Church Farm Newbold Verdon

By Roger King

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Introduction

I have only been able to gather a limited amount of information about Church farm and there is much more to discover.

Though the building is relatively new in historical terms, the proximity of the farm to the old centre of the village suggests that there may well have been earlier farmsteads on this site, possibly dating back many hundreds of years to Saxon times. Its name suggests a link with the St James's church, but this may be just geographical rather than proprietary.

My main source has been the census returns 1841-1911 and I also have a number of 19th century press cuttings referring to the owner. **If** the farm was owned, or tenanted, by members of the Wildman family in the late 1700's and early 19th century, then I have records of this ownership.

1911 Census

Walter Orton was recorded as the owner he was 48 years old and lived with his wife, Lucy Ellen, and their three children: Jessie (14), Muriel (8) and Alfred (7). Walter was originally from Enderby and his wife was from Weston in Northamptonshire. A fourth child had died.

They had 10 rooms.

1901 Census

Walter and Lucy were living at the farm with Jessie.

1891 Census

William Wilder (77) was the owner and farmer and he had been there for at least 50 years, probably longer as he was born in Newbold Verdon and his father was a farmer (more of that later). William lived there with his wife, Mary, who was the same age as him. Frank, there 38-year-old son worked on the farm, as did their daughter Sarah (28) and George Cooper a 10 year-old school boy boarding at the house.

1881 Census

The census records that the farm was 123 acres in size and that William had one farm labourer working for him. Frank and Kate (28) were also recorded as helping on the farm.

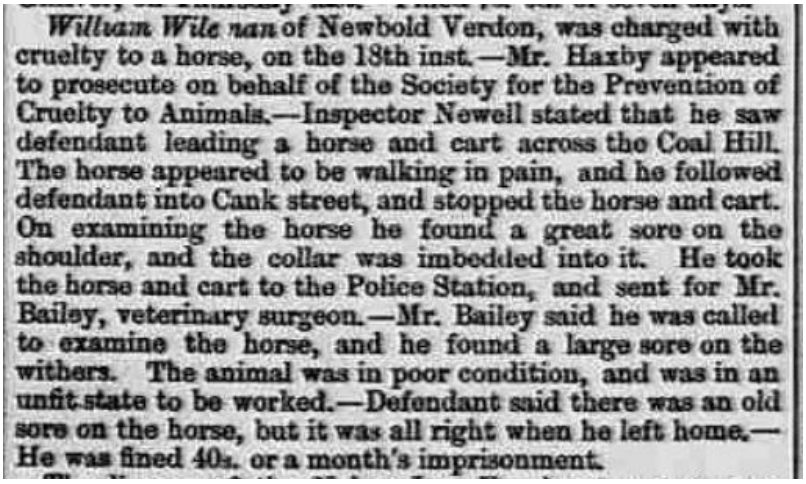
1871 Census

The farm was recorded as 220 acres (larger than 1881 but smaller than 1861). William and Mary's children: Dorothy (23) Frank (19), Kate (18), Ann (15) and Fanny (14) were also living there. Kate was working as a 'morning' governess. Ann and Fanny were scholars.

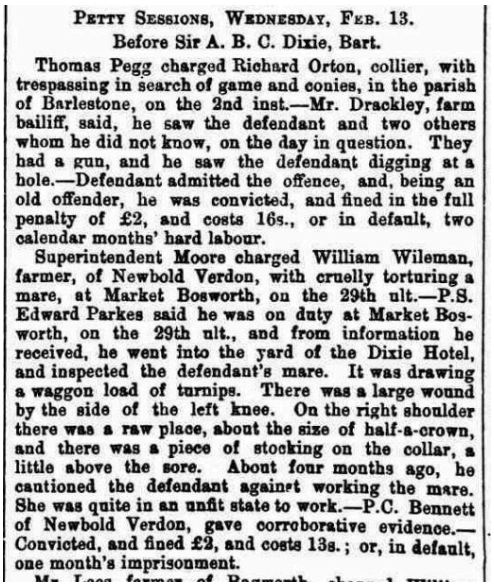
William had 3 labourers (farm workers) and 1 boy working for him.

Newspaper Cuttings

In 1867 and 1868, William Wildman was prosecuted for cruelty toward his horses.



William Wile man of Newbold Verdon, was charged with cruelty to a horse, on the 18th inst.—Mr. Haxby appeared to prosecute on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.—Inspector Newell stated that he saw defendant leading a horse and cart across the Coal Hill. The horse appeared to be walking in pain, and he followed defendant into Cank street, and stopped the horse and cart. On examining the horse he found a great sore on the shoulder, and the collar was imbedded into it. He took the horse and cart to the Police Station, and sent for Mr. Bailey, veterinary surgeon.—Mr. Bailey said he was called to examine the horse, and he found a large sore on the withers. The animal was in poor condition, and was in an unfit state to be worked.—Defendant said there was an old sore on the horse, but it was all right when he left home.—He was fined 40s. or a month's imprisonment.



PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 13.
Before Sir A. B. C. Dixie, Bart.

Thomas Pegg charged Richard Orton, collier, with trespassing in search of game and conies, in the parish of Barlestone, on the 2nd inst.—Mr. Drackley, farm bailiff, said, he saw the defendant and two others whom he did not know, on the day in question. They had a gun, and he saw the defendant digging at a hole.—Defendant admitted the offence, and, being an old offender, he was convicted, and fined in the full penalty of £2, and costs 16s., or in default, two calendar months' hard labour.

Superintendent Moore charged William Wileman, farmer, of Newbold Verdon, with cruelly torturing a mare, at Market Bosworth, on the 29th ult.—P.S. Edward Parkes said he was on duty at Market Bosworth, on the 29th ult., and from information he received, he went into the yard of the Dixie Hotel, and inspected the defendant's mare. It was drawing a waggon load of turnips. There was a large wound by the side of the left knee. On the right shoulder there was a raw place, about the size of half-a-crown, and there was a piece of stocking on the collar, a little above the sore. About four months ago, he cautioned the defendant against working the mare. She was quite in an unfit state to work.—P.C. Bennett of Newbold Verdon, gave corroborative evidence.—Convicted, and fined £2, and costs 13s.; or, in default, one month's imprisonment.

1861 Census

William farmed 302 acres of land and had 5 men and 4 boys working for him - the children not being quite ready to take on the roles they would do in later years.

William and Mary were both 48 and Dorothy 13. William Junior also appears (age 11) he later has his own, smaller, farm in the village; this possibly explains the shrinking of the size of the farm. Other children included: Francis (Frank) 9, Kate (8), Ann (6), Fanny (5) and Sarah (4).

Isabelle Sutton, 21, from Belgrave -probably Leicester0- was their 21-year-old servant. John Prime (13) and Charles Ball (12), both from Newbold Verdon lived in as plough boys.

1851 Census

This census creates a little confusion because we are now introduced to William Wildman Senior, (born 1781) and he is living next door, possibly on the same plot, to our original William Wildman (born 1813).

Census No 120	Age	Status	Occupation	Born	Census No 121	Age	Status	Occupation	Born
William Snr	70	Head	Farmer	NV	William Jnr	38	Head	150 acres Farmer with 4 labourers	NV
Sarah	36	D		"	Mary	37	Wife		"
Thomas	33	S	Carpenter	"	Dorothy	3	D		"
Ann	19	D		"	William*	1	S		"
Hannah Yates	15	Serv	Servant	Barl	Ann Gardener	16	serv	Housekeeper	Barl
					Elizabeth Kirkland	16	serv	Servant	Barl
					Thomas Reynolds	19	Serv	Farm servant	NV
					Thomas Morris	16	serv	Farm servant	Sta**
					George Hudson	15	serv	Farm servant	NV

* This William eventually has his own farm in the village.

** Stanton

1841 Census

Little detail is included in any 1841 census return because it wasn't really asked for. William Wildman (Snr) was living at the farm with William (Jnr) aged 25, three years younger than he should have been. His brothers John (24), Thomas (21), Edward (20) and Henry (18) were living at the farm, together with sisters, Sarah (23), and Ann (17).

With all those young adults he did not need any additional help on the farm.

1811 Enclosure Commission Records

In 1811, commissioners were appointed to oversee the final enclosure of lands in the parish, amounting to 900 acres. In order to achieve this the commissioner had to establish, in law, who owned what land. They did this by first undertaking a survey of landowners, asking which land they owned and to show proof of this. Where there were any disputes the commissioners would decide. A William Wildman's name is included in the names of landowners, along with his brother, John Wildman. It is probably William Snr from the 1851 census but it has not yet been verified. In an additional document, John's fields were named, and they look to have been in Brascote

When the commissioners had distributed the 900 acres, they instructed that drainage ditches be dug and that this was to be paid for, pro rata, y landowners.

John Wildman paid £131 4s 5d and William £168 1s 5d, not insignificant sums at this time.

1798 UK Land Tax redemption

This tax identified all landowners so that they could tax them using a rating system.

On this document both a John and William Wildman had to pay £3 5s 10¼d each year. John Wildman rented a large amount of land from the then current lords of the manor, Messrs Hartropp and Pares and was expected to pay £10 15s 7½d to the government for this.

It is likely that this William was the father of William Wildman (1781) who would have been 7 at the time.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Whilst we know quite a bit about who lived there for a period of time, we don't really know how the farm was organised and where the fields of the farm were. There may have been land close to the farm, but there quite easily could have been field elsewhere in the parish.

The 1870 OS map below shows Church Farm and the building to its west could also have been part of the farm.

- Could the deeds of the house help?
- Are there any old maps in the paperwork?
- What clues are there in the building and existing land?

