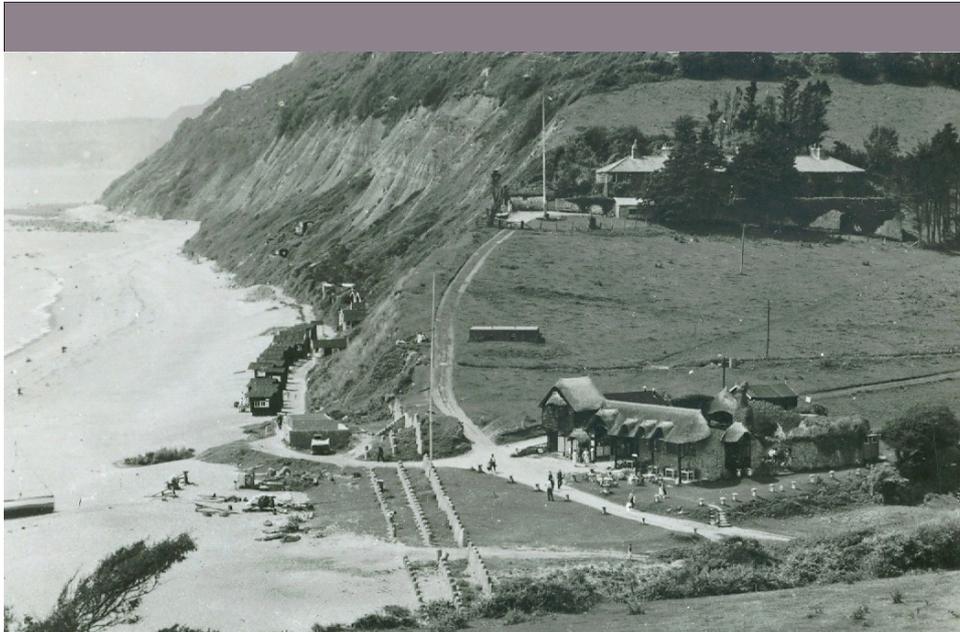


These messages show varied reactions to the attractions of Branscombe.

Post 1945 changes at Branscombe Mouth (56-62)



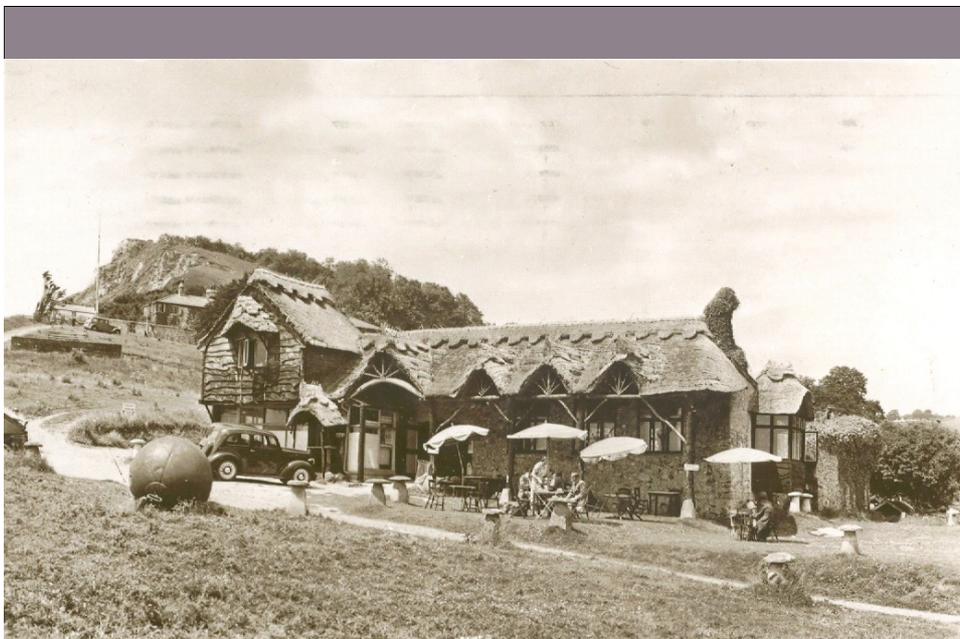
BC 35

SEA SHANTY AND BEACH, BRANSCOMBE

A TUCK CARD

56

Wartime defences. Lines of concrete pillars and concrete pill boxes. Postmarked 25th September 1959, the message on this card shows that the concrete wartime defences were still in place fourteen years after the War ended. "Walked over from here (Beer) to Branscombe on Wednesday – a lovely spot but a pity they have not cleared away the concrete war barrier from the beach."

