



## News and events

**Sunday 8 November St Helen's Act of Remembrance**. This year, every home will receive a leaflet about a Doorstep Act of Remembrance, including the two-minute silence, and a link to an Online Act of Remembrance, including a film of the wreath-laying.

**Next meeting** All our meetings are cancelled until further notice.

## Notes and queries

### The Lattimore snuff box



We have known for some time that Charles Higby Lattimore of Place Farm was presented with a silver snuff box in 1843 but it was a wonderful surprise to receive an email from Steve Godshaw, jeweller of Welwyn Garden City, telling us that the box has survived and is in his possession. The box is solid silver, 3 1/2" long, 2 1/4" wide, 1" deep, and with a gilded (ie gold-plated) interior.

Charles Higby Lattimore was born in Wheathampstead in about 1808, the son of Charles and Mary Lattimore and a cousin of the local family of brewers. He inherited the tenancy of Bride Hall farm from his father in 1834 where he carried on a dispute with the landlord, Charles Benet Drake Garrard of Lamer, that his father had started. The dispute centred on the rights of tenant farmers and became a bitter political, financial and personal feud.

Mr Lattimore was also active in the national debate about the 1815 Corn Law. This placed tariffs on cheap imported corn and so fixed the price at a high level that favoured domestic landowners. The price of bread was therefore kept high with consequent poverty and

depression. Lattimore favoured free trade and the repeal of the Corn Law, whereas the Tories, including Drake Garrard, wanted to keep the price of corn high. On 29 April 1843, Lattimore was at a meeting in Hertford welcoming Richard Cobden, the famous radical campaigner who was devoted to free trade and hostile to aristocratic rule. Mr Lattimore proposed the motion 'that ... the Corn Laws have proved highly injurious to the independence and welfare of the tenant farmer and that they ought to be abolished'. He was later awarded the silver snuff box which is inscribed with these words: *'Presented to Mr Charles Lattimore by the tradesmen, mechanics, and working men in the town of Hertford as a token of respect and to mark the sense of the high opinion they entertain of his publick character for advocating the principles of free trade and a total repeal of the Corn Laws on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 1843'*.

Lattimore moved to Place Farm in 1845. He lived there with his sisters Anne and Mary for the rest of his life, gradually building up his ownership and tenancies of farmland to a peak of 380 acres in 1871 and employing some 20 men and six boys.

The Corn Laws were repealed in 1846 and Lattimore's campaign for the rights of tenant farmers also met with success. The 1851 Landlord and Tenant Act gave tenants the right to remove fixtures or buildings that they had put up at their own expense and the 1875 and 1883 Agricultural Holdings Acts confirmed the tenant farmer's right to compensation for improvements.

Charles Higby Lattimore died on 23 October 1889, aged 81. He is buried in a Grade II listed chest tomb in St Helen's churchyard with his parents, Charles and Mary, and his sisters.