

APOLOGY AND CAUTIONARY NOTE

This piece by Mr Higgins was posted on the internet in good faith but without any attempt by me to confirm the accuracy of these memories with any of the current residents of the village. In hindsight this was a serious error of judgement on my part and, of course, I wish to express my sincere apologies for any distress caused by any statements or comments that are untrue or misleading.

Future researchers into the life of this village will need to appreciate that these comments are the personal memories of a former resident and should therefore be treated with caution.

Michael Fraser

MEMORIES OF OBORNE

contributed by Mr John Higgins
together with additional information from various sources.

The following are a few memories supplied by my elder sister Una M Smith (nee Higgins) born in 1935 and who lived in Osborne until her marriage at the age of about 21.

A Mrs Robertson lived at The Grange during the Second World War. She previously lived at Poyntington Manor and I believe she lost sons and her husband in the war. She was a small lady and took a great interest in the Sunday School and Village School making sure we had parties with jam buns and gifts from the Christmas tree. I remember receiving a Bo-Peep Doll and books at different times. Mr & Mrs Pope came to The Grange towards the end of the war from India. They had a son and were lovely people being very interested in the Church and School. The flags were displayed at Fetes etc. at The Grange. A gardener was employed and lived at Grange Cottage. This was 2 cottages then until Mrs Fraser (*note-no relation as far as I am aware, Michael Fraser*) purchased them and converted them into one property.

My Grandfather purchased the first section of the Old Bell Inn cottages for £500 (?) when his elder son Albert G Higgins (our father) was granted a section of land at Osborne when he was discharged from the Grenadier Guards after the First World War and the Higgins family went to live at Osborne (but this cottage is really in the parish of Castleton). As shown on the rural rates invoices The Old Bell Inn was supposed to have been a Coaching Inn on the London to Exeter road then made into three cottages. One outside water tap was the only supply for all the properties from the railway bridge to the Chancel. All the water had to be carried home by the residents. The

Deeds for the first cottage (our home) were seen at Ffooks and Grimleys Solicitors offices in Sherborne. One service a year was held at St Cuthbert's Chancel on Trinity Sunday.

The headmistress at Osborne School was a Mrs Hoover followed by Mrs England. The children from Poyntington were bussed every day to Osborne C of E school. Hot lunches were supplied (from Sherborne) for pupils who could not get home for lunch and back to school by 1.30 p.m. It was a good rural school and had its fair share of wartime evacuees so a second teacher was employed. It was very much involved with the Church and Rectory.

Most of the agricultural holdings were small and almost all had cider apples – very pretty in the Spring. The people plus children collected their wartime patties from Mrs Robertson at The Grange once a week then hurried home to eat them for lunch. Mainly swede, potatoes, turnips and onion and very little meat but much appreciated with Oxo gravy.

Water was pumped to Higher Clatcombe with underground water rams and an old pump house. I do not remember anything about a mill. There was a water wheel at Grange Farm on the corner of Poyntington Road.

The next section refers to many of the properties in Osborne. I have attached copies of the sketch maps drawn by Mr Higgins to which all of the house numbers refer – and they can easily be identified on Google maps and using Google Streetview. I have added, in italics, for each house any other information that I have currently been provided with from a range of sources. I hope, when residents and former residents see these entries, they will be able to contribute more information (and, of course, corrections) about any of the properties and their memories or discoveries about them.

The following are my memories of Osborne. I was born in 1943 and lived permanently in the village until I was 17 and left home in 1960 because of work. I continued to visit home until my father died in 1968 and my mother moved to Henstridge in about 1970. This means my main memories of the village are for the decade 1950 to 1960.

Layout, houses and residents 1950-60 (please read in conjunction with sketch maps – not to scale) :

Houses 1 and 2 (top of Dodge Cross Hill) Farm Cottages belonging to Marsh Farm. I can't remember the names of the residents. A new house was built on the opposite side of the road (late 60s or early 70s) for the owners of the nursery/market garden.

The following extracts from The Queen Thorne Parish Magazine refer to welcomes and farewells to people in houses 4 & 5 and the new house mentioned in the previous paragraph, known as "Four Acres"

MARCH 1981

Welcome: MRS MURRAY from Perthshire to Castle Road, Osborne

ERIC & MARIE BLACKSHAW from Sherborne to Dodd's Cross

DECEMBER 1982

Welcome to WENDY & ANDREW CHANDLER to 280 Dodge Cross. Congratulations on their marriage in October

NOVEMBER 1984

JOANNE & JEREMY BURGESS moving into 278 Osborne Road (QTN)

DECEMBER 1985

Congratulations MR & MRS FURLONG of Durrant's Close, Sherborne on golden wedding on 9th November. Lived until recently at Dodge Cross when Mr Furlong worked at Blackmarsh Farm. (QTN)

AUGUST 1993

Welcome: BOB & SANDRA TWIGGINS from Linlithgow to Four Acres, Dodge Cross. (Bob worked for BP)

House 3 Marsh Farm (now known as Blackmarsh Farm) – the biggest farm in the village. Mr and Mrs Stanley Hunt plus their son Robert who took over the farm on the death of his father. Stanley was very involved with village life and was a Church Warden for many years. *The farm is owned by Sherborne Castle Estates, and, as Robert Hunt and his wife Margaret have now retired to Milborne Port, the current tenants are Robert's son, Peter, and his wife Amanda with their family. Because of the need for many dairy farmers to diversify, a retail venture known as The Toy Barn is also run at the farm.*

Houses 4 & 5 Farm cottages belonging to Marsh Farm. House 4 – Mr & Mrs Harold Chandler and family. Harold Chandler worked at Marsh Farm but later went on to be a ganger on the railway but was tragically killed when struck by a train. They moved to one of the council houses (Bangers Cottages). Their daughter, Barbara Pitman, still, I think, cleans the church and keeps the graveyard very well.

House 5 – Mr & Mrs Meaker (retired). Miss Meaker their daughter and her son Michael Meaker (who was a little younger than me. Before his retirement I think Mr Meaker was the stockman at the farm.

House 6. Was this building originally a Toll/Turnpike building? Mr & Mrs Twine (retired) *Evidence that this, indeed, a toll house can be found at the following site: <http://www.turnpikes.org.uk/Dorset%20-%20Sherborne.htm> It is known as "Pathfinder Turnpike" and I believe it is now a holiday cottage. I have the following other snippet of information: JULY 1986 death MRS HALLETT of Pathfinder, Osborne Rd, Sherborne.*

House 7, 8 and 9. Originally the public house – *The Bell Inn*

House 7. (Haywards Cottage) The Higgins Family – see later history below

House 8. (London Road Cottage) Was occupied/owned by an elderly spinster. On her death property bought by the local council and occupied by Mr & Mrs Phillips (retired)

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002) & Michael Fraser May 2011

Currently: Peter & June Alexander

Previously Jim & Shirley Brookes – they moved back to Oxfordshire in about 2006

Previously, Mr & Mrs Biddlecombe. Mr Biddlecombe was a retired major in the Military Police.

Mrs Mary Biddlecombe (father Mr Chester @ Crackmoor Farm) worked for Phillips the auctioneers. She was originally a pupil at Osborne School, and went on to study at the LSE.

Their daughter is Elizabeth.

Mr Chester & John Biddlecombe are both buried at Poyntington - apparently they had some sort of falling out with the church at Osborne.

