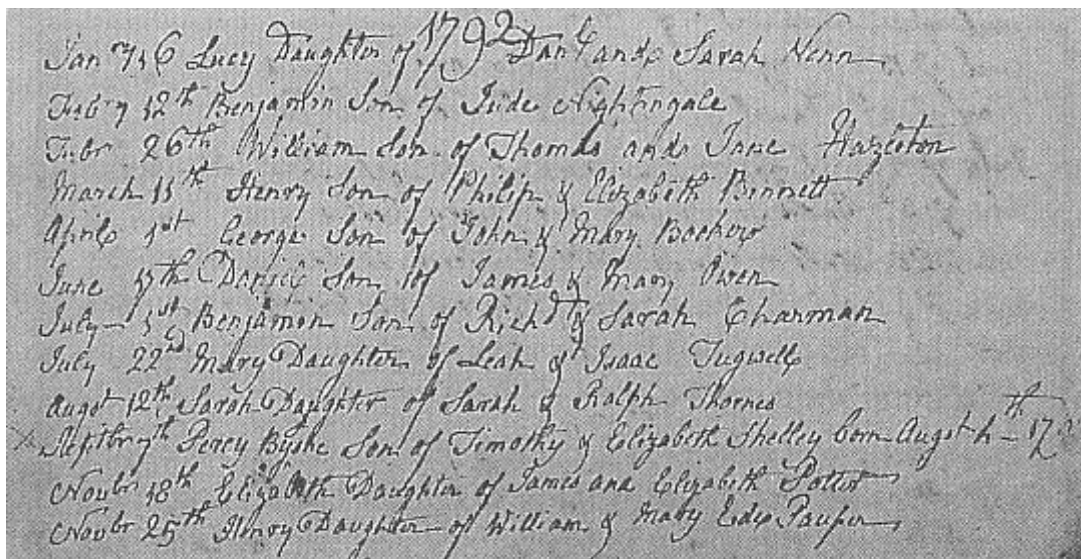




SHELLEY'S WARNHAM

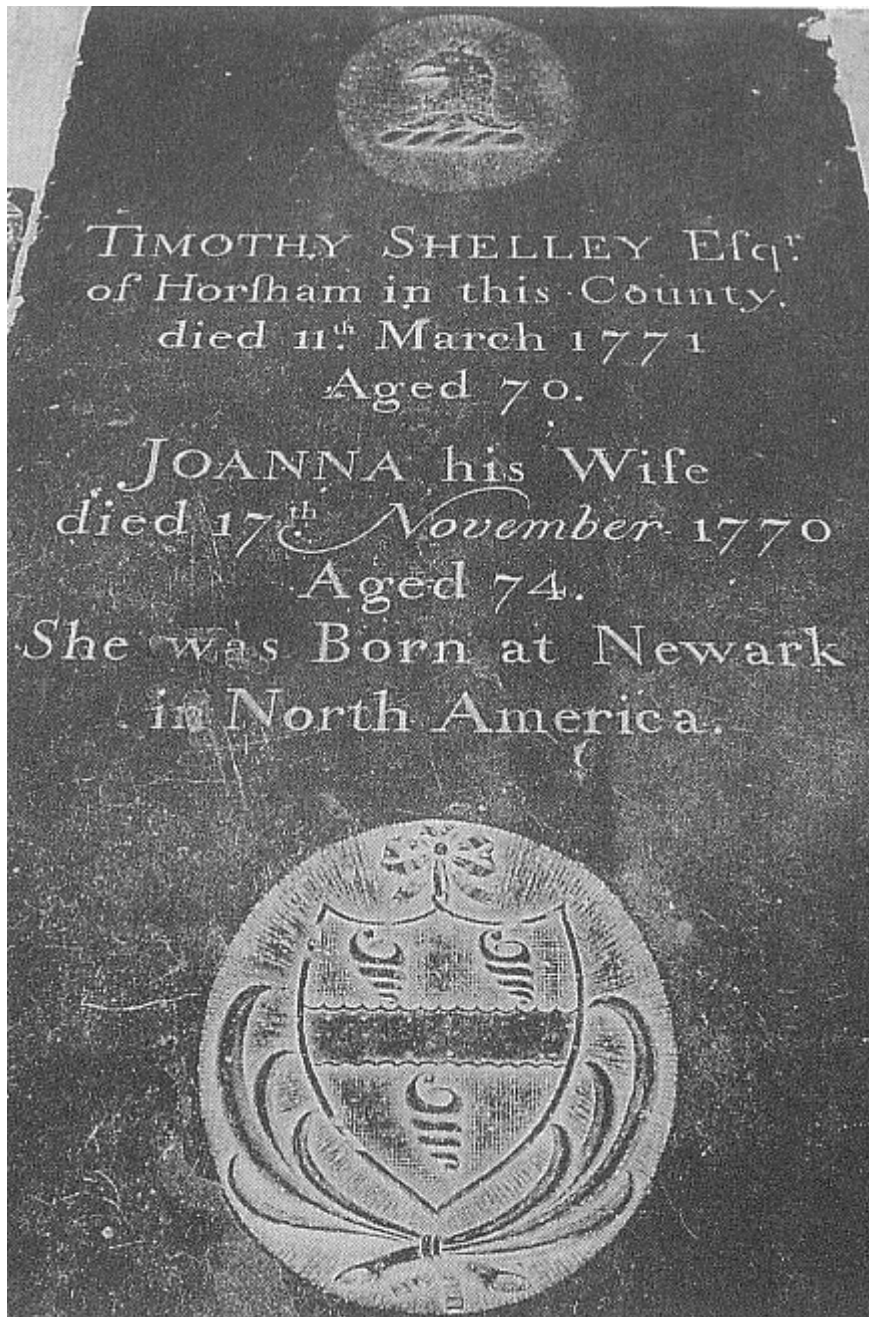
Percy Bysshe Shelley was born in Field Place on 4th August 1792.

