

The Farms

Upon the death of William Barrington, the 2nd Viscount, it became clear that he had a problem with his two nephews, William and Richard, the first and second sons of his late brother Major General John Barrington. (For more information on the two brothers please read 'Beckett & The Barringtons'). Because William had no children the line of Viscounty fell to nephew William upon his uncle's death. However, even though the young William became the third Viscount Barrington, the old Viscount placed the Barrington Estates into a Trust. He appointed his surviving brothers as Trustees to oversee the running of the estate. This meant that although William and Richard bore the titles Viscounts Barrington 3 and 4 in order to keep the Viscounty running, they had no say at all in the affairs of Beckett. Both brothers died childless and with the death of Richard in 1814, the trust terminated. Bishop Barrington had appointed his nephew Mr William Price as Resident Agent in charge of Beckett, but very little was done for the property during those 20 years and consequently it was noted in Augusta Barrington's memoires that, '*the farms and cottages were all out of repair and there was not a shilling of ready money.*'

This probably accounts for why the new Viscount, George Barrington, appointed a new Estate Manager at Beckett by the name of George Merryweather, who arrived in April 1815. He immediately set about gathering information on tenants, property conditions and valuations. He made detailed lists of all the cottages and properties in the area, rents due etc. He also produced a very detailed account of all the farms that belonged to the estate, what condition that they were in and what could be done to improve them.

The following information was obtained from the Barrington Accounts book at the Berkshire County Archives BRO D/EX 447/2/1. This contains many details of farms and lands rented out by the estate circa 1796, and it was this that George Merryweather was trying to update. However, some of these properties are difficult to locate accurately. For instance, the following entry for a property in Watchfield:

'A Particular of an Estate situate in the parish of Watchfield in the County of Berks the property of the Devises of the late Right Hon Lord Barrington. Thomas Perring tenant.' To which property at Watchfield this refers is uncertain, but possibly Manor Farm. (photo below).

'The premises consist of a House with four rooms on a floor, stone built, part tiled and part thatched, a Stable in size for twelve horses and a Barn with four Bays, stone built and tiled. Another Barn with five Bays an open Shed for Cattle, Pigscotes, a Wainhouse in size for four Waggon and a Feeding House, at a small distance there is another Barn with four Bays and a Cow House, stone built and thatched.' For this farm it's noted that the land could be very much improved by draining.



Stallpitts Farm. John Frampton, tenant.

'The premises consists of a House with five rooms on a floor, brick built and thatched. The house is old but if thatched it would stand for many years. A Barn with 5 Bays, Stable for 7 horses, an open Shed or Wainhouse, another open shed for cattle, all stone built and thatched in pretty good repair. Another Shed for Cattle and a Wainhouse for 2 Waggon, timber built and thatched in pretty good repair. Another open Shed for Cattle with a straw roof, old and of little value. A small distance there is a cow house or feeding house for tying up 20 Cattle with Calves, Stalls behind, timber built and thatched in good repair.'



Stainswick Farm, in the Parish of Shrivenham & Ashbury occupied by Richard Frampton. (This farm was leased from Magdalen College, Oxford).

'The premises consists of a House with 5 rooms on a floor, stone built and tiled. A Barn with 4 Bays and 2 Thrashing Floors, a Stable for 5 horses. Another 3 stalled Stable. A Wainhouse for 4 Waggon and 4 Carts. A Cowhouse for tying up 20 cows with calves, stalls behind. Pigscotes etc. A small distance there is another building consisting of 6 feeding stalls.'

Shrivenham Cowleaze Farm. In the occupation of John Badcock (photo below)

'The premises consist of a House with 4 rooms on a floor. A Stable for 5 horses, brick built and thatched. A Cowhouse for tying up 14 cows with calves, stalls behind. An open shed for cattle. A Wainhouse for 2 waggons and 2 carts and an outhouse, pigscote etc, timber built and thatched.'



Sandhills. In the occupation of William Ackerman. (Land but no buildings – photo below)



Home Leaze Farm. Occupied by John Bennett. (Farmhouse photo below – now demolished).

'A House with 5 rooms on a floor. A Stable for 4 horses. A wainhouse for 2 waggons and 2 carts. A range of feeding pens, pigscote etc, all stone built and tiled. A cowhouse for tying up 30 cows with calves, stalls behind.'



Shrivenham. Thomas Williams, tenant.

'A house with 5 rooms on a floor. Stable for 5 horses. Open shed for 18 cows with calves. A Wainhouse for 3 waggons and 3 carts, all stone built and thatched. A Cowhouse for tying 10 cows with calves. Another Cowhouse for 13 cows with calves, timber and thatched.'

Shrivenham. Galley Hens Farm. Occupied by John Butler. (Photo below)

'A House with 3 rooms on a floor. A Barn with 3 Bays. A Stable for 4 horses. A Wainhouse for 2 waggons and 2 carts. A Cow house for 20 cows with calves. A Pigscote etc, all timber built and thatched, in but very indifferent repair.'

Shrivenham. Galley Hens. Occupied by Mary Edgington. (Photo below)

'A House with 3 rooms on a floor. A Barn with 4 Bays. An open cowshed. A Cowhouse for tying up 12 cows with calves. A Stable for 4 horses. Another Cowhouse for tying up 4 cows with calves. These buildings are in but very indifferent repair, the Stable nearly in ruins.'



Shrivenham. Widow Thatcher, tenant.

'A House with 2 rooms on a floor. A Barn with 3 Bays. A Stable for 4 horses, stone built and thatched. In Towns Close there is another Barn with 4 Bays. A Stable for 5 horses with

a loft over. The stable is stone built, the barn of timber and thatched, in good repair except the thatching.'

Shrivenham. William Tucker.

Just land

Shrivenham. William Johnson.

'A House with 3 rooms on a floor. A Stable for 3 horses. A Wainhouse for 3 waggons and 1 cart. A Pigscote. All stone built and thatched, in good repair. A Cow house for 12 cows with calves.'

Shrivenham. Lower Broad Leaze Farm. James Roseblade, tenant.

'A House with 5 rooms on a floor. A Stable for 4 horses, stone built and tiled. A Cowhouse for tying up 12 cows with calves, stalls behind. Another Cow house and a pigscote, stone built and thatched.'

Shrivenham. Penny Hooks and Stone Fields. (Owned by the episcopal church)

A House with 3 rooms on a floor, brick built and thatched. A Stable for 3 horses. A Cow house and Pigscote of little value. A Barn with 3 Bays. A Wainhouse for 2 waggons with a Granary over and another Stable for 6 horses, stone built and thatched, all in good repair except the Pigscote.



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George Merryweather also produced a map that he used for his discussions with his boss, Lord Barrington (5th). On a copy of it I have overlaid where the various farms were at the time and a key to the lettering - both below.



- A - Galleyhens Farm. Still same
- B - Lower Broadleaze Farther Farm. A stone wall marks where the Farm House once stood
- C - Lower Broadleaze Farm. Now Broadleaze Farm
- D - Upper Broadleaze Farm. No longer exists as a seperate farm
- E - Oxleaze Farm. Now Home Farm
- F - Homeleaze Farm. Now part of the Military College
- G - Beckett House & Grounds. Now part of the Military College
- H - Stainswick Farm. Still same
- I - Cowleaze Farm. Still same
- J - Stallpits Farm. Still same
- K - Pennyhooks Farm. Still same