A history of

# Littleton Farm House

Littleton, Surrey

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2014

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# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

Littleton Farm House is a fine example of a Jacobean farmhouse that, like most Surrey houses that were erected before the mid seventeenth century, was built with a timber frame. It remained the principal house of Orange Court Farm until the 1870s by which time it was considered to be old fashioned and was replaced by the present Orange Court Farmhouse. However, when it was built, it was very up-to-date with its integral chimney stack and heating in the upstairs rooms.

The farmhouse and its land have a lengthy and interesting history. It was long known by the name of Orange's, taking that name from a fourteenth century holder of the land. During the late eighteenth century, some time after 1750 when it became a part of the Loseley estate, it was called Orange Court Farm. This name was associated with the house for about a century, although for a time during the nineteenth century it was known as Littleton Farm.

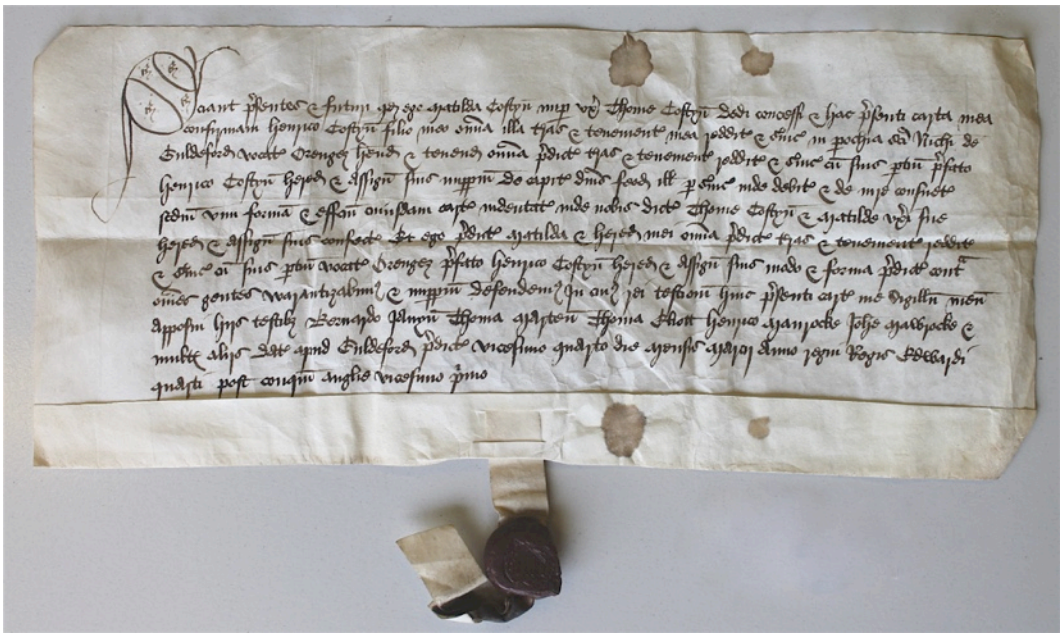
The farmhouse itself dates from the first decade of the seventeenth century and is probably not the first dwelling to be associated with the land. It was very well built and was intended to be a house of high quality. It is significant that, by the 1660s, it was one of only two properties in the tithing of Artington that had six hearths. Only Loseley and Braboeuf had more.

When it was superseded by the new Orange Court Farmhouse, the status and use of the old house and it inhabitants changed. It was divided into two dwellings and the building became a pair of cottages for agricultural workers, a situation that remained in place for around eighty years.

After the Second World War, the Loseley estate sold some of its old houses, including Littleton Farm House, and at that time the two joined cottages were converted back into one home. Since then the house and its grounds have been carefully restored by a succession of private owners and once again the property is a fine feature of the village.

## Early owners and origin of the name

For many centuries, the parcel of land and the house that stood on it were known, rather simply, by the name of *Orenge's* and it was still known by this title when the present farmhouse was erected in the early seventeenth century. Its first change came nearly two hundred years afterwards, in the late eighteenth century, when the property acquired an elegant version of its early name. It became known as Orange Court Farm for reasons that are unclear but which might have had something to do with the meeting place of the Loseley manor court. It retained this name for about eighty years.



*The deed of 1481 by which Matilda Costyn passed Orenge's to her son Henry.*

Early property titles were often very literal, typically just referring to the names of past owners. Fortunately, these titles frequently stayed in place for many years, often linking us to a landowner who had featured in the parish records many centuries ago. In this case, the evidence can be found within an early deed contained in the Loseley manuscripts which records that, in the early fifteenth century, there was land in Littleton that had been previously owned by John Orenge.[1]

He was, however, already a historic figure by that time for, prior to the writing of the deed in 1400/1, the land had been in the hands of Robert

[1] Deed of 20 March 1400/01 transcribed in the Percy Woods Collection vol. 4, Godalming Museum.

Busbridge. It remained in this family for just over six decades until 1464 when Robert Busbridge sold '*lands called Orenge's in Artington*' and they came into the hands of Thomas Costyn and Matilda his wife.[2]

Members of the Costyn family were to own the land for one hundred and thirty years, taking their custodianship to the end of the sixteenth century and almost up to the date that today's farmhouse was constructed. Its first owner, Thomas, held the land for fifteen years or so but by 1481 Matilda was a widow and she passed the property to her son, Henry.[3] A couple of decades later, in 1508, the manor records of Loseley show that the property had recently been divided with one part owned by John Costyn and another by Henry Costyn.[4]

By the end of the sixteenth century, Orenge's as a whole had shrunk and Henry's land had been absorbed into the Loseley estate. That part of the property was now in the ownership of Sir George More and had lost its old identity. John's share of the land remained independent of the estate and, by the mid seventeenth century, it had become known by the old name of Orange's.

## John Costyn's farm

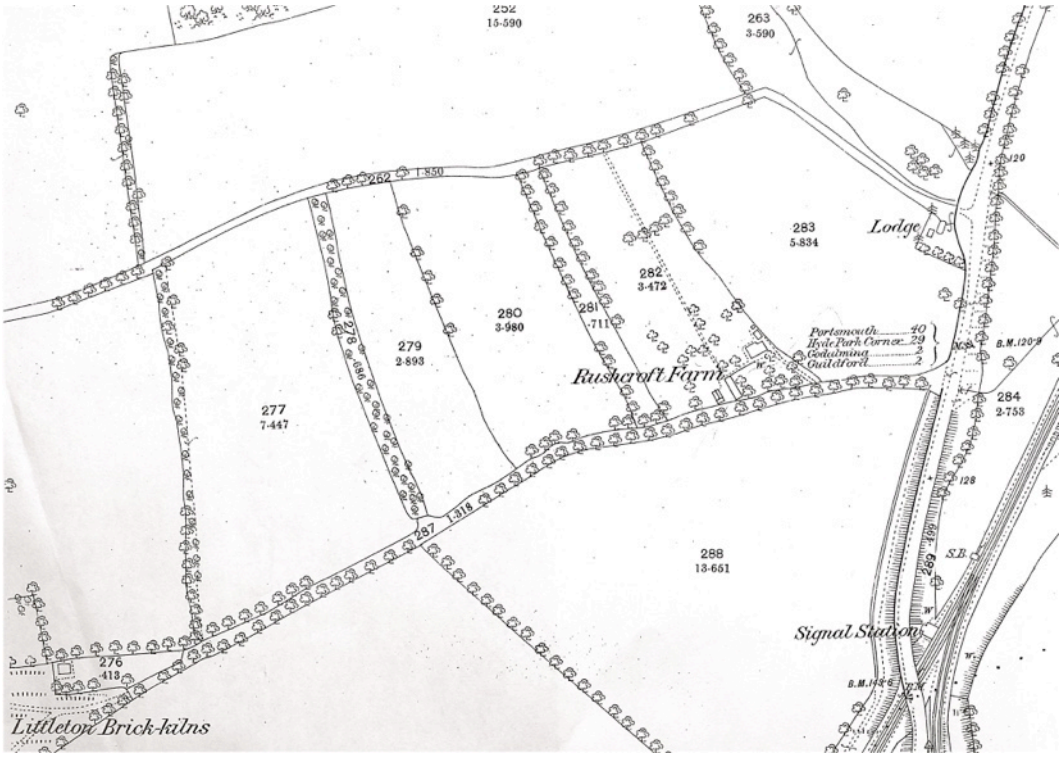
During the medieval period and through most of the sixteenth century, Orenge's was not a coherent land holding. It was made up of a number of cultivation strips that were scattered throughout the land which surrounded Littleton and Artington. This was the usual way that agricultural land was arranged in medieval England, particularly in the midland counties, when farming was carried on in large, common fields.

Villages were typically surrounded by two, three or four very large unhedged open fields that were subdivided into strips, each one individually owned. These strips were grouped together into furlongs, clusters of similar sized and shaped pieces, which made up the larger field. The fields were farmed in common and, because there were no hedges or fences, the manor court oversaw and controlled the activities within them.

The land around Littleton was still farmed in this way, at least in part, until the late sixteenth century. During that century, things had begun to change and the common fields were gradually being enclosed. It was a

[2] Busbridge is spelt at the time as 'Bussbrygge'
[3] Ffeofment/LM/342/46/1, SCH
[4] Manor of Loseley court baron of 1508, LM/306, SHC

piecemeal process; individuals bought and exchanged strips of land enabling them to create consolidated, compact holdings. Having achieved that end, they were able to hedge round their new lands and work it in the way they chose, free from the constraints imposed by the need to grow the same crops as their neighbours and free from the control of the manor court.




*Fossilised medieval cultivation strips in the area of Rushcroft Farm survived to be recorded on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map.*

The shapes of some of the old strips and furlongs were often preserved by the new hedgerows and the fossilised evidence of the common fields survived long enough to be mapped in the nineteenth century and, indeed, a few of their boundaries survive to this day. The 1871 Ordnance Survey map shows some of these hedges with the characteristic curved shape of the medieval strips.

As well as the surviving field boundaries, there is also written evidence recording the earlier scattered nature of the farm holding. A lease of 1571 concerning what had been Henry Costen's part of Orenge's, lists the parts of the property and shows that it was made up of small plots of land

scattered around the common fields of Littleton, as well as some larger areas of enclosed land.[5]

The lease paints a picture of medieval common fields that had, by then, been partially enclosed but where many of the open field characteristics remained. The common fields were called Marsh Field, Hill Field, the Deane and the Down. It appears from this document that the land around Littleton still consisted of a combination of unhedged strips in these fields and others that had been enclosed into larger fields by that time.

As far as John Costen's former portion of Orange's was concerned, this process had been completed by the end of the sixteenth century. By 1596 his successor, John Costen, held the farm from the lord of the manor of Loseley who received an annual quit rent from Costen of 2s 2d, an amount which still applied in 1735 when a map of the farm was made. This continuity of the quit rent strongly suggests that the farm had achieved its mid eighteenth century form by the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

The new, late sixteenth century farm was largely a coherent, ring fenced holding but there were a couple of remote, modestly sized pieces of land attached to it. One plot was located in the meadows of the river Wey and the other comprised of a fossilised furlong of land in what had previously been the Marsh Field, hard by the edge of the Pease Marsh common.

The year 1596 saw two deaths in the Costen family which would precipitate the sale of the farm. In October of that year, William Costen turned up at the meeting of the manor court to claim the tenancy of the farm, for his father had died early that year. His father's heir, William's elder brother John, had died soon afterwards leaving William, the second son, as heir and he was formally admitted as tenant of the farm at the court.

Due to this double bereavement, William Costen's inheritance came at a price. On the demise of a manorial tenant, the new holder of a property paid a form of death duty to the lord of the manor. A financial relief was usually claimed, which was the equivalent of one year's quit rent, as well as a heriot, which was usually the deceased's best beast. William therefore had to pay 4s 4d for two reliefs as well as handing over a red cow in respect of his brother's death. The other item which he had to part with in respect of his father's death was, very unusually, a cupboard. Perhaps he had no other healthy cattle or little else of value to offer the court. William was the last member of the Costen family to own the farm

[5] LM/358/77, SHC.

and his tenure was very brief: four years later, he sold Orange's to Richard Bromfeild.

## The Bromfeild family and their new house

By the end of the sixteenth century, the farm had established its modern shape and it was in the very last year of that century that the property was bought by Richard Bromfeild.[6] He held it for just a handful of years before passing the farm and a fine new farmhouse to his son Richard and his daughter-in-law Joanne, sometime before 1610. This transfer was probably made as a marriage settlement.[7] It was certainly a generous bequest and it made for a very secure start for Richard the younger and his new wife.

