

The Barrington Connection

Having already discussed the succession of the Manor of Watchfield, it was at the close of the 18th century that it too, along with neighbouring manors in Shrivenham, all came into the possession of the Barrington Estate. The seat of this estate was Beckett which at one time was an important manor in its own right, being mentioned quite separately in the Domesday Book. By 1796, Lord Barrington, from his large mansion that is Beckett House, controlled much of the day-to-day affairs in both Watchfield and Shrivenham.

But by the end of the 19th century the power and structure of the manorial system was diminishing and becoming ever more costly to maintain. Such became the strain that in 1922 the whole estate was put up for auction by the then Right Honourable Viscount Barrington. To assist in the sale a catalogue was printed setting out the numerous lots along with maps to aid location. This document along with others, is preserved in the Shrivenham Heritage Society Archive at Shrivenham.

The following information is pages copied from the catalogue concerning property belonging to the Barrington Estate but located within the parish boundary of Watchfield.



Above. The formal front entrance of Beckett House. Photo by Neil B. Maw

By direction of the Right Hon Viscount Barrington

BERKSHIRE

In the Parishes of
SHRIVENHAM WATCHFIELD and LONGCOT

Illustrated particulars with Plan and Conditions of Sale of
THE BECKETT ESTATE

Comprising
The Noble Stone Built Mansion

in the Elizabethan style of architecture, set in charming surroundings with Lawns, Pleasure Gardens, Shrubberies, Park and Lake, together with

FIVE FARMS,

Residences, Accommodations Lands and Cottages

in and about the villages of Shrivenham, Watchfield and Longcot, the whole embracing an area of about

1440 acres

to be offered for sale by auction by

ADKIN, BELCHER & BOWEN

(unless previously disposed of by private treaty)

at the Town Hall, Swindon,
on Monday, October 16th, 1922

at 2 o'clock precisely

Illustrated Particulars and Conditions of Sale and orders to view may be obtained of the
Solicitors: Auctioneers:
Messrs Rider Heaton Meredith & Mills Messrs Adkin, Belcher & Bower
Lincolns Inn, London, W.C. 2 Wantage
and at Abingdon, Berks

LOT 23
Coloured Mauve on the Sale plan
The attractive

Mixed Agricultural Holding
Known as
Manor Farm
situate in the Parishes of Watchfield and Shrivenham, comprising
Excellent Modern Farmhouse & Buildings
and Two Cottages
and about

229ac. Or. 11p.
of sound Arable and Pasture land

Let as to part to Mr. W. R. Hedges on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy at an apportioned rent for the purpose of sale of £305 per annum, as to another part to Mrs. Barton and Mr. D. Skinner's representatives at £11. 19. 0. per annum, the remainder being in hand, the estimated and apportioned rents amounting to

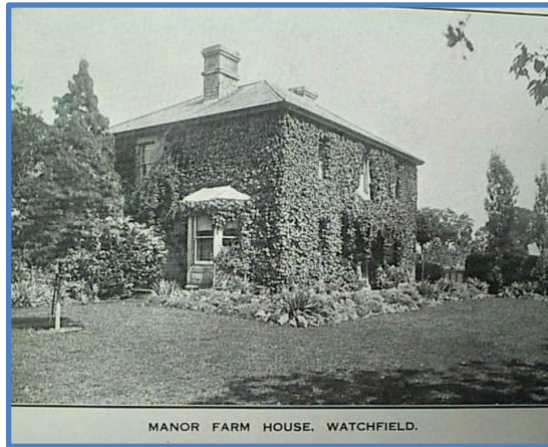
£320 per annum

THE HOUSE contains:-
Tiled Entrance Hall with open Staircase
Drawing Room with bay 16ft. X 14ft. with marble mantel and tiled grate.
Dining Room 14ft. X 12ft. with marble mantel and tiled grate
China Pantry with shelves and serving hatch to Dining Room
Office by side door
Roomy Kitchen with range and tiled floor
Back Lobby with Lavatory basin. Pantry and dairy
Back kitchen with force Pump. Small Cellar
Four Bedrooms each having fireplaces, two 14ft. X 13ft. and two 14ft. X 9ft. 6ins.
Bath Room
Maid's room and W.C.

THE FARM BUILDINGS comprise:-
Brick and slated range of Coal House with cement floor, W.C., Copper House, Tool House, Incubator
House and Oil House
Stone built and tiled Cart Stable for 10 with Loft over, blue brick floor
Leanto stone and tiled Pig Styes
Stone and tiled Calf House and Yard
Angle range of stone and iron roofed Milking House for 11 and three loose boxes
Stone and tiled Nag Stable of one stall, loose box, Harness Room and loft over
Stone and tiled Barn with cement floor
Timber and iron roofed Milking House for 18 with tiled floor and feeding pas sage.
Yard with stone built and iron roofed 5 bay open shed
On the opposite side of the public road is a stone and thatched Coach House
And in Pigeon House Close: a stone and thatched Barn, Stone and stone slated Pigeon House with Calf House under and stone, timber and thatched open shed.

