

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



N E W S L E T T E R 114

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Special edition: **NUTLEY**

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CALENDAR: Nether Wallop Rectory by Michael Hicks on
Thursday, 10th January

Shakespeare's Rose Theatre by Julian Bowden
on Thursday, 14th February

Wessex Sound & Film Archive by David Lee on
Thursday, 14th March

All at 7.30 pm in the Conference Room, Regional Centre

AND Excavations at Oakridge, Basingstoke by Mary Oliver
7.30, 16th January at the Alton Community Centre
(Alton History & Archaeology Society)

ANNOUNCEMENT:

We are now a registered charity.

AND WHEN DO WE DO THE DIGGING?

Newcomers to our Society have been asking me recently "When do we actually do any digging?" This is a fair question, seeing that we are an archaeological society, and one that I think needs answering honestly.

The first point which I feel ought to be borne in mind is that no responsible society will embark on a dig without being led by a trained and competent director. At the moment those of us who are qualified to do this are, for the time being, unable to give enough time. When there is enough demand we have occasionally been able to arrange a training dig. We shall, of course, let members know of any digs likely to be organised in our area by the Museum Service, the Trust for Wessex Archaeology etc, who sometimes ask for help.

Secondly, although digging is important, there are other, non-destructive, ways of undertaking archaeological work. We have begun field-walking some sites that show up on air photographs. This often has to be arranged at short notice once we have got the farmer's permission and the ground is in the right state. Any finds then have to be processed - washed, marked and perhaps drawn - and we hope to start finds processing again soon after Christmas, when we have transferred our bits and pieces from the Kempshott Village Hall to the Pottery Room at the Regional Centre (an appropriate place!)

Also, there is "hole-watching": if you see a hole or trench being dug, look into it and see if any pieces of pottery or other artefacts are being unearthed. But of course, don't go onto a site without permission from the land-owner or contractor. And let a member of the committee know if you see anything interesting.

Thirdly, we are also a historical society, and there is plenty of work to be done of this kind. Anne Hawker would be glad of help for research on historical Basingstoke - whilst not everyone can easily read mediaeval Latin, there is plenty of research that can be done in later records. And David Lee's forthcoming talk on the Wessex Film and Sound Archive might well inspire some members to do some work on oral history.

So all in all, there is plenty that we can do on our own patch.

And the group working on the video BENEATH BASINGSTOKE would also be glad of help in planning etc.

Please let the following know if you want to take part:

Excavation, field-walking, finds processing, hole watching:
Peter Heath (Basingstoke 27713); Mary Oliver (24263)

Local history records: Anne Hawker (22748)

Video:

Barbara Applin (465439); John Horrocks (780537)

RICHARD DEXTER

NETHER WALLOP RECTORY

Talk by Michael Hicks, Thursday 10th January

This doesn't just mean the building but the benefice: and it is a fascinating account of ecclesiastical skullduggery.

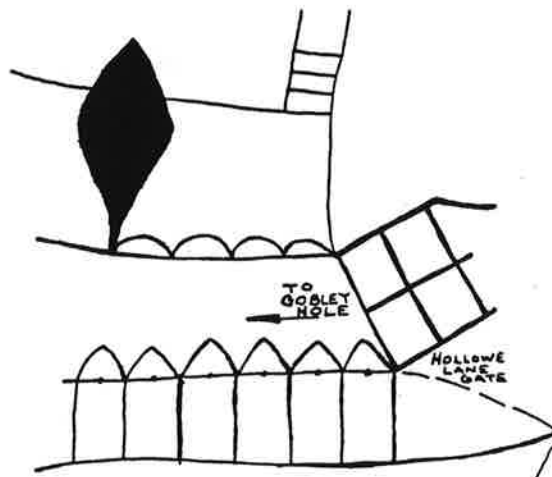
NUTLEY PARISH

History

Parishes were in existence before the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. By that date the lands at Nutley - which meant the lands of Nutley Manor, although not necessarily the whole of the parish - were assessed at 100 shillings. By the time of Domesday in 1087 their value was slightly less, at £4 10 shillings. Nutley was one of the parishes in the Hundred of Bermondspit, which included Dummer, Ellisfield, Farleigh Wallop, Herriard and Preston Candover. South Warnborough, Upton Grey and Weston Corbett were added later.

