

### 3. THE TYE

At the beginning of the 19th Century there were twenty three acres of open land at Bulmer Tye. This waste, or common, had a major road going across it and over the centuries was used for grazing. The earliest documentary reference to the name appears to be of 1310. The early maps show its characteristic shape and three maps have been provided to show its appearance before and after the 19th Century enclosure. Around its perimeter are to be found a mound, a hall site, three old farmhouses, a pub, a former inn, a shop and some cottages most of which were built on rather than round it.

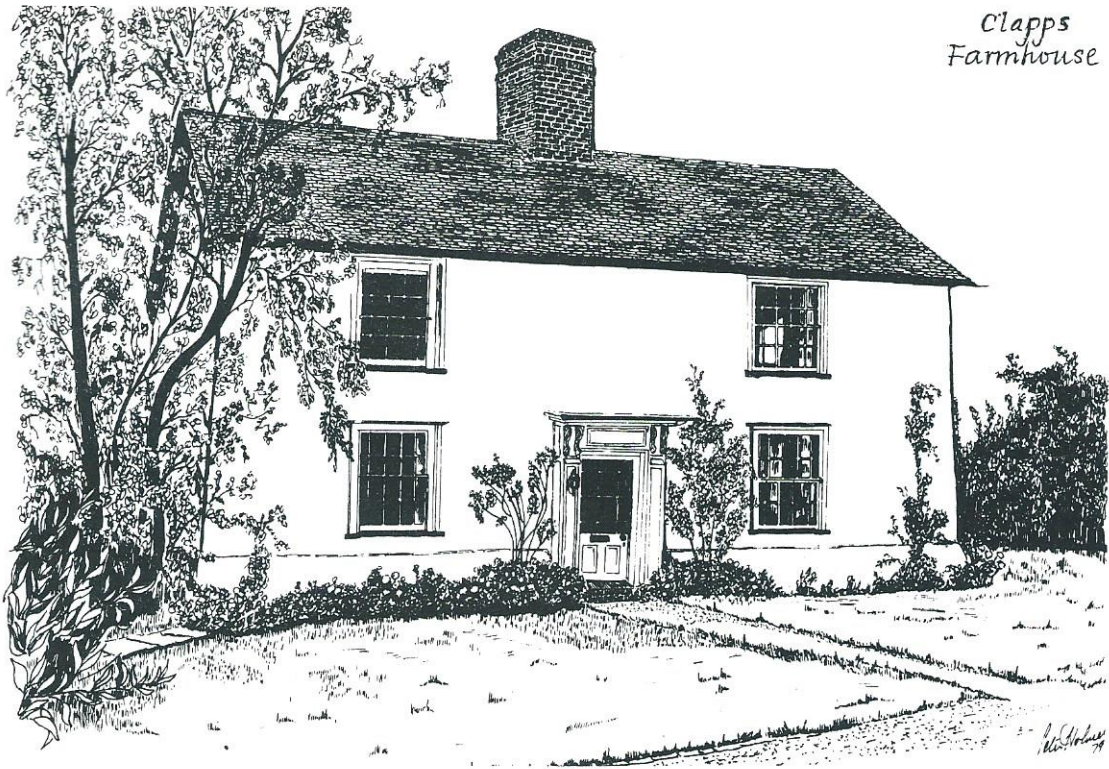
We will work our way round clockwise starting with the vanished hall and the mound. Grandon or Grendon Hall was a mediaeval manor. Ralph de Grendon is mentioned in a land deed of the 13th Century and when Stephen de Grandon was married in 1277 he dowered his wife with all his manor of Bolemere Co. Essex. A large house is shown on the map of 1600. The owner paid for eleven fireplaces at the time of the Hearth Tax. The Daniel family owned it for many years and there is a Grandon monument in the church to the Brage family of 1700 who had it afterwards. Bert Felton says that the shape of the house showed in the crop one year near Grendon Hall Pasture. The late Mrs. Bunn always called Church Road "Granhall Road".



*Jenkins Farmhouse*

*Peter Colman  
1979*

*Clapps  
Farmhouse*



Near the house site is the mound, nearly surrounded by water which could be irregularly shaped ponds or a moat that time has mutilated. In 1507 it was called Pepper Wells, later Pepper Mill Hill and very much later, Peppermint Hill! The word Grendon, however, means green hill. If the hall took its name from the proximity of the mound, as seems possible, that makes the latter ancient. Otherwise your theory is as good as ours: a very early burial mound or tumulus, a 12th Century adulterine (not as exciting as it sounds) castle motte or even a large mill mound. It has so many trees growing on it that an archaeological dig would hardly be possible.

