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# VILLAGE BUILDINGS

A Snapshot in Time:  
Laxton in Peace and War, 1900–1920



LAXTON STORIES VOLUME 2

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Further acknowledgements for 'Laxton Stories' can be found on page 135.

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## AUTHORS

Joy Allison  
Joan Cottee  
Jo Godson  
Mary Haigh

---

## COMPILER & EDITOR

Roger Cottee

---

## PRE-READER & EDITOR OF RESEARCH

Jean Hennell

---

## GENERAL SUPPORT, HELP & INFORMATION

John and Brenda Chambers

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THE GRANDIOSE  
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AGENTS OFFER US  
A PICTURE OF AN  
OLDER SOCIETY  
WHICH WAS STILL  
FIRMLY IN PLACE IN  
LAXTON WHEN THE  
FIRST WORLD WAR  
BROKE OUT IN 1914

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# FOREWORD

BY PROFESSOR JOHN BECKETT,  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

The three additional ‘Snapshot in Time’ booklets are a welcome addition to the history of the village. Each of them in its own way provides an interesting story of life in the village in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Life in the village, as described in the first of the three, is as we might expect: difficult people, nice people, babies, marriages, burials, and the daily round of life, particularly when it came to the farmers and their field work.

The tensions, the friendships, the petty annoyances, the grandiose aristocratic owners (who generally kept themselves to themselves at Thoresby Hall) and their gentlemen land agents (who frequently visited the village to let the tenant farmers know exactly where they stood) offer us a picture of an older society which was still firmly in place in Laxton when the First World War broke out in 1914.

It was a hierarchical society, with the vicar, living in one of the largest houses in the village, keeping a careful eye on the local people, their families, friends,

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# THE CHURCH, AS WE LEARN IN THE SECOND OF THE THREE BOOKLETS, WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT INDIVIDUAL BUILDING IN THE COMMUNITY

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alliances, and fallings out. The church, as we learn in the second of the three booklets, was the most important individual building in the community, built of stone in the 13th century and largely rebuilt using much of the old stone in 1860.

But other buildings were part of the fabric of village life, among them the farmhouses strung out along the main street, the village shop, the post office, the nonconformist chapel and, of course, the Dovecote Inn. Not much disturbed the

community, at least before the war, which had far more animals than modern Laxton, and was a much quieter place – not that it is particularly noisy today – in the days when horses rather than tractors were the main motive power across the community, and people walked rather than speeding (often literally) through the village in cars, vans, and occasionally motor bikes.

Life was full of variety, as the third booklet showed, although some variety, particularly when it came to ill health, was less welcome than other. Everyone knew their place, or at least they knew where they were expected to be in the social hierarchy. The vicar wrote letters on embossed note paper, while the tenants scribbled away on whatever quality they could find, sometimes sending anonymous messages to their landlord for fear of what the Thoresby Estate might do if it knew who the writer was. Telephones were still virtually unknown but the post was collected and delivered regularly throughout each day. Ploughing competitions were frequent events.

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# FEW ENGLISH VILLAGES HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED AS THOROUGHLY AS LAXTON, AND THESE BOOKLETS, PAINT AN UNUSUALLY DETAILED PICTURE OF A REMARKABLE VILLAGE

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Occasionally the village had to cope with poor behaviour, but special constables were in post for the duration of the war and both received long service awards subsequently. Finally, Laxton did its bit for the war, including taking in a Belgium refugee family, and of course the farmers had to do as they were told by the War Agricultural Committee.

Life was not idyllic: mysterious illnesses with no NHS, and the poverty of some local families, ensured that it was tough, but few English villages have been documented as thoroughly as Laxton, and these three booklets, added to the originals, paint an unusually detailed picture of a remarkable village over the first two decades of the twentieth century.

All the researchers and writers were local volunteers, mostly with little experience of historical research, and it is a measure of their commitment and, dare I say it, previously hidden talent that Laxton has been so carefully and accurately detailed via the three new booklets to add to the four originals.



# PREFACE

Members of Laxton History Group set out to research a 'snapshot' of the village during the period 1900 – 1920. The project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, involved the writing of four booklets, each looking at a different aspect of life in Laxton at that time. The booklets were published in June 2016.

We found ourselves, however, in the unusual position of completing the aims of the project with funding to spare. We had moreover uncovered a tremendous amount of information which had still to be shared with a wider audience. An extension to the duration of our project has enabled us to write three more booklets which will further examine life in the village and its relationship with the Thoresby Estate at the turn of the twentieth century.

The booklets are a collaborative effort by Group members. They examine the lives of villagers and share some of their stories, shedding light on the times in which they lived and the difficulties they faced. The letters between the tenants and the Estate are the major source of the stories.



For the most part the tenants corresponded with the Estate out of need or necessity, so the letters reveal very little by way of good news, but they certainly paint a vivid picture of a very different age which was not so very long ago.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the trustees of the Manvers Estate for their foresight in depositing their collected Estate papers at the University of Nottingham and so providing us with such a wonderful resource from which to learn.

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THE VILLAGE  
LANDSCAPE, WITH  
ITS HISTORIC LAYOUT  
AND INTERESTING  
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THE CONTEXT FOR  
THE ACTIVITIES  
OF THE VILLAGERS  
WHO LIVED AND  
WORKED IN LAXTON  
AT THE TURN OF THE  
TWENTIETH CENTURY

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# THE VILLAGE LANDSCAPE

The history of Laxton is embedded in its layout and in its historically interesting buildings. Our study of the correspondence which took place in the first twenty years of the twentieth century between the tenants of the Thoresby Estate and its Agents led to the discovery of further details about the village buildings and the people who lived in them and used them.

In the period of our study from 1900 to 1920 the village of Laxton looked very much as it does today, built on some of the highest land in Nottinghamshire and surrounded by its open fields. The layout of the village, it is now generally accepted, was set out in medieval times and the original tofts were part of a planned village, perhaps developed at the same time as the construction of the castle. Many of the regularly laid out plots, running alongside and at right angles to the road which runs through the village, can be identified in Mark Pierce's 1635 map. Indeed many of them are still in place today.



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## Pictured

*Laxton, 2016*

The High Street follows the line of what it is believed was the regularly laid out North Row of the medieval village.

After Cross Hill, where there is a small green, North Row continued on up The Bar. In the late nineteenth century and at the turn of the twentieth century The Bar was still a gated road.

The other branch of the main road which runs through the village, now called Main Street, continues down the hill to Bottom Farm, where it divides again, one lane leading to the southernmost part of the village, Moorend. This road was also gated near to where the entrance to South Field is today.

Along Meadow End in South Field a green lane called Clay Lane was the road to the small hamlet of Moorhouse during the period we studied. Clay Lane runs from South Field, passing between Copthorne Farm and Primrose Farm and then continues on to Moorhouse.

This village landscape with its historic layout and interesting buildings provided the context for the activities of the villagers who lived and worked in Laxton at the turn of the twentieth century.



## SOCIAL BUILDINGS, UTILITY BUILDINGS AND DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

Pictured

*The Bar - from  
Queenie Sampson's  
embroidery c.1925*

As well as serving a particular purpose in the village certain buildings in the period we are concerned with were hubs of social activity, notably the church, the school and the Dovecote Inn.

Other buildings such as the smithy, the Post Office, the shops, the mill and the Parish Rooms were all utility buildings, either built for or adapted for specific purposes. Their very existence at that time and the uses they were put to tell us a great deal about the activities of the villagers and the services they needed at hand in the time when horses were still the main means of transport.

The domestic buildings, farm houses and cottages, reveal a good deal about the economic state of the village itself. The type, size and upkeep of the property says much about the social hierarchy in

the village. The correspondence about repairs to the buildings between the Estate Agents and the tenants reflects the social attitudes of the day and adds detail to the stories of the lives of the villagers in Laxton during the period of our study.

We have chosen to write about particular buildings as examples of their type or because the correspondence about them highlights a particular aspect of village life.

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE VILLAGE, 1900 – 1920**

An overview of the village from Laxton Common to Moorhouse will paint a general picture of the village at the turn of the century. In later chapters we will examine some of the buildings in greater detail to give a fuller picture of Laxton at the time.

The Church of St. Michael and All Angels is a Grade 1 listed building and there are eleven further properties which are Grade 2 listed in Laxton, and in Moorhouse Church Farm is Grade 2 listed, (see Appendix 2). This gives some indication of the historical interest of our buildings.

In 1900 a visitor approaching Laxton village from Ollerton would pass through the gorse bushes and scrub land along the narrow gated road which crossed Laxton Common. The gorse which grew there must have given only poor shelter to the sheep and cattle which grazed on the tough, coarse pasture of what was still common land.

Following the road into the village and passing by Mill Field the visitor might glimpse the wooden post mill with its four sails turning in the wind.

# LAXTON MILL

Already by 1900 Laxton Mill would have been considered old fashioned, after all Tuxford had no fewer than three working tower mills and growing mechanization was on the horizon.

The farmers of Laxton, always slow to discard old machinery whilst it still worked, or to abandon old buildings whilst they still stood, continued to make use of the post mill. The design for post mills first came to Britain with the Normans.

The wooden body of the mill, built to contain the machinery which ground the grain and also used as a grain store, was mounted on a large vertical post, so that it could be pivoted round to allow the sails to catch the wind. Laxton mill had a fantail, a small windmill mounted at right angles to the sails, which ran on rails around the mill. It enabled

the miller to ensure that the “buck”, (the body of the mill), was facing the wind when the mill was in use. It also had an efficient braking system, as it was only too easy for the fantail to drive the mill far too quickly which could bring the whole structure down.

Graham Laughton, great grandson of James Laughton, the miller, remembers being told that ‘Hollanders’, a Dutch firm, were employed to maintain the mill, and that the upkeep of the mill was a twenty four hour job, really hard, strenuous and skilled work.

The mill was ideally placed at the top of the village on the high ground in Mill Field, where the wind sweeps across the Open Field. James Laughton, lived in High Street next door to what is now Lilac Farm.

## THE DESIGN FOR POST MILLS FIRST CAME TO BRITAIN WITH THE NORMANS



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## Pictured

*Laxton Mill, painted by Graham Laughton, great grandson of the miller*

According to the Inland Revenue return of 1910, it was known as 'Top Place', though latterly it came to be called 'Millers House.' He and Mary, his wife, had 13 children in total, though one child died young and two sons were lost in the First World War. James at fifty three years old in 1900 was fortunate in having the help of his grown up sons who were still living at home. John, the elder son, worked on the farm, George was a horseman on the farm and Samuel worked the mill.

James and Samuel milled the flour for the farmers' wives to make their bread in the big brick bread ovens which were a feature of the farm houses in Laxton. The farmers' wives not only made their own bread,



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### Pictured

*High Street,  
Town End Junction*

they also brewed their own beer. Some of the farms had both brew houses and hop yards, though the quality of the beer varied from house to house. Still today hops can be found growing in the hedgerows, escapees and descendants from those long ago hop yards.

The millers also produced animal feed for the farmers. Their job was a skilled craft and was still very important to the village at the turn of the twentieth century. But despite the hard work of James and his sons mechanisation was threatening the millers' trade and after 1916, when the mill blew down in a tremendous gale, it was never replaced.

The story of the mill is told in greater detail in this series of booklets by Mary Haigh in 'Open Field Farming in Laxton' and by Cynthia Bartle in 'Living in Laxton'.

## THE CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Leaving the mill and turning the corner into High Street our visitor could not help but notice the grey stone tower of the Church of St Michael and All Angels, as imposing then as it is today, dominating the main road which ran through the village.

A description of High Street itself by Alice Clark, who came to live at Town End Farm in 1913, says much about the agricultural work which went on in the village and the attitude of the villagers towards

farming activities, she wrote: *“The roads for those days were good, made of flint stone with grass verges on either side.”*

But then she goes on to say that as the carts, beasts and horses moved about the village streets ruts appeared which had to be continually repaired. The roads were none too clean either; mud and animal droppings were abundant.

The Manvers family and their Agents had to brave the mud and muck outside the church as

they took an active interest in the lives of their estate workers and frequently attended village social events in both the church and the school. We will examine the affairs of Laxton Church as they are revealed in the Manvers’ papers in closer detail in Chapter Two.

## FARM HOUSES AND COTTAGES

On the corner of High Street and Town End, where today a modern house, Westwood House, stands, a little group of red brick and pan tile cottages huddled together.

With few exceptions however the same farm houses and cottages lined the wide carriageway in much the same way as they do today. By 1900 many of the houses had been repaired and rebuilt by Lord Manvers who was generally regarded as a good landlord by the villagers.

# THE ROADS FOR THOSE DAYS WERE GOOD, MADE OF FLINT STONE WITH GRASS VERGES ON EITHER SIDE

It is in no small measure due to the Thoresby Estate's maintenance of the buildings that we can still enjoy and study them today, for instance, in High Street, Lilac Farm and its farm buildings, the barn adjoining Holme View Farm and Ivy House Farmhouse are now Grade 2 listed buildings. Ivy House Farmhouse dates from the 17th Century but it was refronted and extended in the 18th Century. It is constructed from both stone and local red brick and currently has a plain tile roof. The main eaves are rebated and there is a short length of dentils at the back of the house.

Lilac Farm dates from 1748, though the barn is dated 1760. In the period of our study the farm buildings would still have been used as a barn, stables and pigeoncote.

The Manvers' correspondence reveals more detail about the state of the farmhouses and cottages which we shall examine in Chapter Four.

## CRAFTSMEN'S COTTAGES

Near the top of High Street is 'Blacksmiths Cottage' where Thomas Hilton and Arthur Grundy worked. The forge was a vital part of village life; horses were shod there, farm tools mended, simple replacement parts for machines made. For the farmers in the village there was probably no building more useful than Thomas Hilton's workshop.

In Church Cottages a shoemaker and cobbler, Sam Moody, worked. The village wheelwright,

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William Duckmanton, had his workshop and saw pit at the bottom of the Twitchill. It is interesting how the cottages and outbuildings were adapted by the craftsmen as workshops. We are fortunate in still today being able to identify their places of work, (utility buildings). The table in the Chapter '*Who Lived in My House*' and Cynthia Bartle in '*Living in Laxton*' give details of occupations and houses.

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## THE SCHOOLS

# IN 1860 LORD MANVERS HAD SPENT £483 ON A NEW SCHOOL AND SCHOOL HOUSE, WHICH ARE NOW THE VILLAGE HALL AND THE ADJOINING HOUSE

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Still in High Street, the two schools, which had also been built by Lord Manvers, stood proudly on opposite sides of the road, built of red brick and pantile, each with one large school room which resembled a barn.

In 1860 Lord Manvers had spent £483 on a new school and school house, which are now the village hall and the adjoining house. In 1870 and 1871 he had an infant school built on the opposite side of the road. The site, now in private hands, has recently been sold. It cost him £143 in total. In 1900 Frank

Willis was the Head Teacher and he served at Laxton Parochial Church School until 1922 when he retired. The story of the school is told in this series by Joan Cottee in '*The Village Schoolmaster*.'

The Senior School, now the Village Hall, is a Grade 2 listed building, it has splendid Gothic windows.

## THE GENERAL STORE

Opposite the church was a general store, the main source of household supplies for the village housewives before the advent of the motorcar and modern supermarkets.

In 1911 the shop was being run by Samuel Laughton and his wife, Edith. Samuel had left the family milling business in order to farm his own place, which he rented from the Thoresby Estate, and to run the shop. Shopping in Laxton will be examined in greater detail in Chapter Three.

## THE VICARAGE AND PARISH ROOMS

Set back on the opposite side of the road the new vicarage and the Parish Reading Rooms were screened by trees.

The vicarage, a Grade 2 listed building, is a splendid example of Victorian architecture, and it still remains the only really large house in the village. It must have

been a cause for great wonderment when it was first built, putting the incumbent vicars on a completely different social footing from most of the villagers. It had been built by Lord Manvers to Revd. Martin's design and taste.

Since he was unmarried and lived alone, served only by a married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Parncutt, who kept house and garden for him, he must have had more than enough room to spare.

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The Parish Rooms built in the vicarage garden were used as village reading rooms as well as for the evening classes which Frank Willis ran and for school treats and other church social occasions.

The Vicarage is further examined in Chapter Two.

## THE DOVECOTE INN

The Dovecote Inn, standing in a prominent position at the edge of the village green, served as a place of relaxation and entertainment for the village workers.

It is said that Lady Manvers and Revd. Martin pressed for the Dovecote's Sunday licence to be revoked because in summer time, after drinking at the Dovecote on their one day off after a week of hard labour in the fields, the men of the village lounged on the green and catcalled the vicar as he passed on his way to and from Moorhouse in order to preach at the chapel of ease. We shall learn more of the Dovecote in Chapter Three.

## THE METHODIST CHAPEL

The Methodists in the village also disapproved of alcohol, one area where church and chapel adopted the same stance in village politics. The Chapel had been built in 1802 as a Congregational Chapel but had been taken over by the Primitive Methodists. By 1902, as Cynthia Bartle mentions in 'Living in Laxton', it was already used as a Primitive Methodist Chapel. This was probably because the Congregationalist membership had dwindled. It was not unusual for one sect of Dissenters to sell their superfluous chapels on to another more active sect. Primitive Methodism had certainly gained in popularity in the area at the time as the building of Moorhouse Primitive Chapel shows.



The Laxton chapel still stands on Chapel Lane but it is now a private house.

### Pictured

Location of the Methodist Chapel from Queenie Sampson's embroidery

## THE OLD VICARAGE FARM

Opposite the chapel is the Old Vicarage Farm, which was given to Lord Manvers in part exchange when he built the new vicarage. This would have been the home of Revd. Martin and other former vicars before the new vicarage was built. In the Inland Revenue Survey, Map and Field Books, of 1910 it is recorded as: *“a house and homestead near the chapel ‘Manor Farm’. Good water and Common rights.”*

Certainly Revd. Martin, who was related to the aristocracy, would have been happier to have called his dwelling ‘Manor Farm’ rather than ‘The Old Vicarage’ or even ‘Vicarage Farm.’

