

Why the name Foord Road?

Meet John Foord and The Foord Charity

by Amy Myers

In 1766, Mr John Foord, yeoman, bequeathed in his will £300 pounds to the safekeeping of the minister and churchwardens of Lenham, and their successors for ever. They had the task of appointing a ‘fit and proper’ schoolmaster who would use the interest on this bequest (then £12 a year) to teaching ‘ten most ‘indigent, honest and industrious poor boys reading, writing and accounts’¹

Mr Foord is also listed in the Reports into Charities in England and Wales in the early nineteenth century.² That was in 1827 but eight years earlier when Parliament had enacted an inquiry into the ‘Education of the Poor’ there were a few questions being asked over the bequest. As security for the payment of the £300 a house in Lenham had been allocated. Nevertheless, the report pointed out (somewhat severely?) ‘there does not appear ever to have been any deed or writing related to this transaction’. The commissioners dug a bit further and reported that ‘the prevailing opinion of the parish’ was that money had been ‘lent at four per cent’. They reported that ‘no reason is assigned why this sum should have been lent at only 4 per cent’.³ Perhaps the absence of paperwork explains why this charity has now disappeared into Lenham’s past.

¹ Edward Hasted, 'Parishes: Lenham', in *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 5* (Canterbury, 1798)

² *First Fourteen Reports of the Commissioners Appointed to inquire concerning Charities in England and Wales*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 2 May 1827

³ *First Report of the Commissioners on their inquiry into Charities in England and Wales on the Education of the Poor*, 4 March 1819, Parliamentary Papers