

Personalities

...the novelty of having electricity! We switched the lights on and off just to see them work



Because of their wealth, and therefore influence, many of the people who have owned the Manors (Argentines, later Lordship, The Bury, Trayles and the Old Manor) have played a significant part in the history of Melbourn.

One of the earliest names is probably **Argentine**, who held the manor from the early-12th century.

The manor was sold in the early 1700s to the **Hitch** family, who also bought Trayles manor in 1703. By 1891 the Hitches had sold the manorial rights (*the land and all its privileges*) and, in 1898, they also sold nearly 1000 acres of land in Melbourn and Meldreth, mostly to the **Palmers** who were fruit growers. The Hitches retained the Manor House in the High Street and continued to live in Melbourn. The rood screen in All Saints' Church was donated by Thomas Hitch in 1507.

In 1700 the lease for Melbourn Bury was held by Sir Benjamin **Ayloff**, who left money to found the first school in the village. By 1725 the lease had passed to Sir John **Hatton** and after his death to his widow Mary, in 1740. The Bury was sold in 1784 to John **Trigg** and held by Mary Trigg until 1806, when she sold it to John **Fordham**. The Triggs were great benefactors and Trigg's Charity still exists in the village. In his will, dated 6th June 1818, he instructed that on his death all his goods should be converted into cash and distributed to various charitable and religious institutions. It was through this that the first free village school was established.

In 1864 the freehold of The Bury estate was sold to the **Fordham** family, also great benefactors to the village. They supported all three churches, donated a Reading Room and held many sporting and charitable events in the grounds of The Bury. They also ran a dairy and milk round and employed local men on the farm and in the fruit orchards.

Benjamin **Metcalfe (Medcalfe)**, a dissenter and founder of the Baptist Church in 1654, was famous

for being involved in the Ship Tax riots which took place in Melbourn in June 1640.

William **Carver** became minister of the Congregational Church in 1792. He took over the ministry after dissension among the church members over the conduct of a minister, Samuel Bull. Following the death of the Rev. Richard Cooper it was thought that his young assistant Samuel Bull,

The rood screen in All Saints' Church

