

# A Historical Look at Leckhampton's Farms

*By Terry Moore-Scott*

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## ***General Background***

Having researched and published accounts of the manorial estates, ancient field systems and old roads and tracks of Leckhampton, I felt that the next logical topic to study was that of the parish's farms which featured so prominently in the life and economy of the village over the centuries. This alone makes them worth chronicling but, in fact, many of them turned out to have interesting histories in their own right, well worth recording.

The historian Finberg suggested that in early medieval times Leckhampton served as the 'home farm' for the royal manor of Cheltenham. Whether or not this is entirely correct, it is certainly true that from ancient times right up to the 19th century, Leckhampton presented a rural landscape with wide open fields and throughout the centuries the main employment for its people was on the local farms. A reflection of this is seen in the Men & Armour Survey for Gloucestershire of 1608, a document that lists for every parish the occupations of all its able-bodied men and their suitability for bearing arms. The list for Leckhampton is quite short containing only 27 names but, of these, eight are either 'yeomen' (freehold farmers) or 'husbandmen' (tenant farmers), the rest mostly being labourers or servants.

Much of this industry could be described as subsistence farming, primarily arable crop growing, aimed at supporting the lords of the manors and their estates and at providing for the local inhabitants. With the start of the 19th century, however, this all changed. The old manorial hold over the land was disintegrating and gradually mechanisation brought about more efficient methods of farming, all of which had a significant impact on the old farming community. The farms however soon found themselves in demand as important providers of food, especially meat and dairy produce, to the rapidly expanding town of Cheltenham Spa. This, though, meant a switch from traditional arable farming to less labour-intensive highly commercial pastoral farming. A consequence of this was unemployment among farm workers who had to move to other jobs such as quarrying and trades serving the burgeoning 'big houses' of Cheltenham. (According to statistics for Gloucestershire, between 1800 and 1900, the population of the county more than doubled but the number of people employed in agriculture halved.)

Even so, up to the 1850s, the spread of urbanisation had reached no further into Leckhampton than The Park, Moorend and Naunton, leaving the rest of the parish still with its farms and broad acres of fields. The latter continued to be worked (some now in market gardening) but inevitably the status of many of the former working farmhouses changed. Many underwent conversion to residential homes although often these continued to be referred to in the records as 'farms' and occasionally to have 'farmers' occupying them, thus giving a false impression of the real situation. By the time of the 1891 Census, just three 'farmers' were listed with their farms (Fred Hicks at Leckhampton Farm, Wm Hicks at Collum End and Wm Mustoe at Blackhedge); Charles Richings was listed as 'dairyman' at Church Farm and there were three so-called 'farmers' at private addresses who may or may not have been active farmers. In addition to these, there were in all nine listed 'market gardeners'.

As the following paragraphs show, it has been possible to identify at least ten farms, each with its

associated land, as having existed in and immediately around the parish, but if one includes other so-called 'farms', the total number could be half as great again. Some, like Moorend, Blackhedge, Collum End and Leckhampton are historically of considerable interest and Leckhampton Farm in particular has the added distinction of probably having had a key role as the centre of one of Leckhampton's ancient manorial estates. Also included is Hartley Hill Farm for, despite always having been in Coberley parish, it was for centuries a part of the Leckhampton Court estate; Crippetts Farm (actually in Shurdington parish but with close associations with Leckhampton) is also included.

I would not claim this to be an exhaustive account of Leckhampton's farms and their histories but it includes all the established farmhouses with which we are familiar as well as a number of less well-known sites whose status as true farms is doubtful. If nothing else, it provides a salutary reminder of just how important farming was in old Leckhampton and how much all of this has changed. Of all the working farmhouses that once existed here, only one now remains (Hartley Hill) and that is not even within the parish.

The principal sources that I used in this study are as follows:

Department of Environment's List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Survey of the manor and hundred of Cheltenham, 16 July 1617, by John Norden the Elder and John Norden the Younger (GRO D855 M50)

Plan of the Leckhampton Estate of Wm Norwood Esq by James Crow, 1746 (GRO D303 P2)

Schedule to the Leckhampton Inclosure Awards (GRO D2025 10)

Abstract of Title relating to Norwood estates, 1815 (GRO D303 E1)

Survey of Leckhampton Parish by W Croome, 1835 (GRO P168a VE1/2)

Particulars of Leckhampton Tithe-free Estates, 1841 (Glos Collection RX.134, GRO D1388 S63)

Various OS maps from 1889

Kelly's and other directories for Cheltenham town.

