

Correspondence on Jack Cook.

Jim Cook post to website, 18 Apr 2014,

Hi, been looking through your fabulous site. If of interest the photo titled 'another tar gang', is in fact not a tar gang, they were the Gardeners at Leydene House, seen in the picture constructing the driveway at the House, Jack Cook, near front with shovel and smoking a pipe, was my Father. In another category, 'Coronation Celebrations', the 'Men marching past Riverside', are members of the local lodge of Ancient Order of Foresters. Leading is Jack Pollard, with his Son, Stuart ?, on the Donkey, front row is Jack Appleby, Herbie Goddard, Fred Gibbs, my Father, Jack Cook is near the back, wearing cap, all are wearing their sashes and badges of Office.

Lovely, lovely site, much pleasure and memories viewing it, I may have pictures in my own collection to add if interested. (The original Adams shop bill is in my own collection, it was to my Grandfather, John Cook, when he moved from Warhill to Oxenbourne in 1889.

Sincerely yours, Jim Cook



Leydene workers building driveway. Jack Cook fifth from right, with brush and pipe.



The Coronation procession, 1953



Bill from Thomas Adams to John Cook 1889

Michael Blakstad to Jim Cook

Thanks for the kind words! I would, indeed, be most grateful for any records, photographic and otherwise, you could supply! The rationale of the eastmeonhistory.org.uk site is that we digitise memorabilia and make them available to researchers wherever they may be, then either return them or, if people are happy to consign them to our archive, index and store them in our 'library'. (the .net site was our original history site, and it is intended for those who want simply to browse our history.)

So, if you are kind enough to supply us with pictures, and indeed with any information you have about your East Meon antecedents, I could either return them or add them to our collections. (As you may have seen, we ran a successful Open Day last September, made possible with funds provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund), to which a gratifying number of villagers, and people from elsewhere in Hampshire, brought their collections. Where do you live? (Of course, if you want to email digital files, i.e. scan the originals, that cuts out a process!)

We welcome corrections and additional information of the kind you have supplied. It was Herbie Goddard's daughter Hazel who told me this was a tar gang - her grandfather is Ernest Christmas, on the left. Curly Adams, next to him, was a village 'linksman', i.e. responsible for a stretch of village streets. Would that we had such jobs today! But I shall transfer the photograph to the Leydene section with the information you have provided. (I suppose that, stretching a point, you could call them a 'tar gang' if, however temporarily, they are on road-building duties...)

Thanks, too, for the information about the Coronation procession. I shall add that information as well. I hope very much that we shall be communicating further.
Michael

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 18th April 2014

Thank you for your lovely and very speedy reply. I was born and brought up in Oxenbourne, only child of Jack and Ivy Cook. On leaving School aged 14, I followed in my Fathers footsteps and worked on the Farm, which was then Farmed by the Berry Family. In 1966 I made the big decision to leave the land and joined The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary, I served pretty much all around the Southern area of Hampshire, including 5 years on the Isle of Wight, ending in Alresford to complete 30 years service, and where I still live now.

My Parents, Grandparents and Great Grandparents are buried in East Meon Church Yard. Great Grandparents' Headstone is the large curved top Stone on the bank just behind the flag pole. I know My Grandfather lived at Warhill, then Tigwell, then again at Warhill before moving to Oxenbourne in 1889/90 as Shepherd for Mr Berry. Grandfather sadly passed away in 1913, when my Father was 2 years old.

After Easter I will sort through what I have to see if there might be any additions or information I can add to an already wonderfully informative site, full of so many memories !.

I know I have an original copy of the 'tar gang', picture, unfortunately I don't think it is dated. I know my Father worked as a Gardener at Leydene House, before working for George Atkinson, (Snr). I would say that photograph was taken in the 1930's, my Father was born 1911, and my Parents married in 1940.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 19 April 2014

Good Morning, having looked again at the photographs, I am quite sure Hazel is right, the first of the Photographs is undoubtedly a 'Tar Gang', the second Photograph is not connected and I know from my late father was taken at Leydene House when he worked there as a Gardener. Truly though as you say they were engaged in Road building, if only temporarily and not Public Roads.

