

ALTON PANCRAS *History Project*

Alton Pancras Timeline 891 – to date

Each entry starts with the year. The **information** is in ordinary print, the **source** (in brackets) follows.

Most documentary sources are from the *Dorset History Centre* (DHC) in Bridport Road, Dorchester, some on-line, much more available by personally visiting. See website

www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethistorycentre

Most books referred to are available from Dorchester lending library or through the inter-library loan scheme nationwide.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP – *Alton Pancras* DHC – *Dorset History Centre* CD – *Colin Dean*
Echo – *Dorset daily newspaper, South/West Dorset edition unless stated.*

FODA – *Friends of Dorset Archives (DHC)*

HGS – *Hampshire Genealogical Society journal.*

Hutchins – *History and Antiquities of Dorset, J Hutchins 1861, volume 4 pages 450-461.*

PO – *Post Office*

PRs – *Parish Registers, viewed at Dorset History Centre*

PVN&V – *Piddle Valley News & Views, parish magazine*

RCHM – *Royal Commission on Historic Monuments, County of Dorset, 1970*

891

Watcombe recorded as Whetecumbe in a later copy of an Anglo-Saxon charter, *Olde English wheat valley (Place Names of Dorset, A D Mills 1994)*

998

Holcombe (farm) recorded as *Holancumb*, *Olde English* (at the) hollow valley. (*A Fagersten*)

1012

Aweltune (*Placenames of Dorset, Mills*)

1086

The Bishop of Sarum holds Altone. He has 10 ploughs and 4 slaves, also 6 villagers and 10 smallholders with 1 plough, 1 villager and 5 smallholders with one plough. A mill which pays 15 shillings. Edward and Payne each have 2 ½ hides and 3 ploughs. Value of the Bishops lordship £13, value of the men's £4. (*Domesday*). *Trying to compare sizes of villages through their value, Yetminster was £22, AP £17, Charminster £16, Up Cerne £10.*

1091

Osmund, bishop of Sarum, gave by charter to the canons of that church (Sarum) *Aultona inter alia, praeter militum terras. (Hutchins)*

Aulton - farm by the river stream (A D Mills)

1160c

Awoltona and/or Awelton(e) (A D Mills)

1226

Aweltone Pancratti (*Placenames etc above*)

1291

Distinction between Aulton in Suthbury (Australis-south) and Aulton in Northbury (Borealis-north) (*British History online*)

1303

Bishop of Salisbury, Simon of Ghent, complained that Alton church was 'destitute of consecration' in one of his visitations. (*Dorset*, J H Bettey, David & Charles 1974)

1326

Alton Pancras (*A D Mills*)

1332

Barcombe was Berecombe, *valley where barley is grown*

1348

Black Death. It was estimated that between 1/3rd and 1/2 Dorset population died. Recovery took until 15C. (*Manor Houses of Dorset*, Russell & Grindrod 2007)

1404

Main tenant of Australis (south) was John Stoke junior who had 11 customary tenants farming 160 acres with 15 cottagers and 7 serfs. Borealis (north) was Robert Young with five tenants holding collectively 90 acres with 13 customary tenants, 13 cottagers and four serfs. (*Register of John Chandler, Dean of Salisbury 1404-17 (Wiltshire Record Office)*.)

1483

AP parishioners were reprimanded by the Dean of Sarum *for not having a fit and proper place over the altar for holding the reserved Sacrament..* (Rev G B Southwell 1907, DHC)

1524

30 people paid their subsidies.

1539

Cerne Abbey surrendered to the Crown on 15 March under the requirements of Henry VIII's Act of Parliament which dissolved monasteries. At the time Cerne Abbey was the fourth richest of Dorset's five abbeys. But in the list of the **principal** sources of income of the Abbey in this year, covering a wide area of south Dorset, AP is not mentioned, though Muston (Piddlehinton) is. In 1086 Cerne owned the Manor of Little Puddle (Piddlehinton). Perhaps AP was one of the **minor** sources of income. (See *The Parish Book of Cerne Abbas Vale*, 2000)

1542

Dorset was transferred from Sarum to the newly-created Bristol Diocese. It returned to Sarum in 1836. (*Dorset Natural History Society 1948*)

1543

33 people paid their Tudor subsidies. (*Hutchins*). Is this a guide to the number of houses?
Matthew UTTON became AP church incumbent

1547

Death of King Henry VIII

1549

John BURTHAM became AP church incumbent (*Hutchins*)

1552

Henry VIII had originally initiated a survey of all goods held by churches, with a view to them being made over to him. The survey continued after his death but churches were allowed to keep their goods, at AP in the care of the Curate Sir John CROCKER and four prominent villagers, Edward SHARKE, Thomas LOVELES Richard MORE and John STYCKELOND. (*Dorset Natural History & Antiquarian Field Club Proceedings 1904.*)

1554

Lewis CADE the incumbent. His will proved 1559. (*G D Squibb*)

1582

Pope Gregory XIII changed the calendar in Europe and north Africa from the Roman Empire year (the Julian calendar, after Julius Caesar) which began on 1 January to what became known as the Gregorian Year, 25 March to 24 March. See 1751.(HGS2008 p 256)

1591

Thomas DOWNTON installed as incumbent on the resignation of John CHILDE (*Hutchins*)

1596

38 Eliz. Grange and farm of Barcomb held by Giles PENNY of Toller-Whelme of the Bishop of Sarum as of his manor of Sherborne. (*Hutchins*)

1600

Population “about 120”. No recusants or non-communicants. Thomas DOUNTAY? the vicar. (*Report to the Dean at Sarum c1600; Dorset Natural History Soc 1954*)

1608

The first known mention of football in Dorset was recorded by the churchwardens at AP who reported their vicar because he went regularly to nearby Cheselborne to “footeball on the Sabbothe day”, sometimes missing his service altogether. (*Rural Life in Wessex 1500-1900, J H Bettey 1987*)

1610

John Speed’s map shows Alton (*no Pancras*) and Plush in Buckland Hundred, Piddletrenthide in Cwerne Hundred and Piddlehinton in Puddletown Hundred. ‘Hundreds’ were administrative areas, usually measuring c120 acres. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton 2001*)

1617

Henry SPINTER of AP was stated by his churchwardens to have been drunk in church and that “one Saboth daye a littell before the eveninge prayer went up into the tower and at a trappe dore did pisse downe upon theare heads in the belfry that they could not stand there nor neare itt to the great offence of those that were present....” (*Rural Life in Wessex 1500-1900, J H Bettey 1987*)

1626

John Bill’s map was sparing of placenames, only Plushe among Piddle Valley places was named. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton, 2001*)

1627

Peter Van den Keere’s map only mentioned Piddlehinton (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton 2001*)

1642

Start of the Civil War. Ended 1649.

1645

Rent paid out of Borealis farm to the church of Sarum was sequestered (temporarily possessed by someone else through estate being vacant or in debt). The STICKLAND family were long lessees of Borealis. Their seat, which was ancient, stood a little north of the church. (*Hutchins*)

A farm at Barcomb at the north end of the village belonging to George PENNY Esq, recusant (declined to attend church) was sequestered (temporarily possessed by the church through vacancy or non-payment of rent).

Joan Blaeu’s map includes all 5 valley villages, Alton *Pancras* and Plush in Buckland Hundred. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton, 2001*)

1648

Philip LAMB BA, Clare College, Cambridge mentioned as AP incumbent. (G D Squibb 1948). Philip Lamb was said to have become vicar of Bere Regis in 1654 but was ejected from his position due to Congregational practices in 1662 and moved on to AP. (*Bere Regis Past & Present, Pitfield & Legg, 2006.*) See 1662.

1649

End of the Civil War which started 1642

1661

Owners of this village appear to be George PENNEY Esq., Mr William STRICKLAND and Mr Thomas ARNOLD. The two manors, or parcels of demesne land (demesne – land farmed

by the lord of the manor, as distinct from land sub-let to other tenants), now denominate and belong to two prebends (church officials at Salisbury) in the church at Salisbury, Alton Borealis and Alton Austral. (*Hutchins, quoting from subsidy roll 1661*)

1662

Thomas SHERRING instituted as incumbent after Philip LAMB was ejected.
Richard HYDE DD granted the lease of AP rectory 27 Mar 1662. (G D Squibb 1948, *Dorset Deeds*, C A Fry 1911)

1665

Village said to have been deliberately burnt to get rid of the plague. The burnt house at Burnt House Bottom was said to have been the Manor House (*Andrew Graham 2008*)

1670

Timothy WILLCOCKS instituted as incumbent of AP on death of SHERRING. (*Hutchins*)

1671

Richard Blome's map includes all five valley villages, interesting spelling of Piddletrenthide as Piedelrechhed. (*Dorset Maps*, David Beaton, 2001)

1685

Sep 3. Judge Jeffreys' Bloody Assize began at Dorchester during which 312 people suspected of being involved in the Monmouth Uprising were tried. Of these, 74 were hanged, 175 transported and 54 discharged. Nine are unaccounted for. Jeffreys had advised that anyone wanting mercy should plead guilty! It is not known if any were from AP.