The 1891 Census (as in *Leckhampton 1894: The End of an Era* (1994))

Personal recollections supplied by Mrs Daphne Oliver (née Hicks).

### ***Individual Sites***

#### **Berry (or Leckhampton) Farm**

Possibly one of the parish's most interesting farms, this site will be remembered by older residents as the working farm it was right up to 1954. The usual view of it is from Farm Lane but the house itself actually faces east. It used to be approached by a track which still exists leading off Leckhampton Lane from a point near to the stream, although originally there would have been an approach via a drive or track leading from the direction of Moat Cottage. The farmhouse and its principal barn are both Grade II listed buildings, the house (in its present form) dating from around 1800 with 19th-century extensions, and the six-bay barn behind it from possibly as early as the late 16th century, with a partial rebuild in the early 1800s (this last date being provided by a date stone on the west gable end bearing the inscription ' J Clark/Bilder/1819'). A former resident of Leckhampton, Mrs Daphne Oliver, is a member of the Hicks family which for many years was associated with farming in the parish, including Leckhampton Farm. She recalls it being said in the family that timbers in the original Leckhampton Farm house and its old barn were reused ships' timbers brought up from Berkeley 'by bullock cart' and that one beam in the attic of the house bore the date 1625.

The earliest documentary record of the farm is in a title deed of 1724 indicating that the farm, then

known as Berry Farm, was occupied by a Mr John Iles. On Crow's plan of Leckhampton made in 1746, the farm is described as 'Mr Isles' Farm' and shown to be situated within an area, depicted as 'Mr Isles' Land', which lay on the north side of Leckhampton Lane stretching from the western edge of the parish almost over to the Moat (see Figure 1). The Iles connection with Leckhampton seems however to go back much earlier for a manorial court record of 1691 for Leckhampton indicates that the Iles owned land in the parish from as early as 1625. Their interest in Leckhampton did not last much beyond 1746 though the schedule to the 1778 Inclosure Act for Leckhampton describes the farm as belonging to an Abraham Wallbank. (For a further discussion of Iles and Wallbank and the case for identifying the farm as the original centre of a manorial estate, see T Moore-Scott, *The Manorial Estates of Leckhampton*; Gloucestershire History (2002), 18-19.)

Figure 1. Mr Iles's Land and Berry Farm, 1746

We next encounter the farm in records of 1824-25 which note that a parcel of land in the Berry estate was acquired from Henry Trye by a William Read King and indicate that the farm was still known as Berry Farm. In Croome's survey of 1835 however Berry's Farm House and surrounding lands are shown as being owned and occupied by a W S Evans. As late as 1889, the OS map shows the farm still as Berry Farm but by 1891 the census gave the name as Leckhampton Farm owned by Mr Frederick Hicks. From then on the farm remained in the ownership of the Hicks family until around 1954. Subsequently, the farm was allowed to fall into a bad state of neglect but in 1992 work began to resurrect the building as residential accommodation (Leckhampton Farm Court), enabling us to appreciate to some extent how the house looked in its heyday. (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Leckhampton Farm in the early 1900s with members of the Hicks family

*Photograph by kind permission of Daphne Oliver*

### Blackhedge Farm (also Blackedge)

For a property of no obvious distinction, the history of this farm is full of surprises, providing as it does links to eminent families in the land, to locations as dispersed as The Arctic and South America, and finally to local golf playing.

The name Blackhedge first appears in Norden's 1617 Survey of Cheltenham, and later parish records note the burial of Joyce Jones, wife of John Jones of Blackhedge, in 1680 and of John Jones himself in 1721. It is not though until 1815 that a farm is actually mentioned and that is in a title deed relating to the Norwood estate that names a John Theyer as the tenant of around 61 acres of land at a rent of £150 p.a. In 1835, Croome's survey lists Blackhedge Farmhouse as being in the ownership of H N Trye and occupied by a John Gregory at a rent of £5 p.a. sale particulars for Leckhampton Court Estate in 1841-42 featured as one lot Blackhedge Farm (then let to a Mrs Elizabeth Bubb) and surrounding lands of over 96 acres stretching on either side of the valley down to Medley Green; the rent for this was £386 p.a.

