1906 Inquiry into Endowed Charities in Berkshire – Parish of Tilehurst

In 1906, by order of the House of Commons, the Charity Commissioners undertook an Inquiry into Endowed Charities in each Parish within the County of Berkshire. The Inquiry covering the Parish of Tilehurst took place on 27th April 1906. Section VI of the Inquiry Report dated December 1906 contains the following description of the venue and attendees:

> VI. Report of the Assistant Commissioner
>
> The Inquiry was held in the Parish Room near Tilehurst church, where there were present Messrs. Charles Collins, county councillor and churchwarden of Tilehurst ; J. Millen and W. J. Sargent, overseers ; T. H. Woodeson, assistant overseer and clerk of the parish council ; and John James, of Tilehurst ; D. M. Davies, chairman of the parish council ; and Herbert Blatch, churchwarden of Theale ; and W. C. F. Anderson, secretary of the Berkshire Education Committee.

The Inquiry Report included transcripts of Charity Commissioner reports from previous years, as well as the reports tabled in 1906. All those reports relating to Poor's Lands Charity and Wheat's Charity are reproduced verbatim below, in chronological order.

- 1837 Report – Wheat's
- 1837 Report – Poor's Lands
- 1862-63 General Digest – Wheat's and Poor's Lands (tabular format)
- 1906 Report – Wheat's
- 1906 Report – Poor's Lands
- 1906 Tabular Summary – Wheat's and Poor's Lands

Terminology

Throughout the Inquiry Report, the term 'allotment' refers to an allocation or parcel of land, not to an 'allotment garden'.

Currency Notation

Ten pounds eight shillings and six pence is shown as "10*l.* 8*s.* 6*d*."

(*l.* for libra, *s.* for solidus, *d*. for denarius*)*.

Land Area Notation

Areas are given in acres (A), roods (R), and square perches (P).

(1 acre = 4 roods. 1 rood = 40 square perches.)

1837 Report – Wheat's

WHEAT'S CHARITY

A memorandum on the above table, of the date of 1799, in the handwriting of the Rev. Dr. Chandler, then rector of the parish, records that since the date of the tablet (1731), a charity of the yearly produce of 1*l*. 10*s*. had been left by Mr. *Wheat*, for three great coats to be given to the poor people of the parish of Tilehurst, the said money issuing out of an estate in Silchester, which was then the property of Mr. Lyford, surgeon, of Basingstoke, by whom the said charge was then paid.

The above land at Silchester is now the property of —— Lyford, esq., of Basingstoke, who pays the sum of 30*s*. annually to the clergyman of this parish, by whom it is laid out in the purchase of two great coats, which are given by him to two poor men selected by himself as most deserving.

1837 Report – Poor's Lands

POOR'S LANDS

On the inclosure of this parish, under an Act of Parliament 51st Geo. III, there was allotted to John Blagrave, lord of the manor, and to the rector, churchwardens, and overseers of the poor of the parish of Tilehurst, as trustees for the poor, a parcel of land, marked on the plan annexed to the award as No. 1, adjoining the workhouse, containing 9A. lR. 12P.; another parcel (No. 2), lying on Kentwood Common, containing 3A. 2R. 35P.; and a third parcel of lands (No. 3), lying on Kentwood Common, near Harmoor, containing 15A. 2R.

The two first-mentioned allotments are now let to John Webb, esq., on a lease dated 29th September 1816, for the term of 21 years thence ensuing, at the rent of 17*l*. 4*s*. per annum.

The third parcel is let on lease, dated 29th September 1815, to Mrs. Sophia Sheppard, widow, for the term of 21 years, from the date, at the yearly rent of 26*l*. 7*s*.

The proceeds, amounting together to 43*l*. 11*s*., are laid out in coals, which are distributed through the winter to all the poor parishioners renting under 10*l*. per annum, without regard to their being resident within the limits of the parish, at the discretion of the churchwardens, with the consent of the lord of the manor and rector. About 220 families receive them, the share to each being about 4 cwt. A small stock is also reserved, in order to render assistance to poor persons in case of sickness.

1862-63 General Digest – Wheat's and Poor's Lands

Locality of Charity.	Tilehurst	Tilehurst
Designation of Charity.	Wheat	Poor's Lands
Endowments. – Real Estate.		
Houses and Lands. (Acreage of Lands.)	—	31A. 0R. 4P.
Rent of Real Estate.	—	29*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.*
Rents-charge and Fixed Annual Payments.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	—
Endowments. – Personalty.		
Stock.	—	—
Dividends and Interest.	—	—
Total Gross Income.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	29*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.*
Total Former Income.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	43*l.* 11*s.* 0*d.*
Objects of Foundation, or Purposes to which the Income is applicable.		
Education.	—	—
Church Purposes.	—	—
Support of Almshouses, their Inmates, and Pensioners.	—	—
Distribution of Articles in Kind. (Articles.)	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.* *Clothing.*	29*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.* *Coals.*

1906 Report – Wheat's

WHEAT'S CHARITY

The rentcharge of 30*s*. is now paid by Mr. Henry Welch Thornton, of Beaurepaire Park, Basingstoke, the owner and occupier of land containing 65a. 3r. 15p., known as Hall's Farm, in Silchester and Pamber, out of which the charge issues. It is collected every two or three years by the churchwardens, who, together with the rector, administer the charity.

The income is expended in the purchase of reefer coats, costing from 10*s*. to 17*s*. each, which are given to aged men who are past work, selected by the trustees on the recommendation of the clergy. The benefit of the Charity is confined to the civil parish of Tilehurst, nothing having been given within memory to inhabitants of Theale or St. George's.

