

ABBOTS LEIGH CENTENNIAL RECORD 1915

Volume 2

**Poundbatch
Dennyview
Sandy Lane
Knightcott
Glen Avenue
Harris Lane**

Poundbatch Farm – once the area where stray animals were impounded – is one of the oldest dwellings in Abbots Leigh, dating from at least 1760, but probably a farm dwelling before that. In the 1841, 1851, and 1861 Censuses it was farmed by the Vowles family – John Vowles and later his son, also John. The stream from Abbots Pool down to what are now Ham Green Lakes runs through Vowles Bottom.

In 1871 and 1881 Poundbatch was farmed by Joseph Stones, in 1891 by Benjamin Withers, in 1901 by Richard Beard Withers, and in 1911 by Samuel Chapman who had married Benjamin Withers' daughter Eliza. Richard Withers had moved to Avon View (now Staddlestones) when Samuel Chapman took over Poundbatch but when this was sold in 1915 (to F.W. Giles) Withers moved to Moundleigh (now the Kennels).

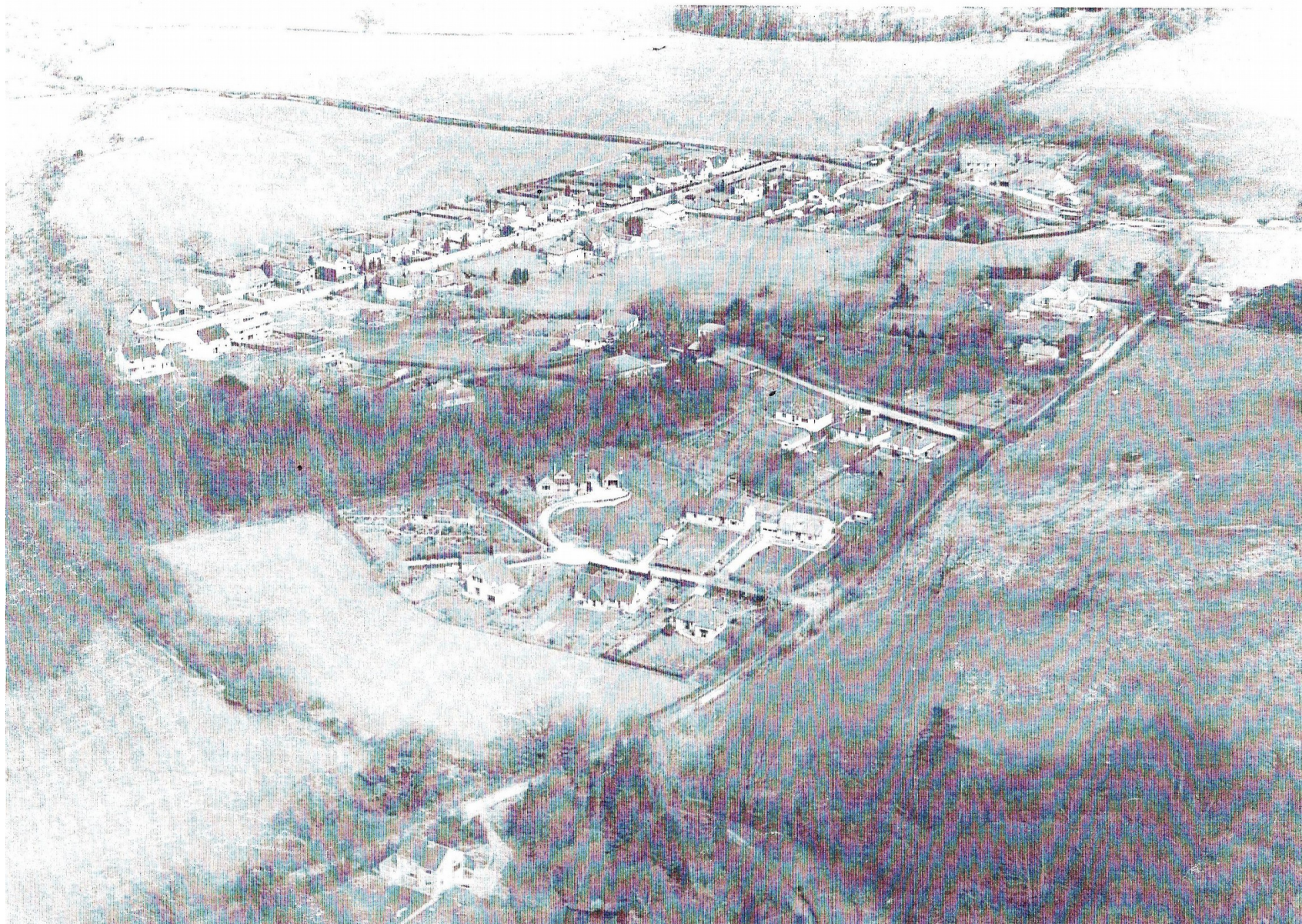
At the 1915 sale of the Abbots Leigh Estate, the 141 acre Lot 15 holding stretching from Poundbatch across to what is now Glen Avenue, along Vowles Bottom, and up to Haberfield and parts of Blackmoor – was bought by Mildred Trim, wife of a Taunton speculative land agent. The Lot was soon split as she sold on parts of it to other buyers.

