

on his way to France. The road was obviously more important earlier in its history than it is now, as the King held court at Northampton Castle and would travel from London for this purpose passing through Stoke Goldington, as did Danial Defoe, Carl Phillip Mauritz(?) a German Pastor in 1782, travelling on the outside of the stagecoach much to his dismay, as he suffered terribly from the tossing about on the road, and Wm McRitchie in 1795 from York to Northampton, Northampton being a very important town in those days due to the Royal influence.

In tudor times, Gayhurst Village, it would seem an affliction to the eye of the landed gentry, was removed from the land surrounding the Church and Park, and rebuilt in it's present position.

In 1772 a new Pastor was engaged in Stoke Goldington, and in his diaries that he kept he made many notes as to the people who lived here, but his main contribution to the annals was that the people of Stoke Goldington are poor ignorant and idle, and it would seem that even as far back as that date, the church was ill attended.

In 1780 Fever struck Stoke Goldington, and in this account lies a possible moral. A baker of this village allowed a certain customer to run into debt. Eventually as this customer could not pay his

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SCOTT

account, and he did the only thing possible, he arrested him, on his own account and upon his appearance in court was sent to Prison, whereupon he caught the dreaded Jail Fever. His Wife was then called to nurse him, which she did, though he died. She then returned to Stoke Goldington bringing with her the fever which she proceeded to give to everyone in the village in the usual way that in those times it spread like wildfire, and in due course children numbering forty, of which twenty had lost both parents and the rest one, all this was caused by one man running into debt.

The Turnpike Commission. There was a turnpike and toll gates in the surrounding area. One tollgate at Lathbury, another at Stoke Goldington, and one at Weston Underwood, and the coaches would come through these gates and have to pay the toll of 1/6d, and in one year it was registered that a total of 3,081 coaches passed through, with 13,862 horses and riders, plus gigs and chaises. Of course the animals had also to pass through the tollgates, and although pigs were twopence a score cows were rated at 1guinea per score, and sheep at fivepence a score. It was also a favourite haunt of highwaymen and many coaches and businessmen were robbed between Newport Pagnell and Northampton.

A good place to gather information about Stoke Goldington is the Records of Lincoln Cathedral, as we were once under their jurisdiction, and the Public Library at Northampton, and Records of the Northampton Mercury are a mine of information.