

# HARTFORD GRANGE

THE  
HOUSE  
and  
FARM

## **PREFACE**

This was an exercise that grew and grew until, for me, it became all-consuming. I hope that the results of my project to find out as much as possible about Hartford Grange, its associated Grange Farm, and their occupants, will prove interesting.

The germ was planted in December 2021 when John Szostek, chair of Hartford Civic Society, innocently asked me to find out about Hartford Grange following a query by Kit Wise, who lives in the United States and is a descendant of the owners, William and Charlotte Todd Naylor. It had been demolished in 1921 but had been a major feature of the village for at least 100 years before then. The research involved going back to the 1846 tithe map and apportionment which showed one John Cheshire as the proprietor. John was the pivot I needed to dig back in the past and track forward to the future.

I had done a similar exercise for my mother's family's 17th century Old Hall farm in Staffordshire, and for the 18th century Aylestone Hill House, now a hotel, in Hereford, so I leapt at the opportunity to do the same research in my much-loved home village of Hartford.

The most frustrating thing about my report is the absence of a photograph or drawing to tell us what Hartford Grange looked like. We can only hope that one will turn up, one day, and find its way into the public domain. It's obvious that it was a former farmhouse that was made much grander over the years to the point that members of England's high society were happy to accept it as a base from which to pursue their passion for fox-hunting with the country's most fashionable hounds.

However, thanks to the wonderful source, the British Newspaper Archive, we have exact details of its interior and furnishing in 1852.

In a different social context, it was fascinating and moving to follow the fate of the families who lived at its associated Grange Farm. This was sadly the focus of national sensational reporting in 1908, following three tragic deaths, which one hopes would have been avoidable today.

I am indebted to numerous sources, too many to mention here, but especially the British Newspaper Archive, Ancestry.co.uk, Findmypast, the Scottish National Library, the Genealogist, the Cheshire Archives, *The Green Collars* by Gordon Fergusson, Hartford Civic Society, Kit Wise, the draughtsmen who drew the 19th century Ordnance Survey maps, and the wonders of the Internet, which will serendipitously uncover magical facts and inspirations which lead to whole new avenues of research.

I have endeavoured to mention all my sources in the text, rather than spoil the flow of the narrative with lots of footnotes.

It has been an enormous honour to mix with these fascinating long-dead people and to share their experiences of a house and environment that most of them seem to have loved and relished. No research like this is ever finished and I know that I will always be on the lookout for more information. Anything new that turns up will be added to the original report.

**Anne Loader**  
**Hartford**  
**April 2022**

# HARTFORD GRANGE

## ORIGINS OF THE BUILDING AND ITS EARLY OWNERS

The historical definition of a 'grange' is an outlying farm with tithe barns belonging to a monastery or feudal lord, though in common parlance it later came to mean a country house or large farmhouse with farm buildings attached – in other words, the home of a gentleman farmer.

This probably explains the origin and evolution of Hartford Grange, which was not deemed worthy of mention as a prestigious house in the *1850 Bagshaw's Directory*. Twenty years later, however, and following a lot of improvements, it was noted in John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* as one of the five significant residences in Hartford – the others being Hartford Manor, Hartford Hall, Hartford House and Woodlands (now The Riddings).

It is very sad that no photograph seems to exist of Hartford Grange, which would help with dating the long-demolished building. Its first depiction is on the 1846 tithe map of Hartford but there is no reason to think it was brand new at that time. A farm of some 50 acres was included in its estate, as well as a small farmhouse, cottages and a smithy. Its owner was John Cheshire, a salt merchant and proprietor, who had acquired it after being left a considerable amount of money and property by his rich great-uncle when he reached his majority in 1816.



Extract from the 1846 tithe map of Hartford

## LAND-TAX ASSESSMENT.

For the Township of An Assessment made in pursuance of several Acts of Parliament lately  
in the Hundred of Eddisbury, in the County of Chester, for the year 1824. passed for granting an aid by a Land-Tax, and for other purposes.

NAMES OF PROPRIETORS.	NAMES OF OCCUPIERS.	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY, SALARY, &c. ASSESSED	SUMS ASSESSED			Sums redeemed or Purchased.		
			£.	S.	D.	£.	S.	D.
John Marshall Esq	Self	Mess <sup>g</sup> & Land	10	0	0 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>			
John Marshall Esq	Self	Mess <sup>g</sup> and Land	2	7	0 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>			
Sir John Chetwood Bart.	John Marshall Esq	Do and Land	3	17	0			
James Thomas	James Thomas	Cottage and Land	1	10	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>			
Thomas Antrobus	Thomas Antrobus	Cottage and garden	..	3	2			
William Arnold	Self	Cottages and Land	.	0	1			
John Cheshire Esq	Self	Mess <sup>g</sup> and Land	2	10	0			

The first land tax entry for John Cheshire as proprietor and occupier of the messuage and land, at £2 18s 8d

Going one step backwards in time from the date of the tithe map, the 1836 poll book for Hartford lists John Cheshire "Esq" - a title which denotes a certain social standing - as owning a freehold house and land adjoining the turnpike road leading to Northwich, which is definitely Hartford Grange, as no other house would fit that description.

This record is a stepping stone back to the Land Tax. It was first introduced in 1692 on actual rental values and personal estate, but this proved very complex to administer. A few years later fixed quotas were established for each county, and these quotas were apportioned to the individual parishes and townships, who then appointed their own assessors. The counties were overseen by land tax commissioners, who audited the returns. Surprisingly these were often on quite tatty pieces of paper, though the majority were more formal, and eventually printed forms were introduced.

The total quota for each township and the rate for each property remained the same for many decades, with the fortunate result for later researchers that each property can be identified over a long period of time from its unique assessment. The annual statements can be used to trace land ownership patterns in a township like Hartford. Also, because they were eventually used to make up poll books for parliamentary elections, the two sets of documents can be complementary. For clarity, the important dates below are in **bold** type. Records do not exist for every year.

Continuing the backwards look, in **1830** and **1831**, John's land and messuage, which we have every reason to think was The Grange, were assessed at £2 18 4d. In **1828** and **1829** and for the rest of the land tax period, the sum was £2 18s 8d (an easy figure to look for, as eights were written differently in those days). He both owned and occupied the property. It is the only amount to that value on the Hartford list and indicative of a desirable house and surrounds. For comparison, James Royds of Woodlands was assessed for £4 13s 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, and the very rich salt magnate, John Marshall at Hartford Manor, was being charged £10 8s 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. The smallest amount was 1s 2d for a tiny piece of land - which the owner was exonerated from paying.

The first time that "John Cheshire Esq" was listed in Hartford for land tax for owning and occupying the messuage and land was **1824**. The assessment for this was £2 18s 8d,

The previous year, **1823**, the property had belonged to William Butters, but he then disappears from the list and is not mentioned again in future years. It is therefore reasonable to infer that William Butters had sold the land and messuage to John Cheshire in time for the **1824** land tax assessment.



Burdett's 1777 map of Cheshire covers a large area and its depiction of Hartford is sketchy. It is interesting to see how Hartford Beech covered such a large area. The placement of houses on the map may owe something to artistic licence but it would be nice to think that the black square on the side of the triangle in the centre of the village (at the south end of Hartford Beech and marked by a small red cross) represents Hartford Grange.

Going back further, to **1815**, it is George Butters who is now named as the proprietor of the messuage and land; was he William's father? From **1790** to **1811** George rented the property to various people but chiefly - for 14 years - to John Holland; it was rated throughout at £2 18s 8d. When the online archived Hartford land tax records start, in **1789**, James Bostock was George's tenant. From **1789** to **1797** the property was referred to simply as a "farm" rather than the more legal-sounding "messuage and land".

It is perhaps worth noting at this point that up to the end of the 18th century Hartford possessed a considerable area of common land over which the villagers had right of way and on which they could graze their cattle. There was also the usual "waste" land where they cut timber and kept a few pigs. This common occupied the triangle now formed by Beach Road, Chester Road and Bradburn's Lane. In 1795 Colonel Thomas Marshall, the chief landowner, enclosed Hartford Common and the villagers lost their age-old rights. It was a time of change.

## THE EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE

It is pretty safe to assume that Hartford Grange as John Cheshire knew it when he acquired the property in 1824 was originally a big 18th century, or older, farmhouse and that this formed the core of a building that was improved and enlarged in the 19th century. This was true of the other local "significant residences" mentioned in the *Imperial Gazetteer*.

In Cheshire many old farmhouses, originally composed of several bays, were later 'gentrified' and extended using classical architectural touches. Given that George Butters had a long-term tenant living at The Grange he was unlikely to have spent money on this, but when John Cheshire bought the property he was rich enough to make it a more desirable residence if he so wished.

The surviving old grand houses in Hartford mentioned in the *Gazeteer* are featured in the excellent *Hartford (Extended) Conservation Area Appraisal* undertaken by the now defunct Vale Royal Borough Council, and also listed in detail by Historic England and Hartford Civic Society. Three have changed and give some idea of the ways in which houses could be altered and extended. Comparing their sizes on the same 1898 OS map shows that The Grange was the largest.



*Hartford Hall, a former manor house, dates back to the late 16th and early 17th century and originated as a hall with a cross-wing. It was extended into two parallel ranges in the 19th century. It has two storeys and a five-bay front with a projecting two-storey gables porch. The 'new' large bay windows on the side look out onto an ornamental pond. At the turn of the 19th century it was the home of John Cheshire's rich benefactor, his great-uncle. It is now a hotel and Grade II Listed.*

*Hartford Manor is a former country house, originally known as Green Bank, and constructed in the 18th century. It was given a grand new front complete with portico, and an extra wing - for entertaining - by its owners, the Marshall family of prosperous salt merchants, but the core of the building is older. For many years in the 20th century it was used as offices. It is a Grade II Listed building.*



*The Riddings, originally known as "Woodlands" (the origin of the name of the Landswood Park estate which was built on its site in the 1960s and '70s) was for many years the home of the influential Royds family. It also has an 18th century core. It was remodelled in the mid 19th century when the extensive works included the addition of a large Ionic detailed porch. It is square in plan with an extension to the right, and is a Grade II Listed building.*

*The simple but elegant Hartford House, near the village centre and now hidden behind high fences, was small in comparison with the other houses cited by the *Gazeteer*. It was built in about 1830 and followed the architectural fashions of the time, with a shallow slated roof, distinctive windows and a good quality portico on slim columns. The front door has eight fielded panels. It seems almost insignificant, but perhaps it was mentioned in the *Gazeteer* because it was an example of what the other conversions originally aimed for. It is locally listed.*





*Knights Grange at Winsford was one of the original granges attached to Vale Royal Abbey. Obviously the original farmstead was medieval but the old photograph (left) shows the current farmhouse before it became part of a modern sports complex. The core of Hartford Grange may have been like this.*

## THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE

Whilst the exterior of Hartford Grange will remain conjecture - unless a photograph suddenly comes to light - we know exactly what it was like inside in 1852 and how it was furnished.

After John went bankrupt in 1848 and started moving around to elude his creditors, the house was sold to Henry Garnett, a wealthy industrialist. He and his wife spared no expense to make their home and its associated outbuildings as attractive and modern as they could. They had intended to stay for a considerable time. Then Henry unexpectedly inherited his father's imposing country mansion in Lancashire and they had to move there quickly.

The Garnetts put The Grange up for sale by private treaty and its contents were sold by auction over three days. The descriptions in the two relevant advertisements are fascinating, though it is strange that the word "Grange" has been omitted from the heading:

Chester Courant -  
Wednesday 15 September 1852

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**MESSRS. CHURTON**  
Have been honor'd with directions from Henry Garnett, Esquire, (who is removing to a distant part of England,) to offer for

**SALE BY PRIVATE TREATY.**  
All that most desirable and well-built Residence, called  
"HARTFORD."

One of the most complete and best appointed abodes for a Family of respectability which it has ever been their pleasure to submit to public notice. The present Proprietor, not having contemplated a removal, has spared no expense whatever in maintaining the whole in perfect order and condition, and fit for the immediate entry of a purchaser, without the necessity of incurring the least outlay.

It is approached by a meandering Carriage Drive, through Pleasure Grounds of exceeding beauty, studded with healthy trees and evergreens, and looking into a beautifully arranged Flower Garden and Parterre, laid out by an eminent Landscape Gardener, with great taste.

The House contains on the ground floor, an Entrance Hall, about 32 feet by 6 feet, tastefully laid with Minton's fancy tiles; Library, with bay window, 15½ feet by 18½ feet; Dining-room, also with bay window, 22 feet by 18½ feet; Recessed Drawing-room, 25 feet by 23½ feet, each fitted with elegant marble chimney-pieces and full register grates; Morning-room, 16 feet by 14 feet; Butler's Pantry, with private entrance into the Dining-room by double doors; Store-room and Servants' hall, together with two large and excellent kitchens, each fitted with Lister and Lees cooking ranges, hot hearths, warm closets, smoke jacks, &c. &c.; and also a large roomy pantry and well ventilated larder, having slate dressers and salting shelves; and underneath are excellent vaulted beer and wine cellars. On the first floor are nine spacious bed and dressing-rooms, bath-room, having slipper and shower baths upon an improved principle, by Lister and Lees; water closets and house-maid's closet, fitted with dresser and sink; together with four rooms situate on the upper floor.

The whole house and premises are plentifully supplied with hot and cold spring and rain water, and are fitted in the most substantial and complete manner with all the requisite fixtures for such an establishment.

The out-offices are admirably arranged on two sides of a large well-paved court-yard, and consist of coal receptacle, milkhouse or dairy, farming man's cottage, large wash-house, baking oven and laundry, fitted with wash-tubs, copper and iron boilers, force pump, ironing stove, and complete range of frying rails in hot air closets, with a large room over the whole; coach-house, harness-room, with groom's bed-room over; four-stall stable, and four loose boxes, with hay lofts over, the whole of which are fitted with iron cradles, slate mangers, and oak panelling.

The Farming Buildings comprise stables for five cows, boiler and washing house, capital pigeon loft with poultry houses over, wood shed, and fitted for young stock, Bailiff's store house, &c., and on the land are three newly erected houses for laborers.

The Land, of which there is 36 Acres or thereabouts, is of a very superior quality, and the greater part has been drained and boned within the last three years. It is well supplied with water, and has the advantage of a large liquid manure tank which receives all the sewage from the house and premises.

Upon the whole this may be relied upon as being one of the most complete and desirable properties which has been in the market for a considerable period.

A purchaser may be accommodated with all or any part of the Furniture, either by valuation or at a rate to be fixed upon and included in the purchase money.

Cards to view may be had by letter, and applications, and any further information obtained, from Messrs. CHURTON, Auctioneers, Chester.

### MESSRS CHURTON

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smoke jack, &c, &c; and also a large roomy pantry and well-ventilated larder, having slate dressers and salting cisterns; and underneath are excellent vaulted beer and wine cellars. On the first floor are nine spacious bed and dressing rooms, bathroom, having slipper and shower baths upon an improved principle, by Lister and Lees; water closets and housemaid's closet, fitted with dresser and sink; together with four roomy attics on the upper floor.

The whole house and premises are plentifully supplied with hot and cold spring and rain-water, and are fitted in the most substantial and complete manner with all the requisite fixtures for such an establishment.

The out-offices are admirably arranged on two sides of a large well-paved courtyard, and consist of coal receptacle, milkhouse or dairy, farming man's cottage, large wash-house, baking oven and laundry, fitted with washtubs, copper and iron boilers, force pump, ironing stove, and complete range of drying rails in hot air closets, with a large room over the whole; coach-house, harness-room, with groom's bedroom over; four-stall stable, and four loose boxes, with hay lofts over, the whole of which are fitted with iron cratches, slate mangers and oak panelling.

The Farming Buildings comprise shippens for five cows, boiler and washing house, capital piggeries with poultry house over, wood erected shed fitted for young stock, Bailiff's store house &c, and on the land are three newly erected loose boxes for hunters.

The Land, of which there is 36 acres or thereabouts, is of a very superior quality, and the greater part has been drained and boned within the last three years. It is well supplied with water, and has the advantage of a large liquid manure tank which receives all the sewerage from the house and premises.

Upon the whole this may be relied upon as being one of the most complete and desirable properties which has been on the market for a considerable period.

A purchaser may be accommodated with all or any part of the Furniture, either by valuation or at a sum to be fixed upon and included in the purchase money.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday  
27 November 1852

**Important Sale at Hartford**  
**Within five minutes' walk from Hartford Station, on**  
**the London and North Western Railway, and about one**  
**mile from Northwich in the County of Chester**

**Important Sale at Hartford.**  
*Within five minutes' walk from the Hartford Station, on the London and North Western Railway, and about one mile from Northwich, in the County of Chester.*

**M**ESSRS. CHURTON respectfully intimate that they have been instructed by Henry Garnett Esq. (who has removed to a distant part of the country) to **SELL BY AUCTION**, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 7th, 8th, and 9th days of December, 1852, commencing each morning at eleven o'clock precisely, the valuable Effects in the above-mentioned extensive residence and premises, comprehending a general assortment of Modern and very Excellent **HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE**, recently manufactured regardless of expense, and especially deserving attention; comprising the usual appendages for the entrance-hall and staircases, and the requisite entertaining rooms most tastefully completed in various fancy woods, upholstered in silk, damask, chintzes, &c.; elegant pier-glass 64 in. by 54 in, upon rich rosewood table, with marble slab top, and plate-glass doors; extra quality of Axminster and Brussels carpets and hearth rugs; pedestal and other lamps; French and English time-pieces; prints and engravings; valuable oil paintings; chimney and other ornaments; double-barreled gun, &c. &c. The numerous bed and dressing rooms are fitted up with four-post, half-tester, French, and iron bedsteads; best leather beds, hair, wool, &c., and other mattresses; super blankets and counterpanes; Brussels, Kidderminster, and Scotch carpets; chimney and dressing glasses; bronze and wire henders; sets of fire-irons; painted imitation maple double and single wardrobes; chests of drawers, dressing and wash tables, bidets, airing horses, and bed-sieges.

The requisite effects for nursery and school-room, together with articles in the butler's pantry, servants' hall, kitchen, and store rooms.

The **Out-door Effects** comprise a modern-built brougham, elegant pony carriage with small back seat, plated pony harness; valuable bay mare, 15½ hands high, 8 years old, a male hunter; handsome brown harness pony, 8 years old; fat and store cattle, pigs, poultry of the pure Dorking breed; stacks of hay and wheat; quantity of Swede turnips, mangel warts, and potatoes; manure, modern farming implements, garden roller and tools, bee hives, hot-bed and cucumber frames and lights, choice greenhouse plants, &c., patent mangle, dairy utensils, and other effects.

Catalogues are being prepared, and may be had, one week prior to the sale, at the Inns in Hartford and Northwich, and upon application (enclosing four stamps) to Messrs. CHURTON, Auctioneers, Chester, and Whitechurch, Saig.

MESSRS. CHURTON respectfully intimate that they have been instructed by Henry Garnett Esq (who has removed to a distant part of the country) to **SELL BY AUCTION**, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 7th, 8th and 9th days of December, 1852, commencing each morning at eleven o'clock precisely, the valuable Effects in the above-mentioned extensive residence and premises, comprehending a general assortment of Modern and very Excellent **HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE**, recently manufactured regardless of expense, and especially deserving attention: comprising the usual appendages for the entrance hall and staircases, and the requisite entertaining rooms most tastefully completed in various fancy woods, upholstered in silk, damask, chintzes, &c; elegant pier-glass 64in by 54in, upon rich rosewood table, with marble slab top, and plate-glass doors; extra quality of Axminster and Brussels carpets and hearth rugs; pedestal and other

lamps; French and English time-pieces, prints and engravings; valuable oil paintings; chimney and other ornaments; double-barrelled gun, &c, &c. The numerous bed and dressing rooms are fitted up with four-post, half-tester, French, and iron bedsteads; best feather beds, hair, wool flock and other mattresses; super blankets and counterpanes; Brussels, Kidderminster, and Scotch carpets; chimney and dressing glasses; bronze and wire fenders; sets of fire-irons; painted imitation maple double and single wardrobes; chests of drawers, dressing and wash tables, bidets, airing horses, and bed-steps.

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It is interesting to compare the footprint of The Grange house and outbuildings on the rather crude 1846 tithe map (where the angle of the buildings is wrong) with the beautifully-drawn 1910 OS map where it has changed considerably. Even the bay windows described in the advertisement seem to be apparent in the later very detailed site plan, and it looks as though the house has doubled in size backwards and enjoys a garden view. The front of the house is facing east. Is the 'bulge' a fashionable portico?