#### **Not Too Public**

Crossing the main road to the Henny Ryes Lane with four council houses of 1947 in it, we pass the former police house, some council houses built in the early '30s on the main road near the turnpike site and come to the Fox Inn, the sole survivor of the Tye's three pubs. Originally a thatched, lath and plaster beer house, it was bought by Mauldons the Ballingdon brewers in 1863. James Andrews, the publican up to 1885, was also a skin merchant buying, cleaning and selling the "strings" for sausage making. John Ling who followed, decided to place a large lantern outside so that his customers could see to drink their ale and also so the people "on the road" would be encouraged to stop and have a drink. The regulars objected strongly and demanded that it be removed because they did not want every passer-by to see them drinking. His order book between 1886 and 1898 shows not only big orders for XXX but also that the agricultural depression was being lifted with several gallons of each spirits every month. The present building went up in 1900 built by George Grimwood & Sons for £1,050 and Greene King took over in 1957. The well was here and men would leave their pails lined up outside while they went in for a drink. When they came out they went off, as one observer put it, with a bucketful of water and skinfull of beer.

Let's look at two of the Tye's residents briefly. First John Dixey who married in 1855 and raised his six children in a cottage near the Fox. At first an agricultural labourer he was later classed as dealer, brewer and yeoman. He was remembered scything the hay round the headlands of fields for his donkeys. He charged 3d to cart 5 cwt of coal from

Sudbury station to Upper Houses. Grannie Eaves died in 1938 when she was ninety one years of age. She hadn't a tooth in her head but could still eat pickled onions. She was the "nuss" and delivered many local babies; but she was chiefly remembered for her ability to dry wet clothes out on her knees in front of the cottage fire and still not get rheumatics.

South of the inn were at various times a post-office, the blacksmith's shop, a communal bake-house later turned into a wash-house, almshouses, the brick built village lock-up with a heavy oak door and a number of cottages. Alas the buildings, rebuildings and demolitions of the latter are too complicated to be summarised for this history but John Dixey, who has made a house called The Anvil from two of them, has researched the story of all of them in interesting detail and will be glad to share it with others. Most of them were two up and two downers. Here is a description of one: "It was thatched and of wattle and daub. The larger room upstairs was built under the thatch like an attic; the small room or kitchen downstairs had no ceiling but you looked up to the floorboards of the small bedroom. My grandfather said it was like this because a weaving loom would extend up through the ceiling into the bedroom."

In 1845 there were 42 cottages at the Tye and by 1851 Bulmer had reached its highest-ever population. There were six almshouses. The vestry books also mention a Poor House. The almshouses were sold in 1884 after being previously let by the guardians of the Sudbury Union. The Poor House, sometimes called the Parish House, was of timber and thatched and was still being insured by the parish in 1847. The blacksmith's shop and house still stand. The last resident blacksmith, Mr. Jeffries, was killed by a horse kicking him. A part-time blacksmith carried on for a few years after that tragedy.

The Common, before enclosure, extended in a long strip nearly as far as the Henny turning on the Halstead road. Alongside were some cottages, the last of which were burnt down a few years ago. On the Henny corner is a house which was formerly the Greyhound Inn. George Dixey kept it at the end of the 19th Century and was also the carrier. During the last war a parachuted German pilot was "arrested" near here by a local air raid warden who said, "Poor chap, he was glad to be caught."

Four farmhouses are shown on the map of 1600 around the Tye Green. Tye Corner Farm is an early timber-farmed house known as Chantry about 1600 and as Underwoods in the 19th Century. Amos Underwood, people's warden, died in 1869 but his widow carried on the cultivation of the farm's 100 acres with the help of two sons and four men. At an auction sale there in 1878 a little boy unofficially absent from school made quite certain that he was found out by losing some of his fingers in a piece of farm machinery.