## THE PINFOLD

At the crossroads the pinfold lay on the opposite side of the road from where it currently stands. By 1900 the bailiff was in charge of rounding up any stray

animals, the office of pinder having been subsumed into the duties of the bailiff. Mary Haigh in 'Open Farming in Laxton' paints a picture of the pinder's role in the village from 1900 to 1920.

## MOORHOUSE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL

Main Street runs from Cross Hill down to Bottom Farm. Then Moorhouse Road leads to South Field

and Clay Lane which led to Moorhouse, a tiny hamlet of farms and cottages, without either a school or shop, but with a little Church of England chapel of ease and a tiny Methodist chapel. The chapel of ease is dealt with in detail Chapter Two.

The little Primitive Methodist Chapel is a small building, approximately six metres by four metres. It is built of local red brick and has a pantile roof. The wooden pews which faced the box pulpit, situated on the west wall, seated approximately twenty five people. Originally, according to the Inland Revenue Return of 1910, it had been built

as a cottage but was converted to a chapel in 1856.

The Inland Revenue Survey of 1908 states that the chapel was in fair repair and still in use by the Primitive Methodists. It still stands today but is now used as a stable.

Margaret W. Saxelby, who was born in Moorhouse, and now lives in Betcheners Cottage, tells us that her

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great grandmother, Hannah Hallam, actually preached in the little chapel. Both she and her husband, John Thomas Hallam, are listed as lay preachers in the 1891 census.

Margaret and her brother, Ken Saxelby of Church Farm, Moorhouse, can remember as children playing in the disused chapel and pretending to preach from the box pulpit. The chains from the old parafin lamps were still in place in the two elaborate ceiling roses which decorated the blue and white plaster ceiling.

The chapel had two windows at the front and one at the rear, a large wooden front door which stood between the front windows opened directly out on to the road.

At the start of the Great War the chapel was in still in

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#### Pictured

*Above: A foundation stone from the wall of the chapel, now in the possession of Margaret W. Saxelby*

*Below: Hannah Hallam, Local Preacher, 1838 to 1906*





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## Pictured

*Moorhouse Primitive  
Methodist Chapel today*

use, but it closed during the war and was later used for agricultural purposes.

These little Independent and Primitive Methodist chapels were built by local people usually for the poorer members of the community, they were very low church and used a reformed simple service. They were very plain, simple buildings, a reaction against the more elaborate Church of England churches.

Lay people, who were well known and sometimes even related to the worshippers, led the services and ran the chapels. They understood their membership and the problems of their own locality, moreover they spoke in the same dialect as their congregation.

The upper classes still ruled the Church of England, the Wesleyan Methodist chapels catered for the middle classes, but the Primitive Methodist chapels were totally democratic and the social

hierarchy, which was so rigid at this time, played no part in chapel life.

Our research into the correspondence in the Manvers' papers has enabled us to add detail to our overview of the village in our period.

The letters which passed between the villagers and the Estate about the buildings in Laxton and Moorhouse give further insights into life in the village at the time. In the following chapters, where we have used particular buildings as examples of what was happening in the village, we shall examine the correspondence about individual buildings and fill in those details.

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# INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS AND THEIR PLACE IN VILLAGE LIFE: RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

## THE CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL AND ALL ANGELS

The grey stone church of St Michael, the Archangel and All Angels, dominates the centre of Laxton. In the period we researched the church was not only a place of worship but also a social centre. Church attendance and Sunday school were an important part of life in the village. The choir, women's groups and men's classes were all attached to the church. The vicars were highly regarded in the village and were right at the top of the social hierarchy. The following research tells the story of the church building at the time.



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### Pictured

Remnant of church arch

When the Parish Church of Laxton was first built in the 13th century it was an impressive building but sadly by the late 18th century it was in a poor state of neglect. This prompted Revd. John Throsby to write a damning report in 1790:

*‘the floor and old stones are completely covered with coals, coal slack, cinders, fire wood, straw, lime, broken bricks and stone, hassocks and floor mats torn in pieces, ladders, an old sieve, broken scuttles and spades, brushes without handles and handles without brushes, mortar boards and mortar, reeds, tiles, broken glass and dog dung’*

*‘How has it happened that not one fostering hand has been found in Laxton or its neighbourhood to shelter these monuments of our forefathers from the most shameful abuse?’*

After this report, money was expended on the upkeep of the church but in 1854, Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church and yet again was none too favourable about the neglected state it was in. This must have prompted Lord Manvers to take drastic action and in 1860 he re-constructed the church, most notably by shortening the east end of the church by one bay, the evidence of which can be seen in the photo.

Still surviving today is the low-side window. This 13th century example is splayed inside to increase light, and measures approximately four inches wide and twenty inches long. As glass was expensive in

the 13th century it may well have either been unglazed or, as a draught excluder, horn may have been used although there are traces that shutters were fitted and used at some point.

The original purpose of this window has long been a debatable subject. It has been popularly known as a 'leper window' but there is no evidence of this, especially as it has been found that it would be near on impossible for the priest to administer the sacrament through the deep wall and small window. One of the theories was that it was opened at important sections of Mass so that a bell could be rung in accordance with an injunction of 1380;



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Pictured

*Low-side window*

*'in the elevation of the Body of Christ let the bells be rung on one side at least, that the people who cannot be daily at Mass wherever they be, whether at home or in the fields, may kneel'.*

The same question arises with this theory as with the leper theory, unless it was a very small bell.

Revd. Collinson worked tirelessly to raise the money for the church improvements, and in the 1900 Almanack reported that:

*'...the addition of four wrought iron bracket lamps in the Chancel has been made and two hanging lamps in the nave' and also rejoiced that 'we have got our Church nicely lighted now'.*



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### Pictured

Church interior  
showing lanterns

In correspondence from Vernon and Jean Bartle in 2016 they can remember old Mr Sam Moody and his son lighting the church boiler and trimming the paraffin lamps.

The architect Hodgson Fowler was responsible for the new interior design of the church and Collinson made rapid work in carrying out these designs. In the 1901 Almanack he reported that:

*'last year saw completion of the first part of our church improvements: the new oak reredos given by the tenants of Laxton in memory of the late Earl Manvers, side panelling at the east end, new altar table and footpace – the gift of Rev H A Martin – new communion rails, removal of screen to its original position, some alteration to the pulpit and reading desk, the shifting of the organ from the south to the north side of the chancel, its complete repair and also painting it, the erection of two interesting effigies of knight crusaders on suitable plinths, the text on the walls repainting, old reredos removing and re-erecting at Moorhouse'*



Pictured

Choir stalls and screen

Collinson carried on his drive to improve the church, but it wasn't until 1912 that more work on the interior was carried out, mainly due to the sagas of the boiler and the church gates.

The improvements through 1912 were: the relaying of iron gratings in the church floor, re-draining all the church walls with concrete channels, the making of a cistern and force pump and the renewal of the rain water pipes. The chancel had new oak stalls and screens, made from forest oak grown at Cockglode, some of the panelling being rare and beautiful wainscot.

The choir stalls and screens were built by Vallance & Blythe who were builders and contractors from Mansfield. On April 1st 1912 Collinson sent Wordsworth a cheque for £80 for work carried out from 'my Church improvement funds' which he admits exhausted the funds that they had raised.

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## ST MICHAEL'S BOASTS SIX BELLS, THE EARLIEST BEING DATED TO C1500

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### THE CHURCH BELLS

St Michael's boasts six bells, the earliest being dated to c1500 and in 1912, Collinson could not hide his pride and joy on the occasion of them being re-hung and wrote:

*'Mr Stevenson who spent so much of his time and skill in re-hanging our noble peel of bells, has lately celebrated his 80th birthday'*

He went on to say:

*'we have a promising team of young ringers on the Church bells, they have improved rapidly by arduous practice and gave a splendid ring on New Year'*

## THE CHURCH BOILER

Even after a new boiler system had been installed in 1889, the problems with heating the church would rumble on for many years to come. In the Almanack of 1907 Collinson reported that in 1906:

*'The church boiler was found to be leaking and one Sunday we were without a fire, but it was got into order for Christmas. We had to have a new boiler which will be of heavy expense.'*

## THE HEATING OF THIS GRAND OLD CHURCH SEEMED TO BE ADEQUATE UNTIL THINGS STARTED TO GO WRONG AGAIN IN LATE 1916

In March 1907, Mrs. Collinson organised a garden sale to raise funds in order to pay for the heating apparatus and boiler, it was well attended and contributed £8 12s. The new boiler had cost £25 and at the vestry meeting in April 1907, Collinson reported that there was *'still a debt of £9'*.

The heating of this grand old church seemed to be adequate until things started to go wrong again in late 1916, when Revd. Tunbridge was the vicar. He wrote to Mr Spink in a letter dated 9th February 1917 that the flues were in a bad state of repair and new ones would be required: *'but alas! There is not a soul here to fix things up'*.

In the midst of the Great War with men away fighting or required on the land, labour was scarce. Revd. Tunbridge continued:

*'If you could spare Barnes and some cement, I would like to get it done before any engineers come to see what general improvements can be made to the heating system before another winter.'*

It may have been chilly inside the church but the relationship between Revd. Tunbridge and Spink could be conceived as rather frosty.

In a return letter dated 10th February 1917, Spink informed Revd. Tunbridge that:

*'I have spoken to one or two engineers with reference to the heating and they all seem of the opinion that it is necessary to have the heating apparatus going in a church like yours a day or two at least before the building is used and in weather like this the fire should never be out.'*

Nevertheless it appears Spink allowed Barnes to carry out the repairs in a letter dated 12th February 1917. Revd. Tunbridge wrote back thanking Spink for the services of Barnes with the following sentence:

*'the fire is lit on Fridays but it is a large building to heat.'*

Trouble with the boiler began again in 1920. On 16th April 1920 Revd. Tunbridge wrote to Mr Argles explaining that:

*'Mather and Co. came and partly unearthed the boiler, apparently worn out. He will come out again to finish his preliminary work when we can find labour to help him.'*

The boiler had been embedded within the masonry and Revd. Tunbridge asked if the estate had two or three men spare to help for the day, to dig it out.

At this point Revd. Tunbridge became unwell and Mr. Frank Willis, the School Master, took over Revd. Tunbridge's duties.

Willis got to work and wrote to Argles with an estimate for the new boiler, £29 10s, exclusive of labour. On 6th May 1920 Argles replied:

*'His Lordship is pleased to contribute £10 and will also provide a bricklayer and labourer to carry out any work required in connection with re-fixing.'*

By September, the same year, not only had Willis raised most of the money but the new boiler was in place and working.

## THE CHURCH GATES

Unbelievably it took about four years to install new church gates. Revd. Collinson first engaged with Thoresby Estate about new gates to the entrance of the churchyard in July 1903. Wordsworth responded by asking Mr. Hill to discuss the matter with Collinson himself in a letter dated 15th July 1903.

It would be about another two years before correspondence continued on the subject. On 25th March 1905 Wordsworth wrote to Collinson and informed him, that he would speak to Mr. Hill himself on the matter but also added:

*'I am certain that at the present time he cannot possibly take anything more in hand so I hope you won't mind a little delay.'*

Mr. Hill had obviously sketched a design for the new gates and on the 31st March 1905 Wordsworth again corresponded with Collinson:

**UNBELIEVABLY  
IT TOOK ABOUT  
FOUR YEARS TO  
INSTALL NEW  
CHURCH GATES**

*'I will look carefully at Hill's sketch of the new gates before showing the Earl, I know from experience the Earl will have an opinion.'*

After getting the approval from Lord Manvers, the next question was where to get the stone from.

On 19th May 1905, Wordsworth wrote to Mr. H. Bramford, with reference to meeting up and discussing the stone available at 'Dusting Close' which is believed to be at the outskirts of the village, on the way to Egmonton.

A letter dated 23rd May 1905 was written from Wordsworth to Collinson stating that:

*'From what Bramford said to me yesterday I am afraid the Dusting Close would be very expensive to get, but no doubt stone might be got from the field at Cophorn, late Weatherall. I believe however that when we have pulled down the buildings late Moody, now Laughton and the wall facing the street, that we shall be able to get all as required for the entrance to the Church Yard – at any rate we shall take all the care we can with that stone and see what can be made of it.'*

It is unclear as to where the stone came from, although the likelihood is that it would have come from 'late Moody, now Laughton' as this would have been Twitchill Farm and transportation would have been easier from there as it was nearest to the site.

In the 1906 Almanack, Collinson wrote a few words about the progress of the gates:

*'At present a heap of stones is the only evidence that something is going to be done! But the when! lies with those who have kindly promised to carry out the work!'*

In the interest of raising further funds, he concluded with:

*'As soon as it is known when the work will definitely begin, you will be finding someone with a piece of paper and a pencil very anxious to put your name on his list with a subscription opposite it!'*

Villagers' subscriptions were not the only form of raising the money needed, the offertory from the 1905 harvest festival raised a further £2 1s 6d. Revd. Collinson had promised Thoresby that he would raise £60 to pay for the new gates with Lord Manvers supplying the labour.

On 13th May 1907, Collinson sent a telegram to Wordsworth enclosing a cheque for the promised £60 and also inviting him to a *'little ceremony of dedication'* for the official opening of the gates.

Wordsworth responded the following day acknowledging that the gates were a *'great improvement'* but failed to mention the invitation to the opening ceremony. The *'little ceremony of dedication'* occurred on Whit Sunday before an ordinary evening service.

*'The vicar, choir and congregation assembled outside the gates, and after the dedication prayers, the vicar unlocked the gates and the choir and congregation sang the Jubilate in procession. The vicar preached a very appropriate sermon from the words 'This is none other than the gate of Heaven.'*

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**REVD.  
COLLINSON  
HAD PROMISED  
THORESBY  
THAT HE  
WOULD RAISE  
£60 TO PAY  
FOR THE  
NEW GATES  
WITH LORD  
MANVERS  
SUPPLYING  
THE LABOUR**

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## Pictured

*The church gates*

Today the gates and the gate piers are Grade II listed and are described as follows:

*'Pair of curved dwarf flanking walls with chamfered ashlar coping carrying decorative railing. Pair of ashlar flanking piers with stepped pyramidal caps. Pair of square skeleton iron gate piers with wavy tops. Pair of ramped top iron gates.'*

It can be seen from the photo that the gates had an iron arch over the top with a lantern to light the way. Sadly these are now missing and are not included in the description.

## VICARS OF THE PARISH

In 1898, one of the longest serving Vicars of the Parish, Revd. Henry Arthur Martin retired from the living of Laxton and Moorhouse. His replacement was Revd. Christopher Barber Collinson.

Collinson immersed himself heavily within the parish, from organising the cricket team, to having articles published in well-respected magazines of the

time in relation to the survival of Laxton's Open Field system.

Collinson enjoyed a friendly and healthy relationship with the Thoresby Estate, especially with the Agent Robert Walter Wordsworth. The correspondence between the two gentlemen shows a friendliness and mutual respect for each other, with their letters regularly starting with 'My Dear Collinson' and 'My Dear Wordsworth', with the occasional humorous line thrown in for good measure.

Wordsworth came from a renowned family. His father was one of the two men who founded the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race and his great uncle was the well-known poet William Wordsworth.

Collinson's true passion was, of course, the church. He took great pleasure and pride in the re-organisation of and improvement to the churches in his care. This can be seen in a letter he wrote to Wordsworth about Laxton Church when he said '*the Church is improving vastly – looks as though it belongs to somebody!*' To pay for these improvements he and his wife would regularly organise events such as bazaars, jumble and garden sales.

Collinson maintained a good relationship with the Thoresby Estate after Wordsworth retired, firstly with Argles and also with his understudy Spink. His honesty shone through. The sad loss of his brother in 1909 meant that Collinson was the beneficiary of his estate. In a letter to Thoresby dated 15th November he wrote:

*'I propose in future not to expect Lord Manvers to make up the value of the living to £300 as he has done up to now - owing to various changes in my circumstances caused by the death of my brother I am in a somewhat better financial position than I was when I came here and hardly*

*feel justified in continuing to secure an increase  
... I am deeply grateful for what has been  
done and I don't want to seem ungrateful'*

Collinson resigned his living in July 1915 to retire. After speaking to Lord Manvers, Argles wrote to Collinson on the 17th July with the following:

*'My Dear Collinson, Referring to our conversion yesterday afternoon, I have seen Lord Manvers this morning and he is very pleased to hear you can stay on at Laxton for a time. He hopes it will be possible for you to continue there until the end of the war and I think it best to now put it in writing to you that he would be prepared to contribute towards the rent of the house which you propose to take at Wheatley'.*

Obviously nobody knew how long the war was going to last. The fact that Collinson had agreed in theory to stay for an unknown period of time showed his affection for his job and the community. The letter also shows how highly thought of Collinson was with the Thoresby Estate with Lord Manvers being prepared to help towards the rent.

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#### Pictured

*Revd. James Tunbridge*



The first Sunday in September 1916 was Collinson's last sermon at Laxton, even though officially it was due to be 30th September. The sermon paid special reference to the death of Corporal O.P. Willis. (*Please see 'Laxton In Wartime'*) As a mark of gratitude, the parishioners presented Revd. Collinson and his wife *'with a beautiful silver rose bowl'*.

The reason for the early departure is unclear but we do know from a letter that Spink wrote to Collinson on 30th May 1917 the address was Wheatley Fields, Retford, so there is a good chance that the house previously mentioned could not be held for much longer.

Revd. James Tunbridge officially took over as Vicar of Laxton and Moorhouse on 14th November 1916. Collinson would have been a hard act to follow and to build a strong relationship, not only with the parishioners but especially the Thoresby Estate was far from an easy one.