What sort of property had they been given? When the elder Richard Bromfeild had bought the farm, it was no longer a scatter of cultivation strips in the common fields but a new consolidated holding that was hedged and separate from its neighbours. This made for a more desirable acquisition altogether and, as well as this, the property was now graced by a very fine, newly built, family home.

The structure of Littleton Farm House shows that it was erected in the early seventeenth century and this has been confirmed by a dendrochronological analysis of the house timbers, which give the likely date of building as 1608 or very soon after.[8] It was built to last and to hold a family but, sadly, Richard and Joanne's marriage was of a very short duration. Joanne died in 1611 and was buried in the churchyard of the parish church of St Nicholas, Guildford in September of that year.[9] The couple did not have children and Richard spent the next decade at the farm as a widower.

Around ten years after Joanne died, Richard remarried. His bride was Anne Russell of Worplesdon and he settled the property onto themselves for their lives and, after their deaths, onto the heirs of their bodies. At that time, however, they had produced no heir and by the late 1620s, they were still childless. As we shall see later in the story, their failure to reproduce at this time was to set in motion a chain of events that would

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[6] Final concord, Mich. 42-43 Eliz. 1, TNA
[7] Abstract of Loseley manor records, LM/1646/, SHC.
[8] Tree Ringer Services report GULH/16/14, Dr Andy Moir.
[9] St Nicholas, Guildford, parish register, SHC.

prompt a family dispute many years later, in the 1660s when Richard was on his death bed.[10]

In the meantime, Anne was luckier than Joanne and was able to enjoy her marriage, domestic life and the house for far longer than her predecessor. When it was first built the farmhouse was very modern in design, having been constructed of four bays, one of which was narrow and designed to accommodate a chimney. This innovation was a feature that made it very different from the homes that were built a hundred years earlier.

*The house as painted by Henry Sage in the early twentieth century. The lean-to is a later addition.*

In houses of that earlier period, the central bays of the building were open to the roof to create a hall, a space that played an important part in the communal life of the inhabitants. It was the heart of the home where the master, his family and servants all ate, socialised and lived together. Meals were cooked here on an open fire and most members of the household slept in the hall at night. Such hall houses had been the usual style of dwelling, from the greatest to the most humble, since before the Norman Conquest. This is how the Costyn family, for example, would have lived.

[10] Chancery case, ref: C6/160/4, TNA.

The later sixteenth century witnessed a period of dramatic change in domestic layout and, by the time that Littleton Farm House was built, homes differed greatly in style from those of their medieval ancestors. There were similarities, of course: dwellings were still built with a timber frame and the panels between the timbers continued to be made of hazel wattle and covered with a clay-based daub. Floors might still have been made of beaten earth, in the medieval manner, and the roof may have been thatched.

*The north side of the house, showing the stair turret serving two upper floors, the parlour wing and the two chimney stacks.*

However, the way in which dwellings were configured had changed, as had some of the functions that were performed within them. Some of the changes were quite dramatic for, in complete contrast to medieval homes, the seventeenth century farmhouse had no open hall and all the bays of the house were built with an upper storey.

With this change came new features. Chimneys began to appear in homes in the late 1500s and they became increasingly popular as the seventeenth century progressed. They represented a great step forward in terms of safety and comfort and the falling prices of bricks made them increasingly affordable. The chimney stack enabled smoke to be channelled neatly out of the house and its narrow flues made the fire draw, burn and radiate heat more effectively.

Moreover, chimneys now made it possible to have a fireplace in more than one room in the house and, in many buildings, hearths were placed into the stack at the upper floor level. The opportunity to enjoy the warmth of a bedroom fire must have been very welcome for seventeenth century England was a considerably colder country than it is today.

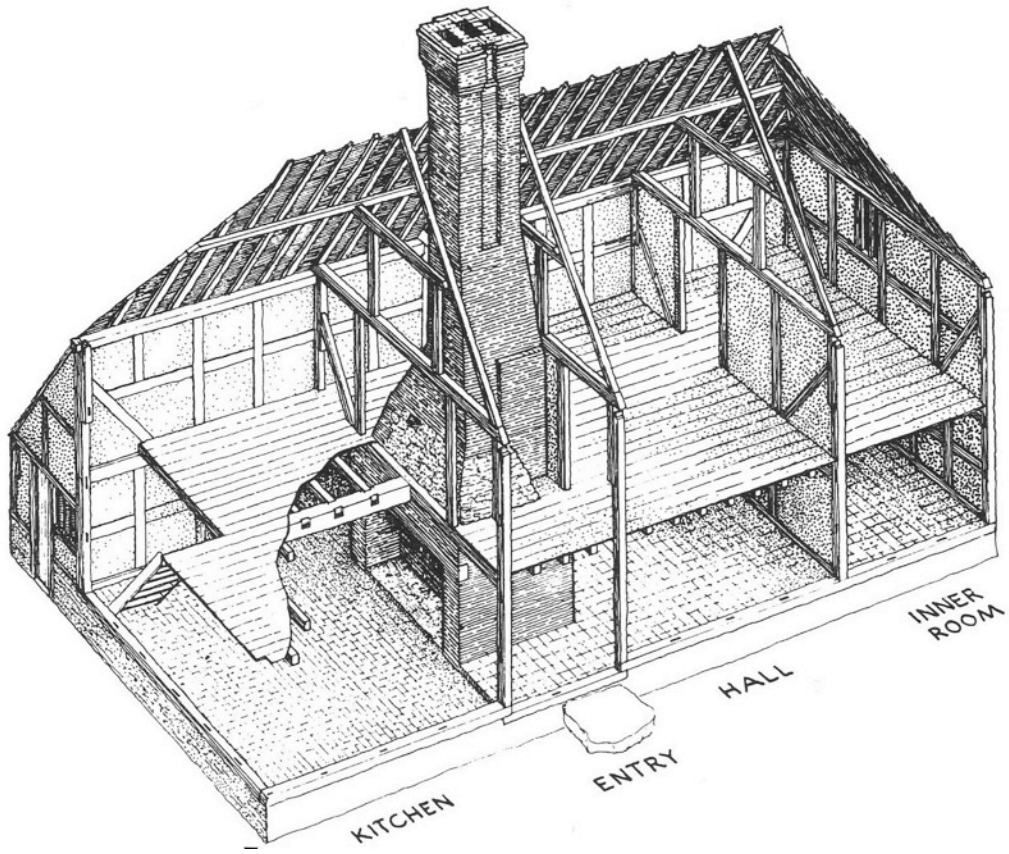
Another new feature was the main entrance to the farmhouse. In medieval homes, the exterior door led directly into the hall, sometimes via a screened passage. However, by the end of the sixteenth century, a new 'baffle entry' arrangement emerged as the normal way of entering a house. The outside door led to a small lobby within the chimney bay from which two interior doors to the left and the right opened to rooms each side of the chimney stack, a feature that helped to keep warmth within the building. In Littleton Farm House, this was on the south side of the house, on the opposite side from the stair turret.

There were many other similar houses being built at that time. Pendean Farmhouse at the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton, Sussex, is akin in its internal layout to the main range of Littleton Farm House and, like the latter, it was also built with a chimney. Constructed in 1609, around the same time as Littleton Farm House, Pendean also has a three-up-three-down arrangement of the rooms with a lobby entry to one side of the chimney stack. There was, however, at least one important difference: the new house at Littleton was built with glazed windows whereas at Pendean they remained unglazed. Recent building work on the southern wall of Littleton Farm House revealed mortice holes that had held the original window mullions. The mullions were fitted square to the wall which enabled glass to be fitted. The windows at Pendean, on the other hand, were built with diamond configured mortices that could not be glazed and so were closed with shutters. Glazed windows were still an expensive luxury at that time and the owners of Orange's evidently had enough money to equip the new house with all modern conveniences.

To the west of the Littleton Farm House chimney lay the kitchen. This area has a very significant beam over the hearth, creating a structure sufficient in size to accommodated a crane for hanging cooking vessels. Typically for a kitchen, the hearth is spacious enough to have contained a good sized fire and it is larger than the decorative brick arched hearth in the hall on the opposite side of the stack.

The dendrochronological analysis of the house suggests that the northern wing and the stair turret were built just a year or so after the main body of the house. The sample cores taken from timbers in the turret and the northern wing shows that these were cut at the same time as those in the

main body of the house, yet the northern wall of the house was not designed to accommodate the turret: it has been cut through as though the addition was an afterthought.




*Like Littleton Farm House, Pendean was built with a chimney and a similar layout of rooms. At Littleton, however, the roof has gable ends and the attic space was used for extra accommodation.*

This suggests a significant change of mind very soon after the farmhouse was built. Perhaps this was undertaken by Richard Bromfeild when he acquired the house from his father, or perhaps it was carried out at Joanne's behest. The recent dating of the northern wing suggests that it may have been built as a parlour and not, as previously supposed, a kitchen wing. The hearth in the wing is small, as one would expect in an intimate room, whilst the kitchen hearth is very large and far better suited for cooking on a busy farm.

The changing structure of the house, with its stair turret and parlour wing, reflected the way that society was evolving at that time. Stair turrets on the outside on a house became fashionable in the seventeenth century for, not only did they allow easier access to the upper floor and to the attic

space, but these ostentatious structures were also a very obvious way for the owner to display his wealth. They enabled the use of the attics as accommodation for the live-in servants, a less comfortable, lower status part of the house, a segregation that was an indication of the widening gulf between master and servant.

There were social changes after about the 1540s that had begun with the demise of the medieval hall and its feudal community. The layout of the new houses created a more formal relationship between masters and their paid servants. Farmers were becoming wealthier and it is obvious from the way that houses changed that they now sought to distance themselves from their hired hands. The addition of the parlour wing provided this privacy for the master and his family.

*The servants at Richard Bromfeild's new house slept in the attic, reached via a stair turret.*

Probate inventories from the seventeenth century show that there was an increasing number of such private rooms in people's houses at that time and they reveal that they were very often more comfortably furnished than the hall. Whilst the fire place in the hall at Littleton Farm House put on a grand display for visitors, the snug comfort of the parlour was reserved for more intimate meetings.

Although houses were, by the later sixteenth century, being built with an upper floor throughout, they still retained an area that fulfilled some of the functions of the medieval hall and it was often called by that name. In Littleton Farm House, Richard Bromfeild used the room that lay to the east of the chimney stack. With its spectacular brick arched hearth, it was a semi-public space where his visitors would be received into the house; today we refer to such a place as a reception room.

But there were other, critical influences that affected the structure and furnishings of houses at that time. As we have seen, the climate was becoming colder and the owners of these new buildings were taking

greater steps to adapt to the harsher conditions. The introduction of chimneys that enabled fires to be burnt in various rooms, even upstairs in the bedchambers, was the most important innovation and the warm, damp-free environment must have been the saving of many lives. Other practical features repelled the chill of the outdoors. Upper chambers were given ceilings to contain the warmth of the fires, in more affluent houses wooden panelling was installed to keep out the draughts and, as we have seen, glazed windows were becoming more common.

These developments at Orange's can be seen as a microcosm of a general social and cultural change that affected the country throughout the later sixteenth century. The new farmhouse at Littleton was far less open than its predecessors, with more scope for personal privacy and with servants kept at a distance. It was an enclosed, self-contained building that was a reflection of the new landscape: the farmstead had become a very private holding, turning in on itself and neatly wrapping itself around the house.

