

Furniture was piled high in the lane, everyone worked with a will, and altogether it was an exceedingly exciting time. The Bridport Fire Brigade, who had been apprised of the outbreak arrived and at once set to work in preventing further damage to adjoining property from the first there was no possibility of saving the cottages, the fire, to use the words of an onlooker "spreading like lightning".

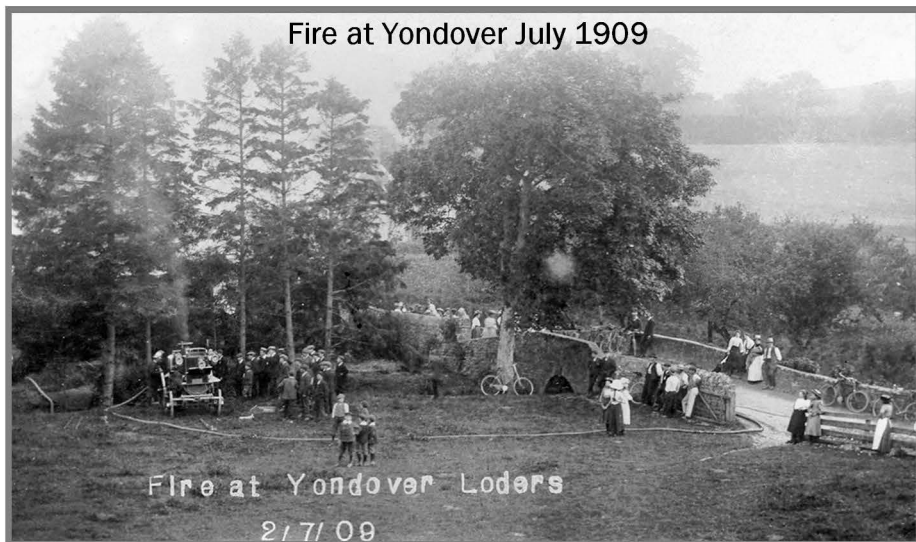
Pictures showing the Goods and Chattels stacked in Barr Lane.

All three cottages were completely burnt out, the estimated damage being in the region of £300.

Seeing there was no fire in any of the cottages at the time, it is supposed that a spark from some adjoining building must have fallen on the roof, and the thatch being dry, quickly became alight. As on the previous occasion valuable assistance was rendered by Sergeant Bown of Bridport and PC Jones.

We understand that the barn and cottages are insured.





Photograph taken from the railway embankment showing a steam driven fire engine pumping water from the Asker. The fire was on 2 July 1909 and the card was posted at 3.45pm on 8 July 1909. This card was rescued from a bonfire. The family of an old lady who has passed away were burning a lot of old papers. Mrs Peck, who lived at Myrtle Cottage, spotted the card and said, "I expect Mrs Paull (my mother) would be interested in that one!". She was and eventually passed it to me. I often wonder what other treasures were burnt on that day!



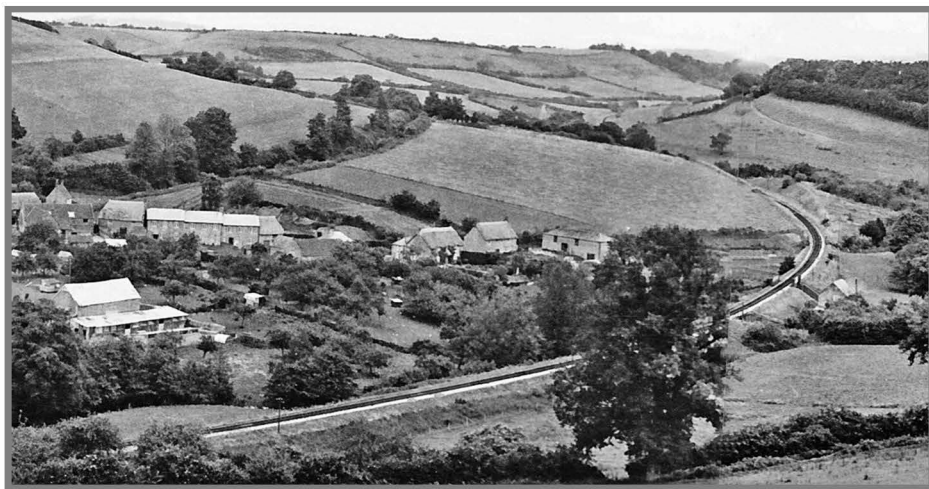
Picture taken from the railway bridge, the fire, judging by the smoke, appears to be around the corner. People had travelled by foot, bicycle and pony and trap. By the time the picture was taken they seem to have lost interest in the fire.