Mary is now living in New Town, Milborne Port in a cottage that was her father's and apparently was almost condemned when Mary went to live there.

These are extracts from The Queen Thorne parish magazine:

JUNE 1984

Welcome: MR & MRS WHITELEY into London Road Cottage & congratulate them on recent birth of baby GEMMA (QTN)

NOVEMBER 1985

Welcome: MR & MRS JOHN BIDDLECOMBE & ELIZABETH to London Road Cottage. MRS BIDDLECOMBE was MARY CHESTER, daughter of C. CHESTER, now of Milborne Port. (QTN)

SEPTEMBER 1997

Farewell MRS MARY BIDDLECOMBE & ELIZABETH from London Road Cottage to Milborne Port. Welcome JOHN & KAREN ECKETT & ZOE, SAM & CHARLOTTE (? To London Road Cottage?)

AUGUST 1999

Welcome: SHIRLEY & JIM BROOKES to London Road Cottage.

House 9. (Church Farm Cottage) This split into two. One half occupied by Mr & Mrs Wilf Cheeseman and the other by Wilf's two spinster sisters. Wilf (who was semi-retired) had a small holding with a few farm buildings round the back of houses 7, 8 and 9 and some fields over the railway bridge to the right and also beyond Poyntington. A very small dairy was alongside house number 9. Gerald Smith (who was to become my brother-in-law [husband of Una my middle sister] used to do the milking (and most of the work!) for Wilf.

Church Farm Cottage

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002 and entries from "The Queen Thorne")

Currently: Michael & Christine Fraser.

Previously Alec & Doris Dick. Alec's hobby was as a clockmaker. Alec's brother Arnold owned an antique shop in Newlands, Sherborne.

2. Account given to me by Mrs JENNIFER TAYLOR at Osborne Fete August 2002:

Inhabited by Wilfred CHEESEMAN whose first wife was BELLA. There were no children and she died in her bed. His 2nd wife was DAISY from Milborne Port who cleaned at Stone House for ANGELA EVANS

Next door (which may have also been part of Church Farm Cottage (Barbara Pitman has described it as once being 2 cottages with the entrance around the back) were 2 of Wilfred's sisters: ELSIE & IVY CHEESEMAN

Wilfred had 4 cows in the field above Bangers, but milked them on the field behind the Post Office, when Mrs HIGGINS was there) and his dairy was a lean-to by the cottage (behind the bus stop)He paid JENNIFER FOOT 3d a week to drive the cows up to the field.

3. Notes provided by David Andrews in back of copy of "WOBURNAM":

From Charities Report 1890:

Date of lease - March 31st 1768

Tenant: Joseph Pitman

Description of premises - messuage & 2 new cottages adjoining the churchyard at Osborne nr Sherborne & ¾ acres of land

Lives in Being - John LOADER, THOMAS WALLS, JAMES PITMAN

Age at time of granting: 12, 2, 11

Rent: 12/-

Last Fine: £24-0-0

Annual value by MR OWENS survey 1812 - £12-0-0

Earliest reference to Post Office: 1.4.1870 appt of RICHARD GILLINGHAM as postmaster (PO Directories/Kelly's - Gillingham still there in 1885

FEBRUARY 1997

Welcome to PAUL & MICHELLE ELLERY – Church Farm Cottage. (QTN)

NOVEMBER 2000

Welcome MIKE & CHRISTINE FRASER to Church Farm Cottage.

House 10. (Ivy House Farm) Initially occupied by Mr and Mrs Archibald Cheeseman (not related to Wilf) and their two daughters Audrey and ?. They moved on semi-retirement to House 12. Mr and Mrs Fred and Ruth Foote and their daughter Jennifer (contemporary of mine) moved from a farm on the Digby Estate, Sherborne Park. On retirement Mr & Mrs Foote moved to Henstridge and the farm was taken over by Mr & Mrs Meyer who had originally been at Grange Farm. This is the farm that has the Tythe/Winninging barn that you [Mr Ken Matthews of The Grange Hotel & Restaurant] mention.

Ivy House Farm

Current owners: Mike & Karen Higham

Earlier tenants: Peter & Jayne Fry (see below)

Previous tenants: The Ropers who originally rented Lower Farm House as a working farm of about 50 acres.

They now live in a bungalow near Bob & Sandra Twiggins

Extracts from The Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

FEBRUARY 1992

3 Jan: Funeral of IDA AMY CHEESEMAN (nee CORNICK) Born at Butterwick Farm, Holwell, 87 years old. One of 13 children, walked the 2.5 miles to Holwell School in all weathers. Then some years cheese making on her sister's farm at Evershot before marrying VIC CHEESEMAN at Hazelbury Bryan in 1924. Settled at Ivy House Farm where they farmed for 36 years before retiring to The White House. She loved her garden and shared plants generously. Member of the PCC. VIC aged 96 was unable to be at the service in person. Daughters AUDREY & PAT, 4 grand-children and 5 great-grand-children. (QTN)

MARCH 1994

Funeral of ALBERT VICTOR CHEESEMAN 28 Jan

Born Sherborne 1895. Early life at Queen's Head Inn (which is no longer) at Coldharbour with

parents and brother Archie. Attended Abbey School (5 successive generations of family educated there). WWI in Dorset Yeomanry, riding horses at the front in France. Married AMY CORNICK and they started farming at Osborne – tenants of Digby Estate for many years. Daughters AUDREY & PAT born at Ivy House Farm. On retirement moved to White House. Wife died 2 years ago. He became disabled and blind and was cared for by staff of Ludbourne Hall, Sherborne. Died in Riverside Nursing Home where he died peacefully just short of his 99th year. (QTN)

MAY 1994

PETER & JAYNE FRY + HALEY & DANIEL to Ivy House Farm

NOVEMBER 1995

Yeohead PC (21 Sept): Planning application: Ivy House Farm – construct silage pit.

DECEMBER 1997

Yeohead PC (30 October): Planning approval: Ivy House Farm – erect extension to cubicle house

SEPTEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (8 July): Grant of planning permission to Ivy House Farm to erect general purpose barn.

NOVEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (9 Sept): Planning permission granted: Ivy House Barn – erect barn

2005-6.

Peter & Jayne Fry had to move to Dorchester owing to Peter being diagnosed with motor neurone disease. The house and Crates Field behind were put up for sale at auction but were not sold until some months later to private buyers, Paul & Leigh McNamara. They erected a stable block in the field together with a menage for dressage training of their two horses. However, in 2006 they decided they couldn't really stand living in Osborne, some reasons were personal, others were the traffic on the A30 and the feeling that, somehow, they felt ignored by most of the villagers. They sold within 24 hours to a retired Dorset farmer who also has horses.

House 11. The Stone House. This house was bought by the National Farmer's Union and occupied by Mr and Mrs Evans and their children Gareth and Megan who went to the Catholic School in Sherborne. Mr Evans was the Secretary of the Dorset Branch of the NFU. It is thought that the Stone House was originally some sort of rural factory possibly producing mustard. There were always some unusual yellow coloured flower plants that grew alongside the brook/drainage ditch that runs alongside the road from the farm buildings to house number 6 where it joined the river Yeo.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Owned by Ian & Sally Baxter. (Ian is a Lt Commander in the Royal Navy)

Before the Baxter's were the Gregory's

(The Sherburn's knew Dr Tony Gregory in Stanstead)

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

FEBRUARY 1983

Goodbye in January to ANN & MICHAEL WILLIAMS, EDWARD & ROSAMUND from the Stone House (QTN)

AUGUST 1983

Welcome: MR & MRS HANNA + NATALIE, NIGEL, NOEL into the Stone House (QTN)

MAY 2000

Farewell to IAN, SALLY, JACK, IMOGEN & DAISY BAXTER on posting to RAF Huntingdon for 4 years.