The pair of
STONE BUILT AND SLATED COTTAGES,
Nos. 67 & 68 Watchfield
Let to Mrs Barton and the representatives of the late Mr. D. Skinner

Below. The Manor Farmhouse, now converted into modern flats and the associated outbuildings into maisonettes



LOT 29
Coloured Orange on the Sale Plan
THE CAPITAL

Agricultural Holding
Known as
Beckett Home Farm

situate in the parishes of Shrivensham, Watchfield and Longcot comprising the attractive old-fashioned
STONE BUILT AND SLATED FARM HOUSE

Very pleasantly situate in the Village of Watchfield, Farm Homestead at Watchfield, Buildings at two Cottages at Shrivensham, together with about
159ac. Ir. 4p.
of productive Arable and Grass land

Let as parts to Mr. W.J. Jeffries and Mr. H.B. Vines on annual Michaelmas tenancies the respective apportioned rents for the purpose of sale of £275.10.0 and £38.10.0, the remainder being in hand, making a total estimated and apportioned rental of
£314.15.0 per annum

THE FARM HOUSE has the following accommodation:-
Entrance Hall
Drawing Room 14ft 6in. X 14ft. with cupboards.
Dining Room 13ft 6in. X 9ft 6in.
Stone paved Kitchen with range.
Scullery and Larder.
4 Bedrooms, 16ft X 13ft, 15ft X 14ft, 14ft X 10ft and 14ft X 8ft. 6ins.
Bath room and W.C. Lavatory basin on landing.
3 Attic rooms and Apple room
Thatched harness room or scullery.

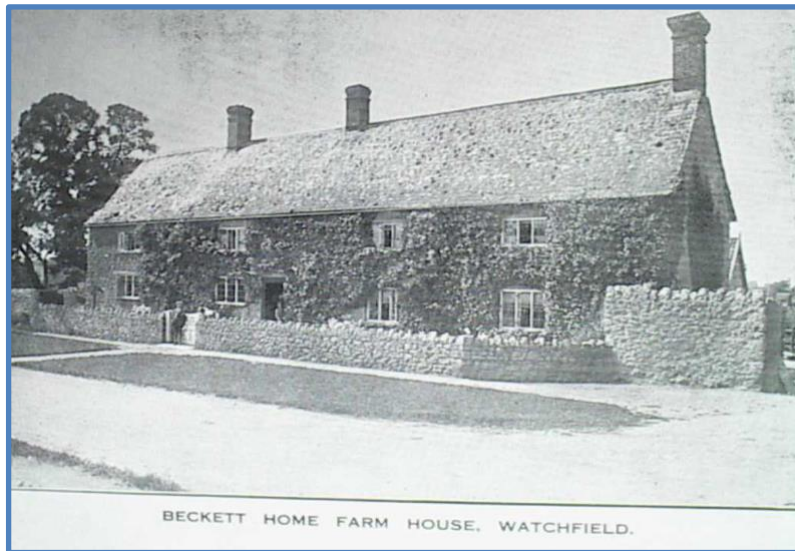
GARDEN AND TENNIS LAWN

Stone and slate milk house with pump
Stone and thatched coal and oil house.
Stone and tiled nag stable of loose box, 2 stalls and trap house.

THE FARM HOMESTEAD comprises:-
Stone, timber and thatched barn and wood house.
Stone and thatched 6 bay milking shed with stone pitched floor.
Yard with 4 bay open cattle shed.
Stone and thatched 4 bay cart shed and loose box in paddock.
Stone and thatched cart stable for 8 and enclosure of loose box.
Horse yard with 6 bay stone and tiled open shed.
Brick, stone and thatched barn with cement floor.
Rickyard.

THE FARM BUILDINGS AT SHRIVENHAM consist of:-
Yard with brick, stone and thatched open cowshed, 2 loose boxes and trap shed.
Stone and slated milking house with drained floor for 13 cows, with feeding passage
Cake house with semi-rotary pump
Small yard with brick and tiled open cow shed
A second yard with stone and thatched 3 bay open cart shed with 2 loose boxes
Brick, stone and thatched old-fashioned FARM HOUSE now used as

Below. Beckett Home Farm, now the Grange on the High Street



Upon the death of Charlotte Barrington in 1935, the remaining part of the estate that was the Mansion House and the Park, was sold by her Executors to the War Department in 1937. The initial intention was to locate and train anti-aircraft gunnery. Preparations were made but it was all cut short by the events of 1939 and the outbreak of World War II. Today it is a military academy and has restricted access and not open to the general public