

## THE MALTHUS FAMILY OF ALBURY

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Somewhat less than a mile south of the old Guildford to Dorking Road (A25), in Albury Park, lies the venerable old church of St. Peter and St. Paul, disused since 1842, and declared redundant in 1974. Although the churchyard would have been used as a burial place for hundreds of years, there are now only a few monuments to be seen. The most conspicuous of these are a group of three, surrounded by iron railings. They mark the graves of a Sydenham MALTHUS, also that of his wife Mariana, and of their fourteen-year-old son, Charles. The Malthus family was a notable one which could be traced back to the 15th century.

The founder of the dynasty may be regarded as Daniel Malthus (1651-1717), an apothecary, who was the subject of a lengthy article in *The Lancet* of 12th April 1930. He was the son of Robert Malthus, Vicar of Northolt. Robert was a man of strong and unpopular views, with a propensity for engaging in Chancery suits. So much so that his parishioners opined that "their vicar was fully as partial to the law as to the gospel".

It was Daniel Malthus who bequeathed the name 'Sydenham' to his descendants. This arose through the association with the very learned Dr. Sydenham. There was great mutual admiration, Dr. SYDENHAM having such a high opinion of his colleague that he appointed him a trustee to his grand-children. Daniel became apothecary to King William III, and later, to Queen Anne. He was offered, but asked to be excused, the Mastership of the Company of Apothecaries, due to pressure of business, paying the requisite fine of £50. His success must have given him some affluence for, in 1702, he bought for £5,500 from James, Earl of Suffolk, the manor of Hadstock, in Essex, which was to pass down through the family. Daniel Malthus married Elizabeth PORTMAN and had by her a son, Sydenham Malthus(1). (In order to avoid confusion the 'Sydenhams' will henceforth be numbered.)

The first Sydenham Malthus, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, was one of the six Clerks in Chancery and, in 1741, a Director of the South Sea Company. He died in 1757, leaving a son Daniel (junior) (1730-1800), of Albury, Surrey. Daniel (junior) was described in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as "a gentleman of good family and independent fortune, a man of considerable culture both in literature and philosophy, the friend and correspondent of Rousseau and one of his executors". He bought a farm in the valley of Mereden, at Wootton, near Dorking, converting it into a gentleman's seat, to which he gave the name of "The Rookery". It was, no doubt, his habit of discussing with his second son the problems of society that inspired Thomas Robert Malthus' treatises on population which were to make him famous (if not infamous) in later life.

Daniel junior's eldest son, Sydenham(2) (1754-1821), led the life of a country gentleman of independent means, making frequent and prolonged visits abroad. He gave his younger brother power of attorney to manage his affairs, and very tiresome they sometimes were. Sydenham(2) had married Mariana Georgina, the widow of Thomas RYVES, the owner of property in the West Indies which was the subject of much litigation. If assuming these problems were not enough, Sydenham(2) also acquired six step-children as well as begetting four of his own. There was also a 'natural daughter, Mary WALKER' who was to receive £30 a year under his Will. All this must have been an unwonted distraction for his younger brother and attorney, Thomas Robert, from his various academic pursuits.

Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), the political economist, is the most well-known of the Malthus family, having aroused much controversy through his theories on population. He was born 17 February 1766, the second of seven children. After being privately educated he entered Jesus

College, Cambridge, where he was a contemporary of Coleridge. In 1788 he was ninth wrangler, was elected a fellow in 1793 (the year in which Louis XVI was guillotined), took Holy Orders in 1797 and, for a short time, was curate of Albury. 1798 saw the publication of the first edition of his great work on population. This was subsequently revised and enlarged in five further editions, and was translated into French and German during his lifetime.

Briefly, Malthus contended that excess population was controlled by natural calamities, plague, famine etc. Robert's answer to the problem of over-population was not vice and natural disasters, but delayed marriages. His theories were hotly contested throughout his life.

