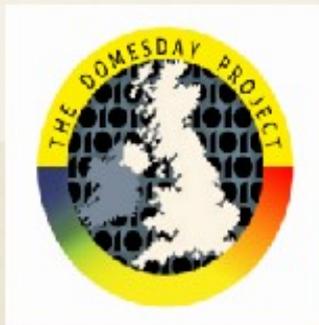


**MARWOOD NORTH & MARWOOD SOUTH 1986**



### The Story of the Domesday Project

In 1986, 900 years after William the Conqueror's original Domesday Book, the BBC published the Domesday Project. The project was probably the most ambitious attempt ever to capture the essence of life in the United Kingdom. Over a million people contributed to this digital snapshot of the country.

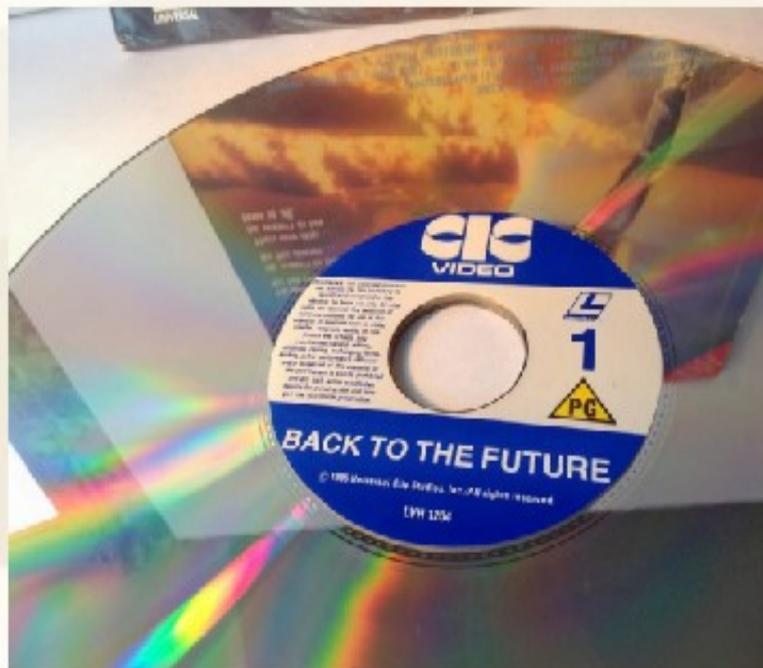
People were asked to record what they thought would be of interest in another 1000 years.

The whole of the UK – including the Channel Islands and Isle of Man – was divided into 23,000 4x3km areas called Domesday Squares or 'D-Blocks'.

Schools and community groups surveyed over 108,000 square km of the UK and submitted more than 147,819 pages of text articles and 23,225 amateur photos, cataloguing what it was like to live, work and play in their community.

Here in Marwood, in 1985, like so many other schools in Britain, we took on 2 of the Domesday Squares, which were actually oblongs! We had a new BBC computer in the classroom and we wanted to be part of a survey, documenting everyday life - the ordinary rather than the extraordinary. A pack was delivered with instructions on how to conduct the survey and a disc to put the information on. We diligently looked at the Ordnance Survey maps and used our own local knowledge to fill in the information about each of the 12 smaller kilometre squares within our two larger oblongs.. How different those surveys would have been across the communities in Britain.

This project used the cutting-edge technology at the time



The data was eventually presented on a special type of Laser-Disc, read by a BBC master computer and navigated using an innovative tracker-ball pointing system.

But the technology didn't catch on and the computers became very expensive for schools and libraries to buy. Very few people ever got to see all their hard work and the work of others across the UK.

As time went on there were fears that the discs would become unreadable, as computers capable of reading the format had become rare and drives capable of accessing the discs even rarer.

**BBC** News | Sport | Weather | Player | TV | Radio | More | Search the BBC

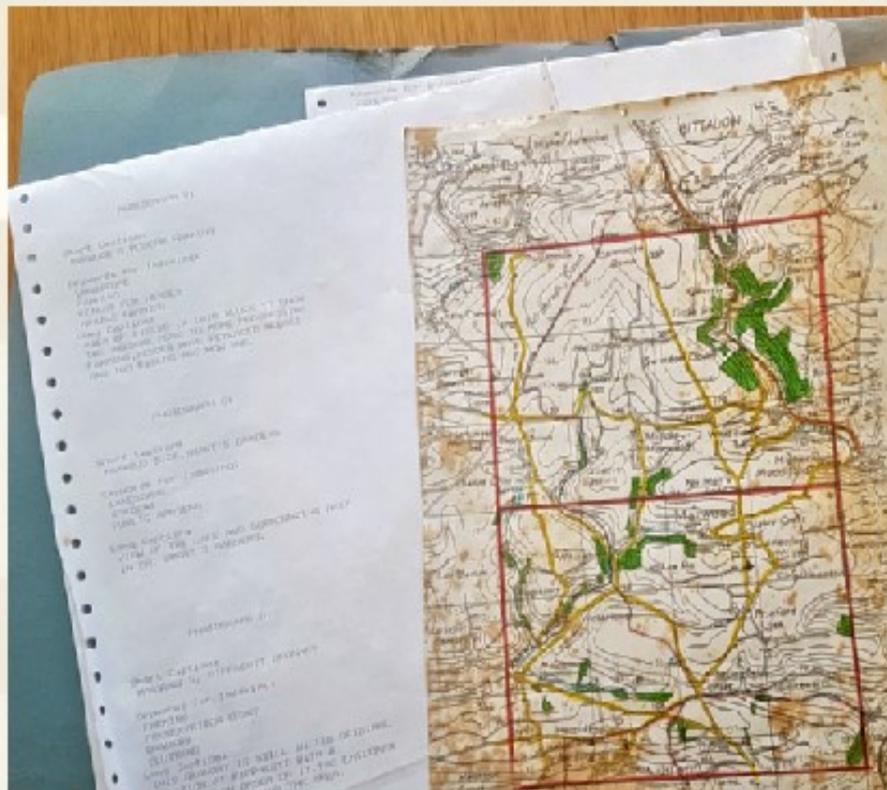
## DOMESDAY RELOADED

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D-block GB-252000-135000  Map of the area  
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<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120314075759/http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/domesday/dblock/GB-252000-135000/page/13>

