

The Tenants of Blundens

Introduction.

Before tracing the tenants of Blundens it is necessary to explain how the early occupants were identified. The starting point was obviously Blunden and his lease gave the previous tenant as Thomas Heath. To find who the tenants were before Thomas Heath was a process of meticulous search and elimination. Eventually, after many false trails, Henry Warner provided the answers. Briefly- greater details and references are given in the relevant chapters later the inventory attached to his will gave the layout of his house as similar to "Blundens" as it would have been at that time (*a very unusual plan - a four bay house with the kitchen in the end bay*); he had a gate into Gid Lane and he had Bury Land (*the significance of this is explained later*) and most important of all his mark 2 can be seen on the beam over the fireplace in what is now the lounge. Henry Warner's lease gave the name of the property as "Forders" formerly in the occupation of Henry Lucas. Two Forders lived in Froyle at the right time, John and Thomas. John had the Mill and Thomas took over the lease of a tenement and land on the death of Alice Mixenbroke, which had passed to her on the death of her husband John.

The Early Tenants - John and Alice Mixenbroke and Thomas Forder

The earliest tenant of "Blundens" that can be identified is John Mixenbroke (*variously spelt as Mixenbrok, Mycelbroke, Mycelbrok, Misselbroke*). The Court Rolls, apart from a few odd ones do not exist before 1546, but there is a reference in an early Court Proceedings to a grant by Copy of Court Roll dated 18th July 31 Henry VIII (1539) to John Myxenbroke junior and William Myxenbroke of two separate messuages and land.

"Fine 13s. 4d. John Myxenbroke junior and William Myxenbroke hold by copy of court roll dated 18th July Henry VIII (1539) one messuage with garden adjoining and half a virgate of land and one piece of land with appurtenances for an annual rent of 13s. 6d.

BL/MS
27949

Fine 6s. 8d. Also they hold by copy of court roll of the same date one toft with curtilage..... and six and a half acres of land called ACREMANLAND for an annual rent of 6s. (8d.), one messuage with garden adjoining one piece of land and eight acres of land called BORDLAND 7s. 8d., six acres of land in one croft there called COKESCROFT one hedge for an annual rent of 6s. 8d. (with customary dues?) for all and singular the premises to wit common tallage 11d., ten sheep. ~d., one cock (worth 2d., deleted) one hen worth 4d., two boon services with one man for a day to plough half an acre of land and sow the same one bushel of grain (passage is unclear, but includes "To the lord of Alton 21d.")"

References to the Mixenbroke family can be traced as far back as 1505. John Mixenbroke died in 1570. The inventory of his goods includes a painted cloth and a painted ceiling - the grand total is £24 7s. (*his will and the inventory are quoted in full later*). The copyhold passed to his widow Alice and on her death in 1581, to Thomas Forder (*Furder*).

Death of widow
Heriot = nothing
Lands remain
in the hands
of the lords

And that Alice Mixenbrok widow who held of the lords for term of her widowhood one messuage and one virgate of land with appurtenances and one cottage and one "corsellett" of land with appurtenances since the last court had died, by whose death nothing falls due to the lords by way of a heriot since by the custom of the said manor a deceased widow is not heriotable And furthermore they say that all and singular the said premises after the death of the said Alice remain in the hands of the lords.

Taking of land

Whereupon at this court came Thomas Furder and in open court took from the lords one tenement and one virgate and a half of land with all and singular the appurtenances late in the tenure of Alice Mixenbroke widow deceased excepting however and reserving always to the use of the lords one cottage with garden adjoining and three half acres of land lying separately in the three common fields of which one half acre lies in the field called COCKES FILD one half acre lies in the field called BURROW FILD and the other half acre lies in the field called LITTLEBURYE FILD and common, pasture for one cow four sheep and two pigs To have and to hold all and singular the said premises late in the tenure of the

Rent 31s.6d.
Fine £20
Admitted tenant

aforesaid Alice Mixenbroke, excepting as before excepted and reserved to the lords, to the aforesaid Thomas Furder for term of his life according to the custom of the manor for an annual rent of 31s. 6d. and all other burdens works customs and services formerly due and of right accustomed And for having this estate and admission the said Thomas Furder gives to the lords for a fine £20 and does fealty to the lords and is admitted tenant. And it is agreed that the lords will discharge (exonerate) the said Thomas Furder annually of one boonworker in autumn.”

Thomas Forder appears in The Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1586 for Goods £3. He died in 1605, leaving his widow Alice his executrix. He is described as yeoman and appears to have been far more affluent than John Mixenbroke. The total of the Inventory is £91 18s. 8d., but he owed £56 16s. 4d. to various persons including £5 to William Jephson (*the Lord of the Manor*), 11 shillings to the parson, £40 to Helen Knight (*presumably the parson's wife*) and amounts varying from 4s. to 40s. to neighbours, local well-to-do people and what appears to be tradesmen. His “wearing apparell” was appraised at 26s. 8d. compared with John Mixenbroke’s “apparell and the money in his purse 10s”. (*His will and inventory are quoted in full later*).

The Tenure of Henry Lucas. Gentleman.

*Wm Berry
Pedigrees of
Sussex Families
1830
Page 35
Visitation of
Sussex*

Henry Lucas was descended from the Lucas family of Suffolk and bore for Arms - Argent, two lions rampant, combatant gules. He married Elizabeth, the sister of Sir John Jephson, and in the Visitation of Sussex taken in 1634, is described as Living in Froyle near Sir John Jephson. They had five children William, Henry, Frances, Elizabeth and Mary. Elizabeth and Mary both married into the armigerous Family of Bettsworth and Elizabeth, the older daughter, who married Thomas, had by 1634 born him 12 children, 4 sons and 8 daughters. One of the sons became Governor of Portsmouth.

