

A History of Little Tew

by Francis Price

What does "Tew" mean?

The name of our village occurs in many guises in early manuscripts. In the Domesday Book (compiled in 1086 AD) it is spelled "Teowe": some experts maintain this is connected to the Old English word "Tiewe", which means "a lengthy object". From this they argue that "Tew" means "a ridge", though it is difficult to make out a single ridge connecting Little, Great, and Duns Tew. Gardeners will know that the village is built on brash and clay. This area of North Oxfordshire is basically a plateau of Chipping Norton limestone, sloping downwards from the north-west to the south-east. This is a later stratum than the Cotswold Great Oolite: it consists of a thin bed of brash below which there is an even thinner bed of Clypreus Grit, a sandy layer that appears under the Timberyard Room. Under this there is a layer of sticky Upper Lias clay, fifty feet deep, and below that is a stratum of marlstone, exposed in the lower part of the village from the Manor to the Old Post Office.

The limestone layer is easily permeable, and the many streams breaking through it have washed away the Lias clay to form wide valleys. There is, however, an unbroken strip of plateau running from Chipping Norton past the Meetings farm and the beech clump at the top of Marsh Hill, and on to Ledwell and North Aston. This forms a watershed between the streams flowing east into the Cherwell and those flowing south into the Evenlode - but it is hardly a "ridge".

Another suggestion is that the name comes from "Tiw", a Teutonic god of war after whom Tuesday is named —just as Woden, Thor, and Freyr have given their names to the following three days of the week. Saxon remains have been found in our area, though why they should have named it after a god is not clear. The true meaning of "Tew" is still open to question.

The First Millenium

The village lies between the main trade routes from London to the north and west, in an area that was never densely populated. Small quantities of neolithic flint implements, and some Romano-British pottery, have been found near Manor Farm. The nearest substantial sites are an Iron Age fort on the plateau above Nether Worton, and a Romano-British farmstead near Beaconsfield Farm in Great Tew.

Neither of the streams - the Dorn and the Swere - that flow through the immediate area were sufficient to power a water-mill when irrigation became increasingly necessary as arable fields replaced woodland and pasture. By the thirteenth century there was a windmill near the junction between the Church

Enstone road and the Green Lane. It was still working in 1742, but had disappeared by 1767.

Our written history effectively dates from the Norman Conquest and the entries in the Domesday Book, which records sixteen "heads of household" in the village in 1086.

William the Conqueror granted extensive lands to his half-brother and most powerful supporter Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Of the four hundred manors Odo received, three lay in our immediate neighbourhood. When William went back to Normandy to fight off a challenge by the King of France, he left Odo in charge of England. But his rule was so oppressive that by the time William returned the country was on the brink of revolt. Odo was later imprisoned and his lands sequestrated.

Large tracts of Oxfordshire were subsequently given to William's follower Wadard, who appears on the Bayeux tapestry overseeing the rustling of livestock from a Saxon farm. His properties in Oxfordshire soon passed to another Norman family, the barons of Arsic. They built themselves a moated manor house on the banks of the Windrush, in what had been the Saxon manor of Cogges, near Witney. The Arsic family gave their Cogges manor house to the abbey of Fecamp - the leading Benedictine abbey in Normandy - to found a priory. They also made over their manor to the north-east of Little Tew as an endowment to maintain the priory.

The Arsics died out early in the thirteenth century and their Little Tew manor was granted by Henry III to the de Greys. Walter de Grey was Archbishop of York, Chancellor, and Regent of the kingdom while Henry was fighting in France. His nephew built the manor house in Cogges that is now the Farm Museum.

The priory was a foreign enclave on British soil, and Henry V suppressed it in 1414 (the year before the battle of Agincourt) because it might have harboured French spies. It reverted to the crown, and in 1441 its estates in Little Tew formed part of the endowment given by Henry VI to his new foundation of Eton College. It remained in their possession until the twentieth century.

The second of Bishop Odo's Little Tew manors, to the west of the village, was awarded to one Humphrey, together with land in Steeple Aston. In the twelfth century the tenure was held by the Leybourne family. Around 1200 the Little Tew manor was separated off and sold to a younger son, Robert Leybourne. Six years later he sold it to Oseney Abbey in Oxford while retaining the tenancy, which remained in his family until 1297.

