



# **Pickwick Manor, Pickwick Road, Pickwick, Wiltshire, SN13 0HU**

**Documentary Research by Louise Purdy**

**Completed November 2022**



**A photograph of the south elevation of Pickwick Manor found in an article by Sir Harold Brakspear on the town of Corsham in the Wiltshire Archaeology and Natural History magazine in 1927.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear FSA p.511-39 (Plate VIII.2)

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## **1. Introduction**

Pickwick Manor at Pickwick, originally known as the 'Manor House' and earlier as 'Pickwick Farm' is found in the historic village of Pickwick in Wiltshire. It sits near to the junction of the A4 between Chippenham and Bath and Pickwick Road, which leads into the town of Corsham. It is said that the building has 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century origins but was mainly rebuilt in c.1664 with additions in 1711. Sir Harold Brakspear, the famous church architect, as owner was responsible for alterations in 1920. Despite its name, the building has never been a manor house.

Pickwick Manor sits with an ancient holding of the manor of Corsham and is one of a number of houses which would have existed on the site. Fragments of one earlier house or more still remain.

Pickwick Manor is one of several listed buildings in the village which fall within the Pickwick Conservation area. Pickwick Manor has been described as being 'by far the most significant building within the Conservation Area'. Currently, an aerial view of its site can be seen in the Pickwick Conservation Area Appraisal draft.<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with instruction by John Maloney, a documentary history of Pickwick Manor and its estate has been produced in this report.

Documentary research into the history of Pickwick Manor has been carried out at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre and online. The Wiltshire Buildings Record holds several files on the house and outbuildings associated with it. Considerable effort has been made to provide a full documentary history of the property, but a physical examination of the building and access to any remaining house deeds would throw further light on the development phases of the building over time and its occupation.

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## **2. Historic England listing**

As a building of great historic worth within the village of Pickwick, Pickwick Manor has a Grade II\* listing.

### Pickwick Manor

On 20 December 1960, Pickwick Manor in Pickwick was given its grade II\* listing.<sup>3</sup>

Details of listing:

*CORSHAM PICKWICK ST 86 70 (south side) 4/314 Pickwick Manor 20.12.60 GV II\**

*House, C14 to C15 origins, mostly rebuilt c1664 for W. Wastfield Sr with additions 1711 for W. Wastfield Jr, restored and altered 1920 by Sir H. Brakspear for himself. Rubble stone with stone tiled roofs and C19 plain tiles to front roof slope, moulded copings to end gables of main range, west end and two rear wall stacks. Two and a half storeys. Main front c1664, has 4 coped gables, 2-light attic windows with hoodmoulds, 7 first floor mullion-and-transom 2- light windows, dripcourse over*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pickwickassociation.org.uk/post/conservation-area-appraisal> [accessed 14 Nov 2022]

<sup>3</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list> - Pickwick Manor, Pickwick, Wiltshire [accessed 10 Oct 2022]

ground floor with 2 original mullion-and-transom windows to right, door and three C18 twelve-pane sashes to left in bead-moulded flush surrounds. Moulded plinth. Six-panel door in large early C18 bolection-moulded frame with panelled piers each side under scrolled brackets to large shell hood. East end wall has 2 dripcourses, similar attic window, 2 similar first floor windows, one blank and ground floor 12-pane sash with timber lintel to right over blocked opening. West end has lower wing, possibly part of C15 house, raised and altered 1920. North-west wing, enclosing forecourt, is possibly C14 to C15 domestic range, the north end converted to barn in C17. South end is 2-storey with north end stack on ridge. East side first floor 2-light ovolo-moulded window and heavy chamfered 2-light medieval window much restored. Ground floor door and medieval 4-light timber mullion window, chamfered mullions. Barn beyond has similar 4-light window, mullions chamfered with broach stops at half length, and 2 blocked openings, all with timber lintels. Heavy cornerstones at north end, upper 2-light ovolo-moulded window with hoodmould. West side of barn has dormer gable and 3 doors. Heavy floor beams with run-out stops to chamfers. Three and a half bay tie-beam-and-collar roof. Rear of 2-storey section has small moulded pointed single light. South front of main range has central stair tower with 2 early C18 bolection-moulded windows over 1920 two-bay flat porch. Original rear door in moulded architrave with 2-light window to right within. To left is projecting wing of 1711, 3-window, two and a half storeys with off-centre gable and parapet. Three-window range of 18-pane sashes in bolection-moulded surrounds with moulded string courses over each floor and one 12-pane similar attic window. Sashes are all of 1920. To right of stair tower, large projecting wing remodelled and raised 1920 original 3-light mullion window to ground floor west, matching windows elsewhere 1920 or reused. Interior: Tudor-arched fireplace in entrance hall, full-height stair with closed string, carved balusters and square newels. Moulded flush square-headed fireplace in subdivided room west of hall. Fine fielded panelled rooms to ground and first floor of 1711 section. Bolection-moulded fireplaces. North-east upstairs room also has bolection-moulded fireplace, Tudor-arched fireplace to upstairs north-west room. Upper room in west wing has stone fireplace with jambs curving out as for stone hood, probably late medieval, but with flat lintel and carved shelf, possibly C17. North-east ground floor room has late C18 style decoration and fireplace. House belonged to Keynes family c1560, was bought by W. Wastfield 1639 and by R. Neale 1774. (H. Brakspear, Corsham, n.d. 25-6 (reprint Wilts.Arch.Mag.43 511- 39).

Listing NGR: ST8626170527

### **3. Extract from the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History (WANHS) Magazine Vol.43 (1927) - Corsham: by Harold Brakspear F.S.A**

Although there is no evidence that Pickwick Manor was ever the principal house or farm of a manor, the site is considered part of an ancient holding. Harold Brakspear an architect and antiquarian, when residing at Pickwick Manor wrote extensively about the history of Corsham in a WANHS magazine in 1927 including details of the ancient holdings found scattered across the parish of Corsham.<sup>4</sup>

Brakspear also refers to Richard, the Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III, granting the manor of Corsham to the customary tenants. He did not provide a date for this grant. The manor of Corsham became known as the king's manor.

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<sup>4</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39

A photograph of the original grant is available at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre and has been dated in the archive catalogue as c.1242.<sup>5</sup> Expanding on this, Logan writing in c.1950 advises the whole of the parish of Corsham was included in the manor granted to the customary tenants except Hartham, the rectory manor and the demesne lands. Added to this was the tithing of Stratton St. Margaret at Swindon and Pitters Farm in the parish of Pewsham.<sup>6</sup> The manor was broken down into eight tithings, Corsham or the Town tithing, Pickwick, Woodlands, Mere, Gastard, Little tithing, Easton and Stratton. These customary tenants gained greater powers and privileges due to the granting of the manor and further privileges due to being tenants of ancient demesne. An annual rent was paid by them of 110 marks to the lord of the manor.<sup>7</sup>

The identifiable ancient holdings, in the tithing of Pickwick, Brakspear referred to in 1927, were Pickwick Farm, Leyceters and Snellings; all of an early date. Brakspear does explain ancient land measurements and does attempt to link all the ancient holdings in Corsham to entries in the Domesday Book.

Quoting from his article published in 1927:

*...Land measures are also of Saxon origin, and manors were generally computed in hides, thus at Corsham there were 34 hides of which 11 hides were in demesne. A hide varied in extent apparently in consequence of the nature of the land; but maybe reckoned for practical purposes at about 128 acres. The enclosed lands held by the tenants were computed in virgates or yards land, one yard land being ¼ hide; and cotsettles, one cotsettle being ¼-virgate.*

*These enclosed lands were held at Domesday by villans who were later called virgators from the nature of their holding; and coscets who similarly became cotsettlers. Both classes were free tenants holding their lands of the lord by customary services.*

*At Corsham at Domesday were 65 villans and 48 coscets, and these occur again in 1300 as 62 virgates of land of villanage in Corsham and 9 virgators likewise of villanage in Stratton, and there were also 46 customars who were apparently the same as the coscets.*

*About 1600 there were in the king's manor, excluding Stratton, 70 virgates of land but no return was made of the cotsettle holdings except 3 ½ cotsettles belonging to our Lady's lands.*

*The first list of lords' rents that remain (1649) show that there were 111 customary tenants in Corsham and 9 in Stratton, but the villans and coscets were not definitely separated, though by calculation the respective numbers agree very closely with the Domesday Survey [P.R.O. Parl Surveys, Wilts 35].*

*The land reckoned in virgates and cotsettles in Corsham did not include all the common lands but were distinct if not actually enclosed holdings in themselves and each had a house which was called a headhold.*

*The surrender of any part of a holding was allowed, but until the house itself was disposed of the headhold remained nominally intact and was computed for the purposes of fines and heriots at its original land value.*

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<sup>5</sup> WSHC - 212A/28/1 - Corsham Charters - Grant of the manor with appurtenances, saving a third of Myntemed and rights of chase, to the customary tenants of the manor, by Richard Earl of Cornwall. Corsham [c.1242] - With armorial and equestrian seal - Photograph available in Record Office library

<sup>6</sup> WSHC - 4442/1 - An illustrated manuscript history of Corsham compiled by John Logan...c.1950

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

*Certain headholds were grouped together to form tithings, these at first should have, as the name implies, contain ten holdings; but the list of lord's rents referred to above shows that the number of headholds and virgates varied considerably in the various tithings. The formation of tithings was obviously for the purpose of mutual protection and most of the headlands in the respective tithings, besides being adjacent to each other, were usually along the lines of ancient roads.*

*A great number of these headlands has been swept away and even the sites of some cannot be identified. On the other hand a number remain and it is interesting to remember that in these cases the spot where they stand has been the site of human habitation for over a thousand years. In spite of their antiquity of the site of the house in only some half-dozen cases is any building remaining earlier than the seventeenth century, which is apparently due to the prosperity of the district, consequent upon the wool trade, which enabled their respective owners to build new houses from time to time as the mode of living changed.*

*Some of the most important of these headholds which are still represented by houses on their sites are: - ...*

*...PICKWICK TITHING.*

*PICKWICK FARM. This holding contained one virgate of land, the house of which has for many years been called the "Manor House," and contains some work of the fourteenth century. In the early days of Queen Elizabeth it was in the hands of one of the branches of the Keynes family; they seem to have got into financial difficulties and surrendered the house in 1639 to William Wastfield. His family came to Corsham in the latter years of Queen Elizabeth and gradually acquired a considerable estate in the manor.*

*The present house appears to have been built by the first William Wastfield, after the Restoration, and is on a more ambitious scale than most of the virgate houses (Plate VIII. 2<sup>8</sup>). The second William built the dining room block in 1711. The property remained with the Wastfields until about 1774 when it was surrendered to Robert Neale, of Corsham, in whose family it remained until recent times, when after a series of short tenures it now belongs to Mrs. Harold Brakspear. There are remains of a square dove house in the garden, which was in existence in 1637.*

To clarify a virgate was an Old English measurement of land, otherwise known as a yardland and said to be between 15 and 40 acres, but typically was around 30 acres.

#### **4. The Buildings of England: Wiltshire**

The 2021 edition of the Pevsner Architectural Guide for Wiltshire by Julian Orbach, Nikolaus Pevsner and Bridget Cherry, titled *The Buildings of England, Wiltshire* makes reference to Pickwick Manor.<sup>9</sup>

*PICKWICK...The clou is PICKWICK MANOR on the junction with Pickwick Road. A typical if unusually impressive C17 house with cross-windows and big dormer gables, built shortly after 1664. The bolection-moulded doorway with shell-hood dates from 1711 where a parlour block was added behind. C17 staircase with pierced flat balusters; early C18 panelled rooms. An older NW range,*

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<sup>8</sup> See plate VIII on p.1 of this report

<sup>9</sup> Julian Orbach, Nikolaus Pevsner and Bridget Cherry (2021) *The Buildings of England; Wiltshire*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London p.258

mostly now a barn, includes two single-light windows of the C14 and some C15-C16 unglazed oak-mullioned windows.

## **5. Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record**

The Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record does record Pickwick Manor as the site of an extant medieval farmstead.<sup>10</sup>

*Pickwick Manor (Manor House), Corsham. Partially extant medieval farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards with additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.*

## **6. The Keynes family**

Harold Brakspear does refer to the Keynes family as early owners of the house and its estate in his article of 1927.<sup>11</sup> He states that this family were resident in the early part of Queen Elizabeth I's reign but the Keynes family had to surrender the estate to William Wastfield in 1639 due to financial difficulties. The Historic England listing refers to the Keynes family as occupants as early as c.1560 and also the house was bought by William Wastfield in 1639.<sup>12</sup> The sources of such information are not disclosed but it is known that Court of Chancery records exist at The National Archives [not seen] that indicate a William Keynes was attempting to establish his title to his father's estate in the parish of Corsham, part of the manor of Corsham. His father was John Keynes and the estate consisted of a messuage and lands. The papers associated with this legal case seem to span from 1558 to 1603.<sup>13</sup> This was probably Pickwick Farm. If so, John Keynes was in possession of an earlier house on the site of Pickwick Manor and these legal papers could contain evidence of this estate in the possession of the Keynes family as far back as 1558. This would fit with the fact that there is no mention of a property holder with the surname Keynes on a 1545 tax list for Corsham.<sup>14</sup> It is possible that the William Keynes bringing the legal case was William Keynes who did hold a messuage, a virgate and two further closes in the tithing of Pickwick, later known as Pickwick Farm, who died in 1634 (see later).

Interestingly, the year 1558 was at the very beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, when she held herself, the lordship of the royal manor of Corsham; this was the case until 1572 when the manor was bought by Sir Christopher Hatton; then soon after sold to Thomas Smyth a native of Corsham.<sup>15</sup> Smyth was responsible for the construction of the Elizabethan manor house by 1582 on the site of Corsham Court.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/889/Archaeology-and-historic-environment-record - MWI65897](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/889/Archaeology-and-historic-environment-record-MWI65897) - Pickwick Manor (Manor House) [accessed 12 Oct 2022]

<sup>11</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39

<sup>12</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list> - Pickwick Manor, Pickwick, Wiltshire [accessed 10 Oct 2022]

<sup>13</sup> TNA - C 2/Eliz/K4/66 - Plaintiffs: William Keynes. Defendants: William Deverell and Mary Deverell his wife, Richard Battersby. Subject: To establish plaintiff's title. A messuage and lands in the parish of Corsham, Wiltshire held of the manor of Corsham, late the estate of John Keynes plaintiff's father. Document type: [Pleadings] Date: [Between 1558 and 1603] [accessed 10 Oct 2022]

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wiltshirerecordsociety.org.uk/digital-archive> - Volume 10 - Two Sixteenth-Century Taxation Lists, 1545 and 1576 p. 28 [accessed 13 Nov 2022]

<sup>15</sup> WSHC - 4442/1 - An illustrated mss history of Corsham compiled by John Logan - c. 1950

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.corsham-court.co.uk/Court%20history/Commentary.html> [accessed 10 Oct 2022]



On a 1576 tax list relation to Corsham, a William Keynes was assessed at 40 shillings for his landed property and he paid tax of 5 shillings and 4 pence.<sup>17</sup> It is likely this was William Keynes who died in 1582/3 (see later).

Some personal papers have been found containing notes, by an unknown author, on the history of Pickwick Farm between 1581 and 1878. The notes were formerly held by Keary, Stokes and White, solicitors in Chippenham. They refer to the Keynes family as the earliest owners of Pickwick Farm who have been traceable and they were also owners of 'Lypiatts' in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> Great Lypiatts Farm still exists south of Corsham.

At a court baron of the manor of Corsham, William and Juliana Keynes surrendered to their son, John, a messuage and virgate of land in Pickwick tything in 1581.<sup>19</sup> An entry written in Latin in a court book for the manor of Corsham dated 1581 refers to this particular surrender (see Fig.1).<sup>20</sup> Within the text can be seen repeated references to William Keynes, a messuage and a virgate, the tithing of Pickwick and William Keynes' son, John Keynes. The year referred to is the regnal year 23 Elizabeth I, which equates to 1581.

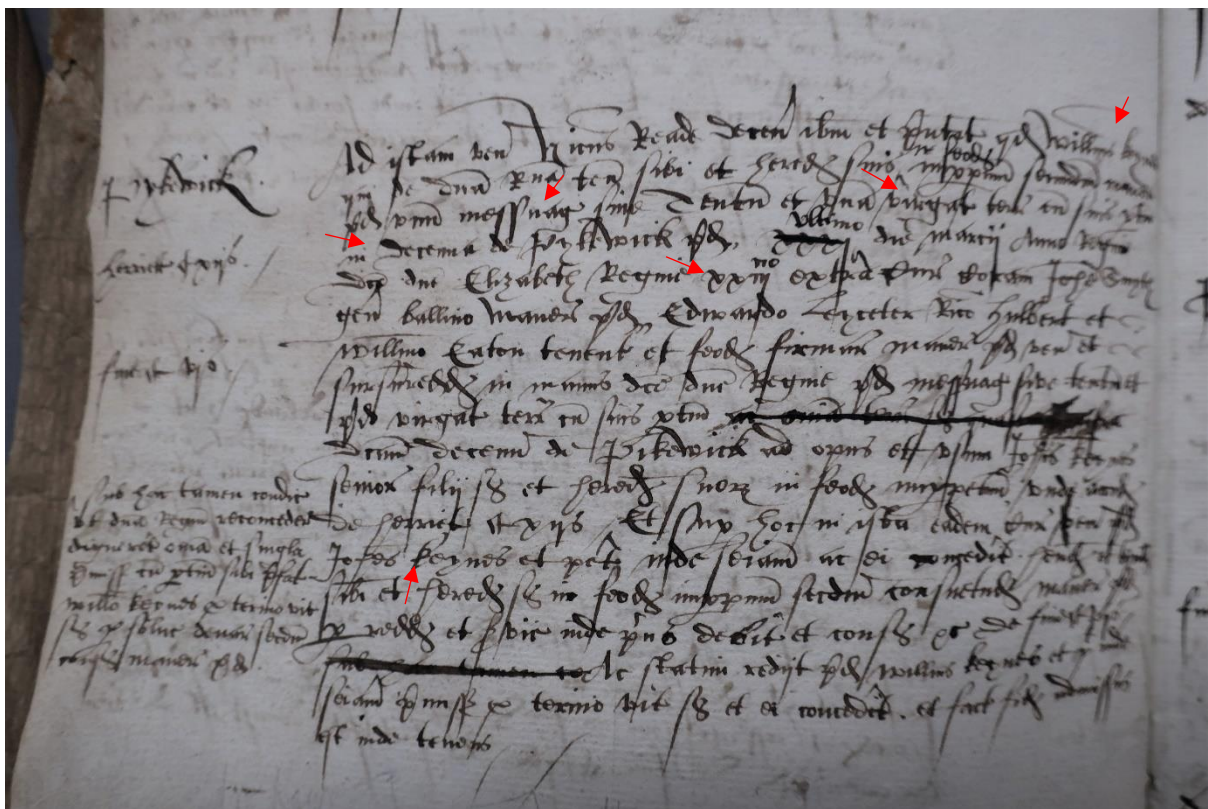


Fig.1 - Extract from a court book of the manor of Corsham showing an entry in 1581 referring to the surrender of a messuage and a virgate of land in the tithing of Pickwick by William Keynes and the admittance of John Keynes his son (in Latin).

