

AUCTION OF THE LYPIATT PARK ESTATE IN 1919: Muriel Brooks 2017

The whole auction catalogue and plan are well worth looking at if you can track down a copy, but typing it up proved too much for me so I have decided to mention the Eastcombe-ish bits only – though at the outset I should say that by the time Sir John Dorington died before World War 1, he and his father had turned around a previously bankrupt estate and added and added to it until it covered an absolutely whopping area. From Honeycombe and Througham in the north-east, across to near Slad in the west, down the Lypiatt ridge to the Horns and Heavens (that is, touching Stroud town), across just north of Nether Lypiatt eastward to Bussage and Frith Wood, and then back northward through Eastcombe to Bisley village. The schedule is imprecise (lots of properties not having a name), but with the numbered plan more sense can be made, even though it is not totally accurate. Near Hawkley – that is, at the very end of Fidges Lane down in the valley – there are four lots listed. Hope you can visualize acres, rods and poles better than I can..

Lot 64. Excellent Parcel of Woodland, known as Dagnish Wood, 10a. 2r. 4p. In Hand, possession will be given on completion of purchase. *This the lovely beech wood stretching from Hawkley Farmhouse to Keepers Cottage in Bismore – the public footpath goes along its foot, starting at the gap in the wall at Hawkley, crossing a miniature waterfall on a tributary stream, and mimicking the course of the Toadsmoor Brook in the meadow . I believe this is now back in the possession of Lypiatt Park estate.*

Lot 65. Enclosure of Woodland known as Hawkley Wood, 5a. 3r. 12p. In Hand, possession will be given on completion of purchase. *Turn right up behind Hawkley Cottage – the public footpath to the Nash End Valley field passes through Hawkley Wood.*

Lot 66. A Capital Small Holding, comprising Hawkley Farm House. Stone Built and Tiled, containing six Rooms, with usual Outbuildings and Garden, also Yard, Open Shed, Pound House and Loft. Two excellent Orchards and Grasslands; the whole comprising about 9a. 2r. 34p. The House and Garden are let to W.E.Perry at £5 per annum, No.1422 to R. Gaston at £1 per annum, and the remainder to Mr. T.R.Davis on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy with other land at a rent whereof there is apportioned to this Lot for the purposes of Sale the sum of £8 per annum. The Timber on this Lot has been valued at the sum of £...

Tithe Rent Charge Commuted Value £0 15s. 0d. This comparatively small house had an enormous family of Randalls – talented people – living in it during the Dorington era. Nowadays, of course, it has been extended and houses, I believe, a couple.

Lot 67. A Stone Built and Tiled Cottage of five Rooms with usual Outbuildings, being No.1420 on plan and comprising an area of about 0a. 2r. 30p. Let to Mrs. Mutton at a rent of £4 13s. 3d. per annum. *The estate carter's house, Hawkley Cottage, now much enlarged with a carefully landscaped garden. Following the valley bottom downstream, one comes to the next cottage – as decorative as Prince Albert could have wished.*

Lot 5. A Picturesque Stone Brick and Tiled Residence formerly THE KEEPER'S COTTAGE. It contains six Rooms, Washhouse, &c. There are also three Setting Sheds, Store, and an excellent Garden. Water from Pump and also by gravitation from Copsegrove Farm (Lot 63). No. 1425 on plan and comprising 0a. 1r. 0p. At

present in hand and possession will be given on completion of purchase.

Lots 20, 22, 23, 24 and 25 represent Toadsmoor Woods, the long stretch of woodland (on the hillside opposite Eastcombe) from one keeper's cottage to the other one by Toadsmoor Pond (though that cottage was not a gamekeeper's place, but Sir John's woodsman's). This woodland adds up to about 70 acres. Coming back up the valley from the pond, on the east side of the stream one reaches what is now known as Rodways Farm, formerly Daniel's – this house is thought to be at least 500 years old...

Lot 72. An Excellent Small Holding known as DANIEL'S FARM. It includes A Small Stone-Built Farm House containing Attic, two Bedrooms, Sitting Room, Back Kitchen with Copper, Dairy and Store. Small Garden. Water from Well. THE BUILDINGS include Yard with two Open Sheds, two-stall Stable with Loft, Piggery, and Cattle Hovel. The whole extending to some 47a. 0r. 30p. The House, Buildings, and Land, are let to Mr. W. Summers on a yearly Michaelmas agreement at £4 per annum. The Timber on this lot has been valued at £....

