adjoining. Three cow commons in the common fields of Charney.

(Hops also appear in the 1629 survey which states: "Convenient hop poles to be allowed every year to be set up and used in the hop yard there and not elsewhere. In consideration whereof the tenant at his cost to plant pole and dress the said hop yard and gather and dry the hops and deliver the moity so dryed and well prepared to my Lady for use at her house at Pusey'.)

The stable on the right hand side of the gatehouse going into the backside belonging to the said premises. And the barn called the Wheat barn with convenient room in the backside for foddering cattle to spend straw and for keeping of pigs. And also the fish in the pond and river.

George Anthony Legh Keck of Stougton Grange, Leicestershire, enclosed the common lands of Charney in 1904; a Mr Bushnell of Wallingford lived there in 1806; the estate was soon after sold on a fifty per cent mortgage to four joint purchasers. The Manor House went to James Crowdy, the agent to the Duke of Marlborough, along with land stretching Eastwards to Lyford Bridge; all this became the Manor farm, and his share included a great deal of the village including the two inns. The other members of the consortium were Thomas Price Belcher, Daniel Giles and William Pinder. In 1809 the estate was involved in a court case brought by the Rev. John Davies Clerk, rector of Longworth, over the amount of tithes that should be paid to Longworth church, in whose parish the village stood. The defendants were William Dewe, John Beesley, Charles Loder, Richard Beesley, Richard Woodbridge, Hungerford Whitefield, Daniel Giles, William Pinder and James Crowdy. The two Beesleys are obviously relations of the James Beesley mentioned on the first page of this guide. The name Pinder is worth noting as a family name; the man in charge of rounding up and impounding stray animals in any village was called the Finder; just such a pound stood close to the Manor in the old village. A letter written by John Caley from Grays Inn sets out the case for the defence. It concerns the lands that belonged "from time immemorial" to Abbingdon abbey - the Boardlands; " name which from its very derivation imports them to have been the Demesne Lands of lands set apart for the Board or Tables of the Monk's". The landlords were also entitled to "Leonard's tithes; being the first crop after a fallow on arable lands not Boardlands". The rector of Longworth was forced to concede both these ancient rights.

The property was sold by the Rev. John Bushnell, Rector of Beenham to Mr Philip Pusey in 1833. His tenant in 1851 was Thomas Dewe, employing 16 labourers and farming 200 acres. He was 70 and unmarried, living with two unmarried sisters; Mary, 72, and Ann, 63. They were all born at Charney. In the eastern portion of the churchyard, close to the manor wall, they are commemorated by a now-collapsed table-top tomb. The land it stands on was purchased from Thomas to extend the churchyard in 1845. He died in 1854 at the age of 74, and Mary in 1871 at the age of 90.

At the beginning of this century was old man providing the key of St. James' Church to a passing writer described how when the Dewes were in possession of the Manor they used a private entrance to the Church to reach their high-backed pew in privacy. They were evidently good Christians. The Protestant Sunday school was erected in 1821 on land given by James Dewe, and endowed in 1835 by his brother Thomas with £1,875. He left a further sum in his will, the dividends amounting to £10 a year to be applied in some manner most conducive to the best interests of the school. Thomas and William Dewe were involved in setting up the Frilford and Longworth Home Mission, with licensed chapels at Frilford, Longworth, Hanney and Appleton; they also set up a mission house and British school at Longworth with a full-time paid minister. Thomas left £300; the income from which was to be spent on the distribution of blankets and sheets to the poor at Christmas. Miss Mary Dewe left £5 yearly to the Infants' and Sunday schools and £5 to the clothing club.

