

Wanstrow Village History



FOREWORD

What determines the character of a village? Usually it is a combination of things situation, architecture, building materials, agriculture, gardening reflecting the occupations, tastes and prosperity of the inhabitants. Always it is best appreciated with some knowledge of its history.

The character of Wanstrow may seem enigmatic to someone driving through it on the main road, but let him stop to wander unhurriedly and it will soon take shape in his mind. It is not a picture postcard village with cottages curved prettily around a green; rather it has a linear shape and the rich variety of buildings testifies to centuries of organic growth. That growth has owed little to the most common influences, squire and parson. It has had more to do with yeoman farmers,

craftsmen and artisans, largely impervious to the outside world until the last century. Nothing spectacular occurred here; neither King Charles I nor the Duke of Monmouth passed this way. Judge Jeffreys did not hold an assize at Wanstrow and none of the villagers was hanged as a result. Wherever else Queen Elizabeth I slept, it was not at the Wanstrow Inn. In fact it was so unnewsworthy as to prompt the quotation "Happy the land that has no history".

Yet although Wanstrow may not flaunt its charms, they are real. A visitor who walks the length of the High Street, from the church at one end to the bridges at the other, will find it a rewarding experience. And although Wanstrow's history may be undramatic, it has many points of interest the potteries, the church, the railway, the manor, the farming, the pubs, the school, the turnpike, the name all the things which have gone to form its character.

INTRODUCTION



The parish of Wanstrow is situated midway between Shepton Mallet and Frome and occupies 2054 acres on the eastern fringes of the Mendips. An ancient parish, it was certainly known to the Romans who built a road across the Mendips to take lead from Charterhouse to Old Sarum. The supposed route of this road now forms the Northern boundary of the parish. The western limit of the parish is marked by an Anglo Saxon boundary stone which can still be found along Withy Wood Lane, on the back route to Cranmore. From this point the boundary goes south to Withy Wood and then sweeps to the East, reaching the highest point of the parish at Breach Wood. Crossing the main road the boundary then plunges down with the stream into Studley Bottom, the lowest point in the parish. It crosses the railway to the east of Studley Farm and then turns North following the ancient boundary of the Royal Forest of Selwood. This boundary can be clearly seen as a bank which is still four or five feet high in parts. Now, of course, it forms a field boundary but in Norman times villagers would only cross this boundary and enter the King's Forest at their peril! The boundary then goes north where it meets up once more with the Roman Road near Alice Street Farm whose name probably reflects the Roman Road with the use of the word "Street".

Between the wars Wanstrow and Cloford were joined together to make one parish. In defiance of the bureaucrats and with respect to our neighbours in Cloford, these notes restrict themselves to the original parish boundaries.

GEOLOGY

Geologically the district varies from substrata of the harder shelly limestone beds of the forest marble forming the escarpment to the east, down to the inferior oolite reaching from Wanstrow towards Wincanton. The soil is generally a heavy clay and certain areas in the past proved suitable for pottery and the manufacture of bricks and tiles.

The stream which later becomes Nunney Brook has its source in the parish and flows on to join the Mells and Frome rivers. Outcrops of limestone shale, composed of tiny loose shell fragments, occur on the higher ridges to both sides of the stream valley, where quarries and limeburning kilns were sited.

The ground is generally flat at a level of between four and five hundred feet above sea level around the village, rising to 722 feet to the South West around Breach Wood. It reaches 561 feet at Burt's Hill and the ridge to the east of Studley Lane and 646 feet at Postlebury Hill to the north east. Extensive areas of hardwood forest originally grew in the higher portions and probably linked with the ridge of Gare Hill. The Royal Forests, much used for hunting in Norman times, were not dense woodland but were intersected by rides, where game flourished.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Through the years the name of the village has appeared with several spellings: in 1065 "Wandestreu", in 1182 "WellsTreu" and in 1225 "Wandestre". Later on in 1791 Rev. John Collinson in "The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset" refers to "Wanstraw" and during the 19th Century the name starts to appear as we know it today.

Various theories exist about the origin of the name. One local tradition has it that the old country words "want" (which meant "Mole") and "trow" meaning "trough") lent their names to the village. It has also been claimed that it is derived from the Anglo Saxon god "Woden" whose name led to "Wednesday" and "Wansdyke". In all likelihood however the name is derived from "Waendel's Tree". Who Waendel was will never be known but he was probably a minor Saxon chieftain for whom the tree had some significance.

EARLY HISTORY

Mankind has undoubtedly settled and made a living in this area since Neolithic times, around 3000 B.C. Partly due to the nature of the general activities of hunting, forestry and farming, few traces are now in evidence without excavation.

However, several discoveries were made some years ago and scientifically examined. There were inhabited rock caves at Leighton Hanging, a Neolithic rock shelter at the so-called Tom Tivey's Hole and an Iron Age burial with remains and implements at White Woman's Hole. In the Cloford and Leighton areas flint scatters and an axe head were discovered and were classified as Prehistoric.

Much later the Anglo Saxons farmed the land and following the period of the Roman occupation, after A.D. 400, recolonised the area and probably farmed more productively utilising the Roman skills of quarrying for lime and the other rich mineral deposits fringing the area.

Occasionally Roman buildings provided the nucleus for the siting of Saxon villages using more permanent stone building methods than the early Saxon timber construction. A Roman villa is thought to have been sited on the South side of Postlebury Wood, adjoining the Roman road near Alice Street Farm.

DOMESDAY

No history of the parish would be complete without an examination of the Domesday Book which shows us that the parish was split into two in Norman times.

West Wanstrow was held by a man named Norman and in 1086, when Domesday was written, was worth £3. It is interesting to note that at the time of the Conquest this estate had been valued at £6; times were hard! The farm contained about 450 acres but did not appear to be worked very extensively as only 2 ploughs and 4 slaves worked the land. Another 100 acres of the estate supported 8 peasant families and only one plough. There were 27 pigs, a flock of 86 sheep, 5 horses and 6 beasts. A wood, one league long by half a league, was also recorded.

The Eastern part of the parish was owned by the Canons of Wells Cathedral, and by 1086 was worth a mere £3. There was a farm of about 250 acres worked by 2 plough teams and 4 slaves, and another 250 acres of this estate supported 7 peasant families and 3 ploughs. Only 12 pigs were recorded, so arable farming was probably more important on this side of the parish.

It is interesting to note that at the time of Domesday much of the English countryside was owned by the Church. Though property was slowly sold over the centuries, the Church was still the largest land owner until well into the 19th Century. The large scale sell off since then would make a present day privatisation share issue look insignificant!

In the time of Domesday the whole of Wanstrow, including the inhabitants, was worth just £6. It has been estimated that the land and property of Wanstrow is worth £20 million today, and the reader will have to determine for himself the value of its residents!

MEDIEVAL HISTORY

In the 11th and 12th Centuries the Manorial holding at Wanstrow had considerable influence in the area. The king made a gift of Marston Manor to Odo de Wandestrie, whose family had owned their Wanstrow lands for many years.

During Medieval times the Ecclesiastical estates of Wanstrow became the Prebend of Wanstrow and the Church Commissioners held the land until 1953.



The other estates became divided during the Middle Ages and we hear of various families owning a "fourth part" and of localities such as "WanstrawRogers" and "Buller'sWanstraw" named after their owners.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in the 1530's affected Wanstrow in that the lands known as "Buller'sWanstraw" belonging then to the Abbot of Muchelney were sold to Hugh Sexey and given by him to his hospital at Bruton. The remaining part of the Manor, after passing through various hands, was sold to "Thomas Baynard of Gloucestershire, Gent" in 1598/9 for £1100. Baynard bought further lands in Wanstrow from Sir John Brune in 1628 and this estate became the Manor of Wanstrow as it was known well into this century.

