

KILMINGTON

Kilminster parish, in Somerset until 1896, lies on the eastern edge of the former Selwood forest bordered by the parishes of Brewham, Witham Friary, Maiden Bradley, Mere and Stourton. As Yarnfield in Maiden Bradley and Brook and Gasper in Stourton were also in Somerset only about half the parish bordered on Wiltshire before 1896.¹ The church is about 4 miles north-west of Mere, five miles east of Bruton and six miles north-east of Wincanton, as the crow flies. The parish is four miles wide at its widest in the south but only about one and a half mile from north to south. The parish was assessed at 2,750 a. (1,113 ha.) in 1841 but 2,876 a. (1,164 ha.) in 1901. Although there does not appear to have been any major alterations to the boundary there were differences over small areas when the meresmen reported to the Ordnance Survey in the 1880s and the latter probably measured the area more accurately than previous surveyors.²

The parish was bounded on the west by a steep, narrow, wooded strip of clay between the Jurassic beds of the former forest and the upper greensand that underlies most of Kilminster parish providing a good sandy loam. On the north steep-sided Long Knoll, also known as Knowle Hill, reaches a high point of 288 m. (945 ft) on the old county boundary. The land slopes eastward and southward from between 245 and 280 m (804—918 ft) on the western and northern boundaries to 160 m. (525 ft) in the south east before rising again to White Sheet Hill although its upper parts (reaching 241m. (802 ft) are beyond the boundary. Long Knoll and White Sheet hill are composed of chalk as is the land immediately around them. The parish has no natural boundaries except the top of Long Knoll ridge but the southern boundary is marked by an ancient highway. The source of the river Wylye is at

¹ Below, local govt. This article was completed in 2017.

² Census; TNA, OS 26/9288; 27/4689.

Brachers Well or Blatchwell in Kilmington. The river runs north of Kilmington Street, above ground in places, before disappearing underground to reappear beyond Coombe Barn Farm near the eastern boundary.³

COMMUNICATIONS

The road along the southern boundary, variously known as Harroway, Tower Road, Long Lane and White Sheet Lane, a continuation of Hardway in Brewham, was clearly part of an important route from Bruton and Castle Cary in Somerset to Hindon and Salisbury in Wiltshire. It may be an older route as it appears to link the Fosse way in Somerset with Old Sarum and the Winchester road and it passes the iron-age hillfort on White Sheet Hill. It was provided with milestones in 1750 and was turnpiked by the Wincanton Trust under an Act of 1756 as far west as Kilmington Common. The presence of public houses and smithies indicated that it was widely used including by drovers. Although it remained a main road in 1896 by then traffic used the road through Mere and in 1893 it was a grass-grown lane between Kilmington Common and White Sheet Hill.⁴ In the mid 20th century it was described as the Old London Road or Roman Road.⁵ A section is used to give access to a carpark at White Sheet and the route forms part of the Leland Trail. West of Kilmington Common, the section now known as Tower Road, was never turnpiked. Another ancient route, partly known as Cokers Lane and Harepit Lane, appears to have divided Kilmington from Norton Ferris running south-east from Huntersway, the old road along the east of Selwood forest, via Berkeley Farm to Long Lane. The Huntersway was also turnpiked from Maiden Bradley to Bruton and partly at ran just inside the north-west boundary.⁶

³ Geol. Surv. Map, 1:50000 sheet 297 solid and drift (1972 edn); OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1886 edn); OS Map 1:25000, sheet 142 (1997 edn); J. Collinson, *Hist. Som.* III, 39.

⁴ J.B. Bentley and B.J. Murless, *Somerset Roads*, II, 68; below, econ. hist.

⁵ WSHC, F2/255/135/1; F4/300/135.

⁶ M. McGarvie, *The Bounds of Selwood Forest* (1978), 12—13, 26—7; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SE (1885), SW (1886 edn); OS Map 1:25000, sheet 142 (1997 edn); SHC, tithe award.

The main routes within the parish today run north—south from Yarnfield via Kilmington Common and from Warminster and Maiden Bradley via Norton Ferris to Stourton and beyond. The two are linked in the parish by Cote Lane, recorded in 1738⁷ and classed as a private road in 1821, and Kilmington Street from which Church Lane runs north to join Butts Lane, the original route from Yarnfield. Butts Lane, which ran south from Dead Woman's Corner, possibly marking a roadside burial, past the church and across the common to the present Tower Road, formed part of the main road from London to Barnstaple in 1675 and was known as Bradley Road in 1821. The northern section remains in use as a local road but the south-western section, was classed as a private road in 1821 and known as Green Ride in 1904, is now a bridlepath. In 1675 Church Lane appears to have continued beyond the church across the common and Huntersway to Witham Friary and further south another road across the common to Brewham was still in use in 1795 but was classed as a private road to the parish gravel pit in 1821.⁸ The roads across the common including the road from Yarnfield appear to have been unfenced. It may have been one of these roads that before the disafforestation of Selwood cost carts 4d. and packhorses 1d. to cross in summer with both carts and packsaddles being branded.⁹

Before 1736 the Yarnfield road was diverted west away from the church in a straight line south east across the common and Long Lane towards Stourton. Still called New Road, it replaced Butts Lane, and may have led to the development of the settlement called Kilmington Common.¹⁰ Although not turnpiked it is shown as a main road in 1822, having been made into a stoned road in 1815 at a cost of £179 to the earl of Ilchester, following inclosure.¹¹ In 1896 Mere Rural District wanted it to be officially classified as a main road

⁷ WSHC 383/980.

⁸ Ogilby, *Britannia*, map 32; WSHC 383/203; SHC, Q/RDe 127; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1904 edn).

⁹ TNA, E134/1654—5/Hil 1.

¹⁰ Dors. HC, D/FSI, map of Kilmington 1736; SHC, DD/WY, map SOM/34; tithe award.

¹¹ J.B. Harley and R.W. Dunning, *Somerset Maps* (SRS 76), map 1822; Dors HC, D/FSI, box 177A.

because it was used by the inhabitants of several parishes to get to the railway station at Witham, which was as close as the railway came to Kilminster¹².

The other main north—south road traversed the parish through Norton Ferris where it crosses two lanes including Harepit Lane which continued eastwards as Field Lane meeting near the boundary before continuing to Kingston Deverill, although that route was no longer in existence by 1839.¹³ The road was turnpiked by the Wincanton Trust in 1798 as far as the northern boundary and was a main road from 1880. The milestone at Norton Ferris gave distances to Maiden Bradley and Frome.¹⁴ There were two turnpike gates in the parish; Yarnfield in the north, demolished c. 1876 and Norton on the road to Maiden Bradley.¹⁵ Strangely there was no gate to the turnpiked Long Lane.

A network of lanes originally crossed the fields and commons, some of which survive as tracks and footpaths. The closure of one such way caused friction with the Hartgills in the mid 16th century.¹⁶ By the 20th century the upkeep of these lanes and paths was sometimes a matter of contention between the local authority and landowners.¹⁷ Kilminster Street was plagued by winter flooding in the early 20th century and in 1916 direction posts were requested.¹⁸

As late as the mid 20th century Kilminster had no bus or other transport services.¹⁹ In the early 21st century there were bus services to Frome, Gillingham, Warminster, Mere, Salisbury and Trowbridge but only five each way per week on Tuesday to Friday.²⁰

¹² WSHC, G9/100/1.

¹³ SHC, T/PH/vch 109; tithe award; Dors. HC, D/DSI, napn1765; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SE (1885).

¹⁴ Bentley and Murless, *Som. Roads*, II, 68; NHBL 1198421.

¹⁵ Bentley and Murless, *Som. Roads*, II, 28; SHC, tithe award.

¹⁶ Harley Dunning, *Som. Maps*, maps 1782, 1822; TNA, STAC 3/3/1; REQ 2/25/276; REQ 2/124/36.

¹⁷ WSHC, F2/255/135/1; F4/300/135; 3363/1.

¹⁸ WSHC, G9/100/3.

¹⁹ H.E. Bracey, *Social Provision in Rural Wilts.* (1952), 194.

²⁰ www.bustimes.org.uk: accessed 9 Jan. 2017.

SETTLEMENT

White Sheet Hill on the south-east boundary contains several earthworks from the Neolithic to the Iron Age some of which fall within the parish. However, an undated but probably c. 1600²¹ perambulation of Norton Ferris manor refers to the boundary as passing over or between ‘great barrows’, a stone called white cross, stone heaps by the ‘castle side’ and ditches.²² A Neolithic causewayed camp and a second possible Neolithic enclosure lie either side of the down. The former is cut into by the old road to Hindon and by a barrow. Several dykes, of uncertain date may have been designed to protect access to the hill but are crossed by the same road. Sir Richard Colt Hoare excavated four possible Bronze-Age barrows on the downs and Bronze-Age flint tools have been found in the area. Hoare is also said to have opened the Bronze-Age barrows on top of Long Knoll and at Jacks Castle Tumulus on the south-western boundary.²³ A few Neolithic flints and one Roman tessera were found near Kilmington Common.²⁴

The names of Kilmington and Norton imply settlement well before Domesday. Kilmington includes the personal name Cynhelm but it is not clear if Norton was north of a settlement within the parish or outside.²⁵ The parish has probably always been an area of scattered farmsteads mainly along the road from the church south west along the present Kilmington Street and turning north past Berkeley Farm and up through Norton Ferris. A few farms like Homestalls lay away from this line of settlement. Norton Ferris appears to have been the more populous tithing at least until the mid 17th century but later seems to have

²¹ Only survives as a later copy.

²² WSHC, 383/198.

²³ Wilts. HER, MWI 474, 563—9, 621; Phelps, *Hist. Som.*, II. 170.

²⁴ Wilts. HER, MWI 35, 3.7

²⁵ Ekwall, *Oxf. Dict. Eng. Pl-Names*, 276, 344.

shrunk to several farmsteads and dependent cottages.²⁶ At some date, probably from the early 17th century encroachment began on Kilminster Common and by 1792 there were 17 encroachments including several cottages west of New Road.²⁷ There was also considerable cottage settlement east of New Road along the boundary of the common, including the Silk House and a few houses, which survive. Possibly they accommodated people dispossessed by the absorption of small farms into larger during the 18th century.²⁸ At the 1821 inclosure after repeated attempts to get them thrown open the old encroachments were accepted as old inclosures and additionally the strip of common between the road and the cottages along the east side was allocated as garden plots.²⁹

The only houses known to predate 1700 are the farmhouses now known as the Manor House and Norton Ferris Farm, and possibly Homestalls and they have all been greatly altered.³⁰ Cote Lane farmhouse is probably c. 1700 and several 18th-century houses and cottages survive notably The Silkhouse near Cote Lane, Endford and Manor Farm in Kilminster Street and Norton Manor Farm.³¹ The last post office was kept in a cottage on the south side of Kilminster Street built in 1781 as a pair of cottages.³² At that date there were c. 75 houses in the parish built of stone and thatched, as the older houses still are, but only 15 houses were in Norton Ferris.³³ During the 19th and 20th centuries infill development, redevelopment of farmsteads such as Street Farm and other existing sites has produced a denser concentration of housing along Kilminster Street and also large numbers of farmbuildings and workshops have been lost throughout the parish.³⁴

²⁶ SHC, tithe award; below this section.

²⁷ SHC, DD/WY, map Som/34.

²⁸ WSHC 383/203; below, econ. hist.

²⁹ WSHC 383/321—2; SHC, Q/RDE 121.

³⁰ NHBL 1283907, 1318460; below, landownership.

³¹ NHBL 131154, 1318478, 1198324, 1198399.

³² Datestone; SHC, tithe award.

³³ M. McDermott and S. Berry, *Edmund Rack's Survey of Somerset* (Taunton, 2011), pp. 239.

³⁴ SHC, tithe award; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1886 edn); OS Map 1:25000, sheet 142 (1997 edn).

In 1910 many houses were in poor repair, some were condemned, in ruins or converted to other uses. Low two and four-roomed cottages were common.³⁵ Houses were still largely of stone and thatch or tile as were non-domestic buildings; brick and slate were rare. Ruins were recorded at Norton Ferris, but mainly in Kilminster Street and Common.³⁶ Nearly all the cottage property at the Common was replaced in the 20th century. There were 9 derelict houses c. 1920 and two fit only for demolition when it was proposed that the district council should build a block of four houses and two pairs of semi-detached houses. Cost was probably the cause of delay and the block of four was completed north of Kilminster Street near Street Farm only in 1928 and one pair of semis was added in 1936.³⁷ It was agreed to build further houses in 1939.³⁸ From the 1930s to 1950s several new houses and bungalows were built on or between existing plots but in 1951 of 78 houses only nine were totally satisfactory, 15 were suitable for rural workers' housing, 17 had minor defects, 34 required repair and structural alterations and three were beyond repair.³⁹ By the 1980s there were 20 local authority houses including eight flats and two pairs of semi-detached houses on the south side of Kilminster Street and the old sawmill site was being redeveloped for housing, one of several small private developments off Kilminster Street.⁴⁰ A few of the larger terraced cottages survive but notorious rows like the Drang have been replaced by modern houses and the nine cottages opposite Street Farm have been turned into a single house and outbuildings.⁴¹

POPULATION

³⁵ Below, soc. hist.

³⁶ TNA, IR 58/73468.

³⁷ WSHC, G9/132/29; G9/600/1; TNA, HLG 49/588.

³⁸ WSHC 3363/1.

³⁹ WSHC, G9/132/38; G9/770/145—156.

⁴⁰ WSHC 3327/9/1—2.

⁴¹ SHC, tithe award; TNA, IR 58/73468—9.

Only seven people were recorded in 1086⁴² but 44 individuals were taxed in 1327.⁴³ In 1641 there were 125 subsidy and poll taxpayers in Kilmington and 234 in Norton Ferris.⁴⁴

Population pressure presumably led to permits for Kilmington residents to build houses on the waste in 1656.⁴⁵ There may have been a significant rise again in the 18th century as from 1770 to 1830 baptisms were 50 per cent higher than they had been previously.⁴⁶ The population rose steeply from 504 in 1801 to 635 in 1841 then to 640 in 1851 before dropping to 587 in 1861. It rose again to 601 in 1871 but then declined sharply to 477 in 1881 and 369 in 1891. Between 1911 and 1921 it fell from 363 to 298 then remained fairly stable until it rose from 292 in 2001 to 328 in 2011.⁴⁷

LANDOWNERSHIP

Kilmington would appear to have been a single manor in the 11th century when Norton probably formed part of the Royal manor of Bruton. Unlike Kilmington Norton does not appear to have had rights in Selwood forest for which Shaftesbury abbey paid 7s. 8d. a year.⁴⁸ By the 12th century there were manors of Kilmington and Norton, later Norton Ferris. In addition, there were several freeholds. From the 16th to 19th centuries there were major changes in landownership as the manors were broken up and more freeholds were created. Both the Hartgills at Kilmington and the Madoxes at Norton Ferris were large families who seem to have regularly divided land between themselves as well as selling off holdings, presumably to raise money. Former customary holdings and old and new freeholds were bought up, mainly by the Hoares in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.⁴⁹ The territorial

⁴² Domesday, 271.

⁴³ F. Dickinson, Kirby's Quest etc (SRS 3), 97—8.

⁴⁴ A. J. Howard and T.L. Stoate, (eds), Somerset Protestation Returns (Bristol, 1975), 245.

⁴⁵ E.H. Bates, Quarter Session Records, 1646—60 (SRS 28), 281.

⁴⁶ SHC, A/BKH 1.

⁴⁷ Census.

⁴⁸ Cal. Pat. 1350—4, 100; Valor Eccl. I, 278; below, this section.

⁴⁹ Below, this section; SHC, Q/REI 28/3, 3a; tithe award.

integrity of the two manors, previously clearly delineated in the west and east of the parish respectively,⁵⁰ was further destroyed by numerous exchanges of land from the 17th century culminating in the 344 a. of land exchanged between Sir Richard Colt Hoare, the earl of Ilchester and Henry Hobhouse in 1812, which makes it very difficult to identify the extent of medieval and early modern estates.⁵¹ The break-up of these newer estates, mainly in late 19th and early 20th century, resulted in 45 per cent of farmland being owner-occupied in 1986.⁵²

KILMINGTON MANOR

Kilminster was held in 1066 by Alsige but later belonged to Serlo de Burcy (d. 1086) who granted it with one of his daughters to the convent at Shaftesbury. However, he also had a ½ hide in Kilminster that had been part of the royal manor of Bruton. His heir was his other daughter Geva firstly wife of Martin and secondly of William de Falaise.⁵³ Shaftesbury abbey held Kilminster manor of the Crown by barony until the Dissolution although c. 1286 it was held under the abbey by Richard of Kilminster.⁵⁴

The manor was held by the Crown⁵⁵ until 1544 when William Stourton, Baron Stourton, a free tenant of the manor,⁵⁶ purchased Kilminster with the capital messuage and demesnes, at least three tenant farms and the advowson.⁵⁷ It was later claimed that in 1546 he had settled the manor with other estates for life on his mistress Agnes Rhys who took possession. After William's death in 1548 Agnes was put out of the manor and with her

⁵⁰ WSHC 383/198.

⁵¹ WSHC 383/205; Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/3.

⁵² TNA, MAF 68/6032.

⁵³ *Domesday*, 231, 271; J.F.A. Mason, 'The Date of the Geld Rolls', *EHR* (Apr. 1954), 283—4; below, this section, Berkeley farm.

⁵⁴ Dugdale, *Mon.*, II, 462—3, 482, 487; *Feudal Aids*, VI, 511; Dugdale, *Mon.*, II, 462—3, 482, 487; F. Dickinson, *Kirby's Quest etc* (SRS 3), 67; *Valor Eccl.* I, 278.

⁵⁵ TNA, REQ 2/18/79; SC 6/HenVIII/655.

⁵⁶ WSHC 1728/70; TNA, SC 6/HenVIII/655.

⁵⁷ *L&P Hen. VIII*, XIX, p. 40; TNA, SC 6/HenVIII/660; C. Brett, *Crown revenues from Somerset and Dorset* (SRS 96), 43.

husband Edward Baynton entered into litigation.⁵⁸ The claim does not seem to have succeeded and William's son Charles, Baron Stourton held the manor until he was attainted and executed for murdering William and John Hartgill in 1557 when it again passed to the Crown. It was not restored to Charles's son John, Baron Stourton, with the title and was let by the Crown for over £30 a year. The lessee in 1585 was Michael Cobbe, a royal sergeant at arms, who in 1586 assigned it to Henry Willoughby one of the manor tenants and receiver of crown lands in Somerset and Dorset.⁵⁹ Presumably Henry (d. 1607) bought the manor outright, for a fee farm rent to the Crown, for his daughter Margaret who married John Hartgill, owner of the demesne c. 1591⁶⁰ as Henry was said to have owned no property in Somerset in 1597 when he acquired Norton Ferris.⁶¹

Although in 1602 John Hartgill (d. 1655) settled the manor on himself for life and then on his eldest son John,⁶² and appears to have granted him estates on his marriage to Anne Gunter, he later had a long-running dispute with him over money.⁶³ The elder John left his unsettled estates to his son Cuthbert, giving rise to many of the large number of Hartgill lawsuits.⁶⁴ John the younger as heir apparent sold his inheritance in a farm in Norton Ferris in 1632,⁶⁵ although he claimed in 1634 that he was forced,⁶⁶ more property in 1637 to the brothers Edward and William Madox⁶⁷ and in 1640 Giffords farm (37 a.) north of Kilmington

⁵⁸ TNA, C3/29/14; C3/1335/22.

⁵⁹ VCH Som. VII, 172; TNA, C 142/114/49; E 178/4455; SC 2/227/123; Cal. SP Dom. 1547—80, 96; 1553—8, p. 302; SHC, DD/BR/wr 27; WSHC, 865/196.

⁶⁰ In 1628 he was said to have sold the manor to John Hartgill but the date was not remembered and the deeds had been taken to London by John: TNA, E 134/4ChasI/Trin 1.

⁶¹ TNA, C 3/353/14; E 178/4455; SC 2/227/123; WSHC, 865/196; GEC Complete Peerage, XII.1, 205—8; Brett, Crown revenues, 19, 50, 207, 235.

⁶² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301.

⁶³ TNA, C 3/353/14; PROB 11/248/294; Cal. SP Dom. 1634—5, 152; E.H. Bates, Quarter Sessions Records 1625—39 (SRS 24), 298.

⁶⁴ TNA, PROB 11/248/294; below, this section. For lawsuits see TNA, C6/21/77, C 6/131/76 and many others in C5, C6, C7, C9.

⁶⁵ WSHC 383/570.

⁶⁶ Cal. SP 1634—5, 152.

⁶⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128.

Street to Richard Madox who in 1676 sold it to Sir Stephen Fox.⁶⁸ John Hartgill predeceased his father leaving a son, also John, who succeeded his grandfather as lord of the manor in 1655 under a settlement of 1652.⁶⁹ John immediately sold the capital messuage and demesnes to his uncle William Hartgill but settled the manor on himself for life and then on his infant son John, who presumably died young.⁷⁰

In 1678 John Hartgill with his wife Katherine and his then eldest son Ferdinando mortgaged the 200 a. inclosed by his predecessors from Kilmington heath⁷¹ and in 1684 they sold off the customary holdings including some to their cousin Henry Hartgill of Maiden Bradley, who also acted as trustee for several Hartgill land sales.⁷² Those sales created a number of freeholds and at least 13 pews in the church were said in the 18th century to have formerly been held by the Hartgills for their lands.⁷³ One example was the modern Street Farm, a copyhold farm sold in 1684, which after passing through many hands was purchased by the Hoare estate in 1855.⁷⁴

The 200 a. of enclosed heath was sold in two parcels to Ferdinando by his father in 1688 and 1691 and in 1722 sold to trustees for Sir Stephen Fox and later added to the demesne farm.⁷⁵ Other unsold land appears to have been divided between the surviving younger children John (d. 1748), Arabella (d. 1711), and Nehemiah (d. by 1766) but was largely bought by the Hoares before 1795.⁷⁶

The lordship descended to John's elder son Ferdinando (d. sp. 1736) who held courts and settled the manor in 1724, in default of issue, on his brother John (d. 1748). John's son

⁶⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, abstract of title c. 1676; box 301. In 1638 Quarter Sessions told John Hartgill and his son John to sell the reversion of an estate to provide the son with money: Bates, Quarter Sessions 1625—39, 298.

⁶⁹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301; WSHC, 383/568; SHC, DD/X/TNN 1.

⁷⁰ Below, this section.

⁷¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300.

⁷² SHC, DD/X/TNN 1; WSHC, 383/567—8, 574.

⁷³ WSHC, 383/567, 573; 2063/33; SHC, Q/REI/28/3.

⁷⁴ WSHC 1617/1/6; SHC, tithe award.

⁷⁵ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128, 300—1.

⁷⁶ SHC, Q/REI/28/3; WSHC, 2063/16, 33.

Ferdinando came of age c. 1753⁷⁷ and in 1764 he sold the manor to Henry Hoare (d. 1785).

The Hartgills were heavily in debt to the Hoares but they retained a small leasehold for the life of Ferdinando's only child Dorothy or Dolly (d. 1838).⁷⁸

Henry Hoare's sons having predeceased him, his estate passed to his cousin and son-in-law Richard Hoare (cr. Bart 1786, d. 1787) and his son Sir Richard Colt Hoare who bought up many of the Hartgill-created freehold estates.⁷⁹ The manor descended with the Hoare's Stourton estates from Sir Richard Colt Hoare (d. 1836) to his brother Sir Henry (d. 1841) and Henry's son Sir Hugh (d. 1857) and nephew Sir Henry Ainslie Hoare (d. 1894). Sir Henry Hugh Arthur Hoare, cousin and heir of the last sold off the estates in the early 20th century but retained the lordship.⁸⁰

Fee farm rents

Liability for the Crown's fee farm rent of £16 19s. 1 ½ d.⁸¹ from the manor remained with the Hartgills until they sold the manor when it passed to the Hoares.⁸² In 1679 Stephen Fox, who had secured an undertaking from the Hartgills in 1675 when he bought the demesne that they would not charge him any of it,⁸³ bought the fee farm rent from Nicholas Johnson. It had been sold by Crown trustees in 1672 to Christopher Dominick who sold it in 1677 to Nicholas. Fox and his successors levied it entirely on the Hoare estate until it was discharged

⁷⁷ WSHC 383/573, 603; 2063/33; Phelps, *Hist. Som.*, II. 188; SHC, DD/X/TNN 1.

⁷⁸ SHC, Q/REI 28/3; DD/BT 3/6/2; WSHC, 383/30, 199—201, 574—5; 2063/33.

⁷⁹ WSHC 383/573; SHC, Q/REI/ 28/3&3a; tithe award.; R.C. Hoare, *Hist. Wilts: Hundred of Mere* (1822), 58—62.

⁸⁰ *VCH Som.* VII, 217; SHC, tithe award.

⁸¹ More than half the income recorded in 1540: TNA, SC6/HenVIII/655; E 179/169/173.

⁸² Brett, *Crown revenues from Somerset and Dorset* (SRS 96), 19, 43, 50, 100, 207; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, rentals 1779—1807.

⁸³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300, deeds.

c. 1806 by being purchased by Sir Richard Colt Hoare.⁸⁴ A separate fee farm rent of 4s. 5d. was levied on the capital messuage⁸⁵ until the earl of Ilchester purchased the rent in 1787.⁸⁶

Kilmington demesne, later Church farm

William, Baron Stourton, acquired the capital messuage or farm of Kilmington in 1544 to hold for 1/20th of a knight's fee but a few days later he sold it to the tenant William Hartgill, the highest taxpayer in the parish in 1524—5.⁸⁷ William Hartgill (d. 1557) was succeeded by his grandson Cuthbert Hartgill, who died in 1580 leaving his son John an infant.⁸⁸ The farm was held directly of the Crown independently of the manor, by this date for only 1/40th of a knight's fee.⁸⁹

In 1609 John Hartgill exchanged lands with several people presumably to improve the demesne farm.⁹⁰ After his death in 1655 his grandson and heir John Hartgill sold the capital messuage and land to his uncle William Hartgill.⁹¹ However, his father had sold over 50 a. to Sir John Lenthall in 1646, the sale to take effect after the death of John Hartgill the grandfather.⁹² Sir John released his purchase to his son Thomas who in 1655 settled it on himself with remainder to Katherine Johnson, probably daughter of Thomas Johnson of London. Sir John Lenthall and his trustees confirmed the grant to Thomas in 1663 when Thomas mortgaged the land to William Hartgill. He sold it outright to William in 1669 and Katherine Johnson, then wife of John Bull, sold her rights to William in 1672 and it was reintegrated with the demesne.⁹³

⁸⁴ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, rentals 1779—1807; box 177A, abstract of title.