Mr Sidney Edward Bouverie-Pusey (who entertained the members of the educational excursion mentioned on page one) sold the Manor to Berkshire County Councils for small-holdings in 1909. A Mrs Pearson, whose husband was the architect of Girton and then a Major Whiteley bought the Manor and its remaining six acres in 1919 and pulled down the remaining barns and cow-sheds, all except for the great tithe barn. It was at this time that the entrance was moved round to what had been the back of the building and he constructed the present entrance and driveway. He also laid out the gardens as they are today, and made up the lawns into their connection continued with the Manor becoming the home of the widowed Mrs Waterhouse, whose husband, Paul Waterhouse, was described as "one of the wittiest Presidents of the Royal Institute or British Architects". **Country Life** "did" the Manor in 1942 and were obviously impressed by "the remoteness of Charney and the eerie mediaevalism of the flat open fields surrounding it."

> It is the landscape of mediaeval England before the enclosures, and of northern Europe's plains, hedgeless and almost treeless arable fields, with the little group of grey buildings standing in thg midst of them, a mediaeval manor essentially unaltered by the passage of six or seven hundred years.

Pictures that accompanied the article show the solar as it was then furnished.

> This remarkable room is no less delightful as a living-place than it is interesting as an architectural antiquity. Its charm is largely due to Mrs Waterhouse having made no attempt, which would have been doomed to failure, to furnish it in the "period"; but, on the contrary, to its primitive simplicity having become the setting for Georgian elegance. Outstanding are the low circular mahogany tea-table with pie-crust carving of exceptional fineness, the Sheraton settee beyond it, and

a superb bureau in strongly figured walnut with satinwood and rosewood inlay by Gillow of Lancaster.

The adjoining garden has been given great charm by Mrs Waterhouse. Northwards a walk between herbacious borders in the kitchen garden leds to a pretty pleached hornbeam arbour. Another arbour of vines trained over an iron canopy supported on pillars, is on the lawn against the church, bringing a Renaissance note into this island of the Middle Ages.

At some time during the thirteenth century building work commenced on the oldest parts of the present Charney Manor. It may have been part of the building programme that followed on the death of abbot John de Blosemville; certainly his will (c. 1255) endowed "new works", and a keeper of the works was subsequently appointed to the abbey. That the Manor was commissioned and supervised by the abbey seems beyond dispute, a secular landowner building in stone was still rare in the thirteenth century and the necessary money could only have originated from Abingdon. A recent visitor drew up a plan which suggests some walls may date from as early as 1200. Conventional wisdom has varied between the dates of 1250 and 1280; this is based on the windows and the timbers of the roof but does not rule out the possibility of walls from an earlier structure having been incorporated.

Certainly the alignment of next door St Peters, which is not true East-West, suggests one of two possibilities; either the Normans built it on the site of an earlier Saxon church, for a conscientious Norman would never have planned a misaligned church, or there was already a Saxon Hall where the present Manor stands, which together with road, marsh and river so constricted the site that the church had perforce to be built East North East by West South West.

The mediaeval house has its roots in the Saxon hall, a plan still familiar to us today in the great barns which are direct descendants. The fact that no certain remains of pre-Conquest domestic architecture are in existence implies that early houses were timber. The roofs of the earliest buildings were held up by massive split oak trunks, set upright in pairs. These formed single large rooms where an entire Saxon household could eat and sleep. Such a hall would probably be divided into bays by arched trusses called crucks. When long timbers were not easily obtainable, (oak being used exclusively; pine was not yet imported) the problem of roofing a wide building was solved by the erection of an aisled hall. In this the span was subdivided by two lines of posts, which supported the roof and separated the hall, like the aisle and nave of a church. This was almost certainly the plan of the original Manor.

In the cruck-framed house each pair of crucks forms the ridge of the roof. They might be attached by a "saddle" at the apex and, between a third to a half the way up, connected by a tie-beam - thus forming a large letter "A". It is the most

primitive method of building to survive in this country and, not surprisingly, the distribution of these cruck-framed houses coincides with place names of a pre-Saxon origin.

In the more advanced king-post and ridge roof there is a post between the horizontal tie-beam of the "A" and the ridge of the roof. This may derive from a central post in a more primitive house. In England the distribution of king-post and ridge roofs points, on the evidence of place names, to their having a Scandinavian origin.

