



*TRUE BLUE FARM*

*LOWER LANE, KINSHAM, WORCS.*

*RESEARCHED BY JOYCE TOLE-MOIR*

**1500–1650**

During the Tudor and Stuart periods, individual houses, cottages and farm buildings were loosely scattered along roads and lanes with no particular uniformity of spacing between buildings.

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<sup>1</sup> Author of **BREDON ~ PEOPLE, TALES & PLACES**, Joyce hosts Family History Sessions at Tewkesbury Library.

Some buildings sat immediately on the road with gardens at their rear; others were set back with gardens extending to the front, sides and rear. There was no consistent building line, though most buildings tended to fall within 10 metres of the road.

### **1650–1850**

The population grew steadily during the 17th and 18th centuries, before undergoing a rapid expansion during the years following the agricultural revolution.

In 1801, the population of the parish (including Bredon's Hardwick, Kinsham, Westmancote, Mitton and Cutsdean) was recorded as 749. By 1851, this had increased to 1,163.



Jacobean Gateway Post – dated 1688, signed WT  
{possibly} William Thornbury {d} 1729 {stonemason}  
Leading to the main house



Kinsham Villagers

The earliest dates I can find relating to True Blue Farm are around 1688 when the date on the gateway post was discovered.

Some of the earliest inhabitants of this lovely hamlet are JOHN GEORGE and his wife ELIZABETH HAPCOTT in 1575 and their son, Thomas born in 1579.

The landscape we see today is largely a product of the agricultural revolution of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Under a series of parliamentary acts, known as **Enclosure**, the open fields of England were divided up into regular parcels and apportioned to the owners of scattered strips.

These new parcels were enclosed with ditches, hedges, fences and walls to form fields which could be farmed more efficiently. Bredon's Act of Inclosure was passed in 1811 and those gaining large, consolidated holdings were Rev. Richard Darke (lord of the manor), Rev. John Keysall (Rector of Bredon), the Earl of Coventry, and John Skipp. Many of today's farmland boundaries date from the Act. On the lower ground, fields were mainly enclosed by hedges and ditches, whereas on the stony hill ground, dry stone walls were the norm. New fields were often drained or otherwise improved, thereby greatly increasing productivity.



Farming families were Charles Parker, William Mumford, Higgins and Rickards

It is interesting to see how the land was split up between these men. There were also several allotments for the other people living in Kinsham.



Barns at True Blue Farm



In the late 19th century, there were numerous farms, smallholdings, market gardens.

## 1851 CENSUS



### Household Members – True Blue Farm 1851

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place
<u>Thomas</u>	<u>White</u>	Head	Married	Male	37	1814	Corn Dealer	Kemerton, Gloucestershire, England
Lucilla	White	Wife	Married	Female	37	1814 -		Kemerton, Gloucestershire, England
Mary	White	Daughter	-	Female	12	1839 -		Kemerton, Gloucestershire, England
Eliza	White	Daughter	-	Female	11	1840 -		Ashton under Hill, Gloucestershire, England
Ann	White	Daughter	-	Female	9	1842 -		Ashton under Hill, Gloucestershire, England
Jane R	White	Daughter	-	Female	7	1844 -		Ashton under Hill, Gloucestershire, England
Edward	Allies	Servant	Unmarried	Male	28	1823	Corn Dealers Agent	Worcestershire, England
Emma	Bridle	Servant	Unmarried	Female	22	1829	House Serv	Worcestershire, England
Felicia	Stephens	Niece	Unmarried	Female	17	1834	Dressmaker	Overbury, Worcestershire, England
John	Cook	Apprentice	Unmarried	Male	16	1835	Apprentice	Gloucestershire, England

## Cheltenham Stag Hounds

28<sup>th</sup> February, 1857

To meet at True Blue Farm, Kinsham – the home of Mr. Tom White.

## 1861 CENSUS



Farm House, Chapel Lane, Bredon, Tewkesbury,  
Worcestershire, England

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place
Thomas	White	Head	Married	Male	46	1815	Farmer & Corn Dealer	Kemerton, Gloucestershire, England
Lucilla	White	Wife	Married	Female	46	1815	-	Kemerton, Gloucestershire, England
Eliza	White	Daughter	Unmarried	Female	20	1841	-	Ashton, Gloucestershire, England
Annie	White	Daughter	Unmarried	Female	18	1843	-	Ashton, Gloucestershire, England
Jane Rosa	White	Daughter	Unmarried	Female	16	1845	-	Ashton, Worcestershire, England

## 1891 CENSUS

Oswald Belcher {b} 1853  
Married  
Martha Martin  
In December, 1878 Tewkesbury District

### Children:

Jessie {b} 1878  
Mabel {b} 1882  
Alice {b} 1886

Unfortunately, Martha died at the young age of 34 in 1890. Oswald Belcher died in 1924.

