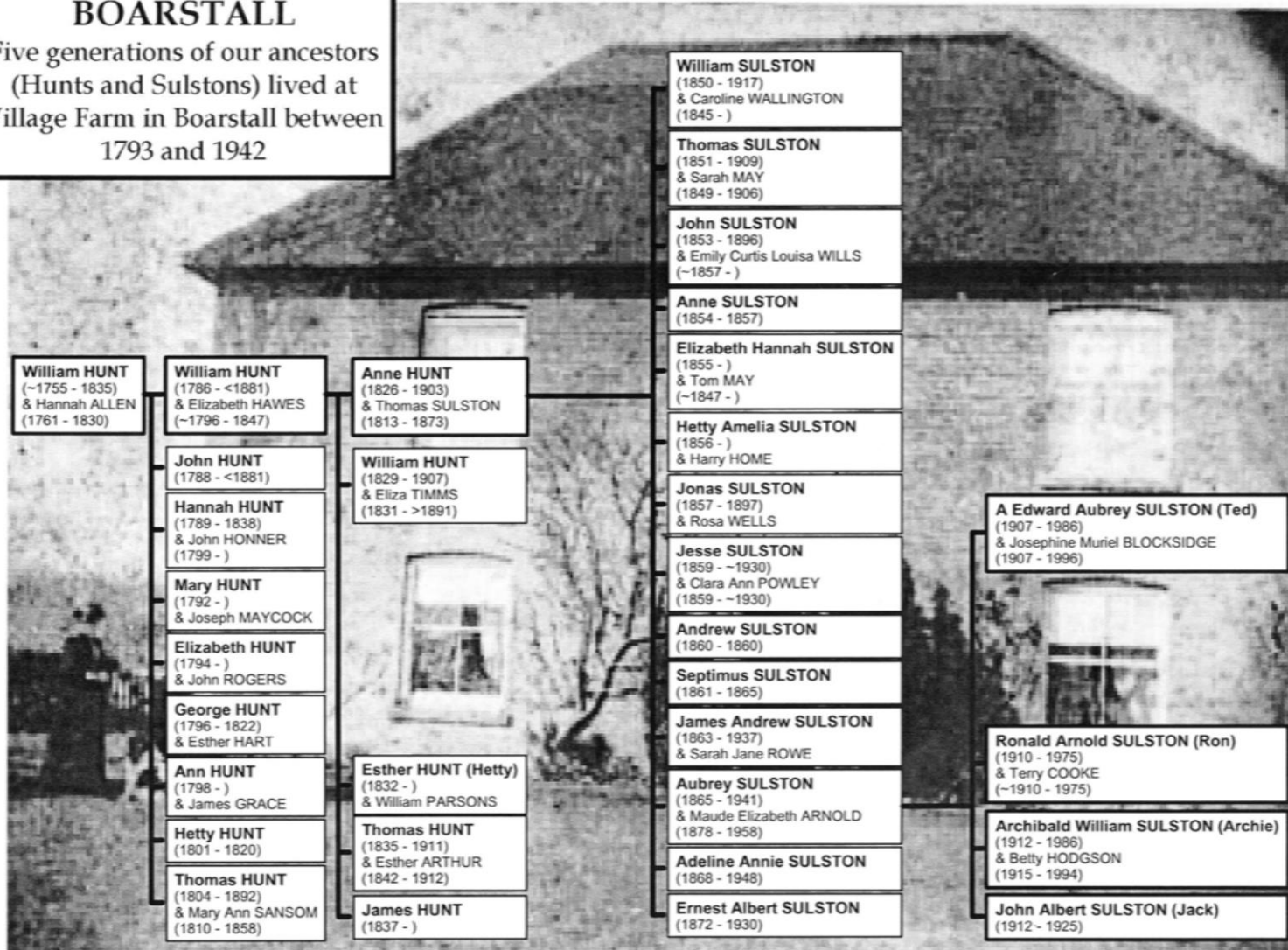


BOARSTALL

Five generations of our ancestors
(Hunts and Sulstons) lived at
Village Farm in Boarstall between
1793 and 1942