But in the south-east of England most surviving thirteenth century houses are of the trussed rafter type. This method of construction shows great advances on the earlier frames; it is lighter and more scientific than the cruck method and more economical as it doesn't require massive timbers. Instead each rafter is treated separately; there is no principal truss and no triangular framework at bay intervals. Craftsmen who had a knowledge of skilled jointing had to evolve before the style could become widespread. There is no ridge to the internal construction; each pair of rafters is joined some two-thirds of the way up by a collar beam and has a straight brace to the collar and another vertically to the wall plate, producing a polygonal profile (see illustration). The distribution of these "uniform scantling" roofs (scantling being a measurement of breadth and depth of timber) suggests that they were an importation from France, arriving with the conquering Normans. Examples have been found in France dating from the mid 11th century.

The great defect of the trussed rafter roof was the lack of lengthwise stiffening; if a joint decayed the weight of the roof covering might force the rafters to lean out of line. This was remedied by the insertion of a longitudinal beam under the collar (the collar purlin), which was supported from the tie-beam by a post with four-way struts; two tenoned to the collar purlin, and two to the rafters or the rafter braces (see illustration). This is called a crown-post roof; a term coined to distinguish it from the true king-post which supports the ridge rather than a central purlin.

The solar roof at Charney Manor is a text book example of this type of roof, showing a combination of tall crown-post, tie-beam, and trussed rafter. Early crown-posts were square or chamfered, with straight struts and the tie-beam uncambered, almost square in section. Later crown-posts were shaped like a small column with octagonal shafts and a moulded capital and base.

The solar measures 30ft by 16ft. A "solar" is correctly any room above ground level; the word being derived from the French "sol" meaning "floor" and "solive" meaning "beam". The solar was the private bed-sitting room of the owner and his family in the early Middle Ages, usually added at the upper end of the hall. During this period an individual bedroom was exceptional and judging from contemporary literature personal servants often slept in their master's rooms, partly as a protection, using a low truckle bed which could be kept under

the larger one during the day. During the thirteenth century the English House developed a plan which continued in essential features until the end of the mediaeval period. The lower end of the hall was screened off to form a passage with external doors at either end. Two, or more doors in the end wall of the hall communicated with the kitchens and offices. The solar, usually raised on an undercroft, was attached to the opposite end of the hall. Though only the solar wing remains in anything like its original form Charney Basset is an outstanding example of this plan.

An extra room could be obtained by joining an annexe, separately roofed, onto the solar like the chancel to the nave of a church. Indeed it was a favourite position for the dommstic chapel. The chapel at Charney was built with its entrance towards the north end of the solar wall, thus allowing an east window to the solar. The whole bears a distinct resemblance to the chapel ordered by Henry III at Freemantle in 1251.

> A certain chamber with an upper storey, with a chapel at the end of the same chamber, for the queen's use; under which chapel the sheriff is to make a cellar to hold the king's wines.

Most of the original walls are about 3 ft thick, and built of ashlar and rubble. The solar was approached by stone steps leading up from a yard to the doorway which now communicates with the modern passage. At the south-west angle of the solar is a blocked doorway communicating with a triangular projection which once served as a garderobe (a mediaeval latrine). There would have been a drainage ditch or pit dug beneath to carry the waste. The west wall is a good six inches thinner than the other walls and there is the beginning of a filled-in window in the south-west corner which indicates that it originally projected further westwards. As the room leans slightly to the west the original wall may have fallen out in the sixteenth century, otherwise the owners may have simply decided to foreshorten the wing to line up with the central hall.

