

A History of Pound Cottage, The Green, Newick, Sussex



Pound Cottage in 2012



The building as part of Brett's Farm in 1907

Pound Cottage, The Green, Newick

Pound Cottage is a single-storey, sandstone-built structure with a pantile roof, immediately adjacent to Newick village green. It was once a farm building but was converted to a small cottage in 1959. The following is a brief history of the property.

19th century

The farm, of which the building was part, was Bretts Farm. The old 16th century Bretts farmhouse still stands just to the north of the cottage. The farm building is shown on an old estate plan of 1829 and it is likely that it was there long before that. The building was probably used for livestock or agricultural equipment or may indeed have been a 'pound'. A pound was a building used to temporarily keep cattle and livestock that had strayed onto the highway.

The 1840 tithe map below provides a fine indication of the layout of the Bretts Farm buildings. The building to become 'Pound Cottage' is shown with a blue circle. The farmhouse is the building coloured pink, numbered 441. Numbers 439 and 440 comprise the farmyard with the various farm buildings shown. The farm itself at this time extended eastwards down as far as the river Ouse, all owned by John Harmer and farmed by Philip Morris. The building, coloured pink, to the left of the farm buildings is what would later become the Royal Oak public house. The pond is shown on the green.



1840 tithe map extract (north is to the top right corner)
(East Sussex Record Office; TD/E 42/1)

By 1860 the owner John Harmer had died and the farm was then advertised for sale by auction. Below is the auction notice which appeared in the *Sussex Advertiser* newspaper 7th August 1860 referring to the farmhouse, barn, stable, lodges, and yards with 74 acres of very productive arable, meadow, pasture and hop land which adjoined the Ouse Navigation and Goldbridge Wharf.

NEWICK, BARCOMBE, AND SOUTH LANCING, NEAR SHOREHAM, SUSSEX.—Valuable Farm, Building, and Brook Land, Market Garden, Houses, &c.

Mr. Drawbridge,

HAS been favoured with instructions TO SELL BY PUBLIC AUCTION, at the White Hart Hotel, Lewes, on TUESDAY, the 1th day of September, 1860, at three o'clock in the afternoon, in four lots, the following valuable FARM and LANDS, the property of the late John Harmer, Esq.

Lot 1.—All that compact FARM known by the name of "Brett's," containing by admeasurement 74a. 3r. 12p. of very productive arable, meadow, pasture, and hop land, in a high state of cultivation, with house, barn, stable, lodges, and yards, most delightfully and conveniently situate, close by the pleasant, improving village of Newick, a short distance from the parish church, and nearly surrounded by good roads. A portion of the land adjoins the River Ouse Navigation and Goldbridge Wharf, and within a short distance of the Uckfield, Barcombe, and Cooksbridge Stations on the London, Brighton, and South-Coast Railway.

This Lot is Copyhold of the Manor of Newick, subject to two heriots of best beasts, and fine at the will of the Lord on alienation, and an annual quit rent of 10s. Land tax £3 per annum.

Auction notice from *Sussex Advertiser* newspaper 1860

The 1875 Ordnance Survey map below shows the farm, with the building circled. The access into the farmyard from the southern corner of the village green can be seen.



Ordnance Survey map 1875

In the 1890's Bretts Farm was owned by James Henry Sclater with the farmer being Ebenezer Martin followed by Thomas Wimpress. The farmer's field just beyond the

farmyard was called the Home Field and was used not just for agriculture but also for various village functions, including football and cricket.