Because his fellowship was conditional upon him remaining a bachelor, he was not in a position to contemplate marriage until 1804. He was then able to marry his longtime sweetheart, Harriet, daughter of John ECKERSALL. Harriet presented him with three children. Henry, the eldest, was to become vicar of Effingham. Emily lived to be 77 and died at Bath in 1883, while Lucy, his youngest child, died tragically of tuberculosis in 1825, aged only 17. The following touching epitaph, written by her aunt Fanny Eckersall, is still legible on her tombstone at Ashley, Hampshire, where she had been staying when the fatal illness overtook her:

And doth this little grassy mound	No, in affection's memory yet	The promise of her youthful years
Hold all that's left of one so dear?	Her sweet lov'd image shall not die	Waste not beneath this lowly sod,
And shall her place no more be found	By hearts that never can forget	Immortal fruit the spirit bears;
Save in the earth that moulders here?	Embalm'd in many a secret sigh.	The pure in heart shall see their God.

Soon after his marriage the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus was appointed Professor of Modern History and Political Economy in the East India Company's recently founded college at Haileybury (later to become the public school of that name). One of his fellow professors was to be Edward Christian, brother of Fletcher Christian of "The Bounty" - and almost as troublesome. Here Malthus lectured and continued his learned dialogues until his death on 29th December 1834. He was a modest and kindly man, despite his harsh theories, who overcame the lifelong handicaps of a hare lip and cleft palate to achieve an honoured place in learned society. He was to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (supported by 21 signatories), became one of the ten Royal Associates of the Royal Society of Literature, and was a founder member of the Athenaeum Club.

The Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus lies buried in the Abbey Church at Bath, where he had been visiting his father-in-law. Very full biographies are to be found in the Dictionary of National Biography and in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. However, for the sake of brevity I will merely quote from Arthur Mee's "SURREY":

*"He was made famous by an essay originally published without his name. His theory that lack of food would keep down the population of the world has been contradicted by history, but his Essay on the Principle of Population, which appeared in full just before the battle of Trafalgar, has been one of the most discussed essays in the English language. He has been much abused and misrepresented: he was a warm hearted man, whose work was of great value to Charles Darwin in building up his theory of Evolution".*

Before leaving his generation it is worth noting that Sydenham(2) and Thomas Robert's youngest sister, Mary-Anne Catherine, married one Edward BRAY. The latter was son of William Bray, the well-known historian of Surrey. In 1801, on the death of the Rev. Owen MANNING, who had begun a history of Surrey, William Bray undertook to complete the work, and visited every church and parish in the county. Manning and Bray is still considered one of the best county histories in England. William Bray was also the editor of "Evelyn's Diary" and the publisher of the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus' works. He died in 1832 aged 96. There is a mural to him in Shere parish church.

Sydenham Malthus(2) died in December 1821, aged 67. With his wife, Mariana, and younger son,

Charles, who had died earlier the same year aged only 14, he lies buried in the graveyard of the old parish church of Albury. His eldest son was born on the 29th May 1801 and, in accordance with family custom, had been baptised Sydenham(3). It is known that he attended Pembroke College, Cambridge, and matriculated in 1820, but there is no record of him having graduated. He appears to have led the life of a country gentleman, his father having left him the Manor of Hadstock, Essex, as well as an estate at Albury. It is him we must thank for having donated the books and papers of his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus, to Jesus College, Cambridge. However, (for me), Sydenham(3) is chiefly noteworthy for having married my second cousin, thrice removed, Mary Anne, eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. Samuel WHITE DD, the rector of St. John's Hampstead. Mary Anne's twin sister, Isabella, married into the A'COURT family, her two grandsons becoming successively the fourth and fifth Lords Heytesbury. Mary Anne Malthus (nee White) was a considerable heiress in her own right having been the beneficiary of a generous marriage settlement and substantial legacies. Sydenham(3) and Mary Anne therefore had the means for a comfortable independence. Their marriage was blessed with "a full quiver", three (possibly four) sons and seven daughters.