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.wiltshirerecordsociety.org.uk/digital-archive> - Volume 10 - Two Sixteenth-Century Taxation Lists, 1545 and 1576 p. 57 [accessed 13 Nov 2022]

<sup>18</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> WSHC- 1742/8171 - Court book for the manor of Corsham 1581 - 1603, 1605



William Keynes was buried at Corsham on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1582/3.<sup>21</sup> A will for William Keynes of Pickwick dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 1582 [1583] exists and he is also recorded in Corsham parish registers as dying in 1582/3. Nothing has been detected in the will in relation to his landholding but the will does refer to at least five sons, John, William, Alexander, Robert and Thomas and one daughter, Clair.<sup>22 23</sup>

John Keynes Snr is recorded as being buried at Corsham on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1591.<sup>24</sup> This is confirmed by parish registers.<sup>25</sup> The notes refer to an entry in a Corsham court book when the homage at court presented the death of John Keynes Snr in 1591 when he was seized of 'a virgate of land in Pickwick'. The same court entry refers to Marie as his widow and John as his son.<sup>26</sup> It is likely John Keynes Snr was John Keynes of Longs, Corsham, whose will was dated 2 May 1591.<sup>27</sup> This suggests that John Snr was not residing at Pickwick Farm at the time of his death. Instead, it is likely his son, John was farmer at Pickwick Farm before his father's death.

In 1600, the notes on Pickwick Farm show that John Keynes of Pickwick surrendered at a manorial court 'a messuage and virgate plus two closes called Pockridge Mead [possibly sub-divided] in Pickwick Tything, to his son William.<sup>28</sup> It is interesting to note that a John Keynes was prominent in the tything of Pickwick based on the church rate paid in 1604. He paid the second highest amount of church rate - 18d out of all the inhabitants in the tything (see **Fig.2**).<sup>29</sup> It is unknown when he died.

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<sup>21</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Wills and Probate 1530-1858 - will of William Keynes of Pickwick, Corsham dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 1582 [accessed 10 Oct 2022]

<sup>23</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Family History Society - The Parish Registers & Bishops Transcripts - Corsham Burials 1563-1837 - William Keynes died 1582/3

<sup>24</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

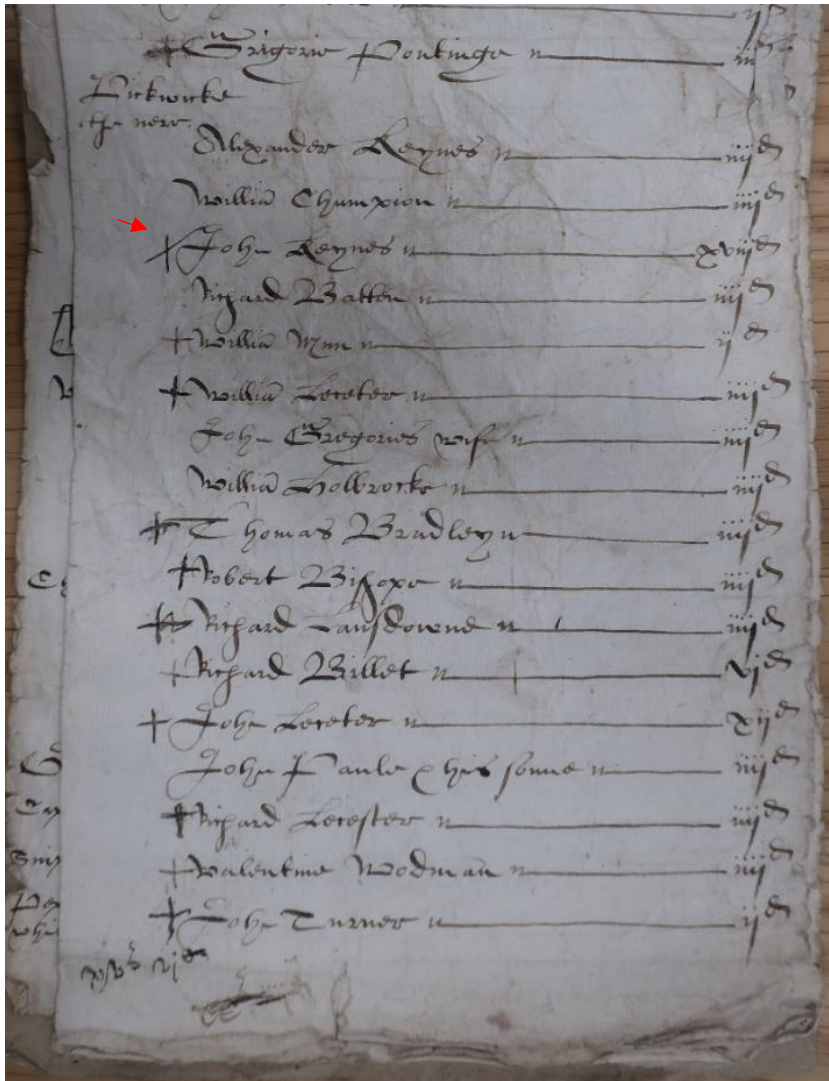
<sup>25</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Family History Society - The Parish Registers & Bishops Transcripts - Corsham Burials 1563-1837 - John Keynes died 1591

<sup>26</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Wills and Probate 1530-1858 - will of John Keynes of Longs, Corsham dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1591 [accessed 10 Oct 2022]

<sup>28</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>29</sup> WSHC - 1285/9 - Parish Records of Corsham: St Bartholomew and Gastard : St John - Churchwardens' rate and accounts - 1604



**Fig.2 - Extract from the church rate records for the parish of Corsham dated 1604 covering the tything of Pickwick**

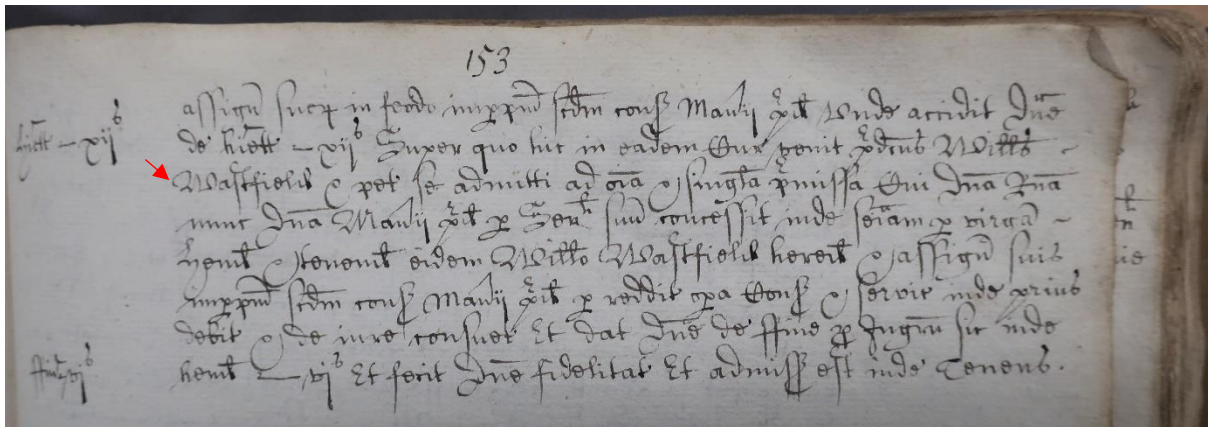
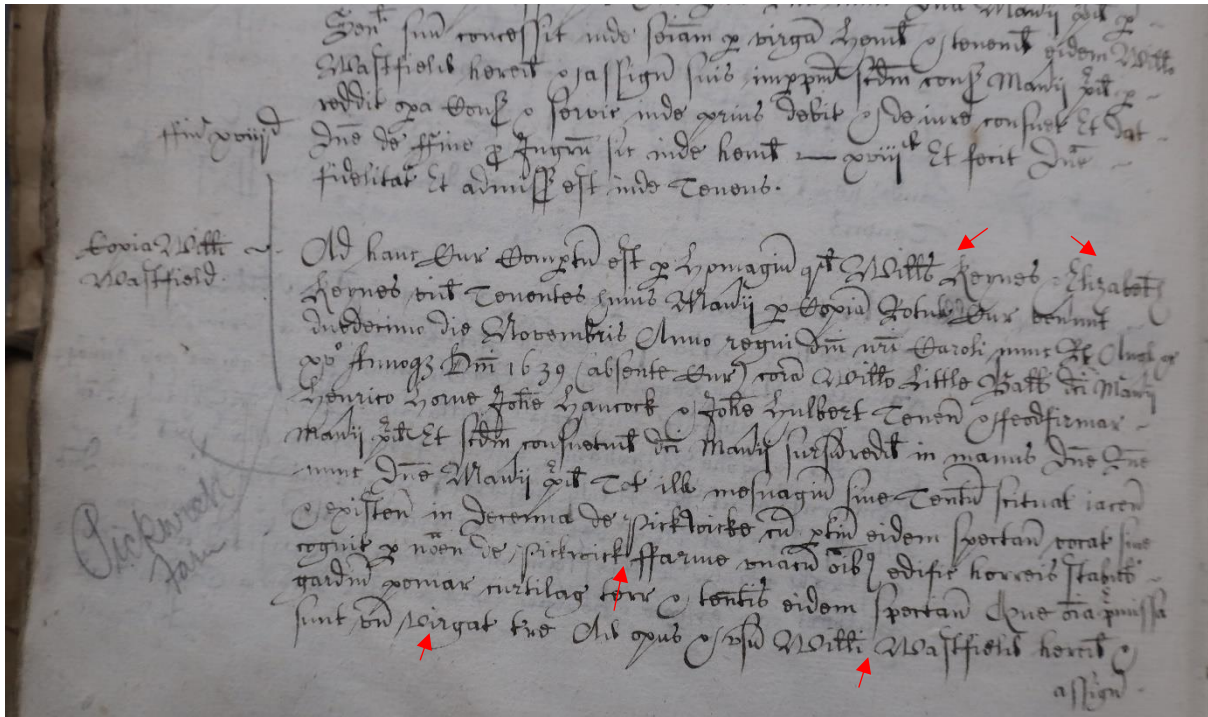
William Keynes, the son, was buried in Corsham parish on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 1634 and his death was reported at a manorial court on 30 April 1635. His widow Elizabeth was then entitled to the estate during her lifetime whilst their son William was the heir.<sup>30</sup>

Significantly, the notes on Pickwick Farm record a court book entry dated 17<sup>th</sup> September 1640 that stated on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 1639, William Keynes and Elizabeth Keynes widow surrendered 'a messuage called Pickwick Farm with coachhouses, stables, garden and orchard and one virgate of land to William Wastfield'.<sup>31</sup> The entry from a relevant court book can be seen in **Fig.3**.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> WSHC - 1742/8173 - Court book for the manor of Corsham 1630-1648, p.152-153



**Fig.3 - Extract from a court book of the manor of Corsham showing an entry on 17 September 1640 referring to the surrender of Pickwick Farm on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1639 by William Keynes and Elizabeth Keynes widow. William Westfield was then admitted as tenant (in Latin).**

There was a Court of Chancery legal case in 1638 between William Keynes as plaintiff and William Snellinge as defendant which related to the manor of Corsham. This may have brought about the sale of the estate to William Westfield in 1639.<sup>33</sup>

**7. The Westfield Family**

Harold Brakspear in his account of Pickwick Farm refers also to William Westfield taking possession of the farm in 1639.<sup>34</sup> The notes on the history of Pickwick Farm refer to the fact that William was the son of Adam and Frances Westfield. It is clear from the same notes that the Westfield family

<sup>33</sup> TNA - C 6/154/96 - Plaintiffs: William Keynes. Defendants: William Snellinge. Subject: manor of Corsham, Wiltshire. Document type: answer only. 1638 [accessed 11 Oct 2022]  
<sup>34</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39



were of some prominence in the locality due to their possession of a substantial amount of property.<sup>35</sup> This is also echoed by Harold Brakspear in his account of Pickwick Farm.<sup>36</sup>

In 1645, there were 11 yardlands in the tithing of Pickwick, one of which belonged to Pickwick Farm (see Fig.4).<sup>37</sup> Please note, the number of yardlands are 8 relating to lay persons and 3 belonging to the parson, together totalling 11.

	yardlands	Cottages
Town	8	0
1 vicars Comite tith	1	0
3 Layes Comite tith	0	3
3 Layes tith	0	half
Pickwick	8	0
3 vicars Comite tith	3	0
Easton	11	0
6 vicars Comite tith	6	0
Middon	7	0
2 vicars Comite tith	2	0
Little Copping	3	0
Gostland	13	0
Woodlands	17	0
Widdowatts	1	0

Total  
 as it is kept up in this } 86  
 Copy  
 Out of the Court Roll in 30<sup>mo</sup> } 5 1/2  
 of the vicars Comite tith 12 — 00

**Fig.4 - A note of the number of yardlands in the manor of Corsham found at the end of a 1645 transcription of the custumal of the manor of Corsham**

It is recorded in the notes on the history of Pickwick Farm that there was another court book entry on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1664, when William Wastfield Snr surrendered Pickwick Farm to the use of himself and Marie his wife, for his life and then to the use of their son, William Wastfield Jnr.<sup>38</sup> The relevant court book written in Latin has been found and it does confirm this surrender of Pickwick Farm which then had a messuage and a virgate of land in the tithing of Pickwick.<sup>39</sup> Again within the text can be seen references to William Wastfield Snr., Marie his wife, William Wastfield Jnr., Pickwick Farm, a messuage, a virgate of land and the tithing of Pickwick (see Fig.5).

<sup>35</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>36</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39

<sup>37</sup> WSHC - 473/57 - Custumal, manor of Corsham, superscribed 'I John Davys of Woodlands, have Transcribed These Articles for my owne uses out of a Transcript of Mr James Hulberts of Corsham towne, who has his out of a booke of mr Leonard Smith['s] father (of Mingly) who made ye originall noates. (I have altered some obsolete words but not ye sence, as may appear by other Coppys.) Ano. Dm - 1645.' Concluding with 'A noate of ye yard lands in Corsham Lord[shi]pp', arranged by tithings...1645

<sup>38</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>39</sup> WSHC - 1285/29 - Court book of the manor of Corsham 1653-1674



Harold Brakspear is clear in his account that the main part of the existing house was built after the Restoration and was 'on a more ambitious scale than most of the virgate houses'. Whilst his grandson, Thomas Brakspear, in a 2006 planning application stated the construction date of the east side of Pickwick Manor [main house] was c.1664.<sup>40 41</sup>

References to the house built after the Restoration, do not include the west end of the house, which the Historic England listing [see earlier] suggests was possibly part of a house of a 15<sup>th</sup> century date and the north-west wing, possibly a domestic range dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Thomas Brakspear in 2006 created a picture in our minds of the main range of the new house with several rooms on the ground floor, but one room deep with a projecting stair tower behind [to the south] leading to upper rooms. It was built of random rubble stone with freestone quoins and window dressings.<sup>42</sup>

In 1673, William Wastfield Jnr married Debora Coleman.<sup>43</sup> On 13 June 1670, William Wastfield Snr a yeoman made a will and died by 13 January 1678/9. Both his will and an inventory can be found in **Appendix B**.<sup>44</sup> What is particularly interesting, the inventory items are listed by room and the rooms stated aid our understanding of the arrangement of the relatively new house and the use of older buildings adjoining at this stage.

### Rooms in 1678 inventory

Ground Floor	First Floor
Parlor	chamber over parlor
Parlor chamber	chamber over the parlor chamber
Buttery	chamber over the buttery
Hall	
Darke house	Chamber over the darke house
Larder house	Chamber over the larder house
White house	Chamber over the white house
Shop	
	Cheese lofte

<sup>40</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39

<sup>41</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Wills and Probate 1530-1858 - will of William Wastfield Senior of Pickwick, Corsham yeoman, dated 1670, inventory dated 1678 and probate dated 1679 [accessed 9 Oct 2022]



Mary [aka Marie] Westfield the widow of William Westfield Snr died in 1682.<sup>45</sup> Pickwick Farm was then inherited by the son of William Westfield Snr, William Westfield of Easton [probably then Easton Farm].<sup>46</sup>

On 18<sup>th</sup> May 1705, William and Deborah Westfield [of Easton] surrendered at the manorial court

*...a messuage & virgate & closes called Cow Leaze, Old Cow Mead and New Cow Mead, 40a Farthing Plott, Cow Mead Hill, Cow Mead Bottom, Priors Cliff, le[?] Lower Bottom, Pillingers, Purley & Smiths Leazes to William his son & Susanna James Spinster the intended wife of William the son...*<sup>47</sup>

Sadly, William's wife, Susanna and her newborn baby, William, died in November 1705. Described in parish records as the son and wife of William of Pickwick.<sup>48</sup>

Additionally, by his will dated 1707, William Westfield of Easton bequeathed the contents of Pickwick Farm to his son, William.

*Item I give and bequeath unto my aforesaid son William Westfield All that ground called Ash Acres together with the lease thereof, lying and bring in the parish of Haslebury in the said County of Wilts and also All my goods and chattels both within Doors and Without that is upon my Estate at Pickwick.*

In 1712 his will was proved as he had passed away.<sup>49</sup>

Thomas Brakspear in 2006 refers to William Westfield Jnr extending the house in c.1711 by adding rooms to the south elevation, each side of the stair tower. This resulted in the re-fenestration of the stair turret to accommodate these additions. The materials used were the same as in c.1664. Additionally the front door and its surround were added around 1711.<sup>50</sup>

On 24<sup>th</sup> June 1728, a William Westfield of Pickwick, gentleman, married again, Mrs Anne Powell of Mauditts Park. The marriage occurred in Malmesbury.<sup>51</sup> There is a Mauditts Park Farm at Little Somerford.