The courts-leet and law-day sheriff's turn courts for the Hundred were held in Nutley parish, but where is not clear. Perhaps at the site of present day Bermondspit, the namesake of the Hundred, or possibly at Nutley Court Farm, which was opposite Nutley Manor. The word "court" in the name makes one wonder.

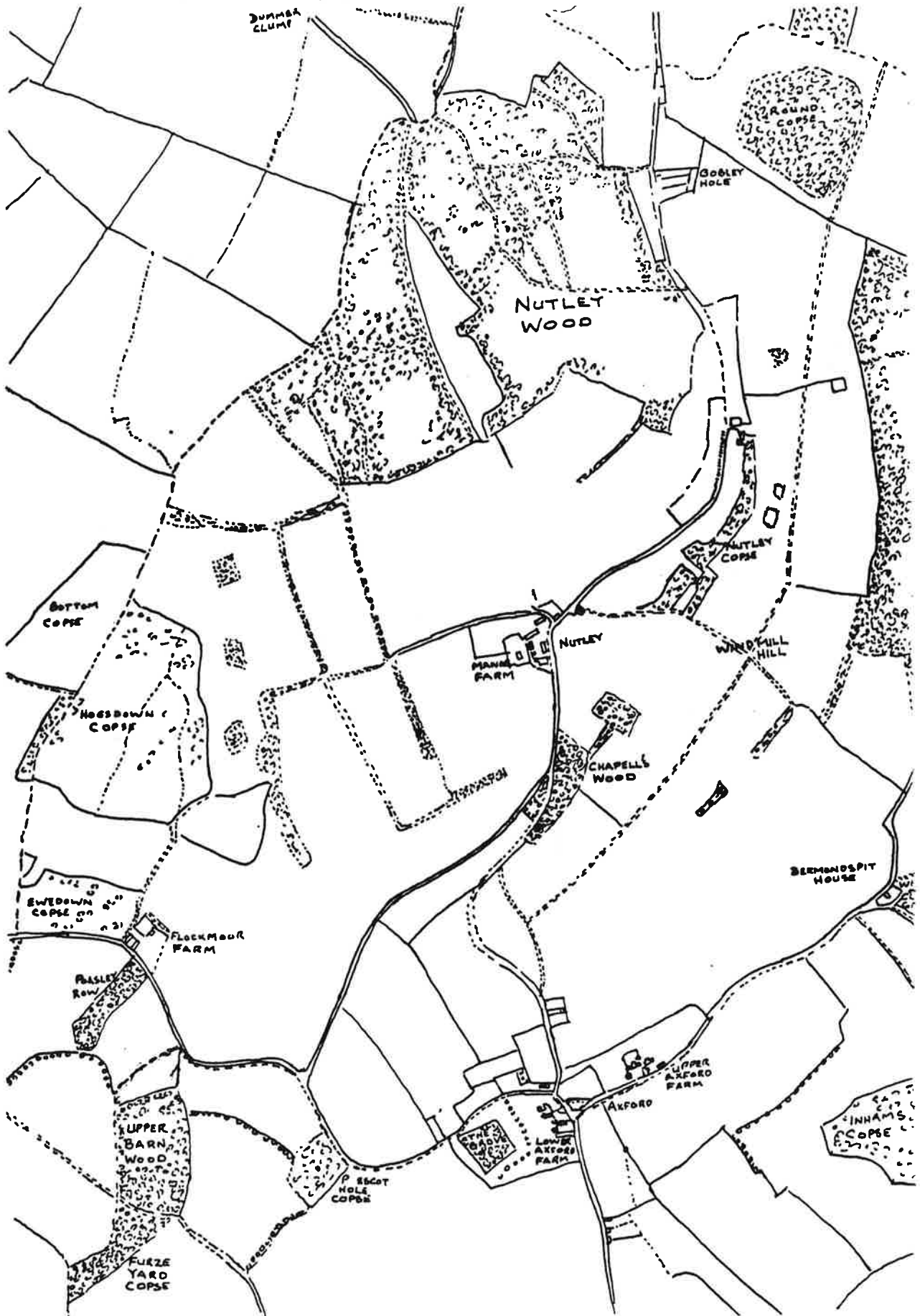
The earliest map in the Record Office at Winchester to show Nutley parish is dated 1635. (A copy was kindly lent to me by John Bulpitt and has been most informative). The parish has changed remarkably little over the intervening 350 years, particularly in the northern half where fields and woodlands remain much the same. The roads as we know them now were in place, although they were not to become properly surfaced, that is, tar-macadamed, until the 1930s. Mr Mansbridge, father of the present owner of the garage at Cliddesden, told me that he well remembered the road before it was surfaced. There may be others in this area who can recall it as it was in those days. The map shows the right of way that goes through Nutley Farm and up to Dummer Clump quite clearly as a road, which looked then much as it does now, with the woods and open spaces unchanged. Nutley village was well established; houses are shown at Axford. But there is no sign of habitation at Gobley Hole, and no Green Lane.