For 35 years the map and printouts of the Marwood School children's efforts have sat in a cupboard at home. Several times I have re-read some of the 'snapshots' of ordinary life in the 1980s. I have been fascinated by the details I had forgotten! With an Exhibition of Marwood Past and Present in the Parish, in August 2021, this was an ideal time to bring it out of the cupboard to share.



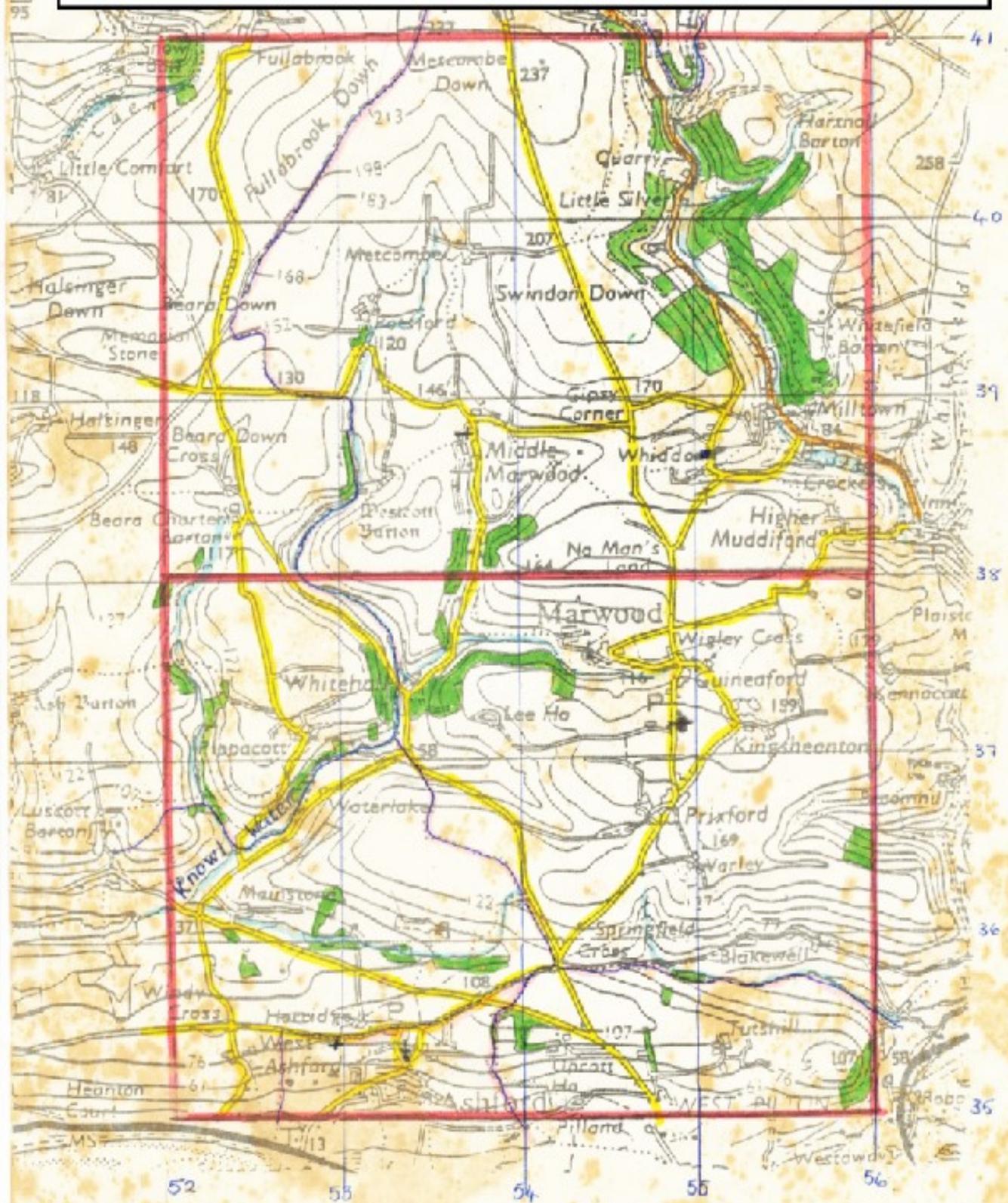
### Worth Doing

The Domesday project has been much loved over the years and behind the scenes enthusiasts, both amateur and professional, attempted and succeeded in rescuing the Domesday data. This is still available on a very simple BBC archived website (see left), where they have left all the original data for the D-Blocks, written mostly by children, intact.

When compiling this book I could take screenshots of the Marwood survey, upload photos and research any aspect needed on the internet. I could manipulate the information to produce this book and the PDF on our Marwood Matters Website, at home. Unimaginable to me, 35 years ago.

# THE DOMESDAY PROJECT

We read the maps, went out into the parish, took photographs, made decisions and recorded our findings on the computer.



