

South & Lower Farms

Research Report, April 8th 2019

by Michael Blakstad



Lower Farm, Etching by Robert Brydon 1905

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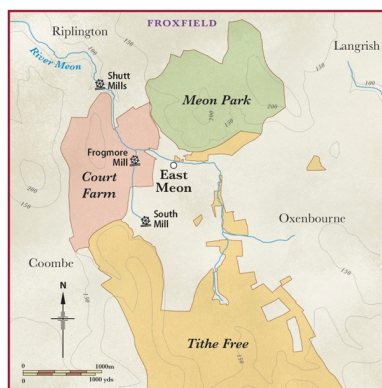
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Summary

From the time of Domesday, South Mill was one of seven mills in the manors of East Meon and Meon Ecclesia; it was located near the source of the River Meon, close to a chapel of ease and the field on which annual fairs were held¹. In the early 17th century South Farm was built amid its own fields, until then cultivated in demesne by the Diocese of Winchester; it became one of the most important farms in the valley and changed hands several times. Lower Farm is the northern neighbour in close proximity to South Farm and from the 19th century they were farmed together. In the 20th century they were rented, and later owned, by one of the Cumbrian families who migrated to East Meon and are today farmed by the fourth generation of Atkinsons.

The Middle Ages

From Norman times the Bishops of Winchester were lords of the manor of East Meon, which was the largest of its Hampshire estatesⁱⁱ. Domesday had entries for two manors: Menes and Menes Ecclesia. The latter comprised approximately 700 acres of land, completely surrounded by the much larger Menes Manor; it was farmed *in demesne* by serfs and its revenues went directly to the Diocese. Menes Ecclesia certainly included Meon Park, the Bishops' hunting park and Court Farm, but it is not clear what other lands were included: it is possible that parts of today's South and Lower Farms lay in Menes Ecclesia, and that the attribution varied from century to century.

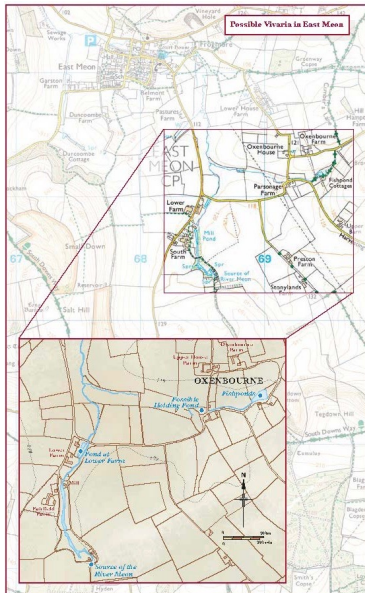


This map shows lands recorded as free from tithes in 1851, farmed 'in demesne' – directly by the Diocese. It also shows the mills listed in Domesday which were on the River Meon: Frogmore was in Menes Ecclesia.ⁱⁱⁱ

South Mill

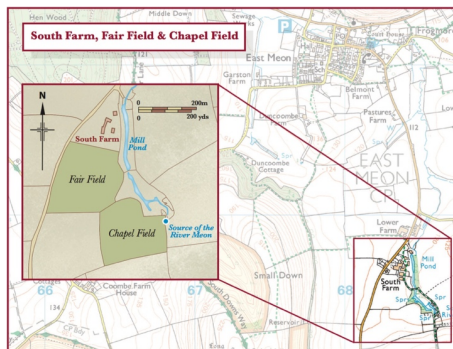
The Winchester pipe roll of 1301 records under Meon Manor: *Defaults of Rent: 'the mill which belonged to Robert Molendarius sometimes held drawn into demesne £1 for the year'* Domesday lists 7 mills in the Hundred of East Meon, one in Menes Ecclesia. The Winchester pipe roll of 1301 records under Meon Manor: *Defaults of Rent: 'the mill which belonged to Robert Molendarius sometimes held drawn into demesne £1 for the year'*^{iv}. This was South Mill and it was not liable to pay rent that year because at that time the land had been taken into demesne, to be farmed directly by the Diocese. A century later, South Mill had been rebuilt and was occupied by a baker who had fields on which he grazed his animals and he paid rent. *'Farm of the mill: 13s 4d from William Tyere, baker, for 1 water-mill with the mill-pond and pasture on both sides of the mill-pond from the lord's demesne beside the chapel, demised to the same William by fine, which same mill was built anew at the cost of the same William, Total 13s 4d'*^v.

Most medieval farmers lived in cottages and tofts clustered together in one of the dozen tithings which comprised the Hundred of East Meon and from which the villeins went out each day to tend their 'lands' in the open fields which they rented from the Diocese of Winchester^{vi}.



The probable location of four vivaria which provided fresh fish for the Bishop.

Near South Mill, at the source of the Meon, and at what became Lower Farm there were probably two in a series of *vivaria* – ponds in which freshwater fish were bred exclusively for the bishop’s table, maintained by the bishop’s fisherman^{vii}. There was also a chapel-of-ease, St Mary in the Fields, and Fairfield where an annual fair was held on Lady Day, 25th March^{viii}.



Chapel Field and Fairfield.

Early Modern

Between 1500 and 1700, the population of England doubled and the growth of towns and cities created a hungry market for agricultural produce whose prices rose six-fold. Land rents grew even faster forcing farmers to become more efficient. New methods were introduced first to East Anglia by farmers from the Netherlands; they spread to the chalk downlands of southern England. Irrigation was improved: water-meadows along the Meon were managed by sluices and now produced winter hay, making it possible to feed more cattle over winter and increasing their size and yields.

Crop rotation was revolutionised; instead of leaving fields fallow every third year, 'up-and-down' husbandry meant alternating the ploughing of fields and laying them down for grass; new fodder crops such as turnips were introduced and 'artificial grasses' such as sainfoin, trefoil and clover. Four-course rotation now alternated wheat, then turnips, then barley and finally clover. Farmers learned to use manure more intensively and those near large towns or cities diversified into the production of fruit, vegetables and hops; hops were a new import from the Continent, and their addition converted 'ale' into 'beer'. Climate, too, played a part: drier weather led to increases in barley and wheat crops. Finally, the imported Dutch plough and a move from oxen to horses further increased yields.

Successive enclosures drove tenants off their open fields and more farmsteads were subsequently built among the fields owned by the better-off farmers who had forced those with smaller holdings to vacate their lands. Meanwhile, increased availability of brick was transforming the architecture of houses and farm buildings, and the nature of the farm household changed as well. The early modern period saw further changes in land ownership as first the Crown, then Parliament, confiscated church lands, including in East Meon. After the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, ownership was restored to the diocese, but land-holdings, representing control of the properties, were assigned to wealthy laymen.

South Mill in Elizabethan East Meon

In 1567, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries had deprived the Diocese of Winchester of several of its important properties, a rental survey was held to establish the value of the properties it still held. There are two entries for Southmill: for the mill, rented for 15s,



1567 Rental: Southmill entries under East Meon tithing

and the meadow, at 6d. While the mill was rented by Nicholas Wright, the meadow was let to Anthony Langrishe. This would have been a water meadow, the most valuable form of grazing since the irrigation could be controlled to produce lush winter or spring grass.

Anthony Langrish & Nicholas Wright were the wealthiest men in the Hundred and rented lands in several tithings.

Eastmeane Goods	Robert Wright, gent, £16 John Wright, gent, £10
Riplington Goods	Nicholas Wright, gent, £5
Borden Lands	Edward Langrishe, gent, £12
Borden Goods	Nicholas Pescod, gent, £8
Langrish Goods	William Langrishe, gent, £8
Ramsdene Goods	Roger Langrishe, gent, £3

In the 1586 Lay Subsidy members of the Wright and Langrish families represented six out of only seven 'gentlemen' in the tithings surrounding East Meon (table, left)^{ix}. When Nicholas Wright died in 1591 he bequeathed holdings not only

in East Meon but in other hundreds including Catherington, Clanfield and Havant. In the 1580s he had converted the 14th century hall house in what is now Workhouse Lane into a substantial farmhouse (now known as The Tudor House). He, his sons and farm servants lived, in the early modern manner, under the same roof and went out to work the fields from what was essentially, the home farm^x.

A 1777 Indenture includes a reference to land at South Mill being 'heretofore Demised and Granted for divers years by Thomas the Lord Bishop unto our late Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth.'^{xi} Thomas Cooper was Bishop of Winchester from 1584 – 1594: it is therefore probable that it was confiscated from the Diocese in the reign of Elizabeth.