THE MANOR

By the 16th Century the manorial system, both as an economic unit and political organisation, had largely disintegrated.

The tenants and the labourers no longer owed the lord of the Manor services according to the degree of their subjection but were free men, paying rents. The lord no longer dispensed justice in his court according to the custom of the Manor but, like everyone else, was subject to the King's Courts. Freedoms such as we know them were still a long way off, but ideas were stirring which during the next century would lead men, including men from Wanstrow, to take arms for an elected Parliament against an anointed King.

In Wanstrow, the Baynards built the Manor House but, for gentlemen, they were relatively poor. There is an inventory of the goods in the Manor House in 1687; no mention of silver or paintings or carpets or any but the most rudimentary furniture, the whole of insignificant value. Be that as it may, one of the Baynards bequeathed five pounds to the poor of the parish in 1694 and several members of the family were buried in the south transept of the Church. They mortgaged the estate frequently in the 18th Century and sold it in 1752 to the Reverend Andrew Bethune of Rowfant near East Grinstead, Sussex.

Although the Bethunes were lords of the Manor from 1752 to 1831 they only came to Wanstrow occasionally and the Manor House during their time was let to a family called Yeoman. The Yeomans were not connected with the Yeomans of Merehead Quarry but were one of the old Wanstrow families: in the first year of the parish register in 1570 the baptism of Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph Yeoman, is recorded and the name, together with other Wanstrow names like Allen, Cox, Elliott, Gibbons, Hyman, King, Millard, Mogg, Phelps, Vincent and Willmot, crops up in many subsequent years.

John Yeoman's diary of visits he made to London in the 1770's has been published, but his only reference to his home life was when he went to church in Berkhamstead. Here, he tells us:

"the Parson was the worst that ever I heard but Upton Noble.
The clerk was shocking bad indeed, they sing the same tunes as
we do but very bad."

More interesting from the parochial point of view is the diary of his daughter Mary covering the year 1800, which presents the picture of a busy life, hard work in the house and brew house punctuated by a good deal of social tea drinking with now and then a drop of something stronger. She says:

"May 29 End of Rook Harvest tonight. They was all tipsey very so indeed and indeed."

Much of the fun of Mary's diary comes from her father's tendency to stay out late:

"Sep 15 They all went to Pilton Feast came home not till morning early I may say."

and his unwillingness to tell her where he was going:

"May 18 Father went somewhere. I know not where not me, no, no."

In 1891, when he was 53 years old, William married "Lina" Long then aged 24. Sometime before 1897 they went to live at Manor Cottage, close by, which had been converted into a shooting lodge from four different cottages. Around the turn of the century the old Manor House was divided into two, and in 1906 William Hurle Clarke died.

Lina, who appears to have been a woman of much character and wit, married secondly Philip Warburton. Lina's nephew, Charles Clarke, says:

"Their marriage was not happy on the whole, although they had flashes of serenity. My aunt is said to have ruled the village with a rod of iron. She used to say that the invention of the bicycle had increased the illegitimate birthrate, because it enabled young men from distant villages to have their way and return home without answering for the consequences."

Of Philip, when older, he says:

"He was still an excellent judge of a horse and also

considered himself a good judge of the girls, slapping them affectionately on the bottom with shouts of 'good filly, what!'"

In 1928 the Wanstrow Inn, Chancellor's Farm, Turner's Farm and Kennel Cottage were sold. Philip died in 1942 and Lina in 1949. On her death the Clarkes sold most of the remaining cottages on the estate to the tenants and the land went soon after.

THE CHAPELS

Around the 1800's it was common for dissenters to meet for worship in their houses if no suitable chapel was available and, for example, in May 1827 a Dissenters' Licence had been granted to a Mrs Mary Ann White of Wanstrow permitting her to use her house for worship.

Wanstrow's Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1835 and it is more than likely that Mary Ann White was amongst the first worshippers that year. The chapel was finally demolished in the late 1960's and, of course, Wesley Close now owes its name to it.

Evidence of another chapel near Weston Town Farm also exists. Across the road to the North of the farmhouse is a field shown as "Chapel Field" on the old maps. What is now an old outbuilding is thought to have been used as a chapel at some time in its past.

The building of the Primitive Methodist Chapel was started in 1876 and the Somerset and Wilts Journal of November 25th of that year records:

"On Tuesday afternoon last, the memorial stones of a New Primitive Methodist Chapel were laid in this village. For some time past the members have held their services in an inconvenient and inadequate room, but at last the way has been opened for the erection of a commodious building to be

dedicated

to the worship of God. The site, which is valued at about £10, is the gift of Mr. W. Walwin. The building will be 27 feet long by 19 feet wide and there will be accommodation for about 100 persons. The plans have been prepared by Messrs. Ashman and Son, of Leigh on Mendip, who are also the builders. The builders' contract was £235."

BUILDINGS

There are several buildings of note within the parish and these are listed below in order along the various streets radiating from the main village crossroads. Certain buildings are "listed" by Mendip District Council and these are marked with an asterisk, "*". Buildings of less than 100 years old have not been included and, for identification purposes, the current names have been used.

In several cases, older buildings stood on the site of present ones and were either taken down and rebuilt, often reusing old materials, or else were substantially altered and extended. (The current concern with conservation was not always respected by our forebears in earlier centuries!) In most cases roofs have been replaced using modern materials, although some originally had been thatched. Old stone walls have been covered with rendering and windows and doors have been replaced, not always in a compatible style! These modernisations all make dating difficult and the authors offer apologies for any omissions or errors in the list.

Church Street.

Church Close (Brambles): 19thC pair of cottages.

Dame King's Orchard: Built 1855 as village school. The original children's privies remain in the garden but are now used as garden sheds.

Stable to Manor Farm: 18thC.

*Church of St. Mary.

*Three Chest tombs in Churchyard: 1750.

Church House/Park Farm: Largely demolished. Some 18thC farm buildings remain.

*Manor House and Manor Farm House: 17thC with modifications 1725 and further 19thC alterations.

Manor Cottage: Late 18thC with 19thC alterations.

*1 & 2 Church Street: Late 18thC.

3 & 4 Church Street: 19thC. No.4 was shop and post office.

Outbuilding at rear is dated 1808 and initialled.

Frog Lane

Arden Cottage: Early 19thC. Stable at side dated 1878.

*Lingmarsh: 1750.

Barn and Stables: 18thC. Belonged to Manor Cottage. Stone features

Station Road

*Turner's Farm House: Circa 1750. Altered 1810, original access from Frog Lane.

Orchard Close: Circa 1800. Was 2 cottages, combined and restored 20thC.

Sunnyside Nos. 1 & 2: Late 18thC. Was five cottages in a close called "The Barracks".

King William IV: Also contained the butcher's shop. Extended in mid 19thC.

The Post Office: Originally part of Wanstrow Inn.

Frome Road

House opposite Village Hall: Early 19thC. Heavily restored, was a pair of cottages. Adjoining barn used by Corn Merchant and later as an Egg Packing Station.

Chancellor's Farm: Part 18thC with 19thC rebuild.

Greenfields: Rebuilt in 20thC using materials from cottages adjacent to Park Farm.

Blindman's Cottage: 1822, recently extended and restored.