## KEY

B' Road

Woodland

River or Stream

C' Road

Parish Boundary (Every parish has its own church)



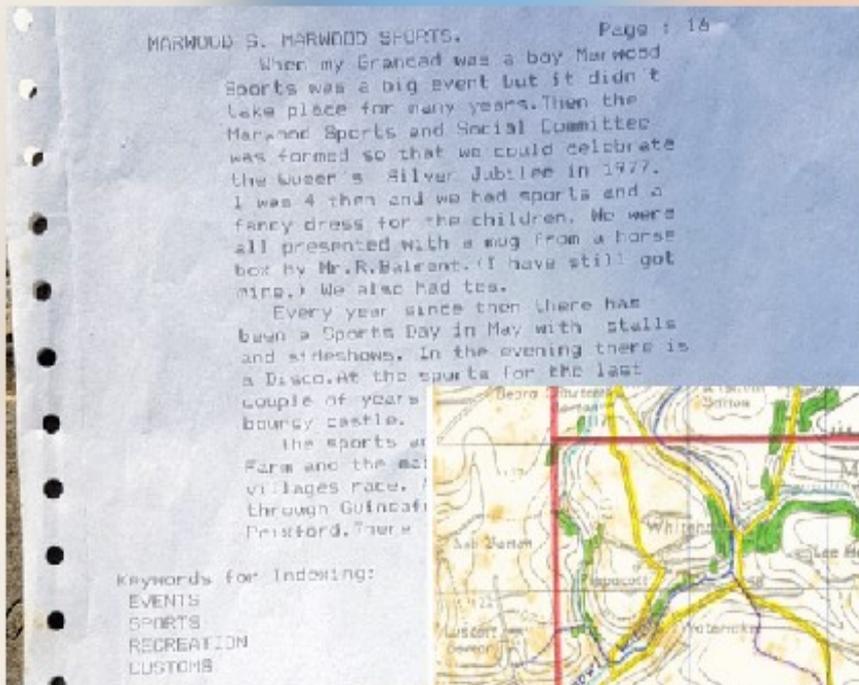
**We could only choose 3 photos to represent our area and we chose 'Sports Day', 'Narrow Lanes', and 'Metcombe Down' for Marwood North. The whole landscape was so green!**



**In Marwood South we chose 'Modern Farming' with fencing instead of hedging, 'Dr Smart's Gardens' and the 'View from the Church Tower'. Would we choose the same today to represent the whole area?**



Some of us are on this photo and are listed on the credits, some were too young and some had already left for secondary school the previous year.



We divided the tasks, took turns to write up the information on our computer and listed key words for indexing on the final national version.



ITEM COUNTS

Squares are numbered: 1 2 3 4  
5 6 7 8  
9 10 11 12

| Item   | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | number entered |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------------|
| Primary Major Land-Cover Category              | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 01 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 12             |
| Secondary Major Land-Cover Category            | 14 | 01 | 01 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 11 |    |    | 4              |
| Tertiary Major Land-Cover Category             |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Primary and Middle Schools                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Secondary Schools and Sixth Form               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Colleges of Further Education and Polytechnics |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Universities                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Private Schools                                |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| DHSS Benefit Offices                           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Job Centres                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| NHS General Hospitals                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| NHS Small Hospitals                            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Private Hospitals                              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Nursing and Old People's Homes                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Doctors' Surgeries and Medical Centres         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Dentists' Surgeries                            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Post Offices                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 01 |    |    | 1              |
| Take-away Hot Food Shops                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Food Shops and Supermarkets                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Non Food Shops and Department Stores           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Open Markets                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Hypermarkets                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| DIY Stores                                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Agricultural Suppliers                         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Garden Centres                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 01 |    |    |    | 1              |
| Cattle Markets                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Garages with servicing                         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Petrol Filling Stations                        |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Banks  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Building Society Offices                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Private Sports Club Grounds or Facilities      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Commercial Sports Stadiums or Grounds          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Public Swimming Pools                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Indoor Sports Centres                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Public Playing Fields                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Public Parks and Open Spaces                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Waterparks Centres                             |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Cinemas  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Theatres and Concert Halls                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| bingo Halls                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Betting Shops                                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Amusement Arcades                              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Dance Halls, Discos and Night Clubs            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Wine Bars                                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Restaurants                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Snack Bars                                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 01 |    |    |    | 1              |
| Pubs, Inns, Bars and Hotels                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Clubs (Working Mens' or similar)               |    |    |    | 02 |    |    |    |    |    | 01 | 01 |    | 3              |
| Churches, Chapels and other places of worship  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Libraries                                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Museums and Art Galleries                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Historic Buildings (open to public)            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Country Parks                                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Chemical Works and Oil Refineries              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Power Stations                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Sewage Works                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Abattoirs                                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Metal Manufacturing Works                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Paper and Board Manufacturing Works            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Breweries                                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Brickworks, Cement Works                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Collieries, Open Cast Mines, Quarries          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| BR Stations                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Other Railway Stations                         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Bus Stations                                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 0              |
| Bus Services                                   |    |    |    |    | 01 |    |    |    | 01 |    |    | 01 | 3              |

Filling in a questionnaire on the computer was new territory and the variety of items listed were just not in our D Blocks! Marwood North and Marwood South were each divided into 12 kilometre squares and we filled in the land use. Now we really knew why our photos were so green. Marwood North and South just didn't have indoor swimming pools, hospitals or universities, but other areas did!