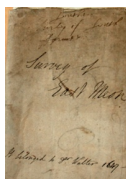
South Farm

The first contemporary use of the name "Southfarme" appears in 1627 when Robert the youngest son of Nicholas Wright bequeathed to his widow Barbara....

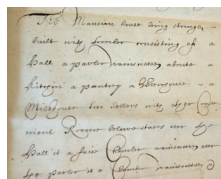
Et ad nos herede I have a lease of a farme in Eastmeane aforesaid called Southfarme and of the landes meadowes pastures feeding, woodes underwoodes, commons, profits and commodities thereunto belonging for the terme of fiftie yeares or there aboutes more my will is and I

Extract from will of Robert Wright, 1627, including 'to have a lease of a farme in Eastmeane aforesaid called Southfarme and all the lands, meadows, pastures, feeding, woodes underwoodes, commons, profits and commodities thereunto belonging for the terme of fiftie years

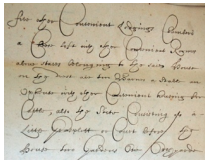
There was no mention in Robert's will of a 'messuage', 'toft' or other dwelling at South Farm, but in 1647 the Commonwealth Parliament conducted a survey of the Hundred, in which a substantial 'mansion house' is described in some detail which had been built at some point in the early 17th century.



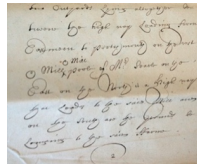
Parliamentary Survey of South Farm, 1647.



'The Mansion House being strongly built with timber consisting of a hall, a parlour wainscotted about, a kitchen, a pantry, a Brewhouse, a Milkhouse, ... with four convenient rooms below stairs; above the hall is a fair Chamber wainscotted ...



... five Convenient Lodging Chambers, a ? Loft, four Convenient Rooms above stairs; belonging to the said house. (Also ... 2 barns, a stable, an ox-house and housing for cows).



...two outyards lying altogether to the north by the highway leading from East Meon to ... the Mill and Mill Pond of Mr Searle on the East'.

Civil War and Restoration

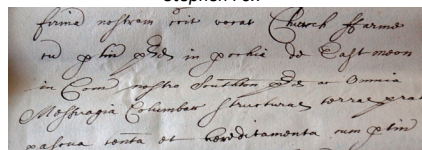
Cromwell's Parliament and the Restoration of King Charles II both handed South Farm and other East Meon properties to their respective supporters . Bishop Curle of Winchester had fled to Soberton in 1645 when Winchester fell to the Parliamentarians and died there in 1647; Parliament passed a Bill for the Sale of Episcopal Lands under which the diocese of Winchester was stripped of all its estates^{xii}. The tenancies of Court and South Farms were handed to Parliamentary supporters Nathan Hallowes (a Derby MP) and Richard Dannald respectively. In 1649 the two Meon manors were bought by Francis Allen MP, a contentious and wealthy London goldsmith-financier, who had arranged the execution of Charles I^{xiii}. Upon the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, the East Meon manors were handed back to the diocese but tenancy of the principal estates was granted by the Crown to followers of the king: Court, Church and South Farms went to Stephen Fox, the man who had financed Charles's exile and negotiated his return to England^{xiv}.



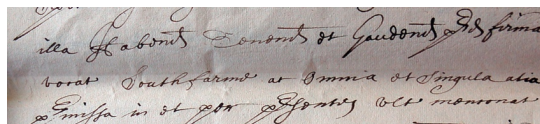
Sir Stephen Fox by John James Baker; Fox was financier to Charles II and leaseholder after the Restoration of East Meon's manorial lands



Start of 19-page letter from Charles II allocating Court Farm to Stephen Fox^{xv}



Page 7 'Church Ffarm(s)'



p15 Firma vocet Southffarme

Fox, later Sir Stephen, was the Member of Parliament for Salisbury and there is no evidence that he ever visited East Meon; absentee landlords were to hold the land for two centuries. It is hard to make out whether the entry is to 'Church Ffarme' or 'Ffarmes': if in the plural, it refers those owned and farmed by the diocese. Church Farm, singular, is used in the 1851 Tithe Apportionment but there is no clear indication to what it referred; today's Church Farm was built in the 20th century at the south-east of the village.

A 1671 indenture uses the plural: it assigns to Sir Stephen Fox 'All that his ffarms with the appurtenance//s and all Church Ffarms and all houses, Buildings, Dovehouses, Orcharde, Gardens and Meadows, Pastures and ffeedings, Profitts, Comodities and Appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging or therewith comonly used or enjoyed, situate, lying and being in the Town of parish of East Meon'^{xvi}. South Farm was one of these, along with Court Farm. We have seen that South Mill was only taken temporarily in demesne in 1301, and was let to tenant millers and bakers;^{xvii}. We don't know when St Mary's chapel became disused and Chapel Field became farm land, but the rest of its fields must have been farmed in demesne so that there would have been no tenants with whom to negotiate 'enclosure'. Robert Wright had presumably aggregated both demesne and tenanted lands and established the first farmstead in East Meon to stand among its own fields, away from the clusters of dwellings from which farmers and farm workers went to the open fields each day.

In 1662 Sir Stephen sold the lease of South Farm to William Hearst, a London doctor. It appears that the Hearsts continued to own South Farm for at least another fifty years. In the late 17th century Robert Randall, a wealthy yeoman, occupied South Farm.



Sale of South Farm by Stephen Fox, 1662, to William Hearst, London Doctor^{xviii}

Upon Randall death in 1707, John Bonham took over a meadow at South Mill and '3 closes of land called Godwin's Ground'^{xix}. On April 5th 1711 a William Hearst of Salisbury wrote to the Bishop, Sir Jonathan Trelawny: 'I having lately discoursed and created with your Lordship's Steward Mr Forbes about renewall of my lease of South Farm in East Meon and seven years of the term therein granted already expired at the latter end of this month, I did offer Mr Forbes the Summ of £40 for filling up the terme (which was the usual fine paid to my Ld Bishop Morley and Ld Bishops Men) but it was refused except I would give 20 guineas more by reason of – Government Lease he said was executed. Now it is my humble request that your Lordship will take the usuall Fine because it has cost me a great deal of money upon account of fire.'^{xx} In today's money, the annual rent was £7,500.

In 1777 Henry Penruddock Wyndham of Cormanton in the County of Southampton acquired the lease of the mansion, dwelling house and lands of South Farm, East Meon^{xxi}. Extracts from the Indenture comprise Appendix 4. Wyndham was evidently another absentee landlord and mention is made of *tenure or occupation of the late John Randall*, which suggests that the Randall/Randall family had farmed most of the land for the best part of a century. Such indentures follow standard patterns of wording and we should not make too much of the mention of *all great Timber Trees of Oak Ash Beech and Elm* and later of the

need to preserve *the Wood and Coppice wood in and upon the said Demised Premises from all and all manner of Waste Spoil and Destruction* but it is likely that woodland comprised a portion of the farmland. Records also show that in 1793 George Guy, yeoman, insured Fairfield Farm and in 1800 leased South Farm from Henry Penruddock Wyndham^{xxii}.

Victorian age

South & Lower Farms

The Victorian age introduced more detailed records of farms and their occupants: in 1851 a survey was made of every property in East Meon in order to assess the Apportionment in cash of what were up to then Tithes paid in kind. In 1841 the first Census Enumeration was made of the whole population, although the second census, in 1851, provides more useful information. East Meon History Group's Robert Mocatta has analysed the data from both records^{xxiii}.

The overall picture is of large landowners and farmers benefiting from new technologies of farming and employing fewer labourers whose fate was therefore very uncertain. Farmers expanded their holdings and many of East Meon's farmhouses no longer housed working farmers. The farmers who remained wanted more private space within the farmhouse and correspondingly reduced the size of their 'household'; their workers now lived not under the same roof but nearby, in empty farmhouses which had [been](#) converted or in cottages.

Deleted: bee



Lower Farm, etching by Robert Bryden 1905

Lower Farm is the northern neighbour of South Farm and the two were now jointly owned. In the Tithe Apportionments they are listed together as '*occupied*', i.e. farmed, by Samuel Padwick, comprising 580 acres, 245 of which were tithed; the landowner is John Bonham Carter. In the 1851 census Padwick is listed as living at Lower Farm, aged 38; his wife Jane was 25, the sister of James Lock who farmed Court Farm which was still East Meon's 'manor farm'.