In 1897 eight coats, costing 4*l*. 9*s*., were distributed, in 1899 five costing 3*l*. 4*s*. 7*d*., in 1902 five costing the same amount, in 1903 two costing 1*l*. 10*s*., and in 1905 two costing 1*l*. 9*s*. 10*d*., leaving a balance of 1*l*. 5*s*. 9*d*. in the hands of the churchwardens, besides two years' payments which had not yet been collected.

1906 Report – Poor's Lands

POOR'S LANDS

These allotments, it was declared by the Inclosure Act (51 George III., c. 141), were to be let by the trustees for the purpose, and the rents and profits arising therefrom were to be laid out in fuel, which fuel was to be distributed among the poor inhabitants of the parish of Tilehurst who should be legally settled therein and should occupy lands and tenements under the yearly value of 10*l*., and such portions of the allotments as were not so let were to be appropriated for the purpose of sowing furze, planting wood, and cutting fuel, which fuel was to be distributed among such poor inhabitants as aforesaid; provided that if the rents and profits should at any time be more than sufficient to answer the purposes for which the same allotments were directed to be set out, then it should be lawful for the trustees to apply the overplus of such rents and profits for the relief and benefit of the poor for whose benefit the allotments should be set out in such manner as the trustees should think proper.

The Inclosure Award, which was dated 26th February 1817, incorporated these trusts by reference.

The Charity is under the management of the rector and churchwardens of Tilehurst and the overseers of Tilehurst and Theale. The lord of the manor (Mr. H. B. Blagrave of Calcot Park), although a trustee, has taken no part in the administration, nor has the late rector.

Mr. T. H. Woodeson is clerk to the trustees and receives 5*l*. 5*s*. yearly, which covers his commission as rent collector and his trouble in managing the allotments.

The property belonging to this Charity is now let as follows :—

1. Land near Park Farm, Church End, Tilehurst, known as the Poor's Land, and containing 8a. 2r., let on a yearly tenancy to R. Blagrave at the yearly rent of 12*l*.
2. Land on the common, Tilehurst, containing 2a. 2r. 20p., and let in allotments to various tenants at the aggregate yearly rent of 5*l*. 5*s*.
3. Land at Chapel Hill, Tilehurst, containing 3a. 2r. 25p., and let in allotments to various tenants at the aggregate yearly rent of 3*l*. 15*s*.
4. Land at Harmoor Hill, Tilehurst Common, containing 3a. 0r. 28p., and let as allotments to various tenants at the aggregate yearly rent of 6*l*. 9*s*.
5. Land on the common, Tilehurst, containing 4a. 2r. 20p., and let to F. Wilder and others as trustees for a public recreation ground, for the term of 21 years from Michaelmas 1897, terminable at the end of the 8th, 12th, or 16th year, at the yearly rent after the first four years of 16*l*. 3*s*. 9*d*.
6. Land at Tilehurst Common, containing 5a. 2r. 20p., let to Richard Armstrong on a lease for seven years from Michaelmas 1901 at the yearly rent of 10*l*. 5*s*.

The allotment land is let in plots of 20 perches at 5*s*. per annum each, and as they are not always fully let, the income varies slightly. The above figures represent what was received in 1905.

Tithe of about 4*l*. 5*s*. is payable to the rector of Tilehurst, but the late rector, Mr. Routh, who died in February 1905, returned it, as the Inclosure Act directed, to the trustees together with a contribution of his own towards the coal distribution.

The only other outgoing in connexion with the property is the occasional expense of fencing.

The net income is applied towards a distribution of coal at Christmas. About 10*s*. yearly is expended in printing tickets and notices advertising the distribution throughout Tilehurst and Theale, to which places the Charity is confined. In the last six years, from about 30*l*. to about 50*l*. has been expended in coal, of a total weight varying as a rule from 24 to 48 tons yearly, which is divided in doles of two or three hundredweight and delivered to householders of not more than 10*l*. annual value, of whom there are upwards of 200 in Tilehurst and about 100 in Theale. In 1904 the exceptional amount of 64 tons 16 cwt. was distributed in doles of 4 cwt. each. In 1905 32 tons 16 cwt. at 18*s*. 10*d*. a ton, costing 30*l*. 17*s*. 9*d*., were divided in lots of 2 cwt. each among 328 persons, and a balance of 14*l*. 9*s*. 2*d*. was left in the trustees' hands at the close of the financial year on Lady-day 1906.

1906 Tabular Summary – Wheat and Poor's Lands

Parish, Township or Chapelry	Tilehurst (including Theale)	Tilehurst (including Theale)
Donor or Title of Charity.	Wheat, Mr.	Poor's Lands
Endowments. – Real Estate and its Income.		
Houses and Lands. (Acreage of Lands.)	—	28A. 0R. 33P.
Gross Rent thereof.	—	53*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*
Rent-charges and Fixed Yearly Payments from Real Estate.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	—
Endowments. – Personalty and its Income.		
Stock.	—	—
Securities for Money and other Personality.	—	—
Dividends and Interest.	—	—
Total Gross Income.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	*53l. 17s. 9d.*
Objects of Foundation, or Purposes to which the Income is applicable.		
Education.	—	—
Church Purposes.	—	—
Almshouses and Pensions.	—	—
Distribution to the Poor. In Kind.	1*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*	*53l. 17s. 9d.*
Other Public Uses.	—	—