

Pivington

By Henny Shotter

Several places in the area around Lenham share the name *Pivington* .



Courtesy of <http://www.photographers-resource.co.uk>

The oldest and maybe the source for naming the others is ‘Pivington Manor’ in the parish of Pluckley. The history of Pluckley manor is the subject of an article published in ‘Cantiana’¹, a periodical by Kent Archaeological Society.

The author writes that the manor ‘gave its name to a family of sub-tenants who were certainly there in 1253-1254.’

The manor was associated with the manor of Fairbourne in Harrietsham. Another branch of the family survived in Charing until the late 15th century. What connects these places besides the names of the owners is that they are mills. Pivington in Pluckley is known today as Pivington Mill, once a watermill on the Stour, now an

industrial estate, Fairbourne Mill House in Harrietsham was a watermill on a tributary to the Len and is today a very scenic residence.

¹ See: <https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Pub/ArchCant/Vol.077%20-%201962/077-02.pdf>

Whether the area in Lenham Heath called ‘Pivington’ on the Tithe Map of 1839² is historically connected to the windmill in Lenham Heath is currently unclear.



When driving out of Lenham on the Old Ashford Road there is a house on the road called ‘Pivington’. This name is a reference to ‘Pivington Farm’ on *Hubbards Hill* on the other side of the A20.

Pivington Farm has also been described as ‘Downs Court Hill Mill’³ which makes it likely that it was at some stage part of the



2 Image courtesy of Kent Archive map held at: Kent History and Library Centre. Document Order #: U1772/P34, Date: 1838

3 Coles Finch, William (1933). *Watermills and Windmills*. London: C W Daniel Company. page 237 or https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_windmills_in_Kent

Manor of Downe⁴. There is still a footpath from Pivington across the fields to the area where the Manor of Downe was located.⁵



We don't know when the mill was built, but we do know that it was for sale in 1823 and must have burnt down before 1881, the date when it ceased to appear on maps. In 1838, at the time of the Tithe Awards⁶ John Gilleband Hubbard junior is the owner of the 'Homestead' and the surrounding fields like 'Warren Street Field'

The Kent Archives hold the sale details⁷ of 'Pivington Farm' which was sold at auction on Monday, the 7th April 1828 at the Rose inn in Sittingbourne.

⁴ see our article under the tab 'Manors)

⁵ See our article on the manor of Downe under <https://www.heritagelenham.co.uk/manors>

⁶ <https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/tithes/lenham>

⁷ The document number is U55/SP/310 the advertisement below is slightly shortened and the lay-out reproduced as closely as possible.

**ALL THAT DESIRABLE
FREEHOLD ESTATE CALLED
PIVINGTON FARM**

CONTAINING

About 70 acres of exceeding good Arable and pasture land in a ring-fence,
Substantial brick-built

With stabling for twelve horses,
Waggon lodge, Granary and all
Requisite Agricultural Buildings

Together with

**A CAPITAL CORN WINDMILL
IN GOOD REPAIR,**

Containing two pair of French Stones and Dressing Mill with a good brick-built Dwelling House
and Store House

Close to the Mill:

The Premises are well supplied with water and in excellent repair

Also three excellent Lime Kilns

Viz a Flame Kiln, a Tunnel Kiln and a Wood Kiln, all complete Repair

And a Good Pit for digging chalk to supply the same.

The whole of these most desired Premises are situated in Lenham in the County of Kent,
In the immediate neighbourhood of good roads, in a sporting country, abounding with game,
And are now in the occupation of Messrs. George and Thomas Cruttenden,
Tenants at will at the yearly rental of £1350s.0d, only and in addition to which the Lime kilns
have been let at £50 per annum.

In later years Pivington was owned by Lord Chilston. In his notebook⁸ is an entry that the water company was interested in installing a water reservoir on Pivington Farm. This however did not materialise. The water tower and reservoir went up in Warren Street. Pivington Farm was later a pig farm and became eventually part of East Lenham Farm (hence the house on the A 20 is named 'Pivington')

Today the former farm buildings on Hubbards Hill are private residences.

⁸ See Letters and Papers of 1st Viscount Chilston (1875-1925) at Kent Archives: U564/CLe1-CLe3: Personal and Estate Letter Books 1875-1911