

A few more facts about Mere .

Mere was the freehold estate of Wm. Colgrave .[White's Directory 1856]

Then it was occupied by Wm. Mackinder , leased for £1350 per annum plus a yearly tithe of £280 to Wm. Colgrave .

At that time Thomas Pears lived at East Mere House .

Mr. Roland Ellis Dean purchased Mere Hall and 742 acres in 1904 , the farm bailiff at that time was T. Wyles . Much of this was latter requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence to extend Waddington airfield .

In 1922 Mere was valued at £18,000 or £24.3 per acre .

Valuation in 1928 was £12,280 or £16.64 per acre .

In 1938 Mr. Roland Dean died and his widow , Mrs. Agnes Dean took over the estate , she farmed in partnership with her son Patrick .Mrs .Dean was actively involved in village affairs in Branston during her time at the Mere .

They bought East Mere and 600 acres in 1939 for £26. per acre .

In 1949 this was valued at £40 per acre .

Over the years the estate has been enlarged to about 2000 acres .
Today's [1999] value is approximately £3000 per acre .

Patrick Dean was now farming on his own .

The original lake at Mere was deepened for irrigation purposes in 1961 and two more lakes were dug at the same time . The fourth lake , filled by pump in the winter months was built in 1983 .

In an inventory of 1928 the farm had 22 horses
81 head of cattle
159 sheep
35 pigs

Produce and stores contained Mangolds, barley, oats, fleeces, sugar beet, wheat, potatoes and peas.

Total value £7139. 17s 0p .

1924 Weekly agricultural male wage was over 21yrs 36s 6d
14yr old 9s 7d
Female 5d per hour .

At the time Mr. John Pears was at East Mere House the Dean's lived at Dowsby from there they sold a Lincs. Longwool ram for 1000gns which was exported to Buenos Aires .

During WW11 Mere Hall was occupied by the Home Guard and East Mere House was used by the Women's Land Army and the WRAF .

There is a small Chapel above the stables at Mere Hall and regular services were held there , which were run by a lay reader from Branston . These were held weekly 1915 - 1918, then they became fortnightly until 1939, and then the services became monthly till 1960 . There was also a thriving Sunday School when the services were regularly held . Today there is only a service at Harvest time.

The two rows of cottages that can now be seen at both Mere and East Mere were not there originally . The farm yard to Mere Hall was to be found behind the Hall and the cottages for the workers were below the Shepherd's cottage where remains of an old well can be seen . These were in a row each with their own pig sty . There were some more cottages in this vicinity which had been removed earlier . Stone , it is said from these cottages was used in the building of the stone cottages on the roadside . The red brick cottages were built at the turn of the century [1890 - 1910 ?]

The pair of cottages opposite the farm entrance to East Mere Yard housed the single men's quarters .

Sheps was as the name suggests the house of the shepherd and his cottage linked to the barn and was surrounded by a cobbled walled yard . Still standing is his stable where his pony was housed .

Over the years many trees have been planted on the estate to make it more attractive and to provide cover for the birds . The hedges are well maintained and very few have been removed .

In 1999 the estate employs 32 people. But of these only 6 are employed directly on the land .

Pauline Hemington November 1999.

Cropping

1924	Barley	151acres
	Wheat	155acres
	Peas	24acres
	Potatoes	61acres
	Roots	94acres
	Seeds	186acres
	Permanent Grass	29acres

Tried mustard in 1930	49acres
Did not grow beet until 1941	25acres
Tried flax in 1942	20acres
Oats in 1942	28acres

Approx. 100acres were left fallow each year .

1950	Barley	288a	
	Wheat	173a	
	Oats	49a	
	Peas	63a	
	Potatoes	100a	
	Beet	103a	
	Roots	33a	Turnips, swedes, kale, mangolds
	Seeds	128a	
	Misc. Veg	20a	Savoys, mustard , brussels

Year 1999

Barley	193a
Wheat	665a
Oats	-----
Peas	304a
Potatoes	193a
Sugar Beet	432a
Roots	-----
Seeds	-----
Misc. Veg	-----
Perm. Pasture	24a
Set aside	89a

Also have a herd of Pigs

750 Sows and progeny .

PSH 1999