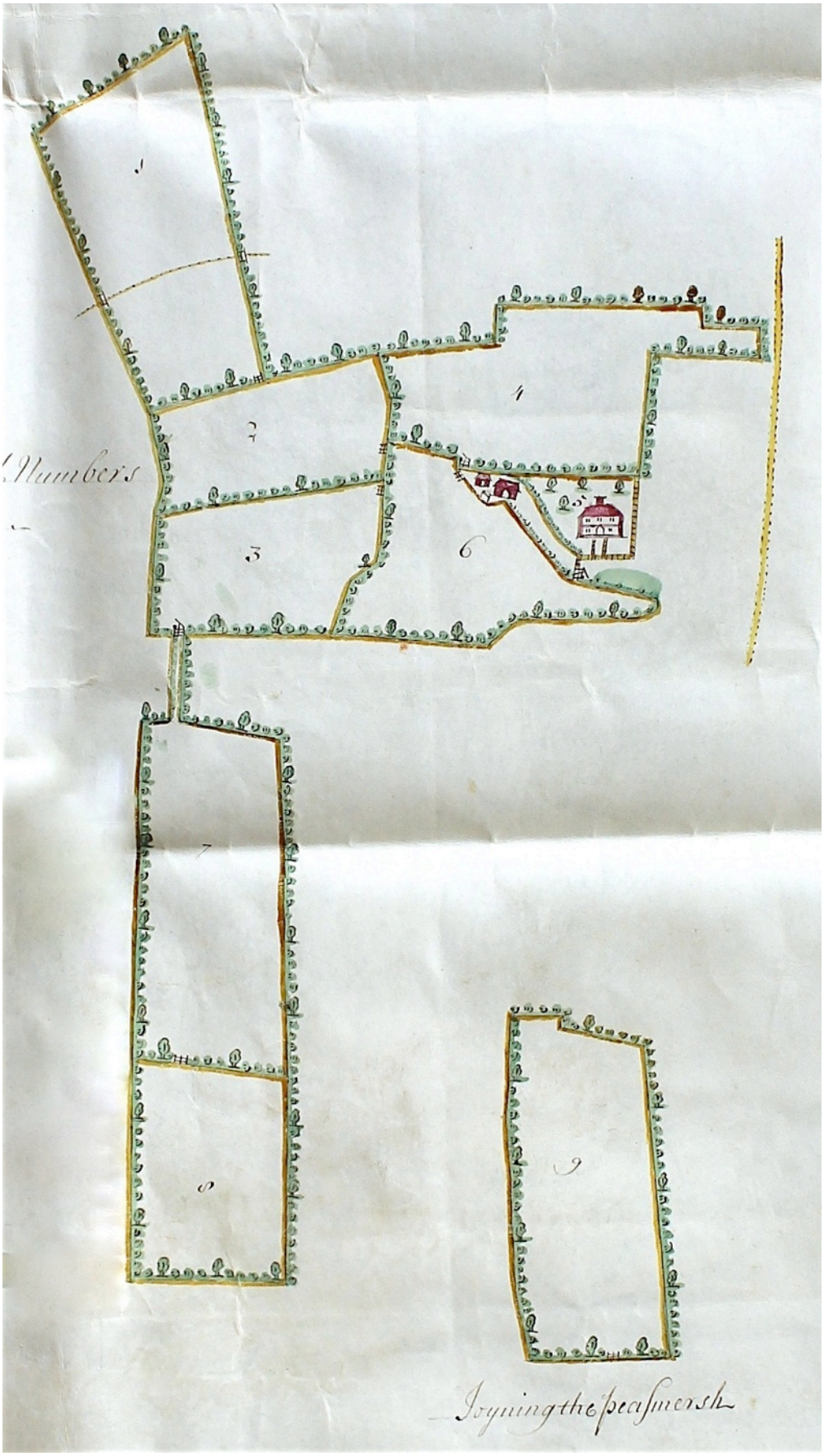
## The farm

Now firmly established under the new ownership of the Bromfeild family, the size and shape of the farmland at Orange's was to remain unchanged for the next 150 years. It is described in the manor records of Loseley as being of 26 acres with a 2s 2d quit rent in the entry of 1596. The same rent continued to be paid to the lord of the manor throughout that period, evidence that the holding remained unchanged.

The farm itself is shown on a beautifully drawn map of 1735 which pictures the fields, the house and its few outbuildings. In addition to the 26 acres in Littleton that were a part of the manor of Loseley, the map shows another 6 acres of land in the river meadows giving the farm a total area of 32 acres. The fields were mostly clustered around the house, on the west side of Littleton Lane, apart from one remote field adjoining the Pease Marsh near Brickfields Farm, known as the Broome Acres.

It is likely that the other village farms also had a share of the river meadows as they provided fine grazing and, in places where water meadows had been constructed, some very early and rich grass. The piece of meadow that belonged to Orange's is now occupied by the unused railway embankment near Shalford railway bridge over the Wey.[11]

[11] The plot is identifiable on the 1788 map of the Loseley estate, LM/2161, and the 1872 OS map, SHC.




*A map of Orange's Farm made in 1735.*

As well as the farmland meadows, the tenants of the farms and cottages in the village had rights of common on the Pease Marsh. The marsh was, effectively, extra grazing land although it was not of the best quality and because its use was not controlled in any way, it was not being used to its best advantage. However, despite these shortcomings it was, for smallholders and cottagers, an essential part of their household economy. For others, notably the large landowners and the tenants of their farms, this large expanse of unregulated common land was seen as an under-utilised resource.

## A family dispute

It is time to return to the Bromfeild family, who have been occupying this fine new house at Littleton and managing the farm for quite some years. They worked hard and in the early 1660s John Bromfeild was next in line to inherit the property. However, thanks to the apparently unscrupulous and rather dishonourable behaviour of a relative, George Chaundler, John Bromfeild nearly missed out on his inheritance.

Events began in the late 1620s, when Richard and Anne Bromfeild had been married for about six or seven years but did not have children. It was about that time that Anne was asked by an old lady, for whom she had been a servant before her marriage to Richard, to go and stay with her because she had become frail and had no-one to look after her.

Anne duly went to care for her old employer but, during her absence, Richard's brother-in-law, George Chaundler, approached him with a proposal. He suggested to Richard that, as he had no children of his own and was unlikely to have any with Anne, he should settle the future ownership of the farm onto his son Thomas Chaundler after their deaths. This, somewhat unwisely, is what Richard apparently agreed to do.

The matter became much more complicated however. Anne returned to Littleton after spending time with the old lady and a few years later she gave birth to a daughter named Anne. This took place in 1634, some twelve years after their marriage and it was probably a surprise and a great joy to them both. Their family was further augmented by the arrivals of Anne's siblings, John and Dorothie, shortly afterwards.

In 1661, Richard Bromfeild's error of judgement of over thirty years before came home to roost. By the summer of that year, he had been widowed for two years and was himself nearing the end of his days. Consequently, the future ownership of the house and farm came into

sharp focus for his son, John. By that time, Thomas Chaundler was dead and it was his heir, his brother Richard, who was claiming that the property would be his after his uncle's death. Therefore, in order to protect his inheritance, John Bromfeild took his case to the Court of Chancery.[12]

*The hall where Richard Bromfeild received his guests serves much the same function today.*

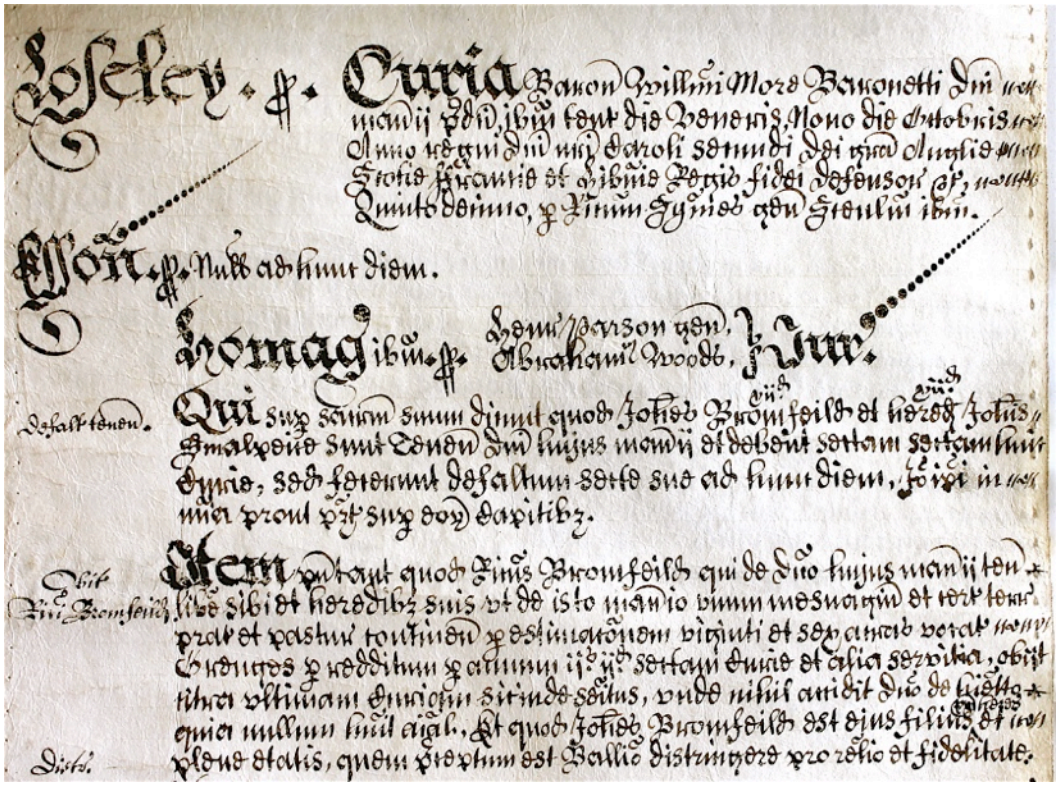
He explained to the court about the course of events that had taken place in the 1620s, information that he would have had from his father. It was claimed that his father had "*been informed by fair speeches of the said George and [was] often . . . entertained at his house*" and had consequently been persuaded, perhaps when in drink, to seal a document that George had thoughtfully prepared in advance which settled the farm on his son, Thomas.

In reply, Richard Chaundler said that he held both the original settlement of 1621 and that of 1627 which settled the property onto Thomas Chaundler and his heirs but he refused to show them to either Richard or John Bromfeild. This may well have been significant as Richard, now old and sick, swore a statement at his Littleton Farm House in which he said

[12] C6/160/4, TNA.

that he had intended that Thomas Chaundler should inherit the farm but only if he and Anne were to have no surviving children.

Unfortunately, the documents recording the judgement of the court have not been found but the Loseley manor court rolls make clear the outcome of the case because they record that John Bromfeild was admitted to the tenancy of the farm after his father's death 1661. He was to hold it until 1674 when he passed it to trustees for the benefit of his children. Richard died in September 1661, just weeks after swearing his statement to the court, the last owner-occupier of Orange's to farm its land.



*Court baron of the manor of Loseley, October 1663, recording the death of Richard Bromfeild who held twenty six acres called Orenge's at the annual rent of 2 shillings and 2 pence.*

Obit Ric[ard]i Bromfeild *(in margin)*

. . . viginti et sex acras vocat Orenges per redditum per annum ii$^{s}$ ii$^{d}$.

For John, Orange's was a property rather than a home or a living for he had chosen not to follow his father into farming: he had instead made a living as a tallow chandler and was by then living in London. He was, however, in Littleton for a time following his father's death, probably to deal with matters at the farm and the house, for he was listed in the 1662 hearth tax return when the house was assessed as having six fire places.

The hearth tax returns give us an insight into the housing stock of the Artington tithing and of Bromfeild's house within it. In 1662, there were thirty-four dwellings in the tithing, of which Loseley House was by far the largest with forty hearths. It was followed, but not closely, by Braboeuf Manor which contained ten. Of the remainder, Littleton Farm House was one of just two houses that had six hearths, the next highest number in the Artington assessment.

It was a significant house and was larger than its medieval neighbours. The central chimney has four flues and thus, probably, four hearths. There is also an external stack on the outside wall of the northern wing that appears large enough to have accommodated two flues. The presence of heated bedchambers on the first floor shows the growing affluence of the yeoman farmer class of society in the early seventeenth century. This number of fireplaces was unusual and the builder of the house evidently aspired to a greater degree of comfort than did many of his farming contemporaries.

By the early 1670s, it appears that John Bromfeild was no longer at the property, for he is not listed in the hearth tax returns for St Nicholas, and was probably back living in London. He died in early 1675, having passed the property to trustees in the previous year, and in his will he instructed them to pay his debts, share the remainder between his son William and daughter Anne and make arrangements for their education. The trustees sold the farm later that same year.

## George Benbrick

The next owner of Orange's, George Benbrick, was a successful feltmaker who lived and worked in Guildford. The long established Guildford cloth industry was at its height during the medieval period but, by the later seventeenth century, it was in decline. Nonetheless, Benbrick did well in his chosen trade and was rich enough to endow a charity for eight poor people that still contributes to the town's combined municipal charities.

