

# HERITAGE CHAMPION'S REPORT 2025 - 2026

Councillor Kim Spickett, Residents' Association of Cuddington

## All Hallows Eve, 2025

This document is my second report created from notes made on site visits and further research.

I am indebted to our heritage officers, museum curator, our archaeologist volunteers, my friend, the historian and archivist David Rymill, (look him up and buy his books!) historians of all interests and persuasions...all of whom I have referenced and credited... an endless list of thank yous.

Commentators seem to be in a spin about “what sort” of history is taught to children. What we OMIT to teach is equally important. Exciting and inspiring children as we do at our kids' club at the museum can give them a lifelong passion for not only history but fashion, engineering, the military, arts and crafts. You may not agree with radical historians, or humanists, or those of faith or traditions. Their history is still history; not all of us are believers. We need to hear it, even if we don't agree with the take! Put away your suspicions. Argue by all means! Have an opinion, take an interest. OPEN YOUR MIND! I love to read and I LOVE a mystery in my history...

“History isn't my thing”. OK. But think of the stuff you DO like. It will become history by the minute. You will surprise yourself. How many of you like mysteries? Were the moon landings fake? Who shot President Kennedy?

Was there a monster at large on the A240?

“Late evening on Tuesday 14 February 2012 the Martin family were taking a taxi from Stoneleigh to their home in Banstead, when near the Reigate Road junction on the Ewell bypass, they saw a fast-moving dark figure with no obvious features dart across the road in front of them. After running across one lane, the figure easily jumped the central reservation fence before crossing over their carriageway - and was quickly and effortlessly up and over the 15 foot roadside bank. Naturally, the whole family and their taxi driver were shaken by this seemingly supernatural experience. Their young son was too scared to sleep on his own that night and the taxi driver voiced his fears of driving back alone”<sup>1</sup>.



Kain White<sup>2</sup>

I'll leave that one with you. Happy quests!

1. <https://eehe.org.uk/33406/springheeledjack/> retrieved 20/10/2025

2. <https://kainmonstersofmodernday.blogspot.com/2012/10/spring-heeled-jack-drawing-by-kain-white.html>

# WHAT IS A JETTIED HOUSE?

## AN IMPROMPTU VISIT, EWELL VILLAGE

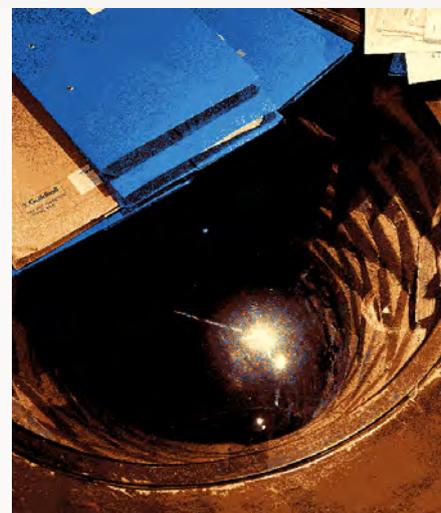
This was a pre-Christmas lunch with our Heritage Officer, Lucy Buckland. As always, I was far too early so called in on my friend Tony, a fruit importer.

Tony and his business partner are the proud owners of this beautiful little property, complete with an indoor well (photo, right).

It is their office.

I was very interested in the life and times of 11 - 15 High Street; and what a life!

If buildings could only talk...



**Heritage Category: Listed Building**

**Grade: II\* List Entry Number: 1288469**

**Date first listed: 10-Apr-1954**

**List Entry Name:**

**11-15 (ODD) HIGH STREET, Ewell**

**Statutory Address 1:**

**HIGH STREET, EWELL**

**Post Medieval Finds:**

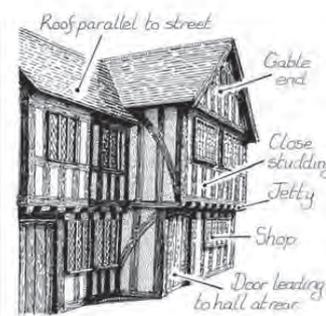
*17th century clay pipe, the neck of a Bellarmine bottle and other 18th century pottery found at 15 High Street, Ewell, during archaeological watching brief.*

*Excavated burnt timber remains suggest the presence of a medieval building which burnt down.*

High Street, Ewell 16th century. Two storeys, plastered jettied timber framing, six casement windows, those 3 to right modern leaded ones. Ground floor has, from left to right, door, small modern shop, sash window, door, modern sash, door, modern sash. Old

tiles. Portion of No 15 to right is not jettied and is double canted to corner as item 7/117. Modern leaded windows, plain 19th century shops. Old tiles.

So what is a jettied building? It is an extended upper storey, jutting beyond the storey below, formed by the beams and joists of the lower storey oversailing the wall. Surrey has plenty of these charming buildings; a late 15th - early 16th century jettied house can be seen at 33-35 High Street, Leatherhead



**Urban house with jetty:** Urban houses were usually timber framed with jetties providing extra room on upper floors and higher status. Some had the gable end facing the street; in others the roof ran parallel to it.

(Surrey HER Listed Building 9327). Weller Eggar, Estate Agents, on the corner of Quarry Street and Mill Lane in Guildford is another 16th century example. (Surrey HER Listed Building 8519).<sup>1</sup>

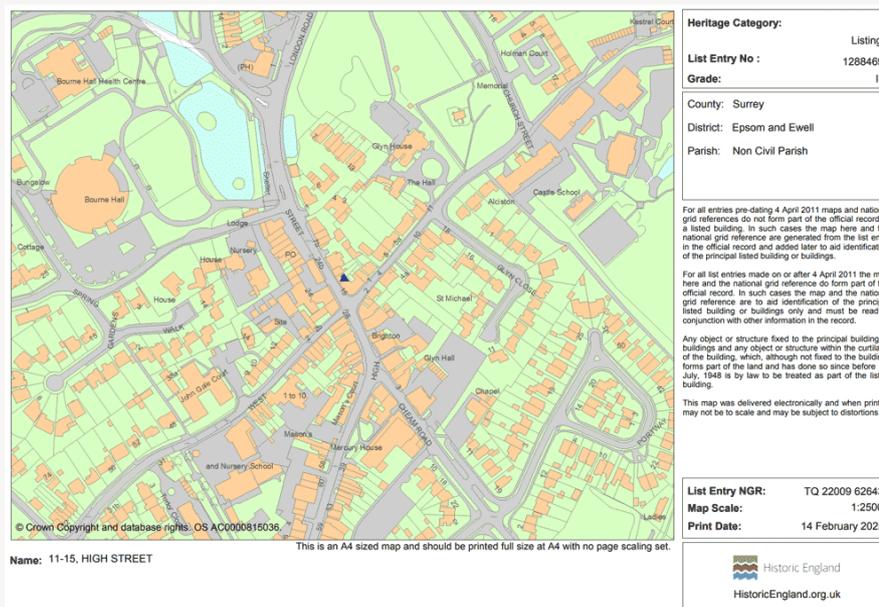
Nos 11, 13 and part of 15 were built as one unit and have a continuous jetty. What is now regarded as two adjacent properties was probably three in earlier times

1. [https://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/monuments/jettied\\_house](https://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/monuments/jettied_house)

A map of the area (Ewell) with the property marked

Historic England is a fantastic organisation with resources and signposts available to the amateur history sleuth.

Our Heritage Officers at EEBC recommended it to me and I have not been disappointed!



as there are three front doors.

Ian West, in his *Buildings in Ewell* (1974), describes the whole property as two storeys with plastered jettied timber framing, six casement windows to first floor, and on the right hand three modern lead ones. Ground floor has from left to right, a doorway, small modern shop window, sash window, door, modern sash, door, modern sash. Old tiled roof. Cellar at each end. The remaining part of No. 15 is not jettied and is double canted to corner. Modern lead windows, plain 19th century shop front, old tiled roof, plastered elevations. The jettied part is mid-16th century while the other part is c.1600.

Cloudesley Willis in "A Short History of Ewell and Nonsuch" mentions a wooden cellar lattice and a front door with a hatch or upper half; these are no longer there. The buildings operated as tenements for a time.

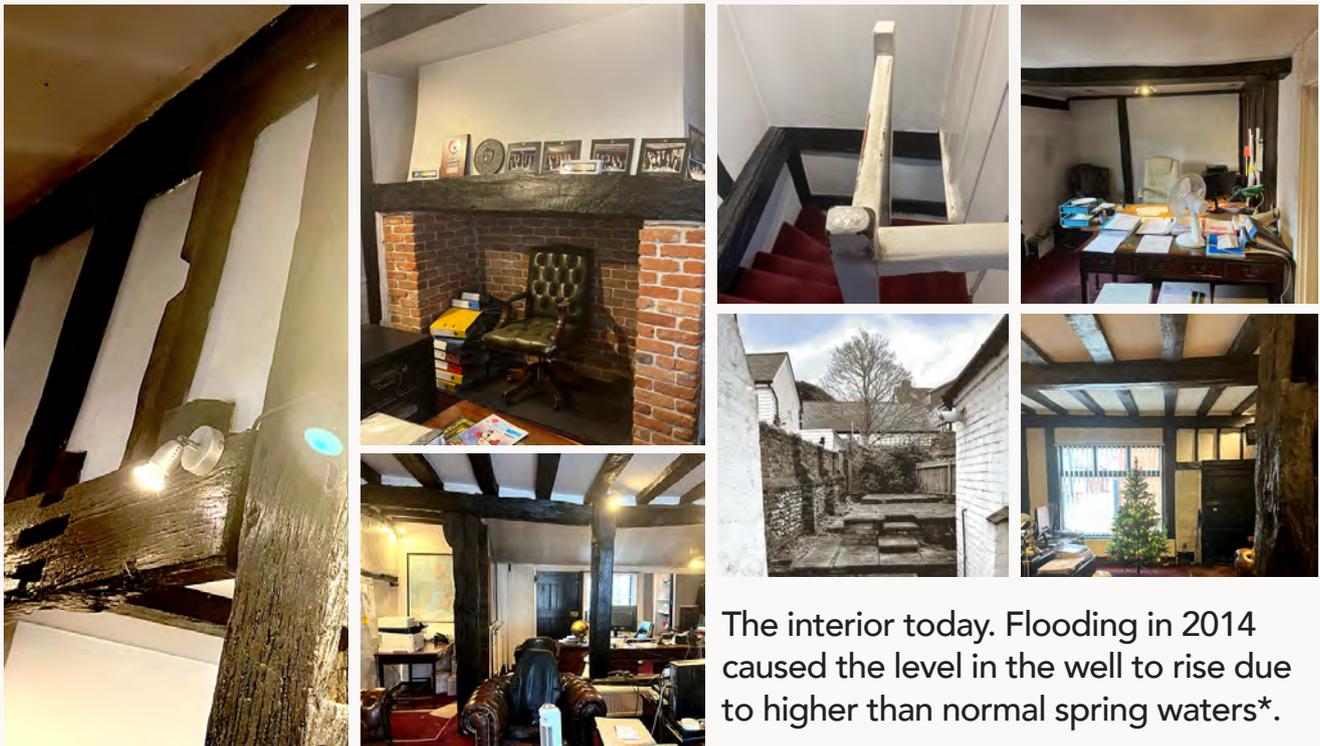
What we know as 9, 11, 13 and 15 High Street: 9 was known as the Red Lion public house.

11-15 now include a physiotherapy clinic (excellent - I have been a patient) and Tony's Office at number 11.

#### OWNERS & TENANTS FROM 1595

In 1595, Sir Francis Carew (the uncle to Nicholas Saunders\*) and Edmund Kidderminster owned the property. Owner prior to 1616 was Sir Alexander Clifford and his wife Jane (brother in law and sister to Nicholas Saunders\*). Then in 1616 Arthur Garraway, 1633 Nicholas Knapp, then in 1684 by inheritance to Ann Fendall, 1691 Henry Fendall, 1702 Thomas Williams Snr. and his wife Ann. Ann married Nicholas Baxter and the houses then went to Henry Fendall. In 1747 they passed to Thomas Williams, his wife Anne and then to her eldest son, Thomas. Prior to 1760 Thomas Williams, nephew of Thomas Williams Jr., 1760 Sir George Glyn. Between 1760–1802. Peter Collins, Seymour, Hotchkin and Scotcher were among the tenants. George Millet, glazier, Widow Bowen, Thomas Rau, baker, William Bailey, John Allingham, collar maker all leased the houses at various times. The properties, together with No. 15, were described as three houses and gardens 1841. Poor Law Award no. 357.

\*We will hear more about the fascinating Mr Saunders further on in this article!



The interior today. Flooding in 2014 caused the level in the well to rise due to higher than normal spring waters\*.

John Griggs owner, and James Hills occupier. Rateable value £5 10s. 1814 Sir Lewen Powell Glyn, 1842 Revd. Sir George Glyn. Some of these people are buried in St Mary's Churchyard, opposite the Spring Hotel. The properties remained in Glyn hands for nearly 200 years. 1841. Census. John Grix, gardener, William Callingham, agricultural labourer and James Hills, shoemaker, lived there with their families. 1851. Census. Stephen Blaber, labourer, George Callingham, plumber and James Hills, shoemaker. 1861 Census: William Baker, carrier, George Callingham, plumber and James Hills, shoemaker, were the tenants.

At the 1871 Census, the three houses seem to have become two as only two families occupied the site – William Baker, carrier, at no. 11 and Joseph Harper, a Greenwich pensioner, at no. 13. Joseph Harper had two lodgers – John Wiltshire, gardener and Henry Sturman, blacksmith. 1881. Census.

William Baker was still there and in the other house was Elizabeth Birdseye, widow, who had James Wilkins, gardener as a lodger. 1891. Census. Mary Ann Baker, widow, carrier and fly. proprietor lived in one house and Elizabeth Birdseye lived in the other with their families. 2000. Since 1926 No. 11 has housed a cab business, run by Jack Launchbury & Son, then the Ewell Coal and Coke Offices, later an antiques shop, a solicitor's office, now a fruit importer. 13 High Street was residential until 1987 when it became Dolls' House Antiques.<sup>1</sup>

#### SIR NICHOLAS SAUNDERS OF NONSUCH

So who was the owner of 11 - 15 High Street before 1595? Nicholas Saunders. He had inherited the estate of Nicholas his father and is named as executor in his will. The estate was most of Ewell in those days!

Nicholas the younger was lacking in business skills. Citing the 'unjust dealings of others' he was already selling off Ewell properties between 1591 and 1601. This probably caused his removal from the commission of the peace in the late Elizabethan period. A career politician, his property holdings were still bringing in an

1. <https://eehe.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/MillenniumProject.pdf> Retrieved 07/02/2025

\*Despite enquiries, the Environment Agency have no record of the well.

Isabella Twysden - an English diarist born in 1605 - the youngest daughter of Sir Nicholas Saunders of Nonsuch and Elizabeth Blount.

Her father had been imprisoned for his Catholicism but converted to the Church of England to become an MP. Her mother kept her faith. After the Gunpowder plot of 1605, Nicholas Saunders sat on a committee to look at ways to stop Catholic plots.

Plots? Nicholas could have written a book on best practice...



income of over £500 a year in 1605.

A disastrous venture - bringing a water supply from Hertfordshire to Surrey - lost him a fortune. Despite knowing the difficulties involved in such a venture, he pushed ahead in 1627, with a plan to supply London with water from Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. Presumably as a result of his losses that he sold remaining properties in Ewell and moved to a house in Nonsuch Park. He played no known part in the Civil War.

According to his youngest daughter Isabella he died at Nonsuch on 9 Feb. 1649 and was buried at Ewell: Saunders died at his home in Nonsuch Park. Isabella (1605-1657), wife to Sir Roger Twysden, Baronet, of Royden Hall, East Peckham, (and a keen diarist) wrote:

*“My good father left this world and went to god the 9 of febr: 1648/9 betwene 6 and 7 a clock at night, being tusday, he was ill 3 or 4 dayes, and as he used to do, in cold wether many*

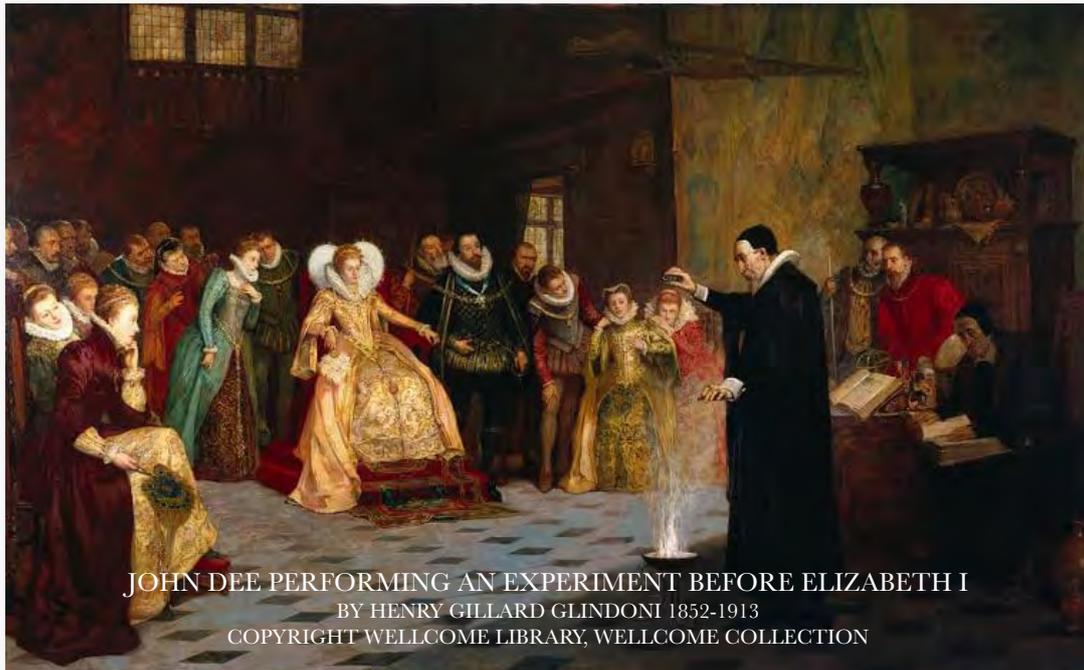
*times laye a bed, and then rising and setting up a while, he undressing to go to bed agane, he fainted a waye, and came agane, and then fainted agane, and came no more tho all was dun that could be. he died at his hous in nounsuch park and was beried at ewell with his auncestors and by his wife, by torch lights, there was 6 by him at the time of his death, he wanted no helps, his son was one, my bro. Henry Saunder, my sister and bro. warham who lived with him was then on bisnes gone in to dorset shere, and I to my grefe was in Kent so could not know of his illnes, to be with him, he was 87.”*

He died intestate. Administration of his estate was granted to his only surviving son Henry. The last properties in Ewell had been sold by 1659. Nicholas rests, with his wife, in the churchyard at St Mary's, Ewell.

I discovered a further controversy - the details are sketchy, the story rather tawdry and sadly reminiscent of modern day misdeeds.

ENTER ONE JOHN DEE...

A mathematician and necromancer; a devotee of crystal gazing, alchemy, astrology etc., who was commonly suspected in his time of holding intercourse with the dead. Queen Elizabeth I frequently summoned Dee for



JOHN DEE PERFORMING AN EXPERIMENT BEFORE ELIZABETH I

BY HENRY GILLARD GLINDONI 1852-1913

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consultations, as her ‘adviser’ on scientific matters during much of her reign. My research for this story references writings by Walker. Mr Walker’s account omits any reference to young Nicholas’ connection with Dr John Dee (he was a former pupil).

