

Ramsden History of Offwell.

Preface.

The history of Offwell and Widworthy was written in 1946 by Colonel Ramsden. Despite extensive research the publication seems to have remained in manuscript form with three known volumes.

Colonel Ramsden thanked the following people for their help in his research they were the Revd. F.E. Copleston, the then rector of Offwell and Widworthy. E.W. Everett and H. Tapley Soper and N.S. Pugsley the then keeper of City Library, Exeter.

J. Benson, the Literary Secretary of the Parochial History Section of the Devonshire Association.

And Mrs Fordham of Sutton Barton for the loan of many books.

The preface was dated December 31 1946.

Ramsden History of Offwell.

The Parish of Offwell is about 2 to 4 miles from Honiton, 18 to 20 miles from Exeter and 6 miles from Axminster, adjacent to the Honiton – Axminster Main Road A35.

There is a main line railway line passing through the northern corner of Offwell connecting Honiton to Waterloo Station, London.

The surrounding parishes starting in the South East are:

- 1. Colyton**
- 2. Northleigh**
- 3. Farway**
- 4. Honiton**
- 5. Monkton**
- 6. Cotleigh**
- 7. Widworthy**
- 8. Stockland**
- 9. Dalwood**
- Schute.**

They all lie in the County of Devon, in the Hundred of Colyton and in the Parliamentary Division of Honiton.

Offwell has a Parish Council, and also a Village School, and Post Office with shop.

It is connected to the Electrical mains but not Gas mains, domestic heating is by means of Oil fired boilers, Aga ranges, solid fuel stoves, or gas tanks.

There are about 400 residents.

Geology.

The sequence of strata in the area from surface downwards is:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Clay with Flints | Eocene & Tertiary |
| 2. Chalk | Cretaceous. |
| 3. Upper Greensand “Foxmould” | Cretaceous |
| 4. Keuper Marls & Clays | Triassic. |

Generally the “Clay with Flint’s lies on the upper Greensand, with a layer of Chert blocks at the base of the former.

In Wilmington, a North-South fault has let down the chalk against the Keuper Marls, giving rise to three large springs, the one in Hayne Lane used to provide water for Honiton and surrounding areas.

These strata were laid down in a sea, whose western shore was along the eastern flank of Dartmoor, then part of a great mountain range. The floor of this sea gradually sank and the debris washed down from these mountains, were laid down as horizontal beds of clay and sand with occasional limestone beds

About the middle of the Tertiary time, some 30 million years ago, the subsidence of the land ceased and it began to rise very slowly from the sea, and because of earth movements to be generally tilted towards the English Channel.

Rain falling collected into streams, easily wore away these soft strata, and carved through the surface clay and underlying Greensand to the impervious Red Marls beneath, and thus formed our present deep valleys from the original flat plateau. The best example being the Blackdown Hills. The results of these geological changes has been the plateau, sloping slightly south east, with a general level of about 650 feet, but Widworthy Hill (718ft) and Sutton Thorne (707 feet) represent the remains of a higher plane of marine erosion.

The lowest point in these parishes is the valley of the Umborne Brook, about 250 feet and the Offwell Brook near Blamphayne about 200 feet.

Practically all the "Run off" after rain runs into these two brooks.

The Flora and Fauna are those usual to East Devon.

These are as usual for East Devon, and are fully described in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association.

Climate.

The average rainfall is about 45 inches

Springs and Water Supply.

While a line of springs everywhere marks the boundary between the Upper Greensand ("Foxmould") and the under lying clays and marls, the North- South fault along the Umborne Brook Valley, causes three very large springs near Wilmington, and probably that at "Rock" Spring west of Sutton Barton.

A strong spring rises near Colwell House, and as the water of this spring is very hard, another North- South fault may have let down a patch of chalk, now concealed by the "Foxmould" at this point.

Wells.

Wells sunk into the plateau round Mount Pleasant are usually about 60 feet deep, the water table sloping from about 680 feet on the hillside overlooking Honiton to about 500 feet in the lower village at Offwell, a slope of about 1 degree 40 minutes South East. The water in these wells is very soft, but in several cases is inclined to attack galvanized Iron Pipes.

Mineral Resources.

The chalk has been worked for lime burning in the Wilmington and Great Sutton Barton quarries. A layer of Phosphatic Chalk crops out in the quarry in Hayne Lane, Wilmington, as was no doubt found at depth in the Widworthy Park, and Sutton Quarries, which would account for the great depth of the latter. The valuable agricultural qualities of this band must have been well

known, as there seems to have been a large business in supplying this lime to the larger area. It is known that wheat straw from land on which it was used was particularly valued for thatching.(See Appendix)

In Wilmington Village this “Cenemnian” Chalk contains a sandy fossiliferous layer, which has been largely worked for building sand, while further south, the Widworthy Park and Sutton Quarries produced freestone equivalent to the well-known Beer Stone. This freestone was known to Revd. Marwood Tucker in 1791, and was used in constructing the terrace walls at Widworthy Court about 1831.

Banks and Hedges.

The banks, which are a feature of Devon scenery, deserve some mention. The earliest British inhabitants, probably few in numbers, lived chiefly by hunting and a small amount of agriculture, in the open spaces of the higher plateaus. The valleys were then densely wooded, containing wolves and bears, and were full of bogs. All of which were serious dangers to travellers.

As the Saxons settled the country, they extended their clearings into the more fertile soil of the valleys. These were outlined by banks, which kept out wild animals, and sheltered livestock, as well as delimiting the boundaries of ownership. They are similar to the banks of Brittany, which those inhabitants there were constant intercourse across the channel. As the population grew, and more land was cleared further enclosures were made, whose banks often followed the contours of the ground. In time the clearings of one village met those of others, and banks were made alongside the tracks joining the villages to prevent cattle, which were being driven along the road, from straying onto the fields. The damp clay lands, which tended to be covered by Oak Woods were the richest agricultural lands, and were not cleared of their woodlands till the Saxon settlement. The Saxons would have used Slaves from their capture of the original Celtic inhabitants, for the heavy labour of building these banks.

In more recent times when land was awarded under the Enclosure Acts, the recipient was required to construct a bank or hedge to define the limit of his holding. The method of construction was described by Vancouver in his report on the Agriculture of Devon page 132, Published in 1808. A bank 9feet wide at the base, by 5feet high stone faced on both sides, with a 2foot wattle fence on top, with a ditch 3 foot deep and 4 foot wide. On each side, cost about 15/- (75p) for 16 1/2 feet. A plain earth bank, of the same height cost about 4/- (20p) for 20 feet.

Parish Boundaries

Starting from the North East corner at Cheeseway Ash, a name derived from the Old English “Cis” a gravelly track, the boundary with Monkton Parish follows the prehistoric line of Northgate Lane, probably one of the oldest Ridgeway’s in the country, till it reaches the short cross roads, made to compel traffic to pass through the toll gates on the Axminster –Honiton Road. Leaving Northgate Lane it now turns North East, along a former watercourse, and crossing the Railway meets Cotleigh Parish at Combe Water. Hence the boundary, probably that of the former Manor of Wilelmitena, recorded in the Domesday Book, follows the stream till it meets the Umborne Brook, the East bank of this in the parish of Stockland, was until 1844 in the County of Dorset. Following this brook, near the New Electric Pumping Station (Circa1946), which supplied Honiton, it has the

parish of Dalwood on the eastern bank. For a few yards near here, the boundary, crosses to the western bank, following a former course of the brook. At Wilmington Bridge, it meets the parish of Widworthy, and turning westward along the A35, (Honiton-Axminster Road) past two old Stones, passes through Wilmington past the “Greystone” an old parish boundary mark, till near the “Drummer’s Stone” crossroads, it diverges slightly to the North, a relic of an old track leading to Northgate Lane. At the point where it crosses the road leading to Combe Water, there stood till a few years ago, a large flint boulder, supposed to mark the spot where, a Drummer is said to have been murdered in the 18th Century, but it is fairly certain that it was one of the Boundary Stones, whose erection was recorded in Overseer’s Accounts for 1701. It now turns to the South about 200 feet east of the Toll House, and thence south east to the old Featherbed Lane, till some 300 yards east of Northcombe Lane, it turns along the hedges, past “Rock Spring”, till it reaches the Offwell Brook. Marking in its course the limits of the Manors of Offwell and Sutton, from Dellimoor, it ascends the opposite hill; probably marking the limit of the Manor of Colwell, past Glanvil Farm, (Clanafelda in Domesday) till it meets a former track way from Honiton to Farway, in Poltimere Copse. Turning North past Cosdshayes, it returns to the Honiton – Northleigh Cross Roads, it passes a former turning to an old track through the Penfield, and following the road till it meets a curious tongue of the Honiton Parish, which represents part of an old track, from Honiton, by Marl pits Hill, and Colwell Wood, to the Offwell Brook Valley. Again following the road, formerly a Ridgeway and in later times the coach route to Sidmouth it returns to Cheeseway Ash.

There were formerly several outlying pieces of Offwell Parish;

1. Southwest of Smallicombe Farm, representing the Domesday Manor of Hesmala-corma.
2. Near Northleigh round Combe Farm.
3. A single plot, named Collinshayes, 150 yards North of Northleigh Church, probably an outlier of Colwell Manor.

These are all given in detail in the Tithe Apportionment of October 1842. They were transferred to Northleigh Parish by Local Government Order, 24th March 1884. According to Kelly’s directory.

Modern Roads and Communications.

The Honiton – Axminster Road, A35 passing through Wilmington forms the dividing line between the parishes for part of its length. The more gentle sloping descent from Mount Pleasant to Honiton, past the “New Inn” was made to assist coaching traffic in the early part of the 19th Century.

The Railway passes through the northern part of Offwell Parish, and was completed as an extension of the London & South-western Railway from Yeovil to Exeter, and was opened on 19th July 1860.

Although the Honiton Tunnel lies just outside the parish this seems a suitable place to preserve some record of a difficult piece of engineering, as the writer has had unusual opportunities of studying it, both in connection with its protection

during the Second World War, and its geology as a potential source of water supply for the neighbourhood.

Its eastern entrance is in Spilcombe Copse at a height of 432 feet above Sea level, in the sandy clay of the lower Cretaceous series, but it quickly passes into the red clay marl of the Triassic system, with its western portal at 460 feet. The sand bed immediately above the eastern entrance is quick sand very full of water, which is said to have caused great difficulties in driving the Tunnel. A few feet higher there is a layer of blue clay about 8 feet thick, with above it about 23 feet of very wet yellow sand. This is the source of very strong springs, which in 1946 supplied the Dairy Works at Seaton Junction, by a pipeline laid along the permanent way.

Before the Tunnel was started, eight test pits were sunk to explore the strata, and were to become ventilation shafts for the completed tunnel. Their positions could be seen on the surface in 1946, and are indicated on the map in the appendix. Of these the second from the West entrance, was lined with brickwork as a ventilation shaft, but presumably owing to the difficulties with water and Quicksand was never carried through the roof of the tunnel.

The parish register records the deaths of several young men, who worked on the construction of the railway, and Pulman in his 4th edition of his "Book of the Axe" records that during the construction of the Railway about 1856, he saw many blackened oak logs taken from the marsh at Combe Water.

The Southern Railway allowed the previous author to examine and condense the section drawing of the tunnel made at the time of its construction. The consultant Engineer for the line was J.E. Errington and the engineer of works was W. Brassey.

The Etymology of the Parish Place Names.

The place names of Devon could be the subject of a separate volume in their own right; Cambridge University Press has published this.

Offwell: - is obviously the spring or well of a Saxon settler, called Offa.

Widworthy is the “Worthy” or protected home of Wida, another Saxon. This name was in common use in Northern France in the 9th Century.

Colwell recalls the “Colman” who laid out the long straight pre-historic track ways.

Sutton was the South Ten of Saxon settlers, a suffix also found in Wilmington, which one is tempted to associate with the name of Wilhelm.

Halshayne and Lucehayne, contain the “Hayne” element signifying a stockaded cattle enclosure, to protect them from wolves.

Cleave derives its name from the “Cliff” falling to the Combe Water Brook.

A list of the more unusual field names from the area is given in the appendix.

Recent discoveries in other parts of the country, suggest that there may have been settled sites in the area from the earliest times, while the “Camp” on Widworthy Hill, may date back to Neolithic times, like Hembury Fort. It was probably a signal station connected with the forts at Hawkesdown, above Axmouth, Musbury, and Membury, Dumpdon Hill and Hembury Fort.

Near Widworthy Church are the remains of a “Burh” probably the residence of the local landowner in early Saxon Times, and later of the Lord of the Manor. It is fully described later. The main road from Axminster to Honiton was certainly in use in Roman times, and Roman coins were found in 1837 close to it at Moorcox.

The origin of the sites of Offwell, Widworthy and Wilmington.

Though the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter passed through Wilmington, nothing is known at present to suggest that there were Roman settlements there, or at Widworthy, or Offwell. The presence of reliable springs and the dry sandy soil, would make these attractive places to rest troops. The nearest known Roman remains are at White Staunton near Chard, and at Honeyditches near Seaton.

The country was very sparsely inhabited, and there were large Oak Forests.

From the third to the tenth century, it was constantly raided from the sea, by Teutonic tribes, who were themselves being driven from their homelands by waves of Mongol invaders, from Central Asia, who in turn were forced out of their lands because of spreading deserts.

The place names indicate Saxon Origin, Wilda being attracted by the water meadows formed by the Wilmington springs, and the defensive position offered by Widworthy Castle.

Offa made his settlement near the springs below Offwell Church, which lay in a South-facing valley, protected from the cold North and East winds. (It is possible that the same Offa had another settlement at Uffculme, about 7 miles east of Tiverton.) As the original settlement grew, the cross roads would have been a natural meeting place, for he traders on the Dorchester – Exeter route, and the Colyton route inland. At first there would have been a wayside shrine, and later a wooden church. Parishes were generally formed after 690 A.D. but often registered much earlier divisions of property.

After the Norman Conquest in 1066, most of the Saxon owners were evicted and the lands were given to the Norman leaders and their followers.

The roads and track ways.

These form an interesting Network. The “Ridgeway” which enters at the North-eastern corner of Offwell parish, at Cheesway Ash, which is another, Old English name “Cisway” meaning gravelly road and the line of the parish boundary follows it. At White Cross the Northgate Lane was diverted to pass traffic through the Toll Gate at Mount Pleasant (There was also a large stables at Mount Pleasant to assist the Horse drawn wagons up and down Honiton Hill). 100 yards east it assumes its original line as “Featherbed Lane”. After crossing the road from “Drummers Stone Cross to Offwell Village becomes a deeply sunken track till it reaches the sign post at Colyton Cross. Thence it ascends the ridge at Sutton Thorne, and then past Downhayne Brake to Colyton.

This “Ridgeway” brought the trade of North Devon and the Quantocks by Wellington, Hemyock and Langford Bridge over the Otter, towards the seaport of Colyton. The river Axe was navigable to Colyton, and Axmouth. Ridgeway’s were used by Ancient Britons because they were generally on higher land, which was less boggy, less densely wooded, and didn’t harbour the wolves or bears.

The main road through Wilmington is shown on the Large Scale Ordinance Survey maps as a Roman Road, and there are historical accounts of a section of roman road having been exposed in section in 1830 near Moorcox Farm. This road descended to Honiton by the steep hill below Springfield House, a new road with gentler gradients was made in the early 19th Century for the increasing coaching traffic on the roads.

The road-leading west from “Tower” Crossroads was part of the Ridgeway from Yeovil over Crewkerne Hill, through Stockland, to Peak Hill Camp near Sidmouth.

From Springfield House an old packhorse track is still visible, leading to the north end of Colwell Wood by Colwell Barton and Cookshayes to join the Northleigh road to Colyton. This is a fine weather track or “Hollow Way” with constant opportunities for watering animals, which could not stray because of

the high banks on each side. As the population increased, its clearings and farms spread into the valleys, and settlements grew up along the line of springs, they became connected to the tracks half way up the hillsides, avoiding the still inhospitable valley bottoms.

