FARMS IN THE PARISH OF BERE FERRERS.

**FERRY FARM**

by Rex Toll *(editor’s changes for clarity in italics)*

This farm is situated on the river Tamar opposite the village of Calstock. The farm house is very old with open beams to the ground floor. At one time it was an inn, when the bar was in the front room facing the river. I can remember it being such. It was run by the Halls, who also ran the dairy farm, milking twice a day. The shippons *(cowsheds)* were constructed with wood and galvanised iron, modern at that date. These have been replaced with new shippons for the Rundles. The farm is the property of the Mount Edgcumbe Estate and has been for many years. The farm house was reroofed after the Second World War by ourselves. We also carried out the repairs for a long period to the old shippons. The water supply rises above the farm in a small coppice, flowing into a reservoir further down towards the farmhouse. This supply used to also supply Ward House with water to a reservoir on the private road into the house.

At the front of the farmhouse was a galvanised wood building open in the frontage all the way along. This building was used to accommodate parties who came up river from Plymouth for afternoon teas when it was not suitable to eat outside. It had seats fixed some time ago at the rear of the open part. The teas etc., were supplied by the owners of the inn. It must have been very popular by the size of the open shed.

This inn must have been very much used during the construction of the new viaduct as the concrete for the piers were cast on a piece of land near the river. The base of the old concrete was *(still)* there some time ago.

A Mr. Jack Conium who worked for my father helped to unload the cement from the barges moored to a jetty near the area where the concrete blocks were cast. I think he was paid something like a 1/4d penny a bag. Adjoining the farm was a boat building shed where many a boat was constructed. The old gent, a Mr. Goss was said not to have used a ruler. He used his wonderful knowledge to work out the size and weight of these boats. It always seemed a rough old shed, but much work was carried out in this building. Outside, near the old building was *a steam box made from an old drum with water that was heated with the wood offcuts and where the timbers were enclosed.* This made the timbers pliable, then they were put in a gig or on the boats being constructed, to cool off. Mr. Goss learned his trade at Netstakes – a quay off the road from Calstock to Gunnislake. He used to live at Calstock, having to cross over the river each day. There was a public ferry from the Calstock side to Ferry Farm where one had to pay two pence to be rowed across. One had to shout ‘BOAT!’ and the ferryman would take one across. It was a little difficult to steer the boat when there was a lot of water running downstream when the tide was going down.