



THE SIR ROGER MANWOOD HOSPITAL CHARITY

1563: Queen Elizabeth I grants the Royal Manor of Hackington (St. Stephen's) to Sir Roger Manwood, her Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Sir Roger makes the Great House at St. Stephen's his principal residence.

1570: Sir Roger builds, at a cost of approximately £500, a hospital at St. Stephen's to provide homes for the aged poor and needy. This is to comprise six almshouses and one larger house to be the home of the Parish Clerk. One of the Clerk's duties is the care of the almsperons and he is also to store wool and flax, etc. for the almsperons to spin and thus have work.

1592: Upon the death of Sir Roger, his will establishes a Charity to be funded by various rentcharges, etc. This is to provide for the maintenance of the buildings and the well-being of the residents.

(Unfortunately the income was not sufficient and a long period of comparative penury ensued).

1636: The Archbishop of Canterbury is asked by the Mayor for his help in "constituting a commission, under the Statute of Charitable Uses, to investigate the miserable state of the poor folk in the late Lord Chief Baron Manwood's almshouses".

(A Board of Trustees was subsequently set up to administer the Charity, comprising the Mayor, the Archdeacon, the Rector of St. Stephen's and nine other trustees).

1740: The house of the Parish Clerk becomes licenced premises, now 'Ye Olde Beverlie'.

1930: The Mayor, The Reverend Gordon Wilson, after making his December Visitation to the almshouses, writes to the local newspaper concerning the state of "these bug-ridden flats".

(The Lord Mayor still carries out the December Visitation to this day, as decreed by Sir Roger Manwood in his will).

1930: Mrs. Catherine Williamson, a Trustee, undertakes that the Williamson family will pay for timber floors to be installed in the almshouses to replace the existing earth floors.

1931: The public sewer is laid near to the almshouses, but the Trustees have insufficient funds for the almshouses to be connected to it.

(At this time the 'water supply' was one solitary tap on the green).

1932: St. Stephen's Church holds a house-to-house collection to raise funds for the Charity.

1939: The Trustees give the freehold of 'Manwood Green' to Canterbury City Council as they are unable to maintain it.

1956: The Trustees borrow £500 from the City Council as a mortgage so that they can afford to carry out urgent repairs.

1960: Mr. John Kaehler, former Steward of the Natural History Section of the Beane Institute and a special constable in St. Stephen's, leaves the Charity a valuable legacy comprising considerable property. There is also another legacy, from Mr. Whiteman of Tyler Hill.

(These legacies transformed the financial position of the Charity).

1983: The Trustees successfully apply for a grant from the Housing Corporation and carry out much needed improvements including the provision of ground floor lavatories.

1996: Manwood Lodge, the adjoining single storey house, is purchased by the Trustees and converted into two more almshouses.

1998: In March, the 'Relief in Need' Fund is set up, increasing the area of benefit of the Charity to cover the whole of the Parishes of St. Stephen and St. Dunstan and the Borough of Sandwich.

In November, the kitchens in the almshouses are thoroughly modernised, providing washing machines, refrigerators, freezers and cookers for all the residents.

2000: A Superintendent is appointed, forming a closer link between the Residents and the Trustees.

2002: An extensive programme of repairs and renovations to 'Ye Olde Beverlie' public house is carried out and the terms of the lease with Messrs. Shepherd Neame are re-negotiated.

2005: The administrative structure of the Trust is radically altered, the work of the paid Clerk being shared with a voluntary Secretary and voluntary Treasurer, who are both Trustees.