

THE CIVIL PARISH OF NEWTON ST. LOE

Introduction:

NEWTON ST. LOE is an estate village purchased by the Duchy of Cornwall from the TEMPLE family during the Second World War. The pattern of ownership and the structure of the village economy changed considerably during the 19th. century. The Common Meadow was enclosed probably in the 1780's without an enclosure award. The effect was to divide the land up between five substantial farms, occupied by tenants of the GORE LANGTON family (who inherited the TEMPLE title by marriage in 1892). The smallholders and peasants were squeezed out, losing grazing rights and the opportunity for independent enterprise, and forced to become landless labourers. By the mid-century, many of the village craftsmen, who had farmed small parcels of land as a sideline, were leaving the village. When the Newton Coalworks closed in 1845, there was a 17% fall in the village population, during the 1840's, as the collier families moved to other pit villages in North Somerset. In general, the young and enterprising departed, to be replaced in some measure by professional people and their servants. The result was a quieter, smaller, and more subservient community, firmly under the control of squire, parson, and schoolmaster.

The power of the GORE LANGTON family as landlords and employers was overwhelming. Apart from the management of Newton Park Estates, the family influence was prominent in the building of the village school in 1846, the restoration of the parish church in 1857, and in providing donations to charity. The character of the village today owes much to their presence over a period of nearly three hundred years.

Graham Davis,
Lecturer in History,
Bath College of Higher Education,
Newton Park,
Bath.

September, 1983.

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Introduction

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The power of the Gore Langton family as landlords and employers was overwhelming. Apart from the management of Newton Park Estates, the family influence was prominent in the building of the village school in 1846, the restoration of the parish church in 1857, and in providing donations to charity. The character of the village today owes much to their presence over a period of nearly three hundred years.

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May 1976

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH : NEWTON ST LOE

An early settlement grew up on the site of a Roman villa and at the time of the Domesday record the Manor of Newton was formed by the joining together of two smaller manors before being passed to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances. It later passed to his nephew, Roger St Lo in Normandy, and remained with that family for the next 300 years. It subsequently passed by marriage to a succession of different Lords - William, Lord of Botreaux; Robert, Lord Hungerford; and then Lord Bergavenny (Abergavenny) - before being purchased by Joseph Langton in 1666. In 1783, the family name was changed by Royal permission to Gore-Langton and eventually by ennoblement to be the Earls Temple of Stowe. On the death of the 5th Earl in 1940, the estates were bought by the Duchy of Cornwall and the present landlord, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, has become a frequent and informal visitor to the village.

The church lies on the western edge of the village and is approached by a road which passes the old Rectory (now acting as a student residence for the nearby Bath College of Higher Education) as it enters the Church square. On one side of the road is the 'Old Post Office' cottage and 'Stonewalls' (formerly Prospect View), a fine house built in 1715, while on the opposite side is the 'Free School' (1968) which functioned as the local school until 1972.

From the road you have an attractive view of the church, including the Perpendicular west tower with its single-handed clock facing you. This tower is surmounted by two-light bell openings, gargoyles and a fine weathercock, as well as some Victorian additions in the form of a parapet and pinnacles.

A three-gate, wrought iron screen leads into the church-yard, under the old yew tree and past the medieval preaching steps which have been adapted as a memorial to the dead of the Great War.

As you enter the church you can see two 'scratch dials' on the left jamb of the south porch, simple sun dials for the priest to use when checking that it was time for Mass!

On entering the south door you pass under an ogee arch with ball-flower decoration, matching the capitals of the four quatrefoil piers of the south arcade and the four-leaf flower decoration of the small arch over the pulpit.

Just inside the door is the table recording the complete list of Rectors of Newton St Loe, beginning with Francis de Stockley in 1297.

The 14th century church consisted of nave, chancel, south aisle and porch. Of this structure, the south aisle and porch remain as well as the east and west walls. The only changes in that part of the church are some 19th century modifications of the windows. The west tower was added in the 15th century and is largely unchanged while the north aisle was built in 1857 - 'to free the nave for the poor of the parish - for ever'. At the same time the north porch was constructed, with its barrel vaulted roof, while the present chancel replaced its smaller predecessor. This could have resulted in the removal of a medieval rood loft - unless there is a section in the arch over the pulpit. It was at this time that the sacristy was also added.

For this building work, there was plenty of local raw material since the white lias could be quarried in Newton itself, the blue lias in Corston and the limestone in many areas around Bath. The floor of the south aisle and nave is paved with ledger stones and also displays two small commemorative brasses. The north aisle and chancel are paved with Victorian encaustic tiles.

Like the lower ridge of the chancel, the triple-ridged roof of the nave and aisle is supported by hammer beams and king posts lined with timber and clad in stone tiles. This is the Victorian replacement of the former single-spanned roof.

The diamond-patterned stained glass windows of the nave are also Victorian. The east window, portraying the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Trinity, is dated 1873 while the three commemorative windows of the chancel are 20th century in origin. The two square-headed Tudor windows in the sacristy were removed from the north wall of the earlier nave and this explains their similarity to the tower window, which is clearly pre-Victorian. The small windows in the pulpit passage and the St Francis window over the pulpit were erected in 1976/7 in memory of Charles and Joyce Roberts and George and Margery Hughes.

The west window of the south aisle was removed for the erection of the Langton Memorial in 1701. This stone flag covered vault is surrounded by a cast-iron railing, "the earliest piece of cast-iron in Somerset, and perhaps the south-west of England", according to Pevsner who calls this a "surprisingly stately and dignified monument in a courtly, restrained style, worthy of Westminster Abbey". The inscription on the marble tablet commemorates the premature deaths of seven of Joseph and Frances Langton's nine children and of Frances herself. A full translation is displayed on the nearby pillar.