⁸⁵ Brett, Crown revenues from Somerset and Dorset (SRS 96), 19, 43, 50, 100, 207.

⁸⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320B.

⁸⁷ L&P Hen. VIII, XIX, p. 40; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301; TNA, SC6/HenVIII/660.

⁸⁸ TNA, C 142/112/158; C 142/191/93; C. Brett, Crown revenues from Somerset and Dorset (SRS 96), 19, 43, 50, 100, 207.

⁸⁹ Brett, Crown revenues from Somerset and Dorset (SRS 96), 19, 43, 50, 100, 207.

⁹⁰ TNA, SC 2/227/123, f. 8.

⁹¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301.

⁹² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301.

⁹³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 301 and 319A, deeds.

Meanwhile William Hartgill appears to have become heavily indebted himself having mortgaged lands from 1667⁹⁴ and despite the objections of his son Henry who joined in the deed, sold the demesne estate then known as Kilmington farm, to John Fox in trust for his son Stephen in 1675 for £3,850, most of which was used to pay the mortgage debts although Henry accused his father of not giving him and his mother their share in the proceeds.⁹⁵ Sir Stephen Fox or his son added parts of the former Common, developed as a farm known as New House or Great Grounds.⁹⁶ In 1716 he was succeeded by his son Stephen who added the name Strangways in 1735 and acquired several titles before being created earl of Ilchester in 1756. The earl died in 1776 and was succeeded in turn by his son Henry Thomas Fox-Strangways (d. 1802) and Henry Stephen (d. 1858), the third earl,⁹⁷ who was followed by his half-brother William (d. 1865) and the latter's nephew Henry Edward Fox-Strangways (d.1905) who divided and sold the estate then known as Church farm in 1872.⁹⁸ Church and New House farms (485 a.) were acquired by Samuel Jarvis (d. 1898) and passed from him to the Stokes family but in 1924 Mrs Stokes split up the farms only retaining Great Ground, which passed to her daughter E. M. Stokes. The rest of New House farm (100a.) was sold to Mr R. H. Rugg and Church farm was divided between several farmers with Mr T. Colclough buying the farmstead and 129 a.⁹⁹

The medieval manor house was replaced c.1601 by Henry Willoughby, presumably for his daughter and son-in-law John Hartgill, but was said to have been built on the heath.¹⁰⁰ It had nine hearths in 1665.¹⁰¹ It stood north-west of the church and was L-shaped house with a block to the south west in 1736¹⁰² but appears have been rebuilt as a simple L-shaped

⁹⁴ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300—1.

⁹⁵ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, survey bk c. 1767, box 300 deeds; WSHC, 2063/33; TNA, C 5/496/1.

⁹⁶ WSHC, 383/645, 2063/16; S. Hobbs, *Gleanings from Wilts Par Regs* (WRS 63, Chippenham 2010), 135

⁹⁷ *VCH Som.* VI, 26; WSHC, 383/645.

⁹⁸ SHC, Q/REL 28/3; tithe award; DD/X/WBB 505; *VCH Som.* VII, 26.

⁹⁹ WSHC, G9/510/22—3; L8/1/3; IR TNA, IR 58/73468; England and Wales Nat. Probate Cal. [Sam. Jarvis].

¹⁰⁰ TNA, E134/7ChasI/Mich 20.

¹⁰¹ E. Dwelly, *Hearth Tax Returns*, I, 99.

¹⁰² Dors. HC, D/FSI, map of Kilmington, 1736.

farmhouse before 1800.¹⁰³ It was said in 1863 that the Hartgill house had been taken down ‘long ago.’¹⁰⁴ Known as Kilmington Farm, the farmhouse appears to have deteriorated after 1840 and was replaced as the farmstead by New House Farm, a four-bedroom brick house adapted from two cottages. Kilmington Farm was rebuilt presumably as two farmworker’s cottages, in which form it existed from 1871 until after 1901, but by 1910 it was a farmhouse again and known as Church Farm.¹⁰⁵

Kilmington Manor house

The house south of the church, now called the Manor House but formerly known as the Dairy House, the Malthouse or Hartgills, was retained by the Hartgill family after their estates were sold.¹⁰⁶ It had five hearths in 1665.¹⁰⁷ In 1693 it was said that it was the dairy for the demesne farm sold by John Hartgill to his uncle William and should have passed to Sir Stephen Fox in 1675 but that it had been withheld by William Hartgill and his son Henry. It was also claimed by Henry’s cousin John Hartgill¹⁰⁸ and passed to the latter’s son Ferdinando who in 1760 let the house, malthouse and 5 a. for five years to John Maxfield, maltster, the existing tenant. The property was specifically excluded from the sale of the manor to Henry Hoare in 1764 presumably for a sale to Maxfield.¹⁰⁹ It then passed to the Lush family, also maltsters. Joseph Lush (d. 1798) was succeeded by his son Joseph (d. c. 1799),¹¹⁰ Joseph (d. by 1850) and Joseph (d. 1873).¹¹¹

¹⁰³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 1177A, map 1800.

¹⁰⁴ Wilts Building Record, Manor House, report.

¹⁰⁵ TNA, RG 10/1965; RG 13/1963; RG 14/12157; IR 58/73468, nos 15—16.

¹⁰⁶ WSHC, 383/196; S. Hobbs, *Gleanings from Wilts Par. Regs* (WRS 63), 135.

¹⁰⁷ Dwelly, *Hearth Tax*, I, 99.

¹⁰⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301.

¹⁰⁹ WSHC, 383/573, 575.

¹¹⁰ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320A, will and opinion.

¹¹¹ SHC, Q/RDe 127; Q/RJL 28/4; DD/BR/tw 25; WSHC, 628/27/9; TNA, RG 10/1965.

A large malthouse, attached to the house, was probably built by or for John Maxfield in the mid 18th century¹¹² when the house and buildings lay open to the road, presumably for ease of access to the business. Before 1839 gardens were laid out around the house, reduced later by widening the road to Church Farm.¹¹³ The last of the Lush family to live at Hartgills was Sarah Lush, widow of Benjamin brother of Joseph (d. 1873). She moved out c. 1900 and the house was bought in 1904 by Charles Paulet Camborne Paynter (d. 1947) who renamed it Manor House and occupied it until the 1930s when he moved into the nearby cottage and let the house.¹¹⁴ In 1946 the house was acquired by potter Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie (d. 1984) who used the malthouse as her studio. The house was sold in 1985.¹¹⁵ It was later the home of military historian Sir John Keegan (d. 1912).¹¹⁶

The house was probably rebuilt in the later 17th century to provide a home for the Hartgills when they sold the rest of their property. It was extended and re-roofed in Welsh slate in the 19th century by the Lush family who may have introduced new fireplaces. The Paynter family made extensive alterations after 1900 inserting 17th-century features, replacing doors and windows and adding a two storey porch with their coat of arms to the two storey, three bay front.¹¹⁷

HOMESTALLS, FORMERLY BECKINGTON FARM

Beckington farm, presumably named after an earlier tenant, formed part of William, Lord Stourton's estate and may have been the freehold he held of Kilmington manor under Shaftesbury abbey before the Dissolution.¹¹⁸ It was let to William Hartgill for 92 years from

¹¹² SHC, Q/REI 28/3; tithe award; TNA PROB 11/1305/31.

¹¹³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, map of Kilmington 1800; SHC, tithe map; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1886 edn).

¹¹⁴ TNA, HO 107/1850; RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 12/1627; RG 13/1963; RG 14/12157; IR 58/73468 *Kelly's Dir. Som.* (1875—99); *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1903—1939); Wilts Build Record, Manor House, report.

¹¹⁵ WSHC, 1844/18—19.

¹¹⁶ ODNB; Sir John Desmond Patrick Keegan: accessed 17 June 2016.

¹¹⁷ Wilts Build Record, Manor House, report.

¹¹⁸ TNA, SC 6/HenVIII/655.

1545 and was sublet to his three sons.¹¹⁹ It was not regarded thereafter as part of Kilmington manor¹²⁰ and paid no quit rent. It was later said to have been acquired by Arthur Hartgill who sold it to John Hartgill (d. 1655) for settlement on John's son Cuthbert for his marriage to Elizabeth Strangways. John certainly left it to his son Cuthbert with other lands in his will but also charged it with annuities to his daughter Jane and son Arthur who had suffered in the Civil War.¹²¹ Cuthbert was said to have built the house, a 'fair house proportionable to the estate' reputedly on the site of an earlier house c. 1640.¹²² It had ten hearths in 1665 but half were exempted, possibly they were not fireplaces.¹²³ John Hartgill's grandson, also John claimed that his uncle Cuthbert was not entitled to the farm but was unsuccessful.¹²⁴

Cuthbert Hartgill (d. 1672) divided his property among his many children but the farm passed to his eldest surviving son Francis, who was said to have been exiled during the Civil War.¹²⁵ In 1674 Francis mortgaged Beckington to the Revd Thomas Webb and in 1676 to others and the farm was also burdened with annuities to other Hartgills. Francis was said to have absconded for debt and been arrested.¹²⁶ Subsequent descent is not clear, presumably it was foreclosed on as by 1766 it belonged to Thomas Webb (d. 1770) who was succeeded by his son Michael (d. 1788) who left the estate, then over 260 a., to his son Charles. It was renamed Homestalls,¹²⁷ the name of land acquired by exchange with the earl of Ilchester after 1800.¹²⁸ In 1808 after the death of Charles Webb Homestalls (276 a.) was sold to Thomas

¹¹⁹ TNA, STAC 4/7/43

¹²⁰ SHC, DD/BR/wr 27. In the 17th century it was said to be in Norton: TNA, C 6/131/76.

¹²¹ TNA, C 6/131/76; PROB 11/248/294, 11/339/292.

¹²² TNA, C 6/21/77.

¹²³ Dwelly, *Hearth Tax*, I, 97.

¹²⁴ TNA, C 6/131/76.

¹²⁵ TNA, C 7/559/16; PROB 11/339/292; Crippen, *Nonconf. in Som.* 30.

¹²⁶ TNA, C 7/575/1.

¹²⁷ The name Beckington survived in field names; WSHC, X6/47; SHC, tithe award.

¹²⁸ TNA, PROB 11/970/274; PROB 11/1175/35; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A, map 1800; SHC, Q/REL 28/3a; tithe award.

Thynne, 2nd marquis of Bath and descended as part of the Longleat estate until c. 1920 when it was sold to Edwin Hames the tenant.¹²⁹

NORTON FERRIS

Norton manor was royal demesne, presumably part of Bruton manor dispersed by Henry I. Between 1121 and 1135 King Henry gave Norton manor with Norton hundred in marriage with Julian daughter of 'Golescalc'¹³⁰ to Jordan d'Auffay¹³¹ [Seine Maritime, France] for royal service for two hides. Julian was a lady of the king's bedchamber who had accompanied Queen Adeliza from Louvain. Jordan appears to have died young and Julian married Nicholas de Stuteville who held the manor in her right between 1138 and 1177.¹³² Julian may have predeceased Nicholas (d. 1177) and Norton passed to her son Richard d'Auffay who held it in 1180.¹³³ By 1189—90 he had been succeeded by his son John who died before 1195, leaving his unnamed heir¹³⁴ a minor in the wardship of Reginald de Pons, possibly John's son in law.¹³⁵ From 1196—7 the manor was held by Alde d'Auffay, presumably John's widow.¹³⁶ Laurentia or Lauretta de Pons, a widow by 1205 when the heir was still alive, was described in the 1280s as daughter and heir of John d'Auffay by Julian 'de Barbuc', possibly an error as was the statement that the manor was given in free marriage with 'Julian' d'Auffay to Reginald de Pons.¹³⁷ In 1212 Reginald de Pons, presumably son of

¹²⁹ SHC, Q/REI 28/3, 3a; tithe award; WSHC, 383/202, 204; G9/510/22—3; L8/1/3; X6/47A.

¹³⁰ Probably one of the Godescalcs of Morialme, Namur: F. Rousseau, *Henri l'Aveugle, Comte de Namur et de Luxembourg (1136-1196)*, 108—14: booksopenedition.org accessed 29 June 2016.

¹³¹ Grandson of Gilbert d'Auffay who reputedly fought at Hastings 1066 but refused to accept plundered English estates: B. Golding, *Conquest and Colonisation: The Normans in Britain, 1066—1100*, 54; E. Chardon, *Precis analytique des travaux de l'Academie* [Rouen], 281: books.google.co.uk accessed 30 June 2016.

¹³² W. Farrer, *Early Yorks. Charters: IX The Stuteville Fee* (1952), 44; *Pipe R.* 4 Hen II, 121; 23 Hen II, 17; *Bk of Fees* II., 81; *Rot. Hund.*, II, 119; *Plac. de Quo Warranto*, 699.

¹³³ Farrer, *The Stuteville Fee*, 45

¹³⁴ John's barony of Auffay was divided between two infant sisters Jeanne and Aude it is not clear why Norton descended differently: Chardon, *Precis analytique des travaux de l'Academie*, 282.

¹³⁵ *Great Roll of the Pipe, 1189—90*, 146; *Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Normanni*, II, p. cxxx.

¹³⁶ *Chancellors Roll* 1196 (PRS n.s. 7), 214, *Pipe R.* 1197 (PRS n.s. 8), 130—1.

¹³⁷ *Feudal Aids*, IV. 286. By the late 13th century there was some confusion as to whether Jordan or John d'Auffay had been granted the manor so Julian de Barbuc, perhaps Bierbeek near Louvain, was possibly an alternative name for Jordan's wife: *Rot. Hund.*, II, 119; *Plac. de Quo Warranto*, 699.

Laurentia was said to have inherited it from his uncle and held the manor in 1230.¹³⁸ He was followed by Gerard Rudel de Blaye (Gironde, France) (fl. 1245—65)¹³⁹ and his daughter Agnes wife of Archambaud III, count of Perigord. Agnes was later said to be the ‘issue’ of Agnes daughter of Laurentia.¹⁴⁰ In 1268 the couple sold the manor to John de Muscegros or Musgrove whose father Robert (d. 1253) had been Gerard’s lessee and who himself took a four-year lease in 1267.¹⁴¹

The manor, which then became known as Norton Musgrove,¹⁴² descended like Charlton Musgrove in the same hundred from Sir John Musgrove (d. 1275) to his son Sir Robert (d. 1280) who had to prove his right to hold in chief of the king.¹⁴³ Robert’s heir was his daughter Hawise, a minor and his widow appears to have held dower in 1297.¹⁴⁴ Hawise married firstly, William de Mortimer (d. 1297), secondly Sir John de Ferrers (d. 1312) and thirdly Sir John de Bures (d. 1350) who outlived her.¹⁴⁵ On Bures’ death the manor passed to Hawise’s grandson Sir John Ferrers, Baron Ferrers of Chartley (d. 1367) and became known as Norton Bonewode or Bovewode. The manor descended in the direct male line to Robert (d. 1413), Edmund (d. 1435) and William Ferrers (d. 1450) who settled it on himself and his wife Elizabeth (fl. 1455) for life.¹⁴⁶ Their heir was their daughter Anne (d. 1469) whose husband Walter Devereux became Lord Ferrers but was attainted in 1485. However, her son John Ferrers successfully petitioned for his estates to be restored in 1489 and on his death in

¹³⁸ Rot. de Oblatis et Finibus, 224, where Lauretta is surnamed ‘de Fontibus’; Bk of Fees II., 81; Plac. de Quo Warranto, 699; Pipe R. 1230 (PRS n.s. 4), 37.

¹³⁹ TNA, SC 1/2/139—40; Cal. Inq.p.m., I, p. 82; Bk of Fees, II, 81. He was dead by 1267 when the prior of Puy Dudon let the manor to John Musgrave: Cal. Pat. 1266—72, 162.

¹⁴⁰ The Christian name of Gerard’s second wife, mother of Agnes, is not named elsewhere.

¹⁴¹ Plac. de Quo Warranto, 695—6, 699; Cal. Inq.p.m., I, p. 82; Cal. Pat. 1266—72, 162.

¹⁴² E. Green, Feet of Fines, 1196—1307 (SRS 6), p. 356; SHC, A/CTP 2/1/104.

¹⁴³ VCH Som. VII, 172; Cal. Inq.p.m., II, pp. 80, 233; Plac. de Quo Warranto, 695—6, 699; Cal. Chart. 1257—1300, p. 232.

¹⁴⁴ Cal. Inq.p.m., II, p. 233; III, p. 270.

¹⁴⁵ VCH Som. VII, 172; E. Green, Feet of Fines, 1307—46, (SRS 12), p. 239; F. Dickinson, Kirby’s Quest (SRS 3), 97; SHC, A/CTP 2/1/103—4.

¹⁴⁶ VCH Som. VII, 172; Complete Peerage V, 313—25; Feudal Aids, VI, 511, VI, 388; Cal. Inq.p.m., III, p. 270; IX, p. 401; Cal. Pat. 1441—6, 52; Cal. Chart. 1441—6, 204—5; E. Green, Feet of Fines, 1399—1485, (SRS 22), p. 201—2.

1501 was succeeded by his son Walter. Thereafter the manor was known as Norton Ferrers or Ferris.¹⁴⁷

In 1541 Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers, sold the manor, with the hundred and other estates to William, Lord Stourton who already held a large freehold at Norton Ferris.¹⁴⁸ In 1546 William (d. 1548) conveyed the manor to trustees for himself and his mistress Agnes Rhys for their lives and then to the uses of his will or his male heir. Agnes survived William and married Edward Baynton. When William's son Charles was attainted for murder in 1557 the remainder after Agnes's death passed to the Crown.¹⁴⁹ With Kilmington it was let to Michael Cobbe in 1585¹⁵⁰ and in 1586 assigned to Henry Willoughby when it appears to have included freeholds and other lands outside the parish such as Brook, Gasper and Zeals.¹⁵¹

In 1597 Henry Willoughby was in debt to the queen for a grant of Norton Ferris manor and the money appears to have been paid in 1599 by his son-in-law John Hartgill and son William Willoughby. In 1600 John released his rights to William who in 1601 sold the manor and lands to Edward Combe. Henry Willoughby released his rights to Thomas Smith and Edward Combe.¹⁵² Both William Willoughby and John Hartgill entered into a fine in 1602 releasing Norton Ferris to Thomas Smith¹⁵³ apparently in trust for himself and Edward Combe. In 1604 Smith sold his moiety to Edward Combe (d. 1608)¹⁵⁴ who held Norton Ferris in chief, settling it on his son William in 1606.¹⁵⁵ In 1627 it was settled on William Combe and his wife Isabella¹⁵⁶ and the demesnes were settled on their son Edward for his

¹⁴⁷ Complete Peerage V, 325—7; TNA, CP 25/2/51/359/4 Hen VIII. East, no.57.

¹⁴⁸ L&P Hen.VIII, XVI, p. 604; TNA, CP 25/2/36/240/33 Hen VIII. East.; below this section.

¹⁴⁹ Cal. Pat. 1572—5, pp. 199—200.

¹⁵⁰ Cal. Pat. 1584—5, p. 260.

¹⁵¹ VCH Som. VII, 172; SHC, DD/BR/wr 27; WSHC, 865/196.

¹⁵² TNA, E 178/4455; Cal. SP. Dom. 1598—1601, 223; Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 30, 320B.

¹⁵³ TNA, CP 25/2/207/44 Eliz. I. Hil.

¹⁵⁴ WSHC, 383/629; TNA, PROB 11/111/125.

¹⁵⁵ W. Phelps, Hist. Som. (1836), II, 173; WSHC, 353/568. William also held land as a freeholder of Kilmington manor in 1609: TNA, SC 2/227/123, f. 8d.

¹⁵⁶ TNA, CP 25/2/479/4 Chas. I. East.

marriage.¹⁵⁷ Edward joined with his father in granting leases and selling lands mainly to the Madox family from 1648.¹⁵⁸ Land was also granted to Edward Combe's sister Margaret presumably for her marriage to Revd Richard Kent who sold the land to Richard Madox the elder in 1660.¹⁵⁹

In 1651 William Combe with his wife, sons and others sold the capital messuage and lordship of Norton Ferris with the pound, Knowle wood and sheepsleight to Richard Madox. In 1653 William Combe, then of Tisbury, left only money for rings to his children in his will.¹⁶⁰ He died in 1654 and between 1657 and 1659 his son Edward (d. c. 1660) sold customary holdings to Richard Madox the elder and his son Richard the younger.¹⁶¹ In 1675 Edward Combe's sons William and Edward sold the remaining family land in the parish to John Madox, another son of Richard the elder.¹⁶²

Richard Madox the elder appears to have only wanted the demesne farm and in 1676 negotiated the sale of the manor to the Speaker Edward Seymour but the sale fell through and in 1677 he sold the lordship with the small farms and cottage properties and Berkeley farm for c.£3,500 to John Fox in trust for his son Stephen who secured a release of claim from Richard's wife and eldest son and members of the Combes family.¹⁶³

Sir Stephen Fox and his successors claimed suit of court to Norton Ferris manor but combined the lordship with the Kilmington demesne, later Church farm, and Berkeley farm,¹⁶⁴ which they confusingly called Norton farm, to create a manor of Kilmington or Kilmington and Norton Ferris,¹⁶⁵ for which they appointed a gamekeeper.¹⁶⁶ In 1762 the earl

¹⁵⁷ WSHC, 383/603.

¹⁵⁸ SHC, A/ABS 1; Q/REI 28/3a; Phelps, *Hist. Som.* II, 171; WSHC, 383/567—8.

¹⁵⁹ TNA, PROB 11/339/437; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301, deeds.

¹⁶⁰ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128, 301—2 deeds; TNA, PROB 11/240/616; below, rel. hist., advowson.

¹⁶¹ SHC, A/ABS 1; Q/REI 28/3a; Phelps, *Hist. Som.* II, 171; WSHC, 383/567—8; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, abstract of title c. 1676; box 302, deeds.

¹⁶² Hadspen House MSS 2/1/2.

¹⁶³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, survey bk c. 1767, box 300, deeds.

¹⁶⁴ Below, this section.

¹⁶⁵ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/1—2; Dorset HC, D/FSI, boxes 19A, 74A and 75.

¹⁶⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 19, appointment of gamekeeper 1716.

of Ilchester bought the reversion of the Red Lion, on the death of Anne wife of the victualler John Smith, from Margaret Fathers and her son William with 10 a. of land creating a smallholding to add to his estate.¹⁶⁷ Norton Ferris manor and its lands descended like the Kilmington demesne to Henry Stephen (d. 1858), the third earl of Ilchester,¹⁶⁸ who in 1812 exchanged lands and a smallholding called Pickfords with Sir Richard Colt Hoare and Henry Hobhouse to create a more coherent holding. He sold his entire Norton Ferris estate with Knowle wood, the Red Lion and other smallholdings (288 a.) to Hoare in 1814 when it became part of the Stourhead estate, which now belongs to the National Trust.¹⁶⁹

Despite having no land in Norton Ferris the earls of Ilchester retained the lordship and appointed a manor gamekeeper.¹⁷⁰ However, in 1805 Henry Hobhouse claimed to hold the manor of Norton Ferris with his farm.¹⁷¹

Norton Ferris demesne and farms

Henry III gave Gerard de Blaye ten oaks from Selwood to repair the manor buildings.¹⁷² In 1533 the capital messuage and lands, known as Norton farm were let, with some of the customary lands, by William Devereux, earl Ferrers to the More alias Smith family. Agnes Rhys wife of Edward Baynton appears to have succeeded in establishing her right to the remainder for life before 1574 when a lease in revision of both those interests was granted to four Tower warders for 21 years.¹⁷³ They never had possession and in 1594 the reversion was let to Thomas Moore.¹⁷⁴ By 1595 Agnes and others with an interest were dead and the Queen granted a lease for lives to Thomas for surrender of the existing lease.¹⁷⁵ By 1627 it had

¹⁶⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 170A surveys, box 300, deeds; below, econ. hist., public hos.

¹⁶⁸ Above, this section; VCH Som. VI, 26.

¹⁶⁹ WSHC, 383/106, 205, 208; Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/3; SHC, Q/REI 28/3a; tithe award.

¹⁷⁰ Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, 13 Sep. 1821.

¹⁷¹ TNA, CP 43/890, rot. 14.

¹⁷² Close R. 1256—9, 78.

¹⁷³ Cal. Pat. 1572—5, pp. 199—200.

¹⁷⁴ Cal. Pat. 1593—4, p. 93. John More was still in possession in 1585: WSHC 865/196.

¹⁷⁵ Cal. Pat. 1594—5, p. 90.

reverted to the Combes, lords of the manor and in 1627—8 was given to Edward son of William Combe for his marriage to Mary Foyle. Edward and Mary were to live with his parents and be given food, drink, lodging and entertainment for themselves, any children, a maid and a manservant, stabling for a horse and an annuity of £60 out of the demesne farm.¹⁷⁶

The Madox or Maddox family were clearly very successful tenant farmers who were able to become freeholders and then to acquire the manor and demesne. In 1628 John Hartgill (d. 1655) sold a farm to Richard son of William Madox and between 1632 and 1640 John and his son John Hartgill the younger sold at least four small farms, some bought from the Combe family, to Richard son of William Madox, the tenant, and to Richard's sons Richard, Edward and William.¹⁷⁷ In 1648 Richard Madox the younger bought farms called Mompessons and Moretons from William Combe and his son Edward.¹⁷⁸ Most of the Norton farms were settled that year on the younger Richard Madox for his marriage to Jane Snook.¹⁷⁹

Richard Madox the elder (d. 1679), the largest ratepayer in 1656, retained most of his estate at Norton Ferris although he sold the lordship, and left it to two of his sons, Richard and Andrew who were already land holders at Norton.¹⁸⁰ Another son Edward had an estate, mostly bought from John Hartgill and sold or mortgaged in 1676 to William Gibbons.¹⁸¹ The sons appear to have been in debt; Richard had already sold land to Stephen Fox in 1677 and Edward had sold his remaining land to Fox in 1678.¹⁸² Richard mortgaged a farm to Thomas Miles in 1690 and forfeited it before 1704 when it was bought by William Wilmott (d. c. 1721). William settled it in 1709 on his marriage to Sarah, widow of Robert Moulton.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁶ WSHC, 383/603.