# DOMESDAY RELOADED

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## D-block GB-252000-138000



1986

### MARWOOD N. "THE LANES".

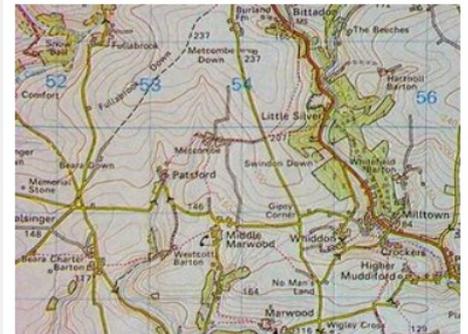
SLIDE TO SHOW THE CHARACTERISTIC LANES WITH THEIR HIGH HEDGES AND PASSING PLACES.



## Map of the area

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Ordnance Survey 100039117

1986 2011



Go: North | West | South | East

## Pictures from this D-block

|                                 |                                |                               |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                 |                                |                               |
| MARWOOD N. GENERAL VIEW. - 1986 | MARWOOD N. "THE LANES". - 1986 | MARWOOD N. SPORTS DAY. - 1986 |

## Written accounts from this D-block

|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Marwood N. General           | Marwood N. Housing           |
| Marwood N. Transport         | Marwood N. Hedgerows & Lanes |
| Marwood N. Birdwatch         | Marwood N. Industry General  |
| Marwood N. Microfilm Centre. | Marwood N. Farming General   |
| Marwood N. Westcott Barton   | Marwood N. "my Day"          |
| Marwood N. A Council Farm    | Marwood N. The School Today  |
| Marwood N. School 50 Yrs.ago | Marwood N. School Dinners    |
| Marwood N. School Playtimes  | Marwood N. The "church"      |
| Marwood N. School Outings.   | Marwood N. Leisure           |
| Marwood N. Attitudes         | Marwood N. Credits           |

## Search the Domesday Site

Type place/postcode

Place Content

## What is Domesday?

### What is Domesday?

In 1986 the BBC launched an ambitious project to record a snapshot of everyday life across the UK for future generations. A million volunteers took part... [read more here](#)

In 2011 the BBC published the survey online and for six months invited updates to the photographs and text to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Shortly afterwards the website was added to The National Archives' UK Government Web Archive.

If you are reading this via UK Government Web Archive, then the original Domesday search function and contact form will not work. This is a consequence of the archiving process. See [Using Domesday](#) for more details.

1986

## MARWOOD N. GENERAL

This block of the Domesday Survey is mostly hilly farmland. There is some forestry commission woodland which is a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees. Most of the area is grassland for sheep and cattle. The fields and lanes are surrounded by high hedges which are alive with wildlife. The population is very low with individual houses dotted all over the area. Only MIDDLE MARWOOD and MILLTOWN can be considered villages. There are no shops, pavements, pubs or a regular bus service but there is the local village primary school which is situated in the block. Apart from farming there is only the microfilm centre, a small amount of building and agricultural machinery repairs as far as employment and industry are concerned.

1986

## MARWOOD N. BIRDWATCH

In May we had a birdwatch for our Domesday Project. Both Stephen's and my house are in the Colam valley, so they are relatively close together. These are the types of birds we saw:

- Crow.
- Woodpecker.
- Chaffinch.
- Great Tit.
- Blue Tit.
- Wood Pigeon.
- Robin.
- Sparrow Hawk.
- Heron.
- Magpie.
- House Martin.
- Blackbird.
- Green Finch.
- Gold Finch.

1986

## MARWOOD N. TRANSPORT

There are only two roads in this area which have a single lane for each direction of traffic. They are busy between 8.15am\_9am and 4.30\_6pm, when people travel through the area on their way to work.

45 vehicles passed through Milltown between 8.40 and 8.55am on 4.7.85. on their way towards Barnstaple.

20 vehicles went in the other direction.

All the other roads are very narrow and winding with passing places and poor visibility. There are no general bus services or other public transport other than the school buses so cars are essential and nearly every family has at least one if not two.

1986

## MARWOOD N. MICROFILM CENTRE.

The Wessex Microfilm Centre is the largest individual employer in the block.

Microfilm is a copy of something made a lot smaller and put on rolls of transparent film.

The centre, on Muddiford Hill employs 12 people at the moment. In the 17 years that the firm has been here Mr. Spink reckons that they have copied 50,000,000 documents or pages of newspaper and used 450 miles of film which is as far as London and back.

The average cost of 100 exposures on a film is £10.

All the newspapers in the S.W. are microfilmed here for libraries to keep a copy. Solicitors, engineering firms, local authorities, together with the library service are the main users of this facility.

1986

## MARWOOD N. WESTCOTT BARTON

Westcott Barton is mentioned in the original Domesday Book of 1086. The farmhouse which stands today was built later, but there is still a preservation order on it and the other farm buildings.

Mr. & Mrs. May farm 270 acres and have farmed this land for 25 years. They keep 55 beef cattle and at the moment have 300 ewes and 300 lambs. They make hay and grow nearly 100 acres of barley. Each field covers between 15 and 20 acres. Two people help on the farm and they use extra labour at harvest time.

We chose this farm because it was mentioned in the first Domesday Book and it is interesting to see how it has changed.

1986

## MARWOOD N. A COUNCIL FARM

Some of the farms around our block are owned by Devon County Council and are rented out to tenants.

We went to Over Crockers farm which is rented to Mr. and Mrs. Briggs and their young family. They have lived there for 3 years. Their farm is a starter farm and they were selected from over 100 couples by a series of interviews.

They rent 77 acres and have 26 acres of their own. They have 70 cows and 20-30 sheep. They make mainly silage and a little hay.

They grow swedes for fodder and potatoes to sell. They don't employ anyone else full-time but they do have extra help for hedging and silage making.

This farm must be kept as a dairy farm and they pay £46 an acre per year in rent.