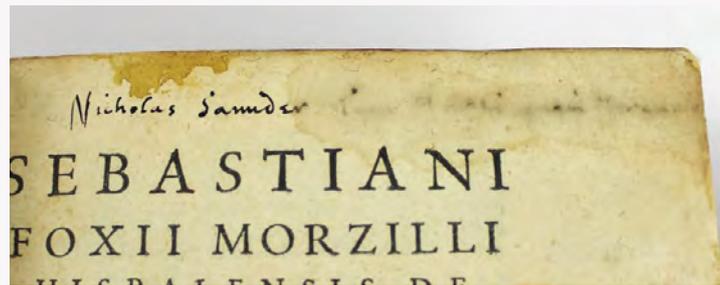
Dee’s known interests in cryptography and wide travels across Europe have long suggested to later writers that he might have been a spy. Robert Hooke suggested that Dee’s ‘book of spirits’ – his records of conversations with angelic beings and of the ‘Enochian’ language they revealed to him – was actually a book of code.

*“To come then to the book it self. Upon turning it over, and comparing several Particulars in it one with another, and with other Writings of the said Dr Dee ... so far as I can be informed, I do conceive that the greatest part of the said Book, especially all that which related to the Spirits and Apparitions, together with their Names, Speeches, Shews, Noises, Clothing, Actions, and the Prayers and Doxologies, &c. are all*

*Cryptography ... that is, under those feignd Stories, which he there seems to relate as Matters of Fact, he hath concealed Relations of quite another thing; and that he made use of this way of obscoding it, that he might the more securely escape discovery, if he should fall under the suspicion as to the true Designs of his Travels ... conceiving that the Inquisition that should be made, or Prosecution, if discovered, would be more gently for a Pretended Enthusiast, than for a real Spy.”*

Personally, I think he was a man who styled himself as a visionary or magician to keep bread on the table, whilst looking in private for scientific discovery, which he found and developed away from the prying eyes of religious enforcers; it is feasible that he may have done some spying to pay the rent too.

The Royal College of Physicians in London hold more than 100 books from John Dee’s library. They were stolen during his travels to the Continent in the 1580s. This valuable library and laboratories in Mortlake were trusted to the care of his brother-in-law Nicolas Fromond. John Dee had a link to Bartholomew Fromond(s) of East Cheam Manor; his daughter Jane Fromond became the second Mrs Dee on 5 February 1577/8. Fromond appears to have sold these, along with



laboratory equipment, behind Dee's back; he was never able to recover most of them.

By purchase or possibly by theft, the books from Dee's library (now housed at the Royal College of Physicians) came into the possession of Dee's former pupil Nicholas Saunders - who attempted to conceal Dee's

signature or other identification by overwriting with his own.<sup>1</sup>

Saunders' bare faced cheek didn't stop there. Knowing that the keen antiquarian Robert Cotton<sup>2</sup> (the Cotton Library is certainly worth reading about!) was keen to find the missing books; Saunders wrote to Cotton on 30 November 1621, to offer a copy of Helinandus' Chronica mundi, a text that came from Mortlake. There was to be an

exchange: for a Burghship!

*'For truly were it the rarest and perfectest booke that is extant... Thus desyring you, yf your Burroughs be allowed or confirmed, to remember me with one of the Burgheshippes'*



\* A campaign by Cotton and others to persuade the Commons to enfranchise three boroughs in Buckinghamshire, was not resolved until 1624.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, a bribe for a patronage. The high regard placed on Dee's books, - particularly since his demise - was not lost on the artful Nicholas!

Saunders' books passed to Henry Pierrepont. Pierrepont's family later donated them to the Royal College of Physicians.

I will never look at that jettied row in Ewell Village again without feeling the need to search for more!

*With grateful thanks to my friend Tony Skinner.*

1. <https://history.rcp.ac.uk/blog/book-belongs-john-dees-library-rcp> 29 January 2016 Katie Birkwood.

2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir\\_Robert\\_Cotton,\\_1st\\_Baronet,\\_of\\_Connington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Robert_Cotton,_1st_Baronet,_of_Connington) Retrieved 17/02/2025

3. <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/saunders-sir-nicholas-1563-1649> Retrieved 17/02/2025

\*London, British Library, Cotton Julius MS C.III, fol. 334.

# A CAST OF CHARACTERS: THE HISTORY OF THE OWNERSHIP OF THE GREAT PARK

**Richard de Coddington** (grave in Ixworth, Suffolk, right), in no position to argue, sells Cuddington, which included the land of the “Great Park”, of which the new nature reserve at Grafton Stables is a part, to:

**Henry VIII**

**Queen Elizabeth I.** The Queen granted George Evelyn a monopoly for manufacturing gunpowder in England around 1565. The Evelyn family became very successful, establishing gunpowder mills in Surrey. The mill at Long Ditton, on the Hogsmill, was highly successful. This was a significant achievement, as England had previously relied on imported gunpowder.

**Edward Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester** who was appointed Keeper of the Great Park in 1606, owned by Queen Henrietta Maria (lived at Worcester House)

During the Civil War the palace and its estate was confiscated, along with other royal palaces, by Parliamentary Commissioners.

**Algernon Sidney** Whig hero and martyr, author of Discourses Concerning Government, takes over during the Civil War when the palace and its estate was confiscated, along with other royal palaces, by Parliamentary Commissioners. (picture, below: Algernon Sidney, after Justus van Egmont, based on a work of 1663. National Portrait



Gallery, NPG 568. Reproduced under a Creative Commons Licence)

**Charles Kirke** son of MP and nobleman George Kirke (lived at Worcester House) becomes keeper of the parks.

**Colonel Lilburne** asks General Lambert for the land as payment for his regiment. Then sold to:

**Colonel Thomas Pride** Commonwealth officer and High Sheriff of Surrey (who executed a coup d’etat on parliament and sealed the death warrant of Charles I). He lives at Worcester House, at the top of what is now Grafton Road.

1658 Pride dies.

Property passes again to **Charles Kirke** (lived at Worcester House).

Restored to **Queen Henrietta Maria**, Charles I’s widow.

**Sir Robert Long** (granted a lease to Worcester House) 1663. By 1665 the house was being used by the exchequer as the plague hit London. Further lease granted by Charles II (after the death of Henrietta Maria, his queen) in 1670.

**Viscount Grandison** (owner of Little and Great Parks).

**Barbara Villiers**, Countess Castlemaine, mother of King Charles II’s children (as Duchess of Cleveland).

**Charles, Duke of Grafton**, Barbara’s son, inherits (ownership of both parks).

**John Walter**, his steward (lived at Worcester Ho.).

**George** his son (lived at Worcester House).

Gunpowder manufacturer **William Taylor** (lived at Worcester House).

WORCESTER PARK HOUSE (down the hill from Worcester House) THEN BECOMES THE GREAT HOUSE ON THE ESTATE THAT IS THE GREAT PARK

**William Taylor** his son (Worcester Park House is built)

**William Taylor, his son** (WPH)

**Frederick Taylor**, his son (WPH)

Frederick's son, **Warrington Taylor**, business partner to William Morris, (lives at Worcester Park House, moves to London).

In his time, the pre-Raphaelites graced the doorstep - they were up the hill in the lodge to Worcester House, possibly the under-keepers lodge, by then a farmhouse. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a personal friend/colleague of Taylor

and William Morris, stayed there, along with Ford Madox Brown, John Millais and William Holman Hunt; Warrington Taylor falls out with his father over his choice of bride about this time.

Then Worcester Park House is owned by **Sir James Pennethorne**, Architect to Queen Victoria, former pupil of Nash. John Nash assists him in extending the property. Pennethorne passes the house to his sons.

The **Wheeler** family live at the house.

World War two damage to the house. Much correspondence follows as by now the house and land has passed to the Dean family.

After much to and fro between adjoining councils, Surrey County Council own the land.

Surrey County Council declare the site of Worcester Park House, now known as Grafton Stables, to be a new nature reserve.

*The Wheeler family (below) are shown in the garden; Worcester Park House is in the background.*



# A NEW NATURE RESERVE FOR CUDDINGTON: JUST LOOK AT THE BIODIVERSITY!



Eternal gratitude to my friends at Epsom and Ewell Times, who very kindly publicised our "call for entries" at:

[https://cuddingtonna.org/library/cuddington\\_bioguide\\_list.pdf](https://cuddingtonna.org/library/cuddington_bioguide_list.pdf) with an excellent article.

They also publicised our campaign to create this space. Look at all the green connections around us - a biodiversity superhighway!

Wherever you live in Epsom and Ewell - why not map your own green links and list what you find?

**They scuttle, they hide, they fly, they make mysterious sounds and manoeuvres at night, cannibalise, spring from the earth, hibernate, swim, camouflage, predate, hiss, bark, steal... (I'm writing this up a week before Halloween) and they fascinate and startle us. The non-humans were here first and they are not always neighbourly. They can warm your soul, yet break your heart in so many ways. Who is guilty of mourning a pet as much and sometimes more than a fellow human? I for one.**

Our UK nature reserves and parks are under threat. There are not enough of them. Our country is densely populated and hemmed in by polluting traffic. No governments during my lifetime, unless pressured to do so, have covered themselves in gold where biodiversity is concerned. The demand by central government to provide housing, schools and medical facilities has become overwhelming. Some of us cannot feed ourselves and are homeless too.

Our children's health is dependent on clean air to breathe, fresh food and water, safe places to learn and play, warm homes free of mould. Lung damage does not discriminate - it affects youngsters across the class divide. We hop up and down around the dangers of drugs, cigarettes and vapes, alcohol - all the while our children are breathing bad air. In this overcrowded borough, we are blessed with parks and nature reserves. This gives our children better air and a chance at life - better physical and mental health, places to go when they have no garden of their own. Such places offer learning experiences and the gift of imagination. My playthings were hideouts in trees, old shoeboxes filled with things that I had found, a little microscope that my Mum and Dad went broke to buy me. I was so lucky.

Yesterday I was sitting in the café at Bourne Hall. Schoolchildren were there with their teachers. There is a library, a museum, beautiful grounds, a river path...I want that experience to be repeated as much as possible in our borough - our new unitary - our county - our country - our world. I am so honoured to have served alongside some fine councillors, officers and residents. They have done so much to make what we have possible.

# LOST BEAUTY OF WORCESTER PARK HOUSE - A NEW NATURE RESERVE FOR CUDDINGTON

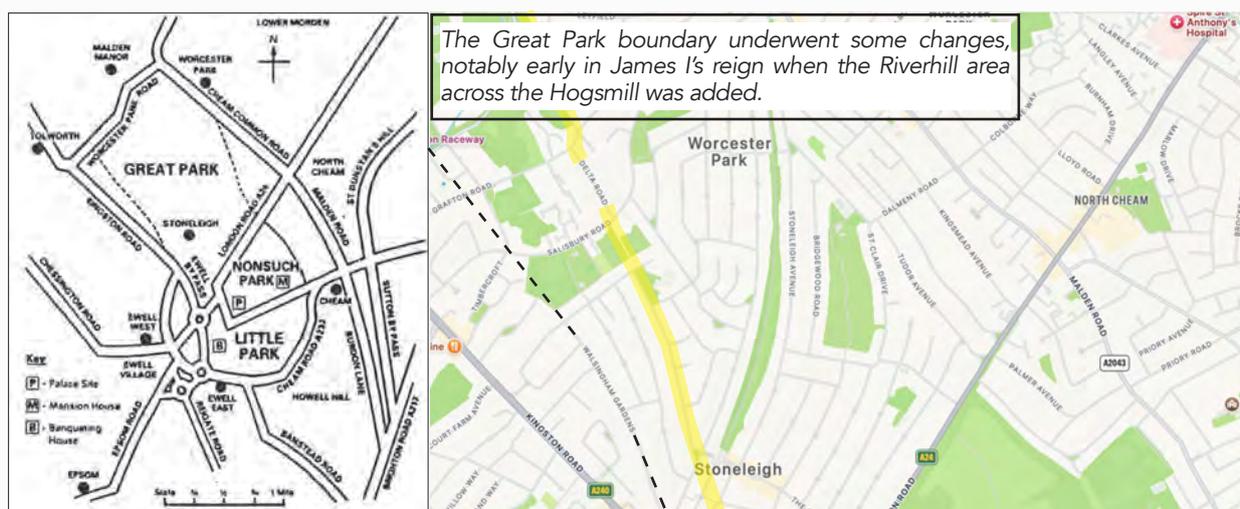
During June 2025, Surrey Councillors Eber Kington, Steve McCormick (also Epsom & Ewell BC) and Natalie Bramhall came to my aid. With my fellow Local Councillors Graham Jones and Phil Neale, we made a plea for this remnant of the "Great Park" of the former Nonsuch estate. Originally marketed for possible development, this land was saved thanks to our campaigning. We can't take all the credit; our residents were tireless in their efforts to save this land! This includes one resident willing to buy the land from his own savings and Wandgas, our local sports club, who would form part of the bid with Cuddington Residents' Association. The Epsom and Ewell Tree Advisory Board were by our side too.

Just goes to prove what good we humans can do!

**In which I look for a body - and a gunpowder dynasty/Arts & Crafts mash-up reveals itself...I dedicate this research to the residents of Cuddington who campaigned for this space, to the councillors who helped our dreams to become reality - and most importantly - to the man they couldn't hang.**

Worcester Park takes its name from Edward

Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester, who was appointed Keeper of the Great Park in 1606. The area was once part of the Great Park which covered around 1,100 acres and adjoined the Little Park which contained Nonsuch Palace, built by Henry VIII. Both parks were originally used as deer parks. King Henry VIII had obtained the land from Richard de Cuddington.<sup>1</sup> During the ownership by Richard, there was a manor house near the palace site\* which was later replaced by Worcester House

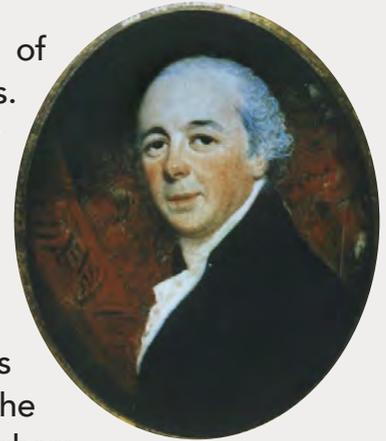


The Great Park boundary - you could say that some of us in the borough live in the grounds of a royal palace! The laying of the Little and Great Parks altered many original roads and paths. London Road and Kingston Road replaced older roads. Newbury Gardens and the footpath linking it with Delta Road and Royal Avenue mark the line of the road from Ewell to Kingston via Old Malden which became the roadway in the Great Park. Walsingham Gardens marked the boundary of the Park. The boundary and roadway on the modern map on the right are marked

1. <https://eehe.org.uk/29845/nonsuchpalace> Retrieved 07/02/2025

\* David Rymill adds: "There was a manor house on the Worcester House site - the Codington family's manor house was in the present Nonsuch Park, close to the Palace site. Martin Biddle in his report into the finds from the 1959-60 excavations discusses the position of the manor house complex and suggests it was largely just to the west of the Palace, perhaps overlapping the Outer Court (Martin Biddle, Nonsuch Palace: The Material Culture of a Noble Restoration Household (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2005), pp 14-16)".

Welsh architect John Nash (1752–1835) designed many of our capital’s neoclassical and picturesque buildings. Financed by the rich and famous, including the Prince Regent and successful property developer James Burton.



Sir James Pennethorne, a pupil of Nash, applied the same beauty with an up-to-date architectural design approach. He eventually inherited his master’s practice and among his works were the new ballroom and kitchens at Buckingham Palace, designed for Queen Victoria.

He purchased Worcester Park and its stunning grounds (previously enlarged by Nash himself) in 1862. He died there in 1871 aged 70<sup>1</sup>.

and is now the site of Worcester Gardens.

The diarist Samuel Pepys visited the district and in his diary commented on Worcester House.

On the nature reserve itself is a quantity of buried rubble (wish I was an archaeologist). This is the remains of a grand house that according to records had the input of “Mr Nash” in its design and build. It was finally destroyed by fire in 1948. It had been, at one time, the home of the architect Sir James Pennethorne.

A former pupil of John Nash, Sir James eventually bought the practice from him. He retired on 30 June, 1870. As a long-standing civil servant he was given a pension of £1766 a year. With his London University building just completed, he was knighted. He had been healthy throughout his life but on 1 September 1871 he died suddenly of a heart



attack, and was buried in Highgate Cemetery.

As his wife had predeceased him, his property was placed in the hands of three trustees: his brother John, who was still living at Hamstead in the Isle of Wight, and his two eldest sons. Dean Parker Pennethorne, a barrister, and Frank James Pennethorne of Worcester Park. They were to divide his property equally among the surviving children.

1. The Royal Academy <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/name/john-nash> retrieved 3/10/2025

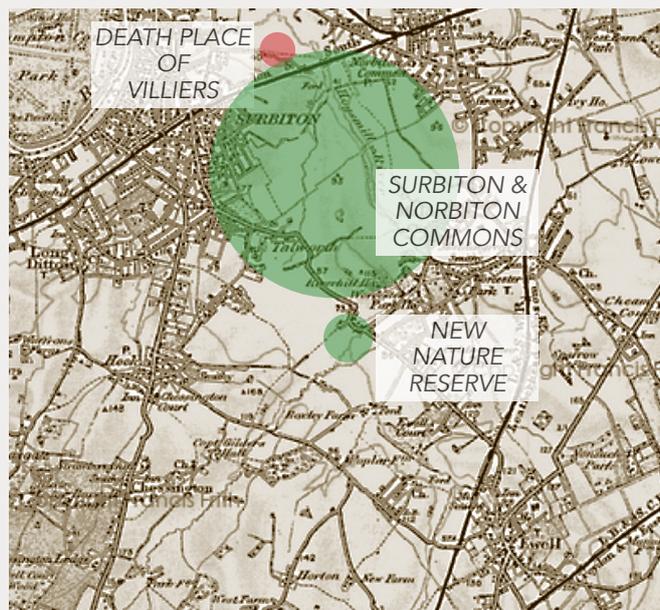
Our new nature reserve has a tale or two to tell. A surviving remnant of what was Henry VIII's "Great Park", there is some Civil War history.

Here is a saker gun ball, like the one found in Grafton Road; 95mm in diameter, weighing around 3Kg; "That'll hurt in the morning..."



The FORMER Great Park "Keeper's House" known as Worcester House, was just up the hill from where Worcester Park House stood; it sat between Worcester Close and Delta Road:

SHHER\_7721 GARDEN WALL TO REAR OF NOS 4, 5, 6 AND 7 AND GARDEN WALL TO REAR OF NOS 4, 5, 6 AND 7 WORCESTER GARDENS, Delta Road, Cuddington. Grid Reference: 521520 165401 Civil Parish: Cuddington. Monument Type: GARDEN WALL (1601 to 1700). Description: Remains of garden wall. 1606-1609 with later patching. Red brick in irregular bond. Formerly a rectangular enclosure, now only the south-east and north-east walls and north-east end of the north-west wall survive. The wall is approx 3 metres high with shallow brick buttresses, the top stepped with offsets and header - brick coping. This is now the only surviving above-ground structure of the buildings of Nonsuch Palace, and lay just to the east of Worcester House built 1606-09 for the 4th Earl of Worcester, keeper of the Great Park of Nonsuch. It is shown in the plan of Worcester House 1609 by Robert Smythson. Listing NGR: TQ2152065401 Form: Listed Building.