*HRO 18M67/6
HRO 49M68/25*

Henry Lucas lived first at Banburies, being granted a 99 year lease by Sir John Jephson in 1609. The lease was renewed by Sir John Jephson in 1620 and included the clause

“Saving that for and during so long time of the said tenure as they the said Henry Lucas the elder and Elizabeth his wife or either of them do or shall inhabit or dwell in any other house within the said parish of Froyle it shall and may be lawful to and for them the said Henry Lucas and Elizabeth and either of them to have and to take in and upon the premises competent and sufficient fire boote to be expended at such other house where they or either of them for the time being do or shall so inhabit or dwell in the said parish”.

It would seem therefore that Henry Lucas was contemplating the move to “Forders”, i.e. “Blundens”, some time between 1609 and 1620 and that it was during this period that the extension to “Blundens” was built (*see under Architecture*).

HRO 50M69/8

It follows that the reference to “all that house and garden with the appurtenances where Henry Lucas then dwelt in an Indenture of 10th June 1650 referring to an Indenture of 1st May 1637” applies to “Blundens”. The same phrase appears in an Inquisition Post Mortem on Sir John Jephson taken at Odiham in 1639.

*PCC Admins.
Vol. VI 1631-48*

Henry Lucas died in 1639, administration being granted to his daughter Elizabeth Bettsworth (*the wife of Thomas Bettsworth*).

The Tenure of the Warners

HRO
18118M67/17

On the 28th April 1642 Henry Warner, Yeoman, was granted a lease by William Jephson of
“all that copyhold tenement in Froyle aforesaid called Forders with all housings buildings orchard gardens gaterooms land pastures meadows feedings late in the tenure and occupation of Henry Lucas gent and now in the possession of the said Henry Warner containing by estimation three score acres.”

The timber was reserved to William Jephson (*the Lord of the Manor*). *“All fishing fowling hawking hunting and all other Royalties”* were also excepted. The lease was granted for 99 years to Henry Warner and Elizabeth, his wife, at a yearly rent of £20. Henry Warner was responsible, at his own cost, for the usual repairs and had to appear at every Court Baron as a *“Customary Tenant”*. He also had to grind his grist *“of what sort soever”* at the Lord’s mill. On his death, or that of his wife, whichever was first £3 was to be paid in lieu of a heriot.

MRO
18M67/56

The lease contained the usual clause about inclosing the Great Common and Henry Warner’s liability to pay his share. Henry sealed the document with his mark *“2”*. This mark is still visible on the beam over the fireplace in the lounge. On 16th April 1659 the new Lord of the Manor, the Hon. John Fiennes, endorsed the lease granted by his predecessor, William Jephson, but now Henry Warner in consideration of the grant and conveyance to him of the great and parsonage tithes and for *“divers other good causes and considerations”* discharged John Fiennes for *“all the estate right title interest claim and demand whatsoever”* which Henry had in any of the *“Commons waste grounds and commonable places”* except *“all such common of pasture”* as he had in any of the Commonfields or in the highway leading from Alton towards Farnham. This document, too, is sealed with Henry’s Mark (2)! Henry Warner’s name and often his mark appear a number of times in the Court Rolls and Court Proceedings 1641-1662

In 1641 the following entry appears: -

Henry Warner

British Library
Add Rolls
17554/17581
Add MS 27949

	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>
<i>for one bushell of Wheat</i>	4	00
<i>for ploughing half an acre</i>	2	00
<i>for two Reaping days</i>	1	00
<i>for certain reaping and binding</i>	3	00
<i>for cutting and raking one acre of barley</i>	1	00
<i>for two washers and shearers</i>	1	08

Customary Haymakers

<i>Henry Warner</i>		3
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(The Victoria County History explains that:

“...in 1641 the customs of the manor, on various points including grazing, are set out, as is the rent payable by various tenants in lieu of services formerly performed”).

In another entry Henry Warner, among others, is fined for *“suffering their hedges to lie open between Froyle Common and Holybourne”*.

At a later Court the following entry occurs *“We present that”* a list of names follows including Henry Warner *“have contrary to the order and by-law made at the last Court kept geese in the fields Common and lanes belonging to this Manor since the first day of August the day prefixed in and by the said order vizt Henry Warner 6 geesewhereby they have lost the payn of 6 pence apiece for every goose so be them kept”*.

At the same Court *“We order and payne Henry Warner a copiehold tenant of this Manor upon payne of tenn shillings to make sufficient the gate entering into Gidd Lane between this and the first day of June next.”* (*The lane alongside the south boundary of “Blundens House” is still called Gidd Lane*).

A little later (21st May 1649)

“It is now ordered by the homage that Henry Warner a copyhold tenant of this Manor shall make sufficient the gate entering into Gidd Lane between this and the first day of June next upon paying of Ten shillings to be forfeited by him to the Lord of the Manor for his default in not doing of the same”.

In the Rental for 21st May 1649 Henry Warner appears under Copyholders for £10 and in the Rental “Half yearly ending Feast Michaelmas 1649” , he appears as: -

Henry Warner £10.00.00

All customs 15.02

In 1661 Henry Warner was appointed (with others) to see that

“sufficient marks and bounds (be) set between one mans land and another in the Commonfields”.

The Hearth Tax of 1665 lists Henry Warner for 3 Hearths.