The most noteworthy of these children was the eldest son, born at the family seat at Albury 29th May 1831, and given the traditional name of Sydenham(4). When not yet 21 his father purchased for him a commission in the army, a career which he was to follow with distinction for the next 25 years. His life is best told in the words of his obituary which appeared in The Surrey Advertiser on Saturday 3rd June 1916:

"We regret to record the death of Colonel Sydenham Malthus, C.B., which occurred at his residence, Dalton Hill, on Friday of last week. The deceased, who was born at Albury nearly 85 years ago, was the son of Mr. Sydenham Malthus, late of Hadstock, Essex. He married in 1867 Miss Henrietta MABERLY, daughter of the then vicar of Cuckfield, who survives him. Entering the army in 1852, he was made Captain in the following year, Major in 1870, Lt. Col. in 1877, and Colonel (Retired) in 1880. In 1879 he commanded the 94th Regiment in the Zulu War, being present at Ulundi, for which he was awarded the medal and created C.B. On his retirement some 35 years ago, he took up residence at Dalton Hill and, with the cooperation of his wife, took the greatest interest in all affairs connected with Albury and the neighbourhood. A staunch Conservative, he was a member of the Guildford and County Constitutional Clubs. For the past 33 years, and at the time of his death, he was the Rector's Churchwarden at Albury. He was a member of the Parish Council, and a J.P. for Surrey. His kindly personality and strength of character represented the truest type of the old English gentleman and his loss will be keenly felt in the Parish".

*NOTE. The battle of Ulundi was the final and critical engagement of the Zulu War and broke the resistance of the Zulus under their chief, Cetywayo. The 94th Regiment of Foot was later named The Connaught Rangers, and was disbanded on the founding of the Irish Republic in 1921.*

Henrietta Maberley was Sydenham Malthus(4)'s cousin. There were three children of the union, not counting a young Sydenham(5) born and died in 1868. However, the name Sydenham was not to be so easily extinguished. It was bestowed on another son, born 21st October 1869. Alas, Sydenham(6) was also destined to die young, in 1880, when aged. only eleven. Their only daughter, Mary, was born in 1872, followed by their only surviving son, Robert, in 1881. Robert performed sterling service in the colonies as a railway engineer until retiring in 1845. The Malthus was a prolific family so it is difficult to believe that Robert was the last of the line. There may yet be a Sydenham Malthus (7) or (8) maintaining the family's proud name.

References:

Population Malthus, his life and times by Patricia James

Notes on the old parish church at Albury by R Charles Walmsley

## **The Rookery after Malthus (Script of talk on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2004.)**

We do not know a great deal about the Fuller family but we do know how they made their money. The London Directory for 1733 refers to ‘Atkins, Honeywood and Fuller’, bankers of Lombard Street. This bank had several changes of name but at least one Fuller was always included, then two, and by 1827 it was simply called ‘Fullers and Company.’

Richard Fuller – who was also MP for Steyning – was the head of the family and having chosen The Rookery as his country seat he set about establishing his position in the county. The House was further extended, conservatories were added and the grounds were developed to provide lawns and paths, flower gardens, and kitchen gardens. An ice house was built above the lake, and a boat house and new ornamental water courses were introduced.

The impression from some of the travel writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was that the house might have been a trifle OTT – some of the contemporary paintings and later photographs show battlemented parapets and gothic pinnacles. J S Ogilvy, writing in ‘A Pilgrimage of Surrey’ in 1914 claimed that “Any architectural pretensions it has lead to the belief that the man who spoilt Leigh Place had a hand in the building of this.” But the setting, taking full advantage of the natural valley of the Pipp Brook, was magnificent. Lawns ran down to the lake and extensive beech woods were planted, with groves of oak and yew, to provide a backdrop to more exotic imports, traces of which survive to this day.

Of course Richard Fuller also had a Town House but we know that he enjoyed living in the country because he was prepared to commute to London many years before this became an accepted way of life; in fact even before the coming of the railway.