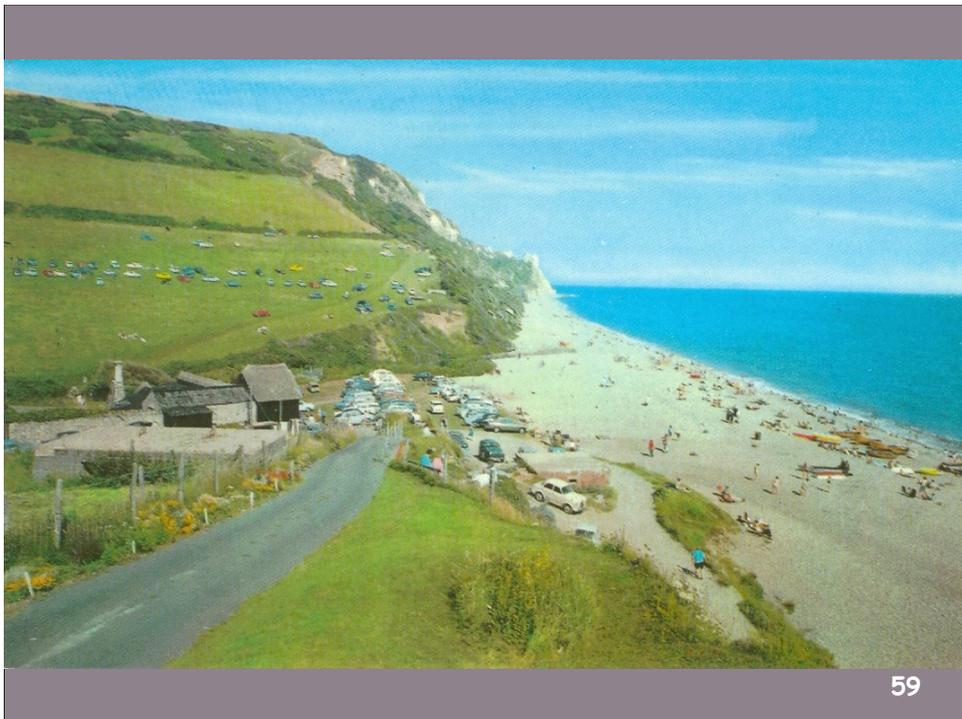
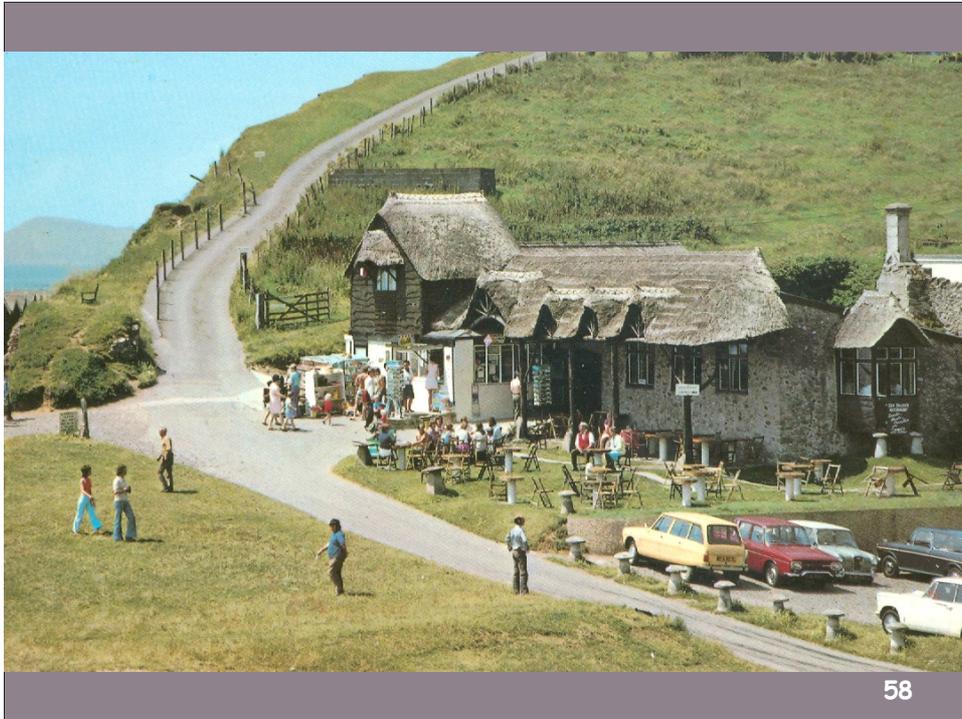


BC 24

SEA SHANTY, BRANSCOMBE

A TUCK CARD

57



Signs of post 1950 recovery, new cars and new fashions ...

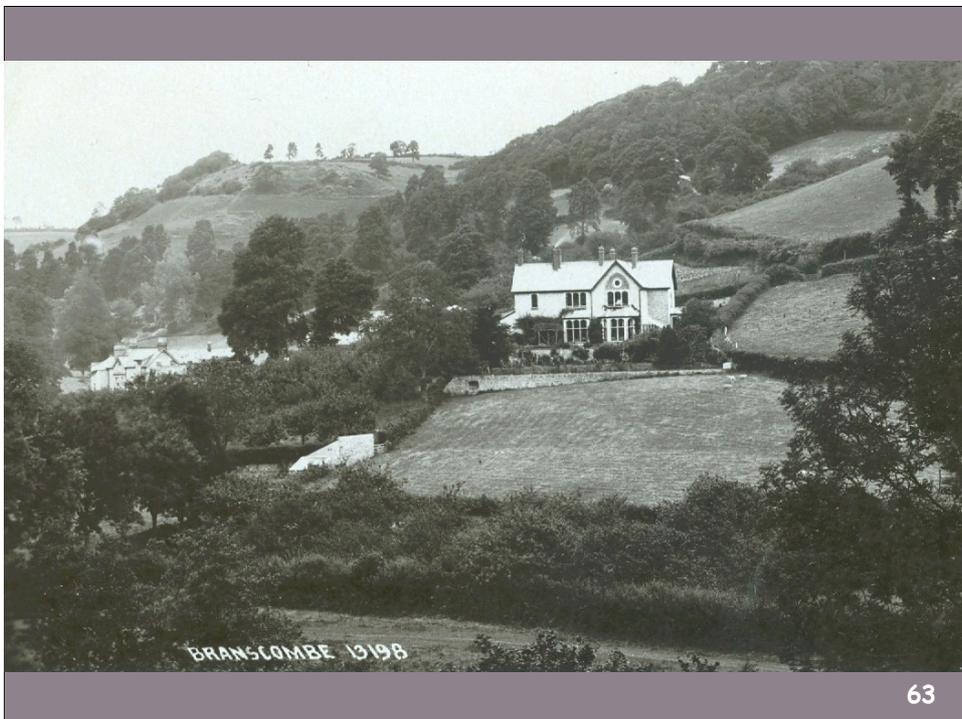


Pictures taken by a Miss Green. She visited Branscombe in the summer of 1947. After watching Mrs Somers making lace at Bank she took these views of pebble picking and sorting on the beach. The pebbles went for industrial use after they had been sorted in the structure on the top of the pill box shown in (61).

