

ROUNABOUT VERWOOD

PAST and PRESENT

Birch Tree Farm, Crab Orchard, Verwood



The Orman family
at Birch Tree Farm,
Crab Orchard.
Mid to late 1800s.

In the mid 1800s Market Gardening became a thriving industry locally when many hotels in the growing town of Bournemouth were supplied by farms and smallholdings in the area. One of several in Three Legged Cross was Birch Tree Farm with the produce taken to Bournemouth, or "Barne" as they called it, by horse and cart.

Birch Tree Farm was the Orman's "ancestral home" so far as Verwood was concerned. Joseph Orman, a broom maker born 1789 at Moor Crichel and his wife Keturah born the same year at Hinton Martell had arrived at Crab Orchard by 1810 when their eldest son Stephen was born. They became the ancestors of the others throughout the area and their children married into many local families.

Stephen Orman became a broom maker and

farmer and rented Birch Tree Farm from William Fryer in 1847. He married Jean Kail and had eight children including Charles who made his home at Holly Tree Farm on the Ringwood Road and Henry Stephen who continued at Birch Tree Farm.

Well into living memory, there were always roadside vegetable stalls in Three Legged Cross where people could choose their own produce. Now there is an extensive Garden Centre named after its founder John T. Brown and other nurseries such as Holly Hedge and White Veil.

A similar view of Birch Tree Farm today



is difficult since mature hedging partly obscures the house, but apart from all the thatch roofs being replaced, the main house and even the outbuilding remains very much recognisable as they were in the old photograph.

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