

A History of Combe Down's Allotments

"... for the benefit of the labourers of Combe Down."

Revd G Newnham, Vicar of Combe Down, 1852

SAVE COMBE
DOWN'S



ALLOTMENTS

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Allotment Gardening in Combe Down since 1851

The history of allotment gardening in Combe Down is inextricably linked to the first Vicar of Combe Down, the Revd. George Newnham (1806-1893), who was himself a keen gardener. Revd. Newnham established the first village allotments in 1851, but since then several sites have come and gone – all developed and built over. By 2024, just two precious sites remained: one in Church Road and one more recent site on Bradford Road, nearer to the Foxhill community.

Combe Down's simple allotment gardens have played an important role in the life of the ordinary people of the village for more than 170 years. The crops they produce and the social interaction they encourage have sustained a community for generations, but very sadly this much-valued part of village life is being ended in 2025 with the closure of the Church Road allotments following the landowner's decision to withdraw the lease from the Council. From October 2025, only the tiny Bradford Road site at Foxhill will remain.

The Church Road and Foxhill sites deserve to be properly safeguarded so that they can continue to play their part in the daily life of Combe Down. Now a community of over 3000 homes, the village looks to a future with an ever-increasing population but (compared to previous generations) with severely reduced access to the pleasures of gardening for food, good health, social interaction and recreation.

Church Road Allotments

Combe Down's peaceful and productive allotment site in Church Road is integral to Bath's working-class social history. Established in the nineteenth century for the villagers who quarried the stone that built this beautiful World Heritage city, this unassuming but much-cherished local green space can be easily forgotten amongst Bath's world-famous buildings and crescents.

Clearly marked on Ordnance Survey maps dating from the late 19th century, Church Road allotments sit between Upper Lawn Quarry, Oldfield Old Boys' Rugby Football Club, St Winifred's Drive, Shaft Road and Monkton Prep School. They occupy land over an area of limestone, some of which is designated for mineral extraction.

These are not statutory allotments. Although they have been worked since the 1890s when they were first leased to Monkton Combe Parish Council for use by residents of the Combe Down Ward, they remained on privately-owned land on a short-term rolling lease to Bath & North East Somerset Council. Areas of these venerable - and consequently vulnerable - allotments have been swallowed up over time by quarrying, most recently in 2020, and it has been a struggle to maintain their long-term future as a critical village asset: a struggle that now appears to have been lost.

A brief history of allotment gardening and its regulation

The oldest known continuously worked allotments in Britain are the St Ann's Allotments, Nottingham, which have been in use since the 1600s and are a Grade II* listed site.

Our modern allotment system has its roots in the 19th century when field enclosures, the industrial revolution and rapid urbanisation saw a population explosion and massive movements into towns and cities.

With little free land for families to grow food and no welfare state, deprivation and poverty were widespread. Land, often provided by local churches from traditional glebe lands which once supported the clergy, began to be offered to the working poor to grow food. Allotted to tenants in standardised units, these became commonly known as allotment gardens, usually measuring ten lugs or rods (with a rod equivalent to sixteen and a half feet or just over five metres).¹ Unique local rules defined the management of the allotment gardens. **These dimensions and rules form the basis for our modern egalitarian system and can still be identified at Combe Down's Victorian allotments off Church Road, where historic stone numbered plot markers carved by local quarrymen are still in position today.**



The 1908 Small Holdings & Allotments Act required local authorities to provide sufficient allotments to meet local demand. In 1919, the Land Settlement Facilities Act required allotments to be available to all, with the intention of supporting servicemen returning from the First World War. Allotment holders' rights were further strengthened by the Allotments' Acts of 1922, but it was **the Allotments'**

¹ The rod was useful as a unit of length because whole number multiples can form one acre of square measure. An acre is equivalent to 160 rods.

Act of 1925 which established the protected status of statutory allotments and ensured that they cannot be sold off or converted by local authorities without Ministerial consent.

More national legislation has been introduced in the 20th and 21st centuries to protect allotments, including the 1948 Allotments Act and the UK Localism Act of 2011. In Bath, the Council has adopted several related policy documents in the last ten years including its Core Strategy (2014), its Green Space Strategy (2015) and its Placemaking Plan (2017), each incorporating policies to protect local allotments and to ‘increase the provision of local food growing’, recognising the impact of climate change and the need for healthy living.

According to the National Allotment Society, during recession or economic and political uncertainty, people turn to the land.² The “Dig for Victory” campaign during the Second World War and the subsequent austerity saw more than 1.5 million allotment plots in cultivation across the UK. The three-day week and trade union unrest of the 1970s encouraged more interest, characterised by the BBC television comedy “The Good Life”. Demand for allotments soared to new levels during the 2020-21 pandemic and lockdowns with waiting lists of up to 3 years or more in Combe Down.^{3 4}

Demand continues unabated. People are increasingly concerned by where and how their food is produced. With only an estimated 330,000 allotment plots remaining in the UK in 2020, it has never been more difficult to get an allotment.⁵ Protecting existing sites from developers is increasingly challenging. Finding new land on which to create new allotments or replace statutory allotments lost to development often results in an unequal fight between well-financed commercial interests and cash-strapped local Councils.

Combe Down: an eighteenth-century stone mining village

Set on well-drained and easily extracted limestone on the southern slopes above Bath, Combe Down began to develop in the 18th century, although evidence of Romano-British occupation and associated vineyards can be found, with the occasional large stone tomb still being discovered. Originally an area of quarries and scattered dwellings encompassed by the ancient parish of Monkton Combe, the village was created in the 1700s by Ralph Allen of Prior Park, who industrialised the quarrying of limestone to supply the new buildings of Bath and beyond. Demand grew rapidly, and so did the village. By 1815, Combe Down had its own Unitarian Chapel. By the 1830s the population had increased to such an extent that it could build and support its own Anglican church. A new parsonage was required and by 1842 an impressive house had been built to the east of the church which was occupied by the newly appointed Revd George Newnham, his second wife Catherine and their growing family.

² <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/aug/10/interest-in-allotments-soars-in-england-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

⁴ <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/find-allotment>

⁵ <https://www.powersheds.com/allotment-waiting-lists/>

Revd George William Newnham: the founder of Combe Down's allotments



Born in Lincolnshire in 1806 and educated at Bristol Grammar School and Christ Church, Oxford, George Newnham was appointed Perpetual Curate of Monkton Combe (which included Combe Down) in 1842. In 1863 the ecclesiastical parish of Combe Down was separated from Monkton Combe and the Revd Newnham assumed the role of Vicar of Combe Down.

Revd Newnham lived and worked in Monkton Combe and Combe Down for over 30 years, fathering 17 children and eventually retiring to Corsham in 1877 with his third wife Harriette.

1851 Tithe Maps of Monkton Combe Parish⁶

Our modern village follows the outlines of fields and plots of land shown on the March 1851 tithe maps of Monkton Combe Parish to a remarkable degree. The ancient path running northwest from Monkton Combe up the drung to Mount Pleasant and then alongside the fields now occupied by the Church Road allotments is clear. The point where the path turns to run alongside the allotments past what is now Monkton Prep School car park is also visible on the 1851 map.⁷

⁶ Bath Record Office, File 5, transcript 32-41 Marksbury to Paulton

⁷ Bath Record Office



A wide view of the 1851 tithe map, showing fields 187 and 161 (Upper Lawn and Lower Lawn)



Monkton Combe 1851 Tithe Map showing field 187 (Upper Lawn)

The two large parcels of land of which the Church Road allotments occupy a part are numbered 161 (Lower Lawn) and 187 (Upper Lawn) on the tithe map. Both were owned in the late 19th century by William Vaughan Jenkins of Combe Grove Manor (also Lord of the Manor of Priston). Plot 161 to the south (the area now occupied largely by Oldfield Old Boys Rugby Club and the houses on the west side of Shaft Road) is marked as arable land measuring 13 acres 3R 24P. Plot 187 to the north, covering an area from roughly the existing allotment side gate east to Shaft Road and north to North Road over what is now Glen Field and the houses in Tynning Road was more arable land, covering 19 acres 2R 4P. It is unclear from the documents held in Bath Record Office if this land was being rented to one William Harding in 1851 or was being farmed by WVJ himself but it is most likely that it was tenanted.



Monkton Combe Tithe Map showing field 161 (Lower Lawn)

The parcel of land now occupied by the Bradford Road allotments was described as The Parkland Buildings on the 1851 tithe map. This was pasture and arable land measuring just over 7 acres, owned by Samuel Hadley of the Hadley Estate and rented to one Benjamin Hamlen.

1852: the first allotment site in Combe Down

The first allotment site in the village, created in 1852 by Revd Newnham (now under Westerleigh Road) was also on Hadley Estate land and is shown on the 1851 tithe map as field number 257 (see below).



Monkton Combe Tithe Map 1851 showing field 257 (now Westerleigh Road)

By the time Revd Newnham arrived to take on the parish of Monkton Combe in 1842, Combe Down was suffering significant social problems. Labouring in the mines and quarries was dangerous, difficult and poorly paid and took its toll in deaths and injuries. The population had increased to 1600 across both villages. Drunkenness and poverty were commonplace. In 1841 a local man had been stabbed to death in a drunken brawl outside one of the local pubs in The Avenue, the Carriage Inn.

Revd Newnham was a keen gardener, with his own large garden encompassing the triangle of land between Belmont Road and Church Road to the east of the new vicarage (field 299).



During the 35 years of his incumbency, he made several alterations and improvements to his new vicarage which evidence his love of horticulture: a garden arch in 1842; manure tanks in 1849; a greenhouse in 1853; changes to the stables in 1854; a dairy in 1857 and a cowshed in 1858. He

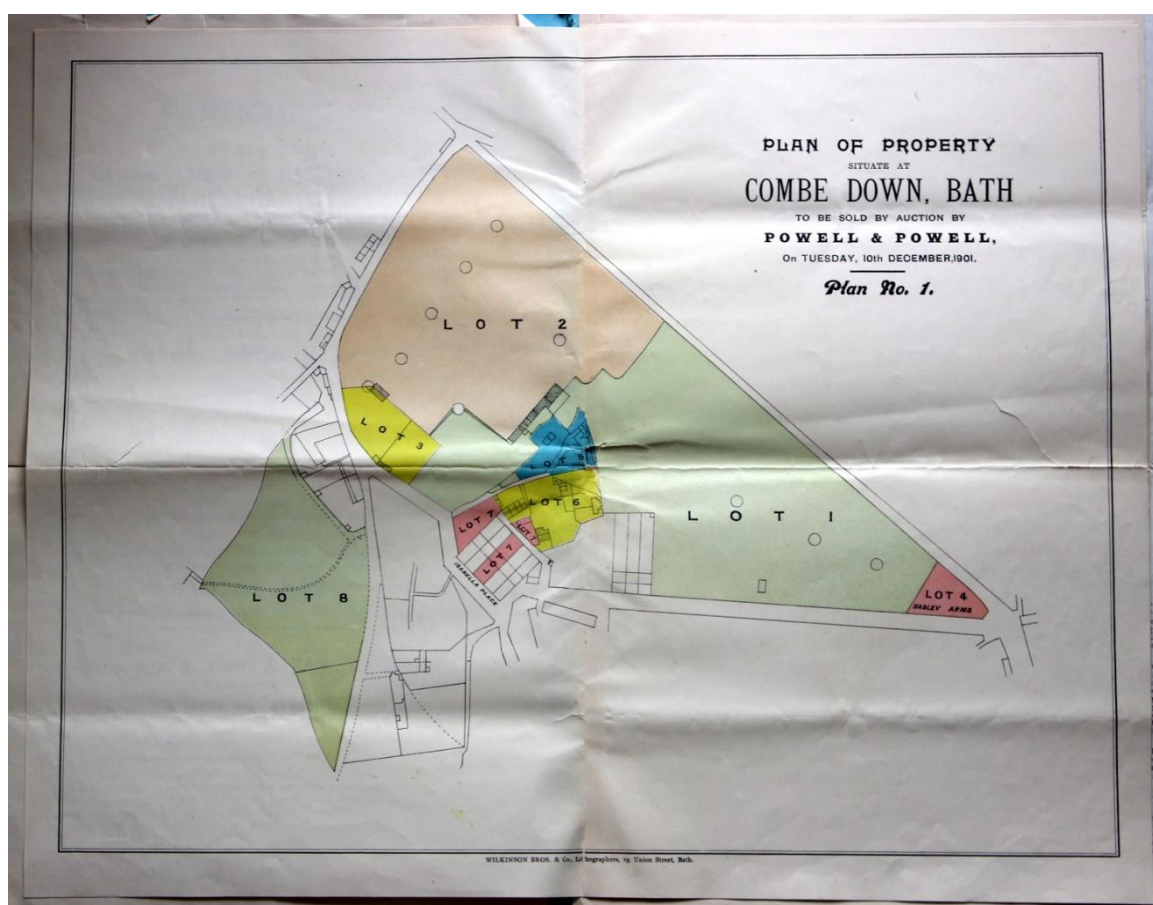
decided that horticulture would help to address some of the social difficulties in the village, and so he introduced the concept of allotment gardening to Combe Down.

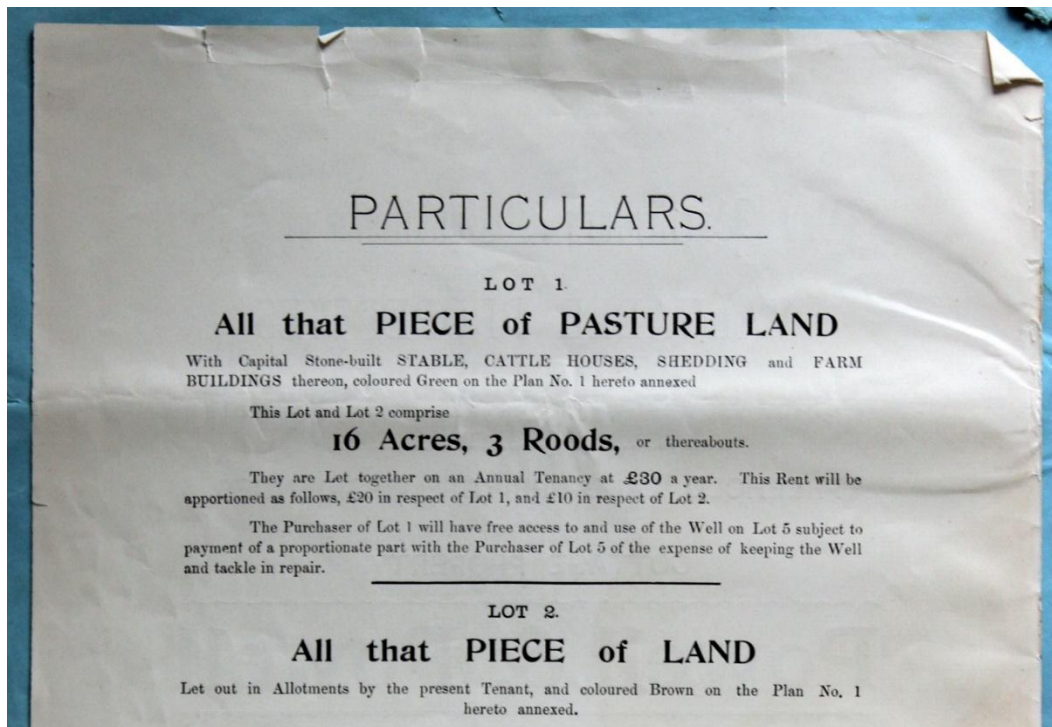
The Bath Chronicle of 22 January 1852 makes the first known reference to allotments in Combe Down, stating that the Revd Newnham “*is about to introduce the allotment system, for the benefit of the labourers of Combe Down*”. In fact, all subsequent reports (probably written by Revd Newnham himself) indicate that allotments had been in place in the village since 1851.

THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.—The Rev. G. Newnham, the respected Incumbent of Monkton Combe, is about to introduce the allotment system, for the benefit of the labourers of Combe Down.

Bath Chronicle 22 January 1852

A suitable area of land was obtained on favourable terms to create at least 33 allotments, and this was sub-let from the existing tenant. It is believed to have been a parcel owned by the Hadley Estate (established 1806), which was bounded to the north by Bradford/North Road and to the west by Combe Road. When the Hadley Estate was later divided up for sale in 1901, this area was separately marked out as Lot 2 and described on the auction particulars as already being “let out by the present tenant as allotments”. Lot 1 has since become the open space now known as The Firs.





1901 Hadley estate sale documents showing Lot 2, let as allotments (courtesy of Mr Graham Barnard, Hadley Arms)⁸

In October 1860, when the Trustees of the Turnpike Roads met to discuss the removal or erection of various toll gates, toll bars and chains across the various turnpikes around Bath, the discussions included reference to the land "*150 yards east of the Jews' Burial Ground ... at present used as allotment gardens*". This is the Hadley Estate land mentioned above.

⁸ Courtesy of Mr Graham Barnard, The Hadley Arms, Combe Down

NOTICE is Hereby Given, that the Trustees of the TURNPIKE ROADS, acting under an Act passed in the 10th year of the reign of his late Majesty, King George the 4th, intituled "An Act for amending and otherwise improving several Roads leading into and from the City of Bath, and for making new Branches of Roads to and from the same," will meet at the GUILDHALL, BATH, on SATURDAY, the 3rd day of NOVEMBER next, at 12 o'Clock at Noon, to consult about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a TOLL GATE, upon and across the Turnpike Road on the Lower Bristol Road, at a spot on that road about 50 feet east of the southern entrance to the road leading from Twerton East to the Suspension Bridge, over the river Avon, known as "Motley's Bridge," and between such entrance and a lane eastward, leading out of the said Lower Bristol Road, to East Twerton Terrace, near the Bath Gaol, all in the parish of Twerton, in the County of Somerset.

Also, to consult about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a TOLL GATE, together with a WEIGHING ENGINE, upon and across a Turnpike Road, on Combe Down, at the western extremity of the parish of Monckton Combe, and its junction with the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe aforesaid, and about 150 yards east of the Jews' Burial Ground, on Combe Down.

Also, about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a BAR or CHAIN on the side of the said Turnpike Road, at the same place, across the entrance to a road leading from the said Turnpike Road, past Brunswick Place, into the village of Combe Down.

Also, about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a TOLL HOUSE, YARD, GARDEN, and other conveniences, upon the south side of the said Turnpike Road, or in and upon a portion of the land adjoining the south side of the said Turnpike Road, at the spot named for the Erection of the aforesaid Toll Gate, Bar, and Weighing Engine last mentioned, which land is at present used as allotment gardens, all within the parish of Monckton Combe aforesaid.



Combe Road circa 1905, showing allotments (left of picture) where Westerleigh Road was later built



Bradford Road, showing allotments to the right before Westerleigh Road was built



1949 Ordnance Survey showing remaining allotment gardens after Westerleigh Road built

Although reduced in size by the building of Westerleigh Road in the 1930s (see 1949 OS map above), some of this area remained in use as allotments for decades afterwards, with older villagers such as Frank Sumsion remembering the access down a lane now occupied by Combe Road Close.

The following reminiscence was published on francisfrith.com in 2013:



"This picture of Combe Road brings back many memories. ... adjacent to the shop [on the left] was a small lane that led to the local garden allotments, my father had one of these."

1852 onwards: Rules, Rents and Management

In January 1852 Rev Newnham drew up a set of Allotment Garden Rules for Combe Down *“for promoting the comfort and resources of industrious labourers”*. Each allotment holder had to sign or mark their own copy and agree that they *“must attend some place of worship at least once every Sunday”* and *“may not be a known frequenter of drinking houses”*. Rents (sixpence) were to be paid annually each October, as was traditional, at a time when agricultural labourers were earning around £40 a year.⁹

By 1855, three years after their establishment, the allotments were known to be under the management of a Committee (see newspaper report of the allotment supper in 1855).

Records held by Combe Down Heritage Society show that in 1885, Allotment Number 21 measured 20 lugs and was tenanted by a Mr J Osbourne. This was generous: the traditional area for an allotment was (and still is) 10 rods or poles (approximately 250 square metres). Mr Osbourne was unable to read or write and so it is probable that someone read the rules to him, after which he made his mark to confirm his agreement, witnessed by Henry Wolfe. Wolfe was a man of some local standing: born in Monkton Combe parish in 1826, he lived in Byfield Place and farmed 60 acres on and around the Down. He is believed to be the tenant from who the allotments were sub-let.

⁹ 12 pennies to a shilling, 20 shillings to a pound.

COMBE DOWN
ALLOTMENT GARDENS,

Established January, 1852.

For promoting the comfort and resources of industrious Labourers.

❖ REVISED ❖ RULES, ❖ 1884. ❖

- I.—The Occupiers to be residents on the Down, gaining their living by labour, excluding tradesmen and persons usually receiving parish pay.
- II.—The yearly rent to be 6d. per lug and to be paid at Michaelmas for the year ending 25th March following.
- III.—Any Tenant not paying his rent before Christmas shall forfeit his allotment.
- IV.—Only vegetables, grain and fruit to be grown there.
- V.—The land to be cultivated by spade labour only.
- VI.—No Tenant is allowed to sub-let or transfer his land.
- VII.—No Occupier may work on his land or remove the produce on the Lord's Day.
- VIII.—Any Tenant who shall commit wilful encroachments or damage on any land connected with the gardens, or shall permit any member of his family to do so, shall be subject to immediate removal from his allotment.

IX.—Any Tenant convicted of theft or any other misdemeanor, or being a known frequenter of drinking houses, shall be liable to forfeit his allotment.

X.—Any Tenant cultivating his garden improperly, or allowing weeds to grow thereon to the injury of his own crops or that of another Tenant, shall be liable to have his garden either reduced or taken away.

XI.—Every Occupier is expected to attend some place of worship at least once every Sunday, and, should he neglect to do so shall be liable to forfeit his allotment.

XII.—All Tenants shall use their best endeavours in discovering and convicting any depredator or trespasser on the allotment ground, and shall be careful to close and lock the gates after them and not permit entrance by other means. Keys of the gates shall be furnished at 6d. each.

XIII.—Three of the Tenants shall be chosen annually upon the rent day by the Tenants themselves to form a Committee of Reference as regards the fair construction of these Rules, but any one who shall wilfully break any of them shall forfeit his land without further notice or ejectment suit.

Witness our hands this ²⁴ day of Oct 1885
J Osbourne
his mark
Allotment No. 21 containing 20 lugs.
Witness H Wolfe

Allotment Gardens established January 1852, Revised Rules 1884 (CDHS)

The document above relates to Allotment No 21 of 20 lugs. Dated 24 October 1885 it is signed by J Osbourne (his mark) and witnessed by H Wolfe. Henry Wolfe was a dairyman, born in the parish, who lived in Byfield Cottages and who also served on various village committees.

The history of allotments in Combe Down since 1852

By October 1855 there were at least 31 "field-garden" allotment tenants in Combe Down on the Hadley Estate land, managed by a committee. The Bath Chronicle of 11 October 1855 reported the tenants' annual meeting on 4 October at which rents were paid, followed by a lively supper in the vicarage schoolroom. In a polite echo of the ancient custom of the Lord of Misrule they were waited on by the vicar, his wife and friends as well as the local schoolmaster and committee members. The committee had some indebtedness on the allotment land, as it was reported that "when the debt on the ground is cleared", the committee hoped to be able to offer prizes for the best produce.

So successful had been the Revd Newnham's allotment "experiment" that a similar field was being prepared for the villagers of Monkton Combe (later lost to the building of Westfield House by the new Vicar of Monkton Combe, the Revd Francis Pocock).

THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.—The tenants of the field-gardens, on Combe Down, thirty-one in number, held their annual meeting on the 4th instant, at the school-room. The rents were paid up, the report of the committee was read, and some very fine vegetables were shown, so fine, indeed, that it is hoped, when the debt on the ground is cleared, to offer prizes for the best produce. The supper was then served, and the cheerful party waited on by the clergyman, his wife and friends, the schoolmaster, and committee. The success of this experiment has led to the making of a like attempt for Monkton Combe, where a field is now being prepared for allotments.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 11 October 1855

THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.—The tenants of the field gardens, on Coombe Down, thirty-one in number, held their annual meeting on the 4th instant, at the school-room. The rents were paid up, the report of the committee was read, and some very fine vegetables were shown, so fine, indeed, that it is hoped, when the debt on the ground is cleared, to offer prizes for the best produce. The supper was then served, and the cheerful party waited on by the clergyman, his wife and friends, the schoolmaster, and committee. The success of this experiment has led to the making a like attempt for Monkton Coombe, where a field is now being prepared for allotments.

Well Journal 13 October 1855

In October 1856, 29 tenants out of 34 attended the annual allotment supper “at the schoolroom” (in the vicarage) joined by villagers from the new allotments in Monkton Combe. Some difficulties were alluded to, but a fine show of vegetables brought a positive note. The influence of Revd. Newnham was clear and the importance he placed on the social aspect of allotmenting was already evident. With its reference to “*the blessing of Providence*” it is likely that the Vicar was in fact the diligent correspondent who sent in regular reports to the Bath Chronicle.

COMBE DOWN ALLOTMENTS.—Last week the Combe Down allotment tenants had their annual rent supper, when 29 out of 34 attended to meet a few friends. The financial statement gave hope of surmounting all difficulties in due time. Some of the Monkton Combe tenants joined the party; and there is reason to hope that the latter undertaking, though in its infancy, may follow in the steps of the elder one. A show of very fine vegetables proved what the soil is capable of yielding, and that, through the blessing of Providence, the careful man's labour is not in vain.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 October 1856

On 13 October 1857, a “comfortable hot supper” was held in the vicarage schoolroom for 44 allotment tenants of Combe Down and Monkton Combe. They were again waited on by Revd and Mrs Newnham. A “small exhibition of large vegetables” took place in an anteroom where the annual report was read, and the financial statement made. Mrs Newnham had given birth to the couple's tenth child only three months earlier, and it is to be hoped that she slipped away early for a good night's sleep!

COMBE DOWN & MONKTON COMBE ALLOTMENTS.—On the evening of Tuesday, the 13th inst., the Combe Down School-room was filled, for the fifth time, by allotment tenants of that place and Monkton Combe. No fewer than forty-four sat down to a comfortable hot supper, and were waited on by the clergyman and his wife, and some of the resident gentlemen. A small exhibition of large vegetables, grown on the ground, took place in the ante-room, where the annual report was read, and the financial statement made. After supper the entertainers and their guests separated with many kind expressions of goodwill and warm wishes for many such future gatherings.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1857

In January 1858 a new schoolroom opened in the village, on the corner of Belmont Road. At least 140 people crowded in to hear Revd Newnham's opening address and to admire the new ceiling. There would be plenty of space for future allotment suppers!

By 1860, there were 39 allotment tenants in Combe Down and 17 in Monkton Combe: a total of 56.

In early October, orders were being proposed by the Trustees of the Turnpike Roads to erect a toll house, yard, garden, toll gate, bar and chain across the turnpike through Combe Down (Bradford

Road/North Road), 150 yards east of the Jewish Burial Ground, using "a portion of land at present used as allotment gardens" for the toll house:

Also, to consult about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a TOLL GATE, together with a WEIGHING ENGINE, upon and across a Turnpike Road, on Combe Down, at the western extremity of the parish of Monckton Combe, and its junction with the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe aforesaid, and about 150 yards east of the Jews' Burial Ground, on Combe Down.

Also, about making an Order in Writing for ERECTING a BAR or CHAIN on the side of the said Turnpike Road, at the same place, across the entrance to a road leading from the said Turnpike Road, past Brunswick Place, into the village of Combe Down.

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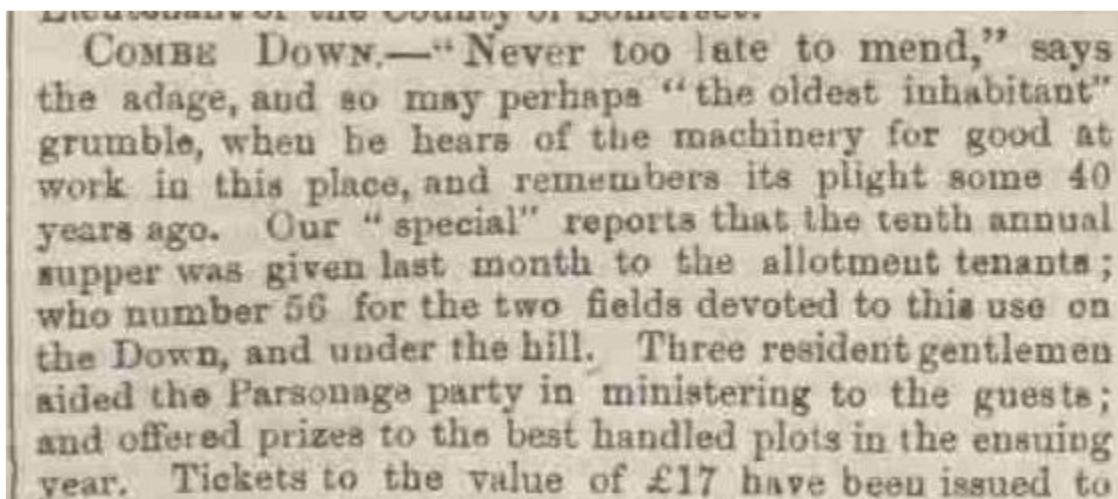
Bath Chronicle 4 October 1860

Two weeks later, most of the Combe Down allotment holders came to the October annual meeting and supper, although only half of the Monckton Combe tenants made the journey up the steep hill – perhaps unsurprising in those days before street lighting and tarmac paths. 1860 had been one of the coldest and wettest years on record. After paying their annual rents, the tenants were given back one quarter of their rent on account of the potato harvest failure – a most important crop. The supper was beef, with vegetables from the allotments and "*libations of coffee*" to follow, and some "*fine samples*" of produce were shown. Despite the difficulties, everyone went home hoping for better returns next year.

On Tuesday evening, the allotment tenants of Combe Down and Monckton Combe had their annual supper. Of the former, 32 out of 39 attended; of the latter, 8 out of 17. The tenants exhibited some fine samples of their produce, a part of which supplied the vegetables for the feast. The rent was punctually paid, and one quarter returned in consideration of the failure of the potatoes. The party then did ample justice to the beef, washed down with libations of coffee as ample as innocent, and parted in hope of a more favourable season next year.

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette 18 October 1860

In October 1861 a 'special' correspondent (undoubtedly Revd Newnham again) reported Combe Down's tenth anniversary allotment supper. Reference was made to the benefits the allotments brought to the village, compared to the '*plight of the place*' in the 1820s. Continuing the tradition, three '*resident gentlemen*' helped the vicar and his wife serve supper to the villagers. There must have been some excitement amongst the tenants when these gentlemen offered prizes for the best managed plots in the year ahead.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 28 November 1861

The Bath Chronicle of 15 October 1863 confirms that the annual rent supper was attended by 35 Combe Down tenants who had been paying rent for 12 years, joined by 9 tenants from Monkton Combe who had been paying rent for 8 years. Rents were '*for the most part, punctually and cheerfully paid*' and after a prize fund collection raised £8, a prize fund of £4 13s was awarded to those growers whose vegetables '*would have done credit to Sydney Gardens*'. It was agreed to spend the balance on providing steel forks to tenants at half price and everyone went home at 9 pm in '*happy harmony*'.

COMBE DOWN FESTIVITIES.—We are pleased to chronicle the continuance, or rather the advance in a good course, of our neighbours on the hill, who though once, in financial phrase, ruling low in the market, are shewing a decidedly upward tendency. Last Tuesday the allotment tenants of the Down and Monkton Combe held their annual gathering—the twelfth anniversary of the former, and the eighth of the latter company. To these it was a farewell meeting, the ground being happily required for a parsonage; and we trust the little village may find, as other places have, the large blessing of a resident parson and parson's wife. The rents were for the most part punctually and cheerfully paid. The novel feature was the display of vegetables grown in the field, which would have done credit to Sydney Gardens. The exhibition originated with the men themselves—25 of them contributing 1s. for a prize fund, which was so liberally met by the residents as to make up £8. Of this £4 13s. was distributed on the spot to the owners of the best collections and single specimens, the judges being Mr. T. Batson, Mr. R. Graburn, and Mr. W. Price, who brought to the task great experience, and gave to the samples most careful attention. With a part of the balance it was proposed, and warmly approved, to supply to the tenants steel forks at half price, the rest to be carried on to next year's festival. The party, numbering 35 of the Down and 9 of Combe, then sat down to the wonted repast of beef and allotment-contributed vegetables, with coffee as a beverage; nor were the absentees, who had paid their rent, left without a portion. The customary report was read, some kind addresses given by friends, suggestions made for future shows, and all dispersed at nine o'clock in happy harmony.

