

Archivists' Report No. 41

Bridge Road

Pam Clayton referred to us a query from occupants in the road who wished to know the date of their property. This led to a study of the road in history, which we had not tackled before.

The road as we know it is only 100 years old. However, its predecessor — Greensted Lane — goes back several centuries (certainly before 1632) and was a lane which went from the Havant Road to Cold Harbour Farm to the north, largely following the stream. This stream has now been culverted and runs under the main road into the Mill Pond. The only buildings (by the early 19th century) were at the Havant Road end, in what was a short cul-de-sac off the main road; one was the early National School. By this time the road was starting to be called Back Lane. The land was arable and one plot is strangely called 'Tan House Field'.

By 1898 there were nine properties, all on the west side and the remaining buildings were largely erected in the early 20th century, when it took its present name.

St. Peter's Square

We are grateful to Adrian Locke for letting us see the deeds of Nos. 29-37. These include records of the White Swan public house (the building is still there) and adjoining properties from 1807 onwards. The White Swan was owned by Emsworth Manor until 1897 when it was enfranchised (i.e. made freehold). It is a Grade III Listed Building. Where Heidis and Nationwide are now (nos. 35-37) were two houses in 1807, subsequently divided into four. For well over 200 years this part of the Square was a focal stretch for merchants, shops, etc., with two inns and many other businesses.

Clovelly Road

We were lent the deeds of a house in this road. In 1838 the whole of the Clovelly Road site was part of the garden of Valetta, a big house fronting the main road, in the ownership of a retired Army Officer, and finally demolished in 1958. The garden land was successively sold off and was owned by the Revd. H. G. Spriggs in 1913 and bought by a builder in 1933, and development started before the outbreak of war in 1939. The banana shape of the road derives simply from the originally curved field boundary. Our thanks to Patricia Williamson for her generous help.

Old Field Names of Emsworth

It is possible in a few cases to trace the history of plots of land back several centuries. In the 17th century and earlier many fields were given names; some were based on owners or occupiers, others on the use or location of the land. Here are a few examples:

Island Field (known also as Eyland and, in modern times, Highland) situated on the north side of Havant Road. It was named as such in the Manor Rentals of 1495 and 1618-32. The entries do not list cottages or other buildings so this area was obviously completely agricultural.

Quintains. This name is still in use at the top end of New Brighton Road and related to an agricultural plot in the 17th century. It has been variously spelled Quintons and Quintance and the site has been used as arable farming and brick kilns, the bricks being used for the building of houses in New Brighton Road and Westbourne Avenue.

Killhouse. This strange name occurs in 19th century deeds and also in the 1618 Rental. Killhouse, according to an Indenture of 1863, is 'a parcel of waste ground or mudland, which at every tide is the greater part covered with salt or sea water'. In 1618 it is 'a field of Emsworth facing Killhouse marsh'. The 1851-1881 Censuses indicate that buildings of that name are on the Quay next to the Mill, possibly facing the Mill Pond.

Sweare Lane. A cottage 'lately built' is mentioned in 1618-32. This was the earlier name of King Street and is our earliest reference to the existence of the Street (Lane).

Brookfield

Our Administrator sought information on the Brookfield, Havant Road. The site in 1838 was pasture and was sold in 1882 for building plots and building took place between then and 1887. It was occupied by Charles Emery in 1891 with seven family members and two servants. In 1896 it had a double carriage drive, large entrance hall, dining room with ornamental ceiling, seven bedrooms, bathroom (hot and cold), three wc's, a two-stall stable, coach houses and two heated greenhouses. The owner from 1887 to before 1914 was W. H. Duffield. The hotel was started in 1972 by Joyce and Drew Gibson with six bedrooms and by 1993, had 41 bedrooms.

1895 Map of Emsworth

Frank Warren (a member of the Trust) has given us a copy of the 1895 map of Emsworth. This, like any map, is invaluable to us as a mine of information. We will eventually deposit it at the Museum for display.

Emsworth Turnpike and Short By-Pass

Before the short by-pass was built in 1973, the main (turnpike) route from Portsmouth to Chichester went along West Street, High Street and Queen Street. A Trust member, Malcolm Walford, who has done very valuable work in indexing the Hampshire Telegraph, has been researching the history of this south coast turnpike. In 1973 there were compulsory purchase orders designed to produce the route of the short by-pass. Material Malcolm has passed to us is most useful as it deals with buildings demolished. These include Westgrove House, 7 West Street, Reeves Social Club and the front gardens of properties in West Street, part of the Hospital garden and part of Lillywhite's car park and Westgrove Gardens.

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Hon. Archivists