¹⁷⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128, 301—2, deeds.

¹⁷⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320, abstract of deeds.

¹⁷⁹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 302. sett.

¹⁸⁰ TNA, PROB 11/339/437; E 179/256/11.

¹⁸¹ Trustee and father-in-law of Andrew Madox: TNA, PROB 11/361/61.

¹⁸² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, survey bk c. 1767; above, this section

¹⁸³ WSHC 383/575—6, 603; TNA, PROB 11/421/537, PROB 11/581/371.

Sarah (d. c. 1744) left it to her son James Moulton (d. 1754).¹⁸⁴ James left his estate to his three daughters Sarah, Martha and Hannah but Sarah died before 1761 when her sisters settled the estate on their marriages to John Powell and Richard George who mortgaged it. In 1764 the two men sold it to Henry Hoare.¹⁸⁵

Andrew Madox, who had already assigned land to his brother Richard in 1675 in trust, possibly as a mortgage,¹⁸⁶ died in debt in 1676 and his elder son Richard, a minor, took his father's property after his mother died leaving Andrew's will unproved, leading to litigation before the will was proved in 1679.¹⁸⁷ Richard, son of Andrew, mortgaged the remaining land to his aunt Cecilia, widow of John Madox (d. 1676),¹⁸⁸ brother of Andrew. Richard bought unspecified land in Kilmington manor in 1684 but in 1687 he released his entire estate to Cecilia who had paid off his debts.¹⁸⁹

In 1693 Cecilia Madox (d. 1722), who then owned most of the Madox family land not sold to Stephen Fox, settled the capital messuage and over 470a. on her son John and his wife Mary.¹⁹⁰ She also left two small farms to his sons William and Richard Guy and the residue of her estate to her son Richard (d. s.p. 1728).¹⁹¹ John (d. c. 1716) was succeeded by his wife Mary and son John who settled the estate on his marriage to Jane Selwood in 1719. The younger John Madox exchanged land with Sir Stephen Fox in 1731.¹⁹² He was a J.P., acted as trustee for the Hartgills' family settlements,¹⁹³ and had a large family, which may have led to debts as from 1747 he mortgaged over 800 a.¹⁹⁴ In 1728 his brother Richard had left the

¹⁸⁴ WSHC 383/575—6, 603; TNA, PROB 11/733/343.

¹⁸⁵ WSHC 383/572, 576.

¹⁸⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128 and 302, deeds; box 320B abstract of deeds.

¹⁸⁷ TNA, PROB 11/361/61; C 5/486/56

¹⁸⁸ TNA, PROB 4/6869.

¹⁸⁹ TNA, CP 25/2/717/29 Chas. II. East.; PROB 11/339/437; WSHC 383/567—8, 575, 603; 2063/17; Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/2.

¹⁹⁰ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/1.

¹⁹¹ TNA, PROB 11/588/191; WSHC 383/577, 980.

¹⁹² Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/2; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128.

¹⁹³ WSHC 383/573, 603.

¹⁹⁴ WSHC 383/579.

residue of his estate to John's son William Madox who in 1729 acquired his uncle's farm in Norton Ferris held by his brother John for which he built a new farmhouse, in 1730 also exchanged lands with Sir Stephen Fox and in 1731 purchased his brother Richard Guy Madox's farm.¹⁹⁵ In 1733 William bought the Cox family's freehold farm called Quails, possibly the homestead, two deynes and six bovates given by Hawise de Ferrers to Richard Quayle and his wife Julian in 1314. It was settled on the marriage of Richard Madox and Jane Snooke in 1648 but appear to have been sold to Nathaniel Lawes and before 1660 to Robert Cox.¹⁹⁶

Richard Madox (d. 1728) had charged his estate with large legacies to his nephew John Madox's sons John, who died young, William and Richard. This resulted in litigation between their father John Madox and his brother William, Richard's executor, and in 1737 John had to grant c. 90 a. to William as indemnity. However, William (d. s.p. 1741) also left large legacies charged on his estate.¹⁹⁷ The Madox lands were overburdened with these and other large legacies and annuities under several family wills leading to litigation between landowners, executors and legatees.¹⁹⁸ In 1747 John and his sons William and Richard, who had recently come of age, mortgaged their remaining estates to Henry Hoare and his brother William's estate, comprising two farms in Norton Ferris and one in Kilmington, three small holdings, land and a coppice, was offered for sale.¹⁹⁹ Most of William's land was bought by Henry Hoare²⁰⁰ who was also dragged into the Chancery suits, which only concluded in 1768 when Hoare bought Quails farm and was indemnified against further action.²⁰¹ In 1760 Ferdinando Hartgill released Hoare from the customary fee farm rents payable to Kilmington

¹⁹⁵ WSHC 385/603; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128.

¹⁹⁶ SHC, A/CTP 2/1/104; WSHC, 383/603; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320B; TNA C 6/35/28.

¹⁹⁷ TNA, PROB 11/681/6, 11/709/245; Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/2; WSHC 385/603.

¹⁹⁸ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/2; WSHC 385/603.

¹⁹⁹ WSHC 383/196.

²⁰⁰ WSHC 385/30, 603.

²⁰¹ WSHC 383/579, 603.

manor out of William Madox's lands.²⁰² The Hoares amalgamated William Madox's farms as Norton Ferris farm (332 a.), which descended with Kilmington manor as part of the Stourhead estate until it was sold to a farmer in 1943.²⁰³

The original capital messuage, probably part of the demesne farm let to John More in 1585,²⁰⁴ had 14 hearths in 1665²⁰⁵ and may have been either the house rebuilt in 1732 by William Maddox (d. 1741) as a 'strong' house with a walled garden, or the house occupied by his mother Mary.²⁰⁶ The 1732 house is possibly the present Manor Farm on Kilmington Street. The house has been altered but has a two-storey, three-bay front of local stone. The surrounding farm buildings have been converted to dwellings.

The Quails house became the farmhouse for the newly enlarged farm at Norton Ferris and was known as Norton Farm,²⁰⁷ now Norton Ferris Farmhouse. It probably dates from the 17th century having a cross-passage and chamfered beams in the main two-storey, four-bay range. The house has an 18th-century rear west wing beside the road and was enlarged again in the early 19th century including a porch in the gable end and a rear east wing.²⁰⁸ The farm buildings have been converted into dwellings.

Unable to pay off the mortgage debt to Hoare, John Madox and his sons sold their farm, usually known as Norton, Manor, or Norton Manor, farm to William Barnes of Bristol in 1754 but it was still charged with an annuity to John's mother Mary, which she agreed to reduce, and as late as 1764 John had to indemnify William Barnes against litigation.²⁰⁹ In 1754 John bought Green Cote, now Cote, farm from John and Thomas Humphrey of

²⁰² WSHC 383/573.

²⁰³ Western Daily Press, 20 Feb 1943, 13 March 1943: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

²⁰⁴ WSHC, 865/196.

²⁰⁵ Dwelly, Hearth Tax, I. 97.

²⁰⁶ WSHC, 865/196, 577.

²⁰⁷ WSHC, 865/577.

²⁰⁸ Hist. Build. List, no. 1318460.

²⁰⁹ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/2.

Bridgwater whose father Thomas had bought it from the Hartgills in 1684 but in 1770, having moved to Mere, John Madox sold it to Henry Hoare.²¹⁰

In 1768 following William Barnes's bankruptcy and death Henry Hobhouse bought the farm at Norton Ferris²¹¹ and it later became part of the Hadspen estate in Pitcombe, Somerset.²¹² Henry Hobhouse (d. 1792) was succeeded by his son Henry who entered into a three-way exchange of land at Norton Ferris with Sir Richard Colt Hoare and the earl of Ilchester in 1812.²¹³ Henry Hobhouse (d. 1854) was followed by his son Henry (d. 1862) and grandson Henry²¹⁴ who in 1919 sold his Norton Ferris estate (524 a.) to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for the use of Wiltshire County Council under the Smallholdings Act of 1918 and it was carved up into small units.²¹⁵

Henry Hobhouse was still living in Clifton when he bought the farm and before 1781 he fitted up a parlour and kitchen at Norton Farm, which he used when visiting together with three chambers, two garrets and new underground cellars. He had also laid out a garden with a border and was planning a 2-a. lawn, probably replacing the elaborate walled garden shown on a map of 1772.²¹⁶ The house is built of rendered rubble under a hipped Welsh slate roof. It was greatly altered in the mid 19th century and after 1919 was divided into two houses now called Manor House and Manor Farm. An 18th-century granary survives from the old farmyard.²¹⁷

Norton Ferris Freeholds

²¹⁰ WSHC 385/573, 603

²¹¹ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/1, 3.

²¹² Phelps, *Hist. Som.* (1836), II, 171; SHC, Q/REL 28/3a, tithe award.

²¹³ *VCH Som.* VII, 53; WSHC, 383/205; Hadspen Ho. MSS 1/1/6, 2/1/3.

²¹⁴ SHC, Q/REL 38/3a; tithe award; *VCH Som.* VII, 53.

²¹⁵ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/5; below, econ. hist., agric.

²¹⁶ Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/1; WSHC 628/48/21; SHC, tithe award.

²¹⁷ Hist. Build. List, no. 1198399.

The manor of Norton Ferris appears to have contained several freehold farms and in 1280 free rents were worth over £4, compared with £2 12s. for customary tenants.²¹⁸ The Bythewode family held land there in the 13th century.²¹⁹ A virgate holding was settled by Robert de Westwode in 1297 presumably for his marriage as in 1311 Robert (fl. 1327) and his wife Alice settled it with remainder to her heirs if Robert had no issue. It may have been the Bythewode estate.²²⁰ A freehold farm at Norton called Shepards belonged to Robert Baldenham who sold it to Robert Barksdale c. 1520.²²¹ This appears also to have been a virgate estate and had been acquired by William Hartgill before his death in 1557 and presumably descended with the Hartgill estates.²²² John Hartgill (d. 1655) appears to have given a one-yardland farm at Norton Ferris on his son John who was living there in 1632 when he sold it to Charles Barnes grandson of the former tenant. Charles (d. 1678) was succeeded by his son Robert (d. 1689) whose son Robert Barnes sold it to Thomas London of Kilmington in 1717. Thomas (d. 1731) left it to his wife's granddaughter Rachel Fitz. In 1766 her husband James Castleman sold it to Henry Hoare.²²³

A large farm comprising two houses with a hide and a quarter virgate was settled on William de Notton and his wife Joan in 1309. In 1413 William Lord Stourton died in possession of three houses and one carucate of land, which he held of Norton manor, and was succeeded by his son John, a minor.²²⁴ The estate presumably descended to Sir William Stourton, Lord Stourton (d. 1548) and merged with Norton manor in 1541.²²⁵

²¹⁸ TNA, C133/28/8.

²¹⁹ L. Landon, *Som. Pleas 1280* (SRS 44), 222—3; Green, *Feet of Fines, 1307—46*, p. 7; F. Dickinson, *Kirby's Quest* (SRS 3), 97

²²⁰ Green, *Feet of Fines, 1196—1307*, p. 356; *Feet of Fines, 1307—46*, p. 27.

²²¹ TNA, C 1/890/41.

²²² TNA C 142/112/158.

²²³ WSHC 383/570, 572.

²²⁴ *Cal. Inq.p.m.*, XX, p. 31.

²²⁵ Above, this section.

A roofless estate²²⁶ called Spratts and Topps held by the Smart family during the late 16th and early 17th century²²⁷ was acquired by the Combes who sold it to John Hartgill in 1627. In 1633 Hartgill sold it with a cottage holding to William Madox who in 1637 left it to his grandson William Madox. William died a minor and his estate passed to his brother Richard Madox the younger. It was sold to Sir Stephen Fox with Norton Ferris manor.²²⁸

BERKELEY FARM

It is possible that the ½ hide in Kilmington, which Serlo de Burcy took from the royal manor of Bruton and retained²²⁹ was the later Berkeley farm, south of Norton Ferris. It presumably descended like Low Ham in High Ham, Somerset, to Serlo's daughter Geva and her descendants the FitzMartins before passing to the Berkeleys in the 14th century.²³⁰ Sir John Berkeley (d. 1428) married Elizabeth, daughter of John Bettesthorn (d. 1399), heiress to a two-carucate estate held of Norton Ferris manor and a small estate held of Kilmington manor.²³¹

A two-carucate estate at Norton Ferris was settled in 1318 on John de Mere and his wife Alienor and their issue with remainder to John de Felde and his wife Alice and the heirs of John. In 1330 they made a new settlement for the benefit of Roger de Buttethorn or Bettesthorn and his wife Margaret and their daughters Katherine, Alianor, and Joan, presumably granddaughters of John and Alienor.²³² A grandson John was born subsequently and was heir to Margaret (d. 1349).²³³ John de Bettesthorn died in 1399 when his heir was his daughter Elizabeth wife of Sir John de Berkeley. The estate was held in socage of Norton

²²⁶ Land with no homestead.

²²⁷ TNA, PROB 11/114/481; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300, letter c. 1676.

²²⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, abstract of title c. 1676; 320B abstract of deeds.

²²⁹ *Domesday*, 231.

²³⁰ *VCH Som.*, VIII, 74—5.

²³¹ *VCH Som.*, VIII, 74—5; *Cal. Inq.p.m.* XVII, p. 404.

²³² Green, *Feet of Fines, 1307—46*, pp. 74, 151.

²³³ *Cal. Inq.p.m.*, IX, p. 251.

manor but one of the houses was a freehold of the Abbess of Shaftesbury's manor of Kilmington.²³⁴

Sir Maurice Berkeley (d. 1458), son of Sir John and Elizabeth, was followed by his son Maurice (d. 1474) and grandson Sir William (d. 1485). William's heir was his sister Catherine Berkeley, wife of Sir John Brereton whose daughter and heir Werberga Brereton (d. 1524) married Sir William Compton (d. 1528).²³⁵ The estate known usually as Berkeley Farm but sometimes as the manor of Norton and Kilmington,²³⁶ was let in 1523 by William and Werberga to William Hartgill for 41 years.²³⁷ Werberga's heir was her son Peter Compton who died under age in 1544 leaving a posthumous son Henry (d. 1589), created Baron Compton in 1572. The property appears to have been held for her life by Peter's widow Anne who married William Herbert, earl of Pembroke and died in 1588. Lord Henry's son William, who was made earl of Northampton in 1618, held the farm in 1591.²³⁸

Before 1595 the farm was sold to Henry Willoughby and John Hartgill who with their wives sold it to William Combe in 1601.²³⁹ The Madox family appear to have been tenants of much of the estate and in 1653 Richard Madox the elder sublet the capital messuage, apparently with 14 hearths in 1665, a cottage and 17 a. to his son Richard.²⁴⁰ Other former Berkeley estate lands were sold off and became part of other holdings. However, between 1655 and 1660 Richard Madox the elder, with his sons Richard and William bought the freehold of several of those holdings and also the house and 17 a. from Edward Combe.²⁴¹

In 1675 the Madox family sold Berkeley farm to John Fox in trust for his son Stephen and in 1676 Richard Madox the younger assigned his leasehold.²⁴² John Hartgill and his son

²³⁴ Cal. Inq.p.m., XVII, p. 404.

²³⁵ VCH Som., VIII, 74—5.

²³⁶ WSHC, 251/91; 1728/70.

²³⁷ WSHC, 251/91; TNA, STAC 4/7/43.

²³⁸ Burke, Peerage (1949), 1504; WSHC, 383/196, 567.

²³⁹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 302, deeds, 320B abstract of deeds.

²⁴⁰ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, deeds; Dwelly, Hearth Tax, I. 97.

²⁴¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 302, deeds; 320B abstract of deed.

²⁴² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, deeds.

Ferdinando laid claim to the land and were presumably paid to join in a release in 1679.²⁴³ Sir Stephen Fox combined Berkeley farm with other purchases at Norton Ferris and confusingly called it Norton Farm.²⁴⁴ It descended to Henry Stephen (d. 1858), the third earl of Ilchester,²⁴⁵ who in 1812 exchanged lands in Berkeley farm with Sir Richard Colt Hoare and Henry Hobhouse to create a more coherent holding. He sold the farm to Hoare in 1814 when it became part of the Stourhead estate.²⁴⁶

HILL GROUNDS

Before 1630 under an agreement for disafforestation of Selwood forest, one third of the 600-a. Kilmington heath or common, the whole of which lay in the forest, was granted to the king in exchange for the destruction of the deer and the removal of Kilmington from forest laws.²⁴⁷ Following the 1630 disafforestation that tract of heath was sold by Charles I to Sir Charles Berkeley, possibly as compensation for the loss of his office of Lieutenant of Selwood. He enclosed it in 1636, although some local people persisted in breaking the bounds, and built a farmstead before 1662 when he mortgaged the estate.²⁴⁸ Thereafter the 200—240-a. farm formed part of the Berkeley's manor of Bruton, which was heavily mortgaged. The farm was let to the Hoare family from 1722 and merged with their estates when they bought Bruton manor in 1776.²⁴⁹ The Hoares named the estate, excluding the woodland, Hill Grounds and at first kept it in hand with Stourhead's home farm²⁵⁰ The building shown in a map of 1797 had gone by 1839²⁵¹ but a farmstead known as Hill Farm was rebuilt on the same site possibly c.

²⁴³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300, deeds.

²⁴⁴ WSHC, 383/603.

²⁴⁵ Above, this section; VCH Som. VI, 26.

²⁴⁶ WSHC, 383/106, 205, 208; Hadspen Ho. MSS 2/1/3; SHC, Q/REI 28/3a; tithe award. The NT uses the spelling Berkley: NT, HER 1110344.

²⁴⁷ TNA, E 134/1654—55/Hil 1

²⁴⁸ WSHC 383/569, 571; TNA, E 134/1654—55/Hil 1.

²⁴⁹ Dwelly, Hearth Tax, I, 99; SHC, T/PH/vch 95; DD/BR/fc 10; WSHC 383/571—2; VCH Som. VII, 23

²⁵⁰ WSHC 383/104 (1), 106,

²⁵¹ WSHC 383/203; SHC, tithe award.

1840 for a tenant as from 1841 until 1910 or later the farm was let out.²⁵² In the 20th century, however, it was kept in hand again and remained part of the Stourhead estate. By the end of the century the farm buildings had been demolished.²⁵³

ECONOMIC HISTORY

Kilminster has always been primarily an agricultural community but its complex post-medieval landownership means that few early records have survived. The parish appears to have comprised woodland, heath and common pasture in the west, much of it in Selwood Forest, which was partly inclosed in the 17th century after disafforestation;²⁵⁴ the remainder, Kilminster Common in the south-west, was inclosed in 1821. The open fields lay mainly on the better land in the east and were largely inclosed piecemeal in the 17th and 18th centuries. Homesteads and paddocks occupied the central areas.²⁵⁵ Perhaps as a result of land values Norton tithing was more highly rated and taxed than Kilminster tithing although the latter had more payers.²⁵⁶ There was very little alternative to agricultural employment or village trades but attempts were made to establish textile and malting industries in the 18th century.²⁵⁷ In the later 19th century there were several unemployed people in the parish and by 1911 some people appear to have worked in industries outside the parish, a trend which would accelerate through the later 20th century.²⁵⁸

AGRICULTURE

²⁵² WSHC 383/107; L8/1/3.

²⁵³ WSHC, G9/510/22—3; Wilts. HER, MW 164776.

²⁵⁴ Above, landownership.

²⁵⁵ SHC, Q/RDe 127; tithe award.

²⁵⁶ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2, copy of 1691 rate; SHC, Q/REI 28/3, 3a.

²⁵⁷ Below, this section.

²⁵⁸ TNA, RG 11/2079; RG 14/12157.

In 1086 the Kilminster estate held by Shaftesbury Abbey was assessed at five hides and five ploughlands. Four villeins and three bordars had four ploughteams but only three virgates whereas the demesne covered four hides and one virgate with one team. As no slaves were recorded presumably the tenants owed work with their teams on the demesne. The abbey had 14 cattle, 15 pigs and 137 sheep at Kilminster and the estate had increased in value from 30s. in 1066 to 40s. in 1086. There was extensive woodland. There is no account of the half hide formerly in Bruton.²⁵⁹

Proximity to Selwood Forest with its restrictions and opportunities was a major influence on medieval agriculture. A large part of the parish was carved out of the heath and woodland including Kilminster Heath or Common, which as late as the 19th century accounted for 200a.; but it is likely that all the land west of Kilminster village was formerly heath and woodland.²⁶⁰ In the late 12th century the townships of Kilminster and Norton were included in the forest and Kilminster paid 6s. to the forest bailiff.²⁶¹ In the 1250s the abbess of Shaftesbury claimed that her tenants had pannage for pigs in the woods of Witham, presumably along the north-west boundary of the parish, and pasture for those who had none in Kilminster. The claim was based on the communal use of uninclosed land in the ancient demesne of the Crown before the endowment of Witham Priory in 1173. Pigs in the wood were impounded and Robert de la Ford, the abbey steward, was forced to pay for their release in the prior's court. It was argued against the abbess that as the land was royal demesne no-one had rights there and the king could give it to Witham for their exclusive use.²⁶²

In 1298 Kilminster tenants had common pasture in Kilminster Heath (c.600 a.), still said to be within the forest and paid the king 8s. in money and 12s. 1d. in wheat for common in the rest of the forest waste but the settlements and their lands were disafforested by the

²⁵⁹ Domesday, 231, 271; C. and F. Dom. Bk. Somerset (Chichester, 1980), 37.5.

²⁶⁰ SHC, tithe award.

²⁶¹ Cal. IPM, II, p. 443; VCH Som. I, 557.

²⁶² C. Chadwyck Healey, Som. Pleas Ric. I to Hen. III, pp. 451—3; VCH Som. I, 556.

new perambulation.²⁶³ That may account for the reduced rent of 7s. 8d. paid in 1351.²⁶⁴ At Norton Ferris in 1307 a virgate holding had common pasture for eight oxen²⁶⁵ and recorded medieval freeholds averaged two virgates per homestead.²⁶⁶ In 1314 the Quayle holding comprised land measured unusually in deynes and pasture in bovates on Norton Hill.²⁶⁷ That indicates considerable arable and the open fields appear to have been on the hillsides at Norton although known as Norton and Kilmington fields.²⁶⁸ A man at Norton was surnamed le Herder in 1327.²⁶⁹ Meadow and pasture was in closes by the 16th century and probably earlier although Rodmead at Norton Ferris appears to have been shared until 1808 or later.²⁷⁰ Large closes were being divided up in the mid 16th century.²⁷¹

In 1280 the Norton Ferris demesne comprised 135 a. of arable, 13 ½ a. of meadow, unspecified quantities of underwood and pasture and was only worth £4 whereas rents were over £10 and tenants' works were worth over £2 15s.²⁷² Over the following century and a half rents had increased slightly and the amount of demesne arable had declined presumably laid to grass as in 1435 the Norton Ferris demesne comprised 100 a. of arable, 12 a. of meadow, 40 a. of pasture, 100 a. of wood and £13 in rent.²⁷³ Kilmington manor by 1518 was entirely let and rents comprised three quarters of the income. Payments to the forest courts and officers besides the cost of collecting rents, keeping accounts and holding courts accounted for most of the expenditure and the abbey receiver had only £12 9s. 7d. for 1517—18.²⁷⁴

Under the Crown after the Dissolution arrears rose to a third of income and many rents were

²⁶³ VCH Som. I, 557—8.

²⁶⁴ Cal. Pat. 1350—4, 100.

²⁶⁵ E. Green, Feet of Fines 1196—1307, 356.

²⁶⁶ E. Green, Feet of Fines 1307—46, 7, 27, 74, 151; Cal. IPM, XX, p. 31.

²⁶⁷ SHC, A/CTP 2/1/104.

²⁶⁸ WSHC 383/570SHC, tithe award.

²⁶⁹ F. Dickinson, Kirby's Quest etc (SRS 3), 97.

²⁷⁰ TNA, C 1/890/41; WSHC 383/204.

²⁷¹ TNA, REQ 2/18/79.

²⁷² TNA, C 133/28/8.

²⁷³ Cal. IPM. XXIV, p. 342.

²⁷⁴ WSHC 1728/70.

not being paid.²⁷⁵ In 1544 when William, Lord Stourton paid over £1,200 for Kilmington manor comprising the demesne and two tenanted holdings the demesne farm had pasture for 400 sheep on the heath and his son was said to have kept 800.²⁷⁶ In the 1550s large numbers of sheep were folded on the common fields in winter.²⁷⁷ In 1601 Norton Ferris manor was sold with pasture for 60 sheep in the fields and downs and 80 sheep and 6 oxen on Norton Downs in harvest season.²⁷⁸ The rector's income in 1536 came largely from tithes comprising £10 from grain and £5 from wool and lambs.²⁷⁹

In the 16th century the virtual gang warfare waged between the Hartgills and their neighbours, especially Charles, Lord Stourton, centred on the theft of horses and detention of livestock including oxen, valued at up to £3 a head, and on one occasion reputedly 1,200 sheep.²⁸⁰ In the 1550s William Hartgill claimed to have had 14 milk cows, 17 other cattle, five horses, and 356 sheep taken from fields where he was accused of trespassing. A tenant whose forfeited copyhold had been granted to William Hartgill before 1550 was accused of killing and injuring Hartgill's horses and cattle on the land.²⁸¹ Crops were also destroyed in these disputes including allegedly 60 a. of wheat, barley and dredge on Beckington farm and 34 a. of new wheat at Norton Ferris. The Hartgills claimed to have had 80 wainloads of wheat, barley and dredge, 60 of oats and 60 of hay taken. On another occasion William Hartgill was said to have had a team of 14 oxen to pull a heavy wain over fields with 4 others yoked ready if required. As he valued his oxen at £3 each he was clearly an exceptionally wealthy farmer. It is evident from this and other legal disputes that oxen were generally the preferred draught beast.²⁸² Oats and vetches were also grown but wills in the

²⁷⁵ TNA, SC 6/HenVIII/655.

²⁷⁶ L&P Hen. VIII, XIX, p. 40; TNA, STAC 4/7/39.

²⁷⁷ TNA, STAC 4/7/42.

²⁷⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSL, box 302, deed.

²⁷⁹ Valor Eccel. I, 152.

²⁸⁰ G. Bradford, Proceedings in Star Chamber (SRS 27), 207—16; Maxwell Lyte, Bps Regs 1518—59 (SRS 55), pp. 73—4; SHC, A/AQP 25/15.

²⁸¹ TNA, REQ 2/18/79; STAC 4/7/38.