1986

## MARWOOD N. SCHOOL PLAYTIMES

Our playground at school is not one big one but three tarmaced areas and two lawns. As there are only about seventy-five children in the school, we are allowed all sorts of equipment from the P.E. shed at breaktime.

We play tennis, bat and ball against the wall, mixed football and netball. Children often skip and play with the hoops. They also play tig and imaginary games.

We've got climbing frames on the grass and parallel bars. The infants have got a rope ladder, barrels and a slide on the front lawn. Just this week Mr. Brooks our head teacher has put up a death slide for us.

We also have a computer to use and comics to read during playtime.

1986

## MARWOOD N. SCHOOL 50 YRS.AGO

50 years ago our school catered for everyone in this block and they spent all their school days here from 5-14. They walked to school from their houses.

There wasn't any electricity and the school was heated by coal fires with guards around them.

The headmaster Mr. Pill had a very tall desk which he could stand at and the children had sloping desks. They wrote with dip pens.

The children brought their own dinners to school and ate them in the classroom. The teachers were very strict and children got the cane if they were naughty.

There weren't any school trips, outings or school plays like we have today. If they were lucky they had a chapter of Charles Dickens' novel a "Christmas Carol".

1986

## MARWOOD N. SCHOOL OUTINGS.

We are very lucky at our school because we go out on lots of trips and outings.

This term we have had three trips out in connection with the Domesday survey and have been to London for 4 days with Shirwell, Berrynarbour and Goodliegh schools.

We have just come back from a weekend camp under canvas in Kentisbury's school field.

We had to put up and take down our own tents and they were inspected twice a day. We enjoyed the rock climbing and making dams at Heddon's Mouth.

Next week Mr. Breeds the warden of Braunton Burrows is coming to talk to us and on Wednesday the whole school will go for the day to the Burrows and take a packed lunch and have a swim in the sea if it is warm enough.

1986

## MARWOOD N. ATTITUDES

People live in this area because they choose to. They generally prefer the space and the peace of the countryside together with the community life, even though they may work in Barnstaple or elsewhere.

The general attitude is not to change things. They like life the way it is. They like the hedgerows and the winding lanes however impractical they are. Conservation is carried out where possible. Replacing hedges for fences and removing trees and hedges to make fields larger and more economic, in the name of progress is not generally appreciated by the community at large.

1986

## MARWOOD N. HOUSING

There are only two villages in the block, Milltown and Middle Marwood, each made up of about 25 houses, all very individual and with a garden. Small groups of houses (1-10) are dotted about the area.

Most of these houses are detached dwellings. They are generally in a very good state of repair and although they may be very old most have modern amenities. However many people still have their own water supply and septic tank. Unless you have your own cylinders there is no mains gas. Nearly every house uses its chimney and although electricity and oil are used for cooking wood burners and open fires are used a great deal for heating the home.

1986

## MARWOOD N. HEDGEROWS & LANES

When we went for a walk along the lanes at the end of June we found the following wild flowers in the hedgerows;

Birdsfoot Trefoil, Bugle, Buttercup, Cinquefoil, Clover, Cow Parsley, Cuckoo Flower, Daisy, Dandelion, Deadly Night Shade, Dogrose, Foxglove, Gorse, Goosegrass, Honeysuckle, Greater Stitchwort, Herb Bennet, Herb Robert, Hogweed, Ivy, Knotgrass, Lesser Stitchwort, Mayweed, Nipplewort, Orpine, Ox-eye Daisy, Periwinkle, Pennywort, Plantain, Poppy, Purslane, Rape, Red Campion, Rosebay Willowherb, Rough Cheril, Seamilkwort, Self-heal, Shepherd's Purse, Smooth Hawkesbeard, Soapwort, Speedwell, Thrift, Thistle, Toadflax, Tufted Vetch, White Campion, Wild Chamomile, Wild Strawberry, Woundwort, Yarrow.

1986

## MARWOOD N. INDUSTRY GENERAL

The main industry in this area is farming. Most of this is very mixed and no one relies on just one crop or animal.

The microfilm centre is the largest employer.

There are several self-employed builders and one employs at least three other men. However this is all small scale; repairs, extensions conversions, with the occasional new building.

There are three agricultural machine and car workshops.

Mr. Smith operates an earth moving plant business from Milltown.

Little Silver Quarry, (small amounts of silver were found) has been closed for several years, but recently test blasting has been carried out again. It supplied chippings but now there is only the Readymix concrete works there

1986

## MARWOOD N. FARMING GENERAL

Farming in our area is very mixed. There are dairy farms with sheep, bullocks and also a corn harvest. Although most of the land is grassland more and more corn crops are being grown. Fields vary from 1 or 2 acres to 35.

Mr. Pugsley's farm at Whitefield was mentioned in Domesday and is one of the largest with 520 acres. At the moment there are 900 sheep, 600 lambs and 120 cattle. They grow barley and make silage and hay, employing 4 people in all.

In the Domesday entry of 1086, 2 Men At Arms held Whitefield from Robert and there were 3 slaves, 4 villagers and 7 smallholders living there. Woodland as now was noted as well as meadow and pasture. 100 sheep were counted as were 5 cattle, 3 pigs, and 10 goats. It was valued at 30s.

1986

## MARWOOD N. "MY DAY"

I live on a 300 acre dairy and sheep farm. We have 138 milking cows, 150 heifers, 300 breeding ewes and 2 horses at the moment. We only grow about 20 acres of root crops for fodder.

I get up at 6.30am, get dressed and have a drink of milk and a bun with butter on. Then I go to help milk the cows. After that I get changed, have another drink and walk to school.