Cole's Farm: 1740(part). Originally a small cottage and extensively developed and modernised in recent years.



*The Rectory: 18thC with 19thC extension.

High Street

Mayfield and attached terrace. 19thC with later additions. The blacksmith worked from Mayfield at one time.

*White Cottage: Early 19thC with later alterations. Was part of Wanstrow Inn.

*Fernwell Cottage: Circa 1650. Originally 2 cottages. Extended and restored in 20thC.

St. Hilary & Avalon: Late 19thC. Believed at one time to have been one house. 20thC St. Hilary used as Post Office with a telephone kiosk in front garden.

Rock House & adjoining cottages: Partly late 18thC.

Bullocks Farm: 1812. Original barn was later used as shop, now included in 20thC rebuild.

Woodbine Cottage: Early 19thC. Possibly with earlier parts. Used as shop first half 20thC.

Lilac Cottage: Early 19thC. Possibly with earlier parts.

Street Farm: 18thC. Now largely derelict.

Bradley House: Late 19thC.

Pottery Cottages & Springdale: 1865.

Oday & Sutcliffe: Late 19thC.

Primitive Methodist Chapel: Dated 1877.

Eggcup Cottage and attached cottage: Possibly late 18thC.

Bridge House: Late 18thC. Subsequently much extended and altered.

Riverside: Early 19thC. Originally 2 cottages. Reconstructed 20thC.

*Pear Tree Cottage: Circa 1650. Recently renovated.

Coombe Cottage: Early 19thC. Currently under renovation and extension.

Mead Lane *Mead House: Circa 1750 with 20thC additions.

Brook House: Was a group of 17thC cottages, one demolished and others converted into one in 20thC. Used as Post Office in mid 20thC.

Kennel Cottage: 18thC but on site of earlier cottage. The kennels still exist and housed hunting dogs for the Manor.

Bridge Hill

Nos. 1 & 2: One early 19thC cottage. Other later. Both subsequently restored.

Studley Lane (This was the main road to Bruton before the turnpike)

Sturton Farm: Probably 18thC but parts may be older. Reputed to have been used by a noted cheese maker in 19thC.

Studley Farm: Part late 17thC with later additions and rebuilding.

Witham Lane (This lane used to lead to Witham Friary)

Hunters Lodge Farm: Originally 2 cottages. Probably 17thC. Converted in 1839.

FARMING

Early farming in Wanstrow, in the days when transport of people and produce was slow and expensive, meant that there would have been a far wider range of crops and livestock than we now see in the parish.

In 1687 the Inventory of Thomas Baynard's possessions included 5 hay ricks, 60 bushels of oats, 40 bushels of barley, 8 bushels of wheat and "the wheat reek and reek stadle", 36 beasts, 1 heifer, 20 calves, 9 oxen, 1 plough mare and "a hundred little piggs".

In 1722 Thomas Baynard mortgaged his estates and raised £2000 on a 1000 year mortgage. The mortgage deeds listed many field names which gave a clue as to the use and character of the land at various times in the past. Thus we see names such as Bean Close, Orchards Close, Lime Kiln Close, Oxen Leaze Paddock, The Groves, Bean Hays, Mulberryes, Bramble Close Ragglans (Rag=large flat limestone frequently used for roofing slates), No Grass, Water Close and Dry Close. All of these names still appeared more than a hundred years later on the 1838 Tithe Map. By this time other names such as Fish Pond Paddock and Barley Close were also recorded, and the small field opposite the Wanstrow Inn was shown as Hop Yard (this is now the site of Cragnor).

In 1804 the Agricultural Returns were drawn up and the total Live and Dead stock of the parish were recorded as follows: 264 cattle, 50 sheep and goats, 72 pigs, 30 horses, 12 wagons and carts, 53 quarters of wheat, 25 of oats and 20 of barley, 307 loads of hay, 57 sacks of potatoes and 117 cwt of cheese.

Apart from all this many villagers would have kept a pig and grown vegetables for the family in their back gardens.

During the 18th and 19th Century much of the common land of Somerset was enclosed, enabling the new landowners to cultivate it for their own ends. Whilst the common man might get some land for himself, generally the land was divided up amongst local landowners on the basis of their financial ability to farm it. A fine example of "to them that have, shall more be given"! Wanstrow was no exception and in 1842 the Wanstrow Enclosure Award handed over Wanstrow Common to the local gentry.

Some years later, in 1895, the Bath and West of England Society conducted some agricultural experiments on Stall Ground to the west of Chancellor's Farm. The trials extended over several years to determine the effects of different methods of cultivating the ground and a detailed report on the state of the ground was prepared at the start of the programme. This tells us that the top soil was 4 inches deep, with fairly good drainage and that the field had been down to grass for at least 80 years. It had been mown the previous year when 15cwt of hay per acre had been cropped. In addition to this a detailed survey of the vegetation in the field had been made and 15 types of grass, 4 clovers and 23 other types of plant were identified. Modern chemicals have changed all this but it is interesting to see that in 1895 the Society's Consulting Botanist reported:

"The great abundance of weeds, notably of the Oxeye Daisy, Meadow Crowfoot, and Yellow Rattle, is a feature of special note."

Nowadays the land is regarded as being good, producing healthy grazing and arable crops. The land is rich due to modern intensive farming and is very productive when fed with manure and fertilizers, but cattle need to be kept off the land during the winter months. The topsoil has doubled over the last 100 years as a result of ploughing and manuring and is now approximately 9 inches deep.

In 1984 the Milk Quota was introduced but, as yet, this has had little effect on the local dairy farms. In many ways the biggest change over the last few years has been the introduction of silage as the main type of cattle feed instead of the traditional hay. With the first cut in mid-May and additional cuts at 6 week intervals through the summer, high quality feed can now be produced without the critical dependence on weather conditions. Milk is now collected from bulk tanks which were introduced during the 1960's; the old milk churns which used to be taken daily to the railway station and, later, to Wanstrow's Milk Factory having been phased out.

Intensive pig units have replaced the traditional pig sties and scientifically balanced feeds have taken over from pig swill. One such unit is located at Brickhouse Farm and there is also another unit, just across the old parish boundary in Long Lane, Cloford.

Modern farming may not be as picturesque as the romantics would have us believe but the hightech approach has increased yields and efficiency beyond the dreams of the farmers of the 19th century.

LIMEKILNS

Five limekilns are known to have existed in Wanstrow. Those near Leighton, Burts Hill and Studley Farm are still visible. The ones near Weston Town and Sturton Farm are no longer visible but were marked on maps last century. Deeds of 1722 record the field name "Limekiln Close", indicating the existence of kilns from at least that date.

In 1795, in "General View of the Agriculture of the County of Somerset", Billingsley said of kilns:

"Their form is that of a French bottle, the height seventeen feet, the length of the neck, in which the calcination is wholly effected, seven feet; its diameter four feet, and the diameter of the belly in the largest part twelve feet. They are built on the side of a hill, by which means the top is on a level with the adjacent rock".

The total cost of construction was £10, and Billingsley tells us:

"In such a kiln may be burnt four hundred and eighty bushels of lime per week and this will consume fifteen quarters or one hundred and twenty bushels of refuse coal". (Refuse coal being low grade coal)

Lime, of course, was used extensively on the land and Billingsley tells us:

"..... all agree that it is the most cheap and efficacious manure that the husbandman on these hills can have recourse to."

In addition to this, lime will have been used as the base for making mortar, plaster and whitewash, and would therefore have been essential in the construction of buildings throughout the parish.