The notes on Pickwick Farm indicate that at a court baron in October 1728, William Westfield a gentleman surrendered Pickwick Farm, a virgate of land and 70 acres of land to himself for his life and then to Anne Powell spinster his intended wife and heirs of their bodies, and in default to the right heirs of William Westfield.<sup>52 53</sup>

Interestingly, there is a conflict between the two records just referred to in relation to the marital status of Anne Powell. Further to this, the actual entry in the court book dated October 1728

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<sup>45</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Family History Society - The Parish Registers & Bishops Transcripts - Corsham Burials 1563-1837 - Mary Westfield died 1682 wid of William, sen of Pickwick

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Wills and Probate 1530-1858 - will of William Westfield of Easton, Corsham, yeoman - probate dated 1712 [accessed 9 Oct 2022]

<sup>47</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>48</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Family History Society - The Parish Registers & Bishops Transcripts - Corsham Burials 1563-1837 - William Westfield buried 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 1705 and Susanna Westfield buried on 23 Nov 1705, son and wife of William of Pickwick

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Wills and Probate 1530-1858 - will of William Westfield of Easton, Corsham, yeoman - probate dated 1712 [accessed 9 Oct 2022]

<sup>50</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1538-1812 - marriage of William Westfield and Mrs Anne Powell of Mauditts Park in Malmesbury on 24th June 1728 [accessed 9 Oct 2022]

<sup>52</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Westfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>53</sup> WSHC - 1285/30 - Draft court book of the manor of Corsham 1727 - 1730

outlines the lands associated with Pickwick Farm in more detail and it is possible to calculate that the estate in fact included a virgate and 59 acres of land at this stage (see Fig.6).

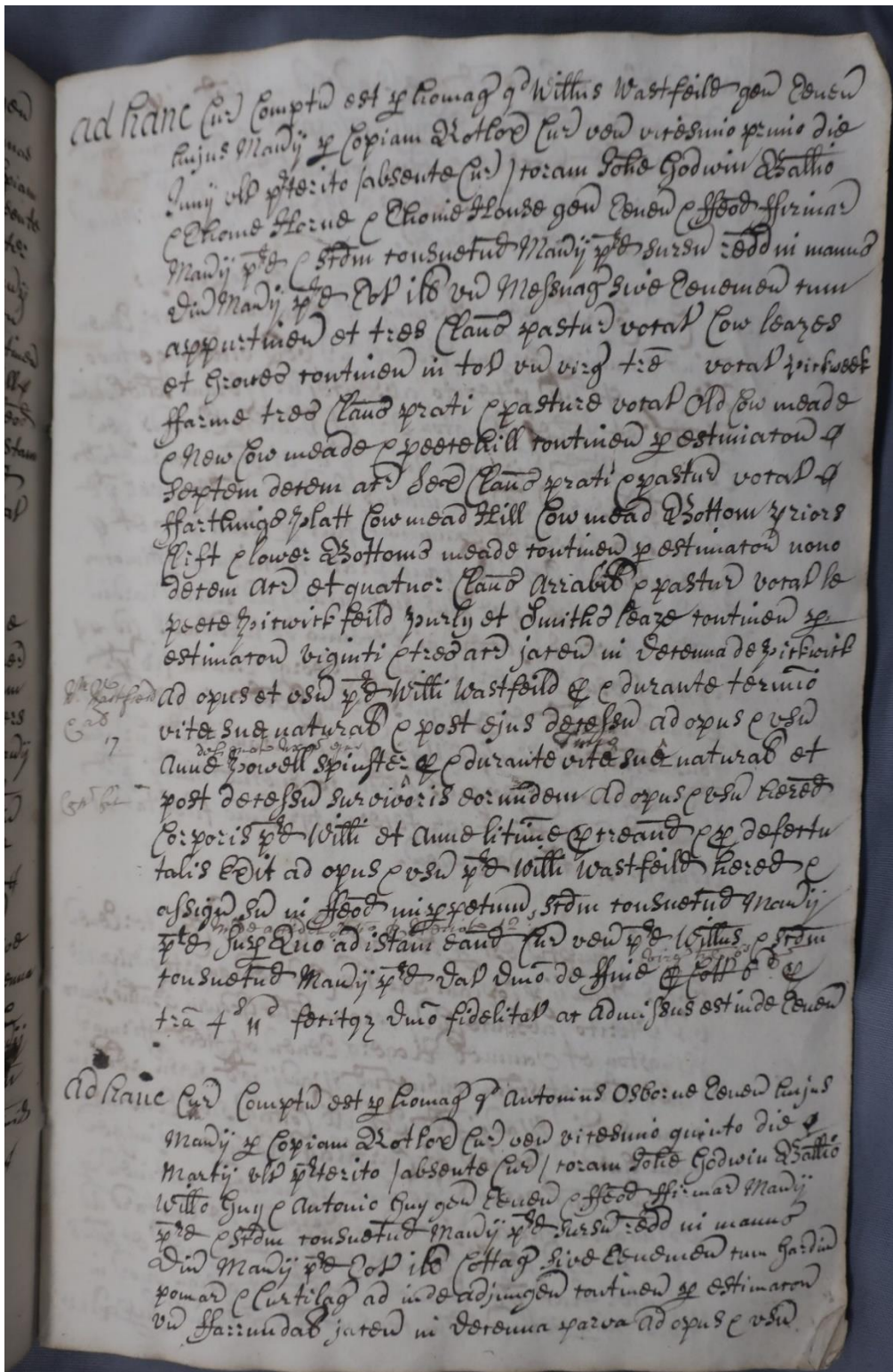


Fig.6 - Relevant extract from the court book of the manor of Corsham dated October 1728 (written in Latin).

The following information can be gleaned from the court book entry dated October 1728:

Property holding in tithing of Pickwick	Acreage
1 messuage or tenement, appurtenances and 3 closes of pasture called Cow Leazes and Groves called Pickweek ffarme	1 virgate [approx 30-32 acres]
3 closes of meadow and pasture called Old Cow Meade, New Cow Meade and Peece hill	17 acres
6 closes of meadow and pasture called ffarthings Platt, Cow mead Hill, Cow mead Bottom, Priors Clift, lower Bottoms meade	19 acres
4 closes of arable and pasture called le Peece, Picwick Field, Purly and Smiths Leaze	23 acres

From this information, it is now possible to make an attempt at working out the composition of the virgate or yardland called Pickwick Farm, making use of the information within the Tithe Award of 1839.<sup>54</sup> When doing this, an assumption has been made that the relevant field names and sizes did not change significantly between 1728 and 1839 (Please see table below and **Appendix A**).

Entries in the Tithe Award of 1839	Size of Field (a. r. p.)
Homestead (262, 263 and 194)	0 3 23 0 2 14 1 2 7
Home Grove (261)	8 1 15
Upper Grove (345)	4 1 20
Lower Grove (346)	6 2 14
Cow Leaze (264)	9 1 18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31 2 31</b>

It is known a William Wastfield of Corsham, a gentleman died in 1728/9.<sup>55</sup>

In 1730, Anna [aka Anne], his widow requested at a court to be admitted due to her right to the property for her life and then for Walter Wastfield brother of William to be admitted in reversion as heir of his brother. The Pickwick Farm estate was unchanged at this stage from how it was described in 1728.<sup>56 57</sup>

The notes on Pickwick Farm state on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1743, Walter Wastfield gentleman surrendered Pickwick Farm to three trustees, Edward Grinfield Esq., William Mountjoy and Thomas Mitchell, gentlemen. It is suspected that Wastfield was surrendering his reversion in relation to Pickwick Farm. This particular court book entry has not been seen. The notes also refer to Anna Wastfield widow of William Wastfield marrying Thomas Hayter gentleman and then living or continuing to live at Pickwick Farm.<sup>58</sup>

In a court book entry dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 1746, it is stated that on the 28<sup>th</sup> December 1745, Walter Wastfield gentleman and the three trustees referred to earlier surrendered the reversion after the

<sup>54</sup> WSHC - Tithe Award for Corsham with map dated 1839

<sup>55</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Family History Society - The Parish Registers & Bishops Transcripts - Corsham Burials 1563-1837 - William Wastfield at Corsham a gentleman died 1728/9

<sup>56</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>57</sup> WSHC - 1285/30 - Draft court book of the manor of Corsham 1727 - 1730

<sup>58</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century



death of Anne Hayter to Vickris Dickinson at a manorial court.<sup>59</sup> The entry in the court book provides a good description in English of Pickwick Farm at this stage (see Fig.7 and the following transcription).<sup>60</sup>

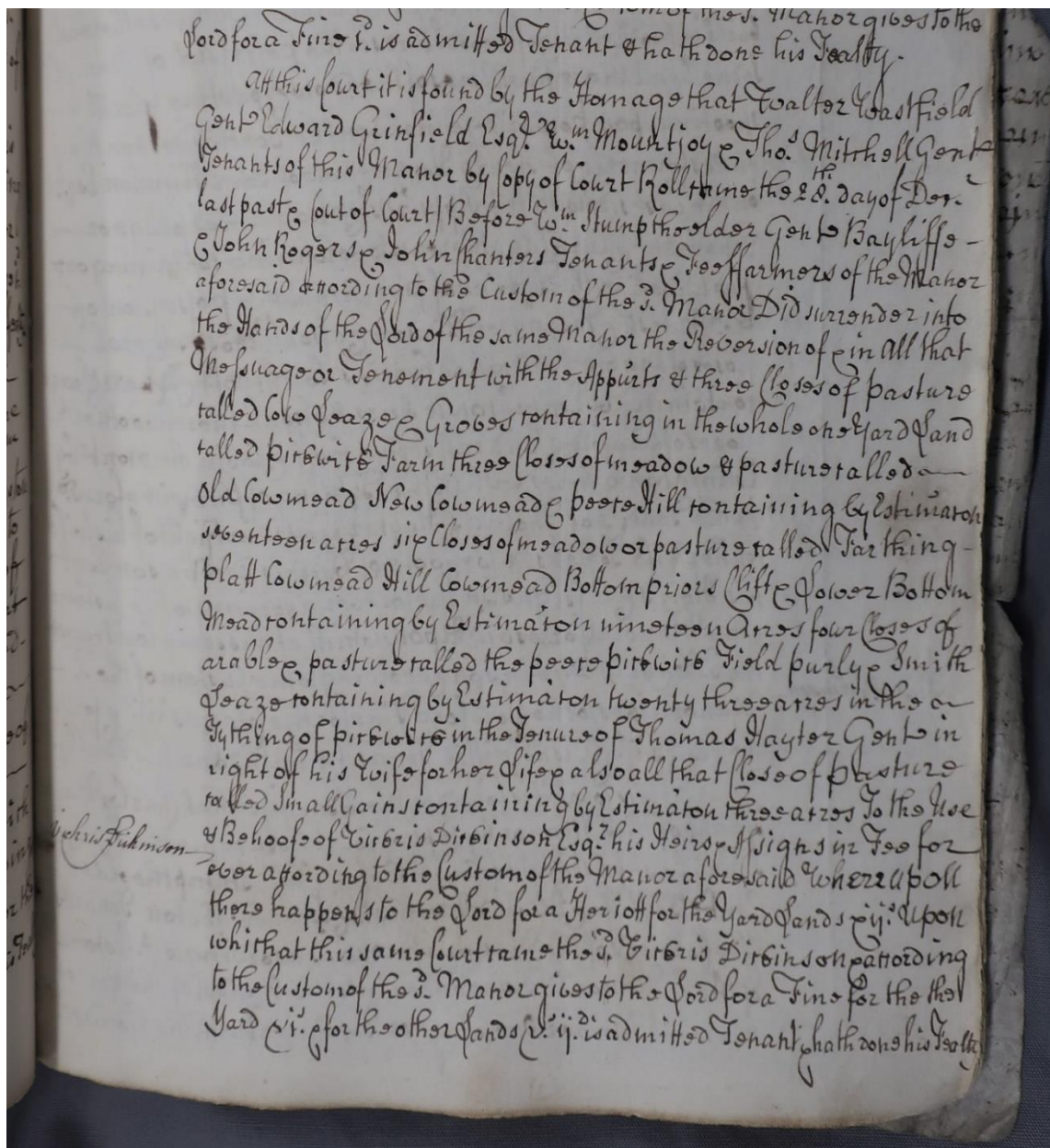


Fig.7 - Extract from a court book of the manor of Corsham dated 1746 relating to Pickwick Farm

The transcription of this entry dated 1746 is as follows:

Att this Court it is found by the Homage that Walter Wastfield Gent Edward Grinfield Esq. Wm Mountjoy & Thos Mitchell Gents Tenants of this Manor by Copy of Court Roll came the 28<sup>th</sup> day of Dec last past & (out of Court) Before Wm Stump the elder Gent Bayliffe & John Rogers & John Chanters Tenants & Fee Farmers of the Manor aforesaid according to the Custom of the sd Manor

<sup>59</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>60</sup> WSHC - 1285/32 - Court book of the manor of Corsham 1741 - 1753

*Did Surrender into the Hands of the Lord of the same Manor the Reversion of and in All that Messuage or Tenement with the Appurts & three Closes of pasture called Cow Leaze & Groves containing in the whole one Yard Land called Pickwick Farm three Closes of meadow & pasture called Old Cowmead New Cowmead & Peece Hill containing by Estimation seventeen acres six Closes of meadow or pasture called Farthing Platt Cowmead Hill Cowmead Bottom Priors Clift & Lower Bottom Mead containing by Estimation nineteen Acres four Closes of arable & pasture called the Peece Pickwick Field Purly & Smith Leaze containing by Estimation twenty three acres in the Tything of Pickwick in the Tenure of Thomas Hayter Gent in right of his Wife for her Life & also all that Close of pasture called Small Gains containing by Estimation three acres. To the use & Behoofe of Vickris Dickinson Esq. his Heirs & Assigns in Fee for ever according to the Custom of the Manor aforesaid & whereupon there happens to the Lord for a Heriott for the Yard Lands xii [shillings] Upon which at the same Court came the sd Vickris Dickinson & according to the Custom of the sd Manor gives to the Lord for a Fine for the ... Yard vi [shillings] & for the other Lands v [shillings] ii [pence] is admitted Tenant & hath done his Fealty.*

It is clear from this entry in 1746, the Pickwick Farm estate was largely the same as in 1728 except for the acquisition of a close of pasture called Small Gains containing three acres. The Tithe Award of 1839 showing a close of pasture of the same name, consisting of 2a 1R 15P (294) adjacent to and to the east of Priors Cliff (295).<sup>61</sup>

Vickris Dickinson of Pickwick was a Quaker who went on to marry Elizabeth Marchant at Comberwell meeting house in the parish of Bradford on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 1746.<sup>62</sup>

## **8. The Neale family**

On the 26<sup>th</sup> October 1748, at a manorial court, Walter Wastfield and Vickris Dickinson together surrendered the reversion of Pickwick Farm and other property in the tithing of Pickwick in the occupation of Anne and Thomas Hayter. Thereafter Robert Neale Esq. was admitted and took on the reversion of this amalgamated estate after the payment of fines.<sup>63</sup> It does appear that Anne Hayter and her husband Thomas were still alive at this stage and were occupying Pickwick Farm and the other property in the tithing. An extract from the court book containing the entry in English dated 26<sup>th</sup> October 1748 can be seen in **Fig.8**. Also, please see the following transcription of this entry.

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<sup>61</sup> WSHC - Tithe Award for Corsham with map dated 1839

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - England & Wales, Quaker Birth, Marriage, and Death Registers, 1578 to 1837 Vickris Dickinson marriage to Elizabeth Marchant on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1746 [accessed 9 Nov 2022]

<sup>63</sup> WSHC - 1285/32 - Court book of the manor of Corsham 1741-1753

30 for 12.  
 1490  
 At this Court came Walter Westfield Gent & Vickris Dickinson Esquire Tenant of this Manor... by Copy of Court Roll & in full Court there... according to the Custom of the said Manor Did Surrender into the Hands of the Lord of this same Manor the Rever[si]on from & after the Decease of Anne the Wife of Thomas Hayter Gent, late Anne Westfield the Widow of William Westfield Gent deceased of & in all that Mess[uage] or Tenement with the Appur[tenances] three Closes of Past[ure] called Cow Leaze & Groves cont[aining] in the whole one Yard Lands called Pickwick Farm three Closes of Meadow & Pasture called Old Cow Leaze New Cow Mead Peece Hill & small Gains cont[aining] by Est[imation] seventeen acres 6 Closes of Meadow or Past[ure] called Farthing Platt Cow mead Hill Cow mead bottom Priors Clift and lower bottom mead cont[aining] by Est[imation] 19 acres 4 Closes of ar[able] and Past[ure] called the Peece Pickwick Field Purly & Smiths Leaze cont[aining] by Est[imation] 23 acres and also All that Cottage or Tenement and Curtilage... thereunto belonging cont[aining] one Farundell [farthingdale?] now or late in the possession of William Marsh & Margaret Tinson and also all those several Closes of ar[able] Land called Curtis's South Croft & Quarr Leaze cont[aining] by Est[imation] 16 acres & all that Close of ar[able] called Rye Croft cont[aining] by Est[imation] 3 acres and all that Close of ar[able] Land called Copper acre cont[aining] by Est[imation] 3 acres. All which said premises are situate lying and being in the Tything of Pickwick within the Manor of [aforesaid] & are now in the Tenure of the said Thomas Hayter in Right of his s[ai]d Wife. To the use and behoose of Robert Neal Esquire his Heirs and Assigns in fee forever accord[ing] to the Custom of the Manor of [aforesaid] whereupon there happens to the Lord for a Her[riot] for the Yard Lands and for the other lands vi [shillings] & Od [pence] & 1q [farthing] is admitted Tenant & hath done his Fealty.

144  
 in the Tything of Pickwick within the Manor of [aforesaid] are now in the Tenure of the said Thomas Hayter in Right of his s[ai]d Wife. To the use and behoose of Robert Neal Esquire his Heirs and Assigns in fee forever accord[ing] to the Custom of the Manor of [aforesaid] whereupon there happens to the Lord for a Her[riot] for the Yard Lands and for the other lands vi [shillings] & Od [pence] & 1q [farthing] is admitted Tenant & hath done his Fealty.