Many of the wealthy Guildford traders and clothiers were purchasing farms during this period and the acquisition of Orange's was, for Benbrick, purely an investment. He did not live in the village, for his will makes it clear that he resided in a house in St Nicholas in Guildford and not at the farm. This is confirmed by his entry in the 1672 hearth tax returns.

According to George Williamson in his book, Guildford Charities, George Benbrick was a nonconformist and was convicted more than once of meeting for worship in a manner that was not in accordance with the Prayer Book of the Church of England. It was a difficult time for individuals who did not hold mainstream views but they, in turn, could be equally intolerant of such others; as his will reveals, he was deeply suspicious of Roman Catholicism, a faith that was far more wide spread and traditional than his own.

*The Guildhall in the early 1800s. George Benbrick had helped to fund its re-building in 1683.*

Benbrick was a wealthy man and in his extensive will he made many monetary bequests, as well as the gift of his property. Sadly, he had no heirs, for although he and his wife Jane had borne at least three children, none of them survived childhood. As a result, much of his wealth went to founding a charity for the poor of the parish of Guildford St Nicholas.

He gave an annuity of £10 out of his land in Alton and Shalford to be distributed to eight persons in equal portions. This was quite a substantial sum of money but there were conditions attached to his bequest and people of a certain disposition were precluded from becoming a recipient; funds were not to be given to anyone who was a drunkard, a whoremaster, vicious, debauched or a papist. Clearly, he was indeed disinclined towards those of the Roman Catholic faith.

Towards the end of his life, in 1683, he was one of just sixteen people who subscribed towards the rebuilding of the Guildhall in the High Street.[13] Today, it still stands as one of the finest buildings in the town. George Benbrick died in February 1683 and in the absence of any heir, he left the farm in Littleton to his wife, Jane, for her life and, after her death, to her kinswoman, Charity Faggetter.

[13] Guildford in the Olden Time by George C Williamson, 1904.

## Abraham Toft

At some time between 1683 and 1690, Charity Faggetter married Abraham Toft of Godalming, a clothier who had made money in the local wool trade. He had acquired Orange's via marriage but, like Benbrick, he had done well in business and used some of his wealth to invest in farming. During the seventeenth century, agriculture was becoming increasingly commercial, serving the needs of the growing metropolis, and farms were bringing good returns to both owners and occupiers.

When he made his will in 1727, Abraham had a number of properties in and around Godalming to leave to his descendants. He devised some named assets to his wife, Charity, but the remainder of his real property to his son George Toft. Orange's is not specifically named in Abraham's will but in that of his widow, written in 1739, Charity passes the farm to her son George, all of which suggests that she had continued to hold the property in her own right after her marriage to Abraham. This is despite the claim on the 1735 map that Orange's was actually George's property.

He had a long wait before he came into his inheritance: Charity did not die until April 1750 at the very advanced age of 95 and her will was proved the following April. Once this was done, George and his two daughters, Charity and Mary, sold the farm with almost indecent haste, within a couple of weeks, to Sir More Molyneux. Thereafter, for the next two hundred years, the occupiers of Orange's were tenants of the Loseley estate.

## The estate farm

Sir William More Molyneux was the first member of this prominent family to own the property as a part of the large Loseley estate. He was also the first in the family to bear the name of More Molyneux. His uncle, Robert More, had died without heirs in 1689, the year before he was born, and the property passed to his mother Margaret, who married Sir Thomas Molyneux. Thereafter the family name became More Molyneux and when William inherited the property he was usually referred to as Sir More Molyneux, without the use of his christian name.[14]

William's marriage to Cassandra Cornwallis of Carmarthen produced eleven children. Within this dynasty there was an heir, two spares and eight daughters. One would expect many grandchildren and future

[14] nationalarchives.gov.uk. The Loseley Manuscripts.

potential custodians of the estate to follow as a consequence and this is surely what the parents had hoped for but, alas, fate was exceptionally unkind to them in this respect. Several of their children died in infancy, many remained unmarried and James, their eldest son, also predeceased his father.[15]

Sir More Molyneux was sixty when he purchased the farm and four years later Cassandra passed away. Her widower owned it for a decade and when he died in 1760 he was succeeded by his only surviving son Thomas, Colonel More Molyneux, who owned the Loseley estate for sixteen years. Thomas had been educated at Oxford and began his army career in 1747 as an ensign in the 3rd regiment of foot guards. Working his way up he became a lieutenant colonel by 1761, shortly after he inherited the Loseley estate, at which time he was also one of two Members of Parliament representing Haslemere.

He had gained his political seat after a tough contest but he was to retain it until his death in 1776 at the age of fifty-four. His colleagues and neighbours obviously regarded him as quite a character for when he passed away the Rev John Butler wrote to George Onslow about him, commenting with some affection that:

*'He was one of the few original men in the world. I hardly know such another. Politeness has the good effect of hiding what is offensive in us, but it covers at the same time many entertaining oddities, and he had more of them than any of our neighbours . . . we shall probably have some nabob to purchase the venerable old seat at Loseley'.* [16]

Unfortunately, Thomas had not been the best of custodians of the venerable old seat at Loseley, nor of its estate. He was a connoisseur who liked the fine things in life and enjoyed spending a lot of money on them, even when there was not a great deal of it available. His lavish lifestyle had a huge impact on the wellbeing of the property.

Upon his death there was much clearing up to do and it was crucial to get the whole property back into shape. John Butler need not have worried however, for a nabob did not take over at Loseley. Initially, four of the daughters of Sir More Molyneux survived their brother Thomas but Cassandra, the eldest and next in line to inherit, died in the following year and would have had little opportunity to make good.

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[15] A portrait of William and Cassandra and their children can be seen in the Great Hall at Loseley.
[16] historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-17.

The next owner was Jane More Molyneux, who was nearly fifty when she took up the reins. Sadly, her period of custodianship began with another bereavement when her sister Caroline Suzanna died in 1778. These deaths left just two of the 'Ladies of Loseley', Jane and her younger sister Anne, who were both unmarried, to look after the mansion and its estate.

*An early nineteenth century engraving of Loseley House by John Preston Neale.*

It was time to take stock and so, at around the time of Caroline's death in 1778, a detailed survey was made of Loseley and its holdings. It depicts Orange Court, as it had become known, and the other farms of the Loseley estate field by field and it shows the result of its gradual enlargement by successive owners who had bought property whenever it became available. There were still significant parcels of land in other ownership but the bulk of the land around Littleton and Artington now belonged to Loseley.

The medieval field pattern was long gone and one now found about a dozen separate farms of various sizes. The land was predominantly arable at that time, continuing the pattern that had been established early in the previous century, and this is backed up by Rocque's map of around 1760 which also indicates that most of the area around Littleton was under the plough. It was evidently the favoured regime of the tenants and it seems that it continued to be used in this way under the stewardship of Jane More Molyneux.

The Names of the fields and Number of Acres of a Farm and Lands belonging to the Ladies of Loseley in the Occupation of Mr Richd Charrott Junior, and lying and being in the Parish of Guildford Surveyed in the Year 1778

| | | With this Mark | A | R | P | A | R | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | | The Six Acres field by the Grove Arable | 7 | – | – | – | – | – |
| B | | The Clapper's close field Arable | 4 | 2 | 31 | – | – | – |
| C | | The two Acres field Arable | 2 | – | 18 | – | – | – |
| D | | The Cart House field or the New Meadow | 4 | 2 | 28 | – | – | – |
| E | | The Orchard field Arable | 3 | 1 | 2 | – | – | – |
| F | | The House Barn Stable Garden & Gate | – | – | – | – | 3 | 28 |
| G | | The Farm Gate | – | – | – | – | – | 28 |
| H | | The Pond Plot and Cart-House | – | – | – | – | 1 | 16 |
| I | | The Hog plot Pasture | 1 | 1 | 22 | – | | – |
| K | | The Broom field Arable by the Deas Meadow | 4 | – | 2 | – | – | – |
| L | | The Meadow by the River | 6 | – | 32 | – | – | – |
| | | The Whole content Arable Meadow & Pasture | 33 | 1 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 32 |
| | | The Contents of the Waste Lands | 1 | 1 | 32 | | | |




*Details of Orange Court Farm from the Loseley survey of 1788 when it was owned by 'the Ladies of Loseley' and tenanted by Richard Charrot junior. The farm had an area of 34 acres, 3 rods and 7 perches. The house is in the centre of the map.*

Jane was an extremely capable woman and during her time as mistress of Loseley she supervised every detail of the household and estate management. She left a mass of meticulously detailed accounts and instructions for housekeeping and by careful practice she put the estate back on its feet almost single handed. Her sister Anne had married in 1789 and, as her husband was a widower with children, it is likely that these concerns took her elsewhere.

Anne died in 1798 and Jane passed away four years later. There was just one surviving grandchild of Sir More Molyneux and his wife Cassandra who could inherit the estate. Jane's nephew, James, was the son of Thomas through his liaison with a lady called Jane Freeman. He had been born in 1760 and had grown up as James Freeman but in 1802, under the terms of his father's will and in order to inherit the property, he changed his name to James More Molyneux. At the age of forty-two, with this new identity, he became the next owner of Loseley and its farms.

As soon as he inherited Loseley, James took a great interest in exploiting his new acquisition to the best possible advantage. As well as successfully pressing for the enclosure of the Pease Marsh, he took an active interest in the farming of the estate and, as the years passed, he became very critical of his tenants' methods, although the Ellis family, who arrived at Orange Court Farm in 1804, seem to have avoided much of his ire:

> *"If chalk was not to hand my sand-tenants would be complaining that they could not farm the sands to advantage without lime but as it is to be had at an easy price this tenant [i.e. Woodham of Westbury Farm, Compton], John Whitbourn and Greentree seldom ever use it."*

In 1816, possibly because of the changed economic circumstances following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, he was concerned about the lack of pasture on his estate. He was resolved to change the farmers' current agricultural practices and was intent on imposing his will on his other farms:

> "*I will force the tenant into a better system of modern and improved agriculture and lead him to depend more on livestock, particularly sheep, than our tenants do at present. All my farms have good turnip lands but this advantage is lost from the present deficiency of pasture to receive the sheep when the turnips are fed off. We must remedy this improvidence".*[17]

[17] LM/788/19, SHC.

This may have been a reaction to the sudden change in circumstances brought about by the end of the Napoleonic Wars at Waterloo in 1815. Napoleon's defeat saw the end of a period of plenty for British farmers. The French blockade of the British coastal ports had reduced the import of foreign food and home agriculture had expanded in an attempt to provide the country with the produce it needed. The end of the war enabled grain imports to enter the country once more and prices slumped. This ushered in a period of depression in the industry that was to last for decades.

It seems likely that James More-Molyneux's outburst was a reaction to this change, perhaps believing that animal husbandry was a more prudent option as the technology did not then exist to enable the importation of meat products. Times were becoming increasingly tough.

## Enclosure of the Pease Marsh.

In 1802, James More Molyneux wrote that he was contemplating adding land to Orange Court Farm from the Pease Marsh. This roughly triangular area of common land, that stetched from the Harrow in Compton to the Old Portsmouth Road, measured 803 acres and its enclosure had exercised the minds of the owners of Loseley since the seventeenth century. However, their object was not easily gained. The majority of the common, the waste of the manors of Westbury, Polsted, Loseley and Godalming, was an important resource for the farmers and cottagers who lived in the surrounding villages.