House 12. The White House. Mr and Mrs A Cheeseman and their two daughters (See House 10). Mr Cheeseman had a small area of land where he raised a few chickens. I think one of his daughters married a Mr Swain and lived in House number 31.

Current owners: Jason & Karen Perryman with children Rudi and Frankie. Jason is a parish councillor on Yeohead & Castleton Parish Council.

Extracts from The Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

FEBRUARY 1984

Congratulations to MR & MRS CHEESEMAN of White House on birth of 5th great grand-child (now have 3 g-g-daughters and 3 g-g-sons)

AUGUST 1984

And to MR & MRS CHEESEMAN of the White House – celebrated their diamond wedding on 16th July – 2 dau, 4 g'ch, 5 g-g-ch. (QTN)

House 13. The Thatched Cottage. Occupied by Miss Jeans a spinster.

Current owners: David & Anne Andrews.

House 14. (Hillside Cottage) Mrs Franks (and lodger). Mrs Franks caught the bus every day to Yeovil where she worked in a department store.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Current owners: Chris & Joanne Boyce. Joanne is a secretary at Westlands in Yeovil. Chris is an RAF pilot on secondment to the Royal Navy.

The previous owners were Brian & Sheila Shotter, who moved to Mere. Brian was a retired aero engineer at Westlands.

(Chris breeds rare pigeons and other birds - and a lovely black & white pigeon he owned has adopted Peter Fry as a surrogate partner after his mate died and now follows him everywhere during the day, but returns here at night. All attempts to persuade him to stay at Hillside Cottage, including providing him with another mate, have been unsuccessful. The pigeon originally tried to adopt Michael & Christine Fraser at Church Farm Cottage, but decided Peter Fry was more interesting!)

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

SEPTEMBER 1980 (QTN)

Deanery Synod Rep: MR B SHOTTER, Hillside Cottage

MARCH 1999

Farewell to BRIAN & SHEILA SHOTTER in January. Welcome to Hillside Cottage: CHRIS & JOANNE BOYCE & ALEX (10) & CRAIG (8)

House 15. Mr & Mrs Bert Millar (plus female relative lodger – who worked either in Sherborne or Yeovil in a shop.) The Millars were retired but the house was always surrounded by flocks of chickens.

This now includes Osborne Bridge Garage – a car repair workshop run by Wesley Fry who lives in the house with his wife Janet and they have 3 daughters who have now left home, apart from Anna who is at University.

House 16. (Crackmore Farm.) Mr and Mrs Chester and their daughter Mary. Mr Chester was the organist at Poyntington church and he and his daughter would also play the organ in Osborne Church if required.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

*Greg & Jenny Callaway + children: Lewis & Lara.
The family have been there since at least 1986*

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

DECEMBER 1993

Yeohead PC (7 Oct): Application for erection of 2-storey dwelling at Crackmoor Farm.

MAY 1994

Welcome: PAUL & ANN DUNNING +NICHOLAS, SARAH, CHARLOTTE, JAMES to Crackmoor Farm

MAY 1997

Welcome to JENNY & GREG KELLAWAY with LARA (6) & LEWIS (3) to Crackmoor Farm

DECEMBER 1997

Yeohead PC (30 October): Crackmoor Farm – erect cubicle house (condition: landscaping and tree planting – visual amenity reasons.)

(From this point on refer to Sketch map 2)

What's in a Name

The way a word is spelt and pronounced can often be misleading.

The name of the Council houses in the parish of OBORNE suffers from this drawback. While it is spelt Bangers, it should be pronounced Baingers.

I hope the following will explain how the houses were given their name.

In 1946, the Sherborne Rural District Council purchased the site on which the Council houses stand, together with a small cottage standing on it in which lived Mr. Robert Banger (Bob), a bachelor who died in 1944, the last of the Bangers

When the building of the houses was completed I was asked to suggest a name and gave the name Bangers to keep alive the long Banger connection. The little thatched cottage, now demolished, looked very picturesque in the Spring 'with masses of snowdrops and in the Summer yellow with evening primroses The living room had a very low ceiling, so it was necessary to make a small well in the floor, so that the grandfather clock could stand upright. There is also a link between Bangers and Australia. In 1973, the Rector of Osborne, the Reverend D Mitchell received a request from the Right-Reverend TT Reed, Bishop of Adelaide, seeking information about his forebears. The Rector asked me if I could deal with it, which I did and found some of the Bishop's ancestors.

They were Bangers from Osborne, Millers from POYNTINGTON and others from Sherborne. It was of great interest to be able to help trace the Bishop's family tree from 1902 back to 1732. I would like to add a few words about Bishop T T Reed. During a long correspondence I learned that in 1973 he was made the first Archbishop of Adelaide and Metropolitan of the New Province. He attended the Lambeth Conference in 1958, and visited Old St. Cuthbert's Chancel, making a donation to the Restoration fund. He also had a water colour of Old St. Cuthbert's Church which belonged to his grandmother. He retired in 1974, and had hoped to visit Osborne again with his wife, but was unable to do so. What of the name Bangers? Down the ages letters have often been added or left out. May I suggest that an "I" be put in Bangers so as to keep alive the family name, not sausages or an old car!

(This is something I was sent some time ago and, regrettably, I failed to keep a record of the identity of the person who very kindly contributed this. Michael Fraser)

Houses 17 to 28 (12 Council houses built soon after the Second World War. Bangers Cottages (pronounced Baingers) were named after Bob Banger who had a very old cottage on the site surrounded by an orchard. On Bob's death the land and cottage were acquired by the Council, the area cleared and the new houses built. I think at the time there was some annoyance expressed by other villagers as the new houses were seen as rather posh with proper kitchens and bathrooms with running water and flushing toilets and proper drainage albeit to septic tanks in the front gardens whilst many private homes in the village could not be supplied with tapped/mains water and had to use chemical toilets.

House 17. Mr and Mrs Charlie and Alice Smith and daughter June. Charlie was the gardener (and sometimes chauffeur and handyman at the Grange and I think Alice did some cleaning there.) June (who died from a heart attack a few years ago) married "Big" Roy Bailey and lived, I think, in the new house built behind the church.

House 18. (#2 Bangers) I can't remember who lived there.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Philip & Christine Gibbs (and daughters Danielle & Jessica, + Seph the greyhound)

Before them was a granddaughter of the Cheeseman's

They don't join in village activities.

Philip was a T A Marine on the south coast, and they did a swap with the Cheeseman girl, who had problems chasing up Magna Housing for maintenance & repairs.

Philip now works for Southern Electric Contractors.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

DECEMBER 1987

Welcome: MR & MRS NEWMAN & SHANE to 2 Bangers & MR & MRS CHANDLER to 8 Bangers

APRIL 1995

Belated welcome to in 1994 PHILIP & CHRISTINE GIBBS + DANIELLE & JESSICA 2 Bangers.