Lot 73. A Small Grass Holding with an Excellent Stone and Tiled Cottage containing four Rooms, with Dairy, Wash-house, usual Outbuildings. Garden and Piggery. Water by gravitation. Tithe Rent Charge Commuted Value £6 3s. 8d. The whole comprising some 17a. 3r. 26p. Let to Mr. G. Hunt on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy at £20 5s. 0d. per annum. The Timber on this lot has been valued at the sum of £... Tithe Rent Commuted Value £2 8s. 3d. Land Tax £0 1s. 0d. *This is Bismore Farm, now slightly smaller as its holding to the north of Bismore Bridge is now part of Little Bismore garden.*

Lot 74. CUTHAM'S COTTAGE. Stone Built and Tiled and containing five Rooms, usual Outbuildings and Garden, being No. 1514 on Plan and having an Area of about 27 poles. Let to G. Villavoise [sic] at £5 per annum.

Lot 75. ACCOMMODATION GRASSLAND AND RUINED COTTAGE adjoining the Village of Eastcombe, being No. 1566 on Plan and comprising about 1a. 0r. 25p. In Hand: possession will be given on completion of purchase. *This, I think, must be Fieldholme. About 20 years ago Grace Winstone, born in 1912, said 'That was never a cottage, that was a tumbledown old barn' – but it would seem she misinterpreted what she saw as a child.*

Lot 76. Parcel of Woodland and Old Quarry close to the Village of Eastcombe being No. 1568 on Plan and comprising some 2a. 2r. 14p. In hand: possession will be given on completion of purchase. *This became Bob Bingle's woodyard, sawmill and joinery on the site now occupied by Aberlink.*

I was surprised by Lot 90, which is four fields that until very recently stayed together under one owner – at one time the Granville Sharps of The White House, who I believe put a no-building covenant on the holding. The idea of replacing the old 'hovel' – an animal shelter – with a house was refused planning permission about 25 years ago. Christina Granville Sharp herself, however, had a studio in which she lived finally on the field near The White House, and that made it possible to replace it with a house comparatively recently. While the fields bordering Fidges Lane remain good pasture, those below Wells Road are crossed by the little spring-fed stream that forms the 'east combe' and are therefore part of a fuller's earth slip

reaching down into Bismore (which explains why no building has survived on them).

Lot 90. Four Enclosures of Accommodation Grassland in the Village of Eastcombe, with Yard and Hovel being Nos. 1461, 1492, 1493 and 1494 and containing about 8a. 1r. 3p. Let to Mr. L. Smith on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy at £16 per annum. Tithe Charge Commuted Value £0 7s. 9d.

Lot 91. Accommodation Grass & Orchard in the Village of Eastcombe comprising about 0a. 1r. 16p. The Land is let to Mr. A. Smith on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy at £1 10s. 0d. per annum. *I had not noticed this parcel before, either. It had a very odd curving shape, and lies to the right of the public path that heads uphill from opposite The Old Bakehouse (in The Street) to Fidges Lane. It finished where the public path becomes the drive down to Troops Hill, that is, below Fidges Lane.*

Lot 91a. TROOPS HILL COTTAGE & LAND comprising about 0a. 3r. 34p. Let to Mr. J. Calding at £3 10s. 0d. per annum. *The land stretched above the cottage, with quite a long frontage on to Fidges Lane. This upper part had the 'new' houses Pine Hill and Overdale built on it about 40-45 years ago, so Troops Hill garden was greatly reduced.*

Lot 92. Stone-Built and Tiled Cottage of five Rooms with usual Outbuildings and capital Garden in all about 34p. Let to C. Winston at £4 0s. 0d. per annum. *Mr. Winston died after falling under the railcar at Downfield, in 1926 I believe. His widow Maria (Rye-a, according to Mr Johnson – a scary lady) and their children Lewis and Grace stayed in the cottage called Lewisville. Lewis, of course, died in WW2. The cottage is now called Stick Heaven. It has been extended a little, but the land still stretches all the way up to Fidges Lane.*

Lot 93. A Superior Modern Stone-Built Residence known as JUBILEE HOUSE containing three Bedrooms, Hall, Sitting Room, Village Reading Room, Kitchen, Scullery, &c. Garden with Piggery. In all about 2r. 16p. Let to Mr W.H.Backhouse at £5 per annum. In the case of this Lot a supply of water is afforded from Lot One (*ie Lypiatt Park paid*), but there is no right to such supply or its continuance. Land Tax £0 2s. 0d. *Towards the end of Victoria's reign Sir John Dorington had his estate stonemason – Mr. Backhouse – build himself a house that incorporated a great lofty room for villagers to use as a 'reading room'. Jubilee House has for a long time now been called Berwick House, divided into two. During WW2 the occupants of the larger section (Mr and Mrs Thurman) housed an Essex evacuee mother and two children in the reading room.*