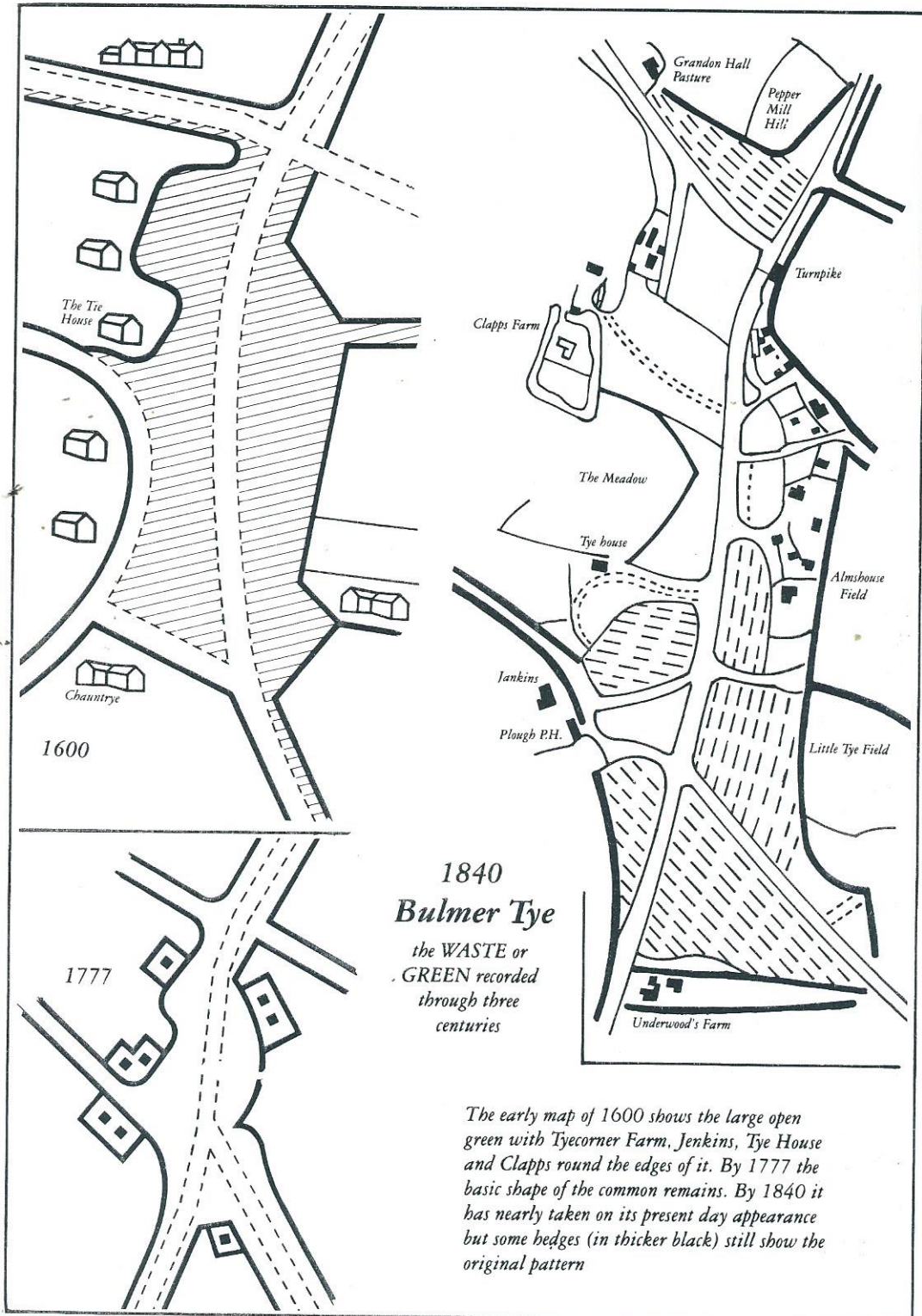
The Plough (now two houses) was an old inn on the edge of the Common. Beryl Harding-Payne thinks its patrons must have smoked a lot because bits of broken clay pipe are always turning up in her garden. Plough Green in front of it is the last bit of common remaining and was used until the fifties for grazing Farmer Reed's cow.

Jenkins has been occupied by farming families from very early on until our own century and was only sold away from the land in the 1950s. The front section is a 16th Century three bay timber framed house with jettied overhang along the front. Its handsome brick chimney of six joined octagonal shafts is of the same date, as are the fireplaces. These, with some scarf joints, the size and spacing of the uprights and various bits of external and internal evidence suggest that this section was built between 1510 and 1550. The brick nogging is more recent. The front was extended to the south in the early 17th Century and there is internal evidence from timbers and fireplace that the extension to the west at the rear is of similar date. As a representative of the many farmers who lived in the house, let's take George Badham who in 1871 was 61 years old, magistrate, trustee of Sudbury Corn Exchange, churchgoer and farmer of 350 acres employing twelve men, three boys and two servants living in. Jenkins stables were important. The Badhams bred Suffolks.