Nearby, there is another listing - also an intriguing relic of the English Civil wars:

Site Name: Possible Civil War corroded iron ball, Worcester Park. Grid Reference: 520820 165130. Civil Parish: Ewell. Monument Type: FINDSPOT (1601 to 1700) Description: Corroded iron ball, probably shot from a saker field gun (nominally a 6 pounder) of 16-18 century date. Possibly fired during Second Civil War during action on 7 July 1648 by Royalist Troops under Earl of Holland retreating from Reigate to Kingston.

Falconry and hunting at her Great Park, as well as fostering good political and business relations, were an escape for the queen. Her riding skills were above those of many men; she asked for larger, faster horses to be bought from abroad. There is a site in Nonsuch Park, opposite Briarwood Road, where it is said that she liked to crossbow shoot:



SHHER\_21003

Site Name:

Queen Elizabeth's Elm. Site of ancient tree, Nonsuch Park

Grid Reference:

522810 163440

Civil Parish: Nonsuch

Monument Type: TREE MOUND (1540 to 1900) NAMED TREE (1540 to 1900)

*Found in a garden at Grafton Road, Worcester Park.*

POSSIBLE background could be:

*(FORMER SURBITON COMMON, SHOWN ON 1800's MAP, PREVIOUS PAGE) death of Lord Francis Villiers, killed by Commonwealth forces. Royalists flee, eventually out to Reigate. Sir Michael Livesey, 1st Baronet and Regicide (signatory to the death warrant of Charles I), led the battle at Surbiton Common.*

Surbiton Common and Tolworth were open countryside, so Cuddington, Malden and Long Ditton seem a logical escape and dispersal route. Royalist survivors fled to Reigate and St Albans, where they failed to enlist any support to have another go at the enemy.

Or PERHAPS:

*Two hundred Royalists based at Worcester House were defeated at the junction of the Avenue and Salisbury Road. They retreated through Cheam Common to Putney. Three soldiers are buried in Cheam Churchyard.<sup>1</sup>*

**The period leading up to the firing of six-pounders in Cuddington was very interesting indeed!**

The whole of the former village of Cuddington, with its mansion and church, were demolished. The Great Park - Worcester Park was 911 acres. The Little Park, where the palace stood, was 671 acres. This "new build" celebrated the birth of his long awaited heir. Cuddington Manor, the property of Richard and Elizabeth Codington, was sold in exchange for land in Suffolk. The Cuddington we know is part of what remains.

Sir Thomas Cawarden, Keeper of the Banqueting House, was tasked with providing entertainment 'at the Queenes Majestie's House,' for the French ambassador, M. de Noailles, and his wife. In 1556 Cawarden's lease was granted to the Earl of Arundel. In 1559 he received Queen Elizabeth:<sup>2</sup>

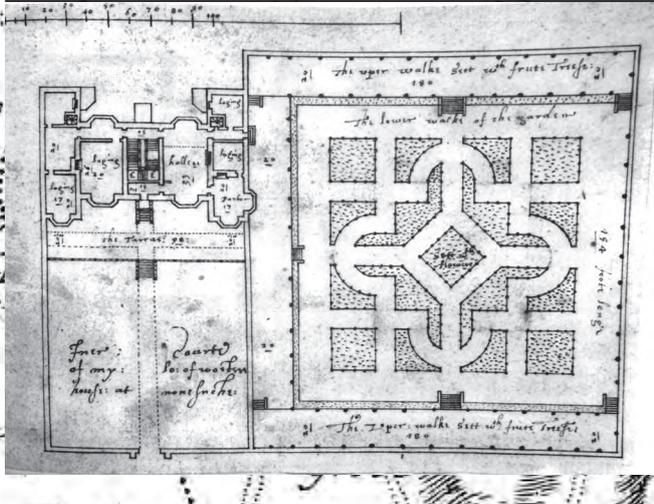
*'Her grace had as great cheer every night and banquets; but Sunday at night my lord of Arundell made her a great banquet at ye coste as ever was sene (at great cost not before seen), for soper, bankete, and maske (a supper banquet and Masque/ plays), wt drums and flutes, and all ye mysyke yt cold be (all the*

1. History of St Mary's Church Cuddington, Robert Leach and others

2. Elizabeth I, Huntress of England: Private Politics, Diplomacy, and Courtly Relations Cultivated through Hunting Dustin M. Neighbours



The original "Worcester House". "Worcester Park House" is built down the hill much later.



Extract from the 1729 map by John Senex<sup>3</sup>. A revamped and four storey Worcester House plan drawn for Earl of Worcester, Keeper of the Great Park, in 1610 (from the RIBA collection).

music possible), tyll mydnyght; and as for chere, has not bene sene nor heard (such cheer had never been seen before). On Monday was a great supper made for her, but before night she stood at her standing in the further park, and there she saw a course (hare coursing and deer hunting). At nyght was a play of the Chylderyn of Powlles and theyr mysyke master Sebastian Phelyps and Mr. Haywode (the children of the Powells family, under the direction of their music teachers, entertained the queen); and after, a grete banket, wt drumes and flutes and the goodly bankets and dishes as costely as ever was sene, and gyldyd. . . . My Lord of Arundell gayfe to ye Quene grace a cubard of plate (a gift of a dining service, metal plated perhaps).'

In 1590–2 Elizabeth purchased the palace and park of John, Lord Lumley, heir of the Earl of Arundel, in exchange for lands to the value of £534.

In 1599 Mr. Roland White wrote to Robert

Sydney: 'Her Majestie is returned again to None-such, which of all other places she likes best'; on this visit, the Earl of Essex, having returned from Ireland without the queen's permission, burst into her bedchamber at ten o'clock in the morning. She waved the incident away but he was committed four days later to the custody of the Lord Keeper. Eventually, Essex was executed. On hearing the news, the Queen paused momentarily from her music, then carried on playing the virginals as if it were an everyday occurrence.

Lumley was appointed Keeper of the Palace and Little Park by James I, who was frequently resident there for hunting and racing, which probably took place on Banstead Downs (vide Banstead) - land we now call Epsom Downs.

On 1 December 1606 the Earl of Worcester was appointed Keeper of the Great Park at Nonsuch, whence no doubt it acquired the name Worcester Park, and the lodge in it the name of Worcester House.

The estate formed part of the jointure of Queen Henrietta Maria, and was visited by Charles I in 1625,



A letter from Colonel Robert Lilburne to General Lambert offers "on behalf of the regiment" to sell Nonsuch to him. The men, it was thought, would be willing to accept 12s. in the £ for their service. The Little Park and Palace were purchased by Major-General Lambert, and in 1654–6 the Great Park and Worcester House were purchased by Colonel Thomas Pride, who died in 1658 at Worcester House, the house in the Great Park. Who were they?



Lambert (top left) seen as a dashing hero; probably more Royalist than radical; hobbies included gardening and needlepoint; once escaped from the Tower by climbing down an improvised rope. Lilburne: leveller, radical, unrepentant and determined that his men should be paid what they justly fought for. Pride, (right) shown on a satirical playing card made by somebody devoted to the Royalist cause: "simpleton drayman", survivor, fighter for freedom of religious expression, "wide boy". How much is heresy? How do they compare to politicians in our lifetime?



1629, 1630, and 1632. Eventually, it fell into the hands of the Commonwealth; the exiled son and heir of Charles, Charles II, would not take the throne until the Restoration in 1660. During the Commonwealth, the palace was at first leased to Algernon Sidney for £150 per annum. Oliver Cromwell's Government soon afterwards assigned the whole place to Lilburne's regiment, then in Scotland, as security for the men's pay.

So was "Worcester Park House" once the home of English Civil War Colonel Thomas Pride? No - or really "no not quite" as the Taylor family, gunpowder manufacturers, took over the Great Park and decided that a new house was needed. Down the hill that we call Grafton Road and the Avenue - on the site behind Cromwell Road and Old Malden Lane - a house of splendour would eventually appear.<sup>1</sup> (It was said that Pride's house had barrels of rather fine liquor in the cellar when it was cleared)

So who was Colonel Thomas Pride?

At 7 a.m. on 6 December 1648 several regiments were posted in the precincts of parliament. Pride stood in the lobby with his guard, ready to execute the operation which has become associated with his name. The Council of Officers had ordered him to 'purge' the Long Parliament of those members who were obstructing the army in its desire to bring Charles I to trial. Altogether 186 members were 'secluded' or prevented from taking their seats in the Commons. A further forty-five were sent to prison. Out of a total of 471 MPs, only seventy-one continued into Westminster Hall on the path that would bring the king to trial and execution. Preventing members from entering and placing others under arrest, Pride was ignoring the parliamentary independence that the civil wars had been fought to preserve. The truncated 'Rump' Parliament that resulted was a poorer institution than anything the Stuarts could have come up with. Effectively, the 'purge' was a military coup<sup>2</sup>.

His occupation after the first Civil War (raising recruits, policing St. James's) had been largely logistical and administrative, so his background in trade had equipped

1. Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, retrieved 29/07/2023: <https://eehe.org.uk/?p=60554>

2. <https://anglo-magyar-media.com/2020/11/13/regicides-rebels-revolutionaries-november-1648-october-1649-from-prides-purge-to-the-leveller-mutinies-in-england/> retrieved 16/10/2025

DEATH WARRANT OF KING CHARLES I<sup>3</sup>

Listed in the order that their names were signed.

- |                           |                         |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. John Bradshaw          | 16. Peter Temple †      | 31. Henry Marten †        | 46. John Alured              |
| 2. Lord Grey of Groby     | 17. Thomas Harrison †x  | 32. Vincent Potter †      | <b>47. Robert Lilburne †</b> |
| 3. Oliver Cromwell        | 18. John Hewson †e      | 33. Sir William Constable | 48. William Say †e           |
| 4. Edward Whalley †e      | 19. Henry Smith †       | 34. Richard Ingoldsby †   | 49. Anthony Stapley          |
| 5. Sir Michael Livesey †  | 20. Peregrine Pelham    | 35. William Cawley †e     | 50. Sir Gregory Norton       |
| 6. John Okey †x           | 21. Richard Deane       | 36. John Barkstead †x     | 51. Thomas Chaloner †e       |
| 7. Sir John Danvers       | 22. Robert Tichborne †  | 37. Isaac Ewer            | 52. Thomas Wogan †e          |
| 8. Sir John Bourchier †   | 23. Humphrey Edwards    | 38. John Dixwell †e       | 53. John Venn                |
| 9. Henry Ireton           | 24. Daniel Blagrove †   | 39. Valentine Walton †e   | 54. Gregory Clement †x       |
| 10. Sir Thomas Mauleverer | 25. Owen Rowe †         | 40. Simon Mayne †         | 55. John Downes †            |
| 11. Sir Hardress Waller † | 26. William Purefoy     | 41. Thomas Horton         | 56. Thomas Waite †           |
| 12. John Blakiston        | 27. Adrian Scrope †x    | 42. John Jones †x         | 57. Thomas Scot †x           |
| 13. John Hutchinson †     | 28. James Temple †      | 43. John Moore            | 58. John Carew †x            |
| 14. William Goffe †e      | 29. Augustine Garland † | 44. Gilbert Millington †  | 59. Miles Corbet †x          |
| <b>15. Thomas Pride</b>   | 30. Edmund Ludlow †e    | 45. George Fleetwood †    |                              |

† Still living at Restoration

e Escaped abroad

x Executed

Robert Lilburne, brother of radical Leveller John Lilburne<sup>4</sup>, was imprisoned for life at Drake island, Plymouth, for life, along with Lambert (commuted from death sentences).

I wonder if they got on...

him well. The early 1650s saw Pride begin to distancing himself from active military service.

Pride was now one of the burgeoning “middle class” looking for personal wealth and respectability. In 1650 he purchased his “country house” (Cuddington was certainly countryside in those days). Parliament had taken control of Crown lands following the abolition of monarchy.

The larger estate leased as ‘Nonsuch Great Park’ became Pride’s purchase. He secured the lease against the arrears of pay due to his regiment. He payed his dues to his regiment (soldiers’ wages) through the profit earned from the estate. The idea that he had taken up residence in a “palace” at Nonsuch begun with a satire from 1680: “I die here in my own house at Non-such. It was the king’s house, and Queen Elizabeth love this above all her houses”. A Regicide who had grown wealthy enough to live like royalty was too obvious a target for the Royalist satirists to miss. Pride was not living in

Tudor splendour but in a new, regular family house.

The Great Park and the Surrey suburb that was eventually built over it retains the same name. Worcester House - named by the then keeper, the Earl of Worcester, was a modern and expensively built residence (entirely of brick and with a tile roof) three storeys and a cellar, with five bedrooms. This was to be the Pride family home during the 1650s. The estate - including house, outbuildings and deer park - was valued at just over £4,200.

The park keeper, Charles Kirke, received compensation for the loss of his job when Pride took over the running of the estate. Kirke was granted a portion of the land, Great Park Meadow, worth £110 a year (although Pride reserved the right to any wood growing there) Kirke, whose father had been Gentleman of the Robe, was a staunch Royalist, yet treated better under the Commonwealth. At the Restoration the property returned to his keepership, then passed again into private hands and Kirke lost his position again.

Worcester Park was conveniently close to Pride’s Surrey breweries, six miles away at Kingston-upon-Thames.

3. The Bristol Radical History Group <https://www.brh.org.uk> retrieved 20/10/2025

4. British Civil War Project <https://bcw-project.org.uk/biography/regicides-index> 20/10/2025

The regicide document: Charles I's death warrant. Within days, he was beheaded.



Aside from the business opportunities, the Prides may have been attracted to the area because of its reputation for religious separatism, the town described at this time as a ‘hotbed of radicals’.

When the Quaker preacher Edward Burroughs was tried for libel at Kingston in 1658, he announced to the court that he wished Pride could have been in attendance as the Colonel was a sober man who would have favoured his cause.

Worcester House was a show-piece for Thomas Pride’s “country squire” aspirations. Visitors would be greeted by mementoes of his military career - in the main hall of the house hung a musket, a half-pike and a brace of pistols, as well as an antique two-handed sword. As well as reminding guests of his previous military career, Pride showed off that he was a cultured gentleman; a painted virginals in the dining room, a striking clock

in the hall, with each bedroom carefully and distinctly furnished as the “red, yellow and blue chambers”. It is telling, given the lingering rumours of Pride’s illiteracy, that there was not a single book listed among the house contents when he died.

A survey carried out in 1650 numbered 6,000 trees in the park. Pride had felled two-thirds of these and sold them to the navy for ship building.

Over the next few years Pride would systematically strip Worcester Park of anything that would make money - ploughing land for agricultural use. His drive for profit led to Worcester Park becoming a working farm as much as a comfortable country estate.

Not everything was sacrificed to the axe or plough, though: when, in 1851, the Pre-Raphaelite artists Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais rented the dilapidated buildings of Worcester Park Farm as their base, Hunt noted a “glorious avenue of elms” along the drive.

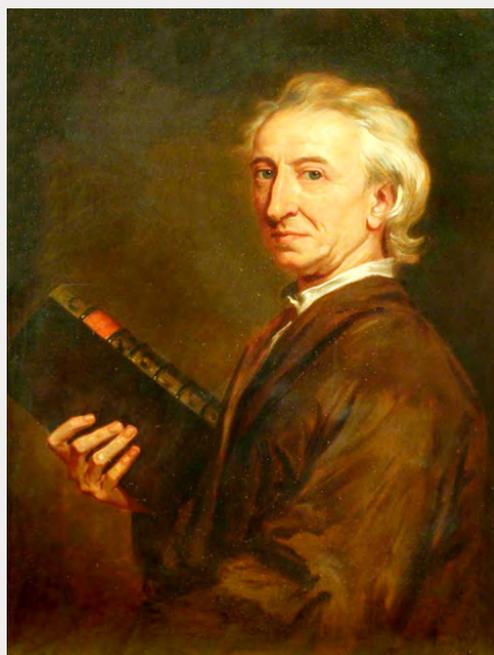
Pride’s breweries were not far away, in Kingston. Aside from his business interests, he stood for election in Reigate, December 1656. He was already the Sheriff of Surrey

The diarist John Evelyn was born into landed gentry with royalist sympathies. John's brother, Richard, lived with his family in Woodcote, Epsom and is buried at St Martin of Tours Epsom.

He was a friend of Lord Berkely and often visited him at Nonsuch. His 1661 publication, *Fumifugium*, condemned "aer and smoak" pollution from coal fires in London and he argued for the mass plantation of trees to clean the air.

Three years later he published *Sylva*, a detailed study of trees and tree cultivation in Britain and Ireland. It explained the choice of seed and the best conditions for successful germination. It also offered advice on such issues as tree diseases, pruning, and how to fell and season timber.

Evelyn himself claimed to have written *Sylva* for purely practical reasons. The recent Civil War between supporters of the king and parliament had led to extensive deforestation, as trees were either felled for military purposes or sold off for ready cash, so fresh supplies of timber were urgently needed for shipbuilding. On the title page, Evelyn represented his work as responding to "Certain Queries" propounded by "The Principal Officers, and Commissioners of the Navy"<sup>3</sup>.



and was embarrassed that he would have to return himself at the declaration of votes (so he didn't).

He held some belligerence toward the "Lord Protector"-as Royalist factions were urging Cromwell to take the crown, knowing that this act would cite another rebellion.

Between April 1657 and the end of June, Pride sat on twelve parliamentary committees. Did

he have a genuine interest in the constitution? Some. But he was more concerned with local matters. He attended the hearing of the "Immoderate Living Bill" to curb those living in luxury that they had no means to pay for (cheeky!). He was also present as a teller when the house voted to reduce the excise on beer (he was already supplying his own booze to the armed forces). On the 5th of May he



had voted to curb the building of houses in the suburbs of London. He had been called "a buffoon"; he had peculiarities of speech, teased behind his back for saying "wops" instead of "wasp"<sup>1</sup>. He apparently didn't read. Pro-Royalist jibes, satires and insults followed him for years beyond his death.

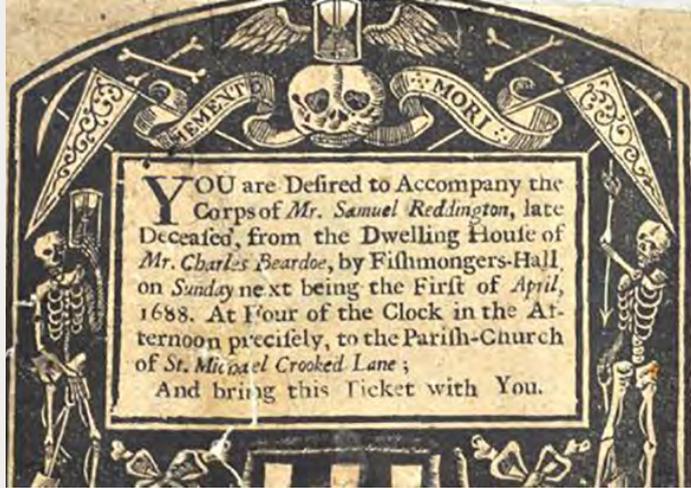
On the 23rd of October, 1658, Colonel Thomas Pride died. He had a history of urinary obstruction - perhaps stones, prostate cancer

or both. His will was hastily drawn up, just eleven days before:

***I Thomas Pride of Worcester House in the County of Surrey*** being under the chastisement of the Lord, yet of perfect memory (blessed be my God for it) considering the frailty of mankind and the uncertainty of my abode in this world; here make this my last will and testament in manner and forme following.  
*Imprimis I bequeath my soule into the hands of my pretious Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, being p[er]swaded by the faith he hath wrought in me, that he will wash it throughly from*

1. From Cromwell's Buffoon: The Life And Career Of The Regicide, Thomas Pride 15 May 2017 by Robert Hodgkinson
2. From the Public Records Office
3. <https://eehe.org.uk/76835/john-evelyn-diarist/> retrieved 18/10/2025

A puritan funeral was immediate and without ceremony, “superstitious kneeling and praying to the body” and “singing” are to be “laid aside”. Look at this eerie example of an invitation - more like a Halloween Party! Some were buried in a shroud without a casket. Thomas Pride may have been buried in a simple cloth. The wealthier would have materials saved so that a box could be made. But think about his aspirations, his decoration of Worcester House, the muskets in the hall. Surely he would have gone for something smarter? I also think that his grave was unmarked - as the King’s men could not find him<sup>1</sup>.