A much enlarged reproduction from the map of 1745, showing the gate across the road on the northern parish boundary.

On a map of 1745 it is interesting to find little gates drawn at each place where a road crosses the parish boundary, except the southerly one at Axford. North of Gobley Hole the entrance is called Hollow Lane Gate, and if one looks, the road is still high-banked at that point. The gate to the

A drawing (not to scale) based on the Ordnance Survey map of 1871-2. Except in the minor details described in the text, very little has changed.



east at Bermondspit was called Wellclose Gate, a name which can still be found on modern maps. The western gate beyond Flockmoor at the edge of Ewedown Copse was Lower Field Gate. These gates were nothing to do with turnpikes, which were a later introduction. They were intended to contain cattle, mark a parish boundary or indicate that the road was entering private land.

The early maps show houses that no longer exist, some in Nutley, some in Axford and some on the west of the road opposite to where Forest Lodge now stands. At that time Windmill Hill almost certainly did have a windmill!

Surprisingly, no dwelling is shown at Bermondspit. One would have expected, since that was the place that gave the Hundred its name, to find some sort of habitation there. No houses at all are shown along Dummer Road. Gradually, as one works through the years on the maps, houses appear at Flockmoor, Poasley, Gobley Hole and in other parts of Axford, until now they line the road from Kimber's Cottages to Axford Corner, stretch up Crown Hill and fill in the crossroads corner with Kenward's Bungalows. In 1635 the whole southern part of the parish was divided into small sections, barely more than strips, with many different owners. These small fields will not have been bounded by hedges, but possibly by ditches or banks, or simply by paths. Later maps show the strips completely gone and the land enclosed.

The church

St Mary's Church at Nutley was, according to church records, made redundant in October 1951 and demolished in 1956. There are several local people who remember the church well and still grieve at its passing. Ivy Hammond was married there, as were her parents before her. Others living locally were christened there. Peter White was the last one.

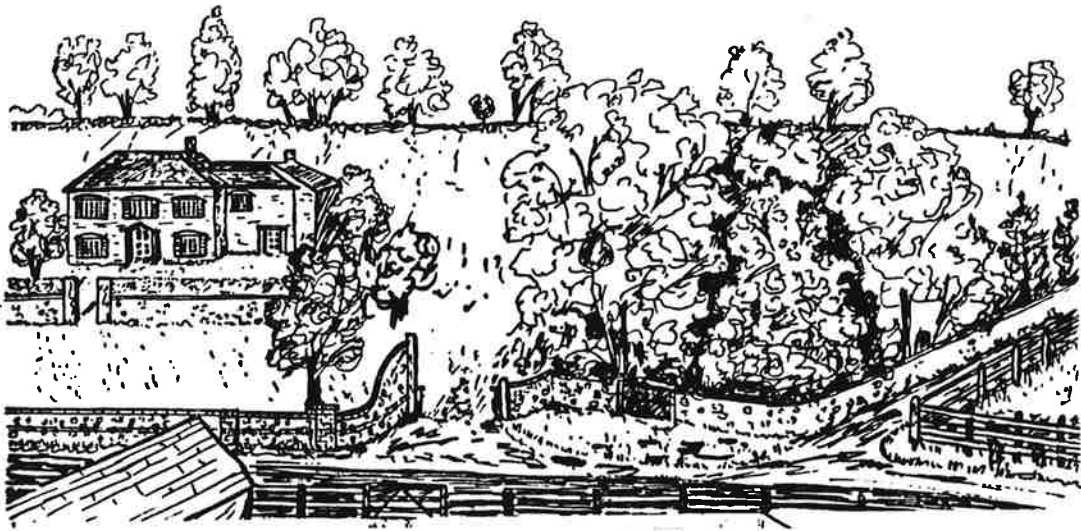
Nutley and Preston Candover have been closely connected ecclesiastically for a very long time, although they remain separate civil parishes. An 1871 map shows a vicarage at Nutley opposite the churchyard but the incumbent, if there was one, would have been responsible to the vicarage at Preston Candover. At present the parish is "held in plurality by the incumbent of Preston Candover". The advowson (that is in effect the right to appoint an incumbent) was originally held by the Prior of Southwick. After the dissolution it was in time granted to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester and it may have been then that it was annexed to Preston Candover.