Lot 94. A Small Parcel of Grassland in the Village of Eastcombe, at present unenclosed and comprising some 39 poles. In Hand, possession on completion of purchase. *This is the village green.*

Lot 95. Village Bakery, Shop and Three Cottages with Garden and Outbuildings. In all about 0a. 1r. 30p. Let to Messrs. H. Antill, G. Griffin and J. Nobbs at a total rent of £13 10s. 0d. per annum. Tithe Rent Charge Commuted Value £0 3s. 6d. Land Tax £0 4s. 6d. *Apparently Springfield, Bakery Cottage, and another (disappeared) dwelling were all on this corner site that lies between Wells Road and the lane down to Bismore. Mr Antill used to put people's Sunday dinners into his oven to cook after the day's batch of bread had been baked. The remains of the baker's ovens are still*

in Bakery Cottage (and the owners believe an attached outbuilding was used as a slaughterhouse. Somewhere in the Doringtons' 'diary' is a record of the allocations of beef Mr Antill was required to supply to tenants as part-payment for work rendered.) I do not know what business was at Springfield premises, but the cottage is unique in the village in having a sort of built-in cellar-cum-shed with high double doors on the downhill side of the cottage. I have always wondered why there was no village joinery (for coffins, apart from anything else). Maybe this was it?

Lot 96. Two Cottages and Gardens with usual Outbuildings and small Orchard. In all some 1a. 1r. 2p. One is let to D. Sollars, and the other is at present void, the Orchard is let to J. Hunt, the apportioned rent to this Lot being £1 per annum, the actual and estimated rent being £8 15s. 0d. per annum. These now form Woodview, on the lane that lies between Wells Road and the lane down to Bismore (Old Hill). The building of Woodview's garage and the consequent reconfiguring of the bend unfortunately made this lane virtually unusable for cars, whereas previously it was considered a useful alternative route by Bismore's inhabitants.

Lot 97. Stone Built and Tiled Cottage with Garden and Usual Outbuildings in all about 36p. Let to J. Davis at £4 per annum. This is Crow's Nest.

Lot 98. A Small Parcel of Woodland adjoining the foregoing Lot, and in all about 2r. 3p. This is In Hand and possession will be given on completion of purchase. This is the piece of woodland that flanks Old Hill once one is below the steep bend and Crows Nest. I suspect that long ago the woodland used to be continuous along the valley slope from here to the Nash End valley, forming what used to be known as the Custom Wood where it was customary for tenants to be able to extract wood according to their status. I could well be wrong! This section used to be indented on the roadside by two passing places – or in the case of the lower one, perhaps a turning place as a waggon left the path across Lower Common to join the road uphill. One of these has virtually disappeared through disuse, and the remaining one occasionally has cars inconsiderately parked in it by visiting walkers. This wood became attached to Woodview at some point in the twentieth century (perhaps even at this 1919 auction), and later a lower section was transferred from Little Orchard, and Badgers Brook too, to Woodview. The two sections are divided by a path that is now difficult to trace, having fallen into disuse after not being put on the definitive map. This path would have been very useful for people at the north end of Eastcombe who had business in Bismore, or work at Lypiatt Park, or who needed to walk to Stroud. It begins on Wells Road between Woodview and Mount Pleasant, and cuts diagonally down to where the Old Hill forks between Bismore main hamlet and the track down to the bridge.

Lot 99. A Capital Six-Roomed Cottage. Stone-built with Tiled Roof, containing six Rooms, with usual Outbuildings and Gardens and small piece of Woodland. In all some 1a. 2r. 37p. The Cottage is let to C. Taylor at a rental of £7 per annum, and the Wood is in hand. This is the cottage known for a long time as Little Orchard. I do not know whether Mr Taylor bought the place, but shortly afterwards (if not from 1919) it was lived in by Hester Maitland Radford, Countess Battyany. A minor mystery for me is that on the auction plan, in the garden of Little Orchard there was already a square building where the artists later had their studio, now known as Badgers Brook (a house has replaced the studio/bungalow. Muriel Little was born in Woodlands in 1923 and the Radfords already were in Little Orchard. Did Hester

rent from Mr Taylor and build her studio even before the auction?

