

**An Account of the Farms and Farmers
of the Parish of Axminster
since the Agricultural Revolution.
Including Smallridge, Westwater, Weycroft & Wyke**

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To the reader:

The research on which this document is based was mainly carried out in 2015. On the next page I explain how it has evolved since then. Any errors and omissions that you may find are entirely mine, but if you draw them to my attention, I will happily correct them in later versions. If you have additional information which you would be happy to share, I will do my best to accommodate it.

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I wish to acknowledge the help and information that I have received from several current Axminster farmers and other interested parties. In particular, and in alphabetical order, in 2015 I benefitted from extended conversations with Ann Bond, Lisle Burrough, Dick Hurford, Dudley Hurford, Shirley Hurford, Jim Rowe (who also lent me documents from the archive of Messrs R&C Snell) and Ken Voysey.

After this document was first posted on the axminsterheritage.org website in mid-2016 I received information and feedback from several persons, some of them living outside the UK. In most cases their interest arises from family history researches, and much of their feed-back is reflected in this revised version. I am particularly grateful to Christopher Moran, who has provided additional information, primarily on the Gage and Denning families; and to Dave Scott Mear for his information mainly covering the Mear and Rowe families.

I have made a small number of other changes to the text based on information which I have found since 2015, but the basic structure and content reflects my original researches.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this document

Farming has been central to Axminster for centuries. Axminster may be more industrial than the average Devon town, but it owes much of its character and a lot of its accumulated wealth to farming, and to its role as a hub serving the farmers of surrounding parishes.

The purpose of this document is to draw together in one place such information as I have been able to find about the farms of Axminster parish since the early 19th century, and in particular the people who were farming them. My narrative therefore covers roughly two centuries, from the early 1800s to the present, during which period agricultural improvements have been widely if not universally adopted, culminating in the highly technical farming which is characteristic of the early 21st century.

By around 1800 the foundations of modern farming were increasingly evident within the wider farming community, not just among the elite pioneers, marked by growing levels of mechanisation, attention to soil fertility, scientific animal breeding and improved animal nutrition. All of this built on the foundations laid by generations of earlier agricultural pioneers who had been at work over the period from about 1650 to 1800, the middle period of which is sometimes called the 'agricultural revolution'.

Although I make some use of, and reference to, documents from the 18th century (and before), the quality of documentary sources improves considerably from the early 19th century. The 19th century was also a time when few farmers could afford to ignore 'scientific farming' altogether, and during which employment on farms started to fall in response to the 'pull' of industrial employment (and, particularly during the late 19th century, emigration). The late 19th and early 20th century is also the period when family farms and owner-occupation were becoming more widespread, if not quite the norm in all areas.

To survive in business in the 21st century, farmers have to achieve a level of scale quite different to that which is represented by the pattern of farming traced in this document. As a consequence many of the farmyards and farm houses identified and discussed here are now substantially divorced from the real business of farming. It would be almost pointless to regret or to resist these changes, and one of the main purposes of this document is to record a past era while the evidence is still reasonably fresh.

The structure of this document

In this introductory chapter I try to explain more precisely what I am (and what I am not) seeking to achieve, not least by setting down some definitions. I also set out my principal sources.

Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the farms themselves, including (as far as I have been able to establish it) information on where each one either can be found, or used to be located. I have described a series of routes starting in the town which, between them, pass close to all of the named farms.

In Chapters 3 to 9 I have grouped the farms into seven blocks of land. The first of these blocks lies to the north of the town, and after that I work clock-wise around the town, covering the whole of the parish. In these seven chapters I set out all of the information that I have found showing who was farming each farm, and over what period.

Finally, Appendix 1 provides an index to all of the farms that are mentioned in the text, and Appendix 2 provides guidance on where and how to find detailed on-line maps from the late 19th century onwards, covering the parish of Axminster. Appendix 3 contains the results of an 1828 survey of cow keeping in Axminster parish.

Some definitions

Farms and farmers

The question 'what is a farm?' may seem extremely easy to answer at first sight, but the more we think about it, the less certain we may become. Examples of what a farm is are easily given, but a water-tight definition which can successfully be applied to all cases is much harder to pin down.

At its simplest, a farm comprises a block of land, probably (though not always) some animals, a set of farm buildings (to accommodate whatever animals there are at certain times of year, and to store crops and farm machinery), and a farmhouse. Almost all such farms have a name, which may have remained unchanged for centuries. In effect such a farm is a physical and geographical fact, which can be marked on a map, and which provides the owner or tenant with several of the necessary elements needed to run a farm business.

However, many farm businesses have access to more than one distinct parcel of land, and may well comprise more than one 'historical' farm. Over time a farm business may well rent, buy or sell land, or move from one location to another. Sometimes as land is aggregated into larger units, the original farmhouses, and some of the original farm buildings, are hived off and sold to non-farmers. We may think of this as a modern phenomenon, but in fact it has been going on for hundreds of years. What is more, while the total number of farms in a parish tends to decline over time, that does not stop new farms from emerging.

There is therefore a clear distinction to be made between a farmer and his farm business (on the one hand) and those distinct entities that most of us would think of as farms (on the other). This document is about farmers as well as farms, but it is structured round the farms, and in particular round the farms to be found around Axminster.

What I have then attempted to do is to trace who worked those farms as tenants or owners. I am much less interested in who owned or leased the land: it is the persons who were running the farm businesses which interest me, including the moves which some of them made from farm to farm. I considered producing an index of surnames, but on reflection I concluded that for anyone accessing this document electronically, the 'find' function represents the most effective aid to tracing the names of interest to them.

Most Axminster farms were owned by large landowners until the 20 years running up to World War I. At that time there was a wave of selling as estates were broken up in response to changes in the taxation system, and the pendulum swung strongly in favour of owner-occupiers.

Anyone interested in the history of the Manor of Axminster can find this in the writings of George Pulman (Ref 1¹) and James Davidson (Ref 2). The only comment that I would make in passing is that Axminster is unusual in Devon in having neither a clearly identifiable Axminster Manor House nor a single Barton farm².

As towns expand they inevitably swallow up adjacent farmland, farm buildings and farmhouses, though generally not whole farms at a time. In this document I refer to some former farmhouses which now lie well within the boundaries of the town. There were almost certainly many other instances where individuals lived within the town and rented farmland nearby, probably without any recognisable farm buildings either around their houses or on their land. Some of the people who did this were butchers (who needed grazing land to hold and fatten up animals that they had bought at market or direct from local farmers), or dairymen (see below for more information on them), together with other individuals who could run a farm business without needing to live on the land being farmed. Typically such farm units were both less long-lived and smaller than average. They did, however, offer ambitious individuals without prior connections a way into farming.

A relatively late example of this process can be seen via a press advertisement (Ref 10, TCWA 9 Mar 1898) for what was described as a small farm "... of 42 acres of rich meadow and pasture" behind Lea Combe House (i.e. close to where the Fire Station now is, on Lyme Close). This was offered with no associated buildings or facilities to let on an annual tenancy, by the owner, James Coate. Since I cannot tie this land to any named farm, I have not pursued it further, even though 42 acres would actually have been a worthwhile holding at that time.

¹ See a later heading for an explanation of those sources to which I make frequent reference.

² Sources differ regarding the origins of the term Barton, which is typical of Devon, but by no means restricted to the county. Some authorities consider that it means a farm where cereals can be cultivated, whereas others describe Bartons as at least semi-fortified farms, sometimes in more remote settings. Most Devon parishes have at least one Barton farm, usually named after the parish (e.g. Musbury Barton, Shute Barton, Widworthy Barton etc), and some have up to three (hence non-parish names such as Hill Barton and Marsh Barton). Axminster is unusual in not having any. Generally they are linked to substantial farms which have often been associated with prominent local families over several generations. They were often owner-occupied by the 19th Century.

Dairymen and dairy farms

Many if not most of the farms around Axminster have (or had) dairying as a core part of their business. However, it was not always like this. Writing in the early 1870s George Pulman (Ref 1, page 13) described the 'share-cropping' (and risk-sharing) system employed at that time as follows.

"The system of dairy farming is, that the farmer, instead of keeping his cows in his own hands, lets them to a 'dairyman' at prices raised from £8 a cow some years ago to £10 and £12 a cow now. He supplies pasturage, hay and stalling. The dairyman makes the best he can of the produce."

Under this system, dairymen were entrepreneurs rather than simple hired hands, and wherever possible I identify them as such.

How far does Axminster extend?

Axminster has for centuries been a market town, and a parish (both ecclesiastical and civil), with a 'hinterland' made up of neighbouring hamlets and villages. For the purposes of this document I am dealing with those parts of the historic parish of Axminster which surround the town in a single, contiguous block.

I am therefore excluding some areas which were historically associated with Axminster, whilst being separated from the town by land which indubitably belonged to neighbouring parishes. Such excluded areas include the Shapwick estate (to the south) and the cluster of farms which lie just over the parish (and county) boundary which divides the parishes of Hawkchurch and Thorncombe, including Easthay, Beerhall and Tuck Mill. Historically, these three farms constituted the tithing of Beerhall, which was considered to form part of Axminster. The links between Axminster and these slightly more distant parcels of land can be traced back to grants made centuries ago to Newenham Abbey.

Although I have included a simple sketch map in Appendix 1, its purpose is limited, and it is not something on which others should rely beyond its stated purpose. The simplest way to see the boundaries of the historic parish of Axminster is to go to the Genuki.org.uk website. Having navigated through to Devon, select Axminster from the list of parishes, and by clicking on the red 'thumbnail' map on the Axminster page, the parish boundaries³ can be seen. The historic boundary differs from the current parish only inasmuch as it included a strip of land on the western side of Smallridge which now lies in the parish of All Saints. Throughout the period for which we have census returns (1841 to 1911) that strip of land, and the farms within it, fell under Axminster, and I have therefore included them in this documents.

Step-by-step instructions on how to see the current parish boundary superimposed onto modern Ordnance Survey base mapping is provided in Appendix 2.

Key sources and references

I list here the main source document that I have used, and to which I refer several times (as Ref 1, Ref 2 etc). Other sources which are used once only are given in footnotes.

Books and surveys

Ref 1 is 'The Book of the Axe' by George P R Pulman, and in particular the 4th edition, which was published in 1875, and which is very significantly bulkier and more informative than earlier editions. The Devon library service has several copies (including more than one in Axminster library) which can be borrowed.

Ref 2 is 'The History of Newenham Abbey in the County of Devon' by James Davidson, published in 1843. Davidson lived for some years at Sector House. See also Appendix 3.

Ref 3 is 'The Book of Axminster: The making of a town within its landscape' by Angela M W Dudley (Barracuda Books, 1988). This excellent and thoroughly-researched book, which contains many maps and illustrations, was published in a limited edition, and hence is much less freely available than the other sources cited here. However, one copy is held by Axminster library, and another is in the Devon Heritage Centre (DHC) in Exeter.

³ The underlying source is 'Historic Parishes of England and Wales: an Electronic Map of Boundaries before 1850' by R J P Kain and P R Oliver.

Ref 4 is 'The Book of Axminster with Kilmington' by Les Berry and Gerald Gosling (Halsgrove, 2003).

Ref 5 is 'Around Axminster – in old photographs' by Les Berry and Gerald Gosling (Alan Sutton Publishing, 1993).

Ref 6 is a survey of the land holdings of the Petre Estate which was carried out in preparation for their sale, in 1824. It can only be seen (so far as I am aware) at the DHC, where its reference number is 49/26/5/22. Although it shows who leased or rented hundreds of parcels of land in and around Axminster, it has to be borne in mind that the named individuals may not themselves have farmed the land, though some clearly did. Ref 3 (page 131) explains that the manor of Axminster⁴ was sold for £43,000 to James Alexander Frampton, a London businessman, and William Knight, an Axminster solicitor who had acted as the Petre Estate's steward of the manor. There were problems because Frampton alone signed the deed of sale, and the litigation which followed his death went on until 1872, at which point Henry Knight (William's nephew) became the sole owner, and Lord of the Manor of Axminster. He in turn died in 1894, and was succeeded by his son, Major Henry Knight. He sold the market rights in 1910 to local auctioneers Messrs B&J Gage and R&C Snell, while the separate 'manorial rights' reached Charles Snell in 1916 when he purchased the key element(s) of the Cloakham Estate. When he died in 1965, the ceremonial title of Lord of the Manor passed to Frank Rowe (and in 1994 to his son Jim).

Ref 7 is the collective term used for the tithe apportionment process undertaken in the mid-19th century to modernise the system under which tithes were paid by many property owners to the parish church. Some other properties were exempt from tithes because they were associated with former monasteries. This was of particular relevance to Axminster, where Newenham Abbey had been a major landowner. The source documents can be found on-line. A scan of the 'Tithe Apportionment Map' is accessible on-line either via the axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk website (on the Axminster Information tab) or on the eastdevonaonb.org.uk website (search for 'tithe': the map is in the 'conservation' section of the website, under the 'Parishscapes' project). This gives each field a unique reference number which can be linked to a schedule of fields which can then also be accessed via the eastdevonaonb.org.uk website. That schedule does not link directly to individually named farms. However, a consolidated summary of the field-by-field schedule, with farm names, can be found on the website of the Friends of Devon Archives (foda.org.uk) which provides equivalent information for all Devon parishes. As the FoDA website shows, the tithe apportionment work in Axminster parish was undertaken in 1838 (over the county as a whole the work was spread over several years), not in 1840 as suggested elsewhere. The FoDA website allows searches by parish or by surname and is generally easier to use than the 'Parishscapes' schedule.

Quite separately I found one set of information from 1828 linked to the tithe system, which provides unusual information about the number of cows owned by the various tithe payers of Axminster parish. This information is set out in Appendix 3.

Ref 8 is the sales catalogue which was produced in 1916 when the Cloakham Estate was offered for sale at auction by Messrs Wilson & Gray of Grosvenor Square on behalf of Henry Knight (see also Ref 6 above). The auction took place at the George Hotel in Axminster on 7 December 1916. Many of the larger lots were withdrawn, having failed to reach their reserves. At least two copies of this document are held in the DHC, but the one that is of greater interest carries the reference number 49/26/17/5, because it has both a map of all of 33 lots, and some photographs of Cloakham.

Many other sales catalogues are individually referenced.

Ref 9 comprises three ledger books which were kept by Robert Snell of Summerleaze, Kilmington and then (from about 1900) by Messrs R&C Snell of Axminster. The first two ledgers taken together cover the period from December 1893 to May 1907, while the third runs from January 1914 to May 1923. These were very kindly lent to me to assist with this research by Jim Rowe of Symonds & Sampson (and formerly of Messrs R&C Snell Ltd). The majority of the entries comprise valuations carried out in connection with the determination of farm rents, likely sales values and the process surrounding the grant of probate. The area covered by these ledgers spreads much wider than the parish of Axminster.

⁴ Some properties had already been sold over the previous 50 years. The 1824 sale covered all those properties which remained in Petre ownership at that time.

Jim Rowe kindly lent me some other old ledgers kept by Messrs R&C Snell over much the same period and later which I have not referred to in full detail, but which I have used to confirm, and in a few cases supplement, information from other sources. These ledgers were kept in connection with the firm's insurance Agency business, but they only tell a partial story, being in effect notes which were made to be used in association with the policy documents (which were kept separately). The ledgers themselves are in any case quite delicate. However, where there are references in the text to 'insurance' documents or records, this is where the information came from.

Ref 10 is the collective term for old newspaper reports, all of which can be accessed via the britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk website. In all cases I identify the newspaper concerned, and the date of publication. The newspapers are identified by their initials (DCC = Dorset County Chronicle, EE= Express & Echo, EFP = Exeter Flying Post, EPG = Exeter & Plymouth Gazette, NDJ = North Devon Journal, SM = Sherborne Mercury, TCWA = Taunton Courier & Western Advertiser, WDP = Western Daily Press, WT = Western Times, WG = Western Gazette, WMN = Western Morning News).

Ref 11 is the collective term, for the Axminster parish registers. I have not checked these meticulously, but where I am aware that they show an individual to have been resident at a particular farm, I treat this as reliable evidence.

Ref 12 is the parish-by-parish collection of valuations produced in 1910 for the purposes of updating the property tax base. The resultant schedules, assembled by District Valuers for the Inland Revenue, can be seen in the DHC, where those covering Axminster parish carry the reference number 3201V/2/5. These records, which cover buildings as well as farms, were so detailed that they were popularly known as the second 'Domesday' book.

I refer in this document to the very large majority of the plots of land identified in Ref 12, but there remain a few which cannot be tied to a particular farm or farmer (e.g. a 16-acre plot called 'Godfreys' attributed to Messrs Rowe. I simply cannot tell which branch of the Rowe family is meant, nor can I identify the plot). There are other instances where individuals held mainly small plots relatively close to the town, almost certainly in some instances with an eye to building houses or keeping a horse. I am aware of one exception to this generalisation, namely William Bridle Carter, a nurseryman and seedsman, who had seven scattered plots totalling just over 17 acres on which he no doubt produced some plants and seeds for his shop in town. However, since these holdings would never be identified as farms in directories or on census returns, it would be pointless to include him and his fields, or to deal with other comparable exceptions as anything other than footnotes.

Census returns, voters lists and directories

The census returns made every 10 years from 1841 to 1911 provide invaluable information about people, but are not always reliable or detailed as far as place names are concerned (they are often somewhat general, describing many properties as 'Wyke', for example, rather than naming the individual farms). References to census data are generally made simply by citing the year (e.g. '1851C shows Mr ABC at XYZ farm').

I have used standard 'family history' websites (mainly ancestry.co.uk, because it is the one with which I most familiar) to find the relevant census returns, and to check some birth details and family backgrounds, particularly for those individuals who were farming in Axminster roughly 100 years ago, at the time of the 1911 census. This is of greatest relevance where two or more individuals shared not just a surname, but first names as well, and I have tried to avoid making any mis-statements about who was farming which farm(s).

Although both land tax records and the lists of qualified voters, which were kept from 1832 onwards, can demonstrate or confirm connections between persons and named properties, including farms, they show even less than the census returns do about who was doing the farming. I have therefore not sought to exploit these sources systematically (the voters lists, for those who wish to use them, are accessible on microfiche at the DHC). However, having found one printed voters list, for 1842, included in James Davidson's 'Collections for a History of the Town and Parish of Axminster'⁵ I do make some reference to this as 1842V, because some of the information which it contains complements the information from the 1841 census return. The same source includes

⁵ See Appendix 3 for further information about this source.

(on pages 1059 to 1070) a copy of the 1821 land tax records for Axminster, albeit transcribed in handwriting which is far from easy to read, for anyone who wants to check it.

Axminster library has a collection of extracts from historic directories covering the period from 1850 to 1939 (plus a few earlier ones). Many of these can be consulted in full at (among other places) the DHC in Exeter. Such directories generally list at least the more prominent local farmers. The directories are referred to in the text by citing the year (e.g. '1878D shows that Mr ABC had taken over XYZ farm by then'). The full list of directories cited is as follows:

- White's 1850 History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devon
- Post Office Directory, 1856
- Billings' 1857 Directory
- Post Office Directory, 1866
- Morris' 1870 Directory of Devon
- Post Office Directory, 1873
- J G Harrod & Co's 1878 Directory
- White's 1878/79 History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devon
- Kelly's 1883 Directory
- Kelly's 1889 Directory
- White's 1890 Directory
- Kelly's Directories for 1893, 1902, 1906, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1923, 1926, 1930⁶, 1935 and 1939

Some of these directories can also be found on-line (e.g. on the historicaldirectories.ac.uk website), but navigating them tends to be very slow. It should also be remembered that all directories are researched, assembled and printed over a period of months, so what was printed was sometimes already out of date. There is also a tendency for some information to be repeated from issue to issue (irrespective of the publisher). Nevertheless, the information provided acts as a valuable supplement to census data.

Old maps

Finally, I have used a sequence of old maps. Although the fact that a particular farm is named on a map suggests that it was recognised at the time that the map was drawn up, it does not provide definitive proof (because it could simply be 'carried over' from the survey that formed the basis of an earlier edition of the same map). Equally, the absence of a specific farm name does not prove that the farm did not exist when the map concerned was published: not every fact can be crammed onto a map, and by no means every property gets named, even on the largest scale maps.

The earliest map that I have used is Benjamin Donn's map of Devon, published in 1765. This can be found and fully accessed via the Wikipedia page devoted to Benjamin Donn. There is also a paper copy in the DHC at Exeter. Despite its scale, it names most of the Westwater farms individually, plus Cloakham, Sisterwood (not Sisterhood), Weycroft Abbey, Mill Brook, Shools and Newnham (not Newenham) Abbey.

A dozen years later a much larger-scale map was produced for the Petre Estate by a surveyor called James Haywood of Eaton Street, Pimlico. His survey was carried out over the period 1776 to 1778. The original, which measures roughly 6 feet square, and is both well preserved and surprisingly detailed (e.g. most if not all fields are named, and for those that did not belong to the Petre Estate the owner's name is given), is held at the DHC⁷. It only covers the Petre landholdings and small blocks of land which were closely inter-mingled with them, not the whole parish⁸. Two

⁶ The extract available via Axminster Library is incomplete, covering surnames A-Da only. I therefore consulted the hard copy in the DHC. This 1930 directory covers Devon and Cornwall, and is kept a couple of shelves below the other Kelly's directories listed here, which are specific to Devon.

⁷ DHC ref 4377M/E2. Although at the time of writing the DHC on-line catalogue does not include it, the reference number can be found on the National Archives website, and was cited in a report in an archaeological report in the 1980s, and does produce the map itself.

⁸ The town is roughly in the centre of the map, which covers the land between Musbury Road and the Axe; between Woodbury Lane and Sector Lane; several farms to the west of Sector Lane (but not Weycroft or the farms accessed off Lodge Lane); all of the farms up the Yarty (other than Yeatlands, which is a blank 'island' surrounded by Petre land); and the land up to and including Uphay and Cloakham. Sisterhood, Greatwood and Smallridge are not covered; nor are Wyke, Great Trill and most of the land south of Woodbury Lane.

line drawings based on this map are included in Ref 3, on pages 52 (Gamberlake to Newenham Abbey) and 104/105 (the town, including the surrounds from Cloakham to Gamberlake).

The first Ordnance Survey (OS) map of Devon is dated 1809 (based on a survey in 1808/09), produced under the oversight of William Mudge. We then have Greenwood's map of 1827, and the map produced in connection with the tithe apportionment process in 1838 (see Ref 7 above). All of these are also viewable at the DHC, and the coverage of the 1838 map is broadly similar to that of the Petre map of 1776/78. The 1809 and 1827 maps can also be viewed on-line (see Appendix 2 for details).

There is an undated map of the catchment of the river Axe and its tributaries which forms part of Ref 1 above (and which is also reproduced at the front of Ref 3), which must have been drawn prior to 1860 (we know this because it does not include the railway, which opened that year). In my opinion it should be treated with some caution, because it appears to have been re-drawn at a larger scale than the original on which it was based, with the consequence that some place names are misleadingly (in some cases wrongly) located. It is also not oriented on the conventional north-south axis, which is not an error since it is clearly indicated, but can easily mislead a casual user.

The 6"-to-the-mile OS map which was published in 1891 (and which is viewable as 'hard copy' at the DHC or on-line: see Appendix 2 for details). This was based on a survey made in 1886/87, and offers the first really detailed map of the area.

Appendix 2 also covers a range of later mapping which can be found on-line. This does not, of course, include locally-produced maps, such as the map covering much of the parish, and dating from 1916, which forms part of Ref 8 (see above).

These maps are simply referred to in the text as 'the 1765 map', 'the 1891 map' etc.

A further source with research potential

A source that I have not (yet) explored or used is the collection of parish-by-parish record sets held at the National Archives, described as 'Ministry of Food: National Farm Survey, Individual farm records 1941-43'. The National Archives, own reference codes are MAF 32/649/1 (Axminster Town) and MAF 32/649/2 (Axminster Hamlets).

Adjacent parishes

For the benefit of anyone wondering about carrying out comparable research in one or more of Axminster's neighbouring parishes I offer the following indicators.

I have identified 90 places linked to farms in Axminster (see Appendix 1), and the text describing these farms occupies 55 pages (Chapters 3 to 9).

Kelly's Directory for 1939 lists 54 farms in Axminster parish, representing a majority of the active farms that I have identified at that time, but not the totality. The equivalent 'counts' from the listings covering six neighbouring parishes are as follows:

- Membury 40 farms (16 of these being linked to Furley)
- Hawkchurch 36 farms
- Musbury 30 farms
- Shute 30 farms (5 of these being linked to Whitford)
- Kilminster 21 farms
- Dalwood 29 farms

Without wishing to be over-precise, it is highly likely that between them these six parishes (to say nothing of Chardstock, Uplyme, Combpyne, Rousdon, Axmouth and Stockland) had well over three times as many farms as Axminster; and it might therefore be expected that any equivalent account of farming in them would be over three times as long as the 50-60 pages needed here for Axminster's farms.

Going back further in time, the 1831 census return (which recorded people's occupations but not their names) counted 99 farmers in Axminster parish, of whom 67 employed non-family labour, and 32 did not. The six parishes listed above had 151 farmers between them at that time, 109 of whom were employers, and 42 of whom were not. This suggests a more modest multiplier in terms of research effort, but still one that would be significantly greater than has been required for

Axminster alone. The other six parishes (Chardstock to Stockland, as listed above) had a further 222 farmers in 1831.

Based on my experience, I would strongly recommend any other interested researcher to take a parish-by-parish approach.

Chapter 2: Overview of the Farms

Full listing

A table which, with its accompanying map, can be found in Appendix 1, provides a full alphabetical 'look-up' listing of the farms (and places) which are covered by this document. Each farm is placed into two separate categories referenced in separate columns. The first deals with where to find them, and the second with where within Chapters 3 to 9 of this document they are then discussed further.

No system for organising such disparate information is perfect, and some readers are bound to feel that I have chosen the wrong groupings in Chapters 3 to 9. My hope is that any such irritations are not sufficient to get in the way of communicating my wider objectives.

There are then five farms which I treat as being outside the 'true' parish of Axminster, even though they have strong historical links to the town. These are dealt with immediately below under the heading 'Remote farms', rather than in Chapters 3 to 9.

I have not included any photographs in this document, but views of many of the farms that are mentioned in this document can be found on the geograph.org.uk website (see Appendix 2).

Remote farms

Three of the 'out-of-parish' farms (Beerhall, Easthay and Tuck Mill) are in the parish of Thorncombe, just over the parish border from Hawkchurch, and therefore over the current county border into Dorset. There are also various features carrying the name Spearhay on both sides of that same parish boundary. These farms and associated dwellings originally constituted the tithing of Beerhall within Axminster parish.

Shapwick Grange Farm lies to the south of Axminster, near Rousdon. It too constituted a tithing within Axminster parish in earlier times.

A 'lost' Manor

Haccomb-fee Manor is widely referred to in documents about Axminster from well before the time period covered by this document (e.g. Ref 2). It was a small manor occupying land which had been absorbed into the town well before the start of the 19th century. In 1824 (Ref 6) that part of Haccomb-fee which belonged to the Petre Estate amounted to 42 acres divided into a series of small parcels, none of them obviously connected with farming.

Route 1: Cloakham

North Street runs roughly northwards from the top of Castle Hill. Opposite the junction with Old North Street is Willhayes Park, where **Willhays Farm** used to be. The large house facing back up North Street was previously called **Willhays Cottage** and was directly associated with the farm. This should not be confused with the cottages towards the end of Willhays Lane.

At the far end of North Street is Willhays Lane, leading to a private road leading across the Axe to **Cloakham** and **Sisterhood Farm**. Just to the north of Sisterhood there used to be a further farm called **St Leonard's**, which can be seen on the 1838 map (Ref 7), beside the footpath which runs from Sisterhood to Watery Lane.

Cloakham had land, including several discrete farms which were rented out (the owner of Cloakham and the Lord of the Manor were often one and the same person). What was probably the house's 'home farm' was separated from the house by the railway as well as the river, and is accessed from Chard Road (see Route 2 below).

Route 2: Chard Road

Leaving town on the Chard Road, the first identifiable farm to be encountered is **Millbrook Farm**, the farmhouse of which faces the main road just beyond the junction with Stoney Lane. (The mill itself, a short distance to the south never, so far as I can tell, had a farm attached.)

Beavor Lane runs off to the right (east) a short distance beyond Millbrook Farm. This provides access to **Prestaller Farm** (to the right) and then **Beulah Farm** (to the left, with its entrance at the point where Beavor Lane becomes the unmade Evil Lane). Evil Lane used to provide access to a

property called **Beaver**, which may well be the same as **Little Beaver**, which is sometimes listed. Whether one property or two, no obvious trace survives.

Back on the Chard Road, after passing the cemetery is a lane which in 2015 provides access (on the left) to a set of unnamed farm buildings which some maps (e.g. plans submitted in connection with a planning application in 2007) show to be called **Cloakham Farm**.

Weycroft Manor Farm can then be found on the right of Chard Road, at the very edge of the town. After passing Weycroft Mill (see the text below on Route 3) and crossing the Axe, there is a turning to Smallridge. Immediately after crossing the railway line, Watery Lane leads off to the left, and eventually to **Greatwood Farm**. Continuing towards Smallridge, the road passes the former site of **Smallridge Farm** (on the right, at the very edge of the village) and then the very obvious **Porch Farm**, on the left. According to the Transactions of the Devonshire Association⁹, Porch Farm occupies the site of the old manor house of Smallridge, and as far as I can see Porch Farm was itself previously known as Smallridge Farm. Then, after the name had been changed (in the late 1890s), another farm, also called Smallridge Farm, was established to the south west, as shown on more recent maps, but not on the OS map of 1893.

Just after the Ridgeway Inn is a gateway leading to **Highview Farm**. At the next fork a left-hand turn leads past **Frogwell Farm** and on to **Long Lea Farm**. Just before Long Lea there is a footpath on the right which leads across the fields to link up to a track and lane to **Undercleave Farm** (and to Dennings Down Farm, which is over the parish boundary in Membury parish). If driving, Undercleave Farm is accessed from the Smallridge Road.

Route 3: Weycroft

Weycroft Mill sits on the east bank of the Axe, adjacent to the Chard Road (see above). Whereas the mill did not ever have a farm attached (so far as I am aware), **Weycroft Manor** did. The manor building can be found up the hill from the mill, on Lodge Lane (accessible from the Chard Road by turning right just before the traffic lights). By the early 20th century, and probably in earlier times, the manor's farm occupied a block of land on the east bank of the Axe and up-hill from the manor house and mill, rather than across the small valley (see the text on Route 2 above). Other farms associated with Weycroft included **Mount Farm**, which I have been unable to identify or locate.

Lodge Lane continues up-hill to a crossroads with an access lane (and public footpath) to **Pinneywood Farm**. **Bagley Hill Farm** is reached via this same lane. Before the high voltage pylons were built in the 1960s the access to Bagley Hill ran closer to the river.

Further up Lodge lane is the entrance to the Old Lodge, previously called **Lodge Farm**. Round the corner and straddling the lane are the buildings of **Higher Lodge Farm** and then, on the right, the entrance to **Pensylvania Farm**. Lodge Lane ends just past a property called 'Pendragon', at the edge of a wood. An unmade lane (and public footpath) runs off to the left, skirting the wood on its way to **Old Barn Farm**.

Route 4: Raymond's Hill Circuit

The following circular route runs up Sector Lane and Stammer Hill to Blackpool Corner, then along the B3165 in the direction of Hunter's Lodge, before turning down Cook's Lane (at one time called Gore Lane), crossing the Lyme Road, and following Woodbury Lane back to Axminster.

The first evidence of a farm on this circuit is the former farmhouse of **Sector Lane Farm**, on the right hand side of Sector Road, just before the eastern edge of the town. I believe that this is the same building which at one time was called Punch Cottage. Down the hill, on the left, is the entrance to Sector House and Park (formerly Sec Tor, and sometimes Secktor). Although the house had land, it does not appear to have had a 'home farm' of its own, though before the 'big house' was developed early in the 19th century, **Sector Farm** was located where the cottages now stand, on the north side of the bridge which carries Sector Lane over the stream.

⁹ TDA Vol 67-68, 1935, page 310.

Beyond the stream, and to the right of the road, are a couple of fields which, I understand¹⁰, were run as a smallholding in or around the 1940s, though without, so far as I can tell, having any dedicated farm buildings. This was not, therefore, a 'farm' in the sense I have used it throughout this document, but is mentioned here in case anyone else is searching for it.

After a steep up-hill section, Coles's Lane can be seen on the right. At the far end of this lane is **Coles's Farm**. Back on Sector Lane, and just beyond the junction, the entrance to **Sector Hayes Farm** can be seen on the left. A short distance further on, and the entrance to **Lower Beavor Farm** can be seen on the right, followed by the junction with Cuthays Lane on the left. There are three farms on Cuthays Lane: **Red House Farm**, just before the junction at the top of Evil Lane, then some way further on the left is the entrance to **Chubb's Farm**, and finally **Cuthays Farm**.

Back on Sector Lane, there used to be what was apparently a small farm called **Honiborns / Honibarns / Honeybans** on the right hand side of the road. I have been unable to find any trace of it now. There are then two farm entrances on the left hand side, to **Shiles Farm** and **Payne's Place Farm**, and then (on the right) the entrance to **Beavor Grange** (previously known as **Higher Beavor**). All of the farms with Beavor in their names also used the spelling Beaver on occasions.

Furhter up Stammery Hill on the right used to be Stammery Hill Cottage, which on at least one occasion was home to a farmer, though not (so far as I can tell) a farm as such. After a while a relatively small and steep turning on the left (which is also a bridle way) serves as the access to New Park, and formerly to **New Park Farm**. Just before Blackpool Corner and the junction with the B3165 is a smallholding called **Hillcrest** (one of two farms in the parish with this name). The B3165 marks the parish (and county) boundary, and the only farm on the Axminster side of the road between Blackpool Corner and Raymonds Hill is **Newlands Farm**.

Having turned down Cook's Lane, the first farm lane (on the right hand side) leads to **Furzeleigh Down Farm**, and formerly to **Little Furzeleigh**. The second access (also on the right, on a double bend) serves **Furzeleigh Farm**. There are many references to farms called **Middle Furzeleigh** and **Higher Furzeleigh**, which I believe are probably references to Furzeleigh Farm and Furzeleigh Down respectively. All of these farms sometimes used a variety of spellings, including Furzeley.

Towards the bottom of Cook's Lane, also on the right, is **Symonds Down Farm** (or sometimes Simmons Down Farm) previously known more simply as **Cook's Cottages**. No doubt this had a link to **Symondsdown House**, which sits above and to the left of Woodbury Lane, about a quarter of a mile to the south, and did at one time have some farmland of its own directly attached.

Further down Woodbury Lane, well past Chattan Hall and on the left, is **Woodbury Farm**, for many years known as **Woodbury Dairy**.

Route 5: Lyme Road and Trinity Hill

There are three farms in the middle of the circuit described immediately above, which are accessed from the Lyme Road. All three are well beyond the urban edge when travelling away from the town. This road is also unsuitable for walking, since it lacks a footpath for part of its length

The entrance to **Fawnsmoor** is on the left hand side, with the farm and former dairy lying beyond the main house. The entrance to **Old Park Farm** can then be seen on the right hand side of Lyme Road. On the left hand side, on a bend, is the entrance to Furzeleigh House, which still has a modest amount of linked farmland, which was at one time called **Lower Furzeleigh**.

The Lyme Road then joins the A35 (at the eastern end of Axminster by-pass). A short way down-hill (towards Honiton, on the by-pass) is the entrance serving **King's Cottage / Farm**, which was known for a short period as **Chattan Farm**.

Turning left from Lyme Road onto the A35, one soon reaches the turning right onto Trinity Hill Road. This passes both **Oaklands Farm** and **Hillcrest Farm** (one of two farms in the parish with this name) on the right hand side. After passing the car park for the Trinity Hill Nature Reserve (on the left hand side of Trinity Hill road) is a lane on the right, running down-hill towards Wyke. This provides the access to Tangletree House and the former **Tangletree Farm**.

¹⁰ Source: Dave Scott Mear, personal communication, 2017. The smallholding was apparently run by Nathan Bull, who lived close to the junction between Sector Lane and Coles's Lane, and milked a handful of cows on those fields.

A short distance further along Trinity Hill Road, on the left, is another car park, for the use of walkers using the Forestry Commission land on Trinity Hill. Directly opposite this car park is a field which contains Trinity Hill Beacon. There is also a permissive footpath which can be followed across the fields and down the hillside to Great Trill (see Route 7 below).

Route 6: Wyke

This route starts on Wyke Road (accessed from the centre of town via Musbury Road and Woodbury Lane), continues on Wyke Lane and ends at the hamlet of Wyke.

The modern OS map shows both **Higher Jackleigh Farm** and **Great Jackleigh Farm** occupying the site on the left hand side of Wyke Road. The two farms have been amalgamated into Great Jackleigh Farm¹¹, which is how the former Higher Jackleigh farmyard is now labelled. Then, just before the by-pass, is the entrance to **Higher Wyke Farm** and **Lower Wyke Farm**.

Beyond the by-pass, and on the 'elbow' of the second of two right-angle bends, is the start of an old and unmarked (pre-by-pass) access lane to Higher Wyke Farm. Further on is the access to **Wyke Farm**, on the left of what has, by here, become Wyke Lane. Opposite this entrance, on the other side of the lane, is the former site of **Unity Farm**. No obvious evidence of Unity Farm survives, though the landform looks as though there could be old foundations close to the surface.

The hamlet of Wyke lies a short distance further on, just beyond the junction with Abbey Gate Lane. **Rose Farm** faces onto Wyke Lane, on the right hand side of the lane. Then further along, also on the right, are the entrances to **Annings Farm**, and then to **Highcroft Farm**. This is the end of the road, though by following the footpath up the hill one eventually comes to the turning to Tangletree Farm (see Route 5 above).

Route 7: Musbury Road

Musbury Road starts close to the centre of Axminster, and is an extension of South Street. This is not a safe route for walkers: the volume of traffic and absence of pedestrian facilities makes it not just unpleasant but dangerous before one even reaches the by-pass.

On leaving the junction of South Street and Silver Street, Musbury Road dips down, and at the bottom of the dip, on the right, is **Purzebrook**, now a row of houses, but formerly an inn, and probably the centre of a farm of the same name. Close to the junction with King Edward Road, on the right hand side of Musbury Road, is where **Hakes Farm** used to be. The road then dips down again, and just past the bottom is the entrance (on the right) to Horslears. Although this was mentioned as farmland connected with Newenham Abbey (see Ref 2), I am not aware that it was ever a farm in its own right. Similarly, I am not aware that Gamberlake was ever a farm, though there was a property of that name close to the junction with Woodbury Lane which is shown on the 1776/78 map, and if Gamberlake ever was a farm, that would have been the farmstead.

Then on the left hand side, just before the slip road onto the by-pass, is **Shoals / Shoals Farm**. On the other side of the by-pass is a small crossroads: to the left is a cluster of buildings known collectively as **Abbey Gate**, which used to include **Little Jackleigh**, while the lane on the right leads down to **Higher Abbey Farm** and then **Lower Abbey Farm**, both of which sit on land which formerly held Newenham Abbey.

Continuing along Musbury Road, the relatively recent **Abbey Gate Farm** is on the left, and just after this is the entrance to **Balls Farm** on the other side of the road. Almost opposite the sign to Trill is the entrance to **Slymlakes Farm**.