The property then appears to have been bought by a John Wilson Croker. The Rt Hon John Wilson Croker (1780-1857) was an eminent national figure, politician, essayist, MP, for 20 years Secretary

of the Admiralty and a Privy Councillor. In 1806 he married Rosamund, daughter of William Pennell (at one time HM Consul-General in Brazil). Each of their two children died when young so Croker adopted his wife's sister (also called Rosamund) who later married Sir George Barrow 2nd Baronet (1806-1876), son of Sir John Barrow, Secretary of the Admiralty from 1807 to 1845 and a great protagonist of Arctic expeditionary voyages in search of the North West Passage (Cape Barrow and the Barrow Straits are named after him). Following Croker's death, the Blackhedge property passed to his widow and, upon her death in 1880, to Rosamund the adopted daughter. In 1879, an annuity of £40 was granted by Lady Croker senior to a Henrietta Boilevsve 'from the Gloucestershire estate' (presumably a reference to Blackhedge). Daughter Rosamund died in 1906 whereupon Blackhedge passed to Sir Francis Laurence John Barrow 4th Baronet of Ulverston, Lancs.

It is highly unlikely that such eminent persons as the Crokers lived at Blackhedge and engaged in farming there. The 1891 Census in fact lists a William Mustoe as farmer at Blackhedge Farm but over the period 1876 to 1910 the Blackhedge land appears to have been leased out in two halves (or 'moieties'), one of around 121 acres to Frederick Hicks (of Hampton Villa Farm) at a rent of £126, and the other of around 122 acres to Arthur Pearman for £170. Eventually, in 1910, the Blackhedge Farm estate of 267 acres was acquired by Messrs E Baring, and Harold A and Roland J Webb, local businessmen having an interest in setting up a golf course (see LLHS *Research Bulletin* No 2 (2001)). The Blackhedge estate was up for sale again in 1914 featuring the farmhouse, a house on Birdlip Road called Shrublands and various isolated parcels of land extending from around the farmhouse as far down as the golf club house at the foot of Crippetts Lane, the whole of the northern part being by then given over to golf links. As we know, the golf course had ceased to operate by 1922 and the land mostly returned to its former agricultural use. As for Blackhedge Farm itself, Kelly's Directories between 1932 and 1938 list a Stanley Jenner in possession but it is not clear whether he actually held any of the land around it

### Bournside Farm

Lying beneath today's Bournside School might still be the remains of a small farm that existed there from at least the 1920s until the mid- to late-1960s when the site was redeveloped for the new comprehensive school. Older Hatherley residents speak of an unprepossessing bungalow-style building in the fields, surrounded by high hedges and approached by a long straight track leading off Warden Hill Road. It does not appear to have been of any antiquity nor of any great size. Successive Kelly's maps between 1890 and 1913 show no building at this site but those from 1926 onwards, and OS maps between 1930 and 1971, vouch for the existence of Bournside Farm there. Kelly's directories for 1936-38, under farms, also list Bournside Farm and indicate that at that time it was occupied by a Walter Theobald. Daphne Oliver recalls that Mr Theobald was a rather reclusive gentleman of sufficient means to possess a coach and horses but only one cow!

### Brizen Farm

This Grade II listed house is situated in the north-west corner of the parish on the south side of Shurdington Road. According to English Heritage, it is a 16th-century timber-framed building having a thatched roof with decorative ridge thatching. Some old records refer to the site as Brays End or Brazend but most commonly it has been known, as it is today, as Brizen.

The earliest documentary evidence to the farm is provided by an 1815 title deed relating to the Leckhampton (ie Norwood Trye) Estate which cites 'Brays End Farm' as consisting of just over 208 acres with an annual rent of £400, the tenant at that time being a John Herbert. A change of circumstances seems to have occurred soon after however. In 1833, according to the Voters' List, a

Thomas Peates, Overseer, was living there, and in 1835 the property was said to be in the ownership of W S Evans (another major landowner in the parish at the time - see under Berry Farm) and described, not as a farm, but as a cottage and ground with a rickyard, barn and stable, the whole worth £4 per annum.