1695

Robert Morden's map has all five villages, including Piedenched. (*Dorset Maps*, David Beaton, 2001)

1700s

By the 18C the old manorial system was long gone but the landed gentry were still virtual lords of the manor but were gradually infiltrated by wealthy merchants and successful lawyers. (*Manor Houses of Dorset*, Russel & Grindrod 2007)

1715

Mr Thomas HASKETT appears to have been Lord of both manors. He also paid tax for "ye East House als (*alias/otherwise*) Burnt House." (*Land Tax*)

1722

Benjamin NOYES instituted on death of WILLCOCKS. Noyes died 1732, "leaving a wife and about 8 children." (*Hutchins*)

1723

Coffee, tea and chocolate taxed; 50 more crimes for which there was a death penalty introduced, including poaching

1724

Herman Moll's map has only Buckland, Alton and Piedenched. (*Dorset Maps*, David Beaton, 2001)

1727

Death of George I, George II succeeds

1728

Survey of both AP manors suggests that there may have been as few as 23 dwelling houses, comprising 17 cottages, 4 houses, 1 mill and house, 1 ale-house. Assuming that the two main farms, the manor house, the vicarage house, and two houses held by Ben SAMWAYS were for some reason omitted, the most likely number of dwellings was probably 29. (*Manor Survey 1728*)

1732

Alton, the principle seate of the ARNOLDS, a veire populous family, arms a chevron between 3 pheasants. (Rev Coker of Mappowder's *Survey of Dorset 1732*)

1736

Church repaired, gallery built and two windows with glazing added. Much of the cost borne by Thomas HASKETT Esq, lord of both AP's manors. Other contributions were from the Dean and Chapter of Sarum (£5.5.0d), the prebendary for Austral manor (£10.10.0d) and for Boreal manor (£10). The total cost was £1312.14.8d. The gallery was given and built at Mr Haskett's own expense. "The new chancel does not bear the smallest resemblance of the old one." (*Incumbents Papers microfilm R1316, DHC.*)

1741

Open fields all enclosed by 1741, when the Court Book records began. (*RCHM 1970*)

1748

Thomas and John Osborne's map was one of the last to show pre-Turnpike roads. Roads radiated from Milton Abbas to Sturminster, Blandford, Dorchester, Cerne seemingly straight through the northern end of AP, and Sherborne. (*Dorset Maps, David Heaton 2001*)

1751

The year ran only from 25 March to 31 December. See 1752. (*HGS 2008 p256*)

1752

This and subsequent years began on 1 Jan instead of the 25 March (Lady Day). The calendar was advanced 11 days to adjust the number of days per year, so for this year only, 2 Sep was followed by 14 Sep. (*HGS 2008 p 256*)

1755

Estimated date of building the two houses of *The Terrace*. The south one was probably extended at the time of building the school for occupation by the teacher, in 1846.

1758

AP had a baker, John CROCKER, who on Sep 6th acted as a guarantor for Richard MASTERS being granted an ale-house licence, also in AP. (*Alehouse licences, DHC*). Two years previously, Ann BIRD was apprenticed to John Crocker, then described as a yeoman. (*DHC m/film R1427*)

1764

William PARRY and Miss Ann HASKETT of Easton Grey, Wilts, leased the mansion north of the church (*Austral Farm?*) to Samuel CRANE of AP, along with the farm buildings and buildings apparently connected with the Manor House, although it seems to say that the Manor House was in possession of John WATERS? Esq. (*Extract of indenture DHC JD5.*)

1771

R Martin's map of this year, reissued in 1794, showed Alton *Pancrafs*, Buckland *Newton*, Plush without the 'e', Piddle Hinton (two words) and Piedenhead. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton, 2001*)

1781

William CARPENTER became vicar on death of Thomas Highmore STEPHENS. (*Hutchins*)

1787

William DAVIES became vicar on death of Carpenter. (*Hutchins*)

1789

Mar 1. Sunday school established by Poole BATHURST Esq and Edmund HENNING Esq each agreeing to pay £1.1s per annum. Five alphabet books, 50 alphabet cards and 4 spelling books were purchased and Miss? Lovelafs (LOVELASS) was paid £1.19 for 26 Sundays teaching. (*DHC m/film R1316*)

1793

This was the era of canal mania when business men and prospectors countrywide saw good opportunities for moving their goods to new markets. One of the proposals was for a canal which would convey coal from the North Somerset coalfields to the port of Poole. Three routes were examined, following the line of the Stour, the Piddle, or through Cerne Abbas. It was to be known as the *Dorset and Somerset Canal* but it soon conceded defeat to the railways. Presumably in AP the canal would have been alongside the existing road through the village. (*Parish Book of Cerne Abbas, Vivian & Patricia Vale 2000, The Somerset Coal*

Canal etc, Kenneth R Clew 1970. and an article by Gordon Bartlett in *Dorset Country Magazine*, editor Rodney Legg, Dec 1998/Jan 1999)

1794

The auction announcement of the sale of the estate, manor and tythes of the whole parish of Alton described it as “a fine, healthy, sporting part of the County of Dorset, abounding with Game and Trout fishery, 8 miles from Dorchester, 11 from Sherborne. Estimated value of the whole £1,056-17-10d per annum.”

TO be sold by auction by Messrs Skinner and Dyke on 12 February at Garraway's Coffee House, Change Alley, London, in one lot, by order of the executor of Poole Bathurst, Esq, deceased, the valuable estates, manor, and tythes of the whole parish of Alton, a fine healthful sporting part of Dorset; comprising the desirable Manor of Alton Pancras, abounding with game, excellent trout fishery, royalties, immunities, a substantial dwellinghouse and sundry farms containing 1,410 acres of excellent meadow, pasture, arable and woodland; and the tythes of upwards of 1,800 acres, let to respectable tenants, Mr E Henning and Mr M Devenish, on leases which expire in 1796 and 1797, at low rents, amounting to £740 per annum, exclusive of mansion house, manor and lands on hand. The estate held under the Prebend and Dean and Chapter at Salisbury, at small renewed rents, and renewable for ever on paying the customary fines.

1795

Alton Australis had a manor and farm, so did Alton Borealis. 'Holcombe or Barcomb' also held a farm. (*Civil Division of County of Dorset, Edward Boswell, 1795*)

1796

An assignment of lease dated 18 June 1796 named William BRAGGE of Seend, Wilts as executor of the will of Poole BATHURST Esq, late of Lydney Park, Glos and his uncle Roger HENNING of Woodsford Castle, gent. Bathurst had been lord of AP Manor. (*DHC website*)

1799

The manor of AP held by Robert HENNING Esq gent who purchased it of the executors of Poole BATHURST Esq. It afterwards came to his son ---Henning Esq of Weymouth, whose widow sold it in 1863 to Erasmus SAUNDERS Esq of Upwey. (*Hutchins*)

The Nineteenth Century

1801

The liberty of AP (areas owned by the manors) had 34 inhabited houses and 2 uninhabited. They were occupied by 34 families, 184 people, comprising 86 males and 98 females. 75 were employed in agriculture, 15 in trade or manufacture. (*Hutchins*)

A survey of crops being grown in AP parish carried out for the Home Office by William DAVIES, Minister, presumably of AP, showed that 130 acres were devoted to oats, 122 to wheat (34 acres of which were supposed to be turnips but they had failed), 82 acres of barley, 30 acres turnip and rape, 2 of peas and 1 of potatoes, the latter virtually all grown in people's gardens.