The church was built in 1845 by public subscription at a cost of £960. It replaced a mid-twelfth-century church, of which part of an arch was preserved in the newer building. What can have happened to this relic? Local memory says that the 1845 church was "blown up". Perhaps the bit of arch went with it. Keith and Doreen Peters visited the church before it was demolished and found the large Book of Common Prayer that stood on the lectern had been damaged and thrown on the floor. They rescued it and gave it to Colonel Paravicini, the then owner of the Manor, who intended having it restored. Its present whereabouts are unknown.

St Mary's was, by all accounts, a lovely little church and is remembered with affection. Unfortunately, as congregations dwindled, the building fell into disrepair and money was no longer forthcoming to maintain it. The churchyard is still "open". That is, it has not been deconsecrated and

belongs to the church, and it should still be possible - although permission might not be forthcoming - to be buried there.

St Mary's did have its moments of liveliness, as shown by an entry in the *Hants and Berks Gazette* of 4 October 1890, which describes a Harvest Thanksgiving attended by those who worked at Nutley Farm, the labourers, their wives and families. After the service, all were taken by waggon to Lt Col Purefoy Fitzgerald's residence (probably North Hall) for supper, followed by speeches. About 40 sat down. Songs and music went on until 8 pm when everyone went home.

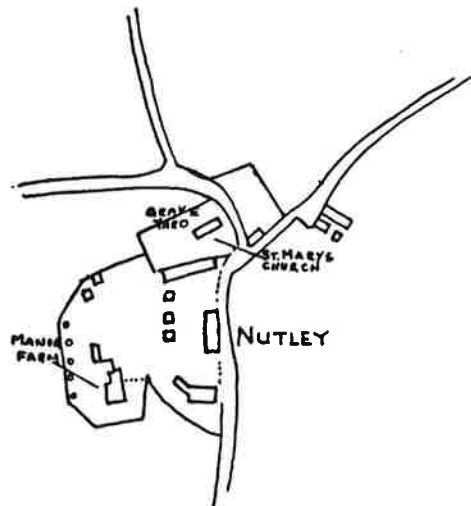


The Manor house and old churchyard. A few gravestones can still be seen amongst the trees that fill the graveyard. The track along beside the churchyard wall is the old road to Dummer Clump, now a right of way.

Roads and houses

There is evidence of a deserted medieval village at Nutley. It would no doubt be difficult for anyone other than an expert to see the signs, since it lies where the manor, its grounds and barns are.

Nutley, enlarged from the 1871-2 map.
The graveyard is open and can be visited.