The lane towards Trill crosses briefly into Musbury parish: both Little Trill and the first half of the driveway of **Great Trill** are in Musbury. **Great Trill Dairy** forms part of the main cluster of farm buildings around the manor house of Trill, which was formerly associated with the Drake family of Ashe House (Musbury).

¹¹ The archaeological report produced in connection with the construction of the Axminster By-pass states that Higher Jackleigh was two cottages, not a farm, and that they were expected to be demolished to make way for the by-pass.

Route 8: Membury Circuit

Despite the name this route does not include Membury, but combines two separate roads which lead there, and which can be combined in a figure-of-eight route, starting on Castle Hill, to the north of Trinity Square.

The bridge over the Axe, just beyond the level crossing, is called Stoney Bridge. There are occasional references to farmers living in cottages close to Stoney Bridge. On the far side of the bridge, on the left¹², is the farmhouse from **Castle Hill Farm**, whose former farm buildings were located on the other side of the road, where dwellings have now been built¹³. A short distance further on, also on the left, is the yard of **Blackhakes Farm**.

A steep climb leads to the staggered junction of Four Cross. The road which is signed to Membury soon passes the entrance, on the right, to **Uphay Farm**. Further up the hill, also on the right, is the substantial farmstead of **Higher Uphay Farm**. Cox's Wood, probably the largest single block of woodland in Axminster parish, can then be seen to the left of the road. The wood, along with Higher Uphay Farm at one end and Tolcis Farm at the other (see below) constitutes a widely recognisable landmark which can be seen from many local viewpoints.

Just before the next group of houses (on the right of the road) is a small unmarked lane leading down to **Sart / Sarte / Zart Farm**. Although **Strangers Hill Farm** no longer exists as a farm, one of the houses just beyond the lane to Sart Farm has preserved the name for posterity, complete with a sign incorporating the pigs which it used to produce.

Although Symons /Simmons Cross is in Membury parish, as is the nearby Park Farm, the buildings associated with **High Lea Farm** are in Axminster parish (even if the end of its access drive, which is on the Axminster side of Symons Cross, is in Membury). A footpath leads past High Lea and down the hill to Long Lea Farm (see Route 3 above).

Turn left at Symonds Cross, towards Tolcis. After some cottages (on the left) is a track leading to Hasland Farm (in Membury parish) and **Quarry Fields Farm** (in Axminster parish). The road then leads down-hill past the former Tolcis quarry (and landfill) into the small hamlet of Tolcis, including Tolcis Farm, which was formerly divided into **Higher and Lower Tolcis / Tolhayes / Tolsehayes / Tulsehayes**. A short distance beyond Tolcis is Tolcis Cross. The road to the right leads down past **Wellands Farm**, and on to Membury, or to Beckford Bridge and Stockland.

Turning left (back towards Axminster) at Tolcis Cross, the road passes beneath the high voltage lines before passing the entrance (on the right) to **Yeatlands / Yetlands / Yallands Farm**. A further descent leads to a short spur of lane leading down to **Higher Westwater Farm**, and the river Yarty.

The next farm, also on the right, is **Middle Westwater Farm**, which (together with Higher Westwater) incorporates the very ancient property known as **Breweshayes**. I believe that the land known as Breweshayes was to the west of the Yarty, and Higher and Middle Westwater were the only farms in Axminster parish that straddled the river over the period about which I am writing¹⁴.

After Middle Westwater the lane climbs and then falls, and at the low point is a lane which leads down to **Westwater Farm**. The field to the east of this lane junction used to be called Clay Hill, and used to contain a property called **Wink House**, which at one time had a small amount of land attached to it. There is in fact ample scope for confusion regarding Westwater Farm, because it is very close to Lower Westwater (see below) with which it used to share the access track identified

¹² I understand that the Membury road used to pass to the west of Castle Hill Farm. When that was the case, the farmhouse and its farmstead would have been better connected.

¹³ There was a separate property called Castle Hill House Estate which was offered for sale at auction on 30 December 1908 by Messrs B&J Gage at Bank Chambers, Axminster (DHC ref 547B/P/499). Castle Hill House itself is the imposing property that sits between the old and new alignments of North Street, facing directly at Castle Hill. When it was offered for sale in 1908 it had 4 acres of meadow and outbuildings on the land between the railway and North Street, behind the cottages which front onto the eastern side of Castle Hill. It also had 4 cottages and some garden and orchard land. The house plus 1.5 acres was re-offered by Messrs Palmer & Co and R&C Snell at the George, Axminster on 19 October 1923 (DHC ref 547B/P/3368) with its development potential (for new housing) being emphasised. As far as I can tell, Castle Hill Farm was not directly linked to Castle Hill House.

¹⁴ Over recent years the hedge which previously divided Middle Westwater from Coryton Park Farm was removed after the latter purchased and absorbed part of the former.

above, and many historical records refer to Westwater, without specifying which farm is being discussed.

Half way up the next hill is a backwards turn (on the left) giving access to **Woodhouse Farm**. Then, at the top of the hill is the relatively new **Westwater Bungalow Farm**. A short way beyond this is Four Cross (which marks the cross-over point of this figure-of-eight route). From here follow the sign for Kilmington, and the next farm is **Hunthay Dairy** (on the left), just before the right hand turn to **Lower Westwater Farm / Dairy**. The next access (also on the right) leads to **Hunthay Farm** and business park. At the end of Hunthay Lane turn left, and follow The Trafalgar Way across the flood plain and back to Axminster.

Chapter 3: Between Membury Road and Smallridge, north of Cloakham

Uphay and Higher Uphay

Whereas Uphay is a very old farm (see Ref 1 pages 586 and 615; Ref 2 page 59), Higher Uphay is much more recent: it does not appear on the 1938 map. However, the 1776/78 map shows that there were at that time several non-farm dwellings roughly where Higher Uphay now is.

Early apprenticeship records¹⁵ show that in 1798 Richard **Perring** was the farmer of Uphay, Ferisses and Pereams. Since he is named in the Universal British Directory of 1792 as a farmer in Axminster, he may have been at Uphay for some years by 1798. The same source suggests that by 1813 the farmer at Uphay was Hugh **Chick**.

In 1824 (Ref 6) Hugh Chick was listed as the occupier of 112 acres described as Uphay, though a further four parcels which included the name Uphay within them (Whitty's Uphay, Anning's Uphay, Frosts's Uphay and Robins' Uphay, totalling about 80 acres) were also listed, most of them rented by W I L **Perham** Esq (who also rented Woodhouse Farm: see Chapter 9).

In 1838 (Ref 7) Uphay was being farmed jointly by Giles **Collier** (also at Millbrook) and George **Shore**, and was recorded as 154 acres. In 1841C it was occupied by George Collier (and Giles Collier had moved to Sart: see below). The link to the Chick family was apparently not broken, however, because 1842V lists James Chick in connection with Uphay.

In 1851C Uphay was occupied by John **Harvey**, and was shown as 170 acres. Both 1856D and 1857D show that John **Pearce** had taken over the farm, and 1861C shows the size as 180 acres. 1866D shows John Pearce as a farmer without specifying the farm, but 1870D and 1871C both place him at Uphay. 1871C gives the farm's size as 190 acres.

1873D again names John Pearce without specifying where he was farming, whereas 1878D shows that the farmer at Uphay was John **Rendell**. 1878/79 does not list Uphay Farm at all.

By 1881C the farm was occupied by Henry **Tucker**, a farm bailiff, and was recorded as 148 acres. Neither 1889D nor 1890D lists Uphay, but 1891C shows George Andrews **Trenchard**, a farm bailiff and gamekeeper who had been born at Hawkchurch in c.1850 as the occupant of Uphay. He was employed by Henry Knight, the owner of Uphay Farm (and much other land besides). No farmer was shown in 1893D, though it seems almost certain that George Trenchard was still there, because in 1895 Charles Snell carried out a valuation, following the death of Henry Knight the year before, connected with the purchase of livestock and equipment at Uphay Farm, by George Trenchard.

1901C names George Trenchard as the farmer at Uphay in his own right. This is confirmed by 1906D, 1910D, 1911C and 1914D, and by Ref 12, which shows George Trenchard as the main occupier of land at Uphay in 1910, with 145 acres (plus another 103 acres elsewhere in the parish). Other persons occupied other parcels of land identified as being at Uphay, but in combination with other nearby farms¹⁶ rather than as free-standing farms.

Ref 8 (1916) states that George Trenchard rented 176 acres at an annual cost of £174. The accompanying map shows that the farm extended along the eastern side of Uphay Lane, from the lane leading down to Sart Farm almost to Four Cross, and down the slope to a relatively short stretch of the west bank of the Axe. He was either assisted, or succeeded, by his son Reuben Trenchard (Ref 10, WT 29 Oct 1915). His other sons included Enos and George, as confirmed by the report of his funeral (Ref 10, 21 Feb 1936), which stated that he had spent over 25 years at Uphay, initially as Mr Knight's gamekeeper and bailiff, and then as tenant of the farm. He had left Uphay in about 1918, when he bought a farm at Membury. He was also described as the owner of racing ponies, and well known at local race meetings.

In 1918 Felix **Rowe** (who had previously farmed at Lower Westwater) evidently bought Uphay. Very soon after he arrived his 7-year-old son George got his right hand trapped in a corn mill, and had to have four fingers from his right hand amputated (Ref 10, WT 17 May 1918). 1919D lists Felix Rowe as the farmer, and this is confirmed by all of the directories up to and including 1939D.

¹⁵ DHC ref 406-A-2

¹⁶ Charles Snell of Hunthay had 52 acres at Uphay, and William Johnson of Higher Westwater had 95 acres. Other Uphay parcels were very small.

He was the son of George Rowe (see Chapter 6: Lower Beavor Farm¹⁷), who had moved from Chagford to Axminster with four of his sons, of whom Felix was the youngest. Felix in turn had several sons, and a newspaper report of a dog worrying case (Ref 10, 23 Jan 1942) identifies the two eldest (Felix junior and William Daniel¹⁸) as Rowe Bros of Uphay. Information which I have seen regarding an insurance policy suggests that they probably took over management of the farm from their father in 1938. Felix Rowe senior died in 1943 aged 57 (Ref 10, EPG 16 July 1943), and is buried at Axminster with his wife Eliza Olive (who died in 1980 aged 93). By the time he died he had been retired for 5 years, having been at Uphay for 20 years by then (i.e. arriving in about 1918, which is consistent with the above sequence of events).

Felix Rowe junior and his brother William Daniel took over Uphay Farm until William Daniel moved the short distance to Higher Uphay (see below). Following Felix Rowe junior's death in 1993 the farm passed to his elder daughter, Margaret. In autumn 2015 the farm, comprising 171 acres, was offered for sale in lots via Messrs Symonds & Sampson. The sales particulars showed that the land was all to the east of Uphay Lane, running from just below Higher Uphay to just above Four Cross, down to the Axe, and then as far as the railway line. It included about 20 acres of woodland (Cloakham covert). The land had for many years been run in conjunction with Higher Uphay, by Michael Rowe (see below), and some of the land, but not the house and farmstead, was then incorporated into Higher Uphay.

Higher Uphay was established as a separate farm in the 1930s. Although all of the evidence that I have seen suggests that it belonged to Felix Rowe senior, it was by 1934 being farmed by Herbert **Mear** (who had previously been at Hunthay Dairy). In that year his eldest son Charles Herbert (Ref 10, EPG 7 Dec 1934) was selling hatching eggs from Higher Uphay, and in 1935D and 1939D, the farmer was confirmed as Herbert Mear. Charles Herbert Mear also had an interest in Sart Farm (see below), but in 1936 he married Vera Rowe of Fawnsmoor (see Chapter 6) (Ref 10, WT 17 Apr 1936) and moved there to farm. Herbert Mear died in 1939 (and is buried at Axminster). His widow remained at Higher Uphay until after the war, when a press announcement (Ref 10, EPG 18 Apr 1947) stated that Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd would shortly be selling live and dead stock on behalf of Mrs M A Mear, who was quitting the farm.

Higher Uphay then passed to William Daniel **Rowe**, the second son of Felix Rowe senior. By 2015 it comprised about 200 acres, with fields on both sides of Uphay Lane, and is currently farmed by his son Michael John Rowe, trading as DW Rowe & Co, with dairying the main enterprise. Some of the fields which now form part of Higher Uphay Farm, and which lie between Cox's Wood and the Membury Road, previously formed parts of Higher Westwater and Tolcis Farms (see Chapter 9), and most of the fields of next-door Uphay Farm which were until 2015 rented have now been incorporated into Higher Uphay, increasing its acreage further.

A third brother (Frank Rowe) became an auctioneer after World War II, took over the local firm of Messrs R&C Snell Ltd, and became one of the best-known local figures in Axminster (and Lord of the Manor) in the 1960s and 1970s. He lived at Uphay House, which sits between the two Uphay farms, on Uphay Lane. A short biography of Frank Rowe appears in Ref 4 (page 137).

Sart

In 1838 (Ref 7) William **Bradley** was the farmer at Zart, which was recorded as just under 49 acres. Three years later (1841C) the occupant of Sart was Giles **Collier** or **Cobben** (the writing is unclear, but that is what it looks like. If it was Giles Collier, this may well be the person who was at Uphay in 1838).

There is then a gap of almost 50 years (including four censuses and multiple directories) without any mention of Sart, for much of which time it seems likely that the land was being farmed as part of a neighbouring farm.

There was a press report in 1887 (Ref 10, WT 3 June 1887) which stated that Mr **Brown** of Sart Farm had suffered a gun accident, resulting in three of his fingers having to be amputated. Then in 1891C, Lawrence **Studley** was recorded as the farmer at Sarte. In 1895 he was in dispute with one of his workers (Ref 10, WT 3 July 1895), who did not like the offer that had been made to him of "... 18 shillings per month, with food and the cowshed to sleep in". He was still there in 1901C (spelled Sart this time) but is not listed in the intervening directories. On 25 May 1907 Sart Farm

¹⁷ Coincidentally, when George Rowe moved to Lower Beavor he too took over from George Trenchard in his role as the Knight family's bailiff.

¹⁸ Other documents name him as Daniel William Rowe.

was offered for sale at auction at the George Hotel, Axminster by Messrs R&C Snell, described as comprising 55½ acres¹⁹.

1906D then has John **Warren** as the farmer, followed by Edwin **Churchill** (1910D). Ref 12 names the tax payer at Sart simply as Mr Churchill, and records the farm as comprising 45 acres (with Mr Churchill having another very small unnamed plot of land at Smallridge providing just over 1 acre more).

1911C shows Sart being farmed by James Churchill, who had been born c.1882 at Curry Mallett in Somerset. No farmer is listed at Sart in 1914D or 1919D (by which time James Churchill was at Greatwood Farm: see below).

By 1923D Job **Bowditch** was the farmer at Sart, but by 1926D he had been replaced by Henry William **Speed**, who was still there in 1930D. By 1935D the farmer was Charles Herbert **Mear** (see above in connection with Higher Uphay Farm). He had left by 1937²⁰.

By 1938 (Ref 11) Alfred Charles **Gill** was the farmer at Sart, which is confirmed by 1939D. He was still there in 1942 when there was a rick fire (Ref 10, EPG 30 Jan 1942), and I believe that he was still the farmer in the mid-to-late 1950s. In fact the Gill family is still at Sart, farming under the name R J Gill.

Stranger's Hill and High Lea

So far as I know Stranger's Hill Farm was created after 1939 (it does not appear on the 1938 map, and my own memories of Stranger's Hill are that in the 1970s it was a relatively small pig farm).

High Lea was offered for sale by the property department of Harrods (Knightbridge) on 19 July 1921, together with Long Lea (see below) and another parcel of land. The sales particulars²¹ state that High Lea was a newly built bungalow with four bedrooms, all modern facilities and wonderful views. It also came with two fields: 4 acres up against the Membury Road, providing the access drive and sitting in the parish of Membury; and 9 acres surrounding the house in Axminster parish. The sales particulars also stressed the excellent quality of the soil and grazing. None of the subsequent directories list High Lea as a farm, but a report in the on-line version of the Independent newspaper (dated 15 Sept 1992) in connection with a dispute over public rights of way referred to "... *George **Trenchard**, who farms the 30 acres of High Lea*" and stated that the Trenchard family had farmed High Lea since 1929. Part of the farm was at that time used for clay pigeon shooting, and I understand Georger Trenchard's brother David still runs Axminster Gun Club there, as well as a building business.

General comment on Smallridge

The Book of the Axe (Ref 1, page 574) tells us that many years ago the manor of Smallridge was sold in parcels to the tenants. In 1838 (Ref 7) the only named farms were Undercleave, Long Lea and Frogwell, though I am also reasonably confident about Smallridge Farm (all covered below).

Later censuses indicate that a few residents of the village had small, unnamed rented farms, sometimes in conjunction with other jobs. 1891C even lists two persons (John **Welch** and Thomas **Chick**) as 'teazel growers', which is about as specialist as a farm can get, and presumably linked to the local textile industry.

From 1881C to 1901C, and in various directories between 1878D and 1910D, Edwin **Marley** is regularly shown as a small farmer. He is not the same person as Edwin Thomas Marley of Frogwell Farm (see below), having been born c.1826 at Smallridge. The directory entries show that he was also a blacksmith, and later ran the post office in Smallridge while farming (as did Mrs Clara Eliza **Richbell** in 1914D, 1919D and 1923D). Ref 12 shows that in 1910 he was the taxpayer on 23 acres at Undercleave (see below).

Several other Smallridge farms (e.g. Battleford, Churchill and Dennings Down) sit close to, but outside, the historic parish of Axminster.

¹⁹ I saw a press clipping from Pulman's News advertising the sale tucked into one of the R&C Snell valuation books (Ref 9).

²⁰ Source: Dave Scott Mear, personal communication, 2017. David was born near Chard in 1937 while his father was on a farm there between his stints at Sart and Fawnsmoor.

²¹ DHC ref 547B/P/2059.

Undercleave

In 1833 there was a press announcement of a farm sale (Ref 10, SM 21 Oct 1833) which stated that as a consequence of a 'fiat of bankruptcy' against Mr James Gifford, various parcels of land at Smallridge would be auctioned at the George in Axminster by Mr Chaffey. These included 23 acres at Undercleave, described as occupied by Mr Denziloe on an annual rent, which I take to be a reference to Malachi **Denslow** (see below in the context of Frogwell Farm).

Five years later, a further sale was announced (Ref 10, SM 23 July 1838), this time including 55 acres at Undercleave, 22 acres described as Shappick Grounds and some other fields, totalling 129 acres on a 7-year tenancy (from 1836) to John **Stone**. This is substantially confirmed by the evidence of the tithe apportionment process in 1838 (Ref 7), in which Undercleave was shown as 128 acres, and occupied by John Stone. He was presumably still there in 1841 (his tenancy having a further 2 years to run), but his address was given then as Smallridge Hill, and Undercleave itself was not mentioned. However, 1842V again links him to Undercleave. The same essential block of land was re-offered for sale the following year (Ref 10, DCC 23 June 1842).

In 1850 Undercleave was offered yet again for sale as part of a package of 86 acres, this time by James Hussey (Ref 10, EPG 5 Oct 1850), to be sold at the George on 17 October that year. Undercleave was listed at 34 acres, alongside Sock's Tenement (27 acres), Keats (23 acres), Linhay (1 acre) and an acre of common land near Weycroft. The tenant was named as Mr **Sandford**.

1851C shows John **Welch** farming at Undercleave, but with a smaller farm than before: just 86 acres (i.e. consistent with the 1850 sale reported above). He was also listed as a farmer at Smallridge in 1850D, but without any indication of which farm he ran. He is listed there (albeit with the farm name spelled as Undercliff) in 1856D and 1857D, and in 1856 timber on the farm was offered for sale (Ref 10, SM 29 Jan 1856) by Mr T H Wills, with the tenant identified as John Welch. He probably died soon thereafter, because 1861C lists Ann Welch as the farmer, still (it appears, though the writing is poor) with 86 acres.

1866D and 1870D both list James **Manfield** as the farmer at Undercleave, which is then confirmed by 1871C, when the farm size is shown as 90 acres. Although the family remained at Undercleave for some time, the spelling of their surname varied quite a lot, as did the spelling of the farm. I have settled on Manfield, while recognising that this may not be correct. 1873D shows James Manfield still present, as do 1878D and 1878/79D. By 1881C Thomas Manfield had taken over as the farmer, and the size of the farm appears to have fallen to 40 acres. Thomas' presence is confirmed by all directories and census returns until 1906D, and by a document (which I have not seen) at the DHC²², which shows that he was paying rent of £125 a year at around the time that he retired. He and his wife Emily also had children baptised at All Saints Church between 1884 and 1887. Ref 12 shows that Thomas Manfield was still the taxpayer responsible for 4 acres at Undercleave in 1910, together with 22 acres named Shapwick Ground. Ref 12 also records Edwin **Marley** as having a further 23 acres at Undercleave.

Both 1910D and 1911C show that James Long **Perring** had taken over Undercleave, and the baptismal register for All Saints Church confirms that he and his wife Alice Bridget had children baptised there in 1910 and 1911. 1911C shows that he had been born c.1876 at Hawkchurch. He was still there in 1914D.

By 1919D the farmer at Undercleave was John **Loving**. From 1923D to 1935D it was John Thomas **Wheadon** (formerly at Wyke, but more recently at Alston²³). When Undercleave Farm was offered for sale at auction in 1938 by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd (Ref 10, WG 1 July 1938), described as 42 acres occupied by John Thomas Wheadon, it was withdrawn, having failed to reach the reserve price. In 1939D no farmer was named at Undercleave, and John Thomas Wheadon was listed as farming at Elmwood Farm, All Saints.

I have not managed to establish what happened over the following 50 years, but by 1991 it can be seen from the EDDC planning website that Mr & Mrs C Ryder were converting at least some of the farm buildings at Undercleave to non-agricultural use.

²² DHC ref 3030A/PZ 6.

²³ Ref 10, WT 28 Jan 1920.

Long Lea

In 1838 (Ref 7) Long Lea was occupied by William **Smith**, and amounted to just over 23 acres. This is consistent with 1841C. He was still there 1851C, with the farm shown as 60 acres, and in 1851 he and his wife Susan had a child baptised at All Saints Church with their address given as Long Lea. 1856D, 1857D and 1861C all show William Smith as the farmer, and 1861C states that the farm was 88 acres.

In 1863 Thomas **Charles** and his wife Sarah, of Long Lea, had a child baptised at All Saints Church. However, in the absence of other evidence I do not know whether he was the farmer or a resident labourer. There is no listing for Long Lea in 1866D or 1870D.

1871C shows James **Perring**, a dairyman, as the occupant of Long Lea. The farm is not mentioned in 1873D, but in 1876 it was reported to be occupied by Henry **Walrond** (Ref 10, EPG 23 June 1876). The press announcement in question concerned the offer for sale of a 95-acre freehold estate within a ring fence and with mostly new buildings, comprising Long Lea, Green Down and Flutteridge, including 36 acres of meadow and pasture, 3 acres of orchard, 10 acres of oak and fir and the remainder in arable cultivation. It is described as well suited for use as a dairy farm, with 14 cows currently milked by Henry Walrond.

In 1878D James **Boon** is the named farmer (he, or someone of the same name, was also listed as the farmer of Middle Furzeleigh, and the baptismal register for All Saints Church has other persons resident at Long Lea in 1877 and 1879, who were, I suspect, labourers who were living there while James Boon lived elsewhere). He was also identified (Ref 10, EPG 18 Sept 1878) as the owner of some timber that had been stolen from Long Lea. In 1878/79D James Boon is identified as a woolstapler, miller and farmer, with an interest in Axminster Town Mills and property in Uplyme, and resident at Cedars House, Lyme Road, Axminster²⁴. 1881C states that William **Retter**, a farm bailiff, was living at Long Lea, and he and his wife Jessie (who had moved from Smallridge Farm: see below) had a child baptised at All Saints Church that same year. 1883D confirms the continuing link to James Boon by naming both him and Long Lea in the same entry, and in 1884 he and his wife Alice had a child baptised at All Saints with their address given as Long Lea. It is likely, therefore, that William Retter worked for James Boon, overseeing one or more of his farms. James Boon died in 1887 (Ref 10, EPG 6 May 1887).

I have found no entries for Long Lea in 1889D or 1890D, but 1891C shows Benjamin **Parsons**, a dairyman, living there. The following year (Ref 10, EPG 2 Aug 1892) the shooting rights at Long Lea were advertised over the name Goss (though he may well not have been the farmer). 1893D again has no entry for the farm.

1901C names Eli Thomas **Strawbridge** as the farmer at Long Lea, and in 1902 he and his wife Elizabeth had a child baptised at All Saints Church shown as residents of Long Lea. There was also a criminal case that year (Ref 10, EPG 26 Feb 1902) in which he was stabbed by a hawker. Although he was not listed there in 1902D, he was in 1906D, 1910D and 1911C, which shows that he had been born c.1863 at Stockland.

Ref 12 shows that he was the taxpayer at Long Lea in 1910, responsible for 98 acres (and named simply as T Strawbridge). He was still there in 1914D, but by 1919D had been succeeded by James Strawbridge.

During the tenancy of Eli Thomas Strawbridge the farm had been offered at auction at the George, Axminster by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd (Ref 10, WT 26 June 1904), described as 88 acres of freehold land let at an annual rental of £80. The land was withdrawn after the bidding stopped at £1,150.

There were attempts to sell Long Lea in 1914, and again in 1917. It was withdrawn unsold in 1914, and the 1917 sales particulars²⁵ although catalogued at the DHC were not in fact deposited.

When Long Lea was offered for sale at auction by the property department of Harrods (Knightsbridge) on 19 July 1921, the sales particulars²⁶ named Mr C **Smith** as the tenant,

²⁴ He had also been recorded as a woolstapler, cloth manufacturer and farmer (of an unspecified property), living at Cedar House in 1870D, and had moved to Axminster following a disastrous fire which destroyed the family's Waterside Factory / Blanket Mill at Uplyme in 1866 (see 'Industrial Lyme, Paper 2: The Woollen Cloth Industry in the Lim Valley' by Richard Bull for the Lyme Regis Museum, accessible on-line via the museum's website for further information). I believe that he may also have been the founder of one of the two brush-making factories at the foot of Castle Hill.

²⁵ DHC 547B/P/1544. NB These documents are not available.

described Long Lea as a dairy farm, and gave its size as 79 acres of grazing and 9 acres of copse (which would match exactly the earlier references to 88 acres). A further parcel of six fields and a quarry, named Shrappick Lands and described as amounting to 23 acres, formed a separate lot²⁷ (as did High Lea: see above). Shrappick Lands abut the parish boundary, near Higher and Lower Rag Copse. Long Lea may well not have been sold in 1921, because 1923D confirms Charles John Smith as still farming at Long Lea. The farm was offered at auction yet again in 1925, this time by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd and TD Hussey & Son (Ref 10, WT 22 May 1925). The announcement gives the size of the farm as 86 acres, and emphasises the quality and range of the farm buildings.

No farmer is listed at Long Lea in 1930D, but in 1934 the on-line London Gazette shows that the land comprising Long Lea and Shappick Lands was registered with the Land Registry by J F Clarke of Widworthy. I have seen no evidence to suggest that he farmed the land himself. No farmer is listed in 1935D or 1939D.

By 1965 Ralph Alfred **Biedermann** was living at Long Lea (in that year he dissolved a Trust that had been established in his name according to the on-line London Gazette), and in 1979 when he died (again the source is the on-line London Gazette) he was described as a farmer, of Long Lea.

The farm continues to exist, and based on the evidence of recent on-line trade directories, I believe that the current farmer is Robert A **Speed**.

Frogwell

In 1833 Frogwell Farm, described as 50 acres, was offered for sale at auction by Mr Chaffey (see Undersleave Farm above for further details of the circumstances, and Ref 10, SM 21 Oct 1833). Malachi **Denslow** was farming the land on an annual rental agreement at that time.

In 1838 (Ref 7) Frogwell Farm, shown as 124 acres, was still in the hands of Malachi Denslow. The spelling of his surname varies over time, but this is the most common version, including in the baptismal register at All Saints Church, where he and his wife Mary Ann had children baptised between 1840 and 1848. 1841C lists him (in error) as one of two farmers at the neighbouring Long Lea Farm, presumably using Long Lea as shorthand for the lane that both farms share, but 1842V is specific as to his link to Frogwell. By 1851C his widow Mary Ann was the farmer at Frogwell, and the size was shown as 130 acres.

There was no entry for Frogwell in 1856D, but 1857D gives Thomas **Harris** as the new occupant. This is confirmed by 1861C which gives the size of the farm as 120 acres. 1866D and 1870D show Thomas Harris still there. 1871C shows that the farm had by then grown to 200 acres. 1873D is the final entry for Thomas Harris, and 1878D has Mrs Sarah Harris as the farmer (though 1878/79D still names Thomas).

1881C has Edwin Thomas **Marley** as the farmer at Frogwell, with the farm listed as 80 acres. His presence is confirmed by all directory and census entries until 1906D, and by the baptismal register from All Saints Church, where he and his wife Annie had children baptised over the period 1882 to 1889. A valuation report (Ref 9) carried out in 1897, when the owner of the farm was evidently considering selling, confirms that he was at that time renting about 100 acres on an annual tenancy. He was apparently widowed and re-married, because in 1906 Edwin Thomas and Mary Jane Marley of Frogwell Farm had a child baptised at All Saints Church. In 1908 (Ref 10, EPG 24 Jan 1908) Messrs R&C Snell announced a sale of live and dead stock to be held on behalf of Edwin Thomas Marley.

Ref 12, 1910D and 1911C all show Robert **Warren** as the new farmer at Frogwell. Ref 12 gives the size as just under 97 acres, and 1911C shows that he was born c.1861 at Membury. There is no entry for Frogwell in 1914D, but information which I have seen in connection with insurance suggest that Thomas George **Sturgeon** arrived as the new farmer in 1914, and his presence is confirmed by 1919D, and then by two press reports (Ref 10, WT 30 June 1920; and WMN 11 July 1927 when there was a fire in a wagon house) and by 1923D through to 1930D. He subsequently moved to Highbridge (Ref 10, 13 Apr 1937). The last of these directory listings (1930D) may be incorrect, because 2 years earlier (Ref 10, EPG 25 May 1928) Frogwell was offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd on behalf of Thomas George Sturgeon, who was described as

²⁶ DHC ref 547B/P/2059.

²⁷ I think it is possible that Shrappick Lands may previously have formed part of Undercleave Farm, though I have seen no evidence to support this, and it should be treated as pure speculation.

quitting farming. The farm itself was described as 103 acres of meadow, pasture, arable and orchard within a ring fence.

1935D lists Thomas **Woodall** as the farmer at Frogwell, followed in 1939D by Ewart Woodall. The farm then passed to Mr V C **Boulton**, though only until 1946. Two press notices placed by Messrs R&C Snell (Ref 10, WG 25 Oct 1946 and WG 6 Dec 1946) announced the sale of the land (by 1946 just 60 acres) followed by the live and dead stock.

I do not know who farmed the land over the subsequent 60 years, but the land is now rented and run as an integral part of Porch Farm (see below).

High View Farm

I understand from Shirley Hurford (who has family connections to it) that High View Farm was previously known as Fairview Farm (though I have not found any documentary references to it under that name, and there are no references to either name in census returns or pre-1940 directories, and it does not appear on any pre-1940 maps). The original farmhouse is now called Honeysuckle Cottage, and the bungalow called High View was built in the 1950s.

The EDDC planning website contains information regarding planning applications affecting the site, from which it is possible to see that in 1954 Francis (Frank) **Searle** bought the site. At that time the farm comprised at least 20 acres²⁸, and Frank Searle had previously milked at Axe Farm. He used the farm to rear calves. After he retired Roy Bagwell took over the site, but did not actively farm it, and some of the land was sold to the Searle family of Colston Farm (it is now farmed as part of Porch Farm: see below).

The farmyard and residual land was used as a scrap yard, before being sold in 2008 to B **Wood**, a farmer from Marshwood who has other parcels of land in and around All Saints. He has recently applied to use the site to store implements and hay, and to rear calves.

Smallridge and Porch Farms

In 1834 (Ref 7) Henry **Fowler** was farming 143 acres on an unnamed farm at Smallridge. He is also recorded in 1841C, and then 1842V positively links him to Smallridge Farm. Appendix 3 shows that in 1828 he had been one of the larger cow keepers in the parish, but whether this was at Smallridge Farm or elsewhere I do not know.

1850D only names one farmer at Smallridge: James **Phippen**, and 1851C shows that he farmed 140 acres, without naming the farm itself. However, given that we know how large Smallridge Farm was in 1838 (see above), it seems highly likely that he was there.

The next mention that I have found of Smallridge Farm is 1868, when Thomas William **Genge**, described as a dairyman there, and with a wife called Mary Ann, had a child baptised at All Saints Church. In 1871 there was another baptism from Smallridge Farm, this time of a child belonging to parents called William and Jessie **Retter**, with William described as a farmer. This is confirmed by 1871C (albeit with the surname shown as what looks more like Potter), which also gives the size of the farm as 99 acres. Later that year there was a fire at Smallridge Farm, with serious damage inflicted on buildings and stored crops and machinery (Ref 10, WT 8 Dec 1871). William Retter was stated to have been insured, but not sufficiently to cover the full losses. He won a court case 2 years later (Ref 10, WT 20 May 1873) despite selling a horse which proved to be lame.

When William Retter left Smallridge Farm it was described (Ref 10, EPG 15 Oct 1880) as comprising 100 acres, 70 of them grazing and 30 arable, all within a ring fence, and with a range of more or less new farm buildings. The owner was named as Thomas Bath of Glastonbury, who was seeking a new tenant. William Retter evidently went to work for James Boon at Long Lea (see above).

By 1881C James **Loveridge** was the resident farmer, and the farm was shown as 99 acres. 1883D shows that as well as farming, he had a role as a local tax and rate collector. Despite the coincidence of name, he was not the son of James Gill Loveridge of Wyke Farm (see Chapter 7 below). He subsequently appears several times below at different farms around Axminster.

²⁸ Source: Shirley Hurford, personal communication, 2015.

1891C shows Charles **Dare** as the farmer at Smallridge Farm (1890D also lists him, but does not specify which farm in Smallridge was his). There is no entry for Smallridge Farm in 1893D.

At this point (as far as census returns and directories are concerned²⁹) it appears that Smallridge Farm changed its name to Porch Farm, and 1901C lists John George **Beer** as the farmer at Porch Farm, as do 1902D, 1906D and 1910D. 1911C shows that he was born c.1866 at Membury. Ref 12 still uses the name Smallridge Farm, but confirms that John George Beer was the farmer in 1910, and gives the size as 94 acres, with John George Beer responsible for a further 46 acres named as Stevens Ground.

Soon after the war the farm was sold at auction by Messrs Whitton & Lang at the George, Axminster (Ref 10, WT 13 June 1919), described as Smallridge or Porch Farm, and comprising 74 acres. The sale included a further 11 acres on Watery Lane and a further 3-acre field. It was reported that Messrs R&C Snell bought the land for an unidentified client (or clients), paying £4,050 for the main farm.

John George Beer was still at Porch until 1930D, and when the farm was re-sold in 1934, he was described as the owner-occupier of 54 acres at Porch Farm (Ref 10, EPG 27 Apr 1934). The sale was organised by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd. A second report (Ref 10, WT 25 May 1934) states that the farm was bought by Abraham Skinner Newbery for George **Beer** of Chardstock, for £1,550. John George Beer died in 1936 aged 80 (Ref 10, EPG 2 Oct 1936), and the report of his funeral states that he had retired from Porch Farm about 2-3 years before, having farmed there for about 40 years.

In 1935D and 1939D the farmer was Cyril John George Beer, and a press report (Ref 10, WMN 10 Feb 1943, regarding a minor technical infringement of the milk regulations) shows that he was still there in 1943.

I do not know how long the Beer family remained at Porch Farm, but by the 1980s (and probably for several years before that) it was owned and farmed by S J **Bale**. This can be confirmed by reference to the EDDC planning website. Mr Bale died in about 1987 and the farm was taken over by Michael Percy **Dare**, who farmed under the name MP&LR Dare & Son. He was there until at least 2004 (again, as confirmed by the EDDC planning website).

The farm is now owned and run by Paul and Lucy **Herrod** trading as PT & Mrs LA Herrod. A 2012 planning application viewable on the EDDC planning website shows that as well as Porch they farm Pennsylvania (see Chapter 4), which they ran before moving their main operations to Porch; and they rent the adjacent Frogwell Farm, making theirs among the larger local farming businesses.

Once the former Smallridge Farm had become known as Porch Farm, it appears that another farm was established on the other side of the road, and a bit closer to Weycroft, called Smallridge Farm. The 1948 English Guernsey Cattle Society's Herd Book includes a reference to Cecil **Forward**, of Smallridge Farm, Axminster. Soon thereafter (Ref 10, EPG 6 May 1949) he commissioned Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd to sell 70 acres of freehold land with vacant possession, comprising "... rich meadows, healthy pastures and arables" with modern farm premises and a licence to build a house up to a cost of £2,000. A month later (Ref 10, TCWA 4 June 1949) John Thornton & Co announced the sale of the entire purebred and non-pedigree Guernsey herd at Smallridge Farm on behalf of Mr Cecil Forward of 'The Gables', All Saints. As well as a gentleman farmer, he was a solicitor in Axminster, and Clerk of the Axminster Rural Council.

Greatwood

In 1838 (Ref 7) Greatwood, recorded as 110 acres, was being farmed by James **Bradford**. By 1841C he had died, and it was occupied by William **Royland**, described as a dairyman rather than a farmer.

In 1850D Samuel **Phillips** was shown as the farmer of Greatwood. By 1851C Mary Phillips was the farmer, with 142 acres. She was still there in 1861C, but the farm was down to 80 acres. Half way between those two listings, in 1856D, Samuel Phillips (possibly her son) was shown as the farmer at Greatwood.

In 1866D Job **Membury**, a dairyman, was at Greatwood. There is then no entry for Greatwood in 1870D, but 1871C lists Thomas **Froom**, with 110 acres. This is confirmed by 1878D.

²⁹ Somerset OS sheet 095/NE uses the name Porch Farm, and places it in its present location.

1881C lists Moses **Moore** as the farmer at Greatwood, with 100 acres. There are then no entries for Greatwood in 1883D, 1889D, 1890D or 1891C, though the baptismal register for All Saints Church shows that in 1885 Richard **Matthews**, a dairyman from Greatwood, and his wife Sarah had a child baptised there.

It appears probable that Greatwood was being farmed by a manager on behalf of its owner, Henry Knight, over this period, because in January 1895, following Henry Knight's death the previous year, a valuation of the livestock and deadstock (Ref 9) had been carried out. Given that the valuation also jointly covered the adjacent Uphay Farm (see above), it is possible (arguably probable) that the last manager had been George **Trenchard**. Later that year the farm, described as 110 acres of arable, orchard, pasture and meadow (Ref 10, EPG 8 Feb 1895) was offered for rent, with enquiries being directed to George Trenchard on behalf of the Knight family.

1901C names Alfred **Batstone** as the farmer at Greatwood, and in 1903 he and his wife Flora Matilda had a child baptised at All Saints Church while resident at Greatwood. The following year Messrs R&C Snell placed an advertisement (Ref 10, EPG 22 Jan 1904) for a forthcoming sale of live and dead stock at Greatwood, stating that Alfred Batstone was leaving the district.

