

Henceford

The following information is derived mostly from source material collated by John Usmar in 2007 as part of his study of the Witheridge Outliers.

Henceford Farmhouse is a listed building, see [here](#) for more information.

The possible meaning of the name is Stallions Ford. Early references and spelling variations listed by the Rev. J A S Castlehowe are:

1281 Hengsford

1311 Northynshengystford

1374 Southhengystford

Owners

From the Land Tax records:-

Year	Owner	Tenant
1780	John Chichester Esq.	John Hedgeman
1798	Heirs of John Chichester	John Hedgeman
1810	John Bidgood	John Bidgood
1815	John Bidgood	John Bidgood
1828	William Bidgood [i]	William Bidgood
1832	Thos Comins & Mr Wm Thomas	William Bragg

From a document provided by Mr and Mrs Hare, which is now held by the Devon Records Office in Exeter, in 1878 William Bowden was paying an Annual Rack rent of £150. The 1881 census still has William Bowden as the farmer, by 1901 Henceford was farmed by George Matthews.

Exeter Flying Post

1st July 1799 advertised Henseford for sale, owned by Mr. John Hedgeman, consisting of a dwelling house, barn and outhouses and about 180 acres of land. This did not result in a sale; there was another advertisement on 31st July 1800 for sale by public auction at the Ship Inn in Crediton.

In April 1827 Henceford was advertised to let for ten years following the death of the proprietor Mr W Bidgood. At this time his wife was still living at the farmhouse. This conflicts with the Land Tax record for 1828; it seems likely that although the owner was deceased it was easier to carry on using his name for the purpose of the tax return.

The 1837 Tithe Apportionment records show the owner to be Mr Robert Mildon and others, with the occupier being William Stevens. The 1841 census lists John Stevens as the farmer age 50 with a son William Stevens age 20.

Henceford was again advertised to be let by tender in July 1843 for a period of 14 years. The description now referred to about 234 acres. Viewings were to be arranged with Mr John Bidgood of Old Hele's in Witheridge or Mr Robert Mildon of Water House, Cheriton Fitzpaine.

Fourteen years later in July 1857, the farm was again advertised to let by tender for a term of 7, 10 or 14 years. Viewings were to be arranged with Mr John Thomas of Old Hebe's (this may have been a typo and should have read Old Hele's), Witheridge or Mr John Mildon of Woodington in Witheridge. The 1861 census lists Walter T. Coles as the farmer.

Another seven years elapsed before the farm was advertised again to be let by tender in June 1864 for a term of seven or ten years.

Melancholy Accident

From the Tiverton Gazette 20th October 1859:

“On Friday 21st ult Mr John Coles of Henceford Farm. Met with an accident which has terminated fatally. It appears that Mr Coles was in the act of jumping from a rick and not perceiving a fork that was standing by the side, he unfortunately pitched upon it and the handle entered his abdomen and inflicted very severe injuries. He was carried home and medical aid was soon procured but mortification ensued and death took place the following Monday. Deceased was much and deservedly respected.”

[i] Henceford was assigned from John to William on 20th January 1817