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THE TICHBORNE CURSE

In this Hampshire village, in the year 1150, the curse of the Tichbornes began. On her deathbed Lady Mabel Tichborne told her family, that unless each year on that day, they give the villagers one gallon of flour, the house of Tichborne would crumble away. To this day a Latin benediction marks the ceremony.

Sir Anthony Doughty Tichborne, the 14th baronet, tells how the curse was only narrowly averted.

Once the dole was stopped. A generation of seven sons was followed by seven daughters, and the Manor House crumbled. Since then the Tichbornes have been more careful and the curse is just a legend.

To every adult - one gallon of flour, to every child - half a gallon. That was the command of Lady Tichborne.

5,000 B.Us from all parts of the country were sent to Sir Anthony so that the dole (ancient in custom, charitable in intent) should be continued.

In country life and tradition, curses have a longer history than rationing. The wish of Lady Tichborne in 1150 is still a command to Sir Anthony-Doughty Tichborne in 1947.