Fig.8 - Extract from a court book of the manor of Corsham dated 1748 relating to Pickwick Farm

Att this Court came Walter Westfield Gent & Vickris Dickinson Esquire Tenant of this Manor... by Copy of Court Roll & in full Court there... according to the Custom of the said Manor Did Surrender into the Hands of the Lord of this same Manor the Rever[si]on from & after the Decease of Anne the Wife of Thomas Hayter Gent, late Anne Westfield the Widow of William Westfield Gent deceased of & in all that Mess[uage] or Tenement with the Appur[tenances] three Closes of Past[ure] called Cow Leaze & Groves cont[aining] in the whole one Yard Lands called Pickwick Farm three Closes of Meadow & Pasture called Old Cow Leaze New Cow Mead Peece Hill & small Gains cont[aining] by Est[imation] seventeen acres 6 Closes of Meadow or Past[ure] called Farthing Platt Cow mead Hill Cow mead bottom Priors Clift and lower bottom mead cont[aining] by Est[imation] 19 acres 4 Closes of ar[able] and Past[ure] called the Peece Pickwick Field Purly & Smiths Leaze cont[aining] by Est[imation] 23 acres and also All that Cottage or Tenement and Curtilage... thereunto belonging cont[aining] one Farundell [farthingdale?] now or late in the possession of William Marsh & Margaret Tinson and also all those several Closes of ar[able] Land called Curtis's South Croft & Quarr Leaze cont[aining] by Est[imation] 16 acres & all that Close of ar[able] called Rye Croft cont[aining] by Est[imation] 3 acres and all that Close of ar[able] Land called Copper acre cont[aining] by Est[imation] 3 acres. All which said premises are situate lying and being in the Tything of Pickwick within the Manor of [aforesaid] & are now in the Tenure of the said Thomas Hayter in Right of his s[ai]d Wife. To the use and behoose of Robert Neal Esquire his Heirs and Assigns in fee forever accord[ing] to the Custom of the Manor of [aforesaid] whereupon there happens to the Lord for a Her[riot] for the Yard Lands and for the other lands vi [shillings] & Od [pence] & 1q [farthing] is admitted Tenant & hath done his Fealty.



The following information can be gleaned from the court book entry dated October 1748:

Property holding in tithing of Pickwick	Acreage
1 messuage or tenement, appurtenances and 3 closes of pasture called Cow Leaze and Groves called Pickwick Farm	1 yardland (approx 30-32 acres)
3 closes of meadow and pasture called Old Cow Leaze [Mead], New Cow Mead, Peece Hill and Small Gains	17 acres [+3 acres for Small Gains?]
6 closes of meadow and pasture called Farthing Platt, Cow mead Hill, Cow mead bottom, Priors Clift, lower bottom mead	19 acres
4 closes of arable and pasture called the Peece, Pickwick Field, Purly and Smiths Leaze	23 acres
1 cottage or tenement and curtilage in the occupation of William Marsh and Margaret Tinson	1 farthingdale [quarter ¼ of an acre]
Several closes of arable land called Curtis's South Grove and Quarr Leaze	16 acres
1 close of arable called Rye Croft	3 acres
1 close of arable land called Copper acre	3 acres

In 1748, it appears that Pickwick Farm consisted of one messuage with appurtenances, a cottage, one yardland and just over 80 acres.

In c.1846, a tabulation was drawn up by a firm of solicitors to provide details on each copyhold estate, once held by Robert Neale (d.1776). The document demonstrates that Walter Westfield and Vickris Dickinson surrendered the reversions of four copyhold estates numbered 70, 71, 72 and 73, which Robert Neale took up on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1748.<sup>64</sup> The property and land which were part of these four copyholds can be seen in the court book entry of 1748. These four copyholds with other lands were eventually placed in a trust in line with instructions within Robert Neale's will dated 21<sup>st</sup> December 1774. The solicitor preparing the tabulation attempted to show the composition of each copyhold when taken up by Robert Neale utilising court books, other information at his disposal and landholdings found in the Tithe Award of 1839. The purpose of the tabulation was to provide evidence in a legal dispute in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century over the copyholds held by the Neale family.

The first copyhold estate of interest to us is no.70 which includes the messuage and the yardland known as Pickwick Farm and all the additional closes of land which were part of the farm in 1746. Nos. 71, 72 and 73 show the cottage and additional closes referred to in the 1748 court book entry. The tabulation includes some minor inaccuracies, based on what has been found in the court books for the manor of Corsham and the Tithe Award of 1839, but overall does create a useful picture of the estate (four copyholds together) which Robert Neale had future rights to in 1748. The extent of the enlarged estate belonging to Pickwick Farm superimposed on the Tithe Award map for the parish of Corsham dated 1839 can be seen in **Appendix C**, along with information extracted from the tabulation created in c.1846.

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<sup>64</sup> WSHC- 529/3 - File of twenty-eight copies of court roll of the manor of Corsham; abstract of some of the same copies and some later ones; tabular statement showing the properties concerned; legal opinion on the copyholds, 1846; special court paper, 1846 [Neale Charters Nos. 131, 134, 164, 172-183] Date: 1721-1846

We are informed by a memorandum of the manor and its customs dated c.1830, in the case of a yardland when surrendered a heriot was paid, due to its status as an ancient holding. The heriot which applied in the case of a yardland was either a yoke of oxen or 12 shillings. A fine paid by the new tenant is also referred in the memorandum amounting to 6 shillings for a yardland (see Fig.9).<sup>65</sup>

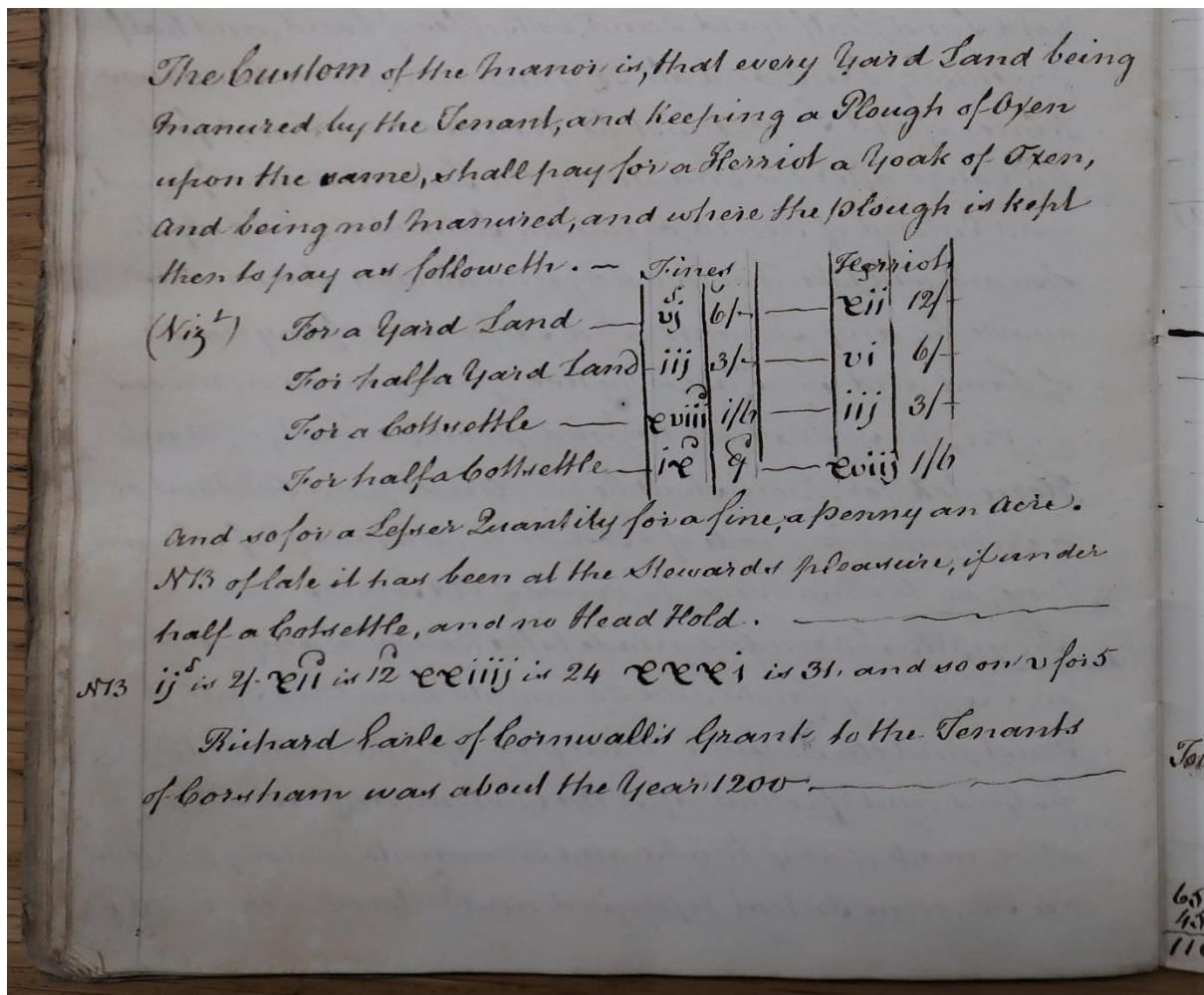


Fig.9 - Extract from a memorandum of the manor and customs of Corsham dated c.1830

Looking back at the 1748 court book entry, there is reference to a heriot payment which appears to be two animals, alternatively there could have been a transcription issue when the final version of the court book was produced and the Roman numeral 'x' was mistaken for the abbreviation &, and the word 'and' ii was inserted, rather than 'xii'.

What is not known is when Anne Hayter actually died or surrendered the estate to allow Robert Neale to take full possession of it.

There is evidence in the memorandum that Thomas Hayter held a headhold in the tithing of Pickwick in 1756, along with Robert Neale Esq; which of them was holding the headhold known as Pickwick Farm is not known. It is quite possible that Robert Neale had another ancient estate in the tithing and did not take possession of Pickwick Farm until after this date (see Fig.10).<sup>66</sup> No evidence has been found that Robert Neale Esq. ever resided at Pickwick Farm, nor his son, Robert Neale, instead

<sup>65</sup> WSHC-1780/5 - Undated copy of the customs of the Manor of Corsham with additional notes including list of the occupiers of headholds (ancient tenements) in 1756 and 1824 and copy grant of the manor 1200 - c 1830

<sup>66</sup> Ibid

it appears from the land tax assessment records for the parish of Corsham that the farm was continuously leased to a tenant farmer (see **Appendix D**).<sup>67</sup>

The Head holds in Pickwick Tything in 1756 Occupiers in 1822	
John Bennet	4 — Mr. Pycroft and others
Tho <sup>s</sup> . Bennet	1 — Mr. Loscomb
Tho <sup>s</sup> . Kayler	1
Rob <sup>t</sup> . Neale Esq <sup>r</sup>	1
Widow Stumpf	3 — Farmer Watson
Rich <sup>d</sup> . Smith	1
W <sup>m</sup> . Arnold	1 — Mr. Jones
Parish Lands	1
Total	13

**Fig.10 - Further extract from a memorandum of the manor and customs of Corsham dated c.1830**

A headhold was defined by the memorandum:

*A Head Hold was Lands and Tenements that were Mansion Places of Old Time.*<sup>68</sup>

As stated before, it is known that in 1774, Robert Neale placed Pickwick Farm and other property into a trust for the beneficiaries of his will which suggest that the estate was in Robert Neale's full possession by that stage.

Negley Harte in an article for the Corsham Civic Society in 2012 provides some interesting facts about the Neale Family of Corsham. Robert Neale [with an interest in Pickwick Farm from 1748] was the second Robert Neale to live at the Mansion House in Corsham. His father, Robert was a highly successful clothier in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, who benefitted from the prosperity of the cloth industry at that time. The father was responsible for building his brand new mansion house between 1721 and 1723. He died relatively early in life in 1733 and his son, Robert took on his business and inherited his estate. Through marriage to Elizabeth Smith, the second Robert Neale eventually inherited Shaw House at Melksham in 1757. Sadly the second Robert Neale lost his own son, Robert in 1774, before his own death in 1776. The two female children of the third Robert Neale were only three and one years of age at the time of their father's death.<sup>69</sup>

A rather charming early map dated 1770 of the manor of Corsham shows the village of Pickwick. It records 'all the Roads, Lanes, Greens, Commons and other Waste Lands in the Manor of Corsham'. It was drawn by the mapmaker, William Simpson in 1770 (see **Figs.11** and **Appendix E**).<sup>70</sup> Robert

<sup>67</sup> WSHC - A1/345/125 A, B and C - land tax assessment records for the parish of Corsham 1780-1832

<sup>68</sup> WSHC -1780/5 - Undated copy of the customs of the Manor of Corsham with additional notes including list of the occupiers of headholds (ancient tenements) in 1756 and 1824 and copy grant of the manor 1200 - c 1830

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.corshamcivicsociety.co.uk/measuring-the-heights-of-the-neale-family-at-the-mansion-house-corsham-1722-51> [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>70</sup> WSHC - 135/65H - Map of all the Roads, Lanes, Greens, Commons and other Waste Lands in the Manor of Corsham; William Simpson, surveyor, owners of adjoining fields named. 1770







**Fig. 12 - Extract from the Andrews' and Dury's Map of Wiltshire dated 1773 covering Corsham and the tithing of Pickwick. Pickwick Farm marked with a red arrow.**

In 1780 it is known that the tenant farmer at Pickwick Farm was a man called Hopkins but by 1781 he had been replaced by John Rogers (see **Appendix D**).<sup>74</sup>

A list of residents for the tithing of Pickwick in 1784 has been found including John Rogers (see **Fig.13**).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>74</sup> WSHC - A1/345/125 A, B and C - land tax assessment records for the parish of Corsham 1780-1832

<sup>75</sup> WSHC - 2106/72 - Manor of Corsham; list of residents of the tithings of Corsham, Gastard and Pickwick - 1784

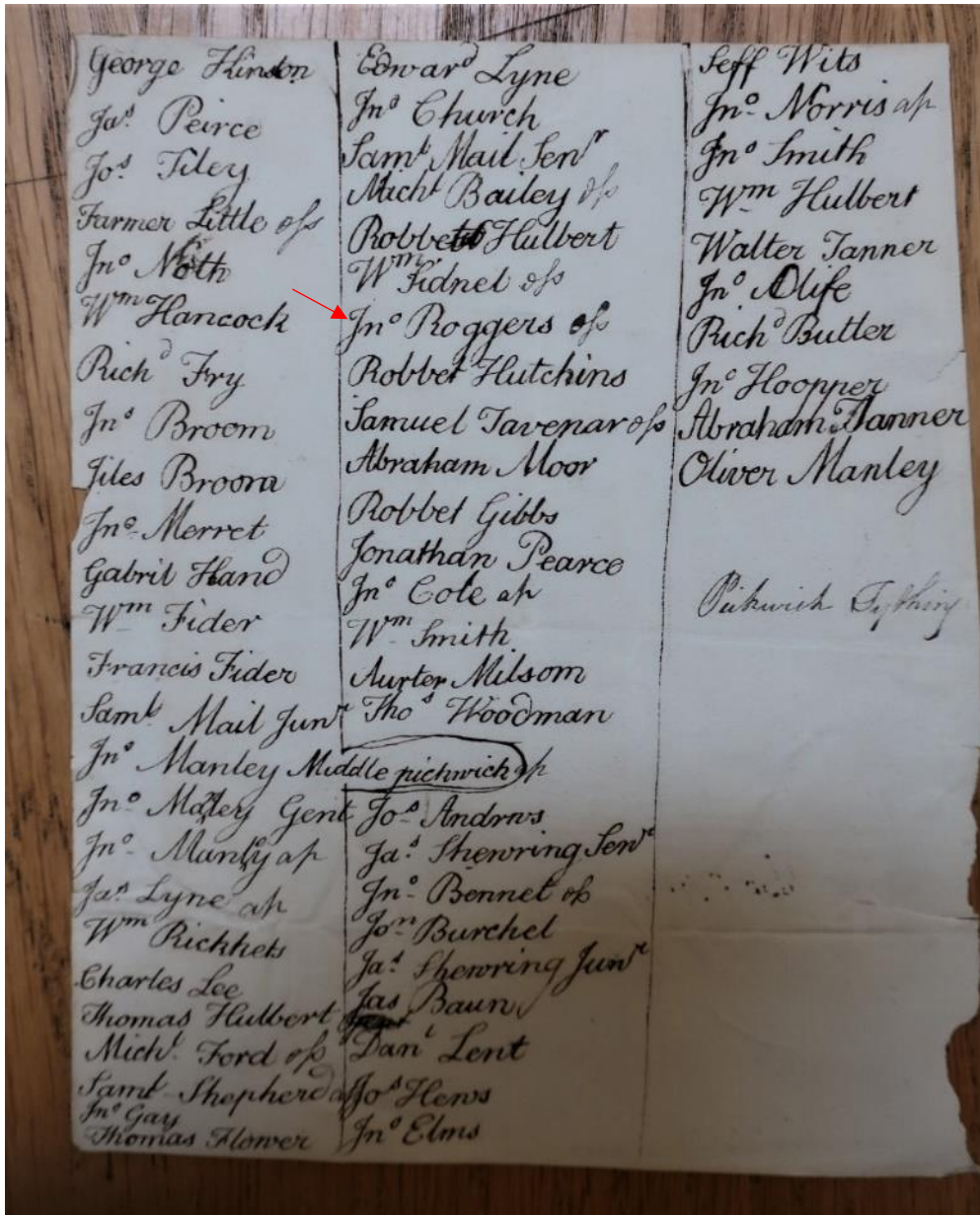
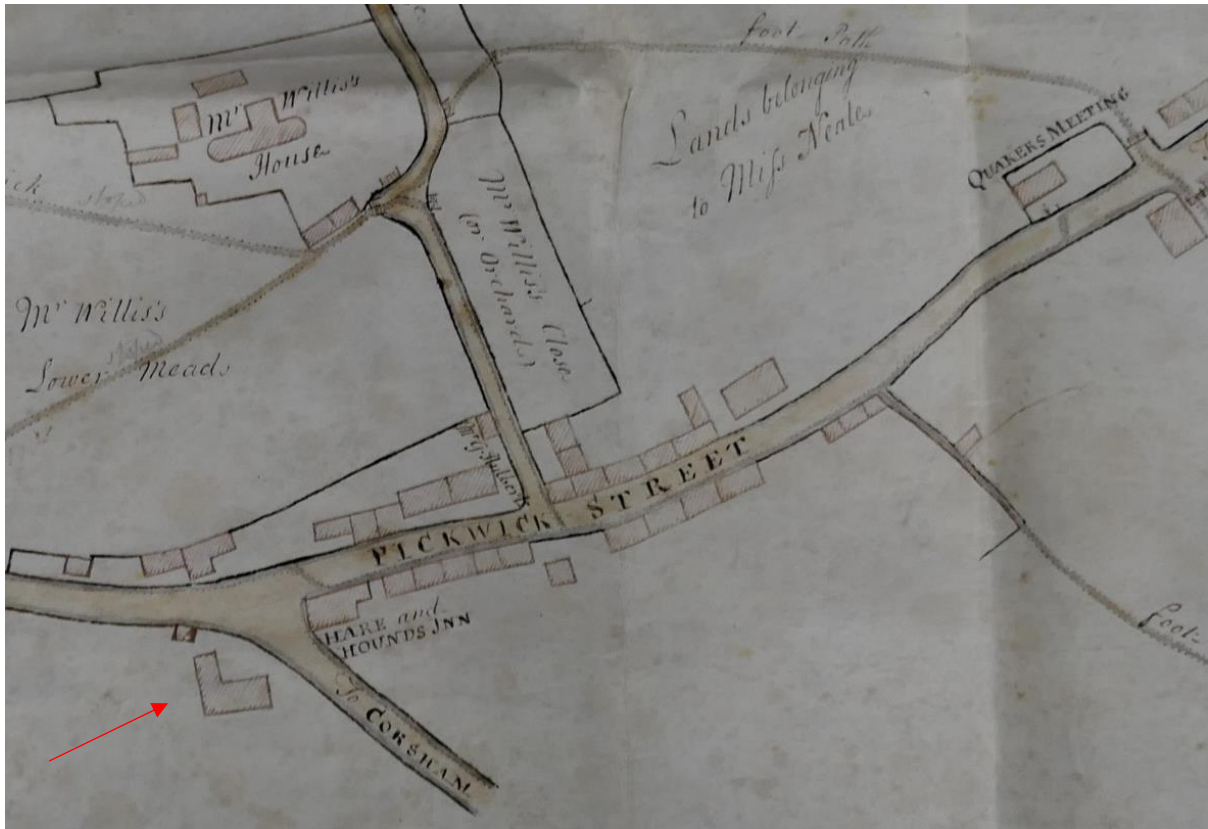


Fig.13 - A list of residents of the tithing of Pickwick in 1784.