²⁸² TNA STAC 3/3/1, 4/7/40—1, 43, 48.

16th and early 17th centuries were dominated by bequests of cattle, sheep and horses. There are no references to dairying, which was later to be the main feature of farming in the parish.²⁸³

In the 1550s William Hartgill claimed to occupy much of Kilmington manor on leases and copies, challenged by other tenants, and may have amalgamated a number of holdings. Two tofts were recorded on the disputed land although a new house was also mentioned.²⁸⁴ He also claimed to hold, by a lease for lives of 1545, 100 a. called New Close part of Kilmington Common, which he said the tenants of the manor had consented to in 1544, although that was disputed. The land then lay in Selwood Forest where it was said there were rights of intercommoning with which the enclosed 100 a. interfered. However, the Hartgills retained the enclosed land, later called New Leaze and it was regarded as part of the demesne farm and subdivided by the later 17th century.²⁸⁵ William, Lord Stourton, on buying the manor in 1544 was said to have agreed to arable lands being inclosed including over 50 a. between Beckington farm and Norton Ferris and 80 a. near Norton. That appears to have been done by ditches and gates. However, the Hartgills are said to have exerted their right of way with wains over some of the newly-inclosed fields.²⁸⁶

17th and 18th centuries

In 1601 John Hartgill inclosed 10 a. of Kilmington Heath, claimed as manor waste, for his own use and similar enclosures were permitted in subsequent years, some for building. At the same time the rector and a Norton Ferris tenant were forbidden to put their sheep on the common and tenants were presented for cutting and selling furze. It was later said that those

²⁸³ D. Shilton and R. Holworthy, *Medieval Wills from Wells*, (SRS 40), p. 229; TNA, PROB 11/70/364, 11/114/481, 11/117/442, 11/121/706, 11/123/628, 11/244/80.

²⁸⁴ TNA, STAC 4/7/49.

²⁸⁵ TNA, STAC 4/7/49; E 134/7Chas1/Mich20; C 5/594/89; Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 300—1, deeds.

²⁸⁶ TNA, STAC 3/3/1.

who penned sheep in Norton Ferris manor had no right to pasture them on Kilmington Common. In 1607, however, the rector was allowed to cut furze and put cattle on the common by the manor court as a grant but not as a right.²⁸⁷ In 1624 John Hartgill was said to hold a 647-a. inclosure in Selwood Forest and 700 a. of waste but these figures equate to more than half the parish so presumably represent Kilmington manor.²⁸⁸ In 1644 an inquiry into Kilmington Heath was told it was 600 a. before the disafforestation of Selwood and that Kilmington tenants used it for pasture and fuel besides having the right to graze other parts of the forest. The tenants had recently been charged up to £200 when taking out new copyholds with common, and the 200 a. left after the allotment to the Crown²⁸⁹ and the Hartgill inclosures was insufficient as being an arable parish farmers needed pasture for plough beasts. It was said that John Hartgill was allowed to inclose the 10a. in return for ceasing to put his beasts on the common. No previous lord or lady of the manor had ever put stock on the heath except Mr Willoughby who had removed his sheep when asked to do so by the tenants.²⁹⁰ John Hartgill said that his father employed him to inclose a third of the common. Resentment at the reduction in the common probably led to the hedgebreaking and trespass on the Crown allotment in the 1640s and 1650s after Sir Charles Berkeley purchased and inclosed it although it was said the commoners had benefited by the destruction of the deer that formerly grazed the heath.²⁹¹ Before 1678 the Hartgills had inclosed and divided the c.200 a. they had taken from Kilmington Heath.²⁹² A farm was created and New House farmstead built there before 1722 when the whole former common was sold to trustees for Sir Stephen Fox.²⁹³

²⁸⁷ TNA, SC 2/227/123.

²⁸⁸ TNA, LR 2/202, ff. 343—5; above, this section.

²⁸⁹ Above, landownership, Hill Grounds.

²⁹⁰ TNA, E 134/7Chas1/Mich20.

²⁹¹ TNA, E 134/71654—55/Hil1.

²⁹² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300.

²⁹³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128, 300—1.

Norton Ferris manor had a 200-a. sheepsleight at White Sheet Down but sheep and cattle pasture was mainly in the fields.²⁹⁴ By the middle of the 18th century the sheepsleight had been divided into pastures and coppices.²⁹⁵ In the 18th century a claim was made that Norton Ferris farmers had a right to graze stock in Gasper Common in Stourton but there is no record of such a right.²⁹⁶

There were presumably two arable fields in Kilmington manor and two in Norton Ferris manor in the Middle Ages but they were all situated at Norton Ferris and were known by various names such as Norton and South field, Norton Upper Field, Crouch field, East and West field and Higher and Lower Kilmington fields so are difficult to identify.²⁹⁷ In 1601 one farm at Norton Ferris had 53 a. enclosed ‘in a great ditch’.²⁹⁸ There was one common meadow called Rodmead at Norton Ferris on the boundary with Maiden Bradley. In 1607 John Hartgill exchanged his shares in Rodmead with other landowners for closes and land in the South field.²⁹⁹ The glebe land was all enclosed by 1627 including 24 a. of arable³⁰⁰ but in 1632 a farm was sold as a yardland tenement with 15 a. of arable in Norton and Kilmington fields.³⁰¹ By 1693 most of the Madox family’s land at Norton Ferris was inclosed including 36 a. in Norton field and 20 a. of arable at Combe Bottom had been lately laid to grass but many farms still had dispersed strips of arable in the fields.³⁰² In 1711 the great common field called Norton field and the little common field called Kilmington field were recorded.³⁰³ In 1731 lands in the Great or North field at Norton Ferris were exchanged, apparently the

²⁹⁴ Hadspen Ho. MS. 2/1/1—2.

²⁹⁵ Hadspen Ho. MS. 1/1/6, 2/1/1.

²⁹⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 75.

²⁹⁷ WSHC 385/576, 603; Hadspen Ho. MS. 1/1/6, 2/1/2.

²⁹⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 302, deed.

²⁹⁹ TNA, SC 2/227/123.

³⁰⁰ SHC, D/D/rg 117/1.

³⁰¹ WSHC 383/570.

³⁰² Hadspen Ho. MS. 2/1/1—2.

³⁰³ WSHC 385/603.

inclosed North field in the north-east recorded in 1839.³⁰⁴ Kilmington Common Field, south-east of Berkeley farmstead was still was divided into strips in 1736. In 1747 land bordering Berkeley farmstead was said to have been inclosed out of Norton Ferris Upper Field and other closes to have been formerly part of Upper and Lower Norton fields.³⁰⁵ The earls of Ilchester gave closes to small freeholders in exchange for their strips in the fields³⁰⁶ and by the 1750s 12 a. of former strips had been recently enclosed on their Norton farm although 32 ½ a remained open on Kilmington farm.³⁰⁷ In 1774 the Norton Ferris fields were said to be ‘now inclosed’, no strips appear on later maps and there was no open field land by 1837.³⁰⁸

Many small and medium-sized farms survived in the 1680s some named after 16th-century copyholders but the large farms were rack-rented.³⁰⁹ During the 18th century large farms absorbed smaller ones until only a few small holdings remained copyhold. The many exchanges of land enabled landowners to create very large farms especially at Norton Ferris.³¹⁰ Rack rents fluctuated considerably even from year to year. Sir Stephen Fox let his two largest farms together for well over £200 and by 1712 was letting virtually his whole estate in Kilmington to one farmer but following difficulties in obtaining the rent it was reduced and his successors let the farms separately, presumably in hope of a better return. Fox had accepted straw and corn and c. 1758 his successor took wheat, oats, four horses, a dairy herd, two bulls and 100 sheep, half ewes, towards arrears.³¹¹ As small farms were bought or life leaseholds fell in their lands were added to the large farms and the farmsteads reduced to cottages or demolished. Sometimes farm buildings especially on Kilmington

³⁰⁴ Hadspen Ho. MS. 2/1/2; SHC, tithe award. The Kilmington field in this part of the parish was the Maiden Bradley estate's land in Kilmington earlier known as Bradley field: WSHC 383/198.

³⁰⁵ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2.

³⁰⁶ WSHC 383/576; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 75.

³⁰⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170B, rentals.

³⁰⁸ Hadspen Ho. MS. 1/1/6.

³⁰⁹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 18 and 170A, surveys; WSHC 865/196.

³¹⁰ WSHC 385/20; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177a, draft leases.

³¹¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170a, surveys; box 170B rentals.

Street were retained as secondary farmyards or outfarms but most were demolished in the 20th century.³¹²

In 1628 the Norton Ferris demesne was to be stocked with 500 sheep, ten oxen, ten cows, a bull, ten young cattle and six pigs. By 1676 John Maddox of Norton had a cheese press and produced cheese from his herd of 18 cows and heifers and bacon from his pigs as well as growing wheat, barley, peas and oats with his team of six oxen.³¹³ He also had ten steers, 800 sheep and their wool, seven horses and a well-furnished house.³¹⁴ Several farms at Norton Ferris were mainly under grass in 1744 and in 1753 a marl pit on the estate was filled in.³¹⁵ Before 1764 14 a. at Kilmington had been planted as an orchard and in 1780 Henry Hobhouse had a new orchard planted at Norton farm with 60 apples in a great many varieties and eight types of pear but few others were planted and even in 1885 there was very little orchard except at Norton Ferris.³¹⁶

Late 18th-century improvement

Henry Hobhouse was keen to improve his newly-acquired Norton farm and as well as including clauses in leases about not breaking grass and rotating crops required a tenant to sow clover and rye grass with his lent corn in the third year.³¹⁷ In the late 1760s the farm had over 222 a. of arable in large closes, 112 a. of inclosed grass and over 200 a. of down including former closes that had been thrown open. It was let initially for £300 rising to £340 by 1771. Hobhouse commissioned two reports by Peter Fry of Axbridge and by Thomas Weston of Warwick. In 1775 the farm supported a dairy herd of 30 cows and young animals, 800 sheep of which 300 were breeding ewes, and two sows. The best cow ate 30 cwt of hay

³¹² Dors. HC, D/FSI, map of Kilmington 1765; WSHC 385/196; SHC, tithe award.

³¹³ WSHC 385/603

³¹⁴ TNA, PROB 4/6869.

³¹⁵ WSHC 383/30, 196.

³¹⁶ WSHC 385/573; Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2; SHC, tithe award; OS Map, 1: 0560, Som. LV.SE. (1885 edn).

³¹⁷ Hadspen Ho. MS. 2/1/1

and was worth £8 a year, wheat gave eight sacks an acre every third or fourth year from 68 a., and coarse barley and oats were grown but vetches and peas did not do well on the heavy land. Ploughing was by a man and boy with three horses who managed only one acre a day and the wheat was sown with clover after which a large thorn bush was hauled over it. Weeds were troublesome and Fry recommended laying to grass. The same year c. £270 was spent building an 80-ft barn and a 40-ft diameter pool on the sheepsleight. In 1777 most of the farmyard was reconstructed. In 1778 Weston prepared separate recommendations for each field and although not advocating any change of land use suggested working wheat fields on a four-year rotation with turnips, barley with clover and fallow, draining some fields, ridging turnip fields for the winter and dressing with lime against fly damage, and especially harrowing and rolling grassland. He also found that the sheep on the down, which he recommended inclosing, were too long-legged for the grass.³¹⁸

In the 1780s Edmund Rack recorded about 12 farms in the parish, mostly dairy and pasture, grass being worth twice as much as arable. The land was not suitable for good barley but produced wheat, oats and a few peas and turnips. Labourers had 1s. a day and drink.³¹⁹ Part of a dairy herd was taken for arrears of rent in 1788³²⁰ and as dairying increased in importance much of the Hobhouse land at Norton Ferris was laid to grass.³²¹ In 1772 the earl of Ilchester had spent over £43 building a large granary³²² but a report prepared for him in 1790 stated that there was too much arable on his Norton farms and a third of it would be better suited to pasture. Some was cold white clay. A great number of fields had recently been thrown together but the surveyor recommended further amalgamations. On Kilmington farm some land was inclined to furze and the breast ploughing and burning of 146 a. of

³¹⁸ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2.

³¹⁹ M. McDermott and S. Berry, *Edmund Rack's Survey of Somerset* (Taunton, 2011), pp. 239—40.

³²⁰ WSHC 383/197

³²¹ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2

³²² Dors. RO, D/FSI, box 177A, acct.

weedy former common land to convert it to sheep pasture was recommended.³²³ In the north Homestalls, a freehold farm, was still more than half arable in 1789 and had a large marl pit but also a 56-a. sheepsleight called Long Knowle on the top of Knowle Hill. After it was bought by the marquis of Bath a new farmstead was built between 1814 and 1839.³²⁴

Hoare also had his land surveyed in the late 18th century with a view to improvement. Most of the small holdings were already laid to grass and harrowing was recommended, as was the sowing of remaining arable with clover for conversion to meadow or pasture. For the larger farms where clover and turnips were already grown drainage, liming and manuring of the arable were recommended and rotations including clover to be first mown then ploughed in the second year. All farms had cowhouses and two had dairies. The buildings were of stone and thatch and in good condition.³²⁵

Inclosure of Kilmington Common

About 200 a. of Kilmington Common still lay open in the early 19th century. It was an irregular piece of land between the Hill Grounds, formerly Selwood Forest land on the west, the land taken into the Kilmington demesne to the north, the road to the church on the east, and the road from Bruton on the south.³²⁶ The down on White Sheet Hill carried no common rights, which at Norton Ferris were confined to the common arable and White Sheet Corner west of the down.³²⁷ However, in 1806 four cottages and ten additional gardens encroached on the Norton manor waste totalling over 4 a.³²⁸

³²³ Dors. RO, D/FSI, box 170A, survey.

³²⁴ WSHC, X6/47 and 47A; SHC, tithe award.

³²⁵ WSHC 383/101.

³²⁶ SHC, tithe award.

³²⁷ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2.

³²⁸ WSHC 383/203.

By the late 17th century the Hartgills as lords of Kilmington manor had added a large part of Kilmington Common or Heath,³²⁹ to their demesne farm. It had a road cutting across it to access the remaining common from New Road, stopped up by 1800.³³⁰ There were heavy penalties of up to a £1 for grazing illegally on the common, not removing geese by Candlemas or storing firewood there.³³¹ In 1773 21 holdings were listed as having rights on the remaining area of Kilmington Common although by then some were only land with no farmstead and some claims were denied including those of the glebe and the former demesne farm, which had already had land from the common. Despite repeated orders in the manor court to throw open encroachments,³³² in c.1800 four cottages and ten gardens encroached in the south-east corner of the common then measuring 207 ½ a., although some were probably made with the consent of the manor in the first decade of the 17th century.³³³

In 1813 many local landowners and farmers petitioned Parliament for the inclosure of the remaining common.³³⁴ It cost over £1,600 part of which was raised by selling allotments, sometimes to people wanting to build cottages. Of the rest Sir Richard Colt Hoare was awarded 103 ½ a., the earl of Ilchester 39 a., the rector c.9 a. and small freeholders c. 20 a.³³⁵ In 1827 17 pieces of common were still in separate ownership.³³⁶ William Phelps claimed that inclosure not only benefitted the landowners but the poor who obtained larger gardens.³³⁷

Earlier 19th century

³²⁹ Above, this section.

³³⁰ WSHC 383/196; Dors. RO, D/FSI, box 75; maps of Kilmington 1736, 1800.

³³¹ WSHC 383/980.

³³² WSHC 383/322.

³³³ WSHC 383/104, vol. 1; TNA, SC 2/227/123; Dors. RO, D/FSI, box 170A rentals; map of Kilmington 1800.; SHC, DD/WY, map SOM/36b.

³³⁴ SHC, DD/WYp, box 4.

³³⁵ WSHC 383/1; SHC, DD/S/OG 10; DD/RR 39/1.

³³⁶ SHC, DD/BT 3/6/2.

³³⁷ W. Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 177.

In 1815 the rector claimed tithes were too low and that an acre of wheat was worth £10 and that tithes of £1 per cow and 3s. 6d. for ten fleeces was reasonable. Farmers thought otherwise one farmer saying his cows produced scarce enough milk for their calves and Richard Hoare, who was cropping Hill Grounds with a rotation of wheat, turnips, barley and grass, said the fields were subject to blight and would be more rewarding as larch plantation.³³⁸ Loss of arable reduced employment and in 1821 only 64 out of 121 families were employed in agriculture.³³⁹ As farms grew, especially after the major exchange of fields between landowners in 1812, many farmsteads like New House and Pickfords were converted to labourers' cottages and remaining farmsteads were enlarged. Hoare's tenants wanted cow and waggon houses in the 1820s.³⁴⁰ The Hobhouses were still concerned with improving their farm at Norton and when a long-standing tenant left in 1822 proposals for a new lease included the usual penalties on tilling grassland, mowing the meadows more than once a year, or growing corn in successive years and required the folding of sheep and the sowing of clover and rye at the end of the term. Although arable fields covered 206 a. and grass 119 a., 193 a. of downland was let with the farm.³⁴¹

The Ilchester estates were rack-rented apart from cottages and traditional rents amounted to only 4s. out of a nominal rental of over £280 although in the 1820s only c. £240 was received.³⁴² Most of the estate was let to a single farmer who also leased one of the Hoare farms giving him a total of 785 a. in 1827 when one farmer rented the entire Hobhouse estate (526 a.) and three other farmers had between 145 a. and 266 a.³⁴³ In 1829 the Hoare estate in Kilmington (982 a.) comprised Norton Ferris farm (270 a.), Berkley farm (222 a.), Kilmington, now Manor, farm (187 a.), Cote farm (96 a.), an amalgamation of three small

³³⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320B, correspondence.

³³⁹ Census cited in C. and J. Greenwood, *Som. Delineated*, 121.

³⁴⁰ WSHC 383/72; SHC, tithe award.

³⁴¹ SHC, A/ABS 1, p. 603; proposals for a lease c. 1822, document in private hands 1997.

³⁴² Dors. HC, D/FSI, box, 316, estate accts.

³⁴³ SHC, DD/BT 3/6/2.

holdings and two farmsteads, East and West farms (27 a. each), north-east of Kilmington Street, Red Lion farm (10 a.) and the Hill Grounds (141 a.) then farmed with the Stourhead home farm. The smaller farms were entirely laid to grass but arable accounted for well over half the total acreage of the three largest farms.³⁴⁴

In 1839 over 1,000 a. out of 2,587 a. was still arable. The soil varied in quality over clay and chalk from heavy land worked on a four-course rotation of wheat, turnips, barley and artificial grass to sandy loam producing good wheat and oats but the height of the parish meant harvests were late and much of the grassland was neglected and covered with furze and heath. Dairying predominated in livestock farming and only sheep were kept for meat. There were 250 cows, 160 young cattle, 7 working bullocks, 80 horses, 30 colts and 3,000 sheep. Rents average 30s. an acre for both arable and good grassland. Of 18 holdings the largest were 530 a. and 498 a.; there were three farms between 200 a. and 300 a., one between 100 a. and 200 a., two between 50 a. and 100a., five between 20 a. and 50 a. and five between 8 a. and 20 a. but a few of the smaller ones were held by tenants of larger farms and one farmer occupied over 550 a.³⁴⁵ Only 14 farmers were recorded in 1841 and 83 labourers but no specialised workers.³⁴⁶ A limekiln appears to have been opened in the 1840s on White Sheet Hill and was run profitably supplying farms on the Stourhead estate as well as the house itself in 1848. The rent increased from £18 in 1849 to £20 in 1867.³⁴⁷ There was a cottage and garden attached. The kiln appears to have gone out of use by 1912.³⁴⁸

In the late 1830s and 1840s Henry Hobhouse enlarged his fields; boundaries were grubbed out and old names replaced with ones like 18 Acres. He built three new labourer's cottages at Norton in 1848.³⁴⁹ Tenant farmers were also keen on improvement and several

³⁴⁴ WSHC 383/106.

³⁴⁵ TNA, IR 18/8624; SHC, tithe award.

³⁴⁶ TNA, HO 107/952.

³⁴⁷ WSHC 383/82, 107.

³⁴⁸ TNA, IR 58/73468; WSHC, G9/510/22.

³⁴⁹ Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2.

won prizes for livestock.³⁵⁰ Mr Lush, who farmed the Kilmington demesne farm, described the farm when he took it over in 1837 as having dry land, poor and worked-out arable of which 60 a. had been thrown out of cultivation and 237 a. of uncultivated common. He pared and burnt the land at a cost of £8 an acre and fed it with ashes and bone as well as dung from the farmyards. He grew swedes then rape, vetches and turnips, eaten by the sheep before sowing wheat on the best land and rye on the rest. His yield of wheat rose from c. 26 bu. an acre to over 40. He had been prepared to experiment, for example using bicarbonate of soda or subsoiling, which produced no improvements, and by 1859 had made 403 a. good arable.³⁵¹ By 1851 the two largest farms had over 500 a., four more had over 180 a. and the rest were under 60 a. Three dairies were recorded, which might account for some of the seven female workers recorded on one farm in 1851 when 116 workers were employed on ten farms.³⁵² A farmer retiring at Norton Ferris in 1857 had a dairy herd of 57 including a shorthorn bull, a flock of 332 Southdown sheep and six horses besides equipment for making cheese and hay and drilling turnips.³⁵³

Later 19th century

In 1861 farmers employed 135 agricultural labourers and there were eight dairy workers, many resident on farms, and six shepherds and although the total recorded labour had fallen by 1871 there were 10 dairy workers, nine shepherds and three farm bailiffs.³⁵⁴ In the 1870s two dairies were run by women.³⁵⁵ Rents were rising on the Hoare estate by up to 50 per cent between 1841 and 1862 and in the case of Hill Grounds by 550 per cent, presumably due to

³⁵⁰ e.g. Bristol Mercury, 18 Dec. 1847: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

³⁵¹ The Preston Guardian, 16 July 1859: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

³⁵² TNA, HO 107/1850.

³⁵³ Salisbury and Winchester Jnl, 17 Jan. 1857; Devizes and Wiltshire Gaz. 13 March 1857: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

³⁵⁴ TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965.

³⁵⁵ Morris & Co. Dir. Som. (1872).

improvements.³⁵⁶ About this time one farmer attempted to abolish the local custom of giving part of the labourers' wages in beer instead paying them an extra 1s. a week in winter and 3s. in summer and encouraging them to save for necessities.³⁵⁷ In 1867 the rector and a leading farmer produced contradictory reports about the employment of female and child agricultural labourers in the parish. The former said there were 109 of whom 43 were boys and 14 girls under 18, including 14 under 10 years old five of whom were under 8 but the latter said there were only 85 such labourers of whom six were girls over 13 and 50 were boys of whom none was under 8. As the 1871 census only records 18 women and 41 boys employed on farms and a total of 103 agricultural labourers, most of the women and children must have been casual labourers. The rector noted that cottage rents were high although the accommodation was bad and that wages were very low. He referred to the system of private gangs being employed in agriculture although on a small scale.³⁵⁸ A boy carter in 1868 earned 1s. 6d. a week and was fined 5s. with 6s. costs when he lost control of his horses. He was in charge of a waggon and a cart.³⁵⁹

Between 1866 and 1876 there was an increase in grain crops, although that might just reflect the timing of crop rotation, and an increase in grass. The number of sheep remained at about 2,500 but the number of dairy cows rose from 221 to 334 and pigs from 201 to 293.³⁶⁰ The stock of two farmers who died in this period reflects the importance of dairying and the use of artificial grasses for hay and roots for feeding. One farmer had Carson ploughs, broadcast and mowing machines, a turnip drill and several ricks of different types of hay besides 67 a. of pasture, 60 a. of clover hay and 44 a. of newly sown grasses. His unspecified

³⁵⁶ WSHC 383/107.

³⁵⁷ J. Abbey, 'Intemperance: its bearing upon agriculture' (1881), LSE Selected Pamphlets: Jstor: accessed 16 June 2016. Sadly, he killed himself in 1879 following bad losses on his farms: Jacksons Oxford Jnl, 3 Jan 1880: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

³⁵⁸ Children and Women in Agric. (1867), 499, 506; TNA, RG 10/1965.

³⁵⁹ Western Gazette, 2 Oct. 1868: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

³⁶⁰ TNA, MAF 68/68/59, 60, 486

livestock sold for £1,733.³⁶¹ A Kilmington contractor was employed for chaff cutting, threshing, clover shelling and grass cutting. He charged up to 28s. a day for threshing, although he often had to wait two or three years for payment.³⁶² Cowmen and shepherds were offered cottages at Norton Ferris in the 1870s but their wives were expected to work on the farm.³⁶³ Rents had stabilised on the Hoare estate although most farmers were on yearly tenancies with leaseholds reserved for the largest farms. Nearly half the estate was still arable but only Norton Farm had equal quantities of both arable and pasture most holdings seemed to specialise in one or the other with Berkeley farm and Hill Grounds still mainly arable. Improvements at Berkeley farm in 1878 included reroofing the house, stalls and other buildings with tiles. The farm had a large garden and stack yard.³⁶⁴ An arson attack in 1879 destroyed five corn stacks, wool, machinery, three barns and three cottages driving the uninsured farmer out of business. The farm sale included 70 dairy shorthorns, 300 Hampshire Down sheep, a Berkshire boar, ten carts and waggons, three ploughs and three mowing machines.³⁶⁵ In 1881 the Hoare estate borrowed money under the Inclosure Commission scheme for unspecified improvements to Stourton farm including Hill Grounds in Kilmington.³⁶⁶

By 1881 both the number of labourers and of specialist workers had fallen and only nine farms were recorded, with up to 700 a. but four with under 100 a., employing 60 workers, probably due to the agricultural depression.³⁶⁷ However, the return of 1886 recorded 19 occupiers of land. Arable had declined substantially with only 390 a. recorded, most of it under wheat and oats, and 2,060 a. of grass. As a result the number of horses had fallen from

³⁶¹ Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 24 Dec. 1869: BNA accessed 28 June 2016; WSHC 628/27/9.

³⁶² SHC, DD/X/PAT 12.

³⁶³ Western Gazette, 13 Jan. 1871, 5 Jan. 1872, 24 Jan. 1879, 19 Dec. 1879: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

³⁶⁴ WSHC 383/48; SHC, DD/BT 23/3.

³⁶⁵ Warminster and Westbury Journal, 27 Aug. 1887, 10 Sep. 1887, 24 Sep. 1887; Western Gazette, 2 Sep. 1887: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

³⁶⁶ WSHC 1617/1/3.

