

Pat Lay - Clotted Cream & Chapel.

To locate baptism of Richard Stephens' father, Joseph, registers have been searched 1750-1790 in the following parishes
St Cleer, Davidstow, Aduent, Tremaine, Tresmeer, Egloskerry, Treuen, St Petherwin, St Thomas, Legant, Altusnun, Lewannuck, Lancaast, Blisland & St Breward.

Cornwall was part of the diocese of Exeter & wills held in Exeter Probate Registry were destroyed by German bombs 1942. Cornish Methodist burial records were not recorded as carefully as the parish burials.

Hope Hewitt.

Sonnet. On Ancestors

We used to bash them with our ping-pong ball,
those Baltic-ice-eyed ancestors who stared
down on the rough colonial kids who ^{dared}
on rainy days to play within their hall.

The ancients said: they change their skins who ^{roam}
but not their hearts. And this was true of those
chill-tinted portraits that could still impose
their northern rules on an Australian home.

Dress, plain (and starched); and self-effacement born,
And thrift in all: pence, words, time, praise,
delight in friends on those hot summer days
given for free. Even God's gift you earn.
We could not argue. The dead artist drew
the lines we questioned but by which we grew.

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My understanding was that the Cock family were formers at South Creek. The great-grand parents of my generation Robert & Kitty had accompanied the whole family. Harriet, their eldest married to Richard Oats were already in the country, having migrated to S.A, probably to Busra. Both Richard and his father were carriage-builders and wheelwrights and later moved to Bendigo (Sandhurst) and then to Blayney area.

Robert Peter writing to his son speaks of Mrs Whatley & a Mr Forke and refers to half-year's rent being £5. He speaks of crops of turnips and (barley) pumpkins as part-payment. He refers to a youngest son Fred (26 yrs) in 1868 & whom I have not been able to trace as carrying a load to Bathurst. Grandfather Edwin once camped with his waggon on the site occupied by Anthony Holdens. I understood he was collecting supplies. As far as I knew it was only incidental to his farming.

Coombe Cottage

Pre-1945 title deeds relating to Richard Stephens' property, Coombe Farm, Polyphant have been impossible to locate. Solicitor holding post-1945 deeds, says earlier records were destroyed during World War II.

Present farmhouse built 1742. It seems John Coombe bequeathed the farm to his daughter Charity Stephens (my g. grandmother) in 1848, but there is some doubt as to which member of the Coombe family was the previous owner & how it came into John Coombe's possession.

1863 Richard Stephens was the first Superintendent of Polyphant Sunday School & the large barn at Coombe Farm was used regularly for Sunday School teas & other functions.

1984 Ron Edwards occupier of Coombe Farm - born there 49 yrs ago - not a descendant of Richard Stephens. When he was a child, an elderly neighbour, well in her 80s, told him stories of Polyphant at the time of her youth. She remembered that an elderly farmer at Coombe Farm had dropped dead in the yard by the stables while he was harnessing his horse into the cart to go to the market in Launceston.

Remained in the family for another 50 yrs until James' son Ernest was forced by ill health to sell it in 1930s.

Two upper rooms, above the kitchen & present bathroom - demolished by his F some years previously. - 2 separate households.

Trederras or Derras

in 1987 was still an isolated hill farm. Altho' only a little over a mile from the main highway which cuts through the centre of Cornwall, the farm has no mains electricity and relies on a petrol-powered generator which must be used sparingly and so TV is not freely available to the young children of the family. Sewerage mains are not available, neither is there a septic tank. Cooking is done on a wood stove which also heats the house. There is no bathroom. The farmhouse has not been altered much in modern times and it is not difficult to imagine how it looked at the time many Stephens & her siblings were growing up there.

Mrs Doney Lewannick - Owner of Coombe Farm until her death in 1985

Ron Edwards - present occupier of Coombe Farm; his father became a tenant there when Ernest Stephens sold it to Mrs Doney over 50 yrs ago.

Cf - Sequel - Mr Wadge's story of "rags to riches story" when hequeathed farm & cut up orchard area into residential blocks. See also photos of restoration of the old barn.