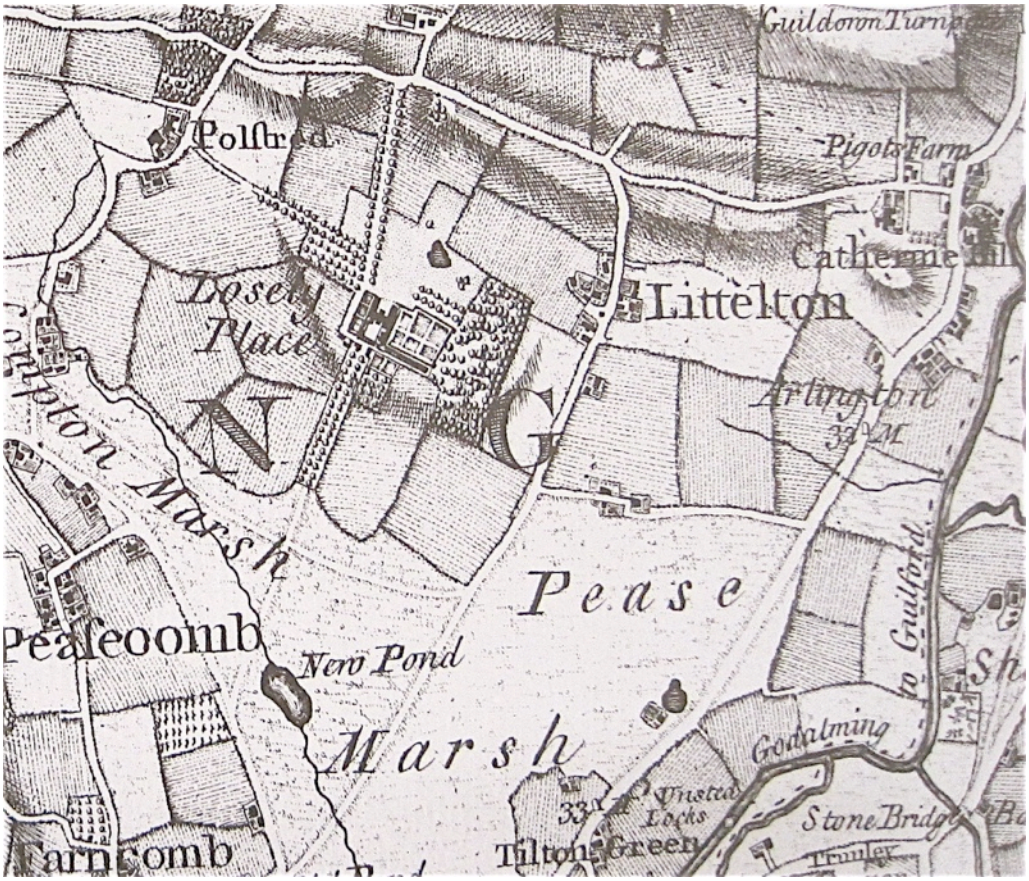
Although the tenants of the farms gained benefits from their right to pasture their animals on the common, there were pressures to have the land enclosed and apportioned to private owners, ostensibly in the name of agricultural efficiency:

> *" .... from the total neglect of this valuable common, the cattle that depasture thereon are almost starved; it is, however, so much coveted by the inhabitants of Godalming and Guildford, that it would, in an inclosed state, find a rental of from fifteen to thirty shillings per acre".*[18]

To large landowners, tenant farmers and agricultural commentators, common land generally was regarded as a wasted resource. Their opinions held sway and, during the eighteenth century, thousands of acres

[18] General View of Agriculture of Surrey, James & Marshall, 1744.

were enclosed for agriculture and divided up between the local landowners. It was they, of course, who had the influence and the wherewithal to have Acts of Parliament passed to facilitate enclosure.




*An extract from John Rocque's map of Surrey c.1760, showing Loseley, Littleton and part of the unenclosed Pease Marsh.*

Uneducated cottagers had little power to resist, although an earlier attempt to secure the marsh had been successfully stopped. In 1756 Sir More Molyneux and six of his tenant farmers had petitioned the House of Lords to have the Pease Marsh enclosed and the lands allotted "*according to your petitioners' respective interests in the said common or marsh land*". Sir More Molyneux was the largest landowner in the area and had a great deal to gain from the enclosure and apportionment of the common land.

It is significant that the only people besides Sir More Molyneux who signed the petition were his tenants, one of whom was the farmer of Orange Court, Oliver Callingham. Even if he and his fellow tenants did have any misgivings about the proposal, they probably felt that they had

little choice but to support it.[19] The petition indicates that they had a right to graze their stock on the common but, as well as not wishing to offend their landlord, they also stood to gain new land for their farms should enclosure take place.

It was a time when feelings were running high about enclosure because cottagers and small landowners relied on their longstanding rights to pasture animals on the common land. Consequently, there quickly followed a counter petition signed by over fifty people from Farncombe and other places surrounding the Pease Marsh objecting to the proposal.

It is surprising that, despite Sir More Molyneux being the lord of the manors of Polsted, Loseley and Godalming, enclosure did not occur at that time. Whether it was the strength of feeling that prevented it or some other event, we do not know but the common was not enclosed for another fifty years or so. It finally happened in the early nineteenth century, prompted by the need to grow as much food as possible during the blockades of the Napoleonic Wars.

## Changes in farming

A part of the quest for efficiency in agriculture was the engrossing of the smaller estate farms into a handful of larger enterprises. This was already happening by the time of the 1778 survey of Loseley for, although there were a number of separate farms listed in the survey, many of the tenants had more than one holding. At that time, Orange Court farm was nearly thirty-five acres and was farmed by Richard Charrott junior, but, typically, it was not his only commitment for he also farmed other areas of the estate.

Between 1778 and 1839 the number of tenanted farms on the Loseley estate fell considerably and the size of the surviving holdings grew accordingly. By the time of the tithe survey in 1839, the land managed by the current tenants, John and James Ellis covered an area of 459 acres. This, in just five decades, represented a thirteen fold increase on its previous size. The farm had also been re-named and Littleton Farm House lay at the heart of this vast acreage, the home of John and Rebecca Ellis and their family.

These changes were part of a national pattern that continued to gather momentum. During the 1700s, the agricultural economy of the south-east

[19] LM/848/2, SHC.

of England had moved rapidly away from subsistence farming and a local economy of small farms towards a regional, market-driven economy led by the demands of the growing urban areas, particularly London. Farmers became more commercial in their outlook and began to make a very comfortable living.

There was an emphasis on improved production and better varieties of both arable crops and livestock, a process that was actively encouraged by James More Molyneux and his successor.[20] The influence of London and its wider economy increased and grew even stronger; the demands of the city were being felt in Surrey and farmers sought to satisfy it. The innovations of the agricultural revolution enabled previously poor land to be improved, notably by the addition of lime, and the area of good arable land increased.

*Two of the new, high yielding crops: sanfoin and trefoil*

New high-yielding crops began to be grown: trefoil, lucerne and sanfoin appeared in grasslands and root vegetables, such as turnips, swedes and potatoes, were introduced. John Rocque's map of Surrey, published in 1768, distinguishes between arable and pasture. It shows that when he was making his map, most of the Loseley estate, apart from the park and some fields to the east of Littleton, was under the plough.

So, as we have seen, farms grew in size but became fewer in number throughout the Georgian period and far beyond this. By 1841 Littleton Farm had become one of four or five principle farmsteads of Loseley compared with two dozen or so holdings that had existed eighty years earlier. Small farmers were increasingly marginalised and many smallholders, who had relied on common grazing rights, lost their livelihood when the common lands were enclosed.

For many, the situation became intolerable and they gave up the struggle, selling their farms to one of the larger landowners. Many moved to new work in the burgeoning industrial cities, whilst some migrated to the new colonies to start afresh. Others, the older workers or the less adventurous, perhaps, joined the ranks of the landless labourers, an ever-growing pool of workers that vied for employment on the remaining farms. The

[20] The South East from AD1000, Peter Brandon & Brian Short. Longman 1990.

remaining farmers were, frequently, owners or tenants of much larger enterprises and, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, members of the Ellis family held a large part of the Loseley estate.

## The Ellis family

The Ellis family came to Orange Court Farm at the beginning of the nineteenth century, soon after the elder James More Molyneux inherited the estate. John Ellis was a local man who had been born around the year 1775 and was the son of John and Mary Ellis who farmed and lived at Artington Farm. This property, which stands at at the junction of The Ridges and the Old Portsmouth Road is now known as The Sheiling.

As the eldest son, it was almost inevitable that young John would follow in his father's footsteps and he doubtless worked around the farm throughout his childhood, for that was the upbringing of all farm children. By the turn of the new century, he was in his twenties and had acquired the knowledge and the financial backing to take on Orange Court Farm in 1804. Being the son of one of Loseley's long-established farmers would certainly not have hindered his bid for the tenancy.[21]

At that time John was still unmarried. Bachelors in Georgian England often had a difficult time; they could not marry until they had established themselves in a trade or profession and, ideally, they needed to have a home of their own. Many of them had to wait until comparatively late in life before they achieved this level of security and the disparity in age between themselves and their young wives (for it was crucial to have children) could often be quite marked.

John Ellis, at the age of 28 years, had therefore achieved that status comparatively early, for he had acquired a prestigious tenancy and a substantial farmhouse. He was now in a position to be able to marry and must have been regarded, with these prospects, as a very eligible bachelor. His bride was a local girl named Rebecca Nash, and the couple married on 18th October 1807 at their parish church of St Nicholas in Guildford.[22]

John and Rebecca Ellis were not the only young members of the Ellis menage to invest in a local farm. As the nineteenth century progressed, the expanding family, comprising of the children and grandchildren of John and Mary, came to be involved with the running of various farms on

[21] Land Tax returns, SHC.
[22] St Nicholas Guildford parish register, SHC.

the Loseley estate. In 1824, John's brother James, who was eight years his junior, became his joint tenant at Orange Court Farm.[23] James did not live there however, for he took up residence nearby at Brickyard Farm.

A third brother, Thomas, who had been born in around 1788 and was unmarried, came to live with John and Rebecca at Orange Court Farm. It must have been a busy household. By the end of 1826 the couple had four sons and five daughters, ranging from Cyrus, who was born in that year, to several who were in or approaching their teens and presumably already skilled in undertaking many of the tasks that were needed in and around the farm and its house.

*The Unitarian Chapel at Meadrow in 2014.*

What sort of people were they? We can gain an interesting insight into their philosophies when we reflect that the family were non-conformists. They were active members and trustees of the Meadrow Unitarian chapel, a house of worship that still stands and flourishes today on its site in Meadrow, on the approach to Godalming. Their links with the place are still tangible; if one visits the garden of the chapel the graves of several members of the Ellis family can be seen.

Their involvement with the movement suggests that they were radical thinkers, for Unitarians do not hold what many consider to be the basic

[23] Land Tax returns

tenets of the Christian faith. They do not, for instance, believe in the concept of the Trinity and they do not accept that Christ was a divine being, the son of God: he was an ordinary man. To many people, such views were shocking and there must have been those living in Littleton who did not approve of their faith.

The Unitarian church has a long tradition of liberal thinking and it has been unpopular due to its opposition to the established church. In the late eighteenth century it was particularly controversial for it remained in favour of the principles of the French Revolution, despite the atrocities that were committed in its name. Hostility towards Unitarianism changed as the nineteenth century wore on but, nonetheless, the adherence of the Ellis family to these unconventional beliefs mark them out as a group of individualistic and independently minded people.

Somewhat surprisingly, it did not seem to bother either of their landlords, despite the fact that both were stalwarts of the Church of England and each of them in turn was patron of the living of St Nicholas in Compton. Perhaps they were bemused rather than outraged by the beliefs of their tenants or perhaps they simply had other, more pressing priorities; as we have seen both were very concerned about the efficient farming of the estate and the ability of the Ellis family to deliver that was in no doubt.

## The planning of Orange Court farmstead

The idea of a having a coherent farmstead near to the house was conceived by James More Molyneux soon after he inherited the estate. He wrote in 1802 of his plans to build a new homestead and farmyard in much the same way that the estate had created Mellersh Farm in the late eighteenth century:

> *The numerous scattered buildings without any regular homestead, and the smallness of the inclosures operate much to the disadvantage of this otherwise desirable farm. The house in which the current tenant Charriot [sic] resides seems to be the most substantial and certainly is in the best repair of any of the buildings, and as it is conveniently situated for water and pasture, it appear to be the most proper situation for bringing some of the other buildings to, in preference to repairing them in their present situation.*
>
> *The plan I should therefore submit would be, a regular compact farm yard, to connect with Charriot's house, to be proceeded upon only at such times as any other distant barns and outbuildings might be*

*falling to decay by removing the worst first, and continuing progressively in this way (but not faster than convenient) till the new homestead be completed. Some of the arable pieces near the homestead should be laid down to pasture by the tenant as soon as they can be got into condition.*[24]

Like many landowners, James More Molyneux did his best to attract good quality tenants in order to extract the most from the land, a policy that continued long after his death in 1823. However, despite his plans, the farmstead was not built until the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is clear that James More Molyneux had continued to face financial challenges during his tenure and he did his best to reduce unnecessary outgoings. In 1820 he had an enormous wing at the side of the Loseley House removed. It was a dramatic event but the wing, which had contained a chapel, a gallery and an indoor riding school had fallen into disrepair and it had simply become a huge liability. He was sixty when this took place and far from regretting its loss his great, great grandson notes that he was very pleased that it had been carried out.[25] Perhaps he was all too aware by this time of his advancing years and did not wish to pass on even more management problems to his son, James.