The 1889 OS map has 'Brizen Farm' marked on it and this description also appears in a number of Kelly's Directories between 1926 and 1938. Daphne Oliver recalls that her grandfather Frederick Hicks farmed there in the late 1880s but its status as a working farm and the extent of its lands thereafter are unclear. The listed occupant in 1926, one Sydney Organ, was actually described as a farmer but in 1932 it was a Mrs D Weston and in 1936-38 a Mr Arthur Gilbert, in both cases without any statement as to occupation. In the late 1940s, a small acreage of land around Brizen was being worked by dairy farmer Preston Dennis. Initially he did this from his home in Charlton Kings but eventually he also acquired the farmhouse and lived there until around 1958. (This information is provided by Mr Dennis's daughter, Rosamond, now living in Minsterworth.) The house today is a private residence.

### Brizen House Farm

There are entries in the Kelly's Directories for 1936 and 1938 for a 'Brizen House Farm' which was apparently located on the north side of Shurdington Road roughly opposite Brizen Farm and near to the junction with Greatfield Lane. In 1936, the occupant was a William Younger Jnr and, in 1938, a Victor Townsend, neither specifically described as farmers. According to Mrs Oliver, Mr Townsend appears to have had some cattle but his activity there was more a small holding than a farm. No other record of it has come to light and there is no obvious trace of the building on the ground today. In these circumstances therefore, its status as a working farm is difficult to confirm.

### Broadwell

There is a local popular notion that the private house in Church Road known as 'Broadwell' was once a farmhouse but the evidence for this is slim. There are only two references in the available record to support the theory: the 1891 Census which lists an Elizabeth Smith, laundress, as occupying 'Broadwell Farm' and the *Looker On* for Cheltenham & Gloucestershire of 1913 which lists Broadwell Farm in Church Road occupied by a Mr Lionel Smith (presumably a relative of the aforementioned Elizabeth). Only two other references to this property have come to light: Croome's 1835 Survey which refers simply to 'house, yard, gardens etc' owned and occupied by John Smith (yes, another Smith) and the 1889 Ordnance Survey map which identifies the building on this site simply as 'Broadwell'. The present-day house appears to be of relatively modern construction but it clearly also incorporates an earlier building. Whether this really constituted a 'farm' as such is questionable and there is no suggestion that the Smith family associated with it were farmers.

### Church (or Church End) Farm

This handsome Grade II listed house on Church Road just beyond the church dates back to the 18th century with some 20th-century additions. Immediately obvious is the high quality of ashlar stone with which it is constructed and it is said that the building incorporates stone taken from the Court, some of it still displaying a black colour from the fire there in 1732. Associated with the farm was a once flourishing dairy and milk distribution centre; this continues to operate on land now separate from but formerly part of the farm complex.

The placename 'Church End' is recorded by Smith (in *The Place-names of Gloucestershire*) as far back as 1570 and a set of buildings on the site of the farm is shown on Crow's 1746 map. It also appears on the 1778 Inclosure plan, which provides the first reference to 'Church Farm'. The name

'Church End' appears in the first half of the 19th century starting with a title document of 1815 concerning Norwood estates which lists Church End Farm, comprising around 121 acres, as being leased out to Samuel Bubb at a rent of £300 10s 0d. In 1824, a number of fields associated with Church End Farm were acquired from Henry Trye by William Read King (see also under Berry Farm). It is not obvious that this transfer also included the farmhouse but by the time of the 1835 survey, Church End Farm, comprising farm, yard, moat and garden (all owned by C B Trye), is occupied by Elizabeth Bubb at a rent of £5. By the end of the 1800s, the name had returned to being Church Farm. In the 1891 Census, Church Farm is listed as being occupied by dairyman Charles Richings along with a Charles Hawker, who is described as 'foreman and coal wharf'. Subsequently, various records between 1913 and 1933 indicate that the farm was in the hands of the Misses Hicks, the three daughters of William Hicks, although the associated land may have been farmed by their brother Frederick. It continued in the Hicks family and at one time William Hicks ran a dairy and milk distribution centre from there. Since 1960 it has been occupied by Ann Hicks who moved there from Collum End Farm.

