

Fleckney Village Sign



The Village Sign is based on the Fleckney Emblem which was created by Cllr. John Middleton in 1987 for the Village. It incorporates the arms of five families who owned the manor of Fleckney from the 11th century until the beginning of the 20th century and the Lovelace motto, "Labor Ipse Voluptas" which translated means labour is its own reward. The ribbon has the medieval spelling of Fleckney.

The crest incorporates the Earl of Lovelace's helm and coronet and two black mastiffs with red collars standing rampant as supports, these signify faithfulness, guardianship and courage.

The tripartite central boss incorporates the ermined cinquefoil of Leicestershire, a bush on a field which signifies its ruralness and a sheep's head which signifies farming.

Very little is known about the history of Fleckney prior to the Norman Conquest. The name 'Fleckney' with its alternative spelling of 'Fleckenie' seems to be Saxon but it may well be Scandinavian.

During the reign of Edward the Confessor (1041-1066) land at Fleckney was held by Edwin Alfred. After the battle of Hastings land was distributed to friends of William the Conqueror with Robert Dispensator, steward to the King, being granted land in Fleckney, and at the time of the Domesday survey held the manor of Fleckney with rights over four carucates of land.

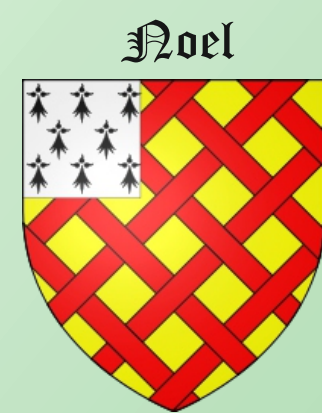
The five principal Lords of the Manor represented in the emblem are:



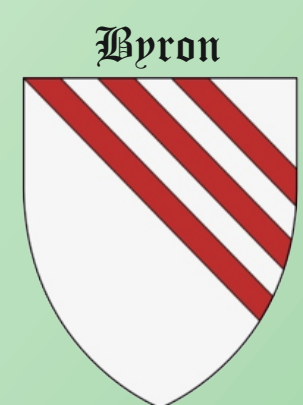
Marmion
An Anglo-Norman baron that fought at the battle of Hastings and was Lord of Fonteney le Marmion in Normandy. Rose to prominence in the reign of Henry 1 when Roger Marmion held the fief of Tamworth in 1129. In Norman French Marmion translates to cheeky kid and Roger is possibly the nephew of Robert Dispensator, first Lord of Fleckney.



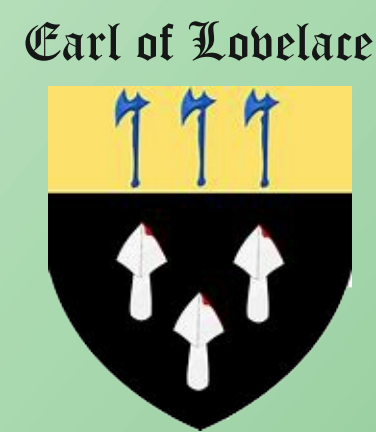
Hastings
Connected to the Marmion family and retained the English name from the 13th century. Sir Nicholas Hastings is the first Hastings named Lord of Fleckney in 1247, with a house at Wistow. Fleckney and Wistow were jointly valued as one knight's fee (service in war for the King). The Hastings retained the manor of Fleckney until 1542 when Sir John Hastings sold it to Thomas Harvey (or Cave) of Elmsthorpe when the family went out of royal favour and he had no male heir.



Noel
Thomas Harvey had no male heir and died shortly after buying the manor and the church living in 1544. His estate was left divided between his four daughters. Thomas' granddaughter, Ann Fowler, eventually inherited most of the estate and married John Noel of Dalby, the 3rd son of Andrew Noel, Sheriff of Rutland, about 1636. The Noels were staunch Royalists during the civil war and came to prominence with the restoration of the monarchy.



Byron
Ann Isabella Milbanke was 11th Baroness of Wentworth and only daughter of Judith Noel (10th baroness) and Sir Ralph Milbanke. She married Lord George Byron, the poet, in 1815. She inherited the manorial rights and her cousin was rector of Fleckney church. Lady Anne Isabella took an active interest in the village where Charles Noel was her land agent, providing money for a school and the church restoration.



Earl of Lovelace
Augusta Ada Byron was the only daughter of Lady Anne Isabella, and married William King, 8th Baron of Ockham. He was created Earl of Lovelace in 1838 using an extinct title from his wife's family. Ada Lovelace was a highly educated mathematician and found renown from working with Charles Babbage creating the first computer. After her death in 1852 the Earl assumed the additional surnames of Noel and Wentworth. The title died out in 2018.

The history of Fleckney's Village Green and Pond dates back to the early 19th century. With the universal replacement of buildings from stone to brick and the building of canals, warehouses, railways and factories, brick making became a lucrative business in the late 18th and 19th centuries. What is now the village pond and village green was a clay pit and brick works, one of several in Fleckney. The heavy grey-blue Fleckney clay made strong long lasting bricks and were in great demand and can be seen in many of the local farms and cottages. Further a field the bricks were used, in part, in the building of St. Pancras railway station.



The Village Pond c. 1950



The house on Saddington Road, which still exists, is where Lady Byron stayed when visiting Fleckney

Although we don't know exactly when the brick works first started, Daniel Putt, a large land owner in Fleckney, is registered as a brickyard owner in 1830 and in 1841 Thomas Wakelin employed Joseph Peberdy as a 'brick makers labourer'. Brick yards appeared to be exempt from employment legislation and many children as young as five were employed but unregistered. The 1862 Children's Employment Commission states that generally a brick maker had three children helping him, often working twelve hours a day. Jack Badcock writes of Abraham Deacon, born in 1828, and says "As was usual he went to work in the brickyards at the age of five or six and within a few years his wages had risen to three shillings a week".

The brick works closed in the 1860s at about the time Lady Byron built the first Fleckney School further up Saddington Road. This was known as the Iron School and was attended by 50 pupils in 1863. The field, which is now the Village Green was known as Pit Field and used for village celebrations especially the Whit Monday festival day of the Ancient Order of the Foresters where there was maypole dancing and feasting.



Anne Isabella Milbanke who married the poet Lord Byron

The clay pit became a pond and has been called various names - Bateman's, Peberdy's, Gillies's and Scrase's. The introduction of machinery stopped the making of hand made bricks and the trade in Fleckney ceased completely in 1902.

The Village Green and Pond is now a protected green space in the centre of the Village and is used for special events and is there for everyone to enjoy.



The Village Pond as it is today

For more information on the history of Fleckney visit Fleckney Library or the Fleckney History Group website at: <http://fleckneyhistorygroup.btck.co.uk>