*James More Molyneux II as a young man.*

James More Molyneux died in 1823 and his son, eighteen year old James, inherited the mansion and the substantial estate. He was to own the property for just over fifty years and would create many changes and improvements in the village and on his farms, including the creation of the dame school in 1843. This little building, which is now St Francis Church, stands just across the road from the farm. It was a far-sighted act, for educational opportunities were rare for the children of agricultural labourers at that time.

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[24] LM/826/138, SHC

[25] James More Molyneux recorded this in his book 'The Loseley Challenge'

*The nineteenth century farm.*
*An extract from the tithe map of St Nicholas parish, 1839.*

*Littleton Farm House (Orange Court Farm) by an unknown artist, at some time in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. It must have been a good drying day, judging by the line of washing.*

It was during his ownership and the Ellis family's long tenancy that the Orange Court farmstead was eventually created, occurring in the thirty years between the completion of the 1839 tithe survey and the publication of the 1871 Ordnance Survey map.

James Ellis died in 1848 and perhaps his brother John felt unable to run the enterprise alone for his youngest son, Cyrus, now took up the reins. After marrying in 1852 he went to farm in nearby Hambledon and was succeeded by his elder brother, James, who was then in his mid forties. The 1861 census shows us that James Ellis was living at Orange Court Farm at that time, having moved from Brickyards Farm. It was a small household: James was still a bachelor and his younger sister, Rosa, who was also unmarried, was living with him as his housekeeper.

They were supported at the farmhouse by eighteen year old Jane Heath who acted as a general servant. Outdoors, James employed twenty-three people on the farm, which included six boys. Some of these lads may have been as young as ten; working life in Victorian times started at a very early age. This was a large number of employees that reflected the size of the Ellis family enterprise. James sold his farming business in 1866 and retired to Farncombe, but he did not enjoy a long period of leisure for he died in the following year at St Catherine's.

## The sale of 1866

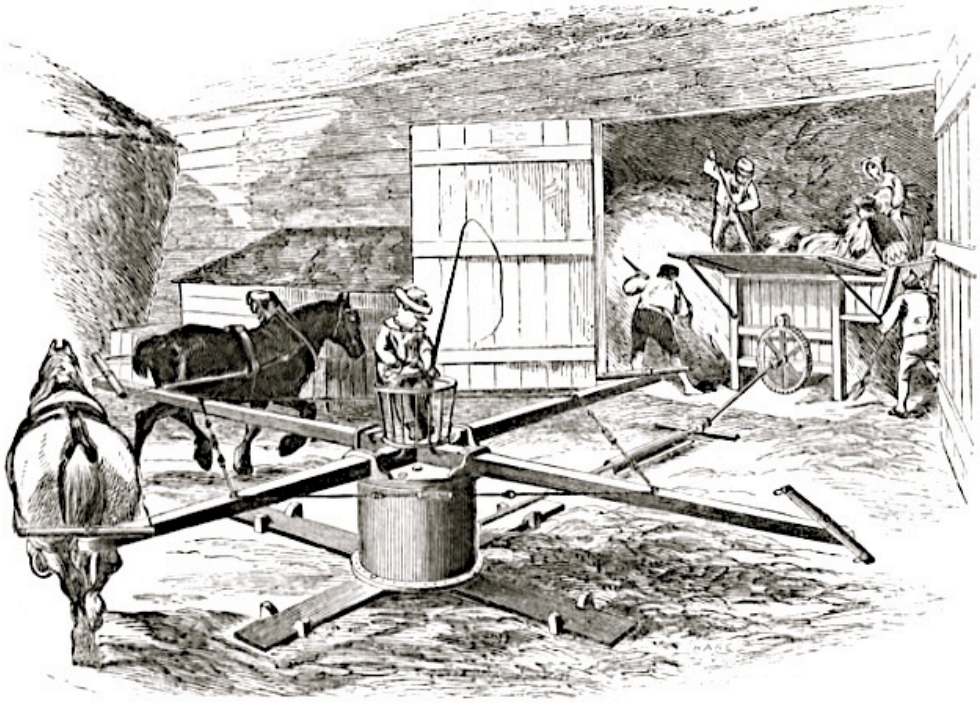
The Ellis family had many connections in the area for the farm sale of September 1866 was conducted by James's brother John who worked as an auctioneer specialising in farming sales.[26] The advertisement which appeared in the Surrey Advertiser listed a enormous quantity of goods and a look through it gives us a fascinating insight into the way in which he, his staff and his sister lived and worked at the property.

There were wagons and carts of all sizes and a *'neat gig with shifting seat*' which would have conveyed Mr Ellis and his sister round and about. The many large, named items of farm machinery included the *'Garrett's Four Horse Threshing Machine, The Woodbourne Haying Machine and the Driffield Corn and Turnip Drill'*. There were clearly many modern, mechanised processes in place, undertaken by expensive equipment such as the *'Howard's Iron Plough'* but there were also numerous small farm implements available that had been used for traditional methods worked by hand. Despite the modern machinery, the motive power of the farm

[26] Surrey Advertiser, 15 September 1866.

was still provided by men and horses. His working animals included twelve cart horses, plus a pony and a cob that were both said to be easy to ride.

James favoured shorthorn cattle, which had been recently bred for both eating and reproduction. This dual-purpose beast first appeared in the north east of England in the late eighteenth century, so the concept was then relatively new in the world of farming. At the time of the auction bidders could vie for shorthorn steers, cows and heifers and also a shorthorn Alderney heifer that was then in calf.



Barrett and Co.'s Four-horse power Threshing Machine.

*A four horse powered threshing machine of 1851.*

Farm predators might be kept at bay by means of the *'three couples of handsome beagles'* and James also owned a quantity of poultry and *'thirteen fat pigs'*. At the time of the sale, many of the 250 Down weather sheep were ready for the butcher. One cannot imagine that James and Rosa went hungry or thirsty after all their hard work, especially when one notes that a quantity of dairy and brewing utensils were also for sale.

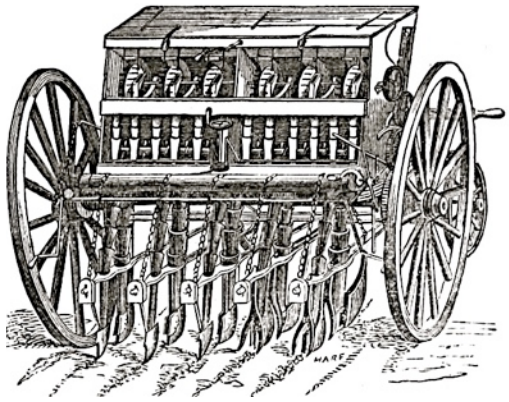
At that time, it was still normal practice to brew one's own beer, an activity that householders throughout the land had undertaken for many centuries. Nowadays, we take our supply of safe drinking water for granted but our ancestors of all ages consumed a very weak 'small beer'

*A shorthorn Alderney heifer and her calf.*

in its absence. Stronger beers, country wines and cider were also made and drunk with pleasure; casks and *'harvest bottles'* were named amongst the tally at the auction. These would have kept the workers and volunteers going and helped them to celebrate afterwards at the Harvest Home.

The Alderney heifer was a more personal asset for she supplied milk for the family use. These animals were smaller than other cows from the Channel Islands but they are very productive and their rich milk is said to be very good for making butter. It takes much time and effort to churn butter into milk but the results must have been delicious. Clearly, with the opportunity as well to grow fresh fruit and vegetables, the household enjoyed a very good diet.

In the late 1860s, Alfred Ellis took over the tenancy of the farm, a property that he knew very well for he had been born in 1828 and, during his childhood, his father and uncle had worked the land together. He was the cousin of John and the late James and their many siblings and he must have been to the farm many times. As we shall see, he and his family were to remain at the farm for around twenty-five years.



*A turnip drill of 1851*

## The new farmhouse

Alfred Ellis was the last tenant farmer to live in the old house, which was then known as Littleton Farm. When he and his wife Frances arrived in about 1866 they had a large household to accommodate. In 1871 they were both aged forty-three and they had six sons and a daughter. They were sufficiently well off to employ a live-in housekeeper and a young

general servant. Alfred employed nineteen people, both adults and boys, to work on the farm.

For most of their time there, the family continued to inhabit the old house but it would soon lose its status as the principal building on this holding. James More Molyneux had died in 1874 and it is likely that it was William More Molyneux, his son and heir, who instigated the erection of the new farmhouse. Made of bargate stone with brick dressings, and much larger than the old house, it was intended to improve the farm in order to attract and keep the best of tenants. At the same time, the old house was divided to become two farm labourers' cottages.

*Alfred Ellis of Littleton.*

Previously, there had been a farmyard and some buildings lying to the north west of the house on the site of the new farmhouse. They are marked on the 1735 map of the farm and were unchanged on the 1839 tithe map but had they been removed by 1871. The barn that still stands on the farmyard site is much older than that of the mid nineteenth century, indicating that it was moved from elsewhere. It probably came from another part of the Loseley estate.

Alfred and Frances Ellis were still the tenants of the farm while these changes were taking place and they must have viewed the proceedings with interest. By the 1880s they were probably living in their new home and enjoying its comfortable new facilities. At the start of the decade the household had shrunk a little for some of the children had left but their daughter Eliza was still at home as were four of her brothers, including Frederick, who was now in his twenties and employed as the farm manager.[27]

Alfred was very busy; as well the running of the farm he had become a trustee at the Meadrow Unitarian Chapel in 1877. This role was one that

[27] 1881 Census return

had been filled by many men and women in his family in the last few decades. It is worth reflecting that such a responsibility was unusual for females at the time. Few women of ordinary birth had official power in Victorian times and the shared running of the chapel, which involved decisions on its policies and financial management was not the role of women in, for example, the established church. In many ways, the Unitarians were well ahead of the times [28]

*Frances Ellis*

William More Molyneux did not take up the reins at an easy time, for the beginning of his custodianship of Loseley marked the start of a disastrous period for agriculture. The people who worked on the land and those who employed them faced continual worry and the prospect of ruin. From around 1873, for twenty or so years, matters were so bad that farming was on the brink of collapse. This dire situation was due to overseas competition, a lack of capital and a series of climatic disasters.

To say that the weather was unmerciful is quite an understatement and those in Littleton and elsewhere must surely have wondered if they were receiving a dreadful punishment from on high. In 1875 and 1876 cold springs and wet summers spoilt the wheat crops. Poor harvests no longer meant higher prices for farmers because significant amounts of cheap food were being imported. The weather continued to deteriorate and in 1879 it was sleeting in the summer; it was so unseasonably cold that the cattle suffered from pleuro-pneumonia and the sheep contracted liver rot.

In order to compete, farmers were forced to produce goods more cheaply. There was great pressure on employers to shed labour and to increase the use of machinery. This in turn meant lower or stagnating wages and greater insecurity for the farm worker. Many left the land and, by the

[28] Ref: 5138/3, SHC.

beginning of the twentieth century, the number of people employed in agriculture had plummeted.

There were good reasons for farmers and their staff to leave the industry. Their working life was exhausting, they faced increasingly uncertain conditions of employment and were at the mercy of the weather and market forces. A poor harvest and a hard winter were dreaded. Their work was hard and very physical and for many, accident or illness could lose them their livelihood.

*William Agate Ellis, who grew up at the farm but emigrated to New Zealand with his brothers.*

This situation came at a bad time for the sons of Alfred and Frances Ellis. Growing up at Littleton Farm House they would have acquired many practical farming skills, as well as an awareness of managing such a large enterprise. However, the prevailing conditions must have made them think twice about staying on these shores, even if the possibility of living in a fine new farmhouse had arisen. For five young men of that generation, the solution lay much further afield.

Alfred and Frances Ellis did not occupy the new farmhouse for very long, for Alfred died in late 1891. Frances took the brave step of emigrating to New Zealand where five of her sons now lived, including William Agate Ellis.[29] The brothers had established themselves as sheep farmers on the North Island and it must have been a good life there for Francis lived until 1919 when she was in her early nineties.

[29] Photographs and biographical information about Alfred, Frances and William Ellis, Godalming Museum donated by Judith Schönfelder of Austria.