In his Recollections of Old Dorking, telling tales of the period from 1825-1840, Charles Rose wrote *“Broad's coach to London started from Dorking at seven in the morning and returned at the same hour in the evening. One of the steadiest supporters was the late Richard Fuller, Esq., of the Rookery, who might be seen morning by morning occupying the box seat, and who sometimes would undertake with much affability the duties of coachman. In fact nothing appeared to please Mr. Fuller better, than politely to hand down the coach steps, or catch in his arms, some humbly clad old lady, receive from her her hearty thanks, the fare, and a small addition for the civil "coachman," all of which were duly acknowledged by an orthodox touch of the hat.*

Richard Fuller was succeeded by his son Richard and eventually his grandson, also Richard. All were partners in the family bank but it was not how they earned their money that affected Westcott, but how they spent it. For during the late 18<sup>th</sup>, and throughout the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the family dramatically increased the size of their Westcott Estate – so much so that it eventually embraced most of the western side of the village and some of the east as well. (You may recall that the land on which the school was built in 1854 was given by Richard Fuller.)

As a result of this extensive landholding most of the inhabitants of Westcott, less those living in the old Manor of Milton, worked for the Fullers either as domestic servants, or as labourers on estate-owned farms, or they were dependant on the family as tenants or employees of estate-owned enterprises.

For example the 1861 census for the Rookery Mansion records a Governess. Lady’s Maid, Cook, Nurse, two Housemaids, a Nursery Maid, two Kitchen Maids, a Butler, Footman and a Coachman – and that was just the living-in staff.

There were also living in staff at the other houses in the village occupied by other members of the Fuller family; Burrell Fuller at Holcombe on Westcott Heath, William at the Old Barracks in Westcott Street.

And in addition to extensive activity covering hundreds of acres devoted to the growing of crops, dairy farming, pasture, orchards and coppicing. there was also a quarry on Fuller land for when Holy Trinity was built Richard Fuller provided the stone for its construction. *On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1851 Gilbert Scott visited the site and took the opportunity to inspect Mr Fuller's pit to determine whether his offer to supply the stone required for the church was acceptable. All was well.*

A survey of mining and mineral statistics in 1858 reported that Fuller's brickworks in Westcott had an annual production of 439,500 bricks, 93,500 tiles and 74, 700 assorted pipes.

As we now know, it wasn't to last. Richard Fuller, the grandson, died in 1854, comparatively young and childless. His widow Maria, then only 42 years old, inherited most of the Fuller estate but the house went to his younger brother George, who took over as the head of the Bank.

**Maria moved to a new, or at least a greatly enlarged home, on a part of the Fuller Estate known as the Rook Field (and subsequently as Rokefield). Here she lived with her two spinster sisters Emily and Juliana Barclay, and used her inheritance to the great benefit of the village. The original Reading Room was built on Fuller land and with funds that she provided in trust for the benefit of the people of Westcott. When it was first built Holy Trinity Church had a very plain interior but it was the widowed Mrs Fuller who paid for the construction of the present vestry on the south side of the church, the provision of the choir stalls, the provision of the pulpit and the eagle lectern. The unusual mosaic reredos behind the altar was her gift, as were the Commandment Panels. She also bought a house (now called Tumbledown just by the entrance to the Reading Room) for a curate to live in. The house was sold several years ago but income from the Curacy House Trust still features in the Parish Church accounts.**

Meanwhile younger brother George continued to manage the banking business until his death in July 1892, just a few months before his sister in law died in October 1892. That was effectively the end of the Fullers in Westcott. It also marked the end of Fuller's Bank. In 1891 it had merged with Banbury, Nix, and Mathieson and by the end of the century it had been taken over by Parr's Bank. Parr's Bank subsequently amalgamated with the London County & Westminster Bank which shortened its name in 1923 to Westminster Bank and is today's National Westminster Bank.

Meanwhile the Rookery mansion and the whole of the Rookery Estate, by now extending to some 650 acres, had been put on the market in 1894 and it was the prospectus for that sale that provides most of our knowledge of the extent of the Fuller inheritance.

When the estate was sold in 1894, the purchaser was Arthur Brooke, a North Country man who had previously bought Leylands, a large house in the neighbouring parish of Wotton and was seeking to extend his Surrey interests. These were a long way from Manchester where in 1869 he had opened his first shop from where he revolutionised the sale of tea - by developing his own blends and by skilful advertising. He named

his shop, and subsequent company, Brooke Bond, because he thought it sounded well – there was never a Mr Bond – and made his fortune when with his encouragement we became a nation of tea drinkers.