The 61 feet high tower was originally open to the nave when built in the 15th century. It is now approached through an oak screen erected in 1909 to commemorate General and Mrs Bayly with panels bearing the symbols:

Alpha	Latin Cross	Jesus	Trinity	St Lo	Christ	Greek Cross	Fleur
Omega	fleuree		Star			bottomee	Lys

The walls of the ground-floor ringing chamber are rendered as possibly were those of the nave before the Victorian restoration. The belfry contains six bells hung for change ringing. An additional set of hammers for a carillon is also in good working order. The tenor bell (10½ cwt) is inscribed 'Thomas Bilbie case all we - July 4th 1741', and was cast from metal of the former 5 ton bells. Below the belfry the clock mechanism also dates from the middle of the 18th century.

The large number of memorial wall tablets form a history in themselves: the Royal hatchment over the south door; the illuminated Lord's Prayer at the east end of the south aisle; and the two Rolls of Honour on the east wall of the north aisle. The ornate brass lantern is Victorian while the round stone font, with its 'stiff Leaf' decoration, is Early English in style but given a lead lining in Victorian times. It may well have been originally in the south aisle but displaced by the Langton Memorial.

The Victorian oak pews of the south aisle are generously spaced to accommodate the fashionable hooped skirts of that time and set aside for the Earl Temple with his family and retainers. The north aisle was for the tenant farmers and those gentry who paid 'pew rents', the west stalls for the children and the nave for the 'poor'.

The chancel is approached through a memorial oak screen presented in 1912. Like the stalls of the south aisle and the western end, the choir stalls have carved 'poppy' bench-ends depicting leaf, flower and berry. The alabaster reredos (1891) presents the Nativity scene in relief and is set in a wooden triptych.

The two-manual pipe organ was presented by John Lacelles in 1879. It bears a plate 'In memory of Frank Angel - organist 1938-1967' recalling a man who also maintained the organ through all those years. From the sacristy a short passage behind the organ leads up to the Victorian oak pulpit which is supported by a slender stone column.

Against the east wall of the south aisle once stood an altar to the Virgin from which a short passage, incorporating a hagioscope (or 'squint'), led to the chancel. This feature, discovered during the restoration, is now guarded by oak doors at each end which are bolted from the outside and contain a small grill. If this doubled as the village lock-up, the unhappy offender had no seating, little headroom and no real ventilation when the squint was glazed.

The Communion Plate: The original silver-gilt chalice and lid are Elizabethan, dated 1555 and 1566 respectively, and are probably the oldest pieces of church plate in Somerset. The silver-gilt flagon and paten were a gift from Mrs Frances Langton in 1716. These were in regular use on the altar until 1938 when a remarkably faithful replica of the chalice and lid were presented anonymously, so that the precious pieces might be stored in the bank except for display on special occasions. The strong box also contains a 10 ins silver plated salver, dated 1823.

A new silver-plated chalice and paten were donated in 1967 in memory of William and Beatrice Niblett; and these are now used for the Eucharist.

Bibliography:

The Manor of Newton St Loe 1066-1945
The Langtons at Newton Park
The Church Rambler 1876
Records of Vestry meetings and P.C.C. meetings
Buildings of England. N. Somerset and Bristol
A survey of the history of Newton St Loe 1951

D A Humphries
Graham Davis
Harold Lewis
Newton St Loe
Nikolaus Pevsner
D A Humphries

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Information relating to the Ordnance Survey map of Newton St. Loe

Map Ref.No.

1. Newton Park Estate Workshop: built in the Edwardian period more or less opposite its predecessor.
2. Church Cottages: Before about 1840 this was the farmhouse to Church Farm. It is now three cottages, the fact that the farm became dwelling houses is unusual in the village.
3. Newton Park Lodge: probably late 19th. century, and built on the site of an earlier lodge. The drive from the mansion house to Newton was built in the early part of the 19th. century.
4. The Hayes: a fine Georgian house. In the mid-nineteenth century, it was occupied by Henry St. John Maule, the estate auditor, who was a partner in a Bath firm of solicitors. He paid only a nominal rent.
5. The Jones Charity School: built in 1698, from the endowment of Richard Jones, a Bristol merchant. The school provided accommodation for the schoolmaster above the school room, rent free. The Charity financed the apprenticeship of Newton boys aged 14 up to 1840, usually to craftsmen outside the village. The school was extended in 1911.
6. Holy Trinity Church: It was built in the 14th. century in the English decorated style. The original parts are the south aisle and the nave. The tower is probably 15th. century. A major restoration took place in 1857 under the direction of the Bath architect, C.E.Davis, and with the financial support of the Gore Langton family. The family pews in the south aisle were part of the restoration. The north aisle was added to provide free sittings in the nave for the poor. Judging by attendance at the parish church at the time of the religious census in 1851, those of the poor who were left, were in need of some encouragement. This would help to explain why the parish church was enlarged despite a falling village population. The presence of the Gore Langton predominates in the restored church. Outstanding is the Langton Memorial below which are situated the family vaults. In the churchyard, a minor cenotaph celebrates Captain Edward Gore Langton, hero of the Peninsular War and Waterloo. The War Memorial in honour of those who served in the Great War stands on the base of an ancient cross. The church gates were erected in 1812-13.
7. Stone Walls: previously called Prospect Cottage. The sundial dated 1715 indicates the age of the building. It was occupied in the late 18th. century by John Harrington who had owned Newton Coalworks before selling them to Colonel William Gore Langton.
- . Post Office: an example of late 17th. or early 18th. century vernacular building.
8. Old photographs show this as the site of the old village pump in front of the Post Office. It was knocked over by accident in the 1930's, when a child from Newton School let the handbrake off on a removal van, and it was not restored. It is now "topped" by a metal manhole!
9. The Old Rectory: a fine example of its kind, built probably about 1780, and set in large pleasure grounds. The advowson was in the possession of the Gore Langtons, and in 1840 Colonel William Gore Langton appointed his nephew, George Gore, as Rector at Newton, with a curate to assist

him. Today, Newton shares a Rector with two other parishes.