PRO E179 176
565 37C
MRO M362

In an undated Survey (*almost certainly 1658/9*) Henry Warner appears for Berryland and Barleyfield (*enclosed arable*) 30 ½ acres £15. 5.

Unfortunately the quit rents of copyholders are not listed separately but appear under Quit rents freeholders and copyholders £72. 8. 6½.

In a later Survey, again undated (*but between 1672 and 1689*), no acreages are given and Henry Warner’s payment has been reduced to £8. The total for Quit rent for freeholders and tenants for life annually is indecipherable (*parts of the document are missing and torn*) but starts with the figure 7 so is likely to be much the same as the earlier £72.

The reference to Buryland taken in conjunction with the Court Roll entry referred to above is of interest as, right up, to Adam Blunden’s time 6? acres of Berry Lands were part of his farm. The only people who can be traced as having had land in Bury (*or Berry*) lands were Henry Warner and his brother Thomas, and later William Bennett (*who took over Thomas Warner’s farm*) and William Canner who took over from William Bennett. The name Berrylands disappears when Sir Thomas Miller enlarged his Park and this is probably part of what in the 1845 Tithe Schedules was called First Arable Park and Further Arable Park. The following entry in the Court Proceedings in a Conveyance of land to William Newman bears out this argument “2 hilves lying in the said field (Comb field) called Little Burylands abutting upon Great Burylands on the North and the mead of Henry Warner on the South”.

Henry Warner died in April 1679 (*buried 23rd April*). In his Will dated 20th August 1678 he appointed his wife Elizabeth and his son William “whole” executors. He left £12 to his son Thomas and “five shillings a piece” to each of Thomas’ sons John, Thomas and Henry. To his daughters Em and Elizabeth he left £40 each. He states that on 20 April 1678 he had lent his son John the sum of £14.10 and “of this money” he left £5 each to John’s two children Elizabeth and John. John (*Henry’s son*) or his wife is “to answer to the executors” for the balance of £4.10.

The inventory attached to the Will lists the items in the Inner Chamber, Middle Chamber and Outer Chamber as well as in the Hall, Malt Loft, Malt House, Milkhouse and Kitchen. This description proves that the extension to the house was done during Henry Lucas’ or Henry Warner’s time -probably Henry Lucas’ (*see Henry Lucas’ Tenure*) and bears out the dating given by Elizabeth Lewis and others (*see Architecture*). Two barns and a stable are mentioned, four horses, four cows and four heifers, forty sheep and ten lambs, five hogs. The total value of Henry’s goods and chattels was £110.10. (*The Inventory is given in full later*). Henry’s son William took on the tenure of the house. He did not marry and died in March 1706.

William left legacies to his brother Thomas (£50) and to his children (£20-£50 each) and grandchildren, (20/- each) to his "cousins" (nephew and niece) and their children, £5 to his maidservant and 20/- to each of his two man servants. In the Inventory items are listed as in the Inner Chamber, outer Chamber, Servants Chamber as well as in the Hall, Kitchen, Drink house, Bakehouse and Cheeseloft. A Barn at Mame (*Malms Farm, Binsted*) is mentioned as well as "the Barn at Froyle". His livestock comprised 5 horses, 3 cows and 2 heifers, 40 dry sheep, 7 couple of ewes and lambs and 5 dry sheep, 4 pigs. (*The total including £200 "due to the deceased on bond" is £380. 3/-*).

The Tenure of Thomas Heath

Andover
Museum

Thomas Heath was the great grandson of Ralph Heath (1586-1650) according to traditionary evidence, was Gamekeeper to Lord Bolton of Hackwood Park and later Ranger of Alice Holt Forest. Ralph's son Edmond (*Thomas's grandfather*) was "a convert of George Fox and *Martyr to the cause*". The Heaths remained Quakers and many are buried in the Quaker Burial Ground in Alton (*see Footnote on Quakers at end of this section*). Thomas's father (*Thomas*) is described as a Farmer of Froyle (1640-1718). He married Joan Tribe of Froyle (*at the Alton Meeting on 26th Sept. 1673*) and their eldest son Thomas (*born 7.5.1674*) came to "Blundens" after William Warner's death.

HRO

It is interesting to note that in 1698 the Will of Elinor HO Warner, the widow of a cousin of William Warner was witnessed by Thomas Heath senior (*his mark was O*) and Thomas Heath the younger (*whose mark was H*). The initials T.H. are carved on the beam over the fireplace in what is now the lounge of Blundens House.

HRO

Thomas Heath was married at the Alton Meeting on 27th Nov. 1702 to Hannah the daughter of John and Mary Gager of Froyle. Hannah died aged 90 on 23rd March 1765. Thomas and Hannah had 7 children- the eldest, Thomas, was born 29th March 1703.

Tom Knight

There is a reference (*in Tom Knights Notes*) to a Quaker Protest of 1715 "*Tith milk was demanded of Thomas Heath Senior for now he had milked his cow nine days*" and in the same year "Tith milk was demanded of Thomas Heath Junior for now he had milked his cow twenty days."

HRO
18M 67/103

In 1729 Thomas Heath is quoted as having a messuage (i.e. "Blundens") tenement or dwelling house, an orchard and gateroom ~ and also a barn and stable of William Draper's with the gateroom belonging together with 60 acres at a yearly rent of £55.12.6 (*from the Marriage Settlement of William Draper and Anne Hornby*).