#### **Croquet for the Curate**

Bulmer Tye House appears from the front to have been built of brick about 1800 but the

back shows it to have had a longer and very varied history. There are clues to the existence of a two bay house with central chimney stack of between 1650 and 1670. These include a 17th Century fireplace, remains of a built-over staircase and timber beams all consistent with such a structure. The house seems to have been added to between 1700 and 1730 and the cellar, some beams, sections of panelling and parts of the main staircase could all belong to this period. Then between 1790 and 1810 the front rooms were extended and their elegant windows and doors belong to this third period. There are other later additions and alternations. Its earlier history seems to have been as a small farm house.



*The early map of 1600 shows the large open green with Tycorner Farm, Jenkins, Tye House and Clapps round the edges of it. By 1777 the basic shape of the common remains. By 1840 it has nearly taken on its present day appearance but some hedges (in thicker black) still show the original pattern*

A barn and the barn pigtle (field) are shown on an early map. In the early 19th Century Robert Andrews' son, a parson, lived there and the later curates-in-charge, all Raymonds, lived in it throughout the rest of the century. A croquet ground existed and in 1871 the Rev. Raymond, his wife, three children, a governess, a cook, a housemaid and a parlourmaid were able to enjoy the elegant improvements which included a water closet, because in 1854 builder Elliston of Ballingdon was employed to repair it.

The current owner is Peter Owen, who both repairs antique furniture and makes musical instruments of exquisite craftsmanship. All the more anguish caused to this lover of wood by the Great Storm of October 1987, which uprooted so many of the fine specimen trees surrounding this house. Further up Old Church Lane is the flint cottage formerly occupied by the gardeners for the bigger house and now extended for the headmaster of a big comprehensive school.

### Dixeyland

Next we come to the late John Dixey's bungalow and builder's yard. Now his two sons, Bill and Tony, carry on the business. Previously this allotment land had been used for a quoits pitch for people living in the village and from further afield. In 1920 a ploughing match was held on Great Tithe field and won by Ernie Carter from Blacksmith's Lane. He said the reason he had won was seeing Connie Watson (later Dixey) standing at the other side of the field in a light coloured dress and striking a straight line toward her. You may have noticed rather a lot of Dixeys appearing in this part of Bulmer. There were so many at one time that it became known as Dixey Tye.

### Clapps Farm House

The front and larger section of this house is dateable to between 1650 and 1660. The central chimney stack, the fireplaces, a cupboard door and the style of the timber frame all offer evidence to place it there. The attractive front doorway, the sash windows, some more cupboards and the stylish little staircase all belong to alterations that went on around 1800. The back portion of the house with its plain-tiled gambrel roof hints at being the altered mediaeval farm house but the internally exposed timbers does not offer any proof of very much earlier date than the 16th Century. When it was sold by auction in 1806 it was described as "an excellent new and convenient farm house with Uniform Front (illustrated) towards the adjoining common and High Road". The 'new' obviously refers to the improvements of 1800 when, of course, agriculture had been profitable for a number of years. The farm lies in a natural drainage hollow and this seems the most likely explanation for its having a moat as an attempt to drain the water away from the farmhouse walls.

Clapps has had some colourful occupants. The Vialls in the early 19th Century were its tenants. John was Parish Constable but apart from expenses from the Vestry this job was unpaid. When the County started a full time police force, a later Viall was on the other side of the law. He was arrested for being found drunk on the floor of a waggon with a Lamarsh companion. The waggon was stopped by a policeman as it proceeded down the road, driver-less, pulled by three horses.

Henry Payne was at Clapps in the 1880s. He died in 1921, aged 92. His 100 acres employed four men. A lad who started there at 12 years of age for 2s.6d. a week remembers him as over 80 and "doubled up wi'gout". Henry was a preacher at the Chapel. Most of these country chapels had a tenant farmer as their chief prop and stay. Their men and families were the congregation. They conducted services with a nice mixture of formality and homeliness. Henry having finished his soul-winning sermon often interposed a message to one of his men before announcing the final hymn, "Now, John bor, we'll jist have one more hymn 'fore we go and feed they bullocks."

Thomas Clape owned land in Bulmer in 1446. He may well have given his name to the house. Half its moat survives. The other half went together with the bridge across it when

estate of nine houses went up on the meadow in the 1960's as an extension of Park Lane. The architect covered their bricks with pink plaster to match the farm house but it is difficult to imagine what Henry Payne would have made of their pavements and street lights. Some of the land is farmed by Peter Brown who built the houses and another resident grows fruit trees on Cottage Field. The rest of Park Lane had a baker's shop kept by Philip Chinnery in 1848 and in 1840 there was one row of cottages with six householders in it and another with three. Some of the deeds say they were built on "waste land in the manor of Smeetham Hall". Until recently Mrs Baxter helpfully and cheerfully kept a sense of community going in the last of the village's shops combined with a sub post office. The five households in the Lane overlook the allotments and then the road.