Hartford Grange 1846 (tithe map)



Hartford Grange 1898 (OS map)

William Todd Naylor bought the house and its estate from Henry Garnett in the early 1850s and although he tried to sell the property from time to time over the following years, it was not until 1921 that the trustees of his estate sold it to Brunner Mond.

He found that it proved a good rental option, though. It's interesting that his agent's first attempt at a short let (overleaf) in April 1865, in the *Liverpool Albion*, did not attract a client.

Liverpool Albion - Monday 24 April 1865

**HARTFORD GRANGE, CHESHIRE.**  
**T**O be LET, FURNISHED, for Twelve Months, within ten minutes' easy walk of **Hartford** Station. Contains Three Reception-rooms, Library, numerous Bedrooms, Bathroom, and all modern conveniences; excellent Offices of all kinds, good Stabling, Loose Boxes and Coach-house, Gardener's Cottage, Hothouses and productive Garden, with Twelve Acres of Grass Land, and more, if required. For further particulars apply to **LIGHTBODY and BOULT, Estate-agents, &c., 1, Derby-square, Castle-street, Liverpool.**

However this second advert, published a few weeks later, was careful to mention not only the house's undoubted attractions but the fact that it was accessible from Liverpool and Manchester by train and close to the Kennels of the Cheshire Hunt. They had now found their true market.

Liverpool Albion - Monday 12 June 1865

**HARTFORD-GRANGE, CHESHIRE.—To be LET, FURNISHED,** within ten minutes' easy walk of **Hartford** Station, an hour's journey by rail from **Liverpool** and **Manchester**, and two miles distant from the Kennels of the **Cheshire Hounds**, contains Three Reception-rooms, Library, numerous Bedrooms, Bathroom, and all modern conveniences, excellent Offices of all kinds, good Stabling, Loose-boxes, and Coach-house, Gardener's Cottage, Hothouses, and Productive Garden with Twelve Acres of Grass Land, and more if required. For further particulars apply to **LIGHTBODY and BOULT, Estate-agents, &c., 1, Derby-square, Castle-street, Liverpool.**

## THE VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT

At this time, Hartford was well-established as a mecca for the hunting set nationally and its population was expanding. Large new houses were being built along the main roads through the village as second-home "hunting boxes" for the rich, and fulltime homes for successful local businessmen who wished to get away from the pollution caused by the various manufacturing processes based in Northwich and its outskirts. The dusty turnpike was no longer the main means of access to the village, and it was possible for a future King to visit simply by getting on a train. At one time it was safer - when highwaymen lurked in the forested part of the turnpike.

Evidence of this is seen in another advertisement in the *Northwich Guardian* which appeared in July 1874 by Churton, Elphick and Co for Beachfield, a house a stone's throw from Hartford Grange. At the time of the publication of the tithe map (see page 3), its lease was held by John Cheshire and his solicitor son Christopher was the occupier. It is now part of The Grange School but was originally one of Hartford's more exclusive homes. From its description it sounds like a smaller version of Hartford Grange and at one time may have resembled it externally as well. It sounds as if the owner has fitted it out specially for hunting enthusiasts and it is also being handled by agents in London and Manchester, where prospective purchasers may see the details.

### On Friday, July Twenty-fourth HARTFORD, CHESHIRE

Important Sale of an attractive and valuable Leasehold Residence, with excellent stables, outbuildings, gardens, and pleasure grounds, situate in the centre of the Cheshire Hunt, within half a mile of two railway stations, about 5½ hours journey from London, and within one hour from Liverpool and Manchester.



*Part of Beachfield, in its heyday as a private house*

... a very commodious and well-arranged HUNTING RESIDENCE, standing in its own grounds of about two acres, known as 'Beachfield', containing on the ground floor spacious entrance hall; drawing room 26ft 9in by 16ft 6in, opening into a conservatory; dining room 22ft by 16ft 11in; morning room, 17ft 10in by 13ft 5½in; two kitchens, butler's pantry, store closets, laundry and out-offices, with excellent larder, wine and ale cellars in the basement. On the first floor, nine bed and dressing rooms, housemaid's closets, w.c. and lavatory, with attic over. There is a back staircase, and the house is well supplied with hot and cold water.

The Outbuildings, which are new and substantially brick built and slated, comprise three-stalled stable, two loose boxes, large coach-house with folding doors, two harness rooms, one of which is beautifully fitted with pitch-pine panels, harness cupboard and Cottam's stable fittings, with two men's bedrooms, granary and hayloft over, paved stable yard with liquid manure pump, rainwater cisterns, taps and pumps, poultry houses, cucumber or melon house, &c. The front garden and pleasure grounds are very tastefully laid out and planted with the choicest shrubs and flowers.

The Kitchen garden is well stocked with choice wall trees and other fruit trees trained on Rivers' principle, is well supplied with water and the whole of the premises are well-drained and in excellent state of repair and condition.

The Property is leasehold for a term of 70 years, less ten days thereof, from the 25th March 1866, at the low annual rent of £52 10s, it is situate in a favourable and healthy locality, and close to a church.

**N.B. Any further information may be obtained from Messrs MURRAY, HUTCHINS & Co, 11 Birch-in-lane, London; Messrs BRIDGFORD & SONS, 30 Cross-street, Manchester; or from the AUCTIONEERS, Chester and Whitchurch, Shropshire.**

A succession of well-heeled hunting-related occupants took on Hartford Grange, the last ones being Cyril Dewhurst and his wife Eleanor, who made their home there in about 1895 as a young married couple, and stayed for 15 years before moving on to grander things in 1910. They still retained a nominal occupancy of the old house and made sure it was well cared-for. When the 1911 census was taken, the "residents" of Harford Grange were Thomas Fogg (47) and his wife Ellen (49). He described himself as a gardener ("domestic"), and the enumerator added, in pencil, "Caretaker, The Grange",

During their time at The Grange, the Dewhursts had witnessed Hartford's continuing growth and the sale of many plots of land, auctioned off expressly as large building sites, especially along Chester Road.

The estate agents sang the praises of the village. In August 1903, a typical advertisement by Marsh and Son for three sites on Chester Road, to be sold by auction, stated:

"Hartford is one of the most healthy and fashionable parts of the county. This land is high and dry, and commands extensive views over a pretty country right up to the range of hills known as Overton Hills, receiving plenty of fresh air direct from the Mersey. It is within two miles of the kennels of the North Cheshire foxhounds and near to most of the principal meets. Railway accommodation: - Hartford [station] on the L and N-W main line of railway is within five minutes' walk. Hartford and Greenbank, on the Cheshire Lines, is under a mile distant.

"Church, Telegraph and Post Office are each about a quarter of a mile. Post arrives in a morning about 7.30 and departs in an evening at 8 o'clock. Hartford is lit by electricity, and the mains of the Northwich Urban water supply are laid close to [the sites]. Rates are about 1s 6d in the pound."

Maybe the availability of all these new and up-to-date houses made Hartford Grange hard to sell or rent. It was more than 100 years old by then. It required an army of servants to run (the Dewhursts' staff included a butler and footman at one time) and these were scarce during and after the war. In 1914 the Dewhursts, now at Tilstone Fearnall, generously lent the house as accommodation for Belgian refugees and as the base for the relief charity set up to care for them.

Before the war, Brunner Mond, owners of Winnington Works, had already built The Crescent, and its attractive Edwardian-style houses, for its directors. The company decided in 1921 to purchase Hartford Grange and its associated farm from the Trustees of William Todd Naylor in order to build what became "The Grange" an upmarket 'estate' of homes for senior managers who were obliged to live within a ten-minute journey of the works so they were on hand to deal with emergencies. Walnut Lane served the same purpose for those of slightly less seniority.



Three 1898 maps joined; Hartford Grange, outbuildings and grounds, showing the house



Modern OS map; "The Grange" new roads in grey extending across field; house demolished

*This photograph taken in 1980 on a misty Sunday morning, shows the red brick wall of Hartford Grange extending into the distance along Chester Road.*



Hartford Grange was knocked down. Only its stable block and the high red-brick wall fronting Chester Road, that once enclosed part of the grounds, still remain. The area is now described by planners in the *Hartford (Extended) Conservation Area Appraisal* as “a cul-de-sac complex leading to early 20th century garden suburbs housing, the converted outbuildings of the long-demolished Grange, and a small new residential development.” The design of the houses is also described as “Lutyens-style, with prominent brick chimneys, set in large gardens with mature trees and hedge boundaries”.



*Typical Grange property, south side*

Not all the land was used for housing, however: Grange Park Recreation Ground was established on part of the former Grange garden. It became a much-used public amenity where there is now a cricket field and a children’s playground.



*Typical Grange property, north side*

So, in spite of having been “one of the most complete and best-appointed abodes for a family of respectability which it has ever been an estate agent’s pleasure to submit to public notice”, Hartford Grange has now vanished beyond living memory, and those who lived there are long dead.

There is one tantalising eye-witness snippet from the WI’s 1951 scrapbook, referring to the high wall “and imposing brick entrance with wide gates and little side doors”, but no more detailed description.

In its time, however, it played an important role in the fabric of the village and the simple address “Hartford Grange, Northwich, Cheshire” was known up and down the land in the most select social circles,

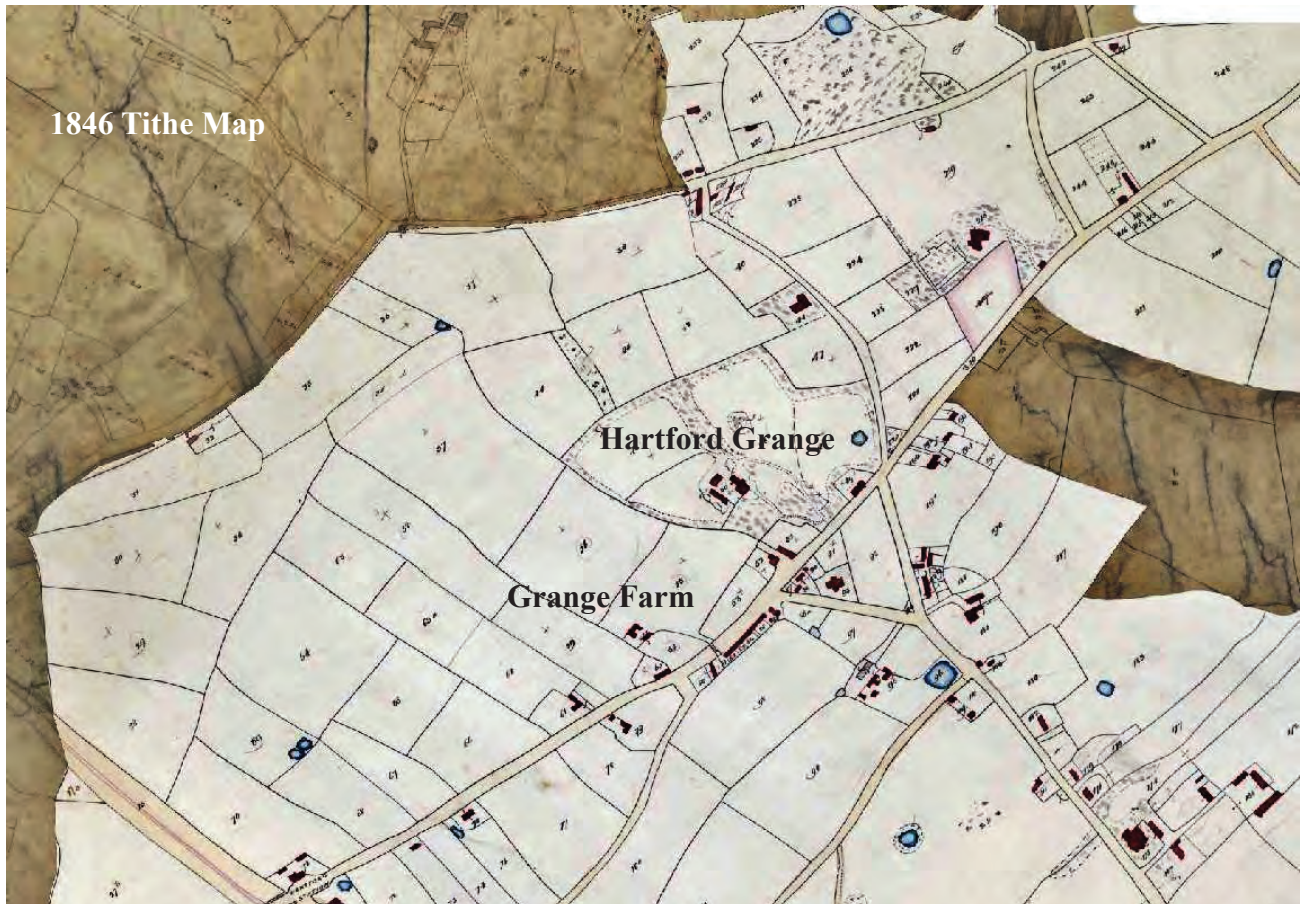
Instead, we must use our imaginations to picture the marble fireplaces in the reception rooms, the black-leaded ranges in the kitchens, the new-fangled showers in the bathroom, the flower-filled pleasure garden and the handsome heads of the finest hunters gazing over their loosebox doors.

And, as you will find out - Hartford Grange was very likely sufficiently grand for a Viscount to entertain the Prince of Wales there...

# GRANGE FARM

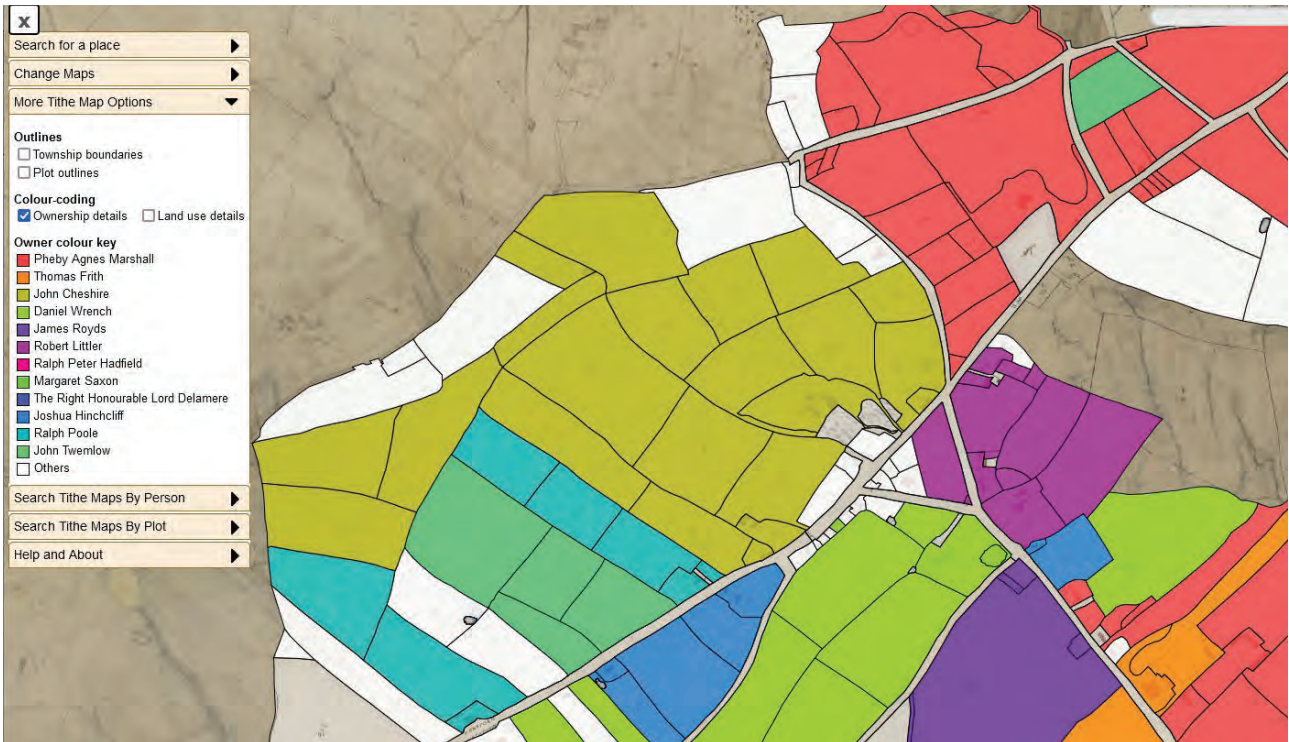
## THE BUILDINGS AND LAND

Grange Farm was part of the Hartford Grange estate when the 1846 tithe map was produced. The farmhouse was built in about 1800, which could make it more or less contemporary with The Grange itself.



John Hudson, the tenant who lived with his family in the farmhouse, occupied the following plots, owned by proprietor, John Cheshire, at Hartford Grange:

- Plot 29, Marl Pit Field, pasture, 4 acres 3 roods 12 perches
- Plot 30, Hodge Lane Field, pasture, 4 acres 3 roods 33 perches
- Plot 34, Smithy Meadow, pasture, 5 acres 2 roods 11 perches
- Plot 35, Long Croft, arable, 2 acres 1 rood 0 perches
- Plot 36, Little Croft, pasture, 1 acre 2 roods 31 perches
- Plot 37, Barkers Meadow, pasture, 7 acres 1 rood 28 perches
- Plot 40, (from Hewitt Booth), Hewitt's Field, meadow, 2 acres 1 rood 28 perches
- Plot 42, Barn Field, arable, 3 acres 3 roods 6 perches
- Plot 43, Top Barn Field, 2 acres 1 rood 16 perches
- Plot 44, Black Field, pasture, 4 acres 0 roods 0 perches
- Plot 54, Garden and Croft, arable 0 acres 2 roods 0 perches (farm house and surroundings)
- Plot 55, Near Red Lion Field, arable, 3 acres 0 roods 0 perches
- Plot 56, Middle Red Lion Field, pasture, 5 acres 1 rood 56 perches
- Plot 57, Further Red Lion Field, arable, 9 acres 0 roods 13 perches
- Plot 58, Smithy Fields, pasture, 4 acres 2 roods 0 perches
- Plot 59, Smithy Fields, 3 acres 0 roods 35 perches



*This coloured tithe map - thanks to the Cheshire Archives - shows the land owned by the various proprietors in the village and thus the extent of John Cheshire's holding, which is in olive green. (See the key.) The dark areas are beyond the village borders.*

As time went on, the farm gained more acreage and even provided the village football team with a field to play on.

The farmhouse and its associated buildings stand back from Chester Road, separated from it by a small field and a hedge. Before the unbroken row of shops was created opposite, it faced a community of small cottages and a toll-bar on the turnpike which went from Northwich to Chester along the old route of the Roman road, Watling Street. This is shown on the map below, surveyed during the 1870s.



*The tollbar, with its associated cottage, is marked as a barrier across the road to the right of the capital "R" on the map. The square shape of the farm house is on the other side of the "R".*

It would be tedious to plough through all the planning applications and battles over housing development on the Grange Farm site which have raged over the years. Suffice it to say that after the farm was vacated, the farmhouse became blighted and derelict, and ear-marked by English Heritage for being at risk. In the end it was restored as one of the conditions for the construction of Redrow's Hartford Grange project.

The top four photographs are reproduced here as a record of how the centre of Hartford used to be when the farm was functioning. It would have been so nice if someone had done this for Hartford Grange itself before the bulldozers swept it away one hundred years ago!



*These two photos from the 1950s show (left) the cottages opposite the farm and its entrance, where the wall curves round, and (right) the hedge which still divides the pavement from the farm.*



*These photos, taken on an October Sunday morning in 1980, with no one about, show (left) the house nestling behind its hedge and the turn into its entrance, and (right) a side view of the house and agricultural buildings at the back, taken from Walnut Lane.*



*What a come-down for the poor farmhouse! These pictures, taken by Hartford Civic Society, show it at its most desolate - boarded up, vandalised and abandoned.*



*Tucked away now, behind the car park in the village centre, restored, loved and looked after again, the Grange Farm house has had a new lease of life.*



*The field to the side of the Grange Farm house is now a public open space as part of a new housing development by Redrow, named after Hartford Grange.*

# HARTFORD GRANGE

THE  
PEOPLE

# THE CHESHIRE FAMILY

## JOHN WIDDOWSON-CHESHIRE – OWNER OF HARTFORD GRANGE

John Widdowson-Cheshire, the first documented owner of Hartford Grange, was born at Northwich in 1796. Thanks to a legacy he was financially supported in his youth and for the next 30 or so years lived on his inheritance and the money he earned as a salt proprietor and merchant, before going bankrupt in 1848. He lived at Hartford Grange with his family and was the great-grandfather of one of the most famous heroes of the Second World War.