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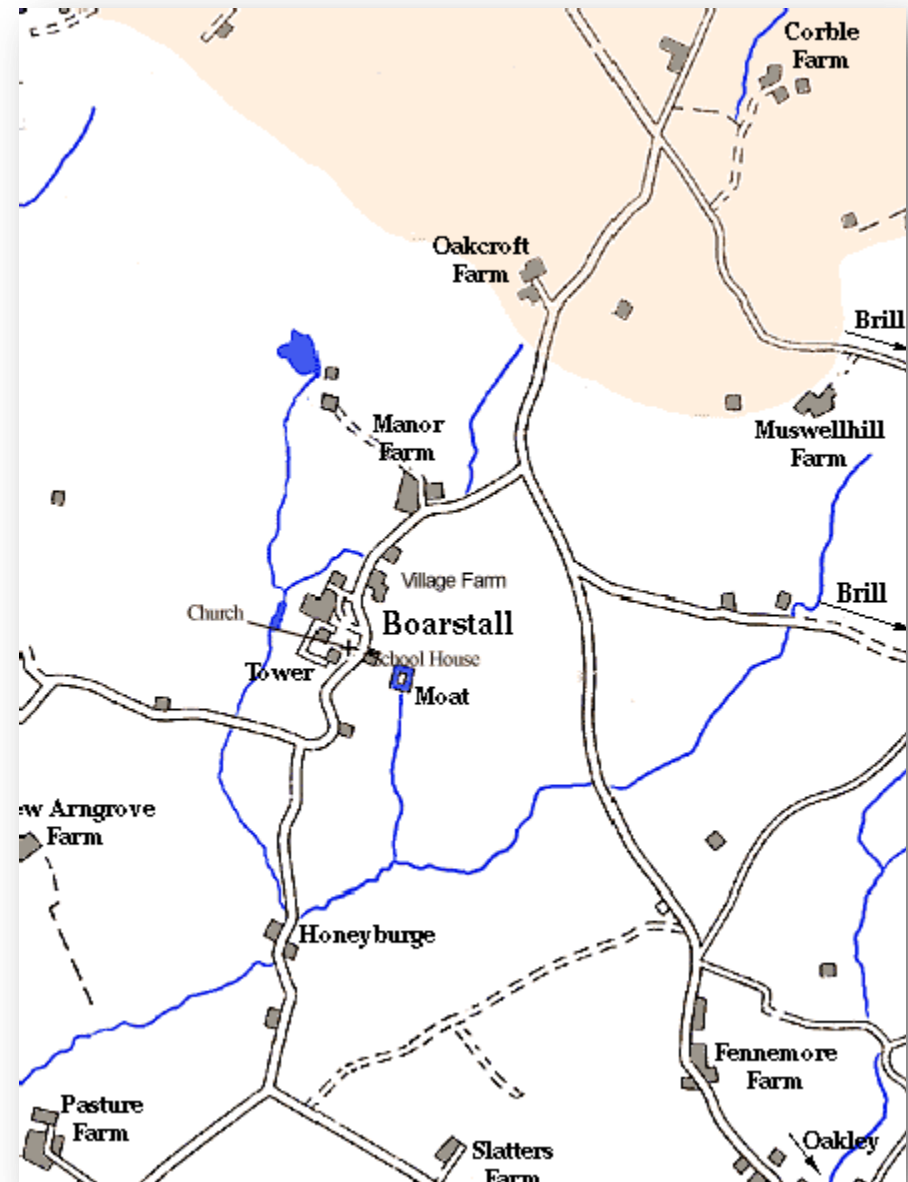
Booklet compiled by Madeleine Harvey (née Sulston)
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Sources:

National Trust leaflet on Boarstall Tower ; Boarstall Home Page at www.erros.co.uk
Sulston Homepage at <http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~sulston/>
Kevin Quick of Bucks Genealogical Society; documents in the PRO at Kew; parish registers
Bucks FHS; Don Johnson; Winifred Chandler; Don Hardwick; census returns

Map of the Boarstall area



The origin of the name Boarstall is thought to be from the Old English word for place (boar, bor, burh) hence Borrestalle or Burhstall meaning the site of a stronghold. However, the legend persists that it refers to the wild boars that used to be hunted in the Forest of Bernewood which covered this part of the country at the time of Edward the Confessor. The land was settled by the Fitz-Nigel or Fitz-Neale family before the Norman Conquest and the manor of Boarstall is unusual in that it has been passed down through a succession of female heirs since then.

Buckinghamshire was in the thick of the civil war and saw more battles than most other counties. Boarstall fared particularly badly and the manor house was occupied at first by troops loyal to the King and then by parliamentary forces. The opposing armies ebbed and flowed and by 1645 the church, village and manor house had been comprehensively destroyed, leaving only the gatehouse tower built in 1312 as a reminder of what had been.