There seemed to be an issue over the distribution of the money donated by Lord Manvers for the poor of Laxton. On 12th January 1920, Argles wrote the following to Revd. Tunbridge:

*'Will you kindly let me have a short statement showing how Lord Manvers donation of £10 in December 1918 and £10 in December 1919 was disposed of, which he gives to the poor of Laxton.*

Revd. Tunbridge replied on the day after:

*'I have never received any hint as to how Lord Manvers wishes his donations to be (unreadable) and have carefully avoided anything like pauperising the people.*

On the 14th January 1920 Argles replied:

*It appears that after paying the coal and clothing club's bonus due this month you will have a balance of about £10 in hand on the two years. The object of this donation is to make the poor of Laxton happy at xmas time. If possible and in future it*

Ma Dec 40/330/2

Laxton Poor (Lord Manvers) Fund

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
Dec. 1918 Cash 10.0.0	Jan'y 1919 Bounts to Coal -
" 1919 " 10.0.0	Clothing Clubs } 4.2.8
£ 20.0.0	Mar 1919 Cottagers Fireside
£	(Wall) Almshouses } 15.11
	Jan'y 1920 Coal & Clothing
	Clubs - Bounts
	Not yet paid. M <sup>rs</sup> } 10.0.0
	Not all in cash in
	hand -
	Balance of 1919 } 5.1.5
	Cash in hand
	£ 20.0.0

Laxton Vicar  
13.1.20

*J. Tunbridge Vicar*

**Pictured**

Revd. Tunbridge's statement of the distribution of the Lord Manvers' donation for both 1919 and 1920 Ma 2C 40 330

is Lord Manvers wish that the money should be distributed just before xmas to deserving cases'

Incredibly it seems that Revd. Tunbridge was unaware of what he was expected to do.

The following Christmas, after Revd. Tunbridge had resigned, Frank Willis took on the Vicar's duties and dealt with the Poor Donation and on 15th December 1920 sent a deeply thankful letter to the Estate:

Dear Sir

On behalf of the poor of Laxton and the Churchwardens, I beg to Thank Lord Manvers very heartily for the cheque received this morning

*I shall have great pleasure in distributing the gift amongst the poor and I am sure his lordship's generosity will be much appreciated'*

Revd. Tunbridge resigned at the end of September 1920 and in a letter to Argles wrote:

*'long time my health has been (unreadable). I have to get assistance. Revd. Henry Julius Martyn from London comes into Laxton on the 15th October to January 6th and probably for a further period if required, he is elderly but strong'*

Revd. Tunbridge's last letter sent from Laxton was on 8th November 1920, informing Argles that he would be leaving on the 10th and going to live in Sheffield and that: *'Rev Martyn has rooms opposite the Vicarage with Mrs Sampson'*.

Upon searching for a new Vicar, Lady Elinor Denison became involved and on December 8th 1920 wrote to Argles:

*'I wrote to Mr Mackenzie but have heard from him this morning that he could not consider the living of Laxton if Lord Manvers did offer it to him – I am sorry for I am so anxious that Laxton should have a really good man this time – but it is most difficult to find anyone now who can afford to take these country livings'*

It is unclear as to whether Lady Elinor was referring to Revd. Tunbridge or Martyn but it would be 19th March 1921 before the new vicar, the Revd. Samuel Bennett Bleau M.A. was inducted into the living.



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Pictured

*The Vicarage*

## THE VICARAGE

The new vicarage building with adjoining service wing and stables was built in 1875, it was designed in a Gothic Revival style by John Birch and paid for by Earl Manvers. This replaced the old living accommodation which is now known as the Old Vicarage Farm house.

The vicarage is now a Grade II listed building, the photo shows the distinctive *'half hipped plain tile roofs with diaper patterns'* with a conservatory on the side.

As a relatively new building the only major change in the period of 1900-1920 was the installation of running water.

Water was piped into the village in 1913 and when Collinson heard this, he was keen that the Vicarage should have its own running water supply. In January of 1913, Wordsworth wrote to Collinson:

*'I am specially obliged to you for your reference to our water supply and I shall of course be very willing to let you have Mr Hills help in drawing up specifications, should you decide to put water in to the Vicarage'*

A running water supply to the Vicarage would be at Revd. Collinson's expense, but Mr Wordsworth showed concern over how much it would cost. In a letter dated 12th April 1913 Wordsworth acknowledged a previous letter from Collinson and replied with:

*'Spoken to Mr Hill about your anxiety for the new water pipes in the Vicarage and he will attend to it but I am not in the least surprised that the cost will be some sum you mention. Water supplies are costly things'*

## HAVING NO INSULATION AGAINST MOTHER NATURE COULD AND DID CAUSE PROBLEMS

Having a water supply was a luxury but by not having insulation against Mother Nature it could and did cause problems.

On the 10th February 1917, Spink replied to a letter from Revd. Tunbridge to inform him that: *'I think the frost has cut nearly everyone's water supply off'*

A month later Revd. Tunbridge wrote again to Spink:

*'since the frost our water system has gone wrong, none of the balls in the sisterns (cisterns) are acting properly and much water is running to waste. If you can spare the plumber and put them right, I should be much relieved'*

One can only presume he got his relief!

Before Revd. Tunbridge resigned the living of Laxton, he wrote to the Thoresby Estate enquiring about the possible repair or removal of the greenhouse, Argles wrote back on 2nd July 1920 stating that they *'will look at the conservatory 16ft x 14ft'*.

After consulting his workmen Argles wrote again to Revd. Tunbridge on 22nd July:

*'The clerk of works reports to me that it would cost 20 to 50 pounds to put your greenhouse in order and that it could easily be taken away without spoiling the appearance of the adjoining building. Under the circumstances I feel sure that Lord Manvers would approve of it being removed'*.

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## ARGLES WAS ONE TO NEVER MISS AN OPPORTUNITY OR A SAVING

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Argles was one to never miss an opportunity or a saving, and on 28th July he sent Revd. Tunbridge another letter:

*'if you decide to pull down your greenhouse, will you kindly give me first offer on the glass. It may prove useful at Thoresby'*

After Revd. Tunbridge had informed Thoresby that he was resigning his living, Argles wrote to him on 5th October 1920 acknowledging his impending retirement and also noted that:

*'I note the question of the conservatory is going to stand over'*.

It is unclear whether or not the conservatory and the greenhouse are one and the same or separate issues, or indeed if they were pulled down.

## LAXTON BURIALS

In the Parish Almanack of 1905, Revd. Collinson alluded to the churchyard becoming '*within measurable distance of being full*'. With this in mind, stricter rules were put in place.

A new fee of £5 was introduced to deter people who did not live within the parish boundary from being buried in the churchyard. In 1909 this fee had increased to £5 5s 0d. For Laxton and Moorhouse residents the fee was 1d.

But when is a resident not a resident? On 31st October 1912, Revd. Collinson received a wire from the Master of the Workhouse of the Southwell Board of Guardians, asking him to make himself available the next day to bury a man, George Pearson,

who had died two days previously. The wire informed Collinson that the undertakers had arranged to be there at 3pm. A few hours later, Collinson received another wire, changing the time to eleven in the morning to accommodate the undertakers better. The day of the funeral, Collinson waited in the morning but no one arrived. He then got another wire instructing him that the funeral had been moved back to 3pm '*owing to a mistake in the certificate*'.

If the family didn't want to arrange the funeral, the legal position of someone dying in the workhouse was that the deceased was to be taken back to the parish which they were from. Revd. Collinson believed that George Pearson was not a previous resident of Laxton but the Master of the Southwell Workhouse said that was the information on his books.

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**A NEW FEE  
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TO DETER  
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DID NOT  
LIVE WITHIN  
THE PARISH  
BOUNDARY  
FROM BEING  
BURIED IN THE  
CHURCHYARD**

---

It didn't come to light until afterwards when they found that there had been a mistake in the man's name. Exactly who the man was is unclear, or even if he was from the village.

Although fearing that the churchyard was filling up fast, in correspondence from Collinson to Argles (22nd January 1915) regarding information required by the District Valuer for Laxton Church and Moorhouse Chapel, Revd. Collinson shows his humorous side by writing:

*'But the present occupants are a silent lot and don't want disturbing, but there are several sites vacant'*

Unsure as to whether to charge the family of Mary Bagshaw, who had died whilst living in London, but who had lived in the village for many years, Revd. Tunbridge wrote to Lord Manvers on the 14th November 1919 to ascertain an answer, especially as these fees went to the Thoresby Estate. Little was Revd. Tunbridge to know that this would open up a small can of worms.

Argles responded the next day with the news that Lord Manvers had given his instruction that no burial fee would be applied. In the same letter Argles enquired about the burial fee charged to the family of John Coupe who was buried in the churchyard shortly after Revd. Tunbridge had taken over three years previously!

Revd. Tunbridge responded on the 17th November 1919 and reported to Argles that Mary Bagshaw's family had been informed that *'Lord Manvers had kindly exempted her case'*.

He also responded to the case of John Coupe by saying *'fees were charged in the ordinary course and I have heard nothing since'* and that:

*'The "Table of Fees" here is all I have to guide me in such matters and no action can be taken that would prejudice any successor's position. What the legal aspect maybe I question if anyone knows but I am trying to find out.'*

Needless to say the burial fee was reimbursed to the Coupe family.

On 8th December 1919 he wrote again to Revd. Tunbridge, this time to inform him that Mr. Rawding, from Kneesall, had received a bill for his mother's burial and had asked the Estate the reason why.

Mr Argles finished the letter with:

*'I fear that if these fees are collected from families, such as the Coupes and the Rawdings, some very unpleasant things may be said about yourself, the church wardens and Lord Manvers. When you came to Laxton I think it was made quite clear to you that these fees only to be charged in exceptional cases and never to old residents in the district.'*

Revd. Tunbridge defended himself in a letter dated 10th December 1919: *'Nothing was said as to these fees as I remember'*.

He went on to state, it was 19 years since old Mrs. Rawding had lived in the village and that her son had happily paid the fee. Defending himself and the church wardens he signed off with the following sentence:

*'It is not a personal matter at all and this should be made clear, but the chief point is that our churchyard is filling up and there will be no more room for anybody.'*

Whether or not Revd. Tunbridge was made aware of the fees pertaining to burials of previous inhabitants of Laxton is unclear, but it does seem that Revd. Tunbridge took the Estate's guidance in the matter as there is no more correspondence on the subject. What does come across from the letters is that once one family had successfully claimed their money back word got around other families, by-passed the Vicar, and went straight to Lord Manvers' office, further agitating the relationship between Revd. Tunbridge and Argles.

## THE CHURCH YARD

Collinson was not only concerned about the inside fabric of the church, the grounds were just as important.

As well as the church gates that were finally completed in 1907, Collinson described in the 1913 Almanack, the work that had been carried out in 1912 as follows:

*'The renewal of the rain water pipes, relaying and gravelling the path on the north side of the Church, shrubs and trees near the Church cleared – the roots had stopped up all the underground pipes. Cut down the big Yew hedge, gone through underneath and was unmanageable but will grow back'*

In 1913, a new Forrester was employed by the Thoresby Estate and in a trip to Laxton with Wordsworth, suggested that *'fresh yew be planted in between the existing stems'* and that *'there will be a little of the same to do below the lower gate'*.

So even after all the destruction that the tree roots had caused, the suggestion was to plant more.



Situated within the churchyard are two millstones, recovered from the mill that collapsed in 1916. The photograph shows six men bringing one of these stones down the village in the late 1930s.

Also situated within the churchyard is an interesting Cross, reportedly of medieval age. Thankfully this Grade II listed monument survived all restorations although its location is more southern due to the enlargement of the churchyard. It has a square plinth, a socket stone and a shaft with a moulded knop.

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#### Pictured

*Men with Mill Stone,  
Left to Right: Arthur  
Newbold, Richard  
Clark, Ron Cree,  
Sam Laughton, Mark  
Bailey, Arthur Grundy*



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**Pictured:**

*Moorhouse Chapel*

## MOORHOUSE CHAPEL-OF-EASE

It is believed that the original chapel here was built for the private use of Robert de Lexington (d1250) early in the thirteenth century.

The present chapel, dedicated to St. Nicholas, was rebuilt on the same site in 1860-61 in a French Gothic Revival style, at the expense of the Right Hon. J E Denison, who at the time was the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The chapel cost Denison £890 and was designed by the architect Henry Clutton, who had the foresight to re-use the bell, which not only kept costs down but also preserved what is now the second oldest recorded church bell in the county. This unassuming plain, straight sided bell dates back to circa 1240 and is hung from the small arched bellcote above the chancel arch.

It is known as a chapel-of-ease due to the fact it is located and built within the parish boundary and serves the residents of Moorhouse who may find difficulty in attending services at St. Michael's.

Today the chapel has a refreshing light decoration with some interesting features. Situated in the middle of the chancel is the altar, made with plastered brick sides with a red marble top. Directly behind the altar is the reredos with four elaborately decorated panels.

The Southwell and Nottingham Church History project reports that there is uncertainty as to where the reredos came from, but in the 1901 Almanack Revd. Collinson reported that the old reredos had been removed from Laxton Church and re-erected at Moorhouse, presumably at the chapel.



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**Pictured:**

*Above: Moorhouse Chapel bell*

*Below: Moorhouse Chapel interior*



The two candelabras also date back to the late nineteenth century, originally oil lamps which have now been adapted to electricity.

Although it is known as a Chapel, throughout the correspondence between Vicars and the Thoresby Estate, the Chapel is referred to as a 'church'. Just like the Laxton Church of St. Michael's, the present Chapel had its fair share of issues.

In the 1903 Almanack, Revd. Collinson reported

that the heating apparatus broke down, which cost £9 9s 11d to repair and through the generosity of the congregation they managed to raise £8 16s 4d specifically for this cause. In 1914, the question of Insurance for the Chapel was raised. Revd. Collinson first asked Mr. Spink in a letter dated 2nd May 1914 if the Thoresby Estate had the relevant cover for the Chapel, to which Spink replied on 4th May 1914 '*We have never insured the Church there, and should have thought that £1000 was ample.*' Collinson must have thought that was a little too much and replied

the following day with '*£750 would be sufficient*'.

By 1917, concern about its poor state of repair can be shown through the correspondence. On 17th January 1917 Revd. Tunbridge wrote to Mr. Spink after Mr. Hills had carried out a report:

*'The matter looks very serious and I have written an urgent letter to Lady Denison about it. It never ought to have been neglected so long.'*

What the repairs were are unclear as there is no report available. In the February, Revd. Tunbridge met

## JUST LIKE THE LAXTON CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL'S, THE PRESENT CHAPEL HAD ITS FAIR SHARE OF ISSUES

with Lady Elinor and informed Spink in a letter dated 9th February 1917 that:

*'The Denisons have promised to do something about Moorhouse Church.'*

After consulting Lord Manvers, Spink replied a week later and informed Revd. Tunbridge that:

*'Lord Manvers will not allow Lady Denison to pay the whole of these repairs and if you have an opportunity, you might let her know that the work will be carried out by the Thoresby men as soon as possible and the cost apportioned according to the acreage or rental.'*

Unfortunately, in a letter dated 25th May 1917 and presumably due to the war efforts, Spink informed Revd. Tunbridge that:

*'I am very sorry but I am afraid it will be almost impossible for his Lordship's workmen to do anything at Moorhouse Church this summer.'*

He went on to ask if Lady Denison could arrange workmen, possibly from the Newark area to carry out the repairs and that he had *'no doubt Mr. Hill would be able to supervise'*.

In the Almanack of 1918, Revd. Tunbridge wrote that although the parishioners of Laxton and Moorhouse raised £9 11s 9d towards the repairs needed to the Chapel, it was impossible to get the labour force required and therefore remained *'in abeyance'*.

There is no more correspondence within this time frame concerning the repairs being carried out but as Moorhouse Chapel is now a Grade II listed building, it can safely be assumed that the repairs were carried out at some point.

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THE POST OFFICE  
PROVIDED A VITAL  
LINK FOR THE  
VILLAGERS TO KEEP  
IN TOUCH WITH  
LIFE BEYOND THE  
VILLAGE ITSELF

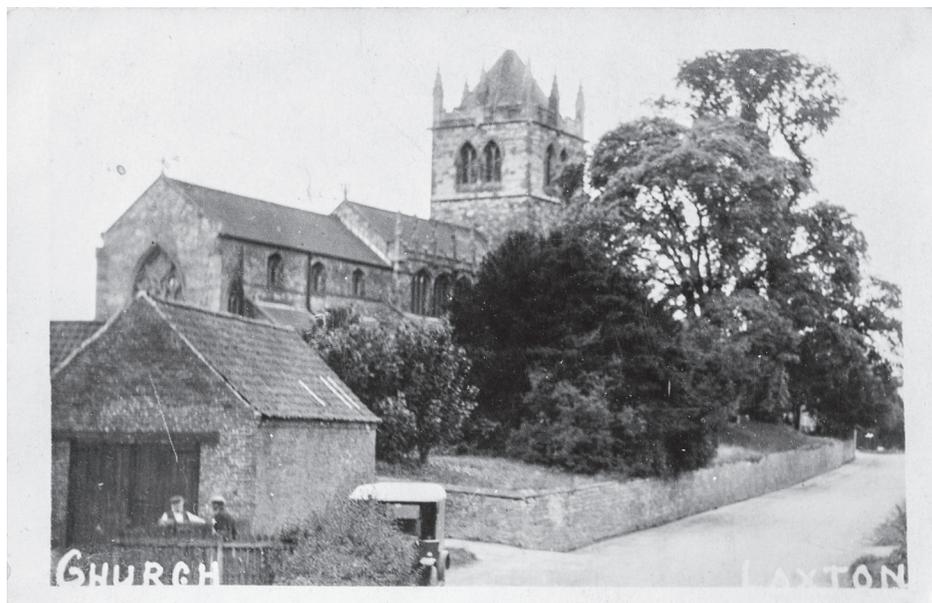
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# INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS AND THEIR PLACE IN VILLAGE LIFE: UTILITY BUILDINGS

## LAXTON POST OFFICE

Before the days of emails and mobile phones one of the most important buildings in the village would have been the Post Office. It provided a vital link for the villagers to keep in touch with life beyond the village itself. The post master or mistress would have had an important role in the village, enabling family members who had left the village to keep in touch as well as providing a vital service, however, to send a money order or a telegraph required a trip to the Post Office in Tuxford.