The Padwicks would eventually have 11 children and 2 housemaids lived at Lower Farm: 18 year old Charlotte Lloyd and 12 year old Mary Kent, both of whom were born in East Meon. Farm servant Henry Kille, 20, also lived in; he too was born in the village. In all, Padwick employed 13 labourers and 7 boys.

South Farm, called 'Fairfield', was tithe-free and is therefore not enumerated in the Tithe Apportionments: which do not differentiate between 3 tithe free farms: Fairfield: 884 acres, Hiden: 227, and 'Church Farm': 205. In the 1851 census, South Farm is occupied by three of Padwick's workers; George Noble, a 45-year-old shepherd from Catherington and his family, Henry Crockford a 67 year old agricultural labourer from Westbourne, Sussex and his family, and George Porter, a 35 year old labourer from East Meon, and his family. The 1855 Kelly's Directory lists under Traders "*Padwick and Guy, farmers*"; William Guy was Padwick's brother-in-law and farmed Rookery Farm.

The 1861 census shows Samuel Padwick farming 1,165 acres, employing 19 labourers and 12 boys; he had 7 children and his 42-year-old sister Elizabeth was their governess. 18-year-old Maria Sparkes (from Cambridgeshire) was the house servant and 17-year-old Emily Norgate from East Meon is listed as nurse girl. 11-year-old George Porter from Idsworth was a "boy of all work" and completed the 13-person household.

In 1871 Samuel Padwick farmed 1,158 acres and employed 16 labourers and 6 boys. His address is given as a combination of Lower Farm and South Farm. His wife and 8 of his children still lived on the farm; his eldest two daughters are listed as Governess and Assistant Governess. They had two living-in servants: 19-year-old Ann Pink from Bishops Sutton and 18-year-old Mary Hiscock from East Meon.

In the following decade, farming in England fell into crisis. A string of bad harvests starting in 1875 had culminated in 1879 in the worst harvest of the century. Corn shipped from the American prairies was now flooding the market, followed by wool, canned and frozen meat from Australia, New Zealand and the Argentine. Prices, especially corn prices, fell. It was said that the 'golden age' of farming ended in 1875; only farms over 300 acres could now hope for a return on investment. Farmers in the south were accused of having lived too well (while farmers in the north worked hard and lived modestly).

Samuel Padwick was evidently successful: when he died in 1878, aged 47, he left £4,000 in his will, £265,000 in today's money. The 1881 census uses the name 'Fairfield Farm' and shows Padwick's widow Jane farming 881 acres and employing 7 men and 4 boys. The house is also occupied by Samuel's brother William, aged 49 (listed as a 'retired farmer'), his sister in law Charlotte, 45, and his sister Elizabeth, 52. Jane's 30-year-old son Samuel was described as 'employed on the farm' and 2 other sons and daughters still lived there: they employed 16-year-old Louisa Porter from East Meon as a general servant and the household was down to 7.

Lower Farm is now occupied separately by George Darvill who farmed 1000 acres, employing 14 men and 6 boys^{xxiv}. Darvill had married Elizabeth Smith, daughter of Henry Smith, an East Meon baker.

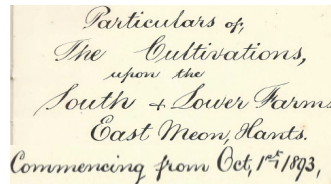


The Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England had put South Farm and Hyden Wood up for sale in 1890, describing them as 'Capital Down Land' and Hyden Wood 'a Celebrated Fox Covert together containing about 916 acres 3 roods and 32 perches with possession on completion of the purchase'. South Farm is described as 'A good Sheep Farm with ... Productive Arable and Grass Lands, and Water Meadows. At this point, 'The property is in the possession of Mrs Padwick, whose tenancy expires at Michaelmas 1890'. Sporting facilities were evidently high on the list of attractions: 'Hunting and Shooting Rides intersect the same. The Hambledon Hounds Hunt Four Days a week ... and Mr Barnard's Harriers have constant Meets.'

South Farm was bought from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners by John Bonham Carter, one of the largest East Meon landowners of that time. The 1891 census lists George Darvill as the farmer at South Farm. Samuel Padwick Junior, now 40, is listed as a retired farmer living at the same address. The 1898 Harrod's directory shows Darvill as the farmer at Court Farm and Fairfield Farm is now occupied by 56 year old William Annels, a "farm servant" from Petersfield.

Cultivation record of South & Lower Farms

George Darvill kept a Cultivation Record of Lower and Upper Farms for five years from 1893, which provides a glimpse of farming methods in the valley at this time. He recorded the treatment of each field year by year, with details of the crops and the number of times it was ploughed, mown, harrowed, dragged or rolled.



Title Page of Cultivation Records for South and Lower Farms, 1893 - 1898

Record of cultivation of one field: 'Spent Hill' 1893 - 1898

Field	Acres	Year	Crop	Treatment
Spent Hill	33a.1.32	1893	Mixed seeds after barley, part dunged and part folded	Cut twice
		1894	Mixed seed after barley	Part mown, part folded
		1895	Oats, 1 roll the other half ploughed & drilled	6 harrows 1 roller
		1896	Half of field, couched & drilled with swedes & turnips	3 ploughs & half 2 ploughs & 4 drags
		1897	Sown with barley & 15 acres put in with sanfoin, superphosphates	
Spent Hill (part)	17a 2.0	1898	Drilled with swedes and super	2 ploughs 6 harrows

Most of the uses to which other fields on the farm are included here ... the main crops were oats, barley, turnips and swedes; other crops mentioned are:

Alresford Stones, 1894: *'bunged for wheat after Bent Ley ...'*

Thistle Field 1894: *'Italian rye cut'*

Upper Wheat Hill, 1893: *'green round turnips after wheat fed off with cake and hay'*

Little Dean Field, 1896: *'Put in with rape, (failed) 2 drags & put in with mustard and sown with wheat'*

Lower Twenty Acres 1894: *'Wheat (after two years' ley) Halletts Pedigree, 1 acre. Potatoes Golden Drop Red'*

Although this large field was divided up, the record for Spent Hill gives an indication of the pattern of rotation: first, part barley followed by 'mixed seeds', one part dunged and another manured by sheep being 'folded'; in the second year, part oats, the other fallow; in the third, couch grass in followed by swedes and turnips; in the fourth, pasture in part of the field with superphosphates as fertiliser, barley in the rest, in the fifth, swedes and more fertiliser. Pasture was carefully tended – apart from sainfoin (lucerne) and couch grass, other forage is mentioned:

Alresford Stones, 1899: *'vetches fed. 1 roll drilled with turnips'*

Little Dean Field 1893: *'Two years mixed ley, part cut, folded all over'*

Great Deans Field 1989: *'8 acres trifolium (trefoil) after oats'*

Nineteen Acres 1895: *'Clover ley (after oats)'*

Darvill's workforce of 20 men was kept busy ploughing, harrowing, rolling &c, all detailed in the Cultivation Record. Activities listed in other fields include:

Lower Twenty Acres, 1894: *'Threshed from field, yield 65 sacks head and tail from machine, 63 lbs natural weight'*

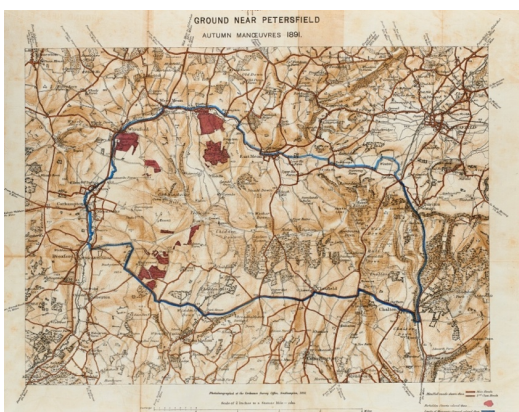
Upper Twenty Acres, 1895: *'Steam cultivated &c'*

George Atkinson, the 21st century farmer at Lower Farm, analysed this log of crops grown at the time: *"vetches, oats for horses, but there weren't a huge amount of cattle. There were sheep, but they were growing a lot of corn."* This is the pattern of farming which was leading the valley into crisis.

