

# EASTCOMBE AND ENVIRONS IN THE DORINGTONS' NOTES ABOUT LYPIATT PARK ESTATE

From 1847 till just before the First World War, J E Dorington – father and then son – owned the house now known as Lypiatt Park and concentrated on building up an estate that had been whittled away by the financial vicissitudes of previous owners. There is a history of 'names' that owned the property in the distant past though there was little likelihood of these people actually living or even visiting there – one Richard Whittington, Roger Mortimer, Elizabeth I before she came to the throne, and indeed I think Earl Godwin and Harold before the Conquest – and then resident Catholic families who even provided a link to the Gunpowder Plot and later the beheading of Charles I. The elder Dorington when he bought the mansion in 1847 found himself in possession of a house suited to the status he had earned in London, but largely lacking its former lands. He went ahead with the astute acquisition of property that became an impressive holding – totally abnegated by his son's dying without a direct heir, and his successor being killed by a sniper in August 1914. The estate was auctioned piecemeal in 1919, giving a lot of tenants the chance to buy their own homes – and these were worth having after the constant programme of improvement carried out by the Doringtons through their employed craftsmen and farmworkers.

There exists outside the records held in Gloucester a hard-to-read manuscript that both father and son used for their own memoranda. I would like the whole to be published in full, but for the purposes of the Eastcombe Archive I have compiled this tantalizing list of mentions of our neighbourhood. Sadly for us, most cottages were not named in those days so it is hard to identify them – and some indeed have now disappeared. And not everything was easily decipherable...

- 1847 Created Boys Wood for the two Dorington sons, who themselves planted the end nearest the house.
- 1854 Old Elkins 10 acres included in Toadsmoor at the time of the survey, a bare slope when bought but planted by Dorington in 1854. Hawkley, 23 and a half acres bought for £1400, rental £57pa, timber valued at £34.15s. Note £57 too much.
- 1855 John Aldum a tenant at Hawkley. £51.
- 1856 Hawkley [Farm] let to Levi Randle [*sic*] at £45 [annual rent].
- 1857 Bought Cuthams, 3 acres, £135, rental £6, timber valued at £22 4s 8d, purchased of Mr Iles.
- 1860 Bought Balls Cottage and Gobey's [included in case anyone knows where these were] £110 and £240.
- 1861 When surveyed for the Tithe Survey, Hawkley Wood measured 15a 3r 13p; Dagnish Wood 5a 2r 14p; Toadsmoor woods 52s 0r 33p and 22a 1r 23p, Boys Wood 4a 3r 31p.
- 1862 February, purchased from Mr Restall for £85 a larch plantation of about 1 acre called Kitly [*sic*] the trees being of 20 years' growth. He had given £20 for it in 1854. Also for £50 a piece of land about 1a 1r 35p, tithe-free (having been wood) let to [?] Totterdale for £25 pa, called [?] Poodeys, he had given £35 for it in 1860. The conveyance by Mr Witchell was £4. Some adjoining land is expected to be sold shortly. Built house in Bismore for gamekeeper. Daniel's Farm [Rodways]: this farm is 31a 2r 14p, the rent is £30, the price asked in 1860 was £1250, it was put up for auction but was not sold. In 1798 it belonged to Mr Wm Tayloe and in 1861 was sold by Mr Edward Tayloe to Mr Lawrie a London Man for £1000 as an Investment, he cut down about £80-worth of Timber leaving about £20, and expended near £50 in repairs. Mr Lawrie became sick of his purchase and in 1862 sold it to Mr Restall acting for me [JED], having asked £900.
- 1863 Cuthams and Kitly – cottages very bad, 1 acre Cuthams, half-acre Kitly.
- 1864 Kennel at Keepers £35 at least. Bought Cuthams/Kitly belonging to Mr Davis. Early in 1863 (or late in 1862) Mr Whitlock the Baptist Minister applied to me to purchase the above small things from old Mr Davis (Randle's [*sic*] grandfather) – he was anxious about the

purchase as some of the money was to go to his Chapel. Cuthams is one-quarter of an acre with a vile thing called a cottage on it. Rental £20 – pulled down (bad title). Kitly is about an acre, 3 cottages upon it in a bad state, and wood worth about £30. Mr Davis asked £110, I offered £80 and ultimately gave £90. The Conveyance for which I paid £4 was made by Mr Winterbotham.

- 1864 In March purchased some cottages and pieces of garden ground from Thomas Pearce - Fidge Hill in Kitleigh [*sic*] with leave for him to remain for life in his cottage. He asked for £170. Not 2 acres. Pearce died 1869. Bought Pearce's cottages at Fidge Hill and 2 acres £120
- 1866 Commenced building and enclosing at Manor Farm [note this is three years before the official enclosure of Bisley Common]. On the advantages of the enclosure Mr Bravender (a Cirencester surveyor) stated  
 'That the Recreation Grounds are 25 Acres  
 That the 9 Garden Allotments are 9 Acres  
 That the 5 Burial Grounds are 2a 1r 25p  
 That Land purchased for Recreation Grounds are 2 Acres  
 That sums expended for Roads and Walls amount to £2495 11s 1d  
 That the Money which must be expended in farm buildings, walling and bringing Land into cultivation may be estimated at £1200  
 That these are to the advantage of the industrious Labourers, who get nothing from the Common'
- 1868 Rebuilt H Young's cottage. Fountain at Kitlye.
- 1869 Commencement of cottages at Kitlye.
- 1870 Cottage and land at Bismore, 3r 26p. Small sheds and yard at Manor Farm.
- 1872 New farmhouse at Manor Farm total £559 completed in 1871 [I still find it outrageous that Sir John called this 'Manor' farm, as it is nowhere near Lypiatt Park. MAB]
- 1876 Richard Faulkes gave up Daniel's [Rodways Farm] and took Hawkley.
- 1879 Restored cottage near Cuthams. Brought water from Daniel's [Rodways Farm] to Lower Common.
- 1880 Purchased Brewers Arms [unidentified] and converted it into cottages, also Troops Hill cottage and another in Eastcombe and two in Bismore. Middle Hill Farm on Bisley Common belonging to W Kearsey deceased was sold at auction for £1500 = 40 acres of land.
- 1884 Cut the end of Dagnish Wood above Keeper's, generally called Violet Bank.
- 1887 Old cottage at Bismore rebuilt from ground.
- 1891 Sale of Goodlake estates: Hill Farm 57a @ £12 = £700, intermixed lands at Nash End 34a @ £24. G Watkins gave £115 for 3 acres near Eastcombe.
- 1893 Rebuilt cottage at Bismore. Bought Lewis cottage [Lewisville, now Stick Heaven] adjoining Troops Hill.
- 1896 Watkins gave up Middle Hill Farm to take a farm at Bisley. Built and nearly finished reading room at Eastcombe.
- 1898 Took water pipe from [?the hydraulic ram in field below Copsegrove?] to Hawkley.
- 1901 Thomas Fisher [woodsman living at the cottage above Toadsmoor Lake] died Jan7 aged 78.
- 1908 Hill House [where? Bournes Green?] put up to auction. Unsold at £4200. Was there a real bid?
- 1909 Field adjacent to Manor Farm at Eastcombe sold by auction, 8 and a half acres with cottage fetched £325, deduct cottage £260. Halliday purchased, rent £12. Dagnish Wood all cleared. Part done in previous years.