³⁶⁷ TNA, RG 11/2079.

81 in 1876 to 66 but despite the great increase in grass there had only been a slight increase in livestock although the dairy herd had increased to 388 and the pigs to 390.³⁶⁸ The decline in labour continued with 11 farms recorded in 1891 and 1901 with 62 labourers falling to 22 in 1901 but offset by an increase in cattlemen and dairy workers to 14.³⁶⁹ At least three farms were run by women in the 1890s possibly influencing the choice of livestock.³⁷⁰ The number of sheep fell dramatically to only 827 by 1906 but milk cows rose to 424 in 1896 and 511 in 1906 and pigs to 575 in 1896 before falling to 502 in 1906 as fewer sows were kept.³⁷¹

20th century

Farming continued to follow late 19th-century trends. Horses remained important and a horse dealer was resident in 1907.³⁷² At Norton Ferris dairy shorthorns, Hampshire Down sheep and Berkshire pigs remained the preferred stock and the pedigree bull recorded in 1903 was probably typical of the dairy farms. Norton Ferris farm had a 70-cow dairy but Norton Manor farm was a 600-a. mixed farm.³⁷³ In 1910 of 13 recorded farms five were under 100a. although two were let to a single tenant. Farms were smaller than in the mid 19th century the largest being the Hobhouse farm (523 a.) and the Hoare farm (329 a.) at Norton Ferris.³⁷⁴ Most farms had cowstalls, dairies and cheeserooms as did several smallholdings and houses such as the rectory. Holdings as small as 5 a. were engaged in dairying and virtually everyone seems to have had pigsties although the statistics show pig-keeping was less popular. The Hobhouse farm at Norton Ferris had a dairy house with cheeseroom, stalls for c. 60 cows and a secondary farmstead at Coombe and the Hoare's Norton Ferris farm had two dairies. Three

³⁶⁸ TNA, MAF 68/486, 1056.

³⁶⁹ TNA, RG 12/1627, RG 13/1963.

³⁷⁰ Kelly's Dir. Som. (1889—99).

³⁷¹ TNA, MAF 68/1826, 2203.

³⁷² Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1907).

³⁷³ Western Gazette, 6 March 1903, 15 Sep. 1905: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

³⁷⁴ WSHC, L8/3.

farms Cote, West and Moor had been thrown together but retained two houses, one as a dairy house. Much of the land was said to be good and well-farmed. The Hoares provided a small piece of land for allotments in 1910.³⁷⁵

There was a continued decline in female employment even in dairying by 1911 when of seven cheesemakers and dairy workers only two were women. Four farms had a resident male cheesemaker. There were only 32 agricultural labourers and at least seven cottages were in ruins.³⁷⁶ In 1916 the 14 farms were all over 150 a. or under 50 a. and arable was still declining although horses kept had increased to 97, mostly for agricultural purposes. However, despite the conversion to and improvement of grass, only 237 a. was heathland, livestock numbers were declining especially sheep (685) and pigs (393).³⁷⁷ The war caused problems as at least four cheesemakers were in the army in 1916 with many other specialised farm workers. There had been no move to ploughing, although the availability of 16 ploughteams suggests it might have been planned, and most farms were mainly grass with much arable under clover. Only one farm had taken on women to milk its 57 cows.³⁷⁸

After the war the Hobhouse farm at Norton Ferris was divided into seven smallholdings by Wiltshire County Council, which planned cowhouses and dairies.³⁷⁹ As very large farms were divided new farmsteads were provided, some like New House farmstead, on its old site although the farm was divided into New House and Great Ground farms in 1924 and a large new farmyard for the latter was built north of New House Farm.³⁸⁰ In 1926 there were 27 farms, only three over 150 a., but no further loss of arable on which oats was the main crop (92 ½ a.), followed by wheat (47 ½ a.) and roots (35 a.). Sheep had

³⁷⁵ TNA, IR 58/73468—9.

³⁷⁶ TNA, RG 14/12157; IR 58/73468—9.

³⁷⁷ TNA, MAF 68/2773.

³⁷⁸ WSHC, G9/172/1.

³⁷⁹ WSHC, F2/2315/25

³⁸⁰ SHC, tithe award, WSHC, G9/510/22—3; L 8/1/3; OS Map 1:10560, Som. LV. SW (1904 edn); OS Map 1:25000, sheet 142 (1997 edn).

been reduced again to 238 and pigs to 84 but cattle numbers had increased to 930 over two thirds of them dairy animals and there were over 4,200 poultry.³⁸¹ The increase in cattle caused problems with water shortages especially for the new county farms who were said to put 100 cattle on the Down.³⁸² Wiltshire County Council did not divide the down between the holdings but allowed all their tenants at Norton Ferris grazing on it.³⁸³ In 1927 a herd of 117 dairy shorthorns was put up for sale at Norton Ferris and they remained the dominant breed of cow in the 1940s.³⁸⁴ In the 1930s a poultry farmer specialised in breeding pedigree birds.³⁸⁵

By 1936 some farms were increasing in size with six over 150 a. but there were 11 under 50 a. and arable had fallen to 109 a., mostly under wheat and oats. Only 41 workers were employed regularly. Horses remained important (58) and there were over 1,000 cattle, mostly in dairy herds and pig numbers had risen again to 420 but there were no sheep and only 3,037 poultry.³⁸⁶ Rough grazing had increased to 385 a. in 1942. The war brought changes including the ploughing of 132 a. of grass in 1940 and 236a. in 1941 mainly for oats but also wheat, roots, potatoes, beans and cabbage. Dairying remained important.³⁸⁷ Church farm was offered for sale in 1941 as a 152-a. dairy farm with cheeseroom, cow stalls for 66 and refrigerating house for accredited milk.³⁸⁸ At the same period the Red Lion had a dairy herd of c. 25, two breeding sows and like most farms still used horsepower but had improved its pasture, former downland.³⁸⁹ However, by 1942 there were 13 tractors in the parish and 19 farmyard engines, but only 30 full-time, workers, one female, and 9 part-time workers of both sexes. There were 924 cattle, mostly dairy, 72 pigs, 44 horses, five mules, one goat and 2,810

³⁸¹ TNA, MAF 68/3319.

³⁸² WSHC, F2/120/38.

³⁸³ TNA, MAF 32/39/272.

³⁸⁴ *Western Gazette*, 9 Sep. 1927, 7 Feb 1941: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

³⁸⁵ *Kelly's Dir. Wits.* (1931—9).

³⁸⁶ TNA, 68/3817.

³⁸⁷ TNA, MAF 32/39/272; WSHC, F2/120/38

³⁸⁸ WSHC 1008/14.

³⁸⁹ WSHC 3549, farm valuations; MAF 32/39/272.

poultry. Most land was fair to good, most of the 22 farms were A-rated and were worked full-time. Some farmers were struggling with injuries and old-age and those were most likely to be B-rated and to use no fertiliser.³⁹⁰

The results of war-time agriculture were still apparent in 1946 with a fall in rough grazing to 244 a. and arable at 580 a. higher than it had been since the 1890s. Besides prisoners of war there were 42 full-time workers, five of them women, and 12 part-time workers including two women. There were still 40 horses on farms, 1,135 cattle and 3,003 poultry but pigs had declined to 19.³⁹¹ By 1956 the parish was reverting to grass with 187 a. of arable crops, primarily, oats and fodder crops and no wheat. A further 470 a. was sown with clover and artificial grasses for mowing or grazing. Only 16 horses were kept, fewer than half for agricultural work but other livestock was increasing in numbers with 1,342 cattle, mostly dairy, 649 pigs, 6,305 poultry, and for the first time since the 1920s there were sheep although only 106. There were 31 full-time workers and eight part-time or casual labourers, mainly male³⁹² and that is reflected in the construction of new accommodation for agricultural workers into the 1960s.³⁹³ Milk production increased on the Red Lion smallholding in the 1950s from five 10-gallon churns a day in 1951 to seven in 1957. The average annual production was 704 gallons per cow worth over £100.³⁹⁴ In 1966 the county smallholdings included eight farms with a total of 325 cattle and 82 pigs.³⁹⁵ By that year poultry-keeping had shrunk to 2,589 birds, cattle and sheep numbers had barely changed but pigs had increased to 1,299 and wheat and barley to 301 a. Rough grazing covered only 70 a.³⁹⁶ The dairy herd increased again before 1986 when cattle totalled 1,708, mostly milk cows

³⁹⁰ TNA, MAF 32/39/272.

³⁹¹ TNA, MAF 68/4182.

³⁹² TNA, MAF 68/4552.

³⁹³ WSHC, F 14/400/22

³⁹⁴ WSHC 3549, milk books.

³⁹⁵ WSHC, F2/120/38.

³⁹⁶ TNA, MAF 68/5004.

and heifers, but there was a small fall in pig and sheep numbers and poultry had virtually disappeared with only 216 hens recorded. Of 16 holdings, 11 were dairy farms, only eight were over 100 a. and three were worked part-time. However, there had again been an increase in arable with over 520 a. under wheat and barley.³⁹⁷ The trend to greater arable farming continued and by 1986 wheat and barley covered over 920 a. but the dairy herd had declined and total cattle were only 1,442 whereas pigs had increased to 2,359 and sheep to 925. Of 15 holdings only 8 were dairy farms and two were cereal farms. Employment had fallen and there were only 12 regular farm workers out of 38, the rest being farmers and their families.³⁹⁸ The number of farms continued to decline and by 2016 there were eight working farms specialising in arable, beef and dairying.³⁹⁹ Many small and secondary farmsteads have been lost or converted to other use.

WOODLAND

In 1086 woodland covered an area one furlong by three, possibly along the northern and western boundaries and part of later Selwood Forest.⁴⁰⁰ The reference to ‘boughs falling under the foot of the wolf’ in 1279⁴⁰¹ and to a payment to the crown for common as ‘wood gavel’ in 1298 implies that tenants were collecting wood in Selwood forest. Both Kilmington and ‘Norton’⁴⁰² woods were inside the forest boundary as perambulated that year.⁴⁰³ Norton Wood covered 100 a. in 1435⁴⁰⁴ but was at least partly cleared by the mid 17th century when

³⁹⁷ TNA, MAF 68/5505.

³⁹⁸ TNA, MAF 68/6032.

³⁹⁹ achurchnearyou/Kilmington-st-mary-the-virgin: accessed 14 July 2016.

⁴⁰⁰ *Domesday*, 271.

⁴⁰¹ *Cal. IPM*. II, p. 443.

⁴⁰² The perambulation indicates ‘Norton Wood’ was outside Kilmington parish.

⁴⁰³ *VCH Som.* I, 558.

⁴⁰⁴ *Cal. IPM*. XXIV, p. 342.

waste and meadow were called Norton Wood.⁴⁰⁵ It might be Knowle Wood, recorded in 1585, but a fragment of woodland nearby was called Norton Wood in the 19th century.⁴⁰⁶

In 1518 a man was accused of felling and removing trees on his tenement at Kilmington.⁴⁰⁷ In 1609 Kilmington manor tenants might shroud hollies and thorns to mend their hedges and fell a bush or as much as a man could carry in a basket on his back, although the lord of the manor had an exclusive right to those on his demesne.⁴⁰⁸ In 1743 a tenant at Norton Ferris was required to plant three timber trees every year and by 1777 there were 410 timber trees on the farm.⁴⁰⁹ In 1744 an 18-a. coppice there was said to be felled every twelve years and to have many trees.⁴¹⁰

A grove of oaks near the Kilmington mansion house, now Church Farm, valued at £400 in 1675 was pasture by 1681 and the 7-a coppice was only 6 a. in 1712 and 4 a. in 1800 and 1839.⁴¹¹ Knowle Wood was divided in coppices in 1681.⁴¹² An estimated 40 a. mainly of oak coppice wood survived in the 1780s.⁴¹³ On the earl of Ilchester's estate two coppices covering c.24 a., presumably their 1681 share of Knowle Wood, were in the process of being felled and by 1796 only 18 a. remained.⁴¹⁴ Hoare was advised to clear his coppice for arable and retain only timber trees but retained his 24-a. share of Knowle Wood as two copses, one called the Nursery, in 1797.⁴¹⁵ Trees were planted on Charles Webb's Homestalls farm after 1789 and there was a 7-a. wood but all woodland on the farm was cleared by the marquis of Bath before 1839.⁴¹⁶

⁴⁰⁵ WSHC 383/568; SHC, A/ABS 1.

⁴⁰⁶ WSHC 865/196; SHC, tithe award.

⁴⁰⁷ WSHC 1728/70.

⁴⁰⁸ TNA, SC 2/227/123.

⁴⁰⁹ WSHC 383/574; Hadspen Ho. MS. 3/2.

⁴¹⁰ WSHC 383/196.

⁴¹¹ Dors HC, D/FSI boxes 18 and 170A, surveys; map of Kilmington 1800; SHC, tithe award.

⁴¹² Dors HC, D/FSI box 18, survey.

⁴¹³ McDermott and Berry, *Edmund Rack's Survey*, pp. 239–40.

⁴¹⁴ Dors HC, D/FSI boxes 18, 170A, rentals and survey and 177A, tithe survey 1796.

⁴¹⁵ WSHC 383/10; 1 Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A, tithe survey 1797.

⁴¹⁶ WSHC, X6/47 and 47A; SHC, tithe award.

Before 1815 Sir Richard Colt Hoare had planted larch, which he considered the most profitable use of the high ground, at Jack's Castle at the west end of Hill Grounds.⁴¹⁷

Following inclosure Sir Richard planted his allotment with oak and larch.⁴¹⁸ By 1839 there was only 124 a. of woodland in the parish mainly in Knowle Wood (37 a.) and in the several Hoare plantations.⁴¹⁹ One or two woodmen were recorded between 1841 and 1871 and thefts of wood were prosecuted in 1848.⁴²⁰ Timber trees consisted of ash, beech, oak and larch was also grown and in 1861 the former common produced 1,500 larch and oak trees and 6,000 faggots for sale.⁴²¹

By 1885 Knowle Wood had been cleared except for a fragment outside the parish and only a tiny part of Norton Wood was left. In the 20th century the woodland was neglected and in 1910 most was valued for shelter only but the Hoare estate seems to have continued growing conifers on Jack's Castle having replanted in the 1890s. The larches were said to be the only good trees in the parish but some plantations had been reduced to ornamental belts.⁴²² By 1904 the last coppice had been cleared. The only new planting was a small wood in the village on Cote Lane.⁴²³

WARREN

In the 1550s there was a fragmentary reference to 1,000 couples of rabbits.⁴²⁴ It was later said that the keeper of Selwood forest kept a warren on the common before the Crown sold the manor and forced John Hartgill to demolish the warren and lodge he had made and killed his rabbits.⁴²⁵ After the 1630 disafforestation of Selwood John Hartgill rebuilt a lodge and

⁴¹⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320B, correspondence.

⁴¹⁸ W. Phelps, *Hist. Som.* II, 177.

⁴¹⁹ SHC, tithe award; above, landownership.

⁴²⁰ TNA, HO 107/952, 1850; RG 10/196; SHC, Q/SR 567/30.5.

⁴²¹ TNA, IR/8624; *Frome Times* 17 July 1861: BNA accessed 29 June 2016.

⁴²² TNA, IR 58/73468; OS Map, 1: 0560, Som. LV.SE. and SW. (1885 edn).

⁴²³ OS Map, 1: 0560, Som. LV.SE. (1904 edn); OS Map 1:25000, sheet 142 (1997 edn).

⁴²⁴ TNA, STAC 4/7/41.

⁴²⁵ TNA, E 134/7Chas1/Mich20; E 134/71654—55/Hill1.

established a warren on the best part of the heath to the annoyance of the tenants.⁴²⁶ It was not recorded again but in 1901 there was rabbit trapper in the parish and in 1943 rabbits were infesting farmland at Norton Ferris.⁴²⁷

MILL

A windmill on Kilmington heath was said in the 1550s to have been out of use for several years and the sails and stones were taken away. It was presumably demolished shortly afterwards.⁴²⁸ A watermill was recorded on Norton Ferris manor in 1595 but there is no other record⁴²⁹ and it was probably Woodbridge mill at Gasper in Stourton.⁴³⁰

QUARRYING

In the 1780s there was said to be ‘flinty’ rock for both road repair and building houses.⁴³¹ That might have been quarried on White Sheet.⁴³² There were gravel pits in 1814 in the north west near the Yarnfield turnpike gate, held by the highway surveyors in 1821, which remained open in 1904.⁴³³ In 1821 3 a. of quarries and gravel pits on Bradley Road was also held by the highway surveyors, apparently as tenants to the Lush family but by 1839 they were sublet to Joseph Lush.⁴³⁴ In 1910 the quarry there was assessed for a royalty on stone and three quarrymen were recorded in 1911 but the quarry may have been given up shortly

⁴²⁶ TNA, E 134/7Chas1/Mich20.

⁴²⁷ Above, landownership; TNA, RG 13/1963; MAF 32/39/272.

⁴²⁸ TNA, STAC 4/7/45.

⁴²⁹ Cal. Pat. 1594—5, p. 89.

⁴³⁰ WSHC 383/568; SHC, A/ABS 1; Q/RDe 127

⁴³¹ McDermott and Berry, Rack’s Survey, pp. 240.

⁴³² OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SE (1885 edn).

⁴³³ SHC, DD/WY, C306 Som 36a; QRDe 127; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1904 edn).

⁴³⁴ SHC, QRDe 127; DD/BT 3/6/2; tithe award.

afterwards.⁴³⁵ Lime was quarried and burnt at White Sheet from the 1840s and the right to do so was let with the cottage⁴³⁶ but quarrying had probably ceased by 1912.⁴³⁷

TRADES AND CRAFTS

Cloth

It is not known when the cloth industry came to Kilmington but until the late 19th century sheep had been kept in the parish in large numbers. However, the first recorded textile worker were linenweavers in 1619 and 1693.⁴³⁸ The Ryall family were woolstaplers from the early 18th to early 19th centuries⁴³⁹ and a wool sorter was recorded in 1806.⁴⁴⁰ In the 1780s many of the poor were said to be employed in spinning and carding, presumably for the serge and hosiery trade at Bruton but that industry had been replaced by silk by the end of the century.⁴⁴¹ One stocking knitter was recorded in 1901.⁴⁴²

The mercers recorded between 1684 and 1765 may have been traders or shopkeepers⁴⁴³ but later Kilmington had a small silk industry presumably connected with that at Bruton. The silk house near Cote Lane and the former common is of 18th-century date and was built in the grounds of a house, since demolished, before 1797.⁴⁴⁴ In 1818 when female children of the poorer classes were employed in the manufacture of silk,⁴⁴⁵ the building was said to have been lately used as a silk house.⁴⁴⁶ However, before 1827 it was acquired by John Sharrer Ward, who owned silk mills in Bruton throwing Italian silk and employed many

⁴³⁵ TNA, IR 58/73468; RG 14/12157.

⁴³⁶ TNA, IR 58/73468; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SE (1885 edn).

⁴³⁷ Above, this section, agric.

⁴³⁸ SHC, A/BKH 1; WHSC 383/568.

⁴³⁹ WSHC 383/196, 568; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A, tithe survey 1797; Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 6 Dec 1802.

⁴⁴⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1276/257.

⁴⁴¹ M. McDermott and S. Berry, Edmund Rack's Survey of Somerset (Taunton, 2011), pp. 239—40; VCH Som. VII, 33, 56.

⁴⁴² TNA, RG 13/1963.

⁴⁴³ WSHC, 383/567, 576; TNA, PROB 11/421/53; PROB 11/912/311.

⁴⁴⁴ WSHC 383/203.

⁴⁴⁵ Educ of Poor Digest [1818] (1819), 787.

⁴⁴⁶ SHC, DD/S/OG 10.

outworkers, but it was only rated at £5.⁴⁴⁷ It was described as a factory in 1829.⁴⁴⁸ In 1831 it was said that the families of labourers in the parish were engaged in silk winding but during the 1830s the trade declined sharply and although in 1839 Ward remained the tenant of the silkhouse⁴⁴⁹ it was converted into six tiny dwellings, some only one up one down, known as Silk House Bottom in 1849. The National Trust converted it into three cottages in the later 20th century.⁴⁵⁰ Despite the closure of the silk house women still wound silk for the Bruton mills; 11 in 1841 and 24 in 1851 but by 1861 only two still worked and one in 1871.⁴⁵¹

Malting

Although land in the parish was said to be unsuited to malting barley there were malthouses in the 18th century and one survived for most of the 19th.⁴⁵² The house south of the church, known as Hartgills or the Malthouse,⁴⁵³ had a malthouse by 1730 when it was let to John Maxfield (d. 1780).⁴⁵⁴ He also inherited the malting business of his parents-in-law John Wilmott (d. 1748) and Sarah (d. c. 1752) and was described as ‘the great maltster...esteemed for his good sense, good nature, affability and generosity’ but the business seems to have been damaged by the incapacity of his executor.⁴⁵⁵ The business was acquired by the Lush family of maltsters who may have built the large former malthouse attached to the house,⁴⁵⁶ converted to a pottery studio after 1946.⁴⁵⁷ Malting appears to have been given up by 1841.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁴⁷ SHC, DD/BT 3/6/2; VCH Som., VII, 33.

⁴⁴⁸ WSHC 383/106.

⁴⁴⁹ VCH Som., II, 422—3; VII, 33; SHC, tithe award.

⁴⁵⁰ NHB 1198324.

⁴⁵¹ TNA, HO 107/952, 1850; RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965; VCH Som., VII, 33.

⁴⁵² McDermott and Berry, Rack's Survey, pp. 239—40.

⁴⁵³ WSHC, 383/196; S. Hobbs, Gleanings from Wilts Par. Regs (WRS 63), 135

⁴⁵⁴ WSHC, 383/573, 575.

⁴⁵⁵ TNA, PROB 11/764/37; PROB 31/783/999; Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gaz. 28 Dec. 1780: BNA accessed 24 June 2016.

⁴⁵⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A, tithe survey 1797; SHC, DD/BR/tw 23; Q/REI 28/3; tithe award; TNA PROB 11/1305/31.

⁴⁵⁷ WSHC, 1844/18—19.

⁴⁵⁸ TNA, HO 107/952.

Smithies

The earliest recorded trade in the parish is smithing and in 1327 one man at Norton and two at Kilmington were surnamed smith.⁴⁵⁹ There was a smithy near the Red Lion on Long Lane, along the southern boundary, with stands for three horses, and another at the Common from the 1730s.⁴⁶⁰ However, a smithy with a smallholding at Norton Ferris was demolished in the 1770s.⁴⁶¹ In the mid 19th century the smithies provided work for up to eight smiths and thereafter there were four or five until the early 20th century.⁴⁶² In the 1900s one smith carried out tool, machinery and waggon repairs, maintained pony traps and kitchen ranges, and supplied oil as well as shoeing horses.⁴⁶³ His smithy remained in business in 1939.⁴⁶⁴

Woodworkers and others

The prevalence of woods and copses in the parish before the later 19th century probably spawned several industries. Carpenters were recorded from 1732, a carpenter's shop was built on the common before 1737⁴⁶⁵ and the Green family were carpenters during the 18th century.⁴⁶⁶ By the 19th century there were many carpenters' shops in Kilmington. In 1801 one was said to have been converted from a stable⁴⁶⁷ and many carpenters and sawyers were recorded from the 1800s including a coach wheelwright in 1842.⁴⁶⁸ Two or three families of carpenters and wheelwrights were in business in 1861.⁴⁶⁹ The Trimbys dominated the trade in the 19th century. William Trimby had a workshop in 1839 and worked as a turner followed

⁴⁵⁹ F. Dickinson, Kirby's Quest etc (SRS 3), 97—8.

⁴⁶⁰ SHC, DD/X/TNN 1; WSHC 383/196, 568; TNA, IR 58/73469; SHC, tithe award.

⁴⁶¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI box 170A.

⁴⁶² TNA, HO 107/952; RG 11/2079; RG 13/1963.

⁴⁶³ SHC, DD/X/PAT 12.

⁴⁶⁴ Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1915—39).

⁴⁶⁵ WSHC 383/574, 980.

⁴⁶⁶ WSHC 383/568.

⁴⁶⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSI box 316, lease bk.

⁴⁶⁸ SHC, A/BKH 1; Q/RJI 28/4.

⁴⁶⁹ PO Dir. Som. (1861).

by his son Uriah.⁴⁷⁰ George Trimby was a wood turner and shopkeeper in 1861.⁴⁷¹ Uriah built up the business and by 1881 was a builder and wheelwright.⁴⁷² In 1910 his business in Kilmington Street consisted of his house and five cottages converted for business use including carpenter's, paint and wheelwright's shops, all described as in parts dangerous, and another cottage with sawpit, wheelwright's shop and forge, in poor condition. He also owned a lot of poor cottage property. The business does not appear to have survived his death in 1912⁴⁷³ and in 1919 the district council considered compulsory purchase for housing.⁴⁷⁴ In the mid 19th century there were several sawyers, turners, coopers and hoopmakers and in 1871 nine hurdlemakers and a basketmaker. Presumably the increase in wheeled vehicles led to rise in the number of wheelwrights from two in 1871 to five in 1881 and 1901.⁴⁷⁵ In 1911 there was only one carpenter and one wheelwright.⁴⁷⁶ A small sawmill site, north of Kilmington Street, set up after the Second World War was redeveloped for housing in the 1980s and there was a car repair workshop.⁴⁷⁷

Brick kiln acre or close, later Brickhill, was recorded at Norton Ferris in late 18th century.⁴⁷⁸ In the 1840s and 1850s century building workers including thatchers, plumbers, bricklayers and plasterers were recorded, some lodging, but few thereafter.⁴⁷⁹ A leathercutter was in the parish in the 1760s,⁴⁸⁰ a woman was gloving in 1851⁴⁸¹ and up to four shoemakers worked in the parish until 1891.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁰ SHC, tithe award; TNA, HO 107/952.

⁴⁷¹ PO Dir. Som. (1861).

⁴⁷² TNA, RG 11/2079.

⁴⁷³ TNA, IR 58/73469; Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1915).

⁴⁷⁴ WSHC G9/100/3.

⁴⁷⁵ TNA, HO 107/952, 1850; RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 13/1963.

⁴⁷⁶ TNA, RG 14/12157.

⁴⁷⁷ WSHC 3327/9/2.

⁴⁷⁸ WSHC 385/196; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A, tithe survey 1797; SHC, tithe award.

⁴⁷⁹ TNA, HO 107/952, 1850; SHC, DD/S/OG 10.