House 19. (#3 Bangers) Mr and Mrs Brown. He worked, I think, as an engineer in Sherborne.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Isabel Wells, widow of Ralph who was a great gardener (Head Gardener of Sherborne Girls' School)

House 20. (#4 Bangers) I can't remember who lived here.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Tracey & "Hector" John Scard. Children: James & 2 others

Tracey's parents, George and Ruby Brown used to live there. George "smoked like a chimney", and delivered the Western Gazette to the village. After he died Ruby swapped houses with John & Tracey.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

NOVEMBER 1993

MRS BROWN has moved to 3 The Bungalow, Washingpool, Poyntington. MRS BROWN has changed homes with her daughter, TRACY SCARD and husband HECTOR and children who have moved to her former home at 4 Bangers. (QTN)

House 21. (#5 Bangers) Mr and Mrs Doug Bailey and their son “little” Roy. Doug was a driver for, I think, a wine merchants. Roy and I were the same age and went both to Osborne School and the boys’ grammar school (Fosters) in Sherborne.

Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

*Residents: Rob & Nikki Ayres. (2011 – Nikki and daughter Laura)
Rob worked for Spiller’s hardware shop in Long Street, Sherborne.
Nicky is the daughter of Sandra & Harold Chandler.
The house is owned by Mauro Lupi
Douglas Bailey used to live there*

House 22. (#6 Bangers) Mr and Mrs Joe Woolmington and their son Michael. Joe was, I think, a carpenter in a building firm.

House 23. (#7 Bangers) I can’t remember who lived here but it may have been taken over by the Chandlers when they moved from house number 4.

House 24. (#8 Bangers) Mr and Mrs Burgess and their daughters Susan and Sarah (?) Mr Burgess was an electrician and a useful man to know for any small electrical work. Susan was the same age as me and in the same class at Osborne School. She passed her 11 plus and went to the girls’ grammar school (Lord Digby’s) in Sherborne.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

DECEMBER 1987

Welcome: MR & MRS CHANDLER to 8 Bangers (QTN)

DECEMBER 1989

Funeral: HELENA FRANCIS PEARL BURGESS (nee RIDEWOOD) at Yeovil Crematorium on 3rd November. Born Sherborne, moved to London Road, Osborne when aged 9 (in ATS during war). In WWII married DOUGLAS ERNEST BURGESS and lived at 8 Bangers. Longstanding member of Village Hall Committee and was due to unveil a plaque commemorating the restoration on 28th October, the day she died. Hobby: sewing, embroidery and knitting. Worked a number of the kneelers in church. Mother of 6 children. (QTN)

House 25. (#9 Bangers) Mrs Ridout and her daughter Ruby. Ruby – who never married – worked in Bret’s shop in Sherborne (on the corner of Half Moon Street and Digby Road) They were related to the Burgesses next door.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

*Pam & Graham Goodger. Been there since about 1992-3
Pam is known by her maiden name, Pam Shepherd
Pam & Graham are graphic designers, and Graham, at least, originated in London
Pam is a long distance runner, and does something in alternative medicine. They have two children, Jack & Louise.
The previous occupant was a chef at The Half Moon in Sherborne*

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

MAY 1994

PAM & GRAHAM GOODGER + JACK to 9 Bangers

Houses 26 and 27. (#10 & 11 Bangers) I can't remember who lived in these two houses but it may be the Chandlers moved to one of these instead of house number 23 and I think Barbara Pitman may now live in one of them.

10 Bangers

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Owned by Harold & Sandra Chandler

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

MARCH 2002

Farewell: HAROLD & SANDRA CHANDLER from Valley View to Yeovil; Welcome to IAN & BEVERLEY CHANDLER & HANNAH, PAUL & JOE to Valley View (10 Bangers)

11 Bangers

House 28. (#12 Bangers) Mr and Mrs Cyril Bailey and their son "big" Roy. They were related to the Baileys in house 21. I think Cyril was a manual worker for the council and Roy married June Smith from house number 17.

House 29. "Old" Mrs Card, her daughter Miss Dora Card and her daughter Pamela. This was the site of the village Post Office before my mother took on the job in the late 50/early 60's. Old Mrs Card and Dora ran it from their hall and also sold some confectionery and sweets.

House 30. Mr King, retired farmer. It was rumoured that he was the father of Pamela Card.

House 31. Mr and Mrs Swain. Farming.

House 32. (Lower Farm, Osborne) Mr and Mrs Foxwell and their son Michael. The Foxwells left the village mid to late 50's and I can't remember who took over the farm. However, there used to be complaints about the muddy state of the lane past the school to the church caused by the milking cows driven to and from the farm.

Please see below after Mr Higgins' sketch maps for a slightly edited report by Ian Crawford-Smith of his work on researching the history of this property – Lower Farm, Osborne.

House 33. (LOWER FARM HOUSE) Mr and Mrs Trim and their son, Bill, farmers.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

The stone outhouses there were originally open fronted cow sheds of corrugated iron built in the 1920's

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

Queen Thorne Newsletter January 1979 shows Mrs PAM DEVONSHIRE as distributor of newsletter with address of Lower Farm.

SEPTEMBER 1980: DIRECTORY

Hall Committee Chairman: M BOARD

Secretary: MRS P DEVONSHIRE, Lower Farm
Treasurer: MRS S MITCHELL

SEPTEMBER 1966

Yeohead PC (18 July) Planning application: Lower Farmhouse – fix intruder alarms. No objection.

Yeohead PC (10 May): Applications: Listed Building Consent – Lower Farm House – renew windows.

House 34. (OLD SCHOOL HOUSE) Mr and Mrs Daisy and Gareth England and their daughter Penny. The School and School House. Gareth was an electrician/garage mechanic and had a home built kit car. Daisy England was the head teacher of the Primary School. Penny was a contemporary of mine and went on to the girls' grammar school in Sherborne, to university and became a teacher herself.

(Notes by John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

First bought when it came on the market after the school was closed by JOHN & JACKY SYKES who are now in Sherborne. He was an ex-naval pilot. They did a lot of work on conversion
Other owners, in rough sequence, seem to have been:

HAMMOND

JOHN & JOAN SAUNDERS*

GENERAL SIR ROBERT & LADY SUSIE CORBETT

* John was a retired architect and, John Sherburn thinks, was instrumental in getting both Lower Farm Cottage and The Old School House listed.

Joan had been crippled by an accident. They had a delightful Nanny who had looked after their children and then returned to look after Joan, who was later moved to a nursing home near Winchester and died in 2001.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

JULY 1983

Welcome WING CO PETER HAMMOND & DIANA with RICHARD & FAY into School House. (QTN)

DECEMBER 1995

Funeral at Yeovil Crematorium 16 Nov for JOHN HENRY SAUNDERS aged 79. Accomplished career as an architect. Love of horses, esp 'Cockeye', and for equestrian skills and enthusiasm for hunting. Worldwide traveller. Retirement spent at Old School House. (QTN)

MARCH 1997

Yeohead PC: Old School House – internal modifications. (QTN)

MAY 1997

Yeohead PC (20 March): Planning: Approval for internal & external alterations to Old School House..
Planning: Approval for internal & external alterations to Old School House. Trees opposite Old School House – owner wishes to plant some trees on the hedge area opposite his house to the south. As his is part of a possible pond development, he will be asked to postpone action.

