

Quantock u3a Local History Visit to Blackmore Farm Manor House

October 16th 2023

I think we (20 of the members) all had an enjoyable and entertaining visit to Blackmore Farm Manore House – Alan Dyer the owner was quite “a card”. Also good to see a grade 1 listed building still being lived in and put to productive use – which will hopefully safeguard its future. Nice to have an opportunity for some refreshments after too!

I attach a few pics and some scans from the booklet – bit naughty, but quicker than me regurgitating. Please do not share more widely though – thank you.

Here’s a link to some interesting documents relevant held at Somerset Heritage Centre: <https://somerset-cat.swheritage.org.uk/records/DD/S/WH>

And the listing is found on Historic England’s website – I’d share the link but the site seems to be broken at the moment – and the on-line listing is not complete, so if you want all the details then you might need to order a copy – google will help you!

At the end of the tour Alan talked about a plan he had had to rebuild the old water mill that was on the site and part of the list originally (it was demolished ultra vires in the 1960s!) – sadly the increase in building costs post pandemic has put paid to this ambition. Here is a map showing the location of the mill:

> [25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952](#)







Putlog holes – to take putlogs or putlocks to support scaffolding during building. In the Solar as was.



Filled in windows to avoid the window tax – generally on the western face to keep out the weather!



Construction marks on the timbers (III) – joints would be numbered with matching numbers on main joining timbers when the framework was constructed off-site and then dis-assembled for re-assembly in situ.



Anglo-saxon font – but not original to Blackmore (from Ibstone I think)



Iron grill through which servants would view the service, and above the now filled-in gallery from where the ladies of the family would view the service.



The "butt"-ery – where the butts of beer and cider were kept, rather than the dairy!





Eel spear and songbird racks in the kitchen.





A gargoyle on the front of the house

Blackmore

This Manor is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of A.D. 1085 but for some time there was some confusion among scholars as to which place was meant and it was variously ascribed to Churchill and Carhampton, but is now recognised as the Blackmore of Cannington. It was spelt in Domesday, "Blachamore".

The Domesday reading is as follows:

"Anschitil holds of Roger de Corcelle, Blachamore. Aluric held it in the time of King Edward (i.e. Edward the Confessor, the last of the Saxon Kings), and paid geld (a tax) for 1 virgate of land. To this manor has been added one acre of land which in the time of King Edward I thegn held in parage. There are two borders. The whole was and is worth eight shillings."

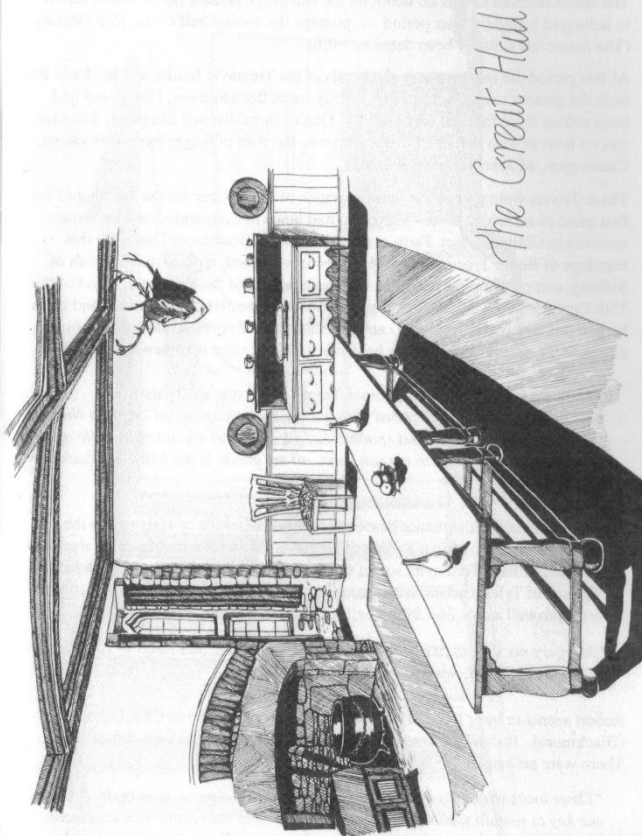
This indicates an estate of between one and two hundred acres. The "virgate" was a variable measure of land. Not a great deal of it was arable. There were two cottages. Parage was usually a marriage settlement so the extra acre was part of a marriage settlement and was worked by a thegn in those days.