I arrive at school early and have a game of football before lessons.

Every day we read, do English and Maths. Sometimes we do Art, Singing, Topic, and watching TV. I have my dinner at school and go home at 3pm.

When I get home I get myself a packet of crisps and a drink and then play on the computer or watch TV until tea. After that I often do a Jigsaw before a bath and bed at 8 o'clock.

1986

## MARWOOD N. THE SCHOOL TODAY

Our school, MARWOOD C.P. SCHOOL, was built about 110 years ago. One of the unusual things about it is we actually ring a hand bell for the start of school and the end of playtime. There are about 75 children in 3 classes. Mr. Brooks is the headmaster.

In our class there are 27, 8-11 year olds and the infants are in the same school. The windows are high which is typical of Victorian times partly so that children wouldn't be distracted by things going on outside the classroom.

Our school has not got a uniform but there are T-shirts and sweat shirts with the school emblem on them.

Our classrooms have high ceilings and they get very cold in winter. The toilets also can freeze and sometimes the school closes in snowy weather.

1986

### MARWOOD N. SCHOOL DINNERS

Our dinners at Marwood are cooked in the school kitchens. Nobody goes home for dinner and only 5 children bring packed lunches, so our cook and assistant prepare about 70 meals a day.

There is a choice each day. The following are the two menus most enjoyed over the past 2 weeks.

MENU 1. Sausages or beefburgers, chips or breadroll, spaghetti or salad. Milk shake, chocolate biscuits, yoghurt or coconut shortcake.

MENU 2. Steak and kidney pie or beefburgers, roast potatoes or wholemeal roll, cabbage and gravy or salad. Meringues, jelly and fruit, yoghurt or fresh fruit.

1986

### MARWOOD N. THE "CHURCH"

This block has no Parish Church, only the little chapel at Middle Marwood. However the Reverend Cranston lives in Middle Marwood and he is the non-stipendary vicar for MARWOOD. Previously he had been a research scientist for B.P. With a company pension he was able to offer his services to the Bishop of Exeter who decided that MARWOOD needed him most. He spends time home visiting preparing for sermons and talks. I asked him what he was most pleased that he had been able to achieve and he said, "Sunday congregations have risen from 10-50 and I'm pleased I am working with the other chapels within MARWOOD parish. We run two youth groups (Adventurers and Teenagers), a house fellowship and joint services together.

1986

### MARWOOD N. LEISURE

People in this area tend to either work for themselves on the land or elsewhere and have large gardens, so much of their time is spent in this way.

Apart from the Working Men's Club at Milltown which is not used at the moment because it needs a lot of repairs and alterations done to it, and the small Plymouth Brethren Chapel at Middle Marwood there are no other public buildings for leisure.

People enjoy gardening, TV and following hobbies in their own homes.

If they want to play badminton or go for a swim they have to go out of the area. Children like to ride their ponies and bikes. Some people like to go hunting while others prefer to go for a walk, camping or on the beach.

Adventurers and Teenagers the church youth group meet here sometimes

1986

### MARWOOD N. CREDITS

The following children of Marwood School have contributed to this Domesday Project:

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| TANYA CROFT         | SIMON FORD       |
| WAYNE BLIGHT        | HELEN BLIGHT     |
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| ZYAN SANSOM         | CAROLYN EDWARDS  |
| CLAIRE PETHERBRIDGE | DUNCAN HARTLEY   |
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# DOMESDAY RELOADED

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## D-block GB-252000-135000



1986

### MARWOOD S.DR.SMART'S GARDENS

VIEW OF THE LAKE AND SURROUNDING AREA IN DR. SMART'S GARDENS.



## Map of the area

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Ordnance Survey 100039117

1986 2011



Go: North | West | South | East

### Pictures from this D-block



MARWOOD S.GENERAL VIEW - 1986

MARWOOD S.MODERN FARMING - 1986

MARWOOD S.DR.SMART'S GARDENS - 1986

### Written accounts from this D-block

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Marwood S. General          | Marwood S. Housing          |
| Marwood S. Transport        | Marwood S. Lanes And Hedges |
| Marwood S. Birdwatch        | Marwood S. Employment       |
| Marwood S. Progressive Farm | Marwood S. Garden Centre    |
| Marwood S. Pleasure Gardens | Marwood S. "our Milkman".   |
| Marwood S. The Parishes     | Marwood S. The Church Hall  |
| Marwood S. Leisure          | Marwood S. Food And Tourism |
| Marwood S. A Sunday Menu    | Marwood S. Marwood Sports.  |
| Marwood S. A Typical Family | Marwood S. A Typical Day    |
| Marwood S. Attitudes        | Marwood S. Credits          |

## Search the Domesday Site

Type place/postcode 🔍

Place  Content

## What is Domesday?

### What is Domesday?

In 1986 the BBC launched an ambitious project to record a snapshot of everyday life across the UK for future generations. A million volunteers took part... [read more here](#)

In 2011 the BBC published the survey online and for six months invited updates to the photographs and text to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Shortly afterwards the website was added to The National Archives' UK Government Web Archive.

If you are reading this via UK Government Web Archive, then the original Domesday search function and contact form will not work. This is a consequence of the archiving process. See [Using Domesday](#) for more details.

1986

## MARWOOD S. GENERAL

The block covered in this survey is basically farmland with a few scattered villages. Most of the land is covered in grass which is used for sheep or cows. Nearly all the fields are surrounded by hedges as are the many small lanes which are only wide enough to take one car.

The villages and hamlets are very small and most of the people work in Barnstaple or further afield. Almost all the houses are very individual with large gardens.