(*Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries 1970.*)

1806

The congregation of AP raised £5.17.6d for the *Patriotic Fund*, quite a considerable amount for such a small parish. The fund was set up after the Battle of Trafalgar to support wounded sailors, widows or families. (*Times 11 Jan 1806. Dorset History Forum mag Mar 08, DHC*)

1807

William CHURCHILL Esq of Henbury (near Corfe Mullen) held the freehold of AP, occupied by Edward TOMKINS. (*Dorset Poll Book 1807*)

1808

Tenure document in which John PHELPS appeared to grant Alton Borealis manor to Robert HENNING for the lives of his children William, Charles Burt Henning and Robert Lovelace Henning. (*DHC document, copy in possession of Mervyn Gibbs 1998*)

1809

The property in AP of William CHURCHILL Esq which included *Barcomb* was purchased by John MILLER Esq of Mappowder. Mr Miller later sold it to George HARDING Esq who sold it to SAUNDERS in 1865. (*Hutchins*)

The will of Henry HOPKINS, a hosier in AP, was proved in 1809. It was made in 1806. (*DHC website*)

1811

31 houses inhabited, 4 uninhabited. 38 families, population 168, comprising 70 males, 98 females. 34 families in agriculture, 4 in trade. (*Hutchins*)

Henry MASTERMAN became vicar 11 Nov. Died 1858. (*Hutchins*)

1812

Map shows established tracks as the same scale as what we now know as key roads. These include a track from the village to Watcomb; Ripps Lane; the lane up to Holcomb, which reaches a T-junction with a track which leads off today's Wessex Ridgeway past Narn Barn towards Buckland Newton. Turn left at the T and Holcomb is now on your right. No farm is named where Barcombe was to be but just north of the village the area we call Bookham is written Bocomb. Could that have been where Barcombe came from? Was the northern part of the village actually a settlement called Bocomb? (Ordnance Survey First series 1812[www.visionofbritain.org.uk/maps])

1817

Langley's New County Atlas has AP in full despite the tight space. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton, 2001*)

1825

The Vale of Blackmore Turnpike Trust proposed to 'turnpike' (tollgates and tollhouses) an existing route from Stock Gaylard (the deer park today) through Pulham, Duntish, Buckland Newton (past the church, the old village centre, *Gaggle of Geese* and Henley) to AP and south through the valley, on today's B3143 route. Not considered financially viable. (*The Old Roads of Dorset, Ronald Good 1940*)

Stockton-to-Darlington railway opened

1826

Datestone on the *Old Post Office*. Most likely to have been placed when an extension was built to accommodate a shop for MASTERS, shoemaker. The initials are RJM, Robert J Masters. (CD)

Thomas PHELPS succeeded his late father John Phelps of Upway as lord of the manor, perhaps Borealis. HENNINGs still the occupiers. (*DHC document, Mervyn Gibbs 1998*)

1829

James Pigot's map included all valley placenames in full. (*Dorset Maps, David Beaton 2001*)

1830

The Swing Riots, a campaign of destruction of threshing machines whose invention had robbed many labourers of winter work, reached Dorset by the autumn. On Nov 26 rioters destroyed William Coward's machine at Wooland, next day that of John Pount at Buckland Newton when they also demanded money of Christopher Morey, a small farmer and blacksmith, and of John Young at Pulham. (Stuart Booth in Dorset Life, Nov 2010)

1832

Some people now qualified to vote if they paid a certain amount of rent, freehold or copyhold. Not many in AP. (Reform Act 1832)

First Dorset County Asylum opened at Forston in August. By 1843 there were 113 patients. Closed 1895. See 1860. This was Forston House, donated by Francis John Browne, today's Forston Farm on the Cerne road north of the Charlton Down (Herrison) turning. (FODA newsletter 18.1)

1833

Methodism was introduced into Piddletrenthide by the Rev. James Oke. Preaching initially in the open air, a cottage was obtained for £5 annual rent. As congregations increased the interior was removed and it became 'a serviceable chapel.' See 1858. (Methodism in Dorset, John S Simon, Weymouth 1870)

1835-8

Richard M(B?)illet HART was the guardian for Alton Pancras on the Board of Cerne Abbas Union Workhouse 1835-1838. The population of AP was 210 and the parish contributed £118 as a three year average. (*Cerne Abbas Union Workhouse 1835-8*, Elizabeth O Cockburn, DHC)

1837

May 29. Cerne Abbas workhouse officially opened. It served Alton Pancras among other villages. (*Cockburn as above*)

1837

Civil registration of births, marriages and deaths introduced, meaning certificates.

1838

The Tithe Commutation Act sought to replace tithes paid to the church with rent charges, so Tithe Maps had to be made to serve as legal evidence of boundaries and areas. It was described as "Apportionment of Rent Charge in Lieu of Tithes" Maps generally were drawn up around 1838 (APs) and/or 1847. (Dorset Maps, David Beaton 2001)

1840

Jan 10. Uniform penny postage introduced nationally. Thomas Hardy born 2 June at Higher Bockhampton.

1841

Population 248 (census). 46 residences on the Tithe Map (DHC)

1842

Population of GB 18.5 million

1842

Robert SHITTLER DD became vicar 16 May following death of MASTERMAN. He was to build the *Glebe House* and the National School and was the first resident incumbent "as far as can be known." (*DHC M/f 1316, PRs*)

1844

Railways Act designed to bring rail travel to the masses

1845

Thomas PHELPS 'mortgaged' the manor to Robert HENNING and his heirs William aged about 15, Charles Burt Henning about 11 and Robert Lovelace Henning aged about 14 for a yearly rent of £20. (*Copy Indenture from Mervyn Gibbs*)

1845

Jan 8. James John Farquharson (1785-1871) was Dorset's premier huntsman from his properties at Langton Long near Blandford and *Eastbury House*, Tarrant Gunville. Between 1806-58 his hounds boasted 1,000 square miles of hunting territory including AP. On this occasion the hunt met at *Dewlish House* and after a 5-mile chase, the kill took place "in front of *Alton House*, Alton Pancras", presumably the Manor House. (*Dorset Sporting Runs*, Rodney Legg 2001)

Potato famine in Ireland (until 1848), first voyage of ss Great Britain, tarmac laid for the first time

1846

Building of AP school completed. Probable date of the extension to 3 *The Terrace* to accommodate the schoolteacher. Vicarage built (later *Beechmead*, now *Old Rectory*)

1847

Jan 9. The morning after the County Hunt Ball at Dorchester, Mr Farquharson's hounds* met at James Harding's farm at Higher Waterston and chased a fox along the route of the Old Sherborne road through Kingrove, Holcombe and Hawcombe for an hour covering 8 miles before the kill in AP parish. (*see 1845). (*Dorset Sporting Runs*, Rodney Legg 2001)

School opened 25 March. (Closed Dec 1933). (*School Managers Minute Book*, DHC)

37 tenements mentioned in sale of the two manors, the property of the late Thomas PHELPS Esq., deceased. (*Sale doc 1848*)

1st June. Dorchester South railway station opened, the western terminus of the line from Southampton. New law restricts women's and children's working day to 10 hours.

1848

ALTON-PANCRAS (St. Pancratius), a parish and liberty, in the union of Cerne, Cerne division of Dorset, 8¼ miles (N.) from Dorchester containing 248 inhabitants. The two manors, or parcels of demesne land, called Alton Borealis and Alton Australis, till lately constituted the endowment of two prebends in the cathedral of Salisbury. The living is a discharged vicarage, valued in the King's books at £9; net income, £120; patrons, the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury, who are also appropriators. The church is dedicated to St. Pancratius, a nobleman of Phrygia, who suffered martyrdom under Diocletian at Rome in the third century. (*Topographical Dictionary of England 1848*)

1850

Thomas Moule's map records **Bacomb**, between AP and Buckland Newton. **Barcombe** perhaps, or Bookham? This map also shows the railway through Wimborne, Poole and ending at Dorchester. (*Dorset Maps*, David Beaton 2001)

1851

Population 282, 136 males, 146 females. All 55 houses were inhabited, there were 56 occupiers. (*Census*)

1856

End of Crimean war. Dorset Constabulary founded although boroughs such as Dorchester retained their own police force. (*Hugh Jaques, Dorset Yearbook 1989*)

1857

Piddletrenthide Methodist church founded. (*Closure report in N&V 1989*).

1858

Rev SHITTLER died in post.

"The present commodious Methodist Chapel at Piddletrenthide was erected. The congregations attending are large and Methodism has secured a firm hold upon the village. It cost £276 and had 200 sittings." (*Methodism in Dorset, John S Simon 1870*). Worshippers would walk to the chapel there from AP, later in pony and trap, remembered by a few older former residents.

1859

Augustus Bernard HANDLEY became vicar 25 Feb on death of Shittler, who died 18 Dec 1858. (*Hutchins*)

"The church of St Pancras is a small, plain Gothic structure in bad repair on account of the numerous springs and is expected to be pulled down and rebuilt on a different site." (*PO Directory of Dorset 1859*.)

1860

Railway station opened at Sherborne

New asylum opened at Herrison with 300 beds. By 1884 Herrison had 58 employees looking after 472 patients. Electricity and heating introduced 1895 and a church built. Forston continued until 1895. See 1904 (*FODA newsletter 18.1, DHC*)

1861

Population 266, 122 males, 148 females (*Census*)

Prince Albert died

1863

Erasmus SAUNDERS of Upwey purchased AP manor from widow of John HENNING of Weymouth except (that owned by) HARDING, see 1865 (*Hutchins/Nott'm Univ*)

1864

Rev HANDLEY moved to Fisherton?. Edward Curwen COLLARD became vicar. (*Hutchins*)

1865

Erasmus SAUNDERS purchased the property in Alton owned by George HARDING Esq, which included *Barcomb* and *Holcomb* (*Hutchins/Nott'm Univ.*)

End of American civil war, slavery abolished USA, Salvation Army founded. Highways Act of 1865 restricted highway locomotives to 4mph in the country, 2mph in towns, plus someone walking ahead with a red flag.