HRO
49M 68/93
49M 68/169

By 1742 Thomas had a messuage, tenement or dwelling house, an orchard, a gateroom lately erected by William Draper together with 60 acres and a further orchard, 2 barns and 2 gaterooms and 110 acres late John Stevens, at a yearly rent of £128.3.10 and also ?acre late Bristow's lifehold at a rent of 2/6, (*from the Marriage Settlement of William Draper and his second wife Lucy Walter and Adam Blundens lease*). In the same Settlement Thomas Heath Junior is shown as having 2 farms of 106 acres, (*part of which had been held by Thomas Warner - a relation of the Warners mentioned in the preceding chapter*).

Thomas Heath died 15th Jan. 1760 and was buried at Alton in the Quaker Burial Ground. He was described as yeoman.

Andover
Town Trail

His son Thomas prospered - his farm being known as The Great Farm. He married Jane, daughter of George and Dinah Hawkins. Their eldest son, Charles, founded a Bank in Andover. The Heath family also owned a Brewery and carried on the two businesses from about 1770 to 1850. A sun dial bearing the initials W.H.H. (*William Hawkins Heath*) son of Charles and great grandson of Thomas is still to be seen on the front of a building in London Street, Andover and portraits of Thomas Heath (*another great grandson*) and his wife hang in the Andover Museum. He was Mayor of Andover in 1837.

Footnote :

For the sake of clarity the Thomas Heath of "Blundens" has been underlined throughout.

Footnote :

Quakers. George Fox (*born c.1625*) founded the Quakers in about 1650. His disciples affected plainness in their dress, were frugal in their manner of living and very reserved in their conversations. Oliver Cromwell tried to suppress the movement but, in spite of this, the sect prospered. Many inhabitants of Froyle were among the early Quakers - their headquarters being at Alton. The Quaker Meeting House was built in Church Street in 1672 and is the second oldest Meeting House in the world still used by Quakers. until the Act of Toleration of 1689, the Quakers were much persecuted.

The Tenure of Adam Blunden

On 30th May 1760 William Draper granted Adam Blunden husbandman* a nine year lease from the previous feast day of St Michael the Archangel (1759) of

“all that messuage tenement or dwelling house formerly in the possession of Thomas Heath and now of him the said Adam Blunden with the orchard gate room and appurtenances belonging and also that one other orchard formerly in the tenure of John Stevens and then of the aforesaid Thomas Heath and now of him the said Adam Blunden and also two barns two gaterooms together with one hundred and ten acres”... “and also that barn and stable of the said William Draper lately erected with the gateroom thereunto belonging together with sixty acres late in tenure of Thomas Heath but now of him the said Adam Blunden”.

(From the lease of 11th June 1759 of land to William Nicholas it is clear that Adam Blunden was already in possession at that date.)

“The Royalty and privilege of hawking hunting fishing and fowling on the said leased premises”

were reserved to William Draper and his friends and servants.

The rent was:-	formerly John Stevens	£ 5.10. -
	Two barns gaterooms and 110 acres formerly John Stevens	£75. 4. -
	Barn and stables newly erected and all other land	£45. 8. 6

There are clauses stating that a rent of 5/- an acre was to be paid for every acre of Commonfield enclosed during the term of the lease and an increase of £3 an acre for meadow ground “ploughed, sowed, digged up or any way converted into tillage.”

One clause states that

“Adam Blunden his exors admins and assigns shall and will from time to time during the said term house ingrange and lay all the corn grain hay and pulse that shall grow or be upon the said leased premises or any of them in the barns hereby leased or in or upon some other part of the same premises save only such hay as shall yearly grow on the three little meadows parcel of the hereby leased premises above mentioned which said hay and none other it is agreed that the said Adam Blunden his exors and admins shall or may dispose of at pleasure....”

If William Draper his heirs or assigns

“shall at any time during the said term be minded to take into his hands any part of the hereby leased premises to plant the same with hops and of such intention do give notice to the said Adam Blunden his exors or admins that then he or they shall permit and suffer the said William Draper his heirs and assigns peaceably and quietly so to do he and they abating out of yearly rents above reserved unto the said Adam Blunden his exors admins so much money yearly as such lands so to be planted with hops shall be esteemed worth by the year by two men to be chosen differently between the said parties to judge of and determine the value thereof.”

Adam Blunden and his family and servants “shall when and as often as they frequent” the Parish Church “in time of Divine Service constantly set or place themselves in the seat or seats there within the former owners or occupiers of the premises aforesaid have been used and accustomed to sit and place, themselves in right of the said lands and premises.”

** In a bond between Adam Blunden and William Draper for the sum of £100 dated 11th January 1764 Adam is described as yeoman.*

A schedule attached to the lease refers to:-

- In the kitchen Two corner seats
- In the cellar One Shelf
- In the Middle Loft Two Gammon

The lease contains the usual repair and maintenance clause but there is an additional agreement in which it is stated that “*the premises within mentioned are not in repair*” and William Draper is to put them in repair and keep them so during the period of the lease “*not withstanding the covenant within mentioned to the contrary*”.

Special reference is made in the lease allowing *“gratis unto the said Adam Blunden rodds for making the hedge of the abovementioned orchard late of John Stevens when need requires.”*

In 1766 after the death of William Draper (1765) Lucy Draper in her answer to Mary Nicholas' Bill of Complaint in the Court of Chancery (*quoted elsewhere*) states that *“the said Estates (the whole of the Manor) are in a ruinous condition for want of proper management.”*

In the same Bill Adam Blunden's farm and lands are listed at a yearly rent of £126. 2. 6.