Before the 1901 census, Darvill moved to Court Farm with his second wife and three children and we shall re-join South and Lower Farms in the next century, when they form part of the 'Cumbrian Migration' and are taken over by farmers from the north-west taking advantage of much lower rents in East Hampshire than in the Lake District.

Autumn Manoeuvres

In 1894, a battalion from Aldershot camped at South Farm during its Autumn Manoeuvres (which would have been held north of Whitchurch but the shooting tenants refused to allow disruption to their sport ... East Meon's sportsmen proved more amenable)^{xv}. It conducted exercises on Westbury land against another battalion based in Soberton. The battalion had chosen Buriton but lack of water supply led to it being located at Fairfield Farm. *"The choice of camping ground at East Meon was further restricted to the left bank of the river, the fields on the right bank being under cultivation, with crops in many cases still standing when the Manoeuvres were terminated'."* and sanitation appears to have been poor ... *"For want of proper instructions beforehand the trenches in the screens were not properly placed and in consequence men urinated against the walls of the screens."* Too much information?



Aldershot Camp map of Autumn Manoeuvres in Meon Valley, 1891. One Division camped at Fairfield (South) Farm, the other at Soberton and the exercises were conducted on land belonging to Colonel LeRoy Lewis of Westbury House, to the west of the parish

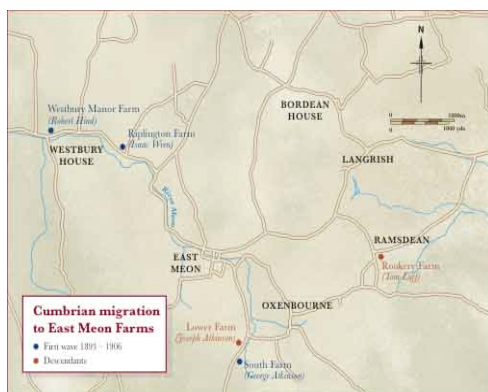
Before 1901, Darvill moved to Court Farm with his second wife and three children. In 1905, South and Lower Farms were taken over by farmers from the north-west taking advantage of much lower rents in East Hampshire than in the Lake District, the so-called Cumbrian Migration.

20th century

In 1901 Robert Bullpit from Leyton in Essex was living at South ('Fairfield') Farm with his wife and three children. South Farm Cottages were occupied by 23 people, including William Blackman, Carter, James Stickland, Shepherd, James Watts. Shepherd, George Morris, Under Shepherd, John and Reginald Moody, both Under-carters, and James Collins, Carter-on-farm.

The Cumbrian Migration^{xxvi}

By now the 'monoculture' of corn and sheep had impoverished the land. Rents plummeted and word reached the Lake District that farmers could rent farms of 400 or 500 acres in Hampshire for what they were paying in the Lake District for farms of between 40 and 80 acres. One wrote: *"Hampshire farmers, who relied on sheep and corn growing, found themselves in financial difficulties and, to make ends meet, sold off some off their sheep. This resulted in their corn-growing land being inadequately fertilised and the corn yields fell"*.^{xxvii}



East Meon farms to which Cumbrian farmers migrated.

A total of 9 families who came down from Cumberland to farm in East Hampshire between 1892 and 1925. *"They largely gave up corn-growing and concentrated on grass and livestock (i.e sheep and beef cattle). They brought with them, and introduced into Hampshire, Lakeland sheep breeds (Marshams)."*

One of the East Meon farms to be rented by a Cumbrian was South Farm. In September 1905, George and Mary Atkinson were farming 40 acres at Skelgill, 5 miles south west of Keswick; they now took over 568 acres at South Farm at a rent of 10/- (50p) an acre. John Bonham Carter died that year and they secured the tenancy from his executors. They could not move south until March 1906 and another Cumbrian migrant, Isaac Wren ran the farm on his behalf for 6 months.



The Atkinson family in front of South Farm. Centre, George Atkinson. Left to right, back row, Hilda (Wren), Nellie (Hoskings) middle, Ethel (Hobbs), Mary (nee Wilson); front, George, Millie, Joseph, Elizabeth.

Map 44. Aldershot Camp map of Autumn Manoeuvres in Meon Valley. The Meon Division camped at Fairfield (South) Farm, the other at Soberton. The manoeuvres were conducted on land belonging to LeRoy Lewis to the west.

George bought from Robert Bullpit, the outgoing tenant, 5 steers at £5 each and a further 7 at £4.5/- each (£4.25). Other purchases from around the district included a water cart (£7), a tip cart (£9) and a saddle and bridle (16/- or 80p).



The farm included South Mill, which had been described in the auction particulars as *'The valuable recently erected brick and slate turbine water mill, driving a pair of gristing stones, having three fine large stores, with hoists to same.'*

To quote the journal "The Miller" of 6th January 1913: *"A distressing occurrence is reported from East Meon, Nr Petersfield. Mildred, the eight-year-old daughter of Mr George Atkinson was in the mill there with her brothers when one of them, not realising that his sister was near the shaft, started the machinery. The child's hair was caught in the shaft and she was killed"*. Her tiny coffin was escorted through the streets of East Meon by the children of the village and she is buried in All Saints' churchyard.



South Mill was rebuilt in 1897, 9 years before the Atkinson family moved to East Meon

The Cumbrian farmers pursued a different farming policy from their Hampshire predecessors, reducing the scale of corn

growing and concentrating on grass for sheep and cattle to graze. Corn was now cut by reaping machines, followed by workers binding sheaves by hand. This new policy involved making vast quantities of hay, and where Hampshire farmers continued to use hurdles for folding sheep over roots, the Cumbrians allowed their sheep, newly-introduced Lakeland breeds, to run free across whole fields.

John Bonham Carter died by his own hand in 1906, and his property in East Meon was put up for sale. Included were South Farm (540 acres, with George Atkinson as tenant), and Lower Farm (260 acres, with Sam Hardy as tenant). The estate did not immediately find a buyer but was purchased in 1908 by Lord Hotham who installed an ambitious water supply scheme including a pumping station at South Farm, close to the source of the River Meon; this involved pumping the water to a reservoir on the top of the downs at Salt Hill, from where it was supplied by gravity; it is still the main water supply for the village. George Atkinson was paid £5 *'in consideration of permitting installation of the pumping station'*



Lot 16 of 1906 sale – South and Lower Farms

The Great War

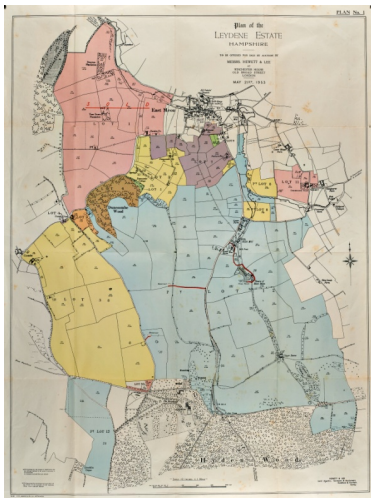
The eldest son of George & Mary Atkinson, George Wilson, had been taught at East Meon National School and later at Churchers College in Petersfield. George W lied about his age to sign up for the Hampshire Regiment and he joined the 15th ('Portsmouth Pals') Battalion. He was taken prisoner in March 1918 during the German Offensive at St Quentin and was posted as missing. By coincidence, Albert Smith, the village thatcher who lived at Frogmore, was taken prisoner in May 1918 and met George Wilson at a reception camp. [In a letter home he mentioned that they had met – and this was the first indication the Atkinsons](#)



GW Atkinson before departing for the front; his cap carried the Hampshire Regiment badge

[received](#) that their son was alive. George W was not released from his German prisoner-of-war camp for several months after Armistice and eventually arrived at Petersfield Station in the middle of the night; he walked home to South Farm, arriving unannounced at around 4.30am. The herdsman, Arthur Dowlen and his two sons Sunner and Charlie, were milking at that hour and were very surprised ...

Between the wars.



One of five maps from the sales particulars of the sale of Leydene Estate Lady Peel's death in 1953, showing land south of the village including South and Lower Farms

Starting in 1913, Viscount Robert and Eleanor, Dowager Countess Peel bought over 10,000 acres of land to the south of East Meon including South and Lower Farms; in the spring of 1914 they started building a 'stately home at Leydene, at the top of Hyden Hill. Lord Peel was a rising politician who subsequently became Secretary of State for India under Lloyd George, Lord Privy Seal, and Chairman of the Peel Commission which recommended the partitioning of Palestine. He had married in 1899 the daughter of Lord Ashton, a multi-millionaire who had made his money from the manufacture of linoleum. Ashton settled on Eleanor the sum of £800,000 – £100 million in today's money.