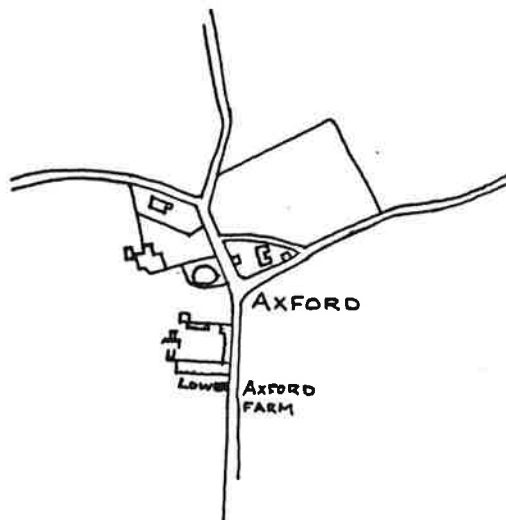


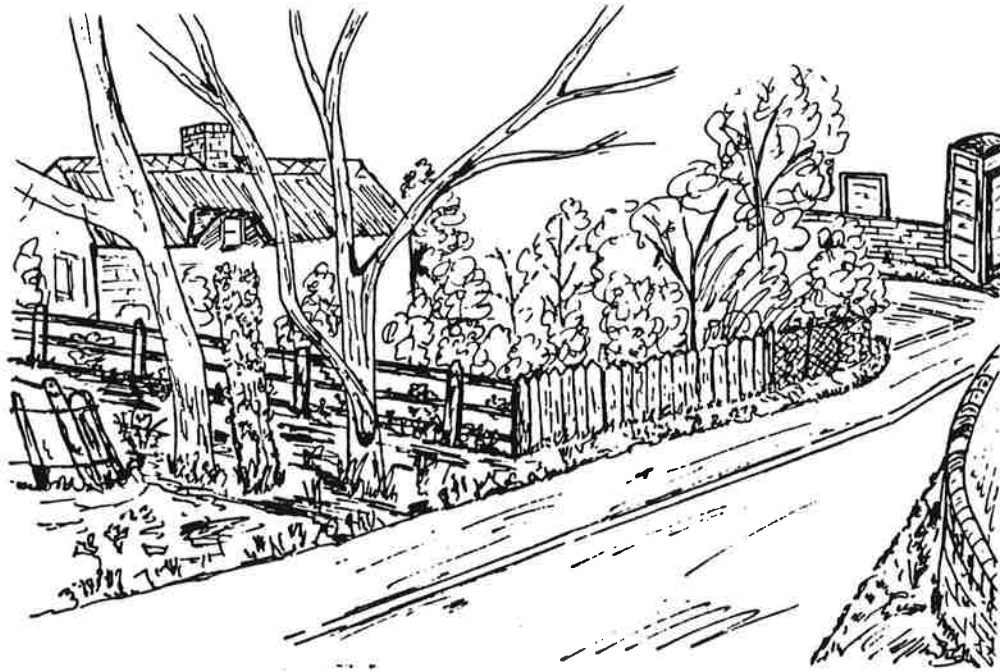
Even in living memory many houses have disappeared from the parish. At Gobley Hole there were two cottages much closer to the road than the present ones, in one of which the Cleave family lived. There was a thatched cottage on the corner just south of South Cottage at Nutley. Nutley Manor, erected in 1814, stands near the site of a much older building. Until recent years it was not used as the manor house and was inhabited by two families. Forge Cottage at Axford, previously known to all as Pink Cottage, was itself two cottages, while between it and the B road were two more! (Hard to believe, but it can be attested to by local residents.) As these buildings have disappeared, so others have arrived. For nearly 200 years then, the population of Nutley has remained remarkably constant. *White's Gazetteer* shows 110 in 1801 and a high spot of 176 in 1841.

The present owners of Forge Cottage are aware that they do not live on the site of the old village forge. The late Bert Fosbury, who was born at Berrydown and lived and worked in the area all his life, said that it was actually at the Kimber's Cottages end. Thus do names create historical confusion.

When roads were finally hard-surfaced, the County took responsibility only for the major routes. Minor roads which were not surfaced ceased to be used except as farm tracks. Some still exist as rights of way, such as that from Nutley to Dummer Clump and from Bermondspit northwards near the parish boundary. Others have virtually disappeared now that people no longer roam freely over the countryside as they once did: with mechanisation and the loss of man-power in agriculture, farmworkers no longer need to trudge the time-honoured paths to and from work.

Axford in 1871, enlarged from the map.
The round feature on the left is a pond, and further left is the site of the present Axford House.





The site of the 'lost' road at Axford corner. The Parish boundary runs along the line of the wooden fence, centre left. The present road turns by the telephone box. The week after this sketch was made, the owner of the land to the north (behind the wire fence) installed a 6 ft board fence to meet the wooden palings of the cottage, and the old road is now hidden from view.

The primary road network, however, remains as it was in 1635 except for minor differences. Green Lane did not appear until after the enclosures and is first seen on a map in 1808. Axford crossroads have changed considerably over the years. Apple Tree and Chestnut Cottages are on a triangle of land that was once bounded by roads on all three sides. The line of the road north of the two cottages can still be seen. It was a continuation of the C or Dummer Road, which at one time seems to have been the major route. Apart from the map, the clue to the missing bit of road is the parish boundary, which runs along the south side of the road from Flockmoor to Bermondspit but north of the two cottages at Axford. On that short piece of "lost" road there was a pond, shown on the award map of 1823. Another pond, now in the garden of Axford House, used to be open and was where the horses were watered in the days of Enos White, who was carter at Moundsmere. Village children played there and slid on it in winter. Enos was father to Ivy Hammond and Harry White and lived for many years in Crown Cottage behind the pub. He started work at the age of seven, as did many in those days. He was ploughing at eight years old and needed a man to help him turn the team at the headland, because he was not big or strong enough.