Oseney Abbey had been founded in 1129 as an Augustinian priory by Robert d'Oily, Constable of Oxford Castle. It became an abbey in 1154 and was soon one of the most prosperous in Oxfordshire. When Henry VIII dissolved the

monasteries, the Abbot of Osney became bishop of the new see of Osney and Thame, with the magnificent abbey church as his cathedral. But when the king took over Wolsey's foundation of Cardinal College in Oxford - now Christ Church - he decided that its chapel, once the church of St Frideswide's abbey, should be the cathedral and the see renamed Oxford. Osney Abbey was deserted and fell into ruin: its heaviest bell, Great Tom, was taken to Christ Church and rehung, a century later, by Sir Christopher Wren in Tom Tower.

Osney Abbey's holdings were transferred to the new cathedral, but Sir William Petre, a Principal Secretary of State from Henry VIII's reign to Elizabeth's, arranged for its Little Tew manor to be reassumed by the crown and given to Exeter College, Oxford, by a charter dated 1565. The college retained the manor until 1872 when it was sold (with the title of lord of the manor) to Albert Brassey of Heythrop Park, a son of the great railway builder. Albert's son Robert broke up and sold the estate between 1920 and 1923.

The third of Odo's Little Tew manors, in the south-eastern part of the parish, was awarded to Ilbert de Lacy whose family stronghold was at Pontefract. For the whole of the thirteenth century, and possibly earlier, the tenancy was held by the de Broc family. It descended to Alice de Lacy, wife of Thomas earl of Lancaster, a nephew of Edward I ("Longshanks"). Thomas led the barons' revolt against Edward II's favourites, the Despencers, but was defeated at Boroughbridge in 1322 and executed. His estates were forfeited but his wife was allowed to retain the Little Tew manor, to which she retired.

When Alice died the manor was sold but - unlike the other two manors - remained in private hands. The Loggin family held it in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and were the most prominent people in the village at that time. They endowed a bread charity which survived until quite recently. From 1700 to 1777 the manor was held by the Keck family, who also owned Great Tew. The holding was sold around 1957 to E H Hutt, whose family farmed Little Tew Grounds, which covers the greater part of the original manor.

The de Brocs were instrumental in extending the Augustinian priory of Cold Norton, founded through the generosity of John de Preaux, lord of Great Tew. The remains of the priory form part of Priory Farm in Cold Norton, whose present owner, Jim Wiggins, has located and cleared out three of its original fish ponds. The priory itself closed in 1507 with the death of its last inmate. Its lands were acquired by William Smyth, Bishop of Lincoln, and presented by him as an endowment for his new foundation of Brasenose College, Oxford. It was used as a refuge when the plague struck Oxford. The part of the estate north of the river Dorn, now part of Showell Farm, was sold by the college in 1872 to Albert Brassey, and passed into private hands with the break-up of the Heythrop estate. It was at that time a detached portion of Swerford parish, but was incorporated into Little Tew parish in 1932.

The precise size of Little Tew's three manors is hard to define. Of the three manors originally granted to Bishop Odo, two consisted of 3.5 "hides", and one - the de Lacy holding - of 2 "hides". A "hide", according to the Oxford Dictionary, was the amount of land sufficient to support a free family and its dependants, as measured by a bull's hide cut into one long thong. It is normally taken as one hundred acres, but there is considerable variation. The earliest maps of the Little Tew area are dated 1742, and show Exeter College holding nearly one thousand acres. By 1878 the Eton College holding was only 85 acres. The third manor covered 340 acres, and the land given to Cold Norton priory — known as Priory Mead - covered eighty acres.

By the eighteenth century Exeter College was the largest landowner in Little Tew, and its Rector and Fellows were recognised as "lord of the manor". Their manor house was on the same site as the present one, owned by the Sandars family, though that building is largely seventeenth century, with an eighteenth-century wing. Eton College's manor house has disappeared: it is thought to have been in Prior's Close, the site of our present church. The manor house of the de Lacy holding used to be called Broc House after its thirteenth-century tenants. It was on the site of the Timberyard cottages, though little remains except for a Gothic arch. Its present owner, Ander Parker, has renamed it Keek's House after the family that owned both it and Great Tew in the eighteenth century.

An early map of the village shows that the road coming down Marsh Hill and going to Church Enstone was originally sited south of the current one. There was a row of three cottages along the old track whose foundations can be seen in the field behind the close on the Church Enstone road.