In its south wall of the solar is a deeply set window of two lancets opposite an Elizabethan fireplace imposed on an older, wider hearth. The trimmed rafters above it suggest that the smoke was once collected in a projecting hood. The mullioned windows in its west end are those shown in Parkers 1851 engraving; the left-hand one was given two extra lights in the restoration of 1909. The presence of a window high up in the gable may suggest that there was once an attic. Beside the doorway into the chapel is a two-light embrasure. The square inner section of the windows' jambs and mullions suggests that the original was unglazed and fitted with wooden shutters and frames of oiled linen or other translucent material. In the thirteenth century glass was still rare enough for gentlemen owners of more than one establishment to carry it around with them as they moved from place to place. All the furniture has been acquired since the war; the large studded chest is 16th

century, believed to be German, and the tapestries above it are 17th century.

The chapel is 12ft 6 by 9ft 10. The east window is a late thirteenth century two-light uncupsed lancet. The south window is a lancet with trefoiled head and hood moulding. There is a piscina (a perforated stone basin for carrying away ablutions) on the south wall, and an aumbry (a locker or recess for sacramental vessels) on the north wall. The marks of the old door hooks can be seen in the sides of the deep doorway which leads to the solar. The roof is probably an eighteenth century reconstruction of the original; it was largely renewed after a fire. The chapel may have doubled as a study where farm accounts were kept, household money and papers being stored in the aumbry. The bible of 1639 is bound in with the prayer book of the same year; it is hand ruled and clearly printed, the two small tables are of roughly the same date. A modern trap-door has had to be fitted into the floor to conform with fire regulations.

Both the chapel and the solar rest on undercrofts. The one under the chapel is only lit by a slit and was probably always intended for use as a storeroom which is what it is today. The floors are now two feet below the level of the ground outside - a result of the sinking of the heavy building and the gradual build-up of soil over the centuries. The main undercroft has beautiful large floor-boards, each wider at one end than the other and alternated to fit in with the next. The ceiling of exceptionally massive timbers has had to be supported by modern posts. There is a double lancet window in the east wall and a plain square headed opening on the south, both original. The fenestration of the west wall consists of two-light windows with square heads, the northern probably sixteenth century and the southern modern. There is a late thirteenth century fireplace in the north wall, its square-headed trefoil being characteristic of its time, a solution to the problem of spanning a wide opening which pre-dates the discovery of the flattened arch. The shape is found in the flat-topped shouldered windows of Edward I's Welsh castles. The flue has a recess at the top of the opening on the right, lined with fire-bricks. Many old cottage fireplaces incorporate such spaces; used to contain tinder, salt and anything else that had to be kept dry. This particular one may have been used for baking communion wafers; if so it is one of the only three surviving examples, the others being in Chichester Cathedral and Smarden Church, Kent. The doorway to the east of the fireplace, like the one into the solar, was formerly external and now opens onto a modern corridor. To the west of the fireplace is a doorway with a depressed head leading into what was once the hall.

If you stand at the top of the stairs your feet will be above the level of the original roof of the hall. Looking up you will see some of the ancient timbers; the hall was rebuilt and divided into two storeys probably during the early period of Dunch ownership, around 1582. The timbers were evidently prefabricated in a workshop and they are numbered in Roman numerals from I to VI. The roof is of sixteenth century

stonesfield slates. The early hall would have extended between what are now the far walls of the two sitting rooms, and have been the same width. Sash windows which had just been invented were also fitted to the house in the sixteenth century but they were replaced by the Victorians, who no doubt felt the present stone mullions were more in keeping with the antiquity of the structure. In the engraving of the house in Parker's **Domestic Architecture of the Middle Ages** (1851) there is a general late eighteenth century character to the centre block, indicating some alterations by the Kecks or Bushnells. At that time the front of the house was to the West, now overlooking the gardens; the present front door and drive would have given directly onto the farm buildings and the great tithe barn which burnt down in the 1940's. The north wing was entirely re-built, perhaps by Mr Pusey to adapt the house to the more modern requirements of a tenant farmer. However, in the second half of the sixteenth century many mediaeval houses were provided with spacious attics fitted with fireplaces and adequate fenestration, doubtless with the object of affording better sleeping accommodation for the servants than was previously available in the kitchen and hall. So despite the Victorian rebuilding the lines still follow the Elizabethan/Jacobean pattern. Prior to the lancet in the upper part of the north wall, and part of an original chimney. As the wing was built in the thirteenth century to accommodate stores it would have had as few window openings as possible. The quatrefoil opening in the west gable of the original North wing is still in position, having been carefully removed and replaced in the new structure. The Victorians built the upstairs and downstairs passages which now connect the solar and the undercroft to the central hall. The fact that the solar was, until the late eighteenth century, only approachable from the outside must have contributed not a little to its survival. In the new front wall some pragmatic or humorous quirk inspired the architect to use an old cell door from Exeter gaol; the warders spy-hole is still visible and on the inside is a massive key.

