

WOODBURY LOCAL HISTORY

SOCIETY

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December 2004

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Honey Cottage in Woodbury Salterton In 1697 a deed was drawn up between Samuel Broadmead, described as a scrivener and schoolmaster and John Moore to lease a cottage and 1/2 and acre of land on the north side of a close called Pyttghe which was part of the Barton of Gregory Gove. This Barton was Bridge Farm and the cottage lay between Pit Close and Honey Lane Orchard belonging to the farm. Three years later John Moore died, and his brother assigned the unexpired lease of the cottage to the churchwardens and overseers of the parish. Five years later, Thomas Scott, a yeoman of Woodbury, leased the cottage for a 99-year term at the rent of 2s per annum again to the churchwardens and overseers. Nearly 30 years later the cottage appears to be in the ownership of the churchwardens and overseers as a deed is drawn up between them and John Casely, a mariner of Woodbury, for the sale of the cottage for £15, with 1d per annum to be paid to the sellers. The document states that the money from the sale, with the approval of the parishioners, was to be used for the poor of the parish. Because of the missing documents it is only possible to surmise what was going on, but it would appear that the cottage was originally part of Bridge Farm and had perhaps been given to the parish at some point. Whether the leases were returning the cottage to the parish officials as the owners or whether the cottage was given between the dates of 1705 and 1732 is difficult to work out. Suffice it to say the cottage became a freehold property and the poor of the parish gained through its sale.

Mrs Emily Calvert of Honiton

An article in the Express & Echo in September 2004 recorded the 111 birthday of Mrs Emily Calvert (the second oldest person in the Britain), who originated from Woodbury. She was born at Bury Meadows cottage in Cottles Lane, the daughter of Emanuel Soper, whose family had been in the village since the late 18th century.

Though the family moved to Heavitree in 1904, her memories of life in Woodbury were quite vivid. Her niece, Mrs Matthews, who lives in Honiton, has lent various family photographs as well as her grandfather's diary to the Society - these have now been put on CD ROM.

Emmanuel Soper was born in 1845, the son of an agricultural labourer and a lacemaker. In his diary he writes that on 17th April 1865 he was converted from his sins, and for the rest of his life was an ardent member of the Plymouth Brethren. Three months after this conversion he enlisted in the Royal Artillery and was posted to India, in which country he served until his retirement to England, in 1889, with the rank of Warrant Officer. He lived in Budleigh Salterton for two or three years before settling back in Woodbury. Emmanuel had been married in India to a widow with children, with whom he had two children before she died. On his return to England he married again and there were six children of this marriage, Emily, born in 1893 being the third child. Emmanuel bought a house in Heavitree, partly so that he would be near the PB chapel there, and spent many hours in his allotment noting in his diary every vegetable he planted and the progress of his plants throughout the year. Four of his sons fought in the Great War and one was killed in action in France in 1918. In 1912 Emily and her half-sister went into service with a family in Putney. By 1916 she was back in Exeter where she found a job and continued work both in Devon and the Home Counties, mainly in service. She evidently married quite late in life and had no children of her own. For several years she lived for long periods with Mrs Matthews and another niece until a few months ago, when, being themselves quite elderly, they found it too arduous to care for her properly, and arranged for her to move into a nursing home. Mrs Matthews says that Emily was a bit of a character and could be quite difficult — even at the age of 111.

The Language of Devonians

Documents of ordinary people of Woodbury before the 20th century, written in their own hand, have not often survived. The following will is that of George Easterling, a tailor living in Ebford, who died in 1833. He left under £100 and appointed his wife Grace to be his executor.

"Gives all my goods and all that is mine too my wife Gras Easterling as long as shee livs singel but if Gras Easterling the wife of George Easterling marith too a Nother then I George Easterling givs all to my three childrin Bety Braithwite and Isaac Easterling and Marey Ann Easterling And if Gras Easterling livs singel shee is to have the hole and after she is dead and then I George Easterling Givs all that is left to my three children with nams is a Bove to be Equalel Divided to each of them. And Marey ann easterling Is to bee joynt Exceter With her Mother Grace Easterling and after the Deth of marey ann Easterlings mothe if there is ten pounds a leaved I give it to marey ann Easterling and shee to take her Part as far as the rest what they mother Leaves after shee is Dead and marey ann is to see that her mother Grace easterling is taken care of as Long as shee livs."

The Pocket Book Of William Phillips William Phillip's Exeter Journal dated 1841, which was used as a notebook and diary by members of the family, was given to the Society by one of his descendants. The journal recorded payments, various financial and business transactions, births of the family and the odd snippet of greater interest. William was a carpenter and builder who was born in 1802, the son of William, also a carpenter, and Jane. William was a supporter of Robert Brent and one of the trustees and builders of Christ Church. In 1833 he married Lydia Ebbels, the daughter of the miller of Exton Mill. An entry

dated 1855 May 13 is headed "The Request of Lydia Phillips to her husband William Phillips", in which she specified articles of clothing, pieces of silver, her workbox and small pieces of household treasures, which were to be given to various children after her death. To her daughter Jane she leaves "the Silk Dress her Father bought Me when in London to the Exhibiton", and also a gold ring marked *E L* (dated 1723). The initials stand for Elizabeth Lee, the wife of her maternal grandfather Richard Hall. Another entry reads "If Anna Hallett never Cleans her plate it is my wish that my son Thomas Phillips to have one large table spoon, one pair of salt spoons, one mustard spoon and two silver coark taps mark Gin & rum" — Anna was either Lydia's sister or her niece. There is a bible owned by Anna Hallett (the niece) which has also been given to the Society — it appears that she had joined a religious order and her name is in the front dated 1859 at Broadclyst. Lydia died in July 1855 aged 50, but William lived for another 22 years dying at the age of 75.

Programme Of Meetings for 2005

- 3 Feb AGM followed by a Social Evening with refreshments
- 3 Mar The History of the Ballymans Estate an illustrated talk by Ian McFadzean
- 7/8 May Exhibition: The History of Village Crafts and Occupations
- 7 Jul Visit — to be arranged