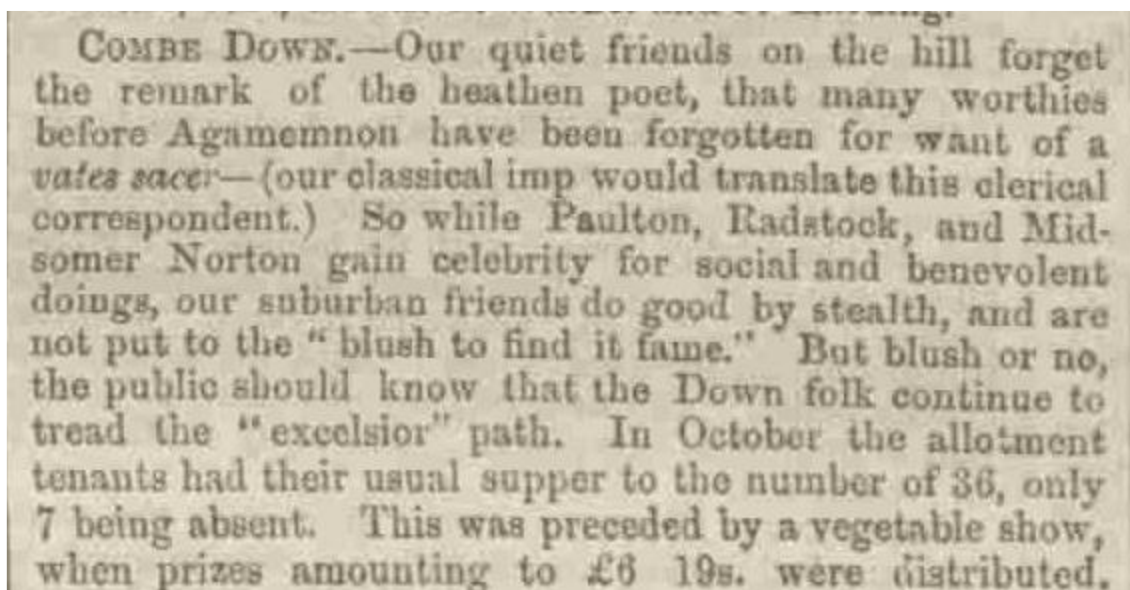
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1863

Sadly, October 1863 was to be the last joint supper with the Monkton Combe allotment holders. A new vicar, Revd Francis Pocock, had been appointed from Widcombe to Monkton Combe, and their allotment field was to be sacrificed for the building of a grand new vicarage (now Westfield House) on Summer Lane. No new land had been found to replace the lost plots.

The anonymous 'clerical' reporter to the Bath Chronicle engaged in classical hyperbole when writing about the annual allotment supper of October 1864, attended by 36 allotment holders out of a total of 43. Commenting approvingly that *'the Down folk continue to tread the "excelsior" path'*¹⁰ there

¹⁰ The 'excelsior path' is an upward path towards heaven

are references to King Agamemnon¹¹ and a quotation from Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*,¹² as well as a sprinkling of Latin and a sideswipe at some of the coal-mining villages south of Combe Down.



COMBE DOWN.—Our quiet friends on the hill forget the remark of the heathen poet, that many worthies before Agamemnon have been forgotten for want of a *vates sacer*—(our classical imp would translate this clerical correspondent.) So while Paulton, Radstock, and Midsomer Norton gain celebrity for social and benevolent doings, our suburban friends do good by stealth, and are not put to the “blush to find it fame.” But blush or no, the public should know that the Down folk continue to tread the “excelsior” path. In October the allotment tenants had their usual supper to the number of 36, only 7 being absent. This was preceded by a vegetable show, when prizes amounting to £6 19s. were distributed.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 26 January 1865

The report wasn't published until 26 January 1865 – perhaps the correspondent had other more weighty matters on his mind. On 25 March 1865, Mrs Newnham gave birth to a baby girl, the last of their 16 children, but sadly she died just three days later, aged 45, and is buried in St Michael's peaceful churchyard at Monkton Combe. Revd Newnham was left with a large family, and it is perhaps unsurprising that for the next few years his name disappeared from reports of the allotment suppers.

October 1865 was reported as the 15th anniversary of the Combe Down Cottage Allotments, coupled for the third year running with a vegetable show in the infant schoolroom. By now the show had grown to include entries from private gardens. *'It is hoped that this wholesome rivalry in honest labour and skill may tend to raise the character of the labourers, while the prizes offered by their richer neighbours proves their interest in the work.'*

33 out of 44 tenants sat down to the annual supper hosted by the Revd Knott of Combe Hill House, Brassknocker Hill in place of Revd Newnham. Two village gentlemen, Mr Daubeny of The Brow and Mr Ling acted as carvers. Waiters (presumably Revd Newnham's house staff) were supplied from the parsonage. The room was tastefully decorated with 'branches, nosegays and coloured lamps'.

The report to the Chronicle was longer and more detailed than any previously so it was probably written by Revd Knott. For the first time a few tenants are mentioned, and the Committee members

¹¹ Ancient King of Mycenae

¹² 'blush to find it fame' is a quotation from Alexander Pope's *An Essay on Man: Moral Essays and Satires*, 1733. Pope was a great friend of Ralph Allen of Prior Park, and used Combe Down stone and stonemasons to build his grotto in Twickenham.

are identified. There are familiar local names amongst them: Noad, Whitaker, Greenway, Clark, Stennard and Williams included.

COTTAGERS' FLOWER AND FRUIT SHOW ON COMBE DOWN.—On Tuesday was kept the 15th anniversary of the Combe Down Cottage Allotments, coupled for these three years with a vegetable show. The infant school-room was lined with tables, covered with produce most creditable to the growers. The judges were Mr. Kitley, Mr. Edwin Russell, and Mr. Hann. Prizes to the amount of £9 4s. (collected among the residents), were distributed among the thirteen competitors, each coming in for some excellence. For the allotment collections of vegetables—T. Noad, R. Ford, Jas. Morgan. Extras—Whitaker and Greenway. Mangolds, swedes, turnips, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, parsnips, and onions—1st and 2nd prizes gained by T. Noad, R. Ford, Jas. Morgan, J. Greenway, Jas. Morgan, W. Clark, J. Williams, and H. Vennell. 1st and 2nd prizes also for potatoes, —kidneys, whites, red, and blue, fell to Edward Ward, R. Ford, T. Stennard, J. Bending. Prizes for collections out of private gardens fell also to Morgan and Noad, and extra, recommended as before by the judges, to Edward Ward, onions 2, parsnips 2; turnips, carrots, cabbage, to G. Fisher, Morgan, Greenway; and as before for white, red, blue, and kidney potatoes, to Morgan, Noad, and Greenway. The committee, Messrs. Fortt, Sibley, Cook, and Hine, expressed the hope that the large gains reaped by the successful candidates would bring into the field next year a greater muster. The room was tastefully dressed with branches, nosegays, coloured lamps, &c., and thirty-three out of forty-four tenants afterwards sat down to a substantial supper. The Rev. G. Knott, Messrs. Daubeny and Ling officiated as carvers, and their office was no sinecure. Waiters were found from the parsonage; and after kindly words on all sides, the happy party broke up at the seasonable hour of nine. It is hoped that this wholesome rivalry in honest labour and skill may tend to raise the character of the labourers, while the prizes offered by their richer neighbours prove their interest in the work.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 12 October 1865

There is no report for 1866. However, on 10 October that year, in what would have been the same week as the allotment supper, Revd Newnham was in Weston Super Mare, getting married for the third time, to a Miss Harriette White, the daughter of a General in the Bengal Army. Miss White was 13 years younger than her new husband and came to Combe Down to take over the running of the vicarage and become stepmother to a large and recently bereaved family. A daunting task, and she was probably the subject of much curious interest amongst the villagers!

The 1867 supper followed similar lines as before. 33 out of 44 tenants attended and the prize-winners, Messrs Noad, Whitaker, Morgan, Bending, Farr, Stennard, Clark and Francis, shared £9 12s.

THE SUBJECT IS - THE RESURRECTION.
THE COMBE DOWN ALLOTMENT TENANTS held their annual meeting yesterday week. The vegetables exhibited round the room were first rate, and were pronounced by the judges, Messrs. Kitley, Ham, and E.J. Russell, to be equal to any shewn in Sydney Gardens. The collections and single specimens of potatoes, cabbages, onions, carrots, and parsnips, did great credit both to the soil and the cultivators. The prizemen were T. Noad, W. Whitaker, James Morgan, James Bending, James Farr, T. Stennard, W. Clark, W. Francis, besides others, dividing among them £9 12s., contributed by kind neighbours, with a little addition from their own purses. The supper following was attended by 33 out of 44 tenants, and the rents came in very well. Messrs. Coxhead and Ling helped at the tables, and but for the inclement weather more would have given their company. We always welcome the cottage allotment system and the social gatherings to which it leads, as a part of that cement which binds the different layers of neighbours together in the complex edifice of society.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 17 October 1867

The correspondent stated: *"We always welcome the cottage allotment system and the social gatherings to which it leads, as a part of that cement which binds the different layers of neighbours together in the complex edifice of society."*

In 1868, 32 tenants enjoyed Revd Newnham's dinner and prizes were distributed between allotment tenants and cottagers.

COMBE DOWNS.—The annual show of vegetables, grown by the allotment tenants and cottagers on Combe Down, was held on Tuesday. There was a very good collection considering the dry summer we have had. Wild flowers and fruits, shown by the school children, formed part of the exhibition. In the evening 32 of the tenants and friends sat down to a capital dinner, which was provided by the Rev. G. W. Newnham, hon. secretary. They were waited upon by Messrs. Coxhead, Battely, and Ling. The judges were Messrs. J. Kitley, J. Hand, and E. Russell. The following were the successful competitors:—*Allotment Tenants*.—Collection—1st, J. Morgan; 2nd, T. Noad; 3rd, W. T. Whitaker; extra, T. Stenard. Potatoes (reds)—1st, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Davis. Round ditto (whites)—1st, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Davis. Ditto (blues)—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Morgan; extra, J. Bending. Kidney potatoes—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Morgan. Carrots—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, W. T. Whitaker. Parsnips—1st, J. Bending; 2nd (equal), T. Noad and T. Stenard. Onions—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, T. Stenard. Turnips—1st, J. Osborn; 2nd, W. T. Whitaker. Cabbage—1st, T. Stenard; 2nd, T. Noad; extra, W. T. Whitaker. Brocoli—1st, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Davis. *Cottagers*.—Collection—1st, J. Farr; 2nd (equal), J. Morgan and T. Noad. Potatoes (kidneys)—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Ditto (reds)—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Farr. Ditto (blues)—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Ditto (round white)—1st, J. Farr; 2nd (equal), T. Noad and W. T. Whitaker. Onions—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Farr. Carrots—1st, J. Morgan; 2nd, J. Farr. Turnips—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, W. T. Whitaker. Parsnips—1st, J. Morgan; 2nd, T. Noad. Cabbage—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Morgan. Brocoli—1st, J. Morgan; 2nd, W. T. Whitaker. Wild flowers and fruits—1st, V. Noad; 2nd, E. Morgan; 3rd, G. Whitaker; 4th, S. Perrett; extra, H. Morgan.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1868

In 1869, there was some dismay that so few allotment tenants participated in the annual vegetable show, but 38 attended the dinner in the evening. Some giant pumpkins were displayed, and the room was decorated with roses, apples and pears.

COMBE DOWN.—On Tuesday the annual vegetable show connected with the cottage allotments was held on Combe Down. It is a pity (writes a correspondent) that so few of the tenants exhibit but those who did were nearly all repaid for their labour, by prizes varying from £2 to 3s. The usual judges, Mr. G. Hann and Mr. E. Russell, expressed themselves in terms of warm praise and Mr. Kitley, jun., in place of his father, took a lively interest in the correct decisions. James Morgan, Thomas Noad, and James Warr were as usual the most successful; but eight others followed them closely. The schoolroom was nicely dressed by the hardworking committee and the lady of the Brow sent the text, "Thou visitest the earth and makest it very plentious" beautifully set up. Mr. Pavitt sent two boxes of exquisite tea-scented roses, of sorts, specially Marechal Niel, and a duplicate of our old friend "Blairii, No. 2," become perpetual. Other friends decked the tables with apples and pears, and a box of tempting pears from dwarf trees, and gigantic pumpkins emulous of Cousin Jonathan's. Some extern friends looked in to see what God had done for the Comb Down labourers; and troops of children gloried in the achievements of daddy. The usual supper of the tenants closed the evening (nearly all the rents being paid), 38 being present. Thanks were voted to the judges and friends, and some plans were proposed for the coming year, committee chosen and the cheerful party dispersed at 9 p.m. "God speed the spade."

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 October 1869

'The lady of the Brow [Mrs Daubeny] sent the text "Thou visitest the earth and makest it very plenteous" beautifully set up ... Some extern friends looked in to see what God had done for the Comb[e] Down labourers; and troops of children gloried in the achievements of daddy. ... God speed the spade.'

October 1871 was reported as the twentieth allotment show with many competition entries. Several villagers were by now famous on the Down for their produce, such as Mr John Croker, licensee of the King William pub, and his cucumbers! – Revd Newnham was determined to give out more cash prizes, and the show's fame had spread. It was also reported in the Bristol Daily Post.

COMBE DOWN.—*Cottagers' Show*.—On Tuesday the 20th exhibition of the produce of the allotment ground at Combe Down was held in the lower schoolroom, which was very prettily decorated for the occasion. Messrs. Kitley, Edwin Russell, and Joseph Hann were the censors, and judging from the excellence of the whole of the "exhibits" their task must have been a most difficult one. The number of entries was much larger than upon any previous occasion; this no doubt was brought about by the determination of the Incumbent, the Rev. G. W. Newnham (to whom the exhibitors owe a large share of the success of the show), to make a larger division of the funds at his disposal, so as to give more numerous prizes and thus afford an inducement to a greater number of cottagers to become exhibitors. Some of the vegetables were of a class seldom met with in village collections, and were well worthy to take their place in any show; we would remark as especially worthy of notice a new potato exhibited by William Whittaker, "the American flower bag," grown from seed supplied by Sutton of Reading, and a "black" potato exhibited by Lydiard. In addition to the prizes mentioned in the subjoined list there were two awarded for the best kept gardens, the first of which went to Mr. John Greenway and second to Mr. Steward. The show was much enriched by various contributions forwarded by gentlemen, of course not for competition, among which was the collection from the Rev. G. W. Newnham of apples, pears, quinces, squashes, and potatoes, which was highly commended, and also a collection of eight kinds of apples contributed by Mr. John Croker, who also sent a very fine cucumber, for the cultivation of which he is justly celebrated on the Down. Nor should we omit to mention three very fine green top turnips (weighing 45½ lbs.) sent by Mr. Davis, of Fox Hill. The prizes were distributed as follows:—

ALLOTMENT TENANTS.—Collection of vegetables, 1st, Whittaker; 2nd, Noad; 3rd, Morgan; extra, Bending. Potatoes (reds), 1st, Whittaker; 2nd, Osborne. Ditto (kidneys), 1st, Bending; 2nd, Whittaker. Ditto (blues), 1st, Noad; 2nd, Whittaker. Ditto (round whites), 1st, Clark; 2nd, Noad. Cabbage, 1st, Stinnard; 2nd, Whittaker. Broccoli, 1st, Noad; 2nd, Minor. Parsnips, 1st, Clark; 2nd, Bending. Carrots, 1st, Minor; 2nd, Morgan. Turnips, 1st, Clarke; 2nd, Noad; extra, Whittaker. Onions, 1st, Morgan; 2nd, Clark.

COTTAGERS.—Collection of vegetables (6), 1st, Farr; 2nd, Noad; extra, Morgan. Potatoes (reds), 1st, Whittaker; 2nd, Noad. Ditto (kidney), 1st, Noad; 2nd, Farr. Ditto (blues) 1st, Noad; 2nd, Morgan. Ditto (round whites), 1st, Farr; 2nd, Clarke. Cabbage, 1st, Farr, 2nd, Clarke. Broccoli 1st, Farr; 2nd, Noad. Parsnips, 1st, Morgan, 2nd, Noad. Carrots 1st, Morgan; 2nd, Clarke; extra, Whittaker. Turnips, 1st, Clarke; 2nd, Noad. Onions, 1st, Morgan; 2nd, Farr. Wild flower device, 1st, Ada Bending; 2nd, John Noad; 3rd, Morgan; 4th, Whittaker.

1872 was reported incorrectly by the Chronicle as the eleventh annual exhibition of vegetables by allotment tenants in the Lower Schoolroom. This was in fact the 21st exhibition. In the evening, some 40 tenants presented the Vicar with an inkstand after dinner, *'in acknowledgement of his kind services to them for 21 years'*.

COMBE DOWN COTTAGERS' SHOW.

On Tuesday afternoon the eleventh annual exhibition of vegetables by the cottagers and allotment tenants of Combe Down was held in the Lower Schoolroom in that village. Besides the show of garden produce exhibited by the cottagers, there were many interesting specimens of fruit and plants shown by the Vicar, Mrs. Greenway, Dr. Harding, Dr. Trevor Morris, Mr. Croker, Mr. Gordon, Mrs. Bending, and Mr. Batteley, these, of course, not being entered for competition. The judges were Mr. J. Hann, Mr. E. Russell, Combe Down, and Mr. Thomas Kitley, and they awarded the prizes as follows:

ALLOTMENT TENANTS—Collection of vegetables, six varieties—1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; equal first, J. Davis; 2nd, J. Bending; 3rd, T. Stennard; extra prize, T. Noad. Cabbage—1st prize, J. Bending; 2nd, T. Stennard. Onions—1st prize, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Davis. Turnips—1st prize, J. Clark; 2nd, J. Davis. Parsnips—1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, T. Miner; extra, J. Bending. Carrots—1st prize, T. Miner; 2nd, T. Stennard. Broccoli—1st prize, T. Noad; 2nd, T. Miner. Kidney Potatoes—1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Bending. Blues—1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, T. Noad. Round Whites—1st prize, J. Davis; 2nd, T. Stennard.

COTTAGERS—Collection of vegetables, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad; extra, J. Clark. Cabbage, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Clark. Onions, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Turnips, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Clark. Parsnips, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Carrots, 1st prize, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Broccoli, 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Farr. Kidney potatoes, 1st prize, T. Noad; 2nd, W. T. Whitaker. Reds, 1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Farr. Blues, 1st prize, W. T. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Farr; extra, J. Clark. Round whites, 1st prize, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Clark.

In the evening the allotment tenants and cottagers, numbering about forty, sat down to dinner in the schoolroom, and the subsequent proceedings were rendered highly interesting by the presentation of a handsome inkstand to the Vicar. The gift originated with the allotment tenants, and as the inscription on the inkstand recorded, it was presented to him in acknowledgment of his kind services to them for twenty-one years.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 10 October 1872

In 1873, Mr Membry of West Cottages, the local policeman, sent in a plate of choice fruit to the show, and the allotment tenants were joined by the cottagers to enjoy Revd Newnham's supper.

COMBE DOWN FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SHOW.—This annual exhibition, which owes its success very much to the zeal and activity of the Rev. G. W. Newnham, the vicar of the parish, took place in the schoolroom on Tuesday, and was numerously attended. The show included, in addition to the exhibits for prizes, several plates of choice fruit sent by the vicar, Mr. Membry, and others. Some nice devices of flowers, the work of children, were also exhibited. The judges were Mr. Frost, Beechen-cliff Villa; Mr. Hann; and Mr. Kitley, Lyncombe. In the evening the allotment tenants and cottagers were provided with a supper by the Vicar, whose generosity was duly acknowledged. Subjoined is the list of prizes:—

ALLOTMENT TENANTS.—Collection of Vegetables, 1st prize, W. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Davis; 3rd, T. Stennard; extra prizes, A. G. Bending and T. Noad. Collection of Carrots, 1st prize, T. Minor; 2nd, John Clark; extra, T. Stennard. Parsnips, 1st T. Minor; 2nd, W. Whitaker; extra prizes, T. Noad and J. Davis. Brocoli, 1st prize, J. Davis; 2nd, T. Noad; extra, A. G. Bending. Turnips, 1st, W. Whitaker; 2nd, J. Clark; extra, T. Stennard. Cabbage, 1st, T. Stennard; 2nd, T. Noad; extra, J. Clark. Blue Potatoes, 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, W. Whitaker. Kidney Potatoes, 1st, T. Stennard; 2nd, W. Whitaker; extra, T. Noad. Round Whites, 1st prize, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Davis; extra, A. G. Bending. Red potatoes, equal 1st, T. Stennard and J. Osborne; 2nd, W. Whitaker; extra, A. G. Bending. Onions, 1st, J. Osborne; equal 2nd, W. Whitaker and T. Noad.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 October 1873

The 1874 show in the schoolrooms was compared unfavourably to that of 1873, which had been “*an exceptionally good one*”. The judges, who included professional market gardeners, dined together at the Hadley Arms while the allotment tenants and cottagers had dinner in the schoolrooms. There is an increasing note of professionalism creeping into the entries, and a divide seems to be developing between the allotment tenants and the cottagers.

COMBE DOWN VEGETABLE SHOW.—This annual exhibition, in which the competitors are confined to the allotment tenants and cottagers, was held in the parochial schoolrooms on Tuesday last. Some capital specimens of vegetable productions were brought together, but upon the whole the show could hardly compare favourably with that of last year, which was an exceptionally good one. Mr. S. J. Pavitt, florist, of Bathwick, sent, but not for competition, a collection of very fine hybrid and perpetual and tea-scented roses; and specimens of fruit and vegetables were also lent by Mrs. Rooke, the Rev. G. W. Newnham, and Messrs. W. Harding, Greenway, Cox and Musgrave, to each of whom was awarded certificates of merit. The judges, Mr. Joseph Hann (gardener to Mr. R. B. Cater, Bath), Mr. Russell, market gardener, of Horscombe Bottom, and Mr. T. Kitley, Oldfield-road, with several other gentlemen, dined together at the Hadley Arms. The tenants and cottagers had a dinner in the evening at the schoolroom. We should not omit to mention the exertions of the Rev. G. W. Newnham in the capacity of honorary secretary. Subjoined is a list of the judges' awards:—

ALLOTMENT TENANTS.—Collection of vegetables—1st prize, Thomas Noad; 2nd, J. Bending; 3rd, J. Davis; extra, J. Whitaker. Carrots—equal, 1st, T. Minor and J. Whitaker; 2nd, T. Noad. Parsnips—1st, T. Minor; 2nd, T. Stennard; extra, T. Noad. Onions—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, T. Stennard. Potatoes (red)—equal, 1st, T. Stennard and J. Bending; equal, 2nd, J. Davis and T. Noad. Round white potato—1st, J. Whitaker; equal, 2nd, J. Bending and J. Davis; extra, T. Stennard. Blue potatoes—1st, J. Whitaker; 2nd, T. Noad. Kidney potatoes—1st, J. Whitaker; 2nd, T. Minor. Turnips—1st, T. Stennard; 2nd, J. Bending. Cabbage—1st, T. Noad; 2nd, T. Stennard. Brocoli—1st, T. Minor; 2nd, T. Noad.

COTTAGERS.—Collection of vegetables—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Noad. Carrots, 1st, J. Farr; 2nd, T. Minor. Parsnips—1st, T. Minor; 2nd, T. Noad. Turnips—1st, T. Minor; 2nd, J. Farr; extra, T. Noad. Potatoes (red), 1st, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Whitaker. Round white potato—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Whitaker. Kidney potatoes—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Whitaker; extra, T. Minor. Blue potatoes—1st, J. Farr; 2nd, J. Clark. Cabbage—1st, J. Clark; 2nd, J. Farr. Brocoli—1st, T. Minor; 2nd, J. Whitaker. Onions—equal, 1st, J. Farr and T. Noad.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1874

The report of the 1875 show and supper was brief and factual and was to be the last report before the Honorary Secretary, Revd Newnham, retired in 1877. Potatoes, onions, cabbages, parsnips, carrots, turnips and brocoli were the main crops.

The annual show of vegetables grown by the allotment tenants and cottagers of Combe Down took place on Thursday last. The judges were Messrs. J. Hann, T. Kitley and E. Russell. In the evening, the allotment tenants dined together under the presidency of the vicar of the parish, the Rev. G. W. Newnham. Subjoined is the prize list :—

Allotment Tenants.—Collection of vegetables: 1st, J. Davies; 2nd, T. Noad; 3rd, J. Bending; extra, T. Stennard. Potatoes (reds): 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, — Osborne. Kidney potatoes: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, J. Bending. Blue potatoes: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, J. Clarke. Round white potatoes: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, D. Morris. Onions: 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, J. Clarke; extra, — Osborne. Cabbage: 1st, T. Miner; 2nd, T. Stennard; extra, J. Bending and T. Noad. Parsnips: 1st, T. Miner; 2nd, J. Bending. Carrots: 1st, J. Bending; 2nd, J. Clarke; extra, J. Davis. Turnips: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, J. Bending; extra, T. Stennard. Broccoli: 1st, J. Bending; 2nd, T. Noad. The prizes for wild flowers were awarded as follows:—1st, Mary Stennard; 2nd, M. A. Tilley; 3rd, Harriet Wilcox; 4th, Elizabeth Hamlin. There were twelve competitors.

Open to all Cottagers.—Collection of vegetables: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, T. Noad; 3rd, J. Clarke. Potatoes (reds): 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, — Whittaker. Kidney potatoes: 1st, J. Clarke; 2nd, T. Noad. Blue potatoes: 1st, J. Clarke; 2nd, W. Francis. Round white potatoes: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, T. Pearce. Onions: 1st, J. Clarke; 2nd, W. Francis; extra, D. Morris. Cabbage: 1st, T. Noad; 2nd, D. Morris. Parsnips: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, T. Miner; extra, J. Clarke. Carrots: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, T. Noad. Turnips: 1st, D. Morris; 2nd, J. Clarke. Broccoli: 1st, W. Francis; 2nd, J. Clarke.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 21 October 1875

Reports of the annual vegetable show and allotment supper ceased after 1875. Revd Newnham left Combe Down in the spring of 1877 and retired to Corsham.

In 1877 a Juvenile Chrysanthemum Society was established by Dr Trevor Morris, for the children of Combe Down attending the National Schools. The annual show took place in the Upper Schoolroom.

COMBE DOWN.

The second annual show of the Combe Down Juvenile Chrysanthemum Society was held in the Upper School-room. This praiseworthy institution was first established last year, Dr. Trevor Morris being the leading spirit of the movement, and the success then obtained warranted a repetition this year, with results best seen by the splendid display under notice. The competition is entirely confined to the children attending the national schools, Mr Henwood, the schoolmaster, providing the cuttings, and small prizes are given in two classes, one for plants in pots and the other for bouquets. The majority of the exhibits were remarkably fine, evincing great care and attention in regard to their culture. The room was tastefully decorated, and a pleasing variety was afforded by the arrangement of a number of plants and ferns kindly

contributed by the Rev. C. G. Acworth, Mrs Rutter, Miss Rooke, Miss Cox, Mr Franklin, Mr Wood, and Mr Henwood. The show was opened at 12 o'clock by the Vicar (the Rev. C. G. Acworth) who, in some few remarks, congratulated the children upon the marked improvement attained since last year, and expressed the pleasure of the subscribers and himself at seeing the efforts which everyone appeared to be making to increase the love of flowers among the children. Three cheers were given for Dr. Morris, Mr Henwood, and the ladies. The prizetakers in the first class were, 1st, J. Henwood, six plants; 2nd, Edward Russell, four plants; 3rd, Blanche Clapp, one plant. The following were awarded prizes for bouquets:—John Henwood, Emma Deverell, Blanche Clapp, Charles Moody, Blanche Farr, Winifred Windmill, William Burns, Alice Hand, and Alice Stellard. In the afternoon the

scholars were regaled with cake and apples. It should be mentioned that the flowers shown will be sent to the Bath Royal United Hospital.

Another flower show was established in the village in 1878 in connection with the Church of England Temperance Society, but this had no association with the allotment tenants and no space was made for a vegetable display. A grand affair designed to attract visitors, with cakes on offer and the Combe Down Brass Band in attendance, it had a distinctly feminine flavour with its *“charming collection of plants and wildflowers”* and the *“exceedingly pretty”* exhibition of bouquets (1880). It is almost possible to hear the distant grumbles of the allotment tenants, with soil under their fingernails and their potato crops unappreciated.

COMBE DOWN FLOWER SHOW.—The third annual flower show, in connection with the Church of England Temperance Society, was held in the Upper Schoolroom, Combe Down, on Friday. The charming collection of plants and wild flowers brought together was tastefully displayed on the school desks, and was highly creditable to all concerned. The exhibition of bouquets of wild flowers was exceedingly pretty, and many of them were skilfully arranged, showing that pains must have been taken by the youthful exhibitors. Floral devices and roses were sent for exhibition by Miss Cox, Mrs. Colonel Clark contributed some roses, Mrs. Roberts some plants, while Mr. Henwood (the hon. sec.) exhibited a nice selection of geraniums. The judges were—Mrs. Acworth, Mrs. Col. Clark, Miss Pope, and Mr. Kitley. The number of exhibitors was 63, and the following is a list of the awards:—
 Class A—Hand bouquets of wild flowers (grasses and ferns included), exhibited by adult members, 1st, Miss Battley; 2nd, Miss Cook; 3rd, Miss Long. Class B—Hand bouquets as above, exhibited by juvenile members, 1st, John Henwood; 2nd, Alice Hand; 3rd, Alice Morgan; 4th, Bessie Helps; 5th, George Hand; 6th, Blanche Farr; 7th, Louisa Helps; 8th, Florence Cook; 9th, Lilly Williams; 10th, Annie Miles. Class C—Collection of plants in pots, not less than three nor more than five, open to juvenile members only, 1st, John Henwood; 2nd, Alice Morgan; 3rd, Blanche Farr; 4th, Charlie Russell. Special prizes given to juvenile members who excelled in classes B and C—1st, John Henwood; 2nd, Alice Morgan; 3rd, Bessie Helps. The prizes were distributed at four o'clock, at which time the children were regaled with cake. The Combe Down brass band attended in the evening and played a selection of music to the enjoyment of the large number of visitors who patronised the show.

Bath Chronicle 22 July 1880

The Revd Newnham was succeeded in 1877 by the Revd Carr Glyn Acworth, who seems not to have had the same sympathy for allotment holders. In 1879 he was prosecuted for riding his horse across a crop of potatoes on an allotment at Englishcombe, causing damage, and was fined ten shillings.

...
week.—The Rev. Carr Glyn Acworth, vicar of Combe Down, was summoned for having wilfully and maliciously damaged a quantity of potatoes, the property of Simeon Humphries, at Englishcombe, on the 19th inst. Complainant, who lives at Entry-hill, has an allotment of five acres at Englishcombe, three and a half of which he has planted with potatoes. There was a right of way through the field, and while working there on Friday week he saw the defendant come up on horseback, and, instead of following the road, he rode across the potatoes, some of which were kicked out of the ground by the horse. Complainant estimated the damage done at £2. A son of the complainant confirmed the foregoing statement. Mr. Acworth denied the charge, and said when the defendant came and asked him for £2 compensation he told him he did not think he had done any damage; if he had it was unintentional, and he thought it would be covered by 2s. Witnesses were called who stated that the damage done was trifling, and would be covered by the sum offered by complainant. The bench considered the charge proved, though they believed the defendant did not commit the damage wilfully. They ordered him to pay 10s. and costs.

Bristol Mercury 29 September 1879

In December 1880, the fourth annual flower show for chrysanthemums grown by the village schoolchildren was held at the Upper School, but again there was no mention of the allotments.

CHRYSANTHEMUM SHOW ON COMBE DOWN.—On Friday a chrysanthemum show for the school children of Combe Down was held at the Upper School, where an interesting display of plants was staged, and the juveniles throughout the afternoon were present in good numbers. The exhibition was the fourth which has been held, and with the wild flower show in the summer, gives an opportunity for interesting competitions among the children. Some fine plants and also nicely-arranged bouquets of chrysanthemums and other flowers were specially noticeable, and with the plants kindly contributed by Mrs. Acworth, Mr. H. Henwood (hon. sec.), Mr. Rooke, and Miss Cox, a varied display of November flowers was on view. Mr. Henwood's chrysanthemums comprised about 30 plants, including the dark purple "Hereward" and the white blossoming "Emma Henwood," a new pompon. The judges of the children's exhibits were Mrs. Acworth and Mr. Kitley (Milsom-street, Bath). The prizes, which consisted of books, were distributed by the Rev. C. G. Acworth, vicar, the following being the prize winners:—Plants: 1st, Louisa Williams; 2nd, Henry Evans; 3rd, Sydney Jordan; 4th, Percy Hillier; 5th, Louisa Helps; 6th, Ada Flocks. Bouquets: 1st, Winifred Windmill; 2nd, Louisa Helps; 3rd, Blanch Farr; 4th, Alice Hand; 5th, Frank Hillier. The vicar spoke a few words of encouragement to the children, and Mr. Henwood expressed the hope that there would be a larger number of exhibitors next year, remarking that he had this year given away about 10,000 chrysanthemum cuttings to the children. Votes of thanks were accorded to the subscribers, and to Mr. Kitley for his services as judge.

Bath Chronicle 2 December 1880

In 1886, a report of a wall damaged by Mr Holly 'on the main road near the old turnpike' refers to the adjacent allotments. **This confirms that allotments were still on the land later occupied by Westerleigh Road.**

WESTON HIGHWAY BOARD.—The monthly meeting of this Board was held on Saturday at the Poor Law Offices, Mr. E. T. D. Foxcroft, J. P., presiding. —Mr. Woulfe drew the attention of the Board to the fact that a portion of the wall on the main road near the old turnpike, on Combe Down, had fallen, and that a part of the footpath was in a dangerous condition. —Mr. Bolwell said a man named Holly knocked down the wall with a cart when tipping a load of ashes on to the adjacent allotment ground, and he thought he was liable for the damage. —It was decided to write to the person who, Mr. Bolwell said, caused the damage, calling upon him to repair the wall. —Mr. M-l-

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 20 May 1886

Revd Newnham died in 1893 in Corsham. His obituary in the Bath Chronicle made no reference to his interest in gardening or his founding of the allotments but does mention that he was "*a frequent contributor to the correspondence columns of the newspaper.*"

DEATH OF THE REV. G. W. NEWNHAM.