Tanneries existed near Colyton, and these treated leather from the surrounding countryside farms with oak bark from the dense oak forests along the valleys.

The road from Honiton via Marl pits Hill to Northleigh is another “Ridgeway”, whose early use is proved by the discovery in 1934, at the northern edge of the Golf Course of Bronze Age urns containing human ashes.

Another “Hollow way” track ran from Honiton by Widworthy castle and church- Halshayne and Watchcombe to Colyton, along the eastern face of Sutton Thorne hill, forming a cross roads and meeting place where Widworthy Church now stands.

Two old tracks diverge from the Main Road west and east of Greystone, the former by Old Cleave Lane, to Hayne Farm and Stockland, and the latter by a ford across the Umborne Brook, near the electric pumping station, to Dalwood and Membury.

From Wilmington a road turned south by Sutton Barton and Smallicombe to Northleigh. That part of this track which passed across the east end of Widworthy Park, was diverted about 1830 by Sir Edward Marwood Elton, to pass from the east end of Wilmington Village, towards Widworthy Church.

Offwell Parish Pump and Offa’s Well.

The well, now protected by a semi- circular wall, adjacent to the Offwell School House is also close to the cross roads where the road from Cotleigh to West Colwell crosses the Honiton to Colyton road.

It is undoubtedly the “Offa’s Well” from which the village takes its name.

Both these roads were important trackways from pre-historic times, and the well must have been of great convenience for watering passing along them.

Originally during the damper climate, which prevailed from about 500 B.C. it was probably a surface spring, but as the water table, fell in drier times the convenience of its position, and the growth of the village resulted in its being deepened and lined, as a well.

According to notes in the “Churchyard Yew” written and published 1832 by the Rev. J.G. Copleston the then rector of Offwell, which referred to a group of objects in Offwell Village.

“ A gothic Stone Pump, for the use of the village, which before its erection had no unfailling supply of water. It bears the following inscription.”

“Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again.” A.D.MDCCCXXX.

(Note: - The actual date carved on the stonework is A.D. MCCCCIII) It is not known if this was an error by the stonecutter.)

The pump was repaired by public subscription from the village inhabitants. Then in 1949 extensive repairs were again required and were paid for by Rev. W.E. Copleston of Offwell House.

The well was then measured and found to be 28 feet deep, and contained 10 feet of water. The height of the collar of the well is at about 600 feet above sea level so that the water table then stood at about 582 feet.

(Trustees of the Copleston Estate advertised the well for sale but the Offwell Parish Council sent a letter of protest pointing out that the well was public property to the Trustees.)

The History of Offwell Village.

The history of the Manor of Offwell, Widworthy etc. is dealt with in a later chapter, but unfortunately very little local information as to the general history of the parishes.

The existence of the Manors was recorded in the Domesday Survey of A.D.1086.

In 1244 Stephen de Offwell had the right of presentation to the Rectory of Offwell, whose Church Lands were valued at about the same date as being worth 106/-8p per Annum (Just over £10).

Another Book written in 1828 shows that in 1361 Henricus, Parson of Offwell was mentioned in a deed relating to Sparkhayes near Colyton. The rector at that time was Richard de Lilleshulle, so Henricus must have been a curate.

The living of Offwell and West Colwell Farm were purchased from the Fulford family about 1772 by the Rev. J.B. Copleston, whose family had owned Smallicombe, further down the Offwell Brook Valley for many generations.

The Fulford's lived at Fulford Park near Dunsford, and had married into the family of the Courtenays, the Earls of Devon, as well as into the Benvil Family of Shute. It was probably through these marriages that the living had come into their hands.

Though no written record exists it is probable the existing village well, which was provided with a pump, and stone covering by Bishop Copleston about 1830, but had been in use for many centuries before. The recess in the wall opposite the entrance gate of the old Rectory, which is sometimes pointed out as "Offa's Well." Perpetuates the site of a dipping place in the "Goyle" stream, which must have served the Rectory before the present road was made in 1810.

The position of the Church close to the crossroads is very characteristic of early Church sites, The road which leads down to West Colwell, is no doubt a survival of the track by which corn was taken for grinding from the higher ground to Colwell Barton Mill, and which joined the old Trade route from North Devon to Colyton at West Colwell Farm.

The village was largely rebuilt and modernized at the beginning of the 19th Century by Dr. Edward Copleston the Bishop of Llandaff, the eldest son of the Revd. J.B. Copleston.

As Provest of Oriel College Oxford he is said to have made many improvements in the University, about 1826 he became Bishop of Llandaff, and shortly afterwards Dean of St. Paul's in London, positions which he held till his death in 1849. He purchased Offwell Barton Farm from the Upham Family about 1800, built the present Farm house, and a new Rectory, on the site of the former one, for his brother J.G. Copleston, who kept a Private School there. He also built the existing Old School house and erected in the Playground at the corner of the road a Granite copy of the "Copleston Cross" which stands today at Copleston 4 miles west of Crediton. This Cross is mentioned in a deed of gift by King Eadgar to his Thane Aelfhaer in A.D. 974. The stone probably originally carried a cross head, and is said to be of Early Saxon date.

It is said that when this copy was being transported it travelled by sea from Exeter to Axmouth, and then by horse drawn cart to Offwell. On route via Sutton Thorne Hill one of the horses was run over and killed by the cart.

He also built Offwell House, about 1828 and its two Lodges. In the wall of the Lower Lodge in the village he inserted a carved stone, from the ruins of the family house at Copleston. He also constructed the two ponds in the Valley below, with the bypass leat to prevent flood water carrying gravel into the upper pond.

He made many improvements in the church and added the vestry, whose front is at an angle to prevent damage to the ancient Yew tree. He also planted the younger Yew tree near the North East Corner of the Church.

Having purchased and modernized the "Tower House" in 1843 he had built the Bishop's Tower to give employment to the poor of Honiton, and to act as a Water Tower for Mount Pleasant and Offwell Village.

The present Infant School was erected by public subscription in 1928, and the Playing Field was presented to a Trust for use as such by the Copleston Family in 1935.

The Manors of Offwell – Widworthy and Sutton. Their Manor Houses and other houses of interest.

Their story must commence with the distribution of the lands after the Norman Conquest. To prevent any of his more important followers from raising large local forces to challenge his supremacy William the Conqueror arranged that the lands they receives should be spread all over the country, and well mixed with those of other retainers.

But this was not just the redistribution of the spoils of conquest; the receipt of these lands carried with it the responsibility to pay the King's taxes. In order that the King should have an idea of the amount of revenues due and so that

there was a fair distribution of taxes he instituted an enquiry which was known as the Domesday book, it records the value of each estate, and the taxes paid by it in the time of Edward the Confessor.

In these two small Parishes we find three tenants:

NAME	ESTATE	YEARLY VALUE	ACRES
Baldwin	Smallicombe	5/-	89
	Colwell	20/-	1020
	Offwell	13/-	245
	North Wilmington /Cleave	7/-6p	182
Tetbald	Widworthy	30/-	591
	South Wilmington	5/-	160
William the Usher	Sutton	20/-	560

These tenants in chief further distributed these lands to their followers, who equally became responsible for the payment of these dues, and such other contributions as their immediate overlord demanded.

Roger	Received	Smallicombe
Rogre	Received	Colwell
Merin	Received	North Wilmington
Reginald	Received	Offwell
Oliver	Received	Widworthy
Richard	Received	Sutton

Merin had also received Stedcombe near Axmouth. In most cases the lower and resident tenants, became commonly known by the names of their Manors, so we get Reginald de Offwell.

Spelling in the Domesday book was a hit and miss affair, there were three clerks that were employed in writing out the Exeter Book of the Domesday report, it is quite possible that Rogre of Colwell and Roger of the contiguous Smallicombe may be one and the same person, written by different clerks.

The later history of Offwell, North Wilmington and Colwell Manors may be summarised: -

Merin of North Wilmington (Cleave) and Stedcombe was succeeded about 1166 by Robert de Ver (Veer) and Robert de Peeric who held their grant from Robert of Normandy, son of Henry 2nd. Stephen de Offwell had by that time become owner of Peeric's share, which included rights over North Wilmington. This accounts for the inclusion in Offwell Parish of the north side of Wilmington Village, and the adjacent lands.

In 1281 the male line of the de Offwell family failed leaving two heiresses:

- (a) Genevefa who married W de Parc of Colwell
- (b) Juliana who married John de Orway.

In 1303 the Priory of Bothemescombe belonged to the Knights Hospitaller, about 1 mile North West of Sheldon, also held 1/10th share in the Offwell Manor.

1341 De Parc of Colwell sold Colwell to Thomas de Courtenay who then became owner of Colwell.

1346 The third share in Offwell belonging to de Veer passed to Meelles (of Widworthy) then to Gilbert and Norbyry and thence to Lord Bray.

1566 the Manor was in the possession of

(a) H. Gilbert $\frac{1}{2}$

(b) G. Fourd $\frac{1}{4}$

(c) Arundel & Compton $\frac{1}{4}$ (Arundel had property in Cotleigh)

This Fourd was probably an ancestor of the family Ford that were prominent on the 18th Century.

About 1600 William Collins, who had made money in the woollen trade of Exeter, purchased Colwell from the Franklin family, who bought it from the Earl of Huntingdon. Courtney's share of Offwell had passed into the possession of Lord Dinham, whose share in Colwell passes through the families of Peverell and Hungerford, to the Earl of Huntingdon. Orway's share of Offwell had been dispersed by sale, some part passing to the Radden Family. Collins also held the advowson's of Offwell and Cotleigh. Male heirs failing to the Collins family, the properties passed through a daughter to the Southcote family, from Kilmington, and thence by sale to the Marwood family. Male heirs failing it again passed through a daughter to the Fortescues who re-sold it to the Marwood Elton's of Widworthy, who sold Colwell in 1936 to Mr Loud.

1769 The West Colwell part of the property was purchased by the Copleston family, who had held Smallicombe for many generations. They also purchased the advowson of Offwell, which had become the property of the Fulford's of Fulford.

Widworthy and Sutton had been bought by the Marwoods between 1680 and 1710, these again passed with other properties in Southleigh, Northleigh and Farway, which had been bought by various of the Marwood family about 1600, and by marriage about 1760 to the Elton family of Bristol, who assumed the name of Marwood Elton, and still own much of the property which about 1880 amounted to 5,000 acres.

Widworthy Barton.

The house was probably built about the end of the 15th Century on the site of an earlier dwelling, and surrounded three sides of a square. The fourth side, now the front, seems to have been added in early Tudor times, with its Hall and Porch. The latter has a tablet with the Chichester Arms, a heron with an eel in its beak. The Plasterwork of the Musicians gallery in the hall is certainly of Tudor date. The hall seems to have been the full height of the house originally, the rooms over it having been added later.

It was bought by the Marwoods from the Chichester's about 1701, and it was their residence till they moved to Widworthy Court about 1830. The house was

burnt down about 1800 and after falling into poor repair was restored after 1938 by Mr J.F. Clarke who bought it about 1936.

Sutton Barton.

This was built about 1690, on the foundations of an earlier house, by James Marwood. It has a chimney piece dated 1591 and some Tudor glass in the iron barred windows. It was built from freestone from the neighbouring quarry, and was the headquarters for the Sutton Lucy Manor. This property passed from the Lucy family to the Courtney's, thence eventually to Percival of Hungerford, Earl of Huntingdon who sold to Franklins

Colwell Barton.

The site is a very sunny one, with a good spring and was occupied from early times. The name embodies the "Col" which translates to "The Old Straight Track" it was connected to the prehistoric track, leading to the ancient camps at Brancombe or Sidbury. The house is of dressed flint with freestone corners, and has two windows at its west end of Tudor date. On the quoins of the northeast corner Initials with a date 1713 are seen, and other initials on the Corners of the chimney at the east end.

Offwell Barton.

Offwell owing to its early dispersal of the property to various owners has no manor house. Although the house belonging to the resident Rector about 1666 may have been on the site of a former Manor House. This house stood just to the East of the present "Old Rectory" and was pulled down by Dr. E. Copleston about 1806. He then built the "Old Rectory" for his brother before 1810, Dr. Copleston also built the present Offwell Barton about that date.

Cleave Farm.

This house was probably built in early Tudor times, and must have been the residence of a very prosperous tenant. In the Poor Rate list of 1763 Cleave is one of the highly rated properties. It has been restored (1946) showing the Tudor stone mouldings of the main fireplace, and the ancient oak beams. Before 1945 it was in poor repair and was inhabited by two labourers families.

Lower Cleave is probably of fairly modern date, but Middle Cleave has a cottage whose window Mullions suggest a Tudor date. It was burned down about 1920.

In a large-scale map of the Marwood Elton estates made about 1781 much land around Cleave is shown as belonging to Lord Orway, really the Countess of Orford.

The old Parsonage near Cleave. Was burned down during the Civil War about 1646 by Parliamentary troops, to punish the Rector the Revd. T. Jones, and a

faculty for its demolition was obtained by Dr. Copleston about 1804. It was purchased by Major Summerfield from the Offwell Glebe after 1920.

Offwell House was built by Dr. E. Copleston about 1828, he also built the Tower House, and later the Tower itself about 1843 to relieve local unemployment and to act as a water tower for his estates.

Cookshayes.

Is mentioned in Devon "Feet of Fines" in 1219, and again in 1321 in the Register of Exeter Diocese.

It is said to have passed through the families of Thomas and Putt, but was bought and built by Robert Marwood about 1711. An engraving is shown on P237 of Roger's Memorials of the West.

Halshayne.

Mentioned in the Close Rolls in 1383 and 1468, it was the residence of William de Hauville, a Juror of Axminster Hundred in 1238. When the property was under restoration in 1946 there was found finely carved stonework and mullioned windows.

Lucehayne.

Was held by Galfridus de Lucy in 1285, who also held Sutton Lucy. Again in 1946 whilst under restoration evidence of two former periods of building works were found under the foundations.

Glanvil Farm.

Was held in 1262 with Wiscombe by William de Gurmundevil, then later by the Prideaux family of Netherton in Farway.

Church Sites.

An immediate requirement of every settlement was a burial ground. From the earliest times of human communities, burial grounds had been associated with the spirits of the dead, and were considered to be under the special care of the Deity. They thus acquired a special and lasting sanctity.

Before the Roman invasion burial, particularly for chiefs had been done by placing the corpse on the ground and heaping up soil round it, thus making a round "Barrow", and further burials added to their size. These barrows became tribal sanctuaries and meeting places.

To the Romans their shape recalled the circular meeting places of Rome, and they were called "Circi" after them. This name was retained after the departure of the Roman garrison, by the Romanised Celtic population, and was later adopted by the Saxons, when they invaded and overran Britain. In our earliest

English records they are described as “Cirics”, and were usually circular in shape retaining the form of the barrow from which they had originated.

Gradually a shelter for the attendant priest grew up on the mound of the graveyard, usually made of wood, wattle or rough branches, and to this was often added an oratory or shrine, of the same materials. In the course of time the name of the “Circi” originally belonging to the burying ground, became attached to the building. Stone building was an almost unknown art among the Saxons, who from their shipbuilding were expert builders in timber.

Here and there as Christianity was re-introduced during the 7th and 8th Centuries, a collection of monks, the successors of the Irish and Scotch missionaries were formed, whose dwellings became known as Mynsters, and were probably the first buildings to be reconstructed in stone by monks from the stone using districts of Western France.

The erection of any building in stone was such an unusual event that it was generally recorded in such chronicles as have come down to us.

The reconstruction of local churches in stone began on a large scale after the Norman Conquest, the invaders having come from a country where stone was easily obtained and commonly used as a building material. The large number of foreign priests who accompanied the invaders, and were accustomed to the comfort and convenience of stone buildings, gave a great impulse to the wide spread erection of stone built Churches and Manor Houses.

The obvious sites for their energy was to reconstruct the rough wooden Churches in the long consecrated grave yards, which for centuries had been the well-known meeting places of the country.