Branscombe Mouth to the Square (62-65)

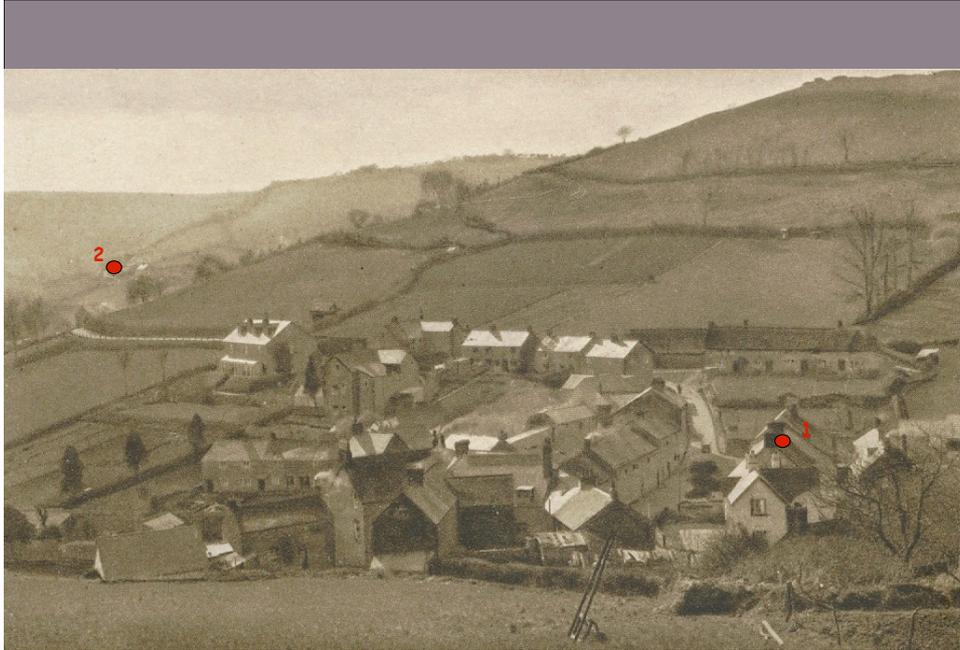


Seaside Farm supplied milk, eggs and cream to holidaymakers in the chalets and on camping sites. The sign advertises fresh milk and cream, also camping – ‘Enquire Within’. The farmer’s camping site is shown on 46 and 47. At that time we see that the road to Branscombe Mouth was still pretty rough. The sign on the right says ‘No Parking, Turning Only’.



The Old Vicarage. The Rev R Swansborough (vicar 1872 – 1910) chose a fine site for his vicarage – a view taken about 1910. On one occasion, Rev F C Butters (vicar 1949 – 55), a keen ornithologist, phoned me to say that there was an unusual bird on his lawn.

Unfortunately by the time I got over there on my bike, the bird had flown. It was a hoopoe, but we did find a spotted flycatcher's nest behind a creeper on the vicar's wall. Sometimes known as the 'vicar's lawn bird' because it frequents well cut vicarage lawns, the hoopoe is an exotic-looking visitor in small numbers mainly to Southern Britain in spring and summer.



64

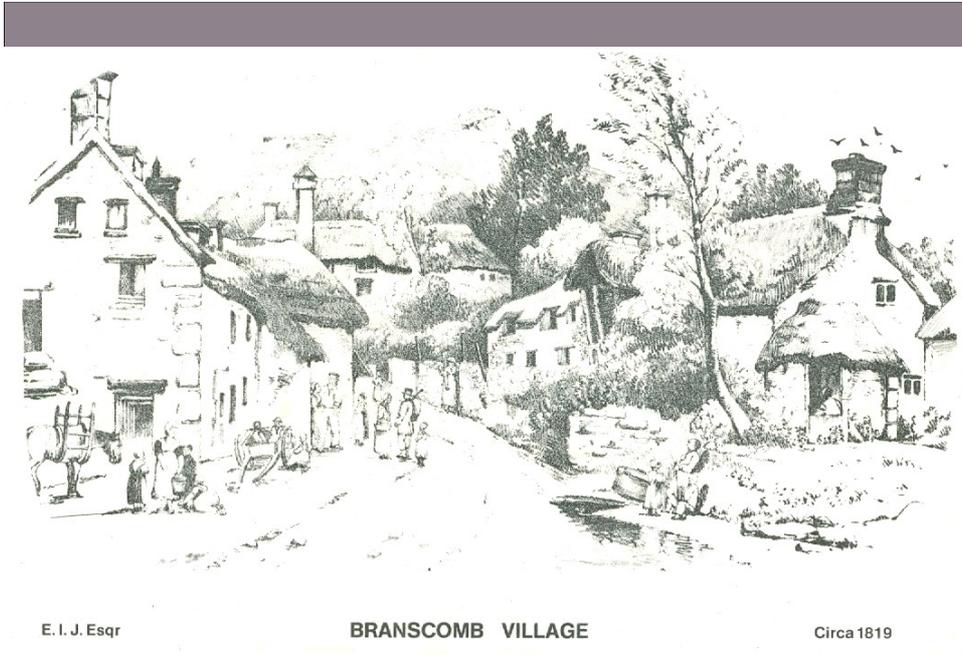


65

Looking down on the Square and the lower village. Again the earlier shot (64) shows less tree cover than the later one. The photographer has managed to get a panoramic view which includes both the Masons Arms (1) and the church (2). In 65 the roof of the pre-war garage is