The death at Corsham on Thursday of the Rev. George William Newnham, at the patriarchal age of 87, after a ministry of sixty-two years, removes from the scene one who had been a familiar figure in Bath for half a century, and an earnest and vigorous supporter of the Evangelical party in the Church life of that period. Mr. Newnham, was a son of the late Rev. William Moore Newnham, sometime Bursar of C.C.C. Oxford and rector of Bassingham, Lincoln, and father of the Right Rev. J. A. Newnham, recently consecrated Bishop of Moosonee. The subject of our notice was born in 1806, gained a Scholarship at C.C.C. in 1823, took his degree in 2nd Class Lit. Hum. 1827, and was ordained at Wells in 1831. Amongst his contemporaries at Oxford whose names figure on the same class lists were the late Bishop Jeune, of Peterborough, Bishop Jacobson, of Chichester, Canon Heurtley, afterwards Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Mr. Herman Merivale, and Mr. W. Butterfield, the architect of Keble College. He was curate in charge of Coleford, Somerset, 1831-1840, and of Shaw, near Melksham, from 1840-1842, in which year he accepted the incumbency of Combe Down where he remained till 1877, combining with it the mother church of Monkton Combe from 1845-1863. After his retirement to Corsham in the early part of 1877, Mr. Newnham took an active interest in all the work of the parish, and till quite recently assisted many of the neighbouring clergy in the Sunday services. He had been a staunch supporter of the C. M. S. since 1832, and for 21 years held the office of Secretary to the Bath Clerical Society. He was a frequent contributor to the correspondence columns of the *Bath Chronicle*, his signature of "Emeritus" being well-known. His last letter appeared so recently as December 14, "Let no man take thy Crown."

Bath Chronicle 28 December 1893

In 1891, land suitable for allotments was being sold in Combe Down for £20 a quarter acre or 10 a perch.

SMALL HOLDINGS.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN LANDLORD. —
BUILDING, ALLOTMENT, and GARDEN LAND for SALE, or to LET, with option of purchase upon easy terms. Land at Claverton Down and Combe Down, near Bath, commanding extensive views and suitable for building, market gardens, allotments, or small farms, is offered in lots to suit purchasers or lessees. Good roads and water supply. No tithe. No building covenants or restrictions. Price (including conveyance), £20 a quarter-of-an-acre; 10s. a perch. Apply, P. A. NASH, Architect and Surveyor, Northgate Street, and 2, Clifton Villas, Combe Down. [9858]

North Wilts Herald 17 April 1891

While Revd Newnham's original allotments alongside the turnpike continued to be cultivated after his retirement, there is an information gap from 1886 until, in January 1895, the minutes of the first meeting of the Parish Council record that villagers' priority is satisfying demand for more allotments. A member of the public, Mr Burns, attended the Parish Council meeting and, although *'palpably out of order, spoke of the need of allotments in the parish'*. This was reported in the newspaper but is not in the minutes.

COMBE DOWN.

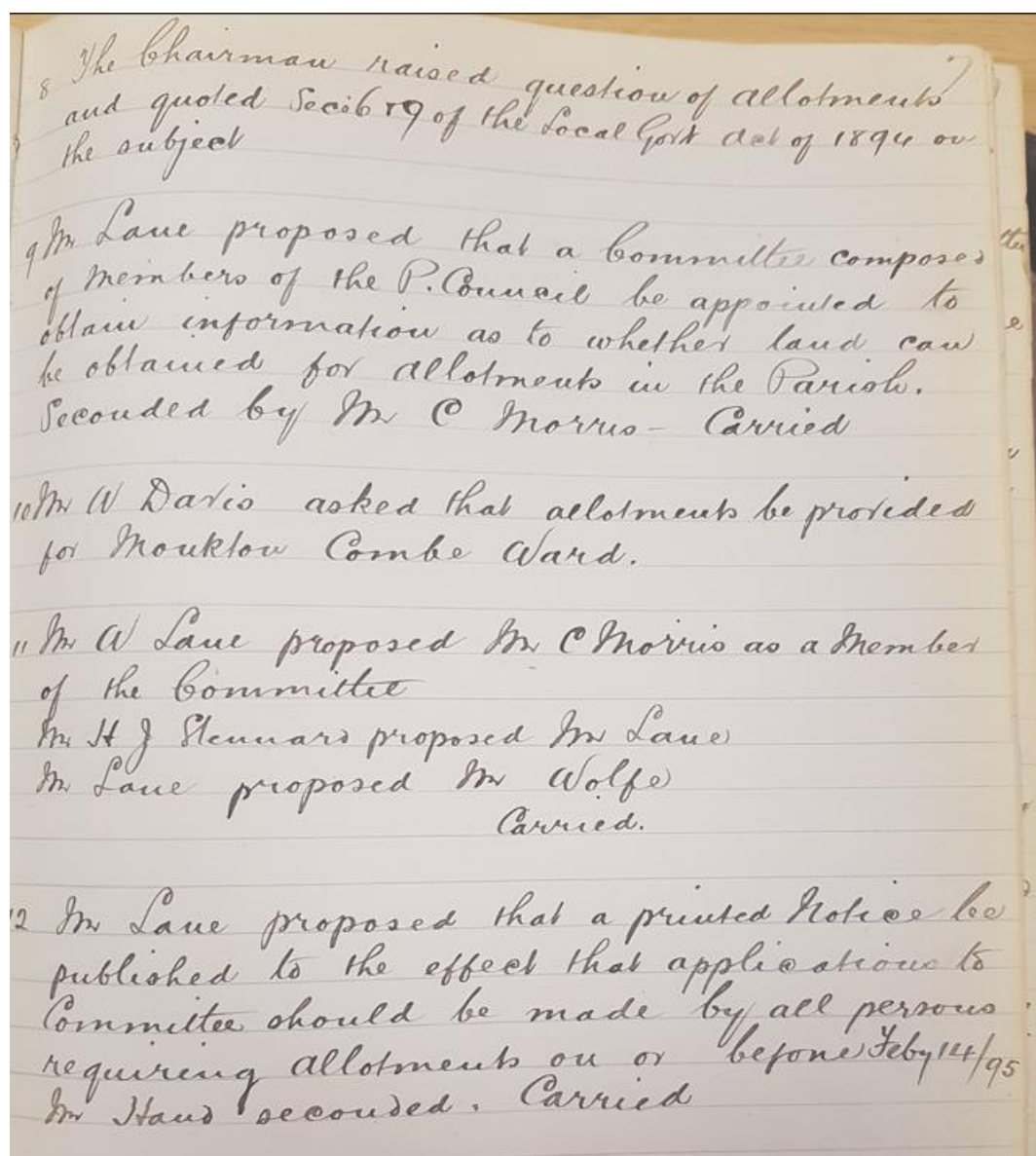
The first meeting of the Combe Down Parish Council was held on Tuesday at the Upper Schoolroom, there being present the Councillors, Messrs. W. Davis, H. Peers Lyle, J. W. G. Watkins, H. J. Stennard, W. G. Lane (overseer), H. Wolfe, W. Hand, C. Morris and H. G. Hale, and a number of the general public.

over their duties to the Council, and Mr. BURNS who was in the room, though palpably out of order, spoke of the need of allotments in the parish.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 3 January 1895

At the Council meeting on 4 February 1895, the minutes record that the Chairman proposed a Committee to establish whether land could be obtained for allotments in Combe Down: Mr C Morris, Mr W G Lane and Mr H Wolfe (the signatory to the allotment lease dated 1885 (above). Mr Davis

asked that allotments also be provided for Monkton Combe Ward. A printed notice was published, asking anyone who wanted an allotment to put their names forward by 14 February 1895.



Parish Council Minutes 4 February 1895

The Bath Chronicle report of the same meeting contains more detail than the minutes, including the pessimism that "there were so many difficulties in the way" the Chairman "did not think they would be able to secure allotments this year".

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council was held in the Upper Schoolroom, Combe Down, on Monday, Mr. H. Peers Lyle, chairman, presiding. There were also present: Messrs. W. Hand, J. W. J. Watkins, W. G. Lane, H. J. Stennard, C. Morris, H. Wolfe, H. G. Hales, and W. Davis. There was a fair attendance of the general public.

ALLOTMENTS.

The Chairman referred to the demand which had been raised for allotments. He had promised that the question should be considered and now brought it forward. He thought the proper course would be to write to the District Council, but Mr. Lane differed from him and the Chairman admitted the Act was somewhat contradictory on the point. Some discussion ensued and Mr. Lane moved that a committee of members from both wards should be formed to obtain information as to those who required allotments and to approach certain landlords. —Mr. Watkins thought that in order to avoid a waste of time and money they should see if they could get the allotments before the Parish Council took action. —Mr. Davis mentioned that allotments would be required for Monkton Combe. —Eventually, in accordance with Mr. Lane's suggestion, it was agreed to appoint a committee, and it was decided to issue bills with reference to the applications for allotments. —The Chairman remarked that no one would like to see allotments more than himself, but he feared there were so many difficulties in the way that he did not think they would be able to secure allotments this year. —It was agreed that everything should be done as far as possible to hurry the matter, and with this object a meeting of the Council was arranged for that day fortnight, when the Committee would be able to report.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 7 February 1895

1895: the Church Road allotments are becoming a reality.

The minutes of the Council meeting on 20 February 1895 (not reported in the Chronicle) show the Committee reporting that land could be hired in the village at seven shillings and sixpence an acre,

fifteen shillings an acre and £3 per acre. It was recommended that the land at £3 be accepted. A circular was sent to applicants, saying that land could be had on certain conditions from the Council if an application was made by a certain date. **This is the first indication of new allotment land in Combe Down, to be rented compulsorily from Mr Joseph Law, tenant of Combe Grove Farm on Mr Vaughan-Jenkins's Combe Grove Manor Estate.**



1880s OS map showing Combe Grove Farm south of what was to become the allotments

On 5 March 1895, a combination of Council minutes and Bath Chronicle reporting shows that Mr Law was reluctantly persuaded to let 6.5 acres of land to the Council at £3 per acre on a yearly tenancy, including all charges. His conditions created some dissent amongst potential allotment holders, but his offer was accepted. He also agreed to plough the land at 14 shillings an acre, and to wait until 7 July for the rent but refused to take any responsibility if his sheep jumped into the allotments. He moved that a local man be chosen to measure the land. Eight applications were received from Monkton Combe Ward and 32 from Combe Down Ward.

So, in March 1895, the Parish Council rented 6 acres 2 rods 30 perches of land from Mr Joseph Law, tenant farmer, and created plots at the northern end of Church Road in Combe Down. This is the site now called Combe Down allotments.

A further 1 acre 2 rods 2 perches was rented from Mr Law for Monkton Combe villagers who came to Parish Council meetings complaining that there were no allotments for them down the hill.

There is also a reference in the Minutes of 5 March 1895 to the footpath, with Councillor Peers Lyle, a young solicitor living at 1 Clifton Villas, stating ominously that *“he would move a resolution at the next meeting”*. This does not seem to have been pursued.

by the following gentlemen of Monkton Combe
 Ward
 J. J. Brown 20 perches
 H. G. Hale 40 perches
 Henry Morgan 40 " of shore 20 perches
 Herbert Knissen 40 "
 A. Rudland 20 "
 R. Sanson 20 "
 J. W. Wall 40 "

Mr Lane proposed that allotments be provided for above applicants. Mr Wolfe seconded. Carried

24 JUL 1897

Mr J Law stated that he was willing to let $6\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land to the Parish Council at the rate of £3 per acre, the tenancy being yearly and the sum of £3 to include all charges. He also agreed to plough the land at $14\frac{1}{2}$ per acre. These terms were unanimously accepted.

The applicants for land in Combe Down Ward were as follows

	ac	ro	po
W. Hinton	1	0	10
C. Stevens	1	0	0
J. Jones			20
R. Hooper			20
J. Williams (C. Victoria Pl.)			20
W. Riscoe			20
F. Millar			40
R. Burns			20
J. Williams (Alma Place)			20 to 30
Ch. Yeates			20
W. Wigmore			20
H. Russell			20
G. J. Goddard			20
W. Warren			20

W. Gibbons	20
W. Fisher (Perely Cottages)	20
S. Hole	20
S. Prescott	20
W. Williams Victoria Cottages	40
W. Williams 7. Syney Place	20
W. H. Smith junr	40
W. Davis	20
W. Ford Green Down Cottages	20
J. Sumner	20
W. Whittaker (Green Cottages)	20
J. Pearce	20
W. Fisher Rose Terrace	20
A. Williams	20
G. Dixon	40
G. Stale	40
J. Prescott	20
Mr W Lane moved that applicants be let the land at the terms stated. <i>Ex pte</i>	
Mr C. Morris seconded. Carried	
Mr J. Law agreed to wait till July 7 th next for the rent of his land, and to have the same ploughed as soon as possible	
Mr Lane moved that a local man be chosen to measure the land. Mr Stale seconded. Carried.	
Mr H. P. Lyle gave notice (through Mr Stale) that he would move a resolution at the next meeting as to the public footpaths It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on the 19 th or 20 th of March.	
H. P. Lyle Chairman 20 March	

Parish Council Minutes, 5 March 1895

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

The monthly meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council was held at the Upper Schools, Combe Down, on Tuesday, Mr. W. J. Watkins, vice-chairman, presiding in the absence through illness of Mr. H. Peers Lyle, chairman. It was stated that Mr. Peers Lyle was suffering from a bad attack of influenza. The Councillors present were Messrs. W. Davis, W. Hand, H. G. Hales, W. G. Lane, C. Morris, J. Stennard and H. Wolfe.

THE ALLOTMENTS QUESTION.

At the last meeting of the Council it was agreed that a circular should be sent to persons who had previously applied, inviting those who required allotments to send in their names and the quantity of land they wanted. The Chairman remarked that he should like to see the question settled at once, as they would want to begin tilling the land. There were five applications for land from the Monkton Combe ward. Mr. Lane, at the request of the Chairman, read out the conditions under which the land was to be allotted, and though among the general public in the room there was some dissent as to these terms, those who had agreed to do so, were, on the motion of Mr. Lane, granted the land. An acre of land was thus allotted. Mr. Lane put in the applications from Combe Down. Mr. J. Law was present, and he was asked whether he would let his land on the terms asked by the Council. He at first demurred, but on Mr. Lane saying they would have to put the compulsory powers into operation, he eventually agreed. He was to let land of about 6½ acres in extent to the Council at £3 per acre, on a yearly tenancy, the rent to include all charges, and to plough the land if required to do so by the Council at 14s. an acre. There were 26 applications from Combe Down ward, and these were all granted land. Subsequently two more applicants for whom land could not be found were supplied by taking away part of the land previously granted to early applicants, the land being thus divided among 28 persons.—Mr. Law remarked that he should not be liable for any of his sheep breaking into the allotments by jumping the pens. He should not quarrel with the Council as to the time when the rent would be paid him by the Council, and he would plough the land next week if possible.—The Chairman said that an agreement would have to be come to between the Council and Mr. Law before the holders could go on the land.—It was unanimously agreed to get a local man to measure the ground and the allotments.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 07 March 1895

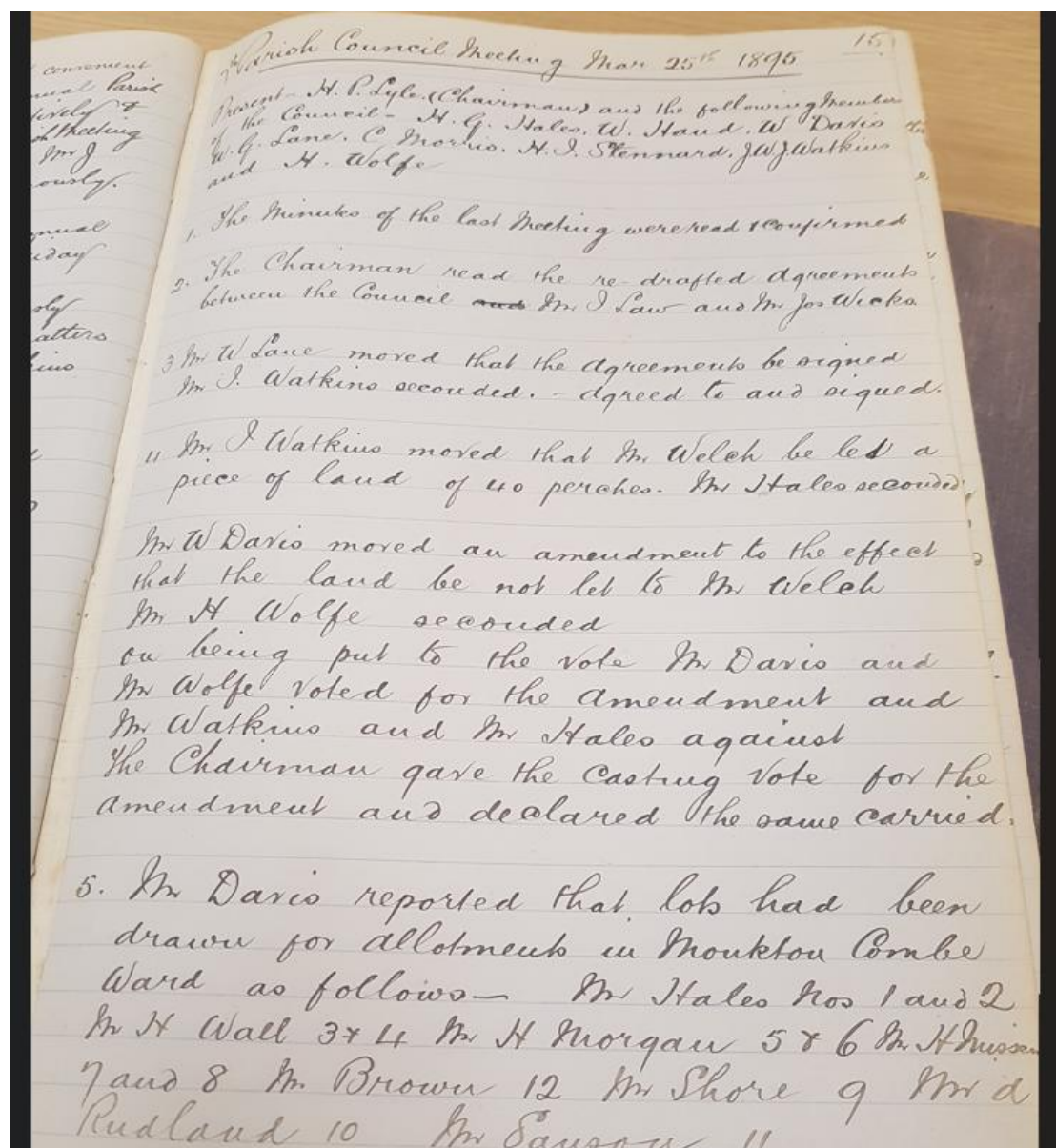
At the Parish Council meeting on 20 March 1895, 3 more applications for allotments at Monkton Combe were accepted. Mr J Wicks' agreement for the land he had agreed to let for allotments in Monkton Combe was presented. He and his family farmed Combe Farm, next to St Michael's church,

and he kindly offered to charge only 10 shillings per acre for ploughing the land instead of 20 shillings, and so the Council agreed to rescind the charge of one shilling to each applicant.

As to Combe Down, Mr Law required payment for unexhausted manure on the land. He wouldn't let the land without this, and had been offered an additional £5 as rent payable. This was accepted as the tenants wanted to take immediate possession. Mr Law then presented the draft of his agreement. It contained several errors, so the Chairman offered to redraft it.

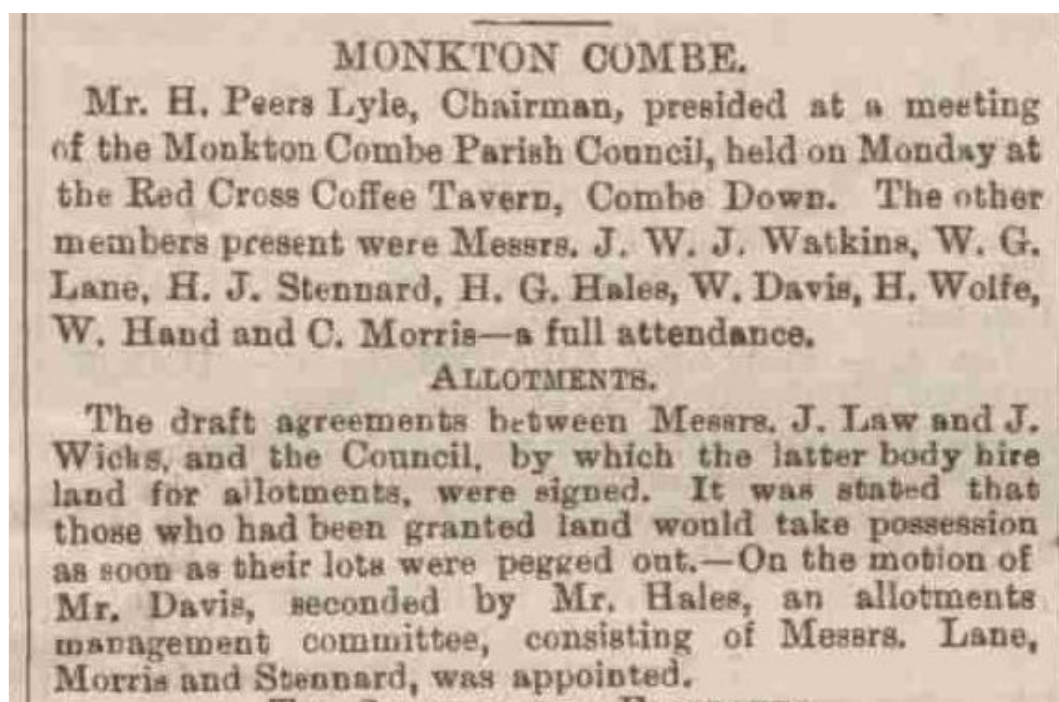
Both redrafted agreements with allotment landlords Mr Law (Combe Down) and with Mr Wicks (Monkton Combe) were signed at the meeting on 25 March 1895.

Lots were drawn to decide the allocation of allotments in Monkton Combe. Messrs Lane, Morris and Stennard were appointed as Allotment Managers and it was agreed to allow tenants on to the land as soon as possible.



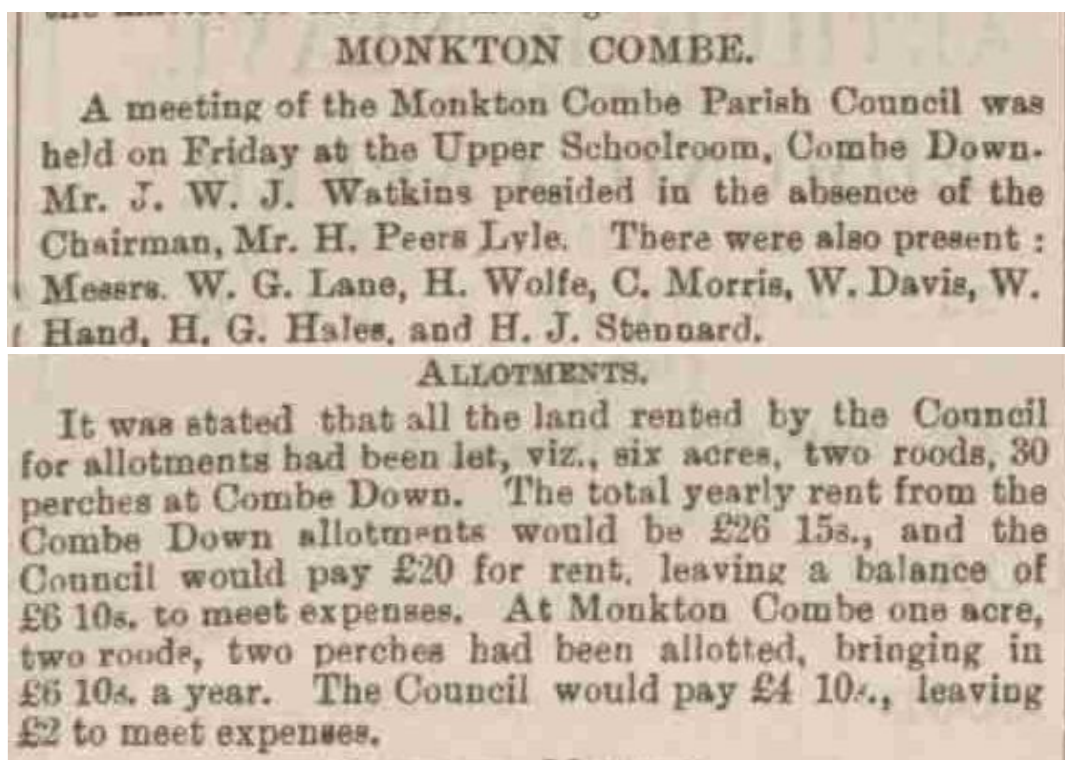
Parish Council Minutes 25 March 1895

The minutes often give less information than the Bath Chronicle report of each meeting.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 28 March 1895

By the end of April 1895, all the allotments had been let. None of this appears in the formal minutes.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 25 April 1895

In August 1895, the Parish Council paid Mr George Fisher of Tynning Road, Combe Down the sum of £2 8s for building two stone pillars in the field wall alongside the allotment and fixing an iron gate in

between them. **This gate and pillars are still in position today.** The Council minutes tell the story in detail.



Photograph by Jacqueline Burrows, Allotment 8A2, 2019

The historic carved stone plot markers were probably made at around the same time and paid for by the Parish Council. Several remain in place on the allotments, while others were rescued during the quarry extension in 2020 and are stored in the Combe Down Heritage Society's archive below the Museum of Bath Stone in Combe Down village. Many have been lost over time.



Minutes of 1 August 1895

At the meeting on 1 August 1895 the Council recognised concerns about Mr Law's sheep breaking into the Combe Down allotments. Mr Stevens complained about damage done to his swedes by the sheep and asked for compensation. (At the 17 September meeting it was agreed to pay Mr Stevens 5 shillings.)

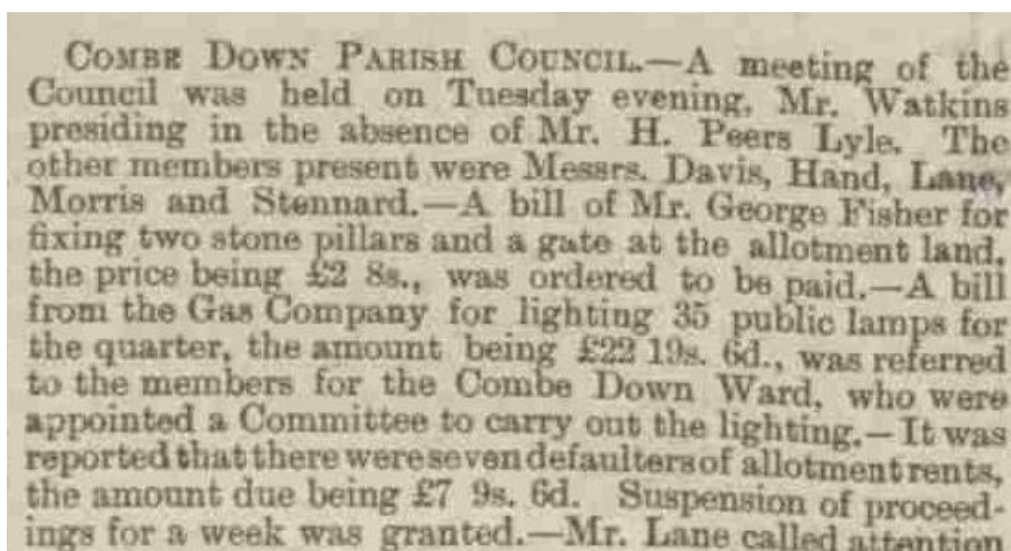
Mr Lane raised the question of fixing a pedestrian gate to the Combe Down allotments, to be positioned in the wall. Tenders were presented from Mr Fisher and from Mr A S Davis. However, the Chairman asked the allotment committee to obtain fresh tenders and decide.

Mr Hale said that a gate was needed at Monkton Combe allotments but that the landlord, Mr Wicks, should do what was needed.

Minutes of 20 August 1895

Mr Fisher had fixed the gate to the Combe Down allotment in a very satisfactory manner. Mr Stevens had to take up the matter of compensation for damage by sheep directly with Mr Law, the owner. The matter of compensation would be held over to next meeting.

Proceedings would be taken against seven defaulters who had not paid allotment rent after 27 August.



COMBE DOWN PARISH COUNCIL.—A meeting of the Council was held on Tuesday evening, Mr. Watkins presiding in the absence of Mr. H. Peers Lyle. The other members present were Messrs. Davis, Hand, Lane, Morris and Stennard.—A bill of Mr. George Fisher for fixing two stone pillars and a gate at the allotment land, the price being £2 8s., was ordered to be paid.—A bill from the Gas Company for lighting 35 public lamps for the quarter, the amount being £22 19s. 6d., was referred to the members for the Combe Down Ward, who were appointed a Committee to carry out the lighting.—It was reported that there were seven defaulters of allotment rents, the amount due being £7 9s. 6d. Suspension of proceedings for a week was granted.—Mr. Lane called attention

Bath Chronicle 22 August 1895: pillars and gate built at allotments.

Minutes of meeting of 25 October 1895:

At this meeting, there was a formal separation of the Combe Down and Monkton Combe allotments, with the finances being separately reported and any profits or losses being retained and not shared.

Mr Wicks' bill for rent on the Monkton Combe land was reduced from 10/6 to 4/6.

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

Mr. H. Peers Lyle presided at a meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council on Friday. There were also present Messrs. W. G. Lane, C. Morris, J. W. J. Watkins, H. Wolfe, W. Hand, W. Davis, and H. J. Stennard.

ALLOTMENTS.

The Clerk reported that he had succeeded in collecting £1 17s. rent outstanding for the allotments. This was considered very satisfactory. Mr. Davis moved that two statements should be published annually of the receipts and expenditure of the allotments in Monkton Combe and Combe Down, and that the Clerk be instructed to keep the accounts separate. Mr. Hand seconded. If there was a profit on the Monkton Combe allotments the holders of those allotments should have the benefit, and so if the Combe Down allotments showed a profit. The loss of one set of allotments should not be made up out of the profits of the other. The motion was agreed to.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 31 October 1895

At some ti

Minutes of 19 December 1895

It was agreed at this meeting that allotment rents would be collected half yearly in future, with notices to pay being sent early in February each year.

Minutes of 21 January 1896

Mr C Stevens wished to give up his allotment, stating that verbal notice had been given on 26 September last. This was not accepted. There was some undefined issue with Mrs Hooper's allotment.

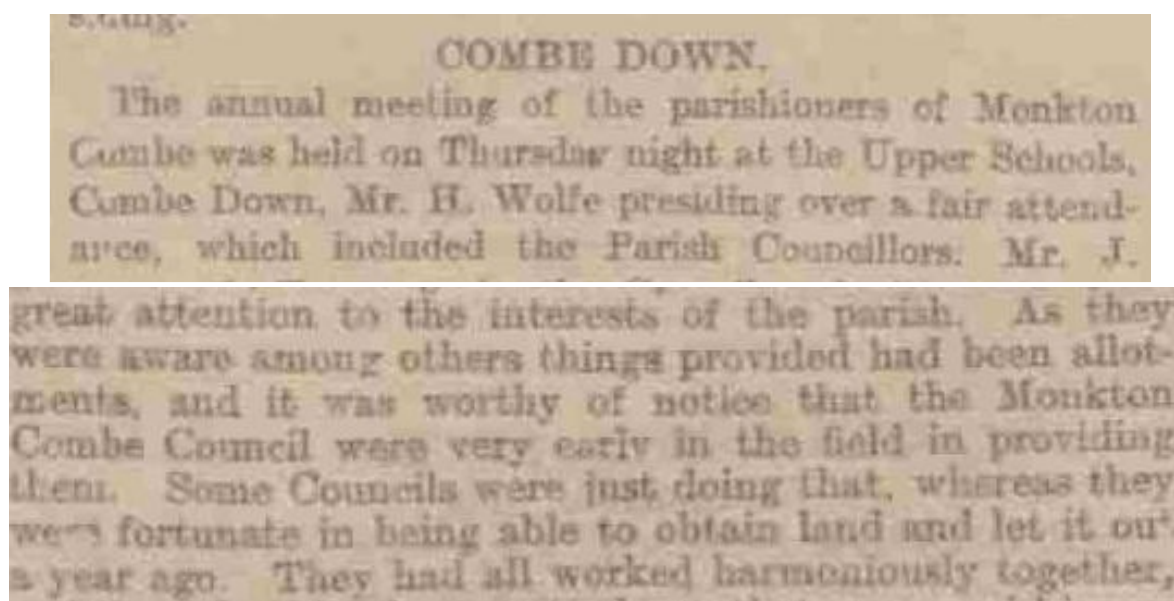
The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Wicks, asking him to place a new gate on the allotments at Monkton Combe.

Minutes of 19 February 1896

Mr Stevens' notice to give up was accepted. Mrs Hooper was allowed to transfer her tenancy to Mr Albert Macey and Mr Warren to transfer to Mr F West.