*its defilements and p[re]sent it to his Father and my Father as his owne puchas.*

*Item I bequeath my bodie to the dust from whence it came to {may.} {..} its sleeping {ous.}untill the glorious day of appearance, being assured that in the meritts of Jesus Christ in my flesh I shall see God.*

*Item I give unto my sonne Thomas five pounds.*

*Item I give unto my faithfull and loving wife Four hundred pounds a yeare, to be levied out of the rents and improvements of my parke, which so farr as {.....} her satisfaction in the said summe of four hundred pounds I give into her hands and possession by these p[re]sents for her security and revenue during her natural life and no longer.*

***Item I give unto my sonne William; And to my sonne Samuell, and each of their heirs and assignees the residue of the rents growing out from my parke, or which by the best improvement may growe out therefrom, during the said naturall life of their mother my wife Elizabeth Pride; To be equally and iustly divided between them and each of them...***

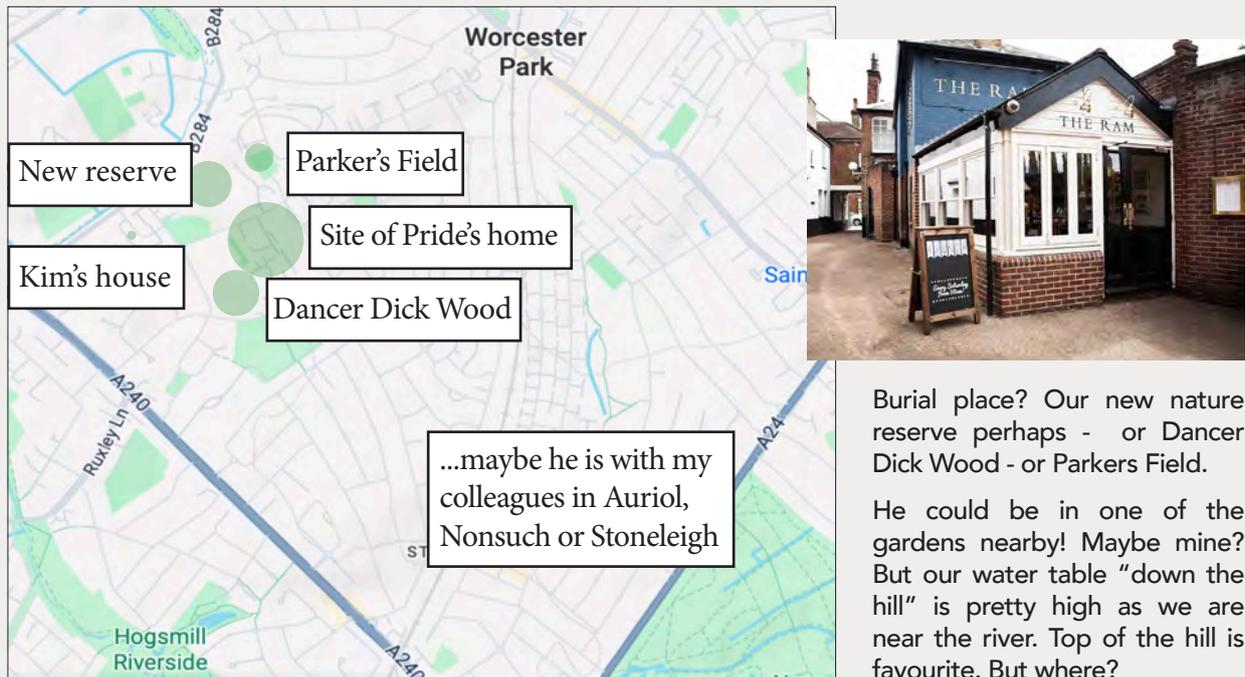
It is known that once all the debts had been paid, he had certainly been living above his means; some are outstanding to this day. ***(I have included the entire will at the end of this section)***

He was buried at his home in Nonsuch on November the 2nd. Where exactly? We do not know. No church in the area bears any record. How far do you transport a body from the death place? I would say in this case, not far at all. My suspicions are that our friend is hidden away in Cuddington somewhere - perhaps on our new reserve. However, he could have been taken by dray-wagon to Kingston...or to the grounds of Nonsuch Palace? Cromwell made a donation toward repairs to St Mary’s Church in nearby Long Ditton - could he be there? In reality, he could be buried anywhere from the site of the palace, across the Cheam, or Stoneleigh, Auriol, East Ewell...I guess we will never know.

A posthumous execution order was declared in parliament. On the 30th of January 1660, the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, Bradshaw and Pride were to be dragged from their graves and hung at Tyburn before being beheaded and thrown into a pit.

Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw were easy - they were resting in Westminster Abbey. But where was Thomas? Rumours now abound: “He is too smelly” (poor Bradshaw

1. History of Death in the 17th Century by Ben Norman



Burial place? Our new nature reserve perhaps - or Dancer Dick Wood - or Parkers Field.

He could be in one of the gardens nearby! Maybe mine? But our water table "down the hill" is pretty high as we are near the river. Top of the hill is favourite. But where?

Where is he? The area of the Great Park today, with an image of the possible site of Pride's Kingston "Berehouse".

certainly was as he had not been embalmed, as Cromwell had), he is "Too far decomposed" then finally "He could not be found".

George Evelyn's Diary reads: *This day (O the stupendous and inscrutable judgments of God!) were the carcasses of those arch-rebels, Cromwell, Bradshawe (the judge who condemned his Majesty), and Ireton (son-in-law to the Usurper), dragged out of their superb tombs in Westminster among the Kings, to Tyburn, and hanged on the gallows there from nine in the morning till six at night, and then buried under that fatal and ignominious monument in a deep pit; thousands of people who had seen them in all their pride being spectators.*

How different to Cromwell's funeral procession of full honours. These were brutal times; the fate of their fellow regicides were similar; the difference being that these poor men were still alive. A lucky few on King Charles II's wanted list escaped abroad.

It is my mission to find the burial place. Or at least make some mark that he was here - he was a Cuddingtonian!

Whatever has been written about Thomas, an ordinary boy who grew up to be the man who threw out parliament, he was like any other really. Who wouldn't stand up for what he or she believes? Which one of us would not take a chance on a business opportunity if it presented itself to be a legal option? My sadness regarding his destruction of woodland - that was in his ownership - comes from the perspective of a woman who is an active conservationist, with a passion for biodiversity, benefited with a decent education. I cannot despise a man who, despite regularly standing in mixed congregations of Baptists and Separatists, believed that a man's soul was between the man and God only. He liked his material things - don't many of us?

The son of a Somerset Yeoman and lowly apprentice, a man who by all account made decent beer from the waters of the then pristine Hogsmill. Next time you are in the Hogsmill Tavern, or the Wheatsheaf, or perhaps the Ram in Kingston (possible site of his "Berehouse") - raise a glass and drink a toast: "to the man they couldn't hang!"

At the Restoration, Nonsuch House and Parks were restored to Queen Henrietta Maria. In 1663 the reversion of part of the estate (under the name of Nonsuch Great



Which one is Barbara?

Of all her portraits, few show her as simply an attractive young woman. Instead, she was shown in the role of a seductress; a "scourge"; a "curse" to the king; "wanton and lustful".



Stories and prints at the time were designed as a draw-fire to my mind. What better way to divert the critical eyes of those suspicious of poor Catherine, "the Catholic queen"!

Park or Worcester Park, land called the Great Park Meadow, and the mansion-house called Worcester House) was leased by Charles II for a term of 99 years to Sir Robert Long, his late companion in exile, and at this date Auditor of the Receipt.

One of the conditions of the lease was that Sir Robert should from time to time convert

To decipher		A.	B.	C.	D.
1	4. 32	12.	30.	44.	52.
2	9. 33	13.	31.	45.	53.
3		14.	335.	336.	337.
4	Huls. 34				
5	35		320		
6	36				
7	w. 37	An			62.
8	38	and			63.
9	39	as			64.
10	i. 40	at			65.
11	41	ar.			66.
12	42	am.			67.

part of the premises into pasture without destroying the trees and bushes (HURRAH!) so that the same might become fit for deer in case the king wanted to restore it as a fine hunting ground (BOO! But they didn't have

the excellent Radfords' Butchers just up the road in Stoneleigh so fair's fair).

During the plague year of 1665 Nonsuch Palace was fitted up temporarily for the offices of the Exchequer. In 1670 Sir Robert Long pleaded for another life in his lease, at the same time representing that during the late disturbed times the site had been converted into tillage, the wood all down, and that he, Sir Robert, had compounded with the queen for her interest, bought out the keepers, and paid £2,500 for repairs of the house.

Sir Robert Long died in 1673, and his will mentions that he settled his lease on his nephew. But in 1670 the palace and both parks were bestowed by Charles II on Viscount Grandison and Henry Brounker, in trust for Barbara Villiers, in that year created Baroness Nonsuch and Duchess of Cleveland

Barbara was, of all the king's mistresses, a true character in her own right - by all accounts a great beauty, a party girl and a survivor; her family's fortunes having been lost. Her father had been killed in the English Civil War.

**Left: Robert Long's "cypher" - a code he used during the civil wars. His callsign was "295".**



From the collection of Roy Hellings: postcards featuring views of Worcester Park House

She was a keen card player - not terribly good as she began pulling panels and windows from Nonsuch Palace to pay off her gambling debts. The park became divided up into farms. Barbara produced six children (none from her husband) - who were acknowledged by King Charles II and given various titles. She apparently sneaked into Hampton Court Palace to give birth to her first child - the king's - while he was honeymooning with his bride, Catherine of Braganza.

Barbara was made Lady of the Bedchamber to Catherine, who she openly hated. The feeling was mutual.

Far from being broken hearted when the king took a younger mistress, she enjoyed the attentions of whoever she fancied. It is thought that Barbara's last child was



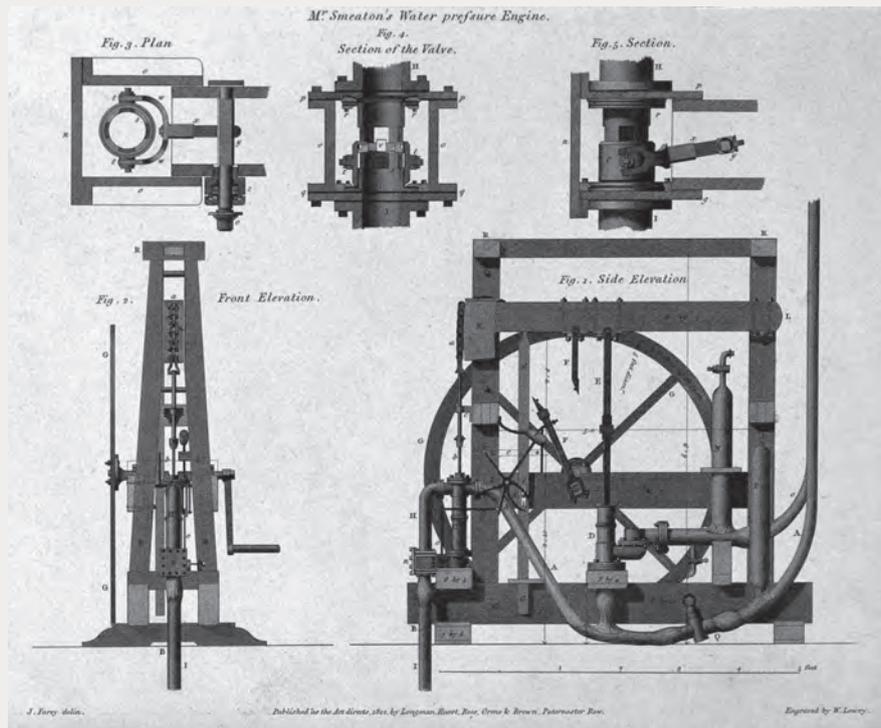
fathered by a Churchill, one of her second cousins. She also enjoyed the rope acrobat, Jacob Hall (pictured), as her lover for a while. Jacob was a favourite of the king of France, as well as Charles II - and Samuel Pepys.

Fecund, flirty and fun, Barbara certainly caught the attention of Pepys, who wrote "I know her to be a whore". He made regular rides across the Great Park (from the inns of Epsom where he stayed) "with my little dog"; I think he was as obsessed with her as all the lads. Historical accounts

are often judgemental - particularly on ladies.<sup>1</sup> Queen Catherine of Braganza, Charles' bride, did not get off lightly either: "Catholic!" - "BARREN!".

In 1710 the parks were held by Charles, Duke of Grafton, grandson of the duchess, whose son in 1731 sold Worcester Park to John Walter, his former steward. John Walter died in 1745, and was succeeded by his son George, afterwards knighted. The latter left two daughters, one of whom died single in 1749, while

1. Ravenous: A Life of Barbara Villiers: by Andrea Zuvich



1.

the other married a Reverend Clarke, who sold to a Mr. Taylor, from whom it passed to William Taylor, who died in 1764.

Mr. Taylor set up here a large gunpowder factory. His heir, William Taylor, built a new house, called Worcester Park House, in 1797. The property divided. Worcester Park House became the residence of a Miss Wheeler.<sup>2</sup>

Just across the lane from the reserve stands the Taylor (no relation) Wimpey development. You may remember my last report concerning the Cotswold Archaeology excavation of the John Smeaton built mill workings. This was the business interests of the Taylor family<sup>3</sup>

*Worcester Park Powder Mills (Surrey HER Monument 1078) were the first authorised Malden gunpowder mills in England. They were licensed to the Evelyns and Hill in 1588-9. There were two wheels, each driving two mills at the Malden Mills, Long Ditton.*

William Taylor Senior, gunpowder manufacturer, died in 1764. William Taylor Junior took over the mills on reaching the age

of 21 in 1774.

An example of an entry in “The Catalogue of Old Engines”:

428. William Taylor, Malden (N). Jun., Nov. 1810. 5 items. 14 horse power double-acting crank engine, with 20¾ inch cylinder, 4 foot stroke, parallel motion, cast iron beam, cast iron connecting rod.

*Reverse plan and sections of the engine and boiler houses and boilers; sheet of sketches of steam pipe, shaft etc. and notes on the engine sent to the Foundry, Nov. 1810. All the drawings except the last item bear letter codes.*

*Original Portfolio or ‘Book’ No. 627. Catalogue of Old Engines p. 114.*

*For William Taylor. Gun powder mill, Malden, near Kingston upon Thames.*

*See also: 4/93 (Engine Order Book No. 7).*

In 1809 Worcester Park was acquired by a grandson - another William Taylor. He used a mill on the banks of the Hogsmill River to continue the manufacture of gunpowder, which had been carried out on and off in the area for several centuries. Frederick, his son born in about 1802, took over the mills. Frederick had a twin, Barrington. His life was interesting too. The Grave of

1. [heritagecalling.com](http://heritagecalling.com): hydraulic-Smeaton-Pump-public-domain image retrieved 18/10/2025

2. <https://eehe.org.uk/29905/worcesterparkhouse/> retrieved 17/10/2025



The birthplace of a brilliant man. Plenty of people are born in car parks and survive to tell the tale - but this is the *site* of Warrington Taylor's birthplace. Dorset House is on the right (image from Epsom and Ewell History Explorer<sup>1</sup>).

the Reverend Barrington Taylor is in St Giles and St George church burial ground, Ashted, Surrey, England. Barrington served as curate for 46 years and also ministered to residents in the Epsom Union Workhouse from 1840-66. In the 1881 Census, residents of the workhouse are listed. The youngest inmate was a girl, surname Childs, just one month old. The oldest: surname Gadd, a former farm labourer aged 96.

Frederick Taylor's children were born at the doctor's house - Dorset House, Ewell Village. Recognize the name? It is now a car park; it makes me sad to think that the lovely old walls are all that remain. Sadder still that his brilliant second son, Warrington, a highly skilled and complicated boy, did not make old bones. He was probably the most pivotal figure in the Arts and Crafts movement in England, taking over the business management of the William Morris Company. Born on 25 August 1835 in Ewell, Surrey, Warrington was the second son

of Frederick and Frances Mary Taylor. His parents were both from affluent families: his father, Frederick, was the second son of William Taylor of Worcester Park, Surrey. His mother, Frances Mary, was the only child of Daniel Richard Warrington of Waddon, Croydon.

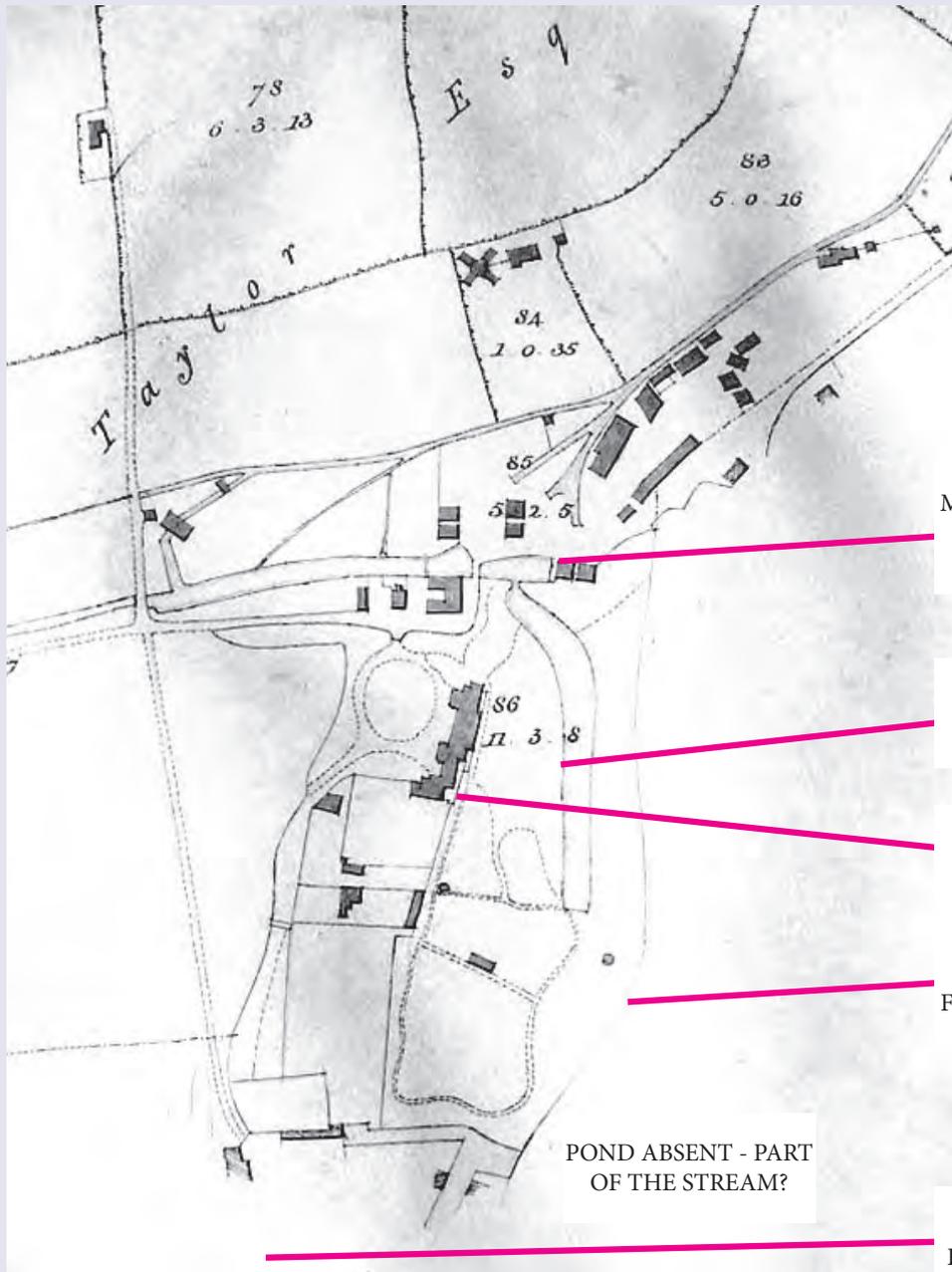
William Taylor Junior (Warrington Taylor's grandfather) had taken over the running of the mills. In 1797 he built a mansion on the land - Worcester Park House. After the death of his father, Frederick took over the running of the mills until they closed in 1854 following an explosion.