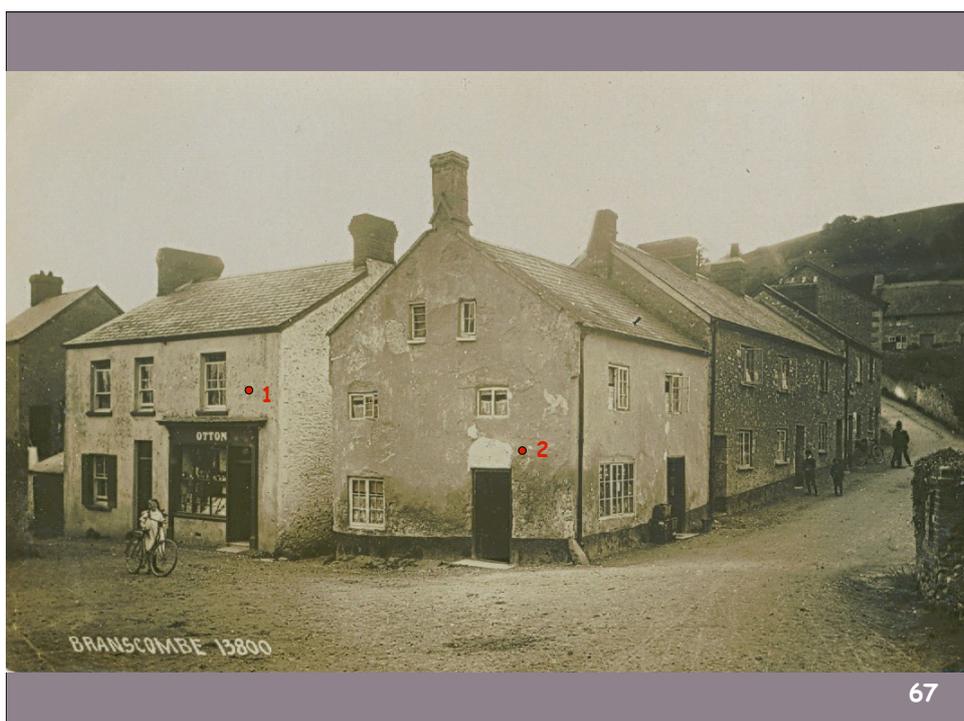
seen (bottom left corner). It became a munitions factory employing about 100 people on shift work during the war. Safely tucked away in a quiet location, this wartime factory and its activities provide another example of the interaction between the local area and the wider world. After the war the site was eventually re-developed.

The area around the Square and the Masons Arms (66-75)



66

This c1819 view gives an impression of life in this part of Branscombe early in the 19th Century. It appears that the alignment of the road and the building line on each side of it has not changed a great deal.



