

NORTH DEAN REMEMBERED

On September 27th 1929, an auction of 34 lots was held of the North Dean Estate which consisted of some 700 acres. It was owned by the newspaper proprietor and aircraft manufacturer George Holt Thomas of North Dean House, who died childless that year shortly followed by his wife Gertrude. Lot 6 was Upper North Dean Farm, bought prior to auction by my father, Albert Edward (Ted) Turner, who was a farmer and businessman. It consisted of about 103 acres, which Ted later reduced to approximately 51 due to other commitments. He also bought Lot 15, a pair of cottages (subsequently knocked into one) opposite the farm which became known as Hazel Cottage, and where my grandparents, Walter and Violet Turner, later lived. At that time, the village had a population of about 50 to 70 people, some of whom also purchased their homes at the auction.

North Dean House has seen a number of residents, including Seebohm Rowntree (of confectionery fame) and the Village Hall has always been host to many social events, including whist drives, which were much enjoyed by Violet.

In 1940, a Home Guard was formed in North Dean, being a section of "A" (Hughenden) Platoon, Wycombe (County) Company and of which Ted was Captain. Like many others during the war including my grandparents, Ted and my mother, Edna, took in evacuees.

Ted had a herd of Guernsey cattle and was diligently assisted on the farm by Bill Cox, who was helped by his wife, Ada, in the dairy. They lived near the Village Hall. Ted and Edna were active participants in village life with Ted serving on the Village Hall Committee for many years. After Edna's sudden death in 1967, Ted lived on at the farm until 1981, when he moved to Great Kimble where, for the rest of his life, he retained a deep affection for North Dean.

*

I was born after the war and left Upper North Dean Farm when I got married 24 years later. My many memories of North Dean include those of a happy and close-knit community, the annual Village Fete and the monthly Sunday afternoon services in the Village Hall. These were taken by the then vicar of St. Michael and All Angels Church, Hughenden, the Rev. S. A. C. Dickins, with hymns accompanied by Rene Ayres (late of The Cottage) on the piano.

Penny Britnell, Dorset