Figure 3. Church Farm Today

*Photograph by Eric Miller, by permission of Mrs Hicks*

Incidentally, Church Farm is not the only recorded dairy operating in Leckhampton about this time. Kelly's Directories of 1936 and 1938 list (under farmers) a Leckhampton Court Dairy in Church Road, the proprietor of which was Mrs Muriel Elwes. This was presumably in the vicinity of the Court but the business must have ceased by the time the Elweses left the Court just prior to the Second World War (see also Leckhampton Court Farm below). A dairy delivery business also operated from Collum End Farm, see next paragraph.

### Collum End Farm

Of all the farms associated with Leckhampton, this is perhaps the oldest and, being at the heart of the village, it will be very familiar to most local residents. A Grade II listed building constructed of limestone with some timber framing, it originates from the late 16th-early 17th century. In more modern times it was converted into two separate residential homes but it has not lost any of its old charm and character. Some may still remember the horse-worked cider press that reportedly was always an attraction at the farm.

Smith dates the earliest occurrence of the placename Collam End to 1570 and we know from Norden's survey of 1625 that a Collum End Farm existed in the village then. Various records from the 18th century testify to the existence of farm buildings on the present site and at some point in the 1830s (according to R C Barnard), the farm was occupied by a John Finch. That it was part of the Court estate however is clear from the 1835 survey which indicates that the farmhouse was owned by H N Trye and leased to William Hicks at a rent of £5 p.a. In 1841, the property comprised: 'farmhouse, garden, buildings, canal (a reference probably to the water feature that was once in the field below the Court), pond etc, cottage garden and 10 fields including Church Meadow Grove and various lands on the hill around the Court'. The value of all this was £250. Collum End Farm appears on the 1889 OS map and in 1891 the Census listed Collum End Farm as being occupied by William Hicks, farmer (probably a later namesake), but in the sale details for Leckhampton Court estate in 1894 the 'present use' of the property is given as a dwelling house.

Entering the 20th century, the farm was occupied by Mr Arthur Pearman who ran a dairy products delivery service from there (see illustration in *Leckhampton In Old Photographs*, p.18). We don't know how long that situation lasted but by 1913 the *Looker On* for Cheltenham And Gloucestershire lists a Mr W Greening and Miss Mills as occupants – indicating that at least by then the house had been split into two. In 1926, Kelly's gives a Henry Millard living there and in 1932 Henry Millard Jnr was in residence. A sketch of the building produced in 1947 (Figure 4) shows the farm still looking decidedly quaint and rustic, not at all like a working farm any more. However, another photograph from 1960 shows that when the property around the farmhouse was being developed to create Collum End Rise, quite extensive stables and other outbuildings still existed, a reminder of its earlier working life.

Figure 4. A pencil sketch of Collum End Farm, 1947; drawn by one of the German prisoners of war quartered at the Leckhampton Court camp. (*Leckhampton In Old Photographs*, p.18)

### Court Farm

Crow's 1746 map of Leckhampton shows outbuildings in an area just south west of the Court which it describes as 'the Farm Yard'. The same area is shown on the 1835 plan described as 'Plantation, Yard, Buildings etc.' The implication is that a home farm may have operated at the Court (see Figure 1) and this theory is supported by the reference in an 1815 trust deed relating to the Leckhampton estate to a 'Leckhampton Court Farm'. Its lands, though, were quite extensive, comprising just over 325 acres, and at that time it was leased out to a John Edwards for a rent of £500 (by far the highest rent quoted for any of Leckhampton's farms around then). The same John Edwards was also tenant of Hartley Farm in 1815 (see below) so one might deduce that the Court Farm lands in question were the fields on top of the hill which were traditionally part of the main Leckhampton manor estate.

### Crippetts Farm

Strictly speaking, this site is in Shurdington not Leckhampton but its close associations with our village over the years and, in particular, its associations with Edward Wilson, the Antarctic explorer, qualify it for inclusion here. Its history is certainly interesting.

Figure 5. The Crippetts, 1886; drawing by Edward Wilson

*Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum.*

Approached by an avenue of Spanish Chestnuts, the present house is built of brick painted black and white to imitate half-timber work and is held to date to the late 19th century. Past observers though have commented on the 6-foot thickness of some of its walls, suggesting that the building could date back much earlier. The earliest documentary reference to the site is in Rudder (1779) and dates to 1573 when Lord Chandos was recorded as possessing Badgeworth manor and a 'grange' (ie barn) called 'Crippitts'. A deed of 1591 refers to a 'watermill etc' at Crippetts for which a rent of £10 was paid. Around this time, the property became the home of the locally well-known Gwinnett family. They left Shurdington around 1700 and the next record we encounter is in the 1778 inclosure plan for Leckhampton which describes Crippetts Lane as the road from 'Crippetts Farm'.