Wishing you a very happy Easter, sincerely yours, Jim Cook



The gardeners on road-making duties at Leydene House. Jack Cook is fourth from the left at the front, Fred Gibbs with watering can.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 20th August 2016

You may well already have this photograph or at least seen it. Sadly I cannot put an exact date to it, but my guess is 1950's ?. It is very clear from the background that the photograph was taken in the Cricket Field, behind the Blacksmiths Shop. These are the East Meon Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters.



I know the faces of most but cannot now put names to all of them, however I am sure someone somewhere can. George, (Shaver), Cook, (my Fathers Brother), is front row with the lighter coloured Coat. My father, Jack Cook, is looking over his brothers right shoulder. Extreme right, (the very tall man), is Jack Appleby. Fred Gibbs and Jack Porter are back row directly in front of the School. Herbie Goddard is back row to the left. As I say I know the other faces but exact names escape me at the moment.

Regards and best wishes, Jim Cook



Just as a point of my Family interest, the Gravestone at the top of the Bank on the left as you enter East Meon Churchyard is my great grandfather, I think prior to that my Paternal Ancestors came from the Candover Valley. I know grandfather lived at Warhill, then Tigwell, then back to Warhill before moving to Oxenbourne in November 1889. I can only assume great grandfather was at Warhill and Tigwell too, as Shepherd. The date on the Stone appears to be 1890. (I do have the records, but from memory).

Addendum, 23rd August 2016

I think my family must have been short of names, John appears to have been used frequently. It is great grandfather at the top of the Bank as you enter the churchyard. My grandfather was also John, my Father too was John, (but always known as 'Jack'). My grandfather's grave in East Meon churchyard is against the Road going up the Hyde, I managed to find it while my father was still alive, it had a stone then, albeit broken, that is now gone.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 20th August 2016

I may have told you I am restoring an original Shepherds Hut that I had always believed was used by my grandfather. This time last year it was all but a complete wreck. As I have dismantled and pieced it back together I have found a number of names in it.



The Shepherds Hut which Jim Cook is restoring

One name I had known was there and had always puzzled over is, 'Le Roy Lewis, Westbury Park'. It had always been a mystery to me as to how or why that name should be in a Hut I know to have been owned and used by the Berry Family at Oxenbourne. (I too had used it in my early working days at Oxenbourne, but only as a food store, not to sleep in as a Shepherd would have done). To be quite blunt the disparity between the two families, their perceived wealth and flock sizes, didn't equate. I then found the name 'Treble' in the timber of the Hut. Research from my own sources point me to T. Treble, living in West Meon, being Farm Agent for Le Roy Lewis in the 1890's. I drew the conclusion, with a degree of sadness, that perhaps the Hut had originally been owned by Le Roy Lewis and perhaps my Grandfather had not used it after all.

These old Huts had a lockable medicine cupboard situated at the back, (the back as entering from the door end). The one in my Hut had all but been destroyed by fire, but as the back support collapsed the front of the Cupboard apparently fell to the floor and survived. As I very gently cleaned this original timber I found the name John Cook, (My Grandfather), written in a beautiful hand, penciled faintly on the inside of the Cupboard Door, and at least two rows of figures indicating the number of Tegn raised. I have a sample of my Grandfathers handwritten figures and they are without doubt formed very similarly, especially the figure 3. Given that my Grandfather died suddenly in 1913, still employed as Shepherd to Henry Berry & Son Oxenbourne Farm, and following the 1904 fire in Westbury House when their flock, and it appears the Westbury Park Estate, began to dwindle, I feel it highly likely that this Hut changed hands and was indeed used by my Grandfather for at least two seasons.