The right-angled bend at the entrance to the Grange used to be a crossroads: one arm ran south-west to join the Green Lane near Little Tew Grounds, the other cut across to the Church Enstone readjust below the Timberyard cottages. Both are now signposted as rights-of-way.

Between the time of the Exeter College map of 1742 and the Eton College one of 1878, a major change took place. The first map shows that the whole area, apart from common land, was still under the medieval system of strip cultivation. The open fields, much larger than the existing ones, were divided into multiple strips each leased by a villager, a single leaseholder having strips in as many as twenty fields. This egalitarian but inefficient system was terminated in Little Tew by the Enclosure Act of 1794, which transformed a society of impoverished peasants into one of tenant farmers and hired labourers.

It also ended several centuries of close connection with Great Tew. Little Tew had the right to pasture its cattle on the fallow field in the west of Great Tew, which was documented in 1268 and still exercised in the eighteenth century: in return, the peasants of Little Tew rendered a service to the lords of Great Tew, probably in Priory Mead, the meadow in Little Tew owned by the de Brocs. The open fields of the two villages were, however, separate. By the Great Tew

Enclosure Act of 1767, nineteen acres were awarded to Little Tew landowners in compensation for their loss of common pasture in Great Tew. Anthony Keck of Great & Little Tew retained six acres on the boundary with Showell. These passed to George Wyld of Little Tew in 1777, ending joint ownership by a single landlord in both parishes.

By that date only a third of the village's holdings were occupied by their owners or leaseholders, confirming a trend for landowners to become non-resident and introduce under-tenants. In 1801 there were forty-three houses in the village and the population was 219; eighty years later the population had risen to 277. In this period farmers occupied around ten of the houses, the other two-thirds being lived in by farm labourers. Before enclosure there were equal numbers of farmers and labourers in the village.

The enclosures brought changes in working practices that caused hardship in some families. In 1776 the village spent £45 on poor relief, which went up to

£101 in 1803, amounting to nine shillings per head of population, the lowest figure in the area. But by 1831 this had risen to £1 per head, amounting to £243. By contrast those tenant farmers who prospered were able to purchase at least some of the land they leased, and to build new farmhouses. The largest farm in the parish, and the least changed since enclosure, was Little Tew Grounds (formerly known as Lodge Farm): Joan Warr's grandfather helped Mr Hutt build the current farmhouse in 1875. Another large holding was formed by combining the farm at the Meetings with Magpie Farm. By then Manor Farm was the only working farmhouse actually in the village. The thatched cottage near it is still known as Ann Beck's. She was an Exeter College tenant who received a lease on ninety acres by the 1794 Enclosure Act. When she moved the homestead passed to the owner of Manor Farm.

In 1870 only 30% of the parish fields were down to permanent pasture, with 9% being uncultivated leys. Between 1891 and 1911 permanent pasture increased from 43% to 68%. Sheep numbered 83 per hundred acres in 1870, declining to 53 per hundred acres in 1911. In the same period the number of cattle increased from twelve to twenty-seven per hundred acres.

In the twentieth century the big landowners began to sell off their Little Tew holdings to local farmers and private residents. Albert Brassey's son Robert sold his Little Tew holdings to a Captain Parlour, who in 1923 broke it up and sold it piecemeal. In 1921 Eton College put its holdings (apart from seven fields that had already been sold) up for auction. The Eton land had been farmed by the Godson and then the Louch families, who lived in Cherwell House and kept their equipment at the Meetings farmhouse. Eton agreed to let William Louch (John Louch's grandfather) retain his possession of Cherwell House as a tenant, with some forty acres around, for his lifetime and that of his wife. He died in 1930 and his wife in 1935, after which the house and adjacent fields, together with two cottages — Up The Steps and Shepherd's Cottage — were sold to a Captain Benn,

by him to the Duffield family, and in 1946 to the McCanns. Of Eton's remaining land, those fields to the north of the Great Tew-Chipping Norton road were bought by Herbert Hall, while those to the south of the road were retained and eventually sold to the Odells of Little Brook House.

