

Account of Purley on Thames

Magna Britannica

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Magna Britannica (Lyssons - 1806)

PURLEY in the hundred of Theale, lies four miles north-west of Reading, near the road to Wallingford. The manor of Great-Purley was, for several generations, in the family of Carew (*note a*) , from whom it passed by female heirs to the Iwardbys (*note b*) and St Johns (*note c*) .

It was bought of the St John family by Sir Robert Mackreth and afterwards passed, by two several purchases, to Mr Martindale and the late Anthony Storer esq. who was about to build a new house on the estate, which has since been erected from designs of James Wyatt esq. pursuant to the directions in Mr Storer's will, which appropriated a sum of money for that purpose. Purley House and manor are now the property of the honourable Mrs Storer, sister-in-law of the late proprietor. The reversion is vested in her son. A manor in Purley, which belonged to Reading Abbey, was granted, in 1550, to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and is supposed to have been since attached to the manor of Great Purley.

The manor of Little Purley belonged in 1218 to the Cifrewasts (*note d*) , from whom it passed to the families of Malyns (*note e*) and Morris (*notes f & I*) . In the reign of Charles I it was purchased by the family of Lybbe, from whom it descended to the present proprietor, P. Lybbe Powys esq. of Hardwick, on the opposite side of the Thames.

Purley-Hall, now the seat of the Rev. Dr. Wilder, was built (*note 2*) by Mr Hawes, one of the South-Sea directors in the memorable year 1720. It was purchased of his family by the present proprietor, about the year 1778. It is situated in the three parishes of Purley, Sulham and Whitchurch, which extends across the river from the Oxfordshire side.

In the parish church are memorials for the families of Hawes, of Purley-Hall, Hyde, and Liebenrood, a tablet in memory of Thomas Storer esq. with an inscription, written by his son, and another for the late Anthony Storer esq. In the east window is some stained glass, by Mr Catton (*note 3*) of Purley. The rectory is in the deanery of Reading, and in the patronage of the crown.

Footnotes (in the original)

- a Esch. Ric.II. Edw. IV
- b One of the co-heiresses of Nicholas Carew, who died in 1467, married Sir John Iwardby.
- c Jane, daughter and heir of Sir John Iwardby, married Sir John St John, who died in 1512.
- d Cl. 2 Hen III and 30 Edw. I
- e Esch. Ric II
- f Esch. Edw IV-Eliz.

Notes (by the editor)

- 1 This name 'Morris' is incorrect. It should have read 'Norris'
- 2 Purley Hall was originally built in 1609 as Hyde Hall. It was enlarged by Francis Hawes between 1720 and 1723.
- 3 This is the only reference to 'Mr Catton of Purley'. It seems very unlikely that there was a craftsman capable of such work who is recorded as having done only one piece and living in Purley.