1866

One of the first steam ploughing engines was used to break up downland at AP.

(*Making of the English Landscape: Dorset, Christopher Taylor, Dovecote 2004.*) See also 1870.

1867

The new Herrison hospital complete. There had been a small but strong lobby for a separate asylum for "lunatics immediately above the pauper classes" and this differentiation was incorporated in Herrison House. (Dorset Justice, Terry Hearing 1999)

In 1867 there were 315 patients at Charminster (Herrison site) and 140 at Forston. [www.institutions.org.uk]

1870

Francis Eddison established his Steam Ploughing Works at Dorchester, hiring out sets of steam ploughs leading to thousands of acres of downland into cultivation, including AP. (Man & The Land; Farming in Dorset 1846-1996, J H Bettey)

1870-2

Population 270, 55 houses. Acres 2,243. Real property £2,642. The parish lies on the Downs 2 ½ miles NE of Cerne Abbas and 7E-by-S of Evershot railway station. The property is subdivided. The parish is a meet of the Blackmoor Harriers. The living is a vicarage, value £208. (*Imperial Gazetteer of England & Wales 1870-2*)

1871

Population 251. 48 houses, 2 uninhabited. (*census*)

1873-5

The whole of the church, except the 15C tower, was taken down and rebuilt at cost of £1312-14-8d, mostly paid for by SAUNDERS family. The rebuild followed the plan of the former building with the addition of a vestry on the north side of the chancel. The external wall of flint with ashlar binding was a copy of that on the preserved tower. The architect was G R Crickmay of Weymouth and the consecration was reported in the *Dorset County Chronicle* of 14 Jan 1875. Church re-opened 13 Jan 1875. (*Incumbents Papers R1316, DHC*). *The Faculty document which detailed the authorised work is in DHC m/film R1306. Mrs Southwell's note & the faculty (authority) doc. on M/Film 1316.*

Dorset Parish Churches A-D, Fred Pitfield, Dorset Publishing Co. 1981)

1873

Charles James Radclyffe of Hyde House, between Bere Regis and Wareham, took over some of the hunting territory from Mr Farquharson* from 1858. The Christmas Eve 1873 hunt started from Armswell north of Plush and covered some 8 miles, including "Alton Bottom Copse and over the hill through Alton Ivors to Henley, then turned right over Buckland Knoll." (*see 1845). (*Dorset Sporting Runs, Rodney Legg 2001*)

1877

Rev Henry MASTERMAN BA of Wadham College, Oxford, inducted into the vicarage of AP on 28 Dec. (*PRs, dhc*)

1878

Edison & Swan invent electric lamp. Red Flag Act limited mechanical road vehicles to 4mph (repealed 1896)

“A cottage was built for a labourer on the premises and the Great Tithes were made over to the incumbent.” (*May 6 (1878?) This was Rectory Cottage, later to be an early Post Office. (Incumbents Papers R1316, DHC)*)

1881

Population 247 (*Kelly's Directory*)

1882 The building of *Barcombe Farmhouse* commenced. (*Specification report Feb, surveyor's report Mar, in possession of Iain Barlow 2013*). Approximate year when the new brick-built *Barcombe Farmhouse* was first occupied, by STIBY. It replaced the Tudor farmhouse on the site of today's *Holcombe Mead* opposite, though the farmyard and assorted barns remained. (*Electoral roll, Jocelyn Mould-Graham, John D Waterman*)

1884

Householders and lodgers paying more than £10pa rent entitled to vote.(Act of 1884)

1886

Rev COLLARD moved to Stratford sub Castle, succeeded by Rev. SOUTHWELL 23 July. (*Mrs Southwell's note M/Film 1316, DHC*)

1887

Cottage adjoining school room converted into a classroom. (*Mrs Southwell's note M/Film R1316 DHC*)

1888

School hall roof raised and school bell turret built. (*Mrs Southwell's note M/Film R.131+, DHC*)

c1888

“The population in 1881 was 247 but is now somewhat less”. (*Mrs Southwell's note M/Film R.1316, DHC*)

1889

Apr 1. County Councils such as Dorset inaugurated by a Local Government Act of the previous year, taking over the administration of the county from Quarter Sessions. Dorset CC was dominated by the nobility and gentry (47), professions and occupations (29) including 7 farmers. The first 'council tax' was 7d in the £ (Hugh Jaques, County Archivist, Dorset Yearbook 1989)

Dorchester Borough Police Force's eight officers amalgamated with the County force (Hugh Jaques, County Archivist, Dorset Yearbook 1989)

1890

The great frost of this year spanned Christmas. Rivers such as the Stour froze, animals died etc.(Newspaper reports)

1891

Population 229. 45 houses, 2 uninhabited. (*Census*)

1892

Three cottages burned down, assumed to be where *Austral* and *Brook Cottages* now stand. (*Dorset Chronicle 9 June*). *The Electric Oven invented.*

1893

New offices (toilets) added to the rear of the school. (*Mrs Southwell's note M/Film R1316, DHC*)

1894

Civil parish councils created. (DHC)

1894-9. *The district telegraph was extended to Buckland Newton via Piddlehinton, Piddletrenthide and AP during these years.(DHC)*

1895

First mention of the village post office being at today's *Rectory Cottage*. Charles KELLAWAY was described as sub-postmaster although he was actually groom to the rector. Believed that wife Jane was the postmistress. Lasted until 1922. (*Directory & 1901 census*)

Forston, Dorset's first asylum, closed. It was opened in 1832 'for the reception of poor persons suffering from mental illness'. Now patients would be transferred to a new £190,000 admission unit at nearby Herrison Hospital which would be known as the Forston Clinic.

Herrison chapel was built between 1895/6. A total of 39 Memorial Inscriptions were transcribed c2005. (Dorset Echo looking back series 6 Oct 2009).

1896

Speed limit raised from 2mph (towns) and 4mph (rural) to 14 mph. (Highways Act 1896, amending that of 1865)

1897

Postal deliveries to all homes, including rural areas, introduced. No more calling at the post office near the Rectory to collect your mail.

The Twentieth Century

1901

Population. 183. 36 houses, all inhabited. (Census)

Death of Queen Victoria in January.

There were 1,399,000 farm workers in UK. By 1961 there were 220,000.

1902

End of the South African War

1903

Wright Bros first flight, Henry Ford started his motor company. Speed limit raised to 20mph

1904

Herrison House opened for private patients on same site. By 1913 Herrison Hospital had 957 patients. See also 1938. (FODA-Friends of Dorset Archives- newsletter 18.1)

1905

Automobile Association (AA) formed at a time when there were 15,800 private vehicles on the road

1907

Baden Powell's inaugural scout camp at Brownsea Island. The actual site has since been lost to the sea.

Dec 31 Rev SOUTHWELL resigned (Mrs Southwell's note M/Film 1316, DHC)

1908

Rev. MORLAND new vicar, instituted 2 May.(DHC)

1909

Pensions for the over 70s introduced

1910

Edward VII dies, succeeded by George V

1911

The census enumerator's schedule gives the population for Alton Pancras as 89 males, 79 females, total 168, in 37 houses. No uninhabited houses. (census)

Shop workers became entitled to a half-day holiday once a week.

1912

Phone system nationalised. Titanic sinks. Thomas Hardy's first wife Emma died.

1913

Illness and maternity benefit introduced

1914

Aug 4. Britain declared war on Germany. Thomas Hardy married 2nd time Florence Emily Dugdale.

1915

Captain Arthur Courtenay SAUNDERS of the Manor House became the first villager to die in the war, killed at St Eloi, France 14 March.

The second was Private Alfred George CROAD of the 5th Battalion Dorset Regiment, killed at Suvla Plain 21 August. His body was never found. Believed to have lived in one of the thatched cottages now replaced by 4 bungalows. (War Memorial research 2007)

1916

British Summer Time (BST) introduced to extend daylight

L/Corporal Frederick Charles GIBBS of *Meadow View* killed at the Ypres Salient 15 Feb. His body was never found. His wife Mary Jane returned to her native Ireland following his death. Private Charles Henry SAWYER of *Fairview* died during the Battle of the Somme in July. He was living in London when he enlisted and was reported as having died from disease in France. (*War memorial book research 2007*)

1917

L/Corporal Walter Robert James SEAL was a member of the 5th Battalion Dorset Regiment and had fought in awful conditions at Gallipoli and the Somme. He died of illness back home in England and was buried at his parent's church at Affpuddle.

Stoker Thomas Charles HOUSE, the only naval fatality from the village, died from exposure suffered at the battle of Jutland off Denmark May/June. He was returned to UK for treatment and was buried at Portsmouth, where his wife lived. (*War memorial book research 2007*)

1918

Four villagers died in the war this year, all within a few weeks of the Armistice on 11 Nov.