THE WATER MILL

Just South of Chancellors Farm, the stream cuts across the fields and before it passes under the road the old Tithe Map shows two fields which give a clue to an earlier use of the stream. "Mill Garden" and "Mill Close" show the location of an old grist (i.e. corn) mill which was powered by water from the stream.

Until just a few years ago the stream had been dammed some way upstream and the resulting pool, known locally as "Fish Pond" would once have provided the head of water to drive the mill. Water would probably have been taken to the water wheel by a leat running alongside the course of the stream. Very little remains of the dam now as it was removed to improve drainage, but traces of the stone work and the sluice gate can still be found in the water.

In Elizabethan days most parishes had their own mills to grind corn. Usually built by the lord of the Manor, the mill would have ground all the corn grown locally. Though the general level of the water table was higher in those days, the water flow would not have been sufficient to drive the wheel all year round, but this would not have been a problem. The parish only needed flour for local consumption so demand would not have been great enough to keep the mill going full time.

Little else is known of the Wanstrow mill. The exact location has not been found and by 1838, when the Tithe map was produced, all that remained were the dam and the field names. Some documentary evidence exists in old records held at the Somerset Record Office. These were written in 1594 and refer to the "gryste mille". Other documents, held by the Clarke family, record the existence in 1747 of "the Mill tenement with the Mill and Mill House".

BRUTON TURNPIKE

At the beginning of the 19th Century the only roads which could be travelled in any kind of speed or comfort were the turnpikes which were maintained by turnpike trusts who charged tolls on those using the roads. At this time the only turnpike through the parish was the top road from Bruton which went past Mitchell's Elm Farm to Leighton and then on to Frome. This road had been turnpiked in 1795 and would have left Wanstrow isolated to all but the most determined traveller.

In 1810 the Bruton Trust built the road from Newhouse Farm to Cloford and the main road which we know today was opened from Bruton to Nunney Catch. At the same time the existing road from Wanstrow to Weston Town and Cranmore was also turnpiked. Not surprisingly this road carried very little traffic and it was disturnpiked in 1831.

A toll house was built in Wanstrow and stood on the cross roads in the grounds of what is now Arden Cottage. Wanstrow Gate was put up across the main road, and a second gate, Wanstrow Side Gate, was erected across Church Street. The rights to collect tolls at Wanstrow were sold to the highest bidder. The collector's standard of living was directly related to the efficiency with which he collected tolls; small wonder therefore that toll collectors were not the most popular of people to be found on a journey along the turnpikes!

Some of the records of the Bruton Trust can still be found at the Somerset Record Office at Taunton. From these records

we can see that a meeting was held at the end of January 1827 to

"..... consider the propriety of altering the situation of the Toll gate across the lane leading from Wanstrow into the Wanstrow Common, also of erecting a toll gate on some part of the turnpike road between the villages of Wanstrow and Cloford and of removing and discontinuing the present gate in Wanstrow Street".

What transpired at the meeting is not recorded but a third gate was subsequently built on Wanstrow Common, and was in use for a number of years. The census of 1871 shows us that the original toll house was run by Henry James and his wife Emma, and the tollgate on the common was run by Joseph Seviour's family. The two main gates at Wanstrow cross roads continued in use until the Trust was disbanded.

The turnpike continued until the railways came and provided a quicker and cheaper form of transport. For a few years the turnpikes struggled on but by 1876 the Trust was disbanded and on 24th April the Wanstrow toll house was sold for £40 to a local builder, Benjamin Giles, who owned Arden Cottage.

THE RAILWAY

The East Somerset Railway company was formed in September 1855 when Isambard Kingdom Brunel was appointed as engineer and instructed to carry out a survey for a line to join Frome to Wells. Two routes were considered: one through Stoke Lane and Doulting, the other, through Cranmore, being accepted on the grounds of cost.

The Railway opened in November 1858. At first it joined the Wilts Somerset and Weymouth line at Witham and, going through Wanstrow and Cranmore, carried on to Shepton Mallet.

Most of the land for building the railway had been purchased from the Church Commissioners. The records show us that the railway company took more land than they had paid for. When the Church Commissioners discovered this they,

understandably, drew to the attention of the railway's directors that they had "taken 31 perches of land more than purchased". This was settled in a gentlemanly manner, without the use of solicitors or lengthy argument. The railway checked, agreed and offered some other land in exchange. A final exchange of letters and the matter was put to rest.

Initially there was no station at Wanstrow, presumably the railway company thinking that there was insufficient business to be had from the village to justify the cost of building one. It was left to the villagers to raise their own funds and a year later, following a meeting at the Wanstrow Inn on 3rd December, sufficient subscriptions were collected from local landowners to erect a small platform and station building. Built for less than £60, Wanstrow station opened three weeks later on 1st January 1860 and was able to boast that it was the smallest station in England! The platform was only the length of two coaches and drivers had to stop the train so that the rear coaches were alongside the platform, the guard having checked at Cranmore or Witham that passengers bound for Wanstrow were seated at the rear of the train. At this stage the station was unstaffed and passengers wishing to catch a train were obliged to hail the train and subsequently buy their ticket further down the line.

Shortly after this the railway was extended and in March 1862 the line was opened through to Wells. Despite the extension the railway was not a great success and with receipts never reaching £1000 per annum no dividends were paid to shareholders. Traffic was light and in 1866 the timetable showed that, of the five trains to Wells each day, only two were scheduled to stop at Wanstrow.

The platform at Wanstrow was raised and lengthened sometime before 1874 when the E.S.R. sold out to G.W.R. and the whole of the track was converted from broad gauge to standard gauge. Still with no permanent staff, the station was under the supervision of the station master at Witham, who was required to visit it periodically to check its condition. During the winter months a platelayer would light the fire in the waiting room in the morning and the platform lamp in the evening.

Little changed at Wanstrow until 1909 when the station was again enlarged, a station master's office was built and a lamp room erected next to the waiting room. With such light traffic it is not surprising that it was the ambition of nearly every porter on the line to be the stationmaster at Wanstrow.

In 1927 the station was enlarged once more and this time a goods loop was added to deal with coal, animal feeds, cattle

and milk from the milk factory in the village. The station remained like this until September 1963 when Beeching's axe fell and the line was shut to passenger traffic. Goods traffic stopped the following January and the station was shut.

Nowadays the station is gone. The track carries stone from Foster Yeoman's to the home counties and, ironically, the smallest station in England is now passed each day by the heaviest trains in Europe. With as many as 17 trains a day, each hauling up to 4000 tons of stone the East Somerset Railway is now busier than ever, but little is left of the platform and station buildings. A few remnants of the original walls of the waiting room can be seen but the platform has been dismantled and a few bricks show the site of the old cattle pens. Each summer the bank on the approach road is covered by sweet peas, a remnant of days gone by when a station master would have proudly tended the station during quiet periods of the day.

THE WANSTROW POTTERIES

Pottery was produced in Wanstrow from the 16th Century, using clay which was dug locally leading to field names such as "Clay Pitts", "Clay Grounds" and "Clay Batch". The earliest reference to pottery is in the Parish Register of 1570 which records the burial of a potter, William Davis, in the churchyard.

In his diaries the Rev J. Skinner tells us of the coarse kinds of pitchers, flower pots and pipkins which were produced. In 1826 he passed through the village and visited the only pottery then at work, observing that:

"...within these few years there were eleven such potteries."