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**Pictured:**

*Outbuildings at  
Twitchill Cottage*

In 1900 the Post Office was based, probably in a parlour, at the small farm now known as Twitchill Cottage. The right to run the Post Office from there seems to have followed the Manvers Estate tenancy. There was no liability to do so, however, as Mr. Wordsworth advised Mrs Hewerdine before her husband, George, took over from Samuel Sampson in 1903. The Hewerdines continued with the Post Office for a couple of years until they moved on to Kneesall and were replaced by Benjamin and Charlotte Moody.

Benjamin seems to have been quite a character, and this move to the Post Office was in fact his entry into retirement. Born in Laxton, the son of Joseph Moody a farmer of 10 acres, he was recorded in 1861 as a 15 years old Agricultural Labourer. He married Charlotte Dewick at Laxton in May 1866.

Benjamin left the land for a career with the railways. The couple were living at Eckington, Chesterfield in 1871 where Benjamin worked as a railway porter. Ten years later he had been promoted to Station Master



(Midland Railway) at Rawmarsh, Rotherham. The large Moody family, with eight children, remained in the Rotherham area until Benjamin was able to take his railway pension.

The couple must have always planned to return to the village of their birth as at some time Benjamin acquired the property occupied by the general store, which he sold to the Manvers Estate in 1905.

Farming proved to be a little too onerous for Benjamin, now over 60, and only a year after taking the tenancy he was asking to have the acreage reduced. This was refused by R. W. Wordsworth who felt that *'after my expenditure on your place, to reduce a holding such as yours from 22 acres to 13 would be quite indefensible from the position of Estate Management'*.

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**Pictured:**

*The wedding of Sarah Alice Moody and William Sampson on 22nd April 1908 taken at Laxton Post Office. Benjamin and Charlotte Moody seated*

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# IN 1917 THE POST OFFICE MOVED NEXT DOOR, TO ORCHARD VIEW, WITH A NEW POSTMISTRESS, MISS MARY MOODY

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Eventually, an arrangement was made for the tenancy to pass to William Sampson following his marriage to Benjamin's daughter Sarah Alice, on 22nd April 1908.

William was one of Samuel Sampson's sons, so he would have been familiar with his new home. During this time Ernest Harold, Frederick William (died 1914) and Charlotte Mary (Queenie) were born. The family remained at the Post Office until 1917 when William took the tenancy of Holme View Farm where his son John Maxwell arrived in 1918.

In 1917 the Post Office moved next door, to Orchard View, with a new postmistress, Miss Mary Moody.

Laxton born, Mary was in her early fifties having been a teacher in village schools at Cumberworth in Lincolnshire and at Perlethorpe. On her return to Laxton she had taken the post of housekeeper for farmer William Atkinson.

She informed Mr Spink on 8th March 1917:

*'I am writing to say that I have taken over the Post Office from Mr Wm Sampson, and the door that will have to be used for that purpose is getting very badly out of order - in fact we have never been able to use it at all since being here. The bottom part is all decayed, & it will only open part of the way which makes it very awkward. Do you think you could put it in order for me? If you could I should be greatly obliged.'*

The request met with a sympathetic response from the Estate. In turn, Mary was assisted with the running of the Post Office by her niece, Mary Louisa

Moody. Mary died in 1925, aged 59. Mary Louisa continued as Postmistress after her marriage to Percy Maddison.

The business moved to their home, the original farmhouse at the holding then referred to as Post Office Farm but now called New House Farm. Finally, in 1937, the Post Office became part of the Shop when Percy gave up farming and the family moved to the general store. There it remained until March 2008, when it became a victim of a reorganisation at the Royal Mail which saw the closure of many village sub Post Offices.



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**Pictured:**

*Nora Kent née Maddison and Margaret Maddison on the last day of Laxton Post Office, March 2008*

## THE POSTAL SERVICE AT LAXTON.

A parish meeting, chaired by Revd. Collinson and held in the Schoolroom was reported in the Newark Herald on 28th October 1905:

*'Up to the month of August, letters were delivered as a rule by nine o'clock throughout the village, and the post went out at 3.20 p.m. Up to that time the letters were brought from Kneesall, and this delivery being a great improvement on the previous arrangement, gave great satisfaction to the villagers. Now, however, the letters are brought from Carlton-on-Trent, and are delivered at least an hour later than under the other system.*

*To make up for this, the postal arrangements for the afternoon were extended to 4.30, but this by no means makes up for the later delivery in the morning,*

*and it is understood that it will be impossible for one man to bring parcels and letters on a bicycle during the Winter months. The meeting on Saturday strongly condemned the change. The chairman, farmers, and tradesmen all stated that they were put to great inconvenience by the late delivery.*

*There was one exception to this, as one householder said it would be better for him if there was no delivery at all as he got "nowt but bills" when the postman did come.'*

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## THE POSTMAN DID NOT HAVE AN EASY JOB DELIVERING POST WHERE THERE WERE NO FORMAL ADDRESSES AS WE KNOW THEM, NOR POST CODES

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The Postmaster-General was petitioned to restore the service previously enjoyed. Whether it was as a result of this approach we do not know, but the 1912 Kelly's Directory states:

*'William Sampson, sub-postmaster. Letters received from Newark-on-Trent at 8 a.m. dispatched at 4.35 p.m. ; no delivery on Sunday.'*

In any case the postman did not have an easy job delivering post where there were no formal addresses as we know them, nor post codes, just the name of the recipient at Laxton.

He needed to learn his round quickly and well!



## THE GENERAL STORE

At the heart of the village the General Store was the largest shop in Laxton, and remained so until it finally ceased trading in 2015 when the proprietor, Margaret Maddison, retired. Generations of villagers hold, with great affection, memories of buying groceries, sweets or stationery; of catching up on local news; or reserving tickets for social events across the solid oak topped counters. Not until reading an inventory prepared for the tenant changeover, Nettleship to Laughton in 1903, did it become clear just how many generations. If we could go back to those times, stepping inside the shop, it would seem a very familiar place: the wooden counters, shelving and nests of drawers (relieved of their modern pegboard facing) were all there then. Just how old might they be?

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### Pictured:

*The General Store  
circa 1908 with Samuel  
Laughton's children  
Oliver and Mabel*



For reasons which will become clear later, it is doubtful if the shop fit would have been undertaken by the Nettleships; which takes us back to their predecessors, the Samuel Pinders. Samuel senior was listed for Laxton Parish in the 1853 Directory & Gazetteer as a Grocer & Druggist. His son Samuel Henry Charles Price Pinder was a Chemist and Druggist Apprentice in Newark at the 1861 census, before returning home. Perhaps development of the Chemist side of the business would have been a good reason to fit out the shop. Graham Laughton (grandson of Samuel Laughton) recalls as a youngster being fascinated by the brass fittings and the Latin names such as Sal Ammoniac in gold letters on the little drawers.

Samuel Pinder junior took over the shop after his father died in 1874. He continued to trade there on into the 1880's before moving to Ecclesall Bierlow, Sheffield, where we can find him with his family in the 1891 census, described as a Chemist & Grocer.

## GEORGE & ANN NETTLESHIP

At Laxton in 1891, George and Ann Nettleship were living in the house behind the shop premises, which adjoined the Little School and its playground. Although George described his occupation as Agricultural Labourer in censuses, he was listed as a Shopkeeper in the 1895 Kelly's Directory of Nottinghamshire.

Mrs Nettleship was remembered by Edith Hickson as being *'very awkward about lost balls. Sometimes she wouldn't allow a search in her garden at all, then a new ball had to be procured somehow'*. Behind closed shutters, there may have been a reason for this seeming lack of generosity. Ann Nettleship's lot in life does not appear to have been a happy one;

suffering from both ill health and at the hands of an abusive husband. She was a 46-year old widow, who had also lost her teenage son, when, in May 1888, she married George Nettleship, who was at least 10 years younger than her.

Early in 1901 she was seeking a legal separation from her husband. A quite shocking story comes to light in the 5th January edition of the Retford, Gainsborough and Worksop Times reporting a case heard at the Retford Police Court under the heading 'DOMESTIC INFELICITY AT LAXTON':

*'George Nettleship, shopkeeper, Laxton, was summoned for persistent cruelty towards his wife, Ann Nettleship, who sought a separation - Mr A. P. Williamson (Bescoby and Williamson) appeared for the complainant, who said she had been married to the defendant about 13 years. She was now living with her married daughter at Laxton.*

*Since their marriage, her husband had acted badly towards her. At times, when in drink, his conduct had been violent. She had put up with it hoping he would improve, but he grew worse and she found her health would not stand against it any longer. Defendant had pushed and knocked her about, and had turned her out of doors at night. In the spring of this year she went into Nottingham Hospital, where she remained for six weeks. She went under an operation. She left on May 22nd, and for eight weeks lived with her daughter - till she was stronger. She then went back to her husband, but his conduct was no better. He had struck her at different times since she went back to him. She was much weaker and could not bear it.*

*Last Friday night she was in the bedroom when he came upstairs, about 10 o'clock, and threatened*

*to set the bed on fire. He would not allow her to get into bed, and had a lighted candle in his hand. She went downstairs and sat in the cold till midnight, when she thought he was asleep. He had threatened once before to set the bedding on fire.*

*On Sunday he turned her out and she had to seek shelter at her daughter's house. She tried to get in her home three times, but without effect. She went home on the Monday and did the housework. He came home between one and two, and, taking the meat from the oven, threw it upon the floor and kicked it among the ashes. She and her adopted son then went upstairs. Defendant followed, and throwing her upon the bed, beat her on the right side which had been operated upon.*

*She left the house directly, and had not been back since. She was afraid to live with him. – Dr. Whittington, Tuxford, said that he had attended the complainant for many years. She had been suffering from cancer of the bowels, and had been operated upon at Nottingham Hospital for this disease. Her state was most precarious, and he was quite satisfied that this would be dangerous to the woman's life to be struck on the right side. – George Bagshawe, the adopted son, said he saw defendant strike his wife on the side after throwing her on the bed. She cried out two or three times.*

*He then went for a doctor. – Defendant, who was partly muddled with drink, said that the last witness put a revolver into his face on Monday night. He denied striking his wife on the bed.- in answer to Mr. Williamson, complainant said that her husband had been a woodman for Lord Savile. He had been earning 2s 9d per day. He had eight sheep*

*on a piece of land. - The Clerk told the defendant he was a disgrace to himself to come to Court in such a state. – The Bench granted a separation order, and ordered defendant to pay 6s. per week on a maintenance order, and £1 13s. costs.'*

Ann Nettleship died early in 1903. It was only after this event that George quit the shop, but not before he had auctioned off all of the household furniture and effects.

## SAMUEL & EDITH LAUGHTON

In the early 1900's the general store was owned by Benjamin Moody. He granted a lease of the building to Samuel Laughton from Lady Day 1903. Laughton had to acquire the trade fixtures and residual stock from the departing Nettleship. A copy of the valuation agreed by Joseph North and William Harpham on behalf of the parties itemises fittings and utensils in the shop and elsewhere together with the remaining stock.

Dry foodstuffs were not pre-packed and a number of storage receptacles were required in the form of flour barrels, stone jars or enamelled tea canisters from which the required quantities were scooped and weighed using a set of brass scales before being transferred into a paper bag or possibly the customer's own container.

The *'paraffin drum with brass tap,'* would have been an indispensable piece of equipment for the general store. In the days before electric lighting, oil lamps and candles were the means of illumination inside a dark house. If a farmer needed to tend a cow calving at night there were no battery torches to light his way, instead, he may have carried a storm lantern. Paraffin oil (kerosene) was the usual fuel for

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### Pictured:

*Top: Valuation of Trade Fixtures, Stock etc. at Laxton General Store Ma 5E 143*

*Bottom: Storm Lanterns at Lilac Farm courtesy of Country Life Magazine photographer Mark Fairhurst*

VALUATION of Trade Fixtures, Stock &c transferred from  
 Mr George Nettleship to Mr Samuel Laughton at Laxton in the  
 County of Nottingham on from March 25th 1903.

Shop.

12 Tea Canisters, 3 damaged ditto, rest of 35 drawers,  
 rest of 36 ditto, 2 shelves with partitions above and below  
 4 shelves with 4 partitions, 3 short shelves with partitions  
 underneath, rail and 6 pegs, Paraffin drum with brass tap,  
 Pewter pint measure and funnel, soft soap tin, 2 Tobacco  
 jars, 4 enamelled tea canisters, 5 small ditto, 5 shelves  
 with partitions, stone jar, glass bottle, 2 Currant sieves,  
 1 small ditto, rail and 17 pegs, 2 flour barrels, 1 small ~~st~~  
 ditto, side counter with 2 drawers, 3 Pewter measures 1 funnel  
 3 shelves across side window, Tracelo tank, 3 stone jars,  
 deal counter with thirteen drawers, ditto: with two bins  
 and 4 drawers, window board, 3 shelves, 2 wooden rods across  
 top of shop, set of brass scales and weights, glass jar,  
 soap, string tin, 2 other tins.

Stock.

10 doz pipes, 7 lbs dates, 8 bottles ink, lamp wicking,  
 68 boxes starch, 44 penny articles, 4 pairs braces, 5 packets  
 baking powder, 5 bath bricks, 2lbs oatmeal, 16lbs granulated  
 sugar, 14 lbs Lump sugar, 3lbs rice, alum, ground rice,  
 3lbs carbonate of soda, half of twice, 4 packets of envelopes,  
 12cans, 2 bottles food preservative, cream of tartar,  
 muscov, linseed, saltpetre, fullers earth, spice Ac, 14lbs  
 soap, 2 packets monkey soap, 1 doz washing powders, 3 lb  
 tallow candles, paper and hars, 2 doz aerated waters.

Sitting Room. Window Blind, Smoke tin.

Upstairs. 3 Window Blinds and Rollers. *2 Curtain holders.*

Kitchen. 2 Window blinds and rollers, smoke tin.

Outside. Water tub, 2 boards forming henroost, 2 cowchains, ladder 12  
 staves, circular stone trough, heap of straw.

Bake House. Baking table. Oven tools, 3 large baking tins, 3 small ditto,  
 3 large bread tins, 1 small ditto:

84 Pigeons 12 young ditto:

£20 7 0

Deduct half stamp and ward

1 6

£20 5 6

We the undersigned value the above mentioned ~~articles~~  
 items at the sum of twenty pounds seven shillings.

(Signed) Joseph North.

( / ) William Warham. Valuers.

Received £20.7.0. Amount of above Valuations April 17th 1903.

£20.0  
 15.7.0

Received

£20.7.0

signed: J. North.



lamps and lanterns which provided a light source from a burning wick which was protected by a glass chimney or globe.

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## SALTPETRE, AN INGREDIENT IN THE SALTING DOWN OF MEAT, WAS ESSENTIAL AFTER THE KILLING OF THE HOUSE PIG, KEPT FOR ITS MEAT BY ALMOST EVERY HOUSEHOLD.

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The stock list confirms Edith Hickson's description of '*a wide variety of wares from groceries, paraffin, sweets of all kinds and all sorts of toys and games from the era from whips and tops on to shuttlecocks and battledores*' (could these be the type of objects described as 64 penny articles?).

The majority of the groceries and hardware items are recognisable and held in stock in some form in shops nowadays.

Not so commonplace items include saltpetre, an ingredient in the salting down of meat, the only way to preserve it before the introduction of home freezers. This was essential after the killing of the house pig, kept for

its meat by almost every household.

Alum seems to have been one of those wonder compounds which could be used in a wide variety of ways from a preservative in pickling recipes to an astringent in the treatment of small cuts.

Fuller's Earth is a clay-like material which is particularly effective at soaking up grease based dirt whether on fabric, floor or even skin. Local ladies would have had to make their own skincare products. A little Fuller's Earth mixed to a paste with rosewater is reckoned to have antiseptic properties and make an effective face mask or a compress to relieve burns or insect bites.

Bath bricks and monkey soap, however, have completely disappeared from the shelves. Could bath bricks be a form of toiletry to be enjoyed by an overworked farmer's wife luxuriating in the tub at the end of the day? No, they were in fact a predecessor of the scouring pad, made from river silt in Bridgewater, and used for cleaning and polishing. Just the thing for scrubbing the stone flag or quarry tile floors, a common feature in Laxton houses. Similarly, Monkey Brand Soap was a china and metal scouring and polishing product, advertisements for which advised '*won't wash clothes*'.

Samuel Laughton, the new shopkeeper was the 24 year old son of the village miller, James Laughton. He married Edith Rayner shortly after taking over the general store. Perhaps, Laughton did not enter into the role of shopkeeper wholeheartedly as in October 1904 he was seeking to get out of that tenancy in favour of taking on the Post Office and 22 acres of land attached to the property now known as Twitchill Cottage. This did not come to fruition as his landlord struck a deal with the Manvers Estate renting the small-holding for himself and selling his interest in the shop to them for £160.