10. The Old Smithy: which lends its name to Smith Hill alongside it going down towards the Globe Inn. While the pits were still in operation, there was another smithy in Newton, situated near the Coalworks opposite the Globe Inn.
11. The Mount: a fine house situated in a commanding position overlooking the Avon valley. Perhaps most notable of its occupants was John L. Stothert of Stothert and Pitts, who rented it at £50 per annum in 1871.
12. The Thatch: one of the few surviving thatched roof cottages in the village. It reminds us that before the railway age, most of the cottages, including those that survive with slate or tile roofs, would have had thatched roofs. It dates from the 17th. century.
13. No. 15: This unassuming little cottage was used as a beershop in the mid-19th century known as the Rising Sun. There was no other public house in the main village settlement.
14. The Village Shop: occupied by the Lake family for three generations. It was a bakers and grocers shop. The bread was baked on the premises, which date back to the 17th. century.
15. The Fountain: and horse trough donated to the village by the Gore Langton family in the mid-19th century. Behind it on the green, the village stocks were placed between two trees, only one of which survives.
16. Newton Farmhouse: dated late 17th. or early 18th. century. By the late 18th. century, Newton Farm had become one of the five principal farms in the parish. From the 18th. to the 19th. century, it was occupied by three generations of the Spencer family. They were the principal tenant farmers in Newton. In the early 1800's, the Spencer family had a part share in the Newton Coal Company, and the Coalworks were situated on their farmland. The farm was mostly given over to dairy produce, supplying milk, cream, and butter to the mansion house.
17. Spencer's Cottage: built in the reign of Queen Anne. It was one of the properties belonging to the tenancy of Newton Farm. It got its name from the Spencer family, the occupants of Newton Farm. The property has a large garden, like many others in the village. In the 18th. century, there were very extensive orchards attached to these properties. Agricultural labourers were paid part of their wages in cider produced from the orchards. The present occupant of Spencer's Cottage is the nationally known chrysanthemum grower, George Hughes.
18. Out-building attached: This small outbuilding was Newton Park Estate Office. It was to this modest structure that tenants brought their half-yearly rent to be paid to the land steward. Until recently, it housed the estate records in a most unsatisfactory manner.
19. Newton Farm Barn: A late 18th. Century barn, dated 1791, and bearing the initials, 'W.L.'. It is not certain who is referred to here, but it could be William (Langton) Gore, as he styled himself after his marriage to Bridget Langton in 1783, or William Gore Langton as he became by the time he became M.P. for East Somerset in 1795. This barn and the one opposite it, built in the late 18th. century, are evidence of the expansion of farming activity during the prosperous period for agriculture of the war years.

20. Quarry Cottages: built in the early part of this century. The name refers to the sunken ground to the south of them, which was formerly a quarry. In the 1830's, it was used as field gardens, rented by the village labourers at modest rents in $\frac{1}{4}$ acre plots for growing vegetables for their families. This was some compensation for the loss of grazing rights the labourers suffered when Newton Meadow was finally enclosed in the 1780's.
21. The Poor House: This pair of cottages could well have been the village poor house, which was sold off by the Keynsham Union in 1838, after the reform of the old Poor Law system. It has many of the known characteristics of Newton Poor House, including a bread oven. If it is, the house was built in the year 1741-2 for the princely sum of £21.
22. The Village Hall: It was built in 1846 as the Village School by the Rector, George Gore, at his own expense on land provided by his uncle Colonel William Gore Langton. The Village School and the Jones Charity School operated as Infant and Junior Schools. Between them, they ensured that every child between the ages of 3 and 13 in Newton attended school by the mid-century.
23. Home Farm Cottages: A pair of cottages, built in 1863 by W.H.P. Gore Langton, who inherited the estate from his grandfather in 1847. For their time, these cottages provided good accommodation: 3 bedrooms, kitchen, parlour, and outside privy, with a useful garden for growing vegetables. They were for labourers employed at Home Farm.
24. Home Farm: another of the principal farms in the parish. In the mid-19th century, it was a fatstock farm made prosperous by the rising price of meat. Home Farm paid the highest rent, and made the most profit among Newton farms in the 1860's. It received something back from the landlord by supplying very large quantities of meat to the mansion house.
25. The Roman Burial Ground: Charles Glover, the village schoolmaster, discovered some Roman remains here in the old quarry during the 1860's. A Roman villa was unearthed in the 1840's near the Twerton tunnel. Its mosaic floor survives in Bristol. Other evidence of Roman occupation was found by the Rev. John Skinner, the early 19th. century Rector of Camerton.
26. The Globe Inn: late 17th. or early 18th. century in origin, but extensively modernised and enlarged in recent years. The large car park owes its origin to the orchard that was attached to the inn in the 18th. century. With the River Avon nearby, many victims of drowning accidents were brought to the Globe Inn, where the Coroners inquests took place. Twice yearly, the tenants on the Newton estate were invited to the audit dinner, which cost the squire £10 each time. The coke from the adjacent coke ovens was used in the brewhouse, which formed part of the premises. As late as 1900, 4 hogsheads of strong beer were brewed daily.