67



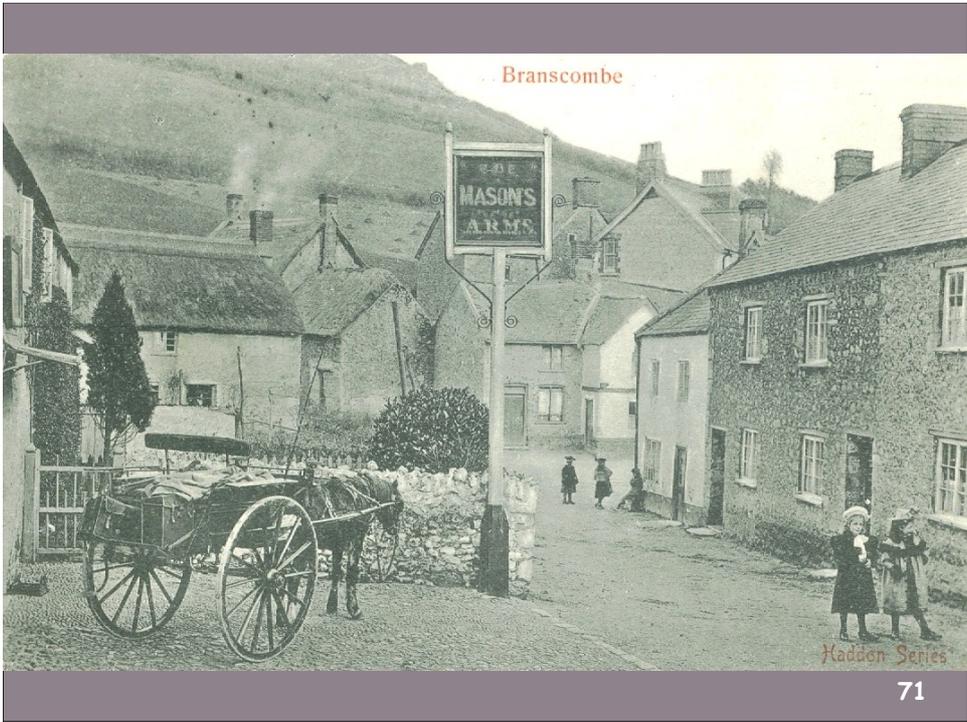
68

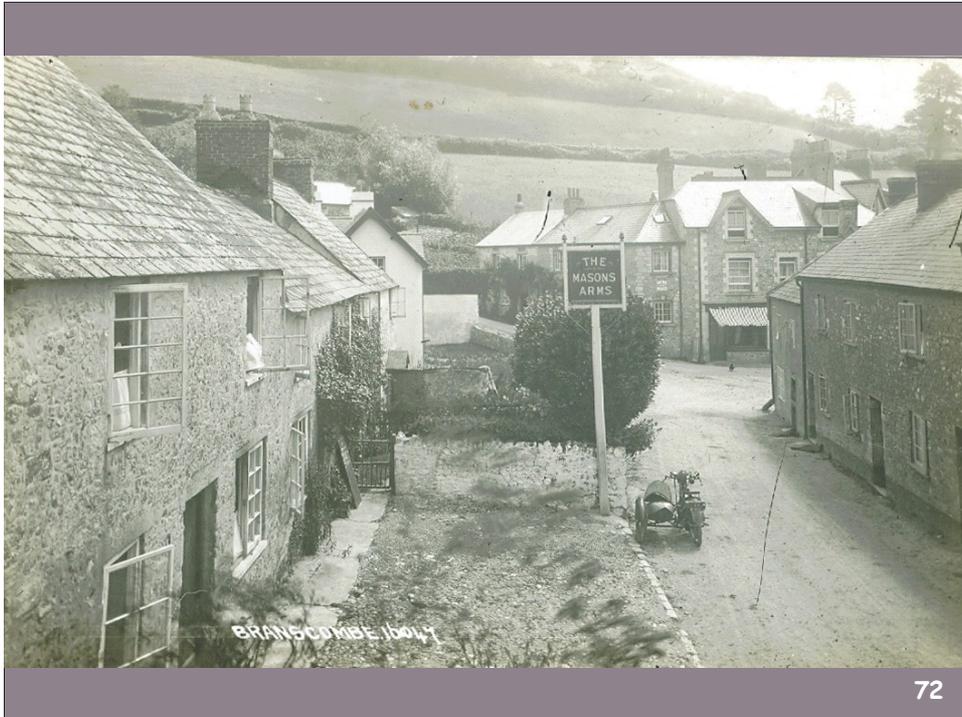
Otton's shop (1) and the Square c1904. The shop later became Colliers. The building on the corner (2) became a shop run by Sammy Gill, a grocer (the "grocer" sign can be seen over the shop door on 69). Eventually the shop was taken on by his daughter Lucy Hutchings. It is shown spruced up in 68. The sign over the door now reads "Hutchings Grocer and Tobacconist". Mrs Hutchings ran this shop for many years.



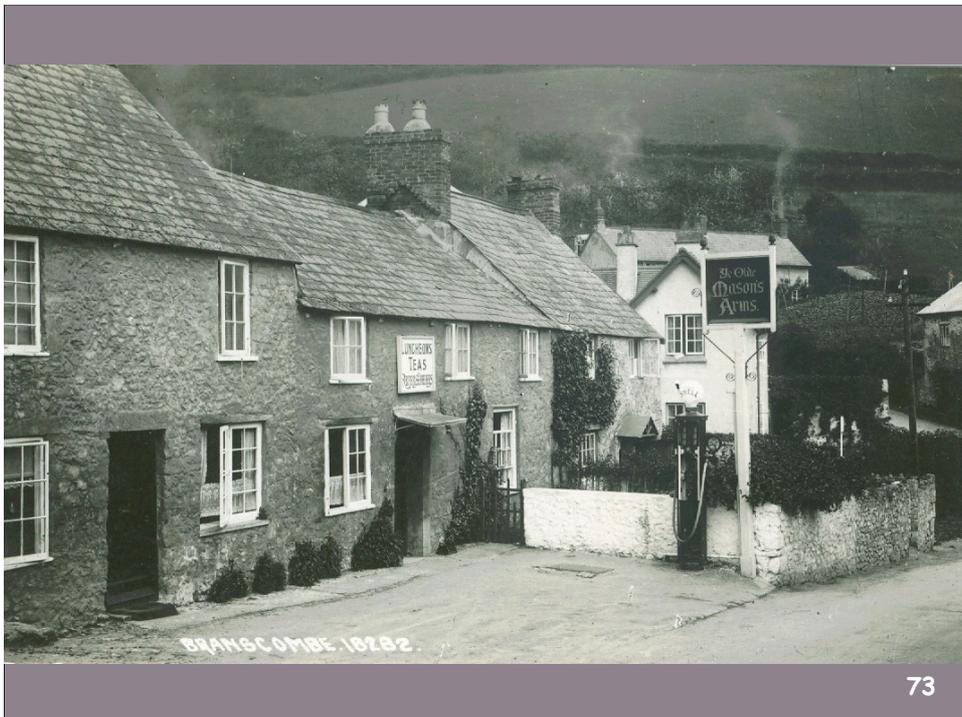
69

This new home replaced an old cottage on this site – the cottage can be seen directly behind the horse and trap in 71.





