in Barn Ground, the field almost opposite the Lychgate, and the celebrations included an excellent tea, singing, dancing, fireworks and a bonfire which kept all amused until nearly midnight.

C



CHURCH ACRE

The piece of ground known as Church Acre is actually two acres, one rod, 33 poles, and is situated just below Fisherman's Cottage. This piece of land was left many years ago for the support of the Church, and the manner by which it is let is the curious custom of a Candle Auction. Every three years a meeting is called, on December 13th, and a horseshoe nail, or pin, is inserted into a tallow candle one inch below the wick. The candle is then lit, and bidding begins. The candle gradually burns down until it reaches the pin, which then falls out, and the last to bid before the pin falls is declared the purchaser. The final bid is paid annually for three years. It is customary for the Vicar to make the first bid, and for those present to drink a rum punch and smoke Churchwarden pipes while the bidding continues. This is practically the only remaining example of this ancient custom still existing in England.

D



CHARITY GATES

A magnificent pair of wrought iron gates stands at what was a carriage drive to Aldermaston Court. These were so-called because the Congreve daughters are reported to have seated themselves in the two large sedelias on each side of the gates on Sunday afternoons to distribute gifts of food and alms to the poor of the parish.

A further pair of wrought iron gates, known as the Mortimer Drive Gates, was removed around 1940. These were situated at the top of Tulls Hill, where today there are the remains of an avenue of chestnut trees.

E



EAGLE GATES

A pair of William the Third wrought iron gates, known as the Eagle Gates, stands imposingly at the top of the village street. These formed the main entrance to Aldermaston Court. They originally belonged to Midgham Manor, and were won over a game of cards by William Congreve, installed at Aldermaston, and surmounted by the Congreve family crest – a falcon. The site of the gates was previously occupied by a Tudor Dower House. When this was demolished to make way for the gates, the two ends were left standing and were converted into the two 17th century lodges. One side was always occupied by the head gardener, and the other side was used as a meeting room, being connected by a long covered passage to the Vicarage – today known as Well House.

F



THE OLD MILL

A mill, probably occupying the same site, is mentioned in the Domesday Book as being sold by Earl Harold for 20 shillings, and the two fisheries for 5 shillings each. The original building was four storeys high, with a wooden building on the south-west side (see photographs in Village Hall). It was worked as a mill until the late 1920s.

The beautiful grounds, surrounded by the River Kennet, famous for its barbel fishing, can be viewed by kind invitation of the owners, Mr and Mrs B. Arlott; but the interior of the Mill will only be open for visiting by request on the day.

G



MEADOW BROOK

Rebuilt in 1971, and now owned by Mr and Mrs N. Whitty, this has a well laid out shrub garden which can be viewed by kind invitation of the owners.

H



WELL HOUSE

This is owned by Major General and Mrs E.R. Benson, and was up until the year 1949 the Vicarage. It was never ecclesiastical property, but was provided as a Vicarage by the Lords of the Manor. You are invited by the owners to walk round the beautiful garden.

I



CORNER COTTAGE

This is a charming fine old timbered cottage, owned by Mr and Mrs F. Barratt, with a unique staircase; also a bathroom which appears to continue into the adjoining property. An attractive country cottage garden can be seen, and Mrs Barratt has kindly agreed to explain the interesting interior of the cottage to those who ask.

J

VILLAGE GREEN, OR LOOSEY

The drinking fountain at the north corner of this triangle was erected by Mr C.E. Keyser to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The Green was once surrounded by a low iron railing, and prior to that by laurels. It is recorded that a Maypole used to be erected on the Green to a height of 80 or 90 feet. A well, thought to be Roman, was discovered in 1940 when a cow, walking over the Green, almost disappeared through the cover. The oak tree is today showing a certain number of dead branches. When found in a similar condition 50 years ago, steps were taken to assist its growth by spreading horse manure, to a depth of 1 foot, over the entire Green.

K

DIXON'S ALMSHOUSES

In 1706 the Reverend Robert Dixon, Minister of the Parish of Aldermaston, built two houses adjoining Cooper's bridge for the use of 'four widows of good character residing in the ancient parish of Aldermaston'. Being found in an unsafe condition after 200 years, one house was rebuilt in 1906, the other in 1924, and they were modernised in 1956. Six Trustees are responsible for the administration of the Almshouses. Details concerning them can be seen in the Church porch of Aldermaston Church.