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Lower Farm

During the Great War and after it, Lower Farm was let by the Peels to a colourful figure, Sam Hardy MFH. His family had made a fortune in Australia and he had a large house on the Spain in Petersfield. From April to late September each year he moved his whole household into Lower Farm. The current owner of Lower Farm, the fourth George Atkinson, relates: *"He used to keep the Hursley Hambledon hounds at Lower Farm and stable the horses in the pubs and in West Meon. He used to take a pack of hounds to the Isle of Wight. He liked nothing better than a hard day's hunting, come back and get his butler to pull his boots off, full of water, and sit down and play the pianola which is in my house now."*^{xxviii}

Hardy's footman, Harry Walter Edwards, later wrote his memories of his boss' visits to East Meon: *"The village pub with its stables had to accommodate the grooms and horses, there were a coachman, 4 grooms and 2 stable lads, my boss used to drive a 4 in hand coach yellow and black with 4 beautiful black horses pulling it, the coachman and 2 grooms in their green livery, also a horn blower in scarlet coat, a gray top hat, every now and then he would burst forth with a fanfare you could hear them coming for miles along the country roads it was really a wonderful sight."*

Edwards also recalled: *"It was a lovely old farm house, no electric only oil lamps in all the rooms. I had about 30 lamps to clean and fill each morning which took quite a time especially those lamps in the drawing room which were standard lamps on silver bases, the only lights in the dining room were candles in brackets on the walls and candelabras on the table which held 12 candles. I must admit they gave a lovely glow and the effect on the silver was wonderful."*



Lower Farm with the store-house (green roof) which Hardy converted into a ballroom

Hardy entertained on the grand scale. A store-house had been converted into a ballroom *"It had a sprung-lined dance floor and it was paper-lined"*. Hardy hired the top dance band of the period, the Savoy Orpheans, and Sir Harry Lauder to entertain his guests, who included Edward and Wallis Simpson. *"In one weekend they got through 120 crates of champagne; the butler had to go round with a wheelbarrow, picking up the champagne corks."* Edwards again: *"None of the indoor staff were allowed to be seen by him out on the lawns or even on the landings after 10.00am. It was a considered fact that*

all cleaning and work through the front of the house should be finished by 9.30am, and if it wasn't, then the butler would want to know why."

Hardy fell out spectacularly with his neighbour, the miller at Frogmore, George Silk, resulting in a colourful court case *"Hardy versus Silk"*^{xxix}. Silk was entitled to control water from upstream, but Sam Hardy had built himself a "posh" new pond and denied access to Silk. In exasperation, Silk went up to open the sluices himself, Hardy sent out his gardener to prevent him, and Silk threw him into the said pond! Silk was found guilty of assault but was

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only bound over; Silk then sued Hardy and a judgement by the House of Lords awarded him damages of £1.

Hardy eventually ran through his family fortune and Lady Peel was able to get rid of her difficult tenant; George W and his brother Joseph took over Lower Farm in 1928, renting 300 acres for £216, or 72p per acre. The Atkinson brothers also rented the grazing rights on Hockham and Small Down.

George Atkinson (the 4th) reflects today: *"After World War One milk production rose dramatically, feeding Portsmouth and London because fresh milk was transported by rail, a premium product! Lower Farm, Peak Farm, Lower House Farm and South Farm all had herds, as did the Joneses at Hill Hampton and Bereleigh Estate."* This brisk dairy trade kept a number of dairy farms in the valley in business almost to the end of the century.

World War II

Oral history interviews were conducted in 1995 by Johnny Culley with residents of East Meon who remembered life in the village in World War II^{xxx}. Several describe South & Lower Farms.

There was an observation post to track German planes on their way to bomb Portsmouth; George W's son was also George W, but was known by his second name, Wilson. He described: *"We had a searchlight site on the farm. They had living quarters there, two or three Nissen huts, all camouflaged. They had a light anti-aircraft gun. It was a big prism, tremendously powerful; they had a big generator. Their aim was to light up planes so that the anti-aircraft guns, wherever they were situated, would pick it off. What they liked to do was get the planes in a cross and follow it. I saw them pick out quite a few planes and the flash around them – you saw the big puffs of our fire."*

"One evening in the summer, we were cutting corn with a binder and stoking when there was a single German aircraft come over, reasonably low, which dropped three high explosives and an oil bomb. We saw the bombs drop. He aimed for the naval establishment but missed. The oil bomb landed in the roadside and caught the hedge alight. The high explosives landed in amongst the sheep; there were one or two of them blown to pieces or injured. The indentations are still on the hillside now where they landed. The road was about six to eight inches deep with chalk. And I can remember when there was a landmine dropped on top of the hill at Chidden Down."

There was a prisoner-of-war camp for Italians at Stroud, and the POWs were assigned to work on farms, as Wilson Atkinson described: *"We had one or two fellows worked on the farm, prisoners-of-war. On one or two occasions I was put in charge of Italian prisoners-of-war. Those that wanted to work on the farm were brought out in a lorry. You used to have them cutting bushes on the hillside and potato-picking. They'd have one, if not two, soldiers with them. We got to know quite a few of them and one or two of the fellows stayed on after the war. They integrated quite well."*



Leslie 'Ginger' Phillips in the 2000s



Presentation of ploughing certificate to Ginger Phillips. L to R: Eileen Atkinson, Wilson, Sarah (Wilson's mother), Ginger Phillips with certificate, Kate, Michael and Jane Atkinson

Leslie ('Ginger') Phillips, was employed as a teenager by George Atkinson: *"He came to me and asked if I'd like to do a job or two. I supposed I'd been with my father – I'd done a bit of tractor work, a bit of relief milking as well when I was a nipper. The first job I ever done, we had to go potato-picking and they didn't have a spinner or an elevator then, you just split the baulk with a horse and baulker, so the potatoes came out either side of you, but you had to do a lot of fishing around for them. You'd get a wage but it wasn't very much!"*

"Five or six horses they had when I started up there and three tractors – an International W Ford, and International 10-20 (that never had tyres on, they had spiked that – if you wanted to take it on the road, you had a band you'd put on) and the third one was a David Brown. The International W Ford, five forward gears that had on it, which was unheard of in those days – at that time, if you had anything more than three in a car, it was remarkable! They had two carters, they did a lot of the farm work then; you'd use them for hay and straw and hoeing the sugar beet and mangolds. They never done no ploughing; tractors were doing [that when I got there ...](#)"

Joseph's brother George W. was at South Farm and the brothers worked in partnership. The government surveyed all farms in 1941, and the return for Lower Farm lists 'Messrs G. & J. Atkinson', while South Farm was not named. The acreage under cultivation by the Atkinsons totals 619, 109 of which produced wheat, barley, oats and mixed corn; 30 grew fodder - turnips, kale and rape, and 140 clover, sanfoins and grasses for pasture. 7 people are listed as working Lower Farm, excluding the farmers and their families. Lower Farm had 92 cattle and 362 sheep, 4 pigs and 1370 poultry. Of the tractors recalled by Ginger Phillips the survey only lists the David Brown tractor at Lower Farm.

Today's George Atkinson, son of Wilson and grandson of George W now owns Lower Farm and he reflects on the effects of World War II. *"The war changed the attitude of the people and our attitude to food; it also changed the landscape. A lot of Lower Farm was cleared from scrub during World War II, the government-backed War Agricultural Committees, staffed by well-known and forward-thinking farmers, including my grandfather, oversaw large scale clearance of gorse, scrub and trees from Leydene all the way to Old Winchester Hill. It was cleared by land girls and prisoners-of-war: potatoes and linseed were grown; it is now all back to grassland. War Ag. Committees could force the sale of land if it was farmed badly. One farmer at Botley was shot when he tried to resist confiscation; Coombe Farm was broken up and taken over by Cecil Kille. The clearance had a huge effect on the flora and fauna and it has struggled to recover ever since. At the time, however, the country was very close to starvation."*

1953 - 1960

After the death of Lady Peel in 1953, the Leydene estate was put on the market. Lot 12 comprised the 'Highly Productive Corn and Dairy Holding LOWER AND SOUTH FARMS 1,178 Acres. This Holding is in a high state of cultivation and has been in the occupation of the present Tenants for a great many years. It includes some of the best Corn Growing land in the district, as well as some high-lying grass Downs, very healthy for Cattle and Sheep Grazing; with a ground field Water Supply, and well fenced.'