According to the 1891 Census, Oswald was living with his daughters at True Blue Farm, Kinsham. He was a “widower” and employed as a “Railway Ganger”. Living next door to Oswald was another member of the Belcher family and his father, Thomas Belcher also lived nearby.

### Oswald Belcher's Census Details

1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census  
True Blue Farm House, Kinsham, Bredon,  
Tewkesbury, Worcestershire, England

<b>First name(s)</b>	Oswald
<b>Last name</b>	Belcher
<b>Relationship</b>	Head
<b>Marital status</b>	Widower
<b>Sex</b>	Male
<b>Age</b>	38
<b>Birth year</b>	1853
<b>Birth town</b>	Kinsham
<b>Birth county</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Birth county as transcribed</b>	WORCESTERSHIRE
<b>Birth place</b>	England
<b>Occupation</b>	Railway Ganger or Labourer
<b>House name</b>	True Blue Farm House
<b>Street</b>	Kinsham
<b>Town</b>	Kinsham



## 1891

Quite a few men in Kinsham were working on the Railway at the time of the 1891 Census. Most of the men were Ag. Lab, a couple were shepherds. There were no notable occupations. These pages present the results of research by Brian Harringman into the men and women who served at Ashchurch Junction station during the period of 1860 to early 20th century.



Ashchurch Junction

Ashchurch was (is again) a station on the Bristol to Birmingham main railway line. It is located some 2 miles east of Tewkesbury on the Tewkesbury to Teddington road, currently the A46. The area is now heavily built up, almost an extension of Tewkesbury, with housing and industry. In the nineteenth century it was a village in an agricultural community. A mile to the north was the village of Northway, to the east the community of Aston Cross at a crossroads on the main road, and north of Aston Cross the agricultural village of Aston-upon-Carrant. To the south of the main road and south of Ashchurch itself was Fiddington, with its hamlets of Natton and Homedowns. To the east of Fiddington was Pamington and to the west Walton Cardiff, both agricultural

communities. All these places feature in the story of the railway though Ashchurch.

The railway line, which was operated by the Midland Railway, passed north to south, skirting Northway, and passing through Ashchurch and Fiddington. Ashchurch station opened in June 1840 and a branch westwards to Tewkesbury the following month. In the 1860s the Tewkesbury branch was extended to Malvern via Upton on Severn, and a new branch line was opened north-eastwards to Evesham, then on to Redditch. The latter would later be extended to Birmingham. Ashchurch thus became an important junction. A line linking the two branches and passing north of Ashchurch station was later constructed. South of the station and to the east of the main line, was a very active goods yard including a goods shed. To the northwest of the station was located a railway provender stores, a large building served by a number of sidings. Beyond the provender store were a stationmaster's house and cottages for railway workers.

Beyond the period covered here Midland Railway would become part of LMS (London, Midland Scottish Railway) after World War 1, and then part of British Railways after World War 2. Ashchurch station closed to passengers in 1961, as part of the Beeching cuts. It reopened to a limited service in 1997 and continues to operate.

The available records show quite a modest number of railway employees at Ashchurch in the early 1860s. An increase during the later years of the decade, particularly of signalmen, coincides with the upgrading of Ashchurch from a simple station to a junction. Additional goods personnel towards the end of the century must be a reflection of increased goods handling. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century some 87 railway employees were identified living in Ashchurch.

One of the features of Ashchurch, and presumably elsewhere, is the very large number of names that come out of all this. For the non-supervisory grades there is a constant large turnover. Porters, clerks (booking, goods, telegraph) were normally young men, not local, for which Ashchurch was just one of a series of short postings around the network. They stayed for a year or two, often lodging with more permanent staff, and then moved on. Most are not seen in local documents. Supervisory grades (stationmaster, foremen) and also signalmen, tended to be older men, married, often with families, and these were more permanent. These also tended to be men from elsewhere. There were also a number of outdoor workers — platelayers, labourers, track inspectors — railway employees but probably not station staff as such. They are seen in local documents and censuses but not in the available railway lists. These tended to

be local people, presumably locally recruited, many of whom were born in and who remained in the Ashchurch area throughout.

## 1901 CENSUS

The image shows a 1901 census form for the Ashchurch area. The form is divided into several sections, including 'Administrative County', 'Civil Parish', 'Ecclesiastical Parish', 'County Borough, Municipal Borough, or Urban District', 'Ward of Municipal Borough or of Urban District', 'Rural District', 'Parliamentary Borough', and 'Town or Village or Hamlet'. The main table contains the following columns: 'ROAD STREET No. and No. of HOUSES OF HOUSES', 'NOTES', 'Name and Surname of each Person', 'RELATION to Head of Family', 'Sex', 'Age last Birthday', 'PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION', 'Usual Place of Birth', '11. Usual Place of Birth', 'WOMEN'S SICES', and 'Final and Death'. The entries are handwritten and include names like Edward Farrand, Isabella, Lillie, Louis, Isabel, Eunice, and Ethel L.