In 1771 the timber on Mr. Blunden's Farm is listed in a survey of woodlands and coppices belonging to William Draper's heirs and in 1775 three of William Draper's coheireses, Lucy Rebecca Draper, Charlotte Draper and Emma Draper (*daughters by Lucy, his second wife*) sold to Sir Thomas Miller their three shares in the major part of the Manor including

“all that messuage or tenement and farm hop kiln barns enclosed and other lands or grounds containing together by estimation 151 acres 2 roods more or less now in the tenure or occupation of Adam Blundell at the yearly rent of £126. 2. 6.”

Mary Nicholas the widow of William Nicholas, William Draper's daughter by Ann his first wife, still retained her fourth part in 1778 as Blunden's lands are listed in an Indenture dated 16th January 1778 among land belonging to Mary Nicholas.

Adam Blunden was an Overseer for the poor in 1761, 1765 and “for his farm” in 1773. Until 1775 his name appears among the signatures and in 1778 there is an entry “Farmer Blunden the money that he overpaid in the Poor Rate 18/2.” There is no reference to him after this date.

Earlier references are:-

- 1768 *Farmer Blunden an account for the boy £3.19. 9*
- 1768 *Farmer Blunden for expenses to Basonstoke with a Heath 1/6*
- 1768 *Farmer Blunden for the boys £3.14.10*
- 1769 *Farmer Blunden for keeping the boy £2. 2. 8*
- 1770 *Farmer Blunden for Stephen Catholick £1. 1.10*
- 1772 *Adam Blundens Bill £4. 1. 3*
- 1772 *Adam Blunden for keeping Trimmings boy 2w 4/-*
- 1774 *Farmer Blunden as he was out of pocket in his half year £2. 3.11½*
- 1774 *Judds owed a months which Farmer Blunden omitted 6/-*
- 1774 *For Blunden a bill and keeping moses 2 weeks 11/1½*
- 1775 *Farmer Blunden for 25 Bavons 1/7½ (Bavons were “brushwood or faggots”)*

There are numerous entries for William Blunden and his family who must have been a great deal less affluent than Adam. William was paid for “stone picking” and “a days work on the highway” and received money “when ill” and “in distress.” He and his family and Robert Blunden (*whose relationship (if any) to Adam and/or William cannot be traced*) and his family all suffered from the smallpox epidemic which affected much of Froyle between 1772 and 1781.

The only entry in the Parish Register concerning Adam Blunden is the baptism of Sarah the daughter of Adam and Mary Blunden in 1756. He was a witness at the marriage in 1758 of Mary daughter of a William Blunden and Mary his wife (*nee Heath*).

No relationship between Adam and William can be traced and Mary Heath comes from another family of Heaths (*her father and brother were both Thomas but were not the Quaker Heaths already mentioned under “The Tenure of Thomas Heath.”*)

It is probable that Adam was the son (*bapt. 24th June 1722*) of Adam Blunden and Catherine Stables who were married at Clapham - the following entries in the Wandsworth Parish Registers are of particular interest:

“Marriages in ye Parish Church of Clapham, by Samuel Edgley, Clerk, Vicar of Wandsworth, with ye Permission of Mr. Savil and Dr. Brady, successively Rectors of ye said Parish, as followeth:

- 1688 *July 28th Adam, son of John Blundell, bapt.*
- 1721 *April 1st Adam Blundell and Catherine Stables*

1722 June 24th Adam, son of Adam and Katherine Blundell, bapt.
 1723 Sept 22nd John, son of Adam and Katherine Blundell, bapt.
 1725 Sept 25th Samuel, son of Adam Blundell, bapt.
 1725 Oct 31st Rebecca, daughter of Adam Blundell, bapt:
 1727 Aug 20th Samuel, son of Adam Blundell, bur.
 1728 Jan 26th Adam Blundell, bur.
 1730-1 Feb 5th George Blackbourne, widower, and Catherine Blundan, widow, Banns.”

Genealogica et Heraldica Vol. 4 Third series p.281

There are at least two strong connections between Clapham, Wandsworth and Froyle. Sir Dennis Gauden built his fine mansion at Clapham and bought the manor of Froyle for his son Samuel. Sir Dennis died in 1688 and was buried at Clapham, July 1st. His house and estate were purchased afterwards by Mr. Hewer, a commissioner of the Navy and co-executor with Benjamin Gauden (*another son of Sir Dennis*), of Sir Dennis' Will. William Hewer bequeathed both house and estate to his relation, a son of the Rev. Samuel Edgley, then Vicar of Wandsworth, who took the name of Hewer and was the last of that family settled there. His widow occupied the estate for some time after his death, and in 1792 it was divided between several proprietors. The rental was nearly as large as that of the manorial estate. The fact that Hewer Edgley Hewer was possessed of a house and lands in Froyle lends strong support that the Adam Blunden born at Wandsworth in 1722 is the one who took the House and lands formerly in the tenure of Thomas Heath of Froyle.

In spite of extensive search no will or record of Adam's death can be found. His initials A B are carved on the same beam as Thomas Heath's.

The Tenure of the Simpsons

James Simpson (*senior*) was born 16th March 1774 and died 6th January 1865 aged 90. He married Sarah Smith on 11th June 1805, she died 23rd November 1840 aged 64.

James and Sarah both benefited under Ann Nicholas' will dated 16th July 1814 (*d. 31st July 1826*) - she left 20 guineas to "James Simpson senior my bailiff" and to "Sarah Simpson the wife of said James Simpson 10 guineas and my mahogany bureau." This bureau is now in the possession of Wilfred Andrew who acquired it when the contents of Blundens House were auctioned in the 1920s.