On 28th April 1905 RW Wordsworth confirmed to Samuel Laughton '*Lord Manvers bought the property subject to the existing tenancy, and you are liable to pay him the Rent as from the 25 March last at the rate of nine pounds a year*'. Samuel continued to work elsewhere, including as a member of the Manvers Estates team. Edith was left to manage the shop, no doubt supported by assistants, especially on the arrival of each of her growing family. An opportunity to step onto the farming ladder finally arose in March 1911 following the death of Henry Bramford. On 14th March RW Wordsworth wrote to Laughton:

*'If you still would like Bramfords place, you had better come & see me at once. You must be able to satisfy me that you have money enough to take to it with.'*

With the financial requirements apparently met Samuel and Edith Laughton and their four children; Oliver, Mabel, Ivy and Alice moved a short distance up the street to Smithy Farm.

## FLORENCE BENNETT

Florence Bennett, daughter of Thomas Bennett at nearby High Street Farm, was one of the women who had assisted Edith Laughton. When she heard the shop was to become available Florence wasted no time in applying to R W Wordsworth, writing on 17th March 1911:

*'Sir, May I beg to say Mr Samuel Laughton told me he was thinking of giving up the shop as he had applied for Mr Bramford's farm. I should very much like to take to the shop & house, as I had to give up teaching owing to my health giving way. I find I am much better with doing other employment.*

*I have gone at different times to manage for Mrs Laughton when she has been away from home, so I thought I should like to have a try for it. I went down to Mr Wm Merrills this morning to ask for his advice in the matter, but he had gone to Southwell. But I feel sure he would speak in my favour if you would like to refer to him. Hoping you will consider my application & I shall be glad to hear from you.*

*I remain, Yours respectfully.'*

Wordsworth must have considered Miss Bennett a most suitable applicant as he replied on 21st March 1911:

*'In reply to yours of 17th I shall be glad to let you the shop now held by Sam Laughton at a Rent of £9. As I am hoping before long to build a new shop, you must please understand that I am not prepared to spend money in doing the present buildings up. You had better come here & sign an Agreement on Friday next.'*

**“AS I AM HOPING BEFORE LONG TO BUILD A NEW SHOP, YOU MUST PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT I AM NOT PREPARED TO SPEND MONEY IN DOING THE PRESENT BUILDINGS UP”**

Florence Bennett was 34, unmarried, living at home with her parents, giving her occupation as Assistant Teacher in the 1911 Census. She had been one of the Pupil Teachers trained by Mr Willis at Laxton School going on to teach at Perlethorpe, Sutton on Trent and Scunthorpe before giving up on doctor's advice following surgery for a stomach ulcer in a London Hospital. Edith Hickson remembered:

*'Our schooldays began under the tuition of Miss Florrie Bennet, the infant teacher of no particular qualifications, but with an aptitude for dealing with raw material.'*

No doubt a good apprenticeship for dealing with some of her customers on their way home from school.

Florence recalled those early entrepreneurial days during an interview published by the Newark Advertiser in the 1960's:

*'It was King George V's coronation that got me going. There was a big tea for everyone in the village and I got the order for the food. I laid in a good stock of biscuits, cakes and minerals. There was a dance at night and it was so crowded that a lot of people came into my shop for refreshments. The shop, the store room, the living room and the kitchen were all full of people until one o'clock in the morning. This gave me a bit of cash with which to speculate.'*

And speculate she did. Reminiscing about her childhood visits, Queenie Sampson (born 1915) wrote in a letter to Florence's great-niece, Marian Cooper:

*'I remember the shop so well. All the little square drawers behind the counter that held so many fascinating things – ribbon, tape, coloured cottons, tobacco, safety pins and much more. The boxes and jars of sweets in the window, the cheese board and cutting wire for it and the wonderful mixture of smells as you opened the door. She sold everything you could think of from bread and cheese to aprons and socks, vinegar and dried fruit, braces and paraffin.'*

*And Christmas was a wonderland. Her whole living room was taken over by tinsel and tree decorations, crackers, boxes and piles of hankies, little photo frames, (I still have one I bought there as a present for my mother), dolls and toys and board games. The window ledges, the table, the piano, any and every possible space was covered.'*



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#### Pictured

Florence Barnes  
(right) with her mother,  
Frances Bennett,  
outside shop in 1925

A subtext of Wordsworth's offer letter suggests the shop buildings were not in good repair and this is confirmed by the Inland Revenue's survey describing the house shop and outbuildings as *'very old & becoming dilapidated – house damp will eventually be pulled down'*.

Indeed, by 1915 serious problems had begun to manifest themselves, with Miss Bennett writing to HD Argles on 13th March 1915:

*'May I call your attention to the shop floor, as the bricks are crumbling away, & it gets very unsafe. I know the strain is very great upon you at the present time, but hope you will accept my apology for writing. Yrs Respectfully.'*

Argles replied that *'The matter shall have my attention as soon as possible, and I hope to call and see you very soon.'*

Deterioration in the structure continued and by 1920 parts of the property seem to have become almost uninhabitable. Florence Bennett's father died early in 1918 and her widowed mother had moved in to live with her. She wrote to HD Argles on 27th April 1920:

*'I am sorry to have to trouble you again about the repairs of the house. The ceiling in the bedroom has fallen in, it is now open to the sky & is so draughty & cold for mother & I. The staircase gets very dangerous. I am afraid of it giving way any time. We are still with only half the roof on the WC. I know you must have a lot to do & think about, so hope you will excuse me for reminding you of your promise. Yrs Respectfully.'*

The letter is annotated by Argles with a message to his Clerk of Works, Mr Mellors:

*"please call & inspect. Extensive repairs must be done here this summer -Trust a/c- The house was to be pulled down but in these bad times it must be repaired."*

Building repairs in the village were undertaken by the Manvers Estate's resident bricklayer, William Barnes. He was a single man, born in Sheffield, who lodged with the Cook family at Crosshill House.

We can only imagine whether romance first blossomed between Florence and William during the time he was employed on the repairs to the shop. They married on 5th June 1923 with the occasion described as 'INTERESTING WEDDING AT LAXTON' in The Retford, Gainsbrough and Worksop Times. Their popularity is clear from the report:



*‘As the newly-married couple left the church the ringers gave a merry peal, and the party wended their way through showers of confetti to the Parish Room, where the reception was held ... A very large number of guests attended.... In the evening the reception room was again filled to overflowing for the social gathering.’*

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#### Pictured

*Wedding group, from left: Mabel Watson, Iris Newbold, Jack Cook (best man), William Barnes (groom), Florence Bennett (bride), Douglas Newbold, William Alexander (brother in law gave bride away), Edith Watson*

A list of the givers of more than 85 wedding presents reads as a roll call of the village population, including children. The gifts included many silver items, china, linens and even a wooden spoon from Ivy Rose.

Florence said in her newspaper interview that William *‘persuaded her to retire when she reached 60’*. They moved to Woodcutters Cottage where Florence continued to live after William’s passing in 1951. She reached the ripe old age of 91.

## PERCY MADDISON

The shop passed into the hands of the Maddison family in March 1937 when Margaret's father, Percy, took over the tenancy and brought the Post Office to the premises.

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**MRS TAYLOR  
'HAD HER HEART  
IN THE RIGHT  
PLACE, SHE  
WAS KIND TO  
CHILDREN AND  
SOMETIMES  
WOULD GIVE AN  
EXTRA SWEET**

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### MR & MRS TAYLOR

Groceries were also sold from the front parlour of Mr & Mrs Taylor's terraced cottage on The Bar, now part of Beech House.

Being close to her family's farm, Edith Hickson had vivid memories of visiting this shop:

*'...stocked with less of everything in the front room. The shelves reached nearly to the ceiling with a counter across the front doorway. All this made it considerably less easy to put a foot down safely in the small parlour with its stock*

*of boxes, packets, bottles and parcels, tins and jars. There was no display of wares in a window.'*

Fortunately, Mrs Taylor *'had her heart in the right place, she was kind to children and sometimes would give an extra sweet'*.

William Bagshaw who lived at the property now called Dijon House also described his occupation as Grocer. He acted as a carrier, taking villagers' produce, assembled in his front room shop, to market. [See *Living in Laxton, by Cynthia Bartle, page 21*].

ALL LETTERS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE COMPANY

NATIONAL TELEPHONE N° 7

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: "HOLE NEWARK"



PARIS 1889



FIRST PRIZE  
MEDAL & DIPLOMA

**James Hole & Company, Limited**

Castle Brewery,

NEWARK-ON-TRENT.

BRANCH OFFICES

109, ANLABY ROAD, HULL.	11, SILVER STREET, LINCOLN.
49, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER.	32, HIGH STREET, GRANTHAM.
11, MARKET PLACE, MARKET RASEN.	3, SHEEP MARKET, SPALDING.
9, MARKET STREET, GAINSBORO.	ST JOHN'S PLACE, MANSFIELD.

5th January 1909.

## THE DOVECOTE INN

The Dovecote Inn was both social and utility building, providing a place for relaxation and rest after a day working hard on the land. It was a social centre for the men and a place where important meetings could be catered for. Placed centrally on the village green the inn building played an important part in village life and, in researching its history, a picture of the time begins to emerge.

The landlords of the Dovecote Inn, or Dove Cote as it was often written, had not one landlord but two to deal with. James Hole & Company Ltd. of Castle Brewery, Newark held the premises from the Thoresby Estate, and this came with just under 50 acres of Thoresby agricultural land. On one occasion it was referred to as 'Dovecot Farm'. The Brewery also had the 'Boot & Shoe' at Weston, now the 'Great Wall' Chinese restaurant.

The census of 1901 revealed a decline in the combined population of Laxton and Moorhouse from

### Pictured

*The Dovecote Inn  
Brewery Letterhead  
Ma 2C 17 9*

438 in 1881 and 428 in 1891 to 394, continuing the steady decline noted in the previous censuses. At the same time the fortunes of the public houses were failing. The Sun Inn had been closed at the bidding of the Estate in 1876. In 1895 Lord Manvers had bought the premises which housed the ‘Volunteer’ – an inn based in the premises now known as Crosshill House – and it appears to have closed soon afterwards but remained as a private house.

In 1900 the Dovecote seems to have been the only inn in the village and the landlord was a Mr Watling. No correspondence with him was discovered, but a Robert Watling appears among the names of the Homage (Jury) recorded in December 1912 in the Tallents Collection. The only record we found was in the Newark Herald 6th February 1902 which reads:

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## NATURALLY THE DOVE COTE, WHICH HOSTED THE AUDIT PROCEEDINGS WAS THE VENUE FOR THE CELEBRATORY MEAL

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*‘The rent audit for tenants under Lord Manvers was held at the Dove Cote Inn on Tuesday last. After the business was over, all the tenants were entertained to a substantial dinner provided by Host and Hostess Watling.’*

We are familiar with today’s meals served to the Jury following their inspection of the wheat field, gaits and dykes, but at this time there was a tradition of a meal being provided for the tenants by Earl Manvers at the conclusion of business on Rent Day in the village. Naturally the

Dove Cote, which hosted the audit proceedings was the venue for the celebratory meal.

The tradition of a 'Rent Dinner' continued until well into the later years of the century, but the venue changed. A film was made at the dinner in the 'Olde England' at Sutton on Trent at the time Laxton was up for sale in 1980.

Mr Watling was succeeded by a Mr Price at some time between December 1902 and December 1904, when the Homage included a Thomas Price. The Manvers Collection papers first revealed him corresponding about his roofs in March 1905 and he was usually addressed with the initials of his full name, John Thomas Price.

The early correspondence relates to what he must do in the fields, and to coming to collect Mr Wordsworth's horse while he visits Laxton. He appears to have provided stabling for the animal while Mr Wordsworth made his rounds.

It is well recorded that for a good number of years the Dovecote had only a six day licence, initiated by Revd. Martin who objected to drunkenness in the agricultural workers in their scant free time.

It is said that this gave the publican an opportunity to catch up on his farm work and that it was generally welcomed, but Mr Price enquired of Mr Wordsworth whether it could be changed in May 1908. Wordsworth declined, saying he had nothing to do with the matter, suggesting he contacted the brewery.

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## **THE DOVECOTE HAD ONLY A SIX DAY LICENCE, INITIATED AT BY REVD. MARTIN WHO OBJECTED TO DRUNKENNESS IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN THEIR SCANT FREE TIME**

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He must have come round to this way of thinking as on 9th February 1909 Tallents & Co. wrote to Mr Wordsworth stating that:

*'... we attended the Retford Brewsters Sessions last Saturday and applied for the renewal of the Licence to their house as a six day instead of a seven day License. The tenant was there and gave his support. The Bench granted the application.'*

The seven day licence was not restored until a successful application was made by Arthur Evelyn Frecknall on 7th February 1965. He was also the last person to farm at The Dovecote. His daughter Margaret Rose, and two grandsons Stuart and Geoff, still live with their families in the village.

The brewery contacted the Estate on Price's behalf in January 1909 saying he *'makes a practice of keeping pigs, but is greatly handicapped by the lack of proper accommodation'*. This resulted in a proposal to build new loose boxes and to cover the yard, for which an increased rent was negotiated.

The 1911 census shows that the family at the Dovecote consisted of John T Price (45), Amelia Price (47), Millicent Price (19) and James Price (17). Millicent was noted as doing dairy work while James was a labourer in wood. Arthur Pettit (54) was also on the premises as a waggoner and Joseph Woodhead (60) was a boarder.

Price was clearly making a name for himself for his catering and on 13th October 1911 he was asked if he could cater for the lunch at the Ploughing Match at Kneesall Lodge Farm on Friday 27th October. He was invited to attend a committee meeting so that they could decide where to put the luncheon tent.

On 11th June 1913 the Newark Advertiser reported that Price was continuing the Rent Dinner tradition:



*'The half yearly rent audit of Earl Manvers' tenants was held at the Dove Cote Inn, Laxton, on Thursday last. About fifty tenants sat down to an excellent repast served by Host and Hostess Price. The health of the noble landlord was accorded musical honours.'*

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#### Pictured

*H J van Batenburg's painting of the Dovecote 1917*

Possibly he focussed more on his duties as publican and caterer than the rules of the open fields as he was reprimanded by Mr Wordsworth in September 1913 for running a tup [ram] there, *'contrary to the rules'*.

Very soon after this, in early October 1913 John Thomas Price died at the young age of 48 and was buried at Laxton on 8th October. The recent loss of her father resulted in a quiet celebration on 11th April 1914 when, as reported in the Newark Advertiser, *'Miss Millicent Price, only daughter of Mrs Price of*

*the Dove Cote Inn* married Mr George Moody, eldest son of Mr S Moody in Laxton church. The bride wore navy blue and carried a bouquet of lily of the valley. She was given away by Mr A Allen of Mansfield Woodhouse and her cousin, Rosie Allen, was chief bridesmaid. The couple honeymooned in Lincoln.

Soon afterwards Mrs Price, asked Mr Wordsworth to build her a *'fowl house'* at the Dovecote as foxes had been killing her birds. He replied:

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## JAMES WROTE TO THORESBY SAYING THAT THE WORK AT THE DOVE COTE WAS TOO MUCH FOR HIS MOTHER

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*'I am afraid it will be impossible to provide a fowl house for you at present as I have so much other work in hand. As the farm buildings are so commodious, I feel sure you can adapt some of the existing buildings for this purpose.'*

At 19 years of age in a time when 21 was the age of majority, James would have been too young to take over the tenancy, and it appears his mother did so. It is likely she managed the inn while he took over the farm work. By March 1915 they had heard that Ivy House Farm, then occupied by Joseph Merrills, may be coming up for let. James wrote to Thoresby saying that the work at the Dove Cote was too much for his mother and that she wished to live privately. William Merrills had advised him to apply for Ivy House Farm. Mr Spink finally made James, then 23, the formal offer of the farm on 5th July 1917.

It appears his mother remained at the Dovecote. Her correspondence continued to be addressed there. On 31st May 1917 Mr Spink wrote to her about the forthcoming Rent Dinner, which was, of course, being held during the war period:



*'With reference to our rent audit dinner next Thursday, will you kindly stick to the rationing allowance, and if you think the meat per head will not be sufficient you might buy a bit of cod fish if you like. Please do not make any fancy pastries'.*

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#### Pictured

*Court Leet at the Dovecote Inn*

There is little correspondence with Mrs Price following James taking the farm, but she received a letter in April 1920 regarding the ceiling in her sitting room which needed attention.