The earliest building was the consecrated Chancel, to which a Nave was added as a meeting place for the laity, corresponding in many ways to the Parish Halls of to-day.

At first the priest often resided in the Church itself, usually over the Porch, but with increasing wealth, and reverence for the building, separate dwellings were gradually provided.

Fonts were not usually installed in these early churches, baptisms being carried out in the open air, at the nearest spring or stream. In consequence the entrance to the graveyard was generally made on the side nearest to such water.

In the case of Offwell Church the site suggests that originally the graveyard of the community which settled in the sunny, well watered hollow below was made at this spot, close to the cross roads, which themselves were recognized as more or less sacred ground. Thus suicides could be buried at cross roads, though they were not permitted to be buried in the adjacent consecrated ground, of the graveyard itself.

Until the Lynch Gate, and the path from the east, were made early in the 19th.Century, access to the south porch was gained by a path, part of which can still be seen, along the foot of the south revetting wall. This entrance with its steps is shown in the sketch in the “Churchyard Yew” printed in 1832. Belloc in the “Old Roads” says that entrance to sacred places from the South or sunny side, is a custom dating back to prehistoric times, and that entrance porches are nearly always on the south side of churches.

There was also formerly a northern entrance in the wall of the North Aisle, of which the outline can still be seen.

The church is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Fabric is of dresses local flint and Chert, the quoins are of Beer stone, and some Lias Limestone has been used, probably in the 19th Century, in the small octagonal Turret at the top of the tower. The floors of the Nave, Chancel and North Aisle, where now visible, are of Lias flagstones, but the sanctuary is floored with recent encaustic tiles. The timberwork is of oak.

The church consisted originally of a nave and a Chancel, which would seem to have been built about A.D. 1200. The centre line of the Chancel is in line with that of the Nave, but that of the sanctuary lies 6 inches further south, the southern wall having apparently been reduced in thickness during the alterations of the mid-19th Century.

Verticality of Abutments.

On 17th May 1946 the abutments of the Chancel Arch were measured for verticality. The North abutment leans towards the North 2 inches in 10 feet, or at an angle of 57 minutes.

The South abutment measured outside the Church on the buttress of the Chancel Arch leans south 3.8 inches in 10 feet, or at an angle of 1 degree 50 minutes.

There are no cracks visible in the plaster near the Chancel arch, so it is probable that all movement ceased many years ago.

The Nave was originally used largely for lay purposes such as courts of justice, parish meetings and even for storing goods belonging to the parishioners.

The South walls of the Nave and Chancel have been so frequently repaired, that little of the original stonework can now be identified.

The buttress outside the south wall adjacent to the Chancel arch has been enlarged to take the thrust of the latter. The original windows in the south wall of the nave were much smaller, the present three light windows having been installed when the north Aisle was added. The small window in the south wall of the Chancel appears to be of the same date as the Chancel arch, and it's widely spread splay may have been meant to give a view of the Altar, from the outside.

The nave, north Aisle and Chancel have semi- circular barrel ceilings, divided into panels by oak beams.

The South Porch was probably a very early addition, but seems to have been entirely reconstructed in the early 19th Century. The broken bowl fixed in the northeast corner may be the original font of the Church, as it appears to be of very early workmanship. The doorway from the Nave to the south porch appears to date from the 13th Century.

The practice of putting up notices in the Church Porch is of great antiquity. The graveyard was the public meeting place and public notices were given out there, at first by “Crier” and later in writing. Marriages and much business were transacted in the porch in the middle Ages.

There must have been formerly a wooden screen across the Chancel arch, and the remains of an iron hook suggest that there may have been a rood above it. The screen was erected to separate the Chancel, the sacred part of the building, from the nave, so largely used for lay purposes. (Dean Jeremiah Milles was precentor of Exeter Cathedral from 1747 to 1784. He made notes on many Devon Parishes. These notes are now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. A Microfilm of them is in the County Library at Exeter.) These indicate that “On the woodwork of the screen is carved this coat of Armour. Gules 4 Lozenges ermine” (These arms are almost certainly those of John Dynham who preceded John More to the Rectory in A.D. 1488)

A.W. Everett thinks that there was originally a wood or stone screen across the Chancel Arch, with possibly a painted “Dome” or rood above it. It appears probable that a similar screen was carried across the North Aisle. This would have enclosed a private Chapel for the Collyns family of Colwell. This would account for the panelled arch opening into the Chancel, which would have made the services in the Chancel visible to those in this private Chapel.

Roods and screens were widely destroyed during the Reigns of Edward VI, Elizabeth, and later by Parliamentary fanatics during the Civil War of 1640-1649.

A similar screen seems to have been carried across the North Aisle, enclosing a private chapel for the Collins family of Colwell. This would account for the panelled Arch opening into the Chancel. Beneath this arch lies a memorial stone to members of the Collyns family of Colwell, who were buried in the vault beneath.

The Tower at the west end was probably the first addition, and is said to date from about A.D. 1450. In its north-eastern corner it has a circular spiral staircase to the Belfry and roof. About 10 feet above the floor, in its south wall, there is a blocked up doorway, which opened into the “Singer’s Gallery”. Which was erected by John Ford in 1754, but removed during the alterations of the 19th Century. The carved panels, now hung on the wall of the North Aisle near the Organ, are said to have been taken from the front of this gallery.

Some 10 feet higher, there is a chamber intended for the safekeeping of parish property such as weapons and armour, which every parish had to keep up.

Above this is the Bell chamber containing five bells in a wooden cage. The roof is of oak boards covered with lead. The battlements may be original, but there were stone finals at each corner, which have now disappeared. The top of the battlements is 44 ft 9" above the Church floor. The pieced stone windows are said to date from the 19th Century, whilst the flagstaff was erected in 1945, and the first flag flown on "Victory in Europe" day.

The north Aisle would seem to date from about A.D.1500 and is divided from the nave by three arches resting on pillars of Beer stone, with carved capitals. The details of these pillars are similar to those in Awliscombe Church, and seem to have been made by the same craftsman. The carving of the half capital adjacent to the Chancel Arch is curious. This abutment of the arch is strongly inclined to the North by the thrust of the Chancel Arch.

The Vestry was added by Bishop Copleston about 1828. Its south wall is not parallel to that of the Chancel, apparently to avoid interference with the roots of the Old Yew Tree. Its stone entrance doorway has been taken from some older building, possibly the former Vicarage, which was pulled down about that date. A very early tombstone was cut up to make the steps of the Vestry.

The Pulpit was made in 1724 at a cost of £24. It must have had a sounding board over it, surmounted by the existing figure of the angel with the trumpet. The figures of the Apostles on the panels are of the same date. The stonework of a much earlier pulpit is concealed beneath it.

The pews are said to have been installed about A.D. 1798, but the present pews were built later in 1852 from the panels of the earlier ones, which were probably higher. In 1950 Mr Northam told Colonel Ramsden that he had helped to dig the trench for the new heating system installed in 1898, this consists of under floor pipes and a boiler running from the North Wall to the South Porch. During this work many Skeletons were found, and he concluded that these must have been from a very early date; before the seats were altered in (1658) may be a misprint for 1798.

The font is of early 16th Century design, and its wooden cover of late 17th Century work.

The Lectern was made by Mr W.H. Farmer, Churchwarden in 1936 incorporating an old Panel of the "Last Supper".

The hatchment of the Royal Arms, with the scrolls of the Lord's Prayer and Creed were erected by Bishop Copleston.

The Organ is quite modern.

The roof of the Church is covered with large Welsh slates, put up in the 19th Century to replace the small "Shindols" so often mentioned in the Churchwarden's accounts, which are said to have been quarried near Kingsbridge in South Devon.

The monuments and windows are described in the appendix.

Electric Lighting was installed in 1946, and electric heating will replace the former Hot air system.

During redecoration in September 1950 traces of a Text and of decorative painting were found under the distemper above the Chancel Arch on the side facing the Nave.

The only letters, which could be deciphered, were “for” in Black, There was an account for “Black pigment” for painting letters in the Church Wardens accounts.

At the same time traces of an early Royal Arms were found above the present Royal Arms. They must have been of early Georgian date as the “G” of GR was plainly readable.

There are two vaults within the Church, and one in the Churchyard. They are given in the Appendix.

Churchyard.

The Archdeacon having ordered the soil accumulated near the Church to be removed, and the surface on the North side to be generally lowered, the displaced earth was deposited round the fast decaying, but since fast reviving Yew Tree. The parishioners were invited to see the graves of their respective friend identified, and formed again in due order. This was carefully attended to by all concerned, in the year 1825. (Up till 1716 it was common practice to bury the dead without coffins.)

At the east side of the Churchyard there is a 19th Century Lynch Gate. The Northern Entrance gates are a Memorial to those who fell in the 1914 – 1918 War. The north-eastern part of the Churchyard was until about 1900, the site of the “Five Bells”, which was then removed to the opposite corner of the Cross roads, the license for which was given up about 1930.

The Yew Trees: - See Appendix

The tree to the South east of the Chancel is of great age and was the subject of a poem published in 1832 by the Revd. J.G. Copleston, rector of Offwell 1804 – 1841, entitled the “Churchyard Yew”, which contained many interesting notes on the village. The tree to the North East of the Chancel, was taken from the present site of Offwell House, and planted by Dr. E. Copleston about 1804.

“This young tree was brought in the year 1808 from its solitude in the pleasure grounds now belonging to the Bishop of Llandaff to the spot, from whence, it is most probable, the seed it sprung from had been originally conveyed by some “Tenant of the woods.”

In Caxton’s “Directions for keeping the Feasts” printed A.D. 1493, it is directed that branches of yew trees shall be carried in Palm Sunday processions to symbolise Palm Branches.

An Ordnance Survey Bench mark at 601 feet 8 inches above Ordnance datum is cut on the North East corner of the Chancel.

The registers existing in 1946 are Births, Deaths and Marriages from 1551 to date. The Churchwardens Accounts 1691 to 1768 and the Poor Account Book 1826 to 1898. Plus an index of Births, deaths and marriages to 1796 by Dr. E. Copleston.

The Rectories.

The earliest Rectory was the house near Combe Water, about a mile to the North East of the Church, now known as "Old Parsonage". The then Rector the Revd. Thomas Jones was an ardent Royalist and his sermons brought him into active antagonism with the Parliamentary Troops, who repeatedly arrested him, plundered his house, and finally burnt it. He fled to Holland where he died.

The Vicarage stood opposite the Churchyard, eastward, near the beech mentioned in the sixth line of the poem "Churchyard Yew". This was a very mean building; Labourers now living were born in it. This building was pulled down about 1810.

The Old Rectory was a very respectable habitation of the kind, as might be inferred from the account given in a subsequent note. See Appendix "Rectors of Offwell"

Both these Glebe houses now taken down, were standing 50 years ago, when the present Rectory House was annexed to the living, together with two acres of land by my Father, then incumbent and Patron. It had been occupied by the Revd. Robert Rous, Rector of Offwell for many years before his death in 1741, for the sake of residing near the Church.

This Mr. Rouse was the grandson of Francis Rous, who was made Provest of Eton during the Rebellion, and was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, which Cromwell summoned and nominated on his own authority in 1653.

It is said that Dr. Copleston obtained a faculty to pull this down when he built the present "Old Rectory" about 1804. and a note in the "Churchyard Yew" says that in 1832 only a ruined barn marked the site. It has been repaired and is now a private residence. There is a legend that the Church plate is buried in its garden.

A private house to the east of the Church was built about 1667 by the Revd. John Rost, the then rector of Offwell, but was bought by Dr. E. Copleston, and pulled down to make a site for the present "Old Rectory." Since the amalgamation of the parishes of Offwell and Widworthy, this rectory became redundant, reverted to the Copleston Family, who have recently sold it.

The Church House.

This was frequently mentioned in the Churchwardens accounts between 1691 and 1768. It was used as a place of refreshment after Church services, and as an Alms House for the aged and sick persons receiving Parish relief. Its site is at present unknown, but a reference in the Accounts to rent paid to Mr. Upham for "The Old Inn" suggests that its site may have been in the Northeast corner of the present Churchyard. (See Poor Account Book 2nd November 1838, sale of Poor House or Church House Sanctioned)

The Parish Accounts for Offwell 1691 to 1768.

In the Iron Coffers of Offwell Church there are two vellum bound books, containing the Accounts of the Overseers of the Poor, and the Churchwardens for these years. They give a most interesting picture of local Government administration in the 18th Century, consequent on the Poor Laws of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

It must be remembered that movement about the country was then limited to riding and driving along very poorly kept tracks, so that duties, now carried out by County or District Councils, such as Public Assistance, highway repairs, Rating and assessment for taxation, were then carried out by Parish Officers.

The Overseer of the Poor was appointed annually at the Parish Meeting. Each large landowner had to nominate a responsible person for the office, in respect of each of his freeholds. In practice they put forward the tenants of their larger farms, who were placed on a rota for these duties by a resolution of the Parish Meeting. Such a Rota is recorded in the second volume of these accounts, for 1747, the expenses of these Meetings, which included much beer and sometimes other refreshments, figure constantly in the accounts. The meetings were generally held in the Rose & Crown Inn at Wilmington.

The qualifications of the Overseer were set out in a resolution of 1744, and were the holding of a freehold, Leasehold or Copy held estate. They usually served for half a year and received for their services 6/- 8d (or 1/3 of a £), which was increased in 1744 to 20/- (or £1) for the half-year. The Churchwarden received a similar sum.

The Overseer also charged for his out of pocket expenses, when visiting local Sessions etc.

His expenses were met by rates assessed on the value of each holding and paid by its occupier. These were calculated in Units, one of which was supposed to be collected each month, the sums varying from several shillings on the larger freehold estates, to a farthing for a small holding (1/4 of a penny) In Offwell the monthly unit brought in 18/- 4d. The number of these units to be collected annually, was decided each year by the Parish Meeting, but generally averaged about 60 to 80 for the year, giving a total income of about £50 to £80.

Copies of these rates for 1708 and 1763 are given in the appendix.

Needy persons were annually selected for Poor Relief by the Parish Meeting, and there are lists of them for each year, the numbers varying from 8 to 18. The Relief varied from 1/- to 11/- a month in cash, but there are very frequent items for clothes, shoes, and allowances of grain, usually barley in times when the price of bread and wheat rose to high levels. Additional help was given in case of sickness, and charges for pauper funerals, which always included much beer, often occur.

The Overseer had also to make assessments for other taxes such as:

Militia Rate.

Window Rate

Birth, Death, and Batchelor Rate.

Pound Rate

Parish Taxes paid from the Poor Rate.

Gaol and Hospital Money, usually paid from the Church Rate.

Bridge Rate for the repair of County Bridges.

County Rate.

The overseers had also to apprentice poor children, by indenture to the various landowners or large farmers. During the 17th Century and 18th Century the wool industry of Devon was so busy that agricultural labour became very scarce, and these child apprentices were of great value to employers. The Principal persons of the Parish acted as Sureties to the amount of £40 for each apprentice, so that they might not become destitute and chargeable to the Parish. These sureties are recorded in lists in the accounts.

A most important duty of the overseer consisted in seeing that no landless person from another Parish should settle in his own, since in case of illness or destitution they might become chargeable to the Parish Poor Rate. In such cases the vagrant was taken before the local Magistrates who held sessions at Wilmington, Kilmington, Colyton, Honiton, and Ottery St. Mary. Orders could be made by these justices, returning such persons to their own villages; whither they were taken by the Overseer.

A curious case occurred near Farway, where a pauper died in a house standing on the junction of the parishes of Northleigh, Farway, and Southleigh. As the parish boundaries met under the room in which he died, it was decided that the parish in which his head lay, when he died, should be chargeable for the funeral.

There are several entries in the parish Registers describing the parish boundaries and these are given in the appendix.

Church Accounts.

The Churchwarden's duties were principally in connection with the upkeep of the Church, and the use of the funds provided by the Church Rate.