In 1870 the Henry Tregelles Gillett was born into a Quaker family in the English market town of Banbury. Ten years later Lucy Bancroft started life in Delaware in the United States where her earliest memories included the "slow clop-clop trip to Meeting in West Street from distant Rockford, almost two miles away".

By the time he was thirty Henry Gillett had moved to Oxford, a city which he was later to serve as Mayor in the troubled prelude to World War II. He was lived with his cousin Arthur and practised as a GP. There was a small mission Meeting lying outside the town and it was thanks to the exertions and generosity of the young Gilletts that the present premises at 43 St Giles Street were bought; the new Meeting House being built behind in 1955. In 1908 Henry Gillett married Lucy Bancroft and together they devoted much of their energy to breaking down the barriers which had grown up between different branches of Quakerism in America. They moved among Friends whose ancestors had benefitted from the presence of an indefatiguable early English Quaker called Joan Vokins.

They knew Mrs Waterhouse and had visited the Manor under her ownership; when she died in 1948 they bought it for the Society of Friends to use as a guest house and conference centre. At the same time they set up a Trust fund in memory of their daughter Jenepher, who died tragically young in an its upkeep. It was intended to provide an atmosphere of friendliness, peace and seclusion for anyone wishing to gain mental and physical refreshment, and for groups meeting to confer an difficult questions or who seek deeper spiritual insight. The Gilletts themselves had always kept an open house, turning no-one from their doors and hosting many discussion groups through the long years of their married life. As a family they started each day with a reading and quiet worship. As Friends they were active and concerned at every level of the Society's functioning. Henry Gillett died in 1955, and shortly before her own death in 1969 his wife wrote:

> At 87 I can boast of nothing spectacular, but I give thanks for all the beauty I have found in fields and gardens, woods and water, and in the old buildings of Oxford. Especially I give thanks for the beauty and goodness I have seen in people, for the unfailing love I have known from babyhood and for the wealth of friendship which has met me along the way.

The Manor was not an easy task for the Society to take on, and in the early days there were times when those responsibe for taking the decisions felt inclined to cut their (sometimes severe) losses and sell the property. But there were always strong advocates; George Gorman in particular, for keeping the Manor. Many have fallen under the spell of its charm and feel that it has a real contribution and a place within the society; providing conference facilities for groups ranging from Bishops to square dancers, and subsidising family holidays for those in need. The running of the Manor has greatly improved under the present manageress. Sheila Terry, who was born and bred in the village of Charney Bassett. As well as the accommodation provided in the House itself there is a "Half-way House", which used to be a cold store, complete with marble slabs, two cottages, which used to house the housekeeper and gardener of the Manor, and have been renamed "the Gillets" and the annexe, or Joan Vokings block. This last is named after a Quaker from Charney, (her brother Daniel Bunce, and brother-in-law Oliver Sansom are both mentioned earlier in this guide) whose life history was published the year after her death in 1690. It recounts her travels to America and the Barbadoes, spreading the message of the Society of Friends.

> I have been most of this winter upon the roaring seas, two months at a time, and saw no land, and my clothes were not off two nights all that time and saw no land, and my clothes were not off two nights all that time, so far as I can remember there was no conveniency for my weak body. There were French, and Dutch, and Irish, and Barbarians, and English, and I had sore exercises against them, both inwardly and outwardly; but yet I had good service also amongst them.