He goes on to add:

"What is singular, the Roman Road which runs near Green Ore Farm on Mendip is there styled the Potters' Road, from having been used by persons of this trade coming thither for the lead ore, which

was required for glazing the inside of their vessels."

Pottery manufacture was a lowly occupation and really was a cottage industry. Frequently the potter would dig his own clay, then throw it and fire it in his own kiln behind his home. Broken or substandard pots would be piled up in the back garden and many of Wanstrow's gardeners today can find large quantities of sherds scattered about their gardens.

In recent years large quantities of Wanstrow pottery have been excavated from various sites around Bristol. The indications are that Wanstrow potters sent their goods to Bristol during the period from 1500 to 1800, with the major period being from 1550 to 1750. Examples of the Wanstrow pottery can be seen at Bristol City Museum.

Today Pottery Cottages still exist and only a few years ago a pottery kiln was unearthed opposite Coombe Cottage when excavations were being made during building work.

THE BRICKWORKS

The Wanstrow Brickworks were in production for the best part of a century. The earliest reference to the brickworks was in 1828 when they were shown on the Bruton Turnpike Map. The works were located a short way from the village where the Oxford clay bed was deep enough to provide satisfactory quantities of clay. Most of the output will have been for use locally, and will have included tiles and field drainpipes as well as bricks. Probably most of the production of the brickworks would have been tiles and drainpipes because surprisingly few brick buildings can be found in the village. Some buildings were, however, made from the local bricks and, for example, the records for the Methodist Chapel show that when it was built in 1876 £10 8s 8d was paid for bricks and tiles from the brickworks.

Competition from the Bridgwater manufacturers, together with cheaper transport costs, combined to put Wanstrow

brickworks and many other smaller firms out of business. Even now many of the older claytiled roofs in the village are still covered with tiles bearing the mark of the Bridgwater factories. In 1902 bricks were still being manufactured by Walter Whittaker but no further record of the brickworks appears after this date.

The site of the brickworks was still in existence for many years, and it became a favourite playground for village children until the 1960's when it became a landfill site for the refuse of Frome.

BLACKSMITHS AND WHEELWRIGHTS

Like any village, Wanstrow had a blacksmith who shod horses, maintained wagons and carts and would repair agricultural machinery as necessary. In the 1900's Wanstrow had two blacksmiths. Edmund Pearce, known locally as "Blackie", worked from a smithy across the road from what is now the playing field. Blackie continued in business until around 1910. Fred Colwell came to Wanstrow as a blacksmith in 1903, and worked for the Bonds in a smithy at the crossroads.

In 1859 William Bond had described himself as a carpenter, but by 1906 William Bond's sons, William and Henry, were in business as carpenters, wheelwrights, blacksmiths and carriers, though they stuck to the carpentry side of the business and had their workshops in what is now called "Orchard Close"

A book still exists which records the account run by the Bonds for work carried out on behalf of Mr Warburton. In 1912 it cost 1s 6d to put 2 shoes on a horse, a milking stool cost 1s and 2lbs nails cost 6d. In 1913 9d was charged for soldering the Warburtons' refrigerator but evidently this was not the most reliable of equipment and the same refrigerator appears to have been soldered several times over the years. Of course this was not a fridge as we know today but was simply a milk cooler which used running water to lower the temperature of milk in the dairy. The Bonds were paid once a year and each December Mr Warburton would come and settle up, the transaction being ceremoniously signed for over a penny stamp.

The Bonds were employed on numerous occasions to carry out work for the Parish Council. In 1895 they made 36 pegs for marking out the newly acquired allotments, and they were also asked to put a new handrail across the bridge at Studley Bottom. Gates and bridges, noticeboards and fences; over the years the Bonds were called in many times whenever work was needed.

Around the First World War the Bonds gave up the carrying side of the business and it was taken over by Mrs. Eliza Willis who lived at Bodden's Cottage at the top of Burt's Hill. On Wednesdays and Saturdays Eliza would go down through the village taking orders for shopping for a small charge. She then drove her horse and wagonette to Frome, stabling the horse at the Unicorn, whilst she ran her errands.

In 1940 Fred Colwell, having worked for the Bonds since 1903, took over the business.

WATER SUPPLY

Until 1885 water for domestic use would have been taken from wells or pumps and the Ordnance Survey maps from that period show that at least thirty wells were in use. In 1885 however, Wanstrow was supplied with piped water from a spring at Dursley near Dungehill Wood. Initially four taps were provided for villagers, one at Coombe Cottage, one at Street Farm, and one opposite the Manor House. The fourth tap was at the village cross roads and had an elaborate fountain which survives in part to this day.

Over the years more and more households were connected to the water supply but wells were still in common use right up to the 1950's. The village taps remained in use for many years but were a constant source of complaint, particularly in winter when leaking water would overflow and create an icy hazard on cold nights. Finally in January 1967 it was agreed that the problem be resolved by removing the taps.

THE PUBS

The earliest recorded publican in Wanstrow was in 1609 when the Somerset Quarter Sessions granted a licence to Thomas Allyn following a petition which read

"..... we the inhabitants of the said place do find him to be a very meet and fit man as also the house where he now doth reside and have likewise used typlinge there for the space of three years being lawfully licensed thereunto".

The licence was granted in accordance with a statute allowing a Typler in every parish needful for the poor and travellers passing through the area. A typler, of course, was a tapster or tavern keeper, hence the word "tipple" meaning a drink.

Two hundred years later when the Turnpike was built, the plans for the road show "The Otter's Head" where the Post Office now stands. This later became the "Queen's Head" and by 1859 had changed its name once more to the "Wanstrow Inn". By the early part of this century the pub had come to be called the "King William", which it remained until the 1960's when it was sold and split to become a private house and the village Post Office.

By 1841 the village had a second pub, the "King's Head", which a few years later became the "King William" and then the "Railway Hotel" when the station was built. When the other pub finally closed its doors the old name of the "King William" was once more adopted.

There was nothing unusual in a small village the size of Wanstrow having two pubs. In the 19th century large quantities of alcohol were consumed. In 1876 beer consumption throughout the United Kingdom reached an all time high when 34.4 gallons per person were drunk. This calculation includes everyone, regardless of age or sex. The previous year all records for spirits were broken with 1.30 gallons being drunk for every man woman and child. With four times more alcohol being consumed than nowadays, little wonder that the temperance movement caught on.

The pub was an important social centre. With long working hours, no television and no cars, for the majority of people it provided the only relief from a hard daily routine. Nevertheless the pub was, of course, more rudimentary than we have now come to expect and food and entertainment would not normally be provided, though games of various sorts were commonly played. The landlord would frequently have another job and thus we see in the census of 1881 that Henry Clacee of the Railway Hotel was also a Cattle Dealer, whilst John Wilmot of the Wanstrow Inn also farmed 48 acres.

During this period publicans would frequently issue tokens. Typically these would be used by customers "putting a drink in" for friends. Rather than needing to remember who was owed a drink the landlord would hand over a token which would then be handed back by way of payment when the drink was needed. When a customer chose not to consume all that was due to him (probably an unusual event!) he could take his tokens with him and save them for another day. The Wanstrow pubs were no exception to this tradition and both pubs had their own tokens. The Wanstrow Inn issued a brass token. Little more than an inch in diameter, it was marked "Wanstrow Inn" on one side and "1d" within a decorative wreath on the reverse.

Savings clubs and Benefit funds were also run from the pub and the record book of one such club still exists. Dating from the start of the 19th Century this book shows us that in February 1805 the sick club lodged £2 2s 0d of funds with the landlord.

