

Extract from British History Online -

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57144>

Sponsor

Victoria County History

Publication

[A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 6](#)

Author

L.F. Salzman (editor)

Year published

1951

Pages

261-264

Citation

'Parishes: Willoughby', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 6: Knightlow hundred* (1951), pp. 261-264. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57144> Date accessed: 24 December 2008. > [Add to my bookshelf](#)

Highlight

 (Min 3 characters)

Please enable javascript to use this function

Contents

[WILLOUGHBY](#)  
[Manor Church Advowson Charities Footnotes](#)

## WILLOUGHBY

Acreage: 1,715.

Population: 1911, 276; 1921, 306; 1931, 336.

Willoughby is a parish on the eastern border of the county, 7 miles south of Rugby. It is divided from Wolfhamcote on the south by the River Leam and from Grandborough on the west by a tributary of this river; the village is in the centre of the parish on another small stream. The northern and eastern boundaries, where Willoughby marches with Barby and Braunston in Northants., are largely artificial. In the north-east corner near Cleve's Hill a height of 450 ft. is attained, but most of the parish lies in the south Warwickshire plain at an altitude of 300 ft. or less. The Oxford Canal, which crosses the eastern side of the parish, was said in 1830 to have 'much increased the prosperity of this place'. (fn. 1) A hundred years ago the houses of the village were 'chiefly ancient with thatched roofs . . . have a very rural appearance, and the whole village has a pleasing air of tranquility and retirement'. (fn. 2) At this time Willoughby achieved some prominence from a sulphurous and saline spring, discovered about 1800 on Mr. Edmunds's farm in the south of the parish, with medicinal properties and recommended for both drinking and bathing. (fn. 3) The fair originally granted in 1248 was still held in the 1830's, (fn. 4) and at the present time the village, from its situation on the high road from Daventry to Coventry and Rugby, and also with canal communication and a main-line railway-station (formerly L.N.E.R. from Marylebone to the North), seems likely to expand and prosper.

East of the village, near the main road, there is a group of 17th-century houses built of squared and coursed sandstone, with thatched roofs, but all have been fitted with modern windows. Two small cottages have walls of puddled clay with small windows set in deep splays, others which have been rebuilt still retain some of what are termed locally mud walls; their thatched roofs are now covered with corrugated-iron sheets.

Parliamentarian troops passing through the village after the battle of Edge Hill are said to have tried to pull down the ancient cross, from which they were dissuaded by the vicar. (fn. 5) An Inclosure Act for 36 yardlands (1,500 acres) was passed in 1759. (fn. 6)

## Manor

In 1086 *WILLOUGHBY* contained several small estates, three being held under Turchil of Warwick by Ulvic (1½ virgates), Ordric (2 hides extending into Woolscott and Calcutt in Grandborough), and Leuiet and Goduin (½ hide). These three pieces of land had been held freely before 1066 by the same respective subtenants. (fn. 7) Hugh de Grantemesnil held one and one-sixth hides in Hillmorton and Willoughby of the king *in custodia*; this had been held by Grinchet and Suain. (fn. 8)

The resulting overlordship of the earls of Warwick, as to Turchil's holdings, is recorded as to one-half and one-fifth of a fee in 1242–3, (fn. 9) 1268 (half-fee only, the fifth being returned under Woolscott), (fn. 10) 1315, (fn. 11) and 1401. (fn. 12) The Grantemesnil holding, here and at Shrewley, (fn. 13) was granted out by Henry I to Wigan, (fn. 14) to be held by serjeanty of acting as marshal, later defined as that of providing at his own cost one man and two horses in every army of the king in England and Wales. (fn. 15) Ralph son of Wigan died in or shortly before 1215 and his brother William, apparently to save the estate from escheating, made it over to Henry de Waltham, his nephew, who did homage to King John for this land, amounting to 1 carucate and a halfvirgate and a mill in Willoughby. In 1221, therefore, it was agreed that Henry de Waltham should hold it for life for an annual