72



73

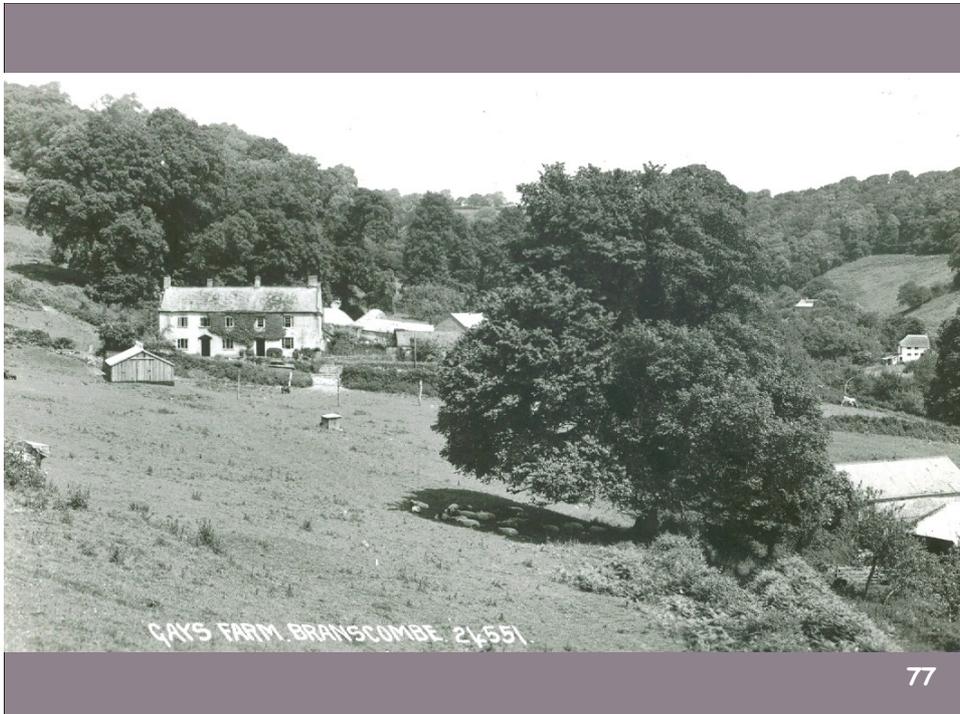


This sequence shows something of the evolution of the Masons Arms from about 1905 to around 1960. The property was enlarged and modernised during this period. During the 1930s (73-74) there was a Shell petrol pump on the forecourt. In 72 the sign on the wall of the Masons Arms is advertising Luncheons, Teas and Refreshments. On 73 the sign on the wall of the house across the road reads “Apartments, Board Residence, Bed and Breakfast and Teas” – further evidence that visitors, some of them in cars, were coming to this part of Branscombe in the 1930s. The motor bike and sidecar in (72) appears to have a local owner – registration TA 888 (TA was a Devon prefix).

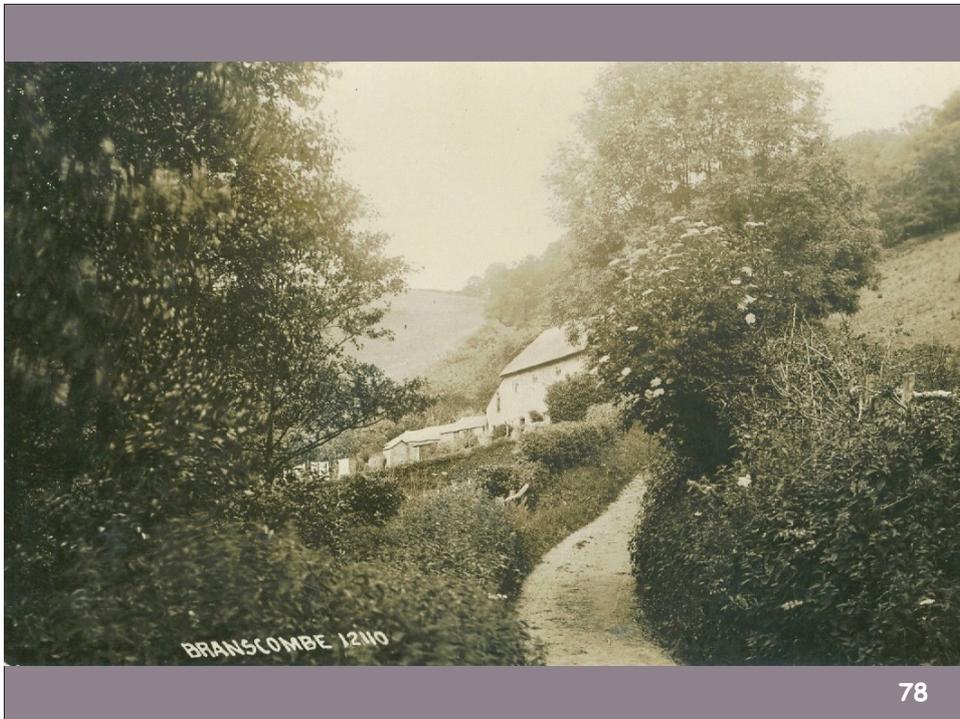
A short detour – Sellars Wood (76-78)