Inscription on Shepherd's hut, 'H.Le.Roy.Lewis.Esq. (The owner of Westbury House in the first decades of the 20th century)



Inscription 'T.Treble'. He was the Agent of the Westbury Estate in the 1890s.



Jim Cook wrote: *This is the very faint image written on the inside of the original medicine cupboard door of the old shepherds hut I am currently restoring. I had started to clean it before I even realised there was any writing there, (hence the scratch marks). It is almost invisible to the naked eye, but super macro close up photographs and further computer enhancement clearly show 'Mr' then something faint that could be the stroke of 'J' for John, above the name Cook. Just below that is what appears to be a date although this is not clear and 'John' written in a very rounded hand. There are also columns of figures headed 'Tegn', presumably relating to the number of Tegn raised in a given year.)*

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 20th August 2016

The two attached Photographs are just an afterthought after you mentioning Le Roy Lewis from my Shepherds Hut. These are the two linking names carved in the inner timbers of my Hut. At something in the region of 125 years old, give or take a few years, they are pretty amazing. The words "Le Roy Lewis Westbury Park" are also just visible, written in pencil, on the timbers of another part of the Hut. (Whilst I have not been able to save all the inner timbers due to their rotten, wood worm infested, or burnt, (the Hut was partly burned by fire at some time), state. I have saved these and replaced them in their original position in the Hut. According to The Hampshire Down Sheep Flock Record Books, T Treble, (living at West Meon), was farm Agent for Le Roy Lewis, Westbury Park, during the 1890's.

All best wishes, Jim Cook

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 20th August 2016

It is still a work in progress, also space in my Garden is at a premium. However, I have just taken these two photographs in the past few minutes. It has yet to have another, darker, coat of paint. The steps are original as are the wheels and corrugated sheeting. Although not visible it also has an original Stove inside. The doors, and most of the timber framework of course, are newly made. Originally Made by Taskers of Waterloo Works, Andover, Hampshire. Date of original manufacture, around 1890/95, (give or take a year or two either way). Although, other than the names of Le Roy Lewis and T Treble carved in the lining Timbers, I have no other proof, I believe it to have been originally used at Westbury Park, (Le Roy Lewis had a sizeable Flock of Hampshire Down Sheep), and then from sometime in the latter part of the first decade of the 1900's, it moved to the ownership of Henry Berry and Son, Oxenbourne Farm, (Also with a flock of Hampshire Down Sheep), where it remained until my ownership. Irrespective of my own family connection with this Shepherds Hut, I am delighted to have been able to own and restore it.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad, 24th August 2016



The attached is the only photograph I have of my grandfather, John Cook, working as shepherd. Undated, it was taken sometime at the turn of the 19th/20th century. From the background hills it appears to be in the road at South Farm, although I cannot be sure, the buildings are unfamiliar. (Henry Berry also farmed at Manor Farm, Langrish). My grandfather was shepherd to Henry Berry, (and Son), Oxenbourne Farm, from 1890 until his death in 1913. The sheep are certainly of the Hampshire Down breed, the Berry flock breed, (later, 1906 I believe), registered as Flock No 321 in the Hampshire Down Flock Records).

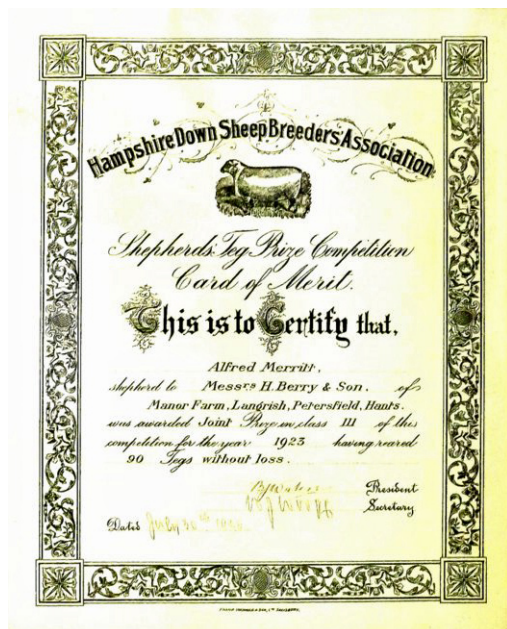
Until 1921 the Flock Record shows Henry Berry as farming at Manor Farm, Langrish, although I know he was at Oxenbourne Farm too. It would have been common practice to walk sheep the relatively short distance between the two farms. I well remember, even in the late 1950's, walking (droving) sheep from Oxenbourne to the railway station in Petersfield, or even farther afield to Beauworth for rented feed.