Sir Dymoke White, the tenant of Oxenbourne House, cashed in all his shares in the family firm of Timothy Whites and Taylors, the chemist (which was subsequently bought by Boots); and bought the entire estate. He then made an offer to the 'present tenants', George W and Joseph Atkinson: "If you are prepared to make an offer for your land, then put a bid in an envelope." They were able to buy both farms, George W. taking over Lower Farm and Joseph South Farm.

Michael Atkinson described the combined farms at the time as 'basically, a mixed farm, it had a dairy, 35% to 40% of the farm was under arable crops including Lower Farm'. South Farm was 496 acres plus 60 rented acres which lay on the south side of the South Downs Way^{xxxii}. George IV describes subsequent changes in the dairy market: "Refrigeration, changing tastes and environmental constraints of milking in a river valley have had an impact... This change in farming pattern has altered fields, cropping and the level of local employment on farms."

Michael Atkinson: "When George W. Atkinson died in 1958 the farm partnership was broken up by my Dad, for the sakes of the two sons working on the farm, myself and cousin Wilson.... Wilson and I would have been an absolute catastrophe in business together. As it was, we enjoyed a very good relationship. He was a 'dog & stick' farmer and I wasn't. Both farms then had dairies; ours was round about 90 cows when we disbanded it, Lower Farm's was slightly smaller. The dairies basically came unviable: they needed a huge amount of money spent on them to prevent contamination getting into the river. Our herd was disbanded in 1998, by which time I was lucky to be able to expand South Farm. We bought part of Oxenbourne Farm at the top end of Harvesting Lane in 1971 and increased the arable side of our farm by 140 acres. When the cows went, that enabled nearly 100 acres of permanent pasture around the Springs around the source of the River Meon to go into cultivation as well. We have made other additions, rented and purchased, and now have just short of 1000 acres in our own right, about 800 odd acres under the plough. The crops are winter wheat, winter oilseed rape, winter oats and spring barley."

A century before, Samuel Padwick had farmed 1,158 acres of Lower and South Farms combined employing 19 labourers and 7 boys. When the farms were split up after the death of George W Atkinson, there had been 18 staff in all on both farms; staffing at South Farm then dropped to five. Wilson Atkinson, described the situation at Lower Farm to Freddie Standfield in 1990: "Today I employ roughly 1 man per 100 acres, whereas my father would have employed roughly 2 men per 100 acres. 1 man per 100 acres is about normal for a mixed farm, because livestock are labour intensive. On an arable farm without livestock, 1 man per 300 acres may be employed."

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"Another change since 1905 is that far less leguminous crops (e.g. peas, sanfoin, trefoil, turnips, swedes, mangolds) are grown now. But I believe the time may be coming when, owing to the high cost of artificial fertilisers, it may be necessary to go back to more use of dung and so-called 'green manure'."

"Changes have also been brought about by a certain amount of grubbing out of hedges, which has been done partly to reduce the rabbit problem and partly to make fields into more suitable size and shape for farm machinery. On the other hand, I am conscious of the value of trees from the viewpoint of landscape amenity, and in recent years have replanted Duncombe Wood which had been largely ruined as a wood. I have also carried out a substantial amount of tree-planting at the foot of my downland, and have replaced elm trees near the road which were killed by Dutch elm disease ... the replacements were lime and copper beech."

"At Michaelmas 1952, I took tenancy of Peak Farm, East Meon, from the late Col Humphrey Nicholson. He subsequently, during his lifetime, gave the freehold of that farm to his old College, Trinity College Cambridge, who are now my landlords. I now farm a total of 1140 acres. My total stock of sheep on Lower and Peak Farms amounts to about 600 breeding ewes. The annual drop of lambs at an average rate of 1½ lambs per ewes gives a maximum sheep population of about 1500 in April and May each year, before I start selling off the lambs. The bred of sheep are mainly Border Leicester/Crossed Cheviot (half-bred). I also keep Suffolk Cross ewes, and my rams are Suffolk, Dorset Down and South Down. There is a country-wide trend for sheep to be on the increase ... I have had numerous showing successes with sheep over the years, mainly for far lamb production. My shepherd, Malcolm Painter, looks after all my sheep at the two farms."



Malcolm Painter and sheep in Church Street, photographed for the cover of A History of East Meon by F.G.Standfield © Stan Smith, published by Phillimore

Malcolm Painter picks up the story: "We had sheep and there were 2 dairy herds. There was a 70-cow dairy herd and Wilson rented Peak Farm off Trinity College, Cambridge, and they had another 70 cow dairy herd over there. About 400 sheep, about 300 acres of cereals, 40 beef cows, suckler cows and they grew potatoes. I used to walk the sheep back, with the dogs, from Peak Farm to Lower Farm over by West Meon Hut ... I remember we did 5000 small bales of hay one day! The tractors were doing the baling, but they all had to go on trailers and handled from one to the other and stacked in the barn. We used to do 20,000 bales of hay and 20,000 bales of straw roughly a year."

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"And we used to have to pick the potato ladies up. Ginger [Phillips] used to go down with the tractor and trailer and pick them all up in the morning and they all had a section of field and the spinner used to come down and they would pick up and would all get paid by the bag."

1980s to the present day

Lower Farm

George IV returned from agricultural college in the 1980s to farm with his father Wilson. *“Nothing much changed for a while: we were farming a traditional mixed farm.”* However, as he described earlier, dairying became difficult to sustain in the Valley and they sold the herd after the big foot-and-mouth outbreak in 2001.



The Atkinsons of Lower Farm 2005. Left to right, Wilson, Jill, George (III) Elizabeth, James, Will, Oliver. Photo Marc Atkinson for Meon Matters.



George Atkinson in 2017

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George and his family today farm 1,200 acres; Lower Farm is the majority and the core of the original farm. In 1992, George and his wife Elizabeth bought 160 acres at Lower House Farm in Oxenbourne from Sir John Chadwick. 400 acres at Peak Farm is still rented from Trinity College Cambridge: the land is made up of heavy clay and flint and difficult to manage.

Map to come of lands at Lower Farm

“Our land doesn’t lend itself to arable; you can’t plough a lot of it, because of the terrain. We don’t milk any more, we fatten cattle, we’ve got sheep, and we’ve got arable and we’ve got storage and cottages. Of 1,200 acres, 360 are arable, which is quite a small amount in this area, so we’re extended graziers.”

Lower Farm is still mixed and includes 360 acres of arable crops: oilseed rape, winter wheat, pulses and spring barley. The arable ground is restricted to the valleys and is now contracted to Nick Atkinson at South Farm so that, by working together, *“we benefit from economies of scale.”*

All the other land is in permanent pasture, including water meadows and steep hillsides which are used for sheep grazing, lamb production and fattening cattle for beef. The Scotch

half-bred sheep and Shorthorn cattle that were brought down from Cumberland have now been replaced by 650 North Country mules bred to Charolais and Southdown rams. Some 150 Friesian and Holstein cattle are fattened to finishing each year, with over 300 on the farm at any one time. Feed is all grown on the farm.

The sheep flock of 650 ewes are lambed with the lambs being sold to the supermarkets. Grazing is usually on the pasture, but electric fences are used to fold lambs being fattened on stubble turnips between cereal crops over the winter. Cattle are reared to 30 months of age grazing grass and home-made silage and hay and are sold to all the major supermarkets.

The mixture of livestock and cereal crops gives the farm huge benefits visually and environmentally, so that he can also look after the natural capital of the land. In 1990, 10 employees worked across the farm, however changing practices and cropping, innovation and mechanisation, sees only two full time employees now. Stephen Painter, son of Malcolm his old shepherd, and Shaun Payne, Malcom's son in law.

South Farm



Michael and Jane Atkinson of South Farm, centre, with Nick, Tilly, Jack & Sue on left, Matt & Joe, right. 2005. Photo Marc Atkinson (no relation) for Meon Matters.



Michael Atkinson at South Farm in 2016.