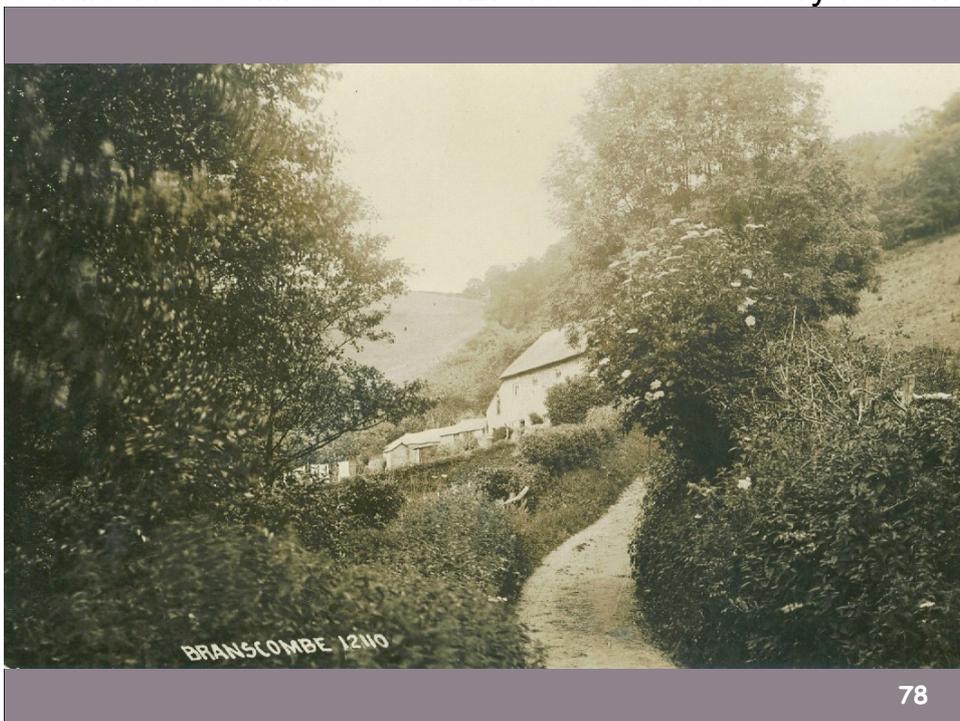
Lower House – a 1920s view. At one time this ancient building was a farmhouse. The house was replaced by a bungalow in the sixties and more recently by an Arts and Crafts house.



Gays Farm, across the valley from Lower House. Over the years, most of the farmhouses in Branscombe appeared on picture postcards.



Sellars Wood Hill about 1912. The road was very narrow at that time.

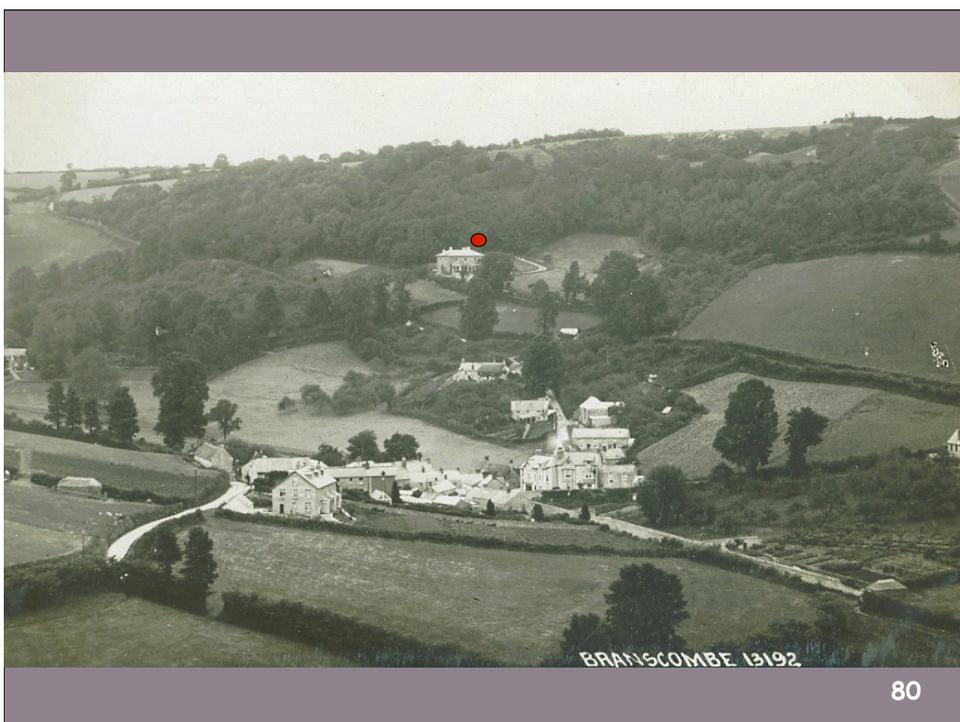


Sellars Wood Hill about 1912. The road was very narrow at that time.

Along the road to Bank and back to the Village Hall (79-84)