DECEMBER 1997

Yeohead PC (30 October): Old School House – fit window in place of doors and widen chimney;

MARCH 1998

Yeohead PC (5 February): Old School House – felt that the new window replacing the door for which listed building approval has been given was quite out of keeping with the rest of the house. Clerk to check the drawings in the application.. Listed Building consent given for erection of hamstone canopy over front door of Old School House.

APRIL 1999

Yeohead PC (28 Jan): Planning granted: Old School House: listed building consent: Change of vehicular access to pedestrian access.

SEPTEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (8 July Application for listed building consent: Old School House – conversion of outbuildings.

NOVEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (9 Sept): Listed building permission granted to Old School House: alteration to existing outbuildings.

Extract from a letter from Sir Robert Corbett to Michael Fraser 11 February 2002:

We have been told it is the oldest house in the village dating from 1549. We believe it stood on what was “always” glebe land and that it served until about 1860 as the parsonage for Osborne. When St Cuthbert’s moved from the south end of the village to its present position (1860-63) and the Rectory was built, as far as we know the dwelling house, standing on church land, was converted into the Village School and run, as so many rural schools were, by the Church of England. It looks as though the original roof (thatched to judge by some of the very old reed we have found in both gable ends of the house) was raised by 18 inches to 2 feet and I would guess that this was done at the time of the conversion. There is splendid Victorian engineering in the beams, trusses and cast iron rod bars in the roof. I believe that the teacher lived in the north end of the house with the present sitting room/study as the living room and a very small garden in the front. She probably kept ducks/geese in the stream! The School yard and lavatories were in what is now the small walled garden at the back. There is a very old bread oven in the thickness of the wall to the left of the enormous open hearth in the study whose massive lintel stone is one of the most remarkable features of the house. The remains of an old and narrow stairway can be seen above the bread oven and in the northwest corner of the roof space. (The walls here are 6½ feet thick). The main classroom was evidently in the present drawing room with a ceiling at roof level and a stove in the middle of the floor space with its chimney presumably running straight through the roof. We believe that the second and brick built schoolroom for the older children was added to the back of the original building in the 1920’s. The children entered by a door in the south wall and their coats were allegedly hung in a passageway within. The fine clock (made in Sherborne) above the porch of the village hall came from the school when it was closed in, I think, 1962 [1976 – M.A.F.] and reconverted to a dwelling. The house was supposed to have been haunted by a young girl who had lost her life by falling down the stairs. Mrs English, the last teacher...claims to have seen her but the original staircase was replaced and rerouted when the building was reconverted since when no further instances have been reported! Susie and I converted the empty cobweb ridden roof space to a studio for her in 2001.

House 35. (Church Farm) Mr and Mrs Joe Eavis and their son Roy, farmers. Joe raised turkeys for Christmas and also kept chickens and ducks. Most of their farm land was over the railway bridge down the lane to the right and, in fact, Roy did all the milking in a shed down there.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

AUGUST 1979

Treasurer of church restoration fund: Mr W. AUSDEN, Church Farm, Osborne. (QTN)

MAY 1983

Welcome to MARY IRELAND into Church Farm with her dressage and event horses. (QTN)

House 36. The Vicarage. (The Old Rectory) Canon and Mrs Curry, their daughter (named ?) and son Thomas. A traditional Vicar who had two or three parishes. The vicarage (although rather cold and draughty) was quite a centre for the village with meetings of the Mothers Union, Sunday School and Confirmation classes etc., held there. The School held its sports day on the lawn and various sales and produce/flower shows were held on the lawn as well as at the Grange. A gateway linked the Vicarage garden to the garden of the Grange.

(John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

The possible first owners were GEOFFREY PYE, a serving Brigadier with the 17/21st Lancers who rented it out a lot.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

QTN May 1979 shows COLONEL PYE as first purchaser, who bought it for £69,000

MAY 1980

Welcome: HUGH & MARY PYE & children VICTORIA & ROBERT into Rectory (QTN)

July 1982 (QTN)

COLONEL PYE of The Rectory posted to Cyprus for 2 years. – departed with wife MARY for Nicosia. The 2 children VICTORIA & ROBERT to remain in UK boarding schools. Tenants: PETER & MARY-ANN HEWKIN AND 2 Siamese cats.

MAY 1983

Old Rectory currently rented from COL. & MRS PYE (stationed in Cyprus) to MR PETER HAWKIN. Also living there is MISS MARY-ANN GOODING who works at Seatons Garage, Yeovil. She accepted a lift home but car left the dual carriage-way near Halfway House, careered over westbound lane and struck a telegraph pole. Driver was killed and Mary-Ann in intensive care but recovering. (QTN)

AUGUST 1984

Baptism of ROBERT NICHOLAS FRENCH of Old Rectory – July 15th (his paternal grandfather is Head Verger at Wells Cathedral and a lay reader) (QTN)

MAY 1986

Welcome MR & MRS FAZAKERLEY to Old Rectory (QTN)

SEPTEMBER 2002 Nigel & Sue MASTERS moved in; William & Gilly FAZAKERLEY moved over the road to “Vespers”

House 37. (Millclose Farm) Mr and Mrs Gould, farmers. Again their farm buildings were some distance away from this house.

(Notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

This is next to the Village Hall. It is owned by Dorset County Council and lived in by JOHN PHILLIPS. John's mother was DAISY PHILLIPS (and I think it is she who appears quite frequently in the PCC Minutes).

The building was originally stone and thatch, but at some stage was tiled and pebble dashed.

MARCH 1992

7 Feb: Funeral service for HUBERT JOHN PHILLIPS. Born in Bishop's Caundle nearly 92 years ago, went to school there and became apprenticed carpenter at Hubert Hutchins. In Dorsetshire Regiment towards the end of WWI and at end of war was at Soligen on the Rhine. Worked for DCC Roads and Bridges Department for 45 years – had a wonderfully detailed knowledge of drains and watercourses in the area. Married DAISY – their first home at Caundle March and then at Folke where he sung in the choir, looked after the churchyard and tended the fires in church. In 1961 moved to Mill Close, Osborne where he helped John on the farm and tended people's gardens. He was active until the end of his life. A keen whist player. A keen interest in Sherborne & District Ambulance for the Elderly & Disabled (the cause to which the retiring collection was donated.) (QTN)

(Michael Fraser's notes:) In about 2010 when John Phillips retired to Sherborne the property was auctioned by DCC and purchased by Mr Harry Harris of Trent. It was substantially improved, removing the pebbledash to reveal the original stone structure, and a lean-to building demolished and the house extended, with other improvements and the garden redesigned. It is currently rented to a

couple, Rodney & Jo Palmer, who have moved to Osborne from North Norfolk. During the renovation the chairman of The Somerset Vernacular Buildings Society inspected the property and, on admittedly rather flimsy evidence, estimated the original structure was built at the end of the 18th century.

House 38. I can not remember who lived in this house.

House 39. Mr and Mrs Foyle or Foy, farmers.

HURST COTTAGE (Houses 38 & 39)

(John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

Originally 4 cottages., but by 1987 was two cottages.

Until about 2000 the DOWN(ES) family were in the far end cottage (far end = furthest from the Village Hall). Apparently their marriage broke up and they moved away.

About 1987 the near end cottage the family that just left had a bookshop in Yeovil (apparently the wife was made a Dame for services to the Liberal Party, and recently a daughter was electrocuted in South America) In about 1986 the ANN MORITZ family moved in for a short time (about a year) and then in Autumn 1987 CAROL & HUGH KINGSLEY moved in

In 2000 Hugh KINGSLEY owned the whole building of which they have converted about a quarter at the far end into a holiday cottage to rent out.

Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:

Welcome to JOHN & SUE MEADOWS-TAYLOR @ 2 Hillside Cottages. Took over "Booklore" in Hound Street last September and moved from their flat over the shop. (QTN August 1980)

AUGUST 1986

Welcome: TONY & ANN MORITZ & daughter LOUISE & Ann's 90 year old mother MRS WRIGHT, to 2 Hillside Cottages, now to be called Hurst Cottage. Louise is at Yeovil College taking A-Levels. (QTN)

OCTOBER 1987

Welcome: HUGH & CAROL KINGSLEY & 9 month old daughter NANCY to Hurst Cottage from Stalbridge (QTN)

House 40. Grange Cottage. Mrs Fraser and, for a while a lodger Mr Norfolk, who had returned to the UK after teaching in the Gold Coast, Africa. He became the history master at Foster's Grammar School for Boys in Sherborne. Mrs Fraser was the choir mistress for the church. I think she also had some connections with the Navy as I remember her arranging a visit to Portland Naval Base where we had a tour of an aircraft carrier and a submarine – very exciting for a small boy!

MANDERLEY (formerly GRANGE COTTAGE and after 2006 reverted to Grange Cottage)

(John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

In 2001 this was bought by KARIN LIMER, a single mother with a young son who bought and opened 2 shops in Sherborne.

Before her the owner was CECILIA MARRIN a retired academic (MARY IRELAND has information about her) John & Ro think she might have been the headmistress of St Mary's School, Shaftesbury.

Cecilia was a widow at some stage before 1986-7. There were 4 children:

1 became a heart surgeon in USA

1 became a QC in London

1 a journalist in London working under the professional name of Minette Marrin (married name was Hislop)

1 a mentally retarded daughter

Cecilia had been there for something like 50 years. She was a very severe lady!

July 2006. Karin Limer and Max moved away to Oakham where Max wanted to go to school. The house was sold to a family in London who, at the moment, are using it as a weekend cottage.

Notes by Mike for Karin: (6 February 2002)

What I have so far discovered or been informed: In 1876 your property was owned by the Master & Fellows of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, and occupied by a James Smith. The whole property comprised 26 perches (40 perches = 1 rood [$\frac{1}{4}$ acre]).

In the 1881 census there was a James Smith, agricultural labourer, born c. 1829, living in Osborne (address not known) with his wife Susannah, a dressmaker (born 1831) with 6 children, 4 of whom were employed (2 boys as agricultural labourers and 2 girls as Glovers [kid]) Also in the house were 2 grandchildren, one of whom was named Barzilla (!). Susannah's maiden name was Chant, and they were married in Osborne in 1851. James appears in the marriage register as the father of the bride for at least 4 of his daughters, the last of whom was married in 1896. It's possible there was another daughter who was married in 1878, so would not have appeared on the 1881 census. James & Susannah and the two youngest daughters were still living in Osborne by the 1891 census. In 1891 the road they were living in was called "Street" (really helpful!!) - they also had a 1 year old grandson with them - no way of knowing which daughter was the mother yet as the husbands of definitely 2 and possibly 3 of their daughters was named Smith!!

In 1838, as far I can gather, the property was owned by Gonville & Caius College, but it's difficult to know exactly who was living there at the time. The Tithe apportionments show the occupier as Elizabeth Hix & James Manning, but they were the listed occupiers of Grange Farm as well. I haven't yet discovered anything about James Manning or Elizabeth Hix (Hicks).

(More notes provided by John & Ro Sherburn 1st February 2002)

Mrs R. Fraser (of the Osborne choir) used to live there when it was called Grange Cottage.

September 1980 (QTN)

Chair of Parish Meeting: MRS C MARRIN, Grange Cottage

Osborne Councillor at Yeohead PC: MRS C. MARRIN

House 41. Grange Farm. Mr and Mrs Mayer (or Mayo). They later moved to house/farm 10 (in the 60's)

House 42. The Grange. Mr and Mrs Pope. Not sure if Mr Pope was ex military or ex colonial police force. I know they had spent considerable time in India before moving to Osborne. He had a big old Humber car which he drove extremely slowly and he used to be annoyed when the village boys overtook him on their bikes!

THE GRANGE

(John & Ro Sherburn 23 January 2002)

Mr Pope was once the squire. J & R can't answer my question about there being two Mr Popes. It became a hotel & restaurant owned by MAURO LUPI and a partner whose name not known. Apparently they didn't get on too well and the partner was bought out by Mauro after he was said to have been diluting the bottles. The partner apparently bought land up Stony Lane to build a house on the site of the old quarry. If this land has been subsequently sold, it must have been within the last 15 years.

Apparently Mauro was "a loveable rogue", but ran a very good establishment in which he employed and trained to a high standard youngsters from the village. In his day one had to book a month ahead for a weekend meal.

January 2000 (approx) sold to Jonathan Arthur who may be the sole owner or the partner in a company.

2001 - Problems with the drainage system which affected neighbours and in which the Parish Council was involved, and Mr Arthur, having had difficulty finding a firm able to undertake the work to a satisfactory standard has invested some £30,000 in a new system.

MAY 1979. Yeohead PC: application to convert outbuildings at the Grange into a dwelling. Objected on the grounds of over development on the site (consent already given for 5 new dwellings in the grounds.)

Sir Melvyn Medlycott's MI's show a Dillon Hanbury THOMAS (d.1926) as of Manor House, Osborne

GRANGE HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Notes from a display in the restaurant.

Advertisement: The Grange House, Two Cottages and Land, Osborne.

For sale by auction on Thursday March 1st 1923 at 3p.m. at Digby Hotel, Sherborne.

Auctioneers: Messrs Senior & Godwin.

The County Solicitor

The Director of Agriculture

Information from the particulars of sale:

Some 3 miles from kennels of Blackmore Vale Hunt. (Hunting also with Cattistock, Lord Portman's, South & West Wilts, Sparkford Vale Harriers & Miss Guest's Hounds six days a week.

The Polo ground of Blackmore Vale Hunt within ¾ mile, also the Sherborne Golf Links.

No compensation payable for Tenant Right or Disturbance, as these matters have been dealt with by the Vendors.

Letter from Senior & Godwin, 92 Cheap Street, Sherborne dated 4th February 1987 addressed to M. LUPI esq.:

"It would appear that the entire property sold by private treaty, prior to auction, on 16th February 1923, for the sum of £150.00*

Property extends westwards to just south of Lower Boyston Lane.

[Note: I have contacted John Scarth (once of Senior & Godwin) and have been assured that no more files exist on the sale of the Grange.) 2nd September 2002. - MAF]

* We think this must be a typographical error for £1,500.00

[Extracts from the Queen Thorne Parish Magazine:](#)

JUNE 1980.

Yeohead PC:

Planning permission: 2 dwellings in Grange garden. Refused permission for a dwelling on land next to Brockdown Cottage.

JULY 1981

Yeohead PC: Approved: double garage at The Grange

JUNE 1996

Yeohead PC (28 March). Planning permission granted to Grange Restaurant to erect 3 units of guest accommodation.

JUNE 1999

Grange Hotel. Bedroom annexe. Convert attic area into 2 bedrooms. No objection.

NOVEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (9 Sept): Planning permission granted to Grange Hotel to erect conservatory.

Application: Grange Hotel annexe: Install conservation roof lights. No objection.

DECEMBER 1999

Yeohead PC (11 November): Planning permission granted: Grange Hotel – roof light.

OTHER BUILDINGS IN THE VILLAGE.

A. Pumping Station. This, I think, was built soon after the war to provide the main water supply for much of the local area by tapping into an underground water source. However, when it was put on a 24 hour trial it drained all the water from existing supplies, wells etc., and so was never brought into use. Has it now been converted into a private dwelling?

B. St Cuthbert's Chancel. All that remains of a much bigger church.

C. Barn. This barn and adjoining yard used to keep pigs by Mr King (house 30)

D. Barn. This half of the barn used as a garage by one of the residents of Bangers Cottages.

E. Barn. This half of the barn and about 2 acres of land alongside house 17 and along the backs of houses 17 to about 20 used by my father for keeping 200-300 free range chickens, a few ducks and geese. Also some very productive filbert nut bushes.

F. School and School House. A very good small primary village school. Mrs England was a very good teacher and the school obtained very good 11 plus exam results – far better than the average. There were only 30-40 pupils aged from 5 to 11 and with only 3 to 6 pupils in each age class there was virtually individual attention. The four in my year (2 girls, 2 boys) all passed the 11 plus. Pupils came only from Osborne and Poyntington. The only drawback was that there were too few pupils of the same age or size to have any real team sports. Also, the school sports field was very small and the school yard too small to be of much use. The only team sport I remember was rounders on the playing field. School Sports day took place on the Vicarage lawn.

G. St Cuthbert's Church. Then a very active church which we, as a family, all attended on a fairly regular basis. My three elder sisters, my elder brother and I were all christened in the church and my two younger sisters were in the choir. My mother, for a while, was one of the church wardens. My brother, who died at the age of 10, is buried in the churchyard and the ashes of both my father and mother are interred in his grave. My paternal grandparents are also buried in the churchyard. Around the back of the church there was a grave of three German aircrew (including one who was only 15 or 16) who were killed when their aircraft crashed (I think in the field to the west of St Cuthbert's Chancel.) Their bodies were repatriated to Germany in the early 60's, I think.

H. Village Hall. Many village groups used this hall, such as the W.I., flower and produce show, jumble sales etc. There was a very keen snooker and billiards club and matches were keenly fought. Competitions were arranged with other villages and in various leagues.

TRANSPORT IN THE VILLAGE

Of course in the 1950-1960's private car ownership was much less than it is today. My parents never had a car and, as a family, we relied on walking and cycling for most local travel. There was a school bus to bring pupils from Poyntington to Osborne and another to take those going to school in Sherborne. However, my sisters and I, in common with many in the village, preferred to cycle the 1.5 to 2 miles. Southern National ran quite a good service from Yeovil to and from Stalbridge and there was an infrequent service from Sherborne through the village to Poyntington and Corton Denham but I think this was only on Sherborne market days and possibly Saturdays. Wilts and Dorset also ran buses from Yeovil to Salisbury (with connections to Southampton, Exeter etc.) The Royal Blue Coaches travelled between London and Exeter (about two each way per day) but you could only board the coach either in Milborne Port or Sherborne. However, if you spoke nicely to the driver he would let you get off at the village turn. Before the Beeching cuts Southern Railways ran a very good service on the line between Waterloo and Exeter Central with most trains stopping in Sherborne. Special trains were run at the start and end of term for Sherborne public schools (both boys and girls). The Devon Belle between London and Torbay ran in the summer and car-carrying trains and sleepers ran to and from London, Plymouth and Penzance. There were early morning mail and paper trains from London and milk trains to London. A great deal of freight was also carried on the line with some very heavy and long freight trains overnight. The line from Yeovil Junction to nearly Templecombe is one of the longest continuous climbs in the UK and with several bends in it and it was not unusual for freight trains to become stuck near Osborne and require a further engine to push from behind. This caused a great deal of noise with whistle blowing and clanking of the wagons. Attempts were made in the war to bomb the embankment (without success) but there is still evidence of some bomb craters near the line in the fields. Day trips by train to the coast were possible from Sherborne (e.g. to Lyme Regis via Axminster, Sidmouth via Chard Junction, Bournemouth via Templecombe and the Somerset and Dorset (or the slow and dirty as it was known – now defunct) or to Weymouth via Yeovil Pen Mill.)

The Higgins Family – House 7. Living accommodation was rather crowded with my parents, three daughters and two sons in a three bedroomed house. Also my paternal grandparents lived in the house although my grandmother had died before I was born and my grandfather when I was 4 or 5. As stated before we had no running water to the house and had to collect all water from one communal tap across the road, usually in buckets. Eventually the supply was moved across the road to outside building number 9. Finally it was piped to each house. However there was no main drainage and so chemical/Elsan toilets were the order of the day. Bath nights were a tin bath in front of the fire and water was heated by wood burning fire in a big copper pot in an outhouse. This was repeated for washday. When growing up we only had electricity downstairs and so it was candles for going to bed in the winter. Of course no central heating so the bedrooms could be very cold in the winter so hot water bottles were used. And it was not unusual to find frost on the inside of the bedroom windows in the morning. Great excitement when my parents could afford to have electricity installed upstairs! We still had the original wooden front door of the house from when it was an Inn and there was a little door within the door through which tankards of ale could be passed – probably to the coachmen. Also the porch had seats each side on which up to 4 people could sit.

My father worked as a postman for 37 years based in Sherborne. He worked long and hard hours. He was usually up about 4.30 am, to cycle into Sherborne to collect the mail cart with one other from the main sorting office (halfway up Cheap Street) to take to the station to meet the mail train. They then had to take the cart back uphill for about half a mile to the sorting office, sort the mail, and set off on their rounds. My father did about a 14 mile round (Sandford Orcas, isolated farms etc., by bike in all weathers (quite hilly terrain). He then used to come home for a late breakfast (usually 9.30 to 10) and then see to his chickens – one of us having already let them out and fed them. After lunch he would have to go back for the afternoon delivery – hopefully not as long. He would then make up the chickens' feed, gardening and never resting. He would work five and a half days a week but had to give up work when he was 57 due to ill health (severe angina and heart problems). Besides his chicken (the egg lorry used to come once a week to collect never less than 12 dozen eggs and sometimes double that) he had the garden and allotments totalling about 2 acres and we were just about self sufficient in vegetables and fruit. Of course we all had to help with the gardening etc. Also he had some rabbits in hutches in the back garden and besides the meat these supplied the pelts were sold to a gloving factory in Yeovil. When my father was forced to give up work my mother was offered the chance to run the village post office from the house. This was very welcome and she ran it for 16 years opening 2 hours in the morning and 2 in the afternoon for 5.5 days a week (no Saturday afternoon opening). She also sold some confectionery and stationery. This was done in the hallway/passageway of the house. I used to help her with her weekly stocktaking and re-ordering. It was quite a busy little office with sales of National Insurance Stamps, savings stamps and payments of old age pensions etc. I used to have a little round within the village selling National Savings Stamps.

It may seem like all hard work but we did go out quite a lot especially at the weekends. In the summer we quite often went for long walks taking a picnic either across the fields towards Goathill or across the down above the Osborne to Poyntington Road. We also had train trips out to the coast or went on the Post Office Social outings by coach.