This Rate was also assessed on the value of the holdings in the parish, a Unit of Church Rate bringing in a yearly income of £4.19/- 10d. The number of units to be collected each year was decided by the annual Vestry Meeting, but usually averaged 2 to 4 units, bringing in a total of about £10 to £20.

In years when heavy repairs to the Church became necessary as many as 8 units of Church Rate were collected in one year.

He was also responsible for distributing rewards for destroying vermin, kites, moles, badgers, foxes and crows.

In case of serious public calamities or private losses, by fire or storm, "Briefs" appealing for outside assistance could be issued by Benches of Magistrates, or Mayors of Boroughs. These briefs were sent to Churchwardens all over the country, who either held a special collection in Church, or more often made a small contribution from the Church Rate fund.

The Churchwarden was assisted by a Parish Clerk, who seems to have usually been some old man in receipt of Parish Relief, and was often given an additional fee for "Dog whipping." Which meant turning out dogs, which entered the Church during services.

Both he and the Overseer were naturally intimately concerned with the position of the Parish Boundaries. In 1701 there is a charge for carrying and setting up Big Stones as Boundary Marks, which would account for the "Drummer's Stone." (Recently Destroyed) and the "Greystone", and the stones shown on the 6" O.S. map near Wilmington Bridge.

The accounts seem to have been compiled from rough notes kept by the Overseer, or Churchwarden, and copied into the Parish Account Books by professional writers, whose spelling is often quaint, and writing most difficult to read. They were then supposed to be "Passed" by the principal Parishioners, and frequently vouched for under oath before the local Magistrate.

The Church Rate also maintained the Church House, partly an Alms House for the aged and sick, and partly a place of refreshment, to which the congregation adjourned for food after Church Service.

Its repairs figure constantly in the accounts. It may have been on the site of the later "Five Bells Inn" in the north-eastern part of the present Churchyard.

Points of special interest in the Accounts.

1700 Silver Bowl mended, Pulpit mended.

1701 Parish Boundary Stones set up

1704 Slates bought for roof.

1709 New bell for Church crest cost £30. (See Bells)

1724 New pulpit.

1743 Fulford succeeded as rector. Heavy repairs to Church.

1751 Church re-roofed with small slates

1753 Faculty for erecting Singer's Gallery.

1754 Church re-floored?

1761 Belfry repaired.

The industries of Offwell and Widworthy.

Agriculture has always been the main industry of the two parishes. The irrigation of the water meadows at Wilmington was carefully practiced, water from the spring near Styles Mill, being conveyed by a stone arch culvert now under the road towards Hayne Farm, and under the main Axminster road into fields see O.S. Map No42. Where traces of former irrigation trenches can still be seen.

The water from the Spring at the Home Farm, Wilmington was carried by a leat to join that from the Spring by the former Manor pond, south of the Gardens, and these were used to irrigate fields towards Marlstile Cottages.

Iron Smelting.

Quantities of Iron slag found about 150 yards south of Higher Lodge, Offwell, suggest that local "Hard Pan" iron ore was smelted there, using oak timber.

Lace Making.

This was introduced from Holland about 1570 by religious refugees. It was largely practiced till 1914, but has been completely replaced by machine made material. It is said to have been generally practiced in the villages, but that the wages were very low.

Lime Burning.

This industry must have been practiced for very many years, judging from the extent of the quarries in Widworthy Park and near Sutton Barton. The latter pits were very large when Sturge made a large-scale survey of Widworthy and Offwell in 1781. In 1566, "Every pytte of lime paying to the Lords of the Manor 12d (One Shilling or 5p.)

In 1791 each pit of lime paid $\frac{3}{4}$ to the rector of Widworthy. The lime contained a percentage of Calcium Phosphate and gave very heavy crops of wheat with unusually strong straw, which was in great demand for thatching.

Freestone.

Low down in these quarries is a layer of freestone, similar in origin and texture to the well-known Beer Stone, which was known in 1791 and used in the construction of the Terrace at Widworthy Court in 1828. The same beds produce the "Widworthy sand at the Wilmington Quarry, which is in strong demand for building purposes.

At the chalk quarry in Hayne Lane, behind the electric Pumping station, analysis by Geological Survey showed 4% of Calcium Phosphates in a bed about 8 inches thick.

Serge Making and Weaving.

It is said that in the 17th and 18th Centuries every cottage had its loom, but that the wages were very low. The serge Industry of Devon was so prosperous that agricultural labour became very scarce, so that child apprentices were eagerly

sought by farmers. Large fortunes were made by the experts. The East India Company were large exporters till about 1834.

Leather Tanning.

From time immemorial there has been large tanneries in Colyton, using the oak bark from the local woods, to cure hides brought from all over Devon. The present oak timber is poor as it is mostly grown from roots of trees cut down for tan bark. Bog Myrtle was used for making scented hides

Candle Making.

It is said that there was a candle factory for tallow candles near Colwell Barton.

Bricks and Tiles.

These were made at the old Clay pits about 600 yards NNE of Sutton Barton. Water pipes were also made. The long pipeline from Home Bush Wood to Widworthy Court was originally laid with these conical jointed clay pipes but these have now been replaced with steel pipes.

Bricks and drainpipes were made at a Brick Kiln in O.S. No.132.east of the junction of the road to Wilmington with the Featherbed Lane to Colyton Road.

The Old Mills of Offwell and Widworthy.

Mill in the "Husk" Copse in Colwell Wood.

The site is in O.S.353 on the 25inch O.S. Map The Mill is not mentioned in the Tithe Register of 1842, or in the Glebe Terrier of 1789, so it had probably been abandoned before that time. No trace of the mill can now be seen but the site of its wheel pit is very obvious. It was fed by a leat, which can be traced from the spring below Colwell House and by another bringing water from the springs in Colwell Wood. The site is only 100 yards east of the lane from Honiton to Colyton, which must have been a busy packhorse track and trade route for trade proceeding to the harbour near Axmouth.

The adjacent field to the south, (O.S. No 374) is named "Shomaker's How" in the Tithe Register of 1842.

The large pit in O.S. No 376, which lies in the "Foxmould" sand, may have been a source of "Fullers Earth." There appears to have been a small building just inside O.S. No 377. This may have been a "Fulling Mill" or used for grinding tan bark from the adjacent woods.

A neighbouring field O.S. No 372 and Aplin's Common are thickly covered with bog Myrtle. Salzman in his "Mediaeval English Industries" gives the following quotation from the "Landsdown MSS." " There is nothing like the Stanish Shermacken to give the skins a pretie sweet saver, but nothing like to the civile (Seville) skins.---- and the powder of right Spanish shemacke ground in a mill is worth 30/- the 100 lbs, which Shemacke is a kind of brush shrub or heath in Spayne, and groweth low by the ground, is sweet like Gale in Cambridgeshire and is cut twice a year, and so dried and ground in a mill, and dresseth all the civile (Seville) skynnes brought hither."

Gale is Bog Myrtle. It seems that this bog myrtle was used as a substitute for the expensive Spanish Shemacke and was ground when dry, for use in the Tanneries.

It is well established that from early times there was a considerable export of hides and leather from Devon to France, and there were tanneries at Colyton in the middle of the 19th Century.

Dr Ramsbotham Curator of the Botany Department of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington writes: "In Withering" An arrangement of British Plants 7th Edition 130, it is stated that Bog Myrtle was used for tanning calf skins, and there is a similar statement in "A new Herbal" by M. Grieve 1931.

Colwell Mill.

This mill stood on the banks of the Offwell Brook in O.S. No 476, and was in constant work till it burnt down about 1890. It was fed by the Offwell Brook and seems to have had a storage pond in O.S. No 409. When Bishop Copleston constructed the Offwell Ponds about 1830 the Miller, found he could obtain longer hours of grinding by raising the sluice gates of these ponds, which formed a considerable reserve of water for his mill. At first this was done with the generous permission of the Bishop, but the miller, a tenant of Sir E. Marwood Elton of Widworthy Court, gradually presumed on this permission, and claimed the right to raise the hatches of these ponds when he liked. Difficulties arose, which nearly ended in a lawsuit, though Mr. Coleridge, later the Lord Chief Justice, examined the case and decided that the miller had no ground for complaint.

It is possible that the "Bye Pass Leat" which takes water from Colwell Woods past the ponds, was made to remove the Miller's grievance that water from the Brook was delayed in the ponds, but more probably to prevent the ponds being filled with gravel, brought down by heavy rains.

Stirling in his description of the villages of East Devon in his "Beauties of the Shore" written in 1838, speaks of the heavy corn crops of the valley of the Offwell Brook.

Style's Mill, Wilmington

The ruins of this mill can still be seen in O.S. No 287. Water was brought to it by a leat, which can still be traced between O.S. Nos. 225 and 226, from Combe Water brook, in addition to that from the Hayne Lane Spring. This brook rises in Spilcombe Copse, close to the east end of the Honiton Railway tunnel. The teat apparently followed the line of the present lane towards Wilmington, picking up water from the very strong springs in O.S Nos. 278 and 282, which now supply the pumping station. The mill seems to have ceased work, when the railway embankment was built about 1858.

In 1789 it paid a tithe of $\frac{3}{4}$ a year to the Rector of Offwell, and in 1705 provided an Overseer of the Poor for the parish—Mr. J. Clarke.

A right of way to Dalwood passed through O.S No 287 with a bridge over the stream, which was long broken down till it was restored in 1946.

Widworthy Mill.

This mill is mentioned in Domesday Book as being worth 5/-a year, and then belonging to the Manor of Widworthy, so must have been established long before 1066. Corn mills must have been one of the earliest requirements of a settled agricultural population, and the local stream were obvious sources of power.

The former mill wheel occupied the same pit now used by the Turbine, which was put in to drive a dynamo to light Widworthy Court, and later supply power for the butter factory in the mill. The residence is separate from the old mill and was erected by Sir E. Marwood Elton in the middle of the 19th Century.

Just north of Wilmington Bridge in Dalwood, was another mill belonging to Ford Farm, which has been pulled down since 1906. It had a large storage pond, now overgrown by alder trees.

The Inns of Offwell and Widworthy.

Offwell Village.

The Five Bells.

This was formerly owned by the Northam Family, and stood on the site of the present Churchyard in O.S. No. 176. As further accommodation was likely to be required in the Churchyard, the Revd. J.H.H. Copleston, then Rector exchanged this site, about 1900, for the "Five Bells Farm", where the Inn was carried on till about 1931. The original house was probably the "Old Inn" or Church House, frequently mentioned in the Parish Accounts, in which charges for repairing the thatch etc are given. It was also an Alms House for paupers.

Wilmington

The White Hart.

Said to date from the 17th Century and mentioned in the parish accounts for 1694.

The Ship Inn.

Denne's map of Devonshire in 1765 shows an inn called the ship just east of Wilmington Bridge.

The Rose and Crown.

Mentioned in parish accounts for 1743, and frequently used for parish meetings. It stood in O.S. No. 368 at the gate of the drive leading to Widworthy Court. About 1827 the name was changed to Marwood Arms inn, and the former inn moved across the road to the position shown on the 25 inch O.S. Map. It was closed about 1910, and the ironwork on which its signboard hung is now used at Sutton Barton to support an outside electric lamp.

Mount Pleasant.

There was a Malt house 200 yards south of the position of the Tower, and it is said that the house at the junction of “Featherbed Lane” and the Roman Road, was formerly an Inn. It has five bottles built into the West and North walls, supposed to have contained the names of the builders. There is a tradition that it was used by smugglers.

Military.

During the 1939- 1945 World War, some 41 Parishioners of Offwell served with the Armed Forces, and a similar number from Widworthy Parish. War Lists for the 1914-1918 war are given in at Appendix.

In addition Offwell and Widworthy each provided a platoon of about 40 men for the 19th Battalion Home Guard of the Devon Regiment.

The Widworthy platoon was attached to “A” Company at Seaton for coast defence, while the Offwell Platoon was part of “C” Company at Honiton, and chiefly concerned with the protection of the Southern Railway.

On 23rd April 1942 a German bomber plane was shot down near Watchcombe. The Pilot was captured by Lieut. E.R. Clarke of the Widworthy Home Guard Platoon, and the rest of the crew by other members of the same platoon.

A few scattered bombs were dropped in the parishes but no casualties or damage was caused.

The “War Book” is preserved among the Parish Council Records.

Additional Notes.

An Iron Age Lead trade route through Offwell.

If Offwell Church is looked at the Honiton – Farway Road near Glanvil Farm, it is obvious that the Church is on a direct line from the Stockland Great Camp to the ring Fort with its Scotch fir trees close o point 777 on Farway Hill. (Nat Grid Ref 30/161 957).

If this line is followed to the North it runs through Maesbury Camp, on the Mendip Hills. To the South it runs through Sidbury Camp and Littleham near Exmouth.

This is a very ancient “Ley” or line of Landmarks for travellers along a former trade route for Lead from the Mendips to the sheltered port of Exmouth.

This would set back the date of the Offwell Site, at least to the Middle Iron Age (250 B.C.) when Lead implements were in use in the Glastonbury Lake Village.

Landmark	Nat. Grid Ref.
Maesbury Camp	
Croscombe Church	

North Wooton Church	
Ponter's Ball	
Dundon Camp	
Hermitage	31/454 278
Muchelney Abbey	31/428 249
Midelney	31/410 229
Hambridge Church	31/393 210
Old Way Gate	31/365 173
Donyat Church (Guide for Ford)	31/338 140
Combe St. Nicholas Church	31/303 113
Weston Chapel	31/292 092
Stockland Church	31/246 045
Stockland Great Camp	31/225 025
Hayne Farm Ford	31/213 008
Offwell Church	30/195 995
Fir Trees Pt 777, On Farway Hill	30/160 955
Sidbury Castle	30/125 915
Bulverton Hill	30/108 894
Passeford on Rover Otter	30/090 875
East Budleigh Church	30/065 848
Shortwood Common pt.292	30/053 838
Littleham Church	30/028 814

From Hayne Farm Ford, there was probably a branch track via Widworthy Castle and Southleigh Church to Branscombe Camp.

Population.

Year	Offwell			Widworthy		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1801	148	154	302	122	123	245
1811	153	159	312	122	108	230
1821	205	174	379	148	126	274
1831	202	183	385	157	121	278
1841(a)	229	209	438	137	120	257
1851(b)	200	189	389	103	89	192
1861	204	189	393	100	88	188
1871 ©	174	193	367	75	66	141
1881	176	156	332	70	61	131
1891 (d)	131	133	264	78	75	153
1901	140	153	293	78	70	148
1911	142	136	278	73	75	148
1921	136	141	277	69	84	153
1931	147	154	301	70	68	138

Notes.

- a) 1841 The decrease of the population in Widworthy is attributed to the demolition of the Parish Poor house.

- b) 1851 The decrease in Widworthy, Southleigh, Offwell, Cotleigh and Monkton is ascribed to the amalgamation of small farms, with reduced demand for labour, which induced many to emigrate, or seek work in other parts.
- c) 1871 The decrease in Widworthy, Upottery and Dunkeswell, is ascribed to the demolition of cottages, and consequent migration of tenants.
- d) From 1891 the Civil Parishes of Offwell and Widworthy included parts of Wilmington.

The above information was compiled from H.M. Census returns by Mr N.S. Pugsley, Keeper of City Library, Exeter.

The Revd. E. Copleston, Rector of Offwell 1800- 1804 later Bishop of Llandaff, made a Manuscript index of the Births, Deaths and Marriages from the Parish Register from 1551 to 1773. His analysis of these has been brought up to 1945 in the attached tables. The book is in the church safe.

It gives a detailed census of the parish in 1790 with Names, families, trades and ages.

There were then in the village;

Weavers	3
Wool combers	3
Serge makers	4
Millers	1
Carpenters	3

Census Numbers

Year	Parish	Male	Female	Total
1790	Offwell	141	143	284
1801	Offwell			
	Widworthy			
1811	Offwell			
	Widworthy			
1821	Offwell	205	174	379
	Widworthy	148	126	274

From Vancouver's Report on Agriculture of Devon 1808

Rates	Offwell			Widworthy		
	£	/-	D	£	/-	D
Poor Rates.						
Relief	125	16	1	70	15	9
Lawsuits & Expenses	3	6	8	1	12	6
Church, Highway, Bridges & Militia	24	1	8	17	17	1
Total	153	4	5	90	5	4
Raised by Poor Rate	153	4	6	106	0	6

Rents.