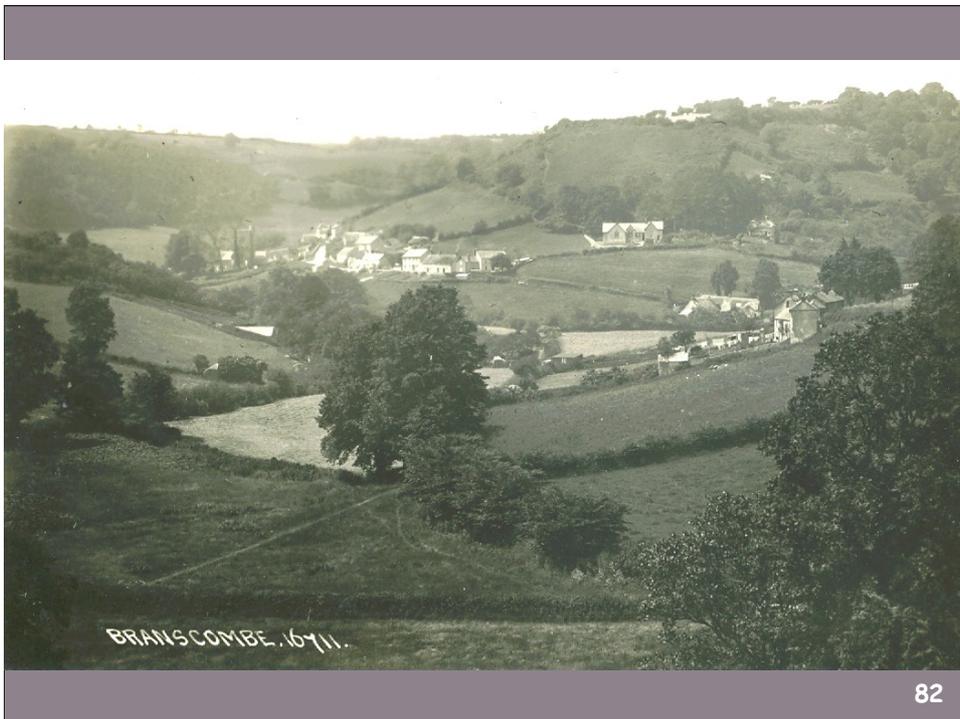


Looking towards the sea from the road. An impressionistic view taken between Millers Lea and Bank in high summer.





Vicarage Hill. Comparing these two views, the later one (81) shows that in the interwar period a number of new houses with fine views were built on Vicarage Hill. In the background is Hazelwood, built by the Ford family in the 1860s.



The valley opens up.



Bank from across the valley. Another unusual angle chosen by a Chapman photographer.

The touching message on this card is neatly written in pencil by a child – probably about 10 years old and sent to an address in Streatham. It is dated 03/08/1917. “We are now at Branscombe and having a lovely time, and not much rain. Yesterday we went to the beach and had dinner there because we have a big bell tent. I have only bathed once because I have a cold”. At the end, in capitals she adds “THOUSANDS OF KISSES AND HUGS FROM BARBARA”.



Back at the starting point. The village hall and the area around the forge.

An example of land use change in Branscombe (85-90)

This is about the triangular area bounded on one side by the road from Bank to the village hall and by Mill Lane on the other side.



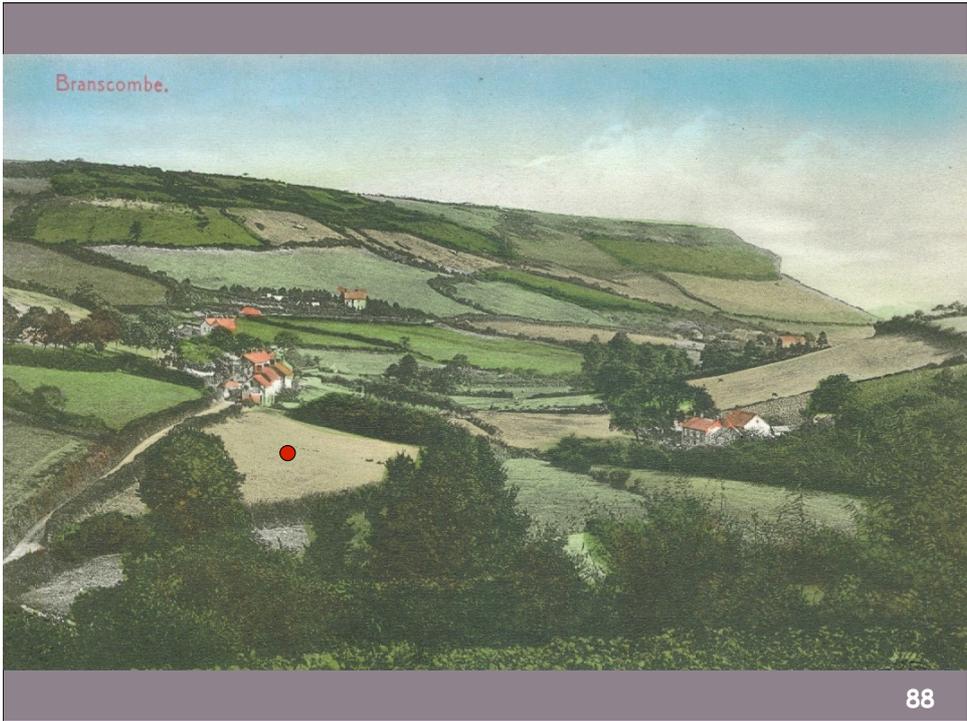
The area (on left of the picture) as it is now – a residential area. What was it like in the past?



Before the 1st World War it was a meadow – in the foreground of this picture.



87



88

Early 1920s views – no change. No doubt the grass was used for haymaking.



89



90

Late 1920s - a big change. The first appearance of allotments. During the Second World War, the allotment holders with the advantage of some very good soil complied with national campaigns to 'Dig for Victory'. Mr C H Middleton, the wartime 'wireless gardener' told us that potatoes and onions were 'munitions of war'. On October 6th 1940 an allotment service was held in St Martins in the Fields Church in London. It was broadcast on the wireless and Mr Middleton read the lesson. There were blessings for increased production – so between 1939 and 1945 these allotments in Branscombe supplied large quantities of these wartime munitions – it was a matter of survival!

And then, after the war, on the other side of the road from the allotments, council houses (90) were built – much appreciated by local people.

In the 'seventies the allotments were built over with new middle-income houses.

The Southern Railway



Postmarked August 22nd 1915. A simple message – “Dear Dad, meet me Waterloo 6.50 on Friday”. I wonder if that train was on time.

Waterloo – Seaton Junction (change) – Seaton Station – bus to Branscombe. That is how so many came to know and enjoy Branscombe between 1900 and 1950.