## The early twentieth century

The next tenant of Orange Court Farm was William Fleming. A scotsman from Lanarkshire, he was widowed and in his mid sixties by 1901. The old farmhouse had been made into two dwellings which were now known as Orange Court Cottages and both had become the home of agricultural workers. One of the houses was occupied by Thomas and Mary Wells with their four children, as well as Mary's widowed father and brother, David and William Lovelock.

The Wells family occupied the slightly larger of the two cottages which had an allocation of five rooms but, with four adults and five children in the household, it must have seemed extremely cosy at times. The three adult men in the house all had outdoor work in the area; David was a labourer and William had a good position as a carter at Brickyard Farm. Thomas Wells had a similarly good position at Littleton farm where he, too, was a carter and was responsible for looking after Mr Fleming's horses, the beasts that were the still the motive power for the business.

In 1901, the other cottage was the home of Stephen and Susan Loveland with their two teenage sons, one of whom worked as a labourer and the other as a gardener. Stephen was also a general farm labourer, whose skills were less specialised than those of Thomas Wells. Consequently, his pay would have been lower than that of his neighbour and he and his family, though they worked long hours, would have lived frugally.

The Lovelands had gone by 1911 and this four roomed cottage had become the home of a Devonshire man, Elias Leman and his wife Elizabeth. They had no children of their own after twenty-five years of marriage but they had an adopted son, Percy Creswick. Elias was a carter and, like Thomas Wells, he would have been up very early in the morning to prepare the horses and farm carts for their day's labours.

Along with the milkers, the carters were the first to arrive for work at four or five o'clock in the morning to feed the horses and prepare them for work before the day labourers arrived a few hours later. Elias might occasionally be on the road much earlier, walking by the side of his wagon, whip in hand, wearing a smock with breeches tied at the knees. A boy, or under-carter, would be there to help fix the drag on hills and with loading.

To our eyes, the extra shilling or two that he received at the end of the week hardly seems adequate compensation for the added responsibility and the extra hours in an already long day. But every additional penny

counted and he probably considered himself fortunate that he was able to earn a little above the basic labouring wage. Carters also had status amongst the farm labouring community and they exhibited a pride in their work and their teams. It could easily have been Elias that Gertrude Jekyll described in her book Old West Surrey:

> *In the older days the country towns on market days were gay with the brightly-painted farm-waggons with their well-groomed teams. There was an amicable rivalry among the carters as to the dressing of their horses, for the brightly-polished brass ornaments and the gay rosettes of worsted ribbon were the carter's own property, and when not on the horses, were often arranged as a trophy over the cottage fireplace. The love of decorating his horses is still a matter of pleasant pride to the good carter, and when I see a well-looking team, made unusually smart for the road or town, I know that the carter is a good fellow, who takes a right pride in his work and cattle.*

*The southern side of house in 1912.*

By 1911, William Wells, the eldest son of Thomas and Mary, was also working with the horses; he must surely have learned a great deal from his father, uncle and next door neighbour. Their specialised jobs must have seemed comfortably secure but, within a few decades, their work and skills would not be required as tractors were to gradually replace horses on the farm.

The same census shows that the household of Thomas and Mary had now shrunk. Mary's father and brother were no longer living with them and the two adults now shared their home with four of their children. It would still be cosy by today's standards, but it must have been far less cramped for them all.[30] Mary's eldest daughter, Louisa, was at home and was hopefully able to help a great deal with the multitude of household tasks.

The youngest daughter, eleven year old Alice, attended the new school that had been erected in the village by the local authority just a few years before. It replaced the little dame school created by James More Molyneux in 1843, which had then been converted by his son William into St Francis Church. Many from the farmhouse would have attended the old school and one can imagine them simply crossing the road to start their studies. They were much luckier than many country children who had to walk for miles in all weathers to go to school.

William Fleming, at the age of seventy-five was still the tenant of Orange Court Farm in 1911. We do not know if he was living there during the years of the Great War but by early 1920 it was home to Albert Raggett and his family. Also in occupation at that time was William Wells.[31] The name may just be a coincidence, but it is possible that he was William the farm's carter, the son of Thomas and Mary, who would by now be aged thirty and lodging in a good home due to the importance of his job.

## The Second World War in Littleton

Unfortunately, it is difficult to positively identify the inhabitants of the two cottages at certain periods in the early twentieth century. However, James and Margaret Lyon had arrived at the farmhouse as tenants of Orange Court Farm by 1920 and they were to play a central part in the life of the village.

By the late 1930s, one section of the two cottages was occupied by William and Ada Ware, their daughter Eileen and her young brother Mick.[32] The family are remembered by Tom Parsons, who was born in 1931 and spent his childhood at Littleton and St Catherine's.

Tom, who still works as a gardener at Hollowfield in Littleton, recollects that two families lived at the dwelling. Bill and Ada Ware occupied the west end of the property and Ada can be seen in a photograph of 1939

[30] 1911 Census return
[31] Electoral Register, Spring 1920
[32] Their home was listed as 8 Littleton in 1936.

standing outside their section of the cottage beside a car. Was this their own vehicle? If so, they would have been getting along quite well in life for, despite the growing popularity of cars, it was certainly not an era of cheap motoring.

Many people still rode through the village on horseback at that time and the shire horses were also a familiar and much loved sight. Tom Parsons remembers seeing these animals 'put to bed' at the end of the day. The car, of course, could have been the property of a visitor or their neighbour, Geoffrey Stone, who lived with his family in the other section of the cottage. This too was a small household, shared by his wife Phyllis and their son and daughter.

Eileen Ware and the other local children had a very rural upbringing, roaming around outdoors with each other and sometimes 'disappearing' on occasions when they should have been elsewhere. The farm provided a multitude of distractions; Tom remembers being caned for truanting from school to watch the threshing in the fields at harvest time and he also recalls whacking rats with his friend, Bill Bramley, when both of them should have been at school.

Some of their escapades took place right outside Littleton Farm House. In winter the pond at the front of the Ware's cottage often froze over and the youngsters took great delight in skating on it. Sometimes, of course, they fell into the water, which was full of noisome substances. The results of this must have been rather less than delightful for their fellow skaters and their long suffering mothers.

During World War II quite a large number of evacuee children came to live with various families at Littleton, including Tom's friend Bill Bramley. Some were accommodated at what is now Pilgrim's Wood nursing home, which continued as a children's home for many years after the war. When the village school proved to be too small to manage its augmented numbers, some of the older children, including Tom himself, took lessons in the former school building at St Francis Church.

One would have expected the children to have been relatively safe in Littleton and so they were, perhaps, until a Messerschmidt flew overhead whilst some of the youngest were out walking with their teacher one day. In an appalling act of cowardice the aircraft opened fire, attempting to machine gun the children, their female teacher and a farm worker named Billy Searle who was ploughing nearby in the fields.

Billy threw himself under his tractor and the school party leaped into a deep ditch. Tom Parsons and his friend John witnessed the scene and

were greatly relieved that none of the human targets was hit. The Messerschmidt and its crew were not so lucky however, for a Spitfire aircraft was following them and it brought the German plane down and destroyed it. It must have been difficult to have found regret at this outcome.

*A view of 1939. The lady beside the car is believed to be Ada Ware and the little boy looking over the wall may be her son, Mick.*

The Lyon family continued to be the tenants at Orange Court Farm during the war and the National Farm Survey of the early 1940s paints a picture of a farm in transition.[33] The old ways were represented by the five horses that still worked on the farm but there were also two Fordson tractors. The survey also records that a considerable workforce of ten full-time workers was employed to deal with the 245 acres of the farm. Some of these workers were German prisoners of war and one of whom, Alfie Hempel, chose to remain in England after the war to work on the Loseley estate.

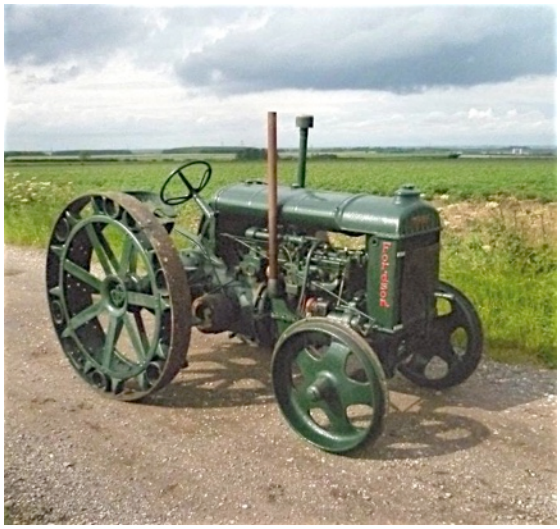
There was constant pressure applied by the local War Agricultural Executive Committee for farmers to increase their yield and over 70 acres

[33] National Farm Survey, MAF 73/40/31 and MAF 32/1044/63, The National Archives.

of grassland were ploughed in 1940 and 1941. Although Orange Court Farm achieved the highest possible rating from the committee, it must have been a constant worry for Mr Lyon who was then growing old. The pressure to produce food for the war effort, and the changes in agriculture after the victory, were to hasten the demise of the old horse-driven world. The number of farm workers, too, would reduce rapidly after the war because of continued mechanisation. This new world was soon to be taken on by his son.

## Post war days and the parting from Loseley

George Lyons succeeded his father as the tenant and he lived at the farmhouse with his wife Gertrude and two daughters. He already had his own enterprise, for he kept a herd of shorthorn cattle. We recall the auction of 1866 and the shorthorn steers, heifers and cows that James Ellis had owned; perhaps these beasts had been a familiar sight on the farm ever since. George Lyons also opened up a market garden in the fields and Albert Parsons, who was Tom's father, worked for George at this enterprise.



*A Fordson Standard tractor of 1940.*

The business seemed to be thriving and the villagers of Littleton were shocked, therefore, when George's body was found beside his van at Stakescorner. Foul play was not suspected and it was recorded as a shooting accident; he was believed to have been jumping over a ditch to aim at rooks in a field. Regardless of the full story, there was much sadness in the locality, for he had been a popular figure.

The tragic death of George Lyon was to herald the start of many changes for the Loseley Estate. In the post war period the estate was in a state of dilapidation and, in order to survive, many of its farms and cottages would be sold off piece by piece so that Loseley House and its grounds could survive and thrive. James More Molyneux, who took on the running of the estate after World War Two, recorded the struggles of his

mother, Gwendoline More Molyneux and his father Brigadier Longbourne, to keep the mansion and its estate afloat.

Life at Loseley House was austere. The building was very cold and draughty, there was no electricity or heating and it was necessary to boil a kettle of water and take it upstairs to have a bath. The fabric of the mansion was in a precarious condition and the grounds needed a huge amount of attention. Post war life here, as in the village, was an immense challenge.

*These fine working horses with their gleaming brass decorations were seen in action at Loseley in the early 2000s but it could easily have been a century or more ago.*

The estate buildings and most of the cottages were badly in need of restoration. Roofs on barns and sheds were leaking and structures were sagging. The cottages of most of the estate employees were damp and in poor repair. With a few exceptions, they were lacking in electricity, a bathroom and an indoor lavatory. It must have been a continual struggle for the tenants to keep warm and clean but there was no money for improvements.

Both the Stone family and the Ware family were still living in the cottages at that time and the two dwellings were by then known as

numbers 10 and 11 Orange Court Cottages.[34] We do not know if their accommodation was in a similarly bad state of condition but it is unlikely that it had received any special treatment. Certainly, photographs taken of some of the neighbouring estate cottages in the late 1950s show that the buildings were in a precarious state.[35]

Most of the tenants were living rent free or being asked for very little, due to their poor housing conditions, but this meant that the properties were making a loss and were a drain on the estate. A grant scheme was introduced nationally, for the problem was widespread, and the estate cottages had many basic improvements made. But even with indoor sanitation and damp prevention measures, the cottages were still cold and damp and smelling of mould and James More Molyneux was struggling to find farm staff. Prospective tenants, quite understandably, did not wish to live there. It is humbling to remember that Mary Wells, who lived at the property half a century before with her three menfolk and her clutch of children, had maintained five tiny rooms and managed her household in similar conditions.

## The sale of the cottages

By the early 1950s the house was still divided and home to two separate households. Eric and Rosetta Ealham occupied the part of the building that had been home to the Stone family, who had moved to The Ridges in Artington. Bill and Ada Ware were still living in the other section and their household had grown.