There are very few amenities only one bus service, one post office and one pub. The churches and church hall serve as general meeting places for clubs and organisations. Apart from building, converting and repairing, industry other farming is non-existent.

1986

## MARWOOD S. PLEASURE GARDENS

Dr. Smart's Gardens bring 25\_30,000 visitors to Marwood each year.

The gardens have extended from a hobby and 2 acres of ground to 12 acres and employing 3 people to look after the gardens.

The gardens were presented on T.V. several years ago and this is why so many people come to visit. It is famous for its camellias and its large bog garden.

There is a small shop where they sell plants.

We liked the pond with the huge golden orf and carp in, also the baby moorhens. We also liked seeing the giant rhubarb, roses, the trees around the pond and the robin tap.

1986

## MARWOOD S. BIRDWATCH

We live at Marwood Hill. My dad rings birds in our garden and others around the area.

The two birds my dad has found most interesting recently are the Long Tailed Tit and the Gold Crest.

I did a 10 minute birdwatch from the kitchen window in May and this is what I saw in the garden.

A chaffinch in a tree then on our bird table. A robin in the rabbit hutch, a crow in a beech tree, and a great tit by a nesting box. I also saw a blue tit flying, 5 swallows overhead, a blackbird walking on the lawn, and another great tit perched in a tree. As well as these birds I also saw 4 birds I didn't know the names of.

1986

## MARWOOD S. PROGRESSIVE FARM

Hewish farm is one of the largest farms in the area. It has 334 acres and Mr. Chugg has been farming here since 1963 gradually adding to the land.

He keeps about 260 sheep and this year has 274 acres of corn. The size of his fields vary from 4\_37 acres.

Only one person works on the farm all year but he has others in for haymaking, combining, spraying and hedging.

Mr. Chugg has made several of his fields larger by cutting down hedges and replacing some with fences making for more use of his land.

His farmland is very intensively used in comparison with other parts of the block, especially the area around Pippacott.

1986

## MARWOOD S. THE PARISHES

There are two main parishes in this area, Marwood and Ashford. Marwood church is much larger with a tower and Ashford is very small and with a spire.

At Marwood church we walked up 106 steps to the top of the tower and had a good view of Dr. Smart's Gardens. The coat of arms on the wall had just been newly painted. The choir seats were miserichords and if you fell asleep they crashed down with a loud bang! There were at least 60 bright new kneelers in the church which had been made by people in the parish. At the back of the church there is a closed area for little children to play during the service.

At Ashford church we noticed most the anchor gravestone.

1986

## MARWOOD S. "OUR MILKMAN".

Mr. Steadman is our milkman and a big part of our community life. For several old people he is perhaps their only daily link. He is also very kind to animals and brought us a baby hedgehog once as he thought we'd like it and it would be safer in our garden than on the road.

He lives on a farm at Whitehall and until about 5 years ago delivered all his own TT farm milk. Now he delivers all sorts of milk from Express Dairies. He delivers about 400 pints a day to nearly 300 houses in all. (Some he only visits every other day.) His round is about 14 miles.

Mr. Steadman occasionally has a boy to help him but apart from an illness he has done the job 7 days a week, getting up at 3am., for 25 years.

When it snows Mr. Steadman delivers the milk by tractor.

1986

## MARWOOD S. A SUNDAY MENU

Our class of 23, 8\_11 year olds democratically voted this as a favourite Sunday menu.

**BREAKFAST.** Frosties and milk.

Fresh orange juice. Egg, bacon, sausage and mushrooms. Toast and butter with Marmite or Marmalade.

**DINNER.** Roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, peas or cauliflower, parsley stuffing and gravy.

Choice of ice\_cream, cheesecake, gateaux or pancakes for sweet.

Fizzy drinks.

**TEA.** Sandwiches or toast, bread and butter with jam.

Chocolate cake. Tea or orange juice.

Fruit and ice\_cream.

**SNACKS.** Crisps, biscuits, or Maltesers.

Orange, tea, coffee, hot chocolate or Bovril.

1986

## MARWOOD S. A TYPICAL DAY

Simon my brother has got up at 7am. while I lie in bed for an extra half hour because I cycle to school and he has to catch the school bus to Braunton before me. I get dressed and eat a typical breakfast of cornflakes, tea and toast. Then I wash and clean my teeth with a toothbrush, put my coat on and ride to school. I leave home about 8.20am. At school we have playtime until the bell and then go in for register. Next we have silent reading maths then half an hour playtime. After that it's usually writing. We eat dinner at school and then play. We do art, sport and music and put up our chairs at the end of the day. I cycle home, change clothes, have a cup of tea, watch TV and go out to play.

1986

## MARWOOD S. ATTITUDES

People live in this area because they choose to .They generally prefer the space and the peace of the countryside together with the community life even though they may work in Barnstaple or elsewhere.The general attitude is not to change things.They like life the way it is.They like the hedgerows and the winding lane however impractical they are.Conservation is carried out where possible. Replacing hedges to make fields larger and more economic in the name of progress is not generally appreciated by the community at large.

1986

## MARWOOD S. LEISURE

The only public facilities for recreation and leisure are the churches, church hall and a public house. Many people come from far a way, to visit the village pub at Prixford which is called the "New Ring O'Bells".There is a darts,shove ha'penny and a skittles league there.

The church hall is used for many activities,like keep fit, clog dancing and morris dancing,whist drives, parties and discos.The churches have joined together to form Adventurers and Teenagers which do various activities and visits around the parish and elsewhere like treasure hunts, cycle rides, barbecues, swimming and indoor games.This is followed by refreshments and a short epilogue.