Arthur Brooke continued to live at Leylands initially, and The Rookery was let, but it subsequently became the Brooke family home. The Brookes, like the Fullers before them, supported village activities. The Queen Victoria's Silver Jubilee entertainment took place on a Rookery Meadow and the Westcott miniature rifle range was established on Rookery land. We also know from a contemporary newspaper report that in 1922 an Al Fresco concert was held at The Rookery to which the public generally and inhabitants of Westcott in particular were entertained by the Red Triangle Club Orchestra and later in the evening by the London Concert Combination. *The stage was set on the terrace to the west of the house, the side of which formed a more or less satisfactory sounding board and the audience were scattered on the lawns and terraces. As the evening grew darker, there were shown three, what were termed "wireless" pictures representing 'There is a green hill', 'On the banks of Allan Water' and 'Keep the home fires burning'. These were apparently produced with the aid of limelights accompanied by Very lights and fireworks and were shown on the side of the hill facing the house, on the side of the lake and at the extreme end of the lake, respectively. The whole proved to be a very pretty and effective scene, greatly enhanced by the reflection thrown up from the lake.*

Arthur Brooke died in 1918, but his wife Alice stayed on and arguably made a greater impact on Westcott than her husband. This was because, in 1925, she was instrumental in forming the Westcott Fellowship Cottage Trust "to eliminate and abolish as far as practicable all slums in Westcott (at that time there were several old, dilapidated cottages in the village – especially in Bailey Road) by replacing them with improved Cottages to let. Alice described what she called a Housing Experiment in a letter to the Times

*Sir -In the village of Westcott, near Dorking, a new scheme is being tried to prevent overcrowding in the present and the existence of slums in the future. Money is being subscribed to build new cottages, and the donors ask for no return either in rent or interest. The rents are given back to the trust fund, to keep the cottages in good repair and build more. The secretary, the architect, and the builder are all doing their bit to make the scheme successful. The committee of management is selected from the Village Club, and a voluntary collector calls for the rent each week*

Although she did not declare her interest, Mrs Brooke gave the initial £1000 to set up the Trust when the scheme was proposed by the then Vicar, the Reverend Salzmann, in conjunction with the flourishing Red Triangle Club - forerunner of the Village Club. She, and other members of the Brooke family also made other generous donations. The Fellowship Cottage Trust still exists although no new houses have been added since 1962 when the new Rose Cottages in Westcott Street were built to replace the old sub-standard cottages on the site.

As with so many of the larger houses in the area, The Rookery was requisitioned during the Second World War to accommodate troops, and we are assembling a growing collection of personal memories from those days. For this evening's talk, however, we need only record that the house was then converted into ten flats, but the splendour of the past was long gone and would never be restored. The house was on the market again in 1962, demolished in 1968, and replaced in the early 70's by a terrace of 'town houses'.

Meanwhile back in 1894, the remainder of the Rookery Estate had been bought by Landowners Ltd., a development company, of which Arthur Brooke was the Managing Director. In subsequent years the various properties were disposed of and former farmland was neatly parcelled up for sale as desirable building sites. Coast Hill Lane, Deerleap Road and the properties backing on to Westcott Mill Pond were all developed in this way. Sales took place in 1898, 1911 and 1929, which disposed of the last of the Rookery Estate.

In 1911, for example, the sale included The Old Mill and the Westcott Mill Pond, Sandrook Cottage and various desirable plots adjacent to Balchins Lane and Coast Hill.

As it has turned out, the most lasting feature of The Rookery has been the footpath that throughout the existence of the great house provided public access across the lawns that swept from the mansion down to the lake. The path survives, it is part of the Greensand way, and now forms the eastern boundary of the Rookery Town House Terrace. The Rookery Lakes, which were both ornamental and practical, insofar as they provided the water for the Rookery's two mills and later were stocked with freshwater oysters, are fenced off and hidden away behind a row of trees.

Although the Mansion has gone, the mill survives as a private house, as does Rookery Cottage, at one time called Rook's Nest and now Springs, on the other side of Rookery Drive.