L

WASING PLACE

This is the residence of Sir William and Lady Mount, and stands in an imposing position on one of the highest points of the estate, commanding impressive views to north and south. You have been invited to walk around these lovely grounds and to enjoy the wonderful views across the valley, park and pasture land. This opportunity is one you should not miss, so give yourself enough time to enjoy the beauty of the surroundings.

M

THE SHOP

A society was formed on December 24th 1869, known as the Aldermaston Cooperative Industrial and Provident Society Ltd, and this business was continued under the management of Mr Frost, Mr Gillett and Mr Pottinger, until it was let as an independent business to Mr York Souce in the 1930s. Eventually it was sold to the Basingstoke Cooperative Society. The shop now belongs to Mr Caiger-Smith, and has recently been let for picture framing, an Audio shop, and now an antique shop.

N



THE HIND'S HEAD HOTEL

Parts of the Hind's Head Hotel are said to date back to 1650, but its original name is not known. In 1800 the inn was known as the Congreve Arms, for in those days Aldermaston belonged to the Congreve family. After the mansion was burnt to the ground in 1843 the inn was sold, and then received its present name from the Forster crest (Sir George and Lady Forster's tomb in Aldermaston Church shows the effigy of Sir George with his head resting on a helmet crested with a hind's head springing out of a crown).

The inn used to brew its own beer in the brew house which still stands behind the main building. This was closed in 1912 on the death of John Wright, who for 40 years brewed an excellent ale at 2d a pint. The building used to be covered in ivy, as were many other houses in the village, and the bell in the clock tower was connected and was used as the fire alarm for the village fire brigade, which existed up until about 1930.

O



THE VILLAGE LOCK-UP

This is situated in the north-east corner of the recreation ground and is last reported to have been used in 1865, when a drunkard was locked up overnight. Readers of Charles Dickens' 'Bleak House' will have no difficulty in believing that next morning it is said he was found to have burnt himself to death.

P



THE FORGE HOUSE

This is owned by Mr and Mrs L. Ford, and stands on the north side of the Pottery, now owned by Mr Caiger-Smith, and world-famous for its very fine pottery. Detailed information and exhibits of this can be seen in the Village Hall. The Pottery was the blacksmith's shop, and between the two world wars a large farrier's business was carried on here to serve the local farms and the Court – who at that time had upwards of fifty horses.

On the south side of the house is a brick and tiled workshop and garage which years ago was a carpenter's shop. This business was run by Mr H. Ford, and his brother Mr C. Ford owned the blacksmith's shop (see photographs in the Church). The yard on the south side on many occasions provided a great deal of fun for the children, when large fires were made of brushwood to heat the iron tyres that were fitted to wagon wheels – a job which called for very quick action on the part of the workers, and occasioned much shouting and perspiring, finally ending in a lot of laughter for everyone.

LITTLE ORCHARD



This was originally called Rose Cottage, and years ago was a smallholding farmed by a Mr Jacob who supplied milk to a number of villagers. From 1911 until 1932 the cottage was also the Labour Exchange. Mr Jacob then had a house built on the Bath Road which he called Aldermaston, and in 1932 the Labour Exchange moved there, subsequently moving again to Woolhampton, Aldermaston Wharf, and finally to Newbury. Mr Jacob and his son also carried on a large business in growing and preparing the willow rods for basket making (see photographs in the Church of rod stripping in progress). Mr Jacob lost two sons in the 1914-18 war, and it is interesting that the name of one can still be seen plainly scratched on a pane of glass in the leaded window of the Maltheuses, where they lived before moving to Rose Cottage. Mrs Hawkins, a daughter of Mr Jacob, is still residing in the parish, and would gladly give further information to anyone interested.

Q



ALDERMASTON POST OFFICE

This has occupied part of the same building as today for a number of years, also a sweet shop and grocery business has been incorporated with it for some time; but years ago there was a harness maker's shop (see photographs in the Church), also a butcher's shop. The outline of the butcher's shop window can still be seen in the brickwork on the south side of the building from Fisherman's Lane today. The house itself was the farmhouse of Village Farm, the milking byres consisting of two sheds on the other side of the lane, where an old Saxon barn still stands.