The Aubrey family were the local landowners from the 1700's. The manor house was rebuilt but then demolished in 1778. The family occasionally lived in the Tower, but their main place of residence was Dorton. In 1901, the land passed to Sir Henry Fletcher. He took the name Aubrey-Fletcher, because he was descended through a female line from the Aubrey family. In the 19th century, there were several tenanted farms in Boarstall including Tower Farm, Holt's Farm, Manor Farm, Muswell Hill Farm and the farm opposite the church. This was originally called Village Farm and later Laurel Farm and it was occupied first by the HUNTS and then by the SULSTON family.



Village Farm from 1793 to 1835

In about 1793, William HUNT moved from Cumnor in Berkshire to Boarstall, with his wife Hannah and four young children - William, John, Hannah and Mary. We do not know why they moved, but it is possible that Mrs Hannah HUNT inherited some money from her MAYOTTE and SOUTHBY relatives who were landowners in Berkshire. This would have allowed William and family to move to better prospects in Buckinghamshire. The first record of the family in Boarstall is in 1794 when William and Hannah's fifth child Elizabeth was baptised in the church of St James, followed in 1796 by the baptism of George.

In 1798, during the wars with France, the government drew up the *Posse Comitatus* which were lists of all men aged between 15 and 60 who could be called upon for service in the army. Bucks is the only county which has a complete return still surviving and in it we find, as one of the 45 men in Boarstall, William HUNT owning four horses and one wagon. He had been renting Village Farm from Sir John AUBREY, the local landowner, since 1795. The farmhouse was built in 1757. William was active as a churchwarden and surveyor for the parish of Boarstall.

In 1798, William and Hannah's 7th child (Ann) was baptised, followed by Hetty in 1801 and Thomas in 1804. This completed their family of nine children. In 1801, Mrs Hannah HUNT was left a cow called Strawberry and a bequest of £20 in the will of her mother, Hannah ALLEN. As her mother had been living in Cumnor at that time, the cow had a lengthy journey to make to Boarstall. Hannah HUNT died in 1830 and is buried in the churchyard. Her husband William died in 1835 and left a detailed will.

Village Farm from 1829 to 1851

William and Hannah's eldest son, William HUNT, continued to farm in Boarstall. He had married Elizabeth HAWES in Brill in 1826 and they had five children. Anne HUNT was the eldest, born in 1826 and baptised in Oakley. Her younger siblings were William, Esther, Thomas and James who were all baptised in Boarstall between 1829 and 1837. Their mother, Elizabeth, died of typhus in 1847.

In the Tithe Survey of **1850**, William HUNT is farming the 139 acres of Village Farm. The annual rent is £28 12s and the landowner is Sir Thomas Digby AUBREY. The farm was mainly laid to grass with 43 acres of arable. The detailed maps from the survey enable the fields to be named and many of the original field boundaries are still present on the ground. The modern public footpath crosses Home Ground, Long Mead and Upper. William was a churchwarden for Boarstall from 1839 to 1850.

In the **1851** census, we find the widowed William living at Village Farm with his three sons William, Thomas and James. He is farming 136 acres. His two daughters are already married - Hettie to William PARSONS and Anne to Thomas SULSTON.



Village Farm from 1851 to 1903



Thomas SULSTON and Anne HUNT were married in **1850** at the church of St James in Boarstall. She reputedly wore the dress shown on the left. They started their married life as farmers at Chilling Place Farm which lies to the north-east of Boarstall, beyond Muswell Hill. Their first two children, William (1850) and Thomas (1851) were christened at the church of St Nicholas at Piddington which is the parish church for Chilling Place. The family moved to Village Farm in 1851, taking over the tenancy from Anne's father. The remaining twelve children were all christened in Boarstall. Three of their children died in childhood and are commemorated by initials on the footstone of a family grave in the churchyard.

In **1861**, Thomas and Anne SULSTON are settled in Village Farm with seven of their children age from 2 to 10 years old. Anne's widowed father William is living with them and they are farming 164 acres, employing 3 men and 3 boys. In the **1871** census, Thomas and Anne SULSTON are farming 157 acres with the help of 3 men and 1 boy. They have nine of their children (ages 1 to 20) living with them plus Anne's father and a general servant Mary NEAL. The farmhouse must have been bursting at the seams.

By the **1881** census, Thomas SULSTON and William HUNT have died and Anne is a farmer of 163 acres employing 2 men and 2 boys. She has five of her children living with her including Aubrey, aged 12. Some of her older children are married and living away from home. William has emigrated to a farm in Woodstock, Ontario in Canada with his wife and young family, Thomas is married and living in Bicester, Elizabeth and James Andrew are working in his draper's shop, John and Jesse are in Cheltenham working in a grocer's shop. In the summer of 1881, after the census was taken, James Andrew joined his older brother in Canada where he found a wife and established a large Sulston dynasty.