The Revd Knott of Combe Hill House, Brassknocker Hill offered to subscribe £1 towards wicket gates for Monkton Combe allotments, but other local gentlemen declined to subscribe. Both the landlord and the occupier consented to the alteration should the Council choose to make it.

The annual parish meeting in April 1896 heard how the Council were amongst the early providers of allotments, while other Councils were only just beginning to make provisions.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 02 April 1896

In May 1896, the perennial problem of rent arrears was discussed at the Parish Council, and defaulters given seven days to pay. A proposal was made to review the rules.

COMBE DOWN PARISH COUNCIL.

A Parish Council meeting was held on Tuesday evening at the Upper Schoolroom, Combe Down. In the absence of the Chairman (Mr. H. P. Lyle), Mr. J. W. J. Watkins took the chair, the only other Councillor absent being Mr. C. Morris.

ALLOTMENT ARREARS.

The Clerk reported that £5 was still owing on the allotments.—Mr. Montagu proposed and Mr. W. Davis seconded the following resolution, which was carried unanimously:—"That the Clerk send a peremptory notice to all who have not paid that unless the money due be paid in seven days proceedings will be taken."—Mr. Lane proposed that "The rules of the Allotments Committee be brought up at the next meeting for approval."—Mr. Stennard seconded.—Carried unanimously.

A SCENE.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 7 May 1896

By September 1896, the allotment gates in Church Road were having to be locked, with the order for locks and keys being expedited.

PARISH COUNCILS.

MONKTON COMBE.

A meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council was held in the Upper School-room, Combe Down, on Tuesday evening. The following Councillors were present:—Mr. H. Peers Lyle (in the chair), Messrs. J. W. J. Watkins, W. G. Lane, W. Davies, W. Hand, R. Parrish, C. Morris, and H. J. Stennard.

ALLOTMENTS.

Mr. Davis proposed that the letting of vacant allotments and of one which would be vacant shortly be left in the hands of the Allotments Committee. Seconded by Mr. Parrish, and carried unanimously.—Mr. Davis announced that he had written to the manufacturer who had the order for the locks and keys, and that he had replied that the matter would be pushed forward.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 3 September 1896

In December 1896, with a surplus arising from the Monkton Combe allotments, it was decided to reduce rents to 4.5d per perch for the coming year, instead of 6d.

ALLOTMENTS.

The Clerk presented the Allotment accounts for the Monkton Combe and Combe Down Wards. These showed receipts (Monkton Combe) from rent of land 1a. 1r. 35p. at 6d. per perch, £5 17s. 6d. The balance in hand was £1 2s. 7d., and 3s. 11d. was due. For the Combe Down Ward the receipts showed £26 15s. 6d. from rent of land, with 10s. 8d. due. After all expenses had been paid a balance was due to the Treasurer of £4 14s. 8d.—Mr. Davis moved that the surplus arising from the Monkton Combe allotments be divided among the tenants in accordance with the terms of agreement. This Mr. Watkins seconded.—Mr. Lane moved as an amendment that the allotments be rented at 4½d. per perch for the coming year, instead of 6d.—Mr. Lyle seconded.—On a division the amendment was carried by five to two.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 3 December 1896

In 1897 it was decided that any cash surplus arising from the Monkton Combe allotment rents would be divided amongst the tenants at year end. This caused some discussion, and it was confirmed that there had always been separate accounts kept for Combe Down and Monkton Combe.

ton Combe.

ALLOTMENTS.

On the 1st of December the Council passed a resolution with regard to the Monkton Combe allotments. By the terms of the letting the surplus at the end of the year was to be divided among the tenants. The Council had decided to let the allotments at 4½d. per perch instead of 6d. for the year. This the tenants objected to as being unfair to the tenants of the past year.—Mr. Davis proposed that the resolution be rescinded.—This was seconded by Mr. Parrish and carried.—Mr. Davis then proposed that the surplus be divided among the tenants according to agreement.—Mr. Lane asked how much the balance was?—The Treasurer (Mr. Stennard) replied that there was only one account for the two wards. He held 9s. 6d. The Monkton Combe allotments showed a balance of £1 2s. 7d.—The Chairman thought that the surplus ought to be divided among the tenants according to agreement. If the Council did not do so they would be going away from their promises.—Mr. Davis submitted that there were separate allotment accounts for the two wards.—The Chairman understood that there had always been separate allotment accounts.—After further discussion the resolution was carried by 5 to 2.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 4 February 1897

ALLOTMENTS.

The Clerk (Mr. E. P. Page) reported that the arrears on the allotments amounted to £1.—Mr. Watkins considered that the Allotments Committee had not done their duty. When invited to move a vote of censure on the Committee he was unwilling to do so.

THE SEATS IN THE ALLOTMENTS

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 8 April 1897

In July 1897 there is confirmation in a report of the Parish Council that Mr Vaughan-Jenkins of Combe Grove Manor has suddenly sold or let 40 perches of allotment land to Edward Hancock for immediate quarrying, with tenants who are losing their allotments to be compensated for their lost crops. This was probably the land used to create Upper Lawn Quarry, confirming that the Church Road

allotments were already being lost to quarrying in the 1890s and that the allotments pre-date the quarry. Mr Spackman was Mr V-J's agent.

auditor.

ALLOTMENTS.

The Clerk read the following letter from Mr. Joseph Law:—"Mr. Vaughan Jenkins has sold or let 40 perch of the allotments to Mr. Edward Hancock who will have to pay the tenants for crop account. I have just seen Mr. Spackman. They want some of it immediately. Will you please see the Parish Council and explain matters to them, and let me know at your earliest convenience."—It was agreed that the Parish Council, Messrs. E. Hancock and Vaughan Jenkins, and the tenants concerned should meet on the spot to determine the amount of compensation. The land, it was stated, was wanted for quarrying.

MEETING.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 8 July 1897:

A minor financial scandal arose in 1897, when the Clerk reported that the practice of dividing surpluses amongst the Monkton Combe allotment tenants was illegal, and the Vice Chairman resigned from, the Council after a heated discussion tended to focus on personalities.

**THE ALLOTMENTS: THE VICE-CHAIRMAN
RESIGNS.**

Some time ago, after much discussion, it was decided to divide the balance on the Monkton Combe allotments among the tenants in accordance with the terms of the letting. The Clerk now reported that this was illegal and that the auditor had surcharged some of the members. The other business under this head was very trivial, but it led to personalities and boisterous conduct on the part of Mr. Watkins and Mr. Davis. Four members spoke together on more than one occasion. The Chairman called "Order," and wished that the members would not indulge in personalities. This acted only as a temporary check and the dispute went on. Finally Mr. Watkins, the vice-chairman, said "I hope you will take my resignation from the Allotments Committee and the Council."

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 9 September 1897

Mr William Vaughan-Jenkins of Combe Grove Manor died on 18 November 1897, his estate valued at £21000. He was succeeded by his son, also William Vaughan-Jenkins (1878-1968) who inherited Combe Grove Manor, including the land leased out as Church Road allotments.

The early death of Mr. Vaughan-Jenkins is much regretted in Somersetshire. He was the head of an old county family, and owned a large estate in the neighbourhood of Bath. Mr. Vaughan-Jenkins, who was a very popular landlord, was a keen sportsman and a remarkably good shot. His Priston preserves are among the best in Somersetshire, having Lord Temple's Newton property on one side and Mr. Popham's celebrated Hound Street preserves on the other side.

Clifton Society 9 December 1897

In July 1898 there is further confirmation that the parish allotments are adjacent to Combe Grove Farm on Shaft Road, with the offer by Mr Spackman, agent for Mr V-J, to meet half the cost of erecting a gate to keep out the farm's cows.

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL
A meeting of this Parish Council was held at the Schools, Combe Down, on Tuesday evening. Mr. H. G. Montagu presided, and other members present were Messrs. W. Davis, W. Hand, H. Morgan, C. Morris, A. Williams, and W. Williams. The business did not include any matters of very great importance. Mr. Spackman, agent for Combe Grove Farm, wrote stating that he was willing to bear one half the cost of erecting a gate between his farm and the allotments, so as to prevent the cattle straying into the allotments. This offer was accepted. Attention was drawn to the condition of the
hand, it was agreed to take no action. Mr. Morgan reported that the allotments on Combe Down, which had suffered in consequence of cattle breaking in, had been protected by the owner of adjacent land repairing his fence. Mr. Davis stated that the footpaths leading from

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 7 July 1898

The same problem was occurring in Monkton Combe, where a strained wire fence was requested to stop cattle getting from Mr Wick's land onto the allotments.

PETITION FROM ALLOTMENT HOLDERS.

A petition was read from the tenants of the Monkton Combe allotments, asking for a fence in order to prevent cattle getting from Mr. Wicks's ground to the allotments.—Mr. Davis moved that the Council provide a fence, and suggested it should be made with strained wire, which would cost something like £5 10s. for seventy yards. There was no seconder for this motion, however, and a suggestion by Mr. Wolfe that the matter should stand over until the next meeting was agreed to.

TRANSFERS.

Mr. Billings, of Monkton Combe, was allowed to rent the piece of land lately occupied by Mr. J. Andrews, who had left the parish.—The Clerk stated that Mr. Geo. Smith wished to transfer his allotment.—It was decided that Mr. Smith should give notice in March.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 9 February 1899

A wire fence was finally agreed at the meeting in March and a tender from Mr A Daniels of Combe Down was accepted in June.

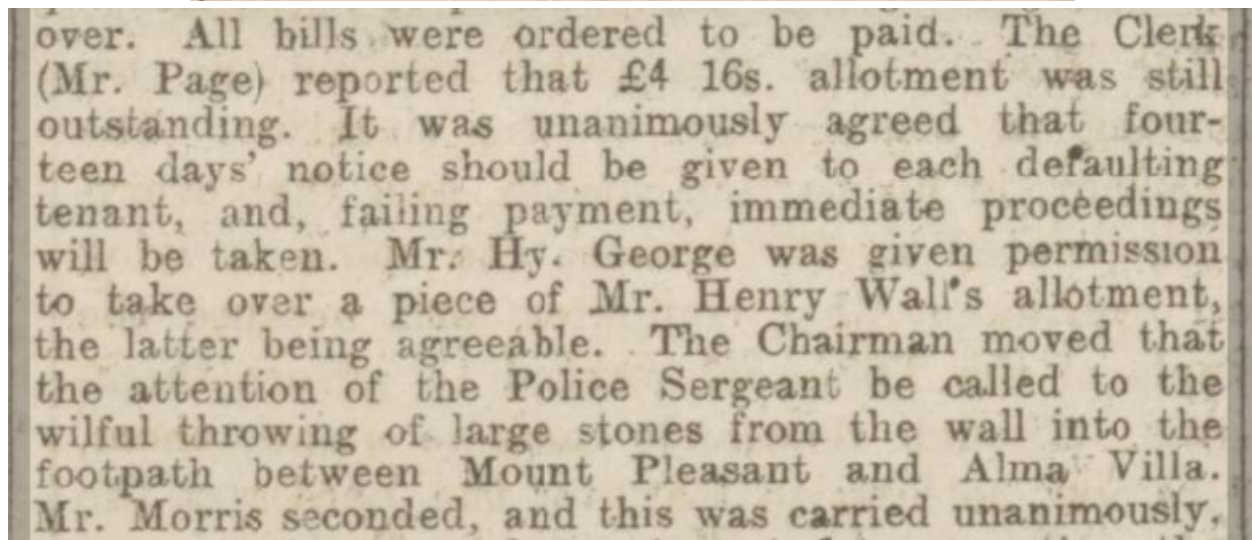
undertook to see Mr. G. Fisher on this matter. Mr. W. Davis renewed his application for a fence for the Monkton Combe allotment, and moved that the Council invite tenders for a fence of strained wire. Mr. C. Morris seconded this proposition which, after some discussion, was carried without dissent. It was decided that two tenders at least should be obtained, and that Messrs. Davis, Morgan, and Wolfe be a committee to get tenders to put before the Council at the next meeting. Mr. Wolfe moved that the Clerk write Messrs.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 9 March 1899

them with further information. The tender of Mr. A. Daniels, of Combe Down, for fencing the allotments at Monkton Combe was accepted. The Clerk presented the allotments accounts for the year ended March 31, 1899, showing that the rents received had amounted to £27 15s. The payments (including £24 5s. for rent and compensation) had been £27 10s., and the balance left was £5 6s. 10½d., a few shillings more than last year.

Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser 10 June 1899

In 1899 there is more evidence to confirm the Church Road allotments occupy the land bordered by the footpath between Alma Villa (later called Glenburnie) and Mount Pleasant. During a Council discussion about the allotments the local police sergeant is requested to deal with large stones being thrown from the footpath wall into the footpath.

The logo for Monkton Combe Parish Council, featuring the text "MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL" in a serif font, centered within a rectangular border. Above the text is a decorative horizontal line with a central flourish, and below it is a similar but shorter decorative line.A black and white photograph of a newspaper clipping. The text is from the Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, dated 5 October 1899. It reports on a council meeting where the Clerk (Mr. Page) reported that a £4 16s. allotment was still outstanding. The council unanimously agreed to give fourteen days' notice to each defaulting tenant, and failing payment, immediate proceedings would be taken. Mr. Hy. George was given permission to take over a piece of Mr. Henry Wall's allotment, the latter being agreeable. The Chairman moved that the attention of the Police Sergeant be called to the wilful throwing of large stones from the wall into the footpath between Mount Pleasant and Alma Villa. Mr. Morris seconded, and this was carried unanimously.

over. All bills were ordered to be paid. The Clerk (Mr. Page) reported that £4 16s. allotment was still outstanding. It was unanimously agreed that fourteen days' notice should be given to each defaulting tenant, and, failing payment, immediate proceedings will be taken. Mr. Hy. George was given permission to take over a piece of Mr. Henry Wall's allotment, the latter being agreeable. The Chairman moved that the attention of the Police Sergeant be called to the wilful throwing of large stones from the wall into the footpath between Mount Pleasant and Alma Villa. Mr. Morris seconded, and this was carried unanimously.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 5 October 1899

In March 1900 the Rural District Council was asked to make repairs to the stone wall opposite the Monkton Combe's allotments.

MOMKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

A meeting of this Council was held at the School, Combe Down, on Tuesday evening, Mr. Stephenson in the chair. There were also present Col. Morrison, and Messrs. W. Davis, H. Wolfe, W. Williams, and C. Morris.—The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. W. Vaughan Jenkins, asking him to repair a wall between Combe Grove Cottages and Monkton Combe College, and to the Rural District Council, requesting repairs to a wall opposite the Monkton Combe allotment ground. A list of several allotments tenants who were behind time in paying their rents was read, and the Clerk was instructed to give them a further 14 days' notice and then take proceedings against such as had not paid.—As

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 8 March 1900

In 1901 several properties were auctioned, together with 20 acres of pasture, garden and allotment land in Combe Down.

COMBE DOWN
AND
LOWER EAST HAYES, BATH.

—
SALE OF
FREEHOLD LAND,
PRIVATE RESIDENCES, and
COTTAGE PROPERTY.

—
POWELL & POWELL

Are instructed to
OFFER FOR SALE BY AUCTION,
At the CITY AUCTION MART, BATH,
On TUESDAY, 10th December, 1901,
At 3 o'clock p.m.,

THE Following Valuable
FREEHOLD PROPERTIES,

Viz.:—

About 20 Acres of
PASTURE, ALLOTMENT, and GARDEN
LAND, with Stone-built Stabling and Farm
Buildings thereon, in Lots.

THE DWELLING HOUSES,

No. 3, ISABELLA PLACE,
ALMA COTTAGE,

No. 1, 2, 3, and 4, BYFIELD-BUILDINGS,
COMBE DOWN,

AND

No. 5, LOWER EAST HAYES, BATH.

The Reversion on termination of lease of
THE HADLEY ARMS, COMBE DOWN.

AND

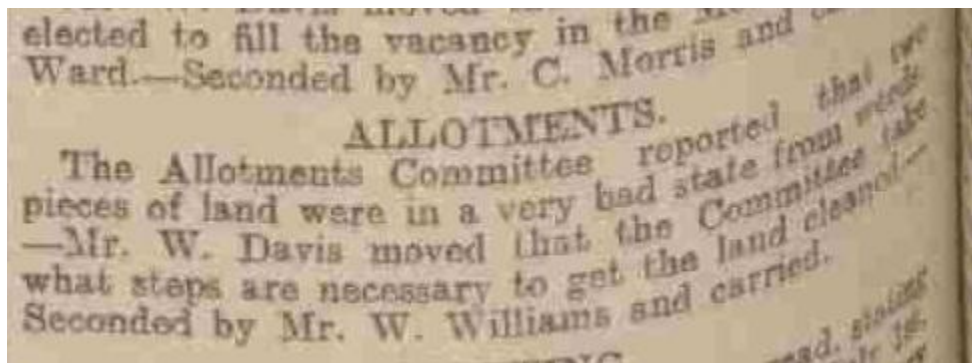
Several Lots of COTTAGE PROPERTY
in Quarry Rise, Quarry Vale, and Rock Cottages,
Combe Down.

Detailed particulars, plans and Conditions of
Sale are in course of preparation, and may
shortly be obtained of the Auctioneers, City
Auction Mart, Bath; of Messrs. MORICE &
BLAKESLEY, Solicitors, No. 8, Serjeant's-inn,
Fleet-street, London; or of

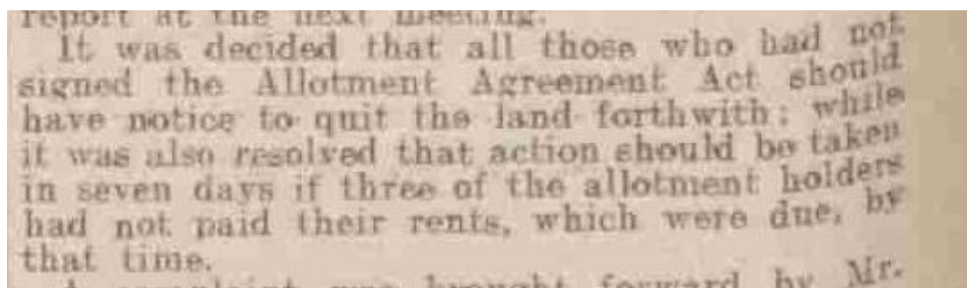
Messrs. SIMMONS, CLARK & Co.,
Solicitors,
No. 8, Edgar-buildings, Bath.

Bath Chronicle 28 November 1901

The next few Parish Council meetings show the constant battles over uncultivated allotments and unpaid rents.

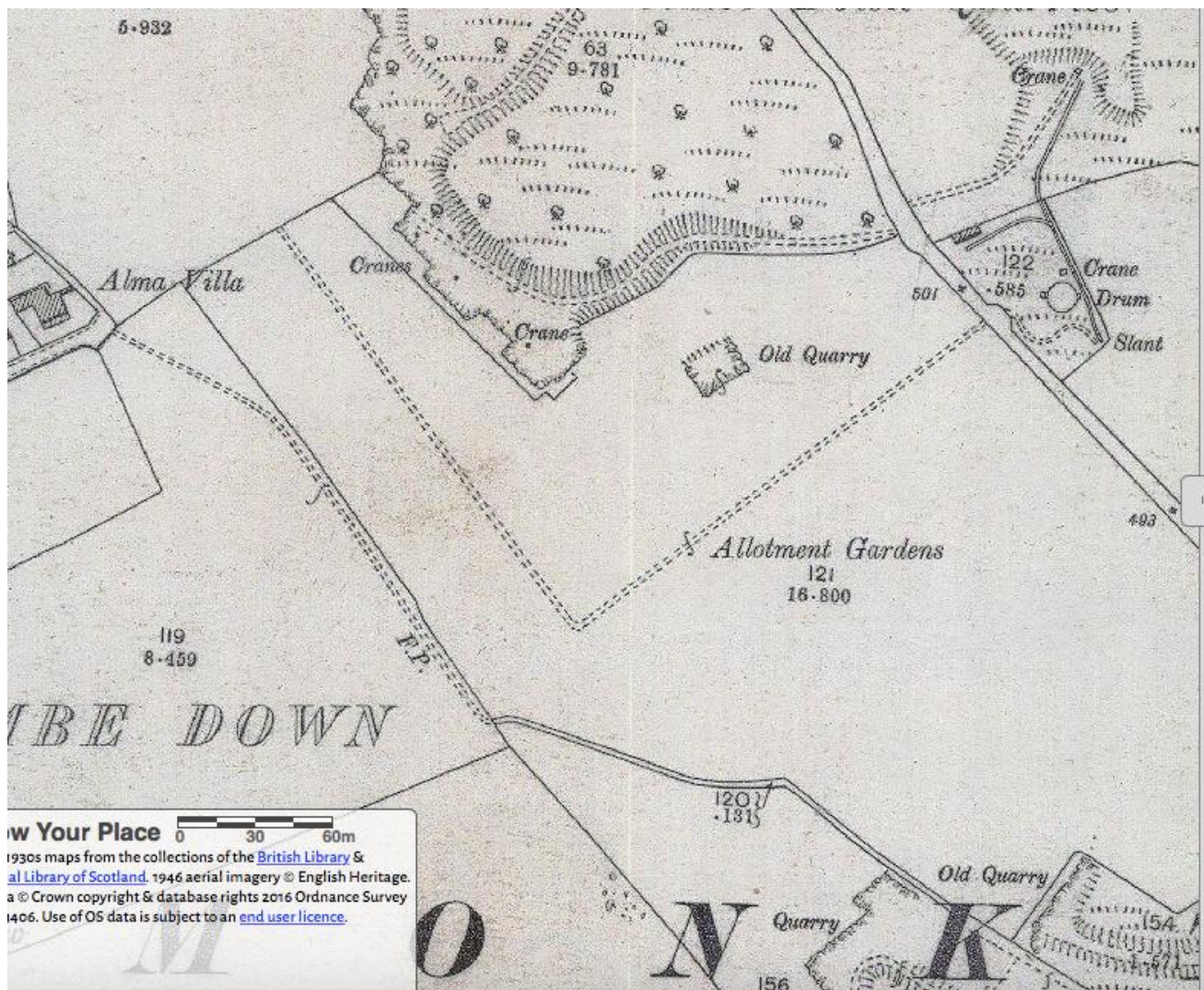


Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 05 July 1900



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 21 May 1903

The Ordnance Survey map published in 1902 shows the allotments occupying the land from Church Road across to what is now Shaft Road, south of the Convalescent Home, as well as on the Hadley Estate land (Firs Field).



1902 Ordnance Survey map – Church Road to Shaft Road allotment site



1902 Ordnance Survey Map – Firs Field allotments

Monkton Combe Junior School, which was then based at Combe Lodge and Welford in Church Road, used Glen Field as the school's sports pitch. The Magpie Magazine of August 1903 notes:

*... the excellent pitches provided [ie maintained] by Mr McKinney [school master] **near the allotments** have done wonders towards developing assurance in [cricket] net practice.*

In July 1904 the poor state of the Combe Down allotments was a concern, and the possibility of awarding prizes to those keeping their allotments in a good condition was suggested.

The subject of the Combe Down allotments was the next business on the agenda, and in this connection Mr. Willis moved that the whole matter and the management of the allotments be relegated to a small committee. The allotments were in a very unsatisfactory condition at present, and he suggested that some inducement should be given the tenants to keep them in better order and take a little more interest in them. He thought prizes should be offered. There were plenty of people in Combe Down who would be glad to voluntarily assist such a movement, and he proposed that the whole management and rents of the allotments be dealt with by a small committee to be composed of the following gentlemen: Messrs. Lane, Williams, Davis (Monkton Combe), and himself. Mr. Williams, however, objected to act on the committee, and his name was, therefore, omitted. The proposal was then agreed to.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 07 July 1904

Nothing of particular interest was reported in April 1905.

matters. The Parish Council accounts, covering the twelve months ending March 31st, 1905, showed that £60 13s. 4½d. was in hand at the beginning of the period, £25 had been received from the overseers, and the rent of allotments was about £23, making a total of £107 15s. 5d., of which £21 19s. 2d. had been expended. The

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 06 April 1905

The following members were elected on the Allotment Committee:— Messrs. Bennett, Davis, Willis, Lane, and Paine.—It was agreed that the whole of the members of the Council

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 20 April 1905

In May 1905, it was proposed to build a roadway through the Church Road allotments to allow stone to be moved from Upper Lawn quarry to the site of the new Monkton Combe Junior School being built nearby. This was to cause difficulties for allotment holders.

A suggestion that a roadway be made through the Combe Down allotments for the hauling of building material to the site of the proposed new junior school was referred to the Allotments Committee, with other matters.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 25 May 1905

In January and February 1907, at electioneering meetings for the Somerset County Council elections, Mr Morland (Liberal) campaigned to be the representative for Twerton on a platform of ensuring the Council did more to enact the *Allotments, Small Holdings and Housing Acts* – at which point he was heckled in good humour by certain members of his audience suggesting he'd be better off standing for Monkton Combe. Others stood on a similar platform to appeal to ordinary working voters.

of and properly administered. It was little use sending Liberals to the House of Commons from all parts of Somerset unless they sent men of Liberal ideas and actuated by Liberal principles to the County Council. The Somerset County Council, Mr. Silcock pointed out, had taken no action under the Allotments, Small Holdings, and Housing Acts. To have men of Liberal

Mr. George Long supported, and urged them to return Mr. Morland. The Prime Minister was in a death grip with the House of Lords, and if a seat were lost anywhere the Tories would say, "The country is not behind you." He wanted to go on the County Council to speak for the men who dare not speak for themselves, to help on the provision of allotments, small holdings, and better houses for the people, and he would like to have a word to say on the education question (Voices: You'll go in for Monkton Combe).

The resolution was carried nem. con., and a vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the proceedings.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 07 March 1907

In March 1907, allotment holders at Church Road, Combe Down lodged claims for damage done to their crops and plots by the horses, carts and men moving stone from Upper Lawn Quarry to the site

of the new Monkton Combe Junior School. Arbitrators were appointed and the School offered settlements 'without prejudice after appointing arbitrators.

THE ALLOTMENT QUESTION.

Several allotment holders attended the meeting and lodged claims amounting from 10s. to £3 for damage which had been done to their allotments which they rented from the Council, which they alleged had been caused by people walking over them. Some considerable time was taken up in the hearing of these matters and eventually the chairman promised to lay the claims before the Monkton Combe School authorities.

CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE.

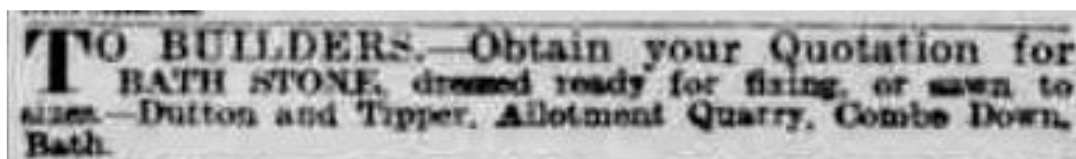
The Clerk read a letter from Messrs. Powell and Powell, who had been appointed arbitrators in connection with claims for damages done by horses and carts to land rented by certain tenants (through whose allotments the contractors' cars went while working at the school), in which they stated that Monkton Combe School were willing to settle the claims. The offers were made without prejudice, and, if not accepted, they would be withdrawn, and left in the hands of a land surveyor, who would most probably allow less. The offers were as follows:—Mr. Watkins, 10s.; Mr. E. Smith, 35s.; Mr. H. Hayden, 10s.; Mr. D. Morris, 7s. 6d.; Mr. C. Ball, 10s.; Mr. W. Williams, 2s.; and Mr. J. Kellaway, 2s. It was unanimously decided that the Clerk see Mr. Wilkinson, of the School, on the matter.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. Davis said that the allotments at Monkton Combe required re-measuring, and moved that it be done at an early date; also that stones be placed to mark out the land. This was seconded by Mr. Bennett, and carried.

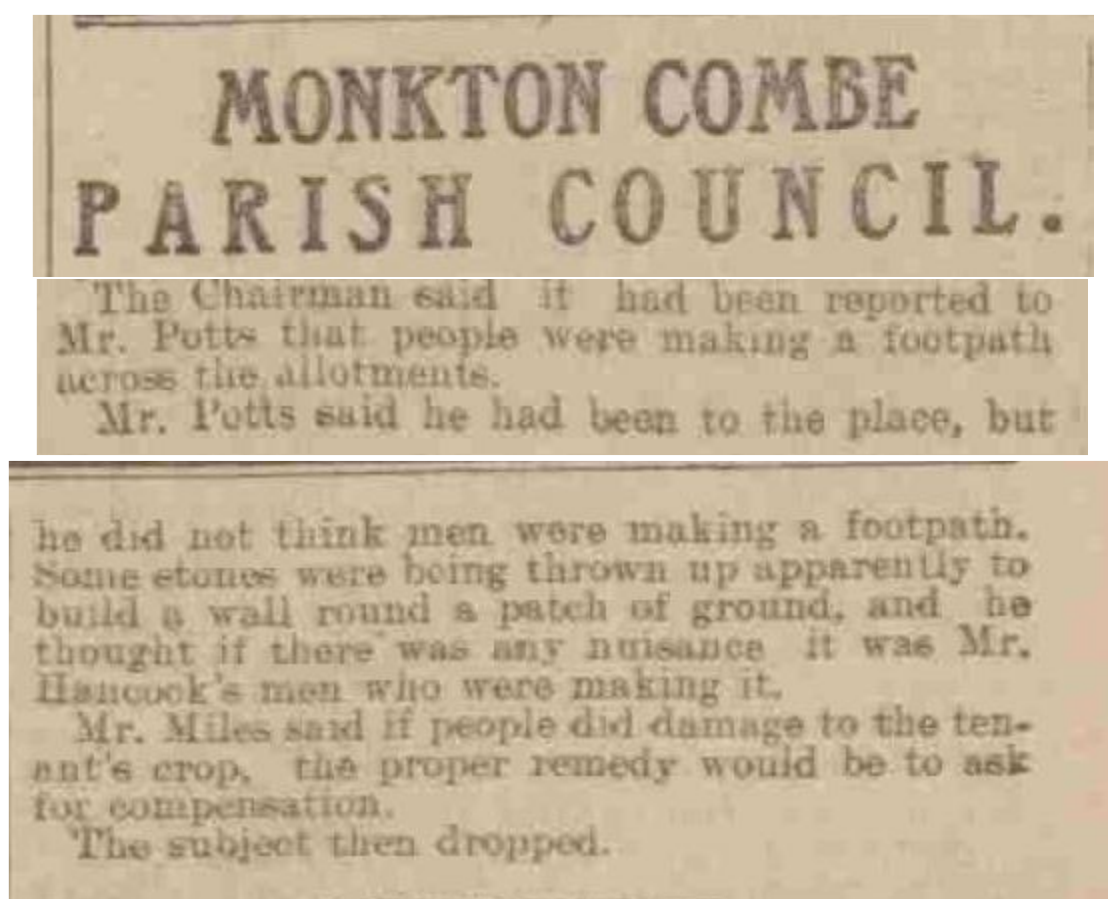
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 28 March 1907

In 1908 an advertisement in the Western Daily Press mentions Allotment Quarry, Combe Down (Dutton & Tipper). This is the Westerleigh Road site.



Western Daily Press 03 December 1908

In 1910, Mr Hancock's Upper Lawn quarrymen were again reported for being a nuisance to allotment holders by creating a path to walk across the Church Road site. They were also building a stone wall around a nearby patch of ground.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 July 1910:

In September 1910 there were more problems, this time concerning trespassers on the allotments and animals being grazed there.

unnecessary

PARISH COUNCIL.

At a subsequent meeting of the Parish Council, the Clerk was instructed to write a letter of protest to the persons concerned in a complaint as to grazing on allotments. Complaints were also made of persons trespassing on the allotments, and it was resolved that in this case also the offenders should be written to and asked to desist.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 September 1910

By 1911, there were no allotments in arrears but the problems with trespassers continued.

The annual meeting of the parishioners of Monkton Combe was held on Monday evening at the Church Room, Tyney Road, Combe Down. The attendance was somewhat meagre. The chair was occupied by Mr. W. Warren (the Chairman of the Parish Council). Those present comprised: Messrs. F. J. Brown, F. R. Mundy, Miles, E. Dudley, and E. H. Wharrett.

ALLOTMENTS.

Mr. Dudley asked whether the allotments were self-supporting. The Clerk said that the accounts just balanced. The Parish Council cut it as fine as they possibly could, so that there was no profit. On the motion of Mr. Dudley, seconded by Mr. Wherrett, the report and accounts were adopted. Mr. Dudley expressed his pleasure at learning that there was no case of arrears of rates, and moved a vote of thanks to the Overseers for their services. This was seconded by Mr. Wherrett and carried.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 30 March 1911

and this was agreed to.

ALLOTMENT COMPLAINT.

Mr. H. Hayden complained of his allotment being trespassed upon, and the Clerk was directed to write him, asking for the names and addresses of persons trespassing.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 25 May 1911

THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.

A meeting of the Parish Council followed, Mr. Miles presiding.

It was decided to instruct the Clerk (Mr. E. P. Page) to warn allotment holders who were over a month in arrears with their rent that they were liable to be proceeded against.

PROPOSED FIRE BRIGADE

Bath Chronicle 30 March 1912

But arrears and non-cultivation were still a problem by 1913.

THE RENT OF ALLOTMENTS.