Payments made to the sick included £1 10s 0d to Edward Dunford for 5 weeks' benefit. Various other payments were also made to Edward but his illness clearly did not last long for in March that year the sum of £3 was collected to pay for his funeral expenses. The same book records that in 1799 the expenses of Wanstrow feast were £13 19s 9d. This included 59 gallons of beer

for £3 19s 6d, 4s 9d for tobacco, £3 12s 6d for beef, mutton and veal, 11s 3d for two hams, 4s 8d for 8 pecks of potatoes, and various amounts for bread, butter, cheese, mustard, pepper, salt and vinegar. In addition to this 5s was paid for preparing the feast, and £3 for music. Evidently a May Pole was also used during the festivities as 4d was paid to Mr Candy for a pole and 12s 4d "for ribband". Some years later the character of the feast seems to have changed for in 1826 there was less food consumed but the revellers managed to get through 167 gallons of beer and cider.

The Wanstrow feast continued for many years and as late as 1903 the school log book still records that a half day's holiday was given to the children in early May each year for the feast.

At the start of the 19th Century most pubs were privately owned and the beer and cider would have been brewed locally, but by the end of the century the breweries had started to expand and, increasingly, pubs began to come under the control of these breweries. In 1892 William Hurle Clarke, lord of the Manor, leased the Wanstrow Inn to the Frome United Breweries Company Ltd. At a yearly rent of £92 8s 0d, the lease included just over 38 acres of land from around the parish and also contained a clause to guarantee Mr Clarke the use of the facilities whenever he chose. The lease records that Mr Clarke

"..... shall have the right by himself or his friends of occupying the two bedrooms over the Clubroom or either of such bedrooms at the rate of one shilling per night in respect of each bedroom on giving twenty

four hours' notice."

WANSTROW NATIONAL SCHOOL

In 1855 a piece of land known as "Dame King's Orchard" was sold to the Rector and Churchwardens of Wanstrow for £40. The deeds for the property show that it was to be used for

".....a School for the education of children.....of the labouring, manufacturing and the other poorer classes of the Parish."

The school was built and it opened in June 1856. The original account book still exists and shows that the first items which were bought were a gross of pens for 8d, pen handles for another 8d and ink and inkstands costing 2s 4d. Slate pencils cost 1s and 2 dozen copy books were bought for 5s 4d. The teacher, Mrs Potts, was paid £35 a year. 15 cwt of coal to heat the school in its first winter cost a mere 13s 9d.

The running costs of the school were met by a combination of donations, a "school rate" imposed on local landowners and a penny a week which was collected from each child. In the first year a total of just over £42 was spent on running the school, which had an attendance of about 50 children.

The school remained in use until the 1960's when it was closed and remained unused for some years before being sold and converted for residential use.

VILLAGE HALL

In 1921 a committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Warburton, set about collecting money so that the parish could erect a building "for recreation and social purposes". The land was given to the village by the Warburtons and the villagers set about collecting money for a building. Evidently much arm twisting took place and by the time the collection was complete more than 120 people had donated enough money to buy "The Hut", as it was known. This was a wooden exArmy hut which stood for many years on staddle stones on the site of the present hall. In the 1971 the hut was demolished and the current prefabricated building was erected in its place.

The first Flower Show was held in the Hall on 10th August 1923 and today this tradition still continues. A Village Fete takes place each July, together with a Harvest Supper in the Autumn, a children's Christmas party and several other functions during the year.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

Wanstrow Parish Council was formed in December 1894 when the first meeting was held. Not surprisingly the lord of the Manor, W. H. Clarke, was voted in as chairman. Once the officers had been elected Mr Nathaniel Coombs was appointed Clerk at a salary of £8 per annum. The first task of the council was to provide allotments for parishioners and eventually part of Bean Close was rented from Mr F. Candy for the purpose. The allotments were rented out to twelve villagers. In 1898 two of the allotment holders, Henry James and Lot Giles, who obviously had a healthy disregard for meeting their bills, were taken to the Count Court to extract payment. The allotments continued in use until 1933 when the Parish Council finally wound them up. The Parish Council minutes record in detail a multitude of items showing the development of the village over the years. In 1925 the council was asked to provide street lighting but felt, at that time, that it was inappropriate. By 1935 parishioners were saying "What a great boon it would be if a couple of lights could be fixed", but to no avail. It was not until 1946 that the Parish Council carried a motion that they should have lights installed in the village, but when the costs were examined it was decided not to proceed. The matter was raised several times in the 1950's but met with little support. In the early 1960's a quote for £27 6s 3d was received for the installation of one light at the village cross roads. A Parish Meeting was held, and on January 9th 1962 the first light was installed. A subsequent meeting recorded that "the meeting felt the light was a great success". Years later the council would of course be pressing the District Council to get more lights installed as quickly as possible, but this story serves to illustrate how attitudes slowly change over the years; things that are regarded as essential now were, at one time, just not seen to be necessary.

When the war came various proposals were made to protect villagers in the event of air raids and fire. An increased water supply, the provision of fire tenders and air raid shelters were all proposed. In the event it appears that the main thing that was done was to provide fire ladders which were stored on the wall by the Village Institute. No sooner had these been put in place when complaints started to come in about parishioners borrowing the ladders for their own use and not returning them. Needless to say the proposal that the ladders should be locked up was rejected!

Usually Parish Council meetings have seen the attendance of the councillors and no more than one or two parishioners but in January 1975 an attendance of more than 120 people was recorded when the council called a Parish Meeting to "Consider the Somerset County Council's proposal to provide a Gypsy caravan site for 15 families at Wanstrow." This was not the first such meeting in the parish as an informal meeting had already been held at which more than 200 residents turned up and it is recorded that "at this meeting overwhelming support was in favour of objecting in the strongest possible terms, in fact at neither meeting did anyone speak in favour of it."

Over the years the Parish Council has considered many matters concerning the village: water supply and sewerage, council houses and planning permission, road repairs and signs, schools and youth clubs. All of these have had an impact on village life through the years, and the council minute books, from which these notes have been compiled, give an insight into local democracy at work.

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

The population of Wanstrow was at its peak in the 1850's when more than 470 people lived in the village in approximately 100 houses. Most of the villagers would have worked on the land in those days; those who did not would have been employed locally in a number of trades enabling the village to be largely self sufficient. The census of 1841 shows that there were coal carriers, carpenters, wheelwrights, cobblers, milliners, blacksmiths, several builders, masons, plasterers and tilers, grocers, tailors, publicans and a washing woman. There were even two residents, John and Frederick Warren, who claimed to be lawyers. In 1844 Mr T. Lloyd was recorded as being a Teacher of Instrumental Arithmetic, whatever that may be!

Towards the end of the 19th Century the village boasted a Church, two Chapels, two pubs, a railway station, Post Office, brick works, several shops and a school. The local policeman kept the peace and a Mr Antoni Banasconi could be called upon to mend your clocks and watches. No need to go to Frome in those days; everything was on the doorstep!

At some stage attempts must have been made at extracting coal as various field names such as "Coal", "Coal Pit Ground" and "Coal Pitt Close" are shown on various documents. Presumably these attempts proved fruitless as no record of coal mining exists beyond the names of the fields.

For many years around the Second World War there was an egg packing station opposite the Village Hall and a Milk Factory stood in what is now Wesley Close.

There have always been quarries in and around the parish and in 1881 3 men were shown in the census as "Quarrymen" and 3 more were recorded as "Masons". Today the Yeoman's quarry provides employment for many more, not just in the quarry, but in the offices and on road and rail.