Gunner Frederick Reginald SAWYER died of sickness, like his brother, but in a German POW hospital on 4 October. He served with the Royal Field Artillery

Trooper Arthur Leonard CROAD was the last of the Alton Pancras men to be killed in action, 17 Oct 1918, less than a month before Armistice. He was the younger brother of Alfred George Croad, killed in 1915. Arthur had married Emily Alma GARDENER at Plumstead in Sep 1918. They were only married a month!

Private (Sapper) Charles Edward CHURCHILL son of John William and his first wife Mary Ruth nee JEANS, who, lived at *Burnside*. He joined the Canadian Engineers and died 11 Dec 1918 following an accident, although illness was also mentioned.

Private John TUCK may have been John Henry Tuck, whose name appeared on the 1915 voters list at Alton Pancras. He was reported to have died of fever at Salonica. A Private J H Tuck of the Motor Transport Company, Army Service Corps, died 5 Dec and was buried in a British cemetery in Greece. Sick or wounded men were often sent to hospitals in Greece. (*War memorial book research 2007*)

End of WW1 Nov 11. Votes for women over 30, men over 21.

1919

Village meeting to decide on a war memorial, who should be included on it and how to raise funds for its provision. (*M/film 1316, DHC*)

Jane MASTERS died and was buried AP Dec 20th aged 67 (*parish registers*). The family had run the shop (*today's Old Post Office*) since at least 1826, the unmarried Jane the last to do so. The shop continued until 1976.

Britain adopted 48-hour working week

1920

War memorial plaque in the church dedicated. (*M/film 1316, DHC*)

Sunday postal deliveries stopped

1921

Population 148 (census)

Irish Free State and Northern Ireland formed

1922

Manorial system effectively ended by the Law of Property Act.

Tomb of Tutankhamen discovered in Egypt. Wireless licenses introduced.

1923

Post Office moved from *Rectory Cottage* to the shop which had been run by the MASTERS family since 1826 at what is today's *Old PO*. (*Jean Lane nee Clark 2007*)

G Lugg was the carrier from the *White Hart*, Dorchester up through the Piddle Valley to Buckland Newton (BN) on Wednesdays and Saturdays. James Pickett was the carrier from BN to Dorchester on the same days. (*Kelly's Directory 1923*)

Alton Pancras was under the jurisdiction of Cerne Division magistrates, one of which was Lt.Col. Erasmus SAUNDERS of AP manor. Petty Sessions were held at Cerne Police Station on the last Tuesday of each month at 11am. (*Kelly's Directory 1923*)

Alton Pancras was in the Dorchester Division of Dorset police, our closest stations Buckland Newton and Piddlehinton. The force consisted of 265 officers. (*Kelly's Directory 1923*)

1926

The Rev. KNOTT became vicar of AP around this time.

18% of houses in UK had electricity

1927

The proposed amalgamation of the parish of AP with that of Buckland Newton was opposed by the Parochial Church Council. (*PCC minutes at DHC R/1316*).

1928

Women now entitled to vote age 21, same as men. Death of Thomas Hardy at Max Gate 11 Jan.

1929

Minimum marriages ages raised from 12 for a girl and 14 a boy to 16 for both, with parental consent required under 21. Abolition of Poor Law system.

1931

Pop 140. (*Directory*)

32% of homes in UK had electricity

1932

Walter 'Hoppy' Davis of Piddletrenthide was asked to extend his PV school bus run. He was to take children from AP to BN school, but only in the winter. They were expected to walk in the summer. In 1932 Percy Abbott took over the business and this school run. His main coach driver from 1932 to 1972 was Bill PURCHASE of *Cherry Cottage*, AP (*Piddletrenthide Memories project 2010*)

1933

Hitler became Chancellor of Germany (Jan 30)

William GIBBS crushed to death by a cow at *Barcombe Farm* (Aug).

Rain on 12 Sep ended the long Dorset drought. There had only been 5 sunless days since the end of Feb and since the end of May rain over 1mm had only fallen 17 times, mainly at night. (*Dorset Echo 'Looking Back' feature 13 Sep 08*)

Village school closed in December and was subsequently used as a village hall.

1934

Piddle Valley had summer drought conditions, with drinking water available from standpipes at specified times (*Dorset Magazine 1976*)

Driving tests introduced

1935

Jan and Feb. Foot & Mouth struck South Dorset. In April it was discovered in North Dorset and 2,100 animals were slaughtered at Sturminster Newton Market and a standstill order within a 15 mile radius issued. (*Jack Dimond*)

30 mph speed limit introduced for built-up areas. AP not considered a built-up area.

(*AP Parish minutes*)

1936

Col Robert SAUNDERS died, son Commander Frank succeeded to AP Manor.

George V died, Edward VIII succeeded but then abdicated, brother became George VI

1937

999 emergency service introduced

1938

Nurses' Home built for 95 female staff at Herrison Hospital, which had its own farm, laundry, ballroom, cinema, operating theatre and dentist. Farm closed 1976. See 1948. (FODA newsletter 18.1, DHC)

65% of homes in UK had electricity.

1939

Carriers from Dorchester through valley to Buckland Newton were G Lugg from the *White Hart* Wed & Sat and C E Jeans from Trinity Street Wed, Fri & Sat. (*Directory*)

Electricity supply reached AP early in year. (*Derek Jeanes 2007*)

Sep 3. Britain and France declare war on Germany. Coldest winter in Britain since 1894.

Stan and Freda CLARK took over the PO, until 1946. (*Jean Lane nee Clark 2007*)

1940

Mar 11/12.. The contents of the Vicarage were auctioned by Symonds & Sampson at the Vicarage, following the death of the Rev. P T P KNOTT in January aged 74. His wife had died in 1938. The catalogue cost 6d and contained 394 lots, spread over two days. (*Catalogue 1940, in possession of Derek Jeanes 2007*)

Oct 7. Hurricane fighter plane P3154 from Warmwell aerodrome was shot down in flames from 25,000 feet above AP, landing in West Acre Field west of *Austral Farm*. Sgt Pilot Dennis Hugh Nichols 19, on his first combat mission, parachuted clear but landed awkwardly near Buckland Newton and damaged his spine. He survived the war and returned to AP to see relics of his plane dug up in AP in November 1993. (*Battle of Britain Dorset, Rodney Legg. Research by Rex Goddard. Memories of Vic Ralph.*)

1940/1

Up to six bombs were jettisoned by enemy aircraft over Green's Field, the field on the hill off the path towards Cerne past *Beechmead*. They were apparently on their way to bomb Bristol (Yate?) but met resistance at Sherborne and turned back, jettisoning their cargo in case they were hit. One failed to go off and was detonated later. Exact year not known but Bristol blitzed mainly between Dec 1940 and Apr 1941, though other raids in 1942.

John Waterman's mother (grandmother?) was in bed at *Barcombe* farmhouse when the bombs were dropped and the explosion shook the house and dust fell on her from the ceiling. (*John Waterman 2007*)

1941

Vicarage sold to Aubrey Waterman who converted it into apartments for rent and named it *Beechmead*.

1943/4

During the occupation of Piddlehinton camp by US forces, many military vehicles moved through AP. One such vehicle left the road opposite the Old PO and demolished a well-head, a local source of water. A tank fell into the river near the school and the locals enjoyed the spectacle of huge US vehicles retrieving it. (*Rose Cosh nee Elsworth, John Waterman 2007*)

1945

Victory in Europe announced 8 May, Japanese surrender 2 Sep.

By August, 171,000 men were being discharged from the armed forces each month, given a demob-suit with high-waisted trousers, a shirt, two (detachable) collars, 2 pairs of socks, 1 pair of shoes, cufflinks, a tie and hat.

1946

ELSWORTHs took over the PO and ran it until its demise in 1976. (*Rose Cosh nee Elsworth 2005*)

1947

Most severe winter in Britain for 53 years, snow lying from Jan 22-Mar 17. Coal, the major source of home heating, couldn't get through from pits to merchants. School-leaving age raised to 15, coal nationalised.

1948

Electric light installed in the village hall (former school)

The orchard north of *Austral Farm*'s dairy chosen for council house building (*Boldacre*)

Reservoir to be built above the pumping station. (AP parish council minutes)

Railways nationalised, NHS founded, Berlin airlift July 48 to May 1949

Britain hosted the Olympic Games, in London. The GCE (General Certificate of education) replaced the School Certificate.

Nationalisation of public services such as railways and health, including Herrison Hospital. See 1986.

2% of homes in UK had a refrigerator, 4% washing machine, 15% electric water heater, 19% electric cooker.

1949

Alton Pancras Pumping Station commissioned; two 2' diameter boreholes 200' deep with suction tank serving high and low level relift pumps. (Sutton Poyntz Water Museum 2006)

The end of clothes rationing. 86% of homes in UK had electricity.