The 1890's were recalled in the article entitled 'I Remember Newick - Village Cricket and other Memories of the Nineties' by C W Bennett in the *Sussex County Magazine* August 1944 page 214 where he states "How we enjoyed the time of harvesting and the arrival of Jesse Hobden's traction engine from Chailey to do the threshing"

Arthur Oldaker, in his memories written in 1973, refers to Brett's farm as Home Farm and he also describes the threshing of the corn at the farm... "The entrance to Home Farm between the Royal Oak public house and the village pond was one of the places where it was carried out. Here as children we would observe the process with great interest; we would watch a terrier grab the occasional rat that ran out from the stack of wheat, listen to the hum of the engine, and what I found fascinating, watch the racing and slowing down of the two balls of the governor that regulated the speed of the flywheel. The traction engines that carried out this work were owned by the family of Hobden at King's Head, Chailey. An engine was to be met with frequently, not only at threshing time, driven at speeds of up to 15-20 miles per hour and to a young child especially the encounter with one of these noisy and often erratically steered 'locomotives' on our narrow roads could be an almost frightening experience. For the driver of a horse and trap it would be an anxious moment; usually he had to dismount and hold the animals head lest it took fright."

20th century

The postcard photograph below has a date of 1907, showing the building on the left, the large farm barn on the right and the old Brett's farmhouse in the background.



Bretts Farm in 1907

The photograph below is from a postcard, postmarked January 1909. The building is shown on the left with the thatched barn behind. To the right is the Royal Oak beer-house and an oak tree. The timber shed beneath the tree was used either for roadman's equipment or for keeping a two-wheeled gig. The Parish Council booklet *Newick -A Pictorial History* (1991) page 12 also has this photograph, with a suggestion that it could have been taken even as early as 1895.



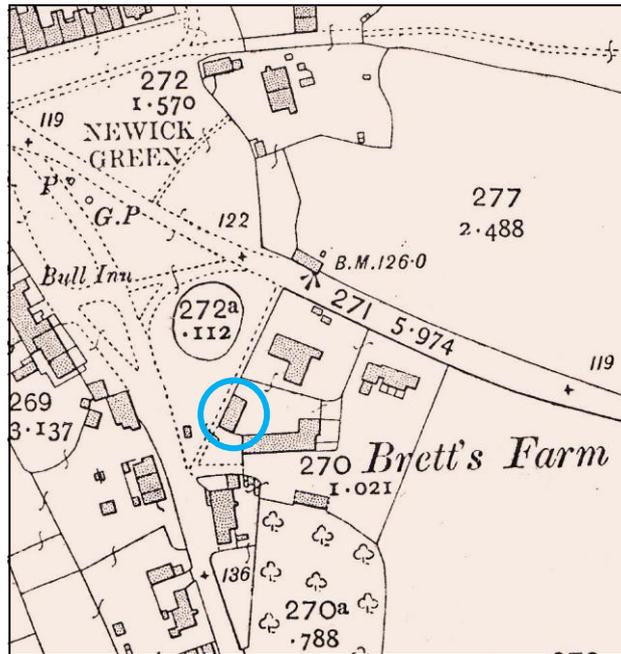
The building alongside the village green at about the turn of the century

Below is a postcard photograph with a 1909 postmark showing part of the building on the right, the thatched barn behind, the old Bretts farmhouse and, in the foreground, the village pond.



Postcard photograph about 1909

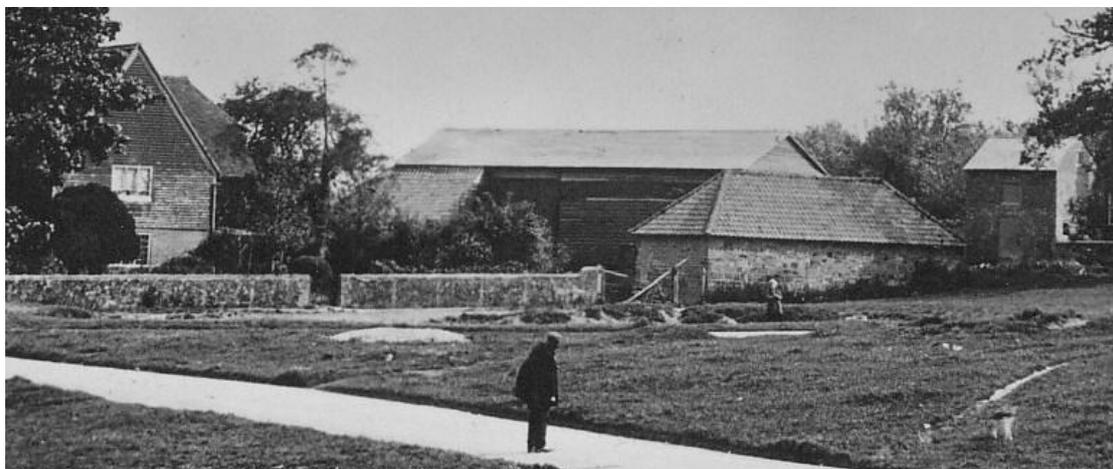
Below is the 1910 Ordnance Survey map showing Brett's Farm, the pond, the village green, etc, together with the building circled in blue.