In 1885 the Wilson family leased The Crippetts and it was there that the young Edward Wilson,

during his school holidays, was able to indulge his interest in wildlife and drawing, and his mother her interest in rearing Dexter cattle. Pigs were also kept and there is a photograph showing haymaking in progress there. The Wilsons may have remained at The Crippetts until at least 1909 although there is also a record to the effect that Edward's mother sold the lease of The Crippetts in 1900. The accompanying illustration (Figure 5) is a reproduction of a drawing of the farm done by Edward Wilson himself in 1886, ie shortly before he entered Cheltenham College as a day boy. It shows a less familiar view of the house, as it then was, in its hillside setting with Bittums Wood in the middle distance and the cliffs of Leckhampton beyond.

On the 1889 OS map the site is described simply as 'Crippetts' but sale particulars from 1930 describe the property as 'a pasture known as Crippetts Home Farm comprising a farmhouse, built as recently as 1911 (*sic*), with land and orcharding'. Crippetts Farm next appears in Kelly's of 1936 and 1938 when it was occupied by Arthur Phelps. Various other occupants have been associated with the farm since then including a Dr Kennett who reportedly acquired it in the mid-1960s.

[*Author's Note:* For much of the foregoing, I am indebted to Mr David Elder who, with D M Wilson, co-authored *Cheltenham in Antarctica, The Life of Edward Wilson* (2000).]

### Elm Farm

The house once known by this name occupied a site on the east side of Farm Lane just below the junction with Leckhampton Lane. 'Elm Farm' is shown at this spot on the 1889 OS map and the 1891 Census records its occupant as Charles Ballinger, gardener. Daphne Oliver recalls her family moving into the house in 1919 until when it had been a farm worker's cottage. The 1926 Kelly's shows it was occupied by Dennis Hicks, farmer, but by 1933 Mr Hicks was listed as being at Hampton Villa on the Shurdington Road (see Leys Farm below) and by then an Arthur Masey occupied Elm Farm. Some time later, the name of Stambridge was associated with it. The house standing on the site today goes by the name of 'The Berries'; it appears to date in part to the mid- to late-19th century and that part at least is probably the old Elm Farm building. The present-day small gothic windows on its front however are not typical of a working farmhouse.

### Green Farm

By its name, Green Farm Stores on Alma Road seems to indicate that this modest premises situated just inside Leckhampton parish might once have been a farm but extremely little is traceable of its past. The 1835 survey shows no farm building there, but the name 'Green Farm' appears on a number of OS and Kelly's maps of Cheltenham from 1889 onwards. It is even marked as such on the 1971 OS map but older residents of Hatherley may recall that it was already operating as a shop in the mid-1950s.

### 'Halfords' and the Kearsays

In the 1815 title deed relating to the Norwood Trye estate, details are given of a farm described as 'Halfords' (or possibly 'late Halfords') comprising over 18 acres leased to a Richard Kearsay at an annual rent of £52. There are very few clues as to the location of this property. Among those persons listed in the 1778 Inclosure Award as having common rights in Leckhampton were a Robert and Elizabeth Halford who leased land from Henry Norwood; the 1815 reference may therefore well have been to land that had once been theirs. Its location is not known but we do know that in compensation for their loss of common rights, the Halfords were awarded land in Upper Sandfield (probably the same as Upper Sands field which lay in the vicinity of Leckhampton Road and Charlton Lane).

According to the same 1815 deed, Richard Kearsay also leased another property described as a



'farm at Leckhampton' comprising over 38 acres for which an annual rent of £72 was payable. Once again, the location of this land is unclear but, by the time of the 1835 survey of Leckhampton, a Fred Kearsley was recorded as leasing 12 acres described as 'the remainder of Homefield' (a parcel of land which lay across the Shurdington Road from Brizen Farm).