Michael Atkinson still directs operations at South Farm but his sons Nick and Matt are the active farmers. They concentrate on arable farming and the land under cultivation has greatly increased. Michael Atkinson bought Upper Parsonage Farm on the slopes of Butser Hill in 1971; along with land which they cultivate under contract, Michael & his sons now farm 3,000 acres of arable including the 360 acres of George's land.

Map to come of lands cultivated by South Farm

In 1999/2000 Nick and his wife Sue got planning permission to restore the decrepit Upper Parsonage Barn and built a farmhouse for themselves: Nick describes how the planners

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insisted that *“the barn had to be restored; initially, it had to be restored with the thatch ... we weren’t keen on thatch, so we had permission to put slates on the barn, but then I just thought, ‘I’ll thatch it’. I just thought ‘I’ll give it a go’ and I did it myself; I did a corner, and got on with it, and just went on with it.”*



Nick Atkinson at Upper Parsonage Farm in 2019



The old barn at Upper Parsonage Farm



The restored beams and pillars of Upper Parsonage Barn



Upper Parsonage Barn today

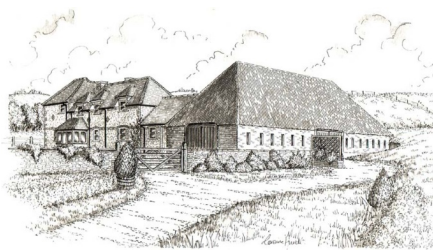
Both farms had dairy herds until the end of the 20th century and both have stopped. As Nick put it, at South Farm *“we were milking cows right on top of the source of the River Meon ... if anything had gone even slightly wrong, the buck would undoubtedly have stopped with us.”* They too recognised the shift in the dairy market, dominated by large herds in the pasture-rich south west of the country. *“We weren’t really big enough and we’d have to expand in such a way that we’d have had to make a huge investment, which we weren’t prepared to do. So we were falling away from livestock, George was falling away from arable, so it became common sense that we should plan together.”*

By opting for arable farming, the South Farm Atkinsons were committing to huge investment in another direction: modern farm machinery is becoming very sophisticated and very expensive. *“I have someone from our local dealership coming down to go through yet another tractor and its wizardry ... it’s quite scary.”* Nick related in January 2019. *“It guides itself, through the GOP signal and tells the fertiliser spinner when to start and when to stop in the field... the tractor cost close to £180,000 and the spinner £25 – 30,000. Something close to £200,00 on machinery.”*

Apart from Nick and Matt, South Farm employs just two men, compared with 50 or 60 when George I came down from Cumbria and 7 or 8 in the 1990s when they still had cows and a herd of pigs. While the technology of farm machinery continues to change dramatically, the yield from crops has, as Nick puts it *“hit the buffers... There is a breakdown in resistance to disease. Whereas in the 1970s and ‘80s the yield difference from one season to another went*

at a gallop, we seem to be going at a steady walk at the moment. The advances are all in Genetically Modified crops, but we're not allowed to grow GM crops."

When they restored the barn, Sue operated 'Harvesting Cream Teas, while Matt Atkinson runs a thriving Hog Roast business, and George lets buildings and has a campsite at Lower Farm. In the 1990s, according to Nick, 'diversification' was an economic necessity for many farmers. *"It's not a word I particularly enjoy. I have to say you can lose concentration on the job in hand, everything becomes diversification."*



Plan sketch of Upper Parsonage Farm, built by Nick and Sue Atkinson in 1999



Cream Teas being served at the barn



Interior of barn restored by Nick and Sue Atkinson



Matt Atkinson's Hog Roast

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For Nick says of the catering business: *"Having weddings in the barn was ok, you could earn some money out of it, but it wasn't easy money at 2.00 o'clock in the morning, trying to get people taxis back to Petersfield."*

The cream teas suffered from the fickleness of the English weather: *"Sue could quite easily have a couple or three girls organised, have done all her preparations for a nice sunny afternoon, and a shower comes along at about 11.00 o'clock in the morning, and that's when people make their decisions for their day: so, it could be quite sunny in the afternoon when Sue's doing the cream teas but if we'd had wind or a bit of rain in the*



Harvesting Cream Teas at Upper Parsonage Barn

morning, Sue would be looking at three girls doing nothing all afternoon, and vice versa, she could quite easily say 'well, the weather forecast doesn't look that good for today, I'll just have a couple of us up there and see what goes on, and they could be queued up half way down to the village, trying to come in for a cup of tea.

Sue continued the Cream Teas business for a decade and still offers Bed and Breakfast; Matt's Hog Roast business continues to prosper. In 2011, the South Downs National Park was extended to include parts of Sussex and Hampshire, including East Meon; George sees benefits from the extra visitors it brings: *"It is important, from camping, holiday and business lets, but also novel crops, food branding and working with the South Downs National Park body are all important aspects to modern farming in the Meon Valley."* As he puts it: *"Farming is always changing. Post-Brexit, new challenges will emerge and thus farmers must work together. Many chemicals and insecticides have been withdrawn by Europe. Strict compliance on manures, fertilizers and water regulations, mean that farmers have to be innovative and nimble to see the opportunities in business."*

"The environmental aspect of the farm is very important, the whole 1,200 acres is in a Higher Level environmental scheme. George looks after the birds and plants on the hillsides and water meadows, protecting native species at risk from many threats. He takes school trips on tours of the farm to show them the history, archaeology, farming, environment and where their food comes from. He admits that having the Southdowns Way, numerous footpaths and 'open access ground' brings its challenges for livestock farming and the native wildlife.

The fifth generation

George's eldest son, James, works as a grain, fertiliser and seed trader in Andover. After working for 4 years in the meat industry, middle son William returned in 2019 to work full-time with George on the farm. Oliver, the youngest, is a graduate rural surveyor for BCM LLP in Micheldever, working towards his RICS and CAAV qualifications. All three bring relevant skills to strengthen the farming tradition set by the Cumbrian migrants, while Nick's son Jack is returning from a stint farming in Australia to join him at South Farm, alongside Matt's son Joe (who currently plays rugby for Wasps) : *"There is a group of kids out there who like the machinery and are very techie and good luck to them, they are the future."* South and Lower Farms are secure in a fifth generation of Atkinsons to continue the farming tradition.

Appendix 1 detail of 1567 Rental, properties of Nicholas Wright in East Meon tithing

Property Description	Value
61 Michus write d. 1 tenent. et 1 claus ter voc. ad scilicet d. 83. South for redd 1. 8 ^o	0 - 1 - 8
62 Adm d. 1 malendin voc. Southmill for redd 15	0 - 15 -
63 Adm d. 1 tiff et 2 accunt. ter quondam legges for redd 5 ^o	0 - 12 -
Adm d. 2 ^o operibus	7 ^o

Appendix 2 1649 'deed of discharge'

... under the will of Robert Wright of East Meon, gent to pay an annuity and legacies from £600 chargeable on South Farm, East Meon'; the beneficiaries are 'Robert Allwyn of Midhurst, Sussex, gent; Peter Allwyn of Treford, Sussex, yeoman, and Barbara his now wife, and, second, Thomas Hanbury of Buriton, esq¹. The next generation of the Wright family were all female and appear to have married out of the parish.

Appendix 3 Indenture of Church Farm to Stephen Fox 1671

... in the thirteenth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles the second Between the right reverent father in God, Brian, by divine providence Lord Bishop of Winchester of the one part And Stepeh Ffox of Ffarloy in the County of Wilts Esq of the other part Witnesseth that the said Lord Bishop in consideration of a former Lease and for divers god Causes and Considerations thereinto ... hath dismissed granted and to farms lett. And by these presents doth for him and his successors dismiss grant and to farms lett unto the said Stephen Ffox All that his ffarms with the appurtenances and all Church Ffarms and all houses, Buildings, Dovehouses, Orcharde, Gardens and Meadowes, Pastures and ffeedings, Profitts, Comodities and Appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging or therewith comonly used or enjoyed, situate, lying and being in the Town or parish of East Meon in the County of Southton and now or later in the tenure of Richard Hildersham Gent or his Assigns or Undertenants, To Have and to hold the said farms with their appurtenances and all the said houses, lande and other the premisses with ... every of their appurtenances unto the said Stephen Fox his heirs &c Also from the making hereof for and during the naturall lives of the Said Stephen Ffox and of Elizabeth Ffox his wife and of Stephen Ffox their sons and the life of the longest lived of whom Yielding and paying therefore yearly and every year during the said Term unto the said Bishopp and his successors at his and their Exchequer at Wolvesey in the said County of Southampton the yearly Rent of ffour pounds thirteen shillings four pence of lawful money of England at the ffeasts of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Michael the Archangel by even and equall portions And If it happens that this said yearly rent or any part thereof ...