R



FORSTER'S FARM

This farm, of some 280 acres, and named after the Forster family who were connected with the village for some 200 years, is farmed by Mr D. Moore, who has a milking herd of 80 Friesians, and has kindly consented to visitors having a walk round the farm. Please take care when on the farms – bulls should never be trusted.

S



ALDERMASTON C. OF E. SCHOOL

The School is open, by kind permission of the Headmaster, Mr G. Paul, and an Exhibition of Arts and Crafts by the children can be seen.

There is a tablet in the brick wall to John Stair, school master in 1770, to commemorate the fact that he produced the first William pear. Detailed leaflets can be seen in the Church. On the west wall of the main building can also be seen the Congreve coat of arms.

T



THE PARISH HALL

This was built in 1897, and incorporated the billiard room, which was for many years the Working Men's Club. The club, which had a large number of members, was very active, and had many games tournaments with neighbouring villages. Games played included billiards, whist, cribbage, chess, draughts, dominoes, bagatelle, wall quoits, shove halfpenny, ping pong, halma, rifle shooting, darts, and rings, and the points system for an evening often topped the 200 mark.

There is an Exhibition of the Life of Aldermaston during the Past 25 Years for everyone to see, together with a display and information from the Aldermaston Pottery, by kind permission of Mr A. Caiger-Smith. Also shown will be the life of a cricket bat — from willows grown in Aldermaston to the finished article, by kind permission of Messrs. Surridge and Co. Ltd.

U



THE RED HOUSE

This Victorian house is owned by Mr and Mrs T. Pasteur, and is interesting in that it was the only house in Aldermaston to be lit by gas many years ago. The method of manufacturing the gas seems a little uncertain at the moment; but part of the equipment is still in situ. A croquet set is in position on the lawn, and you are invited to make use of this.

V



CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, WASING

This small church, which preserves interesting Georgian work, stands in a secluded churchyard near the centre of Wasing Park. It is approached along a grassy path that at Easter time winds between rows of glorious daffodils. The bell turret, nave and south transept date from 1761. The oldest features are early 13th century, and there is also work of c. 1350 and c. 1500.

W



WASING HOME FARM

This is managed for Sir William Mount by Mr D. Smalley, the estate manager, and has a milking herd of 110 Friesian cattle. There are also a number of steer calves being intensively reared for beef, as well as many acres of arable land. Again, you are invited to walk around.

X



WASING LODGE

This is occupied by Mr and Mrs A. Campbell, who will be pleased for everyone to walk around their pleasant secluded gardens. When doing so, please park your cars away from the corner, as this could be dangerous.

Y



THE CRICKET GROUND

The Aldermaston and Wasing Cricket Ground has a picturesque setting in the beautiful grounds of Wasing Park. This lovely ground was generously provided by Sir William Mount in 1947, when the village lost their near-county standard ground in Aldermaston Park. It has an extremely good wicket, and a thatched pavilion, and has provided many hours of enjoyment to many people in this peaceful and beautiful park.