Eileen married a local man, Jim Napper, in 1950 and the young couple were lodging in the house, as was another man, Billy Searle.[36] The Wares and the Nappers were still at Orange Court Cottages in the mid 1950s but there were changes ahead. In his book *The Loseley Challenge*, James More Molyneux records that some time after he took over the running of the estate, an estate agent offered him £1,900 apiece for four pairs of old cottages, including those at Orange Court Farm.[37] He must have been immensely relieved to accept, since it gave him the revenue to build several warm, well appointed cedar bungalows to house his staff and it also enabled him to begin a huge project of estate restoration.

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[34] 1946 Electoral Register
[35] Photographs by Derrick Yellan, County Planning Dept. Guildford RD, Artington. SCH.
[36] Information from Frank Napper junior.
[37] The Loseley Challenge by James More Molyneux, Hodder and Stoughton, 1995..

Thus it was that in about the late 1950s, the house finally parted company with the More Molyneux family. It had been a long attachment for the house had been a part of the estate for nearly two hundred years and its tenants at that time were the last who made their living from the land; future owners and occupiers would come from many different walks of life.

*Pillarbox Cottage in 1956.*

It was a happy solution for all, including the astute estate agent. The houses had immense character and great potential and their new owners must have been delighted with their wonderful setting. James More Molyneux was also pleased and relieved. He notes that *'the appearance of the village was transformed, the new owners of the old cottages making them lovely outside as well as inside and creating beautiful gardens. Everyone was better off!'*

By October 1961 the cottage was home to John and Penelope Staniforth and their adult children John and Patricia. They had not always lived in the area; their daughter Patricia had been born in December 1940 when the family lived in Sheffield.[38] The village of Littleton with its verdant landscape and the woodlands of south west Surrey must have seemed very different to the environment of the industrial north.

John Staniforth was a director of several enterprises, including John Brown & Co, which was a construction company. He seems to have prospered and been well respected in his professional field for, in January 1969 he received a CBE. We cannot be sure whether it was the estate agent or Mr and Mrs Staniforth who renovated the farmhouse, perhaps it was a combination of both, but there must have been a great deal of work to do. The cottages, now reunited as one dwelling was renamed Willowmede and given a Grade II listing in June of that year.

[38] The Times 30 Jan 1941

## Modern times

John and Penelope Staniforth left the house in the late 1960s and by 1970 it had become the home of Clifford Goslett Wharton, a stockbroker, and his wife Doreen.[39] Clifford Wharton was nearly sixty years old at the time of their arrival. He and his wife, who had previously lived at Cobham, had three adult daughters, Jane, Sylvia and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth, the youngest, shared the household at Littleton with her parents and the family were well liked in the community. In particular, they became much involved with the life of Compton church. The family remained at the house throughout the decade and their home was also shared at this time by Felicity Smith who was Doreen's sister.

The Whartons subsequently moved to Shalford[40] and by the early 1980s a famous face could be seen at the property, which at this time was a home that must have been full of wonderful music. The renowned operatic singer Thomas Allen, together with his wife Margaret and their son Stephen lived there for a few years.

Thomas Allen was born in September 1944 at Seaham Harbour in County Durham and had strong family roots with the area; some of his relatives had worked as miners and the family lived modestly. At Ryhope Grammar School his fine baritone voice was spotted by a teacher, who, supported by his family, coached Thomas at lunchtimes and gave him every encouragement. He became head boy at the school and then attended The Royal College of Music from 1964. He married Margaret, whom he had known for years, in 1968.

By the time the family came to Littleton, Thomas Allen was enjoying enormous professional success. He was appearing in numerous operatic productions at this time and the newspaper critics gave him glowing reports. Sometimes, the villagers of Littleton did not have to travel far to enjoy his talents; Roger and Rosemary Musson, who live at Hollowfield, remember moving to the village in December 1981 and attending the Christmas service at St Francis Church, where the sound of his voice enthralled them.

Thomas Allen's work took him touring a great deal and his career continued to thrive but sadly, this nomadic lifestyle eventually put a great strain on his personal life. He and his wife separated and in due course

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[39] www.thegazette.co.uk

[40] The family maintained their links with Compton Church and Clifford Wharton died at Eastbury Manor nursing home in April 2002. The Times 24 April 2002.

they left the farmhouse.[41] Thomas later re-married and he received a knighthood in 1999.

The next owner, a great patron of music, surely knew the Allen family well. Ian Christians, a graduate of Cambridge University had tried several creative enterprises by the time that he and his family arrived at Littleton and, as well as this, he had occupied senior executive positions in business, a mix of responsibilities that he enjoyed. Perhaps one of his most unusual challenges was to run a smelting shop at the age of twenty-three!

*Sir Thomas Allen, who lived at the house with his family in the 1980s.*
*Portrait by June Mendoza.*

For a period in the 1980s he owned a rather unusual and rarified shop in Chapel Street, Guildford, called 'Orpheus and Bacchus' which supplied the discerning customer with fine wine and CDs of classical music. He later created the Orpheus and Bacchus music festival at Le Feure near St Emilion, a marvellous setting that had previously been a vineyard.[42] One can imagine that visitors to Willowmede were treated to good music and enjoyed an excellent glass or two whilst the Christians were living there.

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[42] orpheusandbacchus.com

*Willowmede in August 1967.*
*Top: The east side with its new entrance.*
*Below: The new, 'doorless' south side .*

*Photographer: Derrick Yellan*

They did not stay for very long, however, and neither did their successors, Brian and Jennifer Finlay. Perhaps the farmhouse at Littleton proved to be too small for Jennifer; some years later she and her next husband, Nigel Whalley, purchased the magnificent mansion of Albury Park. They enjoyed gracious living on site and let out its separate apartments but the project became deeply in debt and was featured on "Country House Rescue', a Channel Four programme, in December 2008.

Michael and Christine Thurner and their family moved to Willowmede at the end of the last century. They were already very familiar with the area, having lived at both Compton and Godalming before they came to the village. Despite the renovations undertaken during the previous thirty years or so, it would appear that there remained quite a few challenges facing the new arrivals; electrical work had recently been carried out but the timbers were in poor condition and needed a great deal of attention. There was much decorative work needed as well, both inside and out, but the listing restrictions were very stringent and the options open to these new owners were very limited.

Rescue work (within strictly permitted parameters) began, which included the application of limewash to the exterior. Inside, every panel between the beams had to be re-plastered using conservation methods. No doubt the house was looking rather lovely by the time their daughter Susan celebrated her wedding reception at the house. A marquee was erected in the garden and Roger Musson remembers attending and very much enjoying the event.

On 1st July 2005 the farmhouse was bought by Dr Jim Phillips and his wife Sarah for the sum of £950,000.[43] The family had moved to Littleton from France, where Dr Phillips had been running a pharmaceutical business. He sold the concern in order to move back to England but had not completely left his old life behind, for he still retained a senior position as a director of his former company and worked from home in this capacity.

Sarah Phillips also had a busy working life as a senior tutor at Godalming College, teaching English, Art History and Philosophy. The household was completed by their four children and a dog and with six people and a canine friend in residence it is perhaps not surprising that the family created various changes inside the house and out in the grounds to increase and improve their living space.

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[43] landregistry.gov.uk

Jacqui Stanford, who lives across the road at The Little Cottage, remembers that when they first arrived the kitchen was sited in the room that now lays to the right of the front entrance. Beyond it, the small area that is now a lavatory was used as a pantry. Jim and Sarah Phillips moved the kitchen to the lean-to at the western end of the house, where it is still situated, next to the original kitchen that served the Bromfeild family four hundred years ago.

One of the most useful additions occurred in the attic where a new bedroom, bathroom and sitting room were created, making this area into a very cosy and private enclave. It must have been great fun for one (or more) of the young people to escape upstairs to the new den. The Phillips family also installed new windows throughout the house which probably made it a good deal warmer.

Outside, there were various changes made to the garden and the grounds. The tennis court was renovated and the garden bothy was demolished. A barn was built and a low front wall was constructed to the front of the house. Behind this, the attractive knot garden was created. To the south of the house, a hedge of mixed native species was planted to screen the view of Orange Court Farmyard, which was then in a state of dereliction. All this was accomplished in a relatively short space of time.

The Phillips family were succeeded by the current owners, Charles and Fiona Clayton, who moved to the property with their children, Alex and Charlie in July 2010. It was, perhaps, a risky thing to do at that time for the Loseley Estate had recently gained planning permission to demolish and develop the site. For many potential purchasers, therefore, Littleton Farm House might have been viewed as an unattractive purchase.

The Claytons were not at all deterred, however, for they realised a lifetime’s ambition to live in an old historic house when their offer was accepted. In their first year at the house they were able to watch as the farmyard was dismantled, demolished and turned into rubble. From chaos came order, however, for the pond was reinstated and the best of the farm buildings were turned into attractive houses and an office.

The overgrown and choked hedgerows on Littleton Lane were pulled up and replanted and Littleton Farm House was suddenly visible from the road again having been hidden from the scene for many years.

The Claytons must have been delighted by their new view. They too are making their own mark on the property; they have replaced the old barn cum garage and they have been improving and protecting the house's external structure by means of weatherproofing. As this history is

completed there is a small extension being built at the back and a proper farmhouse kitchen is in the process of being installed.

Fiona says that their "*love of history has prompted us to have the house's history recorded for future generations and our ambition is to preserve and love the house, making it fit for the next 100 years.*"

Let us hope that the family are able to enjoy their home for a long time to come and that Littleton Farm House continues to be an attractive feature of the the village for many future generations to follow.

# Appendix: Known owners and occupiers

| Date | Owners | Occupiers |
|---|---|---|
| 14th C. | John Orenge | |
| 1400 | Robert Busbridge | |
| 1464 | Thomas & Matilda | |
| 1481 | Matilda Costyn | |
| 1481 | Henry Costyn | |
| 1508 | John Costyn | |
| 1576 | John Costyn | |
| 1596 | William Costyn | |
| 1600 | Richard Bromfeild I | |
| 1610 | Richard Bromfeild II | Richard & Joanne Bromfeild |
| c. 1621 | " " | Richard & Anne Bromfeild |
| 1661 | John Bromfeild | Himself |
| 1674 | Trustees of John Bromfeild | |
| 1675 | William and Anne Bromfeild | |
| 1675 | George Benbrick | |
| 1683 | Jane Benbrick | |
| c. 1700 | Charity Toft | |
| 1750 | George, Mary & Charity Toft | |
| 1750 | Sir More Molyneux | |
| 1756 | " " | Oliver Callingham |
| 1760 | Col Thomas More Molyneux | |
| 1776 | Jane More Molyneux | |
| 1778 | " " | Richard Charrott |
| 1802 | James More Molyneux | |
| 1804 | " " | John Ellis |
| 1807 | " " | John & Rebecca Ellis |
| 1822 | " " | John and Rebecca Ellis |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1824 | James More Molyneux II | John & Rebecca Ellis<br>(tenancy with James Ellis) |
| 1826 | " " | John & Rebecca Ellis<br>(tenancy with James Ellis).<br>Thomas Ellis |
| 1848 | " " | John & Rebecca Ellis |
| 1852 | " " | James Ellis II |
| 1861 | " " | James Ellis II, Rosa Ellis<br>Jane Heath |
| 1866 | " " | Alfred & Frances Ellis |
| 1891 | William More Molyneux | William Fleming (farm tenant) |
| 1901 | " " | William Fleming (farm tenant)<br>Thomas & Mary Wells<br>Steven & Susan Loveland |
| 1911 | Gwendoline More Molyneux | Elias & Elizabeth Leman<br>Percy Creswick |
| 1939 | Gwendoline More Molyneux | Bill, Ada & Eileen Ware<br>Geoffrey & Phyllis Stone |
| 1951 | James More Molyneux | Eric & Rosetta Ealhan<br>Bill & Ada Ware<br>Eileen & Frank Napper<br>Thomas Searle |
| 1955 | " " | Bill & Ada Ware<br>Eileen & Frank Napper |
| 1962 | John and Penelope Staniforth | Themselves |
| 1970 | Clifford & Doreen Wharton | Themselves & Felicity Smith |
| 1981 | Thomas and Margaret Allen | Themselves & Felicity Smith |
| late 1980s | Ian Christians | Himself |
| 1990 | Brian and Jennifer Finlay | Themselves |
| late 1990s | Mike & Christine Thurner | Themselves |
| 2005 | Jim & Sarah Phillips | Themselves |
| 2010 | Charles and Fiona Clayton | Themselves |