It was decided that allotment holders who were in arrears with their rent should be notified that payment must be made not later than Jan. 23th. If this notice were not complied with, the Council might seriously consider the question of regaining possession of the land.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 11 January 1913

Meeting of the Parish Council followed, Mr. Buckland again presiding.

DEFAULTING ALLOTMENT HOLDERS.

The Clerk reported that he had received various small sums from some of the holders of allotments who had got into arrears with their rent. He had been authorised to prosecute defaulters, if necessary, but so far had not cared to exercise this power.

The Chairman said the Council were content to leave this matter to the Clerk's discretion.

MONKTON COMBE LEVEL CROSSING

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 June 1913

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL.

THE ALLOTMENTS AGAIN.

With regard to the allotments, it was stated that one piece of land was not in cultivation at all, and that no one would take it now as it was too late in the season. Concerning another allotment, the Clerk said he had written to the tenant calling attention to the state of his ground, which was not in good condition, but he had received no reply.

Mr. Mundy said he was willing to get the garden cleared at a cost of 4s., and, on the proposition of Mr. Treasure, seconded by Mr. Ellett, these terms were accepted.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 12 July 1913

The question of the arrears of several allotment-holders' rents also received consideration, and the Clerk (Mr. E. P. Page) was instructed to deal with the matter.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 13 September 1913

There were a few weak jokes in January 1914 when Henry Whittaker, a Combe Down quarryman, was accused by George Carter of stealing brussels sprouts from his allotment in Monkton Combe. The local police searched Mr Whittaker's house and found corroborating evidence, but the magistrate gave him the benefit of the doubt and let him off.

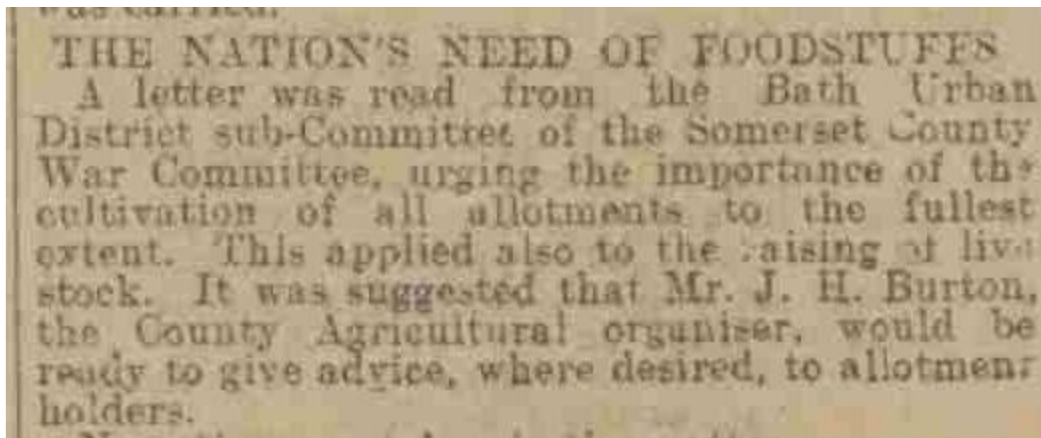
WESTON COUNTY POLICE.

Saturday.—Before Mr. H. M. Skrine (in the chair), Messrs. G. E. Baker, C. Price Davis, F. Harrison, E. E. Phillips, S. F. Tanner and A. Stanley Wills.

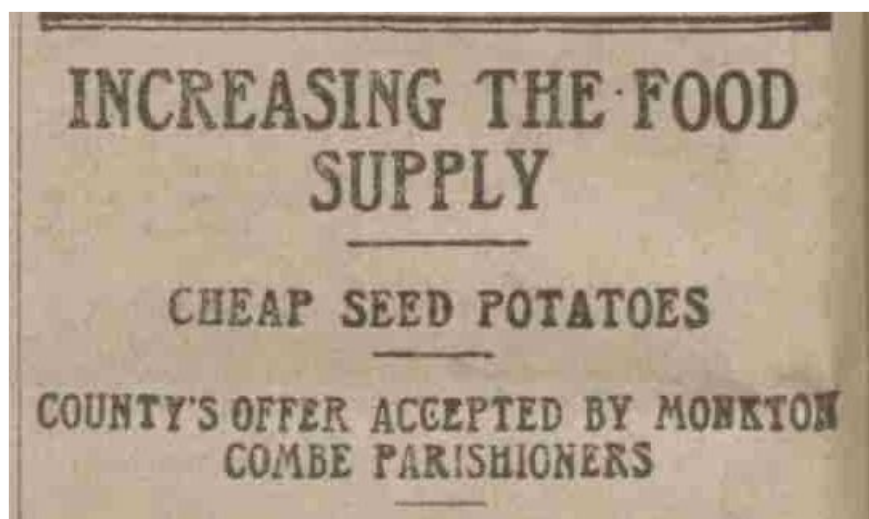
THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.—Henry Whittaker, of Fair View House, Combe Down, a quarryman, was summoned for stealing a quantity of Brussels sprouts, value 2s., the property of George Carter, growing in a garden in the parish of Monkton Combe.—Defendant pleaded not guilty.—The prosecutor valued the sprouts at 2s.—P.C. Dando said that he and P.S. Cook made inquiries, and saw the defendant. Witness asked if he might look round defendant's house, and defendant said he might. Witness found the top of a sprout in the back kitchen, and outside in the garden he found three stalks. Two of the stalks corresponded with the stumps left in the prosecutor's ground.—P.S. Cook gave corroborative evidence.—Defendant denied the theft. He did not take the sprouts; he had plenty of sprouts and greens on his allotment, and he offered to give anyone a feed of greens if they wanted it (laughter). Whittaker handed in a letter testifying to his good character.—The magistrates gave the defendant the benefit of the doubt and dismissed the case. The Bench said they considered it a case of grave suspicion, and the police had acted quite rightly in the matter.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 10 January 1914

War breaks out and by 1916 the country is being urged to Dig for Victory, cultivate every allotment and raise livestock. Mr Ross, three of whose children are serving in the war, offers to co-ordinate the distribution of cheap Scotch seed potatoes to growers in the village.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 January 1916



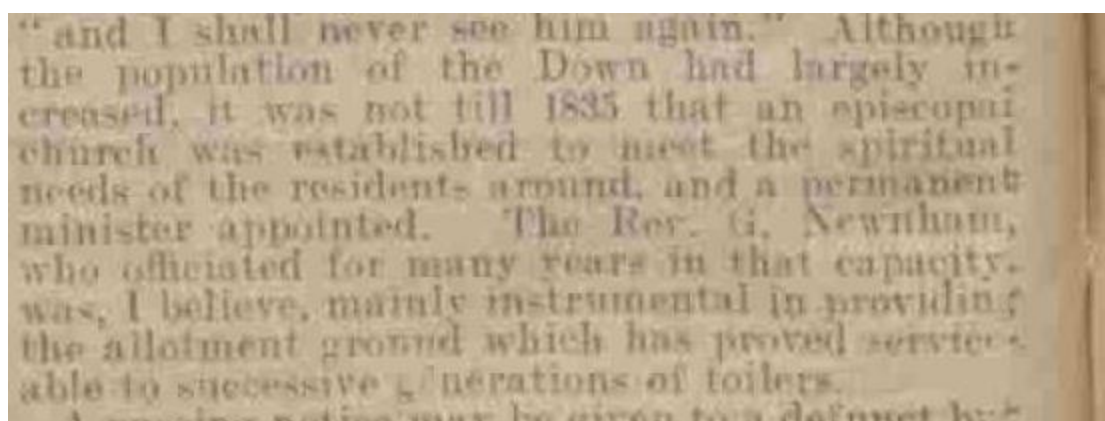
INCREASING OUR POTATO SUPPLY.

The first business of the meeting was to consider a circular letter to the Chairmen of Parish Councils from the Agricultural Instruction Committee of the Somerset County Council calling attention to the recent pronouncement by Lord Selborne that the increase of the food supply of the country was of vital importance. One of the best ways of accomplishing this, it was suggested, would be to secure an increased production of food on allotments throughout the country. It had been suggested to that Committee that if arrangements could be made for the supply of genuine Scotch seed potatoes at a reasonable price, a marked increase in the potato crop would result. General experience showed that a change of seed obtained from Scotland might be expected to give an increase of from two to three tons per acre. During the past season an experiment conducted by that Committee on an allotment proved that the yield of marketable potatoes per acre was increased by the use of Scottish seed from 37 cwt. to more than seven tons. Probably the average yield of potatoes on allotments in Somerset could be doubled, or at any rate increased 50 per cent., by this means alone. A scheme had therefore been adopted to provide for the distribution of Scotch seed potatoes among allotment holders and small cultivators throughout Somerset. The potatoes would be of reliable quality, obtained direct from Scotland, and would be supplied at cost price. Conditions attaching to the operation of the scheme were appended, and the circular pointed out the need of ascertaining as early as possible how many allotment holders in each parish desired to participate. It was suggested that the scheme might be administered by local committees formed for the purpose; and the condition of "cash with order" must be insisted upon. The potatoes would be supplied in bags of one cwt., and would be sent in bulk to the various centres for distribution. The scheme was not confined to allotment holders, and any grower might participate.

The Chairman and Messrs. Ross, Treasure, Miles and F. R. Mundy were appointed as a committee to supervise this scheme.

Mr. Ross, of "The Mount," Combe Down, undertook to receive orders for supply of these potatoes from any residents who had not attended the meeting. All applications must be received by Thursday, February 17th. A total of 16cwt. was ordered during the evening.

Also in 1916, a short historical piece reminds readers of the local newspaper of Revd Newnham's provision of allotments to Combe Down for "*successive generations of toilers*".



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 08 April 1916

In 1916, during a meeting to discuss how women could be encouraged to work on the land, replacing men on farms etc, it was announced that Mr W Williams had offered the Parish Council more land for allotments, rent free.

WOMEN FOR THE LAND

HELPING TO WIN THE WAR

MEETING AT COMBE DOWN

A well-attended meeting was held on Monday evening at the Upper Schools, Combe Down, when the Government scheme for the registration of women for war work was explained. Mr. H. L. S. Macdonald presided, and was supported by Miss Foxcroft and Mrs. Boys (lecturer under the Board of Agriculture for women's work on the land). Others present included Miss Folker (local registrar for Combe Down), Miss Lawrence, Mr. W. H. Clark, Mr. H. J. Stickland, and many others.

Mr. Stickland thanked the Chairman and Mrs. Boys for their addresses. He remarked that Mr. W. Williams, a member of the Parish Council, had placed between 20 and 30 perches of allotment rent free at the disposal of the Committee.

Bath Chronicle 8 October 1916

By 1917, allotment holders were being urged to keep pigs and to grow swedes and turnips if potatoes were unavailable, with the proposal that any waste food be collected by the Boy Scouts to feed the pigs. The Council Chairman doubted that there would be any waste food to collect. Seed potatoes were proving increasingly difficult to obtain.

ALLOTMENTS AND PIG-KEEPING.

Mr. B. Dudley wrote urging better cultivation of the allotments in the district in view of the food shortage. Some allotments were not at all well kept. If potatoes were unobtainable, turnips and swedes might be cultivated.

A letter was read from Mr. H. Dale, Acting Clerk to the Bath Rural District Council, urging that every encouragement should be afforded to pig-keeping in the district.

The Chairman said that Mr. Dudley had already interested himself keenly in the matter. It had been suggested that waste food for the pigs might be collected by the Boy Scouts. Personally he thought very little waste food was available for pig feeding.

SEED POTATO SCHEME.

The Chairman said that the potatoes ordered under the Somerset County Council's scheme arrived at Bath by rail on March 3rd. Mr. Mundy, the Clerk (Mr. M. P. Page), and himself had undertaken the work of distributing the potatoes in the Monkton Combe and Combe Down district. There was a total shortage of 105lbs. in the consignment, a shortage of 62lbs. on a quantity of 16 cwt., and a shortage of 43lbs. on 11 cwt. In addition 41lbs. were found unfit for use. He had written to Mr. J. H. Burton, of the County Council's Agricultural Department, asking that the shortage might be made good. Mr. Burton had expressed inability to supply any more seed potatoes, either English or Scotch. He had received further applications for some 30 tons, which he had had to refuse. However, reasonable compensation would probably be allowed.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Chairman, Mr. Mundy, and Mr. Page for their services in the distribution of the potatoes.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 17 March 1917

In June 1917 there were complaints of damage and trespassers on Combe Down's allotments, and someone having taken an allotment from the widow of an allotment holder ("gardener") killed at the Front.

DAMAGE AT COMBE DOWN ALLOTMENTS

COMPLAINT TO PARISH COUNCIL

ALLOTMENT CROPS DAMAGED.

The Clerk mentioned a complaint that had reached him respecting crops on the allotments having been pulled up on Sunday by, it was believed, children. The one making the complaint was, however, not the Council's tenant, he had taken a piece of the allotment land from someone else.

Mr. Miles: He took it from the widow of a gardener who was killed at the front.

The Chairman and others commented that it was an irregular proceeding for allotment land to be taken over in this way.

Mention was made of the difficulty experienced in keeping trespassers out of the allotments, and the Chairman remarked that it was a serious offence now to interfere in any way with allotments.

Some of the members suggested a prosecution in the case of damage now reported, but it was eventually decided to allow the matter to stand over for further enquiries to be made.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 09 June 1917

ACTIVITIES AT BATH

25 YEARS AGO.

Bath, July 14, 1917.

One of the most regrettable incidents of this summer must be the series of depredations upon allotment gardens.

Bath Chronicle 11 July 1942 referring to 1917

In February 1918, the Parish Council transferred one allotment to the boys of Combe Down School to cultivate. Nine pigs had been procured for allocating to people in the village prepared to keep them. Discussions were taking place about establishing Combe Down Horticultural Association.

PIG KEEPING AT COMBE DOWN

HELPING TO PRODUCE FOOD.

A meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council was held on Tuesday evening at the Church Room, Combe Down, Mr. H. J. Stickland (chairman) presiding. Others present were Messrs. F. J. Brown, T. C. Morris, W. Miles, F. R. Mundy, E. A. Russell, G. Treasure, and W. Williams.

The principal business concerned various aspects of food production. Mr. E. Dudley, of the Rural District Council, stated that he had obtained a quantity of patent manure from Bristol, which he was willing to dispose of to parishioners. This fertiliser had been tested at Frome Road House with satisfactory results.

The Council decided that the land of one allotment holder should be transferred to the boys of the Combe Down School.

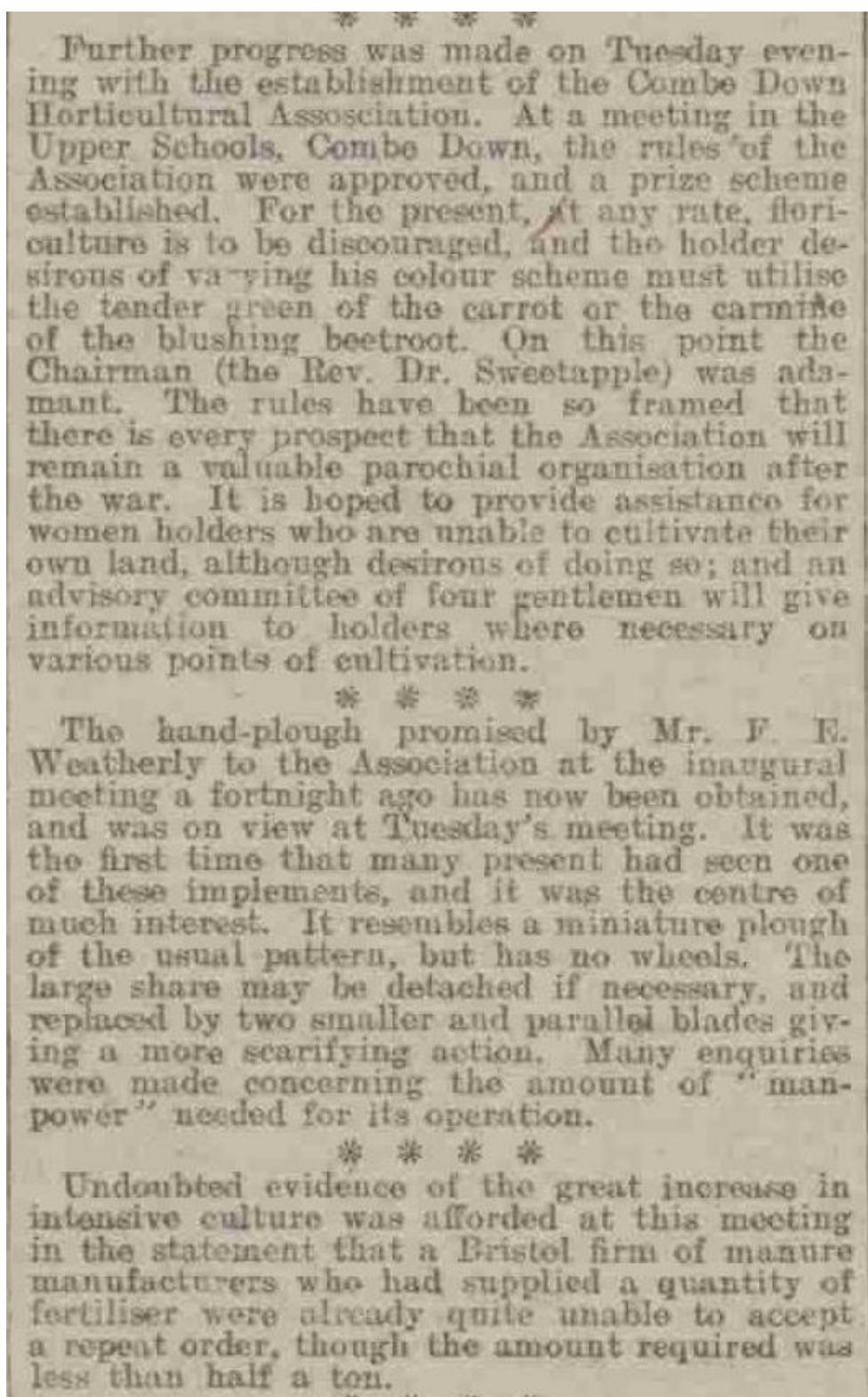
Mr. Dudley again introduced the subject of pig-keeping in the parish. He stated that he had procured nine pigs for allocation in the parish since the last meeting. The Vicar (Dr. Sweetapple) had taken a couple. He (Mr. Dudley) was anxious to do all in his power to procure pigs where desired and to arrange for the supply of feeding stuff. He felt that a great deal of food suitable for pig feeding was still being wasted in the parish, and urged the need of a systematic system of collection. He felt that some organisation by the Parish Council was needed.

After considerable discussion the matter was left in the hands of the Chairman.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 February 1918

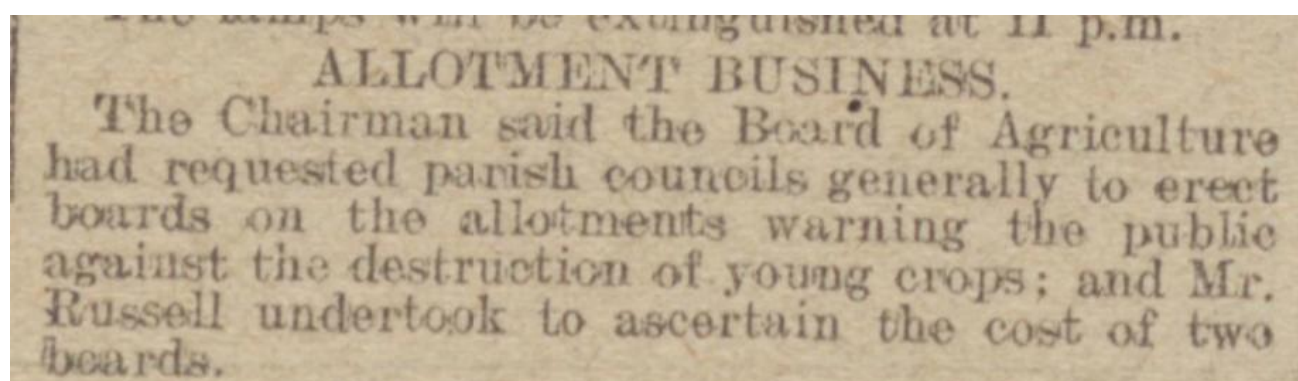
A month later, in March 1918, rules for the Combe Down Horticultural Association were approved and a prize scheme established. Growing of flowers was to be discouraged, with vegetables being used to create colour schemes. Mr Fred Wetherley, lawyer and notable Combe Down resident

(composer of the words to *Danny Boy*), had provided a hand plough for general use and this was the subject of much interest.



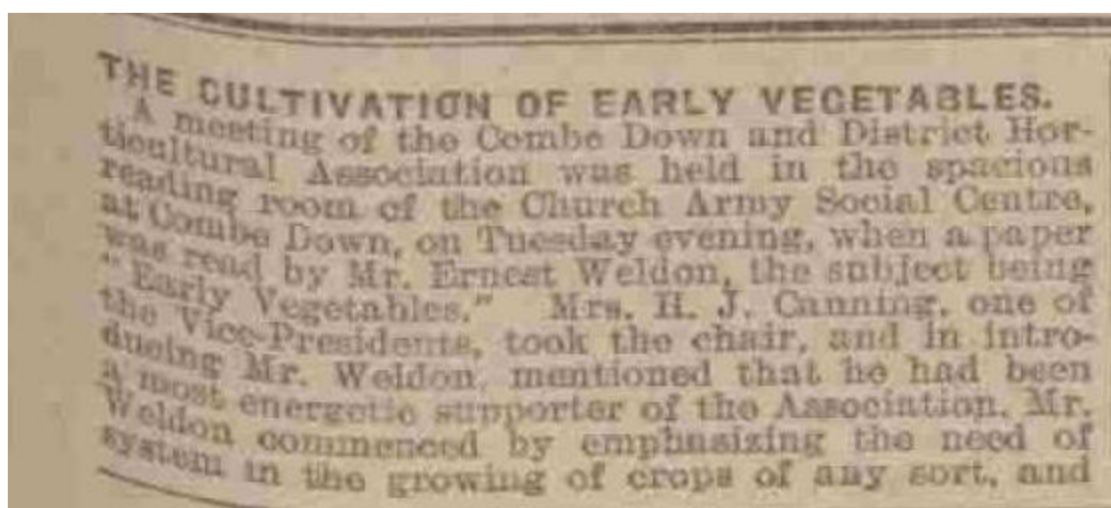
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 09 March 1918

In October 1919 the Monkton Combe Parish Council agreed to erect two warning noticeboards at the allotments.



Bath Chronicle 11 October 1919

In November 1919 there was a report of a meeting of Combe Down & District Horticultural Association in the reading room at the new Church Army Social Centre on Firs Field with over 40 members present. There were many ex-soldiers looking for work.



over forty members being present. It was announced that the annual general meeting of the Association would be held in the Church Rooms, Combe Down, early in December. Capt. North, C.A., who is himself a member of the Association, has a great many unemployed ex-soldiers on his books anxious to work.

Bath Chronicle, 22 November 1919

COMBE DOWN HORTICULTURE.

Local Association Increase Their Membership Fee

At the Church Rooms, Combe Down, on Tuesday night, the annual business meeting of the Combe Down and District Horticultural Association was held under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. H. D. S. Sweetapple. There was a good attendance of members and others interested.

The Chairman read a letter from Mr. F. E. Weatherly regretting his inability to be present on account of having to attend a distant Court. He asked that his resignation as a member might be accepted, as he was leaving Combe

Down. They owed a great deal to Mr. Weatherly, said the Chairman. He had helped them considerably in starting the Association, and had been instrumental in getting them a plough. He moved that they express their regret at his removal from the district, and thank him for the interest he had taken in their work.

Mr. H. J. Stickland seconded, and the motion was carried by acclamation.

An apology for absence was also received from Mr. H. Collins, joint secretary of the Association with Mr. G. S. Rivington.

Mr. Rivington presented the annual report, which showed that the work of the past season had been satisfactorily carried out. They could not call the season a normal one, for the

year had started under difficult conditions in many ways. In the earlier part of the season they were hit by the drought, so that they had to abandon the show they intended to hold in August. They had again managed to carry on the patent manure scheme, and the members were able to try it at a lower price than they could have done elsewhere. They owed thanks to Mr. E. A. Russell for what he had done. As the County Council had discontinued the supply of potatoes, they had first of all decided to drop the supply for the year, but later on, through Mr. Collins, they were able to supply certain members who had not secured their season's stocks, the seed being purchased by the Somerset Co-operative Society. On September 13th a

show was held in Avenue Hall, and considering it was only their second attempt he thought they might claim that it was a success. The classes and entries were more numerous than in the previous year. The Secretary also referred to the winter meetings which had been held, when helpful papers upon horticultural subjects were read and profitably discussed.

Mr. H. Robinson, the treasurer, presented the accounts for the past year, which showed they started with a balance in hand of £10 15s. 1d. The total receipts were £88 18s. 4d., the expenditure £81 4s. 11d. and the credit balance £7 13s. 5d. They ran the show each year at a loss, and as the expenses of it exceeded the in-

come by over £10, they must realise that they could not afford to carry on the show unless they had a better membership, and increased subscriptions. He thought they came out very well, seeing they had been able to show a balance in hand of over £7 on the year's working of the Association.

The balance sheet was accepted and the Treasurer thanked for his work.

The appointment of officers then took place and the Rev. Dr. Sweetapple was re-elected president; Messrs. Rivington and Collins, joint secretaries; and Mr. H. Robinson, treasurer. The Committee was also re-elected with the addition of two lady members, the Chairman observing that this was a fitting thing to do, seeing this

was "ladies' year." The added names were Miss Wood and Miss Adamson.

Following a discussion as to the advisability of increasing the membership fee, it was decided that it be 2s. 6d. instead of 1s. as previously. the qualification for honorary membership was raised from 2s. 6d. to 5s.

A vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman.

Bath Chronicle 13 December 1919

In July 1920 the original Hadley Estate allotments were lost to development when some of the land and the quarry (Allotment Quarry) fronting Monkton Road (Combe Road)/North Road were auctioned by Tilley, Culverwell and Parrott of 10 Walcot Street. This land was to become Westerleigh Avenue.

COMBE DOWN, BATH.

IMPORTANT SALE OF 23 FREEHOLD COTTAGES AND GARDENS,

BUILDING PLOT,

PRODUCTIVE ALLOTMENTS AND A STONE
QUARRY, comprising

Lot 1.—Nos. 1, 2, and 3, SOUTH PARADE COTTAGES. Let respectively to Mrs. Pearce, Mr. Dowding, and Mrs. Barnes at 3s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 3s. per week, landlord paying outgoings.

Lot 2.—No. 14, QUARRY VALE COTTAGE. Let to Mr. W. Newman at 3s. 6d. per week, landlord paying outgoings.

Lot 3.—Nos. 12 and 13, QUARRY VALE COTTAGES. Let respectively to Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Davis at 2s. 6d. and 3s. per week, landlord paying outgoings; also Shed adjoining with Garden in front. Subject to a right of way thereover in favour of the Owner or Purchaser of Lot 2.

Lot 4.—No. 11a, QUARRY VALE COTTAGES. Let to Mr. Long at 5s. per week, landlord paying outgoings. Subject to a right of way thereover in favour of the Owner or Purchasers of Lots 2 and 3.

Lot 5.—No. 11, QUARRY VALE COTTAGES. Let to Mr. Kellaway at 4s. 6d. per week, landlord paying outgoings. Subject to a right of way thereover in favour of the Owner or Purchasers of Lots 2, 3, and 4.

Lot 6.—No. 10, QUARRY VALE COTTAGES. Let to Mr. Drew at 4s. 6d. per week, landlord paying outgoings. Subject to a right of way thereover in favour of the Owner or Purchasers of Lots 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Lot 7.—BYFIELD HOUSE, MONKTON ROAD. Let to Mr. Miles at £16 per annum, tenant paying rates; together with No. 3, BYFIELD BUILDINGS, let to Mr. Ridout at 4s. per week, paid quarterly, landlord paying outgoings. Subject to a right of way over path on East side in favour of owners and occupiers of houses in Byfield Buildings and Byfield Place.

Lot 8.—PADDOCK, with stone and tiled Stable (opposite Byfield House), having a long frontage to Monkton Road. Let to Mr. Heal at £8 per annum, landlord paying outgoings. The wall on the East side is excepted.

Lot 9.—Nos. 1 and 2 ROCK COTTAGES. Let respectively to Mr. A. Herbert and Mrs. Herbert at 4s. and 3s. 6d. per week, landlord paying outgoings; together with No. 3, ROCK COTTAGES, let to Mr. Berridge at 4s. 3d. per week, landlord paying outgoings.

Lot 10.—Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, ISABELLA COTTAGES. Let respectively to Mrs. Barrow, Miss Burgess and Mrs. Creese at 4s. per week inclusive, and to Mr. Curtis at 3s. per week inclusive.

Lot 11.—THE FREESTONE QUARRY with Shed and Equipment at present in hand; also the Slaughter House, Piggeries and Stables. Let to Mr. Pearce at £10 per annum, tenant paying rates; and Nos. 4 and 5 ROCK COTTAGES, together with the Productive Plot of Garden situate at rear of Westbury Avenue, coloured dark blue on plan, and numbered 11. The wall on the south is not included.

Lot 12.—The Valuable ALLOTMENT GARDEN with Stables fronting Monkton Road, coloured pink on plan.

Lot 13.—The Valuable ALLOTMENT GARDEN adjoining Lots No. 12 and 14, coloured green on plan.

Lot 14.—The Valuable ALLOTMENT GARDEN, coloured light blue on plan, adjoining Lots 12 and 13, and fronting Monkton Road.

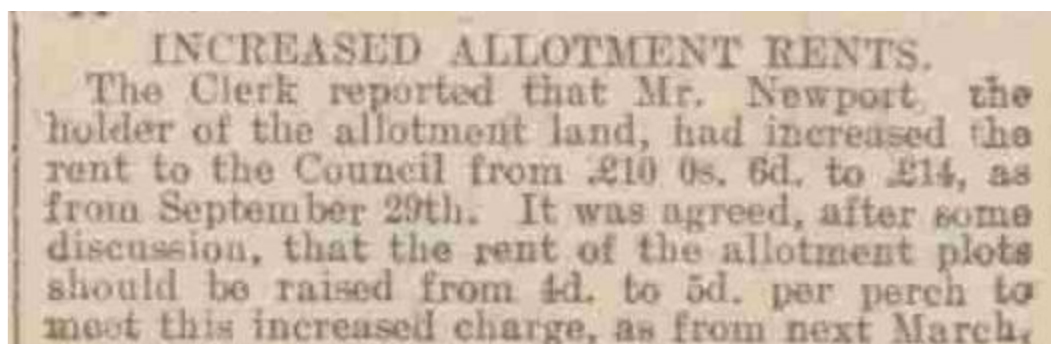
Lot 15.—The Valuable ALLOTMENT GARDEN, coloured purple on plan, fronting North Road, and adjoining Lot 16.

Lot 16.—The Valuable ALLOTMENT GARDEN, coloured brown on plan, fronting North Road and Monkton Road, and adjoining Lot 15.

Lot 17.—Nos. 1, 2 and 3, OXFORD PLACE. Let respectively to Mr. W. Macey, Mr. G. Macey and Mr. W. Seal at 5s., 4s. and 4s. 7d. per week inclusive; also large Workshop and Yard, let to Mr. Hunt at 5s. per week inclusive.

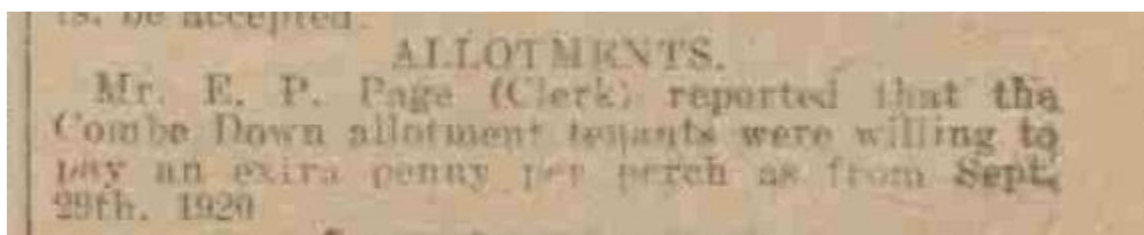
Lots 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 will first be offered in one lot, together with the minerals thereunder, and if unsold will then be offered separately, and rights of way for will be reserved in favour of the respective purchasers or owners of Lots 13 to 16 (inclusive) over strip of land coloured yellow on plan.

Also in 1920 it was revealed that Mr Ernest Henry Newport had become the tenant landlord of the Church Road allotment land, being the tenant farmer of Combe Grove Farm in succession to Mr Law. He increased the rent that the Parish Council must pay.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 28 August 1920

Later that year, in October 1920, Combe Down Parish Council increased its allotment rents and the freehold of allotment land at Williamstowe, founded by Mrs Jane Williamson in the 1870s 'for the benefit of the working poor', was sold together with the houses alongside.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 02 October 1920

By Order of the Charity Commissioners.

Williamstowe, Combe Down, Bath

**SALE OF THREE VILLA RESIDENCES,
EIGHTEEN COTTAGES AND PRODUCTIVE
ALLOTMENT LAND.**

HALLETT & CO.