A plan showing footpaths at Pickwick dated 1796 does provide a crude footprint of Pickwick Farm at one end of Pickwick Street (see Fig.14).<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> WSHC - A1/316/20 - Corsham: footpaths at Pickwick - Diversion or closure of road or footway order 1796





**Fig. 14 - Extract from the 1796 plan of old and new footpaths at Pickwick focussing on the centre of the hamlet of Pickwick, as it was described at that stage.**

In the same set of documents where Robert Neale's will was found, an indenture dated 1795 relating to a marriage settlement between Sir Harry Burrard of Walhampton in the County of Southampton, Baronet, and Grace the eldest granddaughter of Robert Neale. It indicates that Grace had inherited the majority of her grandfather's estate and Pickwick Farm was still part of this estate in 1795.<sup>77</sup> Sir Harry Burrard took on his wife's name Neale and became known as Sir Harry Neale. The indenture states John Rogers was currently or formerly the farmer of Pickwick Farm. Land tax assessment records indicate that John Rogers was still the farmer in 1795 and he continued to be so until 1806 (see **Appendix D**).<sup>78</sup> The land tax paid remained constant from 1791 to 1832 at £2 19s 1 ¾d. This suggests during this period there was little change to the overall size of the Pickwick Farm estate held from the Neale family.

An extract from a copy of the 1795 indenture relating to Pickwick Farm is as follows:

*...Also all that Messuage Tenement or dwellinghouse with the Outhouses Buildings barns Stables bartons yards Orchard and Gardens thereunto belonging And all that Orchard or piece or parcel of Orchard Ground containing by estimation two roods and nine perches Also all those several pieces or parcels of pasture Ground called or known by the several names and containing by estimation the several quantities of Land hereinafter mentioned (that is to say) the Pool piece two roods and thirty perches the Grove eight acres one rood and twenty seven perches Little Curtis five acres three roods and twelve perches Great Curtis eight acres two roods and twelve perches Middle Grove six acres and*

<sup>77</sup> WSHC - 1320/1 (1 of 2 bundles) - ... settlement on the marriage of Sir Harry Burrard and Grace Elizabeth Neale, 1795...

<sup>78</sup> WSHC - A1/345/125 A, B and C - land tax assessment records for the parish of Corsham 1780-1832

*two...perches Upper Grove four acres one rood and thirty two perches Black Acre three acres and seventeen perches Upper Cow Leaze eight acres three roods and eighteen perches Timber yard piece nine acres two roods and twenty perches Pickwick field seven acres three roods and ten perches Upper Spring Tyning six acres two roods and ten perches Lower Spring Tyning ten acres and thirty seven perches Smiths or Purleys Rails two acres three Roods and thirteen perches Further Snellings Hill two acres and thirty perches and Lower Little mead one acre All which said last mentioned Messuage or Tenement Lands and hereditaments are commonly called or known by the name of Pickwick Farm and are situate lying and being in the said Parish of Corsham and now are or late were in the Tenure or occupation of John Rogers at the yearly rent of one hundred and twenty pounds...*

A summary of the property holding found in the 1795 indenture relating to Pickwick Farm can be found in the following table as well as an interpretation of the land and property it probably relates to recorded in the Tithe Award of 1839.

Property holding in tithing of Pickwick	Acreage			Corresponding to Tithe Award of 1839 (No.)
	A.	R.	P.	
Messuage, tenement or dwellinghouse with the outhouses buildings, barns, stables, bartons, yards, orchard and gardens	-			194 Homestead 1 2 7
Orchard Ground	0	2	9	262 Homestead 0 3 23
The Pool Piece	0	2	30	263 Homestead 0 2 14
The Grove	8	1	27	261 Home Grove 8 1 15
Little Curtis	5	3	12	Part 260 Curtis's 14 2 5
Great Curtis	8	2	12	Part 260 Curtis's 14 2 5
Middle Grove	6	0	12 or 20	346 Lower Grove 6 2 14
Upper Grove	4	1	32	345 Upper Grove 4 1 20
Black Acre	3	0	17	Lower part of 327 Upper Purleigh

		18 0 32 ( 1/4)
Upper Cow Leaze	8 3 18	264 Cow Leaze 9 1 18
Timber Yard Piece	9 2 20	265 The Piece 9 3 4
Pickwick Field	7 3 10	267 Pickwick Field 7 2 24
Upper Spring Tyning	6 2 10	268 Hither Spring Tithing 6 3 18
Lower Spring Tyning	10 0 37	269 Lower Spring Tyning 11 1 31
Smiths or Purley Rails	2 3 13	297 Purleigh Rails 3 0 2
Snellings Hill	2 0 30	Unknown location possibly associated with Guyers Farm which previously was the location of a yardland known as Snellings. <sup>79</sup>
Lower Little Mead	1 0 0	Unknown location

**Appendix F** shows the likely extent of the farm in 1795 using the Tithe Award map of 1839.

What is notable from the extract from the 1795 indenture, is that different field names are referred to and there were some variations in field sizes where original closes belonging to the farm are recognisable. Clearly the composition of the farm was a little different in 1795 when compared to the 1748 description found in a court book for the manor of Corsham. However when the extract is analysed, the original yardland continued to belong to Pickwick Farm.

<sup>79</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History magazine - Volume 43 (1925-27) - June 1927 - Corsham: By Harold Brakspear F.S.A. p.511-39

In 1819, the Corsham Enclosure Award had a minor impact on Pickwick Farm.<sup>80</sup> Another local landowner, Thomas Edridge took pasture land known as Black Acre (no.210) consisting of 3 acres and 17 perches and the south west part of Upper Grove (no.209) consisting of 1 rod and 20 perches from Pickwick Farm. In addition, he was given right of roadway and passage from the turnpike road at Pickwick over certain lands, Timber Yard Piece and Upper Cow Leaze, in the possession of Sir Harry Neale and his wife Dame Grace Elizabeth to access his own lands known as Purleigh. This was in exchange for a piece of arable land called Lower Purleigh of 4 acres 3 rods and 16 perches, which then became part of Pickwick Farm (see **Appendix G**).

In relation to the farmhouse of Pickwick Farm, Thomas Brakspear in the note accompanying a planning application dated 2006/7 draws to our attention that new thin barred sashes in c.1820 replaced the old thick barred sash windows of 1711. Around this time, the windows of the hall and dining room were replaced with new sash windows and a new fireplace inserted into the dining room. An existing door between the hall and dining room may also have been an addition at this time.<sup>81</sup> Robert Hulbert was the tenant farmer who instigated these changes. Land tax assessment records for the parish of Corsham suggest he had been the tenant farmer since 1814. He had replaced Walter Chivers who had succeeded John Rogers in c.1807.

The Corsham Tithe Award and its accompanying map provides useful information about Pickwick Farm in 1839 (see **Fig.15**).<sup>82</sup>

The Tithe Award informs us that Robert Hulbert leased Pickwick Farm jointly with William Hulbert from Sir Harry Neale of Corsham in 1839. William and Robert Hulbert were also common brewers, running a business at Pickwick known as Pickwick Brewery. They began leasing the brewery in 1802 from William Hulbert of Pickwick, at which point they were described as Robert Hulbert of Roundway and William Hulbert of Westrop. By the 1830s they were clearly attempting to move way from brewing.<sup>83</sup>

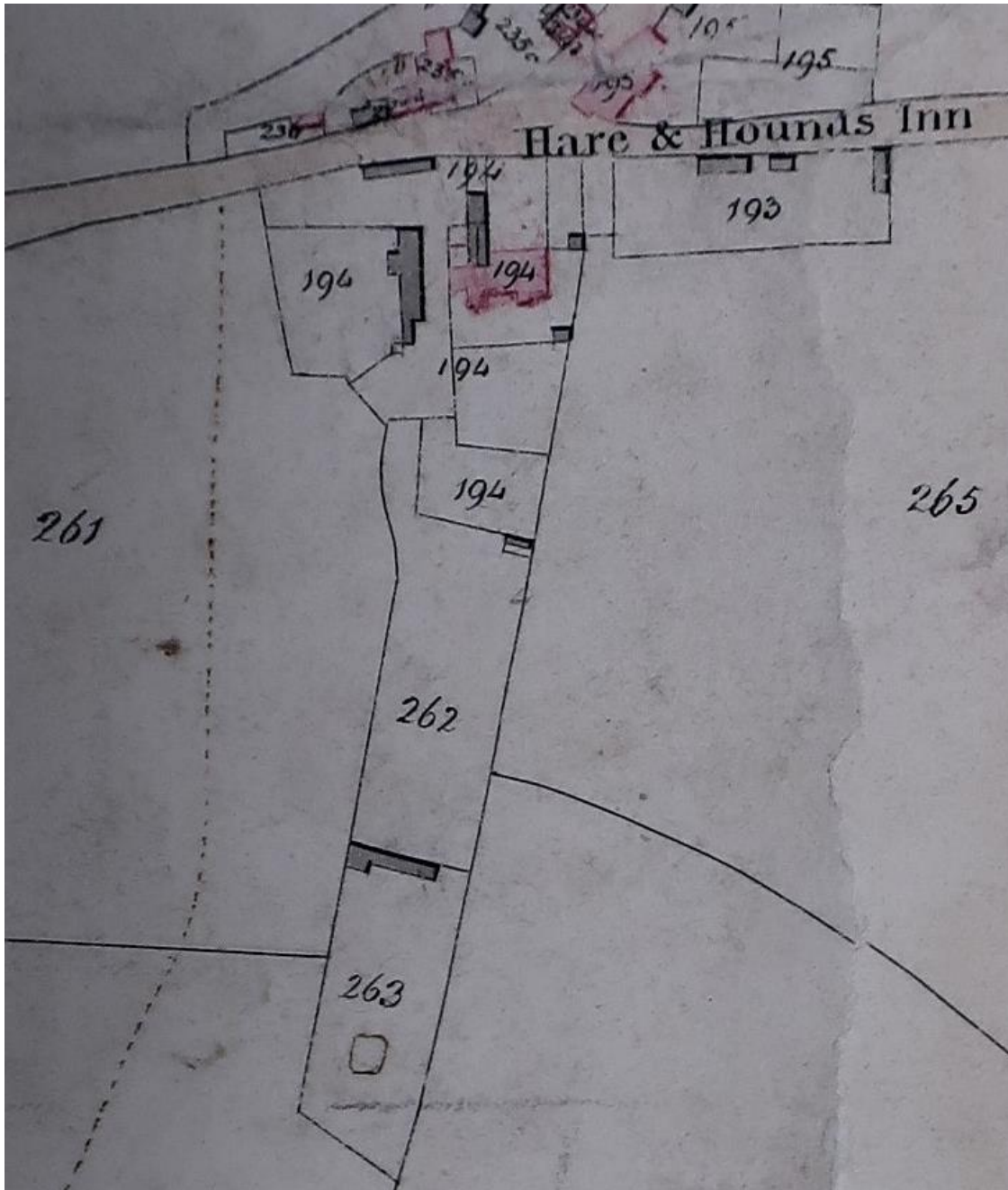
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<sup>80</sup> WSHC - A1/EA121 - Corsham Enclosure Award 1819

<sup>81</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>82</sup> WSHC - Tithe Award for the parish of Corsham with map dated 1839

<sup>83</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Buildings Record - Pickwick Brewery, Pickwick, Corsham - documentary research by Louise Purdy October 2021



**Fig.15 - Extract from the Tithe Award map of 1839 focussing on the farmhouse of Pickwick Farm (No.194)**

The Tithe Award of 1839 also indicates that Sir Harry Neale was only one of several landowners from whom William and Robert Hulbert jointly leased farmland in the locality. In total they occupied together over 514 acres in the parish (see following table).

**Amount of land leased by William and Robert Hulbert jointly in the parish of Corsham in 1839 broken down by landowner**

Landowner	Acreage			Notes
	A.	R.	P.	
Sir Harry Burrard Neale Baronet	98	0	38	Original estate attached to Pickwick Farm
Reverend William Henry Dickenson	7	2	29	Land in or close to the village of Pickwick
Thomas Seager, executor for Robert Hulbert and Robert Hulbert, in trust	30	1	5	Land to the north and north-west of West Park Barn, later Park Farm now gone. Land also close to site of Hartham Park Quarry.
William and Robert Hulbert	13	3	17	Land in the vicinity of Pickwick Brewery or to the north-east of it.
Henry Hall Joy Esq.	233	1	37	Land mainly in the vicinity of Pickwick Lodge, later Pickwick Lodge Farm.
Ann Michell	131	0	14	Land south of the original Pickwick Farm estate including Purleigh Barn. Some land close to Puckeridge [Pockeredge] Farm and land as far west as West Park Barn, later Park Farm, now gone.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>	

A greater breakdown of William and Robert's various landholdings in the parish can be seen in **Appendix H**. What lands were regarded as part of Pickwick Farm at this stage is unclear, beyond the 98 acres leased from to Sir Harry Neale. The extent of Pickwick Farm held from Sir Harry Neale can be seen in **Appendix I**. Looking at the Tithe Award, various members of the Hulbert family owned and/or occupied a significant amount of land and property in the parish of Corsham in 1839.

Sir Harry Burrard Neale Baronet was residing at Walhampton in the parish of Boldre in the county of Southampton at the time of his death in late 1839/early 1840 after writing his will dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 1839. His will was proved on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1840. He had been an admiral in



the Royal Navy and Knight Grand Cross of the Honourable Military Order of the Bath.<sup>84</sup> His widow Dame Grace Margaret Neale continued to hold the estates at Corsham during her lifetime and died at Lewisham in 1855.<sup>85 86</sup>

The 1841 Census provided detailed information about the occupants of Pickwick Farm at that time.<sup>87</sup>

## Corsham

### Pickwick Street

Robert Hulbert	aged 60	head	farmer
Joyce Hulbert	aged 60	wife	
Thomas Hulbert	aged 31	son	farmer
Henrietta Hulbert	aged 26	daughter	
Joyce Hulbert	aged 20	daughter	
Louisa Andrews	aged 15		FS (female servant)

It should be noted that Robert Hulbert was described as just a farmer rather than a farmer and common brewer by this stage. His son Thomas was also described as being a farmer which suggests they were working in partnership, possibly Robert was semi-retired.

In 1847, Thomas Hulbert had taken over the farm. In a newspaper article in the Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 1847, the farm had been entered for a competition organised by the Chippenham Agricultural Society for the best cultivated farm. Pickwick Farm was unplaced but a good description of the farm was given within the article as follows:<sup>88</sup>

*Mr. THOMAS HULBERT. Pickwick. This farm contains 236 acres, in about equal proportions of arable and meadow or pasture. - The soil of the greater part of the farm is stone brash; still, for so small a farm there is on the arable a great variety of soil; some being sandy, and some clay: consequently Mr. H. does not pursue any regular rotation of crops. Occasionally, two corn crops are taken in succession, followed by two green or root crops are grown, or a root crop and a clean fallow between the crops of wheat. Mr. H. drills the whole (or nearly so) of his crops, Guano has been used as a top dressing this season for wheat with very good effects: It has also been used for turnips with great advantage. Mr. H. has likewise this year tried salt as manure for barley, applying it to the land some time previous to sowing, but without any good effects. The average number of sheep returned as kept on the farm during the last three years was 200, but at the time the farm was inspected there were none; although ample provision was made and was making, in the way of green crop, for the full number.*

*The pasture land is applied to dairy purposes; the herd consists of thirty milch cows, principally of the short-horned breed, and sufficient young stock is raised to keep up the dairy. The pasture land is mown and fed alternatively, and manured as often as circumstances will permit, with compost of road earth and yard manure.*

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - England & Wales, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills, 1384-1858 - will of Sir Harry Burrard Neale of Walhampton baronet [accessed 17 Oct 2022]

<sup>85</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915 - Lady Grace Neale died at Lewisham in December 1855 [accessed 31 Oct 2022]

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1841 census for Corsham [accessed 31 Oct 2022]

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1848, 1855, 1859 and 1867 refer to Thomas Hulbert as a farmer in Pickwick.<sup>89</sup>

The 1851 Census indicates that Robert Hulbert and Thomas his son, the farmer were still residing at Pickwick Farm:<sup>90</sup>

### **Corsham**

#### **Pickwick Farm**

Robert Hulbert	aged 71	head	out of business
Joyce Hulbert	aged 70	wife	
Thomas Hulbert	aged 37	son	farmer
Henrietta Hulbert	aged 34	daughter	
Joyce Hulbert	aged 29	daughter	
Sarah Matlock	aged 18		servant

In 1852, Joyce Hulbert the wife of Robert Hulbert died aged 76 and six years later in 1858, Robert Hulbert died whilst still living in Pickwick at the age of 78. Both were buried in the parish.<sup>91 92</sup>

His adult children who had been residing with them in 1851 were still living at Pickwick Farm in 1861.