Ref 12 shows that by 1910 William **Wheaton** had taken over the farm, which was recorded at that time as 110 acres (with a further 22 acres, probably comprising woodland, being held by Henry Knight). 1911C shows that William Wheaton had been born c.1859 at Axminster. Although there are no confirmatory directory entries for Greatwood over this period, Ref 8 confirms that in 1916 William Wheaton was the tenant of 126 acres at Greatwood (excluding Greatwood coppice, which was almost 14 acres in its own right), at an annual rental of £100. The accompanying map shows that the farm was roughly square.

In 1919D James **Churchill** was the farmer at Greatwood, as he was in 1923D, and a planning application submitted in 1997 (and accessible via the EDDC planning website) states that the Churchill family has owned the farm since about 1923. However, 1926D names the farmer as Henry Westcott **Bolt**, which is confirmed by 1930D. 1935D then names Churchill Bros as the farmers at Greatwood, and by 1939D the listed farmer was Cecil James Bowditch Churchill. He was still there in the early 1950s, and the Churchill family remains at Greatwood, where they currently operate under the name of M&K Churchill & Son.

Chapter 4: Millbrook, Weycroft and Lodge Lane

Millbrook

Millbrook (sometimes one word, sometimes two) sometimes refers to the cluster of dwellings which include the mill and the farm, and at others just refers to the farm. Both the mill and the farm were in the manor of Prestaller (Ref 1, pages 584 and 613).

In 1838 (Ref 7) Millbrook Farm was occupied by Giles **Collier**, and was 92 acres. He also had an interest in Uphay (see Chapter 3 above). I have not found a reference to Millbrook in 1841C, but 1842V names Giles Colier as the voter connected to Millbrook (and Bevor, without it being possible to see which parcel of land this refers to).

1851C names Edward Bussell as the miller, but does not name a farmer at Millbrook. Edward Bussell's presence is confirmed by 1856D and 1857D, and 1857D shows that William **Loud**, a butcher, was also farming some of the land at Millbrook. This in turn is confirmed by 1861C, which records William Loud as farming 90 acres, and George **Mullins** with 38 acres, also at Millbrook.

Both men were still there in 1866D, and George Mullins was also listed in both 1870D and 1871C, when his farm was recorded as 40 acres. 1871C also records Mrs Hannah **Sandford** with 18 acres. Both of them are again recorded at Millbrook in 1873D (with Mrs Sandford shown as having Wellands Farm as well: see Chapter 9 below). 1873D also names John **Heal** (who also had Pinneywood Farm, as well as interests in flax dressing and implement manufacturing at the foot of Castle Hill, Axminster) as the farmer of Millbrook Farm.

Both 1878D and 1881C show William **Phillips** as the farmer at Millbrook, with the farm shown as 120 acres in 1881C. (1878D and 1878/79D both suggest that he may have had Bagley Hill Farm as well: see below. By 1883D he apparently only had Millbrook). He was still there in 1889D (but at Prestaller in 1890D: see below). 1889D also names James **Tucker** as a dairyman at Millbrook.

Both 1890D and 1891C show John **Norris** as the farmer at Millbrook, and 1893D shows that he was a dairyman.

1901C and 1902D show Joseph **Corr** (born c.1830 at Armagh, Northern Ireland) at Millbrook, as do all directories and census returns until (and including) 1914D. Ref 12 confirms that in 1910 he was the tax payer on almost 41 acres at Millbrook, plus a further 16 acres at 'Latches' (just off Chard Road, closer to the town).

However, by 1910D Thomas Wilfred **Carroll** was also farming at Millbrook, and 1911C describes him as a dairyman and milk purveyor, and shows that he was born c.1884 in Axminster. All directories from 1914D to 1930D show him still at Millbrook.

1935D names William W **Denning** as the farmer at Millbrook, and this is confirmed by a press advertisement (Ref 10, WG 5 July 1935) which names him as the owner of the 52-acre farm and associated retail dairy business, which was being offered to let by tender, by Messrs W Palmer and R&C Snell Ltd. 1939D lists Ernest **Powell** as the new farmer, and an earlier press report (Ref 10, EPG 21 Feb 1936) shows that he had been there at least 3 years by then. The last references that I have seen to farmers at Millbrook are Francis John **Wareham** (Ref 11, 1942), Reginald **Summers** (Ref 11, 1946) and George **Gay** (Ref 11, 1947).

Prestaller

Long before the dissolution of the monasteries the Manor of Prestaller had been given by Newenham Abbey to the Church (Ref 1, page 613). The 1776/78 map shows a blank space where Prestaller is, and identifies the owner as the 'Prebends of York'. As church-owned property, Prestaller is not shown on the Tithe Apportionment map (Ref 7), nor is any of the land in the list identified as belonging to the farm.

Occasionally the name of the farm is shown as Priest Aller, but this is both unusual and wrong, and I have used Prestaller throughout.

No farmer is shown as living at Prestaller in 1841C (so far as I have been able to determine), though a farm labourer was. In 1842V George Davey **Ewens** (see Chapter 6 below, under Fawnsmoor) was linked to Prestaller. 1851C shows John **Lumbard** farming 75 acres there, as does

1856D. I have not found an entry in 1861C, but both 1866D and 1870D name John **Stickland** as the farmer at Prestaller.

1871C names John **Denning** as the resident of Prestaller, describing him as a dairyman. This is confirmed by 1873D (which also has a John Denning described as a butcher on Lyme Street).

1878D lists Richard **Frampton** at Prestaller, as does 1878/79D. 1881C shows Henry **Harris**, a dairyman at Prestaller, but 1883D has no entry.

By March 1889 William **Phillips** had moved the very short distance from Millbrook to Prestaller. A press report (Ref 10, EPG 29 Mar 1889) states that he lost a cow valued at £15, after she was found, just 15 minutes after being turned out to grass, with serious ligament damage, and had to be put down. His presence at Prestaller is confirmed by 1890D and 1891C. 1893D lists William Phillips back at Millbrook, but I strongly suspect this was an error, and that he was actually still at Prestaller. He was there in 1901C, but a valuation report (Ref 9) carried out in March 1902 shows that he was preparing to leave (to go to Castle Farm, or more accurately Castle Hill Farm: see Chapter 8), a year before his lease expired. 1902D does not carry a listing for Prestaller.

John **Gould** was at Prestaller in 1906D. Ref 12 names three taxpayer associated with Prestaller in 1910³⁰, but none of them was obviously running the farm itself.

1910D names Thomas **Connett** as farming at Millbrook, and 1911C shows that he had been born c.1842 at Farway, while recording him farming at what looks like Millbrook / Evil Lane. 1914D shows that by then he was at Prestaller.

By 1919D Walter Henry **Rowe** was at Prestaller (having previously been at Fawnsmoor), but he died aged 45 in March 1919 (he is buried at Axminster). By 1923D George **Pinn** had taken over at Prestaller, and he was still there in 1939D.

In 1934 what must have been a separate parcel of land, though described as 'Prestaller Lands' was offered for sale (Ref 10, EPG 27 Apr 1934) by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd. The land comprised 31 acres, and was described as having been let to the late Mr P **Bull**. It was bought (Ref 10, WT 25 May 1934) by Mr P Bull (possibly the previous tenant's son) for £1,625.

I am unsure what happened after that, but more recently the farm was run by Derek **Wyatt** & Son (with Mr Wyatt recorded as retiring in 2015, having sold the farm, in connection with a 'for sale' notice).

Beulah and Beaver

Beulah Farm is not identified by name in any of the census returns or pre-1940 directories. However in 1935 a newspaper (Ref 10, WT 3 May 1935) reported on the will of the recently deceased Francis Charles Burton **Dening** of 'Beulah Chubbs Farm', who it described as a farmer and haulier. When Beulah and Chubbs were sold a decade later (Ref 10, EPG 17 Aug 1945) Beulah was described as comprising a bungalow, some buildings and 34 acres, roughly a quarter of the size of Chubbs (see Chapter 5 below). It appears quite likely that on letting Chubbs Farm, Francis Charles Burton Dening had built a new bungalow much closer to the town, and allocated some of the land to it as a smallholding.

By 1947 the farmer at Beulah was Samuel **Diment** (Ref 10, WG 20 June 1947), who had previously been at Lower Beavor Farm. As late as 2010 Basil Diment and his wife Phyllis were living at Beulah, before moving to Wellington, Somerset, where he died aged 92 in 2014.

There was at one time a farm balled Bever / Beaver (or Little Beaver) close to Evil Lane, but there are very few documentary references to it. A house can be seen there on the 1776/78 map, but it is not labelled, suggesting that it was a cottage rather than a farm at that time. The map accompanying Ref 8 shows it to have been contained within Chubbs Farm by 1916. One specific reference that I have found shows that in 1851C William **Terry** was the farmer of Little Beaver, while in 1861C Thomas **Craine** (or **Caine**) was the farmer of 64 acres on Evil Lane without the farm being named. 1866D then names Thomas **Roberts** in connection with Beavor, without qualifying it in any way (as Little Beavor). Earlier than that, in 1824 (Ref 6), Thomas **Bonner** and James **Nowlan** were recorded as renting 23 acres each at 'Evil Grounds'.

³⁰ These three were: Henry Patterson of Willhays Farm (see Chapter 8) with 30 acres; W H B Knight, who owned large swathes of Axminster, with 12 acres; and W J Gill with 10 acres.

Farms at Weycroft

Weycroft has a long history, which has been well written up (e.g. Ref 1, page 576). The 1776/78 map confirms that none of the farms around Weycroft belonged to the Petre Estate, and that map identifies Benedictus Marwood Tucker as the owner (though not the farmer).

There is information about the latter period of working at Weycroft Mill itself in Ref 4 (pages 100 to 101).

First I deal with farms other than Weycroft Manor Farm, which only started to be individually identified as a unit in the early 20th century, and is covered at the end of this section of text. No doubt the land that subsequently came to be labelled as Weycroft Manor Farm was included in the farms discussed first.

Appendix 3 names two farmers as keeping cows at Weycroft in 1828: James **White** and Mr **Wakley**.

By 1838 (Ref 7) William **Adams**, the miller, also had 90 acres which he was farming, and Richard **Northover** (or **Notlove**, or something comparable) had a further 57 acres simply described as Weycroft. 1841C only lists Richard Northover / Notlove as farming at Weycroft itself, but it also appears to link Joseph **White** to Weycroft Lodge, as a farmer, even though there is a stronger link between Lodge and George Maybee (see below), which makes me think that Joseph White's farm may have been more generally attached to Weycroft. 1838 (Ref 7) shows that he had been farming 80 acres on an unnamed holding at that time, and 1842V suggests that he had some connection to an unnamed parcel of land at Beavor.

In 1850D and 1851C James **Bradford** was the main farmer at Weycroft, with 100 acres. William Adams was still the miller. James Bradford's tenure is confirmed by 1856D and 1857D (as is that of William Adams as miller). 1856D and 1857D both identify George **Bond** as a farmer at Weycroft.

1861C lists James Bradford (with 125 acres) and Samuel **Phillips**, a yeoman (with 100 acres), both at Weycroft. Samuel Phillips and his wife Sarah had moved to Weycroft from Westwater (see Chapter 9 below). They are both listed at Weycroft in 1866D and 1870D. 1871C records James Bradford as having 120 acres at Weycroft Farm, and Samuel Phillips as having what looks like 229 acres at Weycroft Abbey. Both of them are again listed as farming at Weycroft in 1873D and 1878D. 1878/79D then confuses matters by recording James Bradford at 'The Mount', and not listing Samuel Phillips at all.

Then, 1881C shows James Bradford with a smaller farm than previously: 73 acres. As well as showing Samuel Phillips at Weycroft Mount Farm (with 400 acres), it lists John **Luscombe**, a dairyman, at Weycroft. Both 1883D and 1889D list James Bradford and Alfred Samuel Phillips at unspecified Weycroft farms, together with Francis **Harris**.

James H **Snell** was listed at Weycroft in 1889D, at Mount Farm in 1890D and at Weycroft Farm in 1891C. Alfred Samuel Phillips (son of Alfred) was at Mount Farm with his wife (also Sarah) and family in 1891C. Both are listed in 1893D, as is Alfred Samuel Phillips in 1901C (at Weycroft Farm), and again in 1902D.

In 1901C and 1902D George Henry **Newbery** was living and farming at Mount Farm. 1906D and 1910D simply show him at Weycroft, alongside Alfred Samuel Phillips. Ref 12 confirms this, and gives the size of farms as 66 acres (George Henry Newbery) and 104 acres (Alfred Samuel Phillips). 1911C then shows both George Henry Newbery and Alfred Samuel Phillips at properties both called Weycroft Farm. Newbery is described a yeoman born c.1846 at Minehead, Somerset, while Phillips was born c.1853 at Axminster.

Although he is never recorded as a farmer in any of the directories that I have seen, an unpublished account of Weycroft Mill that I have seen states that George Henry **Morrish**, who took over the mill when his father died in 1901, also employed a cowman. That source does not indicate how many acres he farmed, though it was clearly much less important than the mill, which at that time was in its prime. However, Ref 12 shows that in 1910 he was responsible for the tax on 47 acres at Weycroft, plus a further 44 acres of Sisterhood Farm (see Chapter 8 below).

From this point on most references are to Weycroft Manor Farm, though some are still somewhat generalised. However, it is worth noting that the farm which is now called Weycroft Manor Farm is a relatively new one, and its farmstead is some way to the south of the land which was known as Weycroft Manor Farm in the early 20th century.

A press report (Ref 10, EPG 3 Jan 1913) on the inquest on a young worker on the farm shows that for a short while Weycroft Manor Farm was run by Cyril **Holmes** and his bailiff, called Henry Maidment. A second press item (Ref 10, WT 6 Mar 1914) reports that the farm had been let, and advertised a forthcoming sale of live and dead stock on behalf of Cyril Holmes, to be run by Messrs R&C Snell, including a small dairy herd, other livestock (horses, sheep, pigs and poultry) and a range of farm implements and dairy utensils. Cyril Holmes was killed in World War I, and it appears that he left the farm in order to join up.

1914D only lists Alfred Samuel Aplin **Phillips** (son of Alfred Samuel) at Weycroft, while a valuation report (Ref 9) produced in March 1914 names Henry Philips (who I think was probably Alfred Samuel Aplin Phillips' nephew) as the incoming tenant of Weycroft Manor Farm (the landlord being named as Cyril Holmes). He may well have been scheduled to take over the tenancy from his uncle. Although 1919D names both of them as farming at Weycroft, without specifying which farms they occupied, we also know from a press report (Ref 10, EPG 1 July 1921) that it was soon after this that Alfred Samuel Aplin Phillips retired and went to live at Chardstock.

On 28 October 1920 Weycroft Manor and Farm was offered for sale at auction by Messrs WRJ Greenslade & Co³¹. The farm was still described as being let to Alfred S A Phillips at an annual rental of £149 (plus £4 for a further small plot to the west of the manor house). The farm was evidently bought by Col Robert C B **Logan**, who was listed as the farmer in 1923D, but then re-sold the farm shortly thereafter.

At the second auction (run by Messrs R&C Snell at the George, Axminster on 30 April 1925) the land on offer again amounted to about 105 acres running along the eastern bank of the Axe³² and up to the lane which serves Pinneywood and Bagley Hill farms, plus a few fields on the south east side of Lodge Lane where it turns through 90 degrees at the entrance to the lane serving Pinneywood and Bagley Hill.

1923D also lists Stephen Miller **Dare** as farming at Weycroft (alongside Col Logan), and he remained there in 1926D and 1930D.

In both 1935D and 1939D Frank William **Hooper** was the only farmer listed at Weycroft. In 1939 Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd advertised (Ref 10, EPG 5 May 1939) a forthcoming sale of 'the estate of F W Hooper (deceased)'. Although the land to be offered was described as comprising Weycroft Manor Farm, this was not the same farm as described above under that name, because it comprised 50 acres "... *adjoining the Chard Road with valuable building frontage*".

Ref 11 suggests that Charles Henry Hooper had been farming Weycroft Manor Farm as early as 1934, and I have seen some insurance documents which suggest that he was farming Weycroft Farm in 1941, but that he moved soon thereafter to Chardstock. I have not managed to establish whether his move was in any way connected to the construction of the US military hospital, which was subsequently re-developed into the Millwey Rise housing and industrial estate.

However, I understand³³ that the present farmstead of Weycroft Manor Farm was either built or significantly developed in the 1940s, with yards and buildings, including an egg-laying unit. The associated land included fields on the Axminster side of the farmstead which were later used to house the Rodney Rendell Farm Service & Dairy Engineering business (often simply known as 'Farm Services', and part if not all of the Weycroft Industrial Estate. The 'Farm Services' site, fronting onto Chard Road, is where housing has more recently been built. The owner for some years was Peter Macdonald-Smith of Poole, through his company Weycroft Macford Ltd.

After the war (Ref 10, EPG 12 Oct 1945) Messrs TD Hussey & Son advertised a forthcoming sale of 30 Devon and cross-bred cattle plus other livestock, to be auctioned on behalf of Mr A S **Retter** of Weycroft Manor Farm.

The farm is now run by the **Burrough** family, in association with Lower Abbey and Sisterhood.

³¹ DHC ref 547B/P/2045.

³² The only piece of river bank land not included in the sale was a small field near the old tile works. The uneven landform in this general area can probably be explained by the dumping of spoil from those works and the associated quarry.

³³ Source: Lisle Burrough, personal communication, 2015.

Pinneywood

The Book of the Axe (Ref 1, page 10) reports that in 1767 there was an unsuccessful attempt to develop a coal mine at Pinney Wood, the participants having been misled by the bituminous nature of the clay soils there. I am not sure whether this is a reference to Pinneywood Farm itself, or to the land closer to the former claypits and tile works (which lie west of the farmstead and south of Coaxdon Hall, close to where the Chard Road crosses the railway line, but on the eastern bank of the Axe, and adjacent to fields that belong to Weycroft Farm: see above).

There are papers (which I have not seen) relating to an 1830 lease involving Pinneywood (and Lodge Farm), held in the Warwickshire County Record Office³⁴.

There is no reference to Pinneywood Farm in 1838 (Ref 7), nor is a farmer identified by 1841C. However, it was probably being farmed at that time in association with Lodge Farm, because later that year a press notice (Ref 10, TCWA 6 Oct 1841) announced that an estate (two thirds of which was tithe-free), called Lodge and Pinney Wood, occupied by George **Mabey** and amounting to 121 acres of arable, meadow, pasture and orchard, was to be offered for sale by auction at the George, Axminster by Richard Fowler.

In 1851C the farmer was John **Vickerey**, with 40 acres. 1856D lists Henry **Jerrard** at Pinney Farm, but 1857D has no entry for Pinneywood.

No farmer is listed at Pinneywood in 1861C, but 1866D names William **Wheaton** as the farmer. By 1870D John **Heal** is the named farmer, also described as a flax and hemp dresser, and manufacturer of agricultural implements at the foot of Castle Hill, Axminster. He is also listed in 1873D (and the absence of a named farmer in 1871C suggests strongly that he was not living on the farm). Neither 1878D nor 1878/79D has a farmer listed at Pinneywood.

1881C shows Noah **Hoyle** as the new farmer, with 44 acres. 1883D does not list him, nor do 1889D or 1890D. However, 1891C confirms that he was still there. Despite repeated absences from directories³⁵, 1901C again has Noah Hoyle at Pinneywood.

There is then a further period of silence from directories before Ref 12 names the farmer at Pinneywood as Thomas **Chick**, with 40 acres. He is listed in 1911C, which describes him as born c.1835 at Chardstock. A newspaper report (Ref 10, EPG 12 Oct 1917) shows that he was still there 6 years later, and although I have not found any further references in directories to anyone farming Pinneywood, two valuation reports (Ref 9) undertaken at 'Pennywood' Farm name 'Mr Chick' as having an interest in the farming business there. Then when Weycroft Manor Farm was sold in 1920 (see above), the map produced for the sale shows C Chick as the resident of Pinneywood, which was probably a reference to George Chick, who was living there at that time (Ref 11). I have also seen other passing references to a Mr Chick of Pinneywood over the period from 1922 to 1925.

Bagley Hill

In 1838 (Re 5) William **Haggett** was farming 67 acres at Bagley Hill Farm. By 1841C he was listed under Underdown (outside Axminster parish), and Edward **Gill** was named as the farmer at Bagley Hill. Despite this, William Haggett was linked to Bagley Hill in 1842V, and in 1851C he was again listed as the farmer, with 70 acres.

1856D lists Jabez **Peady** as the farmer at Bagley Hill, while 1857D spells his surname as **Pady**. 1861C then lists him as Jabez **Pedy**, with 66 acres.

1871C records John Genge **Miller** as the farmer at Bagley Hill, with what looks like 80 acres. He is also listed there in 1866D, 1870D and 1873D, and he and his wife Frances had children baptised at All Saints Church over the period 1868 to 1873, with Bagley Hill given in the register as their address. In 1876 William **Phillips** and his wife Mary had a child baptised at All Saints, with their address given as Bagley Hill. 1878D confirms him as the farmer of Bagley Hill (possibly in combination with Millbrook, unless there were two farmers of the same name). 1878/79D only lists William Phillips at Bagley Hill.

³⁴ The existence of these papers can be seen via the National Archives website. The reference at the Warwickshire County Record Office is CR 299/128.

³⁵ There is also a reference to Noah Hoyle, a farmer, at Smallridge (Ref 10, EPG 1 Feb 1895) being summonsed in connection with a family matter. It is of course possible that they were different persons.

1881C lists Samuel **Coles** at Bagley Hill, with 78 acres. 1883D and 1889D both confirm his presence there, but 1890 has no farmer listed. 1891C names John **Seaward**, farmer and dairyman, at Bagley Hill. 1893D has William Seaward, presumably a relative. 1901C lists James **Bright** at Bagley Hill, but 1902D and 1906D both have John Bright instead. Ref 12 then names Mrs Bright as the responsible taxpayer, with 69 acres.

1911C names Walter John **Wright** (born c.1883 at Kilmington) as the farmer of Bagley Hill, but I could not find any entry in either 1914D or 1919D³⁶. When Weycroft Manor Farm was sold in 1920 (see above) Eli **Collier** was identified as the farmer of Bagley Hill. The map produced in support of that sale shows the western end of the lane which now serves as the access to both Pinneywood Farm and Bagley Hill, but does not show it extending beyond Pinneywood, leaving a question mark regarding the historic access route to the farm.

1923D names Charles John **Spencer** as the farmer at Bagley Hill, as do all subsequent directories up to and including 1939D. He was succeeded³⁷ by Richard (Dick) **Turner**, though I do not know for how long.

In the 1960s the farm passed into the ownership of the **Herrod** family. It was run for many years by Gerald W Herrod, and is now operated by his family under the name RM&HJ Herrod, with a substantial dairy unit.

Lodge Farm and Higher Lodge

Appendix 3 shows that in 1828 William **Mullins** was keeping cows at Lodge Farm. As reported above in the context of Pinneywood, there are papers (which I have not seen) relating to an 1830 lease involving Lodge Farm, held in the Warwickshire County Record Office.

A press notice (Ref 10, SM 9 Feb 1835) names Uriah **Powell** as resident at Lodge Farm, Axminster at that time (though it is possible that he was not the farmer).

In 1838 (Ref 7) Lodge Farm comprised 166 acres, and George **Maybee** (or, more probably, **Mabey**) was the farmer, as he was in 1841C. As also noted above in connection with Pinneywood, later that year a press notice (Ref 10, TCWA 6 Oct 1841) announced that an estate (two thirds of which was tithe-free), called Lodge and Pinney Wood, occupied by George Mabey and amounting to 121 acres of arable, meadow, pasture and orchard, was to be offered for sale by auction at the George, Axminster by Richard Fowler.

By 1851C Henry **Bond** had taken over at Lodge Farm, but the farm had been reduced to 120 acres. He is again listed in 1856DE and 1857D (which describes him as a farmer and cattle dealer). In 1861C the address was simply given as 'Chard Road', but Henry Bond was the farmer with 120 acres, so I am reasonably confident that this was actually Lodge Farm.

1866D names Andrew **Miller** as the farmer at Lodge Farm, but 1870D does not list the farm at all. 1871C records Henry **Potter**, a dairyman, living at Lodge, but 1873D shows that Andrew Miller remained the farmer (albeit presumably living elsewhere). The baptismal register for All Saints Church shows that Henry Potter and his wife Elizabeth were living at Lodge Farm when they had a series of children baptised over the period from 1869 to 1877, and 1878/79D confirms that Henry Potter was still running the dairy at Lodge at that time. There is also a press report (Ref 10, WT 15 May 1874) which states that by that time Henry Potter had for 7 years (i.e. since about 1867) been renting a 16-cow dairy at Lodge Farm from Samuel **Phillips**, and in 1878D Samuel Phillips is for the first time named as the farmer at Lodge. 1881C and 1883D both show George Miller, a dairyman, at Lodge Farm. This is confirmed by 1889D and 1890D. 1890D, 1891C and 1893D all name Samuel Phillips as the farmer at Lodge. In 1895 Philip Phillips advertised for staff at Lodge Farm (Ref 10, TCWA 20 Mar 1895), and 3 years later there was a press notice (Ref 10, TCWA 12 Jan 1898) regarding the estate of Samuel Phillips, who had died just after Christmas.

Both 1901C and 1902D name William E **Seward** as the farmer at Lodge, and there are also instances of his advertising for staff for Lodge Farm in the years before and after these two listings (Ref 10, TCWA 14 Mar 1900 and 15 Apr 1903). He left the farm (and the county) soon thereafter, as can be seen from an advertisement placed by Messrs R&C Snell (Ref 10, EPG 22 Jan 1904) prior to a sale of live and dead stock.

³⁶ Walter John Wright cancelled an insurance policy referring to Bagley Hill in September 1915, and I believe he had moved to Dulcis Farm, Kilmington by then.

³⁷ Source: Shirley Hurford, personal communication, 2015.

By 1905 Benjamin **Hawkins** had taken over, as can be seen by an advertisement for staff for Lodge Farm (Ref 10, EPG 18 Apr 1905), and his presence is confirmed by 1906D, and by Ref 12, which gives the size of the farm in 1910 as 120 acres. 1911C shows that he had been born c.1866 at Membury. He was consistently named as the farmer at Lodge until 1930D, but two press reports 2 days apart (Ref 10, WMN 21 Mar 1932 and 23 Mar 1932) show that he had died, and been succeeded at Lodge Farm by his son, Charles, who is then listed as the farmer at Lodge in 1935D and 1939D. After the war Raymond C Hawkins was selling dogs from Lodge (Ref 10, WG 8 Sept 1950).

Higher Lodge Farm cannot be seen on the 1938 map, but Ref 11 names Stanley William John **Welch** as the farmer there from 1938 to 1943, and in 1945 Mrs Welch was advertising dogs for sale from Higher Lodge Farm (Ref 10, WG 8 Mar 1946).

My tentative conclusion is that in about 1938 new farm buildings were built on Lodge Lane itself, to replace those which were beyond the original house, and that the two farms were to all intents and purposes run as a single enterprise.

They have subsequently been separated, and the Old Lodge Farm & Boarding Kennels business has used the original farm house and buildings since at least 1968, while at some point the newer farm buildings, and the majority of the land, passed into new ownership.

By 1980 David Spencer **Phillips** was at Higher Lodge, and I believe he remained there until the early 1990s³⁸. The EDDC planning website then shows that by 1992 Gordon **Herrod** was the owner-occupier at Higher Lodge. Two years later part of the farmstead was diverted out of farming (and used for the repair of motor vehicles), but a 2007 planning application shows that there was still farming activity on site at that time.

Pensylvania

On page 553 of James Davidson's 'Collections' (see Appendix 3 for details) I found a cutting from an unnamed newspaper announcing that the house and farm known as Pensylvania (a rare instance of spelling it with three n's), described as 63 acres of arable, meadow, pasture and woodland, was to be offered for sale at the George Hotel, Axminster on 23 December 1830. The 'tenant at will' was named as William **Whitemore** (see also under Shools Farm in Chapter 8 below).

In 1838 (Ref 7) Pensylvania Farm was farmed by William **Mullins**, and the farm was recorded as 40 acres. This is confirmed by 1841C (though the address is simply given as Weycroft Lodge). By 1851C the farm had expanded to 90 acres (possibly at the expense of the neighbouring Lodge Farm). In 1856D and 1857D William Mullins was listed at Easthay (outside Axminster parish). However, since no farmer was listed at Pensylvania, it is quite possible that he was farming both properties.

1861C shows John **Spiller** farming what looks like 100 acres on Chard Road. Given what I have concluded above about Lodge Farm in 1861C, I believe this may well be a reference to Pensylvania Farm. By 1866D John Spiller had moved to Chubbs Farm, and no farmer was listed at Pensylvania then or in 1870D.

However, we know that by 1869 Amos **Mullins** was the farmer at Pensylvania, the evidence for this coming from a press report of a rick fire (Ref 10, Bridport News 20 Aug 1869). 1871C gives the size of the farm as 100 acres. He is not then listed in 1873D, but he is in 1878D. 1878/79D has no entry for Pensylvania. 1881C then shows Frank **Richmond** as the farmer at Pensylvania, but 1883D has no entry for the farm.

1889D and 1891C both list Samuel B **Spiller** as the farmer at Pensylvania, and this is consistently the case for several years. Ref 12 gives the size of the farm in 1910 as 45 acres, with an additional 4 acres (probably woodland) being held by the Knight family. 1911C shows that Samuel B Spiller was born c.1844 at Wambrook. 1914D is the last time that he is listed at Pensylvania.

In 1916 (Ref 8) Pensylvania is described as comprising 63 acres, and Reginald Ernest **White** is listed as the tenant, at an annual rent of £60. Pensylvania coppices (20 acres) are listed

³⁸ The on-line London Gazette shows that he made an application in connection with a borehole on the farm in 1980, and also shows that he was declared bankrupt in 1992.

separately, and the farm is shown on the map as being roughly square, and centred on the farmstead. Reginald Ernest White remained at Pensylvania until at least 1939D.

In 1950 the farm was again offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell on behalf of the estate of the late Henry Knight Esq. It was described as a smallholding of 64 acres comprising meadow, pasture, arable, orchard and woodland. The then tenant was not named.

I do not know who farmed Pensylvania over the subsequent 50-odd years, but by the early part of the 21st century the (by then) 87 acres of Pensylvania, together with various blocks of rented land, were being run as a dairy enterprise by Paul **Herrod**, who has subsequently moved the milking herd to Porch Farm (see Chapter 3 above), while continuing to farm the land at Pensylvania under the name PT & Mrs LA Herrod.

Chapter 5: North of Sector Lane to the Hawkchurch boundary, including Cuthays Lane

Sector Lane and Sector Hayes Farm

Sector Lane Farm, being on the southern side of Sector Lane, is covered in Chapter 6 below.

Although Sector (or Secktor) House does not appear to have been a 'proper' farm, in 1838 (Ref 7) James **Davidson** (the author of Ref 2) was recorded as the resident of the house, with 30 acres of land, which I imagine would have been predominantly parkland surrounding the house and drive. The next time that he appears in any census or directory as being directly connected to farming is 1861C when he is shown as a landed proprietor, and apparently farming what looks like 108 acres.

In 1861C there were three other farmers who I have not managed to link below to named farms (either to farms in in this chapter or to those in Chapter 6), who were listed as living on Sector Lane or Road: Walter **Rowe** (45 acres), Amos **Zeally** (65 acres) and James **Rodgers** (270 acres).

In 1911C Samuel **Hussey**, a farm bailiff born c.1869 at Hawkchurch, was living on Sector Lane. He was still there in 1912 (Ref 11). He may well have been employed by Mr J Cunningham, by 1910 the owner of Sector Hall, who Ref 12 shows to have had 44 acres of land adjacent to the house, but no doubt paid someone else to farm it for him.

I have seen reference³⁹ to a poultry farm at Sector, run by a Mr **Bewers**, between 1922 and 1928, but have been unable to find any further information on this.

From 1930D to 1939D John **Matthews** is named as farming 'Sector land'. This could simply be a reference to the land surrounding Sector House (see above).

Sector Hayes Farm is probably the most recent farm to 'emerge' in Axminster parish. It has evidently⁴⁰ been assembled over recent years by Gordon **Charles** from land adjacent to Sector Lane, including some land formerly associated with Red House Farm. By about 2014 it amounted to some 45 acres.

Red House Farm

1841C shows John **Fry** living at Red Farm. Although Red Farm is not named in 1838 (Ref 7), John Fry was at that time farming just under 33 acres, which may have been what is now called Red House Farm. Neither Red Farm nor John Fry is mentioned in 1851C or 1861C.

In 1871C William Wareham is listed as the farmer of what looks like Red Barn, though I am confident that it was actually Old Barn (see below). I have found no further references to Red House Farm or anything like it in the census returns or directories.

However, I understand⁴¹ that for a period in the mid-to-latter part of the 20th century it was farmed by Alan **Griffin**, whose family had previously been at Shiles Farm. The farm itself included some land which had been bought from Lower Beavor in the 1950s. When Alan Griffin left, the farm was parcelled up and sold.

The present house was built in about 1923 (according to more modern sales particulars), and when it was offered for sale in 2013 had 16 acres attached. It is now occupied by private residents and a non-agricultural business.

Chubbs Farm

Chubbs Farm can be seen on the 1776/78 map, and therefore belonged to the Petre Estate at that time.

In 1824 (Ref 6) Chubbs and Ways, totalling 39 acres, was let to Thomas **Lane**.

³⁹ The evidence comes from a passing reference to sales made by another local business to Mr Bewers over the period specified.

⁴⁰ Source: Documents on EDDC planning website.

⁴¹ Source: Shirley Hurford, personal communication, 2015; confirmed by Ken Voysey, personal communication, 2015.

Chubbs Farm is not mentioned in 1838 (Ref 7) or 1841C. However, in 1851C it was being farmed by John **Wills**. It is not listed in 1856D, but 1857D names William **Bussell** as the farmer. Neither he nor Chubbs Farm is identified in 1861C.

In 1866D and 1870D John **Spiller** was named as the farmer at Chubbs, but 1871C lists Robert Spiller, with 127 acres. 1873D reverts to listing John Spiller, while 1878D goes for Robert. John Spiller is listed in 1878/79D and 1883D, while 1881C names Robert Spiller as the resident farmer, with 150 acres. Robert Spiller is again listed in both 1889D and 1890D, and in 1891C. 1893D lists the brothers Henry and Richard Spiller as the farmers of Chubbs, as do 1901C and 1902D. However, Henry Spiller died in 1905, and by 1906D Richard Spiller was the sole named farmer.

Ref 12 identifies F C **Dening** as the taxpayer responsible for just under 129 acres described as Bevor Chubbs (with no other land carrying the Chubbs name being recorded). 1910D and other sources show that his full name was Francis Charles Burton **Dening**, and 1910D names the farm simply as Chubbs. Ref 8 then confirms that in 1916 he was the tenant there of 176 acres, at an annual rent of £70, not including Chubbs coppice (17 acres) or a smaller coppice (4 acres), as well as of Millbrook Cottage. The map accompanying Ref 8 shows that in 1916 Chubbs Farm extended half way down Evil Lane, and included Little Bever. His residence at Millbrook is consistent with 1911C, which shows Stephen Miller **Rowe**, a dairyman (born c.1879 at Monkton Wyld, Dorset) as the resident at Chubbs. Although neither he nor Chubbs Farm was listed in 1914D, he was there in 1919D, and in every directory thereafter until (and including) 1939D. In 1937 there was a scare involving some of his cattle at Axminster market which were thought to be exhibiting symptoms of Foot and Mouth Disease (which was affecting other parts of the district at the time) (Ref 10, WT 11 June 1937). On closer inspection by a veterinary surgeon, this was declared to be a false alarm.

It appears that Francis Charles Burton Dening had probably bought Chubbs Farm when it was sold in 1916, because after he died (in 1935: see Chapter 3 under Beulah Farm) his estate included both Chubbs Farm and Beulah. These farms were not, however, sold until 10 years later (Ref 10, EPG 17 Aug 1945) when they were auctioned by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd. Chubbs Farm was at that time described as comprising 124 acres (with Beulah occupying 34 acres).

I believe that the last person to farm Chubbs as a separate entity was Eli Thomas (Tom) **Strawbridge** junior. Most if not all of the land is still farmed by the Strawbridge family, but as part of Payne's Place (see below).

Cuthays

There is a map in Ref 3 (page 53) which identifies Cuthays as one of the ancient 'grange farms' associated with Newenham Abbey. This is at least partly supported by Ref 2 (page 64), and the farm can be seen on the 1776/78 map forming part of the Petre Estate.

An early apprenticeship record⁴² names William **Liddon** as the farmer at Cuthays in 1810. Davidson tells us (Ref 2, pages 170-174) that when the Petre Estate sold significant tracts of land on 16 October 1810, 320 acres were sold to Thomas Barns, gent, of Hawkchurch, and in 1824 (Ref 6) Thomas **Barns** was renting 93 acres from the Petre Estate at Cuthays (plus 20 acres described as 'Lorings and Reeds'). After his death on 4 July 1826 most of that property passed to his son, Thomas Barns of Tillworth in Membury⁴³. It was again Thomas Barns who, in 1838 (Ref 7), was farming Cuthays, recorded at that time as 105 acres. As we know, he lived in Hawkchurch parish, and 1841C shows a dairyman (Thomas **Coles**) living at the farm. In 1851C the farm was again occupied by a dairyman / agricultural labourer (John **Cottrell**). It is not mentioned by name in 1861C.

In 1866D, 1870D, 1871C and 1873D the farmer at Cuthays was John **Bradford**, with 98 acres in 1871C. (Prior to this, in 1857D, he had been farming an unnamed property on Lyme Road.)

In 1878D and 1878/79D John **White** was the farmer at Cuthays. By 1881C he had been replaced by William **Bentley**, who was farming 146 acres. This is confirmed by 1883D.

In 1889D and 1890D John **Brown** was living at Cuthays, but he was described as a private resident, not a farmer. However, 1891C lists him as the farmer of Cuthays, and year later he was

⁴² DHC ref 406-A-2.

⁴³ A short history of the Barns family of Tillworth can be found in 'Where Dorset meets Devon: Hawkchurch, the story of the village of roses, from the beginning of time to the dawn of the second millenium' by Jack Banfield and Henry Austin (Hawkchurch Historical Society, 2000). One of the authors clearly has direct links to Tillworth.

reported (Ref 10, TCWA 13 Apr 1892) to have killed an adder measuring 21 inches long on the farm. Six months later his wife died (Ref 10, EPG 23 Sept 1892), and 1893D reverts to describing him as a private resident.

1901C names Emma **Loveridge** as the farmer of Cuthays. She was the wife of James Loveridge and (I believe) the daughter of James Swain of Lower Abbey Farm. Her husband's occupation was given on the census return as 'sanitary inspector' (which is consistent with other census returns). 1902D does not list Cuthays. However, a valuation report (Ref 9) dated October 1903 for W H B Knight of Hilary House, Axminster confirms that the tenant of 193 acres, comprising part of Beavor as well as Cuthays and Paynes Place, was called Loveridge. The report also states that the tenants of all of the named farms were relatively recently installed, and that all were generally improving what had become run-down properties. It recommended that improvements to buildings be funded by timber sales.