payment of 2 marks, with reversion to Ivo son of (Henry's uncle) William and his heirs; he stated that he did not hold the whole of the estate, as Aubrey widow of Ralph son of Wigan held in dower and the church was enfeoffed of one acre. (fn. 16) In 1221 Henry owed 10 marks for relief of William's lands, (fn. 17) and the following year again did homage; (fn. 18) shortly after this he was in possession of one carucate and 17s. rent, held by serjeanty of acting as marshal in the Court of Common Pleas, when this portion was stated to be worth 2½ marks. (fn. 19) Henry died and Ivo did homage for his lands in 1235. (fn. 20) In 1251–2 the total holding was said to be 12 virgates, valued at £12. It was then stated that Wigan, with Juliana Pantulf his wife, had been enfeoffed of it by Henry II (*sic*). His son Ralph had kept 10 virgates in demesne, and had subinfeudated William Hastang of 2 virgates. He also had enfeoffed Oliver Sarazin of an unspecified amount by service of a sore sparrowhawk, and Oliver had enfeoffed William de Flamvil on his marriage with his daughter Petronilla. After William's death the Sarazin holding, apparently of 2 virgates, was divided as 4 half-virgates between Oliver's children William, Thomas, Rouland, and Maud. The 10 virgates in demesne descended to Ralph's brother William and his son Ivo, on whose death without heirs his uncle Thurstan enfeoffed the Hospital of St. John Baptist, Oxford, of 'the whole manor', worth £20 with the advowson of the church. (fn. 21) Ivo's death occurred in or before 1242, when his cousin Peter, Thurstan's son, paid 40 marks to have seisin of all his Warwickshire lands, (fn. 22) and in the same year Ralph de Broke, apparently the son-in-law of Thurstan's sister Lucy, released all his right in the manor to the hospital. (fn. 23) At the inquisition *post mortem* on Ivo, when it was stated that his possessions in Willoughby amounted to one carucate of land and 20s. and a pound of pepper in rents, it was also stated that Peter had been born twenty-five years before Thurstan married his mother, and whether he or Godfrey son of Ralph (de Broke) was the right heir was left to 'the king's discernment'. (fn. 24) The lands were divided by fine in 1242, when Godfrey granted to Peter 2 carucates in Willoughby and Shrewley in Hatton in consideration of 16 marks silver and the right to hold, of the hospital, all the lands and tenements in Willoughby which Godfrey held on the day the concord was made. (fn. 25) In the same year Peter granted a carucate to the hospital in frank almoin, (fn. 26) and also the carucate formerly held by Ivo, half of which represented the dower formerly held by Aubrey de Thayden, widow of Ivo's uncle Ralph. (fn. 27) The actual grantor in the latter case was the Prior of Canons Ashby (Northants.), whose right in the land Peter acknowledged, and to whom the master of the hospital gave 50 marks silver. Various other grants were made to this priory, (fn. 28) but by 1316 the Hospital of St. John Baptist, Oxford, held the lordship of the manor, (fn. 29) and in the previous year held the half and fifth fees under the Earl of Warwick. (fn. 30) As early as 1248 the warden, brethren, and sick of the hospital were granted a Tuesday market and Whitsun fair of two days' duration at Willoughby. (fn. 31)

The gifts of land and other property to the hospital up to 1246 are recited on the charter roll of 30 Henry III, (fn. 32) and many were subsequently received. (fn. 33) In 1269 John son of Peter Thurstayn gave a messuage and a carucate of land, no doubt the remainder of the estate formerly held by Wigan in serjeanty. (fn. 34) In 1294 it received two cottages from William son of Ivo de Wyleby, (fn. 35) and in 1346 a messuage, 83 acres of land, 7 of meadow and 2s. 9d. rent from William le Blount of Wyleby and Lucy his wife, (fn. 36) these latter probably representing the holding of 3 virgates by Robert Blund under the Earl of Warwick in 1235, (fn. 37) and the fifth of

a fee held by William le Blount from the master of the hospital early in the 14th century. ([fn. 38](#))

In 1457, on the foundation of Magdalen College on the site of the hospital, its endowments were transferred to that college, ([fn. 39](#)) which has ever since held the lordship of the manor. In 1535 the manor was at farm for £8 10s. 6d.; rents of customary tenants produced £13 17s. 2d., and of freeholders £1 1s. 7½d. ([fn. 40](#)) From at least 1444–5 the hospital had leased most of its Willoughby estates to Richard Hamund or Clarke and his descendants, ([fn. 41](#)) and similar leases were made by the college till 1730 or later. ([fn. 42](#)) Other tenants were Thomas Andrew, senior (died 1496), who held a messuage and a virgate of land, worth 20s. 8d., by fealty and 1d. annual rent, ([fn. 43](#)) and John Smyth (1501), three messuages and two virgates worth 40s. by fealty only. ([fn. 44](#)) The President and Fellows of Magdalen are still the principal landowners, Willoughby being the college's most ancient estate. ([fn. 45](#))



Magdalen College, Oxford. *Lozenge sable and ermine a chief sable with three lilies therein.*