I took shipping at New York, and as the Lord put it into my heart to visit Friends in the Leeward Islands so he carried the vessel, let them that sailed do what they could and they could not steer their course to Barbadoes, although they endeavoured with all their might. I had good service amongst them in the vessel, and they were made to confess to the Almighty power that I testified of. We lay off Antigua a week before the owner would let me go on shore, but the all-wise God ordered it so, that the vessel could not go away till I had been there and performed what service he had appointed for me.

As we were sailing on the sea, it opened in my heart to visit friends at Nevis, but the owner of the vessel, being a hypocritical professor, caused my exercise to be the more; abut the power of the Lord was manifested, and the winds and sea obeyed, that we were carried to Nevis against his will. But he would not let me go on shore, for he had heard that those should pay a great fine that carried any Friend thither; and hoisted sail again for Barbadoes, and said he would weather the point of Gauda-loupe; and he laboured three weeks, but could not do it; for the hand of the Lord was against him.

He locked up the bread, and dealt hardly with his passengers when he saw he should be longer at sea than at first he did expect. He knew that for three weeks there was stinking water, and we were close by a French Island, and they said the French would not let us have any, if starved. They were papists, and said, if we came for water they would take our ship for a prey, and us for captives. Yet this owner of the vessel would not go to any other island, until the merchants that were on board threatened him very sorely; and then he put in at a mountainous place called Mount Seuti and they went all away from me as soon as they were landed.

I was very weakly, being on board the vessel so long, with such bad accommodation. I went on shore with my clothes so wet that I could wring water out of them, and so dried them upon my weakly body, which cast me into such a feverish condition that I was vey dry, and I sat down on the shore, and a girl came to fetch water near where I sat, and I drank till I sweat, and then I swooned.

But I was not clear of Nevis and hearing of a leaking vessel to go to Antigua took my passage in that and then having got a passage, it being night and rainy, I tried to get me a lodging on the land. The people were generally Irish papists, but the Lord did so order it that I met with an English woman, and she treated me kindly, but she had neither bread nor drink, but wine and sugar; and I desired half a pint of Madeira wine to be boiled, and that served me night and morning, and the Lord blessed it to me.

I sailed to the other vessel that I had suffered in, and

called for the owner and cleared my conscience to him, and told him the hand of the Lord was against him, and warned him to repent, else he should suddenly feel the stroke of it heavy upon him; and insasmuch as his heart had been too much set on that bark, he should shortly see that the Lord would destroy it, and accordingly his vessel was split on a rock a little time after.

The breathing of my soul is daily for you, and for all my relatives; and to them at Faringdon and Charney, and Goosey, and all the rest of Friends thereabouts.

Quakers

The basic Quaker conviction is that there is a divine power of love in every human being. We call this also "that of God" and the "light within". The supreme model of this power in action we see in the teachings, the life, and the death of Jesus of Nazareth, though we believe that it is also found in all religious traditions.

We find that we become most aware of the voice of God within us and in other people in our quiet meetings for worsip. All those present at worship are equally responsible for what happens there and anyone inspired may speak. Workship is not restricted to a certain day or a certain place. That we meet (usually) on a Sunday at a meeting house is a matter of convenience, not out of a conviction that these are "holier" than other times and places.

In our business meetings, which are also based on a quiet waiting on God, we try to listen to the contribution of everyone. We do not vote, but the clerk, who serves the meeting as secretary/chairperson, draws up a minute which sums up the "sense of the meeting".

The conviction of "that of God" in all people has very practical consequences in everyday life as well. We make no distinction between the political, social and spiritual areas of our lives. Our struggle to remove injustice, to seek equality between all people, remove the conflict which may lead to violence, and witness against all war, is a direct result of our spiritual insights.

We are an open community and welcome everyone to our meetings for worship. For further information, details of your nearest meetings and of gatherings for enquirers, contact Quaker House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.