James appears in the will dated 30th July 1823 of Mary Annabella Moody (*the sister of Ann Nicholas*) who died 2nd December 1829 as "Simpson my present Bailiff £50."

In 1810 James was an overseer of the poor and overseer, guardian and visitor for various years up to 1835. His name appears almost continuously until 1835 but not in 1836, the last year for which there are accounts.

James and Sarah had six children:-

Mary b. 1807 d. 1902

John b. 1807- was butcher and the "cricketer" whose letter we have a copy of (*see later*) and whose descendants continued to live in Jointure House (*which was demolished and Chestnuts built close to the site in the early 1900s*) until Lewis (*Louis*) died in 1926 and the Andrew's took over the tenancy.

Ann Simpson (*a daughter of John*) was schoolmistress at Froyle c1890.

James b. 10th Dec. 1808 d. 15th Aug. 1887

Rebecca b. 1812 d. 1863

Hannah b. 1820 was organist in 1866

Harriet b. 1831 d. 1869

Between 1833 and 1854 James Simpson was Way Warden.

The Tithe Schedule of 1847 with the accompanying map shows James Simpson as the occupier of Blundens House and farm - Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Moody as the owner. James is also the occupier of land and a cottage owned by William Hawkins Heath. James Simpson was followed by his second son James.

Directories show a James Simpson at Blundens for various years from 1847 to 1880; described as Farmer, hop planter and shopkeeper in 1847, Farmer shopkeeper in 1857 and 1867, Farmer, hop grower, Assessor and Collector of Taxes in 1875 and 1878 (*shopkeeper not mentioned in 1878*), and Farmer, hop grower and shopkeeper in 1880.

Both James and John appear as Voluntary Subscribers in the Churchwarden's accounts between 1860 and 1883. One of them (*it is not clear which*) was Churchwarden from 1860-68.

In the Sale Particulars of Park House Estate dated 1870, prepared by Daniel Smith Son and Oakley of Pall Mall for Sir Charles John Hubert Miller Bart., Blundens Farm is described as "Let to Mr. James Simpson, an old Tenant, who is under notice to Quit at 29th September 1885 at the reduced rent of £250 p.a.". The house is described as

"Old Fashioned Farm House, Brick, Half Timber, Tile and Thatch, containing 4 Bedrooms, Parlour, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Larder, Scullery, Cellar and Grocer's Shop; Wood House Board and Thatch, and Garden."

He was growing over 10 acres of Hops, 3 acres Wood. The Farm is described as "*a compact occupation of Excellent Arable, Pasture, Hop and Wood Land containing 205a or 34p.*" - "*The quantity named in the Lease is 201a lr 13p.*"

The sale of Park Estate would seem not to have taken place as, when Sir Hubert's father died in 1868, he was only 9 years of age, and his mother with her three children left Froyle. The estate was managed by Sir Hubert's uncle Henry John Miller until Sir Hubert's return in 1892. The Place was let to various tenants during this period, and on his return Sir Hubert lived in The Shrubbery.

At this time Blundens Farm was taken over by John Simpson (*James' nephew*), in addition to the Butcher's business, and then by Louis and then, in 1928, the Andrew's.

In 1886 James Simpson is described as Yeoman. He was buried 18th August 1887.

The Simpson's Letters

Alresford August 13th 1821

Dear Sir

According to an old promise I have sent the long expected books for John, with one for James, tho' something Ancient in John's books, he may find some very useful Problems in some of them.

I hope you and Mrs Simpson arrived safe and well to Froyle on the Monday I left you at Alresford my Mother was very sorry that you could not give a call as she would much liked to have seen both you and Mrs S. and to have stopped the night with us but I told her that your business was very urgent and that you must be at home. And no doubt our good old Lady Mrs Simpson (if I may so term her old) was as anxious for your return as you was both to get home to see the poor little dears. I should have received much more pleasure in the Island if I could have prevailed on you to have accompanied me, but be as it is the little time I was there, I spent very pleasantly not depriving myself of the sight of any object I either passed or went thro'. I will just give you an extract of my little journal thro' the Island.

You are well acquainted of our calling on you the morning we started for Southampton being disappointed going by the Coach (Friday 3rd) and so was obliged to walk from Winton to Southton and on our road we passed several Gentleman's seats some very fine buildings, but what attracted our object most was the Military Asylum, where I suppose four or five hundred boys where training up for Soldiers for the Army and most of them poor orphans, having a very fine band and playing at the time of parading. We got into Southton about 1 O'Clock and there dined, started about 16 minutes before 3 from Southton Quay for Cowes in the Steam Packet "being a distance of 15 miles" arrived at Cowes 25 minutes before 5 being just One hour 3/4 and 6 minutes going over, on our passage over saw Netley Abbey, Fawley, Ramble and Calshot Castle &c, as soon as we arrived at Cowes we took the Coach for Newport being only the distance of 5 miles stopped at Newport the Night, saw a great deal of the Town, saw the Barracks at Newport. These Barracks are worth anyone's notice as I should think they must cover with the parading ground as much as 14 acres or more of land, it's not a lofty building at all, but so extensive, nor neither are they so fine a building as Winton (B). We went & seen a place a little from the Town of Newport called Carisbrook Castle where "King Charles I" made his escape there is a well belonging to this Castle 300 feet deep or more, I cannot exactly recollect the depth as I forgot to post it in my Journal, it is drawn by an ass treading the interior of a large Wheel, saw several little Villages a little from the Town, Village, Carisbrook and ...ount joy upon the top of this Mount you may see nearly the whole of the Island.

