

May 2018. The Brewers Company archives are on indefinite loan to the Guildhall Library, London. This is not a complete list. Thanks are due to the Brewers Company for allowing the quotations in this document.

MS 05485 is a notarial copy of the ordinances for the free school and the almshouses dated 1599, with a mid 18th century copy of the will dated 20 Nov 1600.

The terms of the will are further recorded in other documents held at Guildhall so it is not necessary to attempt to read this original document.

Platt wished to be buried in the church of St James at Garlickhythe, where he was a parishioner, on the south side of the chancel near his wife and son. The will was made when he was 'being crased in body but in perfect memory'. The will specifies the detailed requirements for the school and the almshouses, including the wording of prayers to be said.

MS18421 comprises 3 books detailing the management of the estates. One is an older duplicate. **Book 1** dated 1823 includes a transcript of Richard Platt's will.

Page 25 I have 'erected a school and certain almshouses upon a parcel of ground called Wadds alias Boydens Hill in the parish of Aldenham being mine own inheritance left me by mine Ancestors as well.....use for the relief and maintenance of poor aged and impotent Persons and such as by reason of their age and other infirmities are not able to relieve themselves by their trade and labours And for the better supporting of the said free school and almshouses I have made especial choice and nomination of my beloved and trusty friends [The Brewers Company] to be defenders and maintainers'.

Page 49 et seq Orders for the Poor. The Custos to be the Master of the school or another tenant chosen by Platt during his lifetime, then by the Brewers Company. He is to see that the almspeople do their duties, report misbehaviour (if any) report repairs need and collect rents from Aldenham for the payment of the school master and pensions. Anyone living in Aldenham can be appointed. There are to be 6 poor almspeople, chosen by Platt in his lifetime then by the governors. Every poor body admitted has for themself and family 1 room below and 1 room above in the newly-built accommodation. Every quarter 10 shillings to be paid to each household for maintenance and succour. Yearly at about the feast of St Michael there is to be 1 load of wood for each almshouse. Every pensioner allowed 1 ffriese gown price 10 or 12 shillings each Christmas. He does not mind if the almspeople are men, women, married single or widowed, but they are not to marry after admittance upon pain of deprivation. No children to be admitted without permission. No married couples unless both are over 70, unless there are special causes for younger people. Married couples to have the same room, habitation relief and pension of 1 almsbody, and no more. No-one with a disease to be admitted. They are to be of good name and fame, of godly conversation and behaviour, and over the age of 70, but can be thought fit by impotence to be admitted at a younger age. They need to have been inhabitants of Aldenham for 7 years (but special cases can be considered). They are to be known as having worked for their livings when younger. Platt's kindred to be given preference. [Note; one of the early almspeople was Widow Platt. No info to say if she was a relation].

Divine service and prayers are to be said twice a day in the chapel at the end of the almshouses. All almspeople are to attend unless they are sick or have a good excuse. The Custos is to be observant and careful. None can be absent for more than 3 nights a year without the consent of the Custos. Due hours to be kept; almspeople must not be out later than 7 o'clock in Winter or 9 o'clock in Summer. The yard and court to be swept daily, otherwise there is penny fine, which will be shared among the other poor people. No non-family sick persons to stay unless with the consent of the Custos.

Before admission, applicants have to promise that if they die they have no wife or children living in need. They are to leave all the goods they bring to the almshouse, to be distributed among other almspeople, except for Widow Platt and other almspeople already in the almshouses. Drunkards, brawlers, blasphemers, adulterers, fornicators or despisers of the rules will be displaced, once proven. The Brewers Court can displace for any lawful cause or misdemeanour. The above ordinances are to be distinctly and openly read in chapel every quarter day in the presence of the poor people so they cannot claim ignorance of them. A register of the almspeople is to be kept. Account books are to be kept. The wording of the prayers to be said daily is specified. [Essentially they ask God to sanctify and direct the officials to do their job].

Ralph Duncombe leased three roods and other lands. Part of the lease was to supply firewood for the almshouses; he was required to prepare 6 loads for the almspeople and 1 for himself. He was also required to arrange for a coach and horses to convey the governors from London to Aldenham and back in the last fortnight of July each year.

Book 2 is dated 13 May 1875.

Para 19 'the Corporation shall apply to the almshouses in the parish of Aldenham with the gardens, yards and appurtenances thereof, and the annual sum of £200 to be carried by them in a separate trust for eleemosynary purposes, for the benefit of Almspeople, upon the same terms, and with and subject to the same powers, provisions and conditions as affected the same premises respectively and were in force respecting such Almspeople immediately before the date of this scheme'. [This scheme made some alterations to the charitable trust].

MS7297 Specification for Sundry Works Erecting and Finishing the Almshouses at Aldenham

The document contains detailed specifications for the general building a job specifications for various tradespeople.

Each kitchen to have a dresser 3ft 6in long of a value of 25/- each. The WC to have a seat of 1" and a riser on proper bearers. There are to be 6 coppers of 15" diameter. Cooking stoves with over 33" openings and stoves with double backs with 24" openings. Wallpaper to be 1d per yard. Two wells or water tanks to be 5ft diameter and 12ft deep. 1 cesspools to be 4ft diameter by 10ft deep, and to be connected to the WCs.

MS05491 and MS05473 are the account books.

MS05439 are the letters patent from Elizabeth I allowing for the building of the almshouses.

Transcripts can be found in MS18421 dated 1823 and 1875.

MS05516 are the originals of the founder's ordinances with a copy in roll form. Rather delicate, and the same information is found in the other documents referred to.

MS18360. Candidates for admission must be of the age of 70 years and upwards and have resided in the parish of Aldenham for 7 years next preceding the date of election. If there are insufficient numbers of such candidate the Governor may elect Freemen of the Corporation or their wives and widows. Each almsperson to receive £3-5-0 a quarter; married couples to receive £4-17-6 a quarter. They also receive £1 a quarter from Mr Charrington's gift. Each person receives a visitation gift of £1. Each person receives a coat yearly at a cost not exceeding £2. Coals, firewood and faggots are provided for the inmates.

Notice of vacancies are required to be placed on the 2 principal entrances of the Almshouses. No elections takes place till a month after such notice. All applications must be in writing and must state

name, age, place of residence during the preceding 7 years and the state of health and condition of life. The Master and Warden for the time being are constituted a Special Committee to visit the Almshouses.

Also employed are a Custos, a medical attendant (at £12 per annum) and a gardener (at £3 15s. a quarter).

Custos Rev C L Royds £5 a year ret 1884

1884 Rev K Gibbs £5-5-0

Fr Adams Clarke

Medical attendant Mr Troutbeck £12 a year

Nurse Mrs Hawkins 8^{sh} a week Died 1892

Gardener Henry Hawkins £3-15-0 a quarter