	£	/-	D
Accommodation Land	6	0	0
River meadows	4	0	0

Pasture	2	0	0
Between	2	10	0
Marl Lands	1	12	0
Sandy Lands	0	18	0

Population 1801

	Houses	Families	Male	Female	Agric	Manufacture	Others	Total
Offwell	60	64	148	154	74	37	191	302
Widworthy	45	45	122	123	55	23	167	245

The following Notes are shown on the Extract from the Baptism and Death Register.

Plague	1570	1590	1591	1625	1626	1666
Typhus	1635	1640	1670			
Smallpox & Typhus	1676	1689	1698			
Smallpox & Fever	1676	1689	1695	1705		
Influenza	1729					

Ancient Road Metalling in Old Cleave Lane.

National Grid Reference. 211 005

During heavy rainstorms of 8th September 1946, damage was done to many road surfaces in many lanes.

On 6" O.S. Map Devon 71 N.W. a lane runs from M of Roman Road past "Stone" of Greystone – Combe Water Lane to join Cleave Lane, and then eastward down a sharp slope to join the Wilmington – Hayne Farm Lane. About 20 yards west of the latter junction, the water cut a number of sections through the metalling of the lane. This had a depth of 12 to 18 inches of small stone, with many large blocks. This may have been laid by hand, or be the result of gravel being washed down the lane.

This gravel seems to extend under the Northern bank, suggesting that the bank is of a later date than the road.

The pasture on the south side of this lane is named Abbot's Wood in the Tithe Register of 1842, and may have belonged to the Abbey of Newenham near Axminster.

Before the construction of the large railway embankment this lane ran to a ford over the Umborne Brook below Hayne Farm.

Offwell Parish. Rights of way. 1810.

Extract from Register of Baptisms and Burials in Offwell Church Safe.

The original is in the handwriting of J.G. Copleston, Rector of Offwell 1804 to 1841.

1810.

In the beginning of the year the road contiguous to the Parsonage was turned through the waste commonly called the “Goil” agreeably to an order of two magistrates for so doing.

By this alteration the public were much accommodated, the steep part of the hill being considerably eased, and the parish were saved the expense of woiring such part of the said Goil as is converted into a road.

The Parsonage House was at the same time enlarged towards the road.

Parish Boundary Stones.

In 1701 the Accounts of the Overseer of the Poor of Offwell Parish records under expenses of John Wills the Overseer the following Item of expense. “For an Horse and man to fetch stones for the Bounds of the parish and for setting them up. £0. 2/- 0d.

Among these stones, of which two are marked on the 6” Ordnance Map at the Eastern end of Wilmington were:

- 1. The Drummers Stone. This lay about 50 yards North of B.M.653.2 at the Crossroads of the Cotleigh – Offwell road and the main Axminster – Honiton Road, nearly half a mile North of Offwell Church. (It was unfortunately broken up about 1930 by a person who knew nothing of its importance and History.) According to a local Legend it marked the spot where a Drummer was murdered during the Peninsular War. The Offwell Church register of burials records that “An unknown Youth” was buried on 11th July 1701.**
- 2. The Grey Stone. This is marked on the 6” O.S. Map opposite the entrance drive to Widworthy Court. It was mentioned in the account of Widworthy Parish by the Revd. W.J. Tucker in 1791. He mentions a similar stone at the other extremity of the Parish but I have not been able to identify this.**

Extract from first page of Offwell Register commenced A.D. 1551.

6th Maii 1630. On this day we whose names are under written are ready to testifie that White Cross hath always bene repouet from out childhood to be ---ell (parcel?) of our bounds of Widworthy Pish (Parish) being a little greene hill right before Spilcombe Stile, and is two and fourtie feet distant from the brime of the ditch before that stile, and from this white cross we goe in perambulation in a right line towards two ashes standing in Downe Close hedge until we come within two plought lengths of the Ashes, and then we goe to the corner of the new ----- house into the highway.

Barnard Gifford. Walter. Bowden. John Come. John Mitchell. Will Doncaster. Will Chichester.

Note. November 1945. I cannot identify this Down Close in the Tithe Register of 1843. There is a little green bound in the N.W. corner of O.S.108 but it is too

close to the present ditch, and it is said to be a pile of debris from cleaning the ditch.

It may however be the base of this White Cross, which evidently was in existence in 1630.

J.V.R.

Offwell Perambulation of Bounds.

**Extracts from Register of Baptisms P 105
Entry made by J.B. Copleston.**

1794.

May 29th being Ascension Day the inhabitants of Offwell perambulated the borders of their Parish. The Southern and south Eastern bounds of the Parish towards Northleigh, being rather intricate, it may be useful and appears necessary to record the following circumstances respecting the Boundaries on that side.

On LANGLAND Estate one swarth eastward from the hedge in a close called Burnt House meadow. And at the head of another field lying immediately above Burnt House Meadow called Four Acres lying against the lane, ten yards eastward also from the hedge are the limits of the said Parish, in that direction. On the other side of a lane at the head of the last mentioned Close called Four Acres, but two fields farther southward lie part of a Close called Footlands about one acre and a half, and on Orchard adjoining called MILL LAND about one acre belonging likewise to the Parish of Offwell.

There is moreover part of another Close, rated with MILL LAND Orchard about half an acre, divided from Coombe Estate westward by two narrow intervening Closes. The bounds of which are, strait from an Ash Tree growing in the field to the hedge at the upper end.

A small-detached moory plot, about half an acre, separated also from the Coombe Estate by a coppice lying between, is a further part of the said Parish. The above with a small Close near Northleigh Church, called COLLYN'S HAY'S Meadow about three quarters of an acre, no way connected with any other lands of Offwell but belonging thereto, are the chief difficulties in the bounds of the said Parish, and this is inserted in the Parish Register with a view to preventing an future embarrassments or dispute about limits between the respective Parishes of Offwell and Northleigh.

Copied 20th May 1945 by Josslyn Ramsden.

Perambulation of Bounds.

**Extracted from Page 104 of Register of Baptisms.
Entry probably made by Revd J.G. Copleston Rector 1804 to 1841.**

1828

May 15th being Ascension Day the bounds of the Parish were perambulated.

The Road between GREYSTONE and the village of Wilmington have been altered during the last year, the centre of it on longer remains the Boundary between the Parishes of Offwell and Widworthy.

The following observations are in consequence recorded.

The centre of the Road descending from GREYSTONE is still the Boundary (as it is above the said stone) until you come to HOW STILE.

At HOW STILE the boundary is twelve feet from the lower post of the said stile of Gate.

From thence downwards towards BEEKY'S CLOSE the boundary is nine feet on the average south ward from the Southern or South western hedge, to Townsend's where it is 4 ½ feet, and from thence comes to nothing and crosses the hedge in a slanting direction into the road; from thence the boundary runs to a point 10 feet off the northern or North eastern hedge, opposite to GREAT CLOSE GATE.

From thence it continues at 10 feet distance from the said hedge or wall till you come to WHITE HORSE GATE.

From thence it is 12 feet till you come to the Eastern end of WALLIS' Garden. From thence to the Bridge the centre of the Road is the boundary until further alterations in the said Road, which are said to be intended, are carried into effect.

Copied May 20th 1945 by Josslyn Ramsden.

The Phosphatic Chalk of Wilmington.

In 1942 the Geological Survey carried out an examination of the Phosphatic Chalk deposits in the neighbourhood of Wilmington.

A record of the existence of these deposits in the Chalk pit at HAYNE Lane, about a quarter of a mile North of the main Axminster Honiton Road at Wilmington is given on page 61 of the Geological Survey Memoir on the Sidmouth District Sheet No 326.

The Pit was visited by Mr. Dines of the Geographical Survey in the autumn of 1942, and samples taken from the layer of Phosphatic Chalk at the top of the Quarry face for analysis. This showed the presence of 4% per cent of Acid Soluble Phosphates.

Though this low percentage would not justify the working of these beds specially for their Phosphate contents, the latter would be of additional value to land dressed with Chalk from these beds.

This Phosphatic Chalk bed, which is about 8 inches thick underlies the Wilmington and Sutton Barton Areas, and is also present in the neighbourhood of Brancombe. There is reason to believe that its value was well known in the district in by gone times, as the wheat straw from lands dressed with it, was in high repute for thatching, the "reeds" being particularly strong.

In the Sutton Barton quarries about three quarters of a mile South of Wilmington this bed would occur at a considerable depth from the surface and this may account for the great depth to which these quarries were worked.

There is a tradition that particularly heavy wheat crops used to be grown formerly in the Colwell Valley, which immediately adjoins the Sutton Barton Chalk Quarries, and there seems to have been a very large trade in Lime both from these quarries and from those at Brancecombe where similar beds were worked. Records, which have been shown to me by Mr. Clement Ford of Brancecombe, show that large quantities were used yearly by the farmers on the Red Marls and sands of the Otter Vale.

The Sutton Barton Lime Quarries.

Mr. E.J. Broom of Northcott's Farm, Honiton was born in 1869 at Sutton Barton, which was then divided into two houses, one of which was occupied by his father. In his grandfather's time, the other half was the residence of Mr. White, the agent for the Fortescue estate at Colwell, whose bust is now in the Nave at Widworthy Church.

The Lime quarries were in full work in his childhood, the lime being sent to Gittisham, Feniton, Awliscombe, and the clay lands of the Otter Vale.

The lime was burnt with "Culm" which was brought by road from Axmouth, where it was landed from small ships, of which he remembers quite a number in the port.

The Quarry men and Lime burners lived in cottages of which the ruins can now be seen, near the Offwell Brook close to Colwell Barton.

The Lime was measured into customer's carts with wooden tubs holding one or two bushels.

The quarries also contained excellent "Freestone" for building purposes, which is seen to day in many nearby houses. According to the Geological Survey Memoir for Sheet 326 - Sidmouth, this stone is the exact equivalent of the well-known "Beer Stone." It lay at great depth in the quarries. The waste rock was piled on the west side of them, and was carried from the bottom by pack ponies, each of which carried two panniers to hold the waste.

Every year the customers used to assemble at Sutton Barton for a "Lime Feast," when they paid their accounts, and were entertained to a dinner by the Quarry owner. Mr. Broom still has the copper pot in which the stew was cooked on these occasions.

An attempt was made between 1897 and 1900 to revive Lime burning in the Sutton Quarries, but it failed owing to the depth of the quarries, from which the Chalk had to be taken and the increasing cost of transport.

Polwhele Vol.1 p.41 states that Limestone was discovered on Michael Southcote's estate at Northcombe in 1763.

Vancouver's report on Agriculture of Devon 1803 p 154.

It was a general condition of agricultural leases that the tenant should apply 8 hogsheads or 40 Bushels of lime to his arable lands on each acre every year. This would have been equivalent to 1 ¼ tons a year. It cost 6/- to 7/- per hogshead or about 50/- per acre.

Offwell Glebe.

Copied from paper gummed into the end of the Register of Baptisms

In the handwriting of the Revd. J.B. Copleston Rector of Offwell 1773 to 1800.

A True and perfect Terrier of the House and Glebe Lands belonging to the Rectory of Offwell, within the Deanery of Honiton, and the Archdeaconry of Exon. 1789.

Imprimis. The Parsonage House, containing three parlours and one Kitchen, one Milk House with broad stones, two cellars, one brew house with a range of buildings divided for several uses, the whole 80 feet in length.

A Barn & Stable with cow Linhay adjoining, one large court in front one smaller behind one Cow Court, two gardens, partly walled and partly hedged, containing together about one acre and a half.

All the above mentioned buildings are covered with thatch, and with an Orchard consisting of about half an acre, and now thrown in with close belonging to the Glebe called Mead Plot were purchased of the Revd. Mr. MITCHEL by John Bradford Copleston, the present Rector and annexed for ever to the said Rectory as a Parsonage House; in consideration where of a Faculty was applied for, and obtained for taking down the two houses formerly belonging to the same. There belong also to the said Rectory the following buildings and lands.

On the Ground called PARSONAGE GROUND a barn and Cow Linhay with a mow Plot adjoining, making with the Court, about half an acre.

Item. One Orchard including the Plot on which the late Parsonage House stood and a Garden adjoining about one acre.

Item. Two other small orchards making together about half an acre.

Item. On the West of the Barn are these closes following (viz.)

Calve Plot containing one acre.

Barn Close 5 acres.

Six acre Close.

Three acre Close.

Clapper Close 3 acres.

Green Close 5 acres.

Longland 5 acres.

Higher 5 acres

Two Down Closes 8 acres

All these lye conjoined having on the East the Barn and Orchards above named and on the North and West the lane called Parsonage Lane, and on the south the lands of Emanuel Dommett.

Item. The Ragg, lying in CARRIERS'S Lane over against the largest Orchard, 1 acre.

Item. Grubland, having Grubland Lane on the South and CARRIER'S Lane on the East, two acres.

Item. BURSLAND lying in WOOD Lane between a Close of the same name, belonging to an Estate called CLEAVE, and another called WOOD LAND, 2 acres.

Item. WOOD HEAD at the corner of WOOD LAND Lane turning down to STYLES MILL two acres.

Item. RIDGWAY lying in a lane of the same name between a close called GREENWAY and another called GREYSTONE, two acres.

Item. CUCKOO Acre containing half an acre in the same Lane and nearly adjoining.

Item. The two pit Closes containing each one-acre.

Item. The Coppice containing half an acre lying near WHITE HALLPITTS in the middle of the Estate of Mr. Emanuel Dommett, formerly called Dollin's Tenement.

Item. Two acres lying in common in a part of STYLES MILL Tenement belonging to James Marwood Esq. formerly William Manson's.

Item. The GREAT PARSONAGE Meadow bounded on the East by the Brook which separates Offwell from the Parish of Dalwood, in Dorsetshire, on the west by Mill Lane and on the South by Styles Mill containing 5 acres.

Item. One other Meadow called PARSONAGE COMMON Meadow containing one acre.

Item. Neat the present Parsonage House and Church are several small closes and parcels of land (viz.)

1st, The Green containing the Higher Garden containing one acre and a half.

Item. MEAD Plot adjoining to the court of the said Parsonage House on the East containing one acre.

Item. Marles lying near Honiton Lane, two acres.

Item. FIVE YARD lying behind the five Bells one acre.

Item. MILLWAY at the head of FIVE YARD from which it is divided by a narrow Lane containing two acres.

Item. PULPIT lying in GRAYSTONE Lane between a close of the same name and another called PIT ACRE, two acres.

Item. TEMPT ACRE lying in the same lane Two acres.

Item. COLWLL SLADE the third Close in GREENHILL Lane on the right hand going to Colwell, two acres.

Item. Two acres lying in common with Mill Acre the remaining part of the close Vincent Searle. (These have been exchanged by the present Rector during his life with William Searle the late owner for a close of land joining PULPIT on the South called WELL Acre, containing likewise two acres.

Item. Two other acres lying in common with a field PENNEY'S now belonging to John Ford Upham. (These have also been exchanged by the present Rector for a close of land containing two acres lying at the corner of GREENHILL Lane on the right hand going to COLWELL.

Item. There belong to the said Rectory all kinds of Tithe's great and small, payable in Kind.

Item. There is due from two customary Mills (Viz.) Styles Mill and Colwell Mill for each three shillings and four pence yearly.

Item. There is due at Easter from every family for Easter dues and Offerings as follows (viz.)

**For every man that is a housekeeper Two
Pence.**

For his wife Two Pence.

**For his children and apprentices if above sixteen years of age, for each, Two
Pence.**

For a man servant	Six Pence
A woman Servant	Four Pence
For a widow woman housekeeper	Two Pence
For her children and servants as before.	