His father, John Widdowson of Northwich, was listed as a “gent” in the August 1794 Cheshire Game Duty certificates list.

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The following biographical note has been posted on Ancestry by a descendant and is a bland summary of John’s life:

*“WIDDOWSON (post CHESHIRE), JOHN. Adm, pens. at St John’s, Oct 3, 1815. Of Cheshire. [S. of John [WIDDOWSON], salt proprietor, of Northwich. School, Manchester Grammar. Matric. Lent, 1816. Migrated to Peterhouse, Feb 17, 1817. Adm, at the Inner temple, Nov 2, 1815. Adm, solicitor, but did not practise.*

*“Took the surname of Chesshire [sic], 1817, under the will of his great-uncle John Chesshire, of Hartford Hall, Northwich, who died in 1814. He married Sarah, dau. of Christopher Suttle, collector of salt-dues at Northwich. Died Oct 25, 1855; buried at Hartford. (Manchester Sch. Reg; Inns of Court.)*

This is a less staccato version of the above, printed in the Admission Register of the Manchester School 1807-1937, which adds some other crucial information:

*11 August 1809: John, son of John Widdowson, deceased, Northwich, Cheshire. John Widdowson, the father, was a salt proprietor, and died on 3rd March 1803. He had three children.*

*“This scholar took the surname of Chesshire [sic], in accordance with the will of his great uncle, John Chesshire Esq, of Hartford Hall, near Northwich, who died in 1814. He entered St. John’s college, Cambridge, as a commoner, but did not take any degree; and subsequently was admitted an attorney at law, but he never practised his profession.*

*“He married Sarah, daughter of Mr Christopher Suttle, collector of salt duties at Northwich, and died on the 25th October 1855, leaving three sons and three daughters, and is buried at Hartford church.”*

In Cheshire Land Tax Assessments from 1803-34 “John Cheshire” emerges as one of the largest landowners in Hartford. It is likely, however that the name covers two individuals, with the mentions before 1814 referring to the young John’s great-uncle and namesake.

The Widdowson and Cheshire families had many Liverpool connections - both surnames crop up regularly in the area - thanks to the trading partnership between the salt producers in Mid-Cheshire and the Liverpool agents, merchants and businessmen who sold their product onwards. A triangular trade had developed during the late 18th and early 19th centuries linking the

Cheshire saltfield, the expanding port of Liverpool and the coalfield of southwest Lancashire, which provided the fuel necessary for the boiling of brine in the local salt pans.

It is no surprise then, to find a record of the marriage by licence at Walton-on-the-Hill on 21 July 1761 between Elizabeth Cheshire, the sister of great-uncle John Cheshire of Hartford Hall, and John Widdowson. Their son, also called John, born in 1764, was the father of the fortunate young man who went on to live at the Grange.

His great-uncle's will, dated 27 February 1814, some months before his death, was generous in its bequests to the Widdowson family, and especially to John, who was then a fatherless teenager.

In it, John Cheshire instructed his two trustees to use his personal estate and any money that could be realised by the sale of his assets, in *"the maintenance, education and bringing up of John Widdowson the younger son of my late nephew John Widdowson deceased, until he shall attain the age of twenty-one years and then in trust to pay the remainder thereof into the proper hands of the said John Widdowson the younger to and for his own sole and personal use."* He also instructed the trustees to use rents and profits from all his *"messuages [dwelling houses and outbuildings], lands, tenements and hereditaments in Hartford, Northwich and Leftwich"* for John's education and upbringing, and stipulated that these properties should be handed over to him when he reached the age of twenty-one.

With that sort of inheritance, John would thus have enough money to acquire **Hartford Grange** when he reached his majority.

In return great-uncle John Cheshire stated that John on attaining the age of twenty-one years *"shall give up the surname of Widdowson and take up and use the surname of Cheshire"* and he instructed his trustees "to pay the costs, charges and expenses" of doing so.

Presumably the elderly man - a bachelor, one imagines, as there was no mention of a wife or a wife's family in his will - made this move in order to perpetuate the Cheshire surname, as he had no children of his own. It is very likely that he had been supporting John since his father died in 1803 when he was only about seven years old. There is little documentation about great-uncle John Cheshire other than in the *Bailey's Directories* of 1781 and 1784, where his occupation is given respectively as "proprietor of white salt" and as "merchant salt proprietor".

On 26 August 1818, John Cheshire, now aged 23, with no financial worries, and a less than glowing university career behind him, married Sarah Suttle, described as a spinster of Liverpool, at Christchurch, Hunter Street, Liverpool. She was the same age as her bridegroom, and born at Matlock, Derbyshire. She was the daughter of the late Christopher Suttle, former "Collector of the Excise" in Northwich, who lived with his wife Ann at Winnington Hill, died of the palsy, aged 55 in 1814, and was buried at Northwich. This would have been regarded as a good marriage and shored up his position in local society.

In his son Christopher's baptismal record, on 30 Dec 1819, at the Chapel of Witton, under "occupation" John Cheshire simply described himself as "Esquire" - of a certain social standing. Their older children were born in Northwich, including John Jnr in 1825. Does that mean his father had bought Hartford Grange in 1824 but they were living elsewhere while it was being "done up"?

At this time Hartford was a small, rural community, with a population of only 772 in 1821. It was upwind of and far enough from the pollution of any salt works or mines to be a desirable choice of residence. In 1824 a chapel of ease was built on the site of the present church, and the National School was erected in 1833. The impetus for expansion came in 1837 with the construction of the London to Glasgow railway line and the opening of Hartford Station. The village became a

magnet for the rich and titled who wanted to enjoy hunting with the Cheshire Hounds.

In the years after his marriage, John Cheshire called himself a gentleman (implying living on his own means), while working as a salt proprietor, commission agent, salt dealer, salt agent and factor in various places including Liverpool, Witton, Anderton and Winsford. He and Sarah were said to have had six children (see *Manchester School details*), one of whom may have died in infancy as only five are mentioned by name in the records.

Where exactly were John's salt works? One at Winsford was described in the *Chester Chronicle* of 12 November 1830 in a lengthy formal notice about an application to Parliament for the proposed extension of the Weaver Navigation. It was stated that this extension would finish "about two hundred yards above Winsford Bridge, at or near to certain newly-erected salt works, the property of John Cheshire Esquire..."

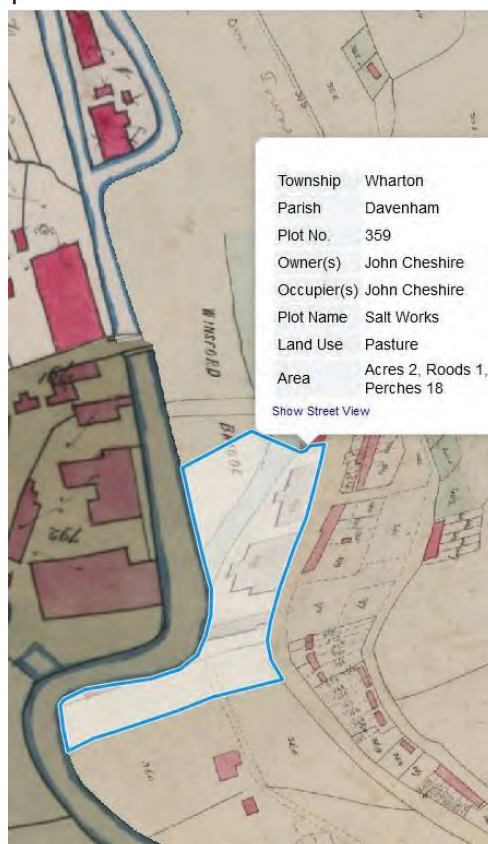
In the 1841 census, John Cheshire was listed as living in Hartford (no specific address) and was described as a 45-yr-old salt merchant. He was living with his wife Sarah (45), son Christopher (21), and daughters Ann (19), Ellen (12) and Sarah (9), all born in Cheshire. They had two female servants, Ann Senior (27) and Mary Gleave (20). Their son John Jnr (16), was not at home. Presumably this was Hartford Grange, though this does not seem to be a large staff to run a house later described as having nine bedrooms.

The 1846 tithe map of Hartford definitively shows Plot 50 (Hartford Grange) as belonging to and being occupied by John Cheshire. The house, building and garden comprised 5 acres, 3 roods and 19 perches. He also owned and occupied plot 45, Middle Field (pasture), and plot 46, Well Field, plot 47 (Little Well Field) and plot 48, Lane Fields and plantation – all classed as meadows – which surround the house.

Indeed, John owned most of the land around the house and grounds, which was rented to others, particularly to John Hudson, who lived at the farmhouse facing Chester Road. His holding made up Grange Farm, which was a mixture of arable land and pasture, and made him the third largest landowner in the village. Finally, he owned "cottages and gardens" on plot no 49, occupied by Richard Forster and others, and plot no 60, a smithy and garden occupied by John Jackson.

The description of himself on the census return as a salt 'merchant' rather than 'proprietor' is interesting. He was later mentioned as being in business in this role in Liverpool. The digitised tithe map of Wharton — then in the parish of Davenham (right) — shows a salt works owned and occupied by John Cheshire, plot no 359, upstream of the township's bridge over the River Weaver. Adjacent is a timber yard owned by him on plot no 360, and "waste on bank" on plot no 378. He also occupied 2 roods and 32 perches of fresh water in "half of river", plot 79.

In Leftwich, he owned a yard, and 13 perches of the River Dane, occupied by the Anderton Carrying Company (plot nos 37 and 37a ), houses occupied by Mary Darlington and John Speakman (plot nos 42 and 43), plus a small



John's salt works in 1846, on the bank of the River Weaver in Wharton. The plan is a merger of two tithe maps, which do not quite tie up.

meadow and pasture (nos 50 and 150), “waste lane” (no 148), and Bone House Yard (no 151), all occupied by William Vernow.

The period from 1840-1888 is regarded as one of rapid expansion in the salt industry, mainly due to the extensive trade directed from Liverpool and the rapid growth of alkali manufacturing in St Helens and Widnes. According to K L Wallwork’s paper, *The Mid-Cheshire Salt Industry*, Winsford was fast becoming the major centre of white-salt production, by gaining much of this internal trade with the Lancashire alkali manufacturers.

However, times were generally hard in the Hungry Forties, which saw years of poor harvests, political upheavals and economic depression in the United Kingdom and abroad. In spite of all his sources of income, in March 1848, “John Cheshire, of Hartford, salt-manufacturer” was declared bankrupt and legal proceedings started which would drag on for at least four years. Did he lose the prestigious Hartford Grange at this point? He then seemed to move around the country quite a lot, avoiding his creditors, but nonetheless in 1849 he was still on the electoral register for Hartford.

Unfortunately bankruptcy seemed to dog the Widdowson family. “John Widdowson, Junior, merchant of Liverpool” (probably a close relation), was listed as a bankrupt on 24 May 1788.

So who was at The Grange? There was a large household there in the 1851 census — that of Henry Garnett (1814-1897) a wealthy engineer and iron merchant, aged 37, with five children. He was later to be High Sheriff of Lancashire and the county’s Deputy Lieutenant. He had bought The Grange in about 1849. (See section on the GARNETT family.)

On 22 March 1851, the *Morning Post* quoted from the *London Gazette* in a long list of bankruptcy proceedings: “Dividends: April 15, John Cheshire, Hartford, salt manufacturer, at eleven, at the Court of Bankruptcy, Liverpool.”

The 30 March 1851 census showed that John Cheshire had moved to Leamington in Warwickshire, where he was living in a house nostalgically named “Hartford Cottage” in the parish of St Mary. He was described as aged 54, a retired salt manufacturer, born in Northwich, Cheshire. With him were his wife Sarah (45), born at Matlock, daughter Sarah (19), born at Hartford [who died the following year], and two female house servants, Sarah Hughes and Ann Holmes.

In *Gore’s Liverpool General Adviser* for 15 May 1851, under a list of “Bankruptcies etc” there is a heading “Dividends”, which includes “May 7, John Cheshire, Hartford, salt manufacturer; at the office of Mr G Morgan, Liverpool: second.” [The listings were taken by the *Adviser* from the *London Gazette*s for May 6 and 9.] The *Globe* reported on 10 May 1851, in a similar list of bankruptcy proceedings: “Dividends declared: John Cheshire, Hartford, Cheshire, salt manufacturer, 6d in the pound, payable at 12 Cook Street, Liverpool, any Wednesday.”

On 17 February 1852, the *Liverpool Mercury* reported:

“An insolvency court was held at Chester Castle, on Monday week, before J. W. Hardern, Esq. There were two cases entered:- Charles Hall, bookseller, Nantwich, and John Cheshire, salt proprietor, of Hartford, near Northwich, and of Liverpool, salt broker. Charles Hall was not opposed, and was ordered to be discharged forthwith.

“John Cheshire was opposed by Mr Simon, instructed by Messrs Holland and Green, solicitors, Northwich, on behalf of several creditors, who objected that the court had any jurisdiction at present, the insolvent having been bankrupt about four years ago,

when his examination was adjourned *sine die*, because he had not accounted for very large sums of money, and had not since made any attempt to finish his examination. Mr Higgin, instructed by Mr Cunnah, of Chester, appeared for the insolvent. His honour decided that he could not then hear the case, nor admit the insolvent to bail, and adjourned the court to the 10th May next.”

Mr Cunnah had placed the following immensely detailed and almost unreadable notice in the 24 January 1852 issue of the *Chester Chronicle*, and its complexity goes a long way towards explaining why John Cheshire is an elusive man to track down 150 years later:

“JOHN CHESHIRE, the elder, late of Monks Ferry, near Birkenhead, Cheshire, previously of Hartford, in the same county, before then of the Castle Hotel, Conway, Carnarvonshire, before then of Albert Terrace, Douglas, Isle of Man, before then of Monks Ferry aforesaid, before then of Albert Terrace, Douglas, Isle of Man, before then of Leamington, Warwickshire, before then of New Brighton, Cheshire, before then of Leamington, aforesaid, before then of Hartford, aforesaid, before then of Leamington, aforesaid, before then of Hartford, aforesaid, during the whole of the above period a lodger out of business; before then of Hartford, aforesaid, carrying on business in Northwich, Cheshire, and at Baltic Buildings, Redcross-street, Liverpool, Lancashire, as a commission agent, salt dealer, salt agent and factor, at the same time carrying on business at Winsford, in Wharton, and Anderton, Cheshire, as a salt proprietor; also carrying on business at Witton, Cheshire, as a rock salt proprietor; and also carrying on business at Wharton, Cheshire, in co-partnership with William Cross, under the firm or style of “Cross and Cheshire”, as salt proprietors; and formerly residing at Hartford, aforesaid, at the same time carrying on business at Wharton, aforesaid, in partnership with Henry Waterton and William Cross, under the style or firm of “Cross, Cheshire and Company”, as salt proprietors; and also carrying on business in Northwich, aforesaid, and in the Baltic Buildings in Redcross-street, Liverpool, aforesaid as a commission agent, salt dealer, salt agent and factor, and also at the same time carrying on business at Winsford, in Wharton and Anderton, Cheshire, aforesaid, as a salt proprietor, and also carrying on business at Witton, as a rock salt proprietor, all on his own account (sued as John Cheshire); part of the time having been a flat owner.”

So in addition to his other interests, he also owned a “flat”, one of the typical double-ended, flat-bottomed barges that carried salt on the canalised River Weaver for more than 150 years. They measured up to 90ft x 21ft, had a draught of 10ft 6ins and when fully loaded could carry 250 tons.

In 1854, in *The Globe*, 30 Sept 1854, under “Dividends declared” it stated “John Cheshire, Hartford, Salt manufacturer,  $\frac{3}{4}$ d in the pound, payable at 12 Cook Street, Liverpool, Oct 11 and following Wednesdays” (presumably when these meagre sums would be paid to his creditors if they turned up).

“John Cheshire Esq” died on 25 Oct 1855 at Winnington, according to the *Chester Courant* of 31 October 1855, and was buried at Hartford. It would seem there were problems with his complicated estate because letters of administration were not granted to his solicitor son Christopher for another 10 years – on 26 April 1865. Sadly, the effects of the once proud “gentleman” were “under £20”.

However, the bankruptcy did not seem to have tarnished his reputation. His Hartford origins were still referred to many years later when on 3 April 1880, the *Northwich Guardian* carried an obituary for “Mr Christopher Cheshire of Northwich in his 61st year, having been born at Northwich in June 1819.” It says that he was “the son of Mr John Cheshire, formerly of Hartford Grange”.

## CHRISTOPHER CHESHIRE – BROUGHT UP AT HARTFORD GRANGE

Christopher Cheshire, the elder son of John Cheshire Snr, was born at Northwich in 21 June 1819. He spent much of his youth at Hartford Grange, and then moved next door, to Beachfield. He became far more successful than his father and younger brother. He was a respected local solicitor and community leader, being appointed the Steward for the Manor of Northwich and holding a number of public offices. He was also Under Sheriff of Cheshire.

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Christopher was brought up at Hartford Grange and was still living there with his parents at the time of the 1841 census, when he was 21. In 1846 he married Fanny Phillips at St John's Church, Hampstead, Middlesex and was listed on that year's tithe apportionment as occupying the adjacent house and garden (Plot 41) to The Grange, known as Beachfield (now part of The Grange School), of which his father was lessee.

In 1851, Christopher, described as a 31-yr-old attorney, was living in Hartford with his wife Frances (35), daughter Frances E (3) and son Walter (1). They had a cook, housemaid and nurse. No address was given but it could well still be Beachfield.

In the 1861 census, Christopher Cheshire (41), attorney and registrar of the County Court, was living at Hartford Bank, an imposing large house on Chester Road, Greenbank, with his wife Frances (44) two daughters and son Walter. They employed three live-in female servants and an 18-yr-old man (individual jobs not specified).

He was active in the cause of the local salt proprietors' grievances against the Government policy on Indian salt taxes which was causing them considerable hardship. These were eventually abolished, which gave a big boost to the Cheshire salt trade.

In the 1871 census, Christopher Cheshire (51), attorney and solicitor, wife Frances (54), two unmarried daughters, Frances Elizabeth (23) and Edith (15) and a son Walter Christopher (21) a solicitor's articled clerk, were living with a cook, housemaid and lady's maid at "Haywood House", Northwich Road, in what was then the township of Weaverham. (This is in fact Heywood/Heyeswood House, Chester Rd, built near Hartford station for Lord Stalbridge, chairman of the Great Trunk Railway Company). It was demolished in the 1960s to make way for housing.

Christopher's busy life can well be summed up in the following obituary, published in the *Northwich Guardian* on 3 April 1880:

### DEATH OF MR. C. CHESHIRE OF NORTHWICH

"The announcement in Wednesday's *Guardian* of the death of Mr Christopher Cheshire of Northwich, would be received, as it was made, with great regret. He had been for some time past in failing health, and a few weeks ago he was prostrated by a serious illness; but although his case was a critical one, and caused great anxiety to his family, yet hopes were entertained that his life would be for some time prolonged. Early on Sunday morning last, however, a relapse took place and during the day his condition was such as to prepare his relations and friends for the worst. He breathed his last at about half-past eleven on Monday morning.

"Mr Cheshire was in his 61st year, having been born at Northwich in June 1819. He was the son of Mr John Cheshire, formerly of Hartford Grange. On leaving school he was articled to a firm of attorneys in Manchester, but completed his articles with his

brother-in-law, Mr Thomas Richard Barker, solicitor, of Northwich. He was admitted as a solicitor in 1842, and afterwards entered into partnership with his brother-in-law.

“After the death of Mr Barker he practised alone and obtained a large and lucrative business. A few years since he took his son Mr Walter C Cheshire into partnership. His great success in business was largely due to his indomitable energy, unflagging perseverance, and stainless character.

“So long as his health permitted him to walk or drive from his residence (Heywood, near Hartford) to Northwich, he persistently clung to business, and only relinquished it when a few weeks ago he was seized with partial paralysis, from which he never recovered. He was always looked up to as a most capable and sound lawyer, and he was deservedly held in the highest estimation, not only by a very large circle of professional friends, but by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

“Several posts of public trust were occupied by Mr Cheshire and he always discharged his duties with efficiency and fidelity. On the decease of Mr Baker he succeeded to the appointment of clerk to the Justices of the division, and was also appointed clerk to the Guardians of the Northwich Union.