The Bridport to Maiden Newton Branch Line

The Bridport Railway opened on 12 November 1857 and closed in May 1975. The construction of this impressive feat of Civil Engineering must have had a big impact on the village. A site base was set up in Loders and it was here that the first sod was cut by Joseph Gundry on 19 June 1855. In Loders, as well as the major earthworks, three bridges and a cattle creep were built over a distance of less than a quarter of a mile. At the end of the project on 20 November 1857 at Loders the contractors surplus equipment was sold including 25 horses, 30 earth wagons and 50 tons of contractor's rails. *(More information on the railway can be found in "The Bridport Railway" by BL Jackson and MJ Tattershall.)*

For over two years the site compound and the considerable number of men associated with the project lived and lodged around the village. I am sure that a number of them must have met the local young ladies and maybe married and settled in the village. Prior to 1857 the only means of transport was by foot or horseback so most of the inhabitants of Loders had probably travelled only as far as Bridport or other neighbouring villages. Dorchester would have been out of reach for most people. Suddenly with a short journey to Bridport or Powerstock stations there was access to anywhere in the country.

In 1940 a gun-siding for a 12-inch Howitzer gun was constructed alongside the railway in Loders. It and a similar siding in Bradpole were removed in 1945. In May 1947, the Ministry of Transport confirmed that the provision of a halt at Loders had been approved in principal but it got no further. In the 1960s and 70s the passenger numbers dwindled to such an extent that it was no longer viable to keep the line open. The trains often ran almost empty.



(Above) The railway sweeps through Loders on a smooth curve with bridges over the Asker, the road at Yondover and New Street Lane. The once cultivated garden between the railway and New Street Lane is clearly visible. The large field left of the railway is now the site of the Cemetery, the allotments and Highacres.



A tank engine with two carriages travels towards Maiden Newton on the stretch of railway line east of Loders, just past the allotments. This is typical of the types of train that ran on the line in the 1950s. A wave to the driver by the bridge at Yondover was always reciprocated.



A single car diesel unit in the cutting just below the Cemetery and the allotments on 26 April 1976. These units were employed on the branch line from the late 1960s until the closure of the line in 1975. They were more than adequate to cope with the passenger numbers. At times, they ran virtually empty.



For people living in Loders there was a choice of two railway stations. Bridport Station (left in the 1950s) was the choice of most. It was a short easy journey along roads by bus, taxi, bike or on foot. For some, particularly at the eastern end of Uploders, the station at

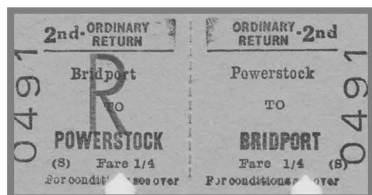
Powerstock was an alternative. It was the nearest but to reach it meant a walk of some one and a half miles across fields by way of farm tracks and footpaths. The tracks were well made from locally quarried stone but were uneven and became muddy in wet weather. They must have been particularly difficult in the dark winter evenings for the half hour, or so, walk across country.



Left, Powerstock Station as it was in the 1930s with wagons in the siding. The railway on the left is the Maiden Newton to Bridport line looking towards Bridport (and, of course, Loders!).

Although the line did not close until 1975 Powerstock Station was sold by

British Rail to Brian and Diana Read in 1968. They carried out extensive works to convert the old station to a comfortable dwelling for themselves and their two children, Giles and Rosie. (*See Powerstock Station - All Change by Diana P Read*).



An unissued return ticket from Bridport to Powerstock from the 1960's. The return fare was 1s4d (one shilling and four pence) which is just under seven pence in today's currency.

New Street Lane - Yondover Farm, Farm Workers



Farm workers with a steam traction engine from Yondover Farm. (Left to right, top) -, Ralph Clark, Reuben Bowditch (boy), Harry Bowditch, Bill Read, driver. (Standing) ? Brown, ?? , Leslie Clark, ? Bowditch, George (Goggles) Ellery, Jacko (Beano) Ellery. The barn is believed to be the one at the west end of New Street Lane which was converted in to a house in the 1990s.



Farm workers with Shire horses in New Street Lane. The house is Mudlark, a thatched cottage before it was extended and modernised. These men are also thought to be from Yondover Farm. The man on the horse on the right could be the same as the one on the traction engine in the driver's position; Bill Read.