1950

30mph speed limit refused as AP "not a built-up area" (*AP parish council minutes*)
Sturminster Rural District Council pumping station opened at *Coles Bottom* near AP Mill. (*Plaque on pumping station*). Rake Hill Reservoir (high level) on Rippis Lane commissioned (Sutton Poyntz Water Museum 2006)

1951

John Harold WATERMAN of *Barcombe Farm* bought the former village school for £200 on behalf of the parish council, giving the council time to raise the money. (AP parish council minutes)

80% of private homes in England and Wales had piped water. 52% of homes in England and Wales had a kitchen sink, a WC and a fixed bath.

1952

Commander Frank SAUNDERS died and the manor was inherited by his daughter Jocelyn Edith Katherine, wife of Robert MOULD-GRAHAM.

Knapps Hill Reservoir No2 commissioned, located off the road that leads from Buckland Newton to the Old Sherborne Road. (Sutton Poyntz Water Museum 2006)

Dorchester Rural District Council is to acquire land belonging to Mrs Mould-Graham for the creation of eight houses. (*Dorset County Chronicle 5 Jun 1952*). These became today's *Boldacre*, completed in 1956. *The weekly wage was £7.50, a pint of beer 6p, starter home £250, loaf of bread £3 (Office of National Statistics-ONS)*

1953

Piped water supply to village came into use. AP was connected to Piddletrenthide and the reservoir was constructed behind AP pumping station. (*AP parish council minutes/Water Museum, Sutton Poyntz*)

Full day of village celebrations for the Queen's Coronation 3 June.

1954

Rationing officially ended after 14 years

Mar1. John Harold WATERMAN of *Barcombe Farm* sold the former *school* building and land to the Alton Pancras Trust for £200. The Trustees' object for its use was for 'the physical and mental training, recreation, and social, moral and intellectual development through the medium of reading and recreation rooms, library, lectures, classes, recreations and entertainments, for the benefit of the inhabitants of AP.' In fact, a village hall. The signatories and witnesses to the agreement included John Harold WATERMAN, Douglas Tom RALPH, P G WATERMAN, Robert Henry ALNER, Thomas James WOODSFORD, E WOODSFORD, and Albert George and N ELSWORTH of AP Post Office. (*Deed of Conveyance, AP Trust 2007*)

1956

Eight council houses built and named *Boldacre* (*AP parish council minutes*)

1959

Mini-car, subscriber trunk dialling (STD) and postcodes introduced

1960s

The two cottages at *Higher Barton* converted into one. (David Webb 2005)

1961

Farthing coin & black-and-white £5 notes abolished, Gagarin first man in space, betting shops legalised, Berlin Wall built, annual motor vehicle roadworthiness tests introduced, known as the MOT certificate (Ministry of Transport!)

1962

Church repaired and electric heating installed. The estimated cost was £1,550 of which £175 was the heating. Overseen by churchwardens E J JEANES and C KELLAWAY. (Faculty document at DHC m/film R1316)

1962/3

From Dec 1962 to Mar 1963 the country was frozen with non-stop snow and ice. It was the coldest since 1740.

The village almost ran out of food and we had to get to Dorchester using Margaret Ralph's Land Rover, crossing fields and using river beds as the roads were blocked by snow. (Jim Elsworth 2007)

1963

Beeching Report which led to decimation of railways, Kennedy assassinated, Great Train Robbery

Last of the four cottages opposite *Brook* and *Austral Cottages* probably demolished. Four bungalows built behind this site in 1965. (Mike Squires, occupier, 2005)

Architect's report described the church as *built on 15th century foundations, greatly restored 1875 and so little remains of the original. Internal decoration poor, dark and dismal. The font is a 15th century octagonal birdbath-type of no particular beauty.* (DHC m/film R1316)

1966

John Harold WATERMAN succeeded as parish council chairman by Derek JEANES of *Boldacre*. (AP parish council minutes)

First credit card introduced, by Barclays Bank

1968

Village to be connected to main drainage. (AP parish council minutes)

1st and 2nd class postal system introduced, costs 5d and 4d.

1969

Entitlement to vote reduced from age 21 to 18.

1970

Voting age reduced from 21 to 18

1971

Decimal currency introduced. Goodbye to shillings & pence (240d to the £), hello to New Pence, 100=£1

1972

Crooked Billet pulled down and replaced by bungalow named by Waterman's *Little Holcombe* (John Waterman 2005)

1973

AP parish council amalgamated with Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton councils to form the Piddle Valley parish council. AP elected two representatives, John Harold WATERMAN and Jocelyn MOULD-GRAHAM (AP parish council minutes)

Britain joined the EEC (Common Market). VAT introduced

1974

Barcombe ceased to be a farmhouse, sold as *Barcombe Grange* (John Waterman 2005)

1975

Inflation at 25%. Dutch Elm disease discovered

1976

ELSWORTHs gave up the village post office and shop and although offered for rent as a business by the Manor, there were no takers. (Rose Cosh nee Elsworth 2005) *Surprisingly, no mention in the annual parish meeting minutes.*

A very dry and dusty Piddle Valley in one of the hottest spring and summers on record. (*Dorset Magazine 1976*)

22 Sep. Auction of the 'former Church of England school with outline planning permission to convert from a village hall to a residential dwelling'. It was described as having an entrance lobby 9' x 9', a main hall 30' x 17'6" and a secondary room 20' x 10'4" 'although the planning permission provides for part of the latter to be demolished to make space for the vehicle access.' Sale money placed in a Trust Fund. New owners renamed it *Higher Barton Hall*. (*Auction document among AP Trust papers 2006*)

July 21. When Dorset Community Council applied to the Charities Commission to use AP Trust funds to buy land for a children's play area, it described AP as *a one-street village being unprotected by any speed limit and a dangerous area for young children*. The request was refused. (*Letter among AP Trust papers 2006*)

1977

Weekly wage £95, starter home £19,000, loaf of bread 27p (Office of National Statistics (ONS)

1979

Villagers pressed for a children's playground at south end of *Boldacre* and West Dorset district council agreed, but villagers later preferred car parking space for the houses.

Post box moved from the Old PO to *Boldacre*. (*AP annual parish meeting minutes & JD Waterman*)

1980

Church bells removed to founders at Loughborough and transported back and reinstalled by the Royal Engineers. The village turned out to watch the spectacle. One of the bells dates from the 1300s, the most modern from the 1600s. Overseen by churchwardens Charles Frederick C KELLAWAY and Elizabeth Eva FOY. The cost was £1,552.50, the cheque made out by PCC treasurer Charles E MALLETT of *Hayes, AP*. (*Faculty document in DHC at m/film R1316*)

1983

First village street lights installed, one outside *Austral Farm*, the other at *Boldacre*. (*AP annual parish meeting minutes*)

1985

Letter objecting to proposal to build 10 houses on what was to become *Holcombe Mead*. AP residents preferred five. (*Annual parish meeting minutes*)

1986

Herrison Hospital closed. Became HQ of West Dorset Health Authority until final closure 1992. (*FODA (Friends of Dorset Archives) newsletter 18.1, DHC*)

1987

Bus shelter proposed next to *1 The Terrace*. Mrs MOULD-GRAHAM agreed the land but it was never built. (*Annual parish meeting minutes*)

Barn and other farm buildings opposite *Barcombe farm* demolished for the 10 houses that became *Holcombe Mead*. (*Deeds*)

1988

Fairview and *Burnside* cottages sold at auction, demolished and replaced by four dwellings. (*Auction notice*)

Proposals for the Puddletown bypass published.

1989

22 Feb. AP Trust registered as a charity. Trust members were Major Michael Roland DANGERFIELD (Hon.Sec), Lt. Col Rex Edmund GODDARD (Hon. Treasurer), Rev. Derek PARRY, Mrs Jocelyn Edith Katherine MOULD-GRAHAM, Victor James RALPH, John Denner WATERMAN. (*AP Trust papers 2006*)

Tree planted just inside the entrance to the driveway to the 'new' *Barcombe farmhouse* to commemorate the centenary of Dorset CC, who supplied the tree! (*Centenary of CC's*)

Piddletrenthide Methodist church closed, having been founded in 1857. WATERMAN family had strong connections with it. (*N&V 1989*)

July 21. Notice by DCC of their proposed 30mph speed limit through Alton Pancras on the B3143 to extend from a point 150 metres south of the junction with Ripps Lane and approx 980 metres north from the same site.