During the 1840s Frederick was a member of several management committees for newly formed independent railways across the country. Interestingly, the name "Taylor" survived in the area in Taylor's Shrubbery, a large wood in Kingston Road, Ewell, situated on either side of Salisbury Road.

Warrington joined his older brother at Eton College in 1848; his father and grandfather as former pupils. Two years later he was sent to school in Germany. He wrote much later to his friend, the architect Edward Robson about the free thinkers there and discussed recordings of

CONTINUES ON PAGE 19

*Coloured map, bottom right:* Tolworth, anciently a detached part of Long Ditton parish, sits on the Hogsmil; Taylor’s Mill was “Malden Mill, Long Ditton”. St John’s at Old Malden is there. Epsom Downs is called “Banstead Downs”. Worcester House is marked. Gunpowder manufacture was the industry of the area of the Hogsmil that makes up our new nature reserve. Previously, the Long Ditton branch of the Evelyn family (descendants of George Evelyn, who was granted a monopoly for manufacturing gunpowder in England by Queen Elizabeth I around 1565) established gunpowder mills in Surrey. The mill at Long Ditton, on the Hogsmil, was successful; England had previously relied on imported gunpowder. A descendant was \*Sir Edward Evelyn, cousin of John Evelyn. John described him in 1685 as “an honest gentleman, much in favour with his Majesty”, and marks of the royal favour were apparent: *\*Edward Evelyn was knighted at Worcester Park, Surrey, on 13 September 1676, later created 1st Baronet Evelyn of Long Ditton on 13 February 1683 and made a deputy lieutenant of the county in the same year.*



MILL STREAMS & WORKINGS BECOME A WATERCRESS FARM<sup>1</sup>

FISH POND SEEMS TO BE REDUCED?

HOUSE EXTENDED?

COUNTY DRAIN (RIGHT) FORMERLY A STREAM (LEFT)

POND ABSENT - PART OF THE STREAM?

THERE APPEARS TO BE A POND (THIS AREA FLOODS)

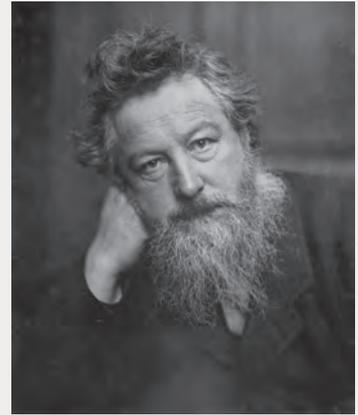
**ENCLOSURE MAP**

Enclosure began in the medieval period but the practice became particularly widespread in the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was established through local Acts of Parliament known as Enclosure Acts<sup>2</sup>.

1. With thanks to historian, archivist and Cuddington neighbour David Rymill <https://www.amazon.co.uk/stores/author/B0034PD672>  
 2. <https://eehe.org.uk/31214/gunpowdermills/>



William Morris (24 March 1834 – 3 October 1896) English textile designer, creative writer, visual artist and socialist activist (Colonel Thomas Pride would have been most enthusiastic, I'm sure, to employ him as an interior designer). His revival of the decorative arts, furniture and textiles and his contributions to the world of literature were astounding. He was born in Walthamstow, Essex, to a wealthy family. He came under the strong influence of medievalism while studying classics at Oxford University. Whilst studying there he met and married Jane Burden, and developed close friendships with the Pre-Raphaelite set, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Algernon Charles Swinburne, and Edward Burne-Jones, as well as with Neo-Gothic architect Philip Webb. Webb and Morris designed Red House in Kent where Morris lived from 1859 to 1865, before moving to Bloomsbury, central London. In 1861, Morris founded the Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. decorative arts firm with Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Webb, and others, which became highly fashionable throughout the Victorian period. In 1875, he assumed total control; the company was renamed Morris & Co<sup>1</sup>.



the composer Richard Wagner.

Warington became a pupil of the liberal Protestant Minister Rev. Jean Auguste Reville in Dieppe, France. It was common in Victorian England for second sons of the successful, land owning middle class to either to take Holy Orders or to join the army, with first-born sons destined to manage the family's estate. Warington chose to join the 29th Regiment of Foot as Ensign, by purchase, on 20 January 1854. He retired from service by the sale of his commission on 3 October 1856. On 23 June 1855 he was made a Lieutenant without purchase; this secured him a profit. In March 1856, he was teaching troops at the School of Musketry at Hythe in the use and practice of the Enfield Rifle before their embarkation for foreign service. Whilst Chatham Garrison in October 1856 he resigned from service. Reasons for early release usually involved illness or lack of suitability for regimental life. From his letters in later life to Edward

Robson and Philip Webb we know that Taylor was well read, bilingual and interested in architecture, theology, philosophy, music and the arts: it is likely that army life was not for him.

He does not appear in Worcester Park House records for the 1861 census taken on 7 April. He was back in England to marry twenty-one-year-old Fanny Florence Stent on 21 August 1861 in Kensington. Fanny was the eldest child of Henry Stent, a builder, and his wife Fanny. The Stents lived in Frame, Somerset, and had ten children. In a letter to Phillip Webb, Taylor described Fanny as 'an exquisite beauty with a heart full of love'<sup>2</sup>.

The Taylors settled in London. Warington had an admiration for the work of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. of Bloomsbury. Writing to Edward Robson he noted that 'the beauty of Red Lion woodwork is that you cannot say it has any style - it is original, it has its own style, it is in fact Victorian, it is individual'. Around this time Taylor began to make acquaintance with members of the Morris circle. At some time during this period, he became employed by Her Majesty's Theatre as a financial manager and accountant. He received complimentary

1. <https://bifmo.furniturehistorysociety.org/entry/morris-marshall-faulkner-co-later-morris-co-1861-1944>

2. A New Look at the Life of Warington Taylor by Fiona Rose <https://morrissociety.org/wp-content/uploads/23.1RoseTaylor69-82.pdf> retrieved 16/10/2025



Millais, Rossetti, Madox-Brown and Hunt. The sunsets and open skies that we enjoy in our borough became a real draw for the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. When we walk across our new nature reserve toward the river and join the river pathways, we will be walking in their footsteps. Their works shocked the art critics. Turner, who died in 1851, just as these lads got started, received flack too; Mark Twain recorded that "a Boston newspaper reported that one of his paintings reminded him of a tortoise-shell cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes".

tickets, which, on one occasion, he passed on to his friend, the Pre-Raphaelite artist, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882).

As an aside - it has been said that Rossetti never visited Cuddington, Ewell and the Hogsmill during Millais and Holman Hunt's time there - but he certainly did! I researched the diary entries from John Everett Millais memoirs:

*October 19th (Sunday).*

*Expected Rossetti, who never came. Governor [his father] spent the day with us, saw Hunt's picture and mine, and was delighted with them. "November 9th, Sunday. - Whilst dressing in the morning saw F. M. (Ford Madox) Brown and William Rossetti coming to us in the avenue. They spent the day with us. All disgusted with the Royal Academy election. They left us for the train, for which they were too late, and returned to sleep here. Further chatted and went to bed".*

Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Warington Taylor had bonded over their love of the work of William Morris. I thought it highly unlikely that with the Hogsmill River being the site of Warington's Father's mill - and also where

fellow Pre-Raphaelite artists were hard at work - it was highly unlikely that they didn't drop in. Rossetti worked with William Morris on the decoration of two pieces which were sold at Christie's London in 1997 and are now at the Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware, USA.

Warington Taylor joined the company in 1865 to act as the firm's manager. He was aware of its furniture prior to this date as letters by him to the architect, Edward Robert Robson, preserved among Burne-Jones papers at the Fitzwilliam Museum, mentioning 'a jolly little round table at Morris' on six legs with trays underneath' and 'their new sideboard'. The latter could have been the sideboard designed by Webb, several examples of which survive including the two-door version, one of which survives at Kelmscott Manor and another one, which was part of commission (1864-65) by Myles Birket Foster for The Hill, Witley, Surrey, which also included a music stand. Ford Madox Brown designed Sussex round seated chairs. So how did Warington Taylor become part of the success that was the William Morris Company? In early 1865 he was in dire straits as he had lost his job at



William Morris Co HQ in Red Lion Square London (photo: Cove Collective)

the theatre. After returning from his travels around the world, he inherited money for the second time in his life and quickly spent it.

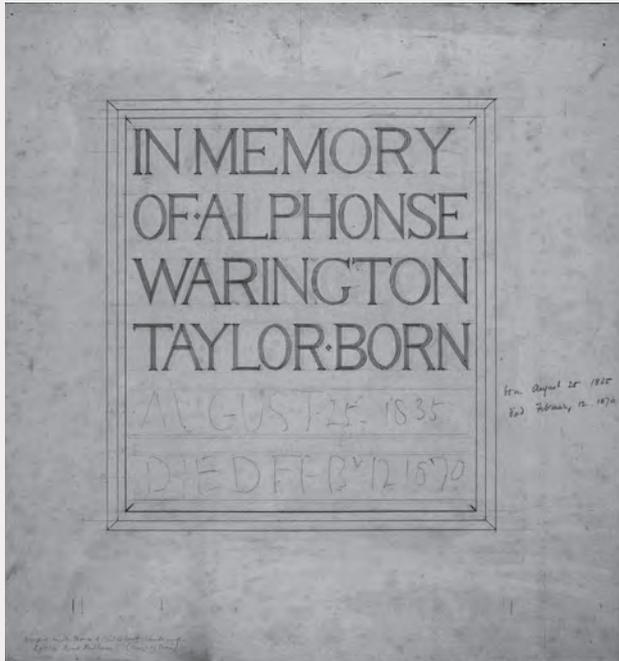
It seems likely that during the years after his marriage and before his engagement at the William Morris company, in his enthusiasm for the arts he spent beyond his means. Warington had fallen out with his father so there was no help from his family. Aside from his spending habits, his father did not approve of his choice of wife.

Robson, a friend, moved to Liverpool in 1864 to become the city's architect and surveyor and whilst visiting London during the early months of 1865: "I met AWT walking like an absent-minded beggar in Piccadilly. He had lost his position at the theatre and was in direst want, his wife at home starving." William Morris was not prepared to see this happening to a man he had come to respect and know as a friend; he offered him a job.

Within a few months of Warington joining the firm, his only child, three-year-old Maud,

described as 'much loved', died of Whooping Cough on 6 May 1865. Despite his grief, he took up his appointment at Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. Within a few weeks he was keeping the accounts of the firm "like a dragon", according to staff there. He attended to the orders of customers, and pushed Morris to be more organized and work at one thing at a time. He also felt that Morris was not charging enough, that some of the partners were unprofessional: neglecting deadlines and not investing enough. Despite his personal financial mishaps, he was an excellent manager of the firm's fortunes. William and May Morris (his daughter) by their own admission were artists and not accountants; they also inferred that the firm would not have survived without Warington's sound business sense. His instinct for what we call today "on trend" was uncanny too. He knew beautiful furniture and fabric when he saw it. Function was high on his list: "furniture should be easily moveable".

He was instrumental in what was to become known as "The Morris Chair". This reclining chair was a furniture staple of the Firm until it closed its doors in 1940. Taylor found the prototype for the Morris Chair in the workshop of an old carpenter, Ephraim Colman, in Herstmonceux, Sussex. He sketched the chair and sent it to the designer



Warrington died, aged thirty-four, on 12 February 1870 at his home in Turnham Green. According to probate records he left 'effects under £6,000'. His funeral and other expenses of £89 19s were paid by the Firm and personally by Philip Webb. Webb designed Taylor's gravestone made of Portland stone. The original design, in the form of a working design for the stonemason, was made by Webb himself. It is now in the V & A, London.

*Burial Place: St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham*

*Architect: A.W.N. Pugin Original Date: 1847 Listed Grade II*

Webb who modified the design slightly. The Morris Chair would go on to become immensely popular; indeed, it would become an icon of the Arts and Crafts Movement and was copied by Liberty, Heal's, and by Frank Lloyd Wright and Gustav Stickley in the United States<sup>1</sup>.

Taylor was diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis sometime in 1865. He was a regular physical presence at Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. for at least the next two years. He spent the winter period recuperating on the south coast, and the rest of the time he was in London. It appears that Taylor was back in London by May 1867 as a letter to Webb, written on 17 May, is addressed from the Firm's address in Queen Square.

One evening, whilst walking for the bus, he bled from the mouth due to his violent cough. He wrote to Webb

*"I better not come to London any more nor leave home unattended. I was rather frightened. The feeling of dying in the streets is rather a violent shock - let Morris know this in a quiet way."*

On 30 June 1868 he wrote a frank letter to Webb explaining that his wife had been unfaithful to him with other lovers, and that she had left him. He reflected that it was his fault for being so engrossed in his work.

His wife, Fanny, eventually returned. Taylor knew he might easily have ended his days in the workhouse. His family stepped in to help, giving him an allowance of £150 per year. In his last letter to Robson, dated October 1869, Taylor wrote:

*"Many thanks for your kind note. As to myself I am one day very ill, the next a little easier - go from bed to sofa - it is long lingering, a sore trial to patience and perseverance. Sympathy my own friend is valuable and right good when subjected to will and duty. I hope and hope for the release of the soul from matter and for peace, rest - the peace I yearn for and fear for but hope - the one thing that holds one - hope".*

Six months and one day after Taylor died Fanny married again to a Walter Wieland, described as a gentleman on their marriage certificate. The 1881 census records her as living in a cottage in Millbrook, Hampshire, with a gardener from Hammersmith, nine

1. <https://bifmo.furniturehistorysociety.org/entry/morris-marshall-faulkner-co-later-morris-co-1861-1944>



Warrington Taylor spotted a rustic, prototype chair with a similar adjustable back at a carpenter's workshop in Herstmonceaux, Sussex, run by Ephraim Colman.

He sent a sketch of the chair to Philip Webb, who then developed the design for the firm.

William Morris began producing the adjustable-back armchair around 1869; it continued to be produced for many decades.

The chair is known for its adjustable, reclining back<sup>1</sup>.

years her junior. Her death certificate is dated 9th August 1885, aged forty-four. The cause of death is listed as cirrhosis of the liver certified twelve years<sup>2</sup>.

So to recap: in about 1862 Worcester Park House was bought by Sir James Pennethorne. In the Taylors' time the estate comprised the house, stables and about 100 acres, but a lot of the land had been sold off by the time Pennethorne acquired the property. The land that makes up the new reserve, and the land around Linden Bridge School, the sports club and woodland opposite, land at Barrow Hill and Parker's Field with the newer houses in the vicinity of Royal Avenue, Drumaline Ridge, Grafton Park Road, Parklands Way, Cleveland Road and the closes attached to it were probably all part of it.

Thanks to my friend, the historian David Rymill, we will unpick that part of the puzzle next!

#### WORCESTER PARK HOUSE:

##### LATER YEARS AND EVENTUAL DECLINE

Mrs Portia Wheeler lived in the house with her (16!) children. Born in Palermo c.1814 she lived until her death with some of her unmarried children. There was a nurse in residence, five servants and a coachman living at the stables. She died at the house in 1889 but son Augustus, now a builder, stayed on with his single sisters. Augustus died in 1898. Portia died at Folkestone in 1906, followed by Ellen in 1910. In the 1911 census, Alice, Nina and Laura were still at Worcester Park House, now outnumbered by servants. The family story is told on the Epsom and Ewell History Explorer web at <https://eehe.org.uk/29905/worcesteparkhouse/> It is sad to note that the house fell into ruin when they died. Portia's daughters had loved to living there; they punted on the lake, held teas for the locals, rang a bell on the jetty to tell the resident swans "grub's up". They loved the nesting swallows and fed wild birds.

It had been a place of great joy, fondly remembered in David Rymill's books about the area.

1. <https://wmgallery.org.uk/object/adjustable-back-armchair/>

2. Retelling the Tale of Taylor: A New Look at the Life of Warrington Taylor by Fiona Rose <https://morrissociety.org/wp-content/uploads/23.1RoseTaylor69-82.pdf> retrieved 16/10/2025

## Photos from the 1950s: Charles E. Brown. Copyright of the RAF Museum

What followed over the years was documented in our local magazine, “The Cuddingtonian” over time: *“Most Cuddingtonians will have heard by this time that the magnificent view from Royal Avenue across country to Headley is sanctioned by the Ministry for preservation...this satisfactory end to persistent efforts by the Cuddington Residents’ Association is but another example of the importance of an organisation such as ours. It is over 21 years since founder members started a campaign to acquire the whole of Worcester Park House Estate as a public park. Its position was ideal for the purpose and the sloping ground with lake and Georgian mansion formed a lovely vista similar to the famous view from Richmond Hill. ...the amount of work put in on this particular project included photographs specially taken from a helicopter by Mr. Chas.*



*Brown, a founder member. The Mayors and town-planning committees of the three boroughs concerned were personally interviewed and at one time there was good hope of a joint purchase of the estate which lies on the three boundaries. Surbiton said the position was too far from their centre and later withdrew support, a reverse which finally killed the proposition. Incidentally the latter shortly afterward enthusiastically backed a Brands Hatch type of motor-cycling racing course on land*

*actually joining Worcester Park House when we successfully opposed this attempt to destroy our amenities with 50,000 spectators. hundreds of cars. stalls. noise, tiller and other disadvantages inseparable to crowds of this size.*

*Energetic support came from the Society for Preservation of Rural England and letters and photographs appeared in the National Press. The Georgian Society arranged a special visit to the house and later borrowed a portfolio of aerial photographs for her late Majesty's inspection. At a subsequent Public Inquiry also the Minister asked for copies*

### Development and Planning

The development of the houses in the Wates Estate off Grafton Road is nearly completed and two new roads on the estate have been named by the Local Authority as Parkland Way and Grafton Park Road. We are pleased to welcome the majority of house-holders as new Members of the Association.

as they were considered unique in showing the vast tide of building surrounding the district and there is no doubt whatever his decision to delay development was mainly due them."

