



Stratton St. Margaret Charities

Hedge's Charity – This was founded in 1693 and consists a piece of land 8a 1 r. Proceeds to go the widows of the parish, if none then to vicar. This year it was £15.

Swindon Advertiser 4 December 1903.

Margaret Brind, by will dated 1740, bequeathed £100 for the poor. The interest was to be distributed yearly on 20 July. Mary Broadway, also by will dated 1740, bequeathed £20 to be invested for the benefit of poor widows and the interest to be distributed yearly on 13 April. In 1757 the bequest, together with the capital of Brind's Charity, was used to buy a small amount of land in Stratton St. Margaret. In 1831 the rent from this brought in £9. When the open fields of Stratton St. Margaret were enclosed an allotment in Upper Stratton was made to Swindon church. The share of the poor, known as the Poor's Allotment, was reckoned at two-fifths of the land allotted. In 1800 4 acres at the southern end were set apart for the benefit of the second poor.

Source: - Swindon: Education and Charities, A History of the County of Wiltshire: Volume 9 (1970), pp. 159-168.

Further to the above the following article appeared in the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald on 17/02/1948:

The three Brind sisters, along with two others, were born in Wanborough, the daughters of Thomas Brind and his wife, the former Dorothy Hedges. Thomas' sister Martha Brind was the wife of Oliver Pleydell and it was their daughter Mary who married into the Goddard family and became the mother of Richard and Pleydell Goddard. Margaret and Dorothy died within days of each other in May 1748. Dorothy left a brief will with bequests to her married sisters. The bulk of her estate went to Margaret, who died less than four weeks later. The sums of money bequeathed by the two sisters were combined in 1757, when acting on behalf of Margaret and Mary, "the minister, churchwardens and overseers of the parish of Swindon" purchased a three-acre close of meadow or pasture ground called Cannon's Close in Stratton St Margaret. Although the money didn't stretch to cover the "for ever" clause, the charity was still in operation more than 150 years later when in 1903 the poor fund stood at £30 and the widow's fund at £5.

Trio's cash funded charities

The last tenant to lease Cannon's Close was Richard Blunsden, who paid £9 a year rent in 1831. When land at Stratton St Margaret, including Cannon's Close, was enclosed, an allotment at Upper Stratton was granted to Swindon's parish church. During the 1880s land acquired with the sisters' bequest was sold, along with land belonging to Richard Goddard and the Poor's Allotment charities. From the money raised £1,171 was invested as a fund for the poor and £203 for widows. In 1906 these and a number of other 18th and 19th century charities were combined. By 1962 the annual income was £110 and only residents of the ancient parish of Swindon were eligible to apply.

Mary Horne by a testamentary paper gave £100 for poor householders not receiving relief from the parish, as well as £100 for the free school. In 1784 Mary's sister, Elizabeth, distributed the interest on this legacy and when she died in 1793 desired in her will that all her sister's bequests should be regularly paid. Joseph and Elizabeth Cooper augmented the Horne charities by settling certain land upon the trusts of Mary Horne's will. In 1796 they conveyed 9 acres in Stratton St. Margaret to James Crowdy, who was to pay half the income to the schoolmaster of the free school for teaching a number of girls, and to distribute the other half among the poor. In 1834 the income was £23 16s, of which £9 was paid to the schoolmaster and the remainder was distributed among poor householders in sums of 2s 6d. or less. In 1896 all the property was sold and £1,034 invested. The annual income was then divided equally between the poor and the free school. In 1903 £12 18s 6d. was distributed among the poor. *Source: - Swindon: Education and Charities, A History of the County of Wiltshire: Volume 9 (1970), pp. 159-168.*

On Friday, January 22nd, eighty-six families of agricultural poor of Lower Stratton, had distributed amongst them by Mrs Kirby, twenty-six score of good beef and three sacks of potatoes, through the accustomed liberality of Wm. Beckett Turner, Esq., the worthy owner of the farm, in her occupation, in the above village, which proved a very reasonable and acceptable gift at this time of the year.

Swindon Evening Advertiser, 1 February 1858

John Herring Trust – Set up in his will of 20-05-1723 to educate 6 Stratton schoolchildren. John Herring was a local Baptist, originally from Great Coxwell, Berkshire. His two meadows called 'Long Gore', rental to be distributed and yielding £3 per annum of which £2:10s is applied in providing yearly prizes for six scholars belonging to the elementary schools in the parish and the remaining 10s is given to four widows, members of the church, reported in 1901 Parish minute book also described in *Swindon Advertiser 04-12-1903*, in 1905 Messrs. Jukes & Ashe were re-elected as trustees. *Swindon Advertiser 28-04-1905*, 1936 winners, James Brown, Stanley Mulcock, Reginald Black, Edgar Buckingham, Mary Warren, Joan Hobbs, Dorothy Lawrence and Doreen Edmunds. *North Wilts Herald 24-01-1936*. Trust was still running in 1967, John Herring Crescent is named after him.

Church Estate – In 1633 John Barrett, of Marlborough & William Barrett of Stratton gave a tenement 'Church House' and 3 ½ rods lying in West End towards costs of repair and decoration of church, in 1796 due 'Enclosure Act' land changes the land was exchanged. In 1903 the house is divided into 3 tenants and the land into allotments at £17 per year.

Swindon Advertiser 4 December 1903

In 1791 Mr A Atkins opened a Nonconformist fund with £3,533 13s at 3%, to go to ministers, now used to fund repairs.

Swindon Advertiser 4 December 1903

A second nonconformist fund was set up in 1754 by Joseph Tompkins with £100 this goes to Baptist minister.

Swindon Advertiser 4 December 1903

The Charities Commission held a local Inquiry into Parish Charities on 27-11-1903 in the Reading Rooms. *Swindon Advertiser 13-11-1903*.