New Street Lane



(Left) A view over Yondover from Boarsbarrow with New Street Lane in the distance. The white house is Mudlark. Just to the right of Mudlark is the old cottage which in the 1950s was a ruin with no roof just crumbling walls and so a good place to explore and play! The houses are better seen in the enlargement (left, below).



New Street Lane is believed to be on the route of the Roman Road from Eggardon to Exeter. Examination of small-scale Ordnance Survey maps confirms the possibility of this being the case.

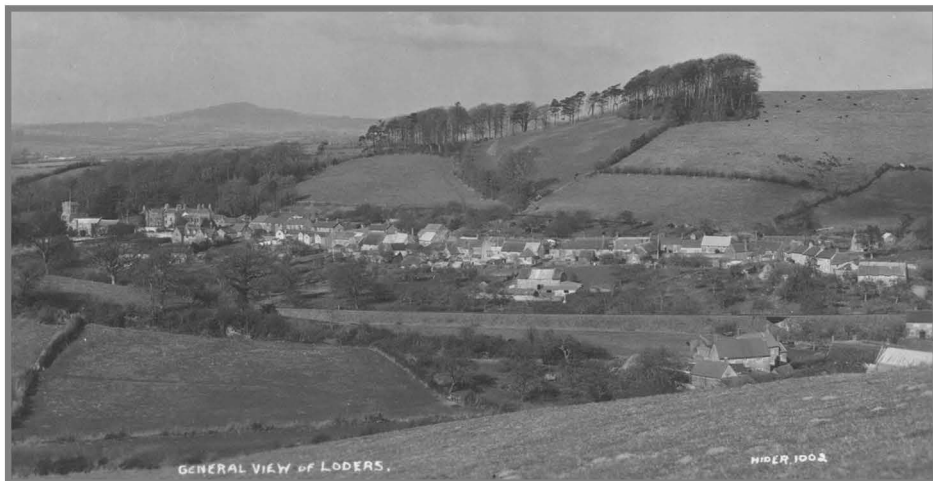
The village is said to have once been located on New Street Lane but was relocated due to an outbreak of the plague in the 1300s. Had that not happened Uploders would, perhaps, now be located along New Street Lane at the foot of the south facing hillside; an interesting thought .



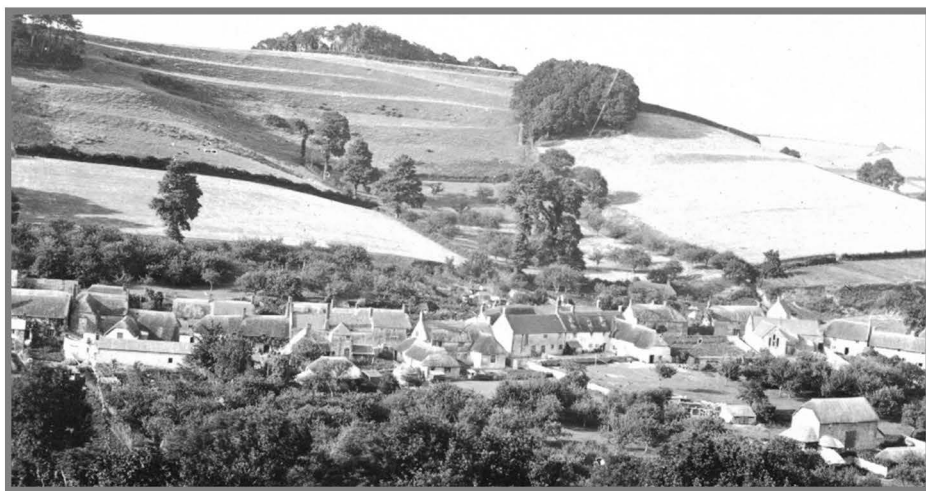
The Old Mill where the old wheel still turns. The mill ground corn and probably flax. It was a bolling-mill. The pounding machinery of the bolling-mill would have pounded the stalks of flax which was grown nearby.

Lower Loders (now known as Loders)

Lower Loders is the most westerly part of the village. With the Court, the Church, the School, two public houses and the village policeman it might have once considered itself to be the most important part of the village, something that would have been hotly disputed by the residents of Uploders and Yondover!



Lower Loders from the Church in the west to east of the school as viewed from south of Yondover. The Maiden Newton Railway runs south of the village and In the foreground (bottom right) is the western end of Yondover.



