

Parsonage Farm at Lower Bourton

The Bourton House papers are a collection of documents that refer to legal transactions and events that have taken place at Bourton over the last 350 years. The earliest document within the collection is a small parchment dated 5th January 1647 and its contents are the starting point of what would become a set of Deeds. (Below. SHS BH 1/1). The Indenture records a transaction between Henry Martyn of Beckett, Esq, and John Hynton of Bourton. Henry Martyn gained notoriety the year after the date of this document, by adding his signature to the Death Warrant of King Charles I. He agreed in this deal to farm let, 'One Close lying in Lower Bourton containing one third of an acre of ground, known as Common Close or The Close adjoining to the Common, now in the occupation of John Hynton.' There seems to be very little on this piece of ground as the wording only included 'appurtenances' suggesting barns or sheds, but no house or dwelling; the lease to run from that day for 1,000 years. The length of the lease being so unusually long and the low price of two pence annually, would suggest that this lease is some kind of family settlement between Henry Marten and John Hynton. There is a note scribbled on the reverse that the Quitrent is two pence, meaning payment in lieu of services to the Lord of the Manor. It makes no mention of which Manor it belonged. It's likely therefore that this was an isolated close of land, next to Common land, that Henry Marten effectively gifted to John Hinton.



On the rear of the document, it is written that John Hynton assigned the property over to his son Thomas on the 11th February 1652. (Below. The area of Lower Bourton)



The next document is dated 19th June 1691 between William Povey of Lower Bourton, Yeoman and John Cox of Bourton, Yeoman. The text within the document describes the series of events or '*Schedule*' that became common within deed documents. In this instance a lease dated 20th February 1654, Thomas Hynton passed the lease over to William Povey. But William died for the text described that by his last Will dated 24th July 1684, he passed the lease to his son John, '*All that Close of Meadow ground being in Bourton containing one acre which he lately has of Thomas Hynton Esq.*' The succession of the property continued through the Povey family, when at 4th May 1691, William Povey, Yeoman, received in the lease all the above property, (BH.1/3). '*And also, a messuage or tenement lately erected and built in and upon the premises.*' William Povey for the price of £20, '*Given to him by John Cox,*' hands over to him all the property listed above; but it's a loan, a mortgage, and must be paid back plus four shillings interest on the 22nd June 1692, '*At the dwelling house of John Cox in Bourton.*' (BH.1/1a)

The next Indenture is dated 25th April 1699, (BH.1/2) between William Povey and Joseph Meysey, both Yeomen of Bourton who sell the lease to John New, Yeoman, for £40 and there is a separate Bond agreement for them loaning the money. This is a substantial increase in value in a relatively short period of time, but buildings had been added. There then followed a series of documents concerning the New family; An

Assignment whereby John New sells property, including the building lately erected, for £40 to his brother Thomas, dated 25th April 1711. (BH.1/7). Thomas New then borrowed £20 from Thomas Styles from Wantage on 27th November 1714, and he borrowed 30 shillings from the same man on 28th May 1716. (BH.1/8). Two years later Thomas New sold the farm back to his brother John with the Assignment dated 14th March 1718, and in the same document Thomas paid what he owed plus interest to Thomas Stiles. (BH.1/9). John took up a loan with the same man for £20 in an Assignment dated 16th March 1718 (BH.1/10) and even wrote a separate certificate promising to pay back £20.10shillings (BH.1/10a). The moneylenders Thomas Stiles, William Butcher and Mary Triplett from Highworth, (BH.1/11) were doing good business in the 1720s and 1730s courtesy of John New. The original Indenture of 1720 is covered in the flat areas of all the folds with the various loans (BH.1/12). The property stayed within the New family for many years and there is an interesting document containing Articles of Agreement dated 13th November 1741, (BH.1/13) which is on a single sheet of paper rather than a large parchment. It's a beautiful document (below) and involved many of the News, centred around their mother, Susanna New of Lower Bourton, Widow, and the property described as, *'All that Close, House, Garden and Orchard with the appurtenances.'* Money had been loaned against the property by William Butcher of Faringdon, Maltster, but eldest son, Henry New, along with all the other members of the family described in this document, agreed to pay it back with the interest, and shall, *'Permit Susanna New, his Mother, to live in the House and to have some Garden Ground for her own use during the term of her life without paying any rent for the same.'* The text goes on to explain in more detail of how the four brothers and two sisters should fare within one month of the decease of their mother. It was contained with the Assignment dated 29th March 1742. (BH.1/14).

The document dated 27th May 1767, recorded Henry New's agreement with Thomas Cox of Bourton for the sale of the estate to him, less the difference owed. Henry acknowledged the receipt of £29, which passed the estate to Thomas Cox. With this document is also a separate letter made by Henry New confirming Thomas Cox's right to a *'Quiet enjoyment of a Leasehold Estate.'* (Below. New Family Agreement & Henry's Statement.