The 1861 Census shows:<sup>93</sup>

### **Corsham**

#### **Pickwick Farm**

Thomas Hulbert	aged 49	head	yeoman
Henrietta Hulbert	aged 45	sister	
Joyce Hulbert	aged 36	sister	

Following Dame Neale's death in 1855, she was succeeded as life tenant to the estates in Corsham by Robert Neale of Yate. He became Robert Neale of Corsham.<sup>94</sup>

In 1871 the Census shows that there had been a reduction in the size of Pickwick Farm to 100 acres and the siblings all unmarried were still occupying Pickwick Farm:<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Dirs. of Wilts. 1855, 1859 and 1867

<sup>90</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1851 census for Corsham [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813 to 1916 - burial of Joyce Hulbert on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1852 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Wiltshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813 to 1916 - burial of Robert Hulbert on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1858 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1861 census for Corsham [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>94</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1871 census for Corsham [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

## Corsham

### Pickwick Farm

Thomas Hulbert	aged 61	head	farmer of 100a - 2 men, 2 women and 1 boy employed
Henrietta Hulbert	aged 55	sister	
Joyce Hulbert	aged 49	sister	
Elizabeth Matthews	aged 18		general servant

At the time, Robert Neale of Corsham, the landowner was writing his will dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 1874, he was in fact living at Clevedale in the county of Gloucester. He died on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 1878 and his widow Ann was the main beneficiary of his will. She inherited all of his estates at Corsham.<sup>96</sup>

Kelly's Directory of Somerset and Wiltshire dated 1875 indicates that Thomas Hulbert was still at Pickwick Farm.<sup>97</sup>

However by 1880, the situation had changed and Kelly's Directory of Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorsetshire of that year refers instead to a Samuel Young as a farmer in Pickwick.<sup>98</sup>

The 1881 Census confirms the change of tenant farmer, but also the farm's acreage had reduced again to 87 acres.<sup>99</sup>

## Corsham

### Pickwick Farm

Samuel Young	aged 29	head	farmer of 87 acres employing 3 men
Caroline Young	aged 32	wife	
Clara Smith	aged 16		domestic servant

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August 1884, a sale advertisement appeared in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser relating to a farm sale, which being the Manor Farm, Pickwick, previously known as Pickwick Farm.<sup>100</sup> Samuel Young was quitting the farm. It is interesting to see this change of name. Had the gentrification of the farmhouse begun? Although an ancient holding and a site of significant interest, there is no evidence that this was the principal farm within the manor of Corsham nor within any other manor locally.

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<sup>96</sup> WSHC - 415/480 - Notes on Pickwick Farm, Corsham and rough pedigree of Wastfield - late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>97</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Dir. of Wilts. 1875

<sup>98</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Dirs. of Wilts. 1885, 1889 and 1895

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1881 census for Corsham

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

MANOR FARM, PICKWICK, CORSHAM, WILTS,  
About three-quarters of a mile from Corsham G.W.R. Station.

To DAIRYMEN, MILKERLLERS, AGRICULTURISTS, AND OTHERS.

Twenty grand young SHORT-HORN Calved and in-Calf DAIRY COWS and HEIFERS, of extraordinary size and quality; 20 Hampshire Down EWES, 5 prime Fat ditto, Chestnut NAG HORSE, 9 capital Berkshire Sows, 86 Store and Shoot Pigs, Berkshire Boar, about 30 head of choice Poultry, the modern Agricultural Implements, Dairy Utensils, &c.

MR. CHAS. H. PARRY is instructed by Mr. S. Young, to arrange and SELL by AUCTION on the Premises, on WEDNESDAY, the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of SEPTEMBER, 1884, commencing at 12 o'clock, the above admired HERD of

SHORTHORN BEASTS, &c.,

which will include 6 very superior young dairy cows with calves of immense size with quality, 6 ditto just springing for calving, 6 forward in calf; 2 very fresh barreners, 20 capital Hampshire-down ewes, 5 prime fat ditto, chestnut nag horse, 7 superior Berkshire sows and pigs, 2 ditto in farrow, 11 store pigs, well-bred Berkshire boar, quantity of choice poultry &c.; pony phaeton with pole, bar, &c., in good condition, spring cart equal to new, with raves, &c., narrow-wheel wagon, dung carts, hay collector, turnip cutter, 2-knife chaff cutter, oil cake mill, sack cart, iron and wood pig troughs, sets of trace and thill harness, agricultural tools, &c.; 2 patent barrel churns and stands, American ditto, butter kiver, boards and prints, 7 tin milk coolers and stands (by Adams and Peters, Bristol), 10 round ditto, milk warmer and cream tin, milk palls and buckets, &c.

The FEED of the Farm in convenient lots.

A portion of the modern Household FURNITURE which will consist of suite of capital dining-room furniture in polished oak and leather covering, equal to new; set of mahogany telescope dining and other tables, tapestry, Kidderminster and other carpets, steel-top and other fenders, harmonium in walnut wood with five stops, iron, French and other Bedsteads, equal to new, with brass mountings; mattresses and palliasses, washstands, dressing tables and appendages, cane seat and other chairs, towel and napkin horses, paraffin and other lamps, hall table, &c., &c.

The whole will be fully described in Catalogues, which will be in circulation two days preceding the sale, and may be obtained at the Offices of the Auctioneer.

Luncheon on the table at 11 o'clock.

Dated Auction, Land, Estate & Surveying Offices, Chilvester Hill, Calne, and Chippenham,  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1884.

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1885, 1889 and 1895 refer to a James Stone as a farmer in Pickwick.<sup>101</sup> It is known from later records that he had taken on the tenancy of Manor Farm and he was residing in the farmhouse now called the Manor House.

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<sup>101</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire 1885, 1889 and 1895

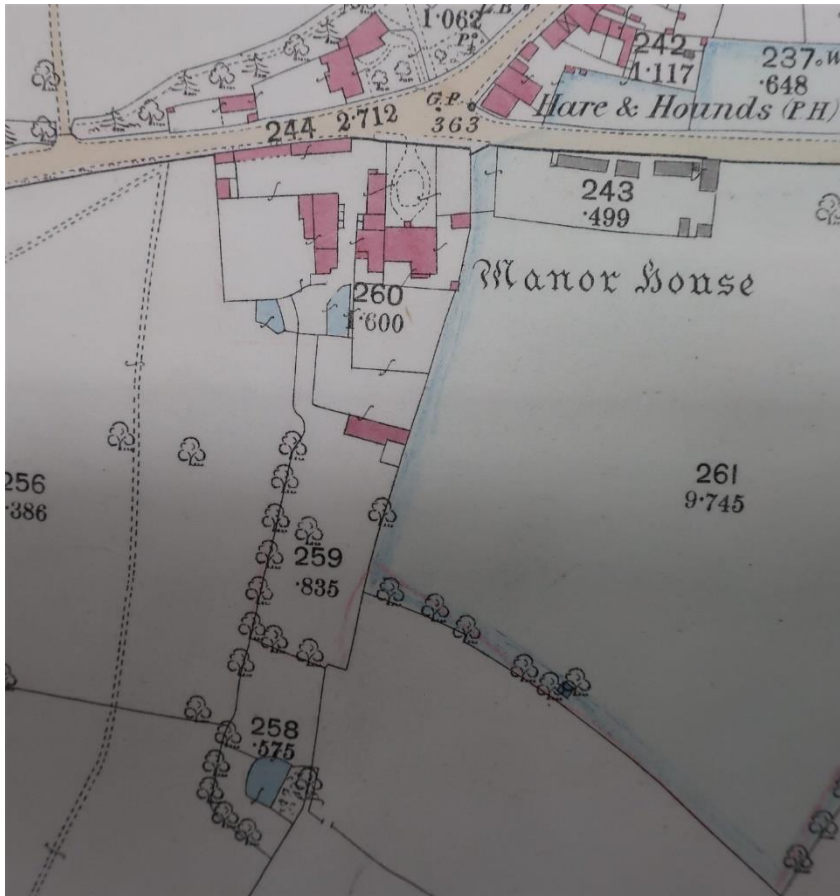


The first 25 inch Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map available for the parish of Corsham was surveyed in 1885 and published in 1886. It shows the farmhouse of Pickwick Farm now known as the 'Manor house' (see **Figs. 16a** and **16b**).<sup>102</sup>



**Fig 16a** - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1886 showing the 'Manor house' and surrounding fields

<sup>102</sup> WSHC - OS map of Corsham 1886 - 25 inch scale - sheet 25/8 surveyed in 1885 published in 1886



**Fig 16b - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1886 focussing on the Manor house**

A rather amusing criminal incident occurred on the site of Manor Farm in 1886 and was reported in the North Wilts Herald on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May of that year.<sup>103</sup>

COUNTY POLICE, MONDAY, May 24.

Before A. B. Rooke, Esq.

STEALING A GOOSE

*George Pearce and Charles Bull, both of Corsham, laborers, were brought up in custody charged with stealing one goose, the property of Mr. James Stone, of Pickwick, Corsham, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. – Mr James Stone stated that he was a farmer residing at the Manor Farm, Pickwick. About five o'clock on Sunday afternoon his attention was called by George Joles to the fact that two men had stolen a goose. He walked out into the yard and saw the two prisoners in a field in his occupation leading out into the Pickwick Road. He went up to Pearce and asked him what he had. He said that he had nothing. The prisoners stayed some little time and then went towards Pickwick. Prosecutor followed them, and again asked for the goose. He again denied having anything, whereupon prosecutor stopped and searched him, and took a goose from under his shirt, which prosecutor now identified as his property. It was worth 10s. During the time he was searching Pearce, Bull left. Shortly afterward Inspector Daniels came up, and he gave the prisoner into custody. - George Joles, a school-boy, of Corsham, stated that he was coming from Pickwick school when he heard geese making a noise in Mr. Stone's field. He looked over the wall, and saw the two prisoners driving the geese up into a corner. He saw Pearce catch a goose and try to put it in Bull's coat pocket, but he could not do so,*

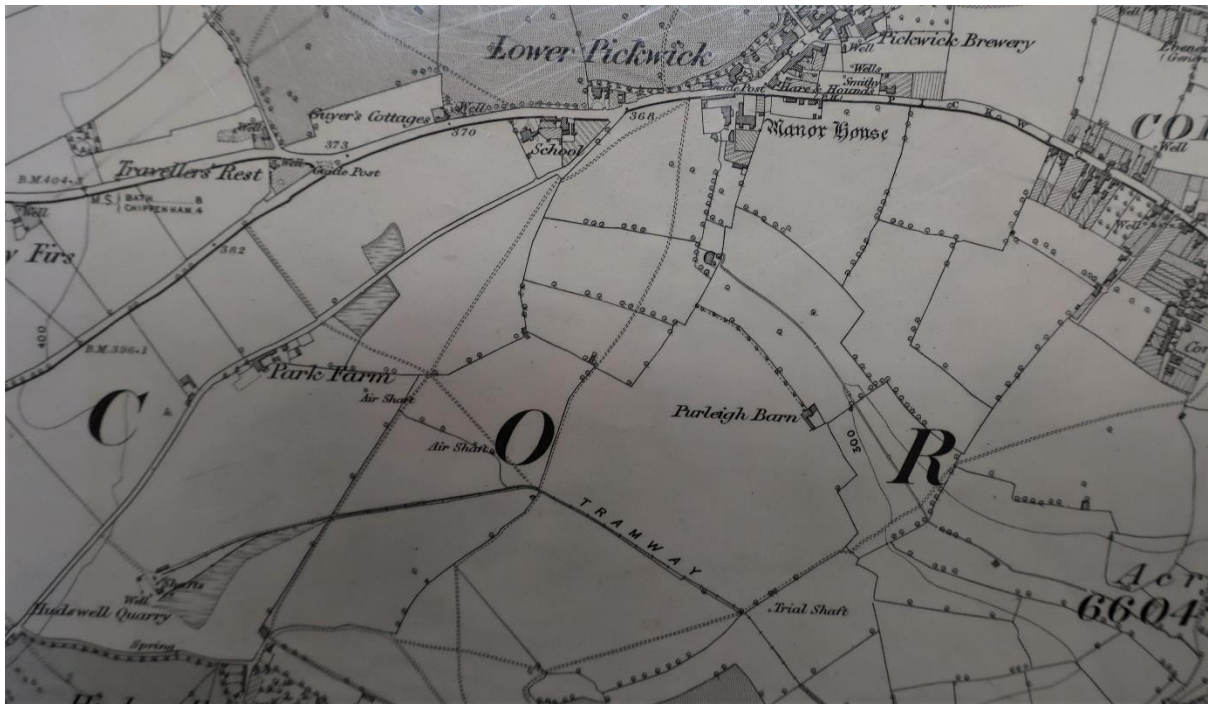
<sup>103</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

and he put it inside his own shirt. Witness then told Mr. Stone. - Defendants, who said they had had some drink or they would not have done it, were remanded until Thursday next.

THURSDAY, May 27.  
Before Rev. J.J. Daniell and E. H. Clutterbuck, Esq.  
STEALING A GOOSE.

William Pearce and Charles Bull were brought up on remand, charged with stealing a goose, the property of Mr. James Stone, on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, at Pickwick. The evidence as above having been read over, the following was given: - Robert Norman, a school-boy, stated that he was in company with the witness Joles. He saw the prisoners in Mr. Stone's field, and saw Pearce put a goose inside his shirt - Inspector Daniels stated that he apprehended the prisoners, and on searching them both found feathers on them, which were similar to the feathers on the goose. The defendants - against whom there was a long list of convictions - after being charged, pleaded guilty, and were each sentenced to two months' hard labor.

A further OS map with a 6 inch scale was published in 1889 (see Fig.17).<sup>104</sup>



**Fig 17 - Extract from the 6 inch OS map of 1889 focussing on the Manor house and the surrounding area**

Thomas Brakspear informs us that further alterations were made to the Manor House in c.1890. Amongst the most significant changes, stone tiles were removed from the north facing roof of the main house, the rafters replaced and the roof was recovered with machine made red clay plain tiles. The second floor attic was renovated which involved some re-plastering and new floor boards. A partition wall was introduced in the library to create a corridor from one side of the house to the other. Along the north elevation, all the mullioned and transomed windows were re-glazed.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>104</sup> WSHC - OS map of Corsham dated 1889 - 6 inch scale - sheet 25/8 surveyed in 1885 published in 1889

<sup>105</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

The 1891 Census confirms that James Stone and his family were still living at Manor Farm.<sup>106</sup>

## Corsham

### Pickwick Road, Manor Farm

James Stone	aged 40	head	farmer (employer)
Mary E Stone	aged 33	wife	
Arthur Stone	aged 4	son	scholar
Lilian M Stone	aged 6	daughter	scholar
Flaurance S Stone	aged 1	daughter	
Jane E Smith	aged 22	cousin	help/domestic
Mary A Smith	aged 14	cousin	help/domestic

Ann Neale, the widow of Robert Neale, whilst living in the parish of St Saviours in Bristol, died on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1891 and the estates at Corsham remained in the hands of trustees for the next three years.<sup>107 108</sup>

In 1893, the trustees under Ann Neale's will reached agreement with the churchwardens of the parish of Corsham in relation to a claim for the use of two pews in the parish church by occupants of both Corsham School (formerly the Mansion House) and Pickwick Manor Farm, both owned by the Neale family (see **Appendix J**).

## 9. Thomas White

The sale of the Corsham estates belonging to the Neale family occurred in 1894. A sale advertisement appeared in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 14 July of that year. Pickwick Farm was part of that sale.<sup>109</sup>

### CORSHAM, WILTS.

*CAPITAL RESIDENCE, ACCOMMODATION LANDS, DAIRY FARM and CORN MILL, situate at and near the Town of Corsham, and containing in all 172 Acres.*

*MR. WILLIAM BURBIDGE has received instructions to offer for SALE by AUCTION, at the METHUEN ARMS, CORSHAM, on THURSDAY, the 9<sup>th</sup> of AUGUST, 1894, at Four for Five o'clock in the Afternoon precisely, the following*

### VALUABLE PROPERTY,

*viz.:*

*Lot 1. - The Capital RESIDENCE, known as "CORSHAM SCHOOL," together with the Outbuildings, large Gardens, and Close of Pasture Land, available for building, the whole in the occupation of F.W. Joyner, Esq., and containing 6A 3R. 6P. To be viewed by Orders only, which may be obtained of the Auctioneer, Chippenham, Messrs. J.P. Sturge and Sons, Bristol, and Messrs. Gill and Bush, Solicitors, Bath.*

*Lot 2. - A Capital DAIRY FARM called "PICKWICK FARM."*

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1891 census for Corsham

<sup>107</sup> WSHC - 943/28 - Nine copyhold admissions, surrenders, and related deeds relating to various closes in Corsham, and also to a chief mansion house and lands called the Mansion or Corsham School (now the Grove) and Pickwick Manor Farm, and pews in the church relating to them. Parties: Dunsdon, Manning, Bezant, Neale - 1843-1894

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - Bristol, England, Church of England Burials, 1813-1994 - Ann Neale died on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1891 in the parish of St Saviours in Bristol but was at Yate, St Mary [accessed 4 Nov 2022]

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]



*comprising a fine Old Manor House, in the outskirts of the Town of Corsham, convenient Outbuildings, and sundry Closes of Land, nearly all Pasture of excellent quality, extending nearly to Corsham Station, having an approach from the Station Road and South Street. Also a Carpenter's Yard and Premises at Pickwick the whole containing 78A. 2R. 4P. It is probable that the valuable beds of Freestone, worked under the adjoining Property, extend under this Lot.*

*Lot 3. - TWO CLOSES OF RICH ACCOMMODATION PASTURE LAND, situate close to the Town of Corsham adjoining Lot 2, and occupied by Mr. Thos. Blackman - 17A 2R. 7P.*

*Lot 4. - A CLOSE OF FERTILE ARABLE LAND, situate near Pickwick Farm about three-quarters of a mile from Corsham, occupied by Mr. James Stone, and believed to contain valuable beds of Freestone - 13A. 2R. 17P.*

*Lot 5. - TWO CLOSES of ACCOMMODATION PASTURE LAND, situate about one mile from Corsham, on the Lacock Road, and occupied by Mr. C. R. Palmer. Also a small Piece of Woodland - 7A. OR. 3P.*

*Lot 6. - A PIECE OF PASTURE LAND near the Roebuck Inn and the Railway Bridge on the Lacock Road, also occupied by Mr. C. R. Palmer - 0A. 1R. 10P.*

*Lot 7. - A FIR PLANTATION at Thingley, adjoining the Public Road and the Great Western Railway - 0A. OR. 21P.*

*Lot 8. - A CLOSE OF ARABLE LAND near Pandown Bridge, occupied by Mr. Job Elmes - 2A. 3R. 1P.*

*Lot 9. - BYDE MILL AND FARM comprising a Water Corn Mill with auxiliary steam power, a convenient Dwelling-house, Farm Buildings, two Cottages, and several closes of excellent Pasture and Arable Land and Orcharding, pleasantly situated about two miles from Corsham, on the Road to Lacock, and four miles from Chippenham, and occupied by Mr. Wm. Cook - 44A. 3R. 32P.*

*Lot 10. - TWO COTTAGES AND GARDENS at Thingley Bridge - 0A. 2R. 1P.*

*Lot 11. - A STRIP of PLANTATION, situate on the Corsham and Lacock Road, about a quarter of a mile beyond the Railway Bridge - 0A. OR. 12P.*

*Lots 1 to 4, Lot 6, and Lots 8 to 10, inclusive, are Copyhold of the "King's Manor" of Corsham, and Lot 5 is Copyhold of the Rectory Manor. The Fines and Heriots are of a merely nominal amount, so that the Property may be considered as practically equal to Freehold. Lots 7 and 11 are sold as Freehold.*

*With each Lot will be included the Freehold Rectorial Tithe Rent-charge thereon, which belongs to the Vendors.*

*Printed Particulars, Plans, and Conditions of Sale are in course of preparation, and may shortly be obtained of the AUCTIONEER, Market Place, Chippenham; of Messrs. J. P. STURGE & SONS, Land Agents and Surveyors, 34, Corn Street, Bristol; of Mr. J.A. NEALE, Solicitor, 20, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. ; or of*

*Messrs. GILL & BUSH, Solicitors, 3, Miles Buildings, Bath.*

It was reported in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August 1894 that Pickwick Farm was sold to Mr Tom White for £3,560.<sup>110</sup> A newspaper advertisement in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 1896 does suggest that Mrs Charles Burbidge occupied Manor Farm for a period after it was sold in 1894.<sup>111</sup>

*FIXTURES OF AUCTION SALES BY MR. WILLIAM BURBIDGE...*

*Sept 18 - Household Furniture at the Manor Farm, Pickwick, Corsham, the property of Mrs. Charles Burbidge, who is leaving the neighbourhood...*

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>111</sup> Ibid

A further sale advertisement in the North Wilts Herald on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 1897 does indicate that Tom White had taken the decision to reside at Manor Farm himself.