All best wishes, Jim Cook

PS, the Children's VE Day Party, in the archives. I am seated far side of the table, wearing a Beret and holding a cup up to my mouth !!!!!.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad August 26th 2016

Attached is a Certificate awarded by the Hampshire Down Sheep Breeders Association to Shepherd Alfred Merritt, Shepherd to Henry Berry & Son. 1923.



This throws up another anomaly, The Certificate Shows Henry Berry & Son, of Manor Farm, Langrish. The Hampshire Down Sheep Breeders Records for 1923 show Henry Berry & Son only of Oxenbourne Farm, East Meon. I do know Henry Berry farmed at Manor Farm, Langrish, earlier records show that address, but I am not quite sure when they left there. I had always thought the 1920's.

Alfred, (Alf), Merritt was married to my Fathers Sister, Charlotte, (Lottie or Lotte). They lived at Oxenbourne, (Giants Cottage). He served in India during the WW1 period. On his return to England he would have been Shepherd to Henry Berry & Son.

He would most certainly have used the Shepherd's Hut I am restoring. The Certificate is in my own Collection. I know there is another awarded to him for a different year, (I believe that one was at Queen Elizabeth Country Park). (Oxenbourne Farm included much of Butser Hill that is now part of the Park). It was 'Uncle' Alf who showed me how to castrate Lambs using a knife and his own teeth ?, (a common practice among Shepherds of the time). I still have that knife in my collection.

All best wishes, Jim

Footnote: The East Meon Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters.