There were many marriages between the Michells and the Shelleys. Field Place, earlier owned for centuries by the Michells was bought by Edward Shelley² from his step-father John Michell¹. Edward willed it to John⁴, elder brother of Sir Bysshe, the poet's Grandfather⁵, John died without issue, the house being left to Sir Bysshe Shelley. It remained in the Shelley family until about 1850.



The poet was baptised in Warnham Church on 7th September, 1792, presumably by Samuel Shuckford, Vicar at that time. There is a tablet to him in the north aisle. The font, of Sussex marble, dates from the 12th Century. The poet received his early education in the village from the Rev. Evan Edwards, then curate, as Shelley's first son Charles did later, when Evan Edwards had become Vicar.

The facsimile of the baptisms for 1792 shown above may be seen in the glass case in the south aisle, together with altar books presented by Sir Timothy⁶, the poet's father in 1828, and earlier by John, the poet's Great-Uncle in 1771. The communion cup was also given to the Church by Sir Timothy.

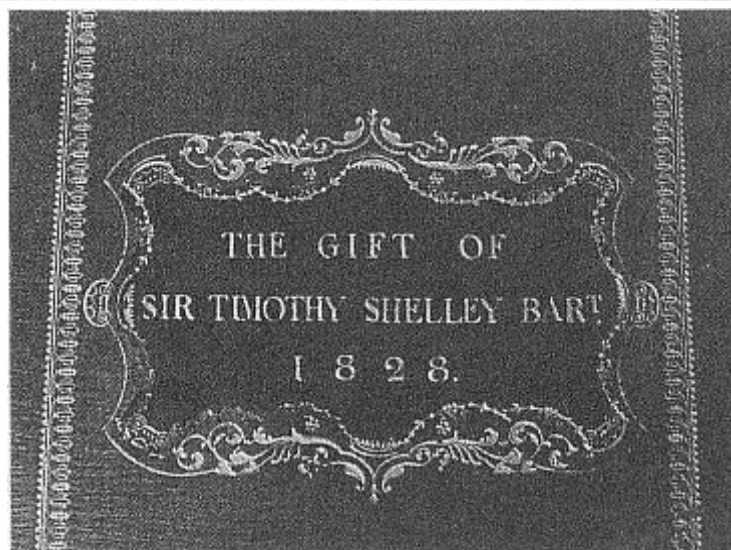
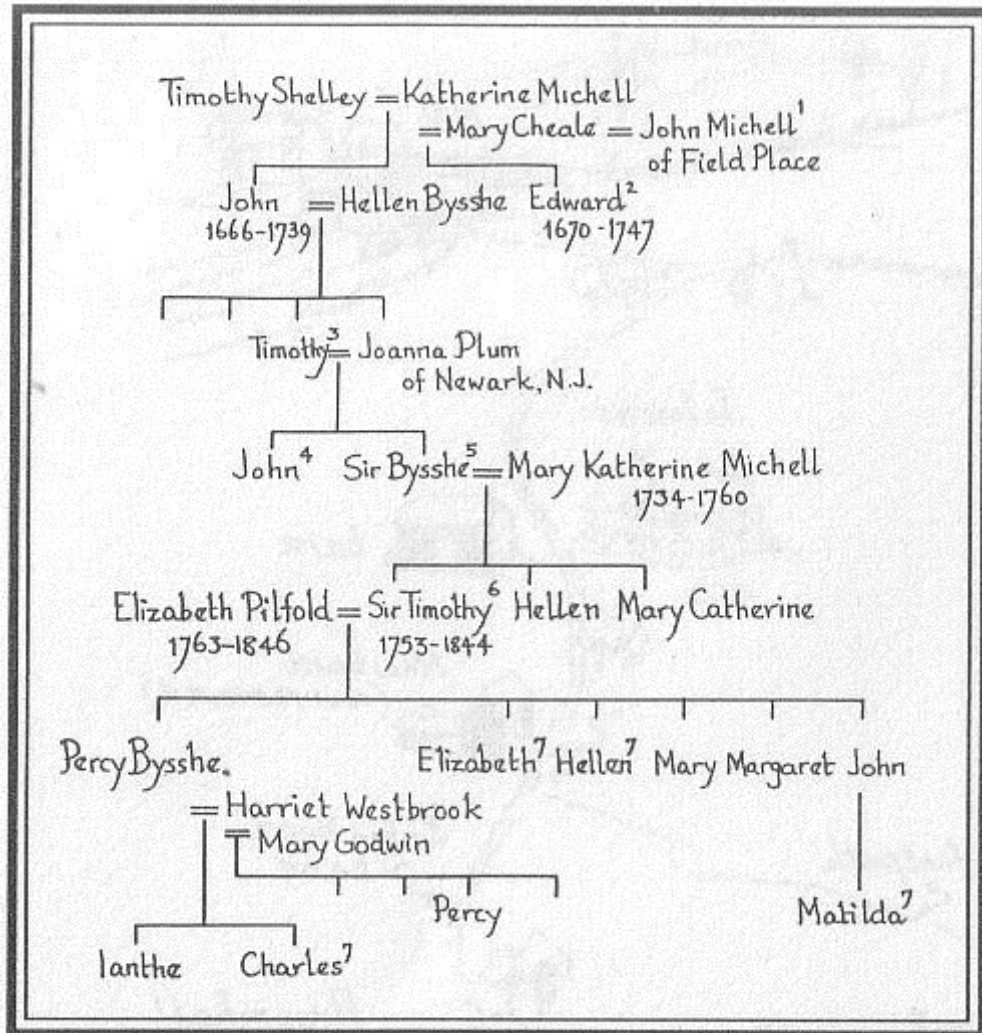