The summer evening sun shining over the village illuminates the strip-lynchets on Waddon Hill. The photograph shows Loders from the Farmers Arms on the left to the School on the right. The thatched cottages to the left of the Loders Arms have long since disappeared and is now the seating area outside the pub. The card was published by Shephard, Bridport, c1905.

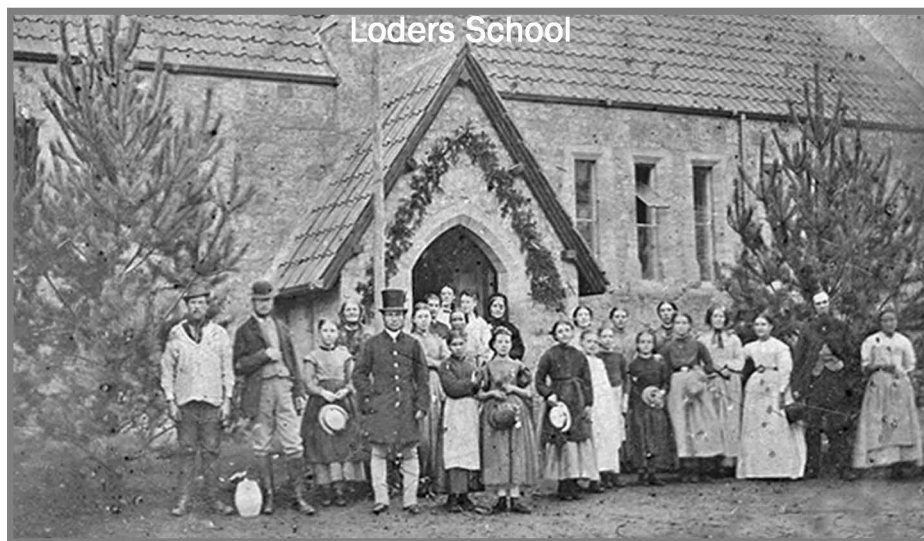
Near the School



Card posted in 1932; the man is thought to be Frank Greening. The door in the wall on the left is to the pump house that provided water to the nearby houses. The pump house was removed in 1975 when Smishops Lane was widened as a condition of the Highacres development. The well remains in the garden of Smishops. The houses on the right have hardly changed. The horse drawn wagon at the end of the road, would be that of Mrs Macey, she lived in the house on the corner. Long after Mrs Macey had gone the corner was known as Macey's Corner.



A crowd at the hunt meet outside Loders School c1930. Amongst the riders is Harold Bishop, the third horse rider from the left. The lady at the back, between the door and window, with her hands clasped is Mrs Hetty Crabb. As women make up most of the crowd, it is likely that the meet was on a weekday when most of the men would have been at work.



(Above) Believed to be the opening in 1869. Sir Molyneaux and Lady Nepean appear not to be in the picture, no one looks grand enough. The postcard cannot be contemporaneous with the opening. The first picture postcards were produced in 1894 and divided back cards (which this one is) followed in 1902. It is possible that the cards were produced from a plate from 1869 for a special event or anniversary in 1902, or later. Alternatively, it could be a re-enactment of the opening in the early 1900s. It is one of the few family pictures with no details on the back. My grandmother, Emily Marsh (Hawker), was born in 1892 so would have been a pupil here between 1897 and 1905. Maybe it was an event when she was a pupil. I prefer to think it is a picture from an 1869 plate. Who knows?

Extract from the Bridport News 15 October 1869
OPENING OF THE LODERS SCHOOL

The little village of Loders was on Wednesday the scene of much public festivity on the occasion of the opening of the new schools (sic) which have recently been erected there for the benefit of the parish. For many years the want of adequate accommodation for the children of the parish desirous of participating in scholastic benefits has been keenly felt, but until lately the matter was not practically dealt with. Lady Nepean of Loders Court, impressed with the desirability of such a building being raised, resolved to erect at her sole cost a new school-room as a substitute for the old building formerly used; and in this munificent determination she was most cordially seconded by her husband. Sir Molyneaux Nepean, Bart., Lord of the Manor at Loders. Accordingly without delay, operations were commenced. A site, admirably suited for the building, was given by Sir Molyneaux, and early in the present year the foundation stone of the new school was laid by her ladyship, and no effort was spared for the speedy completion of the work.....The School had been prettily decorated for the occasion, so the appearance which it presented was singularly pleasing. Outside the porch were temporarily planted several magnificent fir trees and over the door there was a small arch formed of evergreens and flowers.