### Hampton Villa (Leys) Farm

Hampton Villa is a Grade II listed detached house situated on the north side of Shurdington Road near to the junction of that road with Kidnappers Lane. Today it is a private residence but in earlier times it was known as Hampton Villa Farm and, before that, as Leys Farm (this name probably derived from the group of 'Leys' fields that once existed in the same vicinity).

The earliest record of the farm is in Croome's 1835 survey of Leckhampton which identified 'Leys Farm house, yard and buildings' as being owned by H N Trye who rented it out to an F Padmore for £40 p.a. In 1842, The Leys Farm and just over 71 acres were put up for sale, the sale particulars indicating that the house and certain fields were held by a Mr Parker on a 14-year lease. Subsequent to this, the farm was renamed so that by 1876 (according to documents held by the Local History Society (LEG/27)) the building had become known as Hampton Villa Farm and seemingly was now a part of the Blackhedge estate. Along with an adjacent cottage, it was now let to Frederick Hicks for a rent of £130. Mr Hicks was still there in 1904, working his share of the Blackhedge estate land (see Blackhedge Farm). All this seems to point to the farm ceasing to be the full working farm it once was probably following the sale in 1842, leading to its renaming as Hampton Villa. Various different occupants (none obviously farmers) were listed in local directories between 1905 and 1913 but, by the 1930s, Kellys Directories were listing the house in its farmers section identifying the occupant as Dennis Hicks (formerly of Elm Farm). He lived there with his family from 1927 to 1937 eventually selling the house to John Holborow; he in turn sold it in the late 1930s to a Major Dugdale. Its most recent owners for some considerable time have been Mr and Mrs Don Horwood.

### Hartley Hill Farm

Despite being in Coberley parish, this farm and its associated land on the top of Leckhampton Hill were for many centuries part of the main manor of Leckhampton. As early as 1295, an inquisition post mortem of Adam Despencer referred to 40 acres of arable land and a pasture lying 'on the wold' and, in about 1540, Ralph Norwood, lord of the manor of Leckhampton, was in dispute with the lord of the manor of Coberley over rights of access to 300 acres on Hartley Hill. This ownership continued on through the 18th and 19th centuries and in the 1815 title deed for the Leckhampton estate there was mention of Hartley Hill Farm, comprising just over 322 acres which were let to a John Edwards for £240 p.a. In 1838, the farm was held on a 14 year lease by Mr George Finch (quite conceivably a relative of John Finch who was at Collum End Farm around this time) for a rent of £200 p.a.

When Leckhampton manor was put on the market in 1841, the sale particulars included a description of Hartley Farm as 'a valuable freehold estate extending to Hartley Bottom – a fine stock and arable farm of about 322 acres lying in a ring fence in the parish of Cubberley'. According to R C Barnard's notes written in the 1890s, one subsequent owner of the farm was the eminent Canon Lysons (who had connections with the Trye family) and he subsequently sold it to a Mr Camp (the builder of Salterley Grange). In Barnard's time, the owner was a Mr Theodore Williams. These persons were represented as owners of the farm (not necessarily of the associated lands) hence it seems odd that the farm should have been included in the sale particulars for Leckhampton Court in 1894 at which time it was being let to John Stanbridge for a rent of £30.

Despite the demise of Leckhampton's farms over subsequent time, Hartley Farm is remarkable in continuing to operate as a working farm right up to the present day.

### Manor Farm

There is little or no trace of this farm today but there is good documentary evidence of it having stood in a small enclosure just north east of the Moat behind the rectory (see Figure 1). Its origins date back at least to the 17th century when the Partridge family held the second manor of Leckhampton, an estate centred on Berry (or Leckhampton) Farm (which at that time appears to have served as the court for this manor). One member of the family, Oliver Partridge, was granted lease of a house and some land in Leckhampton and it was this gentleman who, in 1679, occupied what was described as 'Mr Partridge's house and garden'. The 1746 map of Leckhampton shows the house on the site behind the rectory but by then it had become 'Mr Nurse's farmhouse', Mr Nurse being a later owner of the manor (but not of Berry Farm itself which had passed to a different landowner).

It is not until 1778 that the property is described by the name 'Manor Farm', presumably reflecting the fact that it was possessed by the so-called lord of the manor (by then a Mr Critchett) although the manor in question had diminished considerably in size. In the 1835 survey of Leckhampton, the site is described as a 'farmhouse, buildings, yard etc, the property of W S Evans, rent in-hand £5'.