The exchange of two acres lying in common with a field called PENNEY'S for the close of land described in the above terrier was confirmed by the said John Ford Upham and J.G. Copleston the present Rector of Offwell. 10th May 1804.
Witness Henry Hodge.

3rd June 1854.

The present rector who was born in Offwell remembers the boundaries of all four Penny's, Long Penny's, three acre Penny's, Two acre Penny's and four acre Penny's: and it was the Glebe lying in common with Mr. Uphams two acres in the four acre field that has been exchanged as recorded above but never legally confirmed.

The house built by the Bishop lies in the said four-acre field.

Other exchanges have been made recently such as that part of ROD BARN (Boo Barn) now made cottage gardens (allotments), but not legally so.

Signed J.G. Copleston.

RECTORS OF OFFWELL.

1263	Michael de Archidiakene	John de Courtenay
1270	Aleured	
	Osbert Giffard	Robert de Offwell
1281	Robert de Clyve	Sir Thomas de Esse
1309	Robert de Offewelle	
1321	Hugh Colly de Setone	
1354	Richard de Lilleshulle	
1410	John Kykke	
1433	John Hereward	Thomas Streche
1488	John Mere	John Dynham
1503	John Keymer	John Suche
1505	William Hawker	John Kaynes
1529	John Stone	
1545	Richard Gylls	John Dracke
1571	Thomas Radden	
1597	John Tanner	
1632	Thomas Jones	Peter Chapman & William Collyns
1642	Robert Davy or (Dacy)	
1652	Humphrey Bradford	
1667	John Rest	Edward Ford of Honiton
1713	Robert Rous	William Rous of Farringdon
1742	Anthony Fulford	Francis Fulford
1755	William Dadde	John Fulford
1764	Francis Fulford	Benjamin Swete
1772	John Vye	John Bradford Copleston
1773	John Bradford Copleston	
1800	Edward Copleston	John Bradford Copleston
1804	John Gaius Copleston	Edward Copleston
1841	John Gay Copleston	
1880	John Henry Copleston	
1919	John Henry Herbert Copleston	
1935	Frederick Elford Copleston	
1954	Nathaniel Fred Partridge	Juliet Marwood Elton

Notes on Offwell Rectors.

Authorities.

- A. Miss Creswell. MS notes on Churches in Deanery of Colyton About 1919. In City Library Exeter.
 - B. Major Wilkins. Offwell Rectors since 1571, Pulman's Weekly News April 14th 1936.
 - C. Hingeston Ranolph. Episcopal Registers of Exeter Diocese. City Library Exeter.
1. Michael Archidiakene; 14th September 1263. John de Courtenay (Guardian of Robert de Offwelle, a Minor) presented Michael

- Arcidiakene to the parson ship worth 2 marks, to be paid by Aleured the Vicar.**
- 2. Aleured. See Bronscombe's register p 159. Robert de Offwell presented Osbert Giffard to the living but Bishop Bronescombe refused institution, but later agreed that Giffard should succeed, but should pay 100/- a year to the incumbent Aleured till his death, and should then become full Rector.**
 - 3. Robert de Clyve. 16th February 1281/2. Sir Henry de Esse, guardian of Thomas, son of Robert de Offwell presented, (See Bishop Quivil's Register p 321 & 349 Stapeldon's Register p 239)**
 - 6. Hugh Colley de Setone. (See Stapeldon's Register p239 &298) 27th November 1332. Dispensation to be absent for study for a year, renewed 27th November 1333.**
 - 7. Richard de Lilleshulle (See Grandison's Register p 1146) 16th February 1354/5 appointed to be a Confessor.**
 - 8. John Kykke (See Stafford's Register p 267) 16th August 1410, Sequestration for non-residence removed.**
 - 9. Sir John Hereward. (See Lacey's Register) 27th June 1433. Sir John Hereward was instituted after resignation of Sir John Kykke, who was awarded a pension of 9 marks from the income of the living.**
 - 13. John Stone. Mentioned in Valor Ecclesiasticaus Vol. 2 p.303.**
 - 15. Thomas Raddon. Instituted 12th October 1571, Buried at Offwell 18th July 1597. Instituted "Raddon's Charity"**
 - 16. John Tanner. (See Oliver Monasticon p 395) Bought Dunkeswell Rectory in 1620 for £400. He left this by his will dated 27th April 1632 to the heirs of Agnes Prowse, his daughter. He also bought other property in Dunkeswell, the Rectory passed to the Genest Family, who sold it to the Graves Family.**
 - 19. Humphrey Bradford. For a full account see Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries Vol. 2 P 144 –247 & 249. Buried at Offwell 3rd October 1667.**
 - 21. Robert Rous. Married Elizabeth Batt at Offwell 27th February 1727. Buried Offwell 10th March 1741.**
 - 23. William Daddo. Rector of Broadclyst 7th May 1744. Rector of Dunsford 25th June 1753. (See Oliver's Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Devon Vol. 2 p 94 & 126) Educated at Balliol College Oxford. Later was Headmaster of Tiverton School. Died 5th August 1765 Buried St. Peter's Tiverton.**
 - 24. Francis Fulford. Rector of Dunsford 2nd January 1767, patron John Fulford. Died Unmarried in 1772. (See Oliver's Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Devon Vol. 2 p 95.**
 - 25. John Vye. Rector of Ilfracombe 25th May 1770. See Oliver's Ecclesiast. Antiquities Vol. 2 P 151-163-140. & Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries 16 p 95.**

The Revd. Thomas Jones.

The Revd. Thomas Jones, Rector of Offwell, where he resided until driven from it, and also one of the portions of Tiverton, was taken into custody by the

Sergeant at Arms, for preaching what was called an anti- parliamentary sermon at the latter place. By various methods of oppression he was forced into resignation of the portion of Tiverton in 1640.

In the following year he was seized in company with one of the prince's servants at Taunton, and detained for some weeks in the castle there as a "Malignant," the term then given to Royalists.

After his liberation from thence, he was taken prisoner and robbed of £80 by a Captain Gould, when on his way to join Sir Ralph Hopton's army for protection, in Cornwall, but was afterwards released upon a victory gained over the rebels. On returning to Offwell he gave public thanks for his deliverance and was in consequence soon taken into custody again. After an escape from that confinement, he was summoned to appear at the Sessions for neglecting the Parliamentary fasts and for superstitiously observing Good Friday. From thence he came off with only rebukes and threats.

Besides these personal acts of oppression his Parsonage was plundered seven times. A fine organ, which stood in the Hall, was broken to pieces by a party of horse from the garrison at Lyme, who rifled and demolished most of his furniture, and plundered him or his cattle.

On another occasion when the earl of Essex's army marches into the West a party from it came and ransacked his house carrying away and destroying his very choice and valuable collection of books. By continual ravages and persecutions he was forced again to shelter himself under Sir. R. Hopton by whome he was not only much esteemed but was employed in some services of importance. Once particularly he was sent by him from Devizes to Oxford, to desire a supply of horses, when that general was about to engage with Sir William Waller. On that occasion he was admitted to the Degree of DD by diploma.

Subsequent repeated attacks and dangers induced him to fly to Rotterdam, where he died some time before the Restoration.

Mr. Jones was reputed a man of good learning, and a very good preacher. He kept a large and hospitable house, and was very charitable to the poor. He was mightily beloved by his neighbours and respected by the gentry and clergy, and was very zealous and industrious in the service of his Majesty.

Robert Dacy the first intruder into the Rectory appointed by the Parliamentary Commissioners was tried on a charge of capital felony.

Though legally acquitted he was not so in the opinions of his parishioners who artiled against him and got him removed.

His successor Humphrey Bradford appointed by the same authority, conformed at the Restoration, and died in possession of the Rectory.

See Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy.

The above is an extract from the notes appended to "The Churchyard Yew" written and published by Revd. J.G. Copleston Rector of Offwell in 1832.

Offwell Church Bells.

**Tenor A 8 cwt Date 1709 Diameter 3ft
Maker T.W. (Thomas Wroth) bell founder of Wellington.**

Inscription. Edmund Prideaux, Nicholas Dilling, (Wardens) William Bendle (Minister) John Ford.

B 6 cwt 56lbs Pre-Reformation Diameter 2ft 9ins.

Inscription "Protégé virgo piapuos convoco Sancta Maria.

C Sharp 5cwt 3qr 26lbs. Date 1853 2ft 7 1/2 ins

Makers C & G Mears, Whitechapel Foundry.

D 5cwt 1709 2ft 4 ins.

Inscription, Huic Ecclesiae me donarunt amici aliquot Liberales quorum Largitiones Siculo collegit.

Mr. Guil. Bendle

Maker T.W. Thomas Wroth, bell founder of Wellington.

Treble E 4 1/2 cwt Pre-reformation 2ft 3ins.

Voce mea viva depello cunta Novica.

Treble 1952 Inscription J.V. Ramsden, W.H. Farmer, Churchwardens.

A. Richards, Captain of Bells, J.N. Welch-Thornton dd, R.G. Copleston Collegit.

In the Churchwardens accounts for 1709 are the following items in connection with the new Bells then erected?

The Bell Founder for casting the Great Bell.	£11.10/- 0d
For Expenses at Wellington	£ 1. 8/- 6d
(There is some reason to believe that Messer's Wroth's Foundry was at Wellington.	
For expenses at Honiton when the Bell founder was there.	£ 0 3/- 6d.
William Hawkeye For the stuff for the Bells	£ 0 11/- 0d
William Hawkeye For the New Bell.	£15 0/- 0d
For new laying the bell clappers.	£ 1 15/- 0d
For Collars for the Bells.	£ 0 12/- 0d
For Hanging the Bells.	£ 0 12/- 6d
Altering 2 Bell Wheels.	£ 0 10/- 0d
	=====
	£ 32. 2/- 6d

There appear to have been considerable repairs to the Bell Cage and Belfry in 1762.

The B Bell was probably the first Bell belonging to the Church.

Ellacombe (Exeter Diocesan Architectural Sec. Vol. 7 p 226) says that the eldest bell usually was inscribed with the name of the Patron Saint of the Church. He also says that Parish churches should have at least two bells.

In the enquiry in 7 Edward VI into Church Goods, Offwell had 4 bells, Widworthy had 4 bells.

Davidson the historian of Axminster in his MSS in the Coty Library, Exeter writing in 1828 says there were then five bells of which three were ancient.

It would therefore appear that the “C” Bell must have been re-cast in 1853 from the metal of one of the Pre- reformation Bells.

The Revd. William Bendle became Rector of Trusham in the Teign Valley on 30th October 1713, the patron being Sir W. Pole. (See Oliver Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Devon V 2 p 194)

Charities belonging to the Parish of Offwell.

A Field of Four Acres called Parish Close near Greystone in the said Parish, the income of which is to be given at the discretion of the Feoffees to the most deserving poor Labourers not receiving Parish Relief.

The Field was bought A.D.1725 for £60 of which sum;

Dorothy Southcott bequeathed	£20	
Henry Southcott bequeathed		£20
A Charity called Raddon’s was applied in part.	£10	
The Parish raised by the Poor Rate.		£10
	====	
	£60	

Note Thomas Raddon was Rector of Offwell 1571 to 1597.

A field of about four acres called School Close situate in the same Parish near Honiton Hill bought in A.D. 1824 with the timber thereon for £99, part of a sum of money given by Emmanuel Dommett of Offwell amounting to £120 is vested by him in Feoffees.

The income from the land to be applied to the Education of the Poor.

The remainder of the sum, now secured by note of hand from the Revd. J.G. Copleston to be expended if hereafter the Feoffees think fit in building a school room or house for the residence of the School Master or Mistress.

The interest if not wanted for the current expenses of the School to accumulate for the purpose of such building.

A cottage for the present use of the Charity School situate in the Village of Offwell, also given by the said Emmanuel Dommett.

In 1947 nothing was known of the cottage.

Offwell Church Plate.

Extract from the Eighth Report to the Devonshire Association by the Church Plate Committee.

Trans. Devonshire Association 1917 Vol. 49 p 152.

Chalice.

Plain Cup 6" high; bowl conical 3 3/8" Diameter 3" deep. Stem and foot of inverted Trumpet shape.

Inscription.

"The Gift of E. Dommett 1823."

Marks. Makers J.H. (Joseph Hicks)

Exeter Hall marks for 1805.

Paten.

Plain on stand 9" Diameter 2 1/2 " high.

Inscription as on Chalice.

Also

P

I

G

Marks.

Maker. G.A. (George) Gartorne)

London hallmarks for 1696.

Flagon.

A squat Tankard with domed lid, to which a spout has been added at a later date.

7 3/8" High 5 3/4" to Lid.

4 3/4" Diameter at lid and 5" at base.

Inscription As on Chalice and Paten.

Marks.

Maker. E.R. (Edmond Richards)

Exeter Hallmarks for 1721.

Alms Dish.

Plain Silver Plate 9" diameter.

Inscription.

"Offwell Church. The gift of Frances and Caroline Copleston. 1839"

Marks.

Maker. E.J.W.B. (Barnards)

London Hallmarks 1834.

Inclination of abutments of the Chancel Arch.

On the 17th May 1946 the abutments of the Chancel Arch were measured for inclination.

The North Abutment was measured from a nail 10 feet above the floor of the North Aisle, and was found to lean towards the North 2 inches in 10 feet or an angle of 57 minutes.

The South abutment was measured on the buttress outside the Church and was found to lean South 3.8 inches in 10 feet, or at an angle of 1 degree 50 minutes.

Extract from Parish Account book Vol. 1

Offwell Parish.

A rate made the 3rd day of April 1708 to be collected and Gathered monthly for the forward (future) towards the relief of the poor within the said Parish of the inhabitants and occupiers as followeth.

		S	D
Sir Edmond Prideaux		1	10
Occupier of Colwell		2	7
Thomas Southcote	Gent	0	6
Thomas Southcote	For Northcoomb	0	3
Thomas Southcote	For Lyals	0	1
John Ford	Gent	0	6
John Ford	For Smallacomb	0	9
John Newbery	Gent	1	3
John Rest	Rector or his Occupier	1	10
Thomas Gibbins	Esq. or his occupier	1	2
Henry Southcote	Or his Occupier	0	1
Thomas Bowdage	Gent	0	10
Clement Bodage	Gent	0	1
William Smith		0	2
William Aplin		0	6
William Brown		0	3
John Caslick		0	4
Philip Wish		0	3
Ellinor Pumeroy		0	3
William Wish		0	3
William Wish	For Jews park	0	1
Thomas Wish		0	3
	The occupier of Scurrows	0	1
	The occupier of Quick wood	0	1
	The occupier of Greystone	0	0
	The occupier of Collyglide	0	0
Dorothy Dommett	For 3 acres	0	0
The widow Bailidif		0	0
Thomas Collyns		0	0
William Dommett		0	0
Mary Sampson	For Southhayes	0	0
William Scarld		0	3
Elizabeth Raddon		0	4
Thomas Upham Clark		0	3
Nicholas Dilling junior		0	4
Nicholas Dilling junior	For Raddon's	0	2
William Scarld		0	0
John Wood		0	1

William Surrage		0	4
John Wallis	Gent or the Occupier	0	2
Benjamin Clark		0	2
	The occupier of Roods (Hoods?)	0	3
John Mansland		0	1
John Boredren		0	2
Phillip Raddon		0	2
Thomas Woods		0	1
Thomas Reede		0	1
Nicholas Dilling Senior		0	3
Nicholas Dilling Senior	For Ffellets	0	1
Mary Harris	Widow	0	0
William Hill	Carpenter	0	0
William Hill		0	0
Edward Harvey		0	0
Emmanuel Franklyn		0	0
	The whole sum is	18/-	4d

From Parish Account Book Vol. 2

2nd April 1763.

A true Copy of the ----- Tax Rate at four shillings in the pound. Entered by Emanuel Dommett Junior.

