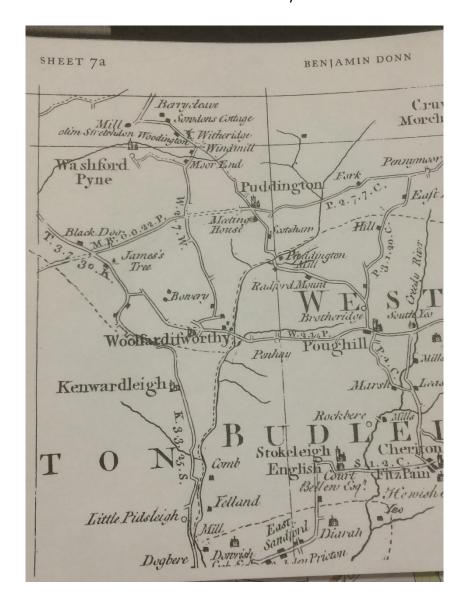
MILL BARTON

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

The earliest reference is believed to be from the Domesday holdings of Tetbald fitz Berner and of Odo fitz Gamelin, which afterwards came to the Honour (a holding or more usually a group of holdings) of Toriton, at this time it was called Mill (Stretchdon). Fitz means "son of".

A former vicar of Witheridge, Rev Castlehow, identified Mill (later Mill Barton) with Stretcheston in a deed of 1539. In an earlier deed of 1233 there is mention of Richard Strech of Washford who Castlehow thought may have given his name to Stretcheston/Stretchdon. He wrote "Stretcheston being now called Mill or Myll, the name Strech only appears in the form Stretchdown on the way from Witheridge to Mill and eventually Puddington." Donne's map of Devon 1765 (see below) shows Mill and underneath "olim Stretchdon" – olim is Latin for formerly.



From the Land Tax records¹, where the farm was referred to as "Mill", not Mill Barton, the following were the owners and occupiers:

Date	Owner	Occupier
1780 - 1797	John Chichester Esq	Richard Elworthy
1798 – 1809	Heirs of John Chichester	Wm Elworthy
1811	Heirs of John Chichester	Robert Chichester
1813	Sir A Chichester	Robert Chichester
1814 - 1831	Robert Chichester	Robert Chichester
1832	Robert Chichester	Abraham Cole

1841 census records show Abraham Cole as the Yeoman at Mill, by 1861 this had changed to James Partridge "farmer of 36 acres". By 1868, James Hill Patridge was advertising Mill Barton with all the stock and implements for sale by auction on 24th September as advertised in the Exeter Flying Post of 9th September. From the 1881 census Mill Barton was then occupied by William H Kelland from Sandford, who was farming 180 acres, however it was still owned by James H Patridge of Mill Park House Witheridge, who again advertised Mill Barton on 7th September 1881, but this time to let for 10 or 14 years.

On 17th August 1895 the Tiverton Gazette reported "About five o'clock on Tuesday morning a fire broke out at Mill Farm, the residence of Mr Tucker. Mr Tucker discovered the barn and adjoining linhays on fire, which he thought had probably been burning for about a quarter of an hour. There was no chance of saving any of the property and a straw rick close by was ignited and added greatly to the conflagration. The property is owned by Mr J Hill Patridge and is partly covered by insurance. The loss to Mr Tucker is estimated at about £100. Among things destroyed was a thrashing machine, reed comber, chaff cutter, 17 sacks of corn, and 2 or 3 carts. The origin of the fire is as yet unknown, but the general supposition is that someone must have taken shelter in the barn and have caused the fire by striking a match."

The 1901 census has Frederick Arscott as the Mill Barton farmer, who was also listed in directories as the farmer until 1910. By 1923 Arthur Matthews was farming and in 1930 and 1939 directories this was taken over by George Matthews.

Mill Barton is Grade II listed and described as²:-

Farmhouse. Early C16 with major later C16 and C17 improvements and extensions, some C19 modernisation work. Plastered cob on rubble footings; rubble stacks topped with C19 brick; slate roof (formerly thatched). Long building facing south-east. Originally a 3-room-and-through-passage plan house with former inner room near left (south-west) end. C17 and C18 1-room extensions to both ends and C17 dairy extension at right angles to rear of hall and inner room. C19 stair now in rear passage. Rear lateral stack to inner room, axial stack backing onto former passage to hall, and axial stack to service end room. 2 storeys.

¹ Additional data from https://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/DEV/Witheridge/LandTax/

² Taken from the Historic England website https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1251168

Unbalanced 7-window front of mainly sash windows; 16-pane to ground floor, 12-pane sashes to first. Both hall and chamber above have hornless sashes, those to passage and lower end have horns. Inner room and chamber above have C17 oak 4-light window frames with ovolo-moulded mullions C20 casement with glazing bars at left end. Passage door right of centre and service doors at each end. Front changes axis slightly to right of passage door. Roof is gable-ended. Hall chimney shaft is plastered but appears to be original rubble stonework. Rear dairy extension has a C17 oak 2-light window frame with ovolo- moulded mullions at first floor level under gable. Good interior of a house with a long and complex structural history. The only exposed early C16 feature is the remains of a truss half-buried in the hall stack. All that can be seen is smoke-blackened apex (Alcocks Type C) with saddle and setting for square-set ridge. Remainder of roof over inner room, hall, passage and service and made-up of 2 types of later C16 or early C17 roof with trenched purlins over passage and service room and threaded purlins over hall and inner room. Lower parts of trusses only exposed in hall and inner room chambers. Both these are side-pegged jointed crucks, the former including a slip tenon. Inner room has late C16-early C17 crossbeam, double ovolo-moulded with step stops. Fireplace is blocked. Hall has probably C17 plain chamfered crossbeams and fireplace here is blocked. Service end room refurbished in late C19 when crossbeam was boxed in and fireplace given new chimney piece. Service room chamber has late C16-early C17 oak crank-headed door frame to alcove alongside the chimney stack, for former stair or garderobe. C18 features throughout store at right (northeast) end and C19 truss near contemporary left (south-west) end wall.



Figure 1: Ordnance Survey 1906-7