Poundbatch Farm itself became the property of the Chapmans and after Samuel's death in 1923 passed to his widow Eliza. The Farm, a seven bedroom 'commodious farmhouse' (1915 sale catalogue) had in the past been occupied by more than one household. In the 1861 Census, for example, George Llewellyn, tailor and draper, is listed as living there. After the 1915 sale the farmhouse was split, and **Denny View** (or Denny House) became a separate residence being occupied in 1921 and 1928 by a Mr. Tittle.

From 1933 Eliza (by then living at Moundleigh) began to dispose of land holdings on what was to become Dennyview Road. Quarter-acre plots were sold individually from the early 1930s, for £100 each. Each plot of land was sold with stipulations about the value of the house constructed and deadlines for completion of the work, including a 'stock proof fence'. The 'plans and elevations' also had to be approved by the vendor and her surveyor. Although the houses were built for individual owners by a range of builders, these requirements might account for the same basic designs appearing several times along the earlier built houses in the road (Nos 1-25 and 2-18), for example 1, 7 and 21; 8 and 14; 9 and 25; 3 and 5; 4, 6 and 12. The road originally ended at the turning circle at Nos 18/25, where there was access to the land around Avon View (now Staddlestones on Sandy Lane). Only in the 2000s was a house built on plot No 18. Nos 10 and 16a are also 'infilling' – No. 10 was built in the 1970s, No. 16a is a 'mock tudor' beloved in the '80s.

Dennyview Road was extended to its current length with several houses built in 1936 to a similar design (**20, 27, 29, 31**) by Ben Chapman (Eliza Chapman's son). Ben Chapman himself lived at No. 31. A further group of homes (Nos. **22-32** and **33-37**) were built in the early-mid 1960s by developer builder William J (Billy) Bray, Nos 24-32 are all of a similar style/construction materials, whilst 33, 35 and 37 (there is no No. 34 or 36) have all got similar design details, roof lines, dormers, windows.

Many of the originally modest homes in Dennyview Road have been extended/improved/rebuilt over recent years - notably **12, 13, 20 and 32** - while others appear pretty much unaltered externally (**1, 2, 7, 8, 11**).



Dennyview Road is a cul de sac, unlike the older Sandy Lane which appears on Richardson's 1800 map, and runs from the Pill Road to, and beyond, Tanpits. At Tanpits - the Tan Yard on Richardson's map and now **Tanpit Lodge** - there was a tannery, possibly belonging to St Augustine's monastery in Bristol – sited on the Failand side of the brook. Oak was used to line pits into which water from Markham Brook was fed and the oak bark leached out tannins causing the animal hides to soften and thus become more durable. Markham Brook runs from Failand, through Markham Bottom, under Haberfield Bridge and thence down to Pill. From Tanpits to Pill, the Brook was the western boundary of the Abbots Leigh Estate and also marked the edge of the parkland which in the eighteenth century had been the deer park and hunting area of the estate.

Much of this part of the Abbots Leigh Estate was acquired by Melville Wills from 1915. His purchases included **Old Park House**, thought to date from early seventeenth century and probably a former hunting lodge, (but documented as Park Farm in the 1851 and 1871 Censuses), **Parkwood Barn** (probably built on the site of old farm buildings and converted to a modern dwelling in 1999), and today's **Parkwood House** (on the site of Old Park Cottage, bought by Hawkings in 1951, let to Higgs, sold on in 1976 and modernised by its present owners in 2005).

At **Glen Avenue**, the earliest house, again built in 1939 on land bought from Eliza Chapman, was **The Quest**. In 1946 Benjamin Chapman sold land to John Moore of Ham Green, but in 1948 he sold sites for three houses to Voysey who built **Mere Green** and **Pentine** in the late 1940s. Other houses on Glen Avenue – **Woodycombe** and **Saywood** were built in the late 1940s early 1950s.

In 1951 Glen Farm was advertised for sale by the Wills estate: The farm holdings then comprised land from today's Haberfield Park Farm down to Manor Road and much of the land west of Manor Lane along to Markham Brook. The farm holdings included an area of 271 acres and a range of dwellings and farm related buildings – the main farm house (today's **Glen House**), a coach house (today's **Coach House**) – and farm buildings - now **Glen Farm**. Also on Sandy Lane were Fishponds Bottom Cottages (now **Glen Cottages**), pictured in Francis Danby's 1837 painting. They were occupied for many years from the 1920s by Wills employees Eddie and Hilda Maddock and Norman (captain of the village bellringers) and Evelyn Coombes,

All the buildings of the farm together with 187 acres of farmland were bought by Edward Champion Hawkings. His son, William Peter, lived in Old Park Cottage until 1959 when **Glenleigh** was built by local developer Norman Voisey. The Hawkings then took over the farm and moved into the main farmhouse in 1968. Glenleigh was sold in 1969 to the present owner. In 1989, on Hawkings' retirement, Glen Farm was advertised for auction in eight lots including Glen Farmhouse, Coach House (a Land Girls' Army home in the second World War and a turkey farm in the 1980s), Burnt House (now **Windrush**), various farm buildings, Fishponds Cottage and land totalling 199 acres.