Lot 100. A Capital Stone-Built Cottage containing six Rooms, with Washhouse, Piggery, Garden and Orchard. In all about 0a. 2r. 21p. Let to A. May at a rental of £6 15s. 0d. per annum. *This is Fairview. I remember Dr. Shelley's daughter refusing on his behalf to sell the top of the garden on the grounds that 'Fairview has always been an island property' (meaning bounded all round by lanes and public footpath) – yet here on this plan one can see that that the north-east quadrant in 1919 went with what is now called Honeyhill: another mystery, this, as there is a record of Hester Maitland renting this (orchard) from Mr May.*

Lot 101. Stone-Built Cottage with garden, usual Outbuildings, and Grassland, in all about 2a. 1r. 38p. Let to Mr. S. Nobes at £6 per annum. Tithe Rent Charge Commuted Value £0 5s. 9d. *Oh dear. The Schedule and Plan have gone wrong here: no wonder neighbours bought each other's property and had to swap later (so the story goes). Lot 101 is outlined in yellow on the plan and it includes what is laughably known as our vegetable garden, and also the plot mentioned in Lot 100 – in other words, the property is what is known now as Honeyhill, but the description fits Little Bismore Cottage. Whoops!*

Lot 102. A Stone and Tiled Five-Roomed Cottage with Garden and Piggery having an area of about 0a. 1r. 9p. Let to H Fisher at £3 10s. 0d. per annum. *On the plan, this is the cottage currently known as Bismore Cottage – up the bank above Honeyhill. Seems right, but I thought the Freeburys lived here...*

Lot 103. Stone and Tiled Five-Roomed Cottage and Orchard with Washhouse, Piggery and Gardens containing about 1a. 0r. 1p. Let to Estate Labourer. Land Tax £0 1s. 0d. *This is The Glen. It had formerly been the site of a lime kiln, and had – and has – a whopping big garden.*

Lot 104. Stone-Built Cottage and Garden with usual Outbuildings, in all about 32p. Let to A. Arnold at a rent of £5 per annum. *On the plan this is Little Bismore, but we know that is wrong. It must refer to Woodlands, which in fact is not coloured, nor given a garden, on the plan. This has got to be a mistake – and I cannot find a description of Honeyhill. However, there is also Lot 105.*

Lot 105. Useful Parcel of Woodland being Nos. 1439 and 1460 on plan, and comprising in all some 2a. 2r. 8p. In Hand, and possession will be given on completion of purchase. *This, then, is when Honeyhill gained the beech plantation, and the woodland above the main path and above the house, as we have Frances Waite Deacon's memory of her father owning this land after the 1919 auction.*

Lot 106. Yew Tree Cottage. An Excellent Stone and Slated Cottage containing six Rooms, with Gardens and Outbuildings, and Piggery, being No. 2 and part 1467 on Plan and comprising about 0a. 3r. 28p. Let to Mr. F. Taylor at £4 per annum. Tithe Rent Commuted Value £0 4s. 0d. *Fiddlededee. This is now Toad Cottage, whose current land holding is indeed 1462 and 1467 on the 1919 plan – but I think the six-roomed cottage description belongs to Honeyhill...*

Lot 107. A Capital Stone-Built Cottage containing six Rooms, with Washhouse and usual Outbuildings. Capital Garden. In all about 0a. 1r. 34p. Let to R. Pocketts at £3 per annum. *This is Hillside. Mr Pocketts worked in the garden at Lypiatt Park,*

which is probably why he had a Capital Garden. Visitors to the Waites at Honeyhill in 1920 stayed with the Pocketts.

Lot 108. A Superior Cottage. Stone-Built and containing three Bedrooms, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Woodstore, usual Outbuildings and Fireplace. Garden and Piggeries, with a piece of Woodland. In all about 1a. 0r. 25p. The Wood is In Hand. The Cottage is let to Messrs. R.C. Close and Mrs. Kinsman at a total rent of £4 15s. 0d. per annum. *The northerly half of what is now Seven Springs, with what lies between Fidges Lane above and the woodland track below.*