⁴⁸⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1027/69; SHC, Q/RJ1 28/4, 43.

⁴⁸¹ TNA, HO 107/1850.

⁴⁸² TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 12/1627.

FAIR

There were several markets in the area including Bruton and Wincanton and for livestock Shaftesbury and Frome were used in the 20th century.⁴⁸³ However, an annual fair was held on Kilminster common by the 18th century. It may have been connected with a revel said to be held on the Sunday after the assumption (15 August).⁴⁸⁴ In 1758 the fair was let out on a lease for lives at two guineas and was held on 24 August for cattle, horses, pigs and cheese.⁴⁸⁵ Farmers complained about their servants and labourers attending during harvest, so in 1781 Richard Hoare ordered it to be discontinued.⁴⁸⁶ In 1816 attempts were made to hold a fair and the excise man was accused of improperly granting licences to sell beer. On 2 September Sir Richard Colt Hoare told stallholders that the fair was discontinued and anyone appearing in future would be prosecuted.⁴⁸⁷ However, it was advertised in 1840 and 1852.⁴⁸⁸

RETAIL SERVICES

Public Houses

In 1634 John Lapham was accused of keeping a tippling house without licence and allowing disorder in his house on Sabbath days and holydays.⁴⁸⁹ During the later 17th century there was one licensed victualler, including William Lapham in 1673,⁴⁹⁰ but between the 1680s and 1712 a cottage at Norton Ferris was kept as an inn by the Reynolds family.⁴⁹¹ There were two licences issued for most of the 18th century, probably for the Jolly Drover at Kilminster Common and the Red Lion, so named by the 1780s,⁴⁹² both on the old Salisbury road that

⁴⁸³ TNA, IR 18/8624; WSHC 3549, pedigree book.

⁴⁸⁴ McDermott and Berry, Rack's Survey, p. 240.

⁴⁸⁵ WSHC, 383/201; The Bk of Fairs (1767), 67; W. Phelps, Hist. Som. (1836), II, 171.

⁴⁸⁶ Salisbury and Winchester Journal 13 Aug. 1781: BNA accessed 24 June 2016; McDermott and Berry, Rack's Survey, p. 240.

⁴⁸⁷ WSHC 383/210

⁴⁸⁸ Bristol Mercury, 22 Aug. 1840; Wells Jnl 21 Aug. 1852: BNA accessed 24 June 2016.

⁴⁸⁹ SHC, D/D/Ca/297.

⁴⁹⁰ SHC, Q/RLa/23/1

⁴⁹¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 170A, survey 1685, rental 1712.

⁴⁹² SHC, Q/RLa/23/1—2, 4, 6—9.

formed the southern boundary of the parish to meet the needs of travellers.⁴⁹³ However, there were several unlicensed alehouses as in 1743 eight men and women were convicted of selling beer and ale without licence and one man was convicted again in 1750.⁴⁹⁴

The keeper of the Jolly Drover moved to Bruton c.1789 and it ceased to be a public house.⁴⁹⁵ It continued to be known by that name, now the Jolly Drovers, but by 1847 it was divided into two dwellings whose tenants were required not to allow the sale of alcohol on the premises.⁴⁹⁶

The Red Lion was built, apparently on land formerly of John Madox (d. c.1716), shortly before 1728 when it was sold to William Shoard. It may have been first licensed in 1731 and certainly from 1740. In 1754 William left it in trust for his daughter Margaret and her son William Fathers who mortgaged it. In 1757 Stephen Fox, earl of Ilchester bought the inn and surrounding land from Margaret and William and it was run with a small dairy farm⁴⁹⁷ but in 1812 he gave it to Sir Richard Colt Hoare as was part of the exchange of land.⁴⁹⁸ The Herridge and Howell families kept it during the early 19th century, although the Howells were Methodists,⁴⁹⁹ and in 1854 the parishioners petitioned against the sale of alcohol on Sundays.⁵⁰⁰ Between 1945 and 1961 the proprietors also delivered cider and other alcoholic drinks locally. In 1978 it sold c. 100 gallons of beer, two and a half gallons of spirits and half a gallon of wine each week.⁵⁰¹ It remained in business in 2016 and formed part of the Stourhead estate. The building may incorporate the original early 18th-century cottage but by 1910 it had two reception rooms, bar, tap and smokeroom.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹³ WSHC, 3117/5.

⁴⁹⁴ SHC, Q/SR/311/166—73, 318/2/53.

⁴⁹⁵ SHC, Q/RLa/23/9—10; WSHC, 383/103.

⁴⁹⁶ SHC, A/BAS/3/71.

⁴⁹⁷ Dors. HC, D/FSL, box 300; above, this section, agric.

⁴⁹⁸ WSHC, 383/200, 205.

⁴⁹⁹ SHC, Q/RLa/23/11—12; TNA, HO 107/ 952; PROB 11/2253/298.

⁵⁰⁰ Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gaz. 15 Jun. 1854: BNA accessed 24 June 2016.

⁵⁰¹ WSHC 3549.

⁵⁰² TNA, IR 58/73468.

Joseph Bird was a beerseller at Kilmington Common in 1837 and 1842,⁵⁰³ a blacksmith kept a beerhouse there in 1851⁵⁰⁴ and part of a house called the Stags Head was a beerhouse probably between 1861 and 1871.⁵⁰⁵

Shops and services

Shopkeepers were recorded from 1753⁵⁰⁶ including grocer, draper and dairy farmer Richard Newton or Nuton who went bankrupt in 1794,⁵⁰⁷ Hugh Lush (d. 1818) who held the silk house,⁵⁰⁸ Benjamin Gaisford, grocer whose wife seems to have run the shop⁵⁰⁹ and William Penny who built a new house before 1858.⁵¹⁰ Four people were rated on their shops in 1827 but those may have been workshops.⁵¹¹ Two shops and a butcher were recorded in 1841.⁵¹² Shops appear to have been mainly on Kilmington Street but there was a draper's at Kilmington Common in 1861.⁵¹³ There were two coal dealers in 1861⁵¹⁴ and three coal hauliers in 1901.⁵¹⁵ In 1871 there were six shops in the parish besides butchers, bakers and coal dealers but thereafter the number declined. In 1891 two shopkeepers and a picture framer and general dealer employed nine assistants mostly relatives.⁵¹⁶

There were up to five commercial bakers from 1861.⁵¹⁷ There was a bakehouse at Kilmington Common and two others in Kilmington Street in 1910, one attached to a grocer's

⁵⁰³ SHC, Q/RJL/28/4.

⁵⁰⁴ TNA, HO 107/1850.

⁵⁰⁵ Kelly's Dir. Som. (1861—6); TNA, RG 10/1965. The name is older; the cottages were on the site of the house of William Hartgill in the late 18th century and the stag's head is their emblem: WSHC 383/104, vol. 1; 383/199.

⁵⁰⁶ TNA, PROB 11/811/336; Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gaz. 3 Nov. 1768: BNA accessed 24 June 2016.

⁵⁰⁷ WSHC 383/197; Manchester Mercury 24 Jun. 1794: BNA accessed 24 June 2016; London Gaz. 28 Feb. 1795, 202: The Gazette, accessed 24 June 2016.

⁵⁰⁸ SHC, DD/RR 32/9/1; DD/S/OG 10.

⁵⁰⁹ SHC, Q/RJL 28/4; TNA, HO 107/ 952.

⁵¹⁰ SHC, A/CED 2/11.

⁵¹¹ SHC, DD/BT /6/2.

⁵¹² TNA, HO 107/952.

⁵¹³ TNA, RG 11/2079.

⁵¹⁴ PO Dir. Som. (1861).

⁵¹⁵ TNA, RG 13/1963.

⁵¹⁶ TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 11/2079.

⁵¹⁷ TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 13/1963.

shop,⁵¹⁸ and in 1916 one baker kept two horses and a donkey presumably for deliveries.⁵¹⁹

Only two shops were recorded between the wars and only one in 1939 when there was a petrol station.⁵²⁰ In 1931 there were no professional or transport services although a limited bus service was introduced in the later 20th century.⁵²¹

There was a post office facility by 1848⁵²² and a woman kept the post office and ran a farm in 1861 with an elderly woman letter carrier. Postwomen were a feature of Kilmington life and the first postman was recorded in 1911.⁵²³ In 1910 the council complained that it was only open for an hour on Sunday, which was not long enough for people to collect post and reply. The nearest telegram facility was at Mere and there was no public telephone in 1930.⁵²⁴ The post office was kept by women until 1939 or later.⁵²⁵ Like most rural villages in the later 20th century Kilmington lost its retail services although the Post Office survived until c. 1999.⁵²⁶

SOCIAL HISTORY

It is difficult to assess the structure of the medieval community but people living in Norton paid an average of 2s. 4d. in tax compared with 1s. 7d. in Kilmington in 1327, a disparity that continued through the 14th century but was reversed in the early 16th because of the enormous wealth of the Hartgills but by 1581 Kilmington taxpayers were again paying about two thirds of the average tax paid at Norton Ferris.⁵²⁷ Both manors had non-resident owners and the rector was also usually absent so freehold and tenant farmers would have been the

⁵¹⁸ TNA, IR 58/73468—9.

⁵¹⁹ WSHC, G9/172/1.

⁵²⁰ Kellys' Dir. Wilts. (1903—39).

⁵²¹ H.E. Bracey, Social Provision in Rural Wiltshire (1952), 194; WSHC 3327/9/2.

⁵²² SHC, Q/SR 565/86.

⁵²³ TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 12/1627; RG 13/1963; RG 14/12157.

⁵²⁴ WSHC 3363/1.

⁵²⁵ Kelly's Dir. Som. (1861—1899), Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1903—39).

⁵²⁶ WSHC 3327/9/3.

⁵²⁷ F. Dickinson, Kirby's Quest etc (SRS 3), 97—8; SHC, T/PH/pls 1/14; TNA, E 179/169/173; A. Webb, Tudor Subsidies (SRS 88), 29—30.

dominant parishioners and by the early 16th century that meant the Hartgills.⁵²⁸ In 1524—5 half of Norton Ferris taxpayers were taxed on wages but only two in Kilmington.⁵²⁹ The differences continued in the 17th century with only two people at Norton exempted from hearth tax in 1670 but 32 in Kilmington and the five largest house, by number of hearths, were also in Norton.⁵³⁰

A man was accused of harbouring beggars and vagabonds in 1518.⁵³¹ In the 16th century gang warfare was waged between the Hartgill family and their neighbours and especially in the 1550s with Charles, Lord Stourton with both sides maintaining servants, apparently regarded by their masters as dispensable to be abandoned to the hangman when they were caught. The recorded thefts of horses fully furnished with saddle and harness implies violent robbery. The lawlessness was undoubtedly exacerbated because the parish lay on the county boundary and criminals could evade the magistrates.⁵³² William Hartgill had been a major tenant farmer of Shaftesbury abbey and was later steward to William, Lord Stourton. He was a very wealthy man, rated at £20 in goods in the 1524—5 subsidy lists, much more than any other parishioner.⁵³³ He and his sons harboured outlaws, stole livestock, took a share of robbery proceeds, engaged in knife fights and hunted in the forest taking deer and on William Hartgill's own boast a cartload of boar in a year. At first William, Lord Stourton protected the Hartgills, who refused to obey orders from magistrates or even the Lord Chancellor, but he later began to suspect William Hartgill of defrauding him and of dismissing servants, presumably to replace them with his own people, saying 'yowe seeke your own gayne more than my commodytie'.⁵³⁴

⁵²⁸ Landownership, rel. hist.

⁵²⁹ TNA, E 179/169/173.

⁵³⁰ E. Dwelly, *Hearth Tax*, I, 97, 99—100; II, 135.

⁵³¹ WSHC 1728/70.

⁵³² G. Bradford, *Proceedings in Star Chamber* (SRS 27), 207—16; Maxwell Lyte, Bps Regs 1518—59 (SRS 55), pp. 73—4; SHC, A/AQP 25/15.

⁵³³ TNA, E 179/169/173.

⁵³⁴ Bradford, *Proceedings in Star Chamber* (SRS 27), 207—16; L&P Hen VIII, XV, 152—3; G. Sweetman, *The Stourton Tragedy* (Wincanton, 1890), 19.

After Charles Stourton succeeded his father he was in open opposition to the Hartgills and the disputes rose to a head in the 1550s with a huge number of cases before the courts, especially Star Chamber and the Privy Council partly due to the refusal of Charles, Lord Stourton and dispossessed tenants to accept all the land arrangements made between his father and William Hartgill, and suspicion that the latter had obtained tenancies by fraud. Other tenants claimed lands held by William Hartgill and there were claims and counterclaims over crops, which were often damaged or removed, and pasture rights, with Stourton's men removing stock and in some cases resentful tenants injuring animals they regarded as trespassing. There were also many claims of assault and riot, disputes over hedging, ditching, gates and of stopping of ways over land.⁵³⁵ On one occasion William Hartgill claimed nearly £2,000 in damages from Charles, Lord Stourton for distrained livestock, surgery after assaults, debts owed by William, Lord Stourton and litigation.⁵³⁶ The resulting murder of William Hartgill and his son John, the execution of Lord Stourton and others,⁵³⁷ and the eventual acquisition of Kilmington manor by the Hartgills seems to have brought the worst lawlessness to an end. However, there was no abatement in litigation as the Hartgills fell out amongst themselves and with their neighbours over landownership and money.⁵³⁸ John Hartgill and his son Cuthbert were accused in 1630 of trying to force a servant to accept responsibility for a child, probably of Cuthbert's, and of preventing the overseer's wife examining the mother.⁵³⁹

It is probable that Revd George Hartgill the astronomer (d. c. 1589) was a grandson of William Hartgill (d. 1557).⁵⁴⁰ John Hartgill, lord of Kilmington manor, was the highest

⁵³⁵ e.g. TNA, STAC 3/1/1, 3/3/31, 4/7/38—49, REQ 18/79, 25/276; Acts of the Privy Council, 1556—8, 43.

⁵³⁶ TNA, STAC 4/7/38.

⁵³⁷ Acts of the Privy Council, 1556—8, 49—50, 58, 72; Sweetman, The Stourton Tragedy, 5—21. One of the murdered was hanged at White Sheet Hill: WSHC 383/198.

⁵³⁸ e.g. TNA, C 3/353/14; C 5/496/1; C 5/594/8; C 6/21/27; C 6/131/76; C 6/133/11; C 7/496/1; C 7/575/1; E 134/Chas1/Trin1, Mich20; E 134/1654-55/Hill1.

⁵³⁹ E.H. Bates, Quarter Session Records, 1625—39 (SRS 24), 154—6.

⁵⁴⁰ P. Morgan, 'George Hartgill: An Elizabethan Parson-Astronomer and his library', Annals of Science (Dec. 1968), 295—7.

taxpayer in the parish in 1598⁵⁴¹ but by 1641 he was well down the list and his son Cuthbert was more highly assessed. The highest taxpayers, assessed at £100 were Edward Combe, lord of Norton manor, Richard Madox and the rector.⁵⁴² As the Hartgills lost power and influence they seem to have been living beyond their means and mortgaged and sold most of their estate before the end of the 17th century. There was friction with Sir Stephen Fox of Redlynch and suggestions of dishonest dealing over land sales. When the Hartgills tried to claim an interest in the Norton Ferris lands of Richard Madox in the 1670s an unnamed correspondent of Sir Stephen's declared that the 'pretended title to that, will like the Hartgills themselves soone vanish and fall to the ground.' Although they remained in the parish for another century they did indeed decline and died out with Dolly Hartgill in 1832.⁵⁴³

There were few employment opportunities for women: one severely disabled girl was exhibited by her mother for money with tragic consequences in 1786 and at least one family may have been involved in prostitution in the late 18th and early 19th century.⁵⁴⁴ Several women were engaged in the silk industry in the 19th century but there was surprisingly little gloving. Women kept the tollgates, shops, the post office and delivered letters.⁵⁴⁵ One farm in 1851 had seven female workers and in 1861 there were 21 recorded female agricultural labourers and five dairywomen outnumbering the 18 women in resident domestic service mostly also on farms. The rector had six female servants but most had one or none and on farms numbers had declined since 1841 when some farms had three.⁵⁴⁶ In 1867 the rector considered that Kilmington's high illegitimacy rate was due to the use of female labour in the fields, which he wished to prohibit but women needed to work as wages were low, also their cottages were very small and in bad condition yet rents were high. The rector wanted cottages

⁵⁴¹ TNA, E 179/171/316.

⁵⁴² Howard and Stoate, *Som. Protestation Returns*, 245.

⁵⁴³ Above, landownership; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 300.

⁵⁴⁴ *Kentish Gazette*, 14 Nov 1786: BNA accessed 24 June 2016; SHC, A/BKH 1.

⁵⁴⁵ TNA, RG 9/1323; above, econ. hist.

⁵⁴⁶ TNA, HO 107/952, 1850; RG 9/1323.

held directly of the landowner as was done on the Hoare estate because farmers would not or could not afford repairs. He was also concerned that children were not at school because boys under 10 were employed and female labours left their children in the charge of girls who were therefore unable to attend school.⁵⁴⁷ Female labour declined in the late 19th century. In 1881 of 17 female domestic servants five were unemployed and in 1891 when only one female labourer was recorded.⁵⁴⁸ There was a slight recovery in domestic service after 1901 when only seven female servants were recorded to 15 employed in 1911.⁵⁴⁹ Dairying had virtually ceased to employ women by 1916 and in 1986 there were only two women fully employed in agriculture and four part-time.⁵⁵⁰

There was very little apparent overcrowding, 121 families in 119 houses in 1821,⁵⁵¹ but Kilmington had many tiny and subdivided houses and in 1804 a cottage was said to have been divided in three.⁵⁵² In 1891 there were 16 two-roomed houses, one occupied by a family of seven, 20 with three and 22 with four, one occupied by a couple with 11 children and another by three adults and seven children from 7 to 19.⁵⁵³ Overcrowding had eased a little by 1911 when although there remained 58 houses with fewer than five rooms there were only seven two-roomed houses. However, some of these tiny houses were crammed with up to eight people including lodgers.⁵⁵⁴ In 1920 one four-roomed house was occupied by nine people⁵⁵⁵. A housing survey c. 1939 to prepare for evacuation found four houses with only two rooms and two houses had two or more people per room. Five houses had more than eight rooms, 19 were empty and one was uninhabitable.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁴⁷ Children and Women in Agric. (1867), 499, 512.

⁵⁴⁸ TNA, RG 10/1965; RG 11/2079; RG 12/1627.

⁵⁴⁹ TNA, RG 13/1963; RG 14/121571/2079.

⁵⁵⁰ WSHC, G9/172/1; TNA, MAF 68/3814.

⁵⁵¹ Census cited in C. and J. Greenwood, Somerset Delineated, 121—2.

⁵⁵² WSHC 383/322.

⁵⁵³ TNA, RG 12/1627.

⁵⁵⁴ TNA, RG 14/12157.

⁵⁵⁵ WSHC, G9/132/29.

⁵⁵⁶ WSHC, G9/172/1.

MIGRATION

One alien was recorded in 1558 but having no goods was presumably a journeyman or servant.⁵⁵⁷ Through the 18th and early 19th century far more women than men were buried in Kilmington indicating male emigration, presumably in search of work. In 1786 the parish clerk's three sons had moved to work in Wincanton or Zeals.⁵⁵⁸ A unnamed man and woman emigrated c. 1840⁵⁵⁹ and a Kilmington man was serving in the Royal Canadian Rifles in 1853.⁵⁶⁰ Shopkeeper William Penny making his will in 1858 declared that any of his grandchildren who went abroad would lose their bequest.⁵⁶¹ In 1871 a letter carrier stole a letter from America with a cheque for a man in Kilmington, presumably from a relative.⁵⁶² In 1891 there were 17 Kilmington-born people in South Wales including the Dodington brothers in Cardiff and the Young family in Ebbw Vale with three sons in the pits⁵⁶³ but they were outnumbered by the 21 in London, including several servants.⁵⁶⁴

EDUCATION

In 1666 there was no free school in the parish but the wives of Nathaniel Lawes and Arthur Hartgill taught boys and girls.⁵⁶⁵ Attempts in the early 19th century to set up a Sunday school failed because parents did not send their children and there were difficulties obtaining teachers and funds. By 1819 there were no schools and the employment of girls in the silk industry and boys on farms was thought to prevent any school succeeding.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁵⁷ Webb, Tudor Subsidies, 11.

⁵⁵⁸ SHC, A/BKH 1.

⁵⁵⁹ TNA, HO 107/952.

⁵⁶⁰ TNA, WO 97/1194/20.

⁵⁶¹ SHC, A/CED 2/11.

⁵⁶² The Bradford Observer, 29 March 1871: BNA accessed June 2016.

⁵⁶³ TNA, RG 12/4398, 4575.

⁵⁶⁴ TNA, RG 12/15, 72, 96, 183, 508.

⁵⁶⁵ Wells, Dioc. Regy, D/D/WLS, box 2.

⁵⁶⁶ Educ. of Poor Digest (1819), 787.

In 1829 a Sunday school was started again⁵⁶⁷ and in 1830 Sir Richard Colt Hoare gave a piece of land east of the church for a National school, planned to accommodate 40 children.⁵⁶⁸ With the support of the rector and landowners the Sunday school taught 26 girls and 13 boys in 1833.⁵⁶⁹ Pupil numbers increased to 42 girls and 30 boys by 1846 and the National Society grant appears to have been covered the running costs including the mistress who received £8 10s. The school, south of the parsonage house, belonged to the parish and was the only means of education for most children.⁵⁷⁰ However, in 1859 it was described as a charity school for girls.⁵⁷¹ Mark Warburton, rector, abolished the Sunday school in 1867 to encourage parents to use the day school.⁵⁷² The Wesleyan Sunday School had 70 pupils in four classes with ten teachers in 1877.⁵⁷³ The church Sunday school had been reinstated by 1905 when 27 children were on the register with two voluntary teachers but average attendance was only 17.⁵⁷⁴

Before 1799 Mrs Coles left money for Church of England Sunday schools in Stourton, Stourton Candle and Kilmington. The rector of Kilmington received a share of the money until 1890. From 1896 under a new scheme the money was paid to the teacher or for prizes to children attending the school. In 1962 it became a charity to promote religious education in Kilmington for the under 25s but had ceased to exist by 2014.⁵⁷⁵

By 1833 a day school supported by landowners taught 14 girls and 7 boys and 19 girls and 13 boys were educated in two schools at their parents' expense.⁵⁷⁶ Only 8 girls and 9 boys were educated daily at a dame school in 1846.⁵⁷⁷ Kilmington National School was built

⁵⁶⁷ Educ. Enq. Abstract (1835), 811.

⁵⁶⁸ Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 177.

⁵⁶⁹ SHC, D/D/Va/2/4; Educ. Enq. Abstract (1835), 811.

⁵⁷⁰ Nat. Soc. Schs Inquiry, 1846—7 (1849), Som. 10—11; SHC, tithe award.

⁵⁷¹ Harrison, Harrad & Co. Dir. Som. (1859).

⁵⁷² Children and Women in Agric. (1867), 499.

⁵⁷³ SHC, D/N/frc/5/1/3.

⁵⁷⁴ WSHC, 2063/30.

⁵⁷⁵ WSHC, TS, A. Platt, 'Wiltshire Schools' [unpag.]; Char. Com. Reg. 309355; TNA, ED 49/1716.

⁵⁷⁶ Educ. Enq. Abstract (1835), 811.

⁵⁷⁷ Nat. Soc. Schs Inquiry, 1846—7 (1849), Som. 10—11.

on the Sunday school site in 1864,⁵⁷⁸ supported by the rector, but in 1867 of 90 children registered average attendance was only 68 in winter and 40 in summer. Girls and boys under ten only attend on 40 per cent of school days. Among girls over ten, attendance was 100 per cent in winter but only 36 per cent in summer, presumably because they helped in the fields or looked after siblings while their mothers worked. The rector established an evening school for 14 weeks in winter but found that took children away from the day school. Attendance was very irregular, on average 13 out of 21 on the register of whom only four were under the age of 12. The older boys would not read although they could write mechanically and keep accounts.⁵⁷⁹

The school was rebuilt by Messrs Clerk of Bruton on a new site to the south of the old in 1872⁵⁸⁰ with a five-room teacher's house behind the old school, which was demolished.⁵⁸¹ The new school, of brick with freestone dressings and a bell turret comprised two large classrooms.⁵⁸² Despite compulsory attendance for all children aged five to thirteen,⁵⁸³ in 1903 there were only 46 children on the register, although the building could accommodate 126, and average attendance was only 83 per cent. The teacher couple's joint salary of £90 accounted for most of the £136 cost of running the school, a quarter of which was met by voluntary contributions.⁵⁸⁴

Pupil numbers fell and average attendance was 30—34 in the 1920s when bad weather and epidemics reduced attendance still further. The school closed for several weeks for influenza and other infectious diseases and children were excluded for impetigo but school reports were usually good. The rector and nurse were regular visitors and in 1923 the

⁵⁷⁸ WSHC, TS, A. Platt, ,Wiltshire Schools, [unpag.].

⁵⁷⁹ Children and Women in Agric. (1867), 499—500.

⁵⁸⁰ Frome Times, 6 Nov. 1872.

⁵⁸¹ SHC, DD/BT 13/11; WSHC, F8/220/1; TNA, IR 58/73469.

⁵⁸² Frome Times, 6 Nov. 1872.

⁵⁸³ Lond. Gaz. 2 Nov. 1877, 5986.

⁵⁸⁴ WSHC, F8/220/1; G9/100/2, 12.

rector's gramophone was brought to the school. The children looked after the school gardens and put on concerts. There were only 35 children in 1930 and the few seniors left to attend Mere Central school. The children had annual outings including to Bristol museum. There was a scarlet fever epidemic in 1934—5. In 1939 the 25 local children were outnumbered by 53 evacuees, mainly from Portsmouth, with their own teachers. By 1941 only 12 evacuees remained and they appear to have left that year leaving only 20 children on the register. There were problems with the water supply, which was delivered in churns in 1946, and in 1945 a hot meal service began. After the war numbers increased to 41 and a new playground was provided. A youth club was started for children over 11. In 1962 the school was arranged into three classes but a new classroom was only built in 1966 and the following year a new kitchen. As well as gardening and producing their own jam in the 1960s and 1970s the children kept sheep and spun wool to weave and knit. In 1969 a mobile classroom was provided for 20 children transferred from Maiden Bradley bringing the total number of pupils to 56. In 1972 Kilminster became a first school⁵⁸⁵ and in 1973 had 19 children who left for Mere Middle School at age 9. By 1997 there was a pre-school.⁵⁸⁶ In 2003 Kilminster and Zeals first schools became a federated school known as Whitesheet Church of England Primary School, an Academy from 2013, with 46 pupils in 2016 of whom the infants attended Kilminster.⁵⁸⁷

Farmer Benjamin Lush had two agricultural pupils living with him in 1861.⁵⁸⁸ Revd Mark Warburton, 1867—1909, crammed university students in the vacations including Archibald Primrose, Lord Roseberry (d. 1929).⁵⁸⁹ Between 1923 and 1939 Gertrude Serrell kept a private school.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁵ WSHC, F8/500/156/1/1; F8/600/156/1/22/1.