### Edward Farrand – Farmer

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place
Edward	Farrand	Head	Married	Male	56	1845	Farmer	Bradford, Yorkshire, England
Isabella	Farrand	Wife	Married	Female	57	1844	-	Manchester, Lancashire, England
Lillie	Farrand	Daughter	Single	Female	29	1872	-	Davyhulme, Lancashire, England
Louis	Farrand	Son	Single	Male	20	1881	Farmer's Son	Urmston, Lancashire, England
Isabel	Farrand	Daughter	Single	Female	17	1884	-	Urmston, Lancashire, England
Eunice	Penlington	Servant	Single	Female	18	1883	Housemaid (Domestic)	Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, England
Ethel L	Hutchings	Servant	Single	Female	15	1886	General Servant (Domestic)	Redditch, Worcestershire, England

## 1911 CENSUS

EDWARD FARRAND – owner in 1911



Edward Farrand died in 1914 and his son, Lewis took over True Blue Farm, but due to a failing potato crop declared Bankruptcy on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1927.

Lewis Ferrand had married Lillian Williams and he even borrowed some money from her to try to keep the farm in business.

True Blue Farm became difficult to sell because of the “blight” in the land caused by the failing potato crop.

In 1928 the farm was value at £10.085 and the package was Home Farm, True Blue Farm and Lower Farm.



TRUE BLUE FARM was then sold to

ROBERT ETON COBB HARRISON & DOROTHY HARRISON IN 1931

Mrs Harrison was fined 5/- for driving without a licence and for causing obstruction whilst in her car!

### Harrison household - 1939

True Blue Farm, Kinsham, Bredon, Worcestershire, Pershore R.D., England

First name(s)	Last name(s)	DOB	Sex	Occupation	Marital status	Schedule	Schedule Sub Number
Robert E C	Harrison	29 May 1892	Male	Farmer	Married	207	1
Dorothy	Harrison	22 Jun 1898	Female	Unpaid Domestic Duties	Married	207	2
David S O	Harrison	18 Jul 1933	Male	At School	Single	207	3
John W C	Pulsford	14 Sep 1919	Male	Assistant Farmer	Single	207	4

WALTER WILLIAM SWAIT

1908 – 1994

Married

WINIFRED ETHEL BOOTH

In Bromley, 1935

Walter was a “Motor Car and Cycle Director”

1939 – 1945 WW2



Walter William Swait was a Sapper during the war and is mentioned in the London Gazette of 1944 {301429}

Walter Swait was the next purchaser of True Blue Farm {history dictated that this farm be always painted blue}. There are windows blocked up as a result of the window tax and the building also came under “corn laws” of the 1600s.

Walter Swait bought the nearby barn, which housed pigs, as the farmer there was not as well off! There was a thatched cottage nearby – now gone.



The Swait name is still on display at True Blue Farm!

Walter and Winifred had several children. Trevor, Anthony and Colin were born in Bromley where Walter and Winifred lived before moving to Kinsham.

#### **Births Mar 1939**

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Swait Trevor Booth [Bromley](#) 2a [1026](#)

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#### **Births Dec 1942**

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Swait Anthony J Booth [Bromley](#) 2a [1398](#)

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#### **Births Mar 1945**

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Swait Colin D Booth [Bromley](#) 2a [1321](#)

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#### **Births Sep 1947**

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Swait Malcolm R Booth [Cheltenham](#) 7b [536](#)

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Walter and Winifred moved to Kinsham in the winter of 1947. This was a particularly severe winter with snow and blizzards. The children attended Bredon Hancock's school in Bredon before attending Ullenwood School, Dean Close. Walter ran his "car and vintage bike" business from an office at Grange Farm, Bredon. At one time there were about 20 vintage motorbikes under the "play area" and at one time a 1926 Rolls Royce car.

### GRANGE FARM



In the 1920's, Grange Farm was purchased by Charles Edwin Chatham for £7,500. At that time, the farm was 194 acres, 3 roods and 88 perches! This was a lot of money – in fact two little cottages in Church Street sold for £250.00 at the same time!





Grange Farm and Orchard are on the corner of Oak Lane and the main road. This picture shows the front of the farm as it is today.



The Orchard as it is today.

The "Furlong", one of the fields where cricket was played, has the haunting sounds of a ball on willow. Ladies in long dresses and hats and gentlemen in their "whites" with jaunty little caps enjoyed many an hour fielding and batting on this field.