“When the Northwich County Court was established in 1847, he was elected registrar, a post which he filled up to the time of his death. By his removal the clerkship to the East Eddisbury Highway Board becomes vacant. Last year when Lt Col France Hayhurst was elected High Sheriff of Cheshire, he was appointed Under Sheriff.

“In many of the public movements of the town he was an active sharer. For several years he took part in the business of the Northwich Local Board, and was one of the most earnest advocates of the movement, which resulted in the formation of the present extended Local Board district.

“In the first year of the existence of the Northwich Volunteer Corps, he was commissioned to the office of ensign, and afterwards received promotion to the rank of captain, a position which he resigned some ten years ago to be succeeded by his son, who is still in command of the corps.

“We might refer to other positions which Mr Cheshire filled with satisfaction to all concerned, but the features of his career to which we have alluded will be sufficient to show that he was a gentleman intimately identified with the town of Northwich and that by his death the district has sustained a serious loss. He has left a widow, and a son and two daughters. The funeral is to take place at Hartford Church, at noon today (Saturday).”

He is buried in Hartford churchyard, with the epitaph “The memory of the just is blessed.” (Proverbs 10:7)

## JOHN CHESHIRE JUNIOR – BROUGHT UP AT HARTFORD GRANGE

John Cheshire Jnr was born at Northwich and baptised at Witton Church on 6 April 1825, the second son of John Cheshire Esq and his wife Sarah. He lived at Hartford Grange in his youth. He did not seek the limelight like his brother Christopher and lived quietly as a salt proprietor and tenant farmer. He was only 44 years old when he died.

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When the 1841 census was taken, John was not at home with his family at The Grange. He would have been 16 years old, and was probably away at school.

With his father, mother and sister now at Hartford Cottage in Leamington, the 1851 census showed John Cheshire Jnr (26) as unmarried and living in Hartford with two servants - Samuel Eachus (36) joiner and his wife Ann (40). No address is given but it may have been Chester Road – it would not be The Grange. His occupation was given as salt manufacturer and he seemed to have followed his father in the salt trade at Anderton and Winsford.

According to the *Banbury Guardian* and other records, on 23 April 1853, at the age of 28, he married Ellen Maria Dewes and gave his occupation as “merchant of Witton in the county of Cheshire” and his father as “John Cheshire, gentleman”. His wife was the eldest daughter of a Buckingham magistrate, Major Edward Dewes, who had an interest in a salt works at Anderton.

John Cheshire Jnr was listed in the *Chester Chronicle* of 28 May 1853, as attending a “meeting of salt proprietors and others, at Northwich”, called by his brother Christopher, to petition Parliament to abolish restrictions in the salt trade between England and India. In 1856 he was also described as a Northwich salt proprietor in a long list of attendees at another important meeting.

Working at the boiling salt pans was a dangerous occupation and there were no health and safety measures in the 19th century. Horrific accidents were commonplace. In October 1861 there was a report of an inquest on one of John Cheshire’s employees, a 36-year-old man who was raking the boiling salt, over-reached himself and fell into the pan. He was terribly badly scalded on his back, feet and ankles and died a few days later, leaving a wife and three children.

In January 1861 the *Chester Courant* reported that Samuel Waldron, a labourer of Wharton, had been charged at Over Police Court with having assaulted John Cheshire. He was bound over to keep the peace for six calendar months and ordered to pay costs.

The 1861 census showed that John (36) had got another string to his bow. He was living in Comberbach Lane, Comberbach and described himself as a salt proprietor and farmer of what looks like 10 acres (the entry is smudged). He had four children, the youngest of whom was three months old. His eldest son, Harry Dewes, was five years old and born at Comberbach, so the family must have been there since at least 1856.

He had obviously made his mark in the village, as on 4 May 1861 the *Macclesfield Courier and Herald* carried a short report on those in Mid-Cheshire who had been re-elected as guardians for the Witton workhouse. John had been reappointed as the guardian for Anderton.

In July 1863, in a *Northwich Guardian* article, John was mentioned as the “waywarden” of his little township - defined as “a person (later, one of a board) elected to supervise the highways of a parish or district”. He was a member of the Daresbury Highway Board composed of representatives from various villages and his suggestions for radical road improvements at Anderton, costing £175, were approved unanimously. They can probably still be traced.

In 1864, the *Northwich Guardian* noted that he was among a large number of Marbury Hall estate tenant farmers at a lavish dinner held to present “a piece of plate” to Mrs Smith-Barry, their landlord’s wife, and a silver centre piece to his son Arthur Hugh Smith Barry Esq “on the occasion of his attaining his majority, 17th January 1864.”

On a legal theme, John was summoned in 1864 for the non-payment of £4 due to the Overseers of Comberbach and an order was made for payment. He was also involved in a county court case where John Gates, master of the sailing flat *Jessie*, sued Thomas Higgin, merchant of Liverpool, for the freight charges on 204 tons of salt shipped on John’s behalf from his salt works at Anderton. Gates claimed payment of 3s a ton and it was stated that Higgin had received a letter from John directing him not to pay more than 1s 5d per ton. Gates refused to accept this. After much deliberation, the judge gave a verdict for the defendant, saying that the wrong person had been sued - implying that it should have been John.

Life was never simple in the salt trade. In August 1868 a notice appeared in the *Cheshire Courant* advertising the sale by auction at the Angel Hotel, Northwich, of the leasehold salt works at Anderton, “pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Chancery, made in the Cause of Dewes against King in the matter of the Estate of Major Edward Dewes” - John’s late father-in-law. It was described as “the most compact and convenient works in the trade, capable of manufacturing up to 20,000 tons of salt annually.” The salt works was occupied by Mr William Hayes but John Cheshire was the leaseholder. Unfortunately the announcement was not followed up and there is no record of the amount raised by the auction.

## CHESHIRE GRAVES IN HARTFORD CHURCHYARD

In the western part of Hartford churchyard there is a large stone slab laid in the crocus-strewn grass which commemorates several members of the Cheshire family. The inscription reads:



IN MEMORY OF  
 SARAH CHESHIRE WHO DIED  
 ON APRIL 22ND 1852 AGED 20 YEARS  
 ALSO OF JOHN CHESHIRE ESQUIRE  
 LATE OF HARTFORD FATHER OF THE ABOVE  
 WHO DIED ON THE 25TH DAY OF OCTOBER  
 1855 AGED 59 YEARS.  
 ALSO OF JOHN CHESHIRE JUNIOR  
 HIS SON WHO DIED JANUARY 7TH 1869  
 AGED 44 YEARS.  
 ALSO OF ELLEN MARIA  
 WIFE OF THE SAID JOHN CHESHIRE JNR  
 WHO DIED JULY 22ND 1870  
 AGED 49 YEARS.  
 ALSO OF SARAH  
 WIFE OF THE FIRST-NAMED JOHN CHESHIRE  
 WHO DIED MAY 11TH 1871  
 AGED 75 YEARS  
 ALSO OF ELLEN  
 SISTER OF THE ABOVE JOHN & SARAH CHESHIRE  
 WHO DIED DECEMBER 30TH 1899  
 AGED 71 YEARS

## **WALTER CHESHIRE GEOFFREY CHESHIRE and LEONARD CHESHIRE**

Christopher Cheshire's son, **Walter**, was mentioned in the Nobility, Gentry and Clergy list for the 1883 *Slater's Directory of Cheshire* thus: "Cheshire Walter C. Esq. Hilderstone, Hartford." His father had died three years previously. Walter was now head of Cheshire and Son, and registrar of the County Court, High Street, Northwich, but had not taken over his father's other plum appointments.

Walter was the father of Oxford professor of law **Geoffrey Chevalier Cheshire**, originally of 10 Beach Road, Hartford, and he in turn was the father of the famous and much-decorated WW2 bomber pilot **Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC, OM, DSO & Two Bars, DFC** (*right*) born at Chester in 1917. He led the famous Dam Busters 617 Squadron and was one of the official British observers of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

After the war, Leonard struggled to adjust to civilian life and had a desire to make the world a better place. He dedicated his life to caring for others, setting up the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity as well as other philanthropic organisations, including the Ryder-Cheshire Foundation with his wife Sue Ryder. He died in 1992.



## HENRY GARNETT – OCCUPIER OF HARTFORD GRANGE

Rich industrialist Henry Garnett (1814-1897) and his large family are very likely to have bought Hartford Grange and its associated estate quite soon after John Cheshire went bankrupt in 1848. They lavished attention on it, bringing it up to the latest standards and expecting to stay for a long time, but moved away when Henry inherited his father's country house in Lancashire.

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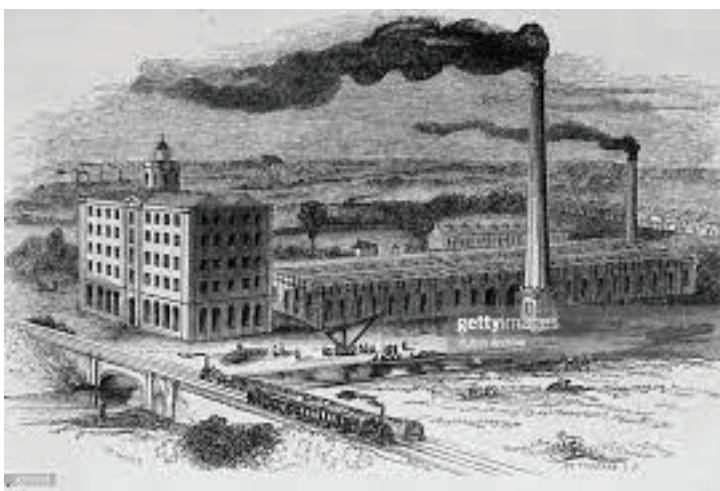
The records show that Henry's youngest child at the time of the 1851 census, Stewart, was a year old and born in Hartford. He was baptised at the Hartford chapel of ease on May 3, 1850 so the family must have taken over the house no later than that date. This supposition is supported by the fact that a document in the Lancashire Archives on the allocation of shares has Henry living in Hartford on 30 June 1850.

The enormous household - the Garnett family of nine plus their staff of eleven - takes up a complete page of the 1851 census returns for Hartford. It reads as follows:

Henry Garnett (37), merchant (iron), born at Manchester; and Harriet Garnett (32), his wife, born at Chester; their children, Anne Garnett, daughter (11), Louisa, daughter (10), Charles, son (8), Lionel, son (7), Robert, son (6) all born at Chester; Laurence, son (4) born at Whittington, Staffs; and Stewart, son (1) born at Hartford.

Their numerous servants are: George Millington (31) butler, born at Thornton, Cheshire; John Jones (22) groom, born at Lanferries, Denbyshire; Marianne Nunn (22) governess, born at Chorlton, Lancashire; Harriet Cheney (35) cook, born at Lanferries, Denbyshire; Fanny Jones (21) kitchen maid, born at Northop, Flintshire; Sarah Hartley (22), under nurse, born at Hartford; Sarah Farrall (45) laundry maid, born at Malpas, Cheshire; Elizabeth Morris (30) lady's maid, born at Lichfield, Staffs; Martha Siddall (23) nurse, born at Chester; Sarah Shard (27) housemaid, born at Malpas; and Elizabeth Roberts (19), under housemaid, born at Chester.

*Grace's Guide to British Industrial History* is the leading source of historical information on early companies, their products and the people who designed and built them. Its entry for Henry Garnett says that he was an engineer and partner in Nasmyth, Gaskell and Co and Nasmyth, Wilson and Co. According to Wikipedia, Nasmyth, Gaskell and Company, originally called The Bridgewater Foundry (*pictured left*), specialised in the production of heavy machine tools, and locomotives which were ultimately sold all over the world.



The foundry was located in Patricroft, Salford, close to the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the Bridgewater Canal and the Manchester Ship Canal. The company was founded in 1836 and dissolved in 1940.

In 1850 the name of the firm was changed to James Nasmyth and Company, then in 1857 to Patricroft Ironworks. In 1867 Robert Wilson and Henry Garnett became the principal partners and the company's name changed again to Nasmyth, Wilson and Company.

The Bridgewater Foundry was an example of modern materials handling that was part of the evolution of the assembly line. The buildings were arranged in a line with a railway for carrying the work going through the buildings. Cranes were used for lifting the heavy work, which sometimes weighed in the tens of tons. The work passed sequentially through to the erection of the framework and final assembly.

Henry Garnett was born in Manchester on 16 January 1814. His grandfather, John Garnett, made his fortune as a merchant trading with Jamaica. In 1836 his father, Robert Garnett, bought Wyreside Hall at Nether Wyreside, Dolphinstone, Lancashire from the trustees of the controversial politician, Fenton Cawthorne. - once expelled from Parliament for embezzlement. He remodeled it extensively.

Henry married Harriet Potts, daughter of Mr Henry Potts of Chester, in 1839. The couple started married life with their growing family in Chester, had a short spell in Staffordshire - where Henry can well have been involved with the expanding iron industry - and subsequently came to Hartford to live at The Grange - hopefully for the longterm. In the 1850 edition of *Bagshaw's Directory*, Henry is mentioned as one of the principal landowners in the village.

Why did an iron merchant choose the environs of Northwich and Winsford, where the main commodity was salt? Maybe Harriet missed her native Cheshire and they got the attractive property for a good price if the bankrupt John Cheshire needed the money.

Perhaps the country life also attracted Henry and his wife. He must have been interested in shooting as he was listed as having a certificate in the 1851 Cheshire County Games List. He also had a mare for hunting.



Then everything changed. Robert Garnett died in 1852, and left Wyreside Hall\* (*above*) and estate to Henry. This was unusual, as he was the third son and thus some way down the family pecking order.

These new circumstances meant that Henry and Harriet had a fully-furnished and equipped neo-classical mansion in which to live. Hartford Grange was surplus to requirements. They moved to Wyreside Hall in the first part of 1852 and left instructions with a firm of auctioneers to sell Hartford Grange and its estate by private treaty and its contents by auction.

In the 1861 census the Garnetts were now shown to have 14 servants to look after their needs in their impressive country house. The young children must have loved it. It was reported that "the centre of the bookcase in the library contained a concealed spring lock, which gave communication with the drawing-room; and in the dining-room there were two secret closets to which access was obtained by 'invisible doors.'"

In 1860 Henry became High Sheriff of Lancashire, Sheriff of Lancaster in 1880, and also a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the county. He left Naysmith, Wilson and Co in 1876, aged 64, when there was a change in partnership. He died in 1897, aged 83.

\* Now a Grade II Listed building, and wedding venue

## WILLIAM AND CHARLOTTE TODD NAYLOR OWNERS OF THE FREEHOLD OF HARTFORD GRANGE

Yorkshire-born merchant William Todd Naylor bought Hartford Grange and its estate, by private treaty, from Henry Garnett for an unknown sum, some time after it was advertised for sale in September 1852. He and his family moved away after a few years but retained their ownership of the property and took advantage of Hartford's desirability to members of high society, wishing to go hunting with the Cheshire Hounds, by renting out the house and grounds..



William Todd Naylor (*left*) was born at Wakefield in 1814, the son of Jeremiah and Mary Todd Naylor and baptised at the church of St John. According to The National Archives, which, together with the Liverpool Archives hold many family papers, his father is said to have come to Liverpool from Yorkshire in about 1827 and established a merchanting firm which had strong links with South America, and in particular the firm of Naylor Bros. & Co. of Rio de Janeiro, headed by George Naylor and active in local commerce and finance from the 1820-40s. Jeremiah lived at Kensington House, Kensington, Liverpool with premises at 33 King Street. He died in 1845 and William succeeded him in the business.

William learned the business by practical experience and in the early 1830s sailed to New York on board the *Canada*. The journal, in the form of letters to his mother, that he wrote en route has been preserved in the Liverpool Record Office. Also archived are documents from 1830, 1832, 1833 and 1835.

In 1843 he was mentioned in *Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser* of 18 May as President of the Brazil Association, signing alongside the Vice President of the American Chamber of Commerce, the President of the East India Association and the President of the Liverpool Association of Cotton Brokers, a declaration on damaged and unmerchantable cotton, which had obviously been causing them problems and loss of money. They resolved that "claims for cotton found to be falsely packed, damaged or unmerchantable, when properly authorised, shall be valid, if made and the cotton returned, at any time within 12 months after the date of purchase."

His interests were not entirely commercial. On 18 January 1848, the *Liverpool Mail* recorded the AGM of the School for the Indigent Blind, in which William played an important role as a committee member. He was singled out for thanks.

On 12 April 1849, at the age of 35, William married Charlotte Wilson (*right*), at Milverton, Warwickshire. She was born at Ackworth in Yorkshire in 1823. In June the following year they put a heartbreaking announcement in the *Morning Herald* saying: "On the 20th inst. the lady of William Todd Naylor Esq of Mosley Hill, near Liverpool, of a daughter, stillborn,"

In 1852 they were living at Wavertree, Lancashire, but by 1854 they had moved to Hartford, as evidenced by this



announcement in the *Liverpool Mail* – “BIRTHS: On 8th March, at Hartford Grange, Cheshire, the wife of William Todd Naylor, Esq., of a daughter.” (Charlotte) The birth was also advertised in *The Spectator*, 11 March 1854, with the same wording.

Sadly, the following year on 31 May 1855, the *Liverpool Mail* announced: “DIED: On the 31st ultimate, aged two years and six months, Richard Paul Todd, second son of William Todd Naylor Esq, Hartford Grange, Cheshire.” He was buried in Hartford churchyard.

Other mentions in various publications and directories over the next few years show that the Naylor family were still at Hartford:

1857 - *The Post Office Directory of Cheshire* stated in its general introduction for the township of Hartford: “Here are several genteel residences, amongst which may be mentioned .... Hartford Grange, the residence of William Todd Naylor, Esq...”

1857 - *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Review* - “At Hartford Grange, Northwich, Cheshire, the wife of William Todd Naylor, esq, a son.”

1857 – “William Todd Naylor of Hartford Grange” subscribed £5 to the *Royal Agricultural Society*.

William had obviously been attracted to Hartford for the fox-hunting, and was a Subscriber to the Cheshire Hounds (cost £10 a year at the time, worth £1150 now). In 1857 there was a major scandal concerning the then Master, Captain Arthur Mainwaring. In the *Chester Courant* of 30 September, William was one of 33 signatories to an open letter stating:

“We Subscribers to the Cheshire Hounds, notify to all persons who have kindly allowed us to sport over their lands that..... Captain Mainwaring is bound as a gentleman to resign - and that despite our unanimous request to Captain Mainwaring to resign the management of our Hounds and our offer to him, repeatedly and recently made, of indemnity from all pecuniary loss, Captain Mainwaring persists in continuing such management, and in attempting to hunt the country. In consequence, therefore, of such conduct on the part of Captain Mainwaring, we hereby declare that we no longer acknowledge him as Manager of our Hounds, nor will we again meet him in the hunting-field.”

The signatories included the cream of the English nobility such as Lord Crewe and the Marquis of Westminster as well as other senior members of the Cheshire ‘establishment’. This crisis was known as “The Cheshire Difficulty” and concerned a love letter from Mainwaring to the wife of a member of the hunt, which fell into the hands of her husband. Mainwaring apologised but the whole drama seemed to escalate out of control, with a duel between the two men being talked about. Given that extra-marital affairs were common among the aristocracy, it seems that Mainwaring’s real ‘crime’ was that he had been found out - though adultery was never proved.

Continuing the equestrian theme, in 1858 an eye-opening article was published in the *Liverpool Mail*, showing what a compassionate man William was. It was an era when horses were often trained with great cruelty - reminiscent of *Black Beauty* - and he had been to see a demonstration in Liverpool of horse-whispering by “American Horse Tamer, Mr Rarey”. Afterwards he was happy to lend his name, with numerous others, to a ringing endorsement of Rarey’s methods.

It read: “We, the undersigned, having received instructions from Mr Rarey, this day, in his method of approaching, haltering, bridling, saddling, subduing, mounting and riding young horses, and also in taming kicking and vicious horses, for the saddle and harness, do hereby testify to the simplicity, beauty and thorough effectiveness of the system, dispensing with that brutal treatment the animal has hitherto been subjected to in the

hands of the rough, uneducated horse-breaker. Mr Rarey teaches how to educate not 'break' the horse, thus placing the animal not only in every man's power, but encouraging kindness and humanity; and we are satisfied that if Mr Rarey's system was generally adopted, there would be no vicious horses."

In November the same year he put up two weight-carrying hunters for auction at the Bretherton and Harrison Midland Counties Repository in Birmingham. All the animals for sale had hunted with the most exclusive hounds, and William's name was mentioned as a selling-point for his two mounts.

In the 1859 Electoral register, Northwich Polling District - William Todd Naylor of Hartford had freehold land and premises of The Grange and kept them for a long time.