Up until the First World War, Little Tew was a self-contained village serving an agricultural area where transport was horse-drawn. The Manor, the Grange, and the Lodge (built around 1850 by Charles Bowers in early 19th-century style) were the only substantial houses. The rest of the village provided the services required by the farming community. There was a timberyard and sawmill, together with a wheelwright and carpentry workshop run by Mr Thomas Woolgrove, whose team of half a dozen craftsmen lived in the four Timberyard cottages. There was a blacksmith's and farrier's business whose last owner was Mr Mark Padbury of Farrier's Close. There was the building firm of Warr and Taylor who carried out extensive modernisation work on Ibstock Close. And there was the Post Office & Stores run by Mr Frank Florey and his descendants. It was a close-knit and much inter-married community.

After 1918 the development of the affordable and multi-purpose farm tractor again revolutionised agriculture. In the 1920s Mr Archie Fitt took over Woolgrove's premises and established an agricultural engineering works which soon received the franchise for Fordson tractors. During the Second World War he was responsible for the maintenance of over a thousand tractors, some for the armed services and some for local farmers: he employed over twenty men. After his retirement in 1981, Turney's took over the yard and kept it going for another three years before transferring the business and remaining staff to their works in Chipping Norton.

Meanwhile the Timberyard cottages had become privately owned. The southern group belonged to Miss Hebe Jerrold, who in her will bequeathed to the village the detached section now known as the Timberyard Room, to be used as a meeting-place for the community.

The building firm of Warr and Taylor closed, but Ernest Warr served as churchwarden until his death in 1968, and the village had skilled builders to call on such as Francis Edginton (who converted the old Baptist chapel) and, more lately, Percy Bradley (who built his own house south of the Timberyard). At the Grange, the old buttery was converted into a seventy-seat theatre by its owners, Fred and Valarie Temlett, who put on amateur productions of classical and modern plays (some written by Val herself) which always sold out the moment bookings opened.

The social centre of the village was the Post Office & Stores run by Mrs Jones. As well as providing the basic essentials, she was the most reliable source of news and an indefatigable letter-writer. When Mrs Jones died, her daughter Mrs Hutt carried on the Post Office for a while, then Pat Broome offered a postal service in her garage in the west end of the village. Great Tew Post Office ran an

occasional service in the Timberyard Room, but we have done without regular retail facilities for several years.

Around a dozen new houses have been built in the village over the last thirty years or so, bringing new blood to the village and new children to keep Great Tew School going (at one time in the late 1970s there were more pupils from Little Tew than from Great Tew). The warm welcome that newcomers received - especially from Betty and Nancy Sandars at the Manor - has maintained that community spirit that every resident remarks on. Some one hundred and twenty people - including a score of children - now live in the sixty-six houses that feature in the current electoral register of the parish.

To mark the new millennium, villagers subsidised the recasting and rehangng of the six-bell carillon in the church tower, providing a sound not heard for nearly eighty years. The iron railings round the Wellingtonia in the centre of the village, planted to mark Queen Victoria's Jubilee, were mended by David Andrews of the Meetings farm, and cleaned and repainted by a party of volunteers. Finally - apart from the compilation of this book - a millennial row of trees was planted on both sides of the road from Ryman's Cottages to the Meetings.

Church, Chapels and charities

It is traditionally believed that before the Reformation there existed a "chapel of ease" in Little Tew. Foundations possibly belonging to it were discovered in 1829 in the area known as Town Close (now part of Elm Close) between the Manor and the Bell House, which was once the site of the village pound and stocks. The stocks were destroyed by soldiers in 1643 but later replaced: it is not known when they finally disappeared.

By the mid-seventeenth century the village seems to have had its own constable, churchwarden, and overseer. The churchwarden paid a quarter of the expenses of the wardens of Great Tew; in Little Tew he was responsible for such things as getting rid of vermin and travelling paupers. Usually he drew money from the overseer's account, or sometimes levied a special rate.

At the time of the enclosures, in 1794, provision was made for the chapel's possible rebuilding, and the tithes on 16.5 acres were awarded to the vicar of Great Tew for the provision of services in Little Tew. The conversion of a house as a meeting-place for Baptists in 1829 caused the issue to be reopened, and Exeter College was prepared to build and endow a chapel, but dropped the idea because of the opposition of the Great Tew vicar, who regarded Little Tew as a hotbed of nonconformity.

