

### Chapter 3

#### The Sale of the Two Principal Estates

In 1918 Lord Alington sold off his Devon Estates. He had estates in Tawstock, Down St Mary, North Tawton, Bondleigh, Coldridge and Beaworthy. The whole area extended to about 2,630 acres, it included 19 stock rearing and corn growing farms, several small holdings, cottages and accommodation lands.

The Hele Manor Tawstock Estate extended to about 1,248 acres which included 8 arable and stock rearing farms, 22 cottages and plots of accommodation lands.

This sale was advertised in the local papers to be offered for sale by auction by - Messrs Knight, Frank and Rutley of 20 Hanover Square, London, WC1. The sale to be held at the Royal Fortescue Hotel, Barnstaple on Tuesday, September 24th 1918 at 11.30am. Solicitors for the sale were Messrs Nicholl, Manistry and Co. of 1 Howard Street, Strand, London, WC2. Land agents CB Hill Esq, Estate Office Crechel Wimborne, Dorset. It must have been a successful sale as all the properties were sold, most of them purchased by the tenants. The whole of Lord Alington's Devon Estates amounted to 63 lots. So I would think it must have been a very busy days auction.

The next year 1919 Sir Philip Bouchier Sherard Wrey Bart sold off a large portion of the Wrey Estate. This important sale was advertised in the local papers, to be offered by auction by John Smale FAI of 13 Cross Street, Barnstaple at the Bridge Hall Barnstaple, on October 15th 1919 at 2 o'clock prompt. The Solicitors were Messrs Tolley, Oerton and Balsdon of Barnstaple. The surveyors were Messrs Smyth, Richards, Stapledon and Fox of Barnstaple and Bideford. For viewing apply to Mr W Harris, Tawstock Village on any Wednesday or Thursday prior to the sale.

This estate had been in the ownership of the Wrey Family for many generations and consisted of farms, small holdings, accommodation lands, woodlands, a country residence and artisan cottages with a total acreage of 2,763 acres. The vendor Sir Philip Wrey was selling as tenant for life under the will of the late Sir Henry Bouchier Toke Wrey who died in 1900. On the death of the late Sir Robert Bouchier Sherard Wrey in 1917 the estate became liable for Estate Duty. This I suspect was why Sir Philp Wrey was selling.

An article in the local paper after the sale stated the sale aroused exceptional interest in the district, The Bridge Hall being packed to overflowing. Mr Smale in commencing the auction explained that Sir Bouchier Wrey could if he so desired, have sold the whole estate as it stood. He however, would not entertain any idea of that sort, and held the view that tenants should have the first chance of acquiring their holdings, to which there was much applause. Sir Bouchier had however placed the reserve at such a figure that the tenants would be enabled to purchase their farms at a reasonable price.