The 1861 census has the following information for Hartford Grange: – William Todd Naylor (46), South American merchant, born Wakefield, Yorkshire; Charlotte Naylor (37), born Ackworth, Yorkshire; William Arthur T Naylor, son (9) scholar, born Wavertree, Lancs; Charlotte M T Naylor, daughter (7), scholar, born Hartford; Frances Mary T Naylor, daughter (5), scholar, born Hartford; Ernest Todd Naylor, son (3), born Hartford; Georgina B Tod (sic) Naylor, daughter (1), born Hartford; Jane Wilson, mother-in-law (77), born Westmoreland; plus cook, lady's maid, laundry maid, nurse, housemaid, dairy and kitchen maid; also living in - under nurse, butler and groom. Presumably the couple's eldest son William was at boarding school.

1861, *Home News for India* – NAYLOR, May 28, at Hartford Grange, Northwich, the wife of William Todd Naylor Esq, of a son. Also in "The Monthly (Alphabetical) record of births, deaths and marriages, 1861, page 336.

1861: Electoral register, Northwich Polling District - William Todd Naylor of Hartford holds freehold land and premises of The Grange.

1862 – William and Charlotte's son Henry was born at Hartford (see census below)

On 6 Aug 1862 – Wm Todd Naylor of Hartford Grange was on the Crown Court Grand Jury, along with Thomas Horatio Marshall of Hartford Beach and other worthies.

In 1863 William cut down on or completely halted his fox-hunting. He had obviously become known for his participation in the sport as a Subscriber to the Cheshire Hounds. There is an advertisement in the *Liverpool Albion* for 12 January which says:

**Lucas's, Liverpool - select sale  
On Thursday next the 15th instant**

WEIGHT-CARRYING HUNTERS, well known in Cheshire, the Property of William Todd Naylor Esq, declining hunting.

1. Brown gelding, by Bay President, dam by Thirsk.
2. Brown gelding, well bred and remarkably clever.
3. Grey Mare, a superior cover back and hunter for a light weight, and has carried a lady.

The above are Horses of high character, first rate quality and great value.

1864 - *Morris and Co's Directory of Cheshire*, in the Clergy, gentry and private residents' section: Naylor, Wm Todd, Esq Hartford Grange.

1865: Electoral register, Northwich Polling District - William Todd Naylor of Hartford has freehold land and premises of The Grange.

April and June 1865 – Hartford Grange was advertised to let, furnished, initially for for 12 months, but later for an unspecified time. Applications to Lightbody and Boulton, estate agents, 1 Derby Square, Castle Street, Liverpool. Had William Todd Naylor and family moved to Liverpool at this point?

1868: Electoral register, Northwich Polling District - William Todd Naylor of Hartford has freehold land and premises of The Grange.

For the 2 April 1871 census the whole Naylor family were in residence at No 37, Parkfield Road, Toxteth (see contemporary photo, right); William (56) is described as a general merchant and his son William (19) as a merchant's clerk. Their youngest child was Henry (age 9) who was born at Hartford. They have a governess, lady's maid and three domestic servants. The house was built about 1860 and is in a very grand area.



The same census for 1871, where the census enumerator's writing is appalling, shows who are living at The Grange in Hartford.

They are the Naylor's staff, recruited from all over the country: Eliza J White (27) Housekeeper, born in Middlesex; together with a housemaid born in Scotland, a kitchen-maid born in Somerset, a housemaid, kitchen-maid and butler all born in Ireland, a footman born in Staffordshire, and a pantryman born in somewhere unreadable. In the Grange stables are three grooms, from Middlesex, Fermanagh and Westmoreland. Also in what is described as "George Ayton's House", are indeed coachman George Ayton and his wife, birthplaces also illegible. It would appear that the house is fully staffed but the Naylor family are at their other house in Liverpool.

1878: Electoral register, Weaverham Polling District - William Todd Naylor of Hartford has freehold land and premises of The Grange.

It must have required considerable money to run two households. Some time in the 1870s the Naylor's left Hartford for good but as the continuing owners of the house they always proudly said they were "of Hartford Grange". They leased it out to several keen hunt enthusiasts and also tried to sell it, but it was still in the hands of William Todd Naylor's Trustees long after his death.

On 25 June 1878 a death notice was printed in the *Morning Post*, *Illustrated London News* and other national and local papers: "NAYLOR – On the 25th ult, at 37 Parkfield Road, W T Naylor Esq, of Liverpool and Hartford Grange, Northwich, Cheshire, aged sixty-three."

His probate record says: "The will of Wm Todd-Naylor Esq, late of Hartford Grange, Cheshire, who died 25 June 1878 at Parkfield-rd Liverpool, Lancashire, was proved at the Principal Registry by Richard Munkhouse Wilson of Salisbury, Wilts, one of the executors. Personal estate under £2,000."

An interesting link between the Todd-Naylor and Cheshire families, who both owned Hartford Grange at one time, is noted here: The *Northwich Guardian* of 15 January 1880 reports – "A little more than three months ago, Mr Herbert Hatt Cook, son of Mr G Hatt Cook of Hartford Hall, was married to Miss Frances Todd-Naylor, of Hartford Grange; and last Thursday the marriage of Mr Walter Christopher Cheshire, solicitor, Northwich, only son of the late Mr C Cheshire of Heywood, Hartford, to Clara, youngest daughter of Mr G Hatt Cook, was solemnized." (See overleaf.)

On 4 January 1882, the *Morning Post* announced – “LAPAGE-NAYLOR – On the 4th January at St John’s Church, Hartford, Cheshire, by the Rev K K Eddowes and the Rev Richard Fort, Julian Harry Lapage, of Les Vaces, Belleville, South America, to Charlotte Maria, eldest daughter of the late W Todd Naylor, Esq, of Hartford Grange and Liverpool. (This was also published in the *Pall Mall Budget* on 13 Jan 1882, with no mention of Liverpool.)

Charlotte died on 29 November 1908, in Beckenham, Kent, aged 85. She and William were both buried in Hartford churchyard, right opposite the entrance to the home they had loved.



Their grandson William Bryan Todd Naylor, born in 1894 in Burma, and a 2nd Lieutenant in the King’s Royal Rifle Corps, is commemorated on the war memorial there (*left*). He joined the 8th Battalion of the KRRC in August 1914. He was wounded in the shoulder at Hooge near Ypres in July 1915, and on his recovery he re-joined his unit, just in time for the Battle of the Somme. He was killed in action on 24 August 1916 at the Battle of Delville Wood. He was his parents’ only son.

The last surviving member of the Todd Naylor family to have been born at Hartford Grange - in 1858 - was Ernest. He died in 1932, eleven years after the sale of the property to Brunner Mond and was also buried at Hartford.

The carved stone over the family vault (*right*) reads:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF  
 WILLIAM TODD NAYLOR  
 OF HARTFORD GRANGE  
 BORN JULY 5TH 1814, DIED JUNE 25TH 1878  
 CHARLOTTE, WIDOW OF THE ABOVE  
 WILLIAM TODD NAYLOR  
 BORN OCTOBER 3RD 1823, DIED NOVEMBER 20TH 1908  
 RICHARD PAUL, SECOND SON OF THE ABOVE  
 WILLIAM AND CHARLOTTE TODD NAYLOR  
 BORN NOVEMBER 12TH 1852 DIED MAY 31 1855  
 ERNEST, THIRD SON OF  
 WILLIAM AND CHARLOTTE TODD NAYLOR  
 DIED MARCH 20TH 1932, AGED 81 YEARS



## HENRY PAUL TODD-NAYLOR - BORN AT HARTFORD GRANGE

Obituary from *Homeward Mail from China, India and the East*, 15 August 1910:



“Mr Henry Paul Todd-Naylor (*left*), of the Indian Civil Service, died in Mandalay on Aug. 6th. Mr H P Todd Naylor was the youngest son of the late William Todd Naylor, of Liverpool and Hartford Grange, Cheshire, and was born in 1861. He was educated at Shrewsbury and University College, Oxford, and having matriculated in October 1880, passed, after examination, in the same year into the Indian Civil Service.

“After having served for some years in Bengal as Assistant Magistrate and Collector, he was transferred in March 1886 to Burma, where he acted as Assistant Commissioner until May 1890, when he was appointed Deputy Commissioner. In April 1902 he was promoted to the office of Commissioner. He received a Companionship of the Order of the Indian Empire in January 1890, and a Companionship of the Order of the Star of India in January 1909. In the following month he became Officiating Finance Commissioner and a member of the Lieutenant-Governor’s Council.”

## FRANCES MARY TODD NAYLOR and HERBERT HATT-COOK GLADYS HATT COOK and EDWARD COPLESTON TOWNSEND

In the 1881 census, Herbert Hatt-Cook (27) and his wife Frances (25) were living in a house on Winnington Lane, Northwich: he was a solicitor and she described herself as a “solicitor’s wife”. They had a cook and a housemaid.

By the 1891 census they had moved to Hartford Green and had five children - George H (8), Gladys H (7), Everilda H (5), Rowland (5) and Blanche (3). Living-in were a nurse, cook and housemaid.

In the 1901 census they were at Holmwood, next to Hartford Post Office, on Davenham Road (now School Lane). Herbert was 47 and Frances was 45. The children at home with them were Everilda (16), Blanche (13), and Angela (6). They had a cook and a housemaid.

Their daughter Gladys married Edward Copleston Townsend of the Indian Army on 6 June 1906 at Meiktila, Bengal, India. The couple had a son, Peter, born in Rangoon, Burma.

## GROUP CAPT PETER WOOLDRIDGE TOWNSEND, CVO, DSO, DFC & Bar



Group Captain Peter Wooldridge Townsend was a British Royal Air Force officer, flying ace, courtier and author. He was equerry to King George VI from 1944 to 1952 and held the same position for Queen Elizabeth II from 1952 to 1953. He and Princess Margaret fell in love, but their doomed relationship became a royal scandal in the 1950s. Captain Townsend was not only 16 years Margaret’s senior but he was also a divorcee with two children. As the head of the church, the Queen could not permit Margaret’s marriage to Peter while his first wife was still alive. Margaret eventually announced that she would not marry him and broke off the relationship.

Following the end of their engagement in 1955, Peter (*above left*) went on to marry Marie-Luce Jamagne in 1959 and Margaret married the society photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones in May 1960. Peter died in France in 1995, aged 80.

## LOWRY EGERTON, VISCOUNT COLE, later 4th EARL OF ENNISKILLEN - TENANT OF HARTFORD GRANGE

Viscount Cole, known to his friends as “Coly” – and in later life to the younger generation as “Lordy” - was a dashing and colourful figure in the second half of the 19th century. He loved hunting foxes and seducing other people’s wives. He was among the inner circle of “Bertie”, the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII), and in 1870 was cited in a notorious high society court case. He lived at Hartford Grange for several years, but moved to Cassia Lodge at Marton when the house proved insufficient for his needs.

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*Vanity Fair*, which perhaps could be described as the Victorian version of *Hello* magazine, featured Viscount Cole in its ‘Men of the Day’ series:

“Lord Cole is one of the pretty, joyous young men who are popular models in their own set of London Society. Blessed with good looks, even temper and a determination to make the best of this world, he became a Rifleman at twenty, and having soon been found to be an exquisite dancer, he pursued a successful social and military career of three years’ duration. Having, however, discovered the charms of domestic felicity, he early retired upon his laurels. He made a brilliant marriage and unmade a famous one and now at two and thirty he is still a favourite partner at any ball he may please to honour, until time shall make him an hereditary legislator.”

An early mention in the press, in July 1868, is that: “Viscount Cole (*below*) was fined 10s for furious riding in Rotten Row at 2pm on 30 June, when he galloped past a police constable.”

Gordon Fergusson, former Honorary Secretary of the Tarporley Hunt Club, mentions him a number of times in his magnificent tome, *The Green Collars – The Tarporley Hunt Club and Cheshire Hunting History*. He says: “In 1869 Lord Cole took a 17-year-old Scottish heiress, Miss Charlotte Baird, as his bride, thus reducing his financial worries... The red-headed Lady Cole bore nine children in 12 years, though not all were fathered by her husband.”

This would not have bothered “Coly”. Many aristocratic couples, married off for money or status, usually made sure they quickly produced an “heir and a spare”, and thereafter didn’t worry too much about the exact parentage of the rest of their brood, born as a result of mutually-tolerated affairs.

Fergusson adds: “Apart from the entertaining he did in his hunting boxes, he was ever popular with the ladies and had his feet under many Cheshire tables. He got rather more than his feet there in one house, as it is known that he made love to his hostess under the dining room table while the butler was laying it for dinner.”

His notoriety was assured in 1870 when he was



involved in a sensational court case to decide the sanity or insanity of Lady Harriet Mordaunt who was accused by her husband of committing adultery with Viscount Cole and Sir Frederick Johnstone. She had confessed to sleeping with numerous men, including the married Prince of Wales, then aged 28. The pair had been friends since childhood. Her family successfully claimed that she was mentally incapable of contesting her husband's divorce proceedings.

Her lover, Viscount Cole, did not deny that he was the father of Harriet's daughter, Violet, conceived when her husband was away in Norway. The little girl was to become the chatelaine of Longleat and mother of the 6th Marquess of Bath.

Bertie was not actually named as a co-respondent in the legal papers but his involvement in the case caused great scandal. He voluntarily gave evidence for seven minutes in open court – a royal “first” - which shocked his mother, Queen Victoria, and deeply hurt his wife, Princess Alexandra.

The *1951 Hartford Women's Institute Scrapbook*, produced to celebrate the Festival of Britain, repeated a wellknown local story that “King Edward VII used to visit The Grange with his friend Lord Cole, later Earl of Enniskillen. One one occasion he disrupted arrangements made for his arrival by catching an earlier train and walking incognito through the village.”

The tale seems have become garbled in the telling. What is far more likely is that Bertie (then Prince of Wales and long before he was King) used to visit Viscount Cole at his home, Hartford Grange, and once walked incognito through the village. The very fact that Viscount Cole lived in Hartford has also been disputed, but there is documentary proof of this below.

After the Todd Naylor's went to live in Liverpool and advertised Hartford Grange to let, there is a gap in the documentation of who – if anyone - actually occupied the house. They still owned it and were proud to be associated with it. Then from 1874 to 1878 the following statements are made in the public domain:

(1) 1874 - *Morris and Co's Directory: Hartford, Clergy, Gentry and Private Residents* - **Cole Lord, Hartford grange.**

(2) *The Upper Ten Thousand* publications for 1876 and 1877, *A Biographical Handbook of 1877*, p184 has the following entry: “Cole, viscount (eld. son of earl of Enniskillen). **Lowry Egerton Cole**; b. 1845; m daughter of late Douglas Baird, Closeburn, Dumfries; ex-ensign rifle brigade; address – **Hartford Grange, Hartford, Cheshire.**”

(3) 1876 - *Debretts Peerages* – 1876, listed under Sons of the Earl of Enniskillen (Cole) who sits as Baron Grinstead: **Lowry Egerton, Viscount Cole**, b 1845, was educated at Eton, appointed Ensign in the Rifle Brigade, 1865; m 1869 Charlotte Marion, daughter of the late Douglas Baird, Esq, of Closeburn, NB. **Residence: Hartford Grange, Northwich, Cheshire.**



Cole in 1880

(4) 1878 - *The Upper Ten Thousand for 1878, A Biographical Handbook of 1878*, p123 – Cole, visc. **Lowry Egerton Cole**, eld. son of earl of Enniskillen; b 1845; m dau of late Douglas Baird, Closeburn, Dumfries; late rifle brigade: address – **Hartford Grange, Hartford, Cheshire.**

(5) 1878: *Post Office Directory of Cheshire* states that “**Hartford Grange** [is] the residence of **Viscount Cole.**”

(6) In 1878 the Todd Naylor tried to sell the house and land, with their agents specifically dropping the name of **Viscount Cole** as a tasty selling point in the advertisement in the *Chester Courant* for 15 May 1878. It's a shame they spelled the name wrong!

“Hartford, Cheshire. To be SOLD, with immediate possession, that very desirable Freehold ESTATE, known as **Hartford Grange**, containing about 70 statute acres, well situated within five minutes' walk of the Hartford and Greenbank Stations, and having extensive frontages to the high road leading to Northwich and a side road. The property comprises a capital residence, now or late in the occupation of **Viscount Coles** (sic), and containing three reception rooms, library, nine bedrooms, two dressing rooms, large bathroom, three good attics, excellent kitchens, servants' hall, pantry, storeroom, larders and other offices, with extensive cellaring. There is stabling for 13 horses (in addition to which accommodation for seven more could be provided by arrangement with the present tenant), and the outbuildings include large coach-house, saddle-room, harness-room with bedroom over for man, gardener's cottage, laundry, &c and excellent dairy.

“The gardens, lawns and pleasure grounds are tastefully laid out, and the estate is well-timbered. There are also three cottages and a good farmhouse and buildings, also smithy with house attached on the property which, from its position is admirably suited for hunting quarters. About five acres of land, situate on the north side of the railway and well adapted for building purposes, would also be sold if desired. For further particulars and cards to view, apply to Mr S Waterhouse, 3 Cook Street, Liverpool.”

It remained unsold and was put up for rent during the summer season on 31 May 1879.

From the wording in the sale advertisement, it sounds as if Viscount Cole had just vacated the house or was about to. He and his household at this point moved to the much larger and perhaps more modern, Cassia Lodge at Marton, owned by his friend Lord Delamere and part of the Vale Royal estate. It had been built in 1846 to replace an earlier building.

Cole had his share of political and social responsibilities at this time to leaven his reprobate lifestyle. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1880 which must have complicated matters. Previously he had been appointed as a magistrate and deputy lieutenant for Fermanagh, and he'd been its High Sheriff in 1870 - the year of the big scandal. He must have been a real multi-tasker...

The 3 April 1881 census return shows that Lowry Egerton Viscount Cole and his family (three daughters and two sons) were living at Cassia Lodge, Marton (*pictured right*), with a governess, house steward, housekeeper, certified nurse, lady's maid, ???? (hard to read), cook, housemaid, kitchen maid, nursery maid, and two footmen.

In the “Saddle”? Room are



a groom and two stable helpers/grooms.

An electoral roll for 1883 reveals he paid more than £50 rent a year.

The attraction that Cheshire held for Viscount Cole was the excellence of its hunting and the famous, fashionable and wonderfully snobby Tarporley (Cheshire) Hunt Club, which had many members in Hartford. He is first mentioned in an account in *The Green Collars* of the last day's hunt of the 1872-3 season, "with 400 fellows out: Many men in grief during the day. Cecil Trafford, Lord Cole & Corbet in the canal." Where he stayed for the season is not yet known.

On 17 February 1874, the hunt took place at Vale Royal. "As regards the chase, a shocking bad day, but very pleasant inasmuch as there were many of the 'Merry Wives' of Hartford out, who were all pleasant as ever, to wit Mrs Marshall, Mrs Littledale, Mrs Corbet, Mrs Villiers &c. Mrs Villiers was mounted by Corbet and looked and rode very well."

Fergusson notes: "The first time he (Viscount Cole) dined at Tarporley was as a guest of Dick Grosvenor [presumably Sir Richard, Marquess of Westminster] in 1875. He was elected a Member the following year."

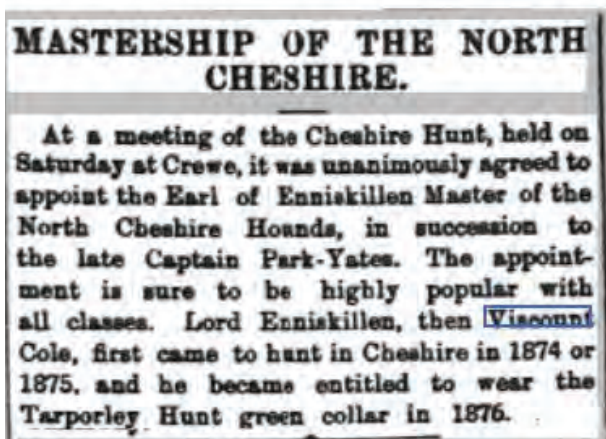


*Viscount Cole, wearing the 'uniform' that was obligatory for the Hunt Club dinners, complete with green collar*

Was 1874 the year Cole started living at Hartford Grange? Members of the exclusive hunt club, which had many arcane rules, including a 'uniform' of a scarlet coat with a green collar, were supposed to have a permanent address in Cheshire and their membership lapsed if they moved away, but this stipulation was later waived to allow Cole to visit his family seat in Ireland when he became Earl of Enniskillen.