(Adieu).

Next Morning Saturday 4th we started about 1/2 before 5 O'Clock for Under Cliffs the back part of the Island, "those Cliffs or Clifts are craggy, mountainous or broken rocks next the Sea and. I suppose some of them nearly 150 feet high and most of them perpendicular which causes it to be a very grand sight as you walk under them, but must be very gloomy in the Wintertime", passed thro' Shyde Village, Rookley and Applicombe* Park the property of ...Pellam Esqr where is a great number of deer, and a most beautiful Mansion house with a Working fountain in front of it, and it is said they have some elegant Paintings in the house, such as cannot be produced for Credit to the Artist in the County if anyone wishes to see the house over and the paintings they must secure a ticket from one of the Attorney's at Newport, passed thro' Godshill & Steephill where we took breakfast, on our way back to Newport under the Cliffs we passed thro' another Village do not know the name, next St.Lawrence where we went and seen the Church which is as I told you before supposed to be the smallest Church in England excepting Family Churches, it is 11 feet wide and 25 feet long, has a small painting at the East end of our Saviours Resurrection from the dead, will hold one hundred people sitting, and standing, passed & several other Villages, got into Newport about 5 O'Clock in the Evening ranged about the Town the whole of the high Evening saw a Prisoner put into the Gaol &c:&c:.

(Adieu)

At .. past 6 O'Clock next morning (Sunday 5th) started from Newport to Cowes and there took breakfast. Walked about Cowes & I saw Cowes Castle left Cowes 20 minutes before 12 by the steam Packet for Southton got to Southton by 3/4 before One O'Clock being only one hour & five minutes on Water, dined at Southampton after dinner went over Itchen Ferry to Pear Tree Green saw the Church and spent an hour or two at the Public house went back to Southton to take tea and walked round the Town at 8 O'Clock in the Evening took the Coach for Winton and there remained all night.

(Adieu).

Next morning (Monday 6th) took Coach for Alresford and there concluded my little excursion with the pleasure of riding home in the inside of the Coach with Mr & Mrs Simpson.

Adieu.

With kind respects to both Mrs Simpson's yourself & family hoping your health is still getting the better, kind respects to all up at the great house.

I remain

Dr Sir

Your most Obedt Servt

D. Anderson

*PS. hope Miss Nicholas
Mrs Moody & Miss M's
remains quite well*

** The word Applicombe is not spelt right, it should be Appuldurcombe House*

Notes on Simpson Letters. 63M67/1&2

13th Aug 1821 From D. Anderson (*Alresford*) to James Simpson Snr
Our good old Lady Mrs. Simpson must be James' senior's Mother Hannah.
Sent books to John (*age 14*) and one for James (*i.e. James junior*) (*age 13*).

27th July 1832 From Cirencester from John to his sister Rebecca. Reference to Father and hops means
Blundens Ann became or already was John's wife.
Grandmother = Hannah Simpson.
Reform Bill 1832.
MHJ = his sister Mary, Harriet and James
(*i.e. James junior*).

Some 13 years after the letter of 1832 was written, appeared The First Book on Cricket with Lithographic
Illustrations (*Wanostrocht, N*) Felix on the Bat History and use of the Catapulta Different Styles
of Bowling Laws of the game, as revised by the Marylebone Club.

After the Simpsons

James House. The 1891 Census shows James House as living at Blundens with his wife Dorcas, his two daughters Frances C. and Agnes B.B. (*aged 16 and 6*) and his son Sam (*aged 3*). James House's name also appears in the Election Registers at various times between 1896 and 1915.

The Parish Magazine records in May 1902 that Miss B House helped with the flowers and again in December 1911 that Miss House helped with the King's Messengers Exhibition and Sale of Work (*The King's Messengers were the Workers Branch for young people who had left school*). Miss House (*together with Mr. and Mrs. Sedgwick and Mr. and Mrs. Downes and their family*) were congratulated heartily for their work in connection with the King's Messengers.

In March 1902 the Magazine notes that Sam House received a certificate for good work at school.

Mrs. Frances J. Leeke was a tenant of the Lord of the Manor (*Customary Tenancy of the Manor ceased 1922*) between 1914 and 1924 and her name appears frequently in the Parish Magazine as an enrolling member of the Boy Scouts, organising collections for charity and holding a Sunday School at St. Joseph's (*Lower Froyle*). The following entry appears in January 1915, when her nephew Lieutenant Walter Lorraine Brodie, 2nd Battalion the Highland Light Infantry, was awarded the V.C.

"for conspicuous gallantry near Becelaere on Nov. 11th in clearing the enemy out of a portion of our trenches which they had succeeded in occupying. Heading the charge, he bayoneted several of the enemy and thereby relieved a dangerous situation. As a result of Lieutenant Brodie's promptitude 80 of the enemy were killed and 51 taken prisoners. Lieutenant Brodie is Mrs. Leeke's nephew and we offer her our hearty congratulations."

In March 1917 it is recorded that "Captain Lorraine Brodie has now also been given the M.C."

Miss H. Leeke's name appears in a Charity Collection list as well as Mrs. Leeke's in 1918.

Mrs. Eric Simpson was the tenant between 1927 and 1931. It is not possible to find out what her relationship, if any, was with the earlier Simpsons.

Mrs. Norah Sophie Maude was at Blundens between 1933 and 1939. The Parish Register records that Norah Sophie Maude age 81 of Blundens was buried on 14th January 1939. The 1933 Election Register gives three Maudes - Enid Mary, Norah Kathleen and Nora Sophy. The 1939 Register lists only Enid Mary.