Aug 3. Outline planning permission sought to develop land at *Crockers Barton* by erection of a village centre comprising 23 houses and village shop/community facility with associated car parking and access. Withdrawn 29 Aug 89. (www.Dorsetforyou.Planning)

Sep 17. The Piddle Valley Methodists ceased worshipping at their church situated opposite today's modern Piddle Valley School. It had opened in 1857 and there are memories of people walking or riding in pony and trap to services from Alton Pancras, particularly the Watermans. (*N&V Sep/Oct 1989*)

1990

Authorisation given for general roof and stonemasonry repairs and birdguards fitted to the church. (*Authorisation doc at DHC m/film R1316.*)

1991

Population 147, 24% aged 0-15, 15% retirement age. There were 53 dwellings, 64% owner/occupied, 13% of households without car (www.Dorsetforyou)

Heaters fitted to rear of pews in the church. (*Authorisation doc at DHC m/film R1316*)

1992

52 villagers signed a letter of support for the development of *Crocker's Barton* field for 6 low-cost houses, a village hall, playground, bus-stop and footpaths. The signatures were instigated by June CHALK. West Dorset DC felt that the land provided an important local gap and refused the application. (*Copy of campaign letter*)

1993

Feb 10. A public meeting called by the parish council at the behest of S Peaceful DAY of *Sunny Cottage* and Andrew Graham of the *Manor*, aimed at getting the area around *Crocker's Barton* re-designated to allow, if required, six housing association houses and perhaps communal facilities for villagers. Motion defeated. (*Meeting advert and information leaflet*)



Riders run the gauntlet of anti-bloodsport protestors at Alton Pancras. Picture by Steve Belasco.

PEACEFUL START TO THE SEASON

MORE than 30 anti-bloodsport demonstrators turned out at Alton Pancras to stage a peaceful protest at the season's formal opening meet of the South

No friction at South Dorset's first meet

Nov 1. The *Echo* carried this story of a peaceful demonstration against hunting at Alton Pancras "as over 100 hunt enthusiasts prepared for the South Dorset Hunt's first meeting of the season outside the village's manor house".

1994

Remains of a Hurricane fighter from WW2 excavated in AP in the presence of the pilot. (See 1940.)

1995

Runner-Up in the Best Kept Small Village competition. (*Certificate*)

1996

Piddle Valley chosen for a pilot study following the World Earth Summit Agenda 21 agreed at a conference in Rio. John WATERMAN, Sally DANGERFIELD and David WEBB among the key players.

BBC Radio Dorset FM was to be swallowed up into BBC Radio Solent with promises of not losing its Dorset identity! Station manager David BENNETT of *Fairview* saw it coming and obtained a job with Dorset CC and later Southampton council and moved there. (*Echo* 5 Aug)

Runner-up in the Best Kept Small Village competition. (*Certificate*)

1997

Piddle Valley History Group launched as part of Agenda 21. Ran for 6 months and although 50 different people joined in, no one was willing to help with its organisation. (CD)

1998

Hayley Bates of *Brook Cottage* made national news when arrested for bigamy, 'marrying' her 6th husband Stephen Perry and living at AP. At one stage she was 'married' to two friends from the Royal Yacht *Brittania!* She had no real AP connections and by the time she married for the 7th time in Feb 1999 at Weymouth she had left the village. (Daily Mail 19 Feb 1998, Dorset Echo 1 Feb 1999).

1999

Puddletown bypass opened. (*Dorset Echo*)

The 21st Century

2000

A commemorative village seat inscribed with the names of all (willing) residents as at 1 Jan that year was produced but due to a foot-and-mouth outbreak countrywide, could not be officially opened until 2002. (CD 2002). Jocelyn Mould-Graham, who donated the land, opened the seat by cutting a ribbon in front of village families. Help for the project came from the Alton Pancras Trust and the seat was designed by village resident Eric Groome. David Webb told the *Dorset Echo* "The bronze plaque was attached to the seat but the opening was delayed due to foot and mouth restrictions. Mrs Mould-Graham formally opened it, Rev. Richard Thomson dedicated a blessing and villagers toasted the Purbeck stone seat." (*Echo 19 Apr 2002*)

2001

Population 145 of which 23% were aged 15 or less, 58% aged 16-64, 19% aged 65+. There were 68 dwellings, 60 household spaces with residents, no second homes. 75% were owner-occupied, 7% council etc rented, 18% other form of tenure. Only 5% of households had no car. No one aged between 16-74 was unemployed. 37% worked in managerial and professional occupations. (*census*)



CHARITY SAYS THANK YOU: Major Roland Dangerfield receives the plaque from British Heart Foundation organiser Pamela Fry and branch Chairman, Hazel Joyce Picture: FINNBARR WEBSTER

Plaque tribute to Roland's efforts

Major Roland DANGERFIELD 31 of *Beechmead*, raised £4,600 for the British Heart Foundation by running the London marathon, in memory of his father Major Michael, and grandfather Roland Dangerfield who both died on their way to watch cricket at Lords on the same day, June 19, in 1998 and 1964 respectively. (*Echo 18 Sep*)

2002 Weekly wage £385, pint of beer £1.90, starter home £69,000, loaf of bread 53p. (ONS-Office of National Statistics). Unveiling of the Millennium seat (see 2000).

May. A jury was ordered to return a not-guilty verdict on a man accused of aggravated burglary and wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm on semi-retired AP farmer John Waterman 67. The main witness, the sister of the accused, changed her story. John had been knocked unconscious with a baseball bat. (Echo 23 May)

2003

Very Highly Commended in the Best Kept Small Village competition.

2004

Brook Cottage enlarged by its owner Andrew Graham, when he took up residence from another estate property also recently renovated, *Sunny Cottage*. (Andrew Graham).

Very Highly Commended in the *Best Kept Small Village* competition.

2005

Very Highly Commended in the *Best Kept Small Village* competition.

Alton Pancras History Project launched at the annual parish meeting in response to suggestions for a community project. As the collection of information increased, displays of old photographs were mounted in the church and a slide show by Derek JEANES.

2006



Charlie KELLAWAY, legendary AP character, now living at *Wightman's Orchard*, officially opened the refurbished *Piddle Inn* on his 85th birthday. (Echo 11 Feb) He was to die later in 2006.

The occasion was the re-opening of the Piddle Inn following refurbishment. Licensee Carline Way said "Charlie has been a regular here for about 30 years so we thought we would ask him to reopen the pub on his 85th birthday. He has lived all his life in the Piddle Valley and he still plays crib for us on Mondays with wife Peggy."

March



New railings awaited outside Barcombe Grange looking south



An inconvenience for the rest of the village!

Roadside railings replaced after a campaign by some villagers that the old ones spoiled the appearance of the village and when they became damaged they stayed that way because whole sections would need replacing. The new ones can be individually replaced, allegedly. (Letter to all residents from DCC dated 20 Feb 2006)

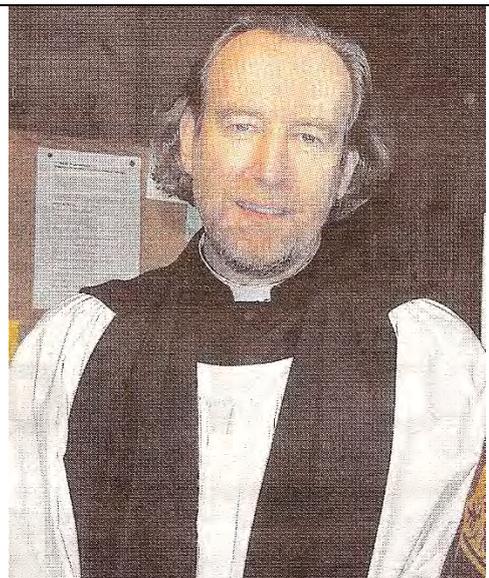
The *Alton Pancras History Project* culminated in the launch at the church of a 100-page book *Alton Pancras Houses and People 1841-2006*. All known houses were described, some with photographs. Words were by Colin Dean, images by Mike Squires. All 150 copies were sold on the day. Dorchester Lending library has two copies and they can be ordered through the inter-library loan system countrywide.

The RALPH's tenancy of *Austral Farm* ended. Greatly renovated but no longer used as a farmhouse.

Nov.

Rev. Tony MONDS and wife Jenny, a librarian, moved into the vicarage at Piddletrenthide, he having been appointed as parish priest for the Piddle Valley plus Hilton, Cheselbourne and Melcombe Horsey. Aged 53, this was Tony's first incumbency. Brought up in Ferndown where his father was rector, Tony progressed to become managing partner of a large solicitors before changing direction to work in the charity sector, then in 1997 becoming a non-stipendiary ordained local minister covering six villages just south of Sherborne, followed by being bursar at Sarum College, Salisbury and stipendiary curate at Sherborne Abbey. (N&V Jan/Feb2007)

Echo photo



2007

Highly Commended in the *Best Kept Small Village* competition.

Sally Dangerfield of *Beechmead* retired from serving as one of two AP parish councillors since 1984 and was presented with a book about Thomas Hardy at the village meeting. She later served for another term, in the absence of a replacement.

The *Alton Pancras History Project* published two small booklets during the year. *Alton Pancras Past* which focussed on the village's one-time shop, hall, pub and a second mansion house. *Alton Pancras War Memorial*, biographical details of those who died, several who also served, and a list of villagers who subscribed to the cost. (updated version published in 2010)

The recently-arrived Bob and Judith Lally at *Rectory Cottage* filled up their wood burner and went out for lunch. Logs on a fireplace were set alight by heat from the log burner and filled the house with smoke. Sally Dangerfield of nearby *Beechmead* heard the smoke alarm and dialled 999. Charlie Thornton from *Higher Barton Hall* opposite raced across with his fire extinguisher, units from the fire service arrived and smoke was the only damage greeting the returning Lallys. (*Echo 17 Dec*)

2008

Highly Commended in the *Best Kept Small Village* competition.