Children like to ride their bike, pony or watch T.V.

1986

## MARWOOD S. EMPLOYMENT

Most of the people who live in this block work in Barnstaple.The most important industry in the area is farming which in some parts is quite intensive.None of the farms are large enough to employ more than one or two extra people.}Building is the next most important industry but again there are no large firms and most builders are either self-employed and work on their own or employ 2 or 3 others.

Cars are essential for getting around and there is a self-employed mechanic in Prixford with his own workshop.There is only one post office and public house. Some families take in visitors during the summer and tourists do come to Dr.Smart's gardens and vist Marwood Church as well.

1986

## MARWOOD S. LANES AND HEDGES

The hedges on either side of the narrow lanes are up to 3 metres high in this area.

They are alive with lichens, ferns,mosses,grasses and all sorts of wild flowers.We have seen orchids growing in the hedgerows, butterflies and all sorts of imsects live there too.

While we were out one afternoon we saw a pheasant,hare, rabbit and a baby grey squirrel.

The hedges are cut late in the summer which means it is very difficult to see round bends or over the tops of hedges.Cars have to back back into passing places to pass oncoming traffic.

1986

## MARWOOD S. A TYPICAL FAMILY

There are four in my family, my Mum, Dad, my younger sister Selina and myself. We live at Marwood Hill in a cottage that was built in the 15th century as a stable and later converted into a house.

My grandparents all live out of Devon in Utterby in Lincolnshire. Both my parents are teachers. Dad teaches at Pilton Comprehensive School and Mum teaches the infants at Marwood.

My family often do a lot of walking in our spare time as we all enjoy it.

We keep chickens and get about 3 eggs a day. We have got two fish and a rabbit that runs about the garden.

My favourite programmes on TV are "Blue Peter", "Dallas", "Don't Wait Up", "Cover Up" and "Starsky and Hutch".

1986

## MARWOOD S. GARDEN CENTRE

Ashford Garden Center is situated just off the main road between Barnstaple and Braunton. It has been there 17 years and covers 2 acres of ground. It sells mainly plants but also green houses, out door wendy houses, garden sheds, fencing, tools and wheelbarrows. Garden furniture, compost, peat, fertilizers and pesticides are also sold.

The most unusual indoor plant we saw to buy was the Venus Flytrap, that closes up when touched.

Sunday is the busiest day and people tend to treat garden centre shopping as something different from weekly shopping. Roughly 30,000 people visit the centre each year and it is one of the only places in the block which employs more than a couple of people.

1986

## MARWOOD S. HOUSING

Houses in this area are in several small villages to the west and south of this block.

There are only 15 council houses and several of these are being bought by the occupier now.

Any new housing is either individual or in very small groups of 5 or 6.

Gardens are generally large and only one row of thatched terraced cottages in Prieford, which have no garages have cobbled out their front area to provide parking spaces for their cars.

Many houses are converted from farm buildings and a house name like "The Granary" or "The Tythe Barn" can be seen in this area. Houses are not numbered in this area except for the council houses, all have individual names given to them by the occupier.

1986

## MARWOOD S. FOOD AND TOURISM

Cream teas are very popular in this area. The church hall is used by the church members to provide cream teas for visitors to the gardens and to make some money for the church. Many people make their own clotted cream by heating creamy milk slowly and then leaving it to cool in the fridge overnight. You can then take the cream off which is like a crust. Cream as well as being put on fruit and cakes is also put on scones and soft rolls with jam (cut-rounds). People bake their own yeast cake and make potato cake. Some of the older people call dumplings "dough boys". There is a lot of fruit and flowers in the area so many make their own wines and non-alcoholic drinks like elderflower champagne.

1986

## MARWOOD S. TRANSPORT

There is only one bus service in this area which runs twice a week to Barnstaple. Therefore a car is essential and nearly every family has one at least.

The roads are very narrow and all have parts where you cannot pass oncoming traffic without having to back into a passing place. Visibility is very poor due to high hedges and the winding nature of the lanes.

The roads are nearly all lower than the surrounding fields partly due to the digging away and leveling in the past when the roads had no surfaces.

This is an area where even 30 m.p.h is too fast to travel.

1986

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1986

## MARWOOD S. MARWOOD SPORTS.

When my Grandad was a boy Marwood Sports was a big event but it didn't take place for many years. Then the Marwood Sports and Social Committee was formed so that we could celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977. I was 4 then and we had sports and a fancy dress for the children. We were all presented with a mug from a horse box by Mr. R. Balment. (I have still got mine.) We also had tea.

Every year since then there has been a Sports Day in May with stalls and sideshows. In the evening there is a Disco. At the sports for the last couple of years there has been a bouncy castle.

The sports are now held at Chapel Farm and the main event is the three villages race. About 40 people run through Guineaford, Kingsheanton, and Prixford. There is a winners cup.

1986

## MARWOOD S. CREDITS

The following children of Marwood School have contributed to this Domesday project;

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| ZYAN SANSON         | SIMON FORD       |
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| WILLIAM HARTLEY     | MARK FACEY       |
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| SAMANTHA BAZLEY     |                  |
| MEGAN EDWARDS       |                  |
| MARYANN FUDGE       |                  |
| SAMANTHA NOLAN      |                  |

# THE 1980s



# BACK 35 YEARS TO THE 1950s - electricity was still a novelty in Marwood, for many.



alamy stock photo



2021  
Where next and how should we best use what we have?



Were you one of the the pupils in top class in Marwood School in 1985? I would love to know whether you remember any part of this project - Please get in touch with me through the 'Contact Us' on the Marwood Matters Website.

Thank you and best wishes,  
June Tamlyn