Names

The Post Office allows house names to be changed almost on request, which can cause some puzzlement when trying to write a paper such as this with a long time scale. For instance, Axford Lodge Farm used to be Upper Axford Farm and prior to that Blackburn(s) Farm; Lower Axford Farm has become

Axford House. Almost as confusing is No 1 Gobley Hole Cottage, which is now Nutley House, leaving Nos 2, 3, 4 and 5 bereft of their leader. The old Hundreds Cottage has been incorporated into the modern Bermondspit House, and so on throughout the parish.

For different reasons place names have also changed over the centuries. After the 1066 invasion, when Norman French became the language of written records, there was obviously a slide in both spelling and pronunciation. As spelling was not standardised, map makers and clerks wrote their personal interpretation of local names, a situation which would not be helped by misunderstanding the local dialect.

Thus Axford, which you might think was "the ford where the oxen cross" is nothing of the kind. There is no indication that a river has flowed in Axford in historical times, although the much more ancient geological record does confirm the presence of past rivers. The name ranges through Ashere in 1272, Axore in 1315, Axor in 1706 to Axford in 1757. The Saxon root was *Aesc*, meaning "Ash", and so the whole name means "the slope or bank where ash trees grow".

Nutley is more straightforward, coming from *Hnutu* - a nut, *Hnuta* - a nut bearing tree, via *Hnutuleah*, which is Old English for "nutwood".

Gobley Hole has been the most difficult name to research, and deserves more time spent on it. The name first appears as Gobble Hole in 1823, although a dwelling is shown on a map in 1745. An archaeological paper of 1888 concerning an Early British Cemetery at Dummer refers to Gobley Holes as "pits of unknown date containing burnt earth and ashes". They also yielded a Neolithic axe, Roman remains and a building.

Bermondspit, to native Hampshire ears, has a very foreign sound. In 1086, the time of Domesday, it appeared as Bermesplet, in 1236 as Brumelespett and in 1610 at Barmaspitt. The latter names fits more closely with recent local pronunciation, which was Barmspit. It means the "bramble pit, or hollow". Note that the "d" was not in the original name.

A number of other names appear on old maps.

Poasley Farm comes from Powlsley Row and Poalsley Grove (both on the same map), which were both to the west of the present house. The derivation is unknown, though it sounds like a personal name.

Sourlands is a field nearly opposite Gobley Hole. It has retained its name since at least 1635, when it was Sowar Lands. According to information received, it is Sour by name and sour by nature, so the name may genuinely be an indication of the soil and nothing more.

Chapel Close is shown on the 1635 map as Capolls Coppice and Capolls Croft. The copse was exactly where the present woodland is, to the east of the B road at the corner of Green Lane. Again, Capoll(s) sounds like a personal name.

Eawedown Copse, on the eastern border of the parish next to Flockmoor, is another that has retained its name through at least 300 years, though now it is spelt Ewedown.

Fragments

A large amount of information has accrued as a result of these investigations into the history of the parish. Some of it, as in most of that in the paragraphs above, can be found in Winchester, in the Record Office and Local History Library, but much was given me by local people who delved into their memories or their personal records and came up with a myriad of fascinating facts.

These snippets are difficult to incorporate into a cohesive narrative, so a few of them follow here as a series of paragraphs covering a number of unrelated subjects.

- "The Crown", as it was called until very recent times (now "The Candover Crown"), is built opposite a field that was once known as Crown Field. Whether this is connected with the fact that different kings held an interest in Nutley Manor lands is not known, but it is nice to think that the pub has a link with royalty.

The pub, although it does not appear on the award map of 1823, is said to be 200 years old. There is no guarantee that these old maps are accurate, but a check through the deeds of the house would confirm the exact date. For around 100 years the landlords were of the name of Jewel and ownership was passed down through the family. Two of the family, with their twin daughters, are buried in Nutley churchyard.

Jeffrey Lax, who has lived here for 30 years, remembers The Crown as sparsely furnished, with sawdust round the bar and scrubbed wooden chairs and tables. It was still much the same only 20 years ago to my own knowledge - clean and bright, a very typical country pub.

- Before the arrival of modern signposting, the miles were marked off by large milestones set along the verges of the roads. Jeffrey can remember counting all six between Axford and Basingstoke when he first came. Now there is only one, and that in a poor state.

Earlier in the century the buses ran twice weekly to Basingstoke, but before that people expected to walk, sometimes pushing children in prams. Bicycles were much in use to ride to work, whether locally or in Basingstoke. Imagine flogging up Farleigh Hill every day! Some sought entertainment in Winchester, and cycled there too.