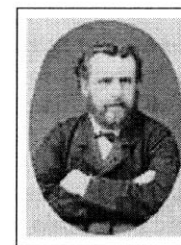
In **1891**, Aubrey is managing the farm with his mother. Addie and Ernest are living with them and Bessie SULSTON was visiting them on census night. She is Ann's granddaughter and the daughter of Thomas from Bicester. In **1903**, Ann died at the age of 77 and an account of the funeral in Boarstall was printed in the Bucks Advertiser. Many friends and members of the family were present.

Who lived in Village Farm?

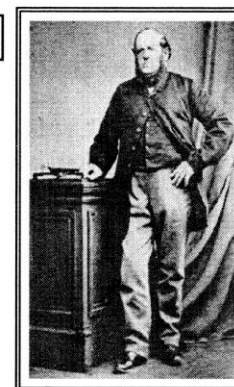
The census returns of 1861 to 1891

Name	Occupation	Rel	Married	Age	Birthplace
1861					
Thomas SULSTON	Farmer of 164 acres	Head	M	47	Piddington, OXF
Anne "	Farmer's wife	Wife	M	35	Oakley, BKM
William "	Scholar	Son	U	10	Piddington, OXF
Thomas "	"	Son		9	"
John "	"	Son		8	Boarstall, BKM
Elizabeth "	"	Daughter		6	"
Hetty A "	"	Daughter		4	"
Jonas "	"	Son		3	"
Jesse "	"	Son		2	"
William HUNT		F by Law	W	74	Cumnor, BRK
Ann GIBBS	Dairy maid	Servant	U	16	Oakley, BKM
1871					
Thomas SULSTON	Farmer of 157 acres	Head	M	55	Piddington, OXF
Anne "	"	Wife	M	45	Oakley, BKM
William "	Farmer's son	Son	U	20	Chilling Place, Piddington, OXF
Elizabeth Anna "	Scholar	Daughter		16	Boarstall, BKM
Hetty Amelia "	"	Daughter		14	"
Jonas "	"	Son		13	"
Jesse "	"	Son		12	"
James Andrew "	"	Son		7	"
Aubrey "	"	Son		5	"
Adeline Annie "	"	Daughter		2	"
Ernest Albert "	"	Son		1	"
William HUNT	Retired farmer	F in law	W	85	Cumnor, BRK
Mary Ann NEAL	General servant	Servant	U	20	Ickford, BKM
1881					
Anne SULSTON	Farmer of 163 acres	Head	W	54	Oakley, BKM
Hetty "	Farmer's daughter	Daughter	U	24	Boarstall, BKM
Jonas "	Farmer's son	Son	U	16	"
Aubrey "	"	Son		12	"
Addie "	Scholar	Daughter		12	"
Ernest "	"	Son		10	"
1891					
Ann SULSTON	Farmer	Head	W	64	Boarstall, BKM
Aubrey "	Manager	Son	U	24	"
Addie "	Mother's help	Daughter	U	22	"
Ernest "	Assistant	Son	U	21	"
Bessie "		Grand-daughter		5	Bicester, OXF

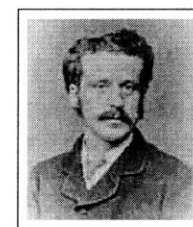
Thomas Snr



Thomas Inr



Anne



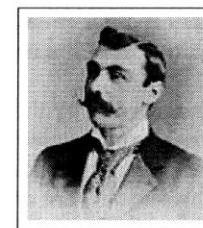
John



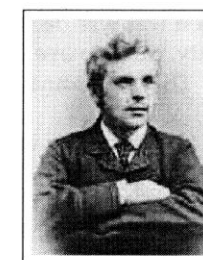
Hetty Amelia



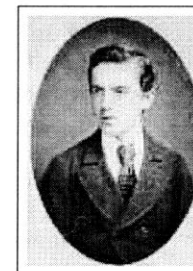
Elizabeth Hannah



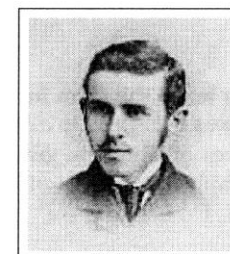
Jonas



Jesse



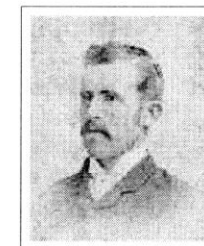
James Andrew



Ernest



Adeline Annie



Aubrey

Village Farm from 1905 to 1941

In 1905, Aubrey SULSTON married Maude Elizabeth ARNOLD in Upton-cum-Chalvey and they settled down to live at Village Farm where their four sons were born between 1907 and 1912. Maude was the schoolmistress in the village school which is to the south of Village Farm. Kelly's directory of 1911 states that the school was built in 1874 for 60 children and that there was an average attendance of 40.

