

**Dobell, Clarence M., *Memoirs of Old Charlton Kings - a series of short papers written for the Charlton Kings Parish Magazine, 1896, originally printed by Norman, Sawyer and Co. in 1898***

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56 pages, A5, obtainable from Charlton Kings Local and family History Society £8.50 + £3.00 p&p

The book starts with the description of the effect that the Romans had on the area with descriptions of the old hill forts. It also explains the origins and derivation of some place names and the arrival and survival of Christianity despite non-Christian tribes coming to the area. It also claims that Earl Godwin (father of King Harold) was from the Cotswold area.

The history of Charlton Kings is inextricably linked to that of Cheltenham and the Cotswolds and was affected by national events, such as the Norman invasion, bringing with it the feudal system. This is explained along with the links and ownership of the local parishes and manors. Charlton Kings had 2 manors and the book reveals the lineage of their owners. There is also a description of the battle of Tewkesbury and its effect on the area.

The book explains the disappearance of the old parish registers that were kept by the abbeys who controlled the parishes because of the dissolution of the monasteries and the introduction of those kept by the parishes themselves; Charlton Kings registers being some of the oldest around. An explanation is given as to what happened to the church property at the dissolution and the consequences plus the links to some of the colleges in Oxford.

Prominent residents are named, including those fined by Charles I for not attending his coronation in the lead up to the Civil War. Most of the gentry classes in the area around Charlton Kings were Royalists, except, of course, in Gloucester, and the siege with its consequences to the area is described. Along with other battles in the area around Cheltenham, the clash of forces in the Battledown area is mentioned along with the grave in Charlton Kings graveyard of one of its victims. The exception to the Royalist view in Charlton Kings was the Greville family at Charlton Park and claims that a visit by a member of the Parliamentarian Prynne/Prinn family was responsible to the purchase of Charlton Park by that family. Other prominent residents of Charlton Kings are mentioned and the book ends in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

I found this book interesting to read and believe that anyone with an interest in the history of the area around Charlton Kings would do so as well. I picked it up intending to read a few pages to see what it was like and did not put it down until I had finished the whole book. However, it must be remembered when reading this book that it was written towards the end of the reign of Queen Victoria, when many sensibilities were very different from those of today. Also, there are no references to any source material so verification should be sought for any facts stated in the book.

Eileen Allen