In 1851 a curate of a new generation, C. Kegan Paul, was appointed to assist the vicar of Great Tew. His special duty was to take the Sunday evening services,

and he records in his Memories that he soon knew everyone in the village but the vicar "did not wish me to visit there except casually as a friend."

Despite this, Kegan Paul managed to persuade the authorities that Little Tew should have its own church "in order to combat the high level of nonconformity in the village." He consulted the diocesan architect, G. E. Street (later famous for the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand), who designed for Kegan Paul "a very pretty church, chapel-like, consisting of a chancel and nave, with a small vestry and porch, to cost a very small sum." A sketch of this church hangs in the vestry. In February 1852 application was made to the Oxford Diocesan Church Building Society for "a new church of 141 sittings, all free," at an estimated cost of £550. With other demands on its money the Society granted Little Tew £50. As there were then no wealthy villagers, and the leading farmers were mainly nonconformists, it is likely that the major part of the cost was borne by the Boulton family of Great Tew Park, though a grant of £65 was also received from the "Incorporated Society for Promoting the Enlargement, Building and Repair of Churches and Chapels".

Kegan Paul also persuaded Eton College to provide Prior's Close as a suitable site for the church, replacing a cottage and orchard. Building started in 1852, though the formal conveyance of the land is dated August 1853, which is the year the church was completed and consecrated. By then Kegan Paul had been transferred to Bloxham, from where he moved on to become a tutor, an Eton master, vicar of Sturminster Newton, and finally the founder of the publishing house that later combined with Routledge.

For the first few years of its existence the church was served by Kegan Paul's successor as curate of Great Tew, but efforts were made to establish Little Tew as an independent parish. It was formally separated from Great Tew in 1855, becoming a "perpetual curacy", and in 1856 the Diocesan Society made a grant of £50 towards the estimated £750 cost of building a parsonage. No further action was taken until 1858 when Little Tew became an independent parish and Charles Foster Garratt was appointed its first vicar.

Garratt was a typical Victorian from a rich merchant family, public-spirited but authoritarian, possessed of the energy and drive to carry out his ambition of creating a model God-fearing Christian community adhering to strict Church of England principles. His outspoken attacks on nonconformity and immorality alienated many — it has been said that he got rid of some Baptists by paying for them to go to Canada, that he evicted one woman for having an illegitimate child, and arranged for the homosexual lover of someone living in the village to be "banished" to Magpie Farm - but nevertheless under his ministry attendance at morning service rose to around 65, and evening service to around 120, out of a total population of some 250 souls.

On his installation Garratt settled temporarily in the house then known as Shepherd's Close, now Ibstock Close. It had been the farmhouse of the Marshal

and then the Kimber families. Garratt bought from Eton the field immediately behind the house, and rented from them the large field known as Elm Close. He built Home Farm on the Great Tew-Chipping Norton road to provide fresh produce for his household, and in 1860 purchased from Exeter College an acre of land on which to build a vicarage. He commissioned G. E. Street to design the building, now known as the Grange, which was completed in 1861 and later considerably extended by Charles Buckeridge. The grounds were extended to the south-west by a further purchase from Exeter in 1866, from whom he also bought the strip of land opposite the Manor garden on which to build his school and almshouses. There is no mention in the records of the four cottages now known as Croft Cottages: from their style one would judge them to have been designed by Street, and they probably housed Garratt's staff while he was living in Shepherd's Close. This would date them between 1858 and 1861.

When his new vicarage was complete, Garratt started a sequence of benefactions to remedy what he considered as deficiencies in the existing village. The National School (in what is now Joan Warr's house) was prohibited by law from providing any religious instruction. Garratt therefore decided, in 1863, to build a new school with no such limitations, together with a house for a resident schoolmaster. Designed by Buckeridge (Street had by then left the area), it was originally intended to take fifty children, but was enlarged in 1871 to take 87 children, though there were still only fifty on the register, with a regular attendance of around forty. Fees were one old penny for the first child and a halfpenny for siblings.

The school was at first subsidised personally by Garratt, but received a parliamentary grant from 1874 onwards: the staff consisted of an uncertificated master, a needlework mistress, and a labourer's daughter who taught the infants. By 1906 the attendance had fallen to twenty; in 1923 the school was closed and the pupils were transferred to Great Tew School, where a new room was built to accommodate the increased intake.