Later on: "The plans for the special school have still to be cleared on points of detail but the Association is happy that the scheme is a good one..." Linden Bridge School has been a wonderful asset to neurodiverse young people - and also our community. Good planning made a positive contribution; the cutting (from the Cuddingtonian, above) is another example. It was these very residents and their successors who campaigned with us so hard for this beautiful new nature reserve.

What follows are documents that show how the possible repair of Worcester Park House was considered and abandoned. The first aerial image, from the 1930s, shows Delta Road and a newer house on the site of Worcester House. Worcester Park House is marked.



Photos from the 1930s: Copyright of the RAF Museum. Top: shows Cromwell Road running left to right. Bottom: the "triangle" at Royal Avenue, bottom right.





File No. 50/1/16,99 - 2890  
 Inspected 24th October, 1945. 76

Re: Worcester Park House, Worcester Park, Surrey.

I note in a letter from Mr. Toy, F.R.I.B.A., that he considers this house to be "a most valuable example of its period and if judiciously treated could be made serviceable with its main features preserved".

Personally I very much resent old and beautiful structures, soundly constructed, being demolished, but I am bound to believe that Jerry builders existed in those by-gone days as they do now.

I am asked to prepare a schedule of war damage and a cost of reinstatement, but where the dilapidations finish in this house is a difficult point to define.

The portion shaded red on the attached plan has been burnt out by incendiaries and would need reconstruction. The remaining portion of the building is of poor construction, the exterior walls being constructed of wood studs of various sizes, brick roged, lathed and rough cast on the outside and lath and plastered inside. Some of the laths and roughcast has fallen off and the old vent laths show rot. The back loggia circular columns have a 4" x 4" wood post in the centre and are cased with wood, some of which is sliding but not by a lot. The rafters and large wood dentils at eave level are rotten in parts and some of the dentils are loose. The window frames, very much out of square are much affected by old age but do not appear badly troubled by blast. Most of the glass is missing. The frame and large architrave of the door leading to one large room off the Hall is badly split and I was informed by the agent, Mr. Orrose, that this was war damage. This I cannot believe as these doors, heavier the supposed bomb are intact. Some of the chimney pieces are sliding but they have been removed too carefully to have gone by blast. I consider the war damage on the part of the house standing is very small indeed. The reconstruction is very poor and the whole place is in such a state that I do not consider it worth spending money on its renovation.

(Signed) H. Carter, Assessor.

30th October, 1945.

An assessor was engaged by the War Office to look at the bomb damage to the house on the 24th of October 1945. As you can see from his findings, the house was not salvageable. Perhaps an enthusiast with funds and access to the right help could have saved it, but wartime changes everything.

Thankfully, we have an archive of photographs to take us back to happier times. I am very lucky, once again, to have my friend David Rymill on hand with his wonderful archives. Over an afternoon tea, I scanned the photograph with my trusty Iphone and we were amused to find the cows (left). Perhaps the lovely summer teas made for Cuddingtonians of the day included jammy strawberry scones topped with home produced cream.

The correspondence regarding the damage to Worcester Park House continues over the page.

466/57  
28th June, 1946.

Ministry of Works  
Historic Buildings - Treasury Direction No.10.

Property Worcester Park House, Worcester Park Road, Worcester Park, Surrey.

Owners Trustees of John Dean, deceased, c/o Messrs. H.W. Croose and Company, 339 Putney Bridge Road, S.W.15.

Unit Dwelling House

Architectural Period The property is stated to be a good example of Regency building.

An application has been received on behalf of the owners that the payment to be made by the Commission should be one of cost of works in lieu of a value payment.

Serious damage was notified on 8th October, 1940 and the preliminary classification of the property is "total loss", the Assessor describing the property as an old and dilapidated mansion having no value as a habitation. The drainage system is understood to be of an obsolete type.

On 23rd February, 1944, Messrs. Croose and Farmer, acting for the freeholder, said it was proposed to demolish part of the structure considered to be dangerous. On 10th May, 1944, their successors in the matter, Messrs. H.W. Croose and Company, applied for a cost of works payment and suggested that the cost of reinstatement would not exceed the value when reinstated and on 7th November, 1944, the estimated cost of reinstatement was given by them as £2,000. On further consideration it was confirmed that the classification was "total loss", partly on account of dilapidations, and Messrs. Croose and Company, were informed that the classification remained unchanged.

Mr. S. Toy, the local architect of the area, wrote on 25th July, 1945, to say that the matter had been referred to him by the local Authority. Whilst he recognised the difficulty and expense that would be involved in putting the property in sound repair, he was opposed to its classification as a total loss. In his view the house is a spot valuable example of its period and, if judiciously treated, could be made serviceable with its main features preserved.

A copy of a report by one of the Commission's Assessors, Mr. H. Carter, is attached, together with a copy of his plan.

It is understood that your architect, Mr. Pritchard, considers that the property has some architectural importance and is capable of preservation.

There has been an informal suggestion that only the centre of the building should be reinstated and made habitable, and the Minister of Works is requested to indicate what part of the building, if any, is considered to be worthy of a cost of works payment. It is understood that it is intended to use the rebuilt house as a family dwelling house.

In the event of a cost of works payment being made it would be necessary for the War Damage Commission to agree with the owners what part of the damage was due to war damage and what part to dilapidations.

Public Address: "TRAVAUX, WIRE, LONDON."  
Telephone Number: RENDANCE 7611. Ext. 1501  
Your Ref. 466/57  
Our Ref. A.H.26/466734

MINISTRY OF WORKS  
AND BUILDINGS, Room 403,  
LAMBETH BRIDGE HOUSE,  
ALBERT EMBANKMENT,  
LONDON, S.E.1.

16 May, 1947

Dear Clarke,  
Worcester Park House

I am very sorry we have taken so long in replying to your letter and brief of 28th June last about this case, but we found it necessary to have unavoidably lengthy discussions with Planning on technical aspects of both the condition and architectural assessment of the building.

As the photographs that I enclose show, the house is a charming example of an early 19th century villa, dated from about 1810. The plan is good and the interior details are restrained and well designed, with careful and scholarly treatment of classical detail. Unfortunately the appearance of the house belies its construction, which is very shoddy indeed. For instance, although the exterior appears to be of stuccoed bricks, as one would expect in a small country house of this period, it is actually of timber framework filled with brick-nogging, laths and plaster. As a result of this kind of construction, a good deal more deterioration has undoubtedly set in during the last few years than would have occurred had the house been built of more solid materials. To a large extent the cost of any restoration of the house would, therefore, be due, not directly to war damage, but to the inferior standard of construction employed.

Our own view is that if the house were all that it appears to the eye to be, we should advise the use of the Treasury Direction. But, as this is not the case, we feel very hesitant about suggesting that public money should be spent on restoring a building that is constructed in such a shoddy fashion.

I enclose a copy of a letter from Planning, which shows that they advise the application of the Treasury Direction, subject to certain conditions. For our part we are rather puzzled to know how these conditions could be implemented, for although we are

bound to admit that restoration is practicable, we are doubtful of the propriety of matching the original work with repairs that are equally shoddy.

Would you let us have our photographs back in due course?

Yours sincerely,  
R. Miller

H.R.V. Clarke, Esq.,  
War Damage Commission,  
Devonshire House,  
Mayfair Place,  
Piccadilly, W.1.



 ROYAL FINE ART COMMISSION  
22A, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.1.

Yr. Ref. 466/57 July 9th, 1947.

Dear Fraser,

I am directed by the Chairman of the Royal Fine Art Commission to say that at a meeting of the Commission held on the 9th. July 1947 careful consideration was given to the merits of the design of Worcester Park House.

The Commission while bearing in mind the evident poor construction of the house and the bad state of repair it is in, not all due to war damage, nevertheless feel it their duty to judge the building on its architectural or historical importance. They feel in regard to the former that in general the design is finely proportioned and has a quality of detail which makes it a valuable example of the diminishing number of early nineteenth century Palladian Villa types of houses in the country. In particular the porticos and colonnade represent a particularly sensitive piece of design in the classical tradition.

For these reasons the Commission would deprecate the loss of a house of such marked quality of design and so well representing an important period in the history of building and therefore recommend that the main features should be preserved and a cost of works payment be approved for the purpose.

Yours sincerely,  
*A.B. Knapp-Ashe*  
Temp. Secretary

Sir Robert Fraser,  
War Damage Commission,  
Devonshire House,  
PICCADILLY, W.1.

25 October, 1948.

Dear Friend,  
Worcester Park House.

I am writing to confirm what I said on the telephone in answer to your letter of October 14th.

One of our architects visited the house on July 16th, 1948, about three weeks after the fire. He reported that the building had suffered very severely as a result; the whole roof was destroyed, large portions of the exterior walls had collapsed and the interior was gutted. The stone colonnade in front was intact, but some of the cornice had gone. The main entrance doorway was very little damaged. The two pedimented porticos of the end pavilion were entirely destroyed.

We were never much in favour of a cost-of-works payment, for though the house was of some architectural interest it was shoddily built. To-day, the scheme for restoration would mean almost complete rebuilding; technically there is just enough detail left to enable this to be done, but the result would no longer be an historic house, but only a reproduction. As a result, we cannot recommend the rebuilding of the house at public expense. (Our own estimate for this was not less than £20,000).

Yours sincerely,  
(A. RUTHERFORD DAVIS).

E. S. Frad, Esq.,  
Senior Assessor,  
War Damage Commission,  
59, Aden Street,  
Kingston-on-Thames,  
Surrey.

466/57 19th December, 1949.

Dear Sir,

Worcester Park House

The Commission wrote to you on 24th July, 1947, to the effect that they were prepared to exercise the discretion given to them by Treasury Direction to make a cost of works payment instead of a value payment in respect of the main features of the above property.

It now appears there was a civil fire in part of the main block of the property in June, 1948, which caused very extensive damage. The Commission are advised that the scheme for restoration of the property would now mean almost complete rebuilding, and that the result would no longer be a historic house but only a reproduction. In these altered circumstances the Commission consider

Yours sincerely,  
/that

Hammond J. Harvey, Esq., A.R.I.B.A.,  
69 St Leonards Court, A.R.I.C.S.,  
East Sheen,  
S.W.14.

that they should no longer agree to the application of the Treasury Direction and will instruct their Regional Office to proceed to determine the amount of a value payment for the building as a whole.

Yours faithfully,  
S. T. WILLIAMS  
for the Secretary.

Head,  
John Dean, deceased  
 (Worcester Park House, Ewell, Surrey)

You asked on the 24th April last whether we could give you any information about the classification of this property. The War Damage Commission have been in consultation with other departments and with the Royal Fine Art Commission and have now decided that they will make a cost of works payment in respect of the main features, that is to say, the centre block and the two side pavilions. The rest of the building qualifies for a partial value payment, if, indeed, there was any decrease in value caused by war damage. Although it is no doubt, so far as the Estate Duty Office is concerned, a matter of valuation, I think I ought to mention that the property was in a dilapidated condition before it sustained any war damage and the cost of works payment will naturally exclude the cost of any repairs attributable to dilapidations.

R. Mead, Esq.,  
 Estate Duty Office,  
 Rayners Lane,  
 Harrow,  
 Middx.

**HAMMOND J. HARVEY**  
 A.R.I.B.A. A.R.I.C.S., CHARTERED ARCHITECT AND SURVEYOR

8-10, KING STREET  
 HAMMERSMITH-W.6  
 28th September, 1950.

WAR DAMAGE COMMISSION  
 RECEIVED AND REGISTERED  
 29 SEP 1950

RI Vendor 3108  
 HJH/FEV.

The War Damage Commission,  
 Devonshire House, Mayfair Place,  
 Piccadilly, W.1.

Dear Sirs,  
 Reference: Worcester Park House. Your ref: 466/57.

Further to our telephone conversation today with Mr. Overed, please find enclosed herewith ex scale plans together with sketches showing how the elevations can be set out to incorporate the proposed reconstruction.

The enclosed are forwarded for you to form a basis for a discussion and if you are favourably disposed to same, then further details can be gone into.

Yours faithfully,  
 HAMMOND J. HARVEY  
 P.E. Vje.

**HAMMOND J. HARVEY**  
 A.R.I.B.A. A.R.I.C.S., CHARTERED ARCHITECT AND SURVEYOR

8-10, KING STREET  
 HAMMERSMITH-W.6

11th October, 1950.

WAR DAMAGE COMMISSION  
 RECEIVED AND REGISTERED  
 11 OCT 1950

RI Vendor 3108  
 HJH/FEV.

The War Damage Commission,  
 Devonshire House,  
 Mayfair Place,  
 Piccadilly, W.1.

Dear Sirs,  
 Re Worcester Park House, Your ref: 466/57.

Since writing you on the 6th instant I have received a communication from my clients surveyor informing me of details of the Notice for Compulsory Acquisition of the Property by the Surrey County Council.

Under the circumstances I presume Section 14 of the War Damage Act 1943 will come into operation, and that you will in due course proceed with the usual notices etc. for settlement of the Value for a Value Payment.

Whilst writing I must point out that the damage done by the fire in June 1948 was not sufficient to render the property unsuitable for a cost of works payment and that under any other circumstances this claim would still be pressed.

Yours faithfully,  
 H. J. Harvey

Telephone.  
 Putney 2533.  
 2534.  
 2535.

J. DEAN.  
 (C.B. DEAN.)  
 Universal Blind Contractor.  
 329, 331 & 333 Putney Bridge Road,  
 Putney, S.W. 15.

Ref. CBD.

Hammond J. Harvey, A.R.I.B.A., P.A.S.I.,  
 69 St. Leonards Court,  
 East Sheen.

Dear Sir,  
 re - Worcester Park House.

I would like to confirm that if the Property is restored, it is my intention to allow a member of my family, my eldest Son, an ex service man, to occupy a part, the remainder to be used as a Recreation Centre for the workers.

On my departure it is my intention to hand over to the Public Trust for the benefit of all.

Yours faithfully,  
 C. B. DEAN.

Some of you may remember Dean's Blinds? Their website say's "since 1894". I have contacted them.

DRAFT

466/57

Ministry of Works.

Historic Buildings - Treasury Direction No.10.

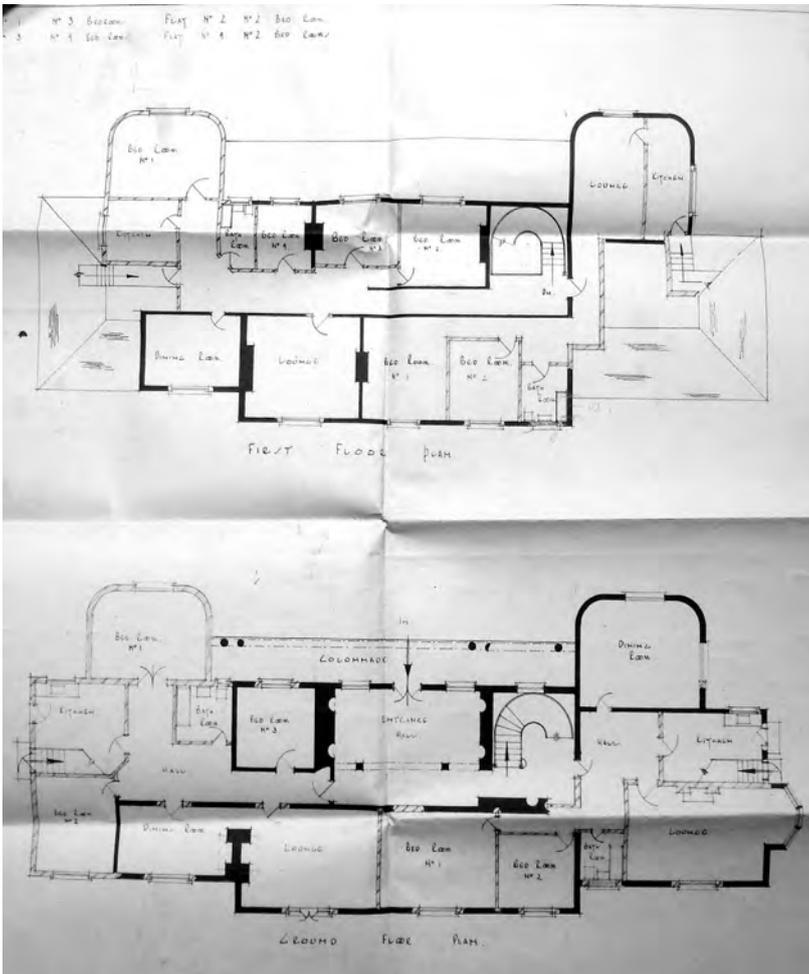
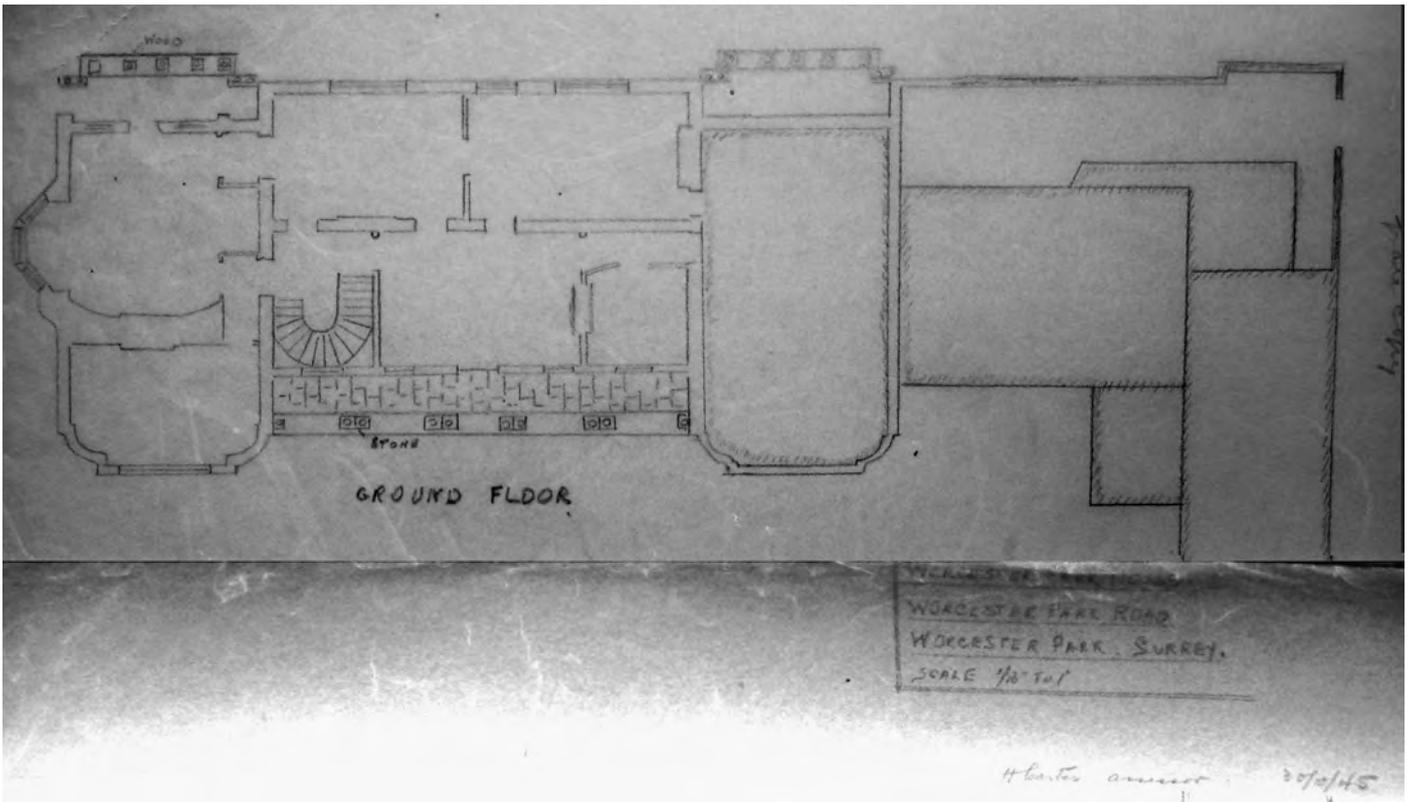
Property	Worcester Park House, Worcester Park Road, Worcester Park, Surrey.
Owners	Trustees of John Dean, deceased, c/o Messrs. H. W. Crosse & Co., 339, Putney Bridge Road, S.W.15.
Unit	Dwelling House.
Architectural Period	The property is stated to be a good example of Regency building.