Once the Basingstoke road was tar-macadamed it had to be maintained. There must be plenty of people who still remember the noise, steam and tarry smell when the road men were at work. But do they know that the boy who used to carry the tar for tipping, oiled himself all over every morning before work to stop the tar from sticking to him?

- The stand of trees along Dummer Road opposite the houses is known as The Grove, and gave its name to Grove Bungalow (formerly Arthbert) and Grove View (now Little Acre). About 50 years ago The Grove, which belonged to Moundsmere, was fuller and more impressive. Then a Mr Drury cut down a number of the trees. No-one ever says who he was, but judging by the manner in which his name is mentioned his action did not meet with much approval.

■ Each spring there appears at Pescott Hole Copse a small patch of cultivated daffodils. These turn out to be the remnants of a garden belonging to Ivy Hammond's uncle, who lived there in a caravan for 30 years. There were stables there as well, belonging to the Kimber family whose name persists in Kimber's Cottages. Until recent years Bill Kimber and his wife lived in the most westerly of the two cottages. Bill owned a strip of land behind houses in Dummer Road, which he cut yearly with a scythe to make hay for sale. On his death the land was sold and became part of the adjoining back gardens. Before that the old allotments went into disuse and are part of the gardens to the east of the road.

■ Kenward's Bungalows are on land which was once a memorial garden. It was set up by a Mr Kenward in memory of his nephew Jack Stevens, a lieutenant in the army. Kenward seems to have met financial difficulties and not to have left provision for the maintenance of the garden which came finally into the hands of Basingstoke Council. Prior to the appearance of the garden, that area used to be the Axford football field. In the 1890s, as a cutting from the *Gazette* shows, there were plenty of men working on the various farms, so there can have been no difficulty in finding enough for a team. Bert Fosbury could remember when there were enough interested parties to hire a coach - or two - for a trip to London from Axford.

Bert, as an old countryman, spoke with a fairly strong accent, and retained a sprinkling of true Hampshire dialect. He always called bumble-bees "dumble-dors". A look at the dictionary will show that "dors" means a sort of humming beetle and comes possibly from the Old English root "dora". It is interesting to note in this connection that just off the main Odiham/Farnham road lies the hamlet of Dora's Green.

■ The present Bermondspit House is new, although at the front it incorporates the old Hundreds Cottage. Anyone in the Hundred who had nowhere else to live could apply to live in the cottage and could not be refused.

Local folklore says that Bermondspit was used as the jail house, and that Dick Turpin was kept there for a night, but whether on his way to Winchester to the Assize is not clear.

■ A perambulation of the Manor of Nutley in May 1806 (ie beating the bounds) was made by tenants and inhabitants, after Public Notice had been given in Nutley church. They started at 10 o'clock in the morning but we are not told how long they took to finish. All three gates to the parish were mentioned, so they were still in use at that time. The Manor seems to have included the whole parish, and it is possible to follow the perambulation on present maps with fair accuracy, even though names have changed or even disappeared.

Those locals of nearly 200 years ago will have passed around, in the north and east of the parish, woodland which was old even in their time. It is sufficiently old to be called "ancient woodland" and has been there at least since the time of the Conquest. Ancient indeed!

Conclusion

When this history was first suggested for use with the Village Appraisal it did not seem possible that such a wealth of information would come from our small rural parish. So much, in fact, that it had to be severely cut for inclusion in the Appraisal. This then is the fuller version. It has become a labour of love and is presented to the parishioners for their interest and enjoyment. Because my expertise in matters historical is minimal, inaccuracies are bound to have crept in. Readers who can put the record straight should please let me know for future reference.

My thanks go to all who gave information. If any names have been left out, please accept my apologies - any omissions are unintentional.

John Bulpitt
Neil and Ann Beattie
Ivy Hammond
Di Rees
Jeffrey and Kathleen Lax
Pat West
Martin Morris
Tom Martin

Peter Lyndon Skeggs
the late Bert Fosbury
Harry White
Tish Owencroft
Ryc Smith
Mrs Wood
Keith and Doreen Peters
John Eastabrook

References

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Hampshire Place Names (Record Office, Winchester)
White's Gazetteer and Directory
Maps of 1635, 1745, 1823, 1871, 1905, 1908, 1932.

BARBARA EASTABROOK

Illustrations: George Langran