

## A Small Holding, Tuckermarsh

This is how it is listed in the 1921 Earl of Mount Edgecombe sale of houses and land in the Parish of Bere Ferrers. It is the second house on the right, down the lane by the railway bridge at Tuckermarsh, now known as "The Hollies". It was let to William Matters (nicknamed Billy Trickets). It consisted of a kitchen, one bedroom, boxroom, a Pig's house and a closet in the garden with 4 acres, 3 rod and 7 perch of land. After 1923 an extra bedroom and sitting room were added.



During the war a Mr Greenfield bought the property to escape the bombing in London. My father Arch Dawe was asked to work there and run it as manager. At this time the land had to be used for growing fruit and vegetables so the daffodil bulbs were dug up and planted on the hedges to be replanted again after the war.

In 1946 Mr Greenfield and his family wanted to return to London and he offered Arch first refusal on the property. He decided to take it on and so with his wife Dora they moved in. At that time there were a lot of Apple, Cherry, and Plum trees and these were quite old so were taken down in order to grow strawberries and daffodils. As the acreage increased potatoes, cabbage, beans, peas, anemones etc were grown and sold locally in Bere Alston and Plymouth.

In those days daffodil flowers were sent to market fully open, so two small sheds were built, with a tortoise stove in each, to force the flowers, which were placed in dozens of jars.



The Double Whites (*Narcissus albus plenus odoratus*) were more popular up the line so were boxed and sent by train to the London markets of Covent Garden, Spitalfields and Borough Market. Also Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester.



There was no running water on the property so it had to be fetched from a shared well down the lane. With the help of Mr Broad, who showed Arch how to divine for water, he dug a well and built a small reservoir and this was used until 1963 when mains water was brought to Tuckermarsh and Rumleigh.

In 1952 a Ferguson TE20 tractor and rotovator were purchased and that made work a lot easier than using the old Trusty tractor. Then a few years later a small Ransome caterpillar tractor was bought for planting bulbs and ridging up and taking out potatoes.



Before that all the rows were dug out by hand using a potato digger and the bulbs planted in threes along the trench and not scattered as they are now. All the rows had to be straight. A neighbour once said to me that in Spring she liked to look across the valley and see the daffodils shooting up in the straight rows. Arch would have been pleased to hear that.



In 1958 the old packing shed was replaced by a new larger one. Arch retired in 1975 having sold off some of the fields to neighbours just leaving three and a half acres around the house. He sadly passed away in 1977. His wife Dora sold the property in 1980 to Mr & Mrs Munn. They sold it on to Mr & Mrs P White who lived there for several years.

Dora and her daughter Gillian moved to Broad Park Road, Bere Alston in 1980 after many happy years at Tuckermarch the place where I was born.



Gill Dawe March 2023