The boiler house, under the W. end of the N. aisle, is entered under a late Norman arch - a nice Victorian conceit! The 19th. C. warm air ducting and gratings are still present; but the system was replaced in 1927 by wide-bored pipes and radiators. Originally coke fired, the heating was changed to gas, then coal, and lastly the present oil-fired boiler: changes prompted by the ever present consideration - running costs. The sacristy fireplace has been obscured by the organ bellows, the chimney truncated.

The photograph behind the font shows the oil lamps used to light the chancel until 1939, when conversion to gas lighting made the 36 lamps redundant. In 1955 electric lighting replaced the gas; while the present lighting was installed in 1982 in memory of Col. W.Q. 'Bill' Roberts, churchwarden from 1952 to 1980.

Although a quiet country church with a small congregation, and now sharing our Rector with Corston and Saltford, in the days of the Earl's Temple Holy Trinity Church was a most fashionable church for the gentry of Bath. And still, at festivals, the pews are full, with standing room only.

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August 1983

Bibliography:

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HOLY TRINITY CHURCH : NEWTON St. LOE

At the Norman Conquest the Village of Newton, the site of a fine Roman Villa, passed to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances. Thereafter it passed to his nephew, Roger of St. Lo in Normandy, and remained in that family for the succeeding 300 years. Subsequently it passed by marriage first to William, Lord of Botreaux; next to Robert, Lord Hungerford; then to Lord Bergavenny (Abergavenny); and was purchased in 1666 by Joseph Langton. In 1783 the family name was changed by Royal permission to Gore-Langton, and eventually enobled as the Earls Temple of Stowe. On the death of the fifth Earl in 1940 the estates were purchased by the Duchy of Cornwall. H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, a kindly landlord, has become a frequent, informal visitor to the village.

The Church, which lies on the Western edge of the village, is approached from the former Rectory, past the 'Old Post Office' cottage, and a fine stone house (dated 1715) to your right; and the 'FREE SCHOOL' (dated 1698), which finally closed in 1972, to the left.

A three-gate, wrought-iron screen leads into the churchyard, which formed the setting for part of the HTV film 'Jamaica Inn' in 1983.

Passing under a venerable yew tree you will see the single-handed clock on the East side of the Perp. W. tower, surmounted by two-light bell openings, gargoyles, and a fine weather-cock. The parapet and pinnacles are Victorian additions.

The path passes the mediaeval preaching steps, which have been adapted as a memorial to the dead of the Great War. Before entering the porch note the two scratch dials on the left jamb, which would tell the priest the time for Mass.

Entering the S. door you pass under the ogee arch with ball-flower decoration, matching the capitals of the four quatrefoil piers of the S. arcade, and the four-leafed flower decoration of the small arch over the pulpit.

The table of Rectors of Newton St. Loe, beside the S. door, dates from Francis de Stockley in 1297. The 14th. C. church consisted of nave, chancel, S. aisle and porch. Of this structure the S. aisle and porch remain, with some 19th. C. modification of the windows, and the E. & W. walls. The W. tower is 15th. C., and largely unchanged. The N. aisle was erected in 1857 - 'to free the nave for the poor of the parish - for ever'. At the same time the N. porch was constructed, with its barrel-vaulted roof; the present chancel replaced its smaller predecessor - removing any evidence of a mediaeval rood loft, unless it be the small arch over the pulpit; and the sacristy was built.

Building materials presented little problem since the white lias could be quarried in Newton itself, and the blue in Corston; while the limestone was available in Bath.

The floor of the S. aisle and nave is paved with ledger stones, and displays two small commemorative brasses. The N. aisle and chancel are paved with Victorian encaustic tiles.

The triple-ridged roof of the nave and aisles, with the lower ridge of the chancel, are supported by hammer beams and king posts; lined with timber, and clad/stone tiles. The Victorian replacement of the former single-spanned roof.

The diamond-patterned stained glass of the nave is Victorian; The East window, portraying the Crucifixion and the Resurrection is dated 1873; and the three commemorative windows of the chancel are 20th. C. The two square-headed Tudor windows in the sacristy were removed from the N. wall of the earlier nave, which would explain the similarity of their glass to that of the tower window - clearly pre-Victorian. The small windows in the pulpit passage, and the small St. Francis window over the pulpit commemorate Charles & Joyce Roberts/George & Margery Hughes, and were erected in 1976/7.

The W. window of the S. aisle was removed for the erection of the Langton Memorial in 1701. The ~~stone-flag covered vault~~ is protected by a cast-iron railing, the ~~earliest piece of cast-iron~~ in Somerset and possibly in S.W. England. The inscription on the marble tablet commemorates the premature deaths of seven of Joseph and Francis Langton's nine children, and of Francis herself. A full translation is displayed on the near-by pillar.

The 61 ft. high, 15th. C. tower, originally open to the nave, is approached through an oak screen erected in 1909 to commemorate Gen. & Mrs. Bayly. The panels bear the symbols:

Alpha :	Latin Cross :	Jesus: Trinity:	St. Lo :	Christ: Greek Cross:	Fleur
Omega	fleuree	Star		bottonee	dé lys

The walls of the ground-floor ringing chamber are rendered, as possibly were those of the nave before the Victorian restoration. The belfry contains six bells, hung for change ringing. The chiming mechanism is also intact, but not in use. The tenor bell (10½ cwt.) is inscribed 'Thomas Bilbie cast all we - July 4th. 1741'. Below the belfry the clock mechanism also dates from the mid 18th. C. From the roof of the tower there is a splendid view of the surrounding countryside.