Garratt also had built, at the same time as the school and adjacent to it, a group of three almshouses. There is no record of them ever having been used for their designated purpose, but this may have been because those who qualified for his charity were all nonconformists. They were later rented out as three separate cottages, but have since been combined into one dwelling called "The Old Alms House".

As Street's original church had no space for an organ - to assist in the communal singing of hymns - Garratt decided to enlarge it, and again engaged Charles Buckeridge as architect. A north aisle was added (using the original windows of the nave) and a tower. Garratt also had installed, at his own expense, a carillon of six bells and a central heating system. The stained glass of the east window was put in later as a memorial to his second wife.

By 1863 the original churchyard to the east of the church had become fully occupied, and Garratt persuaded Eton to transfer some 824 square yards of land to the south, between church and stream, to extend the graveyard. In 1908 he gave a further plot of 787 square yards to the west, reaching from the road to the stream, by transferring land previously forming part of the gardens of No Oven Cottage.

Apart from extending his vicarage to accommodate his rapidly increasing family - he was married three times (as was his father), and produced a total of twelve children - Garratt's last major construction, in 1872, was the twin-gabled stone house between Grove House and the Baptist chapel, now known as "The Old Post Office". In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the village post office was located in Ann Beck's cottage: Frank Florey ran it from 1891 to 1916, after which his daughters, and then his granddaughter, took over. They moved into the Garratt house and ran the Post Office & Stores there until 1978, when it was sold as a private house. Just why Garratt built the place - which bears his initials - or what it was used for in the thirty-four years before it became the post office, is not documented. His last bequest to the village, some time after he had left it, was to give "the tin hut" for use by the community. This one-storey construction of corrugated iron, situated in what is now the Manor garden, just across the road from the Grange, was built on what had been a hard tennis court, but it is now derelict, and was considered too dangerous to use as a youth club when the idea was mooted in the 1980s.

Garratt effectively became "lord of the manor" (though the title had officially lapsed) when he acquired from Albert Brassey those parts of the Heythrop estate that lay in Little Tew. These included the Manor and its grounds, the Bell Inn, Shepherd's Close, and No Oven Cottage. Garratt tried to have the Bell Inn's licence revoked, but failed on his first attempt. He was successful eight years later, in 1880, but by then he had agreed to retire as vicar, as his habit of spending the winters in the French Riviera was not acceptable to the diocesan authorities. The terms of his retirement were amicable: he would retain possession of the house that was renamed the Grange, in return for selling Shepherd's Close for use as the new vicarage, and making an endowment to increase the stipend of future vicars (who, unless like Garratt they had private wealth, would have had to survive on the rent from 16.5 acres of tithe land, and contributions from Queen Anne's Bounty and the Society for Augmenting Small Livings). The pub became The Bell House and a private residence.

Following Garratt's resignation, the office of vicar was held by a succession of relatively short-term appointments, between which the parish was run from Great Tew. The longest-serving resident vicars in Little Tew were Rev. J. B. Jerwood (1895-1912) and Rev. P. Malleon (1916-1922). From 1922 to 1930 it was held in plurality with Great Tew by Rev. W. B. Macfarlane, with Rev. T. L. Tombe as resident curate-in-charge. Finally, in 1930, the pastoral duties were added to those of the vicar of Great Tew, though Little Tew retained its

independent Parochial Church Council which was responsible for the upkeep of church and churchyard.

The vicarage was sold as a private residence, first to Major and Mrs Pears (she was a South African who kept little dark chickens called barnvelders), then to the Milnes-Gaskell family (one of whom, Lady Constance Milnes-Gaskell, was a formidable woman who was lady-in-waiting to Queen Mary). In 1938 it was sold to Col. J. B. Paget, who renamed it Ibstock Close.

Charles Foster Garratt lived in the Grange until 1907 and, as the principal landowner, dominated the village. On his regular walk, accompanied perhaps by his steward and members of his family, he would sharply criticise any failings in upkeep. After his departure, the Grange was let first to Major Kenneth Macdonald, then to a branch of the Sitwell family, who later bought it. In 1958 it was acquired by the Temletts. Garratt continued to visit the village up to 1921, though he'd retired to London, where he rode his tricycle round Bedford Park well into his eighties. He died in 1925 at the age of ninety-two.