Fergusson says: "He had succeeded to the earldom in 1886 and had of necessity to spend more time at Florence Court in Co. Fermanagh. He left Cassia Lodge, where on a number of occasions he had entertained the future King Edward VII, but kept on the stables there for a time and stayed with Captain Park Yates at Sandiway Lodge. On the latter's death he moved to Vale Royal [with Lord Delamere] and then lived at Cuddington Grange for the last year of his managership of the Cheshire Hounds, afterwards establishing himself at Heyesmere [a black and white timbered Vale Royal dower house] when in Cheshire."

In 1895 he was asked to take over as 'Manager' (the equivalent of 'Master') of the hunt following the death of the incumbent, Capt Park-Yates when there was disagreement among members as who should be the replacement. As a neutral candidate he offered to take the hounds for £3,000 per annum, writing: "People in Cheshire



*Cheshire Observer, 2 May 1896*

have been so kind to me all my life that it will be a great pleasure to me to try & make them some little returns & I am willing, if you will all forgive my shortcomings, to have a try.”

He was readily accepted, but said long afterwards that if he had known how expensive it was going to be, he would never have taken on the role – which he undertook from 1896-1901.

The following potted biography was published in the Appendix to *The Green Collars*, alongside those of other notable members. The fact that it does not mention Hartford Grange for some reason is why the story of “Bertie’s” visit/s to Hartford have been doubted, but there is sufficient evidence from other sources to argue that Viscount Cole certainly did live there. Was it considered simply as a temporary “hunting box” and not posh enough to be mentioned in the hunt club records?

Lowry Egerton (“Coly”) Cole, Viscount Cole, later 4th Earl of Enniskillen, K.P., of Florence Court, Co Fermanagh, also of Cassia Lodge, Whitegate, Heyesmere, Hartford and Pettypool Hall, Sandiway (Ten.) and Cuddington Grange for a time. b. 1845; Lieut., Rifle Brigade., 1865-68; H.S. (Co Fermanagh) 1870; M.P. (Enniskillen 1880-85); Hon. Col. 4th Bn. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers; Steward, Turf Club (The Curragh), 1896-1921; National Hunt Cttee, r. 1920; died 1924.

However, the charming, randy, extrovert Earl - with his inherited sense of *noblesse oblige* - does not deserve to be remembered in such a dry way. He had a witty turn of phrase, describing a good hunter as: “A horse that will help you when opening gates, let you blow your horn or crack your whip without noticing it, gallop down the road or on the flat like a Derby winner, and let you make water off his back without moving.”

The hunt club was known for the songs written for it and about it by Rowland Egerton Warburton. This is what he said about Viscount Cole:

*A great “Viscount” young man,  
A jolly and stout young man;  
A galloping, following  
Bucketing. Holloa-ing,  
Bright green-collar’d young man.*

## LEWIS W MOLESWORTH - TENANT OF HARTFORD GRANGE

Lewis Molesworth and his wife took a short-term rental of Hartford Grange, possibly after it had failed to sell in 1879, and were there around 1880-1881.

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By 3 April 1881 Viscount Cole and his household had been at Cassia Lodge for some time and the census return of that date details the latest tenants of Hartford Grange.

They are Louis [sic] W Molesworth (27), gentleman, who was born in Cornelly, Cornwall, and his American-born wife, Jane (22). Visiting them are Philip Beresford Hope (29), a magistrate for Kent, born in London and Herbert Burdell (29), a Manchester brewer, born in Lancashire. They have a cook, and three other female domestic servants (jobs not mentioned) plus a butler, valet and lady's maid. They may have been brought with their employers for the duration of their stay at The Grange.

Interestingly, in accommodation sharing The Grange address, are four grooms and a coachman, which would indicate a certain emphasis on horseflesh. Did the Molesworths bring them along to deal with their horses, or were they employed by the Todd Naylor and were part of the whole rental package deal? Lewis is known to have been a cavalry officer at some time in the 1880s.

Presumably the couple had taken the house with the hunting season (approx the end of October to early April) in mind and had perhaps been sampling the hunting experience in Cheshire before moving on. Certainly, they seem to have moved around the country a lot at a time when it was common for people of all classes to rent or lease their homes rather than buy them. They must have left by September 1881, when the house was again advertised in *The Field* magazine to let "for the hunting season".

Lewis Molesworth was an English landowner of 20,000 acres, and a not very successful Liberal Unionist Party politician, serving one term for the Bodmin constituency from 1900-1906. The couple were very wealthy and had no children. He was the son of the Rev Sir Paul William Molesworth, 10th of the Molesworth Baronets, and succeeded to the baronetcy in 1889. In 1894 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society. In 1898 he was appointed to serve as a Sheriff of Cornwall and was High Sheriff in 1899. He was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of the county in 1900.

For the 1891 census, the Molesworths were living at The Manor, Stanwell, Middlesex and Lewis had the title of "Sir" and his wife "Lady". He was now the 11th Baronet. They were living on their own means, with two of his American-born sisters-in-law; they also had three visitors including the previously-mentioned brewer Herbert Blondell [sic]. Their live-in servants were a butler, two housemaids, a cook, kitchen-maid, two footmen, and three lady's maids. Other servants like gardeners, coachman and a groom lived in nearby houses.

In the 1901 census the couple are at the prestigious address of 3 Great Cumberland Place, Bryanston Square, St Marylebone, London, "living on their own means", with a butler, two footmen, a lady's maid, a housemaid, cook, two kitchen maids and a housemaid. In the Lloyd George Domesday Survey of 1910 there is a detailed account about them: the house and land with a gross annual value, schedule A, of £385, belongs to the Portman Estate and is occupied by Sir Lewis W Molesworth on a 22½ year lease from Lady Day 1906 at a rent of £320.

Sir Lewis died suddenly on 29 May 1912 during a visit to Torquay, and his wife died the following year following a wasp sting.

## MRS HARRIET ANNE RUSHTON CAPTAIN FRANK OSBORNE - TENANTS OF HARTFORD GRANGE

This tenancy is complicated. The first indication of a connection between the wealthy widow Mrs Harriet Anne Rushton and Hartford Grange is contained in a forthcoming wedding announcement in 1886, and is explained in three further pieces of background information.

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This announcement appeared in the 6 Jan 1886 edition of the *Morning Post* – “A marriage is arranged and is shortly to take place, between Mr Frank Osborne, late captain 13th Hussars, and Helen, daughter of the late T L Rushton, Moor Platt, Bolton-le-Moors, and **Mrs Rushton, Hartford Grange, Cheshire.**” Frank would have been 37 at the time and newly-retired from the Army. There is no indication where he was living but it may well have been with his future mother-in-law and bride.

The following details of his will were published on 13 Jan 1915 in the *Manchester Evening News*: “Captain Frank Osborne, of the Hall, Harbury, Leamington, **late of Hartford Grange**, Northwich, formerly of the 13th Hussars, left unsettled property of the gross value of £33,403 of which £26,750 is net personalty.”

Further, a plaque on the Harbury war memorial for his son Brian Osborne, says that the young man’s family lived in Harbury Hall, “a pleasant, spacious home, **where his father could indulge in his passion for hunting**”. Brian joined the Hussars in 1908 and excelled at polo. He was killed at Ypres in December 1914.

Finally, there is more to be learned from the 31 Mar 1901 census – Frank Osborne, age 52, retired army officer born in New South Wales, Australia, was living with his widowed mother-in-law, Harriet A (79), living on her own means, and his wife Helen (41), born in Lancashire, at 14 Warwick Place, Leamington, New Milverton, Warwickshire. Also in the household were a cook and a parlourmaid.

So we can deduce that the widowed Harriet lived with her daughter and son-in-law for a long time after their marriage and probably contributed significantly to the joint expenses. Frank had a passion for hunting and they all lived at Hartford Grange in order for him to hunt with the Cheshire hounds. A hussar was a quick light cavalryman who fought from horseback, so Frank would have been a good horseman. At some point the trio left Hartford Grange but it was a sufficiently valued address to be repeated by them over the coming years.

Harriet outlived her late husband Thomas by more than 20 years, She died at “The Cedars”, Leamington on 29 July 1904 - a few miles from Harbury Hall. She left effects of £6133 14s 11d.

Looking back to the 1881 census, the Rushtons were living in some style at Moor Platt. Thomas Lever Rushton, 70, was a retired banker and solicitor, county and borough magistrate and alderman of the Borough of Bolton. Their servants were a butler, an upper housemaid, a kitchenmaid, a ladies maid, an under-housemaid and a coachman. Thomas had also been Mayor of Bolton in 1849 and was a prominent Conservative. He was senior churchwarden of his Bolton church and his name appeared frequently in the local newspapers.

He died at Cannes in the South of France on 8 February 1883.

## CYRIL & ELEANOR DEWHURST - OCCUPIERS OF HARTFORD GRANGE

Major Cyril Dewhurst was another extravagant character and excellent horseman who came to Hartford Grange in the 1890s for the hunting and was a member of the Tarporley Hunt Club. He moved out of the house in 1910 but generously handed over the building to accommodate Belgian refugees at the beginning of the First World War. He was badly injured during the war but continued to hunt, and ride his racehorses. He finished third in the 1923 Grand National.

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The much-abbreviated biography of Cyril Dewhurst in the *Alumni Cantabrigienses* biographical list of all known students, graduates and holders of office at the University of Cambridge, says:

DEWHURST, CYRIL. Adm, pens. at Trinity, Oct 7 1892. Son of George Bakewell Dewhurst, of Oughtrington Park, Lymm, Cheshire. Born Nov 7, 1874, in London. School, Repton. Matric. Michaelmas 1892. Served in the Great War, 1914-19 (Major, Lancs Hussars; employed Navy and Army Canteen Board; wounded). Of the Grange, Hartford, Cheshire. Died at Sandiway, Cheshire, Apr. 23, 1941. Brother of Gerald P. (1890).

A more easily-read summary, taken from the website [jockeypedia](http://jockeypedia), is as follows, with more to follow on his racing successes:

Major Cyril Dewhurst (1873-1941) rode his own horse Conjuror II to win the 1922 National Hunt Chase and to finish third in the 1923 Grand National. Cyril Peter Dewhurst was born in 1873, the son of George Bakewell Dewhurst and Frances Lucy Dewhurst. A Cambridge undergraduate, he married Eleanor Mary Wrigley in 1895. They had four children, John, Peter, Olivia and Elizabeth. He served in the Lancashire Regiment and was promoted from captain to major in September 1910. During World War One he commanded the 15th Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment.

An even shorter summing-up of his character comes from one of Rowland Egerton Warburton's satirical songs about members of the Hunt Club:

*A Cheshire Hunt Alphabet*

*'D is for Dewhurst, the wildest of men*

*He is fond of his port, his tongue and his pen.'*

The Dewhursts were married at Formby on 14 November 1895, so it is very likely that Hartford Grange was their first marital home. They were both in their early twenties at the time of the wedding. Cyril was a merchant, son of a merchant, and Eleanor was the daughter of a cotton broker.

The first mention in print of the Dewhursts in connection with Hartford was in the *Morning Post*, of 20 April 1896 when Eleanor appealed: "WANTED, A thorough good cook for country; good manager; kitchenmaid kept; two in family; wages £30. Mrs Cyril Dewhurst, Hartford, Cheshire."

Cyril was mentioned in *Sporting Life* magazine on 19 January 1899:

The North Cheshire Foxhounds met at Vale Royal, Lord Delamere's Cheshire seat, also the residence of the Earl of Enniskillen, the Master. The first fox was dislodged at Blakenden, and afforded a 20 minutes' sharp gallop into Abbott's Moss, where he was lost. After chopping a fox in Littledales Gorse a run was obtained from Heywood, through Hartford Village, Littledales Park, past Cuddington Station, into Kennel Wood at Sandiway, where the hounds were whipped off owing to darkness. During one run

Mr Cyril Dewhurst of the Grange, Hartford and Lymm, was riding through a gateway, when the gate swung to and injured his knee. He was driven home in a trap."

The couple loved the thrill of fox-hunting, but it was a dangerous sport for both horse and rider. Cyril doubtless suffered numerous spills of varying severity during his hunting - and horse racing - career. Three years later, for instance, one of his hunters had to be shot after a nasty accident in which it was "staked".

Eleanor was conscientious in supporting local charitable causes, as befitted her position in Cheshire society. On 4 March 1899 the *Northwich Guardian* carried a report headed "Winsford Provident and Benevolent Society." It continued: "Those connected with this newly formed association are engaged on a scheme having for its object the provision of temporary employment for those out of work. Premises have been taken, and it is proposed to start a fire-cutting and bundling establishment. It may be stated that this week the following subscriptions have been received: Mrs Dewhurst, Hartford Grange, £10; Mrs Lea, Winsford Lodge, £5; and Mr J M Fells, £2 2s."

Eleanor had been rather busy giving birth to their first child, John Anthony. *The Gentlewoman* of the same day announced: "DEWHURST – On the 23rd February at The Grange, Hartford, Cheshire, the wife of Cyril Dewhurst, of a son." His brother Peter arrived the following summer.

A year later she had to deal with her 27-year-old husband going off to war. *The Daily Telegraph* of 2 January 1900 reported how a group of friends had signed up to serve in the Boer War:

"Last night it was ascertained that the North Cheshire Hunt is likely to lose for a time some of the most brilliant riders. Captain O M Leigh of Belmont Hall, and Captain Jones of Liverpool have been accepted for service with the Imperial Yeomanry, and among those who have volunteered are Sir Philip Egerton of Oulton Park; Mr John and Mr Cyril Dewhurst, The Grange, Hartford; Mr Benjamin Jones, Liverpool; Mr Bibby Escourt, Southport; and Mr Pilkington, Liverpool. All these gentlemen are well-known members and followers of the North Cheshire Hunt."

He was gazetted as a lowly second lieutenant in the Lancashire Hussars on 4 April 1900.

For the 1901 census, Eleanor was not at home - just four servants were in residence.

When he returned from South Africa, Cyril treated himself to a car, though he didn't deign to drive it himself - in the same way as he would have thought it demeaning to dispense with his coachman and drive his own horse and carriage.

29 Jan 1906 – *Manchester Courier*: "A serious collision between motor vehicles occurred on Saturday at Hartford, Northwich. Mr Cyril Dewhurst, with his wife and three relatives, was proceeding to the Cheshire Hunt when his car came into collision in Whitegate Road with a valuable motor brougham belonging to Mr Alec of Cassia. The latter vehicle was practically wrecked, and one of the chauffeurs was cut on the hand."

There is an interesting alternative version in the *Derby Daily Telelgraph*: "At Whingate (sic) Corner, Northwich, on Saturday, a motor car was being driven from Cassia Lodge to Hartford and at the crossroads crashed into Mr Cyril Dewhurst's car from Hartford Grange. The party in the latter included three ladies travelling to the hunt. The driver, Mr Woolfax, was cut about the head, but the other inmates escaped. The petrol tank of one of the cars was burst, while the front of the other was smashed."

Given that motoring was in its infancy it is perhaps not surprising that good chauffeurs were hard to find. Cyril placed the following advertisement in the *Morning Post*, 28 Sept 1906 – “Wanted: Thoroughly reliable chauffeur. Single-handed, for 24-30 Clement car; 42s per week. Apply Cyril Dewhurst, Hartford Grange, Cheshire.”



*A Clement-Talbot car owned by Sir Maurice Dockrell, and similar to Cyril's vehicle*

In 1910 Cyril decided to move to Tilstone Lodge, nearer to his brothers, and Tarporley. The following advertisement was inserted on his behalf in the *Runcorn Guardian* of 11 November:

“SALE at The Grange, Hartford, near Northwich, of OUTDOOR EFFECTS, extensive ranges of stables and loose boxes, dog carts, saddlery, harness, garden effects; also surplus FURNITURE, by order of Cyril Dewhurst, Esq, who is removing. C J Hughes and Sons, Auctioneers.”

For some reason he still retained his interest in the Hartford house. He was very involved in horse-racing and polo as well as hunting, so the beautiful Tilstone Lodge, built in 1832 and designed by a famous architect, may have been better suited to his needs. Its 115-acre grounds included a lake, two lodges, several cottages, a walled garden and extensive outbuildings, and the whole estate was altogether grander. Hartford Grange had been an ideal ‘starter home’ for a well-off young couple but 14 years on from their marriage, with a secure place in the upper echelons of Cheshire society, they could afford a more lavish lifestyle with a live-in staff of governess, lady’s maid, children’s maid, two laundrymaids, three housemaids, parlourmaid, dairymaid, kitchenmaid, and cook (according to the 1911 census).

An eye-witness account of a 1911 Cheshire meet in the book *Fox-Hunting from Shire to Shire with Many Noted Packs* is recounted by author Cuthbert Bradley and gives a flavour of the social standing of people taking part in the sport locally.

“On a morning in February 1911 - the finish of the Duke of Westminster’s last season of the mastership - we had a sight of the Cheshire, green collars and low-crowned silk hats - in the field, the noble master mounting us on a good grey horse.

“The occasion after meeting at Saughton Towers furnished a typical sight of a real Cheshire crowd, with Tyrell hunting a mixed pack that gave an ardent field a taste of their quality. Glinting sunshine lit up the landscape after a boisterous wet night, and “green Cheshire” looked most inviting for a hunt.

“A large gathering, numbering about 250 horsemen, assembled in the field opposite Saughton Towers, the old red sandstone residence where the master first saw light of day in 1879, and now the residence of his mother, Lady Grosvenor.

“To give a tithe of the names of those riding with the Cheshire during the season would occupy considerable space, but besides the Duke and Duchess of Westminster were Lady Millbank, Lady Grey Egerton, Lady Helen Grosvenor, Lady Lettice Cholmondeley, Mrs Chateris, the three ex-masters of the Cheshire, the **Earl of Enniskillen**, Mr Hubert Wilson, Mr Reginald Corbet, the two masters elect, Mr

Roylance Court and Captain Higson, Mrs Higson, the Marquis of Cholmondeley, Hereditary High Chamberlain of England, and one of the principal landowners in Cheshire, Lord Delamere and Lady Delamere, the Duke and Duchess of Teck, Colonel W Hall Walker, Mr and Mrs Littledale, Mrs and Miss Tyrer, Mr Byng Hopwood, Mr H Brassey, Mr and Miss Tilney, **Mrs Cyril Dewhurst**, Mr de Knoop, Mr Hugh Wilbraham, Colonel Hunt, Colonel Drury, Mr Arthur Brocklehurst, Mr A H Hornby, Colonel Pilkington, Mr H Hewitt, Mr R Weaver, Mr and Mrs Wignall, Mr P Wyndham, Miss Douglas Pennant, Mr Charles L Pennell, Mr H C Lloyd, Mr R T Richardson, Mr Tatton, Mr W E Dixon, Captain and Miss Holland, Mr C W Garfit, Major Hobson, Mr S L Birkett, **Mr Dewhurst**, Mr A R Midwood, Mr J A Ashton, Mr J Reynolds, Mrs Leigh Townsend, Mr H Hermon, Mr W Paul, Mr R P Sidebottom, Mr C Morley, Mr Chesworth, Mr Walter Tinsley. Amongst those on foot were two ex-whippers-in of Cheshire Beagles, the Rev H W Bradley, and a "hunting scribe", the Rev Walter Greswell.

"The view from the hill-side by Saughton Towers is an expanse of grass, well-wooded, back by a range of hills in the blue distance looking across to Eaton Hall, the residence of the Duke of Westminster - where the mighty champions of the turf were bred, Ormonde and Sceptre.

"The industry of cheese-making and the sport of fox-hunting always flourish side by side, whether talking of Cheshire or Leicestershire - the famous grazing pastures over which hounds revel making a paradise for the Sport of Kings."

At least two of the illustrious members above had lived at Hartford Grange. It is interesting that Cyril is not included specifically, as he ought to have been listed alongside his wife. If not him, the "Mr Dewhurst" named may have been one of his brothers, though the Dewhurst family's status as rich cotton manufacturers and hunt stalwarts ought have put him higher up the list if it was written in a high society pecking order. On the other hand, Cuthbert Bradley - not a member of the hunt - may simply have been spotting faces and noting down the individual riders as they milled about at the beginning of the hunt.

Cyril was still having problems with his motoring. The *Manchester Evening News* reported that in May 1914 Mr Cyril Dewhurst's motor driver was sacked after an accident "near Hartford" and had appeared in court. His former employer was described as "The wellknown Cheshire polo player, of Tilstone Lodge, Tarporley."

