

The Holmes Family And Cherry Tree Farm

The Holmes family has been in the village since about 1700. The first record is of Nicholas, who married Elizabeth Pearson of Baslow in 1705. He may well have come from elsewhere and stay in the village after he married.

Subsequently the record of births show that four men called Holmes had children born in the 1730s – all likely to be sons of Nicholas though there is no confirmation. The family of one of these men, Robert can be followed as shown in the family tree.

Robert b1746, John b1775, Charles b1829, James b1870.

Tax returns in the late 1700s show that their income was about average for the village. The only fact that stands out is that John was one of the very few villagers who owned agricultural land in Baslow in the 1800s. It was only a small field off Over Lane, and was later sold to the lord of the Manor, the Duke of Rutland.

They were a family of small farmers, though earlier members could well have had an additional trade or occupation. The Tithe Award 1848 shows that John farmed seven fields, just over 10 acres in total, based on Cherry Tree Farm (the name is fairly recent). It is likely that this was the family home from the start.

Cherry Tree Farmhouse is situated immediately behind (north of) the present village Spar shop. The house appears on a map dated 1799 – the earliest definite date for the building. By then it may well have been one or even two centuries old. Later maps show that it was slowly enlarged, recently including a small structure west of the main building. This was a separate dwelling house in 1848

In 1920 the Duke of Rutland sold all his land in the village. The schedule shows that before the sale the farm was exactly the same as it had been in 1848, with the addition of one small field. I don't know who bought the land and farmhouse, possibly James Holmes himself. In any case the farm remained a going concern. In the 1939 census James and his wife, both aged 68 were living in Cheery Tree Farm. He is described as a dairy farmer. He left some time after this date.

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June 2020