Proof she was still at the Dovecote came that November when she asked for a worn out copper [water heater] to be replaced there and in March 1921 Mr Argles told her that *'The plaster in your Club Room shall have attention with all possible speed.'*

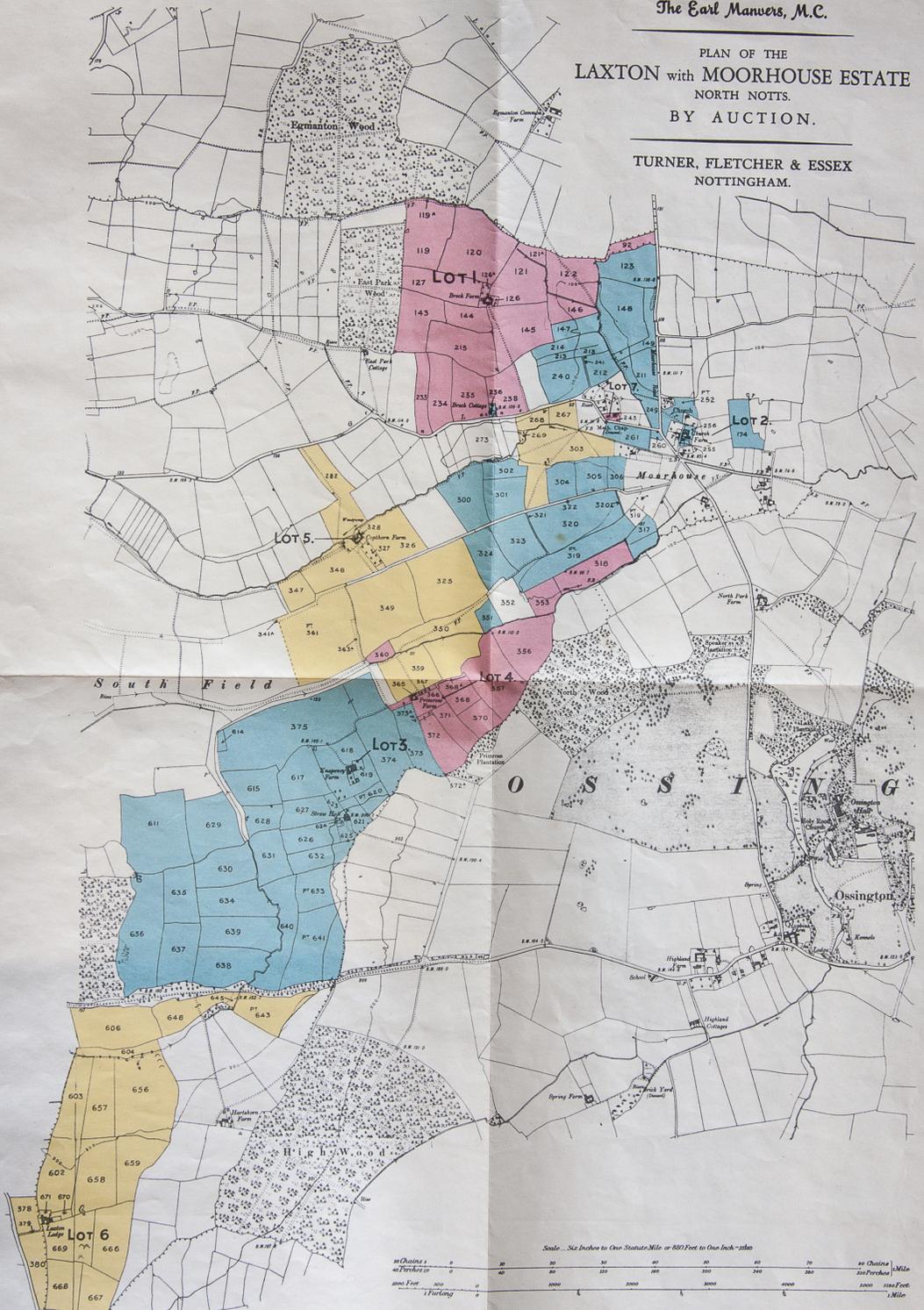
Throughout the entire period the Dovecote Inn provided the venue for the Court Leet, a tradition which continues to this day.

The Earl Manvers, M.C.

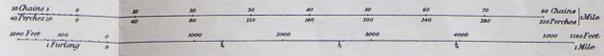
PLAN OF THE  
LAXTON with MOORHOUSE ESTATE  
NORTH NOTTS.

BY AUCTION.

TURNER, FLETCHER & ESSEX  
NOTTINGHAM.



Scale.—Six Inches to One Statute Mile or 880 Feet to One Inch.—



NOTE.—Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

NOTE.—This Plan is published for the purpose of identification only, and, although believed to be correct its accuracy is

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## Pictured

*Plan accompanying the  
1950 Sale Catalogue.  
Church Farm,  
Moorhouse was lot 2*

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# FARMHOUSES AND COTTAGES

The houses in Laxton and Moorhouse reflected the status and economic standing of their inhabitants. In studying them we begin to understand something of the social history of the village at the time. The farm houses were generally well kept and in good condition, whilst some of the cottages were almost uninhabitable and others were so bad that they were demolished. The actual buildings themselves reflected what life was like for the villagers of Laxton and Moorhouse.

## CHURCH FARM, MOORHOUSE.

By 1900 the majority of the properties in the hamlet of Moorhouse were owned by the Denison Estate based in the neighbouring village of Ossington. The exception was the holding we now know as Church Farm which was part of the Manvers Estate. Here we can follow the tenants' stories through our 'Snapshot in Time.'

The Inland Revenue Field Book of 1910 describes Church Farm as being 132.25 acres in extent with:

*'...a fair house & set of buildings, land  
fairly conveniently placed, poor S[oft]  
W[ater] supply least no 'Drinking water.'  
Common right with [Brecks] Cottage.'*

A rent of £112 per annum was paid.

In 1920 the farm was available to let and had attracted the attention of George Saxelby, who was then living at Egmonton Hill Farm. He wrote to the Estate on 19th August 1920:

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## GEORGE'S CIRCUMSPECTION, HOWEVER, PROBABLY AROSE FROM SEEING A PROCESSION OF FARMERS OCCUPYING THE HOLDING DURING THE PREVIOUS 20 YEARS

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*'Dear Sir, It is like buying a  
pig in a poke but I will take the  
Moorhouse Farm if the terms are  
right, as I fore see that if I do not  
take it at once I shall not take it  
at all, as every enquiry I make of  
old farmers who have known it  
for years gives me a cold douche,  
one tells me no one can live at  
Moorhouse who was not born  
there another says a man ought  
to have the farm 3 years rent  
free, so dare not ask another.*

*Will you please give me the  
acreage of grass & arable &  
what rent if any you require  
for the next 2 or 3 years, I will  
then make you an offer or  
see you when convenient.*

*Yours faithfully Geo Saxelby.'*

An interesting approach to negotiating the take up of a farm tenancy, not least in the colourful expressions

used. George's circumspection, however, probably arose from seeing a procession of farmers occupying the holding during the previous 20 years.

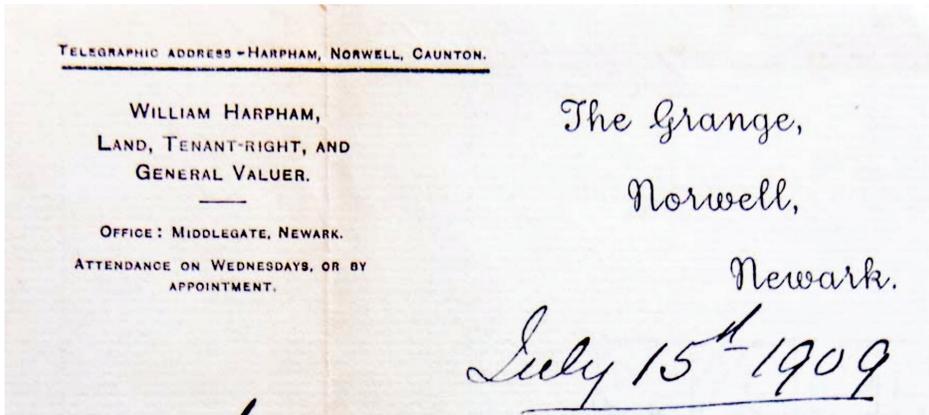
In 1900 William Harpham had been the tenant for many years. Born in 1822 at Moorhouse, he spent all his life living and working there. The 1861 Census records him as *'Farmer of 104 acres'*.

Over the years the acreage farmed increased to 112 acres in 1871 and 122 acres in 1881. During this time his son, also called William, born around 1853, assisted on the farm, stating his occupation to be 'Farmer' in the 1891 Census. Documents making William junior a half tenant were signed in 1900.

When William senior died in May 1901 it was expected that the younger William would take over the farm; R W Wordsworth writing on 17th December 1901 *'& hope it may be in the affirmative'*. Rather than follow in his father's footsteps the 47 year old William Harpham, however, chose to further develop his career as a Tenant Right Valuer.

A dispersal sale was held at Church Farm on 17th March 1902 with Edward Bailey & Son acting as auctioneers. Such was the anticipation of a high quality trade that, in addition to Harpham's five horses, fourteen more were entered for auction by five other owners, including W E Denison. Special attention was drawn by the Auctioneers to the 30 head of cattle which were advertised as *'all of them being of exceptional quality, fashionable colour, and in good condition'*. Twenty eight sheep, 40 couples of fowls, harness, implements and dairy utensils were also to be sold.

After he left the farm, William moved to The Grange at Norwell and in 1906 he married Emily Ann Alexander. By the time of the 1911 Census he was well established as a 'Land Agent & Valuer.' He



## Pictured

*Mr Harpham's  
Letterhead Ma  
2C 17 446*

appears to have been the valuer of choice for many of the Laxton Tenants. Possibly they saw him as one of their own.

On some occasions, he even acted on behalf of both the outgoing and incoming tenants following recommendations from the Estate; which shows he was seen as one who took a fair and impartial approach.

By contrast, the new tenant of Church Farm from Lady Day 1902 was a complete outsider. Keyworth Johnson was born in Hull in 1874. Before taking Church Farm he was farming at North Scarle, Lincolnshire. He agreed to pay a rent of £115 per annum. Shortly after moving to Moorhouse with his wife Ethel, a son, Keyworth Beamont was born. Correspondence from the Manvers Estate indicates that by 1905 Johnson was in arrears with his rent. He left the farm in 1906 and eventually returned to the Hull area where he described himself as 'Retired Farmer' in the 1911 Census.

The farm was re-let to a more experienced pair of hands. Edward Savage was born in 1854 at Saxilby, near Lincoln, the son of an agricultural labourer. He spent the early part of his working life at North Scarle, first as an agricultural labourer and then as a farmer.

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Pictured

*Edward Savage*



During this period, he married Eliza and they had five children. Sadly, Eliza died and in the 1891 census the household included a Housekeeper, Sarah Croft. Edward then took a farm at Bathley, where the 1901 census listed Sarah, together with his son Robert, 20 a horseman on the farm, and daughters Mary Ann, 18 and Sarah Elizabeth, 15 a pupil teacher in school. Later that year Edward married Sarah, who was 14 years his senior.

The Tenant Right valuation at Church Farm was undertaken by William Harpham who wrote to R W Wordsworth on 25 June 1906:

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## EDWARD PARTICIPATED IN LOCAL FARMING EVENTS. HIS TIME AT MOORHOUSE WAS NOT WITHOUT SOME CONTROVERSY

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*'Moorhouse Valn Johnson to Savage. This Valuation is settled and the Award sent off. The amount is £237-5-1. The sum of £13-10-0 has been deducted for non-painting and repairs to House and buildings. I suppose if you paint the House & buildings and do the necessary repairs you will ask Mr Savage to pay you the amount allowed for these dilapidations.'*

Edward participated in local farming events. He attended a lecture entitled *'The results of recent experiments in varieties and manuring of crops'* and may have been one of the 14 new members signing up to the Lincolnshire Farmers' Union following a meeting to promote the society, both held in the Vicarage Room in 1908. He was sworn onto the Jury at Laxton Court Leet in 1908, 1911 and 1915.

His time at Moorhouse was not without some controversy. A dispute with a neighbour, John Rose, over the use of a lane included in Savage's tenancy came to a head in 1915. A letter dated 25th June 1915 from W H Argles to T Morris, Estate Office, Ossington summarises the argument:

*'Mr. Savage and Mr Rose, Farmers at Moorhouse, do not seem to agree about an occupation road.*

*Mr Rose uses this road for going to a field in Laxton Parish, and he tells me that he has seen you on the matter and that you consider he has a right to use this road when going to the field in question.*

*I have looked into the matter, and I think you will find that, strictly speaking, this occupation road was set out for approaching fields in the Parish of Moorhouse only.*

*I am particularly anxious to avoid unpleasantness, and I hope some friendly arrangement can be come to. At present Mr Rose considers that he is quite within his rights... The matter is rather complicated, as I am told that some people called Jepson, many years ago, always used this occupation road for approaching the field in Laxton Parish.'*

On a happier note; both of Edward Savage's younger daughters married sons of Laxton Farmers. Mary Ann became Mrs. Frederick Merrills on 14th

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## MR. SAVAGE AND MR ROSE, FARMERS AT MOORHOUSE, DO NOT SEEM TO AGREE ABOUT AN OCCUPATION ROAD

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August 1911, with Sarah Elizabeth marrying Walter Newbould on 1st July 1915.

In 1916 when Edward contemplated retirement to Eagle in Lincolnshire, on the grounds of his wife's ill health, he recommended his son in law, Walter Newbould to take over as tenant of Church Farm. Revd. Collinson provided a character reference to Alfred Spink on 1st March 1916:

*'I think that he is a hard working young man and I believe steady and would make a good tenant for Savage's farm.'*

Walter Newbould got off to a good start trying to get problems with the water supply and drains remedied. In 1918 he ploughed up grassland as required for the war effort. 14 tons of lime were ordered as part of a Manvers' consignment.

A son, also named Walter, was baptised on 26th May 1918. Nevertheless, it would appear that Walter was not successful during his tenure. Edward Bailey & Son were instructed to hold a sale of Live and Dead Farming Stock comprising 5 horses, 11 Beast and Implements on 18th March 1921. H D Argles wrote to H Spencer & Sons, Retford on 24th June:

*'Newbould to Saxelby. Mr Newbould has been here today, and is anxious to get the money due to him for his Moorhouse Farm Valuation.'*

Did George Saxelby buy 'a pig in a poke' when he took the tenancy of Church Farm, Moorhouse? Perhaps it is best to leave his descendants to provide the answer. The Saxelby family purchased the farm in 1950 when the Manvers' Laxton Estate was broken up and they continue to farm there, almost 100 years on.



## BAR HOUSE

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Pictured

*Sarah Rose's Cottage*

The early years of the twentieth century saw the end of the old cottages described by Thomas Huskington in his survey of the Laxton Estate undertaken in 1862, as being *'very bad and some scarcely habitable'*.

Bar House, otherwise known as Sarah Rose's cottage, was one of the last thatched houses still standing. On reaching this cottage set in *'a garden with fruit trees and the unfailing gooseberry bushes to be found in all the gardens of the village'* at the end of The Bar, the traveller coming up from Egmanton had arrived in Laxton.

The lady in the photograph is most probably Sarah Rose herself as she lived there for over forty years. In 1861 Sarah, a dressmaker by trade, had been widowed and was left to raise four children. Her oldest son, Thomas, born in 1839, continued in

his father Charles' trade as a bricklayer. He never married and remained living with his mother until she died in October 1900, aged 86 years.

Although he stayed on for a short while afterwards, the cottage had been pulled down by November 1905, when plans to erect a Postman's shelter on part of the site were discussed. Although the cottage in the photograph is picturesque, the straw thatch on the roof is very thin and there is significant spalling of the brickwork in the gable. No doubt the Estate did not consider it worth repairing or rebuilding. In 1910 the site was recorded as a garden occupied by Walter Moody who lived further down The Bar.

## WEATHERALL'S OLD COTTAGES, TOWN END

Two houses also described as having a thatch roof were located at Town End. Bought by the Manvers Estate from George Weatherall in March 1903, only one of the pair of cottages was occupied, by the Walker family. The condition of the property was brought to the attention of R W Wordsworth in July 1904, prompting this response:

*'I am sorry you did not mention your cottage to me sooner, as I have already more work in hand for the present season than I can well get through, but from your letter I should say that the cottage was not fitted for your large family & that you really want a larger one. However I will call & see the cottage the next time I am at Laxton, for I certainly do not wish anyone to live in a Cottage belonging to Lord Manvers which is not in proper repair.'*

A year later the family were offered the property now known as Bridlecroft, which was coming vacant

that Michaelmas. So keen were they to take it, the Walkers moved in before completion of the paperwork leading to a rebuke from Wordsworth on 10th October 1905:

*'I am sorry to hear you have already gone into Mrs Moody's Cottage, as I did not intend you to do so until an agreement had been signed, and any repairs or alterations required had been done. Your occupation of the Cottage will render this difficult.'*

Eventually the old cottages were demolished sometime before 1909. A pair of new ones were built by the Estate on the cleared site in 1912. The Walker family were the first to move back into the one now called Aviary Cottage, during the autumn of that year.

## PECK'S ROW

The Manvers Estate were not averse to buying property where it considered demolition would enhance its existing holding. This was the case with Pecks Row, a terrace of cottages at the side of The Dovecote Inn, roughly behind the current site of the Pinfold. In January 1911 the Manvers' Lawyers, Johnsons Long & Co of Lincoln's Inn, London were advised of the terms of the purchase

*'from George Bagshaw of Laxton the following property for £350 – 6 Cottages, Garden & Orchard containing 1a 3r 29p. The right to graze a cow on East Moor Common. The Right to graze 10 Sheep, or 3 young beasts, or 2 horses on Cocking Moor. Two gaits.'*

George Bagshaw lived in one of the cottages and worked as a butcher/pig killer and market gardener.