This story was given to me by a lovely lady who was an evacuee during the War and lived in Oak Lane. See "Sunnyside" for more stories.

"At the Farm, just across the Furlong, lived Farmer Grey, his nice wife and their children, a girl, named Jill, and her brother, Brian. We became friends and I often went across the field to take hens eggs to Mrs Grey, and to play with the children. We did a very naughty thing once: I had heard that in the olden days people had made fuel from mud and cow dung, which they threw against a wall, and allowed to dry. Somehow, I must have persuaded Jill and her brother that this would be a good idea.

So we found some sand and water, to make mud – I cannot remember if we used cow dung or not, but we threw the cakes we made against a wall, on one of the farm buildings: it had just been white washed, so we were *personae non gratae* for some time! I must have redeemed myself a little bit, because I saw a drake floundering in a water butt, and realised that he could not get out or dry his feathers, and would drown. So, I hurried into the farm kitchen and called Mrs Grey, and together we got him out, and into a towel, and dried him by her Aga".

Grange Farm was a working Dairy Farm and the containers, full of milk were put onto a stand outside the farm by the roadside. The milk trucks would line up to collect the milk or delivery. Cows would be brought to the farm from the fields when they were ready to calf, and there are still pens for "calving" which are used today.





“Calving Pens”



Mr. Derek Amphlett has been working at “Grange Farm” for over 50 years now. He is a most humble and knowledgeable gentleman. As we wandered around the farm, he brought back to life the sights and sounds of the farmyard. I could feel myself being transported back to a time when ducks, and chickens were scurrying round and cows were being brought in to have their calves in safe pens. The lovely old barn was used for storage. Notice the state of the dovecote! There was the Dairy and the pig sties.

Derek has seen many changes over the years. He remembers when Mrs. Gray, the Farmer’s wife, grew flowers in her beautiful garden, which she gave to the Hospital. When Mr. Brian Gray became Dr. Brian Gray and was known as Dr. Gray from that moment onwards. Derek remembers when

there were about 7 men all helping to look after the farm. Now the farmyard is much quieter with modern machinery and vehicles making life much easier.



The diesel pump used to fill the tractors with fuel is still in use today. The noise of a working farm and its smells! What memories!



Grange Farm ~ the garden side.

This part of the farmhouse looked out on the garden and the “main” door can be seen. There was a driveway in front of Grange Farm which led round to the front door. There are lovely Cotswold

stone outbuildings at the side of the garden leading to an area which has the view of the new houses off St. Giles Road.

In earlier days, Farmer Grey had a passion for stamp collecting which had begun when he was a very small boy. When he had saved enough money from buying and selling stamps, he sent some of the farm boys to sales to buy motor bikes which could be renovated. These bikes were then sold across the country. It was a very lucrative business.

{From "Bredon, People Tales and Places by Joyce Tole-Moir}

Unfortunately, Winifred Ethel Swait died in Cheltenham General Hospital on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1958. She had been involved in a car crash.

She left £4,135 to her husband Walter.

She was just 46 years old.

**SWAIT Winifred Ethel of True Blue Farm Kinsham near  
Tewkesbury Gloucestershire (wife of Walter William  
Swait) died 19 December 1958 at The General Hospital  
Cheltenham Administration (with Will) London 9 March to  
the said Walter William Swait company director.  
Effects £4135 is. 7d.**

Following the death of Winifred, Walter Swait remarried. His new wife was Hazel M. Hattrell and they were married in 1960 in Cheltenham.

Colin Swait was about 17 years old when he left the farm. He now lives in Surrey and in recent correspondence with him he says .....

The Swait children attended the Baptist Chapel in Kinsham and like that because they were given free sweets. They also attended Bredon Church where the Minister at the time, Rev. Kirk Duncan drove around in a Rolls Royce and it was suggested he was rather above his station!

In a recent email from Colin Swait, he says

*“Good to speak and interesting to hear the new Owner’s are Mr & Mrs Potter. I hope they enjoy living there as much as we did as children”*

*My Brother Trevor rang this morning {from Australia} to say prior to 1947 the house was empty and used for storage of potatoes. It was owned by Dr Lloyd but nothing more is known known of him. Trevor was 11 years old when he daubed the "Swait sports, no spitting swearing " etc in the barn!*

*Next to the Chapel was the Milkman who bottled milk and delivered. They were named Grainger. Hope this helps”.*



The Swait name is still in the barn!

Walter William Swait died in 1994.



New roof on Barn – 2020

*How lovely to have these photos which are a 'link' to the past. It looks like the car on the bottom right is parked on cobble stones outside the barn. These would be the cobbles we partially uncovered.*

*It is so nice of Colin to have taken the trouble to forward the pics and of course share any information you think he would be interested in.*

*Lynne Potter {November 2020}*