P2 That the said Stephen Fox the father, his heirs and Assigns shall, and will from time to time during the said terms hereby granted and at and their his own proper costs and charges

¹ HRO 79M74/E/T12 Deed of discharge of an obligation under the will of Robert Wright...

will and sufficiently repair uphold amend maintain support sustain keep the said farms herby granted shall and shall have and yield up unto the said Bishops ... from time to time upon request withal behalfe made to his or their (?) Woodward for the time being allowing and assigning to the said Stephen Ffox the father and his heirs and assigns convenient and necessary rough timber upon the stem or storks for the said repairs an and ffirsboot, Cartboot and all other Bootes heretofore granted and enjoyed by the tenants of the premisses to be had or taken upon the premisses if the same are there to be had to be employed used and spent in and upon the premisses only and not elsewhere. But if at any time within one Month next after such request made no such assignment shall be made by the Generall Woodward for the time being of the said Bishop and his Successors, that then and in such as only it shall and may be lawfull to and for the said Stephen Ffox the ffather his heirs an assigns to have and take in and upon the premisses not of any rough timbere ffirstboot Cartboot and other forms of any Bootes aforesaid without doing or committing any wilfull wast or spoil ... And the Said Bishopp doth by these proofs make ordain constitute an appoint Charles Grantby of East Meon aforesaid Gent and Anthony Bulbroke of East Meon aforesaid Yeoman joyntly and severally his Attorneys ...

Appendix 4 Indenture of South Farm to Henry Penruddock Wyndham 1777

This Indenture ... Between the Honourable and Right Reverend Father in God Brownlow ... and Henry Penruddock Wyndham of Cormanton in the County of Southampton Esquire ... on consideration of the Surrender of a former Lease of the prmises hereafter mentioned ... of the yearly Rent Covenants Articles and Agreements hereby and hereafter in these presents expressed mentioned and reserved ... the Lord Bishop hereunto especially moving hath devised granted to Farm that the Mansion and Dwelling house and all the Lands Tenements Meadows Pastures and Feedings with their and every of their Appurtenances called or known by the Name of Southfarm ... situate lying and being in the Parish of East meon in the County of Southampton late in the tenure or occupation of John Randall his Assignees or Assigns and now or late in the Tenure of or Occupation of William Clark his Assignees and were heretofore Demised and Granted for divers years by Thomas the Lord Bishop unto our late Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth and were formerly in the Tenure or Occupation of Thomas Hanbury Esquire deceased his Assignee or Assigns Together with all manner of Barns Stables Edifices Buildings Orchards Garden Commons Workdays Profits Commodities and Hereditaments whatsoever And all great Timber Trees of Oak Ash Beech and Elm with free Liberty to cut down work out take and carry away the same unto the said Lord Bishop party to these presents and his successors also excepted and foreprized **To Have and to Hold** the said Farm Lands Meadows &c ... unto the said Henry Penruddock Wyndham ... from the Fifteenth day of June last past for and during and unto the full End and Term of one and twenty years from thence compleat and ended **Yielding and Paying** therefore yearly and every year during the said Term unto the said Lord Bishop and his Successors for the said Messuage Lands and Premises the Sum of Twenty two pounds three shillings and fourpence of lawful money ... **And further** the said Henry Penruddock Wyndham for himself his Executors &c doth covenant and grant to and with the said Lord Bishop &c shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter during the said Term at his and his own proper costs and charges well and sufficiently uphold repair and maintain all and singular the Houses Buildings and Edifices in and upon the said Demised premises Together with the Mounds Hedges Pales Gates Fences and Ditches in and about the same Premises in good and sufficient Reparation and the same well and sufficiently repaired

uphoden maintained and fenced at the End of the said Term **And also** that the said Henry Penruddock Wyndham for himself his Executors &c will from time to time and at all times hereafter during the said Term preserve the Wood and Coppice wood in and upon the said Demised Premises from all and all manner of Waste Spoil and Destruction **And** the said Lord Bishop for himself and his Successors doth grant and Agree with the said Henry Penruddock Wyndham &c to have and take out of the premises excepted sufficient and necessary Ploughboot Cartboot Gateboot Paleboot Foldboot Fireboot Houseboot together with Timber towards the Reparation as shall be by the Delivery Assignment and Appointment of the Woodward of the said Lord Bishop...

ⁱ Morris, John [ed] *Domesday Book Hampshire* History from the Sources, Phillimore, 1982 p40 *Medieval Farming in East Meon* <http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/medieval-east-meon/medieval-life/mills/>.

ⁱⁱ Blakstad, Michael *Medieval East Meon*, <https://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/medieval-east-meon/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Page, Mark ed. *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1301-2* p282.

^{iv} Page, Mark ed. *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1301-2* p282.

^v Page, Mark ed. *The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1409 – 12* p265.

^{iv} *Medieval Farming in East Meon* <http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/medieval-east-meon/norman/the-vestry/>

^{vii} Roberts, Edward *The Bishop of Winchester's Fishponds in Hampshire* *ibid.* p127.

<http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/medieval-east-meon/medieval-life/fishponds/>

^{viii} *Medieval Farming in East Meon* <http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/medieval-east-meon/medieval-life/markets-fairs/>

^{ix} Hampshire Record Series *The Lay Subsidy of 1586*. 'Gentleman' was a designation determined by income.

^x *Early Modern East Meon* <http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/early-modern-east-meon/farm-buildings/tudor-house/>

^{xi} HRO 11M59/D1/5 see xix below.

^{xii} *Early Modern East Meon* <http://www.eastmeonhistory.net/ftv/early-modern-east-meon/civil-war/>

^{xiii} Appendix 1, entry 63 in 1567 rental.

^{xv} HRO M49/T50 *Copy of letter patent granted to Stephen Fox to Charles II, Court Farm, part of the manor of East Meon* 1660

^{xvi} See Appendix 3 for full transcript

^{xvii} There are earlier references to Hill Hampton in Oxenbourne and 'Berely', which became a sub-manor after the Black Death, but no evidence as to when they were established as farmsteads.

^{xviii} HRO 8M49/T51 *Bargain and sale of South Farm, part of the manor of East Meon, i) Stephen Fox Middx esq. ii) William Hearst of London, doctor*

^{xix} HRO 94M72/E/T2 *Surrender by Robert Randoll (deceased) to the use of John Bonham of a meadow of a half-acre at Southmill, 3 closes of land called Godwin's Ground with the road from East Meon to South Farm*
This may be the son of the London doctor who had bought the lease in 1662: he is styled 'of Salisbury' which was the constituency of Sir Stephen Fox.

^{xx} 1711 HRO 59/F/BP/E/B16. *Mr Hearst of Salisbury to The Right Reverend Father in God Bishop of Winchester*. This may be the son of the London doctor who had bought the lease in 1662: Salisbury was the constituency of Sir Stephen Fox.

^{xxi} HRO 11M59/D1/5 1717 *Henry Penruddocke Wyndham of Wiltshire acquires the lease of the mansion, dwelling house and lands of South Farm, East Meon*

^{xxii} London Metropolitan Archives MS 11936/395/618049

^{xxiii} Mocatta, Robert *Nineteenth century East Meon*

^{xxiv} Did the 1,00 acres include Court Farm, which Darvill was later to occupy?

^{xxv} <https://www.eastmeonhistory.net/wars/autumn-manoevres-1891/> Autumn Manoeuvres

^{xxvi} <https://www.eastmeonhistory.net/the-cumbrian-migration/> *The Cumbrian Migration*

^{xxvii} Wren, Cyril in conversation with F.G.Standfield

^{xxviii} Edward, Harry Walter, https://www.eastmeonhistory.org.uk/content/catalogue_item/harry-walter-edwards

^{xxix} HRO58M99/6

^{xxx} Culley, Johnny <https://www.eastmeonhistory.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Memories-of-Wartime-East-Meon-reduced.pdf>

^{xxxi} Atkinson, Michael https://www.eastmeonhistory.org.uk/content/catalogue_item/michael-atkinson