An extract from a Faculty discovered in the St James papers (SHS N964 BOU.4) granted the exclusive use of three pews at the Parish church of Shrivenham (St Andrew's). The wording in the Faculty specified that the grant is, '*To the mansion House of Thomas Cox in Nether Bourton (Lower) called the Parsonage House.*' We know from the Bourton House papers and from a drawing in the Pleydell Estate papers in the RBA, (D/EPB/E158/1 Page 89) that there was a Parsonage belonging to Thomas Cox in Lower Bourton. It's called a '*Parsonage*' because the land carried ancient entitlements to certain tithe payments – usually Vicarial or Glebe (church). The description of a '*Mansion House*' suggests that it was a substantial building of quality. Within several of the Bourton House documents there is a description of how the building was made up with Parlours, Pantrys, Beer Cellar, Wine Cellar, Dairy House etc. (Below and SHS. BH/1 and see SHS N1337 to read the description). But the wording of the Faculty created another mystery. It clearly stated that the allocation of one pew was for the Mansion House at Nether Bourton (Lower) and the allocation of two pews was for the Mansion House at Over Bourton (Upper). More research will now be required to discover where the house in Upper Bourton was located.

Thomas Cox died on the 27th September 1778, aged 61. He was described in several Indentures as a Gentleman. This usually meant that he had sufficient money to lead a life whereby he had no need to work. Such people were often money lenders and their profits came from the interest they charged. He had enough money to afford a memorial slab to be laid in the south aisle of Shrivenham church. His wife Martha died in November 1781. Her Will provided the information that she was living at Newbury. She left her estate to her two Nieces, Henrietta Willoughby and Mary Cheeke. Henrietta married William Newcombe, the younger of Cirencester, described as a Woolstapler and it was he and Mary's husband William Cheeke who featured on the next document in the deed trail. It's interesting to note that the description of the property had most of the original words as described in instances above but added to the '*Common Close or the Close adjoining the Common, is then called or known by the name of New's Orchard, now in the occupation of John Coster.*' The New family were there for over just over 60 years so it's not surprising.

There seems to be no explanation of why William Newcombe senior and his son William would negotiate with the other beneficiary Mary Cheeke and her husband, to buy out their half of the estate, only to sell it to Thomas Kinneir for £18. But that is what happened according to the Indenture dated 6th April 1785. (BH.1/16) The lease was passed by the Assignment of 18th Sept 1784 and contains many names. (BH.1/16a) Thomas Kinneir was described as of Lambeth Terrace, in the Parish of St Mary, Surrey, and a Gentleman. The farm was let to John Coster and probably had been since the early 1780s. Thomas Kinneir's Will was proved on the 7th February 1811, so he must have died in 1810. He left all his real estate to his sister Theodosia Frome who lived at the Close of Sarum in Wilts. She very quickly entered an agreement with William and Joseph Coster who were the sons of previous tenant John Coster. (BH.1/21). The Indenture that set out the details contain a lot of information on the farm. The main description is of, '*All that Capital Messuage or Farm House with the Offices, Outbuildings, Dovehouses, Courtyards and Gardens.*' It also included several cottages with gardens and ends with the amount of 267 acres of land. The rental charge was £580 per annum. On the second sheet of the Indenture are two schedules, the first describing the fields in detail, their names and acreages. The second schedule is a detailed description of the house that was known as The Parsonage. The same description was also in an Indenture dated 1st August 1787. (BH.1/18), whereby Thomas Kinneir leased the farm to John Coster. A similar Indenture was made on 1st June 1791, (BH.1/19) probably brought about by the Enclosure Award of Bourton in 1789. In BH.1 is also a Release dated 23rd April 1813, whereby the Frome sisters transferred rights and legacies of Thomas Kinneir's Will to Theodosia. (BH.1/20).

In the passage leading to one of the garrets in the messuage or tenement first above mentioned, one Press with four shelves, two bells with cranks and wires. In the Closets in the Blue Room one iron lock and key, two rows of pins. And in the said blue room one brass lock and key to the door, the window shutters and iron bars. In the Red Room one brass lock to the door, one lock and key to the closet door, and the window shutters and iron bar. In the room over the little parlour one bell with cranks and wirer, one iron lock and key to the door. In the room over the Bricked Room and the closets adjoining one oaken Press with two drawers, three shelves, two iron latches, one iron lock and key, one iron night bolt and bar, five shelves, two cupboards