Although Cuthays was offered for sale in 1908 (see below under New Park for the evidence), it may well not have sold, because on 17 June 1909 Cuthays (alongside Payne's Place: see below) was offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell at the George, Axminster. The plan produced for the auction⁴⁴ shows the land surrounding the farmstead in a very compact layout, and extending across to Lodge Lane. It comprised just over 70 acres, and the sales particulars describe the farm as a rearing and sheep farm which had been let to James Loveridge, at an annual rent of £70. It was actually his son, Lisle, who was living at the farm (Ref 11, 1909), before he moved to farm at Stockland (Ref 11, 1911). The two farms taken together realised a price of £1,960 (Ref 10, WT 18 June 1909).

Ref 12, 1910D and 1911C all show Robert **Doble** as the farmer at Cuthays, and Ref 12 gives the size of the farm as 70 acres. 1911C says that his age was unknown and that he was believed to have been born at Bridgwater, Somerset. From the evidence of other family members he must have been at least 60. It is possible to tell from information about insurance, and from Ref 12, that as well as Cuthays he had an interest in Payne's Place (see below), and the insurance records also show that he owned and hired out a threshing machine. By 1913 he had moved to Marshwood.

Andrew W **Warren** was the farmer at Cuthays in 1914D and 1919D. A valuation report (Ref 9) produced in early 1920 shows that he was due to leave on Lady Day, to be replaced by Joseph **Stephens**. The same report names Eli Collier (who farmed, among several other places in and around Axminster parish, Great Trill) as the landlord. However, I have seen other passing references to a Mr **Loveridge** at Cuthays in 1922, and in both 1923D and 1926D the farmer was Ivor John Benjamin **Gerry**. In 1930D it was Charles **Bishop**, and in both 1935D and 1939D it was William T **Millman**.

A 2014/15 newsletter which is accessible via the Symonds & Sampson website gives a bit of back-history on Cuthays. It reports that in 1931 the rent for the farmhouse, farm buildings and 66½ acres of land (including a small orchard of 40 apple trees) had been £125 a year, but following some difficulties, the farm had been offered for sale at £1,700 (£25 per acre). However it did not sell, following which Mr Millman (see above) became the tenant, in March 1932. Then in 1944 the farm was sold to Richard and Sam **Quick**. It subsequently passed into the ownership of Miss Joan **Curtis**, on whose retirement (aged around 90), it was next offered for sale, with 28 acres of pasture and coppice, in October 2011.

Shiles Farm

Shiles Farm does not appear on any census returns or in any pre-1940 directories. It seems possible that its name may derive in some way from Elizabeth Shiles who, in 1830, inherited Middle Furzeleigh farm (see Chapter 6 below) from her uncle, Robert Bull. However, if this is correct, then it may relate more properly to an additional parcel of land bought at some later time, because Elizabeth Shiles lived in town and was certainly never identified as a farmer⁴⁵.

In July 1908 a 46-acre farm described as Shiles Ground was offered for sale at auction (see below under New Park for the evidence). In 1910 Ref 12 shows that the taxpayer was Emma **Loveridge**, (formerly of Cuthays Farm), and that Shiles Gound did indeed comprise just under 47 acres. It was re-sold in 1919, at which time a press report (Ref 10, EPG 18 July 1919) shows that it was bought for £1,700 by Mr D **Rowe**, this being Daniel Scott Rowe of Fawnsmoor Farm (see below). The

⁴⁴ DHC ref 547B/P/474.

⁴⁵ I understand from Christopher Moran, who has researched the Shiles family, that Elizabeth and her sister Sarah lived on Lyme Road (according to the 1841 census) or Lyme Street (according to the 1861 census).

property was described at the time as 46 acres of pasture and arable land. When Shiles Farm was offered for sale in 2014 the house was described as having been built in the early 20th century, and it was probably Daniel Scott Rowe who had the house constructed.

It would appear that the farm was rented out, because a press report a decade later (Ref 10, EPG 12 Apr 1929) recorded the marriage of Samuel James Griffin, only son of the late Mr C **Griffin** of Shiles Farm, to Kathleen Mary Rowe Glanville of Higher Lea Farm, Dalwood. Samuel James Griffin was farming at Shiles in 1943 (Ref 11), but I understand that he subsequently moved to Red House Farm. In the 1950s Shiles Farm was bought by Daniel Scott Rowe junior⁴⁶ (who shared a name with his father, who had previously owned it). He was a leading solicitor in Axminster. At some point George **Collier** was the tenant.

It currently provides the base for a crop consultancy trading under the name of DM & SM **Vining**, and I believe that the Vining family has been at Shiles since 1961.

Payne's Place

Payne's Place farm can be seen on the 1776/78 map, showing that it belonged to the Petre Estate at that time.

Payne's Place is named in 1813⁴⁷, when John **Taunton** took on an apprentice there. By 1824 (Ref 6) George **Coombs** was renting it, with the size given as 78 acres.

In 1838 (Ref 7) Joseph **Johnson** was farming Payne's Place, described as having 76 acres. He was also listed as the farmer in 1841C and 1850D, but neither he nor Payne's Place was listed in 1851C. I believe that at this time Payne's Place (together with Cuthays, New Park and Old Barn) formed part of the Tillworth Estate belonging to Thomas Barns of Tillworth, Hawkchurch⁴⁸.

I have then not spotted Payne's Place on the census returns until 1901C, when it was occupied by an agricultural labourer. However, a valuation report dated October 1903 (Ref 9: see also above in the context of Cuthays Farm) confirms that the tenant at that time was called **Loveridge**. Although Payne's Place was offered for sale in 1908 (see below under New Park for the evidence), it may well not have sold, because on 17 June 1909 Payne's Place (alongside Cuthays: see above) was again offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell at the George, Axminster. The plan produced for the auction⁴⁹ shows the land extending up the hill from the farmstead and across to Sector Lane, and amounting to just over 77 acres. The sales particulars also state that the farm had been occupied for many years past by James **Loveridge**, at an annual rent of £50.

Ref 12 shows that by 1910 Payne's Place, like Cuthays (see above), was being run by Robert **Doble**, and comprised 76 acres. In 1911C both houses at Payne's Place were let out, one of them to William Enticott (born c.1890 at Axminster), a cattle drover. Robert Doble had left by 1913.

A valuation report (Ref 9) produced in early 1920, which also covers Cuthays (see above) shows that Andrew **Warren** had been the tenant of both farms, and that he was due to leave on Lady Day, to be replaced by Joseph **Stephens**. The same report names Eli Collier as the landlord.

The next reference to Payne's Place comes in 1923D, when the farmer there was Eli Thomas **Strawbridge**, who was still there in 1939D, and whose family still farms Payne's Place, now one of the larger farms in the parish, under the name F&EJ Strawbridge & Sons. Before taking over at Payne's Place, Ref 11 suggests that he had been farming from a property on Cook's Lane in 1921 (see Chapter 6 under Symonds Down Farm for a probable link).

⁴⁶ Source: Dave Scott Mear, personal communication, 2017. This also covers the tenancy of George Collier.

⁴⁷ DHC ref 406-A-2.

⁴⁸ The evidence is circumstantial, but we know that Cuthays and Old Barn belonged to Thomas Barns during the 19th century, and we know that he had bought at least 320 acres from the Petre Estate (Ref 2). A 1903 valuation report carried out for W H B Knight Esq was described as covering 645 acres in all, comprising Beavor Grange and the Tillworth Estate, and the parcels of land concerned were Cuthays, Payne's Place, New Park and Old Barn, plus others described as 'parts of Beavor'. I believe that W H B Knight had recently (probably following the death of a younger Thomas Barns in 1902) bought parts of the Tillworth Estate from the Barns family.

⁴⁹ DHC ref 547B/P/474.

New Park and Old Barn

New Park can be seen on the 1776/78 map, surrounded by fields and woodland. Although there is a field called Old Barn Field, there was no farmstead of that name at that time.

In 1824 (Ref 6) Charles **Peers** was the tenant of New Park, with a total of 236 acres under his control. In 1838 (Ref 7) New Park was being farmed by Richard **Denning**, and amounted to 133 acres (and Appendix 3 shows that he had been there, and keeping cows, since at least 1828). He was still there in 1841C and 1842V.

Then in 1851C New Park was recorded as 120 acres, and was being farmed by John **Mullins**, while a farm labourer was living at Old Barn. It seems reasonably likely that in both 1841C and 1851C the two farms (New Park and Old Barn) were being farmed as a single unit.

Both 1856D and 1857D list John Mullins as the farmer at New Park, with no farmer named for Old Barn. By 1861C, with his address simply given as Sector Road, John Mullins was farming 250 acres which (as explained above in the context of Payne's Place Farm) I believe probably included most or all of Payne's Place as well as New Park and Old Barn. In 1866D and 1870D John Mullins was again listed at New Park, with no farmer named at Old Barn.

In 1871C John Mullins was still based at New Park, farming 200 acres. By this time I believe that the 60 acres of Old Barn Farm had been separated from New Lodge, and (mis-recorded as Red Barn) was now in the hands of William **Wareham**. (The evidence for William Wareham being at Old Barn rather than Red House Farm is partly based on his subsequent tenure of Old Barn, but also on the sequence of farms in the census book, with Red Barn being recorded between Higher Beavor and New Park.)

From this point, the two farms are dealt with separately, with New Park first.

In 1873D John **Mullins** was farming New Park, but by 1875 the farmer was Francis **Cossins**, who late that year (Ref 10, WG 24 Dec 1875) was advertising for staff for New Park Farm, his presence being confirmed by 1878D and 1878/79D. However, in 1881C Amos Mullins was listed as the farmer, with 150 acres. This is confirmed by 1883D.

In 1889D and 1890D James **Cox** was the farmer of New Park, but by 1891 William **Mitchell** had taken over. He was still there in 1893D.

By 1901C and 1902D William **Johnson** was farming New Park, though he left very early in 1902. We know this because a sale of live and dead stock to be held on his behalf, including 23 in-calf Devon dairy cows, was advertised (Ref 10, EPG 31 Jan 1902) by Messrs R&C Snell. Later that year Mrs **Coles** was advertising for domestic staff for New Park Farm, and in October 1903 a valuation report (Ref 9) carried out for W H B Knight Esq shows that the tenant was indeed called Coles, and that the farm extended to 133 acres. In 1906D the farmer was named as John Henry **Coles**. He was still there a year later (Ref 11, 1907).

In 1908 there was an auction announced by Messrs Whitton & Laing (Ref 10, 12 June 1908) to take place at the George, Axminster on 16 July, at which five farms were to be offered for sale: New Park (135 acres), Old Barn Farm (98 acres), Payne's Place (77 acres), Cuthays (70 acres) and Shiles Ground (46 acres). I believe that the auction was to be held on behalf of W H B Knight Esq (see below in the context of Old Barn Farm for the evidence for this).

John Henry Coles was still at New Park in 1910D, and Ref 12 gives the extent of the farm at that time as 111 acres (with 22 acres of coppiced woodland being held by the Knight family). In 1911C no farmer was shown as living there, and I believe that at this point the land was separated from the house, and re-named as Payne's Place Farm (see above).

In both 1873D and 1878/79D William **Wareham** was farming Old Barn. By 1881C Robert Wareham had taken over, with the farm shown as 70 acres. The farm was not listed in 1883D.

In 1889D and 1890D what looks like Thomas **Rapjohns** was farming Old Barn. By 1891 he had been succeeded by George **Elston**, who was again listed in 1893D. When a valuation was carried out in April 1900 (Ref 9) Thomas Barns Esq (of Hawkchurch) was identified as the owner of Old Barn, and George Elston was shown as the outgoing tenant.

By 1901C Thomas **Vincent** was the farmer at Old Barn, as he was in 1902D. A further valuation report (Ref 9) carried out in 1903 for W H B Knight Esq shows that the farm amounted to 96 acres,

and confirms that the tenant was called Vincent. See above (New Park) for information on a 1908 auction involving Old Barn. 1906D to 1919D inclusive list John Vincent, probably Thomas Vincent's son, as the farmer at Old Barn, who 1911C shows to have been born c.1844 at Dalwood. However, Ref 12 shows that in 1910 Thomas Vincent was still the taxpayer on 80 acres of land, with 16 acres of coppiced woodland being retained by the Knight family.

From 1923D until at least 1939D George M **Dimond** was listed at Old Barn Farm. He died there in 1947⁵⁰. He was followed (though whether there was a gap between them I am not sure) by Norman **Herrod**. When he retired, his brother-in-law Arthur **Strawbridge** took the farm over⁵¹. The land is now farmed in combination with another farm, and it looks to me as though it is with one of the nearby farms in Hawkchurch parish.

⁵⁰ Source: On-line London Gazette, 1947.

⁵¹ Source (for the last two active farmers): Shirley Hurford, personal communication, 2015.

Chapter 6: Between Sector Lane and Cook's / Woodbury Lanes

Sector Lane Farm and Sector Farm

The farm on Sector Lane which was closest to the town was the one linked to the surviving Sector Lane Farmhouse, which I believe was a dairy. Although I have included it here, I do not know on which side of Sector Lane its land was, and it might more properly belong in Chapter 5 above.

In fact the 1776/78 map shows that an earlier Sector Farm had been located where Sector Lane crosses the stream. There are still houses there, and the farmstead itself may well have been moved as part of the process of re-developing Sector (or Secktor) House as a gentleman's residence, by James Davidson. This may well tie in with the fact that in 1831 an auction of live and dead stock was announced at Sector Farm by Mr Chaffey, an auctioneer, (Ref 10, SM 26 Sept 1831), on behalf of John **Zealley**, who was quitting the farm (and also quitting Woodbury Farm).

The first recorded occupant of Sector Lane Farm that I have found was Samuel **Stilling** in 1881C, a dairyman with 11 acres of land on Sector Lane. In 1891C I believe that this was where John **Salway**, dairyman and milk salesman had established himself, though I have also seen a reference to him living at Punch Cottage, Sector Lane several years later, and the 1891 map names the building now named Sector Lane Farmhouse as Punch Cottage. 1901C names a farmer and dairyman on Sector Lane as Walter Salway. In 1906D and 1910D the dairyman was named as Walter John Salway, and in 1914D as John Walter Salway. Ref 12 names the 1910 taxpayer for just under 10 acres of land at Sector, and what appears to be Drake's Grove, as William John Salway, though the first name is almost certainly a recording error.

After no listing in 1919D, by 1923D Walter John Salway is shown living on Sector Road and working as a haulier rather than a dairyman, and so 1914D provides the last definite evidence that I have seen in any directory of Sector Lane Farm as an entity.

However, in 1919 Walter J Salway, described as a farmer, was the complainant in a case reported by the press (Ref 10, WT 16 Jan 1919) in which pigs belonging to George Pinn (who later farmed at Prestaller: see Chapter 4) had repeatedly strayed into his potato field, causing damage; and in 1928, when a child was killed, having become caught up in machinery, at Sector Farm (Ref 10, WMN 22 Nov 1928) the farmer was named as Walter John Salway. A decade later there was another report of a fatality at Sector Farm (Ref 10, WMN 31 Aug 1938) when a farm worker was killed in an accident involving a tractor. The man's employer on that occasion was named as Ernest James Hayball, but I believe he was a farm contractor (from near Chard) rather than the farmer.

I have also seen some information about insurance which links William Henry **Henley** to Sector Farm, but without specifying a date or precisely what his role was. I believe it probably refers to the 1940s or 1950s.

The various Beavor farms

Land known as Bever, Bevor, Beavor and other variants has been recorded in Axminster since mediaeval times, originally in association with Newenham Abbey (Ref 2, pages 170 to 174). Whereas some of the land was enclosed and farmed, much was evidently unenclosed rough grazing and woodland on Stammery and Raymond's Hills. The name Beavor Grange appears at this early stage.

Whilst most of the land and farms to which the name Beavor (or its variants) attaches can be found between Sector Lane and Lyme Road, some caution must be observed because of the existence further north (off Evil Lane) of a separate property called Bever (see Chapter 4 above).

The 1776/78 map shows a farm called Bever (where Beavor Grange now is) and Lower Bever (where it still is). Most of the land associated with Beavor Grange lay, and still lies, up-hill from the farmstead, while the fields between the two farms mostly belong to Lower Beavor.

In 1810, an early apprenticeship record⁵² links Richard **Denning** to 'Bevers'. In 1824 (Ref 6) 39 acres described as 'Part of Beavor' were rented to Henry **Shiles**⁵³ and a further 32 acres ('Part of

⁵² DHC ref 406-A-2.

⁵³ I understand from Christopher Moran, who has researched several Axminster families, including Shiles, that Henry Shiles had been born at Plymtree in 1748, and moved to Axminster as a weaver, marrying Elizabeth Bull of Charmouth. This suggests that although he rented 'Part of Beavor', he probably did not farm it himself.

Beaver') to what appears to be Mary Stocker as the Executor of someone called **Dight**. A further 19 acres were let to John **Seward** described as Honibarns (which the 1776/78 maps shows, with the spelling Honiborns, sitting between Higher and Lower Beaver). He also had 7 acres described as 'Blatchford's'.

In 1838 (Ref 7) the tithe apportionment map shows Beaver as 'tithe free', and so the named properties do not include any of the Beaver farms. However, Ambrose **Bussell** (who in 1841C was farming Lower Beaver) was in 1838 linked to 56 acres. In 1841C there were two distinct farms: Higher Beaver, occupied by Henry **Bond**, and Lower Beaver, occupied by Ambrose Bussell. In between them was a property called Honeybans (or Honibarns) Farm (see above), though it was occupied by a farm labourer rather than a farmer, and its land had no doubt been absorbed into one of the other two farms. 1842V names Henry Bond in connection with Higher Beaver, and both Ambrose Bussell and John Baker (of whom I know nothing further) in connection with both Honeybons and Beaver.

By 1851C the only named farms were Higher and Lower Beaver. Ambrose Bussell was listed as the farmer at Higher Beaver, with 260 acres, while Lower Beaver was occupied by William Bussell (possibly unrelated), who was described as a dairyman and agricultural labourer. My assumption is that the two farms were being run as a single unit at that time. Both 1856D and 1857D list Ambrose Bussell as the farmer of Higher Beaver; neither mentions Lower Beaver.

From this point on I deal separately with Higher and Lower Beaver, in that order.

George **Glyde** was briefly the farmer of Higher Beaver, and 1861C shows him as farming 200 acres. The report of his death (Ref 10, SM 11 June 1861) says that he had arrived at Higher Beaver in March 1860, and that he was aged between 70 and 80. Unfortunately things had gone very badly for him, and having suffered losses of stock and money, he sunk into depression and took his own life.

1870D lists '**Brooks & Catanche**' as the farmers of Beaver, and 1871C then names William **Brooke** and his partner William **Coutanche** of Jersey, and gives the farm's size as 270 acres. 1873D lists Robert Coutanche at Higher Beaver. By 1878D Edwin **Tucker** had taken over at Higher Beaver. This is consistent with 1878/79D, 1881C (which gives the size as 266 acres) and 1883D.

1889D, 18980D and 1891C all list Francis Charles B **Denning** as the farmer at Higher Beaver. By 1893D he had given way to Frank **Hooper**, who was again the farmer in 1902D. The name in 1901C is hard to read, and looks more like Ivan **Dampier** than Frank Hooper. Ivan Dampier's name also appears in 1902D linked to Beaver rather than Higher Beaver. In 1906D no farmer is listed at Higher Beaver.

By 1910D James **Loveridge** was the farmer at Higher Beaver, and Ref 12 shows that the farm at that time comprised just under 223 acres. Census returns show that he had been born c.1848 at Horton, Somerset, and that his father had been the landlord of the Red Lion in Axminster. He and his wife Emma had farmed several nearby farms previously (including Smallridge, Sisterhood, Cuthays and Payne's Place) before moving to Higher Beaver. 1914D lists James Loveridge again, followed in 1919D by Charles George Loveridge who, despite the coincidence of surname, was not James Loveridge's son. He came originally from (and later returned to) Colyton.

In 1921 Beaver Grange was offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd (Ref 10, WG 18 Nov 1921), together with neighbouring farms. 1923D provides the first use for many years in a directory entry of the name Beaver Grange (rather than Higher Beaver): Charles George Loveridge was still the farmer at that time.

By 1926D the farm's name had reverted to Higher Beaver, and the farmer was James **Churchill**. He had recently been widowed, following the death of his wife Aminda (nee Bowditch, buried at Axminster in 1924). He was again the farmer in 1930D, but 1935D names Samuel Churchill (whose name I have seen on other insurance-related documents for Higher Beaver at around the same time, and who I believe was James' brother). James Churchill was again listed in 1939D, but Samuel Churchill's name is also in evidence. Following James Churchill's death in 1950 the majority of the farm, including the farmstead, subsequently passed from the Churchills to yet another branch of the **Loveridge** family (the present owner being the grandson of James Churchill⁵⁴ via James' daughter Frances Churchill, who married Cecil James Loveridge in 1938). Beaver Grange is now run by Cecil Loveridge's son Roger, under the name R C Loveridge & Son.

⁵⁴ Source: Roger Loveridge, personal communication, 2015.

Smaller parts of the farm passed to other members of the Churchill family, helping to create the holdings of Hillcrest and Newlands Farm (see below).

Turning back to Lower Beavor, by 1861C Ambrose Bussell (who had previously farmed at Higher Beavor, and who later moved back there) was simply listed as farming on Sector Road, with what looks like 140 acres. My assumption is that while George Glyde was at Higher Beavor (see above), Amrose Bussell was living at and farming Lower Beavor by then, and certainly he was described as 'of Lower Beavor' when he suffered the loss of nine lambs as a consequence of a dog attack (Ref 10, SM 28 June 1864).

1870D then names James Bussell at Beavor, which ties in with 1871C, which links him to Lower Beavor, which it describes as 300 acres. This is confirmed by 1873D and 1878D. Although 1878/79D does not list Lower Beavor, 1881C shows that James Bussell was still there, but that the farm had contracted to 160 acres. He was again listed there in 1883D, and that autumn he hosted the annual ploughing match of the Axminster & Kilmington Agricultural Association (Ref 10, EPG 12 Oct 1883).

By 1889D John **Trenchard** was listed at Lower Beavor, described as bailiff for A J Knight. His name was given in 1891C as George Trenchard but John Trenchard in 1893D. A press report (Ref 10, EPG 20 Mar 1891) shows that A J Knight Esq had instructed Robert Snell to sell on his behalf a selection of live and dead stock at Lower Beavor. Two years later (Ref 10, WT 30 Mar 1893) George Trenchard, bailiff to W Knight (see also under Uphay Farm, Chapter 3), prosecuted two local men for stealing turnip greens from Lower Beavor. A further 2 years later (Ref 10, EPG 8 Feb 1895) Lower Beavor was being offered for rent from Lady Day, described as 145 acres. Interested parties were directed to contact George Trenchard on behalf of W H B Knight Esq.

By 1896 George **Rowe** was the farmer at Lower Beavor (we know this because his wife Mary Ann died in March that year, with her address recorded as Lower Beavor), as he was in 1901C and 1902D. He had moved to Axminster from Chagford, via Upottery, with at least three of his sons (Walter Henry, Daniel Scott and Felix, all of whom settled and farmed in Axminster). A valuation report (Ref 9) dated October 1903 also names a Mr Row (a mis-recording of Rowe) as the tenant of part of the land known as Beavor, alongside a Mr **Bowditch** (with 222 acres between them). George Rowe died in early 1905, still resident at Lower Beavor (Ref 10, WT 25 Apr 1905), and in 1906D the farmer was listed as the Trustees of George Rowe.

By 1909 (Ref 11) the farmer was his son, Daniel Scott Rowe. Ref 12 names the taxpayer for Lower Beavor in 1910 as D&F Rowe (presumably Daniel and Felix), and gives the size as 150 acres. 1911C shows that Daniel Scott Rowe had been born c.1876 at Chagford. 1923D and 1926D both confirm his presence at Lower Beavor (before he moved to Fawnsmoor: see above). During this stage of his tenure the farm, by then described as 103 acres, was sold by private treaty (Ref 10, WG 18 Nov 1921) by Messrs R&C Snell, ahead of a proposed auction.

William **Connelly** was the farmer at Lower Beavor from 1923D to 1930D, and it was evidently him who purchased the farm (see below for the evidence). However, in later years he let the farm to tenants, and in 1935D the farmer was Walter William **Franks**, formerly of Lower Abbey Farm (see Chapter 8 below). A press notice (Ref 10, EPG 8 Oct 1937) stated that Lower Beavor, still described as 103 acres, was to be let from Lady Day, and a second (Ref 10, EPG 4 Mar 1938) announced a forthcoming sale of cattle and other stock by W Palmer & Co and Messrs R&C Snell Ltd on behalf of Messrs SC and WW Franks, who were quitting Lower Beavor.

In 1939D no entry for Lower Beavor is included. Two press notices (Ref 10, TCWA 2 Nov 1940 and WG 2 June 1944) both relate to dogs being offered for sale from Lower Beavor by Mr S **Diment**. Then (Ref 10, WG 8 Feb 1946) a sale was announced of cattle, a horse and poultry by S Diment, who was reported to be going to a smaller holding with very little building space (that farm was, I understand, Beulah Farm). Finally, another notice (Ref 10, WG 15 Feb 1946) announced the forthcoming sale of Lower Beavor (still 103 acres) on behalf of the late Mr William **Connelly**.

The next farmer was apparently Commander A G **Rodger** (RN, retd), who was advertising for a farm worker (Ref 10, EPG 30 July 1948), and was still there in 1950. At some point during the 1950s he sold some land which was then incorporated into Red House Farm (see Chapter 5 above),

and the main farm was sold at around the same time to Gerald Henry **Watts**⁵⁵. In 1960 he moved to Hoopers Farm, Chardstock⁵⁶.

The farm is presently run as a dairy enterprise by Garth **Vowles** and his family, under the name G C Vowles & Daughters.

The only other instance of a Beavor property being named in the census record arose in 1891C, when Beavor Batch (the wooded area close to the top of Raymond's Hill) was occupied by a timber haulier.

Coles's Farm

The 1776/78 map shows a farm called Coles's Fursley where Coles's Farm is now. It evidently belonged to the Petre Estate at that time.

In 1838 (Ref 7) Henry **Fry** farmed 27 acres at Coles's Farm. By 1841C he had given way to Mary **Stephens**. The farm is not listed in 1851C. 1861C names Aaron **Hayball** as the farmer, with 30 acres. This is confirmed by 1866D, but 1870D and 1871C suggest that he had died, and that his widow Mary Ann Hayball had taken over. She died at Coles's Farm the following year (Ref 10, WT 19 July 1972).

No farmer is listed in most of the directories at around this time, but 1878D and 1881C list Samuel **Darke** as the farmer.

1891C lists Ben **Beviss** at Coles's, describing him as a railway labourer and dairy keeper. Then 1901C lists him simply as a railway plate layer, and identifies his wife Ruth as the farmer. By 1910 Ref 12 shows him as the named taxpayer, with the size of the farm given as a bit over 27 acres. 1911C confirms him as the farmer, and shows him having been born c.1861 at Musbury. In 1921 Coles's Farm formed part of a package of land offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell (Ref 10, WG 18 Nov 1921).

I have seen passing reference to a T Bridle at Coles's Farm over the period 1922-26, but the next directory listings for Coles's Farm are in 1930D and 1935D, when Isaac **Bridel** is the named farmer. In fact, I think his correct name was probably Thomas Isaac Bridel, who had previously farmed in West Dorset. Then in 1939D the listed farmer is Frederick **Spiller**.

The last person to farm at Coles's Farm was Bert **Trevett**⁵⁷(whose full name was probably John Albert Trevett, who died at Coles's Farm in 2013, having moved out of the main house in 1984 into one of the converted barns, according to the sales particulars provided when the farm was offered for sale in 2014). When he retired, he sold most of the land, on the southern side of Coles's Lane, to Furzeleigh Down Farm. The 2014 sales particulars confirm that the original farmstead had contained a cow stall and a cider shed, with an apple crusher and cider press.

Coles's Farm is no longer an active farm. As well as farm buildings having been converted for holiday lets, a building business (AJ Proctor Builders Ltd) is based there.

Stammer Hill, Hillcrest and Newlands

In 1841C there was a farmer called John **White** living at Stammer Cottage, which was located up the hill from Higher Beavor (and has subsequently been demolished). He may have been farming some of the higher land which now forms Hillcrest and/or Newlands Farm, though this is pure speculation. As mentioned just above, there was one reference (in 1891C) to Beavor Batch, which is closer to Raymond's Hill.

There is a smallholding at Hillcrest, at Blackpool Corner, which I believe to have been created from land that previously formed part of Beavor Grange (see above). It appears to have belonged since its creation to the **Stuckey** family (Thomas Stuckey having married Phyllis Evelyn Churchill of Beavor Grange in 1935), and has sometimes been referred to as Higher Beavor. Writing in 'Marshwood Vale' magazine in May 2006, Tom Stuckey, then a student, identified himself as the son of the current owners, Eric John and Joan Stuckey. *"Both families have lived around here for generations ... My family home is a smallholding, in the hamlet of Blackpool Corner, between Raymond's Hill and Lambert's Castle. For many years my parents grew wheat for thatching reed;*

⁵⁵ Source: Ken Voysey, personal communication, 2015.

⁵⁶ Source: The chardstockwebmuseum.org website.

⁵⁷ Source: Ken Voysey, personal communication, 2015.

Dad also worked as a self-employed structural engineer, designing and constructing farm buildings. We grew field beans and a variety of vegetables. Mum had a free range egg business, and sold to local shops and supermarkets; now the supermarket is more centrally organised and local supplies are no longer required. These days we let our fields out for grass keep ..."

Newlands Farm itself is only mentioned in one of the census returns and pre-1940 directories: in 1870D Walter **Clarke** was shown as the farmer (having been at Trinity Hill in 1866D). However, both 1873D and 1878/79D name him as the farmer of an otherwise unrecorded property called Park, which could possibly be an alternative name for Newlands (being not so far from New Park). In 1889D John **Miller** is the farmer listed at Park.

The farm which is now called Newlands was created, at least in part, from land which belonged to the Churchill family of Beavor Grange (see above), when that farm was larger than it now is, and known as Higher Beavor. Based on some insurance records that I have seen I believe that Newlands Farm had come into existence by about 1943, even if it was still known as Higher Beavor, and has been known as Newlands since at least 1946. After being run by Denis Amos John **Churchill** until at least the late 1960s it passed to his son Gilbert, and in 2013 he had solar panels installed on about half of his 45-acre farm. The rest of the farm will continue to support sheep, which have for many years constituted the main enterprise at Newlands.

The various Furzeleigh farms

The period up until the 1870s

Land known as Fursley, Furzeleigh, Furzeigh, Furzeley and other variants has been recorded in Axminster since mediaeval times, originally in association with Newenham Abbey (Ref 2, pages 174 to 178). As with Beavor (see above), whereas some of the land was enclosed and farmed, much was evidently unenclosed rough grazing and woodland on Raymond's Hill, including furze (gorse) from which the farms takes their names.

The 1776/78 map shows Nether Fursley (where Furzeleigh House now is), Higher Fursley (where Furzeleigh Farm now is), Fursley Down (furthest up the hill, where Higher Furzeleigh now is) and Coles's Fursley (which before much longer became known as Coles's Farm: see above).

Ref 2 (pages 174 to 178) also tells us that in 1809 the Petre Estate sold Middle Furzeleigh (74 acres) to Amos Liddon, an Axminster surgeon (who no doubt let it on to a farmer). The same source tells us that he then sold Middle Furzeleigh to John Bull of Charmouth, whose brother Robert Bull of Kilmington later inherited it. When Robert died (on 3 August 1830) the land passed to their niece, Elizabeth Shiles⁵⁸. When she died in 1863 her land was being farmed by James **Fowler**, who is linked by 1841C simply to 'Furzeleigh Farm'. Ref 7 shows that 3 years earlier, in 1838, he had been farming 49 acres on an unnamed holding, and 1842V links him to land at both Furzeleigh and Beavor. In 1851C he was still at Furzeleigh Farm, which had by then greatly expanded to 158 acres. Deeds for the farm, which I have not seen, are evidently lodged at the Dorset History Centre⁵⁹. 1856D also places James Fowler at Furzeleigh, whereas 1857D lists him at Middle Furzeleigh (with Joseph and Richard **Denning** both listed at Furzeleigh).

In 1861C James Fowler was listed as farming what looks like 168 acres on an unnamed holding on Lyme Road. This was no doubt one of the Furzeleigh farms, but which one cannot be divined. In 1866D and 1870D William H Fowler was the only farmer listed at Furzeleigh (though John **Denham** was listed in both at Furzebrook, which may well have been based on two separate typographical errors⁶⁰, one where **Denning** was intended, and the other where Furzeleigh was). 1871C then lists William H Fowler at Middle Furzeleigh, with 167 acres. 1873D simply names his farm as Furzeleigh. This marks the end of the Fowler family's association with Furzeleigh.

In 1878D James **Boon**⁶¹ was listed as the farmer at Middle Furzeleigh (now known as Furzeleigh Farm).

Ref 2 (pages 174 to 178) also tells us that in about 1810 the Petre Estate sold Lower Furzeleigh to "... the father of Samuel **Stevens**". By 1838 Lower Furzeleigh was jointly owned by Samuel and

⁵⁸ These facts have been further confirmed to me by Christopher Moran, based on the 1820 will of John Bull and related family papers.

⁵⁹ Ref D/LRM/A4/1.

⁶⁰ There was at one time a large house called Furzebrook on Musbury Road, near the junction with Woodbury Lane, but I do not believe that it had a farm.

⁶¹ He may well have been the same person as was farming Long Lea: see Chapter 3.

Francis Stevens (who also jointly leased some other land in Axminster) and occupied by Samuel. In fact, in 1838 (Ref 7) the only farm carrying the Furzeleigh name to be specifically identified was Lower Furzeleigh, which was at that time recorded as just under 13 acres. The Tithe Apportionment map shows that Lower Furzeleigh was located where the present Furzeleigh House is to be found. Samuel Stevens was not identified in connection with farming in 1841C, but in 1861C Francis Stevens, a yeoman, was farming 60 acres on an unnamed property on Lyme Road, which is probably a reference to Lower Furzeleigh.

Lower Furzeleigh is then not specifically named in any further census returns or directory listings, and was probably let out for grazing to a series of farmers without the benefit of any associated buildings. The land was then the subject of a valuation report (Ref 9) in March 1903, which indicates that it was at that time in a poor state of repair, with some overgrown fields, and attention needed to fences, gates and drains to bring it into an acceptable state. The farmer is not identified in that report. Furzeleigh House was again on the market in the autumn of 2015, together with just over 30 acres of pasture and woodland in a nearly square plot fronting onto Lyme Road, with the house and its extensive gardens located in the centre of the plot.

Over the period from 1828 to 1873 the only other Furzeleigh farms to be listed by name were Higher Furzeleigh and Furzeleigh Down: probably the same basic property. In 1824 (Ref 6) 131 acres described as Fursley Down was let to A M **Raymond**. Despite the coincidence of naming, if Raymonds Hill got its name from his family, it was from an earlier generation, because the 1776/78 map shows that the place name had been in use for at least 45 years by 1824.

Then in 1841C Higher Furzeleigh was occupied by John **Vickery**, and 1842V names both him and John **Hoare** in specific connection with Higher Furzeleigh. Neither of them, nor the farm, were listed in 1851C, and it is possible that the land had been absorbed into either Furzeleigh Farm or Higher Beavor at that point. Then in 1861C Furzeleigh Down was occupied by John **Bussell**, and shown as 250 acres. In 1871C Furzeleigh Down was occupied by a farm labourer, strongly suggesting that the land had been rolled into another local farm at that stage.

The period from the 1880s onwards

In 1881C the only Furzeleigh farm occupied by a farmer was Furzeleigh Farm, with 100 acres, which was being run by John H **Long**. He was still there in 1883D and 1889D. By 1891C he was listed under Higher Furzeleigh (possibly an error), and in 1893D the farm was again simply listed as Furzeleigh. In 1891C Little Furzeleigh (close to, but distinct from, Furzeleigh Down) was occupied by a farm labourer. According to a press notice (Ref 10, EPG 8 Feb 1895) Little Furzeleigh, comprising 83 acres of grass and arable land, was available for rent in 1895.

In 1901C the only Furzeleigh farm listed was Furzeleigh Farm, which was being run by John **Gillingham**. 1902D and 1906D both list him, though there is a document which I have not seen⁶² which suggests that in 1905 he was served with a Notice to Quit⁶³.

Ref 12, dating from 1910, identifies 304 acres of land attached to various versions of the name Furzeleigh. Furzeleigh House was occupied by Mr R Talbot, but the land immediately associated with it (35 acres) was let to John **Patterson**, who had a butcher's shop in Axminster, and who rented various fields around the town. Just under 49 acres was attributed to the Executors of the Barnes estate, in two plots; while just under 95 acres was linked to Charles **Nicholas**, described as Middle Furzeleigh; just over 79 acres described as Higher Furzeleigh had W H B Knight as the named taxpayer (though he would not have been farming it himself); and Furzeleigh Batches (woodland) occupying 46 acres was the responsibility of George Trenchard (of Uphay Fame: see Chapter 3).

1910D and 1911C both simply list a farm called Furzeleigh, with Charles Nicholas shown as the farmer (born c.1857 at Edgington, Somerset). 1911C also lists Enos **Trenchard** at the separate Furzeleigh Farm (born c.1878 at Axminster). 1914D has no listings at all for any of the Furzeleigh farms, but a press report (Ref 10, 29 Oct 1915) shows that Enos Trenchard was farming one of those farms.

⁶² Dorset History Centre ref D/LRM/A4/1/1. The summary of what it covers comes from the National Archives website.

⁶³ This would be consistent with Ref 12, which shows him to have been the taxpayer on 4 acres named as Lea Combe / Foxhill Land, and 2 acres called Townsend Close in 1910; and 1911C, where he is listed as the innkeeper of the Lamb Inn in Axminster, and a farmer, born c.1857 at Whitchurch, Dorset.

By 1918, however, James **Loveridge** had moved from Higher Beavor (see above) to Furzeleigh Farm, and Enos Trenchard was by then at Furzeleigh Down. We know this, because of a press report (Ref 10, WT 19 June 1918) of a lawsuit involving the two of them. Enos Trenchard was sued for slander over his alleged statement to James Loveridge that "... *I have got as much money as thee hast; you have got it dishonest by cheating the rent when you lived at Sisterhood Farm, and by taking away the things at night.*" In court his defence was to deny ever making that statement, but then he went on to allege that James Loveridge "... *had stolen my sedge grass by the wagon load*". Although the jury found in favour of James Loveridge, they only awarded him damages of one farthing, and the judge declined to award costs in his favour. In fact Enos Trenchard appeared in court as a witness or defendant on other occasions (Ref 10, WT 29 Oct 1915 and EPG 10 Jan 1936), on the latter occasion at the instigation of his own brother (Reuben), over an accusation of killing game without a licence. By 1936 he was farming in Membury, as was his father George Trenchard (see under Uphay Farm in Chapter 3 for more about him).

James Loveridge's tenure of Furzeleigh Farm is confirmed by 1919D, 1923D and 1926D. He died in 1931, and the report on the grant of probate on his estate (Ref 10, WT 5 June 1931) shows that prior to his death he had moved to Leigh Villa, Cook's Lane. So far as I can tell he only had one son (Lisle) who married into the Rowe family of Fawnsmoor, and farmed at Stockland.