Jim Cook to Michael Blakstad 20th August 2016

1893 Ancient Order of Foresters FRIENDLY SOCIETY, LIPHOOK DISTRICT. The Financial Return OF THE COURT "MEON VALLEY," No. 7591, For the Year ended 31st December, 1893, HELD AT THE "GEORGE INN," EASTMEON. 1893.  1893. Officers for Half-Year ending 30th June, 1894. J. COOK, C.R. A. ABURBOW, S.C.R. A. ADAMS, TREASURER. MEDICAL OFFICER—DR. BATTEN. SECRETARY—H. THIBE. COURT MEETINGS—Every Fourth Tuesday. Members' Absence not to exceed 12 weeks at a time. Members must be clear on the Books on the 25th December, 1894, or a fine of 1s. will be imposed. REG. A. W. CHILDS, PRINTED, PETERBOROUGH.																																																															
BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1893. <table> <tr> <th colspan="2">SICK AND FUNERAL FUND.</th></tr> <tr> <th>RECEIPTS.</th><th>PAYMENTS.</th></tr> <tr> <td>By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 169 0 11½</td><td>By Payments to Sick Members ... £ s. d. 22 2 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Entrance Fees ... 0 7 6</td><td>Contributions to District Funeral Fund ... 32 3 5½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Contributions received ... 68 5 0</td><td>Funeral Allowance on death of Bro. Arthur Jones ... 12 0 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Interest on Monies in P.O.S. Bank ... 4 1 0</td><td>Balance ... 187 9 1½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Funeral Allowance repaid from District ... 12 0 0</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Total ... £253 14 5½</td><td>Total ... £253 14 5½</td></tr> </table> <table> <tr> <th colspan="2">MANAGEMENT FUND.</th></tr> <tr> <th>RECEIPTS.</th><th>PAYMENTS.</th></tr> <tr> <td>By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 14 12 8½</td><td>By Cash Paid: Auditors ... £ s. d. 0 8 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Contributions received ... 25 8 2</td><td>Secretary's Salary ... 5 7 6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Goods ... 0 12 2</td><td>Delegates ... 0 18 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Fines ... 0 3 3</td><td>Woodwards ... 0 14 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Certificates ... 0 3 0</td><td>Surgeon, Dr. Batten ... 14 11 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Funeral Nomination ... 0 1 0</td><td>Printing ... 4 6 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Donation, Mrs. Forbes ... 2 2 0</td><td>District Management Fund ... 4 2 4</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rev. J. M. Tomlinson ... 1 1 0</td><td>For Goods ... 1 12 8</td></tr> <tr> <td>Messrs. Henty and Sons ... 1 0 0</td><td>Postages ... 0 7 6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Dr. Batten ... 0 10 0</td><td>Treasurer ... 1 10 0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mr. H. Cohen ... 0 10 0</td><td>Boat of Court Room ... 0 11 3</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>H.C. Levy ... 0 5 7½</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Special Levy ... 0 18 0</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>District Levy ... 13 18 3</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total ... £48 3 3½</td><td>Total ... £48 3 3½</td></tr> </table> <table> <tr> <th colspan="2">SUBSIDIARY FUND.</th></tr> <tr> <th>RECEIPTS.</th><th>PAYMENTS.</th></tr> <tr> <td>By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 6 4 8½</td><td>By Contributions to Sick Members ... £ s. d. 0 15 11½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Contributions from Members ... 3 10 6</td><td>Donation to wife of the late Bro. Jones ... 1 0 0</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Balance ... 7 19 3</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total ... £9 15 2½</td><td>Total ... £9 15 2½</td></tr> </table>		SICK AND FUNERAL FUND.		RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.	By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 169 0 11½	By Payments to Sick Members ... £ s. d. 22 2 0	Entrance Fees ... 0 7 6	Contributions to District Funeral Fund ... 32 3 5½	Contributions received ... 68 5 0	Funeral Allowance on death of Bro. Arthur Jones ... 12 0 0	Interest on Monies in P.O.S. Bank ... 4 1 0	Balance ... 187 9 1½	Funeral Allowance repaid from District ... 12 0 0		Total ... £253 14 5½	Total ... £253 14 5½	MANAGEMENT FUND.		RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.	By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 14 12 8½	By Cash Paid: Auditors ... £ s. d. 0 8 0	Contributions received ... 25 8 2	Secretary's Salary ... 5 7 6	Goods ... 0 12 2	Delegates ... 0 18 0	Fines ... 0 3 3	Woodwards ... 0 14 0	Certificates ... 0 3 0	Surgeon, Dr. Batten ... 14 11 0	Funeral Nomination ... 0 1 0	Printing ... 4 6 0	Donation, Mrs. Forbes ... 2 2 0	District Management Fund ... 4 2 4	Rev. J. M. Tomlinson ... 1 1 0	For Goods ... 1 12 8	Messrs. Henty and Sons ... 1 0 0	Postages ... 0 7 6	Dr. Batten ... 0 10 0	Treasurer ... 1 10 0	Mr. H. Cohen ... 0 10 0	Boat of Court Room ... 0 11 3		H.C. Levy ... 0 5 7½		Special Levy ... 0 18 0		District Levy ... 13 18 3	Total ... £48 3 3½	Total ... £48 3 3½	SUBSIDIARY FUND.		RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.	By Balance from last Account ... £ s. d. 6 4 8½	By Contributions to Sick Members ... £ s. d. 0 15 11½	Contributions from Members ... 3 10 6	Donation to wife of the late Bro. Jones ... 1 0 0		Balance ... 7 19 3	Total ... £9 15 2½	Total ... £9 15 2½
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