*FIXTURES OF AUCTION SALES BY MR. WILLIAM BURBIDGE...*

*March 9 - 85 Tons of Old Hay and 17 Acres Feed, at the Manor Farm, Pickwick, Corsham, the property of Mr. T. WHITE, at 3 for 4 o'clock...*

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1898 and 1899 refer to Thomas White farmer, Manor house, Pickwick.<sup>112 113</sup>

A further OS map with a 25 inch scale was published in 1900 covering the village of Pickwick (see **Figs.18a** and **18b**).<sup>114</sup>



**Fig 18a - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1900 showing the Manor house and surrounding fields**

<sup>112</sup> <https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk> - Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1898 [accessed 4 Nov 2022]

<sup>113</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1899

<sup>114</sup> WSHC - OS map of Corsham 1900 - 25 inch scale - sheet 25/8 surveyed in 1884, revised 1899, published 1900

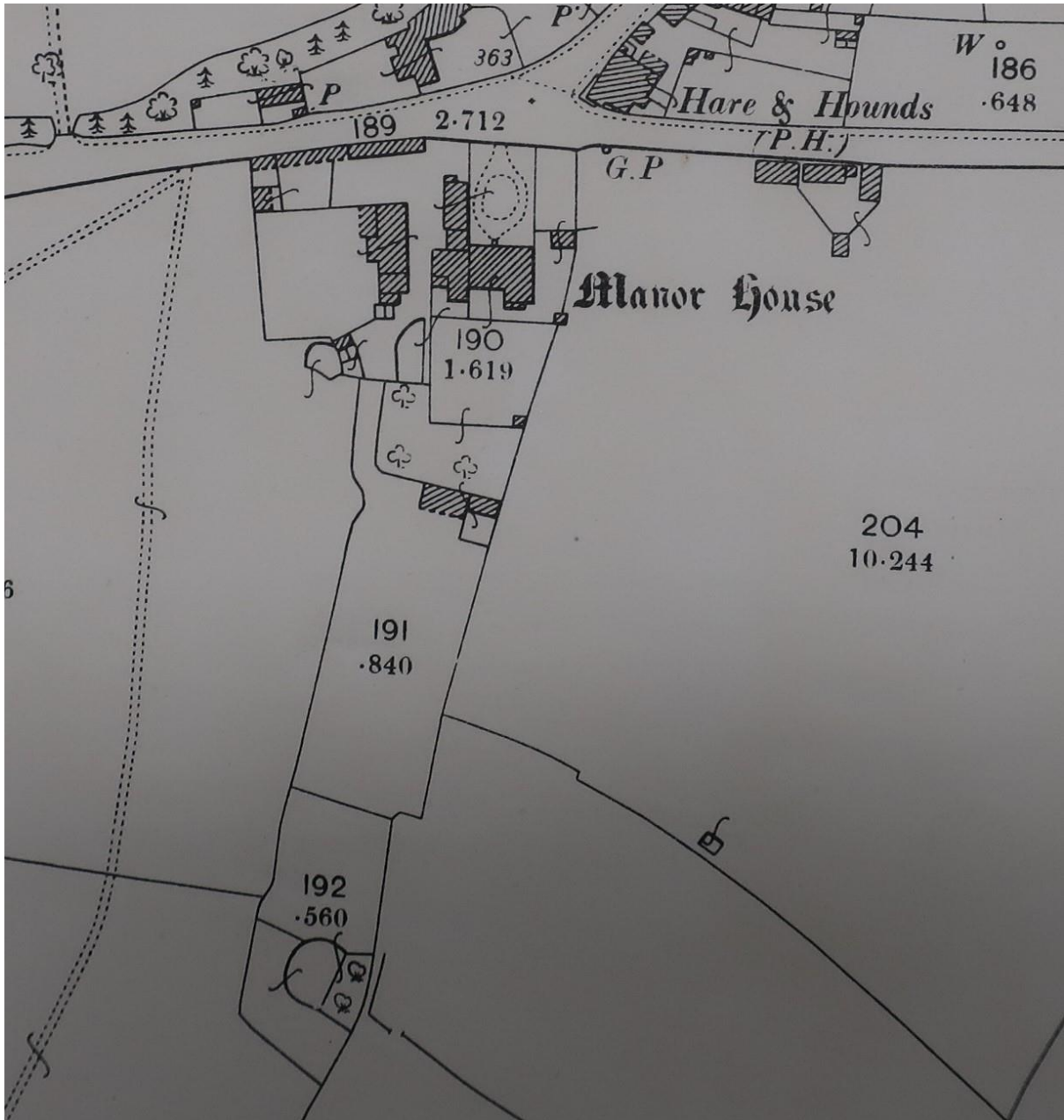


Fig 18b - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1900 focussing on the Manor house

## **10. The Goldney Family**

It is suspected that a change of ownership of Pickwick Manor Farm had occurred by 1901. The 1901 Census informs us that Robert Taylor, a farmer, rather than Tom White was now residing in the Manor House. It is likely that that Frederick H Goldney of Beechfield House had purchased the farm from Tom White at some point between 1899 and 1901 and Robert Taylor then took on the farm.

The 1901 Census provides details about Robert Taylor and his family living at Manor Farm:<sup>115</sup>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1901 census for Corsham [2 Nov 2022]

## Corsham

### Pickwick Road, Manor House

Robert J Taylor	aged 56	head	farmer (employer)
Louisa M Taylor	aged 59	wife	
Augusta M Taylor	aged 21	daughter	no occupation
Mabel M Taylor	aged 16	daughter	no occupation

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1903 and 1907 indicate Robert Taylor was still residing at the Manor House.<sup>116</sup>

A photograph taken in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century of Pickwick Street looking toward the Manor House can be seen in **Fig.19**.<sup>117</sup>



**Fig 19 - A black and white photograph of Pickwick Street dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century** (Permission kindly granted by the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre to reproduce this photograph in this report).

The Inland Revenue survey of 1910 confirms that Frederick H Goldney of Beechfield in Pickwick owned Pickwick Manor Farm and the occupier was still Robert Taylor as the resident farmer.<sup>118</sup> The house and farm together covered an area of about 83 acres at this stage (see **Fig.20**).

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<sup>116</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1903 and 1907

<sup>117</sup> WSHC - 4140/1/B20 BW - From junction at Middlewick Lane towards Hare & Hounds - no date. Permission kindly granted by WSHC to reproduce in this report.

<sup>118</sup> WSHC - L8/1/34 - Inland Revenue Domesday Survey - Corsham (1-500) dated 1910



*Parish of Corsham*

No. of Assessment	No. of Poor Rate	Christian Names and Surnames of Occupiers	Christian Names and Surnames of Owners, with their Residences	Description of Property— If an Inn, &c., the name or sign by which known	Street, Place, Name, and Precise Situation of Property	Poor Rate						Reference to Map	Extent as determined by Valuer			
						Estimated Extent	Gross Annual Value		Rateable Value		Acres		R.	P.	Y.	
							£	s.	£	s.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
504	384	Taylor R.J.	Methuen Lord	Agricul Land Buildings	Easton	244 1/2	196 2/3	176 10	28 1/2	26	XXV-5-H	249	0	6		
505	385	Taylor W.F.	'	No agdn	Westrop Hall	3	22	17 12				3	7			
506	386	Taylor T.E.	Himself	'	Ellabrough Hall		45	36								
507	387	Taylor R.J.	Goldney F.A.	Agricul Land Buildings	Pickwick Manor Farm	83 1/2	97 13/4	88 4	38 1/8	34 10	XXV-8-O	45	0	12		
508		'	Sehington Lord	Agricul Land	Otherwicks	9 3/4	20	19 10			XXV-8-H	6	3	16		

**Fig 20 - Extract from the Inland Revenue Survey of the parish of Corsham dated 1910 showing Robert James Taylor occupying Pickwick Manor Farm, whilst Frederick Hastings Goldney was the landowner. (Unfortunately no accompanying map is available).**

Frederick Goldney of Beechfield House was the principal landowner in and around Pickwick at this time. Born in 1845, he was the second son of Conservative MP, Gabriel Goldney of Chippenham. Eventually after the death of his father and then his eldest brother in 1925, he became Sir Frederick Hastings Goldney, 3rd Baronet of Beechfield and Bradenstoke Priory.<sup>119</sup>

In 1911 the Census shows Robert Taylor's continued occupation of Manor Farm.<sup>120</sup>

### Corsham

#### Manor Farm, Pickwick, Corsham

Robert James Taylor	aged 67	head	farmer (grazier) (employer)
Louisa Mary Taylor	aged 70	wife	gave birth to 9 children, 6 survived
Augusta Mary Taylor	aged 31	daughter	

Robert Taylor's tenure lasted until 1916. It was reported in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 1916 that he had died and his furniture and effects were being sold.

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.corshamcivicsociety.co.uk/the-goldney-family-and-beechfield-house> [accessed 4 Nov 2022]

<sup>120</sup> 1911 Census for the parish of Corsham

C. W. OATLEY.

**Manor Farm, Pickwick, Corsham.**

*CHARLES W. OATLEY has received instructions from the Executors of the late Mr. R. J. Tayler, to Arrange and SELL by AUCTION, on the above Premises, on WEDNESDAY, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. 1916, commencing at Two o'clock, the well-made*

**FURNITURE AND EFFECTS.**

*Including:*

*Mahogany Sideboard, Dining Table, Couches, Easy Chairs, Sets of Mahogany Dining-room Chairs, Brussels and other Carpets, Oak Grandfather Clock, Carved Oak Coffers, wheel Barometer, Cottage Piano in Walnut Case, Antique Mahogany Bracket Clock, Settees, Loo, Card and other Tables, Wicker and Occasional Chairs. Suite in Velvet, Standard Lamp, Mahogany, Brass and Iron Bedsteads, Chest of Drawers, Antique Wardrobe with sliding trays. Mattresses, Beds and Bedding. Marble Top and other Washstands, Dressing Tables, Toilet Glasses, Ware, etc., Four-fold Screen, Kitchen Dresser, Meat Safes, China, Glass and the usual Kitchen Utensils.*

*Outside – Garden Tools, Lawn Mowers, Tennis and Croquet Sets, Carpenter's Bench. Fowl house and Run, two Pigeon Cotes, 42-round Ladder, about 70 Head of Poultry, Set of Trace Harness, two sets of Thill, and Brass-mounted Pony Harness, Spring Market Cart, Iron Pig Troughs, Interchangeable Horse Gear, and a quantity of other useful items.*

*On view morning of Sale. No catalogues.*

C.W. OATLEY.

*Auctioneer and Valuer, Corsham and Box.*

His death had fallen during the First World War and Thomas Brakspear has indicated that the building remained empty, which is supported by the fact that there was no entry for Pickwick Manor in the electors' register for the parish of Corsham in 1918.<sup>121 122</sup>

A crop of grass from the Manor field (11 acres) belonging to Manor Farm was sold at auction on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 1916, following instruction from F.H. Goldney himself.<sup>123</sup> Also a newspaper article on the bankruptcy of Arthur A Higgins of Derriads Farm, Chippenham in 1923, indicates that he farmed Manor Farm at Pickwick successfully for two years from 1916 before moving to the larger Derriads Farm.<sup>124</sup> Where he resided when farming Pickwick Farm is unknown.

<sup>121</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>122</sup> WSHC- A1/355/199 - Chippenham Division - Electors' Register covering the parish of Corsham dated 1918

<sup>123</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> - Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 3 June 1916 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> - Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 20 January 1923 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

## **11. The Brakspear family**

Thomas Brakspear advises that Mrs Lilian Brakspear bought the house [it seems without most of the land previously associated with the farm] from the Goldney family in 1919.<sup>125</sup> It is apparent from the electors' register for the parish of Corsham in 1920 the property was still empty.<sup>126</sup> Thomas Brakspear does advise that the building underwent some renovation work and it is more likely than not this occurred before Harold and Lilian Brakspear moved into the house with their family. Harold Brakspear was an architect and his practice oversaw the renovation work being conducted. A work schedule of commissions dating from 1919-1920 has been found which includes Pickwick Manor along with mostly churches and war memorials.<sup>127</sup>

Dates from this chart provides a picture on how the works were carried out at Pickwick Manor:

**Surveying** - October 1919

**Design finished** - 25<sup>th</sup> October 1919

**Specification finished** - 28<sup>th</sup> October 1919

**Contractor** Rudman - 17<sup>th</sup> November 2019 [possibly the date when the works commenced]

Thomas Brakspear provides a list of the alterations that were carried out.<sup>128</sup>

- Removal of all ground floor old stone floors with the exception of the Hall area
- Conversion back to thick barred sashes for all c.1711 sash windows
- Restoration of leaded lights to all mullioned windows
- Substantial remodelling of the kitchen area (south wing) together with the additions with flat roofs on either side of it. This involved the raising of the roof of this wing by about 1500mm. What remained of the old fabric was limited to the lower walls and a couple of windows.

However, the large sixteenth century domestic barn and some lands formerly associated with Manor Farm remained in the ownership of Sir Frederick Goldney and became known as Manor Barn Farm.<sup>129</sup>

There is evidence that the family had moved into Manor Farm now known as Pickwick Manor by Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 1920, when a job advertisement appeared in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser.<sup>130</sup>

*EXPERIENCED COOK – GENERAL Wanted; five in family; Governess and four maids kept; good wages to suitable person. – Apply to Mrs. BRAKSPEAR, Pickwick Manor, Corsham.*

<sup>125</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>126</sup> WSHC- A1/355/214 - Chippenham Division - Electors' Register covering the parish of Corsham dated 1920

<sup>127</sup> WSHC - 2512/340/6 - Handwritten chart of work including notes of the dates of surveys, designs and execution of work for various clients – 1919-1920

<sup>128</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>129</sup> WSHC - 1959/15 - Sale particulars of the Pickwick estate with plans and photographs dated 1948

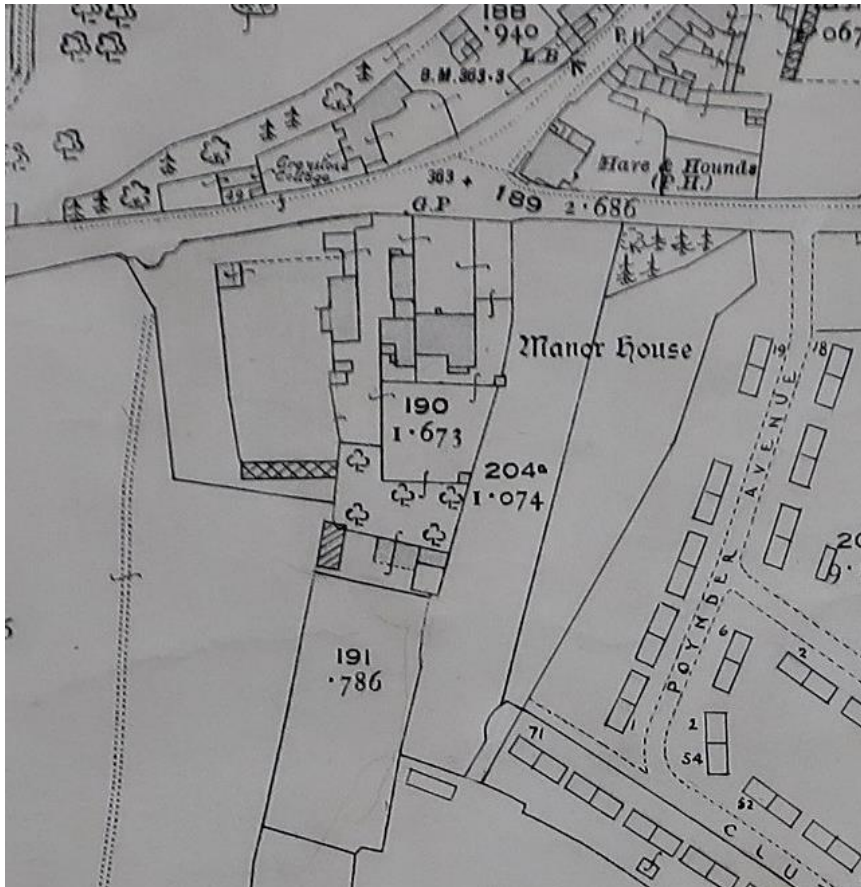
<sup>130</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

A further 25 inch OS map was published in 1921 (see **Figs. 21a** and **21b**).<sup>131</sup>



**Fig 21a - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1921 showing the Manor house, Pickwick and the surrounding area**

<sup>131</sup> WSHC - OS map of Corsham 1921 - 25 inch scale - sheet 25/8 surveyed in 1884, levelling revised 1899, revised 1919 and published 1921



**Fig 21b - Extract from the 25 inch OS map of 1921 focussing on Pickwick Manor, formerly the Manor House, Pickwick**

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1920 and 1923 record Harold Brakspear as a private resident of Pickwick and occupying The Manor House in 1920 and the same property named Pickwick Manor in 1923.<sup>132</sup>

Within Harold Brakspear's diary of 1928 there is evidence that Pickwick Manor was to be rented out for the winter or at least there was a desire for this to happen. Pickwick Manor was being made available fully furnished for at least six months between 24<sup>th</sup> October 1928 and the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1929. The evidence is in the form of a copy rental agreement, the parties to which were Lilian Brakspear and Arthur Westall Vivian-Neal Esq of Chelsea, London. What transpired is unknown.<sup>133</sup>