From 1930D to at least 1939D the farmer named in connection with Furzeleigh Farm was Percy James **Dare**. He was the son of George Frederick Dare of Yeatlands Farm (see Chapter 9. This is confirmed by Ref 10, EPG 13 Dec 1935). Although the DHC on-line catalogue shows evidence that Furzeleigh Farm was offered for sale in the 1940s (Ref 547B/P/3659ii), the details were not actually deposited, and the sale may not have gone ahead. Percy James Dare was still farming at Furzeleigh Farm in the late 1950s. Evidence from the EDDC planning website suggests that the Dare family retained a presence at Furzeleigh until at least 1981, at which time some of the farm buildings were being converted to residential use.

In 1921 Furzeleigh Down was offered for sale at auction (Ref 10, WG 18 Nov 1921) by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd, as part of a much larger package of land originally totalling 607 acres, and mainly made up of Beavor farms (see above). From 1923D until at least 1939D Albert John **Baker** was the farmer of Higher Furzeleigh. He died in 1942 and is buried at Axminster. The reference to Higher Furzeleigh almost certainly means Furzeleigh Down, because his daughter Kathleen married Samuel Edward **Voysey** in 1940, and his son Kenneth Norman Voysey farms Furzeleigh Down with his three sons under the name S E Voysey & Son. The farm now incorporates land which was formerly connected to other neighbouring properties, and is one of the larger surviving farms, with a dairy herd. The farm's website, which promotes their ice cream venture, states that the current generation now at Furzeleigh Down is the fourth, which is consistent with the information above (starting with Albert John Baker). The Axminster Excavators business is also based at the farm.

Symonds Down Farm

Although I have seen no physical or map evidence of a farm directly associated with the main Symondsdown House, there are some fragments of information which suggests that there was one at one time.

The 1776/78 map shows 'Symmonds Down' where the 'big house' now is: one of the very few properties belonging to the Petre Estate located to the east of Woodbury Lane. Any farmland which was associated with the house at that time was probably on the other side of the lane (unless the tenant of the house had bought or rented land from another source by then).

Appendix 3 suggests that William **Newberry** was keeping cows at Symondsdown in 1828 (though the handwriting is far from clear as far as the name of the farm is concerned).

1856D and 1857D both list Samuel **Harvey** as a farmer at Symonds Down, and 1861C lists Joseph **Lovegrove** of Symondsdown House as farming 150 acres.

The first definite reference that I have seen to Symonds Down Farm comes in a press announcement (Ref 10, WT 18 Sept 1868) advertising a forthcoming sale of live and dead stock (with the emphasis strongly on a flock of sheep) to be conducted by Messrs Gage & Halse for John S C **Stevens** Esq, who had presumably been farming the estate prior to that. The notice stated that as well as selling his flock, he intended to let the estate, comprising five lots totalling 54 acres.

1873D lists N W **Parker** as the farmer at Symonds Down Farm, while 1881C lists Robert **Templeman** with 160 acres at Symonds Down.

In 1898 both Symondsdown House and its associated farm were offered separately to let (Ref 10, WT 6 May 1898), via Messrs B&J Gage. The house had with it 16 acres of parkland, while the farm was described as 116 acres of meadow, pasture, arable (15 acres) and coppice. Ref 12 lists R **Bowditch** as the taxpayer responsible for 114 acres at Symonds Down in 1910, with F D **Chick** (probably the owner of one of several butcher's shops in Axminster) responsible for a further 15 acres.

The house was re-sold in 1929 by Messrs Connole, Rickeard & Green of Exeter (Ref 10, EPG 12 July 1929), together with 20 acres of land, and it would appear that the incoming resident, who set up a poultry unit, was Sidney Charles **Walker** (Ref 11, 1931 and 1936).

From this point, all references to Symonds Down Farm are to its present location, on Cook's Lane, and not to the 'big house'.

In 1901C James **Strawbridge** was listed as a farmer at Cooks Lane Cottages. This is probably a reference to the cottages which now sit adjacent to Symonds Down Farm on Cooks Lane. No such holding appears to be listed in directories immediately after 1901, or in Ref 12 (in 1910).

Ref 11 (1922) and 1923D both name John **Churchill** as the farmer at Symonds Down Farm, a listing which is repeatedly confirmed until at least 1939D. Late in the war (Ref 10, WT 5 May 1944) there was a serious fire at Symonds Down Farm, damaging several buildings and destroying three ricks of straw. John Churchill was named as the farmer, together with his sons John and Edward. I believe that the farm was then taken over by John James Churchill and his wife Peggy (who died in 2012 and 2011 respectively), and their son Brian J Churchill. In the autumn of 2015 the farm buildings were offered for sale, with planning permission for residential conversion, together with a small field on the other side of Cooks Lane. By 2017 the farm buildings had been converted and given the name 'Combe Bank Farm'. So far as I can tell, this name was never used for an actual farm on this site.

Fawnsmoor

The farm at Fawnsmoor is beyond and separate from the house of the same name. The house itself is shown on the 1776/78 map, and at that time both the house and the land formed part of the Petre Estate⁶⁴. In 1809 Fawnsmoor (72 acres) and the adjacent Crabb's Wood (16 acres) were sold to Benjamin Tucker Woolley of Axminster. In 1824/25 his successors leased the land (with a sitting tenant: James **Pavey**) to a combination of the Knight family and James Davidson, who also owned the adjacent Sector (or Secktor) Estate. In 1831 James Davidson bought a half interest in the land, which remained in his family's ownership until at least the 1890s.

In 1838 (Ref 7) George Davey **Ewens** was farming 190 acres at Fawnsmoor, but no farmer was recorded there in 1841C (he having moved to Prestaller: see Chapter 4 above). He was also a butter and cheese merchant, and Appendix 3 shows that in 1828 he had been responsible for the largest herd of cattle in the parish, though we do not know where he kept them at that time. Unfortunately his business did not continue to prosper, because in 1847 he was declared bankrupt (Ref 10, WT 18 Dec 1847). In 1848 Fawnsmoor was offered for let, described as 130 acres of arable, meadow, pasture, orchard and woodland, formerly occupied by George Davey Ewens (Ref 10, 11 Mar 1848). All enquirers were directed to James Davidson himself, not via an agent or bailiff.

In 1851C John **Bentley** was farming 125 acres at Fawnsmoor. There are no entries for Fawnsmoor in 1856D, 1857D or 1861C (though James Davidson himself was described as farming what looks on the census return like 108 acres: see Chapter 5 above). Later that year the farm was again offered for let, described as 127 acres (Ref 10, EPG 6 Dec 1861). On this occasion applicants were directed to John **Tett**, a bailiff, whose address was given as Fawnsmoor Farm, and who had probably been running it for James Davidson in the absence of a tenant.

Henry **Loud** was the farmer at Fawnsmoor in 1866D and 1870D, and in 1871C Samuel **Fowler** was there, farming 150 acres. He was also listed there in 1873D, and in both 1873 and 1876 there were press reports of local youths being prosecuted for stealing apples from his land (Ref 10, WT 4 Sept 1873 and WT 3 Mar 1876). There was no entry for the farm in 1878D, or in 1878/79D (but in 1877 a Mr John **Copp** died at Fawnsmoor aged 52 (Ref 10, WT 30 Oct 1877). He may or may not have been the farmer: I do not know).

⁶⁴ Source for much of the information in this paragraph: a collection of mainly legal documents very kindly donated to Axminster Heritage Centre in 2017 by Dave Scott Mear and his brother Roger Mear.

In both 1881C and 1883D John **Johnson**, a dairyman, was at Fawnsmoor. Three years later the farm (described as a 72-acre dairy farm, part of the Secktor Estate) was offered for sale at auction (Ref 10, EPG 24 Sept 1886) by Benjamin Gage at the George, Axminster, with John Johnson confirmed as the tenant. A Mr Rowe (almost certainly from Lower Beavor: see above) bought four fields adjacent to the Lyme Road which did not form part of Fawnsmoor itself at that auction.

Messrs B&J Gage then sold timber from Fawnsmoor the following year at the Red Lion in Axminster (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1887), and although there was no listing for Fawnsmoor in 1889D, later that year John **Gage** (Benjamin Gage's son) gave his address as Fawnsmoor when a child was born (Ref 10, WT 26 Oct 1889). Both 1890D and 1891C show John Gage, described as a farmer and auctioneer, at Fawnsmoor. He was also there in 1893D, and 3 years later (Ref 11, 1896).

1901C shows John **Long**, a retired farmer living at Fawnsmoor. Samuel **Warren**, a dairyman, was also there. 1902D also lists both of them. John Long is again listed in 1906D, but by then the dairy was being run by Walter Henry **Rowe**, a son of George Rowe of Lower Beavor (as it was in 1910D and 1914D). In 1906 (Ref 10, EPG 7 Dec 1906) Walter Henry Rowe won the fat pig class at the Annual Fatstock Show and Christmas Market at Axminster.

Ref 12 confirms that in 1910 John Gage was the taxpayer responsible for almost 72 acres at Fawnsmoor, with a further plot of just under 16 acres (presumably Crabb's Wood) attributed to Walter Rowe. A year later (1911C) John Gage was living in Bank Chambers, Axminster described as a farmer and auctioneer, born c.1867 at Kilmington. He pre-deceased his father (John dying in 1914 aged 47, apparently at his own hand⁶⁵, and Benjamin a year later).

In 1915 Walter Henry Rowe was advertising for a housekeeper for Fawnsmoor who could also make butter (Ref 10, WG 30 Apr 1915). He had not long before been widowed.

In 1917 there was a preliminary announcement of the sale of a 'desirable freehold estate' including Fawnsmoor (described as 23 acres) and two fields near Hunter's Lodge (15 acres: other documents show that these were also known as Higher and Lower Grove) (Ref 10, WT 8 June 1917), to be auctioned by Messrs Hussey & Sons at the George, Axminster. Although the sales details appear on the DHC catalogue (DHC ref 69/9/2/Box1/30) they are now classified as 'unfit for production' (i.e. too delicate to handle). Exactly what happened next is unclear, because one post-sale press report (Ref 10, EPG 21 July 1917) states that Fawnsmoor (again described as 72 acres) had been bought by Mr Rowe, without identifying which one. The Hunter's Lodge land was bought by Mr E Trott. However, in apparent contradiction of that 1917 report, 2 years later it was reported (Ref 10, EPG 18 July 1919) that Fawnsmoor had been sold for £3,000 to Mr F Rowe⁶⁶, again described as 72 acres, by Messrs R&C Snell. The same article covered the purchase by Mr D Rowe of Shiles Ground (see above).

In 1919D John **Dommett** was listed as the farmer at Fawnsmoor⁶⁷, and by 1923D Daniel Scott Rowe was running the dairy there, as he was until 1935D with his daughter (Miss M R Rowe)⁶⁸.

In 1939D Charles Herbert **Mear** was the farmer at Fawnsmoor, having arrived there in 1938⁶⁹. He had come from Higher Uphay Farm, via Sart Farm and Chard, and had by then married Vera Rowe of Fawnsmoor. N&H Rowe were listed as running the dairy. At one stage they had a shop on Chard Street (opposite and below the Congregational Chapel) selling dairy products. In 1967 Roger Charles Mear took over the running of the farm from his father. He sold the house and some land in the 1990s, but retains some of the land.

As of 2015 Fawnsmoor Farm provides the base for a business called Axminster Animal Osteopaths, specialising in horses.

Old Park Farm

Old Park Farm is quite often simply referred to as Park Farm, particularly prior to the 1850s. The 1776/78 map shows Park Farm without any accompanying 'big house', confirming that at that time it formed part of the Petre Estate, and there is a map in Ref 3 (page 53) which suggests that Park

⁶⁵ See Ref 10, WT 11 Feb 1914. John Gage was shot dead, and the evidence pointed strongly to it being a case of suicide while the balance of his mind was temporarily upset.

⁶⁶ I understand from Dave Scott Mear that this was Felix Rowe, who in 1919 moved to Uphay Farm.

⁶⁷ Though see the reference to John Dommett under Lower Westwater (Chapter 9): he had died in c.1917.

⁶⁸ Ref 10, EPG 17 Oct 1924 refers to Gilbert George Rowe, older brother of Daniel Scott Rowe, as 'formerly of Fawnsmoor' when he was declared bankrupt, having left the district by then.

⁶⁹ Source: Dave Scott Mear, personal communication, 2017. This covers several of the facts in this paragraph.

Farm was one of the old 'grange farms' associated with Newenham Abbey. As late as 1891 the OS map labels the 'big house' as Old Park, but calls the farm Park Farm. I have used the name Old Park in this document to distinguish it from New Park (see Chapter 5 above).

In 1824 (Ref 6) the tenant was John **Stevens**, with 120 acres. By 1838 (Ref 7) he had been succeeded by Robert **Gear**, with 127 acres. In both 1841C and 1851C Robert Gear was still there, but the farm had apparently grown to 200 acres. There are no entries for Old Park in 1856D or 1857D.

1861C lists Charles **Trivett** as the farmer of Old Park, with the farm size back to 125 acres. He is also named in 1866D.

By 1869 a Mr Baughen of Park Farm was reported to have had some items stolen (Ref 10, WT 19 Oct 1869), and 1870D names Thomas **Baugham** as the farmer, while 1871C names Frederick Baugham, with the size shown as 128 acres. 1873D names Frederick William Baugham (though there are spelling variations around Baugham / Baughen, and I may have settled on the wrong variant).

We know that Old Park was owned at this time by Emma Louisa, Lady Tulloch, because there is a report (Ref 10, EPG 8 May 1874) that she applied to the Land Improvement Co for a loan of £500 to fund improvements at Old Park. She lived at the main house. At around this time the tenant of the farm changed to William **Hooper**, who in 1876 was summonsed in connection with the use for haulage of an unfit horse (Ref 10, WT 7 Jan 1876). There is no entry in 1878D for Old Park, but 1878/79 names William Hooper.

1881C shows Edward **Henley**, road contractor and farmer, as the resident of the farm, which is at that time shown as 114 acres⁷⁰. William Hooper was listed in 1881C as landlord of the Lamb Inn (Lyme Road), and farmer of 79 acres. Then 1883D, 1889D and 1890D all list William Hooper as the farmer at Old Park, as do 1891C and 1893D. A press report in 1892 (Ref 10, 20 Nov 1892) tells how he lost a horse when an engine and thresher which it was pulling turned over, crushing it. William Hooper evidently died soon thereafter, because 1901C shows Ann Hooper as the farmer, and 1902D lists her as Mrs William Hooper. This is consistent with a press notice regarding timber for sale at Old Park placed by Messrs B&J Gage (Ref 10, TCWA 20 Sept 1899) which referred enquirers to John Chaffey of Garden Cottage rather than to William Hooper. Lady Tullock died in 1903, leaving a life interest in the estate to her sister.

1906D names James **Hill** as the farmer of Old Park, whereas Ref 11 shows that Thomas **Dyer** had taken over as the farmer by 1909. His presence is further confirmed by Ref 12 (which gives the size of the farm in 1910 as 127 acres), and then by 1910D and 1911C, which shows that he had been born c.1884 in Somerset at an illegible place. In 1911 Lady Tullock's sister sold the estate to Malcolm Couper **Gibb** Esq (and later JP) who took a direct and personal interest in the running of the farm.

Ref 11 shows George **Fowler** as farming at Old Park in 1913 and 1915, and 1914D lists him more specifically as the farm manager. By 1919D John **Hooper** (possibly a relative of William Hooper) was Mr Gibb's bailiff at Old Park, a position confirmed by 1923D and 1926D. By 1930D the bailiff was George **Gigg**, and he was still there in 1934 when he advertised for a cowman for Old Park Farm (Ref 10, TCWA 21 Feb 1934).

No farmer was listed at Old Park in 1935D, and in 1938 a sale of live and dead stock at Old Park Farm, including a herd of milking Devon cattle was advertised (Ref 10, WG 18 Feb 1938). It was stated that Malcolm Couper Gibb had let the farm. He died a month later, aged 77 (Ref 10, EPG 18 Mar 1838).

My understanding is that when the farm was let in 1938 the incoming tenant was Edwin George **Powell**, who then bought the farm (as confirmed by 1939D and by Ref 11, from 1939 onwards). He was there until at least the late 1950s, and by about 1961 I believe that the farm had been taken over by his sons Robert William Edwin and Stanley John Powell, and that they and/or their descendants remain at Old Park Farm, trading as R&S Powell.

⁷⁰ It was at this time that a William Hooper was the licensee of the 'Lamb Inn', and the farmer of 79 acres.

Chapter 7: Wyke, Trinity Hill and Great Trill

General comments on Wyke and Trinity Hill

Several of the census returns and directories on which I rely list farmers at unnamed properties in Wyke. I deal with these in this initial section. Some of these may or may not have referred to Highcroft and Tangletree Farms, which appear on more recent maps, but are never named in census or directory listings.

A map in Ref 3 (page 53) suggests that Wyke was one of the 'grange farms' associated with Newenham Abbey. This seems highly likely given its proximity, and the apparently ancient field patterns which are still clearly visible to the west of the hamlet of Wyke.

The Book of the Axe (Ref 1, page 588) tells us that much of the land at Wyke had been sold in relatively small parcels, which helps to explain the fluid nature of farm names and boundaries in this area. Some of these unspecified farms will have spread up Trinity Hill.

Some of the farmers listed below almost certainly farmed at the property now known as Higher Wyke Farm (see below) prior to 1900. In my considered opinion the most likely ones to have done so are John Norris and James Gill Loveridge.

1841C lists one farmer at Wyke in addition to those covered below under named farms: William **Willis**. He may well be the person of that name who, in 1838 (Ref 7), was farming 62 acres on an unnamed holding. Alternatively his surname may more properly be spelled Willey, which is how it is shown in 1842V. He was still at Wyke in 1851C, recorded as a dairyman. There were four other farmers listed at Wyke in 1851C: Robert **Gill**, a yeoman; John **Carter** (62 acres); William **Osmond** (80 acres); and John **Norris** (49 acres). John **Norris** was listed at Middle Wyke in 1857D, alongside John Carter at Wyke.

Of the farmers named above only John Norris was listed in 1861C, still with 37 acres at Middle Wyke, and he was named again in 1866D and 1870D, and was listed at Wyke House in 1871C. Robert **Lane** was also farming 7 acres at Wyke House Villa in 1871C. John Norris was again listed in 1873D.

Abraham **Gribble** was listed as a farmer at Wyke in 1866D, and as a cottager in 1870D, and again as a farmer in 1873D, 1878/79D and 1883D.

In 1878D James Gill **Loveridge** was listed as a farmer at Middle Wyke, and in 1878/79D at Wyke Farm (which I believe to be a different farm from the one listed and reported on below, and quite probably Higher Wyke Farm). He was shown in 1881C to be farming 46 acres, and was described at that time as a sanitary inspector and farmer⁷¹. He was still there in 1883D, 1889D, 1890D and 1893D. He died at what was described as Wyke Farm in 1894.

Frank **Farmer** was running 45 acres at Wyke in 1881C, and was still at Wyke in 1891C. In 1889D, 1890D, 1893D and 1902D Mark **Sanger** was listed as a farmer at Wyke, followed in 1901C by George Sanger. In 1906D Thomas **Slade** was listed at Wyke.

The only farmers named in Ref 12 in connection with land at Wyke who are not dealt with below under specific farm names are George Sanger (2 acres) and Mr **Hacon**, who had recently built Wykeleigh House, and which had 42 acres attached. It is possible that this may have subsequently formed the basis of Annings Farm (see below), but this is pure speculation.

In 1919D Francis Charles **Travers** was at an unnamed farm at Wyke. 1935D lists Burgess E **Leonard** at an unnamed farm at Wyke, and 1939D lists Harry **Rosewell** at Grove Lea Farm, a property to which I have seen no other reference.

I have only seen two references to a plot of land at Wyke called Welches Ground. The first, Ref 10, TCWA 20 Sept 1899 was in connection with the sale of timber, at which time the plot size was reported as 6 acres. In 1910, Ref 10 shows that it was owned by Heal & Sons, a firm of timber merchants based in Axminster, with its size confirmed as 6 acres.

⁷¹ Before he arrived in Axminster he had farmed at Farway, but in 1871 he had got into financial difficulties and had come to an arrangement with his creditors, as can be seen from the on-line London Gazette of 1 Dec 1871.

Unity and the various Jackleigh farms (other than Little Jackleigh)

The farmhouse and buildings of Unity House are shown on early maps of Axminster (e.g. in 1838: see Ref 7) on the opposite side of Wyke Lane to the entrance to Wyke Farm. After these buildings were demolished, the land became Jackleigh Farm, associated with Jackleigh House a short distance to the north.

In 1838 (Ref 7) Unity Farm was the second largest in Axminster parish (after Great Trill), with 202 acres. It was farmed by Francis **Harvey**. This is confirmed by 1841C, 1850D and 1851C, though by then the farm was slightly larger, at 210 acres. Francis Harvey is again listed at Unity in 1856D and 1857D.

1861C names James **Roberts** as the farmer at Unity. 1866D and 1870D both name Joseph Roberts. 1871C then names William Roberts as the farmer of 200 acres at Jackleigh House (while 1873D and 1878D both link him to Unity Farm, as does Ref 10, WT 24 Jan 1873). There is a press report (Ref 10, EPG 10 Oct 1878) of a ploughing match organised by Axminster Agricultural Society at Boughtons, a field forming part of Jackleigh Farm, by courtesy of William Roberts, and 1878/79D names him as farming at Jackleigh House. 1881C does the same, but shows that he was only farming 115 acres by then.

1883D reverts to referring to Unity Farm, and names Henry **Broom** as the farmer. A press report (Ref 10, TCWA 3 Mar 1886) records the death, at Jackleigh Farm, Axminster of Mrs **White** (by implication, though not explicitly, the farmer's wife). 1889D has no reference to either Unity or Jackleigh.

1890D lists Joseph **Brewer** as the farmer at Jackleigh House, but 1891C only lists him in connection with an unnamed farm in Wyke. However, a press report that same year (Ref 10, EPG 7 Mar 1891) connects him to Jackleigh, where there was a rick fire. 1893D lists Caleb **Osborne** as the farmer at Jackleigh, and 2 years later (Ref 10, EPG 26 Apr 1895) he was offering mares for sale from Jackleigh.

By 1899 John **Salter** was advertising (Ref 10, TCWA 2 Aug 1899) for a farm worker to assist with the milking at Jackleigh, and his presence is confirmed by 1901C and 1902D. In 1903 (Ref 10, WG 30 Jan 1903) timber from Jackleigh was being advertised for sale, the same year (Ref 10, WG 3 Apr 1903) John Salter of Jackleigh was offering to let 75 acres of grass at Annings Farm, Wyke Green (see below). Then, 2 years later (Ref 10, TCWA 23 Aug 1905), Messrs B&J Gage were advertising a sale of live and dead stock for John Salter, who was about to quit the farm. Less than 6 months later (Ref 10, WT 23 Jan 1906) he was buried at Axminster. 1906D and 1910D both list Walter William **Rendell** as the farmer at Jackleigh Farm, and Ref 12 gives the size of the farm in 1910 as 115 acres.

1911C then shows two farmers at Jackleigh: Alfred Thomas **Ford** (born c.1879 at Sedghill, Wiltshire) and George Nathan **Saunders** (born c.1871 at Barton St David, Somerset). George Nathan Saunders had been living at an unidentified farm at Wyke (presumably Jackleigh) for at least 2 years by then (Ref 11, 1909).

A few months later Jackleigh was one of several farms throughout the county to be bought by Devon County Council as part of their estate of smallholdings (Ref 10, NDJ 28 Sept 1911). They evidently bought it at auction, and the sales particulars⁷² produced by Messrs B&J Gage prior to the auction at the George, Axminster on 20 July 1911 confirm that Thomas Ford was farming Jackleigh Farm itself (described as 98 acres, and generating a rental value of £199-17s-6d) at that time, as well as two further fields totalling just over 11 acres (and generating a rent of £20-2s-6d a year). The main farm comprised land on both sides of Wyke Lane running right up to the farmstead of Higher Wyke Farm, but omitted one triangular 'orphan field' on the west of Wyke Lane which belonged to Higher Wyke. Jackleigh Farm also extended across to (and slightly beyond) Abbey Gate Lane. This in the lot which the County Council was reported to have bought, for £3,547. The two additional fields occupied by Thomas Ford were to the south of Abbey Gate Lane, opposite the point where the footpath now heads northwards from the lane.

The following year Devon County Council advertised for tenants for two smallholdings created from Jackleigh Farm (Ref 10, WT 13 Aug 1912): one of 46 acres at a rent of £105 and the second of 51 acres at £114 a year. Whereas George Nathan Saunders remained at Jackleigh until at least 1939D, by 1914D William Loder **Moore** had replaced Alfred Thomas Ford. He then became

⁷² DHC ref 547B/P/631.

embroiled in a dispute with the County Council (Ref 10, WT 12 Jan 1917), and the arbitration and court judgement found in favour of the Council. By 1919D he had been replaced as tenant by Mark **Hine** (who was thill there in 1923D), and then Samuel James **Webb** (1926D to at least 1939D).

Two years after the war (Ref 10, EPG 22 Aug 1947) Messrs TRG Lawrence & Son held a sale of live and dead stock on behalf of George Nathan Saunders. I understand that Samuel James Webb later moved to Dulcis Farm, Kilmington.

This helps to explain how and why the modern OS map shows two distinct but immediately adjacent farms: Higher Jackleigh Farm and Great Jackleigh Farm. The current farm buildings occupy the site shown as Higher Jackleigh, and the farm is run by DG&GM **Symes** & Son.

Woodbury Dairy

The 1776/78 map shows a property called Woodberry located where Woodbury Farm now is. It apparently belonged to the Petre Estate, though the land to its south did not.

In 1831 John **Zealley** left Woodbury Farm, and an auction of live and dead stock was held on his behalf by Mr Chaffey (Ref 10, 26 Sept 1831). 1842V then names Samuel **Hoare** in connection with both Wyke Green and Woodbury (and we know that he was resident at Wyke Farm: see below). The next reference that I have found to a farm on Woodbury Lane is 1851C, which records Thomas **Larcombe**, a dairyman as resident there.

By 1861C Thomas **Tucker**, described as a 'dairy renter' had taken over⁷³, and he is consistently recorded in 1871C and 1881C as a dairyman. However, all of the directories which list dairymen between 1866D and 1883D refer to William rather than Thomas Tucker. It is possible that William Tucker was the one who ran the business, but Thomas (possibly his son) actually lived on Woodbury Lane.

1889D, 1890D, 1891C and 1893D all list William **Smith**, a farmer rather than a dairyman, at Woodbury Farm. In 1900 Messrs B&J Gage offered Woodbury Farm for sale at auction at the George, Axminster (Ref 10, TCWA 8 Aug 1900). The announcement named T W **Loveridge** as the occupier of Woodbury Farm (described as 16 acres), as well as of two other parcels of land to be sold at the same time: Stone Hill Cross (9 acres of arable land, near Jackleigh) and Woodcock Close (2 acres near Shoals). He was Thomas William Loveridge, and he had been born at Farway.

In 1901C no farmer is named at Woodbury Farm, though Woodbury Farm cottage was occupied by a farm labourer. In 1902D and 1906D Henry (Harry) **Chapple** was the farmer.

By 1910 (and probably a few years before that: see below) Ref 11 shows that Ernest Henry **Trott** (born c.1886 at Shute) was the farmer at Woodbury Farm, and Ref 12 gives the size of the farm in 1910 as just under 26 acres. He was then recorded there by 1911C and in all subsequent directories up to and including 1939D. A press report on the death of his mother-in-law, Mrs Louisa Swain (Ref 10, EPG 29 Mar 1945), suggests that Ernest Henry Trott had actually been at Woodbury Farm for 40 years by then, and that Mrs Swain had lived with him and her daughter all that time. He died in late 1969 and is buried at Axminster, though I do not know how long he remained at Woodbury Farm.

I believe that Edwin George **Powell** moved to Woodbury Farm in the late 1950s or early 1960s when his sons took over at Old Park⁷⁴. In 1984 a planning application affecting Woodbury Farm was lodged by Philip J Powell as the owner of the farm, and he was still the owner when a further Application was lodged in 2002.

In 2008 Mike Corbin of MD&J **Corbin**, bought the farm and established a farm machinery business there, plus Woodbury Alpacas.

Chattan and King's Farm

Chattan Farm and King's Farm are one and the same entity, and I have seen evidence⁷⁵ to show that the land that belongs to King's Farm lies mainly to the north west of the by-pass, where it abuts the grounds of Chattan. Some even extends across Woodbury Lane and into the steeply sloping fields which lie to the east of Woodbury Way. Prior to 1963 the farm included the land now

⁷³ In 1861C Samuel Harvey, described as a widowed 35-year-old farmer was a boarder in the house.

⁷⁴ Source: Dave Scott Mear, personal communication, 2017.

⁷⁵ Source: Attachments to a 1997 planning application which can be found on the EDDC planning website.

occupied by Brunenburg Way and Woodbury Way. King's Farm would be one of the Axminster farms which was most severely affected by the construction of the by-pass.

In 1901C Paul **Draper** was recorded as a farmer living at King's Cottage, but from about 1902 to 1940 Harry Seymour **Dare** was the tenant farmer at Chattan (or King's) Farm⁷⁶. Ref 12 attributes 44 acres of land to Mrs Stafford of Chattan Hall (which I take to be Chattan Hall Farm), with Mr Dare directly responsible for the tax on a further 16 acres. 1911C records him as having been born c.1866 at Bridport, Dorset. When he died on 22 December 1941 aged 75 (Ref 10, EPG 2 Jan 1942), he was described as having farmed at Chattan Farm for almost 40 years, confirming that he arrived in the very early years of the century.

However, he had retired about 2 years before he died, and in his later years had been helped by his son-in-law F W **Youngs** (Ref 10, WMN 26 Oct 1938). Very early in the war when King's Farm was offered to be let (Ref 10, EE 4 Nov 1939), it was described as a dairy farm of 69 acres, to be vacated by Lady Day 1940.

The new farmer was Sidney **Franks**, who had just married Mary Trott of Woodbury Farm (Ref 10, EPG 29 Mar 1940). He was still there in 1950, when he was reported (Ref 10, EPG 3 Nov 1950) to have received a good price for some heifers that he had sold. My understanding is that he remained at King's Farm until 1963, when the National Archives website shows⁷⁷ that the farm was again offered for sale on 17 September of that year. This is confirmed by the history of the Chattan Estate cited above, which also states that King's Farm was then farmed for a while by E G (probably Edwin George) **Powell**, quite probably in association with Old Park Farm.

King's Farm has for some years been owned and run by David J **Churchill**. In 1997 the EDDC planning website shows that an application was submitted which again describes the farm as 69 acres.

Higher and Lower Wyke Farms

Although Higher and Lower Wyke Farms are now indicated as having been separate entities, no records from census returns and directories refer to Lower Wyke Farm, and I believe that the distinction between the two may only have arisen during the second half of the 20th century (possibly after Higher Wyke ceased operation as a commercial farm, which probably coincided with the building of the by-pass).

Furthermore, because of the rather generalised way in which some of the farms at Wyke are referred to in census returns and directories, it is hard to be sure who was actually at Higher Wyke during the 19th century. Under the heading 'Unspecified farms at Wyke Green' below I deal with all those farmers whose farms I have been unable to identify clearly. I speculate there that John Norris and James Gill Loveridge may well have farmed at Higher Wyke, but I am far from sure on this point.

The first reasonably clear references that I have found to Higher Wyke Farm are in 1901C, at which time Henry **Chapple** and Luke **Hooper** were both listed, though Ref 11 shows that Luke Hooper was farming an unspecified farm at Wyke as early as 1896. A valuation report (Ref 9) in May 1901 confirms that Luke Hooper was the tenant of 93 acres at Wyke (yet another generalised reference) at what was adjudged to be the excessive rent of £85 a year. The report recommended reducing the rent to £75 and investing money in buildings, fences, gates etc to bring the farm back up to a decent standard.

In the case of Henry Chapple, I believe that he was very probably the same person who took over at Woodbury Dairy (see above) very soon thereafter, and later moved to Wyke Farm (see below). We also know that he had left Higher Wyke before 1910. The evidence for this comes from a press notice at the end of that year (Ref 10, WT 2 Dec 1910) announcing the forthcoming sale at auction (by Messrs R&C Snell, at the George on 5 January 1911) of the freehold farm of Higher Wyke, with Thomas **Rough** named as the sitting tenant. The sales particulars⁷⁸ show that at that time the farm comprised 102 acres in three distinct parts: the farmstead itself and land running up the

⁷⁶ Source: 'The Chattan Estate, Axminster, Devon and the families associated with it' by Watson H Dyson, March 1973 (available as a bound typescript in Axminster library), as confirmed by multiple directory entries. This source also tells us that the Chattan Estate bought the land on the other side of Woodbury Lane in 1921 from Henry Tucker Patterson, an Axminster cattle dealer and farmer based at Willhays Farm.

⁷⁷ The sales details are held in the English Heritage archives, ref SB00592.

⁷⁸ DHC ref 1037M/E/9/1.

hillside from it; a single field on the west side of Wyke Lane with two cottages occupied by T Loud and Mr Sanders; and a group of fields on the upper slopes of Trinity Hill accessible from the western end of Trinity Hill Road itself. It was described as a dairy, sheep and rearing farm, and the annual rent was £110. Thomas Rough was confirmed as the farmer by 1911C, which shows that he had been born c.1874 at Winkleigh. This is all consistent in most regards with the information provided by Ref 12, which shows Thomas Rough as the taxpayer at Wyke Farm in 1910, with the size given as just over 104 acres at that time.

Thomas Rough is then shown consistently at Higher Wyke Farm in every directory from 1914D to 1939D. A photograph showing him can be found in Ref 5 (page 81), though this links him (incorrectly) to Wyke Farm (see below) rather than Higher Wyke. When his wife died (Ref 10, WT 1 Jan 1943) the report stated that she had lived at Wyke Farm (rather than Higher Wyke) for 35 years, suggesting that Thomas Rough had arrived there in about 1907.

By 1945 it appears that E **Taylor** was the farmer at Higher Wyke (Ref 10, EPG 30 Nov 1945 offers evidence of miscellaneous items being offered for sale over his name; while EPG 23 Dec 1948 offers geese for sale). I have not managed to establish how long he was there, but in 1971 Frank Henry **Chapple** of Higher Wyke Farm (the eldest son of Cecil Henry Chapple of Wyke Farm: see below) made an application to abstract water⁷⁹ for use at Rose Farm, Wyke, suggesting that the two farms were being run as a single unit. The Chapple family was still at Higher Wyke when the archaeological investigations were made in preparation for the construction of Axminster by-pass in 1993, and in 1995 a planning application was lodged by FH Chapple Ltd. After the by-pass was built, part of the farmstead was developed as industrial units, and this is the part which is now described as Lower Wyke Farm. The industrial tenants include Mobile Marine Engineering Ltd.

Wyke Farm

In 1838 (Ref 7) Wyke Farm was 104 acres, and being farmed by Samuel **Hoare**. He (described in 1841C as a yeoman) remained at Wyke Farm, albeit on a declining scale (95 acres in 1851C and 80 in 1861C). 1866D shows the farmer to have changed to John Hoare, and 1871C shows the size back up to 100 acres. A press report (Ref 10, WT 22 Aug 1877) tells us that John Hoare of Wyke Farm had to cut into a rick of hay which was "... *on the point of ignition*" in order to avoid a serious fire. By 1881C the size of Wyke Farm had risen further to 150 acres. John Hoare was still there in 1901C and 1902D, though he had evidently let some of the land to a tenant, because a valuation report (Ref 9) undertaken in January 1901 names what looks like T W **Loveridge** as the outgoing tenant, and Henry John **Chapple** as his successor. (This is the same combination of incoming / outgoing tenants as at Woodbury Dairy, at very much the same time.)

In 1904 Henry John Chapple lost 20 turkeys to foxes at Wyke Farm (Ref 10, WT 15 July 1904), and he is confirmed as farming at Wyke by Ref 12, 1910D and 1911C. In 1910 Ref 12 ties him to 46 acres of land named in that document as 'Little Wyke', which would be consistent with Wyke Farm having been broken up by then.

The census return shows that Henry John Chapple had been born c.1861 at Membury. He was again recorded at Wyke in 1914D, but he died in 1917, and in both 1919D and 1923D the farmer was his widow, Lydia Joanna Chapple. We know from a newspaper report (Ref 10, WT 26 Mar 1918) that shortly after her husband's death she had applied for her son, Cecil Henry Chapple, to be granted an exemption from serving in World War I, given that he was assisting her on the farm as a carter and cowman, while her other son Andrew George Cridge Chapple was serving in the Devon Regiment (Ref 10, EPG 13 Apr 1917).

In 1924 (Ref 11) and then from 1926D to 1939D the farmer at Wyke Farm was consistently listed as Cecil Henry Chapple. During World War II (Ref 10, EPG 6 Oct 1944) he and his staff were given an award in recognition of the fact that they had increased their winter milk output by 10% over the equivalent figure in 1943. I believe that the size of Wyke Farm increased over the years, and that it was subsequently divided into at least three smaller farms which were taken on by his sons. Cecil Henry Chapple died in 1978 and is buried at Axminster.

The farmhouse and buildings have now been separated from the farmland, with some of the buildings having been converted for residential use, and used as the base for a bed-and-breakfast business (as can be seen from the website wykefarmdevon.co.uk).

⁷⁹ Source: On-line London Gazette, 1971.

Oaklands and Hillcrest

There are no references in either the censuses or in pre-1940 trade directories or on the 1938 map to Oaklands or Hillcrest Farms. However, 1866D shows Walter **Clarke** farming at Trinity Hill, and 1871C shows Thomas **Gribble** living at Trinity Hill Cottage and farming 7 acres. By 1881C his holding had shrunk to 4½ acres. In 1911C J **Hooper** (born c.1863 at Axminster) was occupying an unnamed small farm on Trinity Hill.

Oaklands is a smallholding, and currently the home base of ABBA Cleansing Ltd.

I believe that Hill Crest Farm was created from land that had previously formed part of Wyke Farm (see above). It has been owned and run by JR **Chapple** & Son since at least 1987, Jack Ralph Chapple being one of the sons of Cecil Henry Chapple of Wyke Farm. A planning application in that year (accessible via the EDDC planning website) shows that it was at that time an 80-acre dairy farm occupying most of the farmland between the woods above Wyke and the A35.

Annings and Rose Farms

By the early 20th century we start to find references to two named farms at Wyke Green: Annings and Rose Farms. No doubt the land which created them had previously been farmed by some of the individuals identified in the previous block of text.

In 1903 (Ref 10, WG 3 Apr 1903) Messrs Roberts, Son & Tory advertised 75 acres of grass at Annings Farm for sale. Enquirers wishing to view the land were directed to contact John Salter of Jackleigh Farm, suggesting (but by no means proving) that he was also farming Annings at that time. Then in 1907 (Ref 10, EPG 23 Feb 1907) Messrs B&J Gage announced a sale of live and dead stock on behalf of James **Parfitt** of Annings Farm, who was quitting (see also Ref 11, 1906).

In 1911C Charles Paver **Carter** (born c.1854 at Plymouth) was farming Annings Farm. By 1919D he had given way to Thomas **Griffin**. Thomas Griffin was still at Annings Farm in 1930D, being assisted by his son Frederick Herbert Griffin. The report of Frederick Herbert Griffin's funeral (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1943) tells us that Thomas Griffin retired in 1932, at which point his son moved to Abbey Gate Farm (see Chapter 8 below).