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### Pictured

*Pecks Row below  
the Dovecote Inn*

On receipt of the payment for the property he was advised by Wordsworth that:

*'I am entitled to vacant possession of your house & orchard at Lady Day - if you wish to remain in your house you must come here & sign an agreement & agree as to rent.'*

Whilst Wordsworth saw the letting as a temporary measure, by paying a rent of £1 per month Bagshaw seemed to think he should retain some of his former proprietorial rights. It was with a tone of exasperation that Wordsworth wrote on 16th November 1911:

*'I am not prepared at the present moment to offer any one your orchard, or to make any promise as to the erection of cottages. What however I must insist on is that you vacate your Cottage at once according to notice, & if you don't I give you fair warning that it will be pulled down, & if you don't mind you will find the roof off. I gave you ample time to make arrangements for taking a house elsewhere, & you ought to have done so. You cannot blame me.'*

George Bagshaw replied the next day:

*'Your letter of this morning as upset me, as I am in no form whatever for leaving, and have not the least idea were to go, as I have my Pony & Dray, Pigs & Haystack, and all out door effects, and further more I have just got a nice little trade together in the Green Grocery. I assure you that when I saw you at Thoresby last April, I did not understand you to say that I was to leave, as you said you could not tell me definite, I think there is a Farmer in Laxton who will let me have rooms, providing my other things can stay in the orchard. I think I may venture to say that I don't ought to be kicked out as I had several more who would have bought the Property, but I never set a price on it, as I said I would give you the first chance. Then there is the Land in the Little Field, I think when I sold you that if you remember, you told me you would never take it from me as long as I wanted to keep it. Sir I cannot say more.'*



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Pictured

George Bagshaw

James Laughton provided a refuge for George; but this good turn was seen as a breach of his own tenancy by the Estate. In an attempt to draw a line under the matter Wordsworth wrote to George Bagshaw on 16th December 1911:

*'Lord Manvers' object in purchasing your property was to improve that of his own which adjoins it. There was nothing settled as regards re-building. The Orchard and Gardens will most certainly be added to his adjoining Tenant's. Not a word passed*

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## **“NOT A WORD PASSED BEFORE WE PURCHASED AS REGARDS YOUR WISHING TO REMAIN TENANT”**

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*before we purchased as regards your wishing to remain Tenant. Had this been suggested, we should never have bought, we should have been unable to do that which was the purpose of our buying. Mr. Laughton acted entirely contrary to his agreement in allowing you to go into his house, and he ought never to have permitted you to spend a penny upon it. I have told him that I cannot allow him to sublet, and your best course will be to find some other house, as soon as you possibly can. You have no sort of right to sell property to Lord Manvers, and then attempt to tell him what he is to do with it.'*

By March 1912 the Orchard was divided with the half below J. Cook's stack yard fence at Bar Farm being added to The Dovecote Inn tenancy, in whose occupation it remains. George Bagshaw was instructed to:

*'Please see that the remainder of the hay stacked in your orchard is removed at once. If it is not, you must not be surprised if it is removed for you. If you wanted me to give you something for it I should have done so, but you have no right to enter on that land any more.'*



## JEPSON'S COTTAGES, MOORHOUSE ROAD

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Pictured

*Jepson's Cottages*

A pair of cottages with frontage to Moorhouse Road occupied in 1911 by James Cook's family, and Miss Jemima Jepson remained one of the few properties in Laxton village not acquired by the Manvers Estate.

Their condition in 1912 came to light in correspondence from a solicitor, E S Spencer in connection with the Estate of the late John Bagshaw, who it appears had bequeathed them to his daughter Emily Kate Cocking. In a letter dated 8th November 1912 R W Wordsworth gave the opinion:

*'I cannot think it fair, or indeed legal, for Mrs Cocking to call upon her mother to put the cottages at Laxton into habitable repair, or perhaps I should say better repair than that in which they were at the time of her husband's death. I am prepared to state, and the Medical Officer of Health is prepared*

*to state, they were really not fit for habitation at that time, and we are both of the opinion that to spend money on them now would be an absolute waste. There is not the faintest doubt in my mind that they ought to be pulled down.'*

James Cook moved out to one of the new cottages built next to the Duckmanton's old place, now called Dovecote Cottages, in October 1913, Miss Jepson having left her cottage before 1912.

Willoughby House was built on the site by Emily Kate Cocking and is dated 1920, the year her husband, George died. Emily Kate, fondly remembered as 'Granny Bagshaw' following her marriage to John Bagshaw in 1930, lived there until her death in 1963.

## CORNER FARM

There was also a debate about repairing or rebuilding farmhouses. In 1906 the Estate had instructed Smith-Woolley & Wigram, Land Agents & Surveyors based at South Collingham to undertake a survey of a property whose condition was giving cause for concern. We have identified the house to be George Newboul's at Corner Farm. The report letter, dated 1st October 1906, not only provides us with an indication of the price of building works at that time but also, perhaps more interestingly, an insight of how potential occupants were viewed by the Land Agents:

*'The House is larger than necessary and has evidently been altered and added to more than once. The South East end, 23ft: in length, has very bad foundations and the front wall shows signs of bulging outwards. The same remark applies to the back wall of the old part, though the latter is*

*apparently a very ancient bulge, and the foundations there, though deeper, appear to have no footings, still they have stood and will continue to stand for years. Some Ceilings and Floors are bad, and the Roof of the South Eastern end (23ft): requires renewal. There seems to be no damp course.*

*If you intend to put boarded floors to the ground Floor, and do all other improvements which can be devised, then I do not think the House justifies the outlay. If the old House is pulled down and a new House built, the Back kitchen, Larder and Coalhouse might still stand and brought into use in connection with a new house as they are good, but I assume the cost of a new House can only be regarded as from £600 to £700.*

*What I should be inclined to do in preference to facing the large outlay of a new House would be only essential repairs, to put a couple of ties through the S. East End, underpin the front and end foundations there and renew the 23ft: of Roof. Do minor Repairs, and a new Ceiling and brick floor or two, and then there is no reason why the House should not be good enough for years to come for such class of Tenant as you are likely to secure for a Farm at Laxton, where you want a working Tenant.*

*Say £120 to £140 should do the above repairs.'*

Those of us who have experienced life as a farm tenant will not be surprised that the essential repairs option was chosen. Just how long it took to complete them, however, remains unclear as H D Argles was giving assurance to prospective new tenants in December 1918, that *'the house will be put in proper repair'*. The farmhouse still stands, 110 years older and counting.

## THE MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS

Even building maintenance can tell a story, the story of the builders and the craftsmen involved, the materials used at the time, the tasks they were faced with and the attitude of the landlords towards the properties they owned and the needs of their tenants.

## THE MAINTENANCE TEAM

Holding such a large portfolio of property the Manvers' Estate needed to employ local teams of skilled builders, bricklayers and joiners to repair and maintain the houses and farmsteads.

Sometimes their services would be called upon for major repair work following storm damage. Such an occasion was described in The Retford, Gainsborough and Worksop Times of 20th August 1909:

*'Laxton - A thunderstorm passed over the village on Monday. A house occupied by Mr Cammack of Moorhouse near Laxton was struck by lightning during the storm - the chimney and part of the roof being damaged. Fortunately none of the occupants were injured.'*

Mrs Cammack had already dashed off a request for the Estate to repair the roof on the day of the storm as: *'the chimney has fallen through the roof and it has rained on the beds'*.

Letters from tenants to the Estate Office regularly made requests for smoking fireplaces, faulty chimney pots, crumbling floors and leaking roofs to be put right. There was an expectation that even very minor jobs should be done by the landlords. Benjamin Moody wrote, from the Post Office, on 4th February 1908:



*'When my wife was opening our room door on Friday morning the door fell forward on to her, and on examining the same we found the top hinge had fallen off, it appears to have been quite rusted through and only to have held up by the smallest bit, the bottom hinge too appears worn out – I should say these hinges have been in ever since the house was built 200 years ago. Would you kindly have them replaced.'*

---

#### Pictured

*William Barnes, Bruce Harrison, Mark Whitworth, Mr Tatley*

For R W Wordsworth there were limits, and he replied the next day:

*'You must excuse my saying that if a tenant cannot be at the trouble of re hanging a door, even if the hinges be old ones, without asking his landlord to replace them, my opinion of him is not very high. If we are to do jobs like these, in addition to all the other outlays wh. we undertake, we had better give up trying to satisfy tenants altogether.'*

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THE STUDY OF THE  
VILLAGE LANDSCAPE  
AND ITS BUILDINGS  
HAS REVEALED  
ITS HISTORY  
AND PAINTED A  
PICTURE OF THE  
VILLAGE OVER A  
CENTURY AGO

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# WHO LIVED IN MY HOUSE?

From the following table of village houses at the time of our study and their inhabitants it is possible to trace which houses still stand, which families are still in the village and how the occupations of the villagers have changed over time.

The study of the village landscape and its buildings has revealed its history and painted a picture of the village over a century ago.

# TOWN END

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head: Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household: Name-age-occupation</b>
Town End Farm	John Bagshaw-67-Farmer	Elizabeth Bagshaw-66-wife Alice Bagshaw-24-Farmer's daughter dairy work Thomas Seaton-16-Farm apprentice George Leverton-45-Horseman on farm William Cree-16-Farm servant
West Lea	James H Pearson-60-general labourer/forestry	Elizabeth Pearson-58-wife Edith M Pearson-17-daughter Nellie Bagshaw-3-Nurse child
Stoneycroft	(Garden & Shed)	
Aviary Cottage	(Built 1912)	
Woodcutters Cottage	(Built 1912)	
Top Farm	William Moody-56-Farmer	Rhoda Moody-52-Wife Hilda May Moody-16-Farmer's daughter dairy work Harry Coggle-19-Waggoner on farm James Henry Curtis-16- Cowman on farm
The Cottage	Joseph Rose-69-Farm labourer	Cecelia Rose-57-wife
Toad Cottage (4 cottages in 1911)	1 Edward Butcher-71-Retired railway signalman 2 Vacant 3 Thomas Rose-72-OAP farm labourer	Elizabeth J Butcher-80-wife
Toad Cottage (cont.)		

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head: Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household: Name-age-occupation</b>
Westwood House 4 cottages in 1911	4 Richard Ellis Rose-29-Saddler & Harness Maker  1 Vacant	Pollie Rose-26-wife Richard E Rose-4-son Vincent Rose-2-son Clifford Rose-1-son
	2 George Nettleship-62-Farm labourer	Annie Atkin-46-House keeper Mary-Ann Howe-46-Tailoress visitor Ella Howe-4-visitor
	3 William Sampson-71- Retired Farm Labourer	George Sampson-43-Farm Labourer Arthur Sampson-40-Farm Labourer Fanny Sampson-36-daughter at home John Sampson-33-Farm Labourer
	4 John Rose-60-Farm Labourer	Emily Rose-52-wife Eleanor Rose-13-daughter
Bridlecroft	Thomas Walker-51-Roadman Labourer Rural D Council	Elizabeth A Walker-44-wife Dorothy Walker-19-daughter Mary Walker-12-daughter John T Walker-9-son Grace Walker-6-dau Joyce Walker-3-daughter Jesse Walker-7months-son

## 'UP STREET' OR HIGH STREET 1911

2016 Name	1911 Head Name-age-occupation	1911 Household Name-age-occupation
Holme View Farm	Sydney Johnson-34-Farmer	Sophia Johnson-37- wife Maggie Johnson-10-daughter Sydney Johnson-8-son Mary Johnson-6-daughter Agnes Johnson-4-daughter Fred Johnson-2-son Baby-< 1 month John Elkington-40-Cowman William Dolby-25-Horseman Mary Mills-21 -Domestic servant
Blacksmiths Cottage	Thomas Hilton-55-Shoeing and General Smith	Elizabeth Hilton-50-wife Dorothy Hilton-9-daughter Harold Wooley-19-Apprentice Smith
Cherry Tree Farm	John Dewick-54-Farmer	Harriet Dewick-46-wife George R Brooks-15-step son working on farm
Lilac Farm	Richard Wilkinson-30-Farmer	Annie Wilkinson-28-wife Nellie Wilkinson-2 months William Wilkinson-73-Retired Farmer James Foster-20-Farm servant

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Ivy House Farm	Joseph Merrills-60-Farmer	Mary Merrills-54-wife Arthur Lacey-33-Waggoner on farm John W Marshall-22-Cowman on farm
The Millers House	James Laughton-62-Farming & Miller	Ann Laughton-62-wife George Laughton-34-work on farm Leonard Laughton-26-work on farm H(enry) Laughton-30-Boot Maker
Smithy Farm	Charlotte Bramford-69-Farmer	William Brampton-49-Son working on farm
School House	Frank Willis-53-Schoolmaster	Ruth Willis-56-Schoolmistress Ruth Barbara P Willis-25-Supplementary Teacher
The Shop	Samuel Laughton-32-Farmer	Edith R Laughton-31-wife Oliver W Laughton-7-son Mabel E Laughton-5-daughter Ivy Laughton-4-daughter Alice A Laughton-1-daughter
School Farm	John Rose-68-Farmer	Mary J Rose-63-wife Frank Sampson-24-Labourer forestry Dorothy V Sampson-24-daughter Eric O Sampson-1-grandson John F Sampson-2 months

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Greenpeace	Henry Pinder-54-Farm Labourer	Herbert Pinder-52-Farm Labourer Walter How-38-Farm Labourer Mary A How-47-sister Alfred W How-4-nephew Edith M How-6-Niece
High Street Farm	Thomas Bennett-75-Farmer	Frances Bennett-70-wife Florence Bennett-34-Assistant Teacher Fanny Bennett-28-Farmer's Daughter Dairywork
Church Farm	William Rayner-33-General Labourer	Rose Rayner-31 -wife Wilfred Rayner-6-son William Rayner-4-son Gladys Rayner-1 -daughter
2 Church Cottages	Benjamin Moody-65-Pensioned Station Master	Charlotte Moody-63-wife Cordelia Moody-21-daughter
1 Church Cottages	Sam Moody-46-Farm Labourer	Annie Moody-41 -wife George Moody-18-Farm Labourer Mary L Moody-10-daughter Annie H Moody-8-daughter Percy S Moody-3-son

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
The Vicarage	Christopher B Collinson-47-Clergyman	Rhoda F C Collinson-39-wife Barbara V Cooper-21-neice Theodora Chadwick-19-visitor Mary E Hurt-33-housemaid Butter Oliver-28-Cook
Vicarage Cottage (1911 Flat)	George Barlow-33-Groom & Gardener	

## CROSSHILL AND THE BAR

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Twitthill Cottage (The Post Office in 1911)	William Sampson-27-Farming	Alice Sampson-28-wife Harold Sampson-2-son Frederick Sampson-7 months
Crosshill Farm	William Merrills-62-Farmer	Charlotte Merrills-62-wife Fred Merrills-29-Son working on farm Kate Merrills-27-Daughter Dairy work Clara Merrills-22-Daughter Poultry work William Troope-33-Waggoner on farm William Laughton-24-Cowman on farm

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Crosshill House	John Coup-70-Police Pensioner	Jane Coup-67-wife
Beech House & The Old Stables	1 William Taylor-69-Grocer	Sarah A Taylor-64-wife
	2 Fanny Lloyd-64-widow	Lillian Lloyd-36-Dressmaker Arthur Lloyd-34-House Painter
1 Bar Cottages	Thomas Maddison-59-Farm Labourer	Frances Maddison-51-wife Frances Maddison-13-daughter Ann E Maddison-10-daughter
2 Bar Cottages	John Duckmanton-58-Joiner	Elizabeth Duckmanton-51-wife
New Bar Farm	Samuel Sampson-62-Farmer	Mary Sampson-59-wife George Sampson-35-Son working on farm Harriet Sampson-22-Daughter Dairy Work Arthur Fullard-18-Farm servant
Bar Farm (1703 House)	John Cook-65-Farmer	Mary A Cook-59-wife
The Bar	Walter Moody-49-Woodman's Labourer	Annie Moody-43-wife Muriel M Moody-14-Daughter Annie E Moody-13-Daughter Wilfred W Moody-9-Son Frank E Moody-4-Son

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
The Dovecote Inn	John T Price-45-Farmer & Publican	Amelia Price-47-wife Millicent Price-19-Daughter Dairy Work James W Price-17-Labourer in Wood Arthur Pettit-54-Waggoner Joseph Woodhead-60-(boarder)

## 'DOWN STREET' & CHAPEL LANE

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Laxton Pinfold (6 cottages in 1911 known as Pecks Row)	1 George Bagshaw-50-Market Gardener	Eliza Bagshaw-50-wife Robert Bagshaw-8-son
	2 Ann Lacey-72-Widow	Tom Lacey-35-Woodman's Labourer
	3 Walter Johnson-36-farm Labourer	Fanny Johnson-35-wife
Orchard View	William Atkinson-63-Farmer	Mary Moody-45-Housekeeper William Favill-18-Farm Servant Eliz A Maun-15-Domestic servant
Twitchill Farmhouse	Walter J Laughton-22-Farm Foreman	Edith Laughton-24-wife Elsie M Laughton-2-Daughter Walter J Laughton-7 months-son

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Ivy Cottage Wheelwright Cottage The Conifers	Mary Duckmanton-84-Widow Housekeeper	William Duckmanton-53-Wheelwright
1 & 2 Dovecote Cottages (built in 1913)		
Dijon House	William Bagshaw-54-Shopkeeper(Grocer)	Mary Bagshaw-56-wife
1 & 2 Bungalow	1 Thomas Bagshaw-87- Retired Farm Labourer	
3 Alms Houses in 1911	2 Ann Priest-55-Charwoman	
	3 Jane Dolby-73-Mid-Wife (trained)	
Chapel House	Harriet Rose-61-Charwoman	Edward Rose-33-Farm Labourer (son) Beatrice M Rose-35-daughter, Imbecile Nellie Rose-10-Granddaughter
Vicarage Farmhouse	Sam G Bartle-35-Farmer	Nina Bartle-21 -wife Eliza Bartle-72-mother Charlotte Mottey-77-boarder William H Frisby-14-Waggoner on Farm Evelyn William Bartle-1-son
Hollybush (A farm building in 1911)		

# BOTTOM VILLAGE & MOORHOUSE ROAD

2016 Name	1911 Head Name-age-occupation	1911 Household Name-age-occupation
Step Farm	Robert L Bennett-29-Farmer	Annie E Bennett-29-wife Clara Bennett-1-daughter Rose Bennett-3 months-daughter Samuel Drabble-26-Waggoner on farm Joseph Horton-19-Cowman on farm Louise Bentby-16-Servant Domestic John Quibell-75-Retired Farmer (father in law)
New House Farm	William Bennett-42-Farmer	Sarah Eliz Bennett-37-wife Minnie S Bennett-8-daughter Alice M Bennett-7-daughter Lily E Bennett-5-daughter Doris M Bennett-4-daughter Ernest W Bennett-3-son William Fletcher-40-Waggoner on Farm Florence Green-16-Domestic Farm Servant
Farms Cottage (& Lexington Court)	Sarah Holloway-51-Charwoman (widow)	Ernest Holloway-22-son (feeble minded) Maggie Holloway-11-daughter