WILL SELL BY AUCTION at the HADLEY
ARMS HOTEL, COMBE DOWN, BATH,
on FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8th, 1920, at 7 o'clock
a.m. precisely, the following

Freehold Properties
(subject to Special Conditions):

"Livingstone Villa,"
"Arnion Lodge,"
"Williamstowe Villa"
and

Nos. 1, to 18, Williamstowe,
COMBE DOWN, BATH,
together with the

Valuable Allotment Garden
situate on the South side of Nos. 1 to 18, William-
stowe, the whole producing a Gross Rental of
about

£282 per annum.

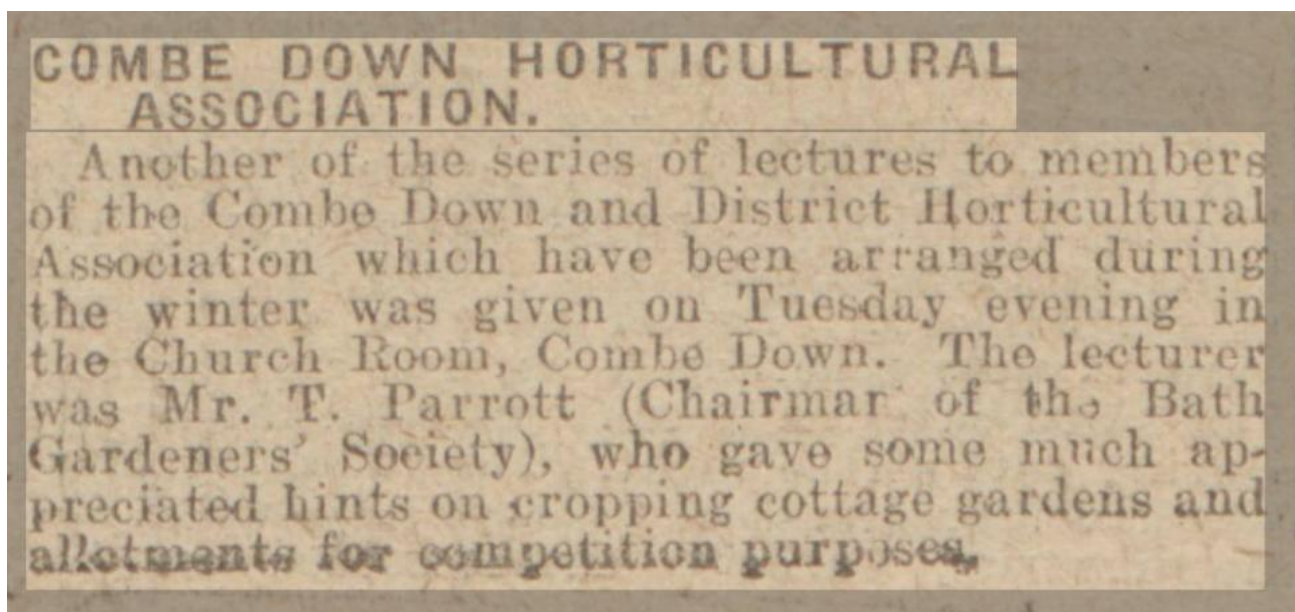
The Property will first be offered in one Lot,
and if unsold will then be offered in Six Lots.

For further particulars and Conditions of Sale
apply to the Auctioneers' Offices, 3, Wood Street,
Queen Square, Bath; or to

Messrs. F. H. and R. A. MOGER, Solicitors,
3, Wood Street, Queen Square, Bath.

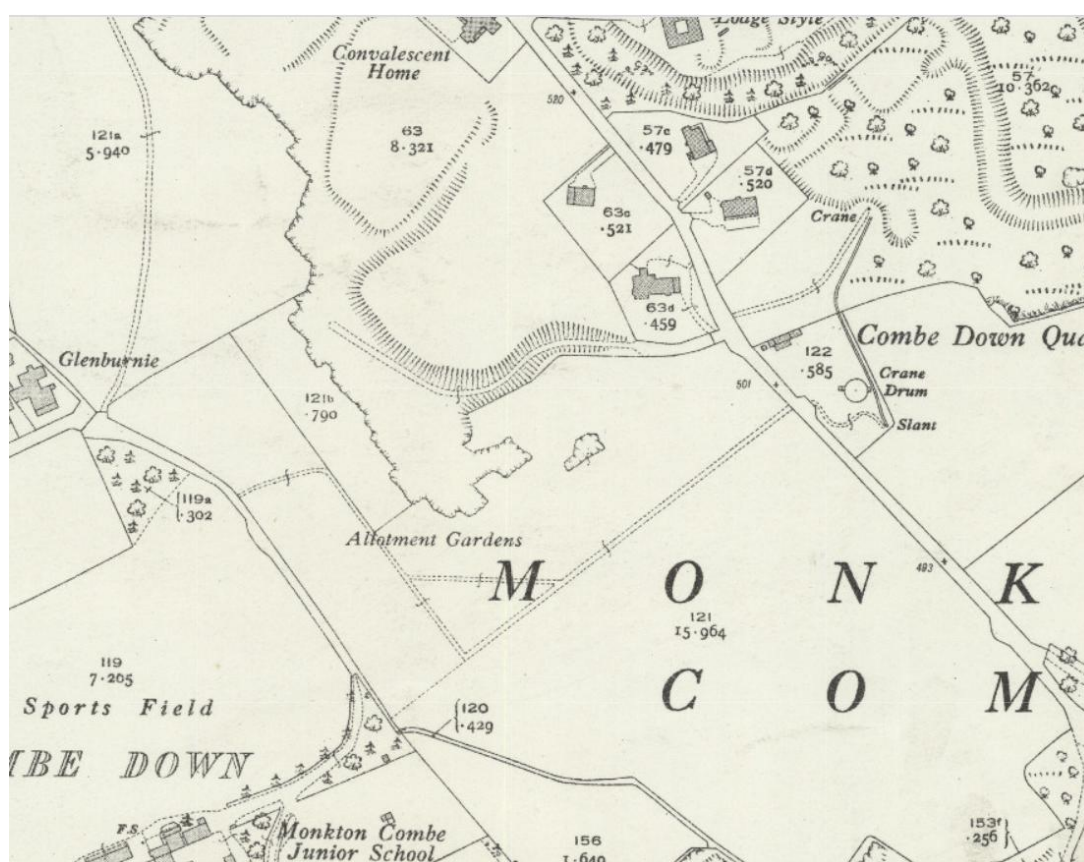
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 02 October 1920

The Combe Down Horticultural Association was now well established, with monthly lectures on Tuesday evenings in the Church Room. In November, a talk was given on cropping allotments for competition purposes.



Bath Chronicle 13 November 1920

The 1921 Ordnance Survey map of Combe Down again shows clearly that the Church Road allotment gardens extended as far as Shaft Road, and occupied the area later known locally as The Paddock, south of St Winifred's Drive. Combe Down quarries were operating on the eastern side of Shaft Road.



1921 OS Map showing the allotments across to what is now Shaft Road

The problem of uncultivated allotments was raised again in August 1921.

WARNING TO NEGLECTFUL ALLOTMENT HOLDERS.

NEGLECTED ALLOTMENTS.

With regard to the allotments, the Clerk called attention to the fact that certain pieces of land were complained about because they were not properly kept by the tenants. They were in a bad state owing to weeds not being kept down, and the other tenants did not like it.

The Chairman vouched for one plot being in a terribly dirty state, and said the tenant did not look after it at all.

The Clerk: He has paid his rent up to date.

The Clerk advised giving warnings that unless allotment were properly attended to the Council would be bound to deprive those who were neglectful of their land. Weeds were blowing on to other peoples gardens, and they were strongly complaining about it.

Mr. Pine said it was unfair to other occupiers of ground.

It was agreed that members of the Council should personally see the tenants who did not keep their ground in a proper state and make it quite clear to them that unless the land was kept clean it would have to be vacated.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 27 August 1921

In September 1921 the 4th annual Combe Down & District Horticultural Association show took place, with the author of the article pointing to Oldfield Park as showing better produce. There was an award for best kept allotment, won by J Williams.

COMBE DOWN SHOW.

FINE DISPLAY OF GARDEN PRODUCE.

TRIUMPH OVER THE DROUGHT.

In the exhibition of vegetables, fruits, and flowers on Thursday afternoon, gardeners, amateur, and otherwise, of Combe Down, showed what they could do, even in a dry season such as this, in the production of those things for which we rely on the fertility of the soil, and also on the fertility of human ingenuity. It was the fourth annual show of the Combe Down and District Horticultural Association, held in the Church Army Social Centre, and the exhibits were creditable in every way. Some of them appeared to be absolute perfection, but in other instances there were products displayed at Oldfield Park the other day which could give points to Combe Down and then win! Viewed as a whole, however, both promoters and growers have every reason to congratulate themselves on the show and it is to be hoped they received that full patronage of the public to which they were so justly entitled for the trouble they had gone to.

Best kept allotment: 1, J. Williams; 2, W. Warren.

BC 10 September 1921

COMBE DOWN SHOW

An Excellent Exhibition

THE MAYORESS'S WARNING

ENGLAND MUST GROW MORE FOOD

The Mayoress of Bath (Madame Sarah Grand) made an eloquent and earnest plea at Combe Down on Saturday that the people of this country should not forget the lessons of war time by neglecting the cultivation of small gardens and allotments for the increase of the country's supply of food.

The occasion was the opening of the annual horticultural show of the Combe Down and District Horticultural Association, at which she deputed for the Mayor, who was unable to be present. It was held at the Avenue

Hall, Combe Down, and was the sixth annual show of the association. The exhibits of vegetables, fruit, plants, flowers and home industrial work were beautifully arranged for inspection. The show was the best, and the number of entries the largest, achieved by the association. The area covered by the activities of the association includes Combe Down, Monkton Combe, Odd Down, Southstoke, Midford, Claverton and Pipehouse. The Chairman is Capt. C. W. Daubeney; Messrs. H. H. Collins, Upper Schools, and Geo. S. Rivington, Livingstone Lodge, are the hon. secretaries; the members of the committee are: Messrs. E. A. Russell, W. Williams, J. Williams, A. E. Beazer, M. Beasant, E. Weldon, W. Turner, D. Carr, and F. H. Pine.

The judges were Mr. T. Parrott, of Lyncombe Vale, and Mr. H. Sparey, of Batheaston, gardener to Capt. Bromet. The industrial section was judged by Miss Adamson, Miss Wood and Mr. F. Fisher.

A WARNING BY THE MAYORESS.

The Mayoress (Madame Sarah Grand) thanked them for their kind welcome. She was deputising for the Mayor, who always was hard-worked even apart from the important duties of the mayoralty. She was glad to see their beautiful show. It was the fourth she had the honour of opening

within a few months, and she was very glad to see these proofs of their practice of horticulture in Bath and district. It was estimated that if the horticultural possibilities of this country were sufficiently and intelligently developed they could have enough produce to feed all the people, but they had not. In the panic of the war hasty steps had to be taken to provide vegetable foods at home to save the people from starvation. Even the lawns and flower beds were dug up and planted with potatoes and cabbages. But when the war was over its lessons in this respect were being forgotten; they were drifting to the old state of things, and relying on imported food that they could produce as well at home. The sooner that state of things was remedied the better (applause). At the recent show at the Agricultural Hall, in London, it was shown that there had been a serious set back in the number of allotments in the country. She would say boldly that no town was doing its duty to its citizens and to the country that did not provide full facilities for allotment and small garden cultivation (hear, hear). The average allotment should produce 10cwt. of foodstuffs; they in this country from allotments and gardens should have 700,000 tons of such produce. Yet the price of vegetables was soaring. Before the war Belgium was called the market garden of England, and England

the paradise of the middleman. They in this country paid £7,000,000 for imported vegetables that could be raised at home (hear, hear). Horticulture and gardening was good in every way; it gave employment and health, it enabled them to have strong and healthy children and citizens. Public opinion on this matter must be excited and changed. She hoped their show would be as successful as it deserved, and she felt pleased and honoured in declaring it open (applause).

THE PRIZE-WINNERS.

The following were the awards.—

For residents in the association's district, not being professional gardeners:

Vegetables.—Collection of vegetables (six kinds): 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer. Six carrots: 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer. Six parsnips: 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer. Six turnips: 1, M. Beasant. Six beet—three round, three long: 1, J. Williams; 2, M. Frankling. Two marrows (for table): 1, A. E. Beazer; 2, M. Frankling. Twelve runner beans: 1, A. E. Beazer; 2, J. Williams. Peas—20 pods: 1, M. Frankling; 2, A. E. Beazer. Six onions (spring sown): 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer. Eight round potatoes: 1, J. Williams; 2, M. Bears. Eight kidney potatoes: 1, J. Williams; 2, A. F. Evans.

Fruit.—Six apples (culinary): 1, A. Patch; 2, M. Bears.

Plants and flowers.—Collection of four

plants in pots not exceeding eight inches: 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer. Single plant in pot not exceeding 10 inches: 1, M. Frankling; 2, M. Bears. Best hanging basket 1, A. Patch; 2, F. Patch. Best window box: 1, J. Williams. For best kept garden: 1, J. Williams; 2, A. E. Beazer; 3, M. Holley. For best-kept allotment: 1, M. Frankling; 2, H. West; 3, M. Holley.

Open classes:—

Vegetables.—Collection of vegetables, nine distinct kinds: 1, F. J. Mallett; 2, T. Sansum. Collection of potatoes, six varieties, six each: 1, E. M. Butler; 2, J. Williams. Peas (20 pods): 1, F. C. Appleby; 2, M. Frankling. Fifteen runner beans: 1, J. Williams; 2, Miss Harrison. Eight tomatoes: 1, Major Lock; 2, J. Williams. Six onions (spring sown): 1, J. Williams; 2, F. Mallett. Three cauliflowers: 1, Monkton Combe School; 2, Mrs. Spear. Two sticks of celery: 1, Miss Knott; 2, T. Sansum. Two cucumbers: 1, F. Mallett; 2, Miss Knott.

Fruit.—Collection of fruit, six distinct kinds, five of each: 1, E. M. Butler. Two bunches of grapes: 1, M. Holley. Six peaches: 1, E. M. Butler; 2, Mrs. Spear. Six apples (culinary): 1, Mrs. Spear; 2, E. M. Butler. Six apples (dessert): 1, E. M. Butler; 2, Mrs. Spear.

Flowers and plants.—Collection of six plants in pots: 1, E. M. Butler; 2, Miss Harrison. Tuberous begonia plants in pot: 1, E. M. Butler; 2, J. Holley. Three fuchsia plants in pots: 1, J. Holley; 2, Miss Harrison.

Table decoration.—1, Miss Ina Williams; 2, Miss C. Pine. Table decoration (under 16): 1, Lena Pine; 2, I. Prescott. Bouquet of wild flowers (children under 14): 1, Natalie Hawkins; 2, Adelaide Prescott.

Industrial.—Cookery (cottagers). Fruit cake: 1, Miss Ina Williams; 2, Mrs. W. Fisher. Dish of cooked potatoes: 1, Miss Ina Williams; 2, Mrs. Close. Doll's dress: 1, Doris Lynn; 2, Marie Styles. Brush drawing copy: 1, Constance Humphries; 2, Phyllis Pratt. Brush drawing from nature: 1, Gilbert Thomas; 2, R. Brinkworth. Woodwork model with working drawing: 1, Alan Macallum; 2, Gilbert Thomas.

Best-kept garden plot (schoolboys): 1, Roland Symes and George Feris; 2, Alfred Morris and Herbert Nowell; 3, Charles Foster and Fred Williams.

The special prize for the largest vegetable marrow in the show was won by Mr. A. E. Beazer.

Special prize for the best exhibit of pot plants: 1, Major Lock; 2, Mr. E. M. Butler; 3, J. Holley; 4, J. Williams; 5, A. E. Beazer.

The R.H.S. bronze Banksian medal was awarded to Mr. A. E. Beazer, and the "Gardening Illustrated" medal to Mr. J. Williams.

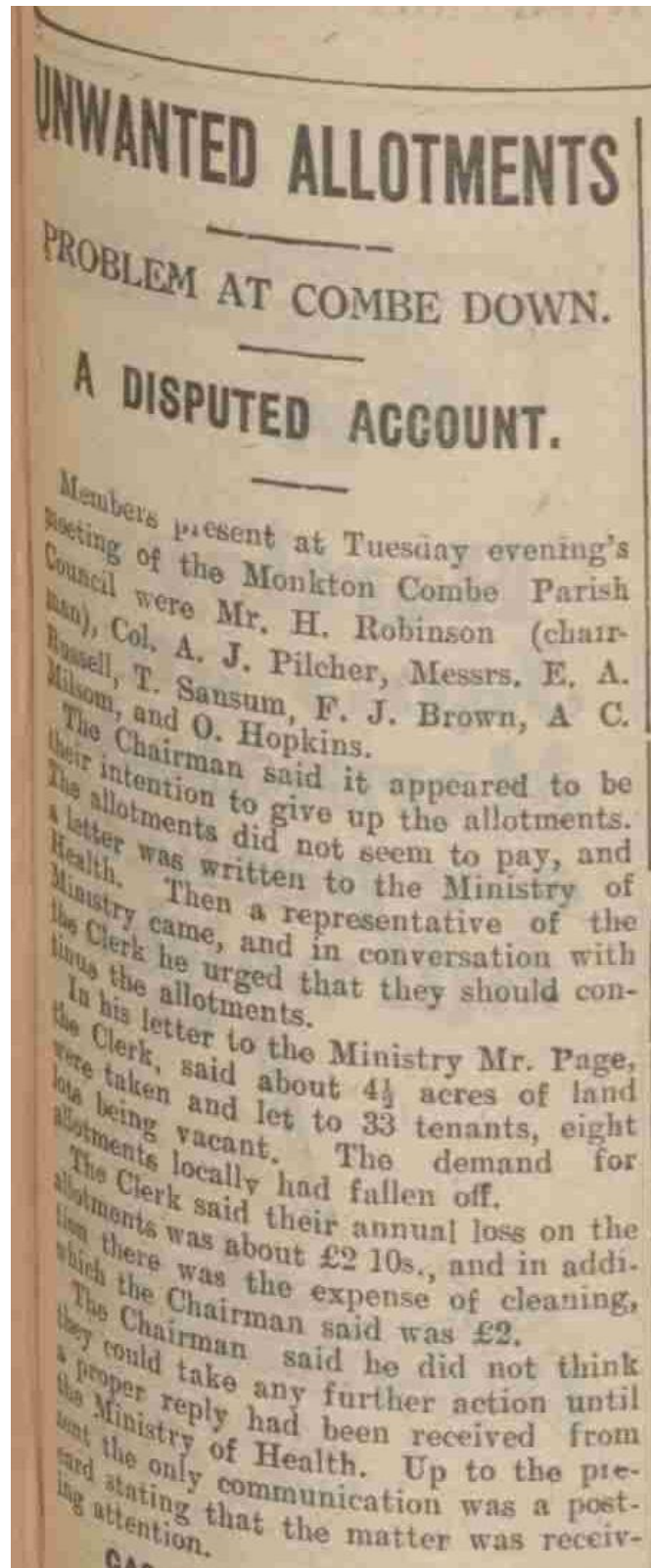
Bath Chronicle 22 September 1923

In 1924, despite there being rents overdue since Christmas, the Parish Council declined to put a "black list" of rent defaulters on the allotment notice board, deciding it was too strong a measure to take.

Upon the Clerk stating that there were some allotment rents overdue, Mr. Robinson suggested that the names of the defaulters should be put on the allotment board—a kind of "black list." If this were done, defaulters would soon pay up. The Chairman thought this measure too strong.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 29 March 1924

In 1927 the Council considered giving up the allotments due to falling local interest and increased costs. However, a representative from the Ministry of Health came to the village to meet the Clerk to dissuade the Council from this measure.



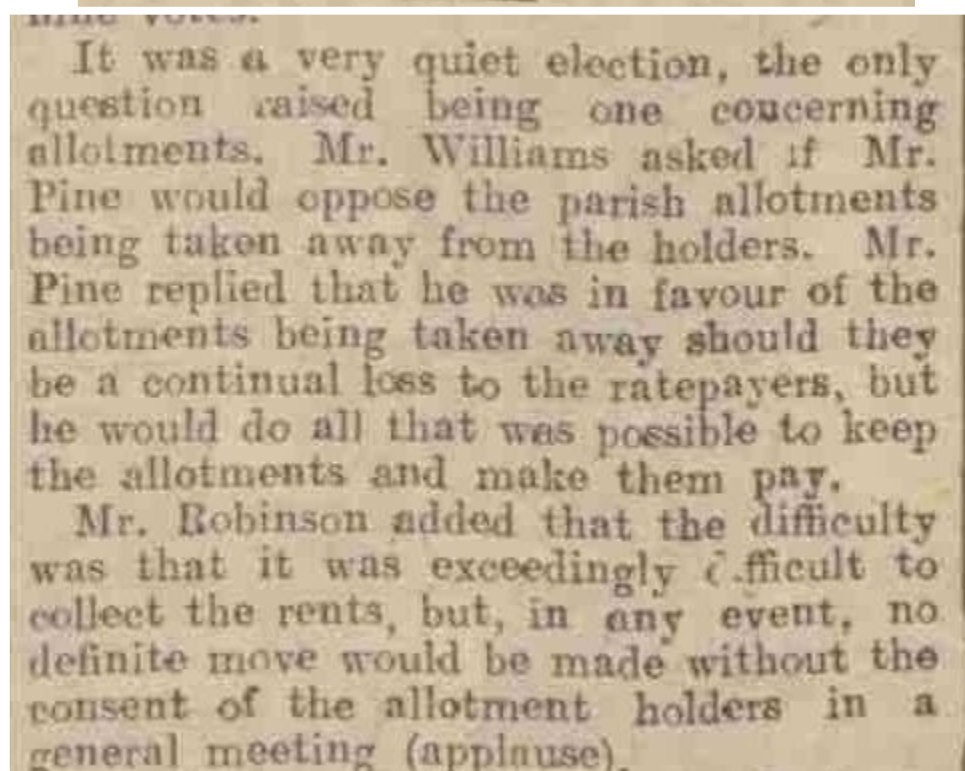
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 17 December 1927

The Council Minutes show that it was decided to raise the rents in the face of a deficit, complaining that "The young men are doing very little."

1928, and the allotments are once again an electioneering battleground. Parish Councillors are considering an option to close the allotments because of rent defaulters: Mr Pine said if elected he would be in favour of that approach if the allotments were a continual burden on ratepayers, but he would do everything possible to keep the allotments and make them pay.

COMBE DOWN.

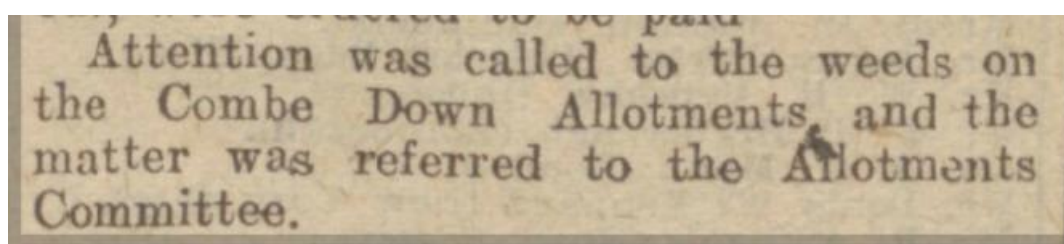
Future of the Allotments.



It was a very quiet election, the only question raised being one concerning allotments. Mr. Williams asked if Mr. Pine would oppose the parish allotments being taken away from the holders. Mr. Pine replied that he was in favour of the allotments being taken away should they be a continual loss to the ratepayers, but he would do all that was possible to keep the allotments and make them pay.

Mr. Robinson added that the difficulty was that it was exceedingly difficult to collect the rents, but, in any event, no definite move would be made without the consent of the allotment holders in a general meeting (applause).

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 17 March 1928



Attention was called to the weeds on the Combe Down Allotments, and the matter was referred to the Allotments Committee.

Bath Chronicle 14 July 1928

The success of Mr G C Johnson, a Combe Down man who had begun his horticultural career in the village as gardener at The Brow, was reported in 1928. He had become Horticultural Superintendent for East Sussex, and had also worked for the Marquis of Bath at Longleat and for J P Morgan at Roehampton.



Bath Chronicle 25 February 1928

In 1929 the issue of unpaid rents was once again a problem. The Monkton Combe villagers who cultivated their own section of the Church Road allotments were better at maintaining their plots and paying their rents, but the Combe Downers on the "upper ground" were a recalcitrant bunch, with unpaid rents and untended plots causing severe stress to Councillors, and no-one coming forward to take on the vacant plots. Allotment gardening in Combe Down was "becoming a lost art".

COMBE DOWN ALLOTMENTS.

—♦—
Holders to be Pressed for Unpaid
Rents.

Regarding some of the allotment holders whose rents became due at Christmas last, but are still unpaid, it was decided to give the defaulters seven days' notice, and if the rents are not then paid to take proceedings.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 February 1929

A COMBE DOWN DILEMMA.

Allotment cultivating is becoming a lost art at Combe Down, Bath, and the Parish Council on Tuesday were faced with a financial loss on the allotments accounts.

The trouble is that there are more pieces of ground than tenants.

Residents of Monkton Combe are keener on growing their own vegetables, for in that section of the Parish Council's allotments there was actually a profit of five shillings on the year.

A serious loss is recorded in the Combe Down portion, however; the Council pay £17 10s. a year in rents, which included the cost of "clearing" and rents received from allotment holders amount to only £11 17s. 8d. Thus there is a deficit of £5 2s. 4d.

The Council discussed ways and means of inducing fresh tenants to take holdings.

"Some time ago we plastered the place with notices," said Mr. F. H. Pine, the Chairman, and turning to the Clerk, he added, "You didn't get one fresh tenant, did you?"

"Well, I did get just one," was the reply.

"And he didn't pay his rent!" the Chairman concluded, to the amusement of the Councillors.

It was decided that a letter be written to the present allotment holders, asking them to try to get other tenants.

The members present were: Mr. R. Daniels, Mr. J. R. England, Col. A. J. Pilcher, Mr. H. Robinson, Mr. E. A. Russell, Mr. F. J. Brown, Mr. F. R. Mundy and Mr. Nelson Plummer (a co-opted member).

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 12 October 1929

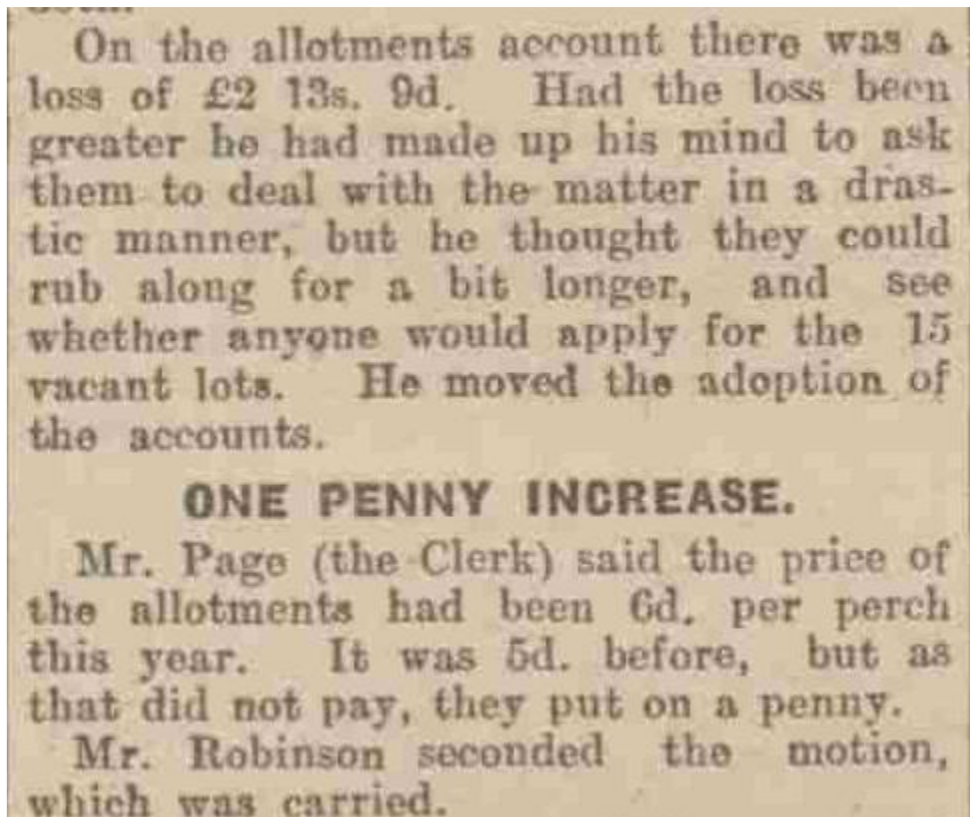
In 1930, the Chairman of the Council considers taking drastic action due to the deficit on the Combe Down allotments, but decides to let the allotments "run on for a bit longer".

Combe Down Parish Council met on Tuesday evening, Mr. F. H. Pine presiding. Others present were: Lieut.-Col. Pilcher, Messrs. H. Robinson, R. Daniels, F. R. Mundy, and S. Plummer, with Mr. E. P. Page (Clerk).

The Clerk reported that the accounts for allotments at Monkton Combe were clear. At Combe Down the allotments had cost £15 18s. 6d., towards which he had collected £7 14s. 2d., and £5 10s. 7d. was outstanding, the rest being voids. There was thus a deficiency of £2 13s. 9d. on Combe Down.

The Chairman said that out of the allotments on the Combe Down, or upper ground, 27 had been let and 15 were vacant.

The annual parish meeting followed, when Mr. Pine, who was elected to the chair, presented a statement of the accounts, and said the books were present and open to inspection. The year started with a balance in hand of £30, precepts of £25 and £35 were made; the allotments yielded, Combe Down £5 13s. 5d., and Monkton Combe £3 13s. 4d.; total receipts £99 6s. 9d. The expenditure was £76 7s. 8d., leaving a credit balance of £22 19s. 1d.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 22 March 1930

In 1931 the Council must deal with allotment holders being “disturbed” by quarrying operations. The Parish Council decide to discuss the problem with the Landlord. This is clearly a reference to Upper Lawn Quarry as these were the only workings still in operation in the village by this time.

In August 1931 there is damage to a gate at the allotments to repair, and a contact is given to Mr Russell of Granville Cottage, Combe Down (Russell House now stands in Tynning Road) to clear some vacant plots.

Mrs Powell, who acts as Secretary to the Combe Down Convalescent Home, writes to ask if any plots can be provided to occupants of the Home, which stands on the corner of Shaft Road and North Road (now Quad Villas).

There was a full attendance of the Council, viz., Messrs. F. H. Pine (chairman), F. R. Mundy, S. L. Plummer, F. J. Brown, R. W. Cornish, A. G. Cleaves, C. G. Millett, R. Daniels, F. Miller, and E. A. Russell, and the clerk (Mr. E. P. Page).

ALLOTMENT AFFAIRS.

The Allotments Committee reported a case where an allotment had been disturbed by quarrying operations. It was agreed to call the landlord's attention to the matter, and also to invite the allotment tenants to meet the Allotments Committee.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 May 1931

Mr. Cleaves reported damage to the allotment gate, and it was decided to allot a sum up to £3 11s. for repairs.

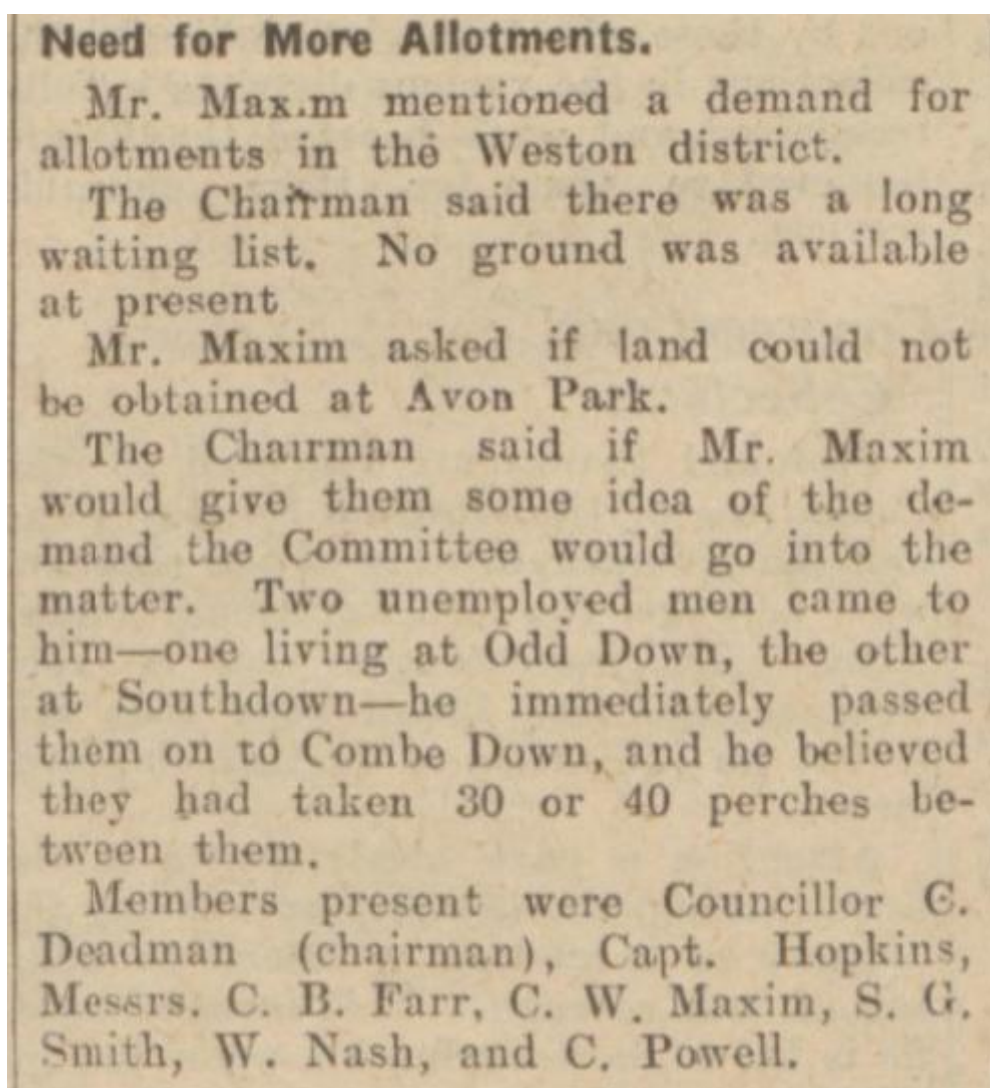
It was resolved to accept a tender of £2 5s. from Mr. H. A. Russell, of Granville Cottage, Combe Down, to clear up some vacant plots on the allotments.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 25 July 1931

Mrs. A. M. Powell, of the Convalescent Home, Combe Down, wrote inquiring if suitable allotments could be had. It was stated that the demand had slackened off, and it was left to the Allotments Subcommittee to meet Mrs. Powell with power to make any arrangements.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 12 December 1931

In 1932, the Bath Smallholdings & Allotments Committee heard about the demand for more allotments. Two unemployed men from Odd Down and Southdown had been found plots at Combe Down.