An application has been received on behalf of the owners that the payment to be made by the Commission should be one of cost of works in lieu of a value payment.

Serious damage was notified on 8th October, 1940 and the ~~estimated cost of reinstatement was given as £10,107.~~ On preliminary ~~inspection~~ the classification of the property appeared doubtful but was eventually resolved as that of <sup>an</sup> "total loss", the <sup>assessor describing the</sup> property being <sup>as</sup> an old and dilapidated mansion <sup>and</sup> having no value as a habitation. <sup>The drainage system is understood to be of an obsolete type.</sup>

On 23rd February, 1944, Messrs. Grace & Farmer, acting for the freeholder, said it was proposed to demolish part of the structure considered to be dangerous. On 10th May, 1944 their successors in the matter, Messrs. H. W. Crosse & Co., applied for a cost of works payment and suggested that the cost of reinstatement would not exceed the value when reinstated and on 7th November, 1944 the estimated cost of reinstatement was <sup>by them</sup> given as £2,000. On further consideration it was confirmed that the classification was "total loss", partly on account of dilapidations, and Messrs. Crosse & Co., were informed that the classification remained unchanged.

Mr. S. Toy, the Panel Architect of the area, wrote on 25th July <sup>1945</sup> to say that the matter had been referred to him by the Local Authority. Whilst he recognised the difficulty and expense that would be involved in putting the property in sound repair, he was opposed to its classification as a total loss. In <sup>his</sup> <sup>view</sup> the house is a most valuable example



DRAFT

466/57

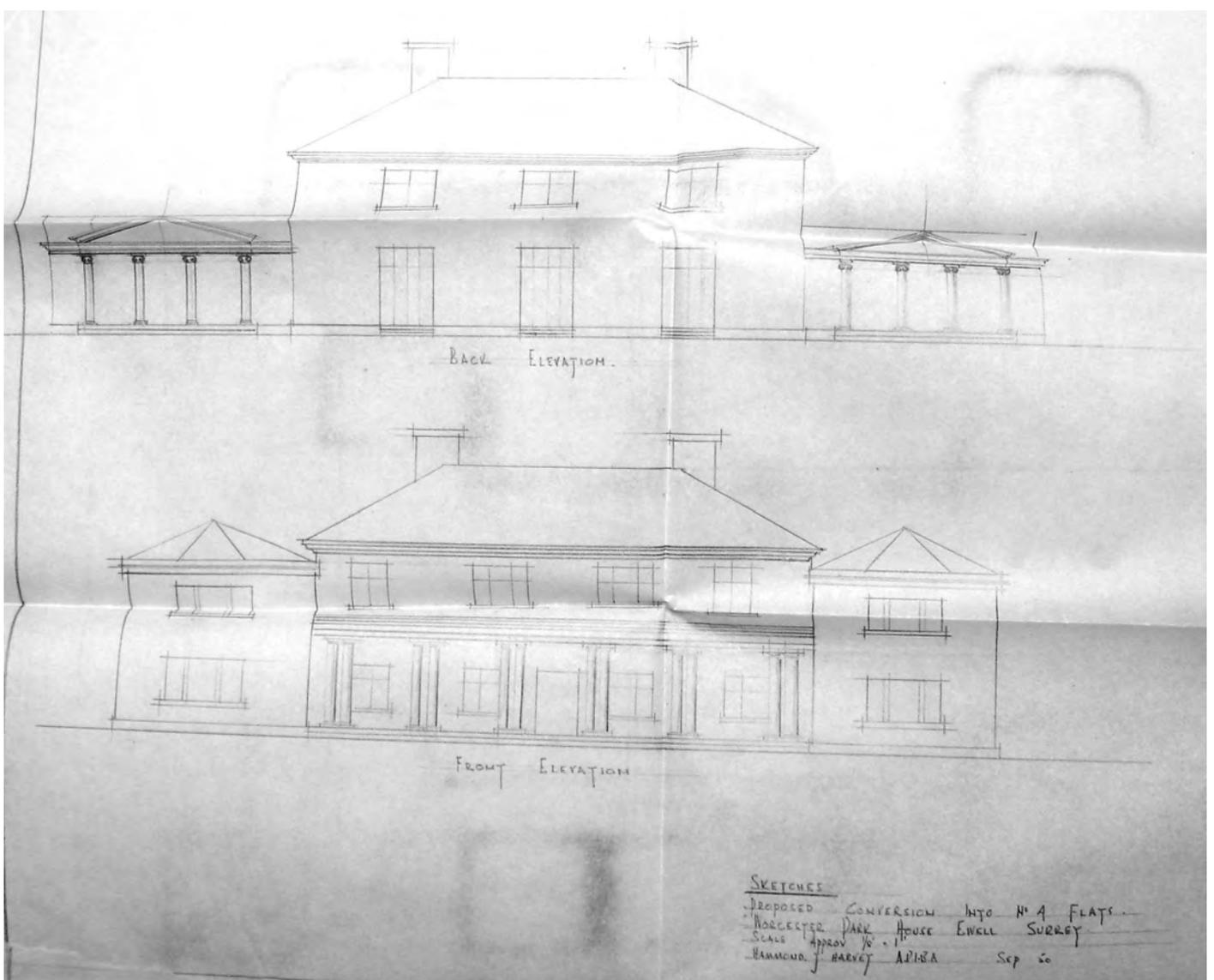
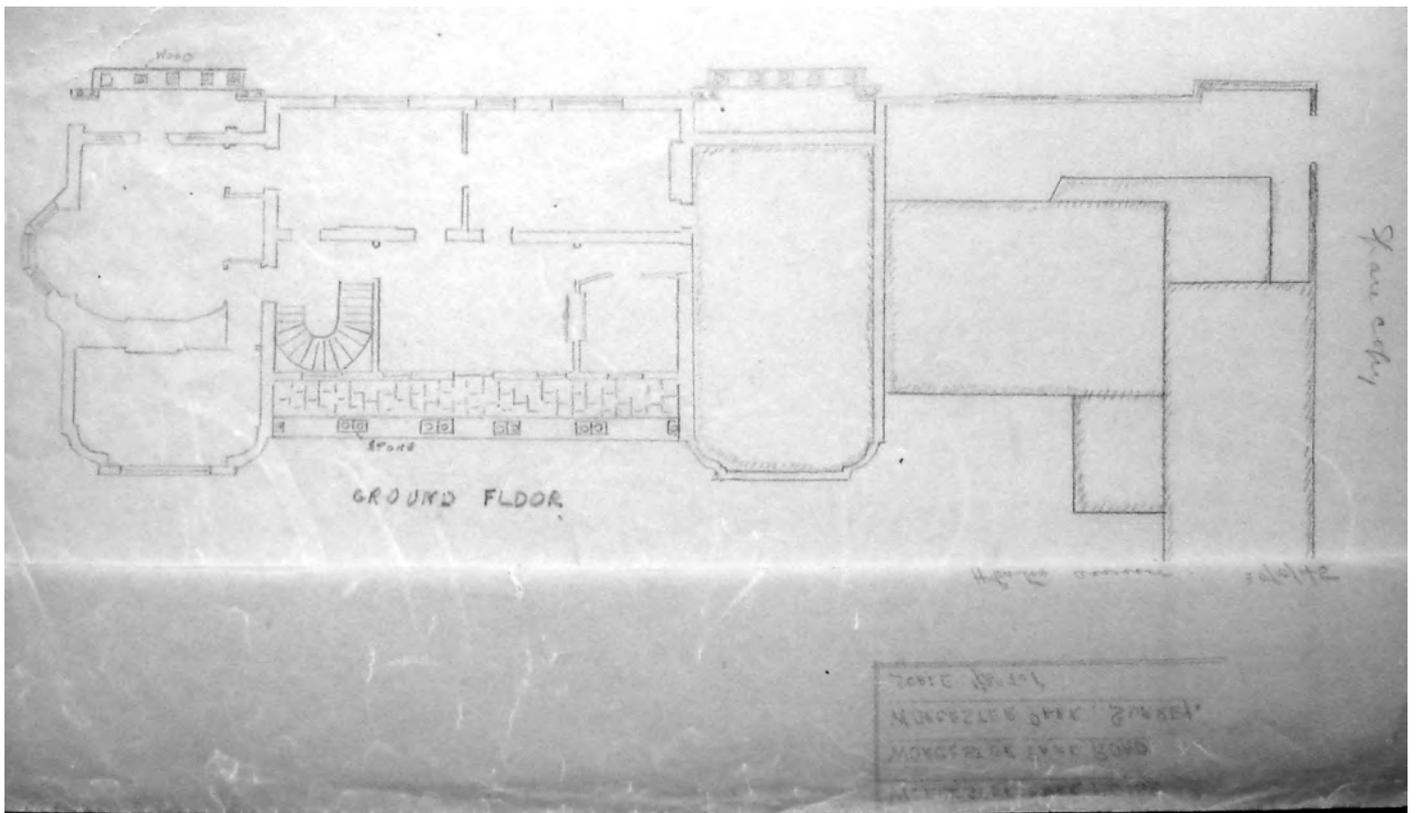
Dear Miller,

I enclose particulars of Worcester Park House, Worcester Park Road, Worcester Park, Surrey. We feel it is a very doubtful case. I hope to ~~concerning which the owners are anxious that the~~ your Mr. Hatched on the telephone about this Treasury Direction should be applied. When you ~~house & he seemed to regard it with a some-~~ have had an opportunity of considering the merits ~~what reserved enthusiasm.~~ of the application no doubt you will let me know ~~As to the other duty Office, Inland Revenue, want~~ the result, ~~us to make up our minds soon as to the kind~~ of payment, ~~Yours sincerely,~~ I shall be glad if you could let us have your views as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A. Miller, Esq.,  
Ministry of Works,  
Dean Bradley House,  
Horseferry Road,  
S.W.1.

(largest  
extra large envelope)



## APPENDIX: PRIDE'S WILL (WORCESTER HOUSE PLAN: PAGE 35)

To all Christian People Greeting

**I Thomas Pride of Worcester House in the County of Surrey** being under the chastisement of the Lord, yet of perfect memory (blessed be my God for it) considering the frailty of mankind and the uncertainty of my abode in this world; here make this my last will and testament in manner and forme following.

Imprimis I bequeath my soule into the hands of my pretious Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, being p[er]swaded by the faith he hath wrought in me, that he will wash it throughly from its defilements and p[re]sent it to his Father and my Father as his owne puchas.

Item I bequeath my bodie to the dust from whence it came to {may..} {..} its sleeping {ous.} untill the glorious day of appearance, being assured that in the meritts of Jesus Christ in my flesh I shall see God.

Item I give unto my sonne Thomas five pounds.

Item I give unto my faithfull and loving wife Foure hundred pounds a yeare, to be levied out of the rents and improvements of my parke, which so farr as {.....} her satisfaction in the said summe of fouer hundred pounds I give into her hands and possession by these p[re]sents for her security and revenue during her natural life and no longer.

**Item I give unto my sonne William; And to my sonne Samuell, and each of their heirs and assignees the risidue of the rents growing out from my parke**, or which by the best improvement may growe out therefrom, during the said naturall life of their mother my wife Elizabeth Pride; To be equally and iustly divided between them and each of them.

Item After the death of my wife I give and bequeath my whole parke with the house or houses and all its or their appurtenances unto my sonnes William and Samuell to bi equally and iustly between them so that there may not be the least fraude or cousinage;

Item it is my will and pleasure is that during the life time of my said wife imediatly after my decease; there may be such a righteous division made before the Lord; That my wife may have no more than foure hundred pounds p[er] anum, out of my parke and house or houses there, according to the bist improvement of the said houses or land. And that my sonnes William and Samuell may have no lesse thin their shares aforesaid;

Item I give unto my daughter Elizabeth Walton five pounds.

Item I give unto my sonne Joseph the foure thousand pounds that I have lyeing in **stocke in the Brew houses at Kingston**, to be putt out for his best advantage untill he cometh to the age of twentie and one yeares, and then ({.iz.}) when he comes to the said age, the said foure thousand pounds with the improvement to be paid him; But if it shall happen that my sonne Thomas and Maior Yates, my partner in those Brew houses shall refuse or deny forthwith to pay, or to give surity for the payment of the said foure thousand pounds, Then I give unto my sonne Joseph my full and whole share, right, tytle, in Trust and propriety in the said two Brew houses, and in the stocke, utinsills, comodities, improvements and app[er] tenants in any wise to them or either of with them appertaning or providing. And I desire my wife that she would so provide and take care with all diligence that the same may be employed by herself and assigned to the best advantage of my sonne Joseph until he come to the age of twenty and one yeares. And then with all the interest to be surrendered up unto him;

Item I bequeath all my Lands and Tenements lyeing, situate and being in any place or places whatsoever (unlesse in those places before mentioned) for be sold to the utmost value that may be made, for and

towards the payeing, satisfyeing, and discharging of debts. And if by the sale of them there shall not be so {...} money be paid for the price of them, and each of them, as shall satisfie all and every of my true and {n...ed} Creditors, that then all those debts that are oweing unto me shall goe to the same use of paying debts; And if yet any should be be unsatisfied of my lawfull Creditors; That then my wife, my sonnes William and Samuell shall pay the rest out of the rent of their lands, each according to the proportion of Land that he or she shall hold and hast after my decease.

Item I give unto my sonne in lawe Robert Walton five pounds to buy him a ringe.

Item I hereby make and institute my trusty and well beloved wife Elizabeth Pride to be my true and lawfull Executrix, And my trusty and well beloved sonne Robert Walton to be my Executor to see all things done right and performed according to the true intent and meaninge of this my last will and testament which that it is for. In wittnesse thereof I have unto sett my hand and seale; this twelvth daie of October in the yeare one thousand five hundred Fiftie eight. Tho: Pride signed and sealed in the presence of us Jon {Lo.e}, Em: Rogers

Knowe all men by these presents that that whereas in my last will and testament {...ring} date with these {p[.]son..} for all other matters I have well and sufficiently provided for my wife and my sonnes William, Samuell, and Joseph, in giving unto them severall portions as by the said will may and doth at lawe appeare. But in the meane time **have not disposed of my stocke and household stuffe in Worcester parke, nor my household stuffe in my house at Kingston;** Nor have I laid that iniunction upon my wife, which was in my will and purpose for to doe;

I therefore doe appoint and order, doe will and desire, **that all my stock of {.....} all in, of, or belonging to my house at worcester parke,** or to me and my wife app[er]taining; And that all my household stuffe there together with all my household stuffe in my house at Kingston and every piece and p[ar]cell of them be sold to the utmost value, and that the money so arizing shall be equally divided between my two sonnes William and Samuell;

And I also further will and desire that my wife Elizabeth Pride part not with any of her interest or portion that she should have in my estate, unto any p[er]son or p[er]sons whatsoever unless it is unto my sonnes and daughter, any or one of them. And if it happen that she doth not p[er]forme this my desire and will, then my will and pleasure is, That from thence forth she shall not have the least propriety in any of my lands or {emm...} nor the least benefitt by that my last will. Any thing therein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

Now for a {.....} the said will is under my hand and seale, given and {g.h..ted} on the day of the date hereof, and is formed {...} imp[er]fect wanting these my plainest desires.

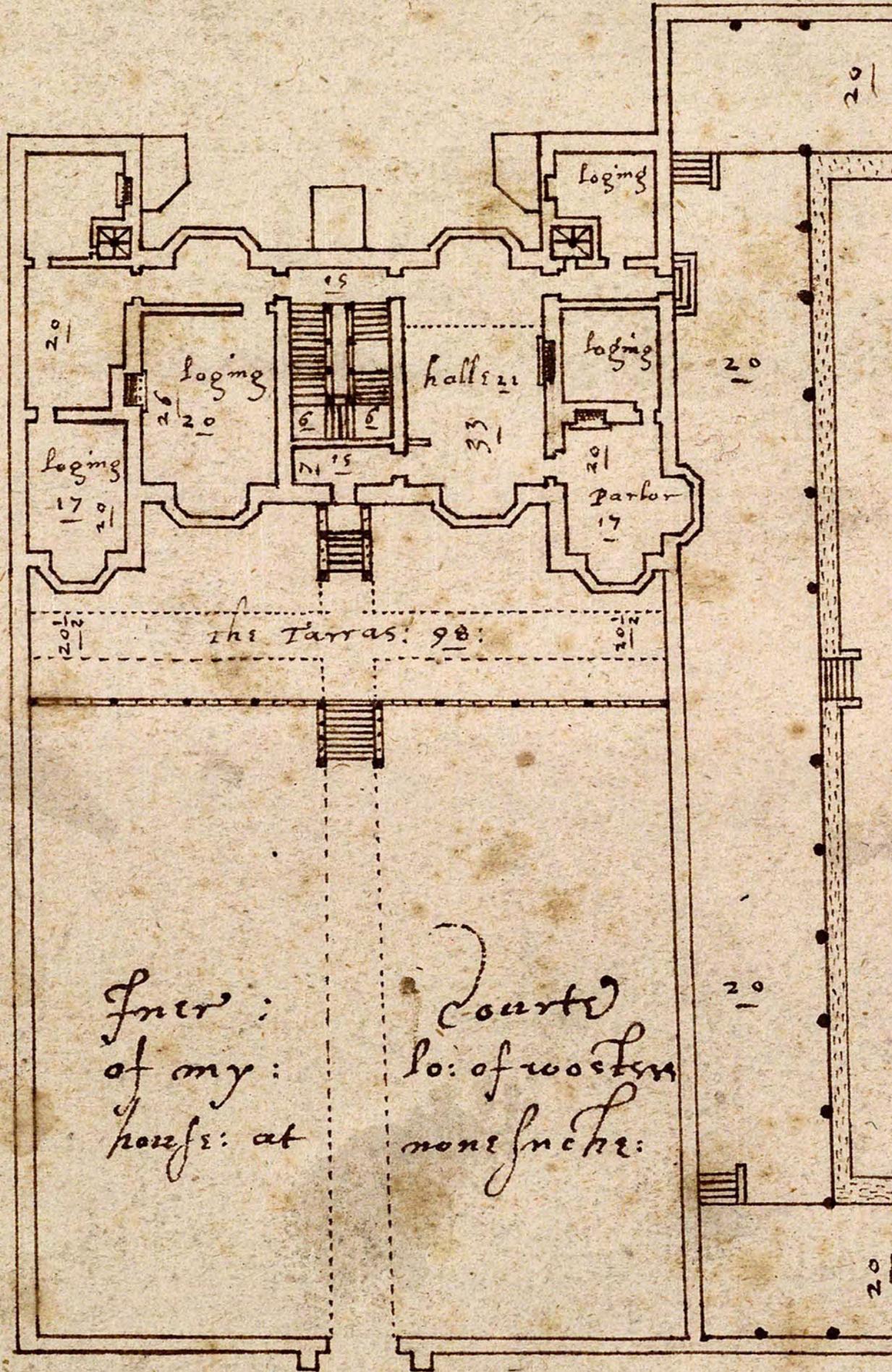
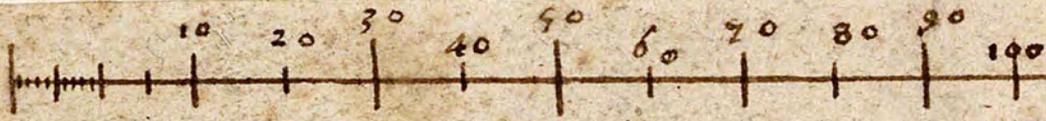
I further desire that the said will shall not remaine in any forme, or permit to any intent or purpose, but that my effort shall fall where the lawe {..as} unless unless these {p.sents} are ioyned with or added to it, to stand in full force and {.....}; In wittnesse whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale this twelfth day of October, several howers after the time of setting my hand and seale to the said will in the yeare one thousand five hundred and fifty eight. Tho Pride Signed and sealed in the presence of us Jon {L..e}, Em: Rogers

This Will with its Codicill thereto annexed was proved at London before the Judges for probate of wills and granting Administrations, the foure and twentieth daie of November in the yeare of our Lord God one thousand five hundred Fifty and eight. By the oath of {.....} Elizabeth Pride the relict and one of the Executors named in the said will. To whom Administration of all and {.....} the goods, chattells, and debts of the said deceased was committed and granted, She being first sworn well and truly to Administer the same; {Res..ing} {p[er]....} to Robert Walton the other Executor to make like probate when he shall come and in loyall {.....} desire the same<sup>1</sup>.