2016 Name	1911 Head Name-age-occupation	1911 Household Name-age-occupation
Corner Farm	George Newbould-67-Farmer	Jane Newbould-66-wife John Newbould-45-son working on farm Walter Newbould-27-son working on farm Annie Newbould-23-daughter Dairy Work Percy Maddison-16-Farm Servant
Bottom Farm	Samuel Whitworth-50-Farmer	Mary E Whitworth-46-wife Charles Whitworth-24-son working on farm Cyril Whitworth-19-son working on farm Nellie Whitworth-15-Daughter Dairy Work Clifford Whitworth-12-son George Whitworth-10-son Herbert Whitworth-9-son Beatrice Whitworth-10-niece Kathleen Whitworth-6-daughter Barbara A Whitworth-3-daughter Alfred M Wilkinson-21-visitor
Corner Cottage	James Bagshaw-35-Estate Labourer	
Kneesall Cottage	Frederick A Moody-33-Mole Catcher	Alice M Moody-35-wife Grace G Moody-11-Daughter Elsie Moody-4-Daughter John E Moody-3-son Sidney Moody-1-son

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Manor Farm	George Cocking-48-Farmer	Emily Kate Cocking-30-wife Richard B Cocking-9-son Kathleen M Cocking-5-Daughter Muriel A Cocking-4-Daughter Edna A Cocking-1-Daughter Ben Skelton-24-Waggoner on Farm
Willoughby House 2 cottages in 1911	1 Jemima Jepson-76	
	2 James Cook-49-Farm Labourer	Ellen Cook-39-wife Jack Cook-17-Farm Labourer Alice Holmes-16-niece
Idle Farm	Samuel Peatfield-55-Farmer	Mary R Peatfield-53-wife Samuel Weatherall-22-waggoner on farm George Ingleton-40-Cowman on farm Agnes M Eten-19 Domestic servant
Moorgate Farm	George Burkitt-41-Farmer	Fanny Burkitt-36-wife Jane Burkitt-12-Daughter Evelyn Burkitt-3-Daughter
Moorend Cottage	John Cree-48-Cottager	Eliza Cree-33-wife Olive Cree-9-Daughter Daisy Cree-8-Daughter John Bagshaw-12-Step son

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Croftways	John Lacey-43-Forester's Labourer	William Lacey-55-Farm Labourer
The Cottage	Thomas Bagshaw-53-General Labourer	Elizabeth Bagshaw-55-wife
Moorgate Cottage	George B Atkin-36-Warehouseman (Railway)	Sarah A Atkin-39-wife Dora Atkin-9-Daughter Bernard Atkin-5-Son

## MOORHOUSE 1911

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Brecks Cottage	William Taylor-37-Waggoner on farm	Lois Taylor-32-wife Adeline K Taylor-8 months-daughter Joseph Taylor-60-Labourer on Farm
The Cottage	James Rollitt-65-Farm Labourer	Mary A Bell-63-Housekeeper
Aggie House Farm	John Parker-67-Cottager	Sarah Parker-72-wife
Betcheners Cottage	William Cammack-69-Cottager	Ann Cammack-67-wife James Cammack-36-Labourer Farm George Cammack-24-Labourer Farm Lillie Cammack-10-grandaughter
Sunnyside Cottage	William Rushby-34-Farm Labourer	Ellen M Rushby-27-wife Hannah Rushby-67-mother

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Wilmington Farm	William Key-31-Farmer	Mabel Key-27-wife Nellie Key-1-daughter
Church Farm	Edward Savage-56-Farmer	Sarah Savage-69-wife Mary A Savage-28-Farmers daughter dairy work Sarah E Savage-26- Farmers daughter dairy work
Bridge Cottage	Peter Rose-80-Bricklayer retired	John Rose-42-Bricklayer (nephew) Ann Mary Rose-38-wife John W Rose-13-son Mary E Rose-11-daughter Christopher Rose-7-son Percy C Rose-5-son Clara H Rose-5 months-daughter
The Holdings	Richard Holmes Capps-52- Cottager & Market Gardener	Maria Capps-55-wife
Brookdale Farm	Matthew Cocking-46-Farmer	Mary Cocking-58-sister Jane B Cocking-48-sister
Moorhouse Grange- formerly Beck Cottages	John Tyler-66-Farm Labourer	
Beck House	Arthur Whitworth-52-Farmer	Hannah Whitworth-56-wife Albert Drable-14-Servant in charge of horses

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Thorpe Farm	George Watson-33-Farm Labourer	Kate Watson-36-wife Albert Rickett-14-Step son- Farm Servant Annie Watson-8-daughter Katherine Watson-6-daughter Elsie Watson-3-daughter

## OUTLYING FARMS AND COTTAGES

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Westwood Farm	Thomas Marrison-74-Farmer	Sarah Marrison-62-wife Hawksworth Marrison-36-Son working on Farm Harold Marrison-25-Farmer Mary Marrison-25-Daughter in Law Stephen Marrison-newborn-grandson William Wells-18-Waggoner on Farm Frank Marchall-20-Cowman on Farm Jerves Wilkinson-28-Farm Labourer George Saxelby-18-Farm Servant Edward Rudkin-21-Farm Servant May Malby-20-Servant

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Cocking Moor Cottage	Charles Taylor-41-Farm Labourer	Emily Taylor-36-wife Annie Taylor-12-Daughter Charles F Taylor-8-Son Cyril Taylor-4-Son
Brockilow Farm	Alfred Chell not in residence	John Wilson-28-Farm Labourer Violet Wilson-28-House Keeper Annie Wilson-4 Bernard Wilson-1
1 Saywood Cottages	George Favill-48-Woodman	Mary Favill-46-Wife Edith Favill-13-Daughter Harold Favill-12-Son Annie E Favill-11-Daughter Joseph Favill-10-Son Maude Favill-8-Daughter Archie Favill-5-Son John H Favill-3-Son
2 Saywood Cottages	George Preston-60-Gamekeeper	Mary A Preston-60-Wife Ethel M Preston-23-Daughter
Laxton Lodge	John Taylor-42-Farmer	Annie E Taylor-42-Wife Thomas Cuddy-17-Farm Waggoner Ughtred H Salmund-15-Cow Lad on Farm
Hartshorn Farm (site of)	Henry Noble-45-Farmer	Charlotte Noble-41-Wife Robert Noble-18-Waggoner on Farm

<b>2016 Name</b>	<b>1911 Head Name-age-occupation</b>	<b>1911 Household Name-age-occupation</b>
Straw Hall (site of)	Thomas W White-23-Cowman on Farm	Mary A White-25-Wife
Knapeney Farm	William Bull-70-Farm Foreman	Ann Bull-68-Wife Alice A Drabble-30-Dairy Work George W Drabble-27- Head Horseman William Drabble-18-Under Horseman George Berkit-18-Farm Lad Edith M Drabble-18-Visitor Baby Drabble-<1month-Grandson
Primrose Farm	Samuel Lacey-49-Farmer	Ann Lacey-52-Wife
Copthorne Farm	William G Quibell-28-Farmer	Reeny R Quibell-26-Wife Marjorie R Quibell-3-Daughter William G Quibell-2-Son John R Quibell-under 4 months Florance E Isaac-18-Servant Harry Cobb-17-Waggoner on Farm Arthur Parr-17-Cow man on Farm
East Park Cottage (site of)	Henry Dolby-51-Woodman's Labourer	Sarah J Dolby-47-Wife George Dolby-20-Woodman Labourer William Dolby-15-Farm Servant
Breck's Farm	Harold L Marrison	Family staying at Westwood Farm
Egmonton Hill Farm	George Saxelby-48-Farmer	Matilda Saxelby-49-Wife Minnie Saxelby-23-Daughter Dairy Work Mary Saxelby-17-Daughter Dairy Work George Saxelby-16-Farmer's son working on Farm



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# APPENDIX 1

## MAPS OF LAXTON AND MOORHOUSE

Based on the 1910 Inland Revenue  
Survey and the 1911 Census

## Key to Properties

- 2 Town End Farm
- 3 West Lea
- 145 Aviary Cottage & Woodcutters Cottage
- 5 Top Farm
- 6 The Cottage
- 7 Toad Cottage & Westwood House
- 15 Bridlecroft
- 16 Holme View Farm
- 17 Blacksmith's Cottage
- 18 Cherry Tree Farm Formerly Buildings Farm
- 19 Lilac Farm

- 20 The Miller's House
- 21 Ivy House Farm
- 22 Smithy Farm
- 23 School House
- 24 School Farm
- 26 Greenpeace
- 27 High Street Farm
- 28 Church Farm

- Shop
- Infant School
- Big School
- Church
- Vicarage
- Chapel

← To Westwood Farm, Cocking Moor Cottage and Common

- 33, 34 1 & 2 Church Cottages
- 29 The Vicarage & Vicarage Cottage
- 29 Ivy Cot./Whitewright Cot./1912 1 & 2 Dovecote Cottages in paddock
- 57 Dijon House
- 58 The Bungabaws / Almshouses
- 62 Vicarage Farm
- 65 New House Farm
- 66 Farms Cottage / Lexington Court
- 69 Corner Farm
- 71 Corner Cottage & Kneesall Cottage
- 74 Manor Farm
- 75 Willoughby House

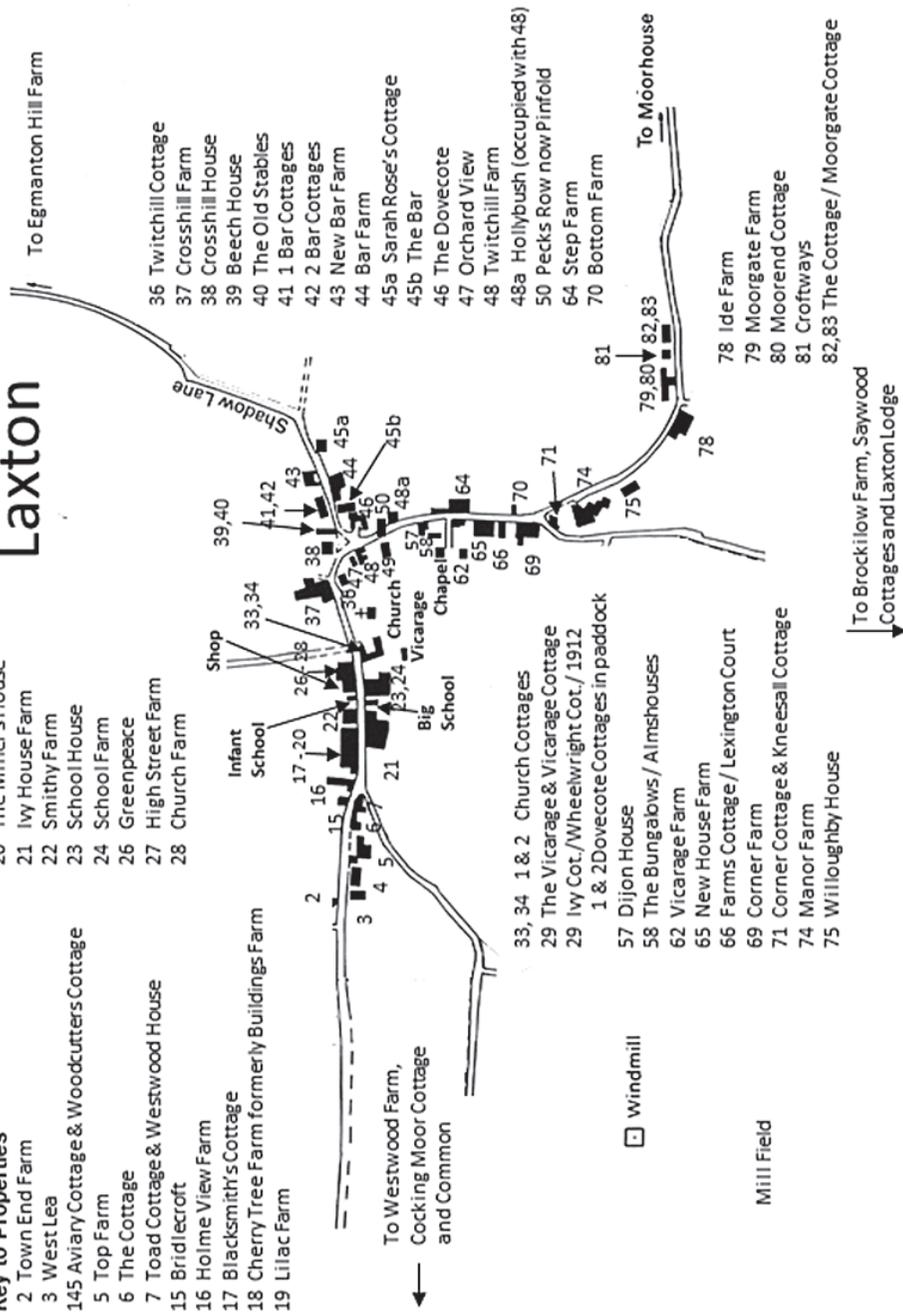
☐ Windmill

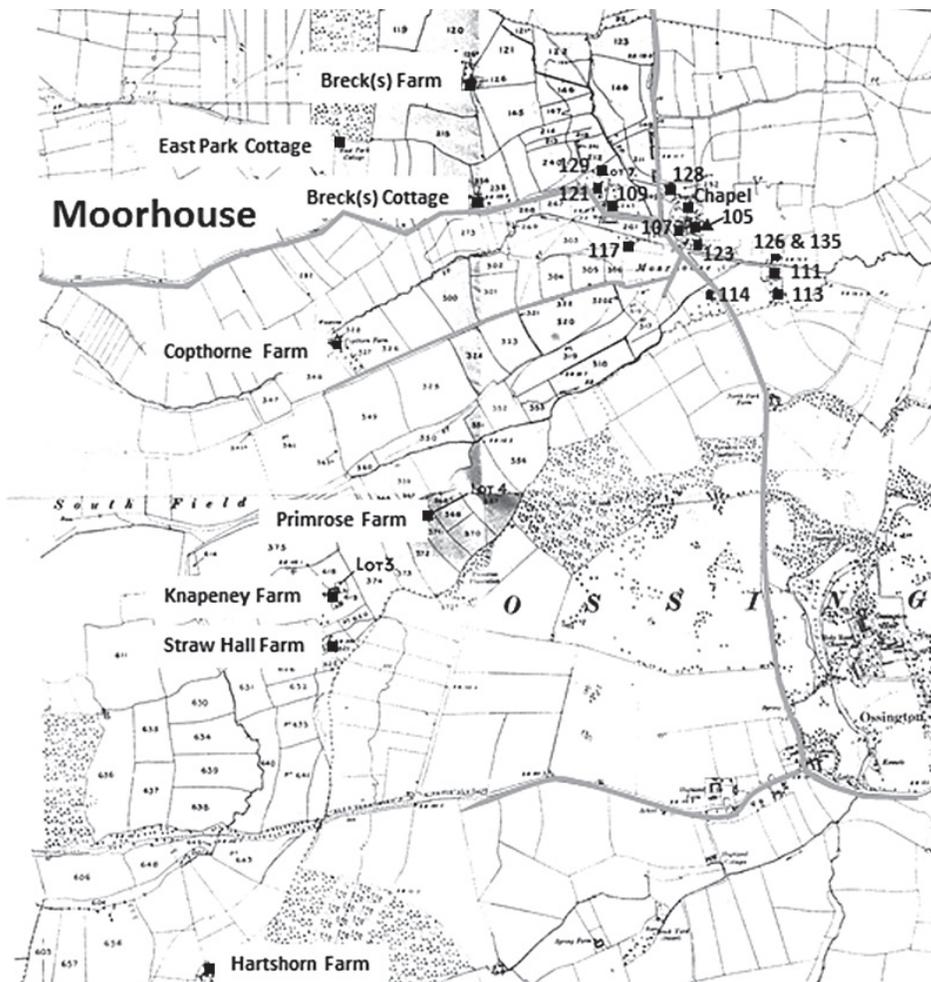
Mill Field

→ To Brockilow Farm, Saywood Cottages and Laxton Lodge

# Laxton

→ To Egmonton Hill Farm





## Key to Properties

105	Church Farm	121	Aggrie House
107	Wilmington Farm	123	Bridge Cottage
109	Betcheners Cottage	126	Moorhouse Grange <i>(formerly 2 semis with 135)</i>
111	Thorpe Farm	128	Sunnyside Cottage
113	Beck House	129	The Cottage
114	Brookdale Farm		
117	The Holdings		

*All properties are numbered as on the 1910 Inland Revenue Valuation Office Survey*



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# APPENDIX 2

LISTED BUILDINGS IN  
LAXTON & MOORHOUSE

## GRADE I

Church of St Michael the Archangel

## GRADE II\*

Moorhouse Chantry Chapel

## GRADE II

Aggrie House

Bar Farm, Barn

Brockilow Farmhouse Barn

Brockilow Farmhouse

Church Farmhouse, Moorhouse

Church of St Michael, Cross 12 metres South

Church of St Michael, Gate Piers and Gate

Holme View Farmhouse, Adjoining Barn

Ivy House Farmhouse

Ivy House Farm, Farm Buildings

Laxton Vicarage and Adjoining Service Wing and Stables

Lilac Farmhouse

Lilac Farmhouse, Farm Buildings

Lilac Farmhouse, Stable

Old Bar Farmhouse

Primrose Farmhouse

Telephone Kiosk

Village Hall

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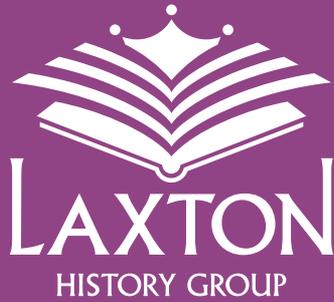
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