I remember it being a generally happy childhood. Fortunately the 1956 Suez Crisis stopped the Saturday morning school! From about the age of 12 I did an evening paper round in the Village (the Bristol Evening Post) and from the age of about 14 I did a morning paper round of about three miles before school. The papers were delivered from W H Smith's stall on Sherborne station to the house by Hunt's milk round, and after I collected the paper money on Saturday I used to take it into the stall. Sometimes on a Saturday I used to look after the paper kiosk on Templecombe Station – travelling there by train.

Well there is lots more I could add but think that is enough for now.

LOWER FARM
OBORNE
AN INCOMPLETE HISTORY AS AT JUNE 2002

Ian Crawford-Smith

In 1570 the Manors of Bincombe (outside Weymouth) and Woburne and the Manorial Rights were bought by Gonville & Caius College Cambridge from the same vendor and the names of the two estates were inextricably connected in the records of the college for very many years. Over time Woburne (the name in the earliest records was Woburnam) underwent several changes finishing up as Osborne. The original name derived from “Who” – crooked and “Burna” – stream, thus “winding brook” now the River Yeo which rises in Poyntington at Seven Wells Down.

At that time Osborne Manor Estate represented almost the whole of the village which was divided into fifteen tenancies or “livings” These were held by “copy of the Court Roll for three lives with widowhood”. (see later) Subsequently, more “lives” could be added for the payment of an additional sum of money, a “fine”. In 1629 the College purchased a further tenement, “The Crofts” comprising 19 acres for £110 and by then they owned virtually all the Parish.

In 1650 there was what is believed to be a unique happening when the tenants exchanged lands with one another, enclosed all the fields and divided up the common. A terrier of 1656 speaks of the common as “lately enclosed” and this might be the only record of enclosure without the intervention of an Act of Parliament and the enclosure commissioners. A study of the survey map of 1766 suggests that that division was not entirely without favour since clearly some seem to have done better than others in the location of their particular plots of land or at least it would appear so as we know them today.

One hundred years later, 1750, the college renewed some of the leases “for three lives” – under seal, instead of “held by copies of the roll”. Three lives was intended to represent about 99 years and it appears that the copies route did not grant an absolute right whereas the new system gave complete freehold for the period.

In 1766 the college called for a survey carried out by Mr Bastard and it resulted in a detailed plan and summary of the estate which then totalled 555 “statutable” acres.

It is in that survey that we can identify for the first time Lower Farm or a property on the same site, but only by location and not by name.

The survey lists Henry Samson as the tenant of “dwelling, barn, stable, stall, orchard and garden in 4 acres” and on the map this seems to stand exactly on the site of Lower Farm as we know it today. It is the same shape as the basic house, without the additions to the north and south (which might have been in 1896) and right on the road. Also recognisable on the 1766 map is the range of buildings fronting the road to

the north of the house that now represent the stable and barn. By 1838, at least the northern end of the barn was recorded as a dwelling and there is evidence today that it was of two floors. A study of the records from 1766 onwards lists no demolition having been carried out of a house or any rebuilding and there are, at Dorchester, bills that show that limited work was done on Lower Farm on this site in the early 1800's. Thus we have to believe that the building of the house that at some time became Lower Farm took place sometime before 1766.

In 1773 Henry who was then 70 (his wife was Edith aged 42) was granted a new lease for "his heirs and assignees". Named as entitlement to the lease were his wife Edith, Henry Samson Hule or Hull aged three, son of Mathew Hule or Hull (possibly the son of Henry's daughter), and John Loder aged 17 son of James Loder all "for the longest life and the longest living." Certainly the Hulls and the Loders had tenancies in the village at that time and together with Samson were probably part of the 1650 enclosing action. David Andrews mentions Steven Samson, Charles Samson, Richard Samson and Arthur Samson, as having taken the Protestant Oath in 1641 and Thomas Samson collecting in 1666 for "the releefe of the Poore of Sandforde in their necessity by reason of God's visitation of it with the plague." In 1642 Anne Samson paid her tax based upon 3 hearths, but where were they?

The next mention of Lower Farm appears at the Dorset History Centre in Dorchester where there are bills done for work in 1831, 1833 and 1838 for the then tenant Robert Dunford and his wife Elizabeth. The work was carried out by a Mr Noakes, and there was such a person listed in 1766 as the tenant of the property next door to Lower Farm. David Andrews writes of a Noakes as a surveyor and prominent member of the village in the late 1700s and 1800s.

The construction of the house, Lower Farm, is interesting because it seems to have been built largely with high class dressed stone which suggest the person for whom it was designed was of some importance. It originally had six bedrooms, two reception rooms and a cellar. Two of the bedrooms, at the top of the back stairs, were clearly servants' rooms and this does not suggest an ordinary farmer of the 18th century.

An entry in the Churchwarden's Account Book in 1794 concerning the "Thythingman's list" could be held to suggest that H. Samson (if the same man, he would have been 91 years old by then) was the most senior person in the village but even so, is it likely that this house would have been built for him?

Robert Dunford was a farmer and E. J. W. T and R. Penny succeeded him as tenant, who seem to have remained in the property until it was sold to Dorset County Council in December/January 1920/21.

The sale particulars at that time listed the house as having "Dining Room, Drawing Room, Kitchen and Pantry, Scullery with water from the reservoir (somewhere on Burts Hill), Lean-to Larder and Cellar (not to be found today), Coalhouse, Toolhouse and Six Bedrooms." There is no mention of a toilet and during the war when it housed two families, we are told that there was no inside toilet in the house. In 1920, there were very many more outbuildings than there are today.

What is of interest is the fact that at the time of the sale to DCC, Lower Farm included 407 acres out of a total estate acreage of 500. This included several of the houses as we know them today such as Grange Farm, Lower Farm House, Hurst Cottage, Mill Close Farm and several other cottages and tenant farms no longer around and of course most of the land in and around the village.

DCC bought the estate to create farms for soldiers returning from the 1914-18 war and Lower Farm then became a council owned farm, as were and are the other farms in the village. The last farmer here was Percy Weedon who vacated the property in 1993 and the council sold it to Peter and Anne Usher in 1994. It is interesting to note that when the farm was sold to private ownership, the acreage had reduced from 407 to 40 of which, upon the sale, all but 0.72 acre were transferred to farmer John Phillips.

Ann and Ian Crawford-Smith purchased the property from the Ushers in November 1998. Much work was necessary upon the house which during the last years of its life as a farm had fallen into deep disrepair. The Ushers did much of the basic work, bugs, damp, electrics and plumbing and then with the change of ownership in November 1998 work commenced to restore the house and some of the outbuildings to something like the historical past, blended with the need for greater convenience.

During the restoration work on one of the fireplaces a newspaper dated 1896 was discovered, used as packing behind the tiles and when the kitchen range was replaced by an Aga it revealed a funnel shaped fireplace. This could suggest that some modernisation was carried out in 1896. Apart from the additions on the north side of the house, the removal of the front door to the south side and the inclusion of a porch over the new front door, probably all done early in the 19th century, there has been a suggestion that the windows too might have been changed.

It was in 1998 that the Land Registry formally requested the change in name to Lower Osborne Farm to avoid confusion with Lower Farm House next door. There is a Higher Osborne Farm in the village.