In 1948 a limestone pulverising plant was built in Wanstrow by Limmer and Trinidad. The site was excavated to accommodate a rail link from the WanstrowShepton Mallet line with the aim of extending the track to Merehead Quarry which was then owned by another Limmer company, Western Trinidad. In the event the line never materialised but a mound of soil, left from the excavations can still be seen in the field alongside the factory. Subsequently the company became Permanite Asphalt producing mastic asphalt for use in the construction industry.

Since 1972 the company has been owned by Tarmac PLC.

Nowadays the population is around 400 with 140 houses. Only a handful of villagers work in the village, the majority commuting each day to work.

In writing these notes we have spoken to many villagers about their recollections of village life when they were children. They all have fond memories of the past.....The aroma of truckles of cheese in one shop, and boots and toys in the other.....playing in the fairyland that was the old brickworks.....pranks played on courting couples in the station waiting room... ..and horses and carts in the village High Street.

Fond memories! One wonders what today's children will recall in the future.

- 43** Romans came to Bath
- 49** Romans worked leadmines in Somerset
- 425** St Patrick built first Abbey church in Glastonbury
- 516** King Arthur obtained command of British Army
- 686** Taunton built
- 705** Monastery founded at Frome by Adhelm
- Manor of Shepton Mallet given to Glastonbury Abbey
- 849** King Alfred born
- 879** Alfred erected his standard on Stourton Tower Hill
- 899** King Alfred dies
- 926** Aethelston made Somerset "English" (Previously part of the Kingdom of Wessex)
- 974** Earthquake in Somerset
- 1001** Taunton burnt by Saxons
- 1005** Bruton Priory established
- 1066 Norman Conquest. Robert, Earl of Mortain, Brother of William I, granted much land in Somerset. William de Mohun came to England with William the Conqueror and awarded 68 Manors, 55 of which were in Somerset. Also appointed as Sherriff of Somerset

- 1069** Men of Somerset and Dorset unsuccessfully attacked Norman Castle at Montacute
- 1075** Bishops See moved from Wells to Bath
- 1083 Turstine, Norman Abbot of Glastonbury and owner of Wanstrow, in a controversy with his Monks, called some Norman soldiers to his aid. Several monks were killed and wounded and Turstine was banished from England.
- 1086 Domesday book completed. Wanstrow valued at £7. Population reported as 8 serfs, 9 villeins and 6 borders. Half of Wanstrow held by the Canons of Wells, the other half by the Abbot of Glastonbury
- 1088 Bishop of Wells became Bishop of Bath. Bath bought by John de Villula for 500 marks
- 1106** Robert appointed first Archdeacon of Taunton
- 1117** Heavy rain throughout the year. Nothing changes!
- 1120 New castle (the present one) built at Taunton by the Bishop of Winchester
- 1136** Building of Wells Cathedral started
- 1137** Bath destroyed by fire
- 1138** Cary Castle capitulated to King Steven
- 1141** William de Mohun created Earl of Dorset and Somerset
- 1142** William de Mohun reformed Bruton Priory
- 1153** Castle Cary besieged
- 1156** Beckington Abbey built
- 1174** Witham monastery founded?
- 1211** William Malet, Baron of Curry and Shepton Mallet, Sherriff of Somerset 1235 Charter granted for Shepton Mallet fair
- 1239** Wells Cathedral consecrated
- 1259** Nunney fair established
- 1295** M.P.'s returned for Wells (for the first time?)
- 1298** Perambulation of Mendip Forest
- 1302** Coal worked at Kilmersdon
- 1331** Edward III introduced cloth workers into Somerset
- 1348** Fair removed from Wells to Priddy on account of Black Death
- 1362** Great Gale
- 1363** Frost from September to April
- 1373** Nunney Castle built
- 1390** Charity founded at Nunney by Philip Delamere

1391 Chaucer appointed Joint Forester of North Petherton
1397 George Inn at Norton St Philip licensed as an Ale House
1470 Mining rights on Mendip defined
1477 Taunton streets paved for the first time
1519 Bruton school founded
1528 Wills at Wells registry commenced
1536 Shepton Mallet reverts to the Crown
1539 Witham Friary dissolved Bruton abbey surrendered
1542 Leland in Somerset
1549 Bruton School restored (having been suppressed at the Restoration)
1563 John Horner Sherriff of Somerset
1587 Shakespeare visits Bath for the first time
1588 Somerset vessels serve against the Spanish Armada
1592 Plague in Somerset
1610 H.M. Prison at Shepton Mallet built
1625 Nunney Manor sequestrated
1627 Shepton Mallet Grammer School founded
1638 Sexeys Hospital founded in Bruton
1641 Wanstrow assessed for £4 16 0 tax.
1642 Nunney Castle held by Royalists. Civil War commenced in Somerset 1645 Nunney Castle attacked. Oliver Cromwell in Somerset
1646 Plague prevalent in Somerset
1647 Great fire at Bruton
1652 Nunney Manor sold
1669 Somerset contributed £668 for the poor of London after the fire there
1683 Longest frost on record. Many deaths in Somerset
1685 Bloody Assize in Somerset. Duke of Monmouth beheaded on Tower Hill
1688 Skirmish at Bruton between Kings troops and those of Prince of Orange
1694 Anthony Horneck appointed Prebendary of Wells
1699 Edward Strode founded Almhouses at Shepton Mallet

1704 Bath Pump room built
1705 Beau Nash made Master of Ceremonies at Bath Pump Room
1708 Severe winter: the coldest known
1716 Great drought
1730 An old woman, suspected of witchcraft, killed by water ordeal at Frome
1739 John Wesley's first sermon in Somerset
1746 Riot at Shepton Mallet caused by a Methodist meeting
1752 John Harding, of Cranmore, Sherriff of Somerset
1757 Food riots at Frome
1762 First(?) Methodist meeting house in Somerset opened in Shepton Mallet
1763 Great Hall, Bruton Abbey, destroyed by fire
1770 Act to enclose part of Mendip passed
1776 Very heavy fall of snow
1778 Taunton streets paved
1779 The Round House, Castle Cary, built
1784 Air balloon sent up at Bath. The first in Somerset
1785 Bad weather: haymaking finished in November
1786 Bruton Abbey taken down. Act passed to allow Parish Church of Marston to be moved
1800 Holwell cavern opened up
1801 Wanstrow population 325
1810 Paving Act passed for Frome.
Thomas Horner of Mells, Sherriff of Somerset
Road via East Cranmore and Weston Town turnpiked

Turnpike built from Newhouse farm to Cloford Common

1811 Henry Thomas Ryall born at Frome. Famous engraver who was appointed historical engraver to the Queen
1823 Downside Abbey founded
1828 Wanstrow brickworks shown on Turnpike map. Pub recorded as "Otters Head" on Turnpike map. Two turnpike gates shown in Wanstrow
1831 East Cranmore to Weston Town road disturnpiked