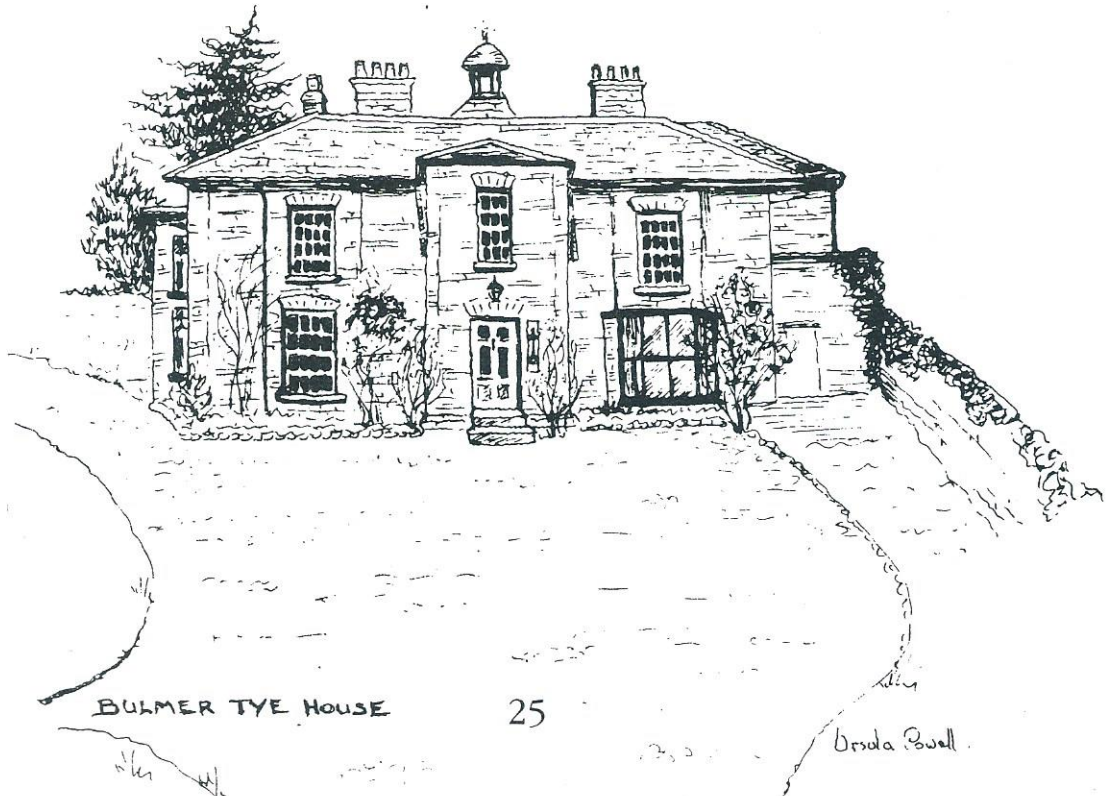
The Parish enclosed common land early in the 19th Century in order to make those allotments and all the others on the Tye. Bulmer had 76 allotments in 1845, nearly all of them at the Tye. When the potato crop failed or times were hard the rents were reduced. Looking at the maps before enclosure induces sadness that it happened; but if you try to visualise all those mountains of fine vegetables that had been grown over the last 150 years, sometimes helping to fill mouths that might otherwise have gone hungry, harvest thanksgiving thoughts might be more appropriate. One of the old Tye residents used to finish all his sentences with 'bor' and another one concluded with 'yinner' (you know). Better allotments and full bellies, bor, than pretty pasture and pinch gut - yinner.

#### Sweet Reason

We must let a younger generation have the last word. Catriona Williamson, who lived in the Street, summed up the Tye versus Street situation for us when she was ten years old. For her, then, the Tye had one advantage:

Bulmer is a lovely place but it has only got one shop,  
There are two main parts to our village, the bottom and the top.  
The bottom is just Bulmer Street, the top is called the Tye,  
Mrs. Baxter's shop is there with sherbet you can buy.  
In the Street there's a post office and a letter box.

The pub in the Street is The Blackbirds and at the Tye - The Fox. Alas, that advantage went with the closure of the Tye's shop. Sherbet for Catriona but for Harry Winch as a little boy it was butter-balls bought from the travelling shop - delicious, once you had sucked off the paraffin left on them by the man who sold everything and had only one pair of hands to serve you with.



BULMER TYE HOUSE