in the wall, and one lock and key to one of the cupboards. In the passage leading to the beforementioned rooms, four window shutters and two iron bars to fasten them. In the Best Parlour one brass lock and key to the door, two window shutters and one iron bar. In the hall and passage adjoining, one iron lock and key, one other iron lock, one bell with cranks and wire, two window shutters and one iron bar. In the Little Parlour one iron grate, one side board in the window and two window shutters. In the Large Pantry one hanging safe, three wine bins one large cupboard with two doors, one dresser and nine shelves. In the Little Pantry one corner cupboard and two shelves. In the Ale Cellar one lead pipe for letting down beer, and iron clock with two keys. In the Small Beer Cellar one lead pipe for letting down beer. In the Wine Cellar two iron locks and two keys. In the Bricked Room two deal sideboards, one corner cupboard, one other cupboard with four drawers under it, one other cupboard with two drawers, three small shelves and one bell with cranks and wire. In the Kitchen one iron crane, and one iron door to the oven, one oak sideboard, and none deal sideboard in the window, five shelves, ten large iron hooks, ten small iron hooks, one towel roll, and one iron pot and grate in the wall. In the Shoe Hole next the kitchen, one sideboard, one old cupboard and three shelves. In the Passage next the kitchen, one mail cupboard in the wall and one bottle rack. In the old Dairy House one hanging shelf. In the new Dairy House, one vate rack, one dresser, four spar doors and two other doors. In the old Bricked Room, two long and four short shelves, two standard posts, and one old millstone. In the Green Plats behind the said messuages or tenements eight oaken posts with brass wires for drying clothes. In the Home Backside, two spouts, two rails and chains to the same, one bucket stand and one ladder and chain to the pigeonhouse door. In the Cart Stable in the home backside, one ladder and chain, one crane for hanging harness' on, two chains to the door, and one large chaff coop. In the Nag Stable, one chain to the door. And in the Woodhouse, one cupboard with shelves.

Theodosia Frome, sister and beneficiary of the Will of her brother Thomas Kinneir, died on the 8th March 1830. She left all her real estate to her Grandson John Nicholas Fazakerley and her Son-in-Law the Rev. Benjamin Churchill. Her wishes were that the estate should be sold and the proceeds divided among her three daughters, Dorothy, Theodosia and Mary Susan.

Purchase of Parsonage Farm by John Tucker

The Conveyance that recorded the transfer of the principal farm at Lower Bourton to John Tucker was dated 27th December 1845. It was between the three daughters of Theodosia Frome, and the surviving Trustee of her Will, who were, '*John Nicholas Fazakaley of Studley near Tiverton, Devon, now residing in Naples, Italy, Esq; on the first part, Dorothy Frome of Southampton, Hants, Spinster; Theodosia Frome of the Close of Sarum, Wilts, Spinster; Mary Susan Frome, Hantoville, island of Guernsey, Spinster, on the second part; John Tucker of West ham Abbey, Essex, Esq; on the third part, and William Morse Crowdy of Swindon, Gent, on the 4th part. Executed in pursuance of the Act of Parliament for rendering a Release as effectual for the conveyance of Freehold estates as a Lease & Release by the same parties.*' (Lease & Release done away with by law).

The core wording of the transaction was still centered around the original 'Close' that had become 'New's Orchard' over the 200 years since it was first let on the 1000-year lease. There were still two documents, both dated 27th December 1845, used to convey the property over to John Tucker. The first was an assignment of the lease (BH.1/22) and the solicitor used the cost of Land Tax, some Tithes and Stamp duty which conveniently amounted to £40. The second document was the conveyance of the Freehold Hereditaments at Bourton, (BH.1/23) the complete description being, '*All that Capital messuage of farmhouse with the offices, outbuildings, dove houses, courtyards and gardens thereunto belonging and two cottages and several gardens belonging and closes, lands and hereditaments, formerly in the tenure and occupation of John Coster, since of William and Joseph Coster, as the same are now in the occupation of John Allaway and containing in the whole 255acres.*' It does continue with further legal jargon and included the right to occupy three pews at the parish church of Shrivenham. (See below). The price of the transaction was £11,960 plus the £40 in taxes, making a total purchase price of £12,000. This was a considerable sum in 1845 and likely reflects the quality of the land and the wealth of John Tucker.

Names	Quality	Quantity	
		a	r
Upper or Ryaweth Field	Arable	118	29
Upper Side Little Arbutts	Pasture	9	3 3/4
Long Sands	ditto	111	1 20
Ryaweth or Hamlage	Arable	8	2 30
Swastlands and Whitmoor Inclosure	ditto	11	1 27
Cottage Fuel House and garden		.	17
Cottage and garden		.	19
House and garden		.	18
Barn Stable Wagon House Skew- House and yard		.	1 2
Total Quantity.		4 255	2 3/4

This narrative of the Parsonage concludes at the purchase of the estate by John Tucker. It should be noted that the land on which the Grange would be built by him was not part of this deal; the Capital Farmhouse in the schedule referring to the Parsonage which was taken down. The Grange land and premises (see map extract below No 18) was part of the Lower Farm deal (See SHS No 1325) which was purchased by Henry Tucker when it was put up for sale in June 1842. Fortunately, the document describing how Henry sold the 'Garden Ground' in 1846 to his brother John for a token £5, was already in the SHS archive and has now been placed with the documents relating to this transaction. (Below).



Dated 22 December 1846

Henry Tucker Esquire

to

John Tucker Esquire

Conveyance of a
Piece of Ground at Beeton in
the County of Berks.