In 1916 and through the 1920s Walter Melville Wills had purchased all of this land and held most of it until his death in 1941. All of the plots within the former Wills holdings have been sold, with most of the dwellings now having seen significant renovation, extension, improvement or in one case demolition and new rebuild.

In 1924 Eliza Chapman began to release land on **Knightcott Road**, selling four plots of land at the top of Knightcott to William Axtens of Bristol. When Axtens died in 1938 these plots were bought by Marjorie Down who later split the holdings into separate sites, which today are **Paddock House** and **The Warren** (Nos 9 and 11 respectively, No 22 **Springfield House** and **Nos 12, 14, 16, 20**.

At the lower end of Knightcott Road, new dwellings were built on the west side in the 1930s (**Nos 1, 3, 5, and 7 (Sonoma)**) whilst on the east side James Wyatt who had bought land from Ben Chapman in 1948, created a market garden and built a wooden cottage, Glen View (to be seen in the aerial photo above). . This passed to Charles Selway and later to Norman Voysey who built four houses on the site (today **Nos. 2, 4, 6, 8**)

Where Sandy Lane and Harris Lane meet stands **Staddlestones**, formerly Avon View, bought in the 1915 sale by Frank Giles, occupied from 1931 to 1996 by Judge Brown and his daughter Catherine, and until her death in 1995 by Catherine . The house has always had strong connections with horses, from horse-drawn carriages in the days of the Giles family, Lippizaners with Catherine Brown and competition horses with the present owner. Also on the join between Sandy Lane and Harris lane is **Myrtle Cottage**. This was built in the eighteenth century and was occupied by Henry Paul (1881 and 1891 Censuses), Edward Rowles (1910) and Emma Wyatt (1911). The named tenant at the 1915 sale was Gilbert Abbot but the cottage was bought by the Misses Harvey and Crease for £260. Miss Crease is known to have lived there for a number of years and from 1964 Myrtle Cottage was occupied by a Mr. and Mrs. Gayford prior to the present owners who have been there for thirty years.

Myrtle Cottage is the only house in Harris Lane not built on land previously owned by the Fry Family at the Priory. It was built in the eighteenth century and was occupied by Henry Paul (1881 and 1891 Censuses), Edward Rowles (1910) and Emma Wyatt (1911). The named tenant at the 1915 sale was Gilbert Abbot but the cottage was bought by the Misses Harvey and Crease for £260. Miss Crease is known to have lived there for a number of years (see opposite) and from 1964 Myrtle Cottage was occupied by a Mr. and Mrs. Gayford prior to the present owners who have been there for thirty years.

The Priory (see also the Manor Road record)) was built by Bristol lead merchant Christopher George in 1831 who lived there into the 1940s. Subsequent owners were John Johnson Brown and Henry and Martha Abbot who lived there from the 1861 Census until the early 1901 when the Frys took on a 21 year lease from the Miles Estate. Roderick Fry bought the Priory at the 1915 sale and lived there until his death in 1952.

In December 1952 The Priory Estate was offered for sale by auction being divided into six separate Lots – the main house, the walled garden, gardens on the main road, Priory Cottage, the orchard and a small piece of field.

The Priory itself started at a price of £3,000 but was then withdrawn. Lot 2 – the walled garden fronting Manor Road was sold to Harold Lee for £2,225, whilst the gardens facing the main road were sold to Mr. King for £885. Lot 4 Priory Cottage (now on Manor Lane) started at £1,000 but was withdrawn at £2,050. The orchard adjoining Priory Cottage and fronting onto what is now Harris Lane started at £250 and, after 22 bids, was bought by Raymond Moxley for £1,010, whilst the final Lot 6 was withdrawn at £525.

Moxley built Prior's Field (then a bungalow) in 1953 and sold adjoining land on which were built Yew Tree House (in 1956) and Lark Rise. Demolished (probably in the 1990s) but now replaced by Rise 1 and Rise 2 (the sugar cubes) The new (2015) Prior's Field was built in 2000 and sold to its present owners in 2008. Yew Tree House was demolished in 2006 and rebuilt in 2007.

The Fry Trustees had sold the Priory itself and land fronting Manor Road and Harris Lane to William (Billy) Bray who in the mid to late 1970s built **Hunter's Lodge** (1974), **Chelmwood** (1977) and **The Ridings** (1978). Also built on former Bray Land were **Trinity House** (1992),

Abbots Corner (1999) and **Cherry Holt** (demolished and rebuilt in 2013), **Priorsgate**, **Priory Orchard**, and in 2015 a new **Priory Gardens**.

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