Ordnance Survey map 1910

A national finance survey included Newick parish, with Brett's Farm being assessed in 1915. The farm was identified as property number 422 owned by Reverend Francis Saunderson Sclater, farmed by Mr Diplock and described as house and buildings and sporting right land.

The postcard photograph below taken between 1911 and 1916 shows the building on the right. The barn behind has had the old thatch removed and a new roof provided with corrugated iron. The Newick Parish Council's booklet *Newick - A Pictorial History* 1991 page 3, also has a photograph, estimated as 1916, showing the re-roofed barn.



Postcard photograph dated between 1911 and 1916

Conversion to a cottage

It was in 1958 that David E Peck, the owner of Bretts farmhouse, decided to convert the old farm building into residential accommodation and submitted a planning application E/58/64. The building was described at that time as being used as a garden store. The large adjacent barn still existed. The submitted plans showed conversion of the building into a small 'bedsit' with hall, bathroom and a kitchen/bed-sitting room. The old sandstone walls were shown to have proposed new three-inch thick breeze block lining walls with a two-inch wide cavity. The works were completed in October 1959.

Since then, the building has been extended with matching pantile roof, to create an L-shaped building, the accommodation now comprising hall, bathroom, kitchen/dining room, sitting room and two bedrooms with a floor area of about 700 square feet plus a loft area. A car port has been provided. Two modern detached houses have been built adjacent to the south-east where the former farmyard and large barn once stood.

In 1976 the village green and the buildings around it, including Pound Cottage, were designated by the Lewes District Council as a conservation area, recognising it as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. A 'Conservation Area Appraisal' was published by the District Council in 2006 describing the many listed buildings and the significant features which make up the special character of Newick Green. Pound Cottage is not formally listed as being of architectural or historic interest. Indeed, in the Appraisal, it is not even included as one of those unlisted buildings which "contribute to the character of the Conservation Area". A view could be taken that the building does make a contribution to the character, with a humble traditional farm building style, Sussex sandstone walls, and a height that sits comfortably into this corner of the village green. Even the orange pantile roof, although certainly an unusual material for this locality, has had over 100 years to create a matured appearance.

When it was advertised for sale, in 2011, the estate agent's description referred to it as "a charming and characterful cottage...conversion of an original cart barn... neatly tucked away on the village green..."

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Information sources:

Sussex Advertiser newspaper 7th August 1860

Ordnance Survey maps

East Sussex Record Office: 1829 estate plan of Allington Manor showing also the village green in Newick Manor (SAS/SH/389), the 1840 Newick tithe map (TD/E 42/1) and associated schedule (the 'apportionments'), land tax details, the 1910-1915 national finance survey map for Newick and the valuation précis book (the surveyors field book is at the National Archives, Kew reference IR/58/12813), the memories of Arthur E Oldaker (1973) (AMS 5785/4), Peter King estate agent sale particulars (HUM/3/515) .

Article entitled 'I Remember Newick - Village Cricket and other Memories of the Nineties' by C W Bennett in the *Sussex County Magazine* August 1944 page 214

Lewes District Council: details of planning applications and the Conservation Area Appraisal for Newick Green 2006

Newick - A Pictorial History published by Newick Parish Council (1991)

A Victorian Diary of Newick 1875-1899 Tony Turk (1999)

Postcard photographs from private collection. Modern photograph by author

Batcheller Monkhouse estate agent sale details (2011)