When the First World War got under way in August 1914, Cyril went back into the Army with the rank of Major. He had been promoted from Captain in 1910.

As thousands of destitute refugees began to pour out of Belgium into the UK, and a frantic search started to accommodate them, Cyril offered the use of Hartford Grange to the local organisers of relief. The *Manchester Evening News* reported on 22 October 1914:

### **BELGIAN REFUGEES Hospitality at Northwich**

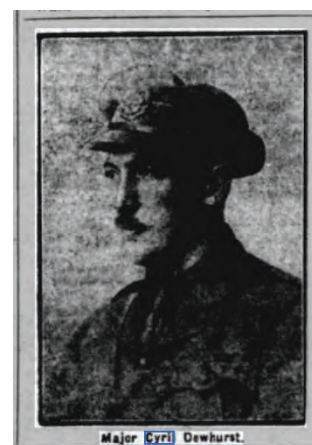
One hundred Belgian refugees, chiefly women and children, arrived at Northwich last night. They are being maintained at the Bachelors' Hall, Winnington, solely at the expense of Messrs Brunner, Mond and Company, who have also fitted up the Ley,

Winnington for seventeen more. The Northwich Committee are also taking to begin with twenty refugees, Mr Cyril Dewhurst having lent the Grange, Hartford. Some pathetic scenes were witnessed. All the refugees were removed in motor cars.

The plight of the refugees initially moved the public across the country, who were keen to help them. Thanks to Cyril's generosity in lending a large unoccupied building to the cause, Hartford Grange seems to have become the headquarters of the Northwich and District Belgian Relief Fund. The committee was soon busy raising money with events including a "Grand Miscellaneous Concert" - which seems to have been a catch-all title for an evening of diverse entertainment by all and sundry who could be persuaded to take part.

The concert was organised by Mr Jock Kenyon, and held at the Drill Hall, Northwich, on Wednesday 25 November 1914. "Artistes" performing were Soprano, Mrs A Whipp; Contralto, Miss G Fortnum; Elocutionist, Miss M Dolan; Tenor, Mr J Moore; Violin, Master Don Hiden; Flute, Mr S Evans; Piano, Mr S Dale and Humourist, Mr Kenyon himself. Tickets were 2s (reserved, dress optional) or 1s 6d. At Christmas the Grange contingent enjoyed goose and plum pudding for lunch.

On 16 June 1916 the *Runcorn Guardian* broke the news that the 43-year-old Major Cyril Dewhurst had been seriously wounded in action. During a heavy bombardment of the British trenches a shrapnel shell burst, killing the adjutant of the regiment, who stood three yards away, and severely wounding Major Dewhurst. On his removal to the military hospital it was found that his ankle was broken, and that he was also suffering from injuries to his head, back and shoulder.



Cyril, pictured in his uniform

"An operation has been performed on his ankle and he is now reported to be making satisfactory progress. It is expected that he will arrive at a London hospital shortly.

"When war broke out Major Dewhurst was mobilised with the Lancashire Hussars, but afterwards became attached to the West Yorkshire Regiment and went out with them on active service as second in command.

"Major Dewhurst, who formerly resided at The Grange, Hartford, is wellknown in Cheshire hunting circles. He is a younger brother of Major Harry Dewhurst of Dalefords, Sandiway, chairman of the Northwich Division Conservative Association, who is also on active service."

Although the operation on Cyril's leg injury was not spelled out, it would seem that his foot and perhaps even part of his leg was amputated. Some nine weeks later, after he had been repatriated, he was well enough to attend the memorial service at Bunbury for a close friend, John Julius Jersey de Knoop, who was a fellow member of the hunt club. He had lived at Calveley Hall and Cuddington Grange. He lost his life on 7 August 1916.

The *Runcorn Guardian* of 25 August 1916 wrote: "Mr and Mrs Cyril Dewhurst of Tilstone Lodge attended the memorial service for their friend Captain de Knoop, who had been killed in action in Egypt, leading the Camel Corps against the Turks. The men had volunteered together for the Boer War and were both keen on hunting."

Although Cyril was no longer living at Hartford Grange at this time, it was still listed as his abode and qualified him to be an elector for Hartford.

After the war, and in spite of his injury, he threw himself back into equestrian sports - hunting, polo and racing. The Tarporley Hunt Club had organised races and steeplechases for many years. At the age of 49, he rode his own horse Conjuror II to win the 1922 National Hunt Chase and to finish third in the 1923 Grand National - a great achievement considering his relative race-riding inexperience.



Cyril, a drawing in  
"The Green Collars"

The hunt club prided itself on its traditions and customs - many of them bizarre to the uninitiated. The prestigious - and boozy - all-male dinners held at The Swan, Tarporley, were governed by precise rules and members could be fined for infringements. According to Gordon Fergusson, the second rule of the club was that:

"Each Member shall appear at Dinner in strict uniform, viz: Scarlet Coat with Green Collar, Waistcoat, and Breeches or Black Trousers, or forfeit five Sovereigns.

"The wording dates from 1890 before which the collar had been velvet. The alternative of knee breeches was a convenient rule for any Member having lost a leg, notably Major Cyril Dewhurst and Sir Evelyn Broughton. The former had four different artificial limbs, a riding leg, a golfing leg, a dancing leg and a bridge leg.

"He was Hunt Secretary and once had a bad fall into the brook at Page's. When he clambered out his foot was back to front, to the consternation of Christo Codrington, a young visitor from the Beaufort, who, white as a sheet, was about to ask where the nearest doctor could be found.

"The Major vented a variety of oaths making it clear that he had broken his leg. His lone companion went a shade paler. (In later life he had a plum complexion.) 'Don't just stand there, man,' shouted Cyril, 'Go and telephone Tarporley 8 and tell my chauffeur to bring me out my spare!'"

In their later years, the Dewhursts relinquished their lease on Tilstone Lodge and bought the red-brick Victorian country house, Overdale, in Overdale Lane, Sandiway - not far from the hunt kennels - where Cyril died on 23 April 1941, aged 67. He left £119,530 (estate duties £32,522).

The tributes published after his death are touching and record public service as well as his more convivial and 'macho' side.

A paragraph in the *Cheshire Observer* stated: "Mr Cyril Dewhurst of Overdale, Sandiway and Great Malborough-street, Manchester, was a member of the well-known Manchester cotton firm of G and R Dewhurst, one of the founders and chairman of the Tarporley War Memorial Cottage Hospital and a member of the Cheshire Hunt. He left £50 to each male servant of ten years' service."

A piece in the *Chester Chronicle* described him as "a kindly employer, a generous supporter of all local charitable and social institutions and a thorough sportsman."

The *Liverpool Evening Express* mentions his role as a founder of the cottage hospital [in 1920] and adds that he was founder and later president of the Tarporley branch of the Royal British Legion. He was also assistant Divisional Chief Warden and rendered valuable ARP service.

Eleanor died nearly six years later. There was a fullsome obituary in the *Winsford Chronicle* on 15 February 1947:

“The funeral of Mrs Cyril Dewhurst, whose death at Overdale, Sandiway, we briefly reported last week, took place on Monday, when a service at Delamere Church was attended by many friends from all parts of the county.

“Mrs Dewhurst, who was 76 years of age, was the widow of Major Cyril Dewhurst, for many years the hon secretary of the Cheshire Hunt and one of the best-known sportsmen in Cheshire. Major and Mrs Dewhurst took over the tenancy of Overdale from Sir Keith Nuttall in 1935, prior to which they held the lease of Tilstone Lodge, Tarporley, from the Peckforton Estate of Lord Tollemache, for more than 25 years.

“Before that they lived at Hartford, where they were equally well known and respected. Mrs Dewhurst was, like her husband, an extremely well-known figure in the Cheshire hunting field and throughout the greater part of her residence at Tilstone she hunted regularly every season. It was, however, as an expert horticulturist that Mrs Dewhurst was best known, particularly in regard to heath and Alpine gardening...

“In her younger days she was a keen golfer and played regularly on the Delamere links. She took little part in public life though in an unostentatious manner she was always a good supporter of any worthy charity.”

HARTFORD  
GRANGE  
FARM

THE  
PEOPLE

## JOHN HUDSON – TENANT OF HARTFORD GRANGE FARM

Not much is known about John Hudson, except for details in censuses and directories. He and his family have not been found in the 1841 census, perhaps due to a transcription error. He should have been living in Hartford then.

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The 1846 tithe map of Hartford shows John Hudson occupying Grange Farm farmhouse and outbuildings and most of the 50-plus acres of land surrounding them. The farmstead belongs to the Hartford Grange estate and is owned by John Cheshire. The house stands back from the turnpike and the entrance to it is just by the toll gate and cottage.

30 Mar 1851 census – John Hudson is mentioned in the 1851 census. He was born in Yorkshire, is aged 54, and describes himself as a farmer of 56 acres employing one labourer. With him are his wife Elizabeth (49), also from Yorkshire. Their two elder children, Elizabeth (22) and William (20) a painter journeyman, were both born at Twemlow, Cheshire, while Ellen (16), Harriet (13), Charlotte (10), and John (7) were all born in Hartford. He must have been in Hartford since at least 1835. The family live between John Jackson, blacksmith, and Sarah Clarke, pauper and laundress.

In the 1857 *Post Office Directory of Cheshire* John is described as a farmer under the Private Residents heading for Hartford.

In the 1861 census the Hudsons are listed immediately before William Todd Naylor on Chester Road. In addition to the children, the couple have two grandchildren staying with them.

In the 1864 *Morris and Co's Directory of Cheshire* John is described as a farmer under the Trades and Professions heading for Hartford.

In the 1871 census the widowed John Hudson is now 74 and a farmer of 80 acres, living with Harriet (32) and Charlotte (31), a grand-daughter (22) and her son (7). They have two male farm servants living in. The 1871 electoral roll says he is the occupier of a house and land "near the turnpike".

John Hudson died on 29 May 1875, aged 78 years, according to a death notice in the *Northwich Guardian* of 5 June 1875.

## **HENRY GERRARD MARY GERRARD TENANTS OF GRANGE FARM**

### **CHARLES HENRY GERRARD - BAILIFF / TENANT OF GRANGE FARM**

Henry Gerrard's tenure of Grange Farm seems to have gone smoothly enough after he took over from John Hudson. When he died, his wife then became the official tenant, running the farm with the help of her son Charles Henry. Then in 1908 a terrible tragedy struck the family which was reported in newspapers across the kingdom.

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Henry Gerrard took over the tenancy of the 80-acre Grange Farm after the death of John Hudson in 1875. The property belonged to the owner of Hartford Grange.

In 1881, Henry Gerrard of Hartford was listed in the voters' register as being the occupier of a house and farm on Chester Road, Hartford [Grange Farm]. According to the 1871 census, he had previously been at 98-acre Raw Head Farm, Bickerton, with his wife Mary (30), and children Anne (13), Charles Henry (12), William (10), John (8), Alfred (5) and Mary (2). The whole family was born at Weaverham.

Charles Henry Gerrard's marriage at Northwich to Frances Jones was registered in the January-March quarter of 1885 (Vol 8A Page 348).

In the 1891 census, Charles H Gerrard (32) agricultural labourer, born at Weaverham, was listed with his wife "F", born at Uttoxeter, Staffs, and children "E" (3 yrs), and "L. L." (5 months), both born at Hartford, in a cottage on Chester Road. At the farmhouse were Henry Gerrard (53) farmer, his wife "M" aged 50, and "B" their daughter, aged 13. They had one 14-year-old male farm servant. The older children had left.

Henry died in 1893, leaving effects worth £503, and his wife took over the tenancy.

Mr J [Joseph] Gerrard then aged 23 years, was listed as being of Grange Farm, Hartford, in a report of Mold Agricultural Show on 30 July 1898 published in the *North Wales Times*. His birds were 3rd in the class for best cockerel and pullet. He was still at home, three years later.

In the 1901 census, Charles H Gerrard (41) was farm bailiff, running the enterprise for - or with - his mother. His wife Frances, was 35 years old, and they had five children living with them, Ernest (13), Lydia (10), May (8), Victor (6) and Beatrice (4), all born at Hartford. His mother, Mary Gerrard (60), now a widow describing herself as a farmer, was at Grange Farm, with her were her son, Joseph (26) farmer's son, Beatrice (23) farmer's daughter, Thomas Dunning (20) nephew, *unreadable job description*, and Charles Dunning (18) nephew, ordinary agricultural labourer.

On 4 May 1908 the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* (and many other newspapers in all corners of the country) reported on a tragedy that would rock the family to the core:

#### **Children drowned and mother poisoned**

"In a cottage in Chester Road, Hartford near Northwich, Mrs Gerrard and two of her youngest children were found dead at noon yesterday. The former's death being due to poisoning, while the latter had apparently been drowned in a dolly tub.

“The house is tenanted by Mr Charles Henry Gerrard, farmer and manager for his mother of the Grange Farm, close by, and he returned to work shortly before ten o’clock. Two hours later, when two other children returned home from school, they were unable to enter the house, and Beatrice went to her father for a key, remarking that she had seen the baby through the window lying on the fender. Thereupon her brother, Alfred Gerrard, rushed to the cottage, burst open the door, and found the two children, Edith, aged seven and Margaret aged 2½ years, one on the fender and the other on the hearthrug. A dolly tub half-full of water was close by, and evidently the children had been drowned.

“Mrs Gerrard was in a chair, and had apparently been dead for fully an hour. She had, it is believed, taken a quantity of rat poison, but a small wound was also found in her throat, and a rope was close by. Mrs Gerrard had not been in the best of health for some time.”

On Thursday, 7 May 1908, the Dundee Courier followed up the story:

“In connection with the terrible tragedy at Hartford near Northwich on Monday, the Coroner’s jury yesterday found that Frances Gerrard (43), wife of a farm labourer, drowned her daughters Edith, aged 7, and Margaret, aged 2, and committed suicide by poisoning during temporary insanity. Deceased left a pathetic letter, in which she stated that her mind was affected.” (*See full inquest report overleaf.*)

Joseph Gerrard died on 13 August 1908, aged 33. He was buried at Weaverham on 17 August, aged 33 years, and had been living at Elmswood Lodge, Hooton. This was another untimely bereavement for the Gerrard family, three months after the triple tragedy.

On 19 September 1908, a destitute railway labourer pleaded guilty to stealing 11lbs of potatoes, the property of Charles Henry Gerrard of Grange Farm, who wished leniency to be exercised. The bench acquitted the defendant to keep his record clean. (*St Helens Examiner.*)

Eight years later, the Gerrard family’s life was once again filled with sorrow. The *Chester Chronicle* of 4 November 1916 carried a sad report:

“News has been received this week of the death in action of Pte Harry Dunning, of the South Lancashire Regiment, whose parents reside at Tarporley-road, Little Budworth, where they carry on a small farm. Pte Dunning, who was aged about 25, joined the Army in August 1914, and prior to that worked for his grandmother, the late Mrs Gerrard, of Grange Farm, Hartford. He was identified with the Hartford Wesleyan Church and was greatly liked. Since he had been at the Front, he often wrote to the officers of the church, and was manifestly a fine young soldier who realised his duty in the noblest possible way. To the bereaved family the deepest sympathy is extended in their great loss.”

Hartford Grange and Grange Farm were sold to Brunner Mond in 1921 but Charles Henry continued to farm the land, as can be seen in the electoral registers covering Hartford in the following years.

An advert in the *Crewe Chronicle* stated that on Wednesday, 16 May, 1934 at Grange Farm, Hartford, there would be a sale of household furniture and effects for “Mr C Gerrard, who is leaving”. He retired from the farm and moved with his sister Annie to Oak Lea, King Street.

On 26 July 1941, at Grange Farm, Hartford, Charles Henry Gerrard died, aged 82, according to a death notice in the *Manchester Evening News*.

It is interesting but sad to note the discrepancies in the reporting of what became known nationally as “The Hartford Triple Tragedy” or “The Hartford Murders”, which was used as a sensational few paragraphs in newspapers far and wide. Half of them are factual, if superficial, while the others - sufficiently distanced from the event not to need to bother with fact-checking or corrections - said that Mrs Gerrard had cut her throat and added other gratuitous inaccuracies. The following melodramatic but accurate story of the initial facts, and the verbatim account of the inquest by a local journalist with good shorthand, is perhaps the definitive version - though the choice of the word “thrilled” in the introductory paragraph grates on modern readers. The original newspaper type is smudged and hard to read in places, as indicated by question marks.

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*Northwich Guardian – Saturday 9 May 1908*

## **HARTFORD TRAGEDY MOTHER’S TERRIBLE ACT DOUBLE MURDER AND SUICIDE**

HARTFORD was thrilled on Monday [4 May 1908] by the perpetration of one of the most terrible tragedies which have taken place in Mid-Cheshire for many years. In a small cottage on the Chester Road, almost under the shadow of the Parish Church, lived Mr. Charles Henry Gerrard, his wife and five children. Mr Gerrard is the son of Mrs. Gerrard, who resides at the Grange Farm, almost directly opposite, and he is engaged in agricultural pursuits on the farmstead. His wife was the principal actress in the awesome and thrilling drama by which three lives have been cast away – her own and those of two of her little girls. Another daughter, Beatrice, who attends the National School, was the unfortunate one to first perceive the tragedy, although the poor child did not actually see the fearful spectacle which met the eye of her uncle.

At noon Beatrice left the school as usual for dinner, and with her little friends playfully rushed homewards. She attempted to enter by the front door as was her wont, but contrary to custom she found it fastened against her. Several knocks failed to elicit an answer, and being curious to know the reason why she was not admitted, the girl looked through the window and saw her youngest sister, Margaret, lying with her head on the fender and another sister, Edith, lying on the hearthrug. Almost wild with fright she ran screaming in the direction of Grange Farm, and her Uncle Alfred, who was about the farm buildings, was attracted by the child’s screams.

Anticipating from her behaviour that something serious had occurred at her home, he at once rushed there. Glancing through the front window – that of the living room – he was staggered at the scene of the two children lying apparently dead. He burst the door open and then he was confronted by a shocking sight. Little Margaret, aged 2½ years, lay dead with her head resting on the fender, whilst close by on the hearthrug was the dead body of Edith, who was a bright girl of seven summers. In a rocking chair sat the mother, Frances Gerrard, aged 43, also dead. Just afterwards the husband, having heard the sad story from his daughter, Beatrice, came running grief-stricken in to the home so suddenly enveloped in sadness.

P.c. Brett, who was but a short distance away at the time, was quickly summoned to the home, and he at once lifted Mrs Gerrard from the chair in which she reclined and laid her on the hearthrug, so that he might examine her heart, but death had presumably taken place an hour or an hour and a half previously.

How the poor victims had met with their death was not difficult to ascertain. A liquid coming from the lips of the mother evidenced the use of poison. There was also a flesh wound in the woman’s throat and an open razor found on the table showed that she had evidently intended to take her life with that weapon. In the kitchen was also found a clothes line tied to a hook in the ceiling.

The little ones had met their sad fate by drowning. On the hearth was a dolly tub containing barely 18 inches of water, and the suggestion is that the mother, overcome by a sudden fit of madness, had taken the children separately and drowned them in it.

The mother is spoken of as a woman of very good disposition, and one who somewhat held herself aloof from her neighbours. She is a native of Cannock, South Staffordshire, but has lived in Hartford a good number of years. At times, however, it is said she has suffered from fits of despondency and had been depressed for a day or two. Her husband is exceedingly well known in the village and is prominently associated with the local Wesleyan Church, holding an official position in connection with the Temperance Society connected with it. To him the deepest sympathy is naturally extended.

Mr Gerrard commenced work as usual at six o'clock on Monday morning, and returned for his breakfast shortly after nine o'clock. At the time his wife was upstairs but he and the little ones partook of the meal together. Whilst they were so doing Edith had the misfortune to upset a cup of tea, some of which went on Margaret's arm, which although not scalded caused the little one to cry. This attracted the mother's attention and she rushed downstairs, picked the little one up, and clasped it in her arms as though to pacify it. She did not speak to her husband, but he did not view this with any great concern as when in such moods she spoke very little. He left home shortly before ten o'clock and his return a couple of hours later was the sad homecoming referred to above.

The neighbours, on being questioned, say that they heard nothing unusual, and they were as greatly surprised as anyone else when the tragedy was discovered. The sad news spread like wildfire and caused considerable excitement throughout the district.

## **THE INQUEST PATHETIC LETTER MRS. GERRARD'S STRANGE REQUESTS AND ACCUSATIONS**

Coroner H.C. Yates and a jury, of which Mr. Moore was the foreman, sat at the Drill Hall, Hartford, on Wednesday morning [6 May 1908] to inquire into the circumstances attending the deaths of Frances Gerrard (43), Edith Mary (seven) and Margaret Maud (two years and four months). Superintendent Cooper was present throughout the hearing.