⁵⁸⁶ WSHC 3327/9/2—3; F8/600/156/1/24/1.

⁵⁸⁷ WSHC, 3327/9/3; whitesheet.wilts.sch.uk: accessed 29 Dec. 2016.

⁵⁸⁸ TNA, RG 9/1323

⁵⁸⁹ WSHC, 3327/9/3

⁵⁹⁰ Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1923—39).

CHARITIES FOR THE POOR

There is no record of any endowed charities in Kilmington until the 1860s although Richard Maddox left 1s. to each of seven named poor widows in 1597 and generous bequests to the poor were made in the early 17th century.⁵⁹¹ John Seward left £10 to be invested for the poor in 1654 but revoked his gift two months later.⁵⁹²

In 1861 William Mells of Norton Ferris left £300 the income to be distributed on 21 December to 20 aged poor of the parish who each received c. 10s. In 1867 Elizabeth Neate of Box gave £320 to repair the family monuments and provide a distribution between ten poor aged women and ten poor aged men of good character in Kilmington. By the 1920s the two charities were distributed together⁵⁹³ and in the 1940s up to 20 recipients had between 10s. and £1 each but the charities were last recorded in 1952.⁵⁹⁴

In 1894 John Hooper left £255 partly to maintain Kilmington Methodist chapel and partly to provide a distribution on 31 December of 6s. to each of six old women and 10s. to each of six old men.⁵⁹⁵ The money was laid out on mortgages and by the 1940s 10s. was given to each of the six oldest women and six oldest men in the parish.⁵⁹⁶ Under a new scheme of 1986 37 per cent of the £25 annual income was used to maintain the burial ground at the parish church and the rest to provide relief of need amongst parishioners.⁵⁹⁷

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

⁵⁹¹ TNA, PROB 11/89/519, 11/140/267, 11/183/221.

⁵⁹² TNA, PROB 11/245/378

⁵⁹³ WSHC 2063/25.

⁵⁹⁴ WSHC, L2/151.

⁵⁹⁵ WSHC 2063/28.

⁵⁹⁶ WSHC, L2/151.

⁵⁹⁷ Char. Com. Reg. 233581.

A Kilmington Friendly Society of Tradesmen was instituted in 1827 and was regularly renewed. It met at the Red Lion inn and was last recorded as the Kilmington Friendly Society in 1856.⁵⁹⁸

HEALTH AND WELFARE

The 1611 plague seems to have affected Kilmington with 15 burials between January and March compared with an annual average of six and there were several other years of high mortality between 1633 and 1686—7.⁵⁹⁹ At least two people from Kilmington were in Wells Asylum in the 1860s.⁶⁰⁰ A dentist lived at Kilmington Common in 1901 but presumably practised elsewhere but the parish had the services of a district nurse by the 1920s.⁶⁰¹

The magistrates ordered a father to pay 9d. a week for a wet nurse in 1609 and c.1617 ordered John Hartgill to let part of a house to a homeless man and his family.⁶⁰² In the 1630s there were several requests from the poor for cottages to be built on the manor waste.⁶⁰³ One man needed help apprenticing his children in 1634.⁶⁰⁴ The parish was very active in returning poor immigrants to their parish of settlement, especially in the mid 18th century when more people seemed to have been moved out than in. In the days after Christmas 1750 four vagrants were arrested including a woman from Dublin and another from Yorkshire.⁶⁰⁵

A poorhouse was held of the manor by the parish for 4s. a year in the late 18th century.⁶⁰⁶ In 1797 the parish had a house on an old enclosure on Kilmington Common,⁶⁰⁷ probably the one they leased for lives from Sir Richard Colt Hoare at £1 10s. rent in 1805 and

⁵⁹⁸ SHC, Q/RSF 1.

⁵⁹⁹ SHC, A/BKH 1.

⁶⁰⁰ SHC, DD/DN 4/4/24

⁶⁰¹ TNA, RG 13/1963; WSHC, 3363/1; F8/500/156/1/1.

⁶⁰² E.H. Bates, *Quarter Session Records, 1607—25* (SRS 23), 52, 198; SHC, Q/SR 27/246.

⁶⁰³ SHC, Q/SR 67/223, 250; 69/120, 135.

⁶⁰⁴ E.H. Bates, *Quarter Session Records, 1625—39* (SRS 24), 210, 229.

⁶⁰⁵ Q/SR 244/10; 305/46, 97; 310/13; 311/77; 315/58; 317/3/17, 19; 318/4/93—8; 324/2/16; 326/3/7; 329/1/5; 329/2/4; 334/1/15; 362/1/37.

⁶⁰⁶ WSHC 383/200.

⁶⁰⁷ WSHC 383/203.

1808.⁶⁰⁸ The parish paid a total rent of £1 17s. 6d. for two poorhouses in 1807 out of over £400 a year spent on poor relief. In 1818 £666 was spent and 48 parishioners received regular relief of between 4s. and £1 8s. a month representing nine per cent of the population.⁶⁰⁹ The house on the common was said to be four dwellings in 1821 but had been burnt down in 1820 and the parish failed to rebuild it.⁶¹⁰ In 1821 it was exchanged together with the poor's inclosure allotment, with the Lush family for a garden further north on the other side of the road, possibly for a poorhouse. However, it was still a garden in 1839 when there was one poorhouse on Long Lane near the common, acquired after 1821. It presumably became a private house after Mere workhouse was completed and was demolished after 1904.⁶¹¹ In 1851 54 in 1851 people were described as paupers but only 17 in 1861 and 19 in 1871.⁶¹² However, in 1895 Mere Union claimed the parish was poor with 26 on poor relief and 25 on medical relief.⁶¹³

WAR AND NATIONAL EVENTS

In 1569 the parish could provide three archers, four pikemen and 11 billmen, four guns, five corslets, 30 bills, three bows and arrows for the militia. It is possible that Butts Lane takes its name from archery practice.⁶¹⁴ An Oxfordshire man claimed he had been pressed as a soldier at Kilmington c.1624.⁶¹⁵ The Civil War afforded an opportunity for rebellion against inclosure by landowners on both sides especially in former royal forests, which local people had taken advantage of legally or illegally. Hedgebreaking and trespass on the Royalist Sir Charles Berkeley's Hill Grounds significantly began only c. 1642.⁶¹⁶ Others caught up in the

⁶⁰⁸ WSHC 383/574, 583.

⁶⁰⁹ WSHC 2063/22

⁶¹⁰ WSHC 383/321; SHC, Q/RDe 127.

⁶¹¹ SHC, Q/RDe 127; tithe award; OS Map, 1:10860, Som. LV. SW (1904 edn).

⁶¹² TNA, HO 107/1850; RG 9/1323; RG 10/1965.

⁶¹³ SHC, C/GP/D 56'

⁶¹⁴ E. Green, *Certificate of Musters, 1569* (SRS 20), 199–200.

⁶¹⁵ SHC, Q/SR 58/226.

⁶¹⁶ TNA, E134/1654-55/Hil 1; D. Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion*, 215.

war included John Hartgill's son Arthur and his son-in-law Francis Bennett who was taken prisoner, banished and had his estate plundered.⁶¹⁷ In 1661 although the Hartgills contributed to the gift to the king the Madox family was much more generous donating £7.⁶¹⁸

From the 1790s several Kilmington men served in foot regiments or the dragoon guards⁶¹⁹ and from the 1830s several joined the Marines.⁶²⁰ A rifle instructor was resident in 1861.⁶²¹

The First World War created problems for the farms, especially with the move to all male labour in the dairies. In 1916 many farmworkers including several cheesemakers and two cowmen were in the army. One farm was left with no help and another relied on the farmer's father who had been rejected for military service yet only four women had been taken on, for milking.⁶²² A war memorial committee set up the parish memorial, dedicated 19 March 1921, and transferred it with remaining funds to the parish in 1927.⁶²³

The Second World War led to the setting up of a joint Kilmington and Stourton Invasion Committee to plan a food production area and first aid post with stretcher bearers. They had two Home Guard platoons, special constables, civil defence wardens and eight women from the Royal Voluntary Service.⁶²⁴ It was optimistically declared that the parish could take 167 evacuees if mattresses and blankets could be found.⁶²⁵ A rifle range was established at Coombe in 1941, which left many pastures in the line of fire although farmers were told they would be compensated for damage to their cows and probably an observation post on White Sheet Hill.⁶²⁶ There were no Land Army workers recorded in 1946 but four

⁶¹⁷ TNA, C7/539/24; C7/559/16.

⁶¹⁸ TNA, E 179/256/11.

⁶¹⁹ TNA, WO 69/113/73; 97/186/60; 97/306/5; 97/1048/26; 97/1177/52; 97/1194/20; 119/20/4; 121/134/13

⁶²⁰ TNA, ADM 139/560/15991; 139/642/2418; 157/17/604; 1078/17; 157 2057/15; 157/3066/9; 188/323/189812; 188/550/361888; 188/556/364706.

⁶²¹ TNA, RG 9/1323.

⁶²² WSHC, G9/172/1.

⁶²³ WSHC, F8/500/156/1/1; 3363/1.

⁶²⁴ WSHC, F2/851/4/2.

⁶²⁵ WSHC, G9/172/1.

⁶²⁶ WSHC, F2/120/38; NT, HER 114037.

prisoners of war worked on farms.⁶²⁷ Victory was celebrated with a seaside outing and tea for the children.⁶²⁸ A disused monitoring post with bunker lies on the boundary at White Sheet Hill.⁶²⁹

SPORT

Before disafforestation deer and wild boar were hunted in the area.⁶³⁰ Despite the inclosure and cultivation of the parish sporting rights were still valued by the major landowners in the early 20th century. Cox's Lodge, or Keeper's Cottage, may have been built for sport. In 1910 it was let for shooting at King's Wood Warren in Brewham.⁶³¹ The Hobhouses exercised their shooting rights in Norton Ferris during the First World War killing partridge, pheasant, hares and rabbits despite complaints of lack of cover.⁶³² The Hoares' sporting rights passed to the National Trust.⁶³³

A small playing field opened in 1983 with a children's play area but the latter had to be given up in 1997 after repeated acts of vandalism. In 1995 there was football club, Kilmington Colts, but in 1998 a new Kilmington and Stourton Eagles team was established. Stourton cricket club became the Kilmington and Stourton cricket club in the mid 20th century.⁶³⁴

COMMUNITY LIFE

⁶²⁷ TNA, MAF 68/4182.

⁶²⁸ WSHC, 3363/1.

⁶²⁹ NT, HER 114013.

⁶³⁰ Bradford, *Proceedings in Star Chamber*, 207—16; TNA, E134/1654-55/Hil 1.

⁶³¹ WSHC, L8/1/3; TNA, IR 58/73468.

⁶³² Hadspen Ho., 5/38.

⁶³³ WSHC, G9/770/155.

⁶³⁴ WSHC, 3327/9/3; <http://www.stourtonhistory.org/sport.html>: accessed 29 Dec. 2016.

In the 1780s a parish revel was still being held on the Sunday after the Assumption (15 Aug.) but was probably merged with the fair.⁶³⁵ The Kilmington Band performed in Bruton in 1860.⁶³⁶ In 1931 there were said to be only two social organisations in the parish,⁶³⁷ one of which was the Kilmington Women's Institute founded in 1924 with 24 members. It was disbanded in 1995 but in 1997 a new Maiden Bradley and Kilmington WI was established.⁶³⁸ The other was presumably the men's club known since 1944 or earlier as the Stourton and Kilmington Home Guard, which created a club room and other facilities at the Jolly Drovers house on Kilmington Common before 1947. The premises were extended in the 1950s and later and the club remained in existence in 2016.⁶³⁹ In 1960 the rector started a parish newsletter covering all aspects of life in Kilmington. Known as Kilmington News or 'the pink paper' it survived until 2003 and was free until 1995.⁶⁴⁰

RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Kilmington church is dedicated to St Mary and although first recorded in 1791 the dedication is probably much earlier and possibly reflected the dedication of Shaftesbury Abbey to St Mary and St Edmund. The medieval tower bears a lilypot, one of Mary's emblems.⁶⁴¹ Kilmington was a sole rectory in Cary deanery, Bruton after the 19th century division of the deanery,⁶⁴² but in 1980 Kilmington was removed from the diocese of Bath and Wells and

⁶³⁵ M. McDermott and S. Berry, *Edmund Rack's Survey of Somerset* (Taunton, 2011), pp. 239—40; above, econ. hist.

⁶³⁶ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 22 Aug 1860: BNA accessed June 2016.

⁶³⁷ Bracey, *Social Provision in Rural Wilts.* 194.

⁶³⁸ WSHC, 3327/9/3; Char. Com. Reg. 1115186.

⁶³⁹ WSHC, G9/770/151; sites.google.com/site/homeguardclub: accessed 29 Dec. 2016.

⁶⁴⁰ WSHC, 3327/9/1—3.

⁶⁴¹ Collinson, *Hist. Som.* III, 41; *Cal. Pat.* 1370—4, 72.

⁶⁴² SHC, D/D/Va 2/4; D/D/Rrd/6.

united with the Upper Stour parish in Salisbury diocese.⁶⁴³ The Upper Stour parish, registered as a charity in 2009, comprised Kilmington, Bourton, Stourton and Zeals.⁶⁴⁴

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ORIGINS AND ENDOWMENT

A medieval history of Wells implied that Kilmington church had belonged to Wells cathedral before the Conquest⁶⁴⁵ but the first record of the church is 1291 when it was one of the wealthiest in the deanery, as highly taxed at £13 6s. 8d. as Castle Cary.⁶⁴⁶ In 1536 the rectory was valued at £21 9s. 3½ d. net, half the income from great tithes but £3 from the glebe.⁶⁴⁷ In 1627 the benefice comprised a dwelling house, new dairy house, decayed barn and stable, orchard, garden, 55 a. of glebe and tithes valued at over £80, indicating the attraction of the living to prominent clergymen.⁶⁴⁸ From the 1680s the Fox family, who valued it with their estates after they acquired the advowson, estimated it at £200 a year.⁶⁴⁹ In 1796 the tithes were valued at £451⁶⁵⁰ and in 1825 at £698 but were considered too low by the rector, who usually farmed them out.⁶⁵¹ Early 19th century returns assessing the living at under £300 of which the curate received £75⁶⁵² although he was able to afford a servant, horses and dogs,⁶⁵³ were clearly inaccurate as the living was returned at £601 in 1831⁶⁵⁴ and the tithes were commuted for £550 in 1839, although the tithe farmer in the early 1830s only averaged £486.⁶⁵⁵ Two cottages and c. 12 a. of glebe were let out and 45a. was kept in hand.⁶⁵⁶ The glebe was divided between Kilmington and Norton Ferris. A scheme to sell half the land to

⁶⁴³ WSHC, 2063/15; 2298A/7; 3327/9/1; Lond. Gaz. 13 Nov. 1980, 15759.

⁶⁴⁴ Char. Com. reg.

⁶⁴⁵ T.H. Palmer, Collectanea I (SRS 39), 60—1.

⁶⁴⁶ Tax. Eccl. 197.

⁶⁴⁷ Valor Eccl. I, 152.

⁶⁴⁸ SHC, D/D/Rg/117; below this section.

⁶⁴⁹ Dors. HC, D/FSI boxes 18, 170A and map of Kilmington 1736.

⁶⁵⁰ Dors. HC, D/FSI box 177A, tithe survey.

⁶⁵¹ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 320A and B; TNA, IR 18/8624.

⁶⁵² SHC, D/D/Rb/1815, 1827.

⁶⁵³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 320B, tax schedule 1816.

⁶⁵⁴ W. Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 174.

⁶⁵⁵ TNA, IR 18/8624.

⁶⁵⁶ SHC, tithe award.

Henry Hobhouse in 1849—50 was not carried out⁶⁵⁷ but small exchanges with the earl of Ilchester were made in 1872.⁶⁵⁸ The living was valued at £640 in 1851⁶⁵⁹ but thereafter fell as tithe income cost over £124.⁶⁶⁰ In 1910 the Norton Ferris glebe was let out as a dairy smallholding and the rest either retained by the rector or let to a neighbouring farmer.⁶⁶¹ The glebe was sold in 1951.⁶⁶²

In the mid 17th century the house had a parlour with a ‘gothique’ south window and door to the buttery on which Francis Potter painted a portrait of his father and six hearths.⁶⁶³ The house was completely rebuilt by Samuel Hemming, rector 1716—33,⁶⁶⁴ and may have been extended by his successors. By the 1830s it consisted of a five bay front range with a large drawing room on the side having a blank gable wall to the front and a back range of service rooms. The main front was plain with round-headed sash windows and a central open box porch. In 1839 the house was redeveloped for Revd Selwyn by Henry Hale of Warminster. A dining room with bedroom over were built in the angle between the drawing room and the service range but the planned four-bay front with off-centre porch and large windows in the gable end of the drawing room was reduced to modified into a three-bay plan with central two-storeyed porch opening onto a new staircase. The front wall was rebuilt with string course and plinth, square headed windows, new roofs and decorative tops to the chimney stacks.⁶⁶⁵ Stabling and farm buildings including a barn and cowhouse were built to the north, some attached to the house, but in 1848 two rectory barns were removed because tithe commutation had rendered them redundant.⁶⁶⁶ By 1910 the house had 14 bedrooms and

⁶⁵⁷ Hadspen Ho. MSS 3/11; Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 177A.

⁶⁵⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 128, 320B.

⁶⁵⁹ TNA, HO 129/267/1/8.1.

⁶⁶⁰ WSHC, 2063/30.

⁶⁶¹ TNA, IR 58/73468.

⁶⁶² SHC, DD/WBF/20/258/5.

⁶⁶³ E. Dwelly, *Hearth Tax Returns*, I, 99; O.L. Dick (ed.), *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (1978), 411.

⁶⁶⁴ S. Hobbs, *Gleanings from Wilts Par. Regs* (WRS 63), 135.

⁶⁶⁵ SHC, D/D/Bbm 75.

⁶⁶⁶ SHC, tithe award; Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 320A and B, permit 1848.

attics, three reception rooms and two kitchens, a two-carriage coachhouse, cowhouses and piggeries.⁶⁶⁷ The house was disused in the 1940s and in 1951 was sold reserving a small plot for a new house. The old house was renamed Kilmington House. The new rectory house was given up in 1980 and the rector of the combined parish of Upper Stour lived at Zeals.⁶⁶⁸

ADVOWSON

Patronage presumably passed with Kilmington manor to Shaftesbury Abbey, which held the advowson until 1539.⁶⁶⁹ After the Dissolution it was taken by the Crown although usually let out notably to William Hartgill who appears to have taken possession of the parsonage house in the 1540s and 1550s.⁶⁷⁰ It was acquired by Henry Willoughby with Kilmington manor and settled on John Hartgill who granted it to the rector in 1611 for the next presentation.⁶⁷¹

Under a settlement of 1602 it passed to John Hartgill the younger and his wife Anne who in 1626 mortgaged it to William Combe and in 1628 to Revd William Helme.⁶⁷² In 1633 John and Anne with William Combe sold it to William Helme, rector of Bishopstone and husband of William Combe's daughter Margaret.⁶⁷³ In 1638 William Helme left the advowson to his daughter Margaret who married Revd Richard Kent.⁶⁷⁴ However, Hartgill claimed in 1634 that he had been forced to sell⁶⁷⁵ and in 1655 settled it after his own death on his son John.⁶⁷⁶

In 1672 Walter son and heir of Walter Barnes, to whom the advowson had apparently been mortgaged in 1644, released his interest to Richard Kent apparently for a further mortgage to

⁶⁶⁷ TNA, IR 58/73468.

⁶⁶⁸ SHC, DD/WBF/20/258/5; WSHC, 2132/103; achurchnearyou/Kilmington-st-mary-the-virgin: accessed 14 July 2016.

⁶⁶⁹ T.S. Holmes, Ralph of Shrewsbury (SRS 9), p. 329; T.S. Holmes, Reg. of Bp Giffard and Bp Bowett (SRS 13), p. 45; T.S. Holmes, Reg of Bp Bubwith (SRS 29—30), 266, 317, 414, 417.

⁶⁷⁰ F. Weaver, Som. Incumbents, 11; TNA, STAC 3/1/1, 4/7/39.

⁶⁷¹ TNA, CP 25/2/346/9Jas. I Mich.; SHC, DD/SAS/C795/PR165.

⁶⁷² Dors. HC, D/FSI, boxes 300—1.

⁶⁷³ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128, abstract of title c. 1676; box 301 deed 1633.

⁶⁷⁴ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301, will. In 1640 the advowson was said to belong to Margaret's brother Thomas, presumably because the jurors were unaware of the terms of William's will: TNA, C142/606/40.

⁶⁷⁵ Cal. SP Dom. 1634—5, 152.

⁶⁷⁶ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 301.

Richard Madox in 1676. In 1677 Richard Kent sold the advowson to John Fox and in 1678 John Hartgill, son of John and Anne, and his son Ferdinando released their claims.⁶⁷⁷

Patronage descended to John's son Sir Stephen Fox and his son Stephen, later earl of Ilchester and successive earls until 1962 when it was transferred to the bishop of Bath and Wells.⁶⁷⁸

PARISH LIFE

Two pairs of brothers from Kilmington were tonsured in 1323⁶⁷⁹ and a Hugh of Kilmington was rector of Norton sub Hamdon in the 1350s.⁶⁸⁰ The rectors were often inadequate, absent or pluralist. William de Ludeford, admitted as acolyte was allowed to farm out the church from 1338 while he pursued his education at Oxford and obtained ordination. Having completed his studies he obtained a dispensation to hold two benefices in 1343 and in 1344 exchanged Kilmington for a church in Norfolk.⁶⁸¹ His successor John Gyen was in debt.⁶⁸² In the 1390s there were at least three rectors⁶⁸³ of whom Nicholas Modeford was allowed to be absent and farm out his church.⁶⁸⁴ The high turnover continued in the early 15th century, seven rectors in 25 years, with several exchanges and many instituted by proxy.⁶⁸⁵ In 1425 John Clere resigned after three years because he was incapable through age and infirmity and obtained a pension for life of £4, half the value of the living.⁶⁸⁶ Kilmington had chaplains in the 15th century including Hugh Bowet, who was accused in 1426 of practicing necromancy

⁶⁷⁷ Dorset HC, D/FSI, box 170A, survey bk c. 1767; box 301, deeds; TNA CP 25/2/593/1659 Mich.; CP 25/2/71/30 Chas II Hil.

⁶⁷⁸ F. Weaver, *Som. Incumbents*, 117; *VCH Som.* VII, 26; SHC, D/D/Ord/103.1.

⁶⁷⁹ Bp Hobhouse, *Reg. of Bp John de Drokenesford* (SRS 1), 217.

⁶⁸⁰ H.C. Maxwell Lyte, 'Somerset Incumbents 1354—1401', *PSANHS*, lxxviii, p. 88.

⁶⁸¹ T.S. Holmes, *Ralph of Shrewsbury* (SRS 9), pp. 329, 361, 372; *ibid.* (SRS 10), p. 498; *Cal. Papal Letters*, 1342—62, pp. 113, 189; Emden, *Biog. Reg. Oxon to 1500*, 1172.

⁶⁸² *Cal. Close*, 1346—9, 149.

⁶⁸³ Maxwell Lyte, 'Somerset Incumbents 1354—1401', p. 84; *Cal. Pat.* 1391—6, 330; 1396—9, 27.

⁶⁸⁴ T.S. Holmes, *Reg. of Bp Giffard and Bp Bowett* (SRS 13), p. 15.

⁶⁸⁵ F. Weaver, *Som. Incumbents*, 117; *Cal. Pat.* 1401—5, 303, T.S. Holmes, *Reg of Bp Bubwith* (SRS 29—30), 266, 317, 414, 417.

⁶⁸⁶ T.S. Holmes, *Reg of Bp Stafford* (SRS 31—2), p.8.

and magic against William, Lord Botreaux.⁶⁸⁷ One of the few graduate clergy was John Cranborne, canon of Salisbury who was rector of Kilminster 1466—70 but as he was warden of Vaux College, Salisbury and prebendary of Hurstbourne, Wilts he was admitted by proxy and probably left the parish to the chaplain John Rose who succeeded him as rector.⁶⁸⁸

Kilminster's second graduate rector was Thomas Benett, LL.D., presented in 1528, but he also appears to have left the parish to a curate.⁶⁸⁹ Lack of a strong rector may have contributed to the lawlessness in the parish in the 16th century. Two local robbers even claimed clerical status in 1523 and c. 1538 a priest who reputedly connived at criminal activity was described as 'belonging to William Hartgill'.⁶⁹⁰ A church house was recorded in 1557 and a 20d. 'new rent' was due for the house to Kilminster manor in 1585. The building was said to be still remembered in the late 19th century.⁶⁹¹ Benett was succeeded by John Gelibrand (d. 1573) a scholar at Oxford who was also rector of Buckland, Glos., although he was at times resident at Kilminster.⁶⁹² Two men claimed the benefice after his death.⁶⁹³ Thereafter graduate clergy were more common but they usually left the parish to curates.⁶⁹⁴ In 1594 the chancel and parsonage barn needed repair, possibly due to the absence of John Penven, AM (1584—96).⁶⁹⁵ John Bullingham, rector 1596—8, was also bishop of Gloucester and Bristol and only obtained Kilminster to increase his income after losing Bristol.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁸⁷ Cal. Pat. 1422—9, 363.

⁶⁸⁸ H.C. Maxwell Lyte and M.C.B. Dawes, Reg. of Bp Bekynton (SRS 49—50), 395; H.C. Maxwell Lyte, Regs of Bps Stillington and Fox (SRS 52), pp. 5, 35, 178; Emden, Biog. Reg. Oxon to 1500, 509.