The electors' register for the Chippenham Division for 1930 shows again Harold and Lilian Brakspear living at Pickwick Manor in the parish of Corsham.<sup>134</sup>

Harold Brakspear with a practice in Corsham, became an architect of national renown when he successfully completed works at St George's Chapel at Windsor. He was knighted for his efforts. His new fame was reported in the Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette on Saturday 8 November 1930.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire 1920 and 1923

<sup>133</sup> WSHC - 3692/3/41 - Brakspear's diary for 1928 ... copy of a legal agreement relating to Pickwick Manor, Corsham ...1928

<sup>134</sup> WSHC - A1/355/264 - Electors' register for Chippenham Division, parish of Corsham dated 1930

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]



## **WILTSHIREMAN'S FAME**

**MR. HAROLD BRAKSPEAR OF CORSHAM TO BE KNIGHTED**

**GREAT WORK COMPLETED**

*There was a brilliant and impressive scene on Tuesday at St George's Chapel, Windsor, "the shrine of chivalry," when the King and Queen attended the service following its restoration by a Wilts architect, Mr. Harold Brakspear of Pickwick Manor, Corsham,. Bath stone was employed.*

*The King was present as Sovereign of the Order of the Garter, of which the Queen is the only woman member. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, Prince George, Prince Arthur of Connaught and other Knights of the Garter were present, as were the Military Knights of Windsor.*

*The Bishop of Winchester (Prelate of the Order), the Bishop of Oxford (the Chancellor), and the Dean of Windsor (Registrar), were among the clergy present.*

*It is understood that it is the King's intention to confer the following decorations in connection with the re-opening of the chapel: -*

*Mr Harold Brakspear, the architect, K.C.V.O.; Mr. Albert Minter, C.V.O.; Mr. Hopkins, foreman, M.V.O. (5<sup>th</sup> class); the Rev. B.C.S. Everett, minor canon, M.V.O. (4<sup>th</sup> class); the Rev. E.H. Fellowes, minor canon, M.V.O. (4<sup>th</sup> class); Mr. Kempton, senior lay clerk, Royal Victorian Medal; Mr. Stainton, chapter clerk, M.V.O. (5<sup>th</sup> class).*

**STRIKING TRIBUTE.**

*In an exhaustive resume of the work of restoration the Rev. A.C. Deane, Canon of Windsor, recalls that in 1920 Mr. Brakspear wrote a letter to the Dean, in which he said: "I solemnly warn you that that there is a very grave danger of collapse."*

*"Beside these words," (proceeds the Canon), "I may set, without breach of confidence, the last sentence of his final report to us, dated October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1930, viz., 'It is no exaggeration to say that at no time in its history has the structure of St. George's Chapel been so secure as at the present.' The difference between these sentences is the measure of what has been achieved.*

*"No tribute to the skill of Mr. Harold Brakspear," adds the Canon, "can be too high, and at any critical point he was able to reinforce his judgement by turning to Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, whom the Royal Academy had nominated as Honorary Consulting Architect."*

*As a result of what has been done, the "King's Beasts" again crown the pinnacles after an absence of 250 years, and many vast improvements have been made.*

**COST £250,000.**

*Mr. Brakspear had a seat near the Knights of the Garter at the dedication service on Tuesday, and Mrs. Brakspear was also present.*

*The work cost a quarter of a million.*

*Mr. Brakspear's architectural work has won fame all over the country.*

*Locally he has been responsible for the restoration work at Malmesbury Abbey, and the recent addition to the East End of the Bath Abbey.*

*He is a great authority on the archaeology of Wiltshire, and acted during the summer as guide to the Royal Archaeological Institute, when they spent a week in Bath, writing the official descriptions for the tours into Wiltshire.*

In 1931, Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire confirms that he was now Sir Harold Brakspear K.C.V.O of Pickwick manor in the parish of Corsham.<sup>136</sup>

The grounds of Pickwick Manor was the site of a garden party for the benefit of the Mothers' Union. The event was reported in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser on Saturday 20 June 1931.<sup>137</sup>

*MOTHERS' UNION* By the kind invitation of Lady Brakspear, a delightful garden party was held at Pickwick Manor, some 100 guests being present. The Lacock Union sent a party who rendered a sketch under Mrs. Jackson. An excellent tea was served afterwards and houp-la (everyone receiving a prize) and other games were played. Lady Methuen was present. The Rev. W.H. Goodge voiced the thanks of those present to Lady Brakspear for such a delightful time, the weather being excellent.

Sadly, three years later, at the age of sixty-four, Sir Harold Brakspear died after a short illness. The matter was reported in the Bath Chronicle and Herald on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November 1934.<sup>138</sup>

*Sir Harold Brakspear Dies at Bath*

**FAMOUS CHURCH ARCHITECT**

**RESTORER OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR**

**RESIDENT OF CORSHAM**

*We deeply regret to announce that Sir Harold Brakspear, K.C.V.O., F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., the distinguished Wiltshire architect, whose home was at Pickwick Manor, Corsham, died on Tuesday evening in a Bath nursing home after an illness of about a month's duration. Since Sunday, the daily bulletins regarding Sir Harold's condition had been less reassuring, and Lady Brakspear had spent nearly all her time in devotedly watching at his bedside.*

*Sir Harold, who was sixty-four, was the youngest son of the late Mr. William Hayward Brakspear, of Sale Bank, Cheshire. He was educated privately, and qualified as an architect by the examination of the Royal Institute of the British Architects in 1892. He was chiefly engaged in the restoration of old buildings, and his most famous achievement was the restoration of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. For this work, he was created a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.*

**COMMERATIVE SERVICE.**

*On Wednesday, November 4th, 1930, there was a brilliant scene in this chapel, which has been aptly styled "The Shrine of Chivalry," when the King and Queen attended a service in celebration of the restoration.*

*The King was present as Sovereign of the Order of the Garter. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, Prince George, Prince Arthur of Connaught, and other Kings of the Garter were present, as were the Military Knights of Windsor.*

<sup>136</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Directory of Wiltshire 1931

<sup>137</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>138</sup> Ibid

*Sir Harold had a seat near the Knights of the Garter at this service, and Lady Brakspear was also present.*

*In the last sentence of his final report on this work to the Canon of Windsor, Sir Harold stated: "It is no exaggeration to say that at no time in its history has the structure of St. George's Chapel been so secure as at the present.:"*

*No tribute to the skill of Sir Harold, said the Canon, can be too high.*

*The restoration cost a quarter of a million, and Bath stone was employed. As a result of Sir Harold's work, the "King's Beasts" were restored to the pinnacles after an absence of 250 years.*

#### **CHURCH RESTORER.**

*Sir Harold's architectural work had gained him fame all over the country. He restored Battle Abbey, near Pevensey, Sussex, associated with the landing of William the Conqueror, after the fire there several years ago.*

*He was also associated with the restoration of Workshop Priory, Nuneaton Priory, Ludlow Church, and St. Worlos, Newport.*

*The mansions which he restored were Great Chalfield, Lacock Abbey, Hazelbury, Little Sidbury, and Sherborne Castle.*

*Sir Harold was also responsible for the restoration work at Malmesbury Abbey, and for the enrichments at the east end of Bath Abbey.*

*Besides being consulting architect to the Dean and Canons of Windsor, Sir Harold was consulting architect to the Dean and Canons of Worcester.*

#### **ARCHÆOLOGICAL AUTHORITY.**

*Sir Harold was a great authority on the archæology of Wiltshire, and on several occasions acted as guide to various architectural associations when they visited Bath and district. He fulfilled this duty in 1929, when the Royal Institute of British Architects made Bath the centre of a series of summer excursions, personally conducting the visitors over Lacock Abbey.*

*During the summer of 1930, Sir Harold acted as guide to the Royal Archæological Institute when they spent a week in Bath, and wrote the official descriptions for the tours into Wiltshire.*

*He was the author of many papers in various archæological journals.*

*In 1908, Sir Harold married Lilian, youngest daughter of Mr. Walter Somers, J.P., of Halesowen, Worcestershire.*

*There is a family of two—a son, Mr. Oswald Brakspear, who is a student of the Faculty of Architecture at Bristol University, and a daughter, Miss Mary Brakspear.*

*Sir Harold underwent an operation in Bath some weeks ago.*

*A requiem for Sir Harold was held at Corsham Parish Church on Friday afternoon. The interment followed in the vault at Corsham churchyard, when the Rev. G. Holborow (vicar of Corsham) officiated. The Bishop of Bristol (Dr. C. S. Woodward) was present.*

Following Sir Harold's death, the decision was taken to let out Pickwick Manor. It was advertised in the Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February 1935.<sup>139</sup> A photograph of the south elevation with the following text is within the advertisement.

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<sup>139</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

TO BE LET.

[Photograph of south elevation]

**PICKWICK MANOR**

**CORSHAM, WILTSHIRE.**

(Bath 8 miles, Chippenham 4 miles, Bristol 20 miles).

The RESIDENCE of the late Sir Harold Brakspear, K.C.V.O.

**Attractive 17<sup>th</sup> Century Stone-Built RESIDENCE,**

Comprising: - Spacious Lounge, Hall, Three Reception Rooms, Cloakroom and the usual Domestic Offices: Five Principal Bedrooms (Three fitted with Lavatory, Basins), Nursery, Linen Room, Two Bathrooms, Small Room used as a Chapel, Three Attic Bedrooms and Tank Room.

ELECTRIC LIGHT

CENTRAL HEATING

HOT WATER CIRCULATION

**GROUND**S, including Tennis Court amount in all, to about **THREE ACRES.**

**TWO GARAGES.**

For Full Particulars, apply to the SOLE AGENTS; -

**JOHN E. PRITCHARD & CO.**

F.A.I.

SURVEYORS AND ESTATE AGENTS.

27, ORCHARD STREET and 82, QUEEN'S ROAD, BRISTOL.

Kelly's Directories of Wiltshire dated 1935 and 1939 show Mrs Christiana Candida Andreae as a private resident and occupant of Pickwick manor.<sup>140</sup>

It does appear that Mrs Andreae was not the only occupant of Pickwick Manor. On Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1937 an article in the Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser refers to a Victor Alexander Mallett of Pickwick Manor, Corsham.

***Foreign Office Official Fined.***

*Despite the warning issued by the Bench at the last Court that in future offenders in halt sign cases would be more heavily fined, no less than 21 offenders were summoned for failing to halt.*

*Victor Alexander Mallett, a Foreign Office official, of Pickwick Manor, Corsham, for whom Mr. E.H. Atchley, of Bristol, appeared, was charged with failing to stop and also with failing to sign his current driving license.*

*P.C. Ralls, giving evidence, said defendant was very indignant when he was stopped, snatched the pencil out of his hand, and signed his license.*

<sup>140</sup> WSHC, Local Studies - Kelly's Dirs. of Wilts. 1935 and 1939

*Mr Atchley said the defendant was an official of the British Embassy in Washington, U.S.A., and had been out of the England for a long time and only returned two days before he was stopped. He was fined £1 in each case.*

The electors' register for the Chippenham Division dated 1939 suggests that she was the only adult occupying the house at this stage.<sup>141</sup> She had been born in 1881, so was 58 years old by this stage. In 1911, the Census shows she was married to Herman Andrae a merchant. They lived together with their children in an 18 room house with a full staff in Chislehurst in south-east London.<sup>142</sup>

In 1946, Pickwick Manor was sub-divided into two dwellings by Lady Lilian Brakspear, although it appears both properties remained in the ownership of the Brakspear family. There was an east/west division with the main house built in c.1664 becoming the east side, the remainder of the building to the west side becoming a separate dwelling; probably including at least part of the older north wing. Plans showing the conversion into two dwellings can be found at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, including a description of all alterations which were proposed to make this happen. Such alterations included the provision of a new front door and lavatory. Additionally, alterations to the kitchen, complete redecoration and repairs to plaster etc.<sup>143 144</sup>

The Pickwick Estate in Corsham, owned by Sir Frederick Hastings Goldney, now deceased, was up for sale in 1948. Pickwick Manor was unaffected, as it had been sold off by the Goldney family in 1919. However Manor Barn Farm previously part of Pickwick Farm was advertised for sale (see **Appendix K**).<sup>145</sup> The plan accompanying the sale particulars shows the previous sub-division of the homestead of Pickwick Farm (see **Fig.22**).



**Fig 22 - Extract from a plan accompanying the sale particulars of the Pickwick estate dated 1948 showing the site of Pickwick Manor in the ownership of the Brakspear family**

<sup>141</sup> WSHC - A1/355/309 - Electors' register for Chippenham Division, parish of Corsham dated 1939

<sup>142</sup> <https://www.genesreunited.co.uk> - 1911 census for Chislehurst in south-east London [29 Sept 2022]

<sup>143</sup> WSHC - G3/760/1249 - Conversion into 2 houses, Pickwick Manor, Corsham for Lady Brakspear - 1946

<sup>144</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>145</sup> WSHC - 1959/15 - Sale particulars of the Pickwick estate with plans and photographs dated 1948



It is interesting to note that the former barn of Pickwick Manor Farm was stated by Percy Mundy in a book, *Memorials of Old Wiltshire* as being a fine example of a 16<sup>th</sup> century domestic barn, similar to a barn at Great Chalfield.<sup>146</sup>

E. Bradley & Son were given permission in May 1948 to convert the Manor Barn into a residence in 1948, retaining its name.<sup>147</sup> A site plan relating to this project can be seen in **Fig.23**, showing the footprint of the Manor House in 1948.



**Fig 23 - A site plan accompanying the planning application to convert the Manor Barn into a residence in 1948 shows the site of the Manor House**

By 1949, Oswald Somers Brakspear was living at Pickwick Manor. He was the son of Sir Harold and Lady Lilian Brakspear.<sup>148</sup> Following retirement, Reginald Master who had been a Principal of a Boys' College in Doncaster came to live at Pickwick Manor and was also living there in 1949.<sup>149</sup> <sup>150</sup> By 1953, Capt. John Michael Dudgeon Gray was living at Pickwick Manor.<sup>151</sup> Whilst by the same year, Oswald

<sup>146</sup> WSHC, Local Studies Library - AAA.940 - Alice Dryden and S. Ogilby Baker (1906) - *Memorials of Old Wiltshire* - Ancient Barns in Wiltshire p.233

<sup>147</sup> WSHC - G3/760/1370 - Conversion of Manor Barn into house - E Bradley & Son - 1948

<sup>148</sup> WSHC - A1/355/344 - Register of Electors - Chippenham Division, Parish of Corsham - 1950

<sup>149</sup> WSHC - A1/355/344 - Register of Electors - Chippenham Division, Parish of Corsham - 1950

<sup>150</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> - Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser - Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September 1954 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>151</sup> <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> - Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser - Saturday 12 September 1953 [accessed 2 Nov 2022]

Brakspear was a practicing architect.<sup>152</sup> Capt. Gray was still a tenant there at No.1 Pickwick Manor in 1960, when Oswald Brakspear was residing at Pickwick Manor with his wife, Angela.<sup>153</sup>

In 1985, the Manor Barn was advertised for sale for £120,000 in the Tilley & Noad Property News and described as being a character property of considerable charm with two double garages, outbuildings, a spectacular garden and a pony paddock extending to 0.75 acres.<sup>154</sup>

Thomas Brakspear informs us in his 2006/7 application for listing building consent, that in 1989, stone tiles replaced the red clay plain tiles on the north roof of Pickwick Manor to recreate its original appearance.<sup>155</sup>

In 1992/3, listed building consent was given for some internal alternations to the older north wing.<sup>156</sup>

Photographs of the exterior of Pickwick Manor can be found in **Appendix L** dating from 1996 taken by the Wiltshire Buildings Record.<sup>157</sup>

Oswald Brakspear died at Corsham in 1999 at the age of eighty-seven, whilst his wife, Angela passed away, also at Corsham at the age of 80 in 2004.<sup>158 159</sup>

In 2007, listed building consent was obtained by Thomas Brakspear, the son of the late Oswald Brakspear, to make internal and external alterations to the building, including a new dormer window, a further window, a glazed door on the east elevation of the building and the removal and relocation of internal partitions. The plans relating to these works are held on the Wiltshire Buildings Record file for the main building.<sup>160 161 162</sup>

In 2013, listed building consent was given with conditions to erect a new garden wall, to relocation a window, modify an old window opening to a glazed doorway and create new doorways as well as carry out other internal alterations.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - British Phone Books, 1880-1984 - Oswald Brakspear, Pickwick Manor, A.R.I.B.A.[accessed 2 Nov 2022]

<sup>153</sup> WSHC - A1/355/394 - Register of Electors - Chippenham Division, Parish of Corsham - 1960-61

<sup>154</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347.2 barn (Pickwick Manor)

<sup>155</sup> WSHC, Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor Corsham

<sup>156</sup> <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk> - N/92/01107/LBC (17 June 1992, decision date 8 Jan 1993) - Pickwick Manor - Sundry internal alterations to North Wing - approved [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>157</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor

<sup>158</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - England and Wales Death Index 1989-2021 - Oswald Brakspear died 20<sup>th</sup> March 1999 [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>159</sup> <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> - England and Wales Death Index 1989-2021 - Mrs Angela Mary Clare Brakspear died 9<sup>th</sup> December 2004 [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>160</sup> WSHC - Wiltshire Buildings Record - B1347 - Pickwick Manor

<sup>161</sup> <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk> - N/06/01782/LBC (21 July 2006) - Pickwick Manor - Remove Modern Internal Partition Wall and One Internal Door. Install One New Internal Door and One Partition Wall - approved with conditions [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>162</sup> <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk> - N/06/02838/LBC (3 Nov 2006, decision date 14 Aug 2007) - Pickwick Manor - Internal and External Alterations Including Dormer Window, Inserting of New Door & Window & Removal / Relocation of Partitions - approved on appeal [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

<sup>163</sup> <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk> - N/13/01738/LBC (17 June 2013) - Pickwick Manor - Erect Garden Wall Following Demolition of Current Garden Wall, Relocation of Window, Modification of Old Window Opening to Glazed Doorway, Formation of New Doorways & Internal Alterations - approved with conditions [accessed 6 Nov 2022]

Thomas and Lucy Brakspear hosted the Pickwick Association Summer Cream Tea on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at Pickwick Manor in support of the organisation.<sup>164</sup>

Members of the Brakspear family continue to live at Pickwick Manor, a house with a very long and interesting history.

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<sup>164</sup> <https://www.corshamcivicsociety.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Spotlight-Autumn-2018-edit-4-Dec-compressed.pdf> [accessed 18 Oct 2022]