		£	S	D
Sir John Prideaux	For Glanvil	12	0	2
James Marwood	For Colwell	14	10	9
	For Sarles	1	12	9
	For Aplings	3	5	6
	For Dillings & Tolotes	2	6	5
	For Dillimere	2	3	8
	For Hills		2	10
	For Frinklins		2	10
	For Honvies		2	10
	For Dillings Furze Close		2	10
	For Styles Mill	1	7	4
George Southcott Esq.	For West Colwell	3	11	0
	For Northcomb	1	12	9
	For Lials		16	4
	For Milly Style		10	11
	For Coads (or the Old Inn)		2	10
John Main Esq.	For Colwell Wood	1	18	3
Revd. William Daddon	Rector	12	0	2
John Ford (Gent)	For the Home Place	3	5	6
	For Smallicombe	4	18	3
	For Woods		10	11

	For Penny's		8	3
Revd. Mr James Mitchell	For the late row son	3	5	6
Mr Emanuel Dommett	For Gibbons	7	11	2
	For Woods		10	11
	For Sarles		5	8
Jonas Guppy (Gent)	For Clive	8	3	3 1/2
	For Nine acres		13	9
Benedictus Tucker	For Cumb	5	9	2
William White	For Gaydon		2	10
Mrs. Elizabeth Upham		1	12	9
William Wish (Gent)	For East Down	2	3	8
	For Barnsleigh	1	12	9
	For Jews park		16	4
	For Southways		2	10
William Dommett	For Roods	1	18	3
Thomas Upham	For Raddon's		10	11
	For Mayone		8	3
	For Cherlands		2	10
Mr Joseph Upham	For Raddon's		10	11
	For Mayens		8	3
	For Podgers		10	11
	For Tilley's		3	8
	For Tuckers		2	10
	For Dometts		2	10
William Sarles		1	12	9
Thomas Wish		1	18	3
James Raddon		2	9	2
Robert Robinson		2	3	8
John Bridges	For Bellots	1	7	4
John Bagwell		1	7	4
Robert Clark	Occupier of Gaydon (or Tuckers)	1	1	11
	For Collings Meadow		2	10
John Dommett	For three acres		6	2 1/2
Thomas Hoskings	For Scurs		10	11
Hannah Hooper			10	11
Phillip Hooper			10	11
William Tucker			5	8
John Ashford	For Culbear Meadow		2	10
John Clark	For White Cross		2	10
John Cox			2	10
Abraham Underdown			2	10

The Occupier of Mount Pleasant			2	10
The Poor Land			2	10
The Parish			5	9
		£120	16/-	0d

OFFWELL PARISH

Domesday Book.

Extract from Victorian History of Devonshire Page 466.

Baldwin has a Manor called HESMALACOMA, which Godwin held T.R.E. and it paid Gold for one hide.

This one plough can till.

Roger holds it of Baldwin.

There Roger has 1 Plough

1 Serf

3 Acres of Meadow

6 Acres of pasture.

Worth 5 shillings a year and was worth the same when he received it.

Note Smallicombe, in Northleigh on the West bank of Offwell Brook.

Baldwin has a Manor called COLEWILLA, which Almer held T.R.E. and it paid, gold for 1-½ hides.

These 8 ploughs can till.

Rogre holds it of Baldwin.

Thereof Rogre has in demesne ½ hide and 1 plough, and the villains 1 hide and 1 ½ ploughs.

There Rogre has 6 villeins

2 bordars

2 serfs

5 beasts

8 swine

57 sheep

20 goats

80 acres of woodland

300 acres of pasture.

Worth 20 shillings a year; when he received it, it was worth 10 shillings.

Note. This must have been the present Colwell Barton.

Baldwin has a Manoe called OFFAWILLA, which Bergaret held T.R.E., and it paid gold for one virgate.

This 2 ploughs can till.

Raginald holds it of Baldwin

Thereof Raginald has in demesne ½ virgate and 1 plough, and the villains' ½ virgate and 2 ploughs.

There Raginald has 6 villeins

2 borders

10 beasts

Woodland 5 furlongs in length by 20 perches in breath.

80 acres of pasture

Worth 13 shillings a year, When he received it was worth 12 pence.

Baldwin has a Manor called WILELMITONA, which Etmer held T.R.E. and it paid gold for 1 virgate.

This 2 ploughs can till.

Morin holds it of Baldwin.

Thereof Morin has in demesne ½ virgate and 1 plough, and the villains' ½ virgate and ½ plough.

There Morin has 2 villeins

2 borders

1 serf

3 sheep

15 acres of woodland

7 acres of meadow

Worth 7 ½ shillings; when he received it was worth 5 shillings.

Note. This must be North Wilmington and Cleave in Offwell.

Baldwin has a Manor called COLLABERA, which Adelwold held T.R.E. and paid, gold for 3 virgates.

These two ploughs can till.

There Morin who holds it of Baldwin has nothing in Demesne.

Worth 3 shillings a year.

Victoria History places this in Offwell. It appears to be the land just South of "Railway Cottages" half a mile North of Wilmington.

Victoria History Page 466.

The land of TETBALD son of Berner.

Tetbald has a Manor called WIDEWORDA, which Almar held T.R.E., and it paid gold for one hide.

This 5 ploughs can till.

Now Oliver holds it of Tetbald.

Thereof Oliver has ½ hide and 1 plough in demesne and the villains' ½ hide and 1 plough.

There Oliver has 7 villeins

4 boardars

3 serfs

12 beasts

6 swine

80 sheep
1 Mill paying 5 shillings.
155 acres of woodland
1 acre of meadow.
30 acres of pasture

Worth 30 shillings a year; when Tetbald received it was worth the same.

To this Manor has been added another Manor called WILLELMATOMA, which Alward held T.R.E., and it paid gold for ½ hide.

This two ploughs can till.

Worth 5 shillings a year.

This latter place is South Wilmington, Victoria History P.509.

The Count (de Mortain) has a Manor called WIBORDA (WOMBERNFORD), which Olward held T.R.E., and it paid, gold for 1 virgate. (64 acres)

This 3 ploughs can till.

Drew (Drege) holds it of him.

There Drew has in demesne 1 ferling and 1 plough, and the villains 3 ferlings and 2 ploughs.

There Drew has 6 villeins
 1 serf
 7 beasts
 50 sheep
 40 acres of Woodland.
 4 acres of meadow
 40 acres of pasture.

Worth 5 shillings a year, and was worth 3 shillings when he received it.

Victoria History places this as Cotleigh it would seem more likely that this was the present Ford Farm near Wilmington Bridge. It might also be Wellhayes Farm near Cotleigh Bridge.

Victoria History of Devon Page 441.

Extract from Victoria History of Devon Page 527 B

Domesday Book.

William the Usher has a Manor called SUTUNA (Sutton) (Sutton Lucy), which Ulwin held T.R.E., and it paid gold for one hide.

This seven ploughs can till.

Now Richard holds it of William.

Therefore he has one virgate and one plough, and the villains have 3 virgates and 4 ploughs.

There Richard has 7 villeins.
 4 bordars
 2 serfs
 3 beasts
 64 sheep

Worth 20 shillings a year; when he received it 10 shillings.

This Manor is one of William's exchanges.

Note.

An acre was 220 yards long by 22 yards wide.

A Furlong was 220 yards long by 220 yards wide.

A league was 12 Furlongs.

One Virgate was 64 acres.

A Firling was 16 acres.

One plough land was 60 acres

One hide was 256 acres. Or 4 Virgates or 16 Firlings.

Victoria History Pages 386 & 402.

Description of Sutton Barton by Mrs. Elizabeth Fordham, October 1946.

The house was built about 1690 by James Marwood M.D. (James Marwood M.D. died October 22nd 1722 aged 66. Buried at Widworthy Mon. Inscription.)

Most of the windows are iron barred and there is some Tudor glass. The house was the headquarters of the work of the Manor. The house and barn were built of stone from the quarry on the estate, where lime was worked and burnt within living memory.

Two yew trees attest the great age of the demesne.

Alexander on "Manorial Title" see T.D.A. Vol. 71 1939 p 317.

Says, "The term Barton means" "The holding of the strong man of leader of the community."

The same interpretation is given in Place names of Devon Vol. p 632.

FIELD NAMES.

T.R.No	O.S .No	M.E.	NAME	Alternative(s)
32	281	219	Tennis Land	
40	307		Elvins	
43	278		Lidefield	
46	265		Abbot's Wood	Newenham Abbey Property?
60	263		Scurr's	
68	316		Whitefield Door	
70	317		Dews Park	Jews park
72	256		Cuckoo Acre	
76	319		Palegate	
85	257		Brimland	
96	227		Culver	Culbeer
100	230		Langlands	
101	215		Culleybeer	
124	210		Shell	
127	247		Busland	
163	37		Lennard's	

172	118		Grubland	
176	119		Wellands	
181	34		Clapper	
190	65		Windwhistle	
208	98		Phurees	
235	92		Bowling Green	
260	171		Sharket	
294	156		Red Lath Oak	
354	375		Shoemaker's How	See under Old Mills.
393	133		Melley	Mill Way?
408	329		Pulpit	Formerly Glebe
425	338		Chinland	
432	334		Colley Slade	
448	405		Offington	
471	484		Sherket	
490	411		Skennell	Kennel?
544	21		Phoenix	Pinnock's?
230	82		Malthouse	Probably was a Malt House

Widworthy

4	7		Spelchem	Spilcombe
63	66	109	Barbery	Barbican of Castle
65	65	107	Yea Mill	Haie (Enceinte of Castle)
66	120	106	Rooks Bar	
108	90		Culverhayes	
136	149	234	Pope's Close	Abbey Land?
144	163		Tumbling Mount	
150	142		Roundabout Mount	
153	157		Wheel Close	Old Mill?
178	221		Stoneburrow	
182	212		Hinkley	Now Halsehayne House.
223	207	128	Carring Pond	M.E. Val. Book (Carrion Pond)
247	197		Bowpool	
253	228		Gull's	
266	73		Lugg's	
271	190	418	Clanwell	
297	80		Caslick's	
318		371	Foreknee	Opposite Cookshayes
353		339	Scruce	Close to Cookshayes
		366	Holdbare	Wood above Cookshayes

Maps of Offwell & Widworthy.

No	Date	Author	Comments
1	1579	Saxton	Offwell & Widworthy Churches marked Scale about ¼ inch to Mile. No Roads or Detail.

2	1680	Morden	Very small scale
3	1611	Speed	Scale ¼ inch to 1 mile
4	1765	Donn	Devonshire 1 inch to 1 mile. No detail between roads.
5	1787	Cary	Road Book. No details.
6	1675	Ogilby	Road Book, No details
7	1809	Ordnance Survey	1 inch to 1 mile. This first edition was re-issued till 1870 with addition of Railways as they were made.
8	1827	Bryant & Greenwood	1 inch to 1 mile. Similar to no 7 in detail.
9	1843	Tithe Map Offwell	Probably by Summers & Slater, Iminster. Scale 3 Chains to 1 inch 1: 2,376. Made for Tithe commissioners with very full detail. At Rectory, Copy in Box.
10	1839	Tithe Map Widworthy	By Summers & Slater Iminster, Scale 6 chains to 1 inch 1:4,752. Made for the Tithe Commissioners, Copy in Diocesan Registry, Exeter. Parish Copy missing, but photo of Exeter copy in box.
11	1781	Offwell & Widworthy	Both 6 chains to 1 inch. 1:4,752. Drawn by J. Sturge. Made for Marwood family of their holdings. Valuation list made in 1806 with numbers of fields corresponding to Maps. With Marwood Elton Documents with Messrs Tweed of Honiton.
12	1831	Paterson	Road book, No details given.
13		Ordnance Survey	Fullest details. Now frequently brought up to date.

Extract from “Valor Ecclesiasticus” Devon Vol. 2 Page 302 & 303.

Offewyle.

The Rectory there whereof John Stone (Clerk) (1529-1545) is Rector is worth Yearly:

In Rents of Assize, land, stores	60/- Shillings
In Tithes of Sheaves	60/- Shillings
Wool and Lambs	76/- 1d
And in oblations	20/-
And other tithes as appears in the Easter Book	78/- 8d
Besides	11/- 3-½ d paid yearly to the said Bishop.
	2/- 2 ½ d to the Archdeacon
	6/- 3d
And to each of their successors for their synodal and cathedraic Procurations	2/- 5d

Total	£14.3/- 5 ½ d
Remains clear for the next	£ 0. 28/- 4d

Northley.

The Rectory there whereof John Ostler (Clerk), is rector is worth per annum in common years.

For rents of assize and Glebe lands	60/- Shillings
And in Tithes of wool	37/- 6d
Of Lambs	16/-
And in predial tithes	70/-
Personal tithes	36/- 8d
With oblations	10/-
	£10. 9/- 7d

Besides 10/- 7d formerly paid to the Bishop of Exeter and his successors, and to the Archdeacon of Exeter and his successors 3/- 7d for their synodal and cathedraic.

And to the Rector of Offewyll and his successors in the aforesaid deanery 6/-, for a certain annual Pension.

Remains clear for the next 5- 20/- 11 ½ d.

Wydeworthy.

The Rectory there whereof Stephen Courtenay, clerk, is rector is worth yearly in the common years;

In rents of Assize and of Glebe lands	57/- 4d
And in the tithes of Sheaves	£4 10/-
Wool	40/-
And lambs	20/- £11 16/- ½ d
And in Oblations	10/-
And other tithes as appears in the Easter Book there.	30/-

Besides 11/- 3d thereof formerly paid to the aforesaid Bishop and his successors 2/- 2 ½ d. and the Archdeacon and his successors 6/- 8 d. For their synodal and cathedraic procurations 2/- 5d.

Remainder clear in the next £- 23/- 7 ½ d

Extract from K.R. Church Goods (E117) File 2 No 7 of Edward VI.

Parochia de Offewell.

111j. Belles yn the tower their and one Chalice committed to the custody of Raff Raddon, Raff person Richard Willys and other parissens their by indenter.

Parochia de Wydeworthy.

111j. Belles yn the tower their and one Chalice committed to the custody of John Chechester gent, John Thomas and other the parissens their by indenter.

Monuments in Offwell Church.

Ford Monument.

A Bradford married A Ford in 1611.

See Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries Vol. 2 p 248.

Collyns Monument.

This also records a monument to “Thomas Collyns of Offwell and Patron of this Church who deceased the 13 Daie of May Anno Domini 1598 Act. Suae 74.

The John Collyns on the floor stone appears to be Johan Collyns wife of Thomas Collyns 1st May 1610.

The register, obviously copied from some other document, gives burial 4th May 1609 but the year 1610 is omitted. From Devon Assn Trans. Vol. 48 p295.

“Southcot of Duleishayes Kilmington by Skinner 1916” States there was a second tablet in Offwell Church.

**“Hic Juxta Sita est Dorothea Uxor Henrici
Southcot gen. Filia Gulielmi et Annae Collyns de
Colwell armiger. Hoc etiam sepulchre Una cum
scroribus suis et avis pro avis sepulta Obiit die
16 Sept. Anno.Dni. 1698.**

Register records.

1696. Joanna Uxor Thomas Southcot sepulta fuit decimo nono die Decembr. 1696.

1698. Dorothea Uxor Henrici Southcott Gen. Sepulte fuit Vicesimo Secunde die Septembr.

The existence of the monument to Dorothea is also noted in Lyson’s, so it must have existed about 1820. Page 374

On the south wall of the Nave.

A wooden tablet to the memory of John Ford 1725 and Mary Ford 1728.

On the North wall of the Aisle.

A bronze plate to the memory of Fred Hooper and Frank Pilton who fell in the War 1914 –1918. Also an Oak tablet in Memory of those who fell in the 1939 – 1945 War. “Charles Henry Baugh. Lorne Currie. Gerald North”

This was made by Mr. W.H. Farmer, Churchwarden, from the design of Mr. H.J. Yates, who carved the lettering. The Jacobean pillars dividing the panels were alter rails from Bramley Church, Hampshire, given by Captain J. Welch Thornton.

Ramsden History of Offwell.