Z



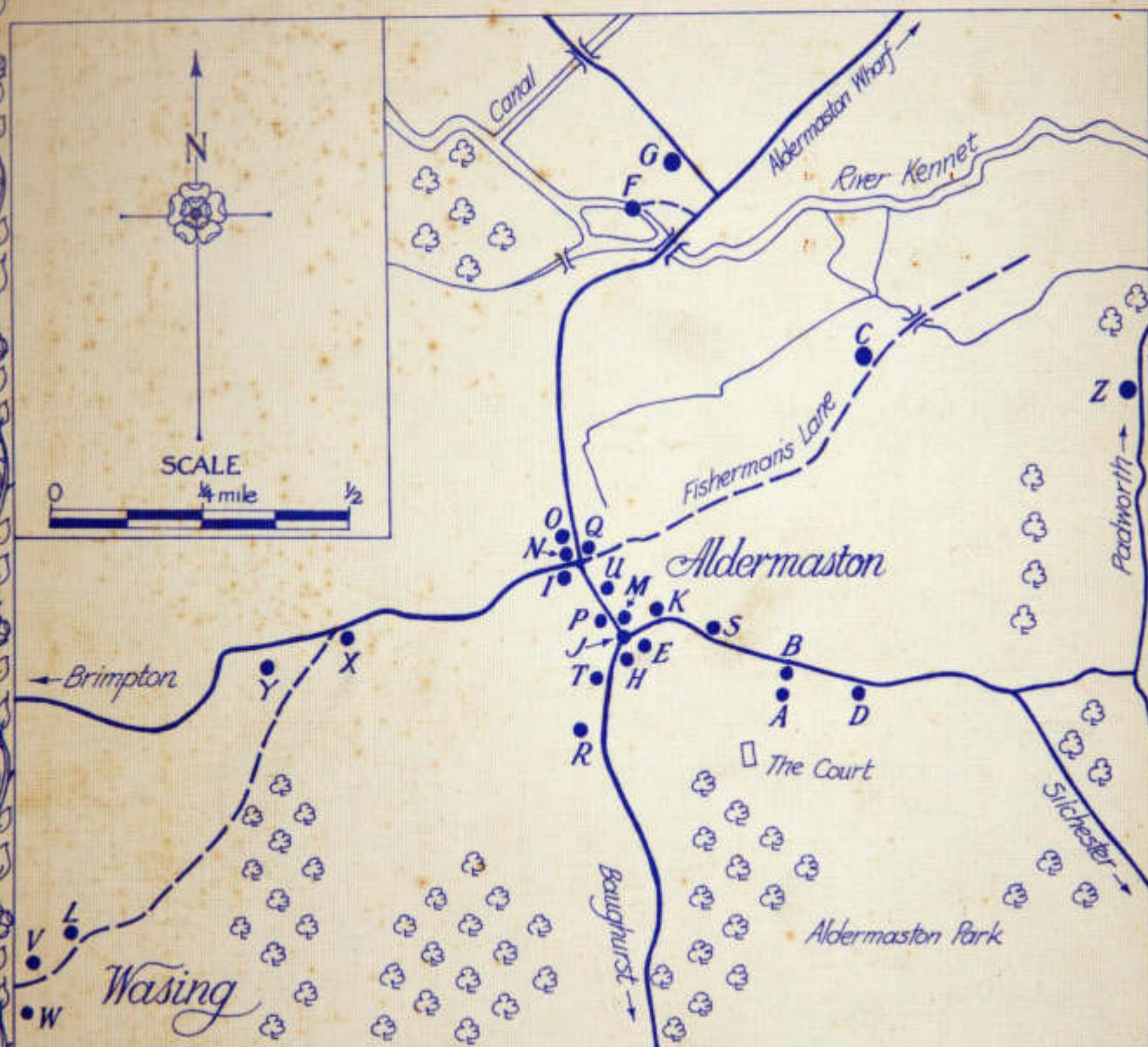
UPPER CHURCH FARM

This beautiful timbered 17th century farmhouse is owned by Mr and Mrs H. Goadby, and was originally known as Harry's Farm. William Harry died in 1544, and his will, kindly loaned by Mr Goadby, can be seen in the exhibition in the Church. You are invited to walk around their lovely country garden.

This souvenir brochure has been compiled by W.A. Cox upon request of the Silver Jubilee Committee, and he would like to thank all who have so kindly co-operated in making their gardens and grounds available for people to walk around.

He is especially indebted to Mr. Laurence McGowan for his sketches and designs, to Mr. H. Finch for his advice on printing, and to Collier Macmillan Schools Ltd., owners of Aldermaston Court, for their generosity in the printing of this brochure.

*Key to properties that can be visited on
Monday the 6th or Tuesday the 7th of June 1977
from 2.30 p.m. until 7.30 p.m.*



- A Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston.
- B Lychgate.
- C Church Acre.
- D Charity Gates.
- E Eagle Gates.
- F The Old Mill.
- G Meadow Brook.
- H Well House.
- I Corner Cottage.
- J Village Green, or Loosey.
- K Dixon's Almshouses.
- L Wasing Place.
- M The Shop.

- N The Hind's Head Hotel.
- O The Village Lock-up.
- P The Forge House.
- Q Aldermaston Post Office.
- R Forster's Farm.
- S Aldermaston C. of E. School.
- T The Parish Hall.
- U The Red House.
- V Church of St. Nicholas, Wasing.
- W Wasing Home Farm.
- X Wasing Lodge.
- Y The Cricket Ground.
- Z Upper Church Farm.