1. Will of Thomas Lord Pride or Pride of Worcester House, Surrey, The National Archives.

Ref: PROB 11/283/493, Date: 22 November 1658, (accessed 17/10/2025 Sep 2023).

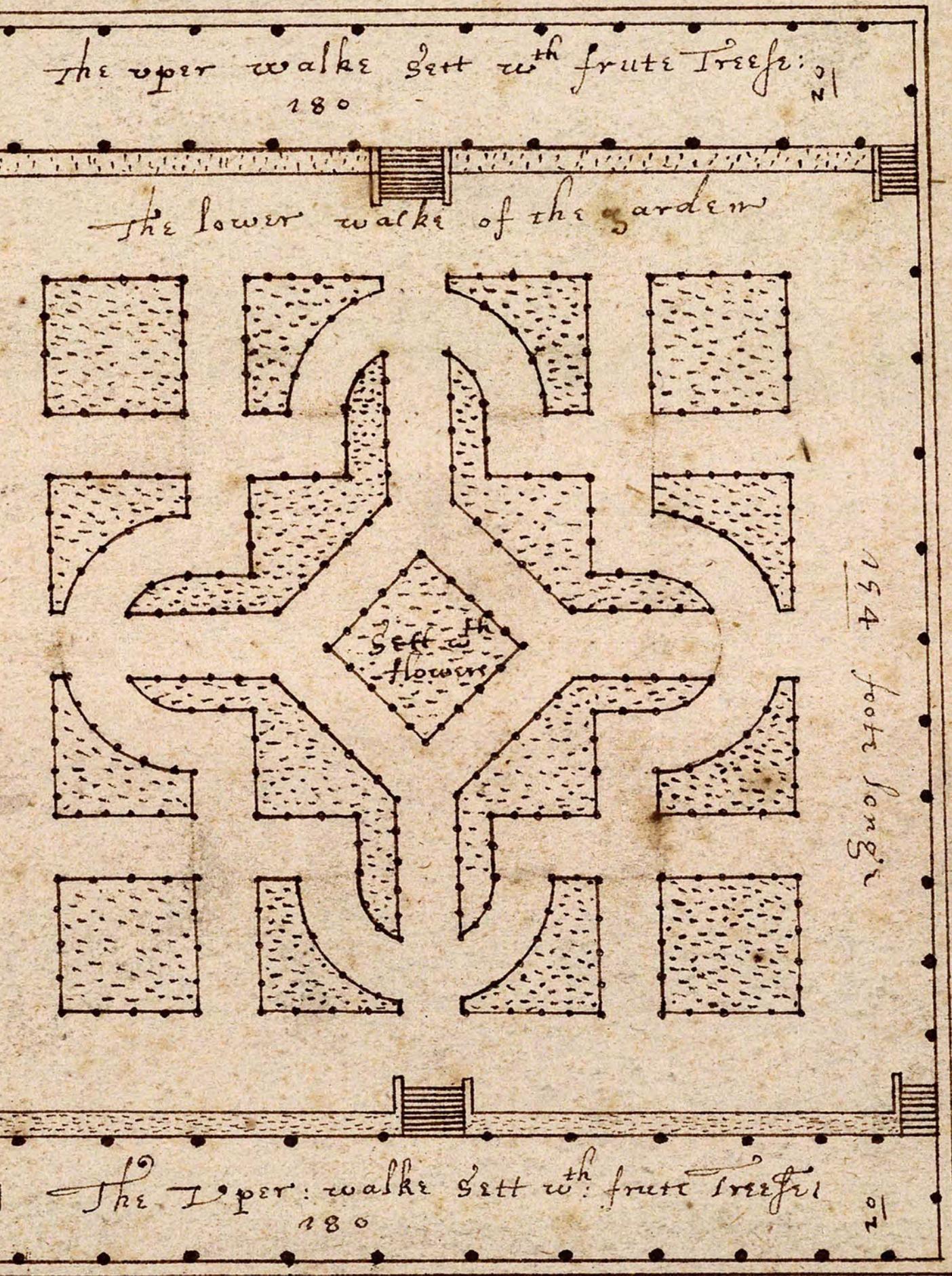
David Rymill adds: "We n  
My conclusion is that the  
think the 'inner court' sho  
the site of no. 8. I don't th  
how the walls we see today



Iner :  
of my :  
houfe: at

Courty  
lo: of wostm  
none fuch:

eed to distinguish between the 17th-century garden wall and the Victorian garden wall of Worcester Court. walled garden would have encompassed 4, 5, 6 and part of 7 Worcester Gardens plus the turning circle; I own on the Smythson plan would have been in parts of the gardens of 7-8, and the house would have been on ink there would have been a 17th-century wall going as far as Delta Road and The Avenue. The point about y are a hotch-potch telling stories about the successive owners is a very good point to get across.



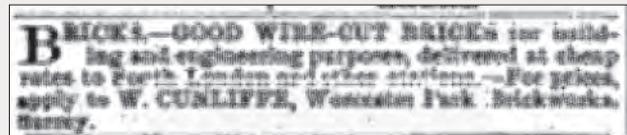
## MORE ABOUT BRICKS - AND A “MUST DO BETTER” FOR KIM



All aboard the good ship “FJORD” - Easter 1898. One of Epsom and Ewell’s most successful industrialists is pictured here; sadly I do not know which of these gentlemen is our man.

You may remember from my last report a mention of “Cunliffe Siding”, a small branch line and halt halfway between Worcester Park and Stoneleigh. I had described the line as being named for the engineer who signed off the project to build the line, assuming that he was a railway engineer. The moral of this story is: NEVER ASSUME.

The truth was, I looked everywhere for this gentleman and could not find a thing. I undertook further research into the industries associated with our UK railways and found “Cunliffe, William, Northfield Brick Works, Kettering, Northants”. I also discovered an old journal from the 1800-1900 period, namely *The British Clayworker: The Organ of the Brick, Tile and Cement Trades*.



After giving myself a reprimand for not tying up loose ends, I set about reading and re-reading.

William Cunliffe was an enterprising gentleman - a contractor, brickmaker, moderniser, entrepreneur...he respected every level of trades and labours and was keen to travel abroad to meet like-minded people.

He was one of a party undertaking a trip to meet brickmakers in Denmark (and a later trip to Germany before WWI). I was amused to discover a photograph from one of his travels; I don’t know who is who but all the same it is a lovely picture and I love all the hats! My mother’s family were hatmakers, based around places like Brick Lane (BRICKS AGAIN!!!) ...but that is

**GUILDFORD.**—For laying a surface water drain and other works, Foxenden Building Estate, for the Corporation. Mr. F. T. Maltby, C.E., Borough Surveyor, High-street, Guildford:—

*Contract No. 1.*

Fry Bros. ....	£85 0	William Cunliffe, Kings-
G. A. Franks .....	71 10	ton-on-Thames* .....
		* Accepted.

*Contract No. 2.*

Fry Bros. ....	£180 0	William Cunliffe .....	£123 10
G. A. Franks.....	155 13	W. J. Engall, Guildford*	86 10
		* Accepted.	

**NEW SURREY YARD.**—A new brickworks has been started at Worcester Park, Surrey, by Mr. W. Cunliffe, the enterprising brickmaker and contractor, of Kingston-on-Thames, the bed of clay being 21 acres in extent, and it is intended to make wire-cuts and red facing bricks. The works will be connected by a siding to the London and South-Western Railway. Messrs. Wootton Bros., of Coalville, have secured the order for the first portion of the machinery.



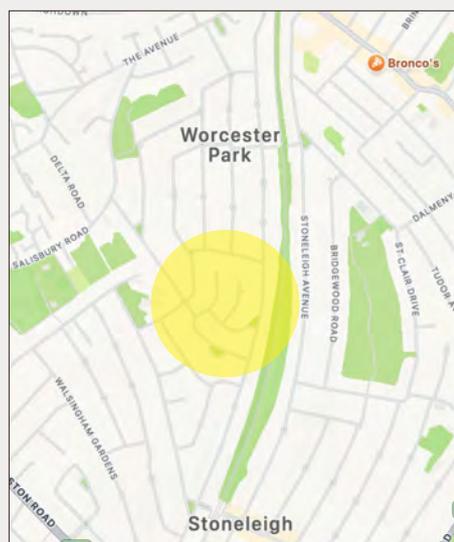
*Clayworker, 43, Essex Street, Surbiton, London, W.C.*  
**WANTED, A SETTER FOR HOFFMANN KILN.**  
 —Apply Cunliffe, Worcester Park Brickworks, Surrey.  
**FOREMAN WANTED for BLUE BRICKS and RED**

An advertisement in "The Builder" from February 17th 1894 announces the awarding of two projects in Guildford. An article in volume seven of "The Clayworker" brings news of a "new yard in Surrey". Before long, William Cunliffe is hiring!<sup>2</sup>

another story.

William Cunliffe moved to a villa in Gloucester Road, Norbiton. He founded brickworks all round this part of Surrey, including New Malden, Norbiton and Worcester Park. The Worcester Park Brickworks stood where Alsom Avenue and newer, modern homes now stand. Cunliffe Road, just over the border in Auriol Ward, commemorates the enterprise. An advertisement in "The British Architect" offers: "Good wire-cut bricks for building and engineering purposes, delivered at cheap rates to South London and other stations..."

William's brainwave in building what was effectively his own railway station paid off. The building boom of the early 20th century



created a great demand for bricks.

World War II halted production at the brickworks but it proved itself to be a very useful training ground for the home guard units based in our borough. It was also a magnet for local children, who treated it as a playground. Childhood and parents' attitude to safety was certainly different in those days.

The area on this modern day map shows the area once taken up by the Worcester Park Brickworks.

Nothing lasts forever; much of what made up Surrey's brickworks became housing. The stubborn old band of clay was good for little else - but it tells quite a story! Potteries

at Ashted, Chimney pots and mechanical tiles made at Nonsuch, Bricks and tiles at Kiln Lane.

The industrial and scientific past of Epsom and Ewell has been a joy to research.

*Brick photo: Richard Symonds*

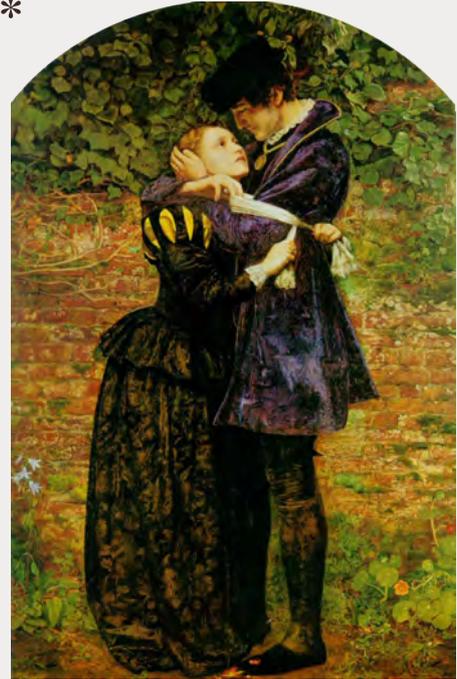
2. The resources in this chapter were located at Google Books - a real treasure trove!

## THE HUGUENOT\*

How many of us stumble upon this image from time to time? "The Huguenot" is one of Millais' better known paintings. OF COURSE we all know that Ophelia appeared in Millais' painting of the Hogsmill River! There is also a story that the doorway featured in the painting of Christ, "The Light of the World", is an old outbuilding that once stood along the Hogsmill.

But "The Huguenot" was conceived at the same time - when the Pre-raphaelite artists were working at Worcester Park Farm - now the site of Delta Road and Worcester Gardens. We know that the male model was Arthur, an old schoolfriend of Millais, who lived in Ewell. But where is this ivy clad wall?

\* MORE BRICKS!!!.....sorry.



Much of the "Hogsmill History" - both industrial and cultural - and the stories around the Nonsuch "Great Park" - has yet to reveal itself. I spent some time looking through the assets listed by Historic England.

One I have already discussed in this report (previous chapter on page one - LAND AT GRAFTON STABLES SITE); it is the following entry:

SHHER\_7721 GARDEN WALL TO REAR OF NOS 4, 5, 6 AND 7 AND GARDEN WALL TO REAR OF NOS 4, 5, 6 AND 7 WORCESTER GARDENS, Delta Road, Cuddington. Grid Reference: 521520 165401 Civil Parish: Cuddington. Monument Type: GARDEN WALL (1601 to 1700). Description: Remains of garden wall. 1606-1609 with later patching. Red brick in irregular bond. Formerly a rectangular enclosure, now only the south-east and north-east walls and north-east end of the north-west wall survive. The wall is approx 3 metres high with shallow brick buttresses, the top stepped with offsets and header - brick coping. This is now the only surviving above-ground structure of the

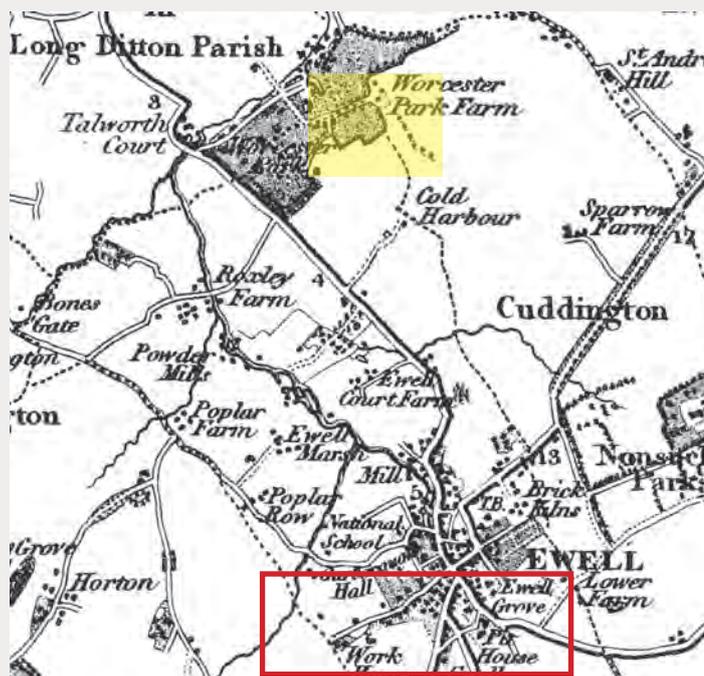
buildings of Nonsuch Palace, and lay just to the east of Worcester House built 1606-09 for the 4th Earl of Worcester, keeper of the Great Park of Nonsuch. It is shown in the plan of Worcester House 1609 by Robert Smythson. Listing NGR: TQ2152065401 Form: Listed Building<sup>2</sup>.

How long I have marvelled at this old wall - quite beautiful and in parts a hotch-potch of brick styles that tell stories about the numerous owners of this part of the Great Park. It is well documented that the site became a farm, where some very famous names took lodgings. In trying to find out more about the wall, I stumbled upon a notion that was too good to miss and met a resident who has researched this very subject!

A search through the story behind the ivy clad wall, with other wild plants adding symbolic clues about the subject matter (C16th - 17th Sectarianism in France)<sup>1</sup>, led me to the work "The Life and Letters of John Everett Millais", written by John Guille Millais. It describes some charming scenes that have completed the puzzle of the wall. As I have already observed in my introduction on page one, the mystery in history brings out the Magpie in me. The models for the picture were Anne Ryan, a professional model and Arthur Reid Lempriere, Millais' childhood friend living in Ewell.

Look at the map on the right. Worcester Park Farm! In 1851, the Pre-Raphaelite artists Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais rented the dilapidated buildings of Worcester House - it was now a family farm - for use as a studio. Hunt noted a "glorious avenue of elms" along the drive; they are highlighted here in yellow<sup>3</sup>.

Arthur, the gentleman who acted as artist's model for the painting, was living at Pit House.



Arthur was a British Army Major-General of the Royal Engineers; the Columbia Detachment founded British Columbia (of great interest to me, as I have dual citizenship as a British Canadian). Geographical features are named after him: Mount Lempriere in the Monashee Mountains, Lempriere, a railway point on the Canadian National Railway transcontinental main line, Lempriere Creek - a tributary of the North Thompson River, and Lempriere Bank, an ocean bank south of Aristazabal Island in the Pacific Ocean on the British Columbia Coast.

So what of the wall? John Guille Millais book tells us: *"he secured a cottage near Kingston, with his friend Holman Hunt...two other members of the Pre-Raphaelite fraternity, bent on working together...the two moved into Worcester Park Farm, where an old garden wall happily served as a background for the Huguenot: "I am advised by Coventry Patmore to keep a diary. Commence one forthwith. — To-day, October, 16,*

*1851, worked on my picture [The Huguenot]; painted nasturtiums; saw a stoat run into a hole in the garden wall; went up to it and endeavoured to lure the little beast out by mimicking a rat's or mouse's squeak - not particular which succeeded, to my astonishment."*<sup>4</sup>



So here it is, in all it's glory (sadly, stoatless). It stretches from Delta Close, right along Delta Road, right again onto The Avenue, right into part of Worcester Gardens, close to the garden of my wonderful resident who helped me solve the puzzle. How nice it would be to commemorate it, perhaps as part of the heritage information at the Grafton Stables Nature Reserve?

1. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Huguenot> retrieved 24/11/2025

2. Historic England