From 1910 to 1915, the government ordered a comprehensive survey of all land in the UK. Ownership and useage were recorded in detailed field notebooks and large scale maps were drawn up to show individual ownership of fields. The intention was to levy land tax, but the first world war intervened. In 1913, the Valuation Survey records that 163 acres were occupied by Aubrey and Ernest Sulstone who paid an annual rent of £209 11s to the landowner, Sir Lancelot Aubrey-Fletcher. The map shows that Village Farm and its fields are only slightly different from the holdings in 1850. Upper Hill has been transferred to the READ family at Muswell Hill Farm and the Holt's Farm field adjacent to Long Mead is now part of Village Farm.

The four sons of Aubrey and Maude SULSTON were Ted, Ron, Archie and Jack and they grew up together on Village Farm. Frequent visitors and playmates were their cousins George and Winifred, the children of Margie and Sam JOHNSON. Margie was Maude's sister and lived at Bushey Cottage in Stoke Mandeville, with their mother Eliza ARNOLD. When Ted went to Aylesbury Grammar School in 1918, he spent the term time with his aunt and returned to Boarstall for the holidays. Life was hard during the depression of the 1920's and then in 1925, Jack died of diphtheria at the age of 13. He was Archie's twin brother and it was a terrible loss for the family. His grave is in the churchyard at Boarstall. In 1928 there was a happier event - Winifred and George's brother was born and Don remembers happy times on the farm as he was growing up. When war was declared in 1939, Archie served in the RAF and Ted was a chaplain in the Army. Archie's wife, Betty, came to live with her mother-in-law. Ron stayed on the farm to help his father with the essential task of food production. They had some assistance from the neighbouring farm, but there was a severe shortage of adult labour.



The final chapter of the farm is recorded by the National Farm Survey of 1941 to 1943. At this stage of the war, Britain was faced with a desperate need to increase home food supplies. All farms were assessed and placed in three categories according to their productivity. If farms were performing below standard, they could be taken away from their tenants and handed over to neighbouring farmers. In 1941 Aubrey SULSTON was the occupier tenant of 162 acres of Laurel Farm (previously Village Farm), with an annual rent of £200 per annum. The farm received the middle classification of B in September 1941. The reason given for this rating was the infirmity of Aubrey and in October he died and was laid to rest in the churchyard at Boarstall. Shortly afterwards, the farm was handed over to the READ family of the adjacent farm and this was the end of the 150 year association of the HUNT and SULSTON families with Village Farm.

Postscript

When Maude SULSTON had to leave the farm in Boarstall, she went to live in Oxford (with Betty) before moving to be with her sister. After the war, Maude and Margie & Sam settled in Lewes in Sussex in adjacent houses. Archie & Betty lived in Oxford, Ted & Muriel in Rickmansworth (Herts) and Ron & Terry in Hilmarton (Wilts). In the due procees of time, six grandchildren were presented to Maude plus her great-niece, Felicity, who lived next door. The current generation of SULSTON cousins has happy memories of family gatherings in Houndean Rise in Lewes, surrounded by lavender bushes and overlooking the beautiful South Downs.

SULSTON graves in the churchyard of St James, Boarstall

Thomas SULSTON who died May 13th 1873 aged 61 years
Ann SULSTON, his wife, who died January 14th 1903 aged 76

Children of Thomas and Ann who died in infancy

Annie SULSTON who died November 20th 1857 aged 3 years and 9 mths
Andrew SULSTON who died November 23rd 1860 aged 10 mths
Septimus SULSTON who died December 3rd 1865 aged 4 years and 8 mths

Children of Thomas and Ann who died as adults (and spouses)

Ernest Albert SULSTON who died January 11th 1930
Adeline Annie SULSTON who died December 28th 1948
Aubrey SULSTON who died October 17th 1941 aged 76 years
Maude Elizabeth SULSTON, his wife, who died October 16th 1958

Grandchildren of Thomas and Ann (and spouses)

Jack Albert SULSTON who died August 10th 1925 aged 13 years
Archibald William SULSTON who died December 24th 1986
Margaret Betty SULSTON, his wife, who died October 22nd 1994