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Nonconformity in the village has a long history. In 1738 there were "three papists of the lower rank" in Little Tew; in 1767 there were twenty-six in Great and Little Tew combined, ministered to by the Earl of Shrewsbury's chaplain at Heythrop, though the departure of the Shrewsburys around 1820 seems to have killed off Catholicism in Little Tew for a while.

In 1663 five or six "separatists" were to be found in the village, and between 1689 and 1729 five Little Tew Quakers were heavily fined for their beliefs. Baptists were first mentioned in 1771, and in 1778 Edmund Drake registered his house for dissenting meetings and taught ten Anabaptists there. From then on the strength and persistence of nonconformity in Little Tew distinguished it from Great Tew. In 1829 John Hiorns, a "Protestant Dissenting Missionary", applied to the diocese for the "registration of a certain building, now fitted out as a chapel, which is intended to be used as a place of religious worship by an Assembly or Congregation of Protestant Dissenters of the Baptist denomination". The application was signed by eight leading members of the village, including members of the Kench and Ryman families.

In 1845 a small Baptist chapel was built down Chapel Lane and attracted congregations of up to a hundred from the surrounding area. In addition a Thomas Williams from Oxford certified that a dwelling occupied by John Long was being used as a place of religious worship for Primitive Methodists.

The Baptist chapel proved too small and was enlarged and substantially rebuilt in 1871 with an endowment from Robert Ryman, who also provided a site for a Manse for the use of a resident ordained pastor. Ryman had been a substantial local farmer and butcher who insisted his tenants attended chapel: he retired to run the Great Tew Post Office.

After the First World War the services at the Baptist chapel were conducted by the two Miss Gates, who lived in the Manse. The Rev. Edith Gates became the minister in 1918, with her sister acting as organist. Her ministry was so active that a school-room was built (by Joan Warr's father) in 1925, replacing two derelict cottages adjacent to the chapel. Over sixty people attended the celebration of the twenty-first anniversary of the Rev. Gates' ministry in 1939, and the guests included the vicar of Great Tew. The Miss Gates retired in 1950 to live in Weston-super-Mare, but services were conducted by visiting ministers until 1960, when the chapel closed. Robert Ryman's benefaction, and another called the Chedzey Fund, together with the organ, hymn-books, and furniture, were transferred to the chapel in Cleveley. This closed in 1980: the nearest Baptist chapel is now in Chipping Norton.

The Little Tew chapel remained empty until 1968, when it was bought by Mr and Mrs Francis Edginton who over the years have turned it into a private residence.

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William Loggin, who died in 1635, bequeathed a rent charge of one pound to the poor of Little Tew out of the tithes of Easington in Warwickshire. By 1825 the money was distributed, usually every other year, in bread.

John Sly, who died in 1657, bequeathed five pounds to the Little Tew poor. The money may have been appropriated by Great Tew, or perhaps it formed part of the £10 poor's money whose origin was unknown in 1787-8.

In 1825 the overseers had ten guineas in poor's money, providing ten shillings' worth of bread for distribution with Loggin's charity. By 1970 the poor's money investment was producing six shillings and eightpence a year, but the rent charges could not be collected and the only active trustee was paying out Loggin's bequest of £1 himself.

Mary Ellen Scott left £250 in 1934, the income to be divided annually among the poor of Little Tew. By 1967 there had been no distribution for several years. At the 1794 enclosure, the rent of £12 from 23 acres in the south-east corner of the parish was given to the poor, to be distributed in coal. The Charity Commissioners recently allowed Loggin's charity to be amalgamated with this Poor's Land Charity, which currently produces an income for distribution of well over one thousand pounds annually.

Little Tew Post Office & Stores

1848-1852 Stores run by Samuel Parish

1852-91 Mrs Mary King, wife of George King, shoemaker

1883-91 Post Office run by Charles Gibbard

1891-1916 Post Office combined with Stores and run in Ann Beck's cottage by Frank Florey, son-in-law of Charles Gibbard, who owned and lived in Manor Farm till his death in 1916,

when Florey moved in, leaving the Post Office to his daughter
1916-26 Wynne Florey, Frank's daughter, moved the business to the
house next to the Baptist chapel
1926-77 Mrs Jones, Wynne Florey's sister, took over
1977-79 Mrs D I lutt, Mrs Jones's daughter, ran the business until the
house was sold as a private residence

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Francis Price