Alton Pancras History Project published its last booklet, *The Lost Houses of Alton Pancras*.

2009

Feb. Heavy snow arrived unexpectedly mid-morning, parents of all schools were told to collect their children and Dorchester was gridlocked. Snow made even the slightest hills slippery and it took four hours to get from Dorchester to AP. At one stage all roads to the valley were impassable but thanks to James Boughie of Piddletrenthide Manor organising his farm staff and equipment, journeys home were eventually completed. It was later described as the worst snow for 18 years. (*CD*)

Dec. Start of almost continuous snow and certainly ice. Even when it rained the water froze as it touched the ground. Tricky driving. This continued until **mid-Jan**. The Channel Tunnel was blocked when trains entered it covered in snow and this short-circuited the rails and hundreds of passengers were stranded aboard. (*Met. Office/TV News*)

Highly Commended in *Best Kept Small Village* competition.

2010

Feb 3. An armed raid at Court Farm, Buckland Newton at 2.30am led to a police helicopter and cars searching the northern part of AP as the four raiders ran across fields. They were tracked to the field between the west side of *Little Holcombe* and the lane leading up to *Holcombe Dairy* but three escaped as poor visibility hampered the search. One man from Somerset was arrested. Alison KOPPENALL of *Boldacre* was one of the witnesses, having been staying overnight at the *Gaggle of Geese* where she worked. (*Echo 4 Feb, pages 1,4,5*)

Sep. AP won *Best Hamlet* award in the *Best Kept Villages* competition. This was a shock to many who felt that the village had never looked so scruffy, particularly the overhang of the river. The area of and around the church had probably tipped the scales, ironic in that a hamlet is described as a small village usually without a church!

2011

Census showed population of 175 in 71 dwellings, male 83 female 92. Of these, 19% (34) were aged 15 or less, 65% (113) aged 16-64 and 16% (28) aged 65+. The countywide averages were young people 16%, the 16-64 group 58% and the 65+ (26%).

An attractive and colourful village map showing its history, flora and fauna, was unveiled opposite the church in a project led by Andrew GRAHAM and financed by the Alton Pancras Trust. (CD)

Pat KENWRICK presented a piano to the church to encourage people to use the church as a venue for some social occasion or events. (CD)

The AP Shoot featured in the national magazine *Shooting Times* and while famous visitors such as Jeremy Clarkson, Guy Ritchie, Andrew Parker-Bowles, Roger Taylor of rock group *Queen* and others received mentions for attending, it was AP keepers Nick BONIFACE, Tom FERRET, Stuart BLAND and Fraser CRAIG who made the front cover picture. (PVN&V)

2012

AP's Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration in Sally DANGERFIELD's paddock mirrored Her Majesty's; torrential rain. Bill DAVEY had cleared the Piddle for the river pageant but the event was reduced to the street-party-in-a-tent attended by 45% of the village population. Colonel TREVIS presided, leading the loyal toast and the National Anthem and our own matriarch Marion WIGHTMAN ceremonially cut the magnificent cake made by Sue HOWELL. The weather literally brought us all closer! (PVN&V)

Our church gains many compliments. It is regularly kept clean, tidy and decorated for services by a surprisingly small team, currently comprising Nancy TITLEY, Gill GREENSLADE, Susan Cheyne, Rachel OLLEY, Sally and Dr Sally DANGERFIELD, Charlotte GERARD, Jill Shattock, Clare CLARKE, Angela TREVIS, Elaine POTTS, Julie SQUIRES and Sue DEAN. Now, after 30 years co-ordinating this team, Jillie EDWARDS is taking her well-earned 'retirement'. (PVN&V)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) for AP paid tribute to its retiring (in both contexts!) treasurer Rex GODDARD for his 30 years in post. These two items indicate just how much the village relies on volunteers to keep it as pleasant and efficient as it is. (PVN&V)

July 12. A fantastic, historic day for not one but two AP Olympic torch-bearing residents. Rachel OLLEY did a morning shift through Iwerne Minster, while Laura KERR had an afternoon run through Bridport. Both had been nominated for their respective voluntary and charity work, for fundraising, and their motivational skills. (PVN&V)

The kidnapping and blindfolding of a young lady named Jen TINDALL from Glanvilles Wootton had a happy ending. She was driven across rough terrain to a remote spot and when the blindfold was removed she was able to read a message carved on a hillside which read "Marry Me". Tom FERRET, the perpetrator, was released following a caution from the 58 AP villagers and friends who were present as witnesses! (PVN&V)

Nov. A superb *Winter Music Programme* featuring the Epstein Trio showed just how attractive a concert-hall setting Alton Pancras church can create. (PVN&V)

2013

Jan. The AP Trust recently appointed two new members, Jonathan Pethen of *Brookside* and Heather Bland of *Holcombe Mead*. They joined chairman Rex Goddard, secretary Sue Brazier, treasurer Terry Cowley, and existing members Andrew Graham, John Squibb and John Waterman. The Trust originated from the proceeds of the sale of the former school and village hall, today's *Higher Barton Hall*, in 1977.

Feb. Presentations were made by the PCC to Rex Goddard of *Blades* for his 30 years as Treasurer of the PCC (he was now its chairman) and to Gillie Edwards of *Holcombe Dairy House* for organising the floral displays in the church during the same period, 1983-2013.

Mar. PCC Chairman Richard Titley presented framed copies of the Alton Pancras map to Rex Goddard of *Blades* for his 30 years voluntary service as PCC Treasurer, and Jillie Edwards of *Holcombe Dairy House* for organising the floral decorations in the church for the same period. Communities only function through volunteers such as these.

May. Vic Ralph's family will have special reason to visit the National Trust's *Coleshill House* site this year. During WW2, Vic, then of *Austral Farm*, volunteered to be trained as a local saboteur should an invasion take place, along with father Gilbert, and Aubrey Waterman. On display at *Coleshill* is one of the underground bunkers in which their 'weapons' were stored. AP's bunker was in Church Hill Wood.

May. Marion Wightman's funeral at a packed Piddletrenthide church was such a warm, friendly event, with spoken tributes from a family duo, readings and addresses from friends and Methodist Ministers, and a beautifully sung blessing from AP neighbours Rachel and Hattie Olley. Marion had a long family association with the Waterman's in their days running *Barcombe Farm*.

May. While Devon cancelled the last day of its County Show due to torrential rain, AP bravely went ahead with its fete, rewarded with a surprisingly large attendance in the former vicarage/rectory, the home of the Dangerfields. Lord and Lady Kitchener-Fellowes, fresh from TVs *Downton Abbey*, alluded to the British attitude to the weather in their official-opening speech.

Sep. Margaret Sawyer, whose ashes were interred in the churchyard recently, had lived with husband Frederick in one of the two *Barcombe Farm Cottages* just after the war, during which she had served in the Women's Land Army and had lodged in both the *Manor House* and at *Beechmead*, the former Rectory.

Sep. Mervyn Gibbs of Creekmore near Poole, who died recently, descended from the prolific AP Gibbs family that included Eliza born 1811, a servant at AP Manor who eloped with Thomas Phelps, son of the Lord of the Manor and married in London in 1832. She died aged 27 and lies buried in our churchyard as Eliza Phelps. Mervyn provided photographs, research and much information to the AP history project and helped to finance the publishing of the resulting book.

Nov. A recent visitor to our church where she was christened in 1956 was Sarah Gillett, born when her parents Michael and Margaret lived at *Beechmead*, today's *Old Rectory*. They were career Diplomats based much of the time overseas, so Sarah saw a lot of 'Nanny Ward' who lived nearby in *Rectory Cottage*. Sarah's parents and Nanny are commemorated in the churchyard.

Nov. In just one edition, we were able to welcome new occupiers to numbers 1,2,3,4 and 7 *Boldacre*.

2014

2015

Jan. Dr Sally Dangerfield of *The Old Rectory* introduced a scheme which, at the touch of a button, messages could be circulated to all residents on e-mail, Facebook and Twitter. (PVN&V)

May. David Ridgway of *Alton Barton* was co-author of a magnificent new book titled *Vivat Shirburnia; Sherborne School and the Great War*.(PVN&V)

May. Sally Dangerfield senior retired as one of our parish councillors after 27 years in two spells, three years as chairman. Fellow councillor Terry Cowley also stood down, after seven years. Both were thanked for their service on our behalf. They were succeeded by Bernard Clifton of the *Old Post Office* and Marie Pethen of *Brook Cottage*.

Colin Dean 2015

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