Lot 109. The Adjoining Cottage containing similar accommodation, and having Garden and Piece of Woodland. In all about 0a. 2r. 3p. The Woodland is In Hand, and the Cottage is let to Mrs. Kinsman at £4 per annum. *This is now the remainder of Seven Springs. It contains another bit of the Honeyhill muddle. Past Woodlands garden, Honeyhill land since 1919 has gone down to Bismore fieldside, below Hillside garden and then up its boundary, across the main wood track and up to Fidges Lane (with Seven Springs garden alongside), then down below Fidges Hill House and Toad Cottage and up again to Fidges Lane, before following the field boundary back to Honeyhill. There is no particular logic to this; but one can see on the 1842 tithe map that this area was divided into very small land holdings that must gradually have been amalgamated into one – presumably by the Doringtons, though the 'diary' does not spell that out. Hats off, though, to the owners of Fidges Hill House and garden, who stayed independent of the Doringtons despite selling them bits of woodland from time to time. There are four other, earlier, lots to mention.*

Lot 68. A Useful Mixed Agricultural Holding known as MANOR FARM situate close to the Village of Bisley and including Stone-Built Farm House containing Attic, Box Room, four Bedrooms, Sitting Room, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Larder, Pantry, Cellar and Coal Store, capital Garden. Water from Pump. THE BUILDINGS include: three-bay Waggon Lodge, Enclosed Yard, Piggery, four Calf Houses, Barn, Granary, two Hovels, Yard with open Cattle Shed and Loose Box. Cow House for five, two Loose Boxes, Waggon Lodge, four-stall Cart-horse Stable with Loft over, and Harness Room. The whole comprises about 78a. 1r. 18p. The Farm House is let to Mr. H. Freeman on a monthly agreement, the Land and Buildings are In Hand, and possession of same will be given on completion of purchase. In the case of this lot a supply of water is afforded from Lot One (*ie Lypiatt Park paid*), but there is no right to such supply or to its continuance. The Timber on this lot has been valued at the sum of £... Tithe Rent Charge Commuted Value £0 13s. 6d. Land Tax £1 1s. 11 1/2d. *This lot of course refers to Manor Farm, Eastcombe, built for Sir John Dorington after 1869 when he pushed through the enclosure of Bisley Common. It cost him less than £600 to build, despite its impressive list of amenities; and it is a rare example of grandiosity in his dealings – the 'manor' is Lypiatt Park, nowhere near Eastcombe, and it is not 'situate close to the Village of Bisley', as claimed by the auctioneer. The land in Lot 68 encompassed the buildings (the house is visible if you are walking rather than driving along the main road just west of Thomas Keble School), the copse opposite The Triangle, the fields where housing now is along The Ridge on the road to Old Bussage, and all the land between The Ram Inn, Frith Wood, and Fourways crossroads (well, if you add in Lot 69). In other words, this is the much-contested Manor Estate, the thousands of houses built over 40 years from about 1970, now euphemistically known as 'Bussage' or 'Chalford'. A long-term and well known Eastcombe resident, Gerry Lowe, once told me that he had been offered this farmland for £7000, and he chose not to buy it. I suggested he*

kept quiet about that, as feelings really were running very high when we arrived here in the mid' 80s... A typical planning battle when the feelings of locals were sure to be over-ruled...

Lot 69. A Parcel of Accommodation Arable Land and a Small Piece of Woodland convenient for Bisley and Chalford Villages, being No. 11 and 60 on the plan and comprising in all 10a. 0r. 3p. The Arable Land is let to L. Smith on a yearly Michaelmas agreement at a rental of £9 10s. 0d. per anum. The Woodland is In Hand. The Timber on this lot has been valued at £... Land Tax £0 2s. 8d. *This is the Fourways corner of 'the estate'.*

Lot 70. A Valuable Piece of Woodland within a mile of Chalgrave [?Chalford!] Railway Station having a long road frontage and known as Frith Wood. It extends to about 23a. 3r. 36p. 0d. is at present In Hand and possession will be given on completion of purchase.

Lot 71. Frith Wood Cottage with Useful Paddock comprising A Superior Modern House containing three Bedrooms, two Sitting Rooms, Kitchen, Washhouse and usual Outbuildings, Capital Garden, Piggery and Small Paddock. Water from Well. Being No. 173 and 233 on Plan and extending to some 4a. 0r. 24p. Let to L. Otley on a quarterly agreement at £12 per annum. *I have never confirmed it, but I think this property still exists and can be glimpsed 'behind' Velhurst and Ashley Drives, by Bussage Recreation Ground.*

Through the whole auction schedule 'usual outbuildings' refers, I assume, to the outdoor lavatories! There were beautiful photographs in the catalogue.