It is not known who had the manor after Roger de Corcelle, who had great holdings of land in Somerset after the Norman Conquest but by the 14th Century it was owned by a family called Tresseleven. The name is mysterious and is not otherwise known and it may possibly be a transposing of the name Trevellion, or Trevelyan (it has various spellings). The family had lands in Somerset and was associated with these parts off and on for hundreds of years.

The following appears in the Assize Rolls:

"In 1382 one Thomas Hatswell of Halsfield, of Minehead, in conjunction with Sir Baldwin Malet, Knight of Enmore, was indicted for entering the house of one Richard Tresseleven at Blackmore in Cannington Parish, and carrying off his wife Margaret, and various other goods and chattels, that is to say, cloth, flax, wool, a silver cup, some silver spoons and some money. Sir Baldwin and Hatswell replied that at the time of the action Margaret was not the wife of the complainant."

There is no result of the action recorded!



The house referred to was no doubt on the site of the present house which seems to belong to a slightly later period perhaps the second half of the 15th Century. (The house has actually been dated as 1486)

At this period the manor was in the hands of the Tremayle family and no doubt they built the present manor house. This family came from Sidbury, Devon and had been settled there from an early period. One of them married Margaret, daughter and co-heiress with her sister, Joan, who was the wife of Roger Pym of Brymore, Cannington, of John Trivet of Sidbury.

These Trivets were part of the family famous in Bridgwater for the building of the first great stone bridge there. They also had lands in Cannington and the name survives in Chilton Trivet Farm at the other end of Blackmore Lane. By this marriage of Roger Tremayle and Margaret Trivet, Sand, a place in the Parish of Sidbury, came to Roger Tremayle. He was a Justice of the Peace at the end of the 15th Century. Now the house at Sand is curiously similar to Blackmore and it may be guessed that when Tremayle came to Blackmore from Sand he built the house and in doing so copied the house he had left. Blackmore is somewhat smaller.

In 1508 we have the Will of Thomas Tremayle (as it is spelt then):

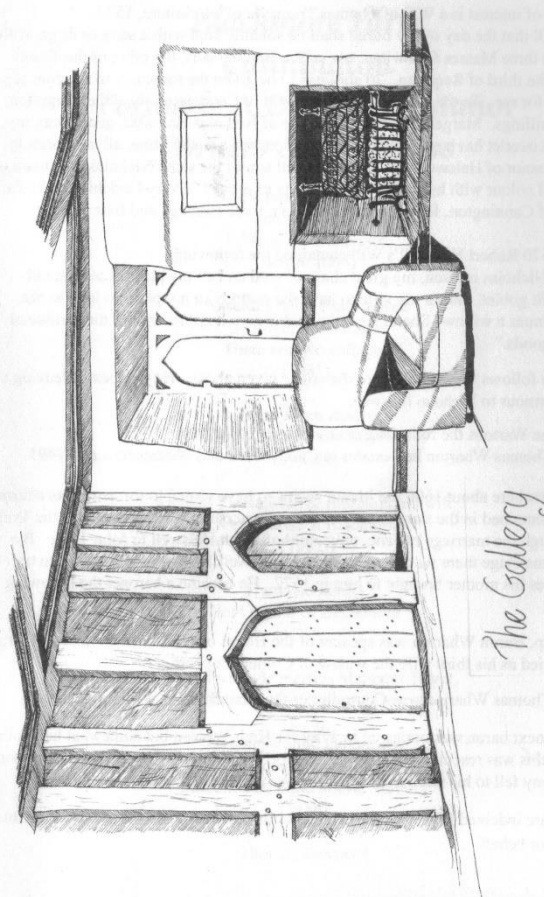
"To Philip my son, a feather bed with bolster etc., a cup called 'le great Nutt' with cover, and six of my best spoons..... To Margaret my daughter, wife of Thomas Tylly:..... Lastly to my son John, all my goods in my house of Blackmore in Cannington."