Messuages, arable and pasture land, and rent in Willoughby and elsewhere were granted by Thomas de Astley to his chantry, later Astley College, in 1337. ([fn. 46](#)) The portion in Willoughby and Dunchurch was worth 54s. 4d. in 1535. ([fn. 47](#)) These properties were granted in tail to Henry, Marquess of Dorset, and Lady Frances his wife (1546). ([fn. 48](#))

## Church

The church of *ST. NICHOLAS* is situated to the west of the DaventryCoventry road in a small churchyard on the western outskirts of the village. It consists of a chancel, nave, north and south aisles, tower, north and south porches, and was built at the beginning of the 16th century, the tower being the last part to be completed. The tower and porches are built of ashlar, the rest of the church of sandstone rubble with worked dressings.

The chancel has been almost entirely rebuilt in brick, including the angle buttresses, rendered over with cement and lined out with joints to imitate ashlar. It has only one window, a modern one of three lights. The upper half of the south aisle walls has been rebuilt partly in stone, partly in brick, including the plain parapet, rendered with cement. In carrying out this work the pointed arches to the windows were replaced with four-centred heads roughly formed in stone and cement, and new tracery was fitted to the old jambs, keeping the design by shortening the lights in the tracery; at the same time brick buttresses rendered with cement were built at each end of the aisle. It is lighted by three tracery windows of three cinquefoil ogee lights, one in the

east wall and one on each side of the porch; another at the west end has been blocked up and cemented over. The porch has a slated roof with a moulded coping to the gable, its kneelers carved with fleurs-de-lis; it is now used as a heating-chamber. The entrance arch is pointed, of two splayed orders continued down the jambs with moulded capitals to both orders, which are extended to form stops to the hood-mould. On both sides there are stone benches and single-light square-headed windows of one splay. The doorway has a fourcentred arch of one sunk splay continued without capitals. The north aisle parapet has been rebuilt in brick and cemented over. There are three windows, two east of the porch and one west, the ones to the east and west are original, the other has modern tracery of the same design, but the lights in the tracery trefoil instead of cinquefoil. They have pointed arches of two splays, the outer one sunk, three pointed cinquefoil lights, with four similar lights forming the tracery. The window to the west is similar but has a hollow instead of a sunk splay and is constructed of red sandstone. The porch closely resembles that on the south. The entrance arch is pointed, moulded on its outer face, a single splay on the inner, both carried down the jambs, and has a hood-mould with large diamondshaped stops. The doorway has a pointed arch of one wide splay set in a stop-chamfered segmental-headed recess.

The tower, which has a moulded plinth, is divided into four stages by moulded string-courses and is finished with a moulded embattled parapet, and panelled piers at each angle. There are slender diagonal buttresses rising in five weathered stages on the west, the lower stage finished with a gable with the figures 1 on the north and 30 on the south, the second figure on the north is too decayed to read but presumably it is a 5 for 1530; there are similar buttresses at right angles to the south-east and north-east angles. The west side, in the lower stage, has a pointed tracery window of three trefoil lights and a hood-mould with large diamond-shaped stops having carved rosettes in the centre. On the south is a single trefoil light to the ringing-chamber, and traces of a painted sundial. On the north, at the junction of the tower with the nave, a half-octagon stair-turret, which diminishes at the second and third stages; it has two loop-lights in the lower stage, and a door with a flat chamfered head and jambs. On the east is a clock-face in the second stage. The belfry windows on all four faces have moulded pointed arches of two orders with two trefoil lights and hood-moulds formed by the string-course.

The chancel (18 ft. 7 in. by 16 ft. 9 in.) has a lowpitched modern roof, and a tiled floor with one step to the altar. On the north side there is a roughly formed later opening with a semicircular head giving access to what was probably a chantry chapel at the end of the aisle, now an organ-chamber.

The nave (34 ft. 6 in. by 15 ft. 3 in.) has a flat plastered ceiling below a low-pitched roof, and a stonepaved floor. The arcades are alike and consist of three bays of moulded four-centred arches, the moulding being carried down without capitals, forming lozengeshaped pillars resting on lozenge bases with one splay; the responds at each end are half-pillars. The chancel arch is a repeat of the arcade. The tower arch is pointed, of three orders, the inner supported on attached shafts with moulded capitals and bases, the outer on the nave side continues to the ground, on the tower side it dies out on the tower walls. The south aisle has a plastered ceiling, and a stonepaved floor to the east bays and modern tiles to the west bay. The south wall has been roughly arcaded with four-centred heads in three bays, part of the heads forming

reararches to the windows. The door has a segmental pointed rear-arch and above it a painted and framed coat of arms of George III. In the west bay against the arcade pillar there is a rather unusual font. It is of red sandstone, shaped like an inverted bell with a simple roll-moulded rim and a square stem with beaded panels on three sides, the other is plain. Carved immediately below the rim on one side there are two crude demi-figures with outstretched arms, ending in a sort of fleur-de-lis, separated by two leaves shaped like fleurs-de-lis. It has a deep lead-lined basin and the bowl and stem are out of one piece of stone; the base is hidden below the flooring. It probably dates from early in the 13th century.