BC 20 February 1932

In March 1932, a meeting was held in the Church Army Hut on Firs Field to agree a scheme to help the parish unemployed, but it proved to be a failure due to apathy. There were some 14 empty allotments in the village which could be offered to the unemployed free of rent for six months. They'd need spades, forks, seed and manure but should seek support for these from the Allotments Association in London. A comment was made that if the men would give up half a cigarette a day, they would be able to afford the costs. When the men were asked if they wanted to join the allotment holders, all but one refused.

A MEETING held in the Church Army Hut, Combe Down, Bath, on Wednesday to formulate a scheme to assist the unemployed in the parish proved a failure, owing to the apathy of the men concerned.

The Parish Council had about 14 allotments vacant, 284 perches at 6d. a perch. They would be agreeable to allow the first half-year's rent to the new tenants.

Mr. Cornish said there would be no difficulty about that.

The Chairman said it would make the cost of the allotments for the first year £3 11s. They would want spades, forks, seed, and probably manure. He hoped they could get into touch with the secretary of the movement regarding these things, Mr. Nicholson, Euston Road, London.

The Chairman said the cost of an allotment of 20 perches worked out at 2d. a week; if the men went without half a cigarette a day, that would be covered. The allotments could be let to the Church Army.

There was no response.

The Chairman then put the question to the unemployed individually, as to whether they were prepared to join the allotment scheme, or suggest anything else

NO ENTHUSIASM.

They all, with the exception of Mr. Butcher, said "No."

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 05 March 1932

The matter wasn't allowed to rest and a committee was set up to investigate the options further.

ALLOTMENT SCHEME

Effort for Combe Down Unemployed

Considerable interest was aroused in an effort to organise an allotment scheme for the unemployed of Combe Down, although it did not receive an enthusiastic response from those most intimately concerned.

However, it was felt by Capt. Goode, of the Church Army (one of the chief organisers of the gathering) that the matter should not be allowed to rest, and a further meeting of a number of unemployed and other interested residents of the Down took place in the Church Army Social Centre. It was decided to set up a committee to consider ways and means of rendering assistance to those out of employment.

The committee appointed consists of Messrs. R. Daniells, C. G. Millett and R. W. Cornish (Parish Council representatives), G. T. Rivington, Major S. H. Clark and Mr. Rendle (representing the rate-payers), and Messrs. A. J. Cleaves, Butcher and E. Ball (unemployed representatives), with Capt. Goode as secretary. It was decided, also, to have weekly meetings of the committee, to endeavour to obtain a register of the unemployed, and of their capabilities and circumstances; and when this had been completed, to make an appeal to the parishioners for work and financial assistance. It is believed that this effort will be of assistance to the unemployed, and that it promises to be more successful than the original scheme outlined at the initial meeting. The first meeting of the new committee is to take place on Thursday evening next, and all unemployed parishioners are invited to register their names with Capt. Goode.

Bath Chronicle 26 March 1932

It's clear that the level of unemployment in the village was high, and many people would have been in need. There were many reports of wholesale theft from the allotments with tenants threatening to quit if their hard work and expenses came to nothing in this way. One tenant lost 30 broccoli in one weekend and another complained to the police. There was also concern about people walking across the allotments, creating a public footpath, and notices had been put up at each end to discourage this.

ALLOTMENT THEFTS

Monkton Combe Parish Council Take Action

Pilfering at Combe Down allotments was brought to the notice of Monkton Combe Parish Council on Tuesday evening by the vice-chairman (Mr. R. W. Cornish), who said he had heard a lot of complaints, one man stating that he lost over 30 broccoli one week-end. They already had difficulty in letting and other things, and if thefts continued they would be having tenants giving up their ground.

There was also complaint, Mr. Cornish said, respecting people crossing allotments, over which a public footpath was being made.

It was remarked that notices had been placed at each end, and that only a short time ago a notice was put up.

In the discussion Mr. Cornish said a tenant made a complaint to the police quite recently.

The Council viewed thefts from allotments as a serious matter and decided to take all steps possible to put an end to them.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 May 1932

The thefts continued and by June 1932, a significant reward of £2 was offered for information leading to a conviction of anyone stealing from the allotments. The problem of shoulder high weeds was also reported, with the Council responsible for bringing in weeders to cut the luxuriant but problematic growth.

Mr. F. H. Pine, who presided, suggested that a notice should be put up offering a reward for information which would lead to the conviction of anyone stealing from allotments. There had been a lot of pilfering lately, he said.

Mr. Russell suggested that the reward be £2, and formally proposed it.

The proposition was seconded and carried.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 11 June 1932

LUXURIANT WEEDS

Mr. Russell said the allotment-holders wanted to know when the new weeders were coming! They wanted them to get through the weeds when the latter were wet.

No answer was forthcoming.

Later in the meeting Mr. Russell sought information as to when the weeds were to be cut.

The Chairman said it was understood it was to be done this week.

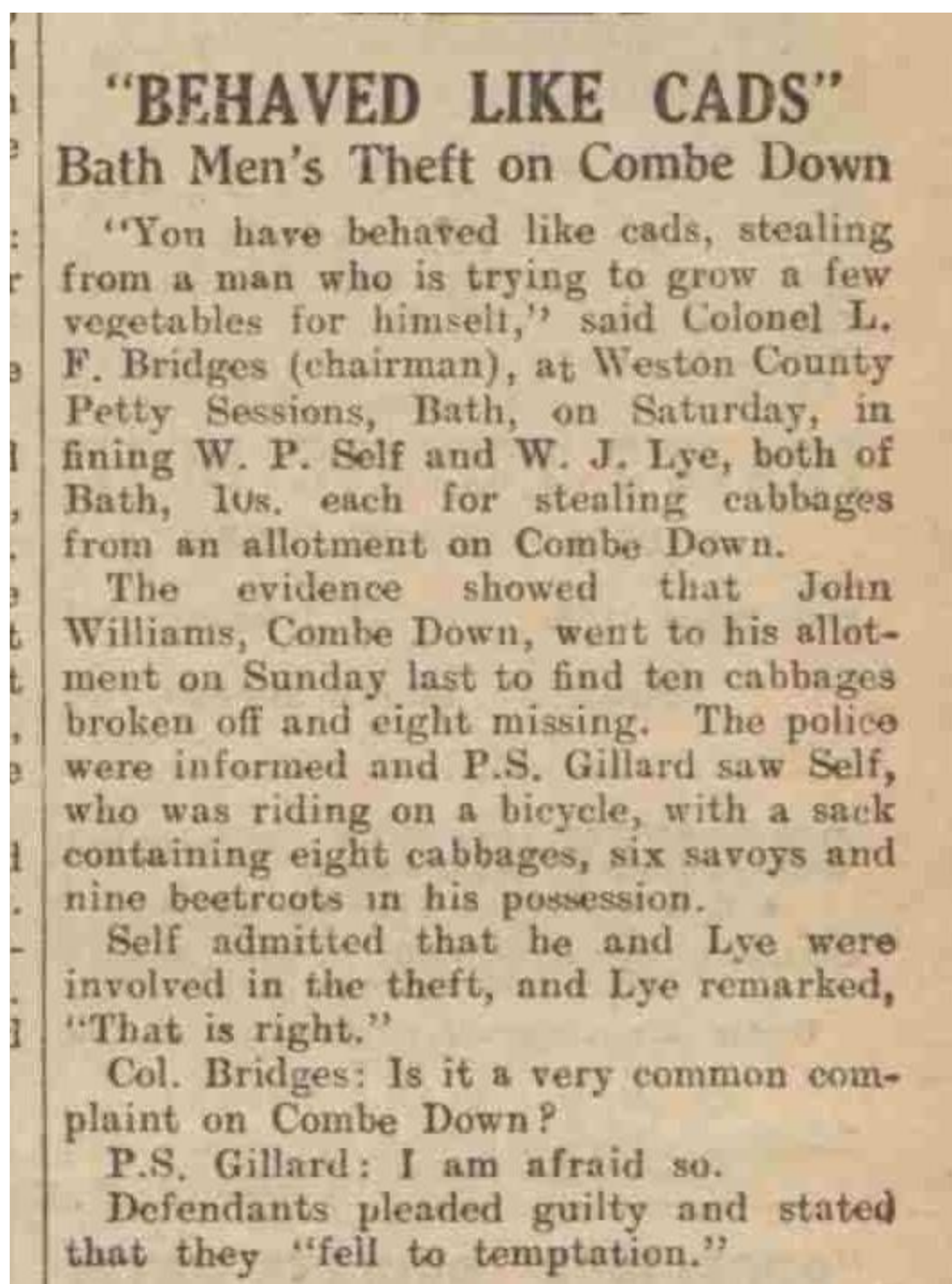
Mr. Russell said it was difficult to get through them as they were as high as one's arms.

Mr. Cornish commented on the nuisance to the allotment holders owing to the weeds seeding.

It was stated that the cutting would not cost the Council anything.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 July 1932

In November 1932, two men appeared at Weston County Petty Sessions accused of stealing cabbages and beetroot from Combe Down allotments: "a common complaint on Combe Down". The defendants pleaded guilty, saying they had "fallen to temptation".



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 12 November 1932

In 1933, the question of allotments for the unemployed was again on the agenda, with five applications having come to the Council. The applicants would be given manure and seeds at a much reduced price, and the land would be cleared and ploughed for them.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 18 February 1933

In 1933, men had been seen measuring out the allotment ground, and there was concern that the land was going to be lost to housing development.

Mr. Robinson suggested that allotment ground would be utilised for housing.

The Chairman: We have assumed that because we have seen people measuring out there. We have nothing definite.

Mr. Robinson: There is nothing official.

It was agreed that Capt. Daubeny be asked to bring the matter to the notice of the District Council.

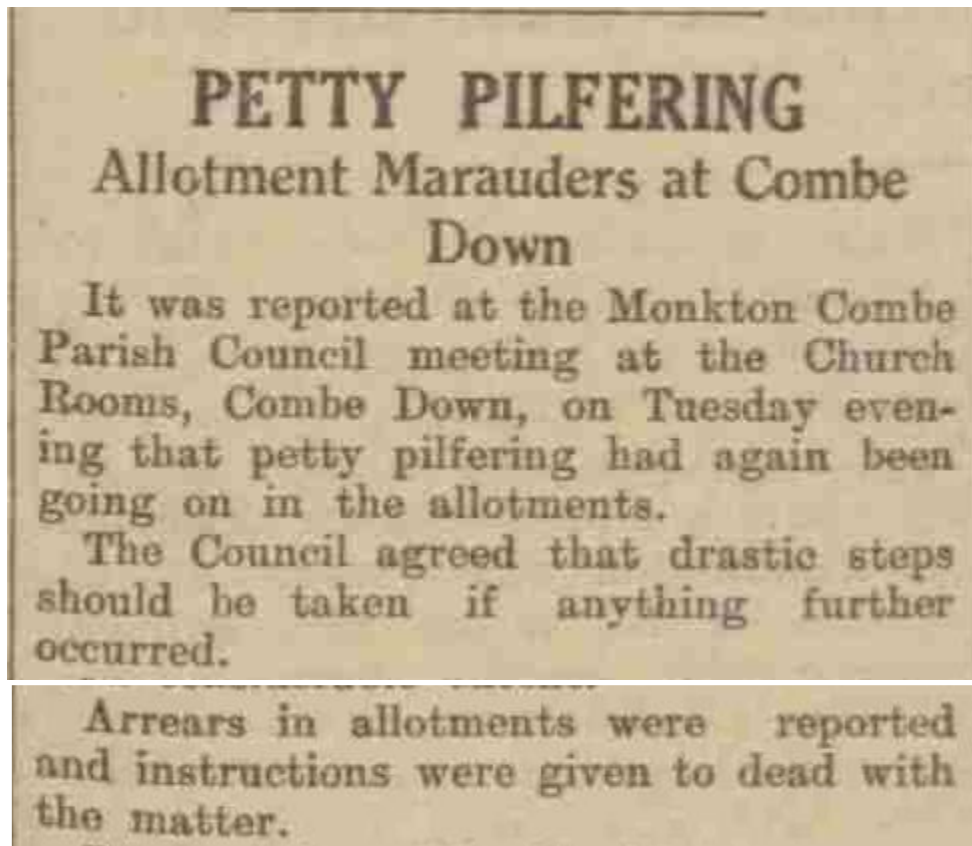
Allotments brought in £14 11s. 4d., and they cost £20 18s. 4d., a loss of £6 7s. on the year.

The Chairman said they had tried in every possible way to induce parishioners to take up allotments, but had not been altogether successful. The allotment question was rather a serious one, but as long as they got through without any further loss he did not see that they could do better than maintain the allotments.

Mr. Cornish elicited that most of the loss was incurred in the Combe Down Ward.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 18 March 1933

The stealing of produce from the allotments continued with drastic action required.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 13 May 1933

The discussions at Monkton Combe Parish Council continue along the usual lines: some applications for allotments, an overall income loss and unlet plots to manage.

The last meeting of Monkton Combe Parish Council prior to the recently-elected Council coming into office took place on Tuesday evening. Mr. Frank H. Pine presided, and there were also present Messrs. R. W. Cornish (vice-chairman), R. Daniels, H. Robinson, C. G. Millett, F. J. Brown, S. L. Plummer, F. R. Mundy, and Mrs. E. M. Page (clerk).

Several applications for allotments were entertained.

It was reported that one tenant questioned whether he has the quantity of land for which he is being charged, and it was decided to settle the point by having the plot measured.

The Chairman said there was £9 13s. 7d. net loss on allotments.

Replying to questions, the Clerk said there was no considerable amount of allotment rent outstanding.

Mr. Robinson urged the desirability of unlet allotments being kept clean in order to prevent weeds seeding and affecting adjoining allotments.

It was stated that this was done once a year.

The Chairman accepted a suggestion that if all the allotments were let the expenditure on them would about be met.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 17 March 1934

Monkton Combe Parish Council met at the Church Rooms on Tuesday, those present being Messrs. R. W. Cornish (chairman), C. G. Millett, W. J. Bray, L. G. Jordan, W. F. Williams, F. G. Prescott, and S. L. Plummer, with Mrs. Page (clerk).

The Allotment Committee reported that two allotments had been re-measured, and also that an iron fence adjoining the allotments was broken down so that the cattle were getting through and spoiling the crops.
It was decided to write to the farmer

Bath Chronicle 12 May 1934

In July 1934, cattle from Combe Grove Farm still managed to break through a fence and get into the allotments, causing damage.

meeting in September.
Allotment holders made complaints about cattle getting into the allotments owing to a broken fence.

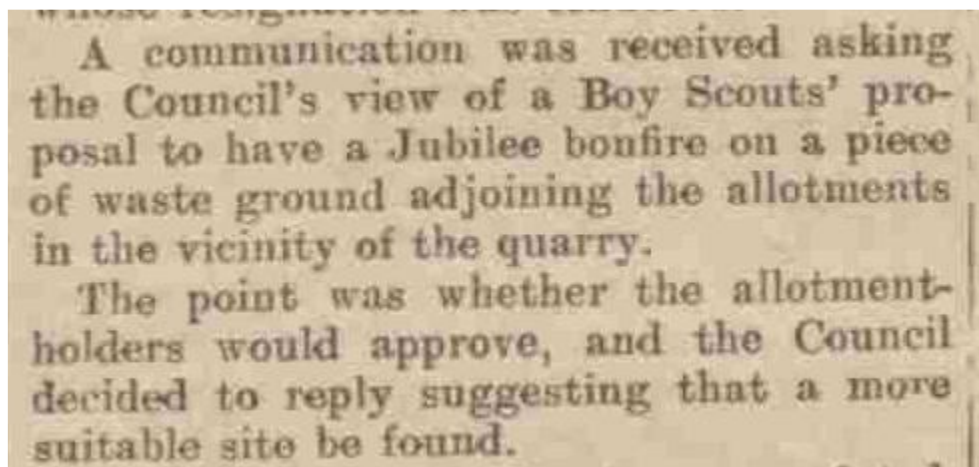
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 July 1934

In March 1935, the theft of ten broccoli from Mr Dowding, a professional gardener who lived at Green Cottages, as reported. Mr Dowding had matched the stumps of his broccoli to vegetables he found in a local shop window, and reported the incident to the police.



Bath Chronicle 16 March 1935

Amusingly, considering that bonfires on allotments are now discouraged, in 1935 the Council had to rule on whether the Boy Scouts could have a bonfire on waste ground adjoining the allotments, near the quarry.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 20 April 1935

In May, the Council agreed to employ a man to shoot or trap the plague of rabbits causing much damage to allotment holders' crops.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 18 May 1935

In September 1935 there was a discussion that indicates allotment land on the Bradford Road was soon to be lost to new housing.

September 13, 1935
With regard to the Combe Down Housing site (the allotment site, Bradford Road), it was announced that an expert had been engaged to make an underground survey of the site, to see if it was safe for building purposes, but his report was not yet prepared.

Commenting on this, Mr. Cornish remarked, "I don't know what they (the Rural District Council) would say if we purchased a bit of land, supposing that we were empowered to do so, and then paid some expert to see if it was safe to build upon. Personally, I think its very bad business. I feel a site could have been found and houses built a long time ago."

Councillors Take a Walk.

Previously, Mr. Cornish had said that Rural Councils were badly constituted bodies to handle a question such as housing—they were not in touch with the parishes.

The report of the Allotment Sub-Committee was soon dealt with, and the only business in connection with it was to appoint "excutioners" for patches of unruly grass.

It was suggested that a good site for a

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 13 July 1935

letter on the subject.

The Council has a number of vacant allotments upon its hands, so it was decided that the Allotment Committee should draw up a report of the circumstances for the consideration of the next Council meeting.

Bath Chronicle 12 October 1935

In 1936 there were more problem with rents and lack of demand for allotments. "Young men do not seem to be keen on gardening", noted the Chairman of the Council. "Allotments are out of fashion."

new sub-postmaster.

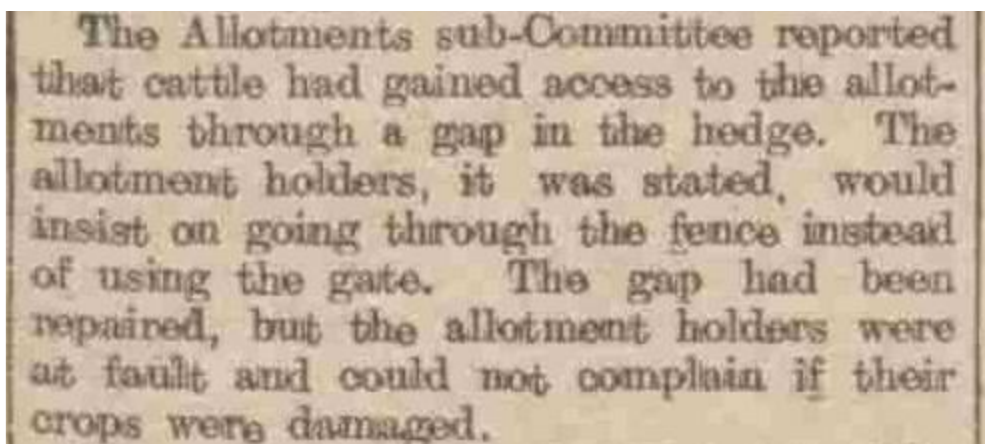
Allotments Problem.

The Allotments sub-Committee complained of the irregularity of allotment holders in paying their rent, and the Chairman, remarking that the extreme method they could employ was to summon defaulters, said they would have to face up to the fact that the demand did not seem to merit their hiring the land for the letting out of allotments.

"The younger men do not seem to be keen on gardening," he said, "and it is not fair that the cost of the land should be borne by the ratepayers. We shall have to look into the matter, but it seems that allotments are out of fashion. Despite the disappointment of many of our older tenants, it seems that we shall have to relinquish the tenancy of this land unless more support is forthcoming."

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 February 1936

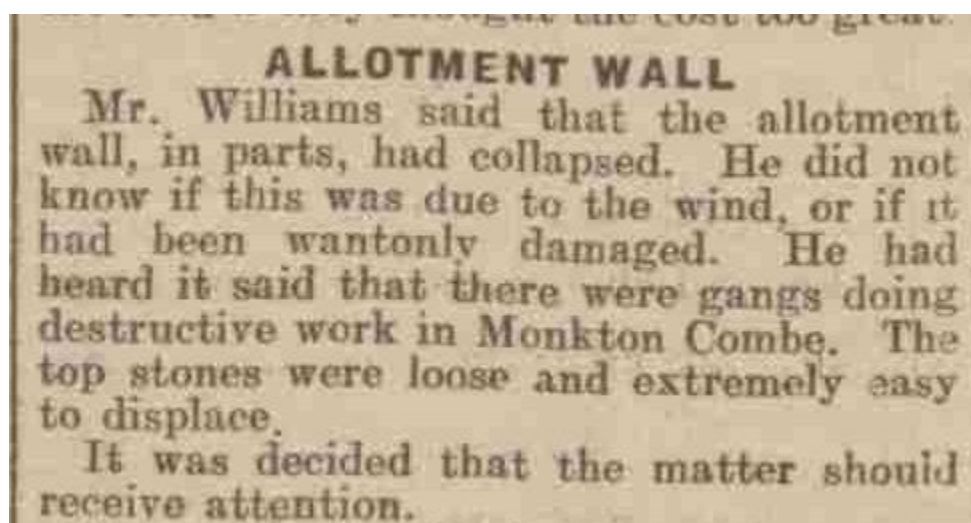
In July 1936 cattle got into the allotments again through a gap in the hedge. The cause is revealed: allotment holders will insist on going through the fence rather than using the gate. The gap had been repaired, but the allotment holders can't complain about something that is their fault.



The Allotments sub-Committee reported that cattle had gained access to the allotments through a gap in the hedge. The allotment holders, it was stated, would insist on going through the fence instead of using the gate. The gap had been repaired, but the allotment holders were at fault and could not complain if their crops were damaged.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 18 July 1936

In January 1937, parts of the allotment wall had collapsed and needed repair. There were reports of gangs being destructive in Monkton Combe, but it was noted that the top stones were loose and extremely easy to displace.



ALLOTMENT WALL
Mr. Williams said that the allotment wall, in parts, had collapsed. He did not know if this was due to the wind, or if it had been wantonly damaged. He had heard it said that there were gangs doing destructive work in Monkton Combe. The top stones were loose and extremely easy to displace.
It was decided that the matter should receive attention.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 16 January 1937

Finally in 1938 the village lost Revd Newnham's original 1851 Field Garden allotments to the development of Westerleigh Road. Tenants were given notice to quit in October 1938, although those who had been regular with their payments would be allowed to continue.

GIVEN NOTICE TO QUIT

OCCUPIERS OF COMBE
DOWN "FIELD GARDENS"

LINK WITH THE PAST

Time marches on. A correspondent informs us that on Michaelmas Day last week, some of the tenants of the old Combe Down allotment gardens received notice to quit their holdings. Many of them will be sorry to lose their ground, and a link with the past has been severed.

It was in 1852 that the land was made into "Field Gardens"—a more pleasing name than the modern utilitarian word "allotments"—and rules and conditions were laid down for the occupation of the land "for the purpose of promoting the comfort and resources of industrious labourers." This has the authentic note of Victorian earnestness about it.

Originally the land was taken over by the Rev. George William Newnham, then Vicar of Combe Down, in order that it might be let out as allotments to parishioners. The annual rental was 6d. per lug "to cover all expenses and raise a fund for prizes to the best cultivator."

MUST ATTEND CHURCH.

Rule 8 provides that "no occupier is to work on his land, or remove produce, on the Lord's Day," while Rule 10 states that "any occupier convicted of theft, or any other misdemeanour, or being a known frequenter of drinking-houses, shall be liable to forfeit his allotment."

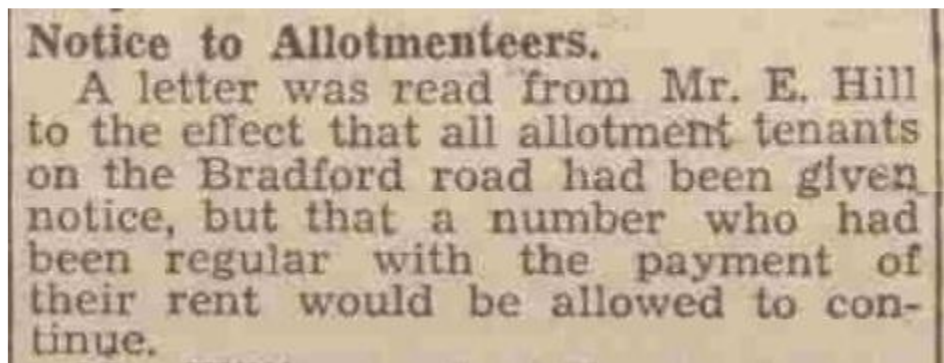
Even more important is Rule 12, for this says: "Every occupier shall attend some place of worship at least once every Sunday, and should he neglect to do so, without sufficient cause, shall forfeit his garden."

"All occupiers who do not attend the church must produce a certificate of their attendance from their respective ministers when required."

HINT TO CITY COUNCIL.

Our correspondent who, through the kindness of Mr. W. Warren, has sent us one of the original tenancy agreements and a copy of the rules, comments, "In reading these rules one cannot escape the conviction that the non-attendance of so many male members of the community at church on Sundays is directly due to the allotment committees of all councils who have omitted to embody these penalty clauses in their regulations for the more modern field gardens."

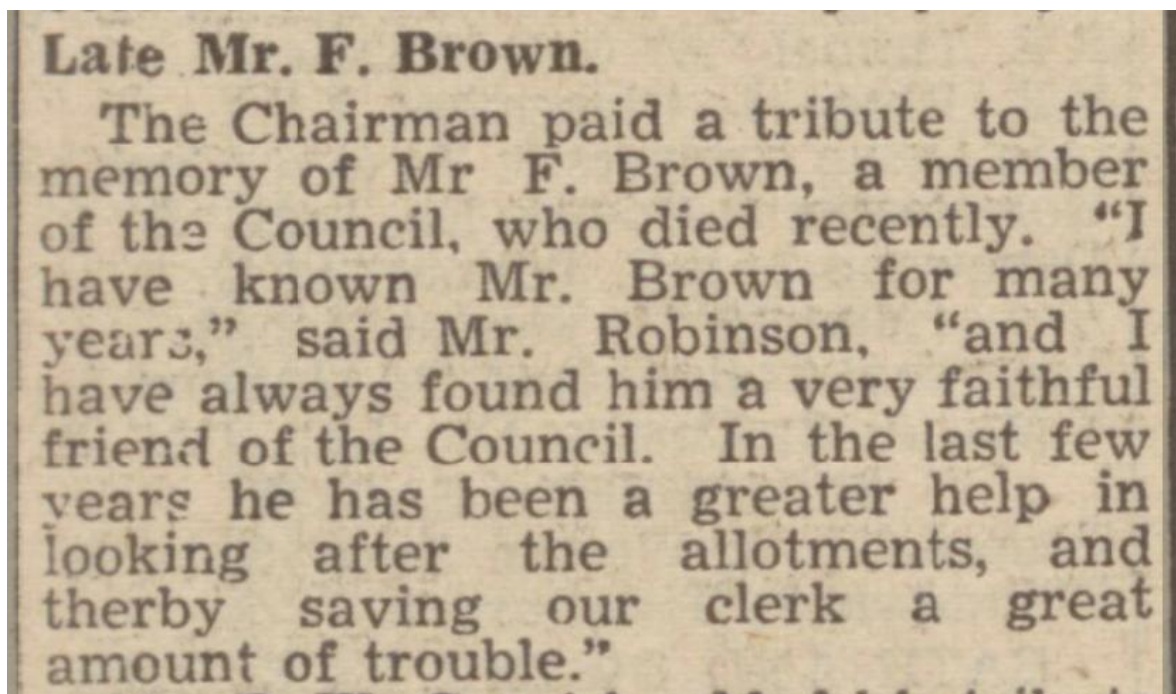
Our correspondent is somewhat amused at the requirement that, where the tenant was not a member of the Church of England, a certificate of his attendance elsewhere might be required. While such rules and regulations would, no doubt, be held in these days to infringe the liberty of the subject, one may, perhaps, be permitted to regret those more orderly times of 1852, when life, at least, moved in more leisurely fashion than in the present year of grace.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1938

In December 1938 there is more evidence that the allotments were being cultivated on the field immediately off Shaft Road. Monkton Combe Parish Minutes of 13 December 1938 note: "Gate at Shaft Road Entrance to the allotments was out of order.". There was also a general reference to vacant plots and the allotment boundary walls being in poor repair.

In 1939, Mr Brown died. He had been the Council member who had taken on much of the responsibility for looking after the allotments.



Bath Chronicle 14 January 1939

Mrs. Page reported that there were 13 vacant plots of allotment and the amount they would bring in would be £5 13s. 9d. Replying to Mr. Cornish, she said the allotments just paid for themselves.

Bath Chronicle 18 March 1939

As the Second World War begins, Combe Down is well placed to deal with food shortages, as it has plenty of land available for allotments.

Land for Allotments

The war, responsible for a disappointment, brought forward, however, a matter in which the parish has a marked distinction. On the report of the Allotments Sub-committee the chairman said that though he did not anticipate that there would be such a food shortage as was in the last war, he thought it could not be too widely known that the parish council had plenty of land available for allotments.

"It is as well to be prepared," Mr. Cornish said. "and I think I can say that this council will make it easy for people to obtain plots in a clean condition."

To that end Mr. W. J. Bray suggested that prospective tenants should have an allotment free for the first six months and Mr. W. F. Williams put forward the alternative suggestion that the council should plough up the land. He thought a Government subsidy would be forthcoming for that purpose and for seeds as well.

Mr. H. Robinson said he thought it would be an additional inducement to tenants if the land was ploughed.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 30 September 1939

Once again, by 1940 the Council is considering advertising for tenants, and the parish allotment "spadeworkers" form their own association. The risk to men and ships could be reduced if people would grow more vegetables for home consumption.

ALLOTMENTS ON THE DOWN

PARISH COUNCIL TO CALL TENANTS TOGETHER

Monkton Combe Parish Council is anxious that all the allotments it administers should have tenants.

They decided at their meeting on Tuesday to call a meeting of allotment holders at a date yet to be fixed with a view to forming an Association; and to write to the Ministry of Agriculture asking what steps can be taken to obtain seeds, seed potatoes and fertilisers at special rates.

Mrs. Crisp advocated that the allotments be advertised, but it was decided, if sufficient advantages could be obtained for the tenants, advertisement would be unnecessary.

Mr. Duckett suggested that Bath horticultural authorities might be asked to address an association if it was formed.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 13 January 1940

RUN RABBIT, RUN !

At Tuesday's meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council Mr Duckett suggested that the Council's allotments should be enclosed in a fence of wire netting to exclude rabbit.

To this Mr Williams said, "Perhaps it would be cheaper to give every tenant a gun!"

It was agreed that the Allotment Sub-Committee should meet on the site. Two hundred yards of netting is suggested as the required quantity.

Bath Chronicle 13 January 1940

"SPADEWORKERS" AT COMBE DOWN Form Their Own Association

Convened at the instance of the Monkton Combe Parish Council, a meeting was held at the Church Room, Combe Down, on Friday last week, to consider the advisability of forming an Allotment Holders' Association in the district.

Mr. R. W. Cornish, J.P., chairman of the Council presided, other councillors present being Mrs. Crisp, Mr. W. J. Bray, Mr. W. Williams, Mr. W. Duckett, Mr. F. J. Prescott, Mr. W. Walters and Mrs. E. M. Page (clerk).

Mr. H. J. Croom, secretary of the Bath and District Allotment Holders' Association, and Mr. G. B. Jones (committee-man) attended and outlined the advantages of such an organisation, Mr. Croom stressing the point that all interested in gardening could join, even if they were not, strictly speaking, allotment holders.

After discussion it was proposed by Mr. Duckett and seconded by Mr. Gillard, that an Allotment Holders' Association be formed for the parish of Monkton Combe, and that the following be appointed as a committee: Mr. Cornish (chairman), Mr. Duckett (secretary), Messrs. A. Doel, Gillard, H. Sumson and Walters.

It was also agreed to call a further meeting at an early date to enlist the support of the parish as a whole.

Some two dozen of those present signified their willingness to join the Association, and the chairman voted the thanks of the meeting to Messrs. Croom and Jones for their interest and assistance.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 03 February 1940

CLEAN LAND OFFER

To Allotmenters at Combe Down

The Monkton Combe Parish Council are willing to help prospective allotment holders in every possible way, the chairman of the Council, Mr. R. W. Cornish, J.P., told a public meeting, held at the Church Rooms, Combe Down, Bath, on Friday last week.

The meeting was called by the Parish Council to stimulate interest in the newly-formed Allotment Holders' Association.

Mr. Cornish said that, if a sufficient number of the allotments were taken, the Parish Council would be willing to plough the land so that tenants would have the advantage of starting with clean land.

He pointed out that imports of vegetables to this country were valued at ten million pounds annually, and, from that figure, could be judged what risks to men and ships could be avoided by growing vegetables at home. The stress of circumstances under which we might have to live would make those who made themselves self-supporting in the matter of vegetables glad that they had not done so. It might be a matter of self-preservation.

At one time all the allotments at Combe Down were cultivated. Why could not that be the case again?

Mr. H. Sumsion accepted the post of secretary of the Association and Mr. W. Warren was added to the committee. The subscription was fixed at 1/- a year.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 09 March 1940

By March 1940, the Parish Council reports that allotments at Combe Down are now very popular but that rabbits are eating the crops. The new Allotment Holders' Association is supported by the Parish Council.

AT COMBE DOWN

Allotments "Going Like Hot Cakes"

Allotments are "going like hot cakes" at Combe Down.

It was reported at Tuesday's meeting of the Monkton Combe Parish Council that seven allotments had been taken since the previous meeting.

The accounts showed that, in the past year, £16 14s. 8d. was received in respect of allotment amounted to 12s. 5d.

Mr. R. W. Cornish, J.P. (chairman) said that he hoped the newly-formed Allotment Holders' Association would receive the support of every member of the Council.

It was stated by Mr. F. Preston that a sub-committee had met at the allotments to discuss the question of the prevention of damage by rabbits. They decided that about 500 yards of wire netting was necessary.

Mr. W. J. Bray said he was in some doubt whether the netting would have the required effect, and it was decided to leave the matter in the hands of the Chairman and Mr. W. Duckett.

Mr. Cornish said that the allotment holders might be willing to erect the netting to their own satisfaction if the materials were provided.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 23 March 1940

In August 1940 the Bathavon Rural District Council received an offer for allotment land at Combe Down: presumably Backstones offered by Mr Membury (see below).

Combe Down Section: P. B. Gibbs, Section Officer; G. M. Gillard, J. A. Davis, C. J. Fale. P. Richards, T. H. F. Williams, G. M. Williams, F. E. Jordan, A. E. Simmons, J. G. Wood, A. S. N. Bradley.

A member reported upon an offer which had been made to him for placing at the Council's disposal, subject to the payment of all outgoings, land forming part of an estate at Combe Down for allotment purposes. It was resolved that the Clerk refer the offer to the Parish Council.

Somerset Guardian 23 August 1940

In September 1940 the Parish Council decide against creating more allotments on Backstones, the playground land behind Lansdown View that had been offered for the purpose by Mr Membury. It would be used for potato production instead.

MR. MEMBERY'S LAND FOR ALLOTMENTS OFFER

MONKTON COMBE AND BATH CITY COUNCIL'S NON-ACCEPTANCE

The question of allotments was discussed by Monkton Combe Parish Council on Tuesday evening.

The Ministry of Agriculture, in a circular, urged that the number of allotments in rural areas be increased, and ample provision be made by the Council for such an extension.

Mr. Robert Membery, of Bath, has placed at the disposal of the Council a considerable piece of land by the side of the Bradford Road free of all charge, for the purpose of ploughing up.

The Bath City Council have suggested that the Recreation Ground behind Lansdown View, Combe Down, be ploughed up for a similar reason, and have turned down the free offer made by Mr. Membery, whose land is inside the city boundary.

The recreation ground is the parish as a

...down the free offer
 Mr. Membery, whose land is
 the city boundary.
 The recreation ground was given to
 the parish many years ago to be used
 as a playground for all time, so the
 Parish Council feel that, in view of
 Mr. Membery's offer, it would be
 wrong to plough it up. At the same
 time, they have still several vacant
 plots on the existing allotments which
 have yet to be taken.
 The Chairman (Mr. R. W. Cornish)
 directed that a further letter be sent
 to the Town Clerk of Bath pointing out
 the facts.
 White Paint

Bath Chronicle 14 September 1940

ON A COMBE DOWN PLAYGROUND

PARKS COMMITTEE TO GROW POTATOES

A portion of land at Combe Down, used as a children's playground, is to be used by Bath Parks Committee for potato production.

The Committee arrived at this decision at their meeting on Monday, after it had been reported to them that the offer of the land to Combe Down residents for use as allotments had met with no response. It is about 1½ acres in area and lies behind Lansdown View.

Major F. J. Stayner said that the War Agricultural Committee had learnt with regret that there were no applications for allotments in that area and, as the Parks Committee wished, they would endeavour to find a farmer or other tenant who would put it under cultivation.

The Clerk (Mr. W. Roberts) said that the Allotments Committee circularised the neighbourhood without getting a solitary application.

Parish Council Protest

He read a letter from the Clerk to Monkton Combe Parish Council (Mrs. Page) strongly protesting against the ground being used for allotments, and expressing the view that the Parks Committee should accept the generous offer of land made by Mr. Membery.

Mr. Roberts said that the land offered by Mr. Membery had been inspected by the Allotments Committee and trial holes made. They came to the conclusion that there was insufficient depth of soil for successful cultivation as allotments.

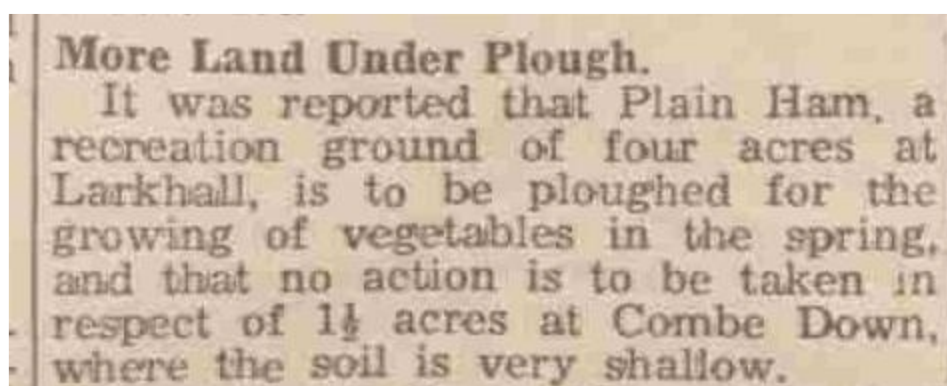
Major Stayner observed that an agricultural expert had been there and had stated that it would grow cereal crops.

Mr. H. Male said that he had noticed a large number of uncultivated allotments at Combe Down.

The committee agreed to take the land over and grow potatoes.

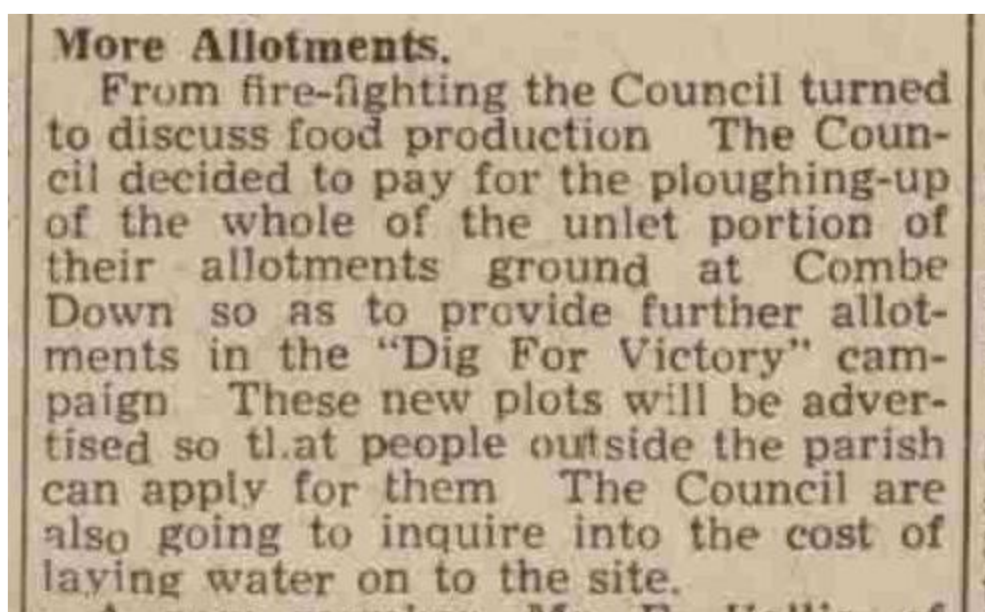
Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 21 September 1940

In December 1940, one and a half acres of land in Combe Down are disregarded for vegetable growing as the soil is too shallow.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 21 December 1940

In January 1941 the Parish Council decide to plough up an area of long-term unlet allotments to create new allotments for the Dig For Victory campaign. Although it doesn't appear that the ploughing went ahead, within a few months, most of the plots have been let. The tenants ask the Council to consider laying on water to the allotments.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 18 January 1941

The Clerk (Mrs. E. M. Page) reported that a number of new tenants had been found for the allotments, and very few plots now remained to be let.

It was agreed that, in view of the fact that the ground had not been ploughed, the uncultivated portions of the allotments should be let rent free for six months.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 March 1941

COMBE DOWN DECISIONS
Question of Allotments' Water Supply

planned on a "good neighbourly" basis and that there would be no on fire parties.

Monkton Combe Allotment Holders Association had asked the Council to instal a water supply in the allotments. The rent was reasonable but the Council decided to inquire into the cost of installation.

Several people were in arrears with their allotment rents and it was the Council's opinion that proceedings should be taken against them in the County Court if they did not pay within seven days.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 19 April 1941

By June 1941, every allotment plot is let and being cultivated. The Parish Council agree to install a water supply and notice boards and take action in relation to dogs trespassing on allotments. The water supply is laid on by September 1941 but there are concerns that the City Council's ban on using water for gardens may affect allotments.

Allotments and Refuse.

The Clerk reported that, for the first time for many years, every allotment plot was let and cultivated and the chairman reported that the Allotments Committee had accepted terms for a water supply to be installed and for fresh notice boards to be erected.

He pointed out that it was an offence for dog owners to allow their animals to trespass on allotments and asked for the co-operation of the tenants in putting an end to the nuisance, promising drastic action on behalf of the Council.

Further complaints having

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 14 June 1941

Allotment Water.

The Council decided to ascertain how the ban on the use of water for garden purposes affected the water supply recently installed in the allotment at Combe Down.

Mr. R. W. Cornish, J.P. (chairman) remarked that the supply had been installed so that in the dry summer weather the allotment would not lack a water supply.

There was no point in continuing to pay for the water if, when the hot weather came, they could not use it.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 13 September 1941

Help the Patients

Dr. Trueman, of St. Martin's Hospital, Combe Down, Bath, asks me to invite residents of the neighbourhood—or farther afield—to send to the hospital any surplus greenstuffs, such as lettuces. These should be left for the patients at the gate, but if they cannot be taken personally a postcard to the doctor will ensure collection either from garden or allotment.

I know of many instances where there is a danger of food going to seed, because of family requirements being more than sufficiently catered for. Any of the hospitals will be glad to receive help in their catering.

Bath Chronicle 2 August 1941

required it.

Allotments

The Clerk (Mrs. E. M. Page) reported that one plot of allotment land had fallen vacant; otherwise the land was all let, and would during the coming year show a profit; the first time for many years. The tenants appreciated the Council's action in laying water on the site.

It was decided to take no action on a suggestion that the Firs Field should be ploughed up for food production, but to raise no objection should the War Agricultural Committee move in the matter.

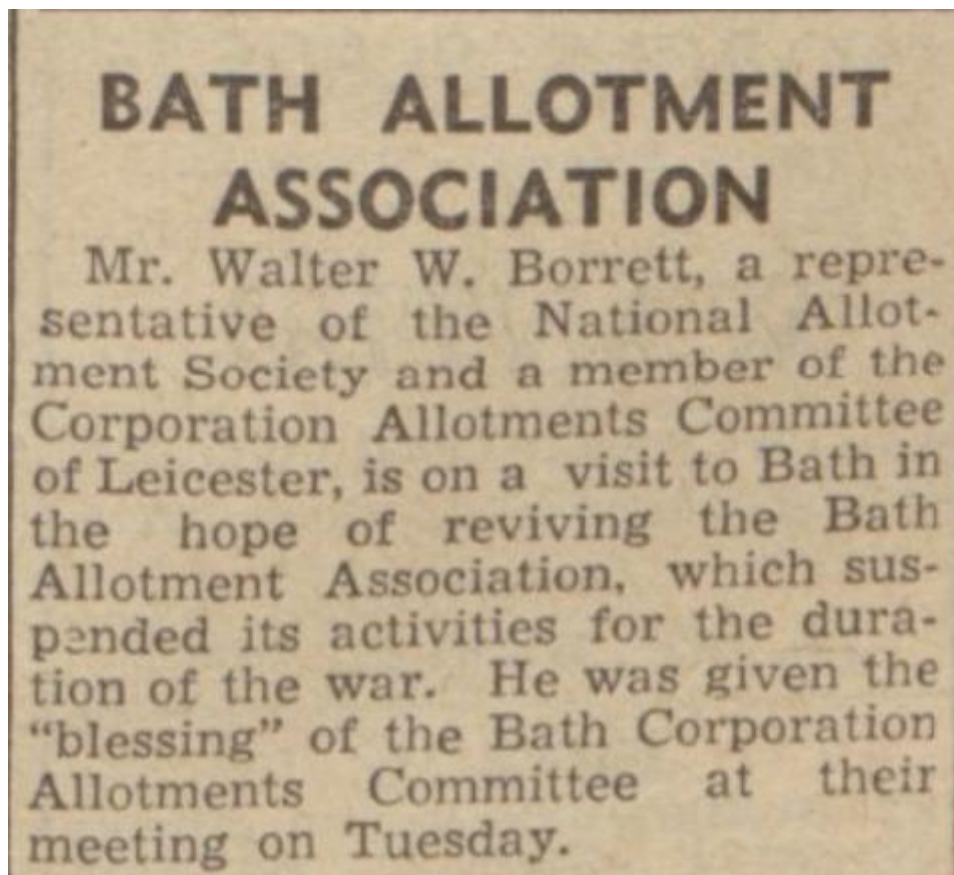
Bath Chronicle 13 March 1943

★ ★ *Half-size Plots*

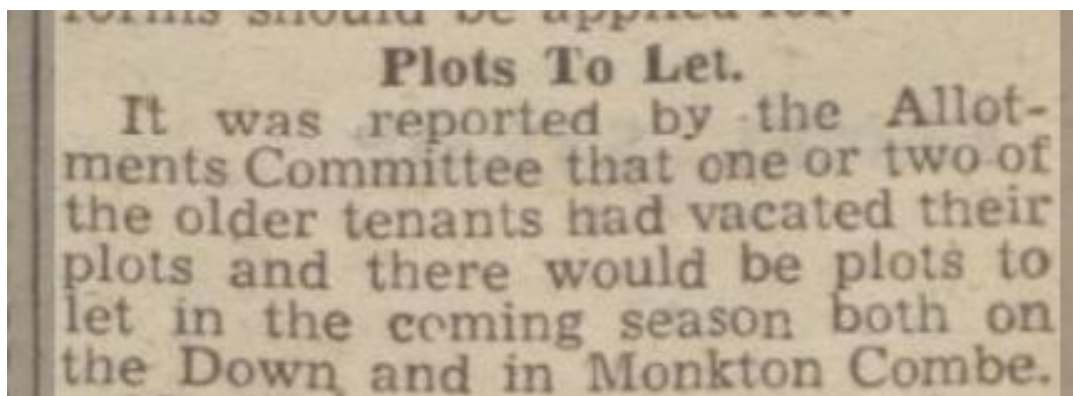
Many people have neither the time, the strength, nor the land, to cultivate the standard allotment of 90 feet by 30 feet. So the Ministry of Agriculture has published a plan for a half-size allotment. It is possible to obtain the plan, "Making the Most of a Small Plot," free, in colour, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Lindum Hotel, St. Annes.

Calling my attention to this, a leading local gardener suggests that the Bath Allotments Committee, in breaking up further land, might offer it in whole plots or half-plots. A half-plot is sufficient in the majority of cases of a household of two or even three, apart from the question of time and ability.

Bath Chronicle 27 March 1943



Bath Chronicle 16 October 1943



Bath Chronicle 18 April 1944

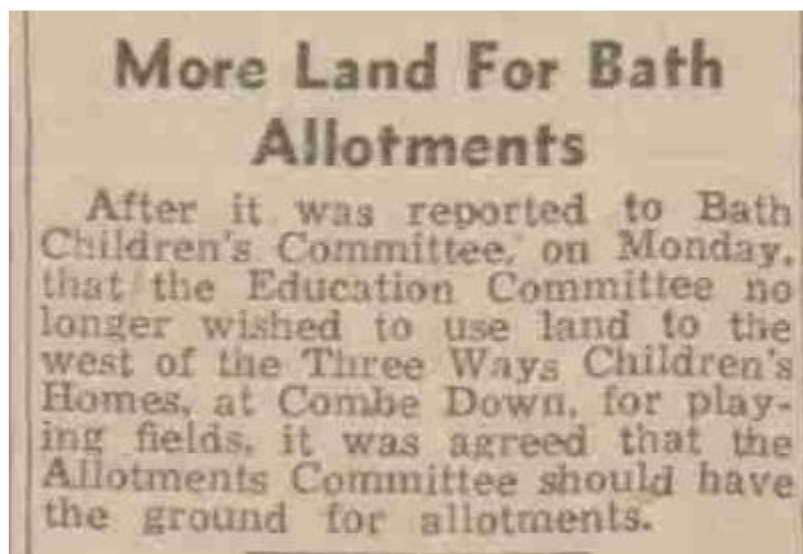
In 1945, the Minutes show that many plots were in bad condition and there had been incursion by cows from Combe Grove Farm on Shaft Road; also in 1947 the allotment gate to the village was broken and required repair.

An aerial photograph in the Historic England archive clearly shows the extent of the Church Road/Shaft Road allotments cultivation in the 1940s.



Historic England archive c 1940s

In 1949, the Council is offered land to the west of Three Ways Childrens' Home (now occupied by Sainsbury's supermarket) for allotments.



Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 26 February 1949

In July 1950, there is confirmation that the remains of the original Hadley Estate field gardens are still in use, described as Firs Allotments, when the Council receives a complain about a damaged fence allowing boys from the Church Army Youth (with their hut in the corner of the field) to trample around trying to retrieve a football.



Bath Chronicle 15 July 1950

In 1950, the Parish Council minutes also report that the notice board at the Shaft Road gate to the allotments had been repaired, and a letter had been written to Captain Vaughan-Jenkins, the landowner, asking for repairs to be made to the fence between the allotments and Glen Field, Monkton Combe Junior School's sports field.

In 1964, there was also a historic moment when Mr Seal of Oxford Cottages announced that he would be giving up his plot, which had been cultivated by the Seal family since the allotments were first created in 1894. Vacant plots 25/26 and 17/18 were to be let for grazing.

In 1966 the Parish Council expressed its concern that the developers of the "Shaft Road site" which was to become St Winifred's Drive had been allowed to purchase a small portion of the Combe Down village allotments. The Parish Council had not been informed nor had it been given the statutory 12 months' notice: another example of the risk to allotments posed by landowners and developers. The developers indicated they were willing to provide a new entrance gate to the allotments from Shaft Road. The notice board sited on the footpath in Shaft Road would be repainted to indicate the access to the allotments.

In 1967 Bath Order SI (1966) 1534 brought Combe Down into Bath City boundary, and the Parish Council lost its responsibility for Combe Down allotments with future leases of the land being agreed between the City Council and the landowner.

In January 1968, Captain William Vaughan Jenkins, the owner of the land on which the Church Road allotments stood, died leaving an estate with a net value of £124000.

VAUGHAN-
JENKINS William of St. Winifred North Rd Combe Down Bath
died 4 January 1968 Probate Bristol 31 May. £125569.

WVJ's will dated 10 September 1961 contains references to his three male Lovegrove cousins as trustees: Charles William Lovegrove (1897-1976), Captain Herbert Lovegrove RN and Major Arthur Frederick Lovegrove RASC.

6. I DEVISE all the real estate whatsoever and wheresoever of or to which I shall be possessed or entitled at the time of my death or of which I shall then be tenant in tail in possession or over which I shall have any general power of appointment or disposition by will (except property disposed of by any codicil hereto) including but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing devise all those my freehold lands and property at Priston aforesaid and my advowson or right of presentation to the Parish Church of Priston aforesaid unto my Trustee in fee simple UPON TRUST for my Son during his life with remainder upon trust for my grandson Alan William Macdonald if and when he shall attain the age of twenty-five years in fee simple and subject as aforesaid

(i) Upon trust for the first and other sons of my Son successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder

(ii) Upon trust for the first and other sons of my Son successively according to seniority in tail with remainder

(iii) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of my Son successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder

(iv) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of my Son successively according to seniority in tail with remainder

(v) Upon trust for my Daughter during her life with remainder

(vi) Upon trust for the first and other sons (including my said grandson Alan William Macdonald) of my Daughter successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder

(vii) Upon trust for the first and other sons of my Daughter successively according to seniority in tail with remainder

(viii) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of my Daughter successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder

(ix) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of my Daughter successively according to seniority in tail general with remainder

(x) Upon trust for my cousin Charles William Lovegrove of the Old Manor Dellington Sussex during his life with remainder

W. Vaughan Jenkins

- (xi) Upon trust for the first and other sons of the said Charles William Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xii) Upon trust for my cousin Captain Herbert Lovegrove R.N. during his life with remainder
- (xiii) Upon trust for the first and other sons of the said Captain Herbert Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xiv) Upon trust for my cousin Major Frederic Arthur Lovegrove R.A.S.C. during his life with remainder
- (xv) Upon trust for the first and other sons of the said Major Frederic Arthur Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xvi) Upon trust that each son of a cousin of mine who under the trusts hereinbefore contained takes an estate in tail male shall take successively in the like order an estate in tail general with remainder.
- (xvii) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of the said Charles William Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xviii) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of the said Herbert Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xix) Upon trust for the first and other daughters of the said Frederic Arthur Lovegrove successively according to seniority in tail male with remainder
- (xx) Upon trust that each daughter of a cousin of mine who under the trusts hereinbefore contained takes an estate in tail male shall take successively in the like order an estate in tail general with remainder
- (xxi) Upon trust for my own right heirs absolutely

This seems to be the point at which the Lovegrove family became involved with the land on which the Church Road allotments stand (including the field off Shaft Road), together with Upper Lawn Quarry and Glen Field. This relationship continues today, with the Council acting as tenant for the short lease with the owner, Mr Richard Lovegrove, and his legal representative.

The historic copy of the 1 July 1991 agreement between Bath City Council and Mr Lovegrove shown here has been superseded by later lease agreements and does not represent the situation as it stands in 2024.

WHEREAS:-

(1) Mr Lovegrove is the owner of the freehold of the land comprising 3.1 acres or thereabouts on the west side of Shaft Road delineated on the plan annexed hereto and thereon edged red (hereinafter called "the allotments")

(2) The Council has requested Mr Lovegrove to enter into this Agreement

NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows:-

1. Mr Lovegrove agrees to let and the Council agrees to take the allotments TO HOLD unto the Council from the twenty fifth day of March 1990 for a term of two years and (unless terminated as hereinafter provided) from year to year thereafter paying the yearly rent of five hundred pounds (£500) payable by equal half yearly payments on the twenty fifth day of March and the twenty ninth day of September the first such payment in respect of the half year ending on the twenty ninth day of September to be made on or before the execution hereof

2. The Council hereby agrees with Mr Lovegrove as follows:-

(a) To pay the said rent at the times and in the manner aforesaid

(b) To cultivate keep and manage the property or cause the same to be cultivated kept and managed in a good and husband like manner and to use and permit the same to be used for allotments allotment gardens and car parking associated therewith only and in particular not for a market garden or market gardens or in any way for the purpose of a trade or business and to allow Mr Lovegrove or his agents from time to time at all reasonable times on giving three clear working days notice in writing to the Department of the Council responsible for managing the allotments to inspect the allotments or any part thereof

(c) To keep in proper repair and condition all hedges ditches paths fences and

gates in and around the allotments

(d) Not to erect any permanent buildings upon the allotments without the consent in writing of Mr Lovegrove such consent not to be unreasonably held

(e) Not to cut down or injure any trees or shrubs upon the allotments

(f) Not to assign underlet or part with the possession of the allotments save that the Council may at its discretion underlet the allotments or parts thereof for use only as allotments allotment gardens and car parking associated therewith provided that the duration of any such underletting shall be so limited as to be coterminous with this Agreement

(g) To obtain all necessary consents and permissions if any required for the use of the allotments as herein provided and to comply with all the relevant statutes or subordinate legislation applicable to the premises

3. Mr Lovegrove agrees with the Council that the Council paying the rent and observing the stipulations herein contained shall during the tenancy quietly enjoy the allotments without interruption from Mr Lovegrove or any person claiming under him

4. Except as provided in Clause 5 hereof this Agreement may be terminated in either of the following ways:-

(a) By Mr Lovegrove giving to the Council twelve months or longer previous notice in writing expiring on the twenty fifth day of March in any year

(b) By the Corporation giving to Mr Lovegrove not less than three months notice in writing expiring on the twenty fifth day of March in any year

5. Provided always and it is expressly agreed that

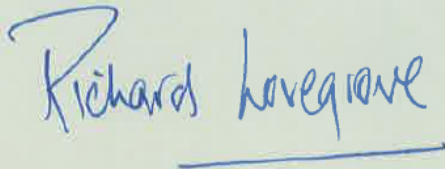
(a) Mr Lovegrove shall have the power upon giving to the Council three months previous notice in writing to expire at any time of the year to re-enter the allotments or any part of the allotments if required to be used for building mining or other industrial purposes or for roads or sewers necessary for such purposes making compensation for crops then growing on the property and if possession of part only of the property is so resumed the rent payable shall as from the day of resumption of possession be reduced by such sum as in default of agreement may be determined by arbitration in the manner provided below

(b) Mr Lovegrove shall have the power to re-enter and determine this Agreement on non payment of rent for twenty one days after the same shall have become due (whether formally demanded or not) or on breach or non observance of any of the conditions or covenants contained in this Agreement and on the Council's part to be observed and performed

(c) The Council shall not be entitled to compensation for any of the improvements mentioned in part one of the second Schedule to the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908 or for any or the improvements mentioned in part two of that Schedule as amended by the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1926 Section 21 and first Schedule unless Mr Lovegrove has prior to the making or execution of such improvements consented in writing PROVIDED that no such restriction on compensation for improvements shall apply in respect of any improvements effected by the Council or its predecessors as tenant of the allotments on or before the date hereof

AS WITNESS the hand of Richard Lovegrove the day and year first above written

Signed by the said
RICHARD LOVEGROVE
in the presence of:-



There have been other allotment sites in the village over the years, all since lost to development.

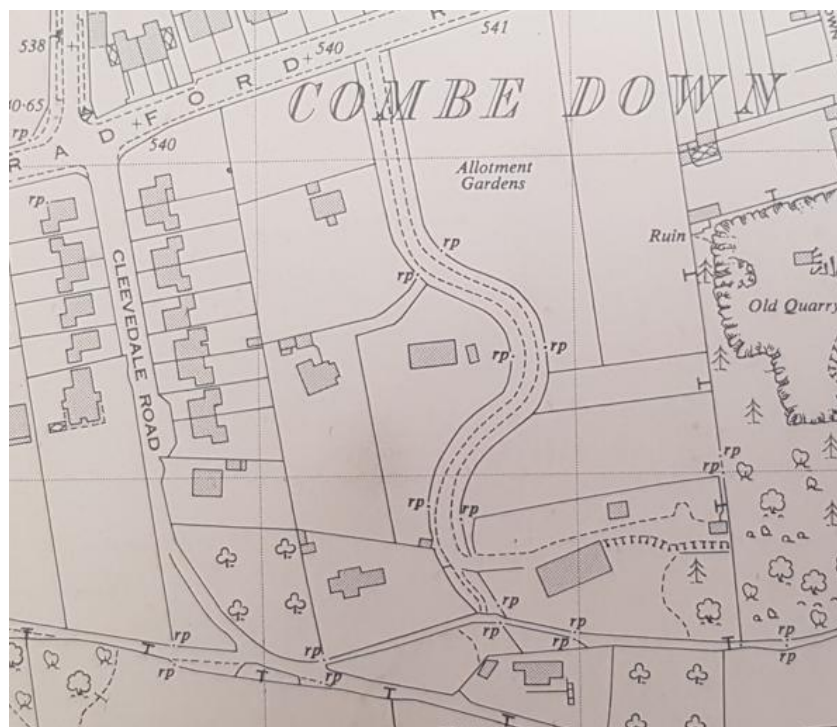
Local historian Peter Addison in his book 'Around Combe Down' wrote about allotments immediately to the west of Holy Trinity church, encompassed by the two drungs opposite Isabella Place and now occupied by Combe Down School's playground. He states that this site was tennis courts until it became allotments in the early 20th century. Older residents can remember allotments here, recalling rhubarb leaves poking out through the railings on to the pavement before the school was relocated from the corner of Church Road and Belmont Road in 1990 and the site was built on.¹³

Late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps also show a small allotment site just south of Brierley House in Summer Lane, on land known as Binegar Down. This site was later built on to create houses on the north side of Beechwood Road.

¹³ Chris Pearce, Combe Road



There was also a site to the west of Greendown Place in the 1940s and 1950s, just before Clevedale Road, again visible on the Ordnance Survey map of the time but also since developed for housing.



OS Map 1951

The story of Combe Down's allotments continues. In the 21st century, the Church Road allotments were still much in demand and cherished by the village, as are the plots on Bradford Road. However, the historic Church Road site was further reduced in area in 2000 and 2016 due to extensions by Upper Lawn Quarry.

In 2019 Monkton Combe School expressed a wish to relocate a section of the ancient footpath (PROW, or public right of way) between Church Road and Mount Pleasant to run inside the allotment wall. The allotment holders formed a Users' Group to respond with suggestions as to how this could be best achieved. However, when the PROW application was published in 2022, it generated significant local opposition amongst the wider community, unaware of the complex nature of the discussions between the school, the landowner, the Council and the allotment holders seeking to assure the future of the site.

In 2019, the landowner also redrew the lease to exclude vehicle access to the allotments via Glen Field. The Council needed to find a solution. In January 2023 the Council anticipated signing a new and extended 15-year lease with a replacement access via St Winifred's Drive, once the issue of the proposed footpath diversion had been resolved. At the same time, the Council proposed recreating the former allotments on the Paddock, and a low-impact plan was drawn up with the input of the Allotments' Association. Unfortunately, the Council did not complete the new lease, citing Council elections (not held until May 2023). In March 2023 a campaign was mounted against the Council's plans by some of the residents of St Winifred's Drive. In April 2023 the PROW application to relocate the footpath was withdrawn. In November 2023 the landowner gave the Council advance notice to quit in 2025. Allotment holders were notified of this devastating news in December 2023.

On 12 December 2023 a public meeting was held at Combe Down School. An action group was formed and a public petition was launched.

In January 2024 the Council declined to designate the site as a protected Local Green Space during Local Plan drafting, citing perceived conflicts with existing Mineral policies.

By 1 February 2024 the petition had reached over 5000 signatures, which had risen to nearly 7000 signatures within a few more months.

In 2024 a group was formed, designated as the Friends of Combe Down Allotments. An application for Asset of Community Value status was submitted to the Council, which was approved.

A combination of circumstances and events seems to have created difficulties in maintaining a harmonious and beneficial co-existence between the landowner, allotment holders, the quarry, the school, the Council and the wider community. We continue to hope that these issues can be resolved to the benefit of all concerned, so that the original village allotments created in the 19th century can continue to be enjoyed by future generations of the whole community.

Revd Newnham's vision was of a place where the people of Combe Down could enjoy their allotment site and *"the social gatherings to which it leads, as a part of that cement which binds the different*

layers of neighbours together in the complex edifice of society". Sadly, 170 years later, this remarkable story seems to have finally been brought to an end.

Jacqueline Burrows

Plot 8A2 Church Road allotments

September 2025

SAVE COMBE DOWN'S



ALLOTMENTS