Note the Royal hatchment over the S. door; the illuminated 'Lord's Prayer' at the E. of the S. aisle; and the two Rolls of Honour on the E. wall of the N. aisle. The great number of memorial wall tablets form a history in themselves. The ornate brass lecturn is Victorian; while the round stone font, with its 'stiff Leaf' decoration can only be said to be Early English in style, with a Victorain lead lining. It would have been displaced from the S. aisle by the Langton Memorial, and later moved to the new N. aisle.

The Victorian oak pews of the S. aisle are generously spaced to accomodate the fashionable hooped skirts of the ladies, and seated the Earl Temple, his family and retainers; The N. aisle was for the tenant farmers and gentry who paid pew rents; the W. stalls for the children, and the nave for the 'poor'.

The chancel is approached through a memorial oak screen presented in 1912. Like the stalls of the S. aisle and W. stalls, the choir stalls have carved 'poppy' bench-ends depicting leaf, flower and berry.

The alabaster reredos depicts the Nativity scene in relief; and is set in a wooden triptych.

The two-mauual pipe organ was presented by John Lacelles in 1879; and also bears a memorial plate 'In happy memory of Frank Angel - organist 1938 - 1967', who also maintained the organ through all those years.

From the sacristy a short passage leads behind the organ to the Victorian oak pulpit, supported on a short, slender stone column.

Against the E. wall of the S. aisle once stood an altar to the Virgin, from whence a short passage, incorporating a hagioscope (squint), led to the chancel. The passge and squint were re-discovered during the restoration. It is guarded at each end by oak doors, bolted from the outside, each containing a small grill. If this doubled as the village lock-up the unhappy offender had no seating, little headroom, and no ventilation when the squint was glazed.

The Communion Plate: The original silver-gilt chalice and lid are Elizabethan, dated 1555 & 1566 respectively, and are probably the oldest pieces of church plate in Somerset. The silver-gilt flagon and paten were a gift from Mrs. Frances Langton in 1716. These were in regular use on the altar until 1938 when a remarkably faithful replica of the chalice and lid were presented anonymously, so that the precious pieces might be stored in the bank. The strong box also contains a 10 ins. silver plated salver, dated 1823.

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1. Newton Park Estate Workshop built in the Edwardian period more or less opposite its predecessor.
2. Before about 1840, this was the farmhouse to Church Farm. It is now a privately owned dwelling house, which is unusual in the village.
3. Newton Park lodge, probably late 19th century and built on the site of an earlier lodge. The drive from the mansion house to Newton was built in the early part of the 19th century.
4. The Hayes, a fine Georgian house. In the mid-nineteenth century, it was occupied by Henry St. John Maule, the estate auditor, who was a partner in a Bath firm of solicitors. He paid only a nominal rent.
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10. The old smithy, which lends its name to Smith Hill alongside it going down towards the Globe Inn. While the pits were still in operation, there was another smithy in Newton, situated near the Coalworks opposite the Globe Inn.
11. The Mount, a fine house situated in a commanding position overlooking the Avon valley. Perhaps most notable of its occupants was John L. Stothert of Stothert & Pitts, who rented it at £50 per annum in 1871.
12. The Thatch, one of the few surviving thatched roof cottages in the village. It reminds us that before the railway age, most of the cottages, including those that survive with slate or tile roofs, would have had thatched roofs. It dates from the 17th century.
13. This unassuming little cottage was used as a beershop in the mid-19th century known as the Rising Sun. There was no other public house in the main village settlement.
14. The village shop, occupied by the Lake family for three generations. It was a bakers and grocers shop. The bread was baked on the premises, which date back to the 17th century.
15. The Fountain and horse trough donated to the village by the Gore Langton family in the mid-19th century. Behind it on the green, the village stocks were placed between two trees, only one of which survives.
16. Newton Farmhouse, dated late 17th or early 18th century. By the late 18th century, Newton Farm had become one of the five principal farms in the parish. From the 18th to the 19th century, it was occupied by three generations of the Spencer family. They were the principal tenant farmers in Newton. In the early 1800's, the Spencer family had a part share in the Newton Coal Company, and the Coalworks were situated on their farmland. The farm was mostly given over to dairy produce, supplying milk, cream, and butter to the mansion house.
17. Spencer's Cottage, built in the reign of Queen Anne. It was one of the properties belonging to the tenancy of Newton Farm. It got its name from the Spencer family, the occupants of Newton Farm. The property has a large garden, like many others in the village. In the 18th century, there were very extensive orchards attached to these properties. Agricultural labourers were paid part of their wages in cider produced from the orchards. The present occupant of Spencer's Cottage is the nationally known chrysanthemum grower, George Hughes.

18. This small outbuilding was Newton Park Estate Office. It was to this modest structure that tenants brought their half-yearly rent to be paid to the steward. At present, it houses the estate records in a most unsatisfactory manner.
19. A late 18th century barn, dated 1791, and bearing the initials, W.L. It is not certain who is referred to here, but it could be William (Langton) Gore as he styled himself after his marriage to Bridget Langton in 1783, or William Gore Langton as he became by the time he became M.P. for East Somerset in 1795. This barn and the one opposite it, built in the late 18th century are evidence of the expansion of farming activity during the prosperous period for agriculture of the war years.
20. Quarry Cottages, built in the early part of this century. The name refers to the sunken ground to the south of them, which was formerly a quarry. In the 1830's, it was used as field gardens, rented by the village labourers at modest rents in $\frac{1}{4}$ acre plots for growing vegetables for their families. This was some compensation for the loss of grazing rights the labourers suffered when Newton Meadow was finally enclosed in the 1780's.
21. This pair of cottages could well have been the village poor house, which was sold off by the Keynsham Union in 1838 after the reform of the old Poor Law system. It has many of the known characteristics of Newton Poor House, including a bread oven. If it is, the house was built in the year 1741-2 for the princely sum of £21.
22. The Village Hall. It was built in 1846 as the Village School by the Rector George Gore at his own expense on land provided by his uncle Col. William Gore Langton. The Village School and the Jones Charity School operated as Infant and Junior Schools. Between them, they ensured that every child between the ages of 3 and 13 in Newton attended school by the mid-century.
23. A pair of cottages, built in 1863 by W.H.P. Gore Langton, who inherited the estate from his grandfather in 1847. For their time, these cottages provided good accommodation: 3 bedrooms, kitchen, parlour, and outside privy, with a useful garden for growing vegetables. They were for labourers employed at Hone Farm.
24. Hone Farm, another of the principal farms in the parish. In the mid-19th century, it was a fatstock farm made prosperous by the rising price for meat. Hone Farm paid the highest rent, and made the most profit among Newton farms in the 1860's. It received something back from the landlord by supplying very large quantities of meat to the mansion house.