A posting on a family history website states that in 1950, Walter Tedbury, a retired farmer, died at Anning's Farm, believed to be the home of his son Edward **Tedbury**. I am assuming that he was the farmer at that time, though this is not confirmed: he could have been living in a tied cottage.

In the 1970s and early 1980s Annings Farm was owned and run by Ivor Allan **Clist**. Submissions made in connection with a 1984 planning application (see the EDDC planning website for details) show that at that time the farm comprised about 50 acres, mainly to the south of Wyke, but including some fields on the northern side of the lane. By that time it had evidently become uneconomic as a dairy farm, and was split into at least two parcels. The Clist family retained the land to the north, with the farm buildings and main group of fields being sold.

The sales particulars produced when Jackleigh Farm was offered for sale in 1911 (see above for details) also covered a smallholding and cottage at Wyke which can be identified from the map as comprising Rose Farm. At that time it was just over 17 acres, and occupied by Thomas **Wheadon** at a yearly rent of £45. I suspect that he was the same person as was named in 1919D as John Thomas Wheadon (born c.1881 at Uplyme) at an unnamed Wyke farm, though insurance information that I have seen names the farm that he ran as Little Wyke, and shows that he left for a farm at Alston in 1913. He later moved to Undercleave Farm, Smallridge (see Chapter 3 above).

1923D shows Mrs Ruth **Beviss** (formerly of Coles's Farm: see Chapter 6 above) at Wyke, and 1926D shows that she was running Rose Farm. She was still there until at least 1939D. In 1971 Frank Henry **Chapple** of Higher Wyke Farm applied for permission to abstract water⁸⁰ for use at Rose Farm, suggesting that the two farms were being managed as a unit. In 1985 John Picton **Bostock** was granted planning permission to operate a waste management business (Axe Skip Hire Ltd) from Rose Farm: I do not know whether or not he had previously farmed the land, which is now primarily in equestrian use.

⁸⁰ Source: On-line London Gazette, 1971.

Great Trill

Great Trill has been in existence for a very long time. A photograph of Great Trill House can be found in Ref 5 (page 68), while a map in Ref 3 (page 53) suggests that Trill was one of the 'grange farms' associated with Newenham Abbey.

The manor belonged to the Drake family of Ashe House, Musbury until 1782 (Ref 1, page 587), when it was bought by Rev George Tucker, and then John Gregson of London, who also owned Little Trill (in Musbury parish). In 1792, while still owned by George Tucker, Trill House (which I take to refer to Great Trill) was apparently⁸¹ occupied by William **Elstone**.

An apprenticeship record⁸² shows that in 1817 David **Harris** was living and working there, though it is not stated whether he was farming the land or working on the estate as, for example, a blacksmith or thatcher.

By 1838 (Ref 7) Great Trill was occupied by Joseph **Gage**, who was farming 257 acres: comfortably the largest farm in the parish at that time, and comparable to its present size. He is described in 1841C as a yeoman. In fact I understand⁸³ that Joseph had been farming at Great Trill since at least 1832⁸⁴, having previously farmed at Bulmoor, in the far north of Axmouth parish, not far from Trill. A memorial tablet in Axminster Church shows that Joseph died on 30 June 1846, aged 58. In 1851C his widow, Ann Gage, was the farmer at Great Trill, with about 300 acres. She died on 31 January 1855, aged 65, and is memorialised by the same tablet as Joseph. 1856D and 1857D both name John Gage as the farmer at Great Trill.

In 1860 Great Trill was sold to Messrs W&J Sparkes of Crewkerne (Ref 1, page 587) (and Little Trill was sold separately). John Gage evidently remained as the tenant, because 1861C shows him there and farming 350 acres. 1866D confirms this. John Gage died on 19 October 1868 aged 46, and is buried in what was then the new cemetery, on Chard Road.

By 1869 John **Salter** was the farmer at Great Trill (Ref 11). This is confirmed by 1870D and 1871C, with the latter also showing John **Bussell** as a dairyman. This is the first time that the dairy is clearly identified as a separate venture: a position that persisted for many years. 1873D again shows John Salter as the farmer, and John Bussell as the dairyman. 1878D and 1878/79D both confirm John Salter's continued tenure, but neither names a dairyman.

1881C lists John **White** as the farm bailiff, responsible for 356 acres, and John **Rendell** as the dairyman. Both names are confirmed by 1883D, which also specifies that John White was working for Messrs Sparkes.

1889D lists Thomas **Loveridge** as Messrs Sparkes' bailiff, and John Rendell as the dairyman. 1890D shows that Thomas Loveridge's presence was short-lived: Frank **Sparkes** (presumably from the owning family) was at that time listed as the farmer. However, this too was evidently a short-term solution, because 1891C shows William **Welch** as the new farm bailiff, and Elizabeth **Rendell**, a widow, as running the dairy.

1893D shows that Francis John Sparkes was the resident of the main house, but that Thomas Welch was his bailiff. James **Snell** was at that time the dairyman (and may be the person of that name who was also farming at Weycroft).

By 1900, when a valuation report (Ref 9) on Great Trill and neighbouring properties in Musbury and adjacent parishes was produced for the Sparkes family in connection with the impacts of the Axminster-to-Lyme railway, Eli **Collier** was the farmer at Great Trill (as well as at Park and Newhills Farms, both of which were owned by the Sparkes family: he had been at Park since at least 1893D). In 1901C his presence at Great Trill is confirmed, while 1902D and 1906D both refer to him in connection with Park as well as Great Trill. An undated description of Great Trill made in connection with an insurance policy describes the farm as producing "... *crops, fruit, wool, cheese, cider, manures and food for cattle*".

In fact, there were two Eli Colliers (father and son). Eli Collier senior had been born c.1848 at Musbury, and his son had also been born there (according to 1911C) in c.1882. Eli Collier senior

⁸¹ Source: Sun Fire Office records, ref MS/11936/385/599752 referred to on the National Archives website.

⁸² DHC ref 406-A-2.

⁸³ Source: Christopher Moran, personal communication, 2016.

⁸⁴ Source: Axminster baptismal register, in which he was described as farming at Great Trill when his daughter, Rebecca, was baptised in 1832.

left Great Trill in 1909, and moved to Shapwick. The notice announcing the forthcoming sale of live and deadstock (Ref 10, WT 19 Feb 1909) refers to "... 75 well-bred Devon cattle comprising dairy cows, heifers, steers, barreners and yearlings, 86 Hampshire Down sheep, 12 cart and cross-bred horses and colts, pigs, poultry, potatoes, agricultural implements, dairy goods, household furniture and effects". The auction, to be run by Messrs R&C Snell, was to be held on 4 March 1909.

Between them Ref 12 and 1910D show that he was succeeded at both Great Trill and Park by Eli Collier junior. Ref 12 gives the size of Great Trill in 1910 as almost 257 acres, with Eli Collier junior responsible for a total of almost 285 acres in Axminster parish. The other parcels attributed to him at that time were Great Trill coppice (over 18 acres), land on Triunity Hill (5 acres), and unspecified land at Wyke (4 acres). His presence at Great Trill is confirmed by 1911C and 1914D. 1911C also shows that by then Frederick **Bowditch** (born c.1882 at Winfrith, Dorset) was running the dairy.

A valuation report (Ref 9) produced in 1916 names Eli Collier as the outgoing tenant. The landlords were named as Edward Jarman Blake and Miss Frances Jane Sparkes. 1919D lists William John **Major** as the farmer at Great Trill, as do all subsequent directories up to and including 1939D. He had come to Great Trill from Drimpton, and he died the following year (1940), aged 77. A sale of live and dead stock was held at Great Trill by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd (Ref 10, EPG 18 Oct 1940).

So far as I can see, his son-in-law, Gilbert Francis **Morris**, took over at Great Trill, and he was stated to be living there in 1943 (Ref 10, EPG 10 Sept 1943) when his own daughter was married. He died in 1968 and is buried at Axminster, but I do not know whether (or how long) he remained at Great Trill.

By at least the 1970s, and up until about 1990, the farm was run by John and George **Rutter**, whose main farm was the neighbouring Ashe Farm (in Musbury parish)⁸⁵. They had farmed at Ashe Farm since at least the late 1950s⁸⁶, and had a large dairy herd. The addition of Great Trill gave them a significant acreage in total. The EDDC Planning website shows that by the early-mid 1990s Great Trill belonged to Mr & Mrs R E Thompson, but I do not believe that they ran the farm.

The trillfarm.co.uk website shows that the current owners, the **Fraser** family, bought the farm in 2008, and that it is now a 300-acre mixed organic farm (mainly geared to beef and sheep production), which seeks to attract visitors on a regular basis. There is a map of the farm on the website.

⁸⁵ Source: Lisle Burrough, personal communication, 2015.

⁸⁶ Source: Brian Lambourne, personal communication, 2016.

Chapter 8: Down the Axe Valley and along the Musbury Road

Sisterhood and St Leonards

Sisterhood (spelled Sisterwood) can be seen on the 1765 map, and the 1776/78 map shows that at that time it belonged to Isaac Hand (though he was probably the landlord rather than the farmer).

Early apprenticeship records show that Samuel **Osbourne** was farming Sisterhood Farm in 1818. Sisterhood and St Leonards were then jointly occupied by Elizabeth **Bradford** in 1838 (Ref 7), and together amounted to 140 acres. This is confirmed by 1841C. She was the widow of John Bradford, who died aged 71 on 22 June 1835 (Ref 1, page 666 et seq), described as 'of Sisterhood'. Unfortunately the on-line London Gazette shows that in 1848, described as a widow and resident at Sisterhood, she was declared bankrupt. Elizabeth Bradford died on 13 March 1861 aged 71, and is memorialised in Axminster church (Ref 1, page 666 et seq) along with her husband and two of their daughters.

In 1851C Sisterhood was occupied by a farm labourer (and evidently being farmed by someone else living on another farm). In 1856D and 1857D Joseph **Higgins** was named as the farmer. In 1861C Thomas **Matthews** was the farmer, with 135 acres. This is confirmed by 1866D and 1870D, and then by 1871C and 1873D.

Both 1878D and 1881C show Benjamin **Gage**, farmer and auctioneer, at Sisterhood. 1881C also shows Robert **Flood**, dairyman. Benjamin Gage's presence is confirmed by 1878/79D and 1883D⁸⁷. 1883D also lists Daniel Flood, dairyman.

1889D, 1890D, 1891C and 1893D all show James **Loveridge** as the farmer at Sisterhood (having moved there from Smallridge). 1889D shows that he was also a tax and rate assessor. 1890D also lists James **Tucker**, a dairyman, at Sisterhood. A news report (Ref 10, WT 19 June 1918, cited above in the context of Furzeleigh Farm: see Chapter 6) gives James Loveridge's tenure at Sisterhood as 1887 to 1897.

1901C and 1902D both list Robert **Spiller** as the farmer at Sisterhood, and the baptismal register for All Saints Church shows that in 1903 he and his wife Beatrice Annie had a child baptised there while living at Sisterhood. There is then no entry for Sisterhood in 1906D. 1910D and 1911C both name Charles Henry **Marley** (born c.1866 at Axminster) as the farmer at Sisterhood, and this is confirmed by Ref 12, which shows that in 1910 he was farming just under 88 acres⁸⁸.

1914D lists William Edgar **Diment** as the farmer at Sisterhood, and he is consistently named until 1926D. In 1927 he moved to Membury. Ref 11 (1928) and 1930D both show Frederick Hugh **Studley** farming at Sisterhood. Then 1935D and 1939D both show Thomas Bennett **Marsh** as the farmer, confirmed by Ref 11 (1940 and 1942).

I am unsure how long he stayed, but I understand that it was in about 1960 that Frank **Burrough** of Lower Abbey Farm bought Sisterhood from the Snell family. He bequeathed it to his daughter, who had married Jack **Hurford** of Tolcis (see Chapter 9). They moved to Sisterhood and continued to farm under the name J&JM Hurford. Jack Hurford died in 2009, and although his family remains at Sisterhood, the land is now farmed by Lisle Burrough of Lower Abbey. Jack Hurford's son Dean still farms some land above Tolcis.

Cloakham

There is a map in Ref 3 (page 53) which suggests that Cloakham was originally a 'grange farm' associated with Newenham Abbey. This is at least partly supported by Ref 2 (page 59).

In 1824 (Ref 6) Mrs **Alexander** was renting 32 acres at Cloakham. By 1838 (Ref 7) 62 acres associated with Cloakham were shown as being occupied by Ann **Alexander**, with a further 54 acres linked to Cloakham House itself, and occupied by William Knight **Frampton**. Ann Alexander was almost certainly the widow of James Alexander, the former owner of Cloakham, and she died in 1846 (Ref 1, pages 582 and 666). Most references to Cloakham, however, are to the house rather than to any direct farming activity.

⁸⁷ Mr B Gage's photograph, taken in 1905 selling cattle in the Square, appears in Ref 4 (page 58). When he died in 1915 he was described as 'of Sisterhood', even though he had not been farming there for some years.

⁸⁸ Ref 12 shows that in 1910 a further 44 acres of Sisterhood land was being farmed by George Morrish of Weycroft Mill (see Chapter 4).

Ref 10 only lists one parcel of land including the name Cloakham, namely 21 acres described as Cloakham Park. This land was attached to the house, with Father Brisson (the Catholic priest), named as the relevant taxpayer. No doubt the seasonal grazing was let a local farmer.

In later years, there was a farmstead (now inactive) built between Chard Road and the sports grounds which is named Cloakham Farm. This belonged to the **Snell** family when they lived at Cloakham, and later passed into the ownership of Axminster Carpets. It was here that Harry **Outfield**, the owner of Axminster Carpets, kept his flock of imported Drysdale sheep. It has planning permission for housing, and (as of April 2017) is on the brink of being demolished.

Willhays Farm

1841C shows John **Welch** farming at Willhays Farm. In 1838 (Ref 7) he had been farming an unnamed holding (presumably Willhays) of 82 acres. By 1851C Isaac **Edwards** was the farmer.

By 1856D Robert **Patterson**, whose family was associated with Willhays for many years, had arrived from Uplyme. He was a cattle dealer and farmer. There are several reports of livestock sales organised by him (e.g. Ref 10, WT 17 Dec 1866 when he sold 87 cattle and 70 sheep, using Messrs Dauncey & Son as auctioneer). He is frequently listed at Willhays thereafter, and in 1881C Willhays was shown as 20 acres, and Robert Patterson was living at Willhays Cottages, an adjacent house, while William **Isaac**, a farm bailiff, was also living on Willhays Lane. By 1889D and 1891C Robert Patterson was back living at Willhays Farm itself, described (in 1891C) as a retired farmer. In 1893D Robert was staying at Rosemount, Musbury Road with his son Henry Tucker Patterson, a cattle dealer like his father. An agreement dated November 1900 (Ref 9) shows that Henry Tucker Patterson was at that time working in partnership with Robert Snell (of R&C Snell). They jointly agreed to pay a fee of 3d per ewe per week to have 60 ewes kept on a farm at Colyton.

By 1901C Henry Tucker Patterson had moved to Willhays House, and 1911C shows him to have been born c.1858 at Axminster. Ref 12 shows that in 1910 he was the taxpayer responsible for 140 acres of land, split between 12 separate parcels. Several of these were individual fields close to Willhays, but the four largest, accounting for over 100 acres between them, were identified as Woodbury (just under 33 acres: see the next paragraph for further details), Prestaller (30 acres) Chilcotts (23 acres) and Gamberlake (almost 18 acres).

In 1916 (Ref 8) he was listed as the tenant of several fields and areas of parkland belonging to the Cloakham Estate, totalling about 20 acres, one of which he bought. He also owned some land to the north of Woodbury Lane⁸⁹.

He was then consistently listed at Willhays until 1930D (after which I have not found any further entries for Willhays Farm), and he died in 1934. One of the thatched cottages which belonged to the farm was hit by an incendiary bomb during World War II⁹⁰.

Town Dairies

The longest-running family business that I have identified which operated what I would describe as a town dairy (i.e. a dairying business with its centre of operations in the town rather than on a farm) was that of the Newbery family. By 1873D Abraham Skinner **Newbery** was listed as a cowkeeper on Silver Street. In 1877 (Ref 10, WT 20 Aug 1877) a hay rick belonging to him, and holding all of the hay from 20 acres at Lea Coombe Fields, caught fire. The whole rick was valued at £100 to £110, and the loss was estimate as one third. In 1878/79D he was living on South Street, where he remained until at least 1890D. 1906D shows that he had moved to West Street, and 1911C gives his address as West House as well as showing that he had been born c.1841 at Dalwood, and confirming that he remained a farmer and dairyman. By 1906D his son Charles was also a dairyman, on Lyme Street, as he was in 1914D. A photograph in Ref 5 (page 50) shows Charles Newbery and two of his sons at the family's stables on West Street.

Ref 12 shows that in 1910 Abraham Skinner Newbery was only the taxpayer on 11 acres of land (split between Hakes and Dunhams Mead. For more detail on Hakes Farm, see below). Charles

⁸⁹ We know this because 'The Chattan Estate, Axminster, Devon and the families associated with it' by Watson H Dyson, March 1973, which can be found in Axminster library, states that in 1921 Henry Tucker Patterson sold the land on which the bungalow now known as Little Acre was built, prompting Mrs Stafford of Chattan Hall to buy the rest of his fields there to prevent further building.

⁹⁰ Source: Mary Sturgeon (née Patterson), personal communication, 2015. The cottage is shown in a photograph in Ref 4 (page 79).

Newbery was the taxpayer on 16 acres of land, split between plots identified as Bellmans, Combe Fields and Purzebrook (see below).

Later, the family was also instrumental in setting up dairy farms for others to run on their behalf, supplying milk to them. See, for example, Hunthay Dairy (below) and Hunthay Farm (see Chapter 9).

Abraham Skinner Newbery was still listed as a dairyman on West Street in 1930D, though since the father of the family had died aged 88 in December 1928 (and is buried at Axminster, alongside his wife Martha, who died in 1932), I conclude that this was a reference to his son of the same name. Abraham Skinner Newbery junior was also a cattle dealer who had bought Castle Hill Farm in 1916 (see below). He was listed as a cattle dealer in 1919D and in 1926D, at which time he was living at Newenham House, on the corner of King Edward Road and Widepost Lane, opposite the modern entrance to the railway station, where he remained until at least 1939D, sometimes described as a farmer. Charles Newbery was a cattle dealer at Coombefield by 1926D, and Isaac Newbery was a dairyman on West Street in 1935D and 1939D.

Abraham Skinner Newbery junior won prizes for his milking Devon cattle at the Bath & West and Southern Counties Society Show when it was held at Torquay (Ref 10, EPG 30 May 1930). He was at one time President of the Devon Cattle Breeders Society, and of the Devon Agricultural Society, who named a stand on the Devon County Showground after him.

1930D also lists **Salter & Stokes** as dairymen, with a depot on South Street. Their business, which involved supplying farm produce to the London markets, had started in Colyton in the 1870s, and expanded in 1901 when they established a butter factory at Chard Junction (Ref 10, WG 5 July 1901). By 1922, if not before, this factory was operating under the name 'Yonder Hill Creamery' (Ref 10, WMN 2 Jan 1922). In fact 1930 was the year when that factory was taken over by Wiltshire United Dairies⁹¹, who in 1936 built what was described at the time (Ref 10, WMN 10 Feb 1936) as "... *the biggest butter works in the country*" on the Chard Junction site. The operating name changed over the years, to United Dairy Group, Cow & Gate, Unigate and Dairy Crest. An advertised property auction (Ref 10, EPG 23 Oct 1925) shows that Salter & Stokes had also operated a dairy collection point and butter factory on Gammons Hill, Kilmington (just outside Axminster parish) for some time. Photographs of those premises from 1908 can be seen on pages 54 and 55 of Ref 5, at which time they were being run by the Sanders family.

Castle Hill

In 1866D Mrs Tryphena **Parrett** had a dairy at an unspecified place on Membury Road. In 1870D she was listed under Crabbswood, a property to which I have not seen any other reference.

In 1856D George **Harvey** was the licensee of the Green Dragon (which by then had moved to the foot of Castle Hill) as well as a farmer, and in 1866D and 1870D he was listed farming at Castle Hill. In 1873D Edward and George Harvey were jointly listed under Castle Hill, with Edward alone listed in 1878/79D. In 1881C he was farming 120 acres on 'Membury Road'. I believe this to have been Castle Hill Farm, where he was recorded in 1883D and consistently thereafter until 1893D. 1889D and other entries show that he was also a tax assessor and collector and I believe that he died in 1899, because a probate valuation (Ref 9) was carried out in December of that year, covering livestock, equipment and a row of six cottages and gardens. In 1891C Francis G Harvey was listed separately as a dairyman at Stony Bridge. There is then a brief reference in the press (Ref 10, EPG 7 Dec 1894) to E Harvey, a dairyman of Castle Hill Farm.

In 1878D James **Phillips** senior was a dairyman on Castle Hill, and 1881C lists him with 20 acres, living on Gas House Lane, aged c.70. He was then listed as a farmer in 1883D and 1889D.

By 1902D William Phillips had taken over at Castle Hill Farm, and he was still there in 1906D. Ref 4 (page 133) has a photograph of a prize bullock belonging to him. In 1910 Mrs William Phillips was the farmer, and 1911C confirms that Clara Phillips, a widow born c.1846 at Axminster, was running Castle Hill Farm. Ref 12 identifies 60 acres of land on which the Executors of William Phillips were responsible for tax in 1910: Millwater (48 acres) and various fields totalling 12 acres.

Clara Phillips was still at Castle Hill Farm in 1914D, which is the last entry that I have seen which refers explicitly to a farm of that name. However, Ref 8 shows that in 1916 a 13-acre smallholding

⁹¹ This date comes from the chaffcombe.com parish website.

on Castle Hill was still occupied by the Executors of William Phillips, along with 60 acres in scattered fields, mostly in the area of land to the east of the road running up to Four Cross.

Ref 8 also shows that the 13-acre smallholding itself, plus some fields amounting to about 25 acres, were bought by Abraham Skinner **Newbery** junior (see the section on 'Town Dairies' above). I understand that he lived there for some time, before moving to Newenham House. He was still running Castle Farm, and selling cattle from it, in 1951 (Ref 10, Sussex Agricultural Express 14 Dec 1951). In 1938 the farmhouse was occupied by Mrs G **Coombes** (Ref 10, 2 Dec 1938), who was reported to have been marooned briefly by floodwaters up to 7 feet deep that winter.

Blackhakes

The first reference that I have found to Blackhakes is in 1824 (Ref 6), at which time Lawrence **Wills** was the tenant of between 2 and 3 acres. I do not know whether he was farming, or just working the clay pits there. By 1838 (Ref 7) William **Loud** was living at Blackhakes Cottage, farming 17 acres. Several members of the Loud family were butchers in Axminster at various times. Based on the small acreage, and a reference to his occupation as a brickmaker and farmer, I suspect that by 1851C the land had been taken over by Aaron Dunster **Curzon**, who was listed as farming 13 acres at Retreet Cottage, near Stony Bridge.

In 1866D John **Genge** was recorded as farming at Blackhayes. In 1871C he was shown with 14 acres at Black Axe, and in 1873D he was at Blackhayes.

By 1878 Job **Membury** was farming Blackhakes, having been listed as a cottager at a brickyard in 1870D, and as a farmer in a place described as brick kiln in both 1873D and 1878/79D. (He had also been a dairyman at Greatwood in 1866D.)

In 1881C and 1883D the farmer was James Walter **Dare**, with 16 acres in 1881C. He was there again in 1891C and 1893D, with the farm's name increasingly frequently given as Blackhakes from 1873D onwards (with one mention of brick kiln in 1890D).

In 1901C, 1911C and in intervening directories John **Bull**, a cattle dealer born c.1841 at Colyton, was farming at Blackhakes, which Ref 12 identifies as comprising 19 acres in 1910⁹². He was there consistently until 1914D, but in 1916 Ref 8 lists the Executors of John Bull as renting 13 acres at Blackhakes itself at an annual cost of £56, plus a couple more fields amounting to about 5 acres. It also shows that his widow, Mrs Emma Maria Bull, bought one of those very small fields. In 1918 she was fined £10 for selling adulterated (watered-down) milk to "... *the Poor-law institution*" (i.e. the workhouse) (Ref 10, WT 24 Apr 1918). She is then shown as the farmer at Blackhakes from 1919D until 1930D, and having sold the farm in July 1931 (Ref 10, WG 24 July 1931), described as 19 acres, to be vacated by Christmas, she died on Christmas Eve that same year (Ref 10, EPG 31 Dec 1931). There is a photograph (Ref 5, page 99) of Richard Bull, described as of Blackhakes, taken in the early 1920s when he was working as a butcher for F Chick of Trinity Square. See also Ref 4 (page 60) for another photograph.

1935D and 1939D both list Charles F **Board** as the farmer at Blackhakes, and he remained there (as owner-occupier) until 1950 (Ref 10, EPG 4 Aug 1950), when the farm was offered for sale by Messrs GS Taylor & Co at the George Hotel, described as 20 acres of grass, and freehold. The land was bought by Mrs O Hoskins for £6,300 (Ref 10, EPG 8 Sept 1950), though I understand⁹³ that C H **Brown** farmed at Blackhakes for a short while in the 1950s. Since the early 1960s Roy George **Speed** has been the farmer at Blackhakes.

Hunthay Dairy

Whereas the other farms accessed from Hunthay Lane face the Yarty, Hunthay Dairy is clearly on the Axe side of the watershed.

I have not found any references to Hunthay Dairy in census returns or in most pre-1940 directories. However, in 1930D Herbert **Mear** was listed as the dairyman at Hunthay Dairy. He subsequently moved to Higher Uphay (see Chapter 3 above).

⁹² A further 1 acre plot at Blackhakes is attributed by Ref 12 to W J Gill, who had another acre at Millbrook and 11 at Prestaller.

⁹³ Source: Documents held at the Dorset History Centre, ref D/LRM/H2/5 and /7 which are referenced on the National Archives website.

My understanding⁹⁴ is that Hunthay Dairy had been established by Abraham Skinner Newbery (see above, under Town Dairies), probably in the late 1920s. After Herbert Mear left, I understand that the cows were milked first by George **Collier** and then by Jim **Hooper** as dairymen acting for Abraham Skinner Newbery junior.

In the late 1960s or early 1970s Clifford **Penhaligan** moved from Cornwall to Hunthay Dairy with his wife Jean and their daughters. He died in 1990, but it continued to be run under the name C&JM Penhaligan. Then, as can be seen from the EDDC planning website, in 1998 Mrs Penhaligan was granted permission to convert what were by then redundant farm buildings for residential / holiday use. The plans submitted at that time show that the land owned by the farm comprised a roughly oblong block occupying the northern third of the land bounded by The Trafalgar Way, Hunthay Lane and Four Cross Hill, plus one large flat field on the other side of the Four Cross Road, on the town side of what used to be known as Vineyard Lane (this field having subsequently been absorbed into Blachakes Farm). The total area then was roughly 55 acres.

Purzebrook, Hakes, Gamberlake and Horslears

Purzebrook House has been in existence since mediaeval times, and at one time had formal gardens in front (on the other side of Musbury Road) as well as land all around. Purzebrook is not specifically identified in 1838 (Ref 7), but in 1841C John **Denham** is listed as the farmer there.

In 1875 Benjamin Gage advertised (Ref 10, WT 13 Aug 1875) that he was going to auction land forming part of Purzebrook, comprising 23 acres of arable, meadow and orchard land, occupied at that time by James **Boon**. The schedule of land provided as part of the advertisement included fields called Great and Little Foxhill, Long and Little Moor, and Gamberlake Mead. There is no suggestion that the sale included Purzebrook House as well. The only other census and directory entries that I have found are in 1891C, when Levi **Welch**, a farmer, was living at 9, Purzebrook, and 1893D when he was listed at Purzebrook as a dairyman. He later appears in connection with Shools Farm (see below).

Some of the land associated with the farm was built on during the mid-to-late-19th century, and most of the rest was used for the Union Workhouse and 20th century housing. At various times the outbuildings behind the house included a dairy and a slaughterhouse (operated by Stuart's butchers, in support of their shop on the corner of South Street and Silver Street).

The first reference that I have found to Hakes Farm is 1824 (Ref 6), when the farmer was identified as A **Forward**. In 1842V John **Welch** was listed in connection with Hakes, though he may not have been farming the land.

There is then a long gap until 1878D, when John **Pidgeon**, a dairyman, was listed there. In 1873D he had been recorded as a dairyman on South Road (not South Street: this could therefore refer to what is now Membury Road, and could well also be a reference to Hakes Farm). He is again listed at Hakes in 1878/79D and 1883D, but I have not found him in 1881C. 1889D and 1890D link him to South Road and Musbury Road respectively, rather than specifically to Hakes Farm. There is no listing for either Hakes or John Pidgeon in 1891C or 1893D.

1901C shows Charles **Newbery** (born c.1879 at Axminster) as the farmer at Hakes, but 1902D does not. It was at around this time that some of the land associated with Hakes Farm was being built on. Ref 5 (page 20) shows Hake's Buildings (now Hillhead Terrace), and Rougemont Terrace (on the other side of Musbury Road from Hakes Farm buildings), which had both been built by about 1908⁹⁵. By 1911C Charles Newbery was recorded at Axe Dairy, George Street, described as a dairy farmer. He was from the Newbery family which ran a 'town dairy' (see above).

Land at both Gamberlake and Horslears was clearly used for agricultural purposes (mainly grazing and small-scale dairying) before it was developed for housing, but as far as I can tell neither ever constituted a farm in its own right. I have found three references to it, all connected to the same person. In 1813 William **Henley**, described as 'of Musbury', took on an apprentice⁹⁶ for Horseleers; then in 1824 (Ref 6) he was described as occupying 32 acres described as Horslears; and Appendix 3 confirms that he was keeping cows there in 1828.

⁹⁴ Source: Dick and Dudley Hurford, personal communication, 2015.

⁹⁵ Ref 12 shows that in 1910 Abraham Skinner Newbery, Charles' father, was the taxpayer responsible for whatever agricultural land was left of Hakes Farm.

⁹⁶ DHC ref 406-A-2.

Shools / Shoals

Shools can be seen on the 1776/78 map, showing that it belonged to the Petre Estate at that time.

In 1838 (Ref 7) Shools was shown as 184 acres, and was being farmed by William **Whitemoor**. 1841C and 1842V both confirm this, and describes him as a yeoman. He is also identified in Appendix 3 as having been a cow keeper back in 1828 (and he may also have been the tenant at Pennsylvania Farm for a time: see Chapter 4 above).

Shools is not listed in 1851C, or in 1856D or 1857D, but 1861C lists Robert **Gill** as the farmer, with 42 acres. He is also listed there in 1866D, as is Job **Symonds**, a dairyman. 1870D lists John **Denning**, a dairyman at Shools, and 1871C shows William **Cotterell** living and farming there. 1873D then shows Mrs Mary Ann Cotterell running a dairy on Musbury Road, which was presumably at Shools. 1878/79D lists Miss Jane Cotterell as running the Shools dairy.

1881C shows Thomas **Swain** farming 90 acres at Shools, and this is confirmed by 1883D. The following year (Ref 10, EPG 8 Oct 1884) the Axminster & Kilminster Agricultural Association held its annual ploughing match at Shoals Farm, courtesy of Thomas Swain.

1889D, 1891C and 1893D all show that the main house at Shools was occupied by non-farmers (e.g. a retired policeman in 1891C), but 1889D shows that the farm was being run by Reuben Swain junior of Lower Abbey (see below), together with a dairyman called Levi **Welch** (see above under Purzebrook).

A press report the following year (Ref 10, WT 3 Sept 1890) stated that James **Smyth** had completed his harvest at Shools. In 1898, an advertisement was placed (Ref 10, TCWA 9 Mar 1898) offering to let a 12-18 cow dairy at Shools. The advertisement had been placed by James Smyth. The following year (Ref 10, EPG 19 Aug 1899) there was a fire on the farm, and the press report names James Smyth as the owner, and Mr **White** as the dairyman.

There is no entry for any farming-related activity at Shools in 1901C, and 1906D shows that the land was being farmed in combination with Lower Abbey Farm by Reuben Robert **Swain**. He was resident there in 1908 (Ref 11), and was again listed as having some link to Shools in 1914D.

1910D and 1911C both list Walter William **Wills** as the farmer at Shools. Ref 12 gives the size of Shools in 1910 as 12 acres, with Walter William Wills also being the taxpayer on a further 7 acres described as what looks like 'Hardaways'. He had been born c.1839 at Musbury. Richard **Halcombe** (born c.1864 at Cullompton) was the dairy manager in 1911C.

1914D shows Beresford John **Snell** as the farmer at Shoals (not Shools), and this was consistently the case until at least 1939D. He was still there and advertising for staff for Shoals well after the war (Ref 10, WMN 2 Apr 1949), and I understand that his family remains there still, though the farm must have been significantly affected by the construction of the by-pass, and by the general expansion of Axminster.

Higher and Lower Abbey

There has been farming close to the site of Newenham Abbey since mediaeval times (see Ref 2 for a full account). The land formed part of the Petre Estate from 1605 until 1824, when it was sold to James Alexander Frampton. At the time of the 1824 estate survey (Ref 6) two parcels of land described as Newenham Chapel (25 acres) and Prince's⁹⁷ (16 acres) were let to William **Tucker**. A further 28 acres, described as 'Part of Abbey' were rented to Mrs R **Forward**, along with a further 8 acres of an unnamed plot. In 1828 (see Appendix 3) James **White** was recorded as keeping cows at Abbey (and at Millbrook / Sector), though his listing at Abbey was in connection with titheable land, and we know that most of the Abbey lands were not subject to tithes, since they are not recorded on the 1838 tithe apportionment schedules (Ref 7).

In 1841C William **Shocker** was the farmer of Princes Abbey (which appears to be the same farm as Higher Abbey: see above), while Samuel **Swain**, a yeoman, was at Lower Abbey, and a farm labourer occupied the house of a third unnamed farm in the same vicinity. Samuel Swain was again connected to Abbey in 1842V.

⁹⁷ We know from a 1776 map (Ref 3, page 52) that two fields adjacent to what is now Higher Abbey Farm were called Princes Moor and Princes Close.

In 1851C two farmers were listed at Abbey (but with no farm details given): Francis Swain (103 acres) and James Swain (100 acres). They were two of the sons of Samuel Swain (a third son, Reuben, farmed at Yeatlands; while a fourth, William, farmed at Kilmington, where his parents had also moved by 1851).

We know from 1861C that at that time Francis Swain was at Higher Abbey (100 acres), and James Swain was at Lower Abbey (110 acres), and from this point on it is sensible to deal separately with the two farms. The main London to Exeter railway had been built during the late 1850s, and opened in 1860, and this will have affected both farms, but particularly Lower Abbey, which is closer to the line (though both farms have land on both sides of the line: Lower Abbey's is mainly close to the Axe, while Higher Abbey's is closer to the Yarty where it joins the Axe). A press report (Ref 10, DCC 14 July 1859) refers to progress being made on the stretch of line from Abbey to Slymlakes (see below).

Francis Swain was consistently recorded at Higher Abbey until 1866D, and then again in 1871C, at which point the farm still comprised 100 acres. In 1870D his son Thomas Swain was named as the farmer, and Francis may well have been at least semi-retired by then. Nevertheless, he was again listed as the farmer in 1873D. In both 1878D and 1878/79D Henry and Thomas Swain were jointly listed as the farmers at Higher Abbey.

In 1881C Henry Swain (another of Francis' sons) was both resident at Higher Abbey and shown as the farmer, of 95 acres. His sole tenure was confirmed in 1883D, and this remained consistently the case until 1902D.

In 1904 William Thomas **Trott** took over as the tenant of Higher Abbey, a change which is reported in a valuation report (Ref 9) dated April 1904, and confirmed by 1906D and Ref 12, which gives the size of Higher Abbey in 1910 as 70 acres. The same source shows that William Thomas Trott was also the taxpayer on a further 8 acres of unnamed land. 1911C shows him to have been born c.1879 at Shute, and he was still there in 1939D. He did not have any family to take over the farm, but he remained at Higher Abbey until about 1968, when it was sold to Francis George (Frank) **Burrough** (see below in connection with Lower Abbey). It has for many years now been run by his son Dean Burrough and his family.

James **Swain** was consistently recorded at Lower Abbey until 1871C, at which point the farm was shown as 130 acres, and he was listed again in 1873D. In 1878D and 1878/79D he and Reuben Swain (one of his sons) were jointly listed.

By 1881C Reuben Swain junior (to distinguish him from his uncle Reuben, who farmed at Yeatlands) was the named farmer of Lower Abbey, with 133 acres. However, a valuation report (Ref 9) carried out in August 1900 (in connection with the effects of the Axminster-to-Lyme railway) confirms that James Swain was still formally the tenant⁹⁸. Reuben Swain junior was consistently listed there until 1906D, with 1893D showing that as well as Lower Abbey, he was at that time farming Shools as well (see above).

A dairyman called William **Sampson** was also listed at Lower Abbey in 1906D. I have also seen his name spelled William Cox Sansom, in connection with household insurance when he was at Lower Abbey. A note attached to that description states that "... *an oil engine used for working dairy appliances is fixed in the dairy*", though he was not responsible for insuring the dairy, which would be consistent with him being a tenant dairyman.

In 1910 Ref 12 gives the size of Lower Abbey as 120 acres, with Reuben Swain responsible for a further plot of land amounting to almost 12 acres at Abbey Gate, plus further 10 acres in the heart of the Axe / Yarty floodplain, known as Isle of Man.

1911C shows Reuben Swain junior of Lower Abbey to have been born c.1845 at Dalwood. 1911C also lists Reuben Robert Swain at Lower Abbey, born c.1878 at Axminster (the son of Reuben Swain junior). 1914D lists Reuben Swain junior at Lower Abbey and Shools, while 1919D only mentions Lower Abbey. There is a photograph in Ref 4 (page 104) taken at Lower Abbey in 1914, showing the fire brigade tackling a fire at Lower Abbey. A probate valuation report (Ref 9) dated August 1919 shows that he had died by then, and a press report (Ref 10, WT 12 Sept 1916) shows that his own son Reuben Robert had pre-deceased him in 1916, having died aged 37 of septic poisoning, following an accident involving a horse and cart on the farm.

⁹⁸ I understand from Christopher Moran that James Swain moved to Summerleaze Farm, Kilmington, where he died in 1884. The reference to a tenancy as late as 1900 may therefore be an error.

In 1923D Mrs Lilian Sarah **Frampton** (of Swain & Frampton) was listed as the farmer at Lower Abbey. She was the daughter of the late Reuben Swain junior, and I believe that following the death of her father she farmed Lower Abbey for a few years in partnership with her brother, Charles. In 1924 they left the farm: the evidence comes from a press announcement (Ref 10, WPG 29 Feb 1924) of a dispersal sale to be run by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd of live and dead stock, and in particular a herd of Devon and cross-bred cattle. The announcement stated that the partnership was being dissolved, and that both parties were quitting the farm. This ended the direct association between the Swain family and one or both of the Abbey Farms going back over 80 years (though the Swains continued to own Lower Abbey Farm for some years, and the family remained strongly linked to the immediate area: see Balls and Slymlakes Farms below).