The Rev. Wm.E. Woodward and his daughter **Mrs. Marjory H. Watson** were at Blundens between 1939 and 1953. Mr. Woodward was a retired Vicar. His wife died shortly after they came and the Daughter, Mrs. Watson, stayed to look after her father and remained after he died.

V.J. Gadban was tenant of Lord Mayor Treloar Trustees from 1953 - 1963. Blundens House was purchased by the Lord Mayor Trustees in 1953 out of trust moneys "*upon trust for sale*." V.J. Gadban was clerk to the Alton Council. The Alton Herald published, in October 1991, an article on his career (*see later*).

The House was sold to **A.J. Maxse** in 1963. The Maxses had Blundens House from 1963 to 1973.

They were followed by **D.J. Evans** from 1973 to 1981 and, in 1981, the house was sold to **The Becks**, the present owners.

The Architecture of Blundens House

Originally a three-bay Wealden House with a single-bay Hall c.1450. The statue on the front elevation is that of St. Peter, donated by Sir Hubert Miller, Bart. Blundens House is the most complete example, in the parish, of a Wealden House. It stands lengthwise to the road in the angle the road makes with Gid Lane, the ancient approach from the Farnham- Alton road (*now the A31*) to Upper Froyle.

There is a central single-bay hall with roof timbers blackened from an open fire. The cross, passage is within the service-bay and the whole of this bay has been floored over with re-used oak timber, destroying the original structure of the first floor. The roof timbers to this bay are very heavily soot encrusted. The position of the doorways at front and back, now blocked, and the position of the screens are visible. Much of this cross passage is now blocked and details destroyed by the later insertion of a massive ingle-nook. On the opposite side of the central hall is the solar or parlour bay beneath which a cellar was formed in the rear half of this bay. The access to the room space above the service-bay and the parlour bay would have been by stairs or ladder.

In the roof space it is clear that the roof was half hipped at either end. There are curved wind braces to the bays. There are queen struts between the tie beams and the collar. In Kent and Sussex crown post roofs are usual. In the open space above the one time open hall, a number of paired common rafters are replacements. Two pairs have carpenters assembly marks. This roof space was at one time bounded by closed trusses suggesting that this area had been used as a store or sleeping quarters.

From the South truss of the open hall in the roof space to the hipped gable end of the original house, the entire timber and roofing are very heavily smoke encrusted. It would seem that the smoke from the former open hall fire place and the smoke from the hearth of the kitchen in the newly built cross wing were channelled into this "smoke bay", and allowed to escape through the louvre or gablet in the apex of the roof. With further alterations and additions to the wing and the building of brick chimney stacks, the need for the "smoke chamber" disappeared.

Two types of scarf joints were discovered. The purlin scarf joints were of the type which may be described as a straight bridling of three quarter depth with square abutments and two edge pegs, a rather simply designed jointing often found in Hampshire vernacular timber buildings. The scarf jointing used for the wall plates of Blundens House are "similar to those used at Canterbury Cathedral" (*C. A. Hewitt*), and may be described as face lapped with full length tongue and groove, square vertical abutments and two edge pegs.

Carpenters marks as found were rubbed and copied. No tear marks were found on any visible timber within the building.

Externally.

Much external framing is visible on the front and rear elevations, especially to the first floor. There are curved braces to each bay with a central stud. Originally the panels between the main timbers were of wattle and daub which at the present time is brick nogging of most pleasant colour and texture which suits the silvery tones of the weathered oak framing. The end elevations of the original three-bay house are masked by later extensions, one of which is the cross wing and the northern end by an additional bay in complete character with the original building added in 1974.

The Cross Wing of c.1590.

The cross wing took the form of a timber framed extension built up against the south truss of the original hall house. As was the sensible building construction of the time, the new building was not "hooked on" the existing structure but built as a separate addition. The elevation facing the road was lined up with the front of the original house and the external timber framing infilled with brick nogging matching up with that of the hall house.

The dating of this extension is corroborated by the fact that Henry Lucas, Gent, of the County of Suffolk had married Elizabeth Jephson, a sister of Sir John Jephson, the then Lord of the Manor of Froyle, and then occupied the property now Blundens House (*then known as "Forders"*) as a Customary Tenant as well as the Tenancy of Bambras Farm. The accommodation of a three-bay house was inadequate for the Lucas's.

The new Cross Wing.

Doors from this passage gave access to the new kitchen and a new Brew House and wash house etc. with easy access to the existing well (*still accessible beneath a heavy stone slab*).

The building of the cross wing enabled considerable changes to be made to increase the accommodation in the original house. A massive fire place was built in the open hall and projecting into the cross passage. A heavy cambered oak beam spanned the wide fireplace opening and a heavy oak beam was inserted to support the oak joists for an upper floor. One end of this beam bearing on the beam spanning the fireplace and the other end mortised into a vertical oak post opposite. This beam has chamfered arises with early type stopped ends and the oak joists to the new floor are similarly treated.

Thus a Living Room had been provided devoid of smoke and, in addition, these structural changes provided an additional room at first floor level. At this time, or earlier, the thatch roof over the original hall house had been replaced by plain tiles pegged to oak battens, but the new cross wing was thatch roofed and this was maintained until the beginning of this century, when it was re-roofed in plain tiles also.

Drainage.

From the kitchen quarters a stone and tile "Box" drain had been laid running parallel to the rear of the house and then at an angle to the road ditch taking advantage of the fall of ground towards the Rye stream.