The north aisle (44 ft. by 8 ft. 11 in.) has a plaster ceiling and stone-paved floor. It is extended at the east end for a chapel, now screened off for an organchamber. Concealed behind the organ there is a 17th-century table tomb. ([fn. 49](#)) On the one end that can be seen there is a coat of arms which also occurs on a wall memorial on the north wall to Henry son of Thomas Clerke, died 1687, and his wife, died 1669. There is also a wall memorial to George Watson with the following inscription: 'In the coast of Guiney George Watson son of Thomas Watson of Willoughby (and one of his Majesstes Captains at sea) departed this life July y<sup>e</sup> 15 anno D. 1674 aetatis suae 45 and gave to y<sup>e</sup> poor of Willoughby y<sup>e</sup> profit of 50<sup>p</sup> for ever to be distributed as by a decree in Chancery is sett forth. Death hath contrould a Captain bold Yet loss of life is gain Especially when charity For ever doth remaine.'

The tower (9 ft. 11 in. by 9 ft. 11 in.) is screened off as a vestry and the ceiling plastered. A later door has been cut through the tower wall to give internal access to the tower stair, and above it, about 8 ft. from the floor, there is evidence of a narrow blocked doorway. The doorway to the ringing-chamber has an ogee head and that to the belfry a four-centred arch. In the ringing-chamber there is a disused carillon with a wooden drum and iron teeth mounted on a wroughtoak frame, and corner posts with ball finials, probably early-17th century. The clock, also disused, probably dates from the beginning of the 17th century. It has two trains and the weights are raised by iron capstan bars on the drums; the uprights of the iron frame are finished with scrolls. An electric clock has been installed as a memorial of the war of 1939–45.

There are six bells, ([fn. 50](#)) five by Joseph Smith, 1713, and one by William Chapman, 1781.

The registers begin in 1625.

## **Advowson**

The church was granted by Thurstan to the Hospital of St. John Baptist, Oxford, before 1246, ([fn. 51](#)) when the grant was confirmed by Gilbert de Segrave, ([fn. 52](#)) as it was by Thurstan's grandson John in 1269. ([fn. 53](#)) It has ever since followed the descent of the manor.

The exact date of the appropriation is not known, but the value of the vicarage in 1291 was £2, ([fn. 54](#)) and in 1535 £9 4s. 4d. ([fn. 55](#)) The rectory in 1535 was farmed for £8 10s. 6d. ([fn. 56](#))

John Hayward in 1436–7 bequeathed a messuage in Willoughby and 20 acres of land in Kites Hardwick and Broadwell to maintain a lamp to burn perpetually in Willoughby church. ([fn. 57](#)) Other land in Woolscott, Hardwick, and Thurlaston was given for the support of an obit and distribution of bread and herrings in the church, to be followed by prayers for all Christians. ([fn. 58](#))

## Charities

The Willoughby Charity, comprising the charities of John Haywood and Margaret his wife, William Flavell, John Brook, George Watson, and Bridget Freemantle, formerly regulated by a scheme of the Court of Exchequer of 6 July 1841 and a scheme of the Charity Commissioners dated 6 November 1868, is now regulated by schemes of the said Commissioners dated 18 January 1907 and 22 October 1920. Under the scheme of 1907 part of the endowment of the charity is separated to constitute the Ecclesiastical Charity. Another part of the endowment constitutes the endowment of the Willoughby Educational Foundation. The scheme also appoints bodies of trustees to administer (1) the Ecclesiastical Charity and (2) the original charity (other than the Ecclesiastical Charity and the Foundation). The annual income of the charity amounts to £373 approximately.

William Cropper, by will dated 20 May 1890, bequeathed to the churchwardens and overseers £200, the income to be expended on coals to be distributed to the ten oldest men and the ten oldest women in the Parish on St. Thomas's Day. The annual income of the charity amounts to £8 14s. 4d.