⁶⁸⁹ H.C. Maxwell Lyte, Bps Regs 1518—59 (SRS 55), p. 52; SHC, D/D/Vc 20. Probably the canon of Salisbury and of St Pauls and multiple pluralist who lived in state at Salisbury where he died in 1558: Emden, Biog. Reg. Oxon. 1501—40, 43; TNA, PROB 11/41/35.

⁶⁹⁰ Maxwell Lyte, Bps Regs 1518—59 (SRS 55), pp. 73—4; G. Bradford, Proceedings in Star Chamber (SRS 27), 210.

⁶⁹¹ WSHC, 865/196G. Sweetman, The Stourton Tragedy (Wincanton, 1890), 18.

⁶⁹² Emden, Biog. Reg. Oxon. 1501—40, 231; D. Shilton and R. Holworthy, Medieval Wills from Wells (SRS 40), 34, 61

⁶⁹³ TNA, SP 48/30, fo. 342.

⁶⁹⁴ Hobbs, Gleanings from Wilts Par. Regs, 135.

⁶⁹⁵ SHC, D/D/Ca 102, ff. 14, 81, 109; DD/SAS/C795/PR165.

⁶⁹⁶ ODNB, John Bullingham: accessed 17 June 2016.

Not only was his successor Richard Potter a frequent absentee, but his curates were either unlicensed or absent. Several parishioners did not take communion, the church needed repairs and there was no glebe terrier until 1627.⁶⁹⁷ His son and successor Francis Potter, 1626—78, remained at Trinity College, Oxford until about 1636, although he visited the parish, and seems to have preferred scientific study and natural philosophy, becoming a fellow of the Royal Society in 1663. One of his curates was threatened with having his licence revoked c. 1630 and the registers were badly kept with only half the usual baptisms and burials entered from the 1630s to 1650s. He was settled in the parish by 1649 when he was visited by John Aubrey and the following year they notoriously tried out blood transfusion on a hen. Potter served without a curate, never gained preferment and was buried at Kilminster.⁶⁹⁸ Among his successors was Samuel Hill (1687—1716), theological writer, master of Bruton Free School from 1700, despite the bishop's objection that he ought to take care of his parish, and canon of Wells. He was a high churchman who attacked Presbyterianism.⁶⁹⁹ His son Samuel held the living from 1732—53.⁷⁰⁰ Communion was celebrated at Whitsuntide in 1762, presumably in addition to Christmas and Easter.⁷⁰¹ From the 1650s if not earlier the aisle was claimed to be solely for the use of the owner of Kilminster manor demesnes, now Church farm, reputedly enclosed from the rest of the church by John Hartgill with the consent of the parishioners, although this was contested in 1661, and in the 1750s the tenant paid for repairs.⁷⁰²

The Hon. Charles Digby (1767—1811) was re-instituted twice, was a pluralist and canon of Wells but resident. He mortgaged the rectory in 1774, possibly to work on the

⁶⁹⁷ SHC, D/D/Ca 120, f. 21; 140, pp. 112—13; 204; 255; D/D/Rg/117.

⁶⁹⁸ ODNB, Francis Potter: accessed 17 June 2016; SHC, A/BKH 1; D/D/Ca 102, ff. 14, 81, 109; DD/SAS/C795/PR165; D/D/WLS/box 2; H.R. Phipps, 'Abstracts of Bath and Wells Diocesan Records' V, 1; O.L. Dick (ed.), *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (1978), 409—12.

⁶⁹⁹ ODNB, Samuel Hill: accessed 17 June 2016; SHC, T/PH/gc 2. He has a monument in Wells Cathedral cloisters.

⁷⁰⁰ F. Weaver, *Som. Incumbents*, 117.

⁷⁰¹ WSHC, 2063/16.

⁷⁰² Dorset HC, D/FSI, boxes 18 and 75 surveys, box 301, deeds; TNA C 6/21/77.

chancel which was floored with Chelmark stone from Wiltshire about that time. In 1776 a Mr Moulton supplied a new mahogany pulpit for £50 and carriage and in 1780 an unspecified item, possibly the pedestal font recorded in the 1780s when the principal furnishings were of mahogany.⁷⁰³ In 1782 one of the four bells lay broken in the church and another in the tower and it was initially agreed that one should be recast but they were sold on the orders of the rector and Henry Hobhouse to Robert Wells of Aldbourne in 1783 leaving only the 1st and 4th bell, one said to be dated 1584.⁷⁰⁴ Revd Digby probably destroyed the earliest parish register having had a copy made as he could not read the original. In 1806 he gave a new cup and cover.⁷⁰⁵ He was succeeded by Charles Strangways, kinsman of the patron.⁷⁰⁶

Strangways was non-resident and a pluralist but had a resident curate Townshend Selwyn who took two Sunday services. His non-resident successor Charles Neve also delegated the parish to a curate.⁷⁰⁷ Selwyn (d. 1853) became rector and was largely resident although also a pluralist. He partly rebuilt the house, chaired the vestry and kept up the two Sunday services with communion three times a year.⁷⁰⁸ He was a botanist and had planted the rectory grounds while he was curate. He may also have been responsible for rebuilding the chancel without an east window and north vestry and installing the 1820s pulpit and reading desk.⁷⁰⁹ Towards the end of his life his son Sydney⁷¹⁰ served the parish as curate. In 1851 the church had 259 seats, 170 free, and an average attendance of 179 in the morning and 120 in the afternoon. On Census Sunday 83 people and 35 Sunday scholars attended morning service and 114 people and 53 scholars in the afternoon.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰³ SHC, D/D/Vc/88; DD/BR/ho/50; McDermott and Berry, Rack's Survey, 239; Collinson, Hist. Som. III, 41; WSHC, 2063/16.

⁷⁰⁴ WSHC, 2063/16; McDermott and Berry, Rack's Survey, 240; Collinson, Hist. Som. III, 41; Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 176, which mentions three but this may be an error.

⁷⁰⁵ SHC, D/D/Rrd/6; PSANHS, XLIII, 194—5; Hobbs, Gleanings from Wilts Par. Regs, 135.

⁷⁰⁶ W. Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 174.

⁷⁰⁷ SHC, D/D/Rb/1815, 1823.

⁷⁰⁸ SHC, D/D/Va 2/4; TNA PROB 11/2174/406.

⁷⁰⁹ Phelps, Hist. Som. II, 174, 176; SHC, D/D/Cf 1868/3; DD/WBF/20/258/2.

⁷¹⁰ Another son was the eminent geologist Alfred Selwyn.

⁷¹¹ TNA, HO 129/267/1/8.1.

Selwyn's successor Henry Fox-Strangways rebuilt the chancel again in 1864, with an east window and choir stalls. Mark Warburton like his predecessors had to contend with an unseemly and long-running battle over pews between the tenants of the Hoares and of the earls of Ilchester. After an assault during a service at the end of 1867 the rector decided to make all seats in the church free, to which Sir Henry Hoare and the earl agreed renouncing any rights, and to enlarge the church to provide an additional 66 seats. He also wished to remove the 'unsightly excrescence' of a south porch. In 1868 plans were drawn up by James Piers St Aubyn for rebuilding the church, apart from the west tower, parts of the south wall and chancel. The old flat-roofed transepts, the north much larger than the south and sometimes called the Hartgill chapel, were demolished together with the nave roof and south porch. A north aisle was added with underground heating chamber, the south door was blocked and a new entrance made through the tower, a south transept was built, the small south window, itself a replacement for a large window with outside shutters in use c.1790, was replaced by a three-light window and new roof and floor were inserted.⁷¹² By this date communion was celebrated monthly, a silver flagon is dated 1866, and the church was supported by a voluntary rate.⁷¹³

In 1906 an additional 24 seats were provided and the tower was restored by C.E. Ponting.⁷¹⁴ Services were then held twice on Sundays and communion was celebrated monthly but otherwise the church was not used although the rector, Mark Warburton (d. 1909), had three curates including the vicar of Mere. There were only 24 Easter communicants but a choir of 17 and a paid organist.⁷¹⁵ His successor Henry Georg Fox-

⁷¹² SHC, D/D/Ca/462; D/D/Cf/1868/3, 1962/3/15; WSHC 2063/18; Phelps, *Hist. Som.* II, 174; SANHS, Tite coll., drawing for Collinson's History of Somerset; Pigot colln, drawing by J. Buckler 1837; Braikenridge colln, drawing by W.W. Wheatley 1844; *Incorporated Church Building Society Annual Report* (1927), 91.

⁷¹³ SHC, D/D/Va/11/4, 15/4; DD/WBF/20/258/5.

⁷¹⁴ *Incorporated Church Building Society Annual Report* (1927), 91; SHC, D/D/Cf/1962/3/15.

⁷¹⁵ WSHC, 2063/30.

Strangways was the first inhabitant to have a car, a steam phaeton in 1912, and two years later he acquired a Buick tourer.⁷¹⁶

The pulpit was replaced again in 1911.⁷¹⁷ The pattern of services was little changed in the 1920s and 1930s but Easter communicants rose to 66 in 1930.⁷¹⁸ In the 1930s a memorial window to the Hartgills was installed in the east end of the chancel. By the 1950s the tower was in a very dangerous condition and the rest of the church was little better with a poor electric installation.⁷¹⁹ The church was provided with new lighting and heating⁷²⁰ but the planned restoration was not carried out and the architect in 1967 said he had never seen a tower ‘that filled me with such a fear for my life.’ A faculty was obtained in 1968 to remove the last two bells but it was not until the 1970s and 1980s restoration work to the church and tower was carried out.⁷²¹

In the later 20th century congregations dwindled, sometimes there was no-one at services but there was a weekly communion service with matins or evensong on alternate Sundays.⁷²² In 1983 there was one Sunday service but by 1989 only one a fortnight and average attendance was 16 in 1991.⁷²³ In 2002 the only Christmas service was held in a barn on the Sunday preceding.⁷²⁴ In 2016 the church was only used for Sunday services once a month.⁷²⁵

ST MARY’S CHURCH

⁷¹⁶ I. Hicks, Early Motor Vehicle Registration in Wiltshire 1903—1914 (Wilts. RS 58), 285.

⁷¹⁷ WSHC, 2063/19.

⁷¹⁸ WSHC, 2063/12.

⁷¹⁹ SHC, DD/WBF/20/258/3—6.

⁷²⁰ SHC, D/D/Cf/1962/3/15.

⁷²¹ SHC, D/D/Rrd/6; DD/WBF/20/258/2; D/D/Cf/1972/9/6, 1974/2/12, 1981/12/18/3/15; WSHC, 2063/28.

⁷²² WSHC, 2063/13—14; 3327/9/1.

⁷²³ WSHC, 3327/9/2—3.

⁷²⁴ WSHC, 3327/9/3.

⁷²⁵ achurchnearyou/Kilmington-st-mary-the-virgin: accessed 14 July 2016.

In the 1780s the church was described as Gothic, the nave roof was arched and ceiled with blue ribs, the walls were whitewashed, and it had a singing gallery and mahogany furnishings.⁷²⁶ In the 1830s a lancet window was recorded in the shallow south transept, ‘pointed’ chancel windows had been relocated in the north and south chancel walls and there were bosses with initials and devices. The two transepts and the tower appear to have been divided from the nave by plain pointed arches.⁷²⁷ Following the rebuilding of 1868⁷²⁸ the church comprised a chancel with north vestry built in 1864, nave with south transept and north aisle and a west tower. The south transept was used as a choir vestry and housed the organ but retained a 14th-century arch.⁷²⁹

The narrow, three-stage tower probably dates from the late 15th century and had four bells until the 1780s.⁷³⁰ The two remaining in situ in 1961 had not been rung ‘for generations’ and the bell floor had collapsed. In 1968 one bell was rehung for chiming and in 1970s and 1980s the tower was repaired.⁷³¹

NONCONFORMITY

Being on the county and forest boundary among divided parishes with easy access between Somerset and Wiltshire probably encouraged dissent. The Stourtons were Catholics and kept a chaplain at Stourton House in the 1550s,⁷³² which probably enabled Kilmington Catholic families to practice their faith. Two households of recusants were recorded in 1641.⁷³³

Although sometimes portrayed as good Protestants at least two Hartgills failed to take communion in 1605,⁷³⁴ in 1661 William Hartgill was said not to have come to church for

⁷²⁶ McDermott and Berry, *Rack’s Survey*, 240.

⁷²⁷ Phelps, *Hist. Som.* II, 174.

⁷²⁸ SHC, D/D/Cf 1868/3.

⁷²⁹ SHC, DD/WBF/20/258/3; Pevsner, *Wilts* (1975 edn), 280.

⁷³⁰ McDermott and Berry, *Rack’s Survey*, 240; above, this section.

⁷³¹ SHC, DD/WBF/20/2584; D/D/Cf/1968/4/1.2; above, this section.

⁷³² G. Sweetman, *The Stourton Tragedy* (Wincanton, 1890).

⁷³³ Howard and Stoate, *Protestation Returns*, 245.

⁷³⁴ SHC, D/D/Ca 140.

many years,⁷³⁵ and Francis Hartgill's house, possibly the later Homestalls, was licenced for Anabaptist worship in 1672.⁷³⁶ The licence was obtained by Robert Cox of Norton Ferris, who may have been the preacher and in 1709 left to his friends the use of his meeting room for five years if the law allowed. One of those friends was Eleanor Adlam who in 1712 left £5 a year from 1715 to the minister chosen by the congregation, possibly implying that the cause was Independent.⁷³⁷

By the later 18th century the meeting room appears to have been given up and from the 1740s to 1760s Kilmington nonconformists supported the minster and meeting at Horningsham.⁷³⁸ In 1797 the Lush family obtained three licences for Independent worship. It is not clear if they were for the same property; one licence refers to the court in front and another to an outhouse.⁷³⁹ Independents are not recorded again although there are licences of 1818 and 1823 for unspecified Protestant denominations, the later at Kilmington common.⁷⁴⁰

In 1804 Mary Farr's house was licensed for Methodists and the house of Joseph Welsh licenced in 1820 may have been for Methodists.⁷⁴¹ In 1825 Kilmington was in the Crewkerne Mission Circuit but was not mentioned again.⁷⁴² Joseph Howell, yeoman and innkeeper, bought a cottage in 1840 with a garden on which a Wesleyan chapel was built in 1847 and on his death in 1857 left a picture to benefit the Wesleyan Missionary Society.⁷⁴³ The chapel had 80 free and 74 other seats and in 1851 60 attended morning service and 140 went in the evening.⁷⁴⁴ The chapel, which formed part of the Frome Circuit, was licensed for

⁷³⁵ TNA, C 6/21/77.

⁷³⁶ Cal. SP Dom., 1672, 399.

⁷³⁷ TNA, PROB 11/529/22, 11/546/243.

⁷³⁸ TNA, PROB 11/733/343, 11/811/336, 11/912/311.

⁷³⁹ SHC, D/D/Rm 2.

⁷⁴⁰ SHC, D/D/Rm 3, 10.

⁷⁴¹ SHC, D/D/Rm 5.

⁷⁴² M.D. Costen, Wesleyans and Bible Christians in South Somerset (SRS 78), 227.

⁷⁴³ SHC, D/N/frc/3/35; TNA, HO 129/267/1/8.2; PROB 11/2253/298.

⁷⁴⁴ TNA, HO 129/267/1/8.2.

marriages in 1865 and had a flourishing Sunday school by 1877.⁷⁴⁵ In 1910 it retained its gallery and was in good condition.⁷⁴⁶

However, the last marriage was in 1908 and the register was closed in 1938 although registration was not officially withdrawn until 1972.⁷⁴⁷ The chapel continued with one Sunday evening service until it closed in April 1969.⁷⁴⁸ The benefaction plaque was removed to the parish church.⁷⁴⁹ Built of dressed limestone under a slate roof, hipped at the rear, the former chapel has pairs of tall Y-traceried windows to the side and a gable entrance with two lancet windows above the door. By c. 2000 it was derelict but has since been converted into a dwelling. A labourer was a Primitive Methodist preacher in 1861 but presumably preached outside the parish.⁷⁵⁰

In 1819 the house of Hugh Lush was licensed for worship by the ‘Lords New Church’, usually a description of the Swedenborgians.⁷⁵¹ He was a shopkeeper and died in 1820, which may have brought the cause to an end.⁷⁵² A Gospel Mission Hall was established by 1906, apparently by a cottage at Kilmington Common, but was given up after 1923.⁷⁵³

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kilmington parish comprised the tithings of Kilmington and Norton Ferris, possibly originally coterminous with the two manors, in Norton Ferris Hundred in Somerset.

However, in the 1520s Kilmington tithing included Yarnfield in Maiden Bradley as a sub

⁷⁴⁵ SHC, D/N/frc/3/3/5, 5/1/3; Lond. Gaz. 24 July 1972, 8835.

⁷⁴⁶ TNA, IR 58/73469.

⁷⁴⁷ WSHC 1420/11; Lond. Gaz. 24 July 1972, 8835.

⁷⁴⁸ SHC, D/N/frc/4/2/10, 4/3/18; WSHC, 3327/9/1.

⁷⁴⁹ WSHC, 2063/28.

⁷⁵⁰ TNA, RG 9/1323.

⁷⁵¹ SHC, D/D/Rm 5.

⁷⁵² SHC, DD/S/OG 10.

⁷⁵³ WSHC, G9/510/22; L8/1/3; Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1903—39).

tithing⁷⁵⁴ and in the early 18th century, Yarnfield in Maiden Bradley and Brook and Gasper in Stourton also in Somerset were regarded as part of Norton Ferris tithing.⁷⁵⁵

In 1852 Kilmington was moved into Frome court district and in 1853 was included in Frome postal district but its inclusion in Mere poor-law union led to its eventual removal from Somerset, first seriously discussed in 1888.⁷⁵⁶ The parish vestry realised the risk as early as 1865 and tried unsuccessfully to detach the parish from Mere Union, which feared being abolished without the income from Kilmington. The parish was a rural district of itself between 1894 and 1896 as the counties fought over it and in 1896 it was transferred to Wiltshire despite petitions signed by most of the inhabitants and from the parish council. It was said that Somerset County Council would not oppose the move because the parishioners were reluctant to pay the legal costs. Kilmington then formed part of Mere, later Mere and Tisbury, Rural District and from 1974 Salisbury District. However, Kilmington remained part of the East Somerset Parliamentary Constituency until 1918 when it was included in the Westbury Constituency.⁷⁵⁷ In 1980 the ecclesiastical parish was transferred from the diocese of Bath and Wells to Salisbury diocese.⁷⁵⁸

MANORIAL ADMINISTRATION

Few court records survive and none have been found for Norton Ferris. Until the 17th century there was a boundary between the two manors, which could be viewed.⁷⁵⁹ Kilmington manor was administered by Shaftesbury abbey and a surviving court book for 1518 covers the usual business of defaults, repairs, strays and tenure but also shows that subletting of tenements

⁷⁵⁴ TNA, E 179/169/173.

⁷⁵⁵ SHC, A/CPX 1

⁷⁵⁶ Wells Jnl, 7 Feb. 1852; Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gaz. 9 Jun. 1853; Bridgwater Mercury, 25 Aug. 1888: BNA accessed 27 Jun. 2016; WSHC 2063/23.

⁷⁵⁷ Youngs, Local Admin. Units, 729, 542; Bridgwater Mercury, 4 July 1896: BNA accessed 27 Jun. 2016; SHC, C/GP/D26, 56; WSHC 3363/1; G9/100/1.

⁷⁵⁸ Above, rel. hist.

⁷⁵⁹ TNA, SC 2/227/123, ff. 8—13.

was permitted at that date. The manor had a reeve and a hayward.⁷⁶⁰ After the Dissolution the king held courts for Kilmington at which tenants agreed to allow some inclosure.⁷⁶¹ Until at least the 1790s Kilmington manor tenants regularly declared that they were tenants of Shaftesbury abbey to whom the manor belonged and whose manorial customs ought to be followed.⁷⁶² Courts were usually held twice a year in the early 17th century but sometimes less frequently. The hayward was the only officer elected.⁷⁶³ In the 1620s the tithingmen of Kilmington and 11 tenants paid to be released from suit of court to the hundred and both the Kilmington and Norton Ferris tithingmen could pay for a licence to appoint a substitute.⁷⁶⁴ By 1650 only Kilmington tithing paid certain money to the hundred.⁷⁶⁵

In the mid 18th century courts were held irregularly and by the 1760s only for cottage tenancies. There were two haywards in 1730 who appear to have served alternately.⁷⁶⁶ There were also two ‘petty constables’ presumably the tithingmen but it is not clear how they were appointed although they attended the hundred court in the first half of the 19th century when Brooke and Yarnfield had their own tithingmen.⁷⁶⁷ In 1757 the tenant of Kilmington, now Church Farm, had to provide accommodation for up to four men and four horses twice a year for keeping the court.⁷⁶⁸ Sir Richard Colt Hoare revived the court in the 1790s holding an annual autumn court to appoint a hayward and deal with nuisances and abuse of the common as well as cottage tenancies. He also held a May perambulation of the bounds in 1819. However, from the 1820s regular courts ceased and they were held only for tenancies, the last recorded in 1866.⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶⁰ WSHC 1728/70.

⁷⁶¹ TNA, REQ 2/18/79

⁷⁶² TNA, SC 2/227/123, ff. 8—13; WSHC 383/980.

⁷⁶³ TNA, SC 2/227/123, ff. 8—13.

⁷⁶⁴ SHC, DD/S/WI 32.

⁷⁶⁵ TNA, E 317/SOM/9.

⁷⁶⁶ WSHC 383/574, 980.

⁷⁶⁷ SHC, A/CPX 1; Sherborne Cas., SHR/C/P, court bk.

⁷⁶⁸ Dors. HC, D/FSI, box 128.

⁷⁶⁹ WSHC 383/13, 321—2, 340; Salisbury and Winchester Jnl, 10 May 1819: BNA accessed 28 June 2016.

The pound on the corner of Cote Lane and Church Street near the well belonged to the Hoares as lords of Kilmington but was moved to a garden further down Cote Lane by 1885. It was unfenced in 1910 and by the 1950s was being used as a refuse dump. It was cleaned and preserved as a small garden.⁷⁷⁰ There was a pound north of Norton Ferris Manor Farm, since lost.⁷⁷¹

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Few parish records have survived but the churchwardens and overseers for the poor were concerned with enforcing the settlement laws and providing for poor parishioners. In 1754 John Madox appealed against the parish poor account.⁷⁷² By the 1760s one churchwarden was chosen by the curate and one by the parish.⁷⁷³

In 1811 Hoare's tenants at Norton Ferris owed 147 days' statute duty on the turnpike roads and 28 days on the parish roads. The large farms owed up to 30 days a year, a considerable burden.⁷⁷⁴ In 1835 the vestry agreed that one man should be provided by farmers for every £30 annual value of arable or £45 of pasture.⁷⁷⁵ By 1865 the vestry met formally once a year and appointed one waywarden and two overseers.⁷⁷⁶

On 31 December 1894 the parish council first met comprising six farmers. They employed a salaried overseer in 1898. The council met erratically about four times a year throughout the 20th century. In 2016 the council had seven members.⁷⁷⁷

SERVICES

⁷⁷⁰ TNA, IR 58/73468; WSHC 3363/2.

⁷⁷¹ SHC, tithe award.

⁷⁷² Above, soc. hist.; SHC, Q/SR 322/3/51.

⁷⁷³ WSHC 2063/16.

⁷⁷⁴ WSHC 283/72.

⁷⁷⁵ SHC, DD/BT 3/6/2.

⁷⁷⁶ WSHC 2063/23.

⁷⁷⁷ WSHC 3363/1—2; Wiltshire.gov.uk/parishcouncils.

Many people probably took their water from the Wylde or wells. Revd Digby (d. 1811) had enclosed a communal well, probably Brachers, in the late 18th century and in 1813 there were still demands for it to be returned to common use.⁷⁷⁸ In the 1880s cottager children at Norton Ferris were ill, allegedly from open drains, which resulted in a cesspool and new drain being made by Henry Hobhouse.⁷⁷⁹ The well at Norton Ferris was disputed between Henry Hobhouse and Sir Henry Hoare who in 1898 agreed that Henry Hobhouse would allow water to the cottagers for domestic purposes in return for Sir Henry renouncing his claim. The well was still in use in 1930 when two cottages had no sanitation and there were complaints of cows fouling the water.⁷⁸⁰ In 1895 it was said that Brachers well was the public water supply for Kilminster and needed repair and by 1900 the parish was prepared to pay for work on the drains but in 1910 most houses still used earth closets.⁷⁸¹ Brachers well was polluted in 1918 and in 1920 effluent from new houses was to be discharged into the river but later a septic tank was planned.⁷⁸² By the 20th century the parish appears to have been short of water with at least one farmer buying water from a neighbour. Larger houses had wells and pumps or rainwater tanks.⁷⁸³ There were said to be no public utilities in the parish in the 1930s.⁷⁸⁴

In 1930 a reservoir was planned for Norton Ferris shared by the Wiltshire county council smallholders who shared the cost. In 1950 the Rural District Council planned a reservoir on White Sheet Down to supply Kilminster but there were complaints of water shortage in the 1970s when mains water was supplied.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁷⁸ WSHC 383/322, 340.

⁷⁷⁹ SHC, DD/BT 17/4.

⁷⁸⁰ WSHC F2/120/38.

⁷⁸¹ WSHC 3363/1. The well survives in Cote Lane.

⁷⁸² WSHC, G9/100/3; G9/132/29.

⁷⁸³ TNA, IR 58/73468.

⁷⁸⁴ H.E. Bracey, *Social Provision in Rural Wilts.* (1952), 194.

⁷⁸⁵ WSHC, F2/120/3; K3/140/138; 3363/2.

A constable was recorded in 1852⁷⁸⁶ and certainly by 1861 Kilmington had a resident police constable. There was a police station near the post office in 1891.⁷⁸⁷ Although there was no public telephone in 1930 by 1939 at least 11 businesses had a phone. A public kiosk was installed after 1957.⁷⁸⁸ Despite requests from 1946 mains electricity did not reach the parish until the 1960s having earlier been deemed unprofitable.⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸⁶ SHC, Q/SR 591/115.

⁷⁸⁷ TNA, RG 9/1323; RG 12/1627; SHC, Q/SR 745/70—91; 777/69—73.

⁷⁸⁸ WSHC 3363/1—2; Kelly's Dir. Wilts. (1939).

⁷⁸⁹ WSHC 3363/1—2.