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Chapter 9

The Wrey Estate Saw Yard and Men.

As a boy I can recall the estate did a lot of its own repair work. They had their own timber sawing yard at Tawstock Court. There was a big rack saw bench for sawing back large tree trunks into heavy timber beams, posts or boarding for repair work on the estate. A smaller circular saw was used for cutting up firewood into logs. The saws were driven by a big Blackstone oil fired stationary engine. The big trees would be cut down in the woods by the men who worked in the saw yard. They would cut all the branches off the trunk of the tree ready for removal and then it would be left for a while to dry out and the wood would start to season. Then the large tree trunks would be brought in from the woods to the saw yard on a big timber carrying dray hauled by horses. The smaller timber being brought in by horse and long tailed cart.

Several men worked on the estate I can remember some of them. Mr Jones who lived at Lake was the carpenter, and I believe the foreman of the yard. The timber men and general labourers were Mr Harris who lived in the village, Mr Luxton and Mr Huxtable who both lived at Lake.

The estate haulage and carting was done mainly by horse and cart by two tenant farmers, Mr Chugg who farmed Hollamore Farm and Mr Holland who farmed Shorleigh Farm. They were often seen hauling timber or fire wood from the woods around the estate or hauling logs around to the cottages on the estate.

Maintainance work on the estate farmsteads was often done by the estate men. I have an old photo of Mr Chugg's horse and cart driven by Mr Mills who worked for Mr Chugg going over the bridge at Holywell School with some children sitting up in the cart and others playing on the road. The horse hauling the cart was a chestnut mare with a white face called Violet. I think the photo was taken in 1935, I can remember the day alright but not the date. A very peaceful looking photo, not many cars about in those days.

In later years the saw yard became less active there was no more hauling timber to the yard nor logs around the village. More of the estate was sold off, and the need for an estate labour force at the saw yard was not required. So the saw yard became redundant. Eventually it was sold off and today a bungalow has been built where the old rack saw bench stood and is very apply named "The Old Saw Mills".