Ann Barker, by will dated 23 January 1902, bequeathed a moiety of her residuary estate to the vicar, churchwardens, and overseers of Willoughby, the interest, amounting to £4 6s., to be distributed about Christmas Day equally between the aged poor residing in the parish.

Mary Adelaide Hodgson, by will dated 13 June 1935, bequeathed £200 to the Coventry Diocesan Trustees to augment the endowment of the vicarage of Willoughby, requesting the vicar to maintain in good order certain graves and tombstones in the churchyard.

## Footnotes

- 1 West, *Directory Warws.* 739.
- 2 White, *Directory Warws.* (1850), p. 680.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 West, loc. cit.
- 5 White, loc. cit.
- 6 Slater, *Engl. Peasantry and Encl.* 302.
- 7 *V.C.H. Warw.* i, 321–2.
- 8 Ibid. 325.
- 9 *Book of Fees*, 957. The fifth of a fee was held by Turchil's descendant Thomas de Arderne.

- 10 *Cal. Inq. p.m.* i, 679 (p. 213).
- 11 *Ibid.* v, 615 (p. 404).
- 12 *Chan. Inq. p.m.* 2 Hen. IV, 58.
- 13 *V.C.H. Warw.* iii, 117.
- 14 *Red Book of Exch.* (Rolls Ser.), 304.
- 15 *Book of Fees*, 1180, 1230.
- 16 Assize R. 951, m. 15*d*.
- 17 Pipe R. 5 Hen. III, m. 15.
- 18 *Exc. e Rot. Fin.* (Rec. Com.), i, 77.
- 19 *Book of Fees*, 375.
- 20 *Exc. e Rot. Fin.* (Rec. Com.), i, 285, 287.
- 21 *Book of Fees*, 1279.
- 22 *Exc. e Rot. Fin.* (Rec. Com.), i, 388.
- 23 MSS. of Magdalen Coll., *ex inf.* Estates Bursar.
- 24 *Cal. Inq. p.m.* i, 919.
- 25 *Feet of F.* (Dugd. Soc. xi), 608.
- 26 *Ibid.* 606.
- 27 *Ibid.* 609.
- 28 Magdalen Coll. MSS.
- 29 *Feudal Aids*, v, 176.
- 30 *Cal. Inq. p.m.* v, 615 (p. 404).
- 31 *Cal. Chart. R.* i, 334. Indexed as Wyleby (Wilby) in Northants. but the Hospital had no connexion with this place.
- 32 *Cal. Chart. R.* i, 296–7.
- 33 Magdalen Coll. MSS.
- 34 *Feet of F.* (Dugd. Soc. xi), 856.
- 35 *Chan. Inq.* a.q.d. xxi, 14. In *Cal. Pat.* 1292–1301, p. 107, the donor is described as Robert son of Ivo.
- 36 *Feet of F.* (Dugd. Soc. xv), no. 1984.
- 37 *Book of Fees*, 957.
- 38 Add. MS. 28024, fol. 192 v.
- 39 *V.C.H. Oxon.* ii, 159.
- 40 *Valor Eccl.* (Rec. Com.), ii, 278.
- 41 Dugd. 281.
- 42 *Ibid.* Leigh Clarke of this family was High Constable of Knightlow Hundred in 1652: *Warw. Co. Records.* iii, 46.
- 43 *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. VII*, ii, 293. The college is described in error as All Souls.
- 44 *Ibid.* ii, 520.
- 45 *Ex inf.* Estates Bursar, Magdalen Coll.
- 46 *Cal. Pat.* 1334–8, p. 389.
- 47 *Valor Eccl.* (Rec. Com.), iii, 61.
- 48 *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (1), 1537 (7).



- 49 This is the tomb of Thomas son of Clement Clerke, died 1663, aged 83: Dugd. 282.
- 50 Tilley and Walters, *Church Bells of Warws.* 263–4.
- 51 *Book of Fees*, 1279.
- 52 Magdalen Coll. MSS.
- 53 *Feet of F.* (Dugd. Soc. xi), 856.
- 54 *Tax. Eccl.* (Rec. Com.), 244. The valuation of 'the church' (i.e. rectory) does not appear in the printed *Taxatio*, but Dugdale (281) gives it as '8 marks'; on the other hand it is said in 1340 to be assessed at 5 marks: *Inq. Non.* (Rec. Com.), 446.
- 55 *Valor Eccl.* (Rec. Com.), iii, 62.
- 56 *Ibid.* ii, 278.
- 57 Chan. Inq. p.m. 15 Hen. VI, 64.
- 58 Exch. Spec. Com. 1440 (19 Eliz.).