Charles Henry Gerrard, Chester-road, identified the bodies as as those of his wife Frances and his two daughters, Edith Mary and Margaret Maud. He said on Monday morning he got up about six o'clock and went to work at the Grange Farm, where he was the bailiff. He returned at nine o'clock for his breakfast. When he returned home he found it ready with the exception of brewing the tea, which was done while he went for a wash. His two children (the deceased) were playing in the kitchen, and came round him when had his breakfast. At the time his wife was upstairs. During his breakfast the children upset a cup of tea and Margaret screamed, which caused his wife to come downstairs. He left home to go to work again shortly after 9.30. About noon his son Victor came to him and asked for the latch-key, saying the house door was fast. Witness gave him the key and he ran off with it. Shortly afterwards his daughter Beatrice came and told him she had seen the baby (Margaret) on the fender, and Edith on the hearthrug. At the time witness was stripped, but he put his coat on and got home as quickly as possible. On arrival he found his wife sitting in a chair by the side of the fire, with her head under the fringe of a book-shelf, which completely hid her face. He came to the conclusion from what he saw that she was quite dead. Witness gathered the little ones up and put them on the sofa.

At this juncture, witness, who had been visibly affected all through, showed signs of great mental anguish and began to weep, but the coroner thoughtfully remarked: "I will spare you as much as I can. I can see your condition."

Continuing, the witness said both children were dead, quite cold, and saturated with water. Four or five years ago – he could not say exactly – he purchased a packet of what was known as "Cheshire

vermin killer" from Mr Lea, chemist, Northwich, for the purpose of killing rats at the Grange Farm. He had occasion to get a little of it for a neighbour about a month ago and he afterwards placed it on their clock. His wife was not aware of it. When he got home he looked on the clock and found it was gone. His wife at times had been very strange in her manner. On those occasions she would go for a week or so without speaking to him except to deliver a message, and was extremely depressed. She began to be depressed on Friday, and she had threatened to do away with herself but not recently. She had wished herself in her grave except for the children. About 20 [? *hard to read*] years ago she had very bad fits, which affected her head very much. His wife had on Sunday sent his little daughter Beatrice to the farm for the poison. When he got home at night she was in bed and had told the children to tell him to use it for the mice, having cleared the cupboard out for the purpose. He did not trouble [?] but went to bed, not looking for the poison.

The Coroner: She has been very fond of her children, has she not?

Witness: Oh, yes, extremely.

The Coroner: And these two little ones more particularly?

Witness: Of all the family. She had no favourites. She was fond of all. She could not do enough for them.

The Coroner (producing a letter): Is that your wife's handwriting?

Witness: Yes.

The Coroner: Where did you find it?

Witness: In her savings bank book.

The Coroner: It is dated 1980 [?], she has not put the "0" behind the eight.

Witness: It is an error.

The Coroner: Oh yes, I see that.

The Coroner then read the letter dated May 3, which was addressed to "My dear husband." It said: "This is the last letter I shall ever write to you. I am sorry to leave you and my dear children. Don't bring the girls to Hartford, but get out of this dreadful cottage. I want you to divide the money that is in the bank in my name among my surviving children, Lydia, Mary, Ernest, Victor and Beatrice and all my clothes to be divided amongst the girls. I feel that you will do your best for them and make them happy. I do hope Ernest will be a good boy, and rise to be a good man, and keep good company. Don't let anybody see me and the children. My last wish is I want Mr. T.B. Moreton, Mr. Birtwisle, also W. and Albert Birtwisle to come and pray with me every day while you keep it here, but not (here were given several names), they have been the cause of this; they have turned my brain."

Mentioning other names, the letter continued: "God help them and bless them, my children. Dear Charlie, I want for nothing, so it is not your fault. Put us all together and don't make a fuss. No flowers, I like to see them growing. For two months I have suffered with my head. I could not do my duty to children and home, so don't cry, just laugh. I am going to make happiness not trouble. Don't [????] for a lot of people to bury us. I want all things quiet, and don't tell people about our business, or anything about me, as I know I am going to rest, the rest I have prayed for a long time... Dear Charlie, my life is ended, my time is passed, and now I am gone no sorrow make, but love my dear children for my sake. I know you will be happy for you are happy anywhere. I was your loving wife, Fannie Gerrard. Mr Booth will let you have the money in the Post Office Savings Bank, and Mr Dimmott for the Winnington pass book. FRANCES GERRARD, Chester-road, Hartford."

The Coroner: Now, Mr Gerrard, arising out of that letter, has she not liked Hartford or was she happy here.

Witness: She was happy and jolly most of the time; it was only when she had these periods.

The Coroner: That will do, Mr Gerrard. I am sure we are all very sorry for you.

Ernest Gerrard, a labourer, said he was a son of the deceased and had lived with his father and mother. On Monday morning his mother called him about eight o'clock to get up and go to his work. On coming downstairs he found his breakfast ready. As he was eating it she said to him: "Be quick

with your breakfast, as I am going out this morning, and remember to take that bicycle lamp home.”

The Coroner: Was that one you had borrowed then, Ernest?

Witness: Yes.

The Coroner: You then went out, what time did you leave?

Witness: About 8.30.

The Coroner: Was your mother preparing to go then?

Witness: No.

The Coroner: Your mother was quite cheerful?

Witness: Yes, more so that morning than for a long time.

The Coroner: And were the two little ones in the house at that time?

Witness, bursting into tears at this question: Yes, playing about my feet.

The Coroner: That will do, Ernest. I am very sorry for you.

Emily Lloyd, wife of Thomas Lloyd, residing in Chester-road, Hartford, deposed that on Monday she saw Mrs Gerrard between ten o'clock and 10.30 swilling the yard. Afterwards she saw her draw several buckets of water from the tap and take them away. Mrs Gerrard never spoke to witness and witness afterwards went in the house. She heard nothing more.

The Coroner: Did you not hear anything in the house?

Witness: No, I am a bit deaf.

The Coroner: Has she ever to you expressed any intention of taking her life?

Witness: No, sir.

Mary Eyes, wife of Rowland Eyes, residing in Chester-road, Hartford, stated that she heard Mrs. Gerrard's crying baby between 10.30 and 11 o'clock, on Monday morning. It cried out. "Edith! Edith!" but nothing more.

The Coroner: And no other sound?

Witness: No.

The Coroner: Was it the sort of a cry as if in anguish or pain?

Witness: It sounded as if Edith was vexing her.

The Coroner: You had not the curiosity to go and look?

Witness: No.

Alfred Gerrard, greengrocer, Chester-road, stated that on Monday at 12.10 noon, he was at his mother's farm when his niece came and asked for her father. She was screaming all the time. Thinking there was something the matter at home he ran across to the house and on looking through the window saw the two children on the hearth. He at once burst open the door and picked up both children, which were dead. Their mother was sitting in a chair by the fireside. She was dead also. The dolly tub was on the hearthrug. He lived close to but had not noticed Mrs. Gerrard had been peculiar. She had never threatened to him to take her life.

P.c. Brett stated that at 12.15 on Monday he was called to the deceased's house. On going inside he saw the two little children placed on the sofa and the mother sitting in a chair by the fire, with her head under a shelf. He lifted her off and placed her on the hearthrug, not being sure whether she was dead, because if not he would have resorted to artificial means of restoration. He felt at her heart and found it did not beat. He came to the conclusion that she had been dead some time as she was quite rigid. He examined the children and found them both stiff and cold. Mrs Gerrard he found had a slight wound to her throat, and some blue liquid running out of her mouth. There was an old razor (produced) on the table close by, which was slightly stained with blood.

The Coroner: Was it open or how was it?

Witness: I don't think it was open. There was also the tea cup (produced) containing the remains of a blue sediment, and part of a bottle of lemonade.

Continuing, witness said he next went into the back kitchen, where he found a piece of rope (produced) which was attached to a hook in the ceiling. At the end nearest the floor there was a noose.

The Coroner: Was there a small stool on the floor underneath?

Witness: Yes. The stool was about nine inches high.

The Coroner: But the rope had not been used?

Witness: No, there was no mark around the deceased's neck.

The Coroner: You went to the children next and on each of their foreheads found a small bruise?

Witness: Yes, and all of their clothes were saturated with water.

The Coroner: And their boots and stockings had been taken off?

Witness: Yes.

The Coroner: Would the dolly tub contain about 18 inches of water?

Witness: Yes, about that; and the floor round about and the hearthrug were also very wet.

The Coroner: Did you see her that morning?

Witness: No, it was very seldom I saw her. She was very little out of the house. She kept herself somewhat secluded. I did not pass the house that morning.

Dr. Hinde, assistant to Dr. Gough, said when he was summoned to the house he found the mother and both children dead. They had apparently been dead some time. He was satisfied the children had died from asphyxiation by drowning.

The Coroner: And if, as I presume, they were put head foremost into the water, they would soon be dead?

Witness: In about five minutes.

The Coroner: And there would not be much struggling?

Witness: No. With regard to the mother, he continued, he could not come to any conclusion as to the cause of death, and had made a post mortem. Externally there were some superficial scratches on the throat in front, in the middle line, near the Adam's apple.

The Coroner: Do you think they were caused by a razor?

Witness: Yes, a blunt razor.

The Coroner: No other marks on the body at all?

Witness: No.

Proceeding, the witness said internally all the organs of the body were healthy except the stomach. The walls of that were congested and inflamed, and it contained a small quantity of blueish green fluid. The bottle (produced) contained a quantity which was extracted.

The Coroner: Have you formed any idea what it is?

Witness: It is pretty evident that it is copper sulphate mixed with other poisons. Copper sulphate is a very acute poison.

The Coroner: Is that the cause of death?

Witness: The cause of death was acute irritant poisoning, the poison being contained in the fluid found in the stomach. She must have taken an enormous quantity and died almost immediately.

Dr Hinde said he had never attended the deceased professionally but Dr Gough had. Some time ago, for influenza.

Albert Birtwisle said he was a registered chemist and was in partnership with Mr. William Lee at the Castle Pharmacy, Northwich. His partner was formerly his employer, and the poison was supplied by him to Mr. C.H. Gerrard, on November 27th, 1903. It was a shilling packet of "Cheshire vermin killer" and was enclosed in three wrappers labelled "Poison".

The Coroner: Can you tell us what it contained?

Witness: It contained 30 grains strychnine mixed with about 30 grains lime blue. That would contain a little poison, but it was not very strong.

The Coroner: The predominant part is strychnine?

Witness: Yes.

The Coroner (to Dr. Hinde): Then I take it that it is strychnine she died from, doctor?

Dr. Hinde: Yes, and copper sulphate.

Mr. Birtwisle said the poison was first wrapped in a blue paper labelled "Poison" with instructions for use.

Answering a juror, witness said the purchaser said he wanted the poison for the destruction of rats.

The Coroner: Everything is perfectly in accordance with that.

In summing up the Coroner said that was the evidence in that very, very sad case. Referring to Mrs. Gerrard not speaking to her husband on Monday morning, he said there was nothing unusual about that, inasmuch as they had it from the husband that sometimes when she suffered from these fits of depression she had gone days without speaking to him except giving him messages. She had had strange delusions at times. They could only assume what she did with the buckets of water which Mrs Lloyd saw her drawing, as the evidence on that point was only circumstantial. He could only assume when the baby was heard calling out "Edith! Edith!" the poor little mite was in its death struggles and was being put in the dolly tub. They must also assume the poor creature had been endeavouring to take her life by cutting her throat but had stopped. Singularly enough, the officer also found a rope attached to a hook, and she had evidently anticipated hanging herself. They could not (???) but there were preparations for everything.

The causes of death were perfectly apparent and one did not want to labour the case more unduly than was necessary. It was a very sad case, and they had a letter which evidently they would agree with him was that of a woman with a very deranged mind. The letter was that of a person of a form of mind which was deranged. He took it the jury were of the opinion that the mother had drowned the two little children in the dolly tub, and if so they would return a verdict of "Wilful murder". He also took it that they believed that the woman had taken poison from the effects of which she died, and it was for them to consider what was the state of her mind at the time. He thought they could come to no other conclusion than that she was insane at the time.

The jury were unanimously of the opinion that the two children were wilfully murdered and that the mother committed suicide during temporary insanity.

The foreman of the jury said they desired to express their deep sympathy with Mr. Gerrard.

The Coroner: I join with you in that, and will convey your sympathy. He has his cup of sorrow full, and I quite agree with you.

### **FUNERAL OF THE VICTIMS**

The remains of Mrs Gerrard and her two children were laid to rest in the burial ground attached to Hartford church on Thursday afternoon [8 May 1908]. Long before the time for the mournful ceremony to be performed streams of people poured into the village from Northwich and surrounding districts, the crowd witnessing the procession and obsequies numbering some 3,000 persons, principally women. Many assembled near the house, and discussed the tragedy in all its phases, and expressions of sympathy fell from the lips of all, and the utmost decorum prevailed. The residents in the neighbourhood drew their blinds. A short service was conducted in the house by Mr. Kettle, after which the coffin of the mother was carried out and placed upon the bier. A moment later another coffin containing the two children was brought from the house amid the breathless silence of the large assembly. Many were visibly affected. The coffins were carried to the church, a distance of from 100 to 200 yards. The bearers were for Mrs. Gerrard: - Messrs. Johnson, Kettle, Fogg, Lloyd, M. Madeley and J.W. Birtwisle; whilst the children were borne on the shoulders of Messrs. Henry Gerrard, Alexander Gerrard, Wm. Gerrard, and Herbert Dunning (cousin).

The mourners were Mr. Charles Henry Gerrard (husband), Misses Lydia, May and Beatrice Gerrard,

daughters; Ernest and Victor Gerrard, sons; Miss Beatrice Gerrard, Mr. Ernest Gerrard, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Gerrard, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Gerrard, Mr. Joseph Gerrard, Mr. John Gerrard, Mr. William Gerrard, Mr. and Mrs. Enoch Dunning (Little Budworth), Mr. and Mrs. Grimsditch (Hooton), Mrs. Warren (Altrincham), Mrs. Twist (Brighton), Mr. Jones (Cannock), Mr. Geo Gerrard (Weaverham Wood), Mr. Hy Price (Liverpool), Mrs. Fred Price (Burton-on-Trent). The mournful cortege was also joined by Mr. and Mrs. Holland (Weaverham), Mr. Fred Hall, Mr. Kettle, Mr. H. Reynolds, Dutton (Norley), Mr. Platt, Mr. A Birtwisle, Mr. Chas. Hale, Mr. James Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cookson, Mrs. Nield, Mr. Geo. Bickerstaff, and Mr. Rutter. The greatest possible sympathy was shown to the bereaved ones by the spectators who lined the route, the men in the crowd standing bare-headed.

Only the mourners and friends were allowed to enter the churchyard, thus preventing them from being disturbed by outsiders. The procession was met at the lychgate by the Rev. H.E. Burdey, senior curate of Northwich Parish Church, who conducted the service in the sacred edifice, as well as at the graveyard, in a most impressive manner.

The coffins were of polished oak with massive brass mountings and shields, on one of which was inscribed "Frances Gerrard, died May 4th, aged 44 years," and on the other: "Edith Mary and Margaret Maud, died May 4th, aged 7 and 2½ years."

The coffins were almost hidden with beautiful wreaths, whilst many mourners carried floral emblems. The contributors were: - Husband and family, Mrs. Gerrard, brothers and sisters, Grange Farm; Mr. and Mrs. Dunning, sister and brother-in-law; Mr. and Mrs. M. Gerrard, Sale; Mr. and Mrs. J. Warren, Altrincham; Mr. and Mrs. Kenyon Twist, Brighton; Mr. and Mrs. John Gerrard, Newton; Cousins Gerrard, Sale; Mr. and Mrs. Grimsditch, Hooton; Cousin Willie Gerrard, Newton; Mr. Birtwisle and family; Mr. and Mrs. Rutter; Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Price; Mr. and Mrs. Harrison and Elsie; Mere Hall Gardens, Knutsford; Mrs. Smith, Beatrice and Gladys. "With loving and deepest sympathy from a few friends, Hartford." "In loving memory, May Pinfield." "The nurse at the Grange." "Children of the old Toll Bar." Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hale and family, "With fondest love from little friend Eva." Mrs Barnes and children. "From Mary Howard to the dear little ones."

The duties of undertaker were performed by Mr. Wood, Hartford.

The large assembly which had witnessed the obsequies from the roadway were afterwards allowed in small batches to take a look at the grave. Sergeant Benfield, Constable Brett and Constable Roberts were in attendance and they experienced little difficulty in controlling the largest crowd ever present at a funeral at Hartford. The best behaviours prevailed.

*Note: The family were Methodists and it is a surprise that the funeral was conducted by an Anglican curate. However a short service was held at the house by their neighbour and friend, Mr Thomas Wesley Kettle of Grange View Cottages – who may have been a Methodist lay preacher (judging from his name!).*



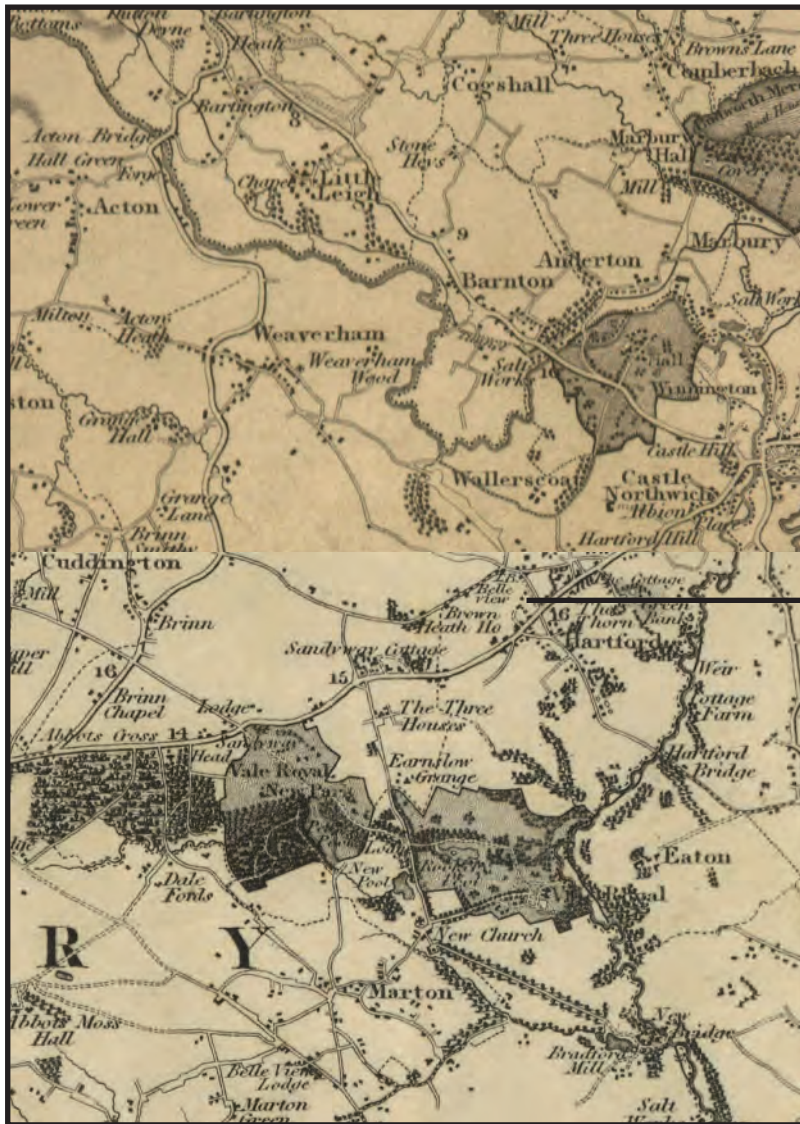
## APPENDIX 1

1864 OS Map of Cheshire, showing the area around Hartford, plus (inset) Hartford Grange and farm

## APPENDIX 2

### 1819 Greenwood Map of Cheshire showing Hartford Grange

Unfortunately the map is in four quarters which all meet at Hartford! This combination shows the corners of the NW and SW maps.



Hartford  
Grange



Hartford  
Grange

### APPENDIX 3

#### 1831 Bryant Map of Cheshire showing Hartford Grange

Once again the map is in four quarters which all meet at Hartford! This combination shows the corners of the NW and SW maps. The Grange is the L-shaped green park.



Hartford  
Grange