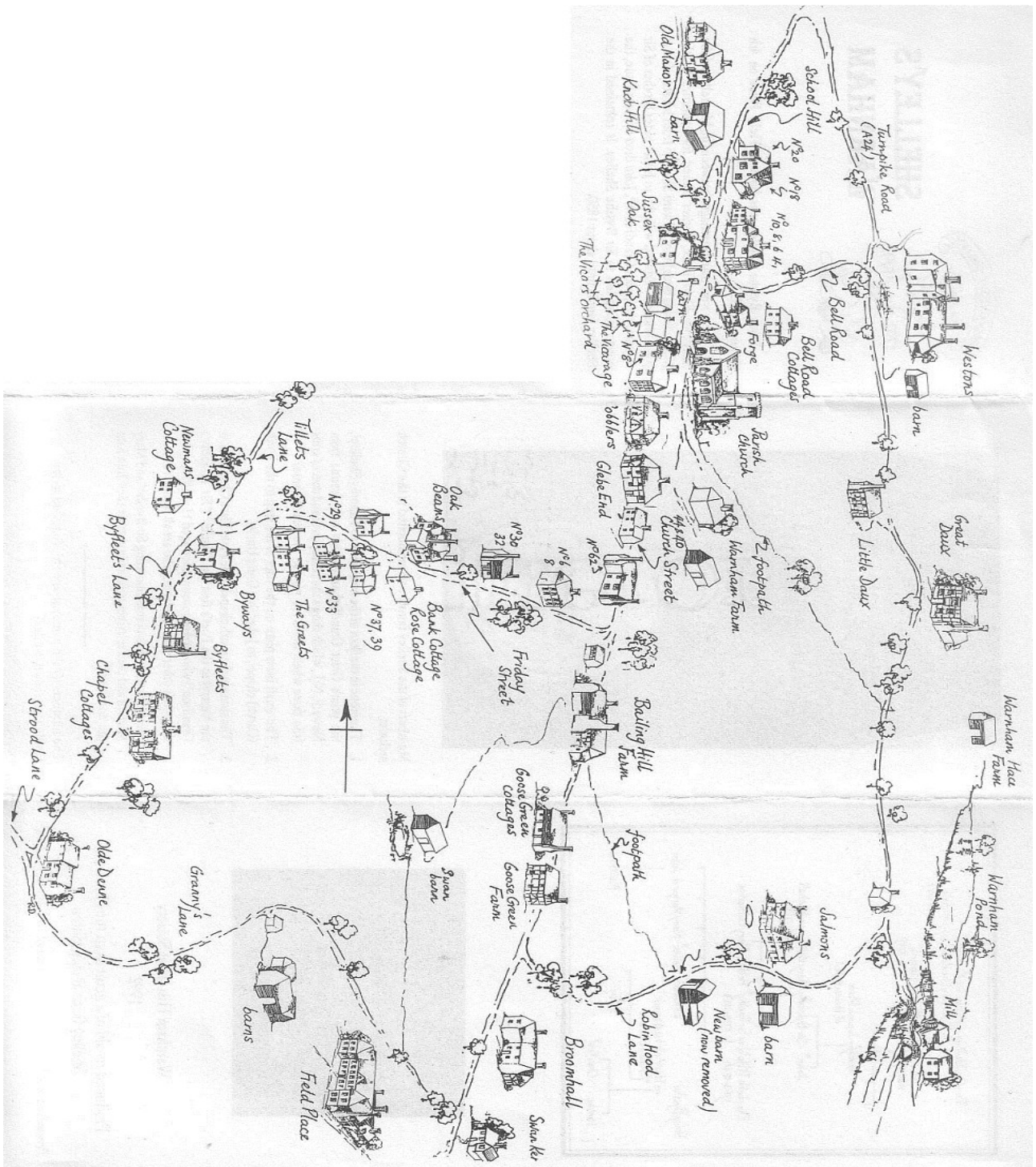
Members of the Shelley family commemorated in the Church include:

1. The stone in the floor of the north aisle to Timothy Shelley³, the poet's Great Grandfather and his wife Joanna from Newark, N.J., which shows the family crest and coat of arms (the three whelk shells is a play on the family name).
2. The small brass plate on the riser of the step to the north (Caryll) chapel, to John⁴, his Great Uncle.
3. The stone in the south chapel (The Field Place Chapel, now the Vestry) to the Poet's first son Charles⁷ ("Sir Timothy's Grandson") who died of consumption aged 11 in 1826, and to the poet's other closest relative who are all buried there.

4. The York stone slab commemorating Sir Bysshe⁵ and Mary Michell and their relatives to be seen outside the Church on the north wall.

The numbers by the names above are identified in the family tree shown below.





The village of Warnham lies in a gently sloping hollow on Wealden Clay, bounded by steep slopes to the south (Bailing Hill) and to the north (Knob Hill) which reflect the tilt of the layers of Horsham stone beneath the surface. Many of the older buildings have roofs of locally quarried stone. Some cottages with stone walls can be seen in Friday Street.

The village probably grew from two settlements, one in which a church was established by the nuns of Rusper, the other at the lower end of Friday Street. Farmhouses were built round about in clearings in the forest. Field Place developed

from one of these.

The Wealden Clay yielded an abundance of oak for building and the parish is rich in timber-framed buildings.

The map is conjectural and is not to scale. It includes those buildings known in 1800 which still stand today shown in more or less detail as they might have then appeared. Houses, or additions made since then are not shown. Present names or numbers have been inserted to aid identification.

Shelley probably walked over Bailing Hill to school, a distance of about a mile. Warnham Mill Pond, where he often played, is about the same distance from Field Place down what is now known as Robin Hood Lane.

Warnham Historical Society
1992

Produced by aid of a grant from the Horsham
Shelley festival committee

Proceeds donated by the Society to the Church roof renovation fund.