From the Tremayles the manor descended to the Halswells of Halswell in the Parish of Goathurst by the marriage of Nicholas Halswell with Margaret, daughter and heiress of John Tremayle, son of the supposed builder. They were related to the Spekes of Tyleshead in Wiltshire and of Dillington. From Margaret it came to Robert Halswell as we find from a will of 1564 where we read:

"Margery my wife to assign the Manors of Blackmore and lands in Cannington to Robert Halswell, my son and heir."

Robert seems to have lived at Halswell but refers to a coffer at Cannington (Blackmore). It should be remembered that money had to be kept safe at home. There were no banks.

"Three locks with keys to be set on my coffer of Evidences, now in the Parlour; one key to remain with my executrix (his wife) and the others with my cousin, Hugh Brook, and with my friend Henry Portman. The coffer to stand in the house of Blackmore."



Also of interest is a Will of Thomas Tremayle of Blackmore, 1534:

"I will that the day of my burial shall be solemnly kept with a song or dirge, with these three Masses following: one of the Blessed lady, the other of the Trinity and the third of Requiem. 20 shillings to be given the same day to the poor to pray for me. To the Prioress of the convent of Cannington for tythes forgotten, 20 shillings. Margery my daughter, wife of Nicholas Halswell, gentleman, my best coverlet having a story of Sampson on him. To the same, all my goods in the manor of Halswell. To John Halswell son of the same Nicholas, one mare of sorrel colour with her colt, or 20 shillings of money. Every Godchild in the Parish of Cannington, four pence. The Vicar, three shillings and four pence."

In 1570 Robert Halswell's Will contained the following:

"To Nicholas my son, my great chain of gold and all my plate except one little gilt goblet. Susan my wife to have the custody of my plate so long as she continues a widow. She to have the said little gilt goblet and all the residue of my goods."

Then follows the references to the coffer given above. He finishes by leaving all his armour to Nicholas Halswell.

Of the Wartons the following is of interest:

Sir Thomas Wharton had estates in Cumberland and Westmoreland in 1495.

Somewhere about 1600 the Manor seems to have turned to use purely as a farm but remained in the same family so far as ownership goes. It passed to the Tynts through the marriage of Jane, only child of Hugh Halswell to John Tynte. By this marriage there was an only son, Sir Halswell Tynte who succeeded to the estates his mother brought to him in 1672. He became a baronet the following year.

Philip, Baron Wharton was speaker of the House of Commons 1642 to 1645 and married as his third wife the widow of Colonel Popham.

Sir Thomas Wharton was Controller of the Household of William of Orange.

The next baron was outlawed in 1729 for High Treason but somewhat late in the day this was rescinded in 1845 as an error! He died in 1729 and the estates and Barony fell to his sisters. The title fell into disuse until was revived in 1916.

We are indebted to the Revd. A.R. Moss for compiling the above historical notes on our behalf.

Blackmore Farm Cannington Formerly A Domesday Manor Owners & Occupiers

Aluric holds Blachamore
In the time of
Edward the Confessor
(before 1066)

Anschitil holds Blachamore
Of Roger de Corcelle
There are two cottages
(1085)

Tresseleven family
Hold Blachamore Manor
(by C14)

Richard Tresseleven & Margaret his wife
Live in house at Blackmore
(1382)

Tremayle family
Hold manor of Blackmore
(C15)

Roger Tremayle marries Margaret Trivet
Of Sand House, Sidbury, Devon
(C15)

Tremaylls build the present
Blackmore Manor house
Modelled on Sand house, Sidbury
(1486)

Thomas Tremayll