A Monument to Joanna Southcot daughter of William Collyns of Colwell who died in 1696. (Note. The Southcots came from Kilmington, and were formerly large landowners in Offwell)

In the floor under the panelled arch into the chancel, a stone memorial to:

John Collyns Died May 1 1610.

William Collyns October 31 1657.

In the Chancel, on the North Wall.

A marble tablet to,

John Bradford Copleston. Died April 8 1831

Margaret his wife January 3 1839.

Ann his daughter January 14 1804.

James William his son lost at sea November 1812.

(Lieutenant Royal Artillery)

A Marble tablet to,

John Gay Copleston June 4 1894

Catherine his first wife March 24 1846

Maria his second wife October 16 1865

Mary Jane his daughter February 24 1852.

On the South wall.

A marble tablet to,

Brigadier General William Wooldridge C.M.G. January 10 1925.

A marble tablet to his son,

Lt. Colonel Hugh Copleston Wooldridge

Killed in action in Malaya January 1942.

Marble tablet to,

Revd. John Gaius Copleston July 20 1841.

Marble tablet to,

Harriet Wife of Revd. John Gaius Copleston January 10 1835.

The following monuments were recorded in 1828 by J.Davidson in his MSS. In the City Library Exeter, but are not now visible.

Floor stone:

“Here lyeth Thomas Collyns of Offwell and Gra-----

The 15th day of May Anno Domini 1598”

A Long stone ornamented with a Cross-in relief. (Almost certainly on South side of Chancel under Chancel Arch)

A Stone mentioned by Lysons.

“Dorothy wife of Henry Southcot daughter of Collins died 1696”

These stones are probably now under the flooring of the pews?

The Windows.

In the south wall of the Chancel a small window containing stained glass fragments of early date.

In the south wall of the nave.

A small square window lighting the steps to the Pulpit.

Two three light windows with stone mullions and stained glass texts of about 1840 at the top.

The west window of the Belfry Tower.

Stained glass window to the Memory of E. Copleston 1846.

The west window of the North Aisle.

Stained glass three light window to the memory of Catherine Ann Copleston March 10th 1887.

North windows of North Aisle.

Three light plain glass windows with stained glass texts to match windows in south wall of Nave.

West window of North Aisle.

Plain glass three light windows, with old stained glass in medallions at top.

West window of Chancel.

Stained glass window to the memory of Dr. Edward Copleston

Notes by John Benson of Foxdon on Manors of Widworthy and Sutton.

1166	Richard de Lucy an Essex Freeholder was enfeoffed of land in Shobrook. Geoffrey de Lucy held one Fee of William FitzRobert, Richard de Lucy was Chief Justice. (Daughter Maud married 1.Walter fitzRobert & 2 De Redvers.
1166	William (W111) son of Hugh de Widworthy (and Westcot in Maxwood, Coombe Davey in Hemyock, and South Wilmington) Held Widworthy.
1198	Hugh de Widworthy (Son of William) held Culm Davey
1218	Robert de Helion made false charge against Maurice de Lucy and others of disscizing him of Sutton.
1220	Robert de Helion gave Sutton to Maurice de Lucy on his

	marriage to his sister Mabel.
1241	William de Widworthy held Widworthy.
1242	Robert de Bulkeworthy held Sutton.
1242	Geoffrey de Lucy of Black Torrington & King's Nympton held Sutton as son of Maurice de Lucy.
1244	Robert de Helion gave half plough land in Sutton to Abbey of Quarr
1252	William de Widworthy.(Robert de Helion and Richard de Lucy) were witnesses of grant of Manor of Musbury by William Courtenay to Lord John Couryenay.
1285	Geoffrey de Lucy, held Sutton of Hugh Prouz.
1285	Juliana widow of William Prouz, held Widworthy in dower of Robert de Dinham, son in law of Hugh de Widworthy
1291	Robert de Dinham sued William Prouz for possession of Sutton. Note. William Prouz had evidently forgotten that "by courtesy of England" Robert de Dinham as widower of Emma de Widworthy had the right to hold Widworthy for his life.
1303-1310	Maurice de Lucy son of Geoffrey de Lucy held Sutton.
1303	Muriel de Widworthy held Widworthy; She married Oliver de Tuddenham who held Widworthy in 1316.
1329	Alice widow of Roger de Moelys granted Widworthy to William de Moelys, her son, who died in her lifetime so his sister Joan became heiress in 1336.
1333	Alice was patroness of Widworthy and presented Richard de Wodeford.
1344	Thomas Courtenay held Sutton. Note In 1220 Robert de Helion agreed that he & his heirs should hold Sutton of Richard le Despencer.
	Hugh Courtenay Grandfather of Thomas Courtenay married Eleanor daughter of Hugh le Despencer. Sutton must have resorted to its Despencer overlords at death of Robert de Helion and passed to Courtenay by marriage.
1346	John de Northcote holds Widworthy as second husband of Joan de Moelyn.
1348	John de Northcote presented John de Wodeford to Widworthy living.
1349	John de Northcote presented Richard Pestour to Widworthy living.
1375	Juliana wife of Thomas Jew (of Cotleigh) and widow of Richard Wotton gave Widworthy to her son William.
1428	John Chichester held Widworthy.

The Owners of the Manor of Widworthy.

Date	
1065	Almer, Displaced at Conquest.
1086	Tetbald son of Berner.
C.1166	Hugh de Widworthy married?

C.1224	William de Widworthy Married?
C. 1262	Sir William de Widworthy married?
C. 1276	Sir Hugh de Widworthy married Emma Giffard of Weare Giffard.
C. 1260	Emma de Widworthy Married Robery de Dinahm.
1300	Emma de Widworthy Married Sir William le Prouz.
C. 1244	Sir William le Prouz Married Alice Reigny.
	Alice le Prouz Married Sir Roger Moeles.
	Jean Moeles Married 1. John de Wotton
	2. John de Northcote.
	Richard de Wotton married Juliana.
	William de Wotton Married Gundred Wiger.
	John Wotton married Englesa Dymock
	Alice Wotton married John Chichester.
	Richard Chichester.
	Nicholas Chichester.
	John Chichester.
	John Chichester.
	John Chichester.
	John Chichester.
C. 1630	Hugh Chichester.
1701	Benedictus Marwood bought Widworthy Estate from the Chichester family.

Summary of Parish Account Book 1826. Remained in use till 1898.

The entries are chiefly notices of Parish Meetings, with assessments in the early pages.

After 1870 the Church rate assessment was discontinued and the Church Expenses had to be met by Offertories.

Poor House	2.11.1838	Owing to the new Poor Law Act, Parish Poor Houses were discontinued. At this meeting the sale of the Poor House by the Honiton Poor Law Union was sanctioned. The ground was bought by Bishop Copleston, and made over by him to the Churchwardens. See also meetings of 30.1.1840 & 1.4.1841.
School House	27.3.1845	Meeting passed vote of thanks to Bishop Copleston for building School, and redecorating the Church.
	14.3.1852	Meeting decided that school was surrounded by its own wall, which had been included in the ground bought by Bishop Copleston for the purpose.
Pews & Singers Gallery	15.8.1852	The Rector Revd. J.G. Copleston proposed to re-pew the church and remove the "Singers Gallery". The meeting did not approve.
	13.1.1853	Meeting agreed to the proposals provided no

		expense fell on the Parishioners, that each farm had its pew, and that doors be provided for each pew.
Vestry Meetings	9.4.1855	Vestry Meetings had hitherto been held in the Five Bells Public House, then existing on the site of the present Churchyard. The Rector objected to meetings being held there.
“Poor Field” at Greystones	21.4.1855	Appointment of new Feoffees. Protest by Sir Edward Marwood Elton. Charity Commissioners decided that the income from this field be divided among resident poor.
Church Roof	26.3.1872	Rev. J.G. Copleston rector, offered to re-roof the South side of the Church at a cost of £60.
Wilmington Drain	26.3.1874	Drain 483 yards long to be made next to the Turnpike at Wilmington.
School	27.3.1876	Subscription voted to Elementary School.
Church Expenses	12.4.1879	Church expenses to be paid in future by offertories. Government required enlarged School.
School	28.4.1879	School Committee appointed. Rev. J.G. Copleston undertook to enlarge School for £10 a year for 5 years and £10 towards arrears of £44 on Church Funds.
Churchyard	29.11.1883	Sanitary Inspectors ordered Churchyard to be enlarged. The enlargement was achieved by demolishing the old “Five Bells Inn” and adding the site to the Churchyard.
Colwell Wood Road	24.3.1885	Meeting decided that the road through Colwell Wood past “Keepers Cottage” was a Parish Road, but that the new circuitous road to the Cottage was a private road.
Main Road	14.3.1889	Parish undertook to maintain the Main Road for a grant of £15 a year.
“Poor Field”	25.3.1891	This field at Greystones was let for £7 a year.
Church Heating	10.4.1898	Meeting decided to heat Church cost chiefly met by gift from Miss Copleston.

Offwell Parish Accounts Volume 1 1691 to 1720.

1692	P7	Three Church Rates Collected £15.13/- 6d.
		Churchwarden assisted travellers with “Passes” also contributed to “Briefs”
1694	P31	Ringers 5 th November. 11/- Beer when King came home. Many sick soldiers from France, also Hollanders & Spaniards.
1695	P36	Repairs of Axminster & Ottery Bridges.

1697	P40	Stretching out Dorothy Lugg 2/- Tolling Bell 2/-. Window Tax.
1697	P41 P43	Repairing Culmstock Bridge 3/- 3d Militia Rate 2/- 6d. Making badges for Paupers.
1699	P45 P47	Attending Visitation at Exeter 9/- 2d. Setting up "Sentences" in Church £5 Doctor Norman for Beer for curing John Civil £1. 10/- 8d.
1700	P48 P52	Mending Silver Bowl. 3 Crosses for Church 8/- North Door & Pulpit mended.
1701	P55 P57	Boundary Stones set up. Communion Table 11/- Ringing Coronation Day 6/-
1702	P58 P64	Burial of young man unknown. Drummer's Stone ? Written agreements between Offwell & Widworthy handed to Mr Bendle, Minister.
1703	P67	Rejoicing Day Ringers 11/-. Prayer Book 14/-6d.
1704	P74 P77 P85	Freestone for mending Porch. 1500 tiles for Church. "Draught of heart & Bowels" Mending Churchyard Steps.
1705	P93	Driving away rebel from Belfry door.
1708	P98 P101 P107	Rate Assessment. Binding Bible £1. 6/- 6d Stiles Mill.
1709	P122	Ringing for Victory against France & Bishop's visit.
1709	P131	Casting Bell.
1710	P138	Dog whipping.
1712	P148	Much small Pox
1712	P156 P158	Tiles for Church. Church Coffers. Scouring Silver Bell and Tanket.
1714	P173 P175	Coronation Ringing 3/-, Other Expenses £1.2/- 10d. Lock for Coffers. Ammunition for Constable.
1715	P178	Window Rate. Barley for paupers.
1716	P191	New Church Coffers. Communion Cloth 10/-6d.
1719	P227	Ends.
VOLUME 2 1722 to 1764.		
1721	P15 P23	Bible £3.15/- 0d Extravagant Expenses by Overseer of Poor.
1723	P30 P35	Sand for mortar, Shindols for Church Roof. Timber Prices. Shroud.
1724	P39 P42 P43	Church House Thatched. 22 Seamen 3/- 6d. New Pulpit £36. New North Door. Liquor & Cakes at Parish meeting.
1729	P46	Beer for Parish Meeting.
1734	P66	"Turkey Prisoners" 1/-
1735	P74	Roofing North side of Church £6.0/-. Threshold North

		Door.
1737	P89	Lamp black for riting the “Sentences” & “King’s Arms.” (Traces of this painting were found in 1950)
1743	P140	Washing out Bells.
1744	P157	Resolution against extravagance by Overseers. Overseer to be paid £2 per year.
1748	P209	Dog whipping.
1749	P216	Payments to Doctor for paupers.
1747	P381	List of “Estates” to provide Overseers and Churchwardens.
1744	P163	Paid Emanuel Dommatt for “Placing Greystone” 16/-. Note. Parish meetings were often held at the Rose & Crown Inn, Wilmington.
1761	P336	Bell cage repaired.
1762	P347	Heavy expenses repairing Bells.
1765	A53	Book to celebrate birth of young Prince.
VOLUME 3		
1773	P3 P4 P5	Church Rate gummed in Cover. Steps to Church Hatch. Clerk’s Salary £1.9/- 0d half year. Fifth November bonfire. Stocks Made. Stone from Beer for Tower. Coping stone for Little Tower.
1774	P8 P9	Prayer Book 16/-. Pew Doors repaired.
1776	P11 P12 P14	Memorandum re West Wall of Churchyard. Curtains for Church windows. Bounds beaten.
1777	P15	Tower Roughcast.
1778	P17	Chancel re-floored with Membury Stone. Communion Rails.
1783	P21	New gate Higher side Churchyard. Bass Viol. West wall of Churchyard erected.
1784	P23	“Spear” & beams between Chancel & Nave removed. “Apostles” Set up £6.6/- 0d.
1786	P28	Ham Hill stone for Battlements.
1788	P32	Lead taken to Plumbers for re-casting.
1794	P41	Bounds beaten.
1795	P44	Certificates for Hair Powder Tax. Church Whitewashed.
1797	P46	Prayers for Victories.
1798	P47	Prayers for Victories by Nelson.
1799	P48	Thanksgiving for King’s escape from assassination.
1800	P49	Tower lead re-cast. Thanksgiving Union with Ireland.
1801	P50	Prayer for King’s recovery. Roof repaired.
1802	P52	Bounds beaten.
1804	P54	Silver Goblet mended.
1805	P55	Cushion for Pulpit £3.0/- 6d.
1807	P57	Cord to carry Font cover.

1810	P59	Bounds beaten.
1811	P61 P63	Heavy repairs to Tower Stone work Thorn hedge planted
1812	P63	County Rate
1813	P65	Vestry Safe bought. Vanes on Tower repaired.
1815	P69- P71	Roof South Aisle renewed. Waterloo Thanksgiving. Roof lead recast. Oak for roof, timber from Colwell. Repairs cost £200.
1817	P73	Bounds perambulated.
1818	P74	Stone for Church Steps from Scrubits Wood.
1820	P76	Sundial erected.
1822	P77	Ringers agreed to ring New Year instead of November 5 th .
1823	P82	Clarinet mended Flute bought.
1824	P87	Bounds beaten. List of benefactions painted on board.
1826	P90	Churchyard Levelled. Bounds beaten.
1829	P96	Bounds beaten.
1830	P98	Constable's Staff purchased.
1832	P101	Tower stairs repaired with chamber for ringers. Vaults repaired or filled in. Floor re-laid with Membury Stone. "Numbering the people" 10/- Planks to cover Southcot Vault.
1854	P182	Seating revised (See plan of Church)
1868	P204	Distribution of Rent of "Poor Field" £6.10/- 0d.
VOLUME 4 1826 to 1898		
1838	P130	Meeting to sell Poor House.
1839	P132	Labourers Cottages rated under 20/- relieved of rates.
1845	P159	Vote of thanks to Bishop for building School and redecorating Church.
1846	P163	Election of Constables. County Rate Valuation of Parish £1860.
1847	P170	Way Warden rate 4d in the £.
1852	P189 P192	Tablet to record gifts to School. North Wall of School, site belongs to School. Objection by Parish to taking down Singer's Gallery.
1853	P196	Re-pewing at Rectors expense sanctioned.
1855	P206 P207	Election of 5 new Charity Trustees. (Must be parishioners.) Rector objected to Vestry Meetings in Public House.
1872	P249	New slate roof to be put on South side of Church. Much new timber required.
1874	P252	Parish undertook new open drain at Wilmington, length 483 yards.
1878	P265	Church repairs to be paid by Voluntary Rate. School to be enlarged.
1883	P275	Churchyard to be enlarged.

1885	P277	Colwell Wood Bridle path claimed for Parish.
1898		£90 given to Rector by Miss Copleston to heat Church.