By 1926D Lower Abbey had passed to Walter William **Franks**, who had moved from Ottery St Mary with his elder brother Sidney. Their tenure was relatively brief: a press announcement (Ref 10, WG 21 Feb 1930) shows that Messrs R&C Snell Ltd had been retained by Mr S C Franks to organize a dispersal sale of 53 Devon and cross-bred cattle (suggesting that the Franks brothers may well have bought the herd of Swain & Frampton). The press notice stated that Sidney Franks was quitting, though in fact he and his brother Walter William Franks moved to Lower Beavor Farm (see Chapter 6 above).

No farmer is listed at Lower Abbey in either 1930D or 1935D, but the farmer at that time was Henry Mervyn Brewsey **Dunford**. He had moved from Paignton, and he was a breeder of pedigree Dairy Shorthorns (Ref 10, WG 12 Sept 1930 shows that he won a prize at the Yeovil Show that year). Unfortunately for him things did not go well, and not only did he lose his wife tragically young in 1934 (Ref 10, EPG 11 May 1934), but 2 years later some of his cattle died. We know this because he was declared bankrupt in 1938, after he had left the farm, and these two factors were identified as the key causes of his difficulties (Ref 10, WT 19 Aug 1938).

In about 1936 Francis George (Frank) **Burrough** had arrived at Lower Abbey, starting an association between the Abbey Farms and another local family which is fast approaching 80 years (as of 2015). Frank Burrough's photograph (as a child) appears on page 38 of Ref 5, at which time his family was living at Bewley Down, between Axminster and Chard. His presence at Lower Abbey is confirmed by 1939D. Insurance document that I have seen show that by 1951 he had bought Lower Abbey Farm from Frederick Robert Swain.

The farm has for many years been run by his son Lisle Burrough and his family. Over time the farming business has expanded to incorporate other local farms and smaller parcels of land (including Sisterhood and Weycroft Manor).

Abbey Gate and Little Jackleigh

When the 1776/78 map was drawn, the buildings at Abbey Gate formed part of the Petre Estate, but the fields to the south east (towards Wyke and Great Trill) did not.

Although Little Jackleigh was a property close to Abbey Gate (as confirmed by maps from 1803 and 1827, and the map which appears in Ref 1 and Ref 3), I have not seen any direct evidence to show that it was a farm, though we do know that there was a farm there (see below).

In 1878D and 1881C Edwin H **Berry** was listed as a blacksmith and farmer at Abbey Gate. A press report (Ref 10, WT 1 Sept 1893) confirms that he had indeed been a farmer at Abbey Gate, and states that he had emigrated about 4 or 5 years earlier (i.e. in about 1888). The same report names Albert **Voysey** as having taken over the farm, and this is confirmed by 1901C and 1902D. Another newspaper report (Ref 10, WT 19 Aug 1904, with his surname spelled Voisey), concerning a robbery (nothing to do with the farm), confirms that he was at Abbey Gate Farm at that time, though I believe he left soon thereafter to farm at Musbury. His tenure spanned the construction work on the Axminster to Lyme branch railway line, including the building of a bridge over Musbury Road close to Abbey Gate, which must have disrupted farm operations.

Matters become complicated at this point, and the evidence as to who was farming the land at Abbey Gate is contradictory.

1910D lists William Charles **Smyth** as farming at Abbey Gate, though Ref 12 does not name him as a taxpayer on any Axminster land in 1910, and attributes 12 acres of Abbey Gate land to Reuben **Swain** of Lower Abbey Farm (see above). Nor is William Charles Smyth linked to Abbey Gate by 1911C, which lists another farmer there, namely Harry **Tuck**, born c.1876 at Ashill, Somerset. He is not listed in Ref 12 as having been a taxpayer on any Axminster land in 1910.

We then have a valuation report (Ref 9) produced in April 1915, which names Reuben Swain as the outgoing tenant and W Smyth (presumably William Charles Smyth) as the incoming one. He is then listed as the farmer at Abbey Gate in 1919D, and there are also two press reports which tie him to Abbey Gate Farm in the 1920s: Ref 10, WT 14 Jan 1920 reports that he was summonsed for allowing stock to stray onto the road; and TCWA 21 Dec 1927 show that he was offering goats for sale from Abbey Gate Farm.

A third report from this period (Ref 10, EPG 20 Aug 1920) shows that Abbey Gate Farm, described as a mixed farm of 45 acres, was to be offered for sale, though neither the owner nor the tenant was named. There was also a directory entry from this period for a further farmer at Abbey Gate: Mrs K **Gibson** in 1926D.

By about 1932 Frederick Herbert **Griffin** was the farmer at Abbey Gate, as confirmed by Ref 11 (1934) and 1939D, and he remained there until his untimely death, from influenza, in 1943 (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1943), on the day of his own father's funeral. The report of his funeral stated that he had been at Abbey Gate Farm since leaving Annings Farm in 1932. (This is contradicted to some degree by Ref 10, EPG 4 Dec 1931 which gives Frederick Herbert Griffin's address as Wyke Farm when he was summonsed for poaching rabbits. This may simply have been a generalised reference to a farm at Wyke rather than Wyke Farm itself.)

In 1944 Abbey Gate Farm was offered for sale at auction at Honiton by Messrs TD Hussey & Son (Ref 10, EPG 18 Aug 1944), described as 43 acres of arable and pasture. I understand⁹⁹ that at about this time Harold **Mear** milked cows at Abbey Gate in a small cowshed attached to the house which still stands to the east of Musbury Road and north of Abbey Gate Lane. In about the 1950s he then built a new farm house and buildings further down Musbury Road, which he ran with his son, Roy.

This new Abbey Gate Farm was subsequently bought by the Chapple family of Wyke Farm (see Chapter 7 above), and is now run by JC&PA **Chapple**, and includes a caravan and camp site facility.

Balls and Slymlakes Farms

Balls and Slymlakes are both old farms. The 1776/78 map shows them both belonging to the Petre Estate.

In 1824 (Ref 6) Balls Farm (70 acres) was rented by Joseph Melford Esq, while Slymlakes was let in two separate parcels to Thomas Hoskins (43 acres) and Henry Knight and Samuel Clode (32 acres). However, I do not think that they were the farmers. Appendix 3 places James **Rowe** at Balls Farm in 1828, and James **Gill** at Slymlakes, both with herds of cows. This is confirmed by 1841C, which identifies them both as yeomen, and spells Slymlakes as 'Sliplakes' (one of many approximations found in census returns and directories). They are both listed at those farms in 1842V. The report of James Gill's death in the USA (Ref 10, WT 12 Oct 1869) stated that he had emigrated from Slymlakes "... 20 years ago last spring" (i.e. in 1848).

By about 1851C it appears that the two farms were being run as a single unit by John Stamp **Loveridge**. 1851C shows him living at Slymlakes (with a dairyman, Charles **Palmer**, also there), and a farm of 70 acres. This was the period when the London-to-Exeter railway line was being built, which must have disrupted farming activities quite considerably. By 1861C John Stamp Loveridge had 217 acres under his control, and a shepherd, Henry **Anning**, was living at Balls Farm.

By 1866D John Stamp Loveridge had moved his residence to Balls Farm, and 1871C shows that by then he was farming 245 acres. John **Broomfield**, a dairyman, was at Slymlakes. 1873D is the first listing to confirm unequivocally that John Stamp Loveridge was farming both Balls and Slymlakes, but this should be regarded as a statement of what was already obvious rather than as new information. The point is confirmed by 1878/79D.

In 1872 Robert **Newbery** of Slymlakes married Polly Loveridge of Balls Farm (Ref 10, WT 1 Mar 1872), she being the daughter of John Stamp Loveridge. He was still there in 1874, but had moved to East Donyatt by 1876 (Ref 11, both events). When a man drowned in the river near Slymlakes (Ref 10, WT 8 Feb 1876) John Stamp Loveridge was named as the occupant of the farm.

⁹⁹ Source: Lisle Burrough and Dave Scott Mear, personal communications, 2015 and 2017, respectively.

By 1881C James **Swain** junior had taken over Balls Farm, and was farming 146 acres. Thomas H **Trivett**, a dairyman was at Slymlakes. However, the next year (Ref 10, WT 24 June 1882) Henry **Tucker** of Slymlakes was advertising for a man to milk cows there.

1883D, 1889D and later directories show that James Swain junior was running both farms while living at Balls Farm. In 1891C Malachi **Trim**, a dairyman, was at Slymlakes.

In 1898 an advertisement was placed (Ref 10, TCWA 26 Jan 1898) over the name of James Swain, offering a "... *dairy of 35 cows to let*". The offer was repeated (albeit with 32 cows) 2 years later (Ref 10, TCWA 26 Dec 1900). Then in 1901C Victor Swain, aged just 14 and described as a farmer's son, was the main resident shown at Slymlakes.

Ref 12 confirms that in 1910 James Swain junior was the taxpayer responsible for both Balls (70 acres) and Slymlakes (74 acres). 1911C shows that he had been born c.1847 at Axminster. The last time that he is listed in connection with Balls and Slymlakes is 1914D (at about the time when he died), and in 1919D Mrs James Swain is shown as farming both properties, a position confirmed (when she was named as Mary Ann Swain) in 1923D.

By 1926D Frederick Robert Swain was farming Balls Farm, with his brother Victor having been at Slymlakes at least 2 years by then (Ref 11, 1924). Both of them were still there in 1939D. Then in 1943 (Ref 10, EPG 19 Mar 1943) there was a barn fire at Slymlakes, the report of which confirms Victor Swain as the farmer. A year later (Ref 10, EPG 8 Sept 1944) Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd advertised a sale of live and dead stock at Slymlakes, and stated that Victor Swain had already left the farm.

Frederick Robert Swain of Balls Farm died in 1954, and his family remained there until the 1960s, when they emigrated to Tasmania. Sales details¹⁰⁰ (which I have not seen) show that the farm was sold on 7 May 1964. By that time not much land remained attached to Balls Farm.

Slymlakes passed into the possession of Lisle **Sweetland**, who in 1950 (Ref 10, EPG 29 Sept 1950) hosted a ploughing match there on behalf of the Colyton & District Agricultural Society. It remains in the hands of the Sweetland family, and his son John Sweetland runs a beef herd there under the name of LE&LJ Sweetland.

¹⁰⁰ Source: National Archives website. The details are in the English Heritage archives, ref SA02338.

Chapter 9: Up the Yarty from Hunthay Lane

General comments on Westwater and the Yarty Valley

Several of the farms along the Yarty valley in Axminster parish appear on Donn's map of 1765, and centuries before that land at Westwater (including Breweshayes) belonged to Newenham Abbey, and then to the manor of Axminster. By the late 17th century parts of Westwater were closely associated with the Tucker family of Dalwood: William Tucker, buried at Dalwood in 1691, and William his son, buried at Dalwood aged 70 in 1733, were both described as 'of Westwater' before their descendants became described as 'of Coryton' (Ref 1, page 713).

The 1776/78 map confirms that at that time all of the Westwater farms still belonged to the Petre Estate. However, in the 19th century James Alexander Frampton, who became the owner of the manor of Axminster in 1824, sold estates described as 'of Westwater and Uphay' (Ref 1, page 624) to William Tucker Esq of Coryton. Following William Tucker's death in 1855, an auction was announced (Ref 10, EPG 12 Dec 1857) by Messrs Wainwright & Co to sell a long list of farms that he had owned (described as the Coryton Park Estate) in several parishes, totalling 1,828 acres. This included 780 acres in Axminster parish, made up of Hunthay, all four of the Westwater farms, Woodhouse, Toller Hays and a property called Broughton Grounds¹⁰¹. The auction was set to take place at the George Hotel, Axminster on 22 January 1858.

That auction was either postponed, or if it went ahead the Westwater farms did not sell, because on 3 August 1860 a large block of land amounting to a bit over 650 acres and described as comprising 'Higher, Lower and Middle Westwater, Woodhouse, Tolcis and Hunthay' was offered for sale in 30 lots, again by Messrs Wainwright & Heard, and again on behalf of the Coryton Park Estate, the auction taking place at the George Hotel. These six farms, plus a substantial number of individual fields located at the boundaries between them and not at that time definitively tied to one farm or another, between them occupied all of the land in Axminster parish which lies to the west of Hunthay Lane / Uphay Lane / Membury Road up to and including Tolcis and Higher Westwater. The accompanying schedules and map (which will be of great interest to anyone researching any of the farms concerned) can be seen in the DHC¹⁰². This is referred to several times below as 'the 1860 sale' without repeating the context and source details each time.

A report of the 1860 sale (Ref 10, EPG 11 Aug 1860) tells us that 25 of the 30 lots (which it describes as comprising about 700 acres, rather than the 650 or so listed on the schedules that I inspected) were sold, raising £19,715. However, we can estimate that something like 250 acres did not sell, because the five lots that were withdrawn carried a reserve valuation of £12,100. The unsold portion probably included Higher Westwater, given that it was re-auctioned 10 years later, plus one of the other named farms.

Although in general it is possible to work out who was farming which Westwater property over the years, with so many farms incorporating the name Westwater into their title, there is clearly some scope for error. Counter-intuitively, Westwater Farm is the smallest of the farms that carry the name, and appears for significant periods to have been run in close conjunction with the nearby Lower Westwater Farm. On the 1891 map it is mis-labelled as Lower Westwater Farm, with Lower Westwater in turn mis-labelled as Lower Westwater Dairy.

Hunthay Farm

The following text does not deal with Hunthay Dairy, which is covered above in Chapter 8.

The 1776/78 map shows that Hunthay belonged to the Petre Estate at that time. In 1824 (Ref 7) Hunthay, amounting to 49 acres, was let to Amos Liddon. However, he was a surgeon rather than a farmer, and the farmer's name is not known. By 1838 (Ref 7) James **Phippen** occupied 60 acres at Hunthay, He was still there in 1841C, but by 1842V the voter associated with Hunthay was Charles Phippen. By 1851C Hunthay Farm had passed to George **Dare**, a farmer and butcher, who was farming 45 acres. He was still there in 1856D and 1857D.

¹⁰¹ I have not been able to work out where this property was, though there was some ground associated with Jackleigh Farm called Boughtons in 1878 (see Chapter 7). The tenant of Broughton Grounds was identified as John Gregson, and there was a Gregson family in Musbury, and at one time a John Gregson had held an interest in Great Trill and Little Trill (see Chapter 7).

¹⁰² DHC ref 218/4.

At the time of the 1860 sale (see above) Hunthay Farm was shown as occupying just over 44 acres, and was in the possession of Thomas Phippen (who had presumably sub-let it to George Dare, who in turn had a field or two on his own account). Thomas Phippen also rented Westwater and Lower Westwater (see below) and various other individual fields.

In 1861C James **Banks**, a dairyman, was at Hunthay, but by 1866D he had given way to John **Bussell**, and by 1870D to Ambrose Bussell who, in 1871C is listed as the farmer at Hunthay, with 45 acres. He died there that same year aged 70 (Ref 10, 19 Apr 1871), and in 1873D Mrs John Bussell is listed as the occupier of Hunthay. Henry **Swain** was there briefly (Ref 11, 1877), but by 1878D it was The Misses Bussell who were listed. By 1878/79 John **Rendle** was at Uphay, but he soon moved to the dairy at Great Trill.

In 1881C William Samuel **Hoare** was at Hunthay, farming 43 acres. He remained there through a series of census returns and directories until 1906D, and died there aged 63 in 1909 (Ref 10, WT 18 June 1909).

By 1910D Charles **Snell** had moved to Hunthay, and Ref 12 confirms him as the taxpayer, with the farm shown as comprising 65 acres. He was also the taxpayer in 1910 on 52 acres at Uphay, 10 acres around Bow Bridge (in the Axe floodplain) and 9 acres named 'Marls'. In 1911C the farmer was Ellen Elizabeth Snell, a widow born c.1850 at Norton Chard, Somerset. Charles Snell (almost certainly her son) was there in 1914D and 1919D¹⁰³.

On 6 January 1921, Hunthay was offered for sale at auction by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd on behalf of A J Knight and the estate of W H B Knight (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1920 and EPG 7 Jan 1921). Hunthay Farm itself (55 acres) was withdrawn at £4,400, but two fields totalling 6 acres described as 'at the corner of Hunthay Lane' were sold (to Henry Tucker Patterson: see above in Chapter 8 under Wilhays Farm), as were three pasture fields and a building in an unspecified location totalling 9 acres (to Abraham Skinner Newbery junior: see below).

In 1923D Dennis **Powell**, farm bailiff to Major F G **Swan**, is listed at Hunthay Farm, and a press report (Ref 10, EPG 10 Aug 1923) shows that there had been a fire at Hunthay, though Major Swan (who had relatively recently moved there) was not at home at the time. By 1926D he had been replaced as Major Swan's bailiff by Clement **Hurford**. (Despite the coincidence, so far as I can see he had no direct link to the Hurfords who now dominates the Axminster side of the lower Yarty valley.) In 1935D Robert **Corr** was Major Swan's bailiff at Hunthay. Hunthay was not listed in 1939D, but Major Swan was still there, because there is a press notice (Ref 10, EPG 15 Dec 1939) announcing the sale of 25 pedigree Shorthorn cattle, a mains-driven milking machine and other equipment at Hunthay Farm, to be auctioned by Messrs TRG Lawrence & Son a few days later.

Mr W **Bond** apparently took over Hunthay, because two separate press reports (Ref 10, EPG 22 Feb and 15 Mar 1946) show that he held a sale of live and dead stock marking the end of his tenure, and that the farm was sold to Mrs J **Wellmont** (or **Willment**) for £7,750. She can only have stayed a year, because the farm was re-sold by private treaty (Ref 10, WG 20 June 1947), and a further sale of live and dead stock was held (Ref 10, WG 22 Aug 1947).

I believe that Hunthay Farm was bought by Abraham Skinner **Newbery** junior (see the section on Town Dairies in Chapter 8 for more about him and his origins), and that he added a substantial block of land on the Axminster side of Hunthay Lane (fronting onto both Hunthay Lane and the Kilmington road). The running of the farm was taken over by his son, Robert E (Bob) Newbery and his family. Bob Newbery was very well known locally, not least because of his involvement in a range of local non-farming activities (including the Axminster carnival and the Kilmington pantomime). I believe that it was during his tenure that new farm premises were built further up the hill, and the original house and associated farmstead sold off. His son William R Newbery subsequently took over the farm, and has added a storage facility and business park while selling some of the farmland.

Westwater and Lower Westwater

The 19th and early 20th centuries

Westwater itself was not listed among the Petre Estate properties in 1824 (Ref 6), though several blocks of land which cannot easily be identified were. Lower Westwater, comprising 61 acres at that time, was leased or rented (though not farmed) by Samuel Ramson Whitty (see below under

¹⁰³ I have also seen a reference in insurance documents to John Snell of Hunthay in 1915.

Claymead for some further details). He still had a financial interest in the land in 1836, and we know this from the details of the auction which was held that year to sell his property (Ref 10, WT 23 July 1836), following his bankruptcy the year before. Lot 9 in that auction was an interest in about 60 acres of land at Westwater occupied by George **Phippen**.

In 1838 (Ref 7) George **Phippen** occupied 124 acres in total, including part or all of Westwater, Clay Hill (see below) and Lower Westwater; and we know that he had been there since at least 1818, when he had been party to an apprenticeship¹⁰⁴. Appendix 3 shows that in 1828 he was keeping a 20 cow dairy, but without naming the farm. It was presumably in or around Lower Westwater.

He was also listed as living there in 1841C and 1842V, but by the time he died, in 1850, he had moved from Lower Westwater to Kilmington¹⁰⁵. The executors to his will were his son James (possibly of Smallridge: see Chapter 3) and his nephew George, who then took over the farm at Lower Westwater.

By 1851C (and in 1857D) Samuel **Phillips** had taken over Westwater House plus 30 acres, while George Phippen (nephew of the earlier George: see above) farmed Lower Westwater, with 100 acres. He was still there in 1856D, but by 1857D his son Thomas Phippen had taken over. The 1860 sale documents (see above) confirm this: Thomas Phippen had about 160 acres including Hunthay (44 acres), Westwater (31 acres), Lower Westwater (77 acres) and miscellaneous other fields.

1861C lists Thomas Phippen living at Lower Westwater and farming 162 acres. This is confirmed by 1866D and 1870D. In 1866D Mrs Hannah **Sandford** was living at Westwater (probably at Westwater Farm), but by 1870D she had moved to Millbrook. 1871C then places Thomas Phippen at Westwater Cottage (which I believe was probably usually known as Westwater Farm) with 177 acres. James **Baston**, a dairyman, was recorded at Westwater dairy in 1871C.

Given that the 1891 OS map labels Westwater Farm (i.e. the more northerly of the two farms) as Lower Westwater, and what is otherwise consistently known as Lower Westwater as Lower Westwater Dairy, there is clearly scope for confusion over who was at which farm over the period when the surveys were being carried out. It also suggests that the two farms were becoming increasingly integrated. In this document I have tried as far as possible to use the names consistently, even if that means over-riding what was stated in some contemporary records.

Thomas Phippen remained at Lower Westwater in 1873D, 1878D and 1881C, at which time he was farming 180 acres, and Frederick **Roberts**, dairyman, was there¹⁰⁶. Thomas Phippen was still at Lower Westwater from 1883D to 1893D. In 1891C Thomas **Tucker**, dairyman, was at Westwater Cottage dairy. In 1889D and 1893D William Tucker was listed as the dairyman at Westwater.

Thomas Phippen was still at Lower Westwater in 1893D, 1901C and 1902D. In between the census of 1901 and the 1902 directory entry the family and the farm both suffered a serious blow (Ref 10, WT 11 June 1901). The article, headed 'Blaze at Axminster' reads as follows. "*A disastrous blaze occurred on Friday which resulted in the total demolition of a farmhouse with all outbuildings and livestock at Lower Westwater, near Axminster, in the occupation of Mr Thomas Phippine*¹⁰⁷. *About 8:30 in the morning while the family were at breakfast they were startled by the information that the pound-house adjoining the residence was on fire. The farm with the barns and stock houses form a circular enclosure, and the gravity of the situation was at once realised.*" Seventeen pigs and some cattle "... *were literally roasted alive, but one valuable bull was saved through the energetic action of a neighbouring farmer, Mr R White*¹⁰⁸, *who, forcing his way through at considerable personal risk liberated the animal from its burning quarters*". The report goes on to note that the farm belonged to Mr Dommatt of Axminster, and that losses were partly covered by insurance. It also states that the fire brigade did not arrive in time to make a great difference, because in the initial panic the family had not alerted them to the emergency. The source of the fire was traced to the practice of placing ashes from the fire in a tub in an outhouse.

¹⁰⁴ DHC ref 406-A-2.

¹⁰⁵ Source: Dave Cross, personal communication, 2016. Dave is a direct descendant of George Phippen.

¹⁰⁶ Although William Roberts had been farming at Higher Westwater until just before 1881, the census return is clear that James Griffin was the dairyman there in 1881, with Frederick Roberts at Westwater.

¹⁰⁷ This is the spelling used in the article, and a reminder that no single source can be unduly relied on.

¹⁰⁸ He was presumably from the nearby Woodhouse Farm.

I have seen an undated description of Lower Westwater, produced in connection with an insurance policy (no doubt connected with the above incident), when it was in the possession of Thomas Phippen. It describes the farm as comprising about 30 acres of arable land and 60 acres of pasture, and the produce as including "... *cereal crops (but not any other growing crops), wool, cider, cheese and manure, on wagons, carts, ploughs, harness, hurdles, chaff cutters and other utensils and implements of husbandry worked only by manual or animal power*".

Thomas Phippen and his wife Charlotte both died in 1905, and they are both buried at Axminster, described as 'of Lower Westwater', alongside two of their several children, including one whose death later in 1901 may well have been linked to the effects of the fire.

A valuation and three transactions

From this point onwards the two farms tended to be managed separately, and I deal with Westwater and Lower Westwater, in that order. However, before dealing with the question of who was managing which farm, I deal with a valuation and three transactions (or attempted transactions) in which the farm names may well have been wrongly given in some instances.

A probate valuation report (Ref 9) produced in December 1916 identified Martha Newbery as having been the owner of Westwater Farm prior to her death, and named the tenant as Felix Rowe (whereas, as reported below, he farmed at Lower Westwater). The report describes the farm as having 85 acres of good land (which would again match Lower Westwater better than Westwater). It stated that the land was being well farmed, but comments on the poor access to the farmstead¹⁰⁹. Felix Rowe was at that time reported to be paying an annual rent of £188, giving the farm an estimated value of £2,850.

Lower Westwater Farm was then offered for sale at auction on 17 January 1918 at the George Hotel, Axminster by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd on behalf of the estate of the late John Dommatt (Ref 10, WT 28 Dec 1917 and WG 11 Jan 1918). In the first advertisement it was described as a very rich grazing and dairy farm comprising almost 90 acres of meadow, pasture, arable and orchard, with a slated dwelling house and range of farm buildings. In the second it was described as 94 acres, and let to Felix Rowe as tenant until Lady Day 1919.

It would appear from this evidence that John Dommatt bought Lower Westwater from Martha Newbery shortly before he himself died.

Then in January 1921 (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1920 and EPG 7 Jan 1921) what was described as Lower Westwater and Wink House, totalling 54 acres (and therefore much closer in size to Westwater Farm than to Lower Westwater), were reported to have been sold by Messrs R&C Snell on behalf of A J Knight and the estate of W H B Knight. The sale fetched £3,000 and the buyer was Mr J Brooks of Falmouth. At the same sale Eli Collard bought three unspecified, but probably nearby, fields totalling 18 acres for £500.

Just over a year later both Westwater (i.e. not Lower Westwater) and Wink House were re-offered at auction (Ref 10, WMN 8 Mar 1922), again by Messrs R&C Snell, with Westwater described as 47 acres (exactly the same as 'Lower Westwater' had been in 1920) and Wink House as 7 acres, and with Eli Collard named as the tenant until Lady Day.

My reading of this highly confusing sequence of events is that the farms were wrongly named in three out of four cases, though of course I cannot prove this.

The 20th century: Westwater Farm

Reverting to the question of who was farming which piece of land, from 1901C to 1914D Alfred Thomas **Grabham** is consistently listed in directories and on census returns as the farmer at Westwater, and Ref 12 identifies him as the taxpayer on 90 acres (described there as 'Westwater Cottage Farm'). 1911C shows that he had been born c.1862 at Chardstock. Then in both 1919D and 1923D Eli W **Collard** is listed at Westwater. I believe, based on insurance documents that I have seen, that he had left for a farm near Crewkerne by 1925.

By 1926D Walter Henry **Loud** was at Westwater. He was almost certainly from the Seaton branch of the widely-distributed Loud family of butchers; and he had married Edith Mary Reakes in 1904.

¹⁰⁹ I understand from Dick Hurford that Felix Rowe actually put in the current access lane to Lower Westwater, so that the farm was approached from Hunthay Lane rather than from Westwater lane, past Westwater Farm. This made the journey to deliver milk to either Gammons Hill or Axminster appreciably shorter.

In both 1935D and 1939D William (probably a mis-transcription of Walter) Henry Loud was listed at Westwater Farm.

The Loud family was still at Westwater in the 1960s, with Bob Loud farming Westwater Farm, and his brother Dick farming Westwater Bungalow Farm (see below). After Bob Loud gave up farming, the land was taken on by the **Hurford** family, and incorporated into Lower Westwater.

The 20th century: Lower Westwater

Following the death of Thomas Phippen in 1905, a valuation report (Ref 9) produced in early 1906 stated that on Lady Day of that year his Executors would quit Lower Westwater, and be succeeded as tenant by George **Loud** (who was, I believe, coming from Shute). He was then named as the taxpayer on 77 acres at Westwater in 1910 (Ref 12), plus a further 2 acres described as part of Uphay, but he evidently did not stay much longer, because both 1910D and 1911C list Felix **Rowe** as the farmer at Lower Westwater. He had been born c.1886 at Upottery (his father being George Rowe, originally of Chagford, who was farming at Lower Beavor). When he died, many years later, it was reported (Ref 10, EPG 16 July 1943) that he had spent 8 years at Westwater (meaning Lower Westwater), from about 1910 to about 1918. I believe that he may well have acquired and then retained some interest in the farm, which later passed to his son Frank Rowe (see under Uphay and Higher Uphay in Chapter 3).

In 1919D Clara Harriet **Phillips**, a widow, formerly of Castle Hill Farm (see Chapter 8), was listed as the farmer at Lower Westwater, as she was again in 1923D. By 1926D her son Walter Phillips had taken over at Lower Westwater, and he was again listed in 1930D, when Charles **Reakes** may well have taken over as the dairyman (despite being listed at Middle Westwater, which I am 99% confident was not correct). Clara Harriet Phillips had died by 1933, and a report of her will (Ref 10, WT 2 June 1933) shows that one of her sons had moved to Sussex, while Lower Westwater was the home of her daughter, Clara Mary Phillips.

In both 1935D and 1939D Joseph **Summers** was listed at Lower Westwater, where he was the tenant. Lower Westwater was then offered for sale at auction by Messrs W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd on 23 August 1945 (Ref 10, EPG 17 Aug 1945), described as 93 acres and let to Joseph Summers at an annual rent of £300. The map produced for the auction shows that at that time all of the land lay to the south of the lane from Four Cross to Higher Westwater, and there were several places where changes in the bed of the river Yarty had left small pieces of ground on the wrong side of the river, given that field edges still followed the historic parish boundary. When Joseph Summers' wife died in 1946 (Ref 10, WT 25 Jan 1946) it was stated that he had been at Lower Westwater for 12 years (i.e. since about 1934).

The following year a further auction of live and dead stock was held on behalf of Joseph Summers (Ref 10, EPG 20 Sept 1946) by Messrs TRG Lawrence & Son. The particulars noted that the sale included both a cart horse and a tractor, this being the era when farmers were actively changing from animal to motive power. Joseph Summers was retiring from farming.

Following the 1945 sale, the farmhouse and farm buildings were insured by Frederick Sidney Kett, an architect who lived in Axminster, but he may well have been acting as an agent for a client, because in October 1945 the interest in the policy was transferred to Ernest William **Hurford** of Crabhayne Farm, Axmouth, who had bought the farm. He was from the same family as the Hurfords of Yeatlands and Tolcis (see below), and he took possession following Joseph Summers' retirement.

The farm remain in the Hurford family. Having been taken over by Ernest William Hurford's son Richard (Dick), it is now run by his sons, under the name RH&MJ Hurford. Lower Westwater is the last working dairy farm in the Yarty valley in Axminster parish, and following a gradual process of accumulation, it is one of the largest farms in the parish. Dick Hurford's brother Dudley also operated a farming business based on a mixture of some land of his own and some rented land, in Westwater and Membury, until his retirement.

Claymead, Clay Hill and Wink House

The list of Petre Estate properties of 1824 (Ref 6) includes several blocks of land which cannot easily be identified. However, they probably included fields known as Claymead and Clay Hill, which lay between Westwater Farm and the lane which passes Woodhouse Farm on its way to Middle and Higher Westwater.

These fields were leased or rented in 1824 (though not farmed) by Samuel Ramson Whitty, proprietor of the carpet factory in Axminster, and grandson of its founder, Thomas Whitty. He still had a financial interest in the land in 1836, and we know this from the details of the auction which was held that year to sell his property (Ref 10, WT 23 July 1836), following his bankruptcy the year before. It is probable that either his father or grandfather had purchased a lease on the land as a straightforward investment, and we know that he lived in Axminster and not at Westwater. In the 1836 auction Lots 7 and 8 were described as an interest in about 8 acres of land known as Claymead Meadow, and about 3 acres of land known as Little Claymead, or Clay Hill, or Streets (both described as being at Westwater).

The field named Claymead Meadow also included a property called Wink House until the 1960s, when it was demolished. The only census or directory listing that names a farmer living there is 1841C, when James **Flack** was listed.

We also know that in 1838 (Ref 7) Clay Hill was occupied by George **Phippen** (see above under Westwater and Lower Westwater for details).

Subsequently farm workers lived at Wink House, and as late as the 1920s a smallholding named Wink House was offered for sale at auction twice in 2 years by Messrs R&C Snell (Ref 10, EPG 24 Dec 1920 and WMN 8 Mar 1922). On both occasions it was described as 7 acres, and on the second occasion it was being farmed by Eli **Collard** (who also farmed Westwater Farm: see above, with Westwater Farm being offered for sale as a separate lot on both occasions). Until at least the 1960s the land continued to be farmed in combination with Westwater Farm, first by Walter Henry **Loud** and then by his son Bob (see above).

Westwater Bungalow Farm

In 1938 Richard Walter (Dick) **Loud**, the son of Walter Henry Loud of Westwater Farm, married Beryl O Summers (from Lower Westwater). He was a cattle dealer as well as a farmer, and he subsequently lived and farmed at Westwater Bungalow Farm. This farm was created at around that time from the land that fronted onto Four Cross and the lanes running from there towards Westwater and Hunthay. Subsequently some land on the east side of Westwater lane was added, from Woodhouse Farm (see below).

Dick Loud built a modern dairy unit close to Four Cross, and after he retired the land was bought by the **Hurford** family of Lower Westwater. After they developed their new dairy unit at Lower Westwater, milking ceased at Westwater Dairy Farm.

Woodhouse

Woodhouse can be seen on the 1776/78 map, confirming that it formed part of the Petre Estate at that time. During the 1790s it was farmed by William **Liddon**, a relatively wealthy dairyman, who died there in about 1795.

In 1824 (Ref 6) W I L **Perham** Esq was shown as renting Woodhouse (46 acres) plus a further 73 acres in plots which included the name Uphay (see Chapter 3 above) and 10 acres called Bryndbury, giving him about 130 acres in total.

Appendix 3 shows that by 1828 John **Harvey** was keeping cows there, and by 1838 (Ref 7) Woodhouse Farm was 170 acres, and farmed by John Harvey. No farmer is recorded at Woodhouse by 1841C, but John Harvey was the listed voter in 1842V.

William **Seaward** was farming Woodhouse in 1851C, and had been recorded at Westwater in general in 1841C, possibly as John Harvey's tenant. In 1851C the farm was shown as 100 acres, as it was in 1861C and 1871C, with William Seaward consistently shown as the farmer in all post-1851 directories up to and including 1878/79D.

At the time of the 1860 sale Woodhouse itself was listed as comprising just over 75 acres, but William and John Seaward were farming much more than this (including Higher Westwater and a small number of odd fields). William Seaward is reported to have bought Woodhouse Farm for £3,000: one of the earliest instances in Axminster parish of a tenant becoming an owner-occupier.

In 1880 Woodhouse Farm, described as 80 acres of pasture, orchard and arable, was offered to let by William Seaward (Ref 10, WG 16 Jan 1880). 1881C, 1883D and 1889D all show Charles **Osbourne** as the farmer (and tenant) at Woodhouse, with the farm shown as 70 acres in 1881C.

1890D and 1891C record James T **Hill** as the farmer at Woodhouse, as do 1901C and 1902D. However, 1893D lists Charles Osbourne, the previous farmer, and there is also a press item (Ref 10, EPG 11 Sept 1895) which identifies William **White** as being at Woodhouse in 1893. A probate valuation report (Ref 9) dated July 1904 shows that James T Hill had died by then.

1906D and 1910D name William White as farming at Woodhouse, though Ref 12 names the taxpayer as E White & Sons, and gives the size of the farm as 80 acres. 1911C lists Elizabeth White (presumably William's widow) and William John White (born c.1853 Colyton) farming at Woodhouse. 1914D, 1919D and 1923D all have Mrs Elizabeth White as the farmer. Then 1926D lists 'E White and others', followed in 1930D by E R A White. In 1930 an unspecified Mr White was advertising for staff at Woodhouse (Ref 10, EPG 20 June 1930).

By 1934 (Ref 10, EPG 14 Sept 1934) it was Dudley Owen **Chown** who was advertising for help with the milking at Woodhouse, and both 1935D and 1939D list him as the farmer there. Another press item (Ref 10, EPG 17 Dec 1937) states that he had arrived at Woodhouse in about 1931. He retired in the early 1960s, and died in 1969.

When Woodhouse Farm was sold, it was split into at least three lots. The house and some of the land was bought by Graham **Cawston**, who farmed it for a while, and then sold the land to the **Hurford** family of Lower Westwater. A block of land adjacent to Uphay Lane was bought by the **Rowe** family and incorporated into Higher Uphay (see Chapter 3), while the land closest to Four Cross was bought by Dick **Loud** and incorporated into Westwater Bungalow Farm.

Middle Westwater

In 1824 (Ref 6) The Executors of Mary **Cole** were identified as renting 61 acres described as Middle Westwater. In 1838 (Ref 7) John **Denning** was at Middle Westwater, where he farmed 69 acres, having taken over the running of the farm in 1833 on the death of his father, James¹¹⁰. The Denning family had apparently been there since at least 1818, when they had been party to an apprenticeship¹¹¹. John was still there in 1841C, and in 1851C, when the farm had grown slightly to 80 acres, and again in 1861C when it was shown as 70 acres. He had by then married Mary Gage, whose father Joseph had at one time farmed Great Trill.

At the time of the 1860 sale John Denning was listed as the tenant at Middle Westwater, but the 'main' farm was only just over 38 acres, and the additional land that he rented as odd fields amounted to no more than 15-20 acres. This is at slight variance with the census returns reported above.

In 1866D, 1870D and 1871C William **Tucker** was the farmer, with 55 acres in 1871C. He may or may not have been from a branch of the Tucker family of Coryton Park who had offered the farm for sale in 1860. He was still there in 1873D, but by 1878D George Tucker had taken over. 1881C lists George Tucker with 80 acres. He was still there in 1883D and 1889D.

In 1891C John **Bright** was the farmer at Middle Westwater, but by 1893D he had given way to John **Stone** (who at that time was farming at Westwater, but without the farm being specified). However, a valuation carried out on 1 January 1898 (Ref 9) names John Stone as the outgoing tenant of Middle Westwater, and James **Newbery** as the incoming tenant. The valuation covered stocks of hay and straw to be left on the farm, swedes in the ground etc. 1901C and 1902D both identify James Newbery as the farmer at Middle Westwater, though a further valuation report in March 1902 shows that he was at that point preparing to leave.

By 1906D William **Dunstan** had bought the farm, and was living there, followed in 1910D and 1911C by George Henry Gilbard **Gerry**, born c.1876 at Callington, Cornwall, as his tenant. Ref 12 gives the size of the farm as 71 acres. During his relatively brief stay he was prosecuted for sending milk with low butter-fat to the dairy (Ref 10, WT 15 Apr 1910). The report on that case also names his dairyman as Thomas Froome.

In 1913 Middle Westwater (then 74 acres) was sold by William Dunstan to Edith Webber (my grandmother), shortly before her marriage to Percy **Knapman**. In 1921 (Ref 10, EPG 7 Jan 1921) Percy Knapman bought four adjacent fields totalling 13 acres at auction, for £500. My grandparents farmed Middle Westwater until Percy's death in 1957, soon after which their son William Percy (Bill) Knapman, my father, bought the farm, and stayed there until his retirement. In 1993 he sold most

¹¹⁰ Source: Christopher Moran, personal communication, 2016.

¹¹¹ DHC ref 406-A-2.

of the land in two parcels (17 and 59 acres) to Dudley E **Hurford** (the son of Ernest William Hurford of Lower Westwater) and Peter **Dare** (of Coryton Park Farm, Kilmington) respectively. They had between them farmed much of the land on annual grass keep contracts for some years. The farm cottage and buildings with limited planning permission for residential use, were sold separately, together with the balance of the land and the fishing rights.