1835 Wanstrow Wesleyan Chapel built
1841 "Queens Head" and "Kings Head" mentioned in Wanstrow
1843 "Weston Mercury" established. "Somerset County Herald", Taunton, established
1846 Bread riots in Somerset
1848 County Lunatic Assylum built at Wells
1851 "Wells Journal" established
Somerset population 443,916
Wanstrow population 471
"Queens Head" mentioned in Wanstrow
1852 Wookey Hole discovered
1854 "Shepton Mallet Journal" established
1855 "Somerset and Wilts Journal" established at Frome
1856 Wanstrow National School built
1858 East Somerset Railway from Witham Friary to Shepton Mallet opened
1859 "Frome Times" (now "Somerset Standard") established
1860 Wanstrow station opened on 1st January
1861 "Wanstrow Inn" mentioned
1864 Cranmore Tower built
1866 Primitive Chapel mentioned
1872 Primitive Methodist Chapel mentioned. "Railway Hotel" mentioned
1875 Church of St Mary restored
1877 "Bath Daily Chronicle" established.
Church restored for £1,500
Primitive Methodist Chapel built?
1880 Failure of West of England and South Wales Bank
1885 John Francis Fortescue Horner, Mells, Sherriff of Somerset
Wanstrow supplied with water from Dursley
1889 Somerset County Council formed
1897 Station master mentioned
1901 Wanstrow population 303

- 1902** Last mention of Wanstrow brickworks
- 1909 Cheddar Gorge aquired by National Trust. Wanstrow station enlarged with new platform buildings
- 1920** Merehead quarry started
- 1921** "Somerset Folk Press" founded
- 1927** Goods loop added to Wanstrow station
- 1933** Cloford amalgamated with Wanstrow
- 1960** Merehead aquired by Yeomans?
- 1963** Wanstrow station closed to passengers on 9th September

KILNS

- ST707417 Shown on Tithe map, nr. Weston Town
- ST701436 Visible nr. Leighton
- ST709406 Visible Burts Hill
- ST718414 Shown on 1886 map nr. Sturton Farm
- ST724412 Visible nr. Studley Farm

LORDS OF THE MANOR

- 1294** William de Isle (Collinson)
- 1298** John de Acton Elizabeth de Clyvedon (Collinson)
- 1316** John de Clyvedon Odo de Acton
- John de Berkeley of Arlingham (Collinson)
- 1329** Emmelina de Clyvedon
- Idonea de Beauchamp

Odo de Acton

James de Wylton

James Lovel (held knights fee of John de Moels) (Collinson)

1377 Edmund de Clyvedon held n of Manor of Thomas Peverel. He died leaving Edmund Hogshaw as heir. Estates were later divided between Thomas Lovell and John Bluet (who had married into the Hogshaw family) n of Manor of East Wanstrow allotted to Thomas Lovell who held it till 1401. (Collinson)

1419 Thomas Lovell (son of above Thomas Lovell) held part of Wanstrow. (Collinson)

1442 John Rogers held n of Manor at his death.

Bartholomew Kylbeck held n. (Collinson)

1486 John Buller held lands of Abbot of Muchelney. After Dissolution these lands went to Hugh Sexey. Other part of Wanstrow went to the Baynard Family and was later sold to Messrs Bethune and Spillowby. (Collinson)

1578 Wanstrow Rogers granted to Newdigate at Founteyne. (Collinson)

1624 The will of Thomas Hide mentions Sir Richard Rogers and Thomas Baynard

1635 Thomas Baynard

1641 Thomas Baynard

1704 John Baynard?

1725 Rachel Baynard?

1840 John Shore

1838 Charles Clarke?

1855 Charles Clarke

1861 Mrs C.S. Clarke

1889 William Hurle Clarke

1906 William Hurle Clarke

1910 Mrs Egerton Warburton

1939 Mrs Egerton Warburton

WANSTROW PUBS

1828 Otters Head Inn

1838 The Inn; George Oatley?

1841 Kings Head; James Parfitt (35)

Queens Head ;William Millard (40)

1851 King William ; James Parfitt (48)

Queens Head ; Simon Corp

1859 " " " "

Wanstrow Inn; " "

1861 Railway Hotel; Jane Parfitt (28)

Wanstrow Inn; " "

1866 " " George Giles

" " " "

1871 " " George Giles (40) " "; Fanny Chapple (30)

Adelaide Giles (40)

1872 " " George Giles

" " John Wilmot

1875 " " Henry Glacee

" " " "

1881 " " Henry Glacee (50)

" " ; John Wilmot (54)

1883 " " " "

" " " "

1889 " " "

" " " " "

1894 " "

William Glacee " " " "

1897 " "

	"	"	"	"	Lewis Baily
1902	"				
	"	Richard Yeoman	"	"	Thomas Wheeler
1906					
	"	"	"	"	"
1910					
	"	"	John Avery	"	" Elizabeth Wheeler
1914	"	"	"	"	"
	"	"			
1919	"	"	Thomas Viney	"	
	"	"			
1923	"	"	"	"	
	"	"	"	"	
1927	"	"	"	"	
	"	"	Walter Wheeler		
1931	"	"	Stephen Viney	"	" Edwin Brooks
1935	"	"			
	Robert Pitman	"	"	"	"
1939	"	"			
	William Biddescombe	"	"	"	"

RECTORS

(Second name is that of Curate)

William de Ralegh canon of Wanstrow (Wells documents)

1404 John Wryngton (Will)
1425 John Frank exchanged with Thomas Lane and became Prebendary of Wanstrow (S&D N&Q Vol22 P146)
1591 Justinian Lancaster, Prebendary of Wanstrow, excommunicated for nonattendance at Chapter meeting (Wells documents)
1618 James Mabb, Prebendary ordered to appear before Dean for failing to attend Chapter meeting (Wells documents)
1624 Thomas Hide (Will)
1642 The will of Thomas Prowse mentions James Mabb Prebend of Wanstrow 1791 Bethune (Collinson)
1813 Charles Bethune (Mary Yeomans diary; notes)
1818 Thomas Valentine Clerk (started 21/12/18)
1822 Thomas Valentine Clerk (left 31/12/22)(note from Simon Henage)
1859 C. Rabbit F Shum
1861 Cicero Rabbitts Charles Lloyd
1866 Cicero Rabbitts
1872 Cicero Rabbitts
William Spraggett
1875 Cicero Rabbitts Christopher Bousefield
1881 Cicero Rabbitts (census)
1883 Charles John Clarke
1885 Robert Dunn started
1889 Robert Dunn
1894 Robert Dunn
1897 Robert Dunn
1902 Robert Dunn
1903 Cyril John Vernon started
1906 Cyril John Vernon
1908 Augustus Chisholme Schofield started
1910 A. C. Schofield
1912 John Gerald Marshall
1914 John Gerald Marshall
1919 John Gerald Marshall

1920 Francis Henry Roberts
1923 Francis Henry Roberts
1923 Edward Peter Roland
1927 Edward Peter Roland
1931 Edward Peter Roland
1934 Wanstrow united with Cloford
1935 Edward Peter Roland
1939 Edward Peter Roland

WILLS

1192 Release Frome charity deeds. Johanni Leche
1374 Indenture Johm le Leche
1386 Indenture Frome charity deeds. Johi Leche
1404 Will. John Wryngton, Rector of Wanstrow
1427 Will. Thomas Bath
1504 Will. William Stanter of Wanstrow
1579 Will. Sir Maurice Berkeley of Bruton
1616 Will. John Godwin
1624 Will. Thomas Hide, Rector of Wanstrow
1635 Will. Robert Baynard of Lackham
1642 Will. Thomas Prowse of Cullompton, Devon
1682 Will. Thomas Baynard of Dorset
1693 Will. George Baynard of Dorset
1695 Will. Jane Bridges of Leigh on Mendip
1704 Will. John Baynard of Wanstrow
1706 Will. Joane Baynard of Dorset

1718 Will. Mary Baynard of Devon

1725 Will. Catherine Baynard of Dorset