Little is known of the subsequent fate of this building. It is not shown on the earliest (1889) OS map of Leckhampton, making it seem that it had been demolished some time earlier, and there is no reason to think that the building had any other special status or particular architectural merit to justify its continued existence.

### Moorend Farm

The placename Moorend usually denotes a location at the edge of a marshy area, in this case probably the one-time marshy area west of Moorend Road covering what is today the lower part of Burrows Field and Allenfield (even by the time of Croome's 1835 survey, Moorend Grove is still described as boggy land).

The earliest reference to Moorend occurs in a 13th-century document recording various parcels of land in Leckhampton from which tithes were payable to the Abbot of Cirencester but it is not until the 17th and 18th centuries that we encounter any real detail about Moorend and its fields. Just how long the farm had existed there is not known but it is reasonable to assume that at least one farm was there from earliest times to work the land in that part of the Leckhampton manor estate. Crow's 1746 map shows two sets of buildings, one is labelled Moorend and is probably the farm, the other, slightly to the east and labelled Tanseys, is probably a group of cottages; behind the farm is what appears to be semi-circular pond. This lay-out appears to be unchanged in 1778.

In 1815, a title deed relating to the Leckhampton estate describes Moorend Farm, comprising just over 124 acres, as being rented out to William Trye at a rent of £195 6s 0d although by the time of the voters' list of 1833 a different tenant, namely William Burrows, was in occupation. The 1835 survey of Leckhampton no longer shows Tanseys but the farm is listed, together with its Home Close field, yard and fold as being owned by Henry Trye but now occupied by a Thomas Weldon. The last recorded detail of the farm is a notice of sale in 1842 relating specifically to Moorend Farm and accompanying lands which were described as lying on two sides of Leckhampton Road (indicating that the new road had cut through Moorend's land). The property is described as an 'improvable' brick-built house with stabling for five horses, a brewhouse, garden and paddock. It is likely that the house did undergo 'improvements' since, according to Daphne Oliver, in the 1840s it

was rebuilt as a wedding gift for Ann and William Hicks who lived there prior to moving to Collum End Farm.

By comparing the plan provided with the 1842 Leckhampton Estate sale particulars and a present-day OS map of this part of Leckhampton, it is clear that the farmhouse became what is now nos 17, 19 and 21 Moorend Road, opposite the ambulance station. The original outbuildings of the farm are now covered by houses further along Moorend Road. Interestingly, the semi-circular pond of a century earlier still existed behind the farm. It also appears that the 1842 farmhouse was larger than the present buildings notably at the front where it appears to have had a large porch or front wing. Sadly, in the absence of any contemporary drawings, we can do no more than imagine what the original building looked like before it was 'modernised' in the 19th century.

#### Colonel Daubeny's Farm

As well as showing that the Norwood Tryes owned Moorend Farm and farmed land around there, the 1835 survey also shows that further to the west (roughly where Gordon Road is today) was another property described as 'farmhouse and garden' also with its yard, fold, etc. This, though, was owned by a Colonel Daubeny who also owned the fields immediately north of Moorend. These were presumably worked by his tenant farmer whose name was given as George James. There is no other record of this farm and I have so far been unable to find a local name for it

#### Warden Hill Farm

It is questionable whether a farm ever existed here and the evidence for it is slim. Croome's 1835 survey records a small parcel of land at Warden Hill described as a 'rick yard' and alongside it is a field called 'House Ground'. This could imply the presence of a farmhouse nearby but no such property is mentioned in the survey. The late 1880s OS map of Leckhampton shows a small group of structures just south of the hill itself but describes them only as 'Warden Hill' with no reference to a farm. Interestingly, Kelly's Directories between 1926 and 1936 list, under farmers, a Philip Weaver, farmer, at Warden Hill but add the note that 'letters should be sent via Up Hatherley'. Some form of farming may therefore have taken place at Warden Hill but the evidence for an established farm being there does not exist and it seems more than likely that the activity actually related to nearby Up Hatherley farm which was situated just across the parish boundary from Warden Hill (hence the postal directive). The existence of Up Hatherley Farm is well attested on OS maps up to the 1970s, occupying a site now covered by the Safeway store!