Higher Westwater

In 1824 (Ref 6) Higher Westwater (72 acres) was being rented by William **Tucker**, as was Cox's Wood (65 acres) and Brewishayes (61 acres).

In 1838 (Ref 7) John **Seaward** was farming 190 acres at Higher Westwater, making him the third largest farmer in Axminster parish at that time. He had probably been there in 1828 (see Appendix 3), and he was still there in 1841C, but he died aged 70 soon after the census had been taken (Ref 1, page 666 et seq). In 1851C Mary Seaward, presumably his widow, was the farmer, of 180 acres. Notwithstanding her listing, John Seaward (probably her son) was identified as the farmer in 1856D and 1857D. However, Mary was there in 1861C, with 200 acres, and her father (William Loveridge, a retired farmer) was staying with her. No farmer was listed in 1866D or 1870D.

At the time of the 1860 sale (see above) the 'main farm' of Higher Westwater was listed as 189 acres, let to William and John Seaward. William Seaward had a further 13 acres between Cox's Wood and the Membury Road which was offered for sale as a separate lot, as well as Woodhouse Farm (see above) and some other odd fields.

On 30 November 1870 Higher Westwater was again offered for sale by auction by Messrs Wainwright & Heard, this time at the George Hotel, Chard. At that time the farm amounted to just over 198 acres and ran all the way to Musbury Road, including the eastern half of Cox's Wood and fields above the wood accessed from Musbury Road.

In 1871C William **Roberts** was farming Higher Westwater, with 200 acres. He was there in 1873D, 1878D and 1878/79D, but in 1881C only James **Griffin**, dairyman, was listed at Higher Westwater.

In 1883D George **Dare** was farming an unspecified farm at Westwater: I suspect it was Higher Westwater. He may be the same George Frederick Dare who 12 years later took on the nest door Yeatlands Farm (see below).

In 1889D an unspecified **Johnson** was a dairyman at Westwater; then in 1891C and 1893D he was named as John Johnson, and confirmed as the farmer of Higher Westwater. A probate valuation report (Ref 9) dated September 1895 (presumably undertaken following the death of the owner) shows that the farm was being let on an annual basis at a rental of £240. John Johnson was still the tenant in 1901C and 1902D, though a further valuation report carried out in December 1902 for the London-based Reversionary Interest Society Ltd (presumably either the new owner, or a potential bidder) shows that by then John Johnson was sub-letting the farm to his sons, who are described as hard-working young men, and desirable tenants. The farm itself is described as 198 acres with some excellent dairy pasture, generally in a good or fair state of cultivation and repair, with fishing and shooting rights and some timber.

1906D lists William Johnson as the farmer. He was still there in 1910D, and Ref 12 confirms this, and gives the size of Higher Westwater as 93 acres. However, it also shows William Johnson as the taxpayer on a further 95 acres described as Uphay, and an unnamed plot amounting to 10 acres, making 198 acres in total.

1911C shows that he had been born c.1874 at Chard, Somerset, and he remained at Higher Westwater in 1914D and 1919D. On 20 November 1919 Higher Westwater was again offered for sale¹¹², this time by Henry Duke & Son in conjunction with Messrs R&C Snell, at the George Hotel, Axminster. This time it was described as just over 206 acres, and occupied by W Johnson.

In 1923D Ambrose **Bussell** (of Loud & Bussell) was farming Higher Westwater, and in 1926D Charles Arthur Trivett **Loud** was named as the farmer. He was almost certainly from the Loud family of Seaton, and a brother of Walter Henry Loud who was farming at Lower Westwater at the same time. He died in 1932. However, by 1927 he had moved to Musbury, and a small advertisement in 1926 (Ref 10, WG 26 Mar 1926) shows that the farm was by then being run by Snook Bros, one of whom was Mr G **Snook**. In both 1930D and 1935D the farm is recorded as

¹¹² DHC ref 1476M/E/3.

being run by Snook Bros, and it is not listed in 1939D. The last reference to Mr G Snook of Higher Westwater that I have seen was in connection with a neighbour's funeral (Ref 10, EPG 17 Dec 1937). This was probably about the time when he left the farm, because it had been advertised to let (Ref 10, WG 28 Aug 1936) by W Palmer & Co and R&C Snell Ltd with effect from Lady Day 1937, described as 202 acres.

By 1942 (Ref 10, WMN 2 Dec 1942) Higher Westwater was in the possession of Thomas Bernard John **Turner**, who (certainly by the late 1950s) had a herd of Ayrshire dairy cows. He sold the farm in about 1960 to Stanley Harold **Burrow** from Colaton Raleigh, who farmed it in conjunction with his son Ken. After his father's death in 1986 Ken Burrow took over the farm, which he ran until he gradually retired and let the land to the **Hurford** family. RH&MJ Hurford bought Higher Westwater in 2014, and re-sold the house together with a small amount of the river-front land.

Yeatlands

There is a map in Ref 3 (page 53) which suggests that Yetlands was originally associated with Newenham Abbey as a 'grange farm'. Ref 2 (page 83) also mentions Yetlands in connection with Newenham. However, the 1776/78 map shows that it had by then been sold by the Petre Estate, and although surrounded by Petre land, it belonged at that time to a Mr Bradford.

Appendix 3 shows that by 1828 Thomas **Gould** was keeping cattle at Yetlands. By 1838 (Ref 7) however, Noah **Bishop** was farming Yallands, which comprised 87 acres. In 1841C the farm was recorded as Yetlands, and he was still there, as he was in 1842V (which also names George Balstone in connection with Yeatlands, though whether he had anything to do with the running of the farm I do not know).

In 1851C the farmer at Yetlands was Reuben **Swain**, with 88 acres. He was listed there in 1856D, 1857D and 1861C, when the farm was recorded again as 88 acres. He was repeatedly listed (in 1871C as a yeoman, in 1878D with both Yetlands and Tolcis, and in 1881C with 200 acres. 1889D specifies that he was the owner of Yetlands, which is very unusual for a directory entry). 1893D is the last listing for Reuben Swain at Yetlands, and on 28 July 1895 a very simple valuation was carried out at Yetlands (Ref 9) which would be consistent with his impending departure. The farm was offered for sale at auction in 1896 by Robert Snell (later of R&C Snell) (Ref 10, WG 21 Aug 1896), described as 89 acres of water meadow, pasture, orchard, arable and coppice, in a ring fence. It was also stated that the farm had recently been let on a 5-year lease to George Frederick **Dare** at a cost of £160 per year. He bought Yeatlands, either in 1895 or at some later point.

This is confirmed by both 1901C and 1902D which show George Frederick Dare, farmer and cattle dealer, at Yetlands, a position which is re-confirmed by Ref 12, which gives the size of the farm in 1910 as 81 acres. 1911C shows that he had been born c.1847 at Kilmington. He was then consistently listed there until 1926D, and in 1929 he was identified as the farmer when his son-in-law George Seller, who worked for him at Yeatlands, was buried (Ref 10, WMN 23 Feb 1929). However, he must have left Yeatlands very soon thereafter, because when he died (Ref 10, EPG 13 Dec 1935) he was described as having farmed Yeatlands for 32 years, until his retirement about 6 years earlier.

Edgar Giles **Hurford** bought Yeatlands, and 1930D lists him as the farmer. He did not stay long, however, and in 1933 he moved to Farwood Barton (between Northleigh and Southleigh, in the area where he had been married in 1930). Yeatlands was then taken over by his father, Charles Giles Hurford, who was the listed farmer in 1935D and 1939D.

Charles Giles Hurford had been born in Kilmington, where his father was the licensee of the Old Inn, but he had become a cowman, working in Sussex for a time before returning to East Devon to farm at Lower Farm, Stockland. He had four sons: Edgar Giles, Charles John (Jack), Ernest William and Richard (Dick), all four of whom farmed in Axminster parish at various times. Charles Giles Hurford was well known in local farming circles, and in 1936 he was elected to the committee of the Colyton & District Agricultural Society (Ref 10, EPG 14 Aug 1936). His youngest son Dick, who worked with him at Yeatlands, subsequently took over the farm. When he retired in 1988, the milking herd which he had built up was taken over by his nephew Dudley E Hurford (see above in connection with both Lower and Middle Westwater). Other parts of the farm were run by Dick's daughter Ann (now Bond), to whom I owe several of the details above. Since Dudley gave up the tenancy in 2011 Ann has run the whole of the farm, which now incorporates some land formerly owned by Lower Tolcis Farm.

Wellands

The 1776/78 map shows Willands where Wellands now is. It formed part of the Petre Estate at that time. Then in 1824 (Ref 6) a Mr **North** was renting 63 acres described as Willands. The size of the farm closely matches the record for Wellands in 1838 (Ref 7), when John **White** senior was farming 62 acres there. He was still there in 1841C and 1842V. Wellands was not listed in 1851C or 1861C (or in the intervening directories).

In 1866D and 1870D Thomas **Sandford** was listed, and in 1871C Henry Sandford was recorded, farming 75 acres. 1873D shows Mrs Hannah Sandford as the farmer at Wellands (and at Millbrook).

In 1878D and 1878/79D George Thornhill **Swain** was listed at Wellands, but in 1881C Frederick G Swain was the listed farmer, with 110 acres. 1883D again shows George Swain as the farmer, as do 1889D and 1890D. After a further listing of Francis G Swain as the farmer at Wellands in 1891C, 1893D reverts to George Swain. I conclude that there was only one person, whose full name was Francis George Swain, but that he generally used George.

In 1901C and 1902D John **Stone** was the farmer listed at Wellands, as he was in 1906D.

By 1910, Ref 12 names Harry **Richards** as the taxpayer at Wellands, responsible for 112 acres. This is confirmed by 1910D and 1911C, which shows that he was born c.1876 at Branscombe. He was still there in 1919D, but a valuation report (Ref 9) produced in early 1920 shows that on Lady Day he was due to leave, to be succeeded as tenant by Carell **Ellis**. The farm, totalling 130 acres, was sold at auction in early 1921 (Ref 10, EPG 7 Jan 1921) by Messrs R&C Snell Ltd on behalf of A J Knight and the estate of W H B Knight. It was bought by Mr H Watts of Yeovil for £4,925, but Carell Ellis evidently took the tenancy, and from 1923D until at least 1939D he was listed as the farmer at Wellands. As late as 1978 the EDDC planning website shows a planning application in connection with agricultural use that had been lodged by Carell Ellis of Wellands Farm, suggesting that at some stage he had bought the freehold of the farm.

The house was subsequently separated from the land, which is now managed as part of Brays Farm (which is adjacent, but on the other side of the Yarty, in Dalwood parish).

Tolcis

There is a map in Ref 3 (page 53) which suggests that Tolcis was originally associated with Newenham Abbey as a 'grange farm'. See also Ref 2 (page 83). This is supported by the fact that the 1776/78 map shows that Tollershayes (i.e. Tolcis) formed part of the Petre Estate at that time. For long periods, the land was farmed in two parts, sometimes referred to as Higher and Lower Tolcis, and what is now effectively the hamlet of Tolcis comprises several dwellings.

In 1824 (Ref 6) George **Skinner** was renting 60 acres at Tolcis. In 1838 (Ref 7) John **White** junior was farming 137 acres at Tolse Hayes, while Richard **Denning**¹¹³ was farming 37 acres at Tulse Hayes (see also Appendix 3). By 1841C the farmers at Tolshays were listed as John White and Elizabeth Denning, and in 1842V John White junior was a voter linked to Tolshays. In 1851C only John White was listed at Tollshayes, with 130 acres. He was also the only listed farmer in 1856D and 1857D.

In 1860 (see above) two separate plots of land surrounding the hamlet of Tolcis, both in the occupation of John White, were offered for sale: one amounting to 79 acres and the other to 47 acres. By 1861C the area farmed by John White had further increased to 160 acres. By about 1862, however, the two main plots were being farmed by Reuben **Swain** of Yeatlands (see above, and see below as well in the context of the 1875 sale).

A map produced when Higher Westwater was offered for sale in 1870 (see above) shows that at least that part of Tolcis which shared a boundary with Higher Westwater was owned at that time by William Seaward (who lived at, and farmed, Woodhouse: see above), and we know that Reuben Swain was running both farms at that time. In 1871C various people were listed living at Tolcis (the first time in the census returns that the modern spelling appeared), including Mrs Hannah **Burroughs**, a dairywoman. It would seem that she may have been at Tolcis for many years, because in 1878 an employee of hers (Sarah Salter) got a long-service award, having worked for

¹¹³ I am informed by Christopher Moran who is descended from the Denning family that this Richard Denning (1781 to 1839) is quite distinct from the Richard Denning who farmed at New Park. Richard Denning of Tolcis was married to Elizabeth Bond.

Mrs Burroughs for over 19 years (Ref 10, EPG 11 Oct 1878). (Although William Wakley placed press announcements when two sons were born (Ref 10, WT 17 Jan 1871 and WT 14 Jan 1879), both describing him as 'of Tolcis Farm', he was not the farmer, but worked there for many years, for Reuben Swain and his family (Ref 10, EPG 5 Jan 1912).)

A press advertisement in 1875 (Ref 10, EFP 19 May 1875) stated that Benjamin Gage (the Axminster auctioneer) would shortly be offering Higher and Lower Tolcis for sale at auction, plus two lime kilns and the blue lias quarry, evidence of which can still be seen up-hill from the farm buildings. Higher Tolcis was described as 81 acres, with Lower Tolcis being 45 acres. Both were described as comprising orchard, meadow, pasture, arable and woodland, and both were stated to be contained within a ring fence. The advertisement also confirmed that for about 13 years the land had been farmed by Reuben Swain of Yeatlands.

1881C again lists lots of people living at Tolcis, but does not appear to name any of them as farmers.

1890D and 1891C both name Francis Thornhill **Swain** (son of Reuben Swain of Yeatlands: see above) as both the farmer of Tolcis, and a lime merchant. In 1897 (Ref 10, EPG 4 Oct 1897) there was an outbreak of swine fever at Tolcis (with Francis Thornhill Swain named as the farmer), and over 20 pigs had to be slaughtered. Then in 1900 (Ref 10, 14 Feb 1900) Messrs R&C Snell announced that they had been retained to sell live and dead stock for Francis Thornhill Swain, "*... who has let the farm*". This is consistent with another press notice which had been placed a month before (Ref 10, TCWA 17 Jan 1900) by Messrs Symes & Madge of Chard offering Tolcis for rent, described as a 102 acre dairy farm with watered meadows, pasture, orchard and arable land.

In 1901C Francis Thornhill Swain was the manager of Tolcis Quarry, while Albert Edwin **Saunders** was named as the farmer. He advertised for a carter in 1903 (Ref 10, WG 13 Feb 1903), and he was still there in 1911C¹¹⁴. The census return showed that Francis Thornhill Swain had been born c.1856 at Axminster, and listed him as the manager of the lime works, with Albert Edwin Saunders (born c.1873 in Hampshire) farming Tolcis Farm. When Francis Thornhill Swain died in 1932 aged 77 (Ref 10, WT 2 Sept 1932), he was still described as 'of Tolcis', and a director of the Devon Trading Co.

By 1914D David **Mitchem** was listed as farming at Tolcis, as he was consistently until 1930D. Various press items also name him over this period (Ref 10, WT 28 July 1916, WT 2 July 1918 and TCWA 16 Nov 1927).

By 1934 (confirmed by Ref 10, EPG 13 April 1934, and then by 1935D) Charles John (Jack) **Hurford** had moved from Yeatlands (see above) to Tolcis. He was listed as the farmer at Tolcis in 1939D, and remained there for many more years, until his death in 1971. His sons Beresford and Jack took over the running of the farm, though neither lives there now. Beresford moved to Cornwall, and Jack moved to Sisterhood (see Chapter 8), while retaining some of the land at Tolcis, particularly the high ground to the north of Cox's Wood. Other parcels of land which formerly belonged to Tolcis were sold to Yeatlands and to Higher Uphay Farm (see above).

My understanding is that although the land is still farmed, there is no longer an active farmer resident at Tolcis.

Quarry Fields

The first mention of a farmer at Quarry Field appears in 1856D, when John **Smith** was listed.

After a long gap, in 1891C Noah **Aplin**, who had been an agricultural labourer at Wellands a decade before, was listed as the farmer at Quarry Field Farm, followed in 1901C by Caleb **Austin**. Ref 12 shows that he was still at Quarry Fields in 1910, when the size of the farm was given as 12 acres, with Caleb Austin also named as the taxpayer on an 8-acre plot called 'Haylands', and a further 3 acres several miles away on Trinity Hill.

In 1921 (Ref 10, WG 30 Sept 1921) Mrs **Braddick** of Quarry Fields Farm was offering weekly board, and the report of a funeral several years later of a member of the Aplin family (Ref 10, WT 21 Aug 1942) named Mrs S Braddick as a friend of the Aplin family (see above). By 1937, when he died (Ref 10, EPG 28 May 1937), Noah Aplin was farming in Membury.

¹¹⁴ Ref 12 confirms that Francis Thornhill Swain lived at Tolcis, but does not provide any detail on the farmland.

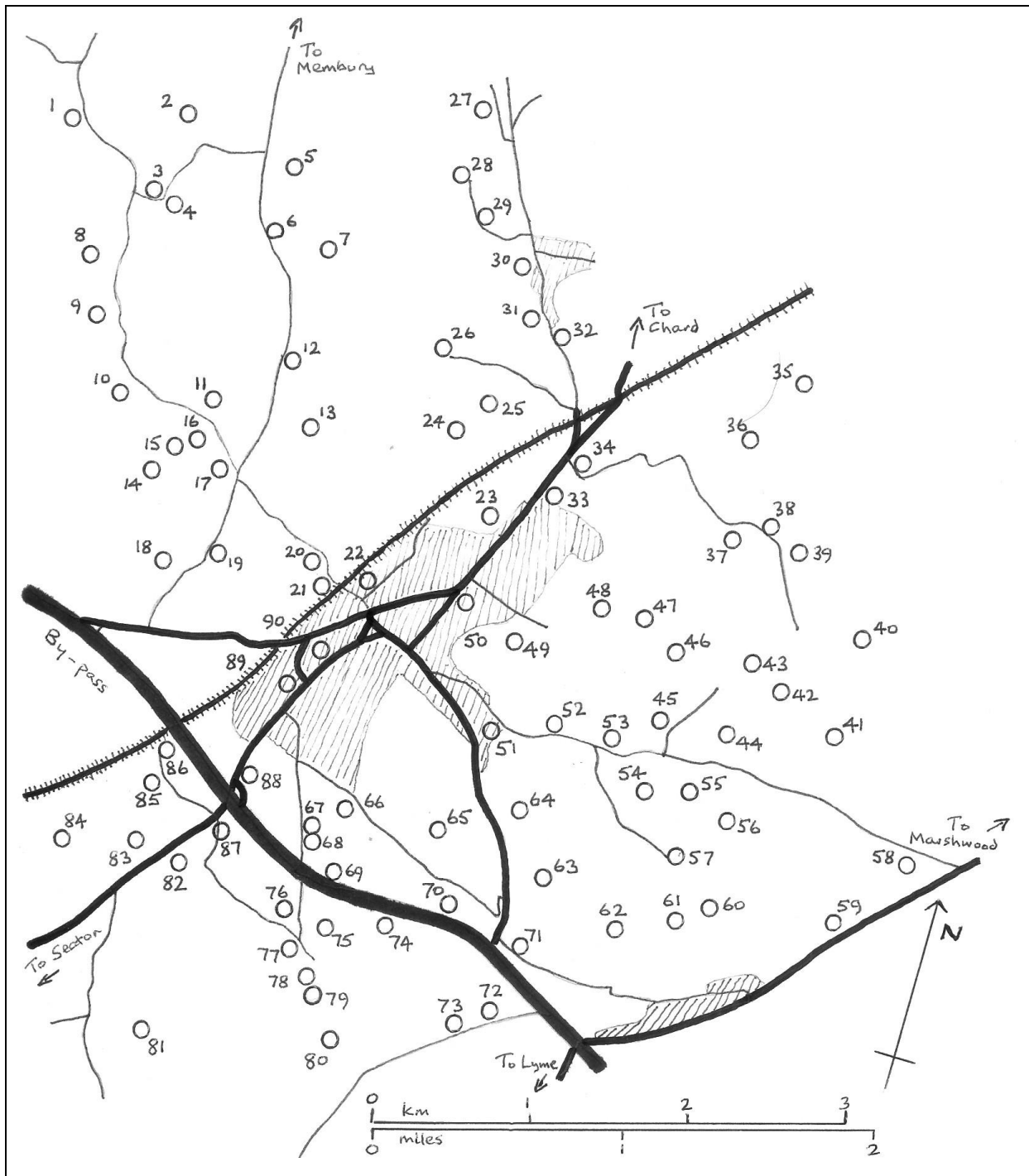
After a further gap, Ambrose **Bussell** is listed at Quarry Fields in 1926D, and then regularly until at least 1939D. The Bussell family was still there in 1946 (Ref 10, WT 1 Feb 1946) when Miss Laura Bussell died aged 61, described as 'of Quarry Fields'. She was also described as the daughter of James Bussell, who had farmed Woonton Farm, Chardstock for 30 years.

Appendix 1: Index of Axminster Farms

The sketch map below shows 90 places in Axminster parish where farms either are or used to be located. See the accompanying **Key 1** for the names of each numbered farm, using current spellings. The map shows roads, lanes and the railway, as well as indicating built up areas, but does not include the rivers.

To find a specific farm where only the name is known, use **Key 2**.

All of these farms / locations are also referred to in Chapter 2 in the section of text which deals with Routes.



Key 1: The names linked to each number on the map

1	Wellands Farm	46	Chubbs Farm
2	Quarry Field Farm	47	Little Beaver
3	Higher Tolcis Farm	48	Beulah Farm
4	Lower Tolcis Farm	49	Prestaller Farm
5	High Lea Farm	50	Millbrook Farm
6	Strangers Hill Farm	51	Sector Lane Farm
7	Sart Farm	52	Sector Farm
8	Yeatlands Farm	53	Sector Hayes Farm
9	Higher Westwater Farm	54	Lower Beavor Farm
10	Middle Westwater Farm	55	Honeybans
11	Woodhouse Farm	56	Beavor Grange Farm
12	Higher Uphay Farm	57	Coles's Farm
13	Uphay Farm	58	Hillcrest Farm (Blackpool Corner)
14	Lower Westwater Farm / Dairy	59	Newlands Farm
15	Westwater Farm	60	Little Furzeleigh
16	Wink House	61	Furzeleigh Down Farm
17	Westwater Bungalow Farm	62	Furzeleigh Farm
18	Hunthay Farm	63	Lower Furzeleigh Farm
19	Hunthay Dairy	64	Fawnsmoor Farm / Dairy
20	Blackhakes Farm	65	Old Park Farm
21	Castle Hill Farm	66	Woodbury Farm / Dairy
22	Willhays Farm	67	Jackleigh Farm
23	Cloakham Farm	68	Great Jackleigh Farm
24	Sisterhood Farm	69	Higher & Lower Wyke Farms
25	St Leonards	70	Symondsdown House
26	Greatwood Farm	71	Symonds Down Farm
27	Undercleave Farm	72	Oaklands Farm
28	Long Lea Farm	73	Hillcrest Farm (Trinity Hill)
29	Frogwell Farm	74	King's Farm
30	Highview Farm	75	Wyke Farm
31	Porch Farm	76	Unity Farm
32	Smallridge Farm	77	Rose Farm
33	Weycroft Manor Farm (new)	78	Annings Farm
34	Weycroft Manor Farm (old)	79	Highcroft Farm
35	Bagley Hill Farm	80	Tangletree Farm
36	Pinneywood Farm	81	Great Trill Farm / Dairy
37	Lodge Farm	82	Abbey Gate Farm
38	Higher Lodge Farm	83	Balls Farm
39	Pensylvania Farm	84	Slymlakes Farm
40	Old Barn Farm	85	Higher Abbey Farm
41	New Park Farm	86	Lower Abbey Farm
42	Payne's Place Farm	87	Little Jackleigh
43	Cuthays Farm	88	Shoals / Shools Farm
44	Shiles Farm	89	Hakes Farm
45	Red House Farm	90	Purzebrook Farm

Key 2: Alphabetical Index of Farms and Associated Places

Key 2 presents the 90 farms in alphabetical order, facilitating the process of finding a specific farm if only the name is known. It includes historic names now discarded, and variants on the spellings. It also includes some other place names which readers may wish to find out about, including some farms which are no longer in Axminster parish. The intention here is to short-circuit any fruitless searches.

As well as giving farms' numbers on the map (where they have them), Key 2 confirms the numbers of the Chapters where any further information can be found. Chapter 3 starts to the north of the town, dealing with most of the farms which lie to the east of the road from Castle Hill towards Membury, in the block of land which ends at Smallridge and the parish boundary. Subsequent chapters work clockwise round the compass, ending with Westwater, and the western edge of the same Membury road.

<i>Farm or place name</i>	<i>No. on Map</i>	<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Abbey Gate		8	See Little Jackleigh
Abbey Gate Farm	82	8	
Annings Farm	78	7	
Bagley Hill Farm	35	3	
Balls Farm	83	8	
Beaver		4	See Little Beaver
Beavor Grange Farm	56	6	
Beerhall Farm		2	See Remote Farms
Beulah Farm	48	4	
Blackhakes Farm	20	8	
Breweshayes		9	See Higher and Middle Westwater Farms
Castle Hill Farm	21	8	
Chattan Farm		7	See King's Farm
Chubbs Farm	46	5	
Clay Hill and Claymead		9	See Wink House
Cloakham Farm	23	8	
Coles's Farm	57	6	
Cook's Cottages		6	See Symonds Down Farm
Cuthays Farm	43	5	
Easthay		2	See Remote Farms
Fawnsmoor Farm / Dairy	64	6	
Frogwell Farm	29	3	
Furzeleigh Down Farm	61	6	
Furzeleigh Farm	62	6	
Great Jackleigh Farm	68	7	
Great Trill Farm / Dairy	81	7	
Greatwood Farm	26	3	
Haccomb-fee Manor		2	See A 'lost' Manor
Hakes Farm	89	8	
High Lea Farm	5	3	
Highcroft Farm	79	7	
Higher & Lower Wyke Farms	69	7	
Higher Abbey Farm	85	8	
Higher Beavor		6	See Beavor Grange Farm
Higher Furzeleigh Farm		6	See Furzeleigh Down Farm
Higher Jackleigh Farm		7	See Jackleigh Farm

Farm or place name	No. on Map	Chapter	Notes
Higher Lodge Farm	38	4	
Higher Tolcis Farm	3	9	
Higher Uphay Farm	12	3	
Higher Westwater Farm	9	9	
Highview Farm	30	3	
Hillcrest Farm (Blackpool Corner)	58	6	
Hillcrest Farm (Trinity Hill)	73	7	
Honeybans	55	6	
Hunthay Dairy	19	8	
Hunthay Farm	18	9	
Jackleigh Farm	67	7	
King's Farm	74	7	
Little Beaver	47	4	
Little Furzeleigh	60	6	
Little Jackleigh	87	8	
Lodge Farm	37	4	
Long Lea Farm	28	3	
Lower Abbey Farm	86	8	
Lower Beavor Farm	54	6	
Lower Furzeleigh Farm	63	6	
Lower Tolcis Farm	4	9	
Lower Westwater Farm / Dairy	14	9	
Lower Wyke Farm		7	See Higher & Lower Wyke Farm
Middle Westwater Farm	10	9	
Millbrook Farm	50	4	
Mount Farm		4	In Weycroft area
New Park Farm	41	5	
Newlands Farm	59	6	
Oaklands Farm	72	7	
Old Barn Farm	40	5	
Old Park Farm	65	6	
Payne's Place Farm	42	5	
Pennsylvania Farm	39	4	
Pinneywood Farm	36	4	
Porch Farm	31	3	
Prestaller Farm	49	4	
Punch Cottage		6	See Sector Lane Farm
Purzebrook Farm	90	8	
Quarry Field Farm	2	9	
Red House Farm	45	5	
Rose Farm	77	7	
Sart Farm	7	3	
Sector Farm	52	6	
Sector Hayes Farm	53	5	
Sector Lane Farm	51	6	
Shapwick Grange Farm		2	See Remote Farms
Shiles Farm	44	5	

Farm or place name	No. on Map	Chapter	Notes
Shoals / Shools Farm	88	8	
Sisterhood Farm	24	8	
Slymlakes Farm	84	8	
Smallridge Farm	32	3	
Spearhay Farm		2	See Remote Farms
St Leonards	25	8	
Strangers Hill Farm	6	3	
Symonds Down Farm	71	6	
Symondsdwn House	70	6	
Tangletree Farm	80	7	
Tolcis		9	See Higher and Lower Tolcis Farms
Tolhays / Tolsehayes / Tulsehayes		9	See Higher and Lower Tolcis Farms
Tuck Mill Farm		2	See Remote Farms
Undercleave Farm	27	3	
Unity Farm	76	7	
Uphay Farm	13	3	
Wellands Farm	1	9	
Westwater Bungalow Farm	17	9	
Westwater Farm	15	9	
Weycroft Manor Farm (new)	33	4	
Weycroft Manor Farm (old)	34	4	
Willhays Farm	22	8	
Wink House	16	9	
Woodbury Farm / Dairy	66	7	
Woodhouse Farm	11	9	
Wyke Farm	75	7	
Yallands / Yetlands		9	See Yeatlands Farm
Yeatlands Farm	8	9	
Zart Farm		3	See Sart Farm

Appendix 2: On-line Mapping from 1800 Onwards

There is a remarkable range of mapping available on-line, and the purpose of this Appendix is to pull together in one place information on where and how to find those maps which date from the 'modern era' of surveying, starting with the **Ordnance Survey (OS) First Series** map which, in the case of Devon, was published in 1809, based on a survey made in 1808/09. This was followed by **Greenwood's map** of 1827.

After a considerable gap we then have the **6"-to-the-mile OS** map of Devon, published in 1891, based on a survey made in 1886/87.

The three main websites where these maps can be viewed are visionofbritain.org.uk, british-history.ac.uk and nls.uk (the website of the National Library of Scotland). Greenwood's map can be accessed via the devon.gov.uk website. None of these websites require users to subscribe or register. The first two provide access to the 1809 and 1891 maps respectively, via specific map sheets (see below), whereas nls.uk has linked the various sheets into a continuous (though not quite seamless) display.

To access the **1809 map**, go to the home page of visionofbritain.org.uk and click on 'historical maps' and then 'topographical maps'. The map that covers Axminster is Sheet 21. The same survey provides the base mapping for an 1844 geological map, which is also worth viewing because of the extra information which it provides. It can be found via the bgs.ac.uk/data/maps website, by selecting 'Geological Survey of England & Wales 1:63,360 geological map series [Old Series]' and then Sheet 21. Sheet 22 covers the coast, from Sidmouth to Lyme Regis.

For **Greenwood's map of 1827** go to devon.gov.uk/devonmaps and the section called 'early maps'. Click anywhere on the map of Devon and you will be taken to the relevant segment of Greenwood's map. Unfortunately Axminster is at the corner of four segments. Nevertheless it is relatively easy to navigate around.

The parish maps produced as part of the **tithing apportionment** process (which in the case of Axminster was carried out in 1838) are detailed, but not complete. This is because they exclude land which was exempt from tithes, which included a substantial proportion of Axminster parish. Details on where to find the maps for Axminster and adjacent parishes on-line are given in Chapter 1, under the heading 'Key sources and references'.

For the **1891 map**, the quickest way to find the map sheet(s) covering any location is to use the british-history.ac.uk website, and then to put either the modern postcode or the place name into the website's main search box. If you put a place name the list of results that is then offered is not restricted to maps, whereas if you put 'EX13' (or any other modern postcode of interest) you will simply be offered a list of maps from which to choose. Beware: the descriptions (e.g. the villages named in association with specific map sheets) can be a bit arbitrary.

If you know which map sheet you want, you can simply put (for example) '072/NW' into the search box, and then select the map sheet from Devon. Each numbered sheet comes in four quarters: NW, NE, SW and SE. Most of Axminster parish can be found on Devon sheets 072/NW and 072/SW, though the area to the east of the town is also well covered by Dorset sheet 027/SE. Other sheets relevant to Axminster parish include Devon 071/NE (for Yeatlands and Higher Westwater) and 059/SE (for Wellands), as well as Somerset sheet 095/NE (for Smallridge and adjacent areas).

Having found the right map sheet, click first on 'View result' and then on the square symbol below the + and - controls (when your mouse is in the right place the words 'View full screen' will be seen). Click on the + symbol at least once to focus on the place of interest to you.

The nls.uk website is not so easy to use at first, but is well worth the effort. To get to the right place go through the following sequence.

- Hover your cursor over 'Digital resources' and select 'Map images' from the list of options offered
- Click on 'Series maps'
- Scroll down and click on 'Ordnance Survey Six-inch England & Wales, 1842-1952'
- Click on 'Seamless zoomable overlay area 1888-1913'

By clicking and dragging on the large-scale map you can navigate yourself to the place you want. This has the advantage that the various map sheets have been put together into one big map.

It has another very big advantage, which is that by using the 'drop-down' box on the left of your screen you can change the map you are looking at. The **'OS 25 inch, 1890s-1920s'** option is particularly good.

In the sequence of clicks set out above, you can change the final choice to show the old map alongside a modern map or satellite image, or to show the individual map sheet boundaries. Whereas the british-history.ac.uk website has modernised the numbering of map sheets (e.g. 072/NW), the nls.uk website uses Roman numerals (e.g. LXXII.NW).

When using this sheet boundary option, by going to the right-hand side of your screen you can select from the particular version of the map that you want to look at (and you also have the option of buying any of the maps revealed in this way as either paper or digital copies).

For the **25"-to-the-mile OS mapping**, the sheets which cover the parish of Axminster are shown below. The darker grey shaded sheets cover the town and its immediate surrounds. The other listed sheets contain outlying parts of the parish (sometimes only very small parts). The lighter grey sheets typically show more than one farm.

LIX.16	LX.13	LX.14	
LXXII.4	LXXII.1	LXXII.2	LXXII.3
LXXI.1	LXXII.5	LXXII.6	LXXII.7
	LXXII.9	LXXII.10	LXXII.11
	LXXII.13	LXXII.14	

The survey made in 1903 was used as the basis for mapping up to 1938. One cannot be certain that all changes over that period were necessarily picked up in the printed revisions.

The bgs.ac.uk/data/maps (see above in the context of the 1809 map) also offers the 'Geological Survey of England & Wales 1:63,360 [New Series]' published in 1906, based on a different series of base maps, but again offering helpful information. Axminster is covered by 'Sheet 326, 340 (Sidmouth)'.

The visionofbritain.org.uk website (see above in the context of the 1809 map) also offers access to **OS mapping from 1945-48**, which is actually based on a survey from 1930 with later corrections. The map showing Axminster is Sheet 177.

Current mapping is available via Sheet 116 of the 1:25,000 OS map in their 'Explorer Map' series, or on-line via the East Devon DC website (eastdevon.gov.uk). From their home page click on 'View planning applications' and then on the 'Map' tab, and then zoom in to the place of interest.

The simplest way to see the **current parish boundary** superimposed onto modern OS base mapping is to use the neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk website. From their home page select the map viewer, put 'Axminster' into the search box, and choose 'Axminster, East Devon' from the options then offered. Now click on 'Parishes 2011' in the list of boundaries offered, and finally click on 'Update map' to see the map itself.

Less easy-to-use mapping is also available on the devon.gov.uk website (put 'footpaths' into their search box, choose the option called Public Rights of Way and then click on 'interactive map'): this provides definitive guidance on the routes of **footpaths and bridleways**.

Finally, there is good base mapping on the geograph.org.uk website, which also includes **photographs** of many of the farms that are mentioned in this document. It is not the easiest website to navigate, but a bit of trial and error can be rewarding. (Hint: having used the search function to find a relevant photograph, use the map function to find other nearby images).

Appendix 3: An 1828 Survey of Cow Keeping in Axminster

The following information comes from a source that I found in the DHC, namely James Davidson's unpublished 'Collections for a History of the Town and Parish of Axminster'. The main 'History' runs to over 750 hand-written pages, bound into a single large volume (DHC ref Z19/21/1). It was completed in 1832, but the accompanying, and substantially larger, bound book of notes (called the 'Collections') includes some information which he gathered after 1832 (DHC ref Z19/21/2).

On pages 1075 to 1077 of the 'Collections' he provides a list entitled 'Occupiers of land that are titheable to the vicar, 1828. Number of cows kept'. This is followed by an equivalent list of cows kept on farms which were exempt from tithes.

I have no way on knowing how 'cow' was defined, or how the information on the numbers of animals being kept was collected. However the large number of farmers with 20 cows, and the absence of any with 17 to 19 or 21 to 25, is consistent with information collected by Charles Vancouver in his 1808 assessment of farming in Devon, which explains how 20-cow dairies were regarded as the standard 'building blocks' of the commercial butter-making sector.

The total number of cows came to 919 (776 on titheable land, 143 on exempt land), with most of them being kept by farmers with 10 or more cows. These larger herds accounted for 596 out of 776 cows (77%) on titheable land, and 122 out of 143 cows (85%) on exempt land.

Some of these cows were kept on the remote farms (e.g. Shapwick), but I have no realistic way of reliably separating these out from the main body of data, because the farms are only named in a minority of cases.

In descending order of scale, the numbers are as follows. Farms marked with an asterisk (*) were exempt from tithes.

No of cows	Proprietors	Sub-total
40	George Davey Ewens, John White.	80
32	Henry Fowler.	32
26	John Seaward.	26
25	Lawrence Mellar.	25
20	Thomas Barns, John Bradfield, James Gill (Slymlakes*), John Harvey (Woodhouse), Francis Harvey, James Hoare, Robert Mullins, William Mullins (Lodge*), George Phippen, Mr Row (Balls*), Samuel Swain, James White (Millbrook / Sector*), William Whitemoor.	260
16	Thomas Baslyan, James Denning, Thomas Gould (Yetlands), John Welch.	64
15	James Chick, William Newbery (probably Symondsdown), James Swain (Abbey).	45
14	James French, Benjamin Hodder, James Pavy, James Rendall, George Slyfield.	70
12	Henry Bussell, Jack Hill, Mr Wakley (Weycroft*).	36
10	Bernard Cox, Richard Denning (Furzley), Richard Denning (Tolshays), Richard Denning (Park), William Henley (Horslears*), William Norman (Raymonds Hill*), Samuel Stoodley, John White (Shapwick*).	80
< 10	On titheable land (I did not write down all of the names).	180
< 10	On exempt land (I did not write down all of the names).	21
	Total	919

I understand from Christopher Moran, who has researched the Denning family in some depth, that the Richard Dennings who farmed at Tolshays and (New) Park and kept 10 cows each are different persons. I do not know whether one of them also kept 10 cows at Furzley, or whether there was a third person of that name. A similar uncertainty attaches to John White.

By way of context, there are about 40 named cow keepers in the table above (the precise number depending on the answer to the question posed in the previous paragraph), while the 1831 census counted 99 farmers in Axminster parish, of whom 67 employed non-family labour and 32 did not. By the time allowance has been made for all of the smaller cow keepers, it is clear that most Axminster farms had a dairy in the late 1820s.