

The Imperial Gazetteer of England & Wales 1870

HEMPSTEAD, a village and a parish in Saffron-Walden district, Essex. The village stands near the river Pant, 5¾ miles SSW of Haverhill r. station, and 6 SE by S of Saffron-Walden; is an ancient place; and has a post-office under Saffron-Walden. The parish includes also the hamlet of Blackden. Acres, 3, 565. Real property, £5, 008. Pop., 797. Houses, 168. The property is subdivided. Winchlow Hall was the seat of the Harveys, one of whom was Dr. Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood. The parish is noted for its trees, and has a famous "Hempstead Oak," of remarkable size. The living is a p. curacy, annexed to the vicarage of Great Sampford, in the diocese of Rochester. The church is ancient; and consists of nave, aisles, and chancel, with lofty tower.

Source: The Imperial Gazetteer of England & Wales [Wilson, John M]. A. Fullarton & Co. N. d. c. [1870-72].

A Topographical Dictionary of England 1848

HEMPSTEAD (St. Andrew), a parish, in the union of Saffron-Walden, hundred of Freshwell, N. division of Essex, 5 miles (N. W.) from Finchingfield; containing 798 inhabitants. This parish, which was formerly a chapelry in the parish of Great Sampford, comprises 3507a. 1r. 11p. The soil is generally a stiff clay, with a substratum of marl, and by draining is rendered tolerably fertile; the surface is richly wooded. The living is annexed to the vicarage of Great Sampford. The church, an ancient edifice with a lofty tower, is situated on an eminence nearly in the centre of the parish; on the north side is a sepulchral chapel, in which are several monuments to the Harvey family, including one to the memory of the celebrated Dr. Harvey, who was buried here on the 26th of June, 1657. The ancient mansion of Hempstead Hall is about two miles distant from the church, in a north-eastern direction: the manor, at the time of the Domesday survey, belonged to Richard Fitz-Gislebert, from whom it passed to one of the earls of Clare; it soon afterwards came to the Veres, earls of Oxford, and among subsequent owners have been the families of Watevil, Cotton, and Harvey, the last of whom held it for many generations.

Source: A Topographical Dictionary of England by Samuel Lewis 1848