THE FRIENDS OF NEWTON CHURCH

Some extracts from earlier Newsletters:

'Our village has preserved its charm, remarkably little changed or spoiled by the years. For six centuries our church and churchyard have stood as a way of life for countless villagers.

Like their parents and grandparents before them, many of our community have cared for the church for half a lifetime. But the years take their toll and these stalwarts are not able to maintain their effort as they would wish.

However, the churchyard still readily grows out of hand while the weather often damages the fabric. The temperamental heating, necessary for our comfort as well as preventing decay in the timbers, linen and organ, is an ever growing expense.

It must be appreciated that we alone support our own church. The Church Commissioners' commitment is to the Rector's income alone in this and all other villages and towns in the country.

Following discussion at the P.C.C. meeting, we decided to arrange events which could be entertaining for ourselves and the public, while also of benefit to the church. We hope to profit from the experience of our senior citizens, the help and forbearance of all the villagers and the interest of our neighbours.'

April 1980

'We can count ourselves fortunate to inherit a model village; and can take some credit for maintaining its tradition in our church, and houses; in our gardens and our streets.

By an accident of geography, and by the conservatism of the Duchy, we have been spared the bustle of contemporary traffic - though once the bridal paths, if not the highway, passed through the centre of the village - and yet we have ready access to modern society. Much of the village history is sparse; some may be culled from the churchyard, old parish registers, and records of former census. Some is yet stored in the memories of our senior citizens, and in their attics and albums.

The houses are identified by numbers or names - sometimes both; but the letter carrier would need only the name of the householder. Have we lost the street names? What of High Street, Top Road, and Cuckoo Corner? Of Claysend, Croxbottom, Sweetwells and Stepside? Of Collier's Hill, Hollow Hill, Copse Hill and Smith Hill? Of Mead, Back, Gipsy, Sawmills, Keepers', Twelve O'Clock and Watery Lanes? And where can have been Dauncey's Buildings, Green Park Road or Cowwheel Terrace?'

August 1980

'With a village population of only 57 families, with each generation inextricably bound up with the others, there being no child-groups; teenage groups; young marrieds, middle-aged, nor old people groups; all are interdependant, and consequently have a human dignity and individuality, and a recognised place in society. This is often misunderstood and confused (by people who do not know the strengths of this way of life) with the class system; but in practice this is the very essence of democracy; where each man is valued for his own specific knowledge and talents; and knows the ultimate satisfaction of realising he is indispensable to the whole life of the community.'

From: The Log Book of Newton St. Loe C.E. Endowed School, July 1970

'"Clockmaker" - Not a craft we had expected until a fine long-case (grandfather) clock returned recently to Newton, bearing clearly on its face the legend 'John Way' 'Newton St. Loe'. Enquiries have confirmed that Samuel Way, clockmaker, came to Newton from Dorchester, and that his son John Way grew up in this village, working as a clockmaker first at Newton, then at Twerton. He died (and was buried in our churchyard) in 1791, full 79 years. Reports of other clocks in Keynsham and Bath could possibly be the same clock; but another in Combe Park is engraved 'John Way, Twerton'. It is probable that he supplemented his income repairing clocks; as a locksmith; and making mechanism for spits. Certainly he maintained the the church tower clock.

June 1981

PAST EVENTS:

SUMMER FETE in a Cottage Garden at Newton : 12 July 1986

We are indebted to George and Gladys Hughes for their lovely garden; the Clerk of the Weather for a summer afternoon; and to friends and guests alike for entertainment, company and generous financial support!

VILLAGE CRICKET at Newton : Sunday 27 July

A determined attempt at serious cricket by both captains - Graham Gurr (Newton Village) and David Shaw (Newton Stragglers) - was frustrated by the 'prepared' wicket and outfield; by the normal occupants' attempt to re-assert their rights on the way to milking, and by the widely varied talents of the players. However, no-one was seriously hurt; it was great entertainment (in its way), and the 'stragglers' lived up to their name. We all enjoyed the tea in the Church Room, then the Bar-b-cue at the Village Hall. Our thanks to groundsmen, umpires, scorers, and the super catering ladies.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

We can trace it back to Sancto Laudus, the son of Alain who was in his time a disciple of St Illtud of Llantwit in Glamorgan. Laudus, or Llewddad, was born in Brittany; became in his turn a disciple of St Germain of Auxerre; travelled through Normandy and to Wales; and was Bishop of Coutances from 528 to 568. The nearby town of St Lo, half-way between Bayeux and Coutances in Normandy, took his name. It was to a later Bishop of Coutances, Geoffrey, that William the Conqueror in 1066, gave our 'Manor' of Newton, whence it passed to the Bishop's nephew, Roger of St Lo, and he and his descendants, the Sir Johns de Sancto Laudo x 5, lived here for the succeeding 300 years. Sir Roger inhabited - if he did not build - the original castle, of which the Keep remains. There was a 14th Century Manor House, and a later 15th Century Gatehouse is in good repair. The present Georgian mansion was built around 1760 by Joseph Langton, who also 'enclosed' the Park. St Lo is a walled town, whose church, Notre Dame, was built like ours of Holy Trinity in the late 13th / early 14th Century. The photograph in our vestry shows its splendid twin spires which were destroyed, like so much of the town, during the D-Day bombardment by the Allies and Hun alike.

The town has been re-built and much of the church restored, but only one spire now stands. The town is renowned for its race-horse stud.

Two communities, sharing a name and mediaeval Lords, both agricultural, one with a population of 2,500 and the other of 150. One where the natives speak French, and the other the Somerset tongue - which is where we are to!

On 1 November 1986 we will re-make The French Connection !

FUTURE EVENTS:

NEWTON HARVEST SUPPER : 4 October at 7.30 p.m. : Church Room

Numbers again limited by space, The Friends invite you to join us for a traditional supper. Tickets: £1.50 from Newton Shop (Saltford 2668)

HARVEST FESTIVAL LUNCH : Sunday 5 October - after the Morning Service

We welcome students and congregation alike to a 'FREE' ploughman's lunch in the Church Room. There is a register in the South Porch, please let us know if you can join us (students contact Julia Dunn F9 Neville Court).

HARVEST FESTIVAL EVENSONG at Newton : 5 October at 6.30 p.m.

THE BISTRO SUPPER : 1 November 7.30 Newton Church Room

Et maintenant! - ici Les Traits d'Union (The French Connection), où on mange à la Table d'Hôte (Chef's Special) dans une atmosphere francaise avec Monsieur le Maître (Bill Pawson) et les jolies filles, tous en costume paysan. Allons enfants de la Patrie (come on country folk) et amusez-vous bien avec Le Plonc (French wine) et le bruit de Montmartre, et à la musique de Paris (Can-Can), pendant une soirée différente. Les billets (tickets) à peu près 55f (£6.00) from Le Maître (Saltford 2662).

SALES DEPARTMENT: We have Laugharne Pottery Newton Church mugs (10 ozs) firsts at £1.50 seconds at 75p. Newton Church Notelets at 10 for 50p Newton Church Prints- at £1.00 Enquiries after Sunday services or at Newton Shop.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH : NEWTON St. LOE

The Friends of Newton Church welcome you to a FLOWER FESTIVAL on
August 9th., 10th., & 11th. 10.00 a.m. to 8.30 p.m.

The Friends of Newton Church:

The Friends' committee first met in September 1979 as a subcommittee of the Parochial Church Council, with the aim of raising funds to supplement the needs of the P.C.C. in this small parish. The committee consists of parishioners and local professional people, and has succeeded in attracting support from a wide compass, raising funds by such events as Garden Parties, Coffee Mornings and Dinner Parties, the Newton Carol Concert and the Newton Country Market. At the same time serving the villagers through The Friends' Harvest Supper, and the Harvest Festival lunch to welcome the returning college students.

Flower Arrangements:

Led by Joy Clasby and Audrey Callen, and supported by Mrs. Primrose Thomas, the team have illustrated our theme of 'PATRON SAINTS' of music & netmakers; fishermen & gardeners; chimney sweeps & carpenters; jewellers & glaziers; potters & embroiderers; lovers & lacemakers; sculptors & stonemasons; toymakers & blacksmiths; spinners & bell-founders; doctors & cooks; coppersmiths & children; art & astronomers; bookbinders & cornehandlers; England & Ireland; archers & animals; and of Baptism.

Festival Altar Frontal and Church Plate:

We estimate that the Altar Frontal dates from 1870-90 and was restored last year with the help of public donations. It depicts the 'Tree of Life' arising out of the 'Cantharus' and bearing symbols of the Passion and Crucifixion of Our Lord. (Please see the photographs of the detail, and the damage.)

The Elizabethan Chalice is hall marked 1556, and may be the oldest piece of church plate in Somerset. It appears to have been in regular use until 1938, when a modern replica was presented anonymously. A large Flagon and Paten - also in silver gilt - was presented in 1716 by Mrs. Frances Langton. We now use the silver-plated chalice donated in 1967 in memory of William & Beatrice Niblett - while the older plate is condemned to the bank. (We are indebted to 'HOME CARE' for security during the festival).

Church Music during the Festival:

During the festival parish organists from our three parishes - Newton, Corston & Saltford - and from parishes in Bath will play softly. Can they illustrate our theme?

The two-manual pipe organ, with pedal board and tracker action was presented in 1879 by John Lacelles.

On Saturday evening at 7.30 p.m. the choir will sing the OFFICE of COMPLINE in Plainsong. Copies of the service are available for you to follow.

On Sunday, between 3.30 & 4.30 p.m. the choir will practice for the Festival Evensong. Do continue to enjoy the displays, or stop and listen as you wish.

The Church Bells:

The six bells in the tower were cast in 1741 from the metal of the former five bells. The tenor weighs 10 cwt. The bells are hung for change ringing, but have a second set of hammers and ropes for a carillon.

On Friday evening a Quarter peal will be rung at 7.30 p.m. The bells will be rung at 6.00 p.m. for Evensong on Sunday; and the Treble bell will be rung at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday before COMPLINE.

producing an uplifting effect upon the observer.

The two matching wings were built as service ranges. At the rear of the house, the symmetry was broken by modern alterations. The rectangular block behind the west wing was added to provide a billiard room for Lord Temple in the Edwardian period. It is likely that the tiled patio and stone steps were added to the rear of the east wing at the same time. The similar window design found in both alterations suggest this possibility.

The interior of the house possesses some fine decorated ceilings, and a range of interesting fireplaces. The inner hall is well lit from the glass dome in the roof. A cantilever staircase with a wrought iron balustrade makes an attractive feature. Other rooms of note are the highly decorated octagonal room, the spacious main living room with its views of the lakes, and the dining room, to the right of the entrance hall, where once hung Gainsborough portraits of the Langton family.

The house is neatly divided between the family quarters and those of the servants. The family lived on two floors, while the servants lived and worked on four floors. The tunnel underneath the entrance hall enabled servants to pass from one wing to the other without encroaching on the territory of the family. The servants living hall was what is now called the chapel. Other basement rooms had specific functions. There was a servant's sitting room, the butler's pantry, and work rooms for cleaning and sewing.

Upstairs the bedrooms in the late 19th century were given the names of different branches of the family, Langton, Gore, Grenville, Buckingham, Temple, and Stowe. The family was extremely proud of its arrival in the English peerage, in 1892, which ironically was accompanied by financial burdens ultimately leading to the sale of Newton Park during the last war.

Graham Davis.
September, 1974.

Amy Borlase

THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF NEWTON PARK

1. The Castle

The oldest surviving building in the College grounds, and a fascinating historical puzzle. There is considerable doubt that it ever was a castle. It was built in the 14th century, probably as part of a Tower house or a late medieval fortified manor house. It was described in the 16th century by Leland as 'a castell like building', which may have referred to the original crenellations. The outline of the probable limits of the courtyard surrounding the building are marked by the sunken wall situated in the lawn in front of the old library, the position of the Gatehouse, and the curtain wall leading from it. The evidence of the windows and blocked up openings suggest that the modern ground level is several feet higher than the original one. The higher level in the basement may have been at ground level. The lower level, often referred to as a dungeon, where legend has it King John was imprisoned, is far too large for the purpose, and was more likely used as a store for wood or coal. King John died in 1216, inconveniently as far as the legend is concerned, a century before his Newton 'dungeon' was built. There is another legend that a tunnel runs from this lower basement, but it has not yet been properly substantiated.

Much of the present building is later than the original part. It is, in fact, a much altered structure. The crenellations on top, the porch entrance with its archways in the style of the Gothic revival, and many of the facing stones are of Bath stone, unlike the local white lias stone of the original tower. It is most likely that these additions were made in the late 18th century, probably after the building of the mansion house in the 1760's, and designed as an interesting piece of antiquity. The coats of arms of families who owned the manor, and the gargoyles leering down at the onlooker, create a fittingly medieval appearance.

Thus it became something like a folly for the amusement of visitors.

What is was before that, in its original form, is not entirely clear. We can only speculate on the evidence. On the tower above the porch, one can observe signs of patching up in the rubble which contrasts with the shaped stones which are the predominant pattern. There one can see the mark of a gable end still clearly visible. This, along with the blocked up passageway at the top of the old stone staircase, suggests that the main hall of the building reached as high as the top of the tower, before the crenellations were added. If this speculation is correct, then the building at one time in its existence was not the single tower structure as it appears now, but a much larger and longer building, substantial enough to have been the manor house. The evidence of the 1789 estate map suggests that this was the site of the old manor house with the old park extending out towards the modern playing fields.

There is some written evidence that the manor house experienced some modernization in the 16th century at the time of the Neville family, and again in the 17th century by Joseph Langton. The lions on guard outside the Rural Science department have survived from the Elizabethan manor house, and the broken shell decoration resting at the foot of the Gatehouse could well date from the later period. In recent years some medieval tiles and a coffin plate have been uncovered more or less by accident in the vicinity of the Castle. It is hoped that excavation of the site would uncover further clues about this ancient and mysterious monument.

2. The Gatehouse

This was originally built in the reign of Henry V, in the early 15th century. It's L shape relationship to the 'castle' is in keeping with other West Country late medieval manor houses as a method of defence. The interior has some interesting vaulting in

the roof characteristic of many ecclesiastical buildings. The door, probably original, is a fine example of its kind, like the 'castle', and possibly effected at the same time, the gatehouse was subjected to antiquarian 'improvement'; with the crenellations, and supports even more out of proportion than on the castle, giving it a theatrical appearance.

3. The Stable Block

The central archway may well be older than the extensions on either side of it, which are probably late Jacobean. The pigeon loft and blocked up window in this central section indicate that it had an independent existence. What may have been an outer gateway was converted into a stable block, possibly soon after the arrival of Joseph Langton in 1666. A few original windows have survived, the rest are 20th century imitations. To the front there is a mounting block, and attached to the side, the buildings housed the family carriages, which numbered six in the late 19th century.

4. The Dairy Block

This is usually thought of as a Tudor building, but it is difficult to be certain of this given the length of time such styles persisted. The mullioned windows and relieving arches are similar to several found in vernacular buildings in Newton village. It was used both as a dairy and laundry block in the time of the Temple family.

5. The Mansion House

It has been described as 'one of the finest country mansions of the 18th century in Somerset'. The house was built for Joseph Langton between 1762 and 1765 by Stiff Leadbeter, one of the minor Palladian architects. The central theme of symmetry dominates the exterior of this Palladian villa which owes much of its attraction to an absence of fussy detail amounting to austerity. One feature of the windows is that they do not fully correspond with the floor levels. The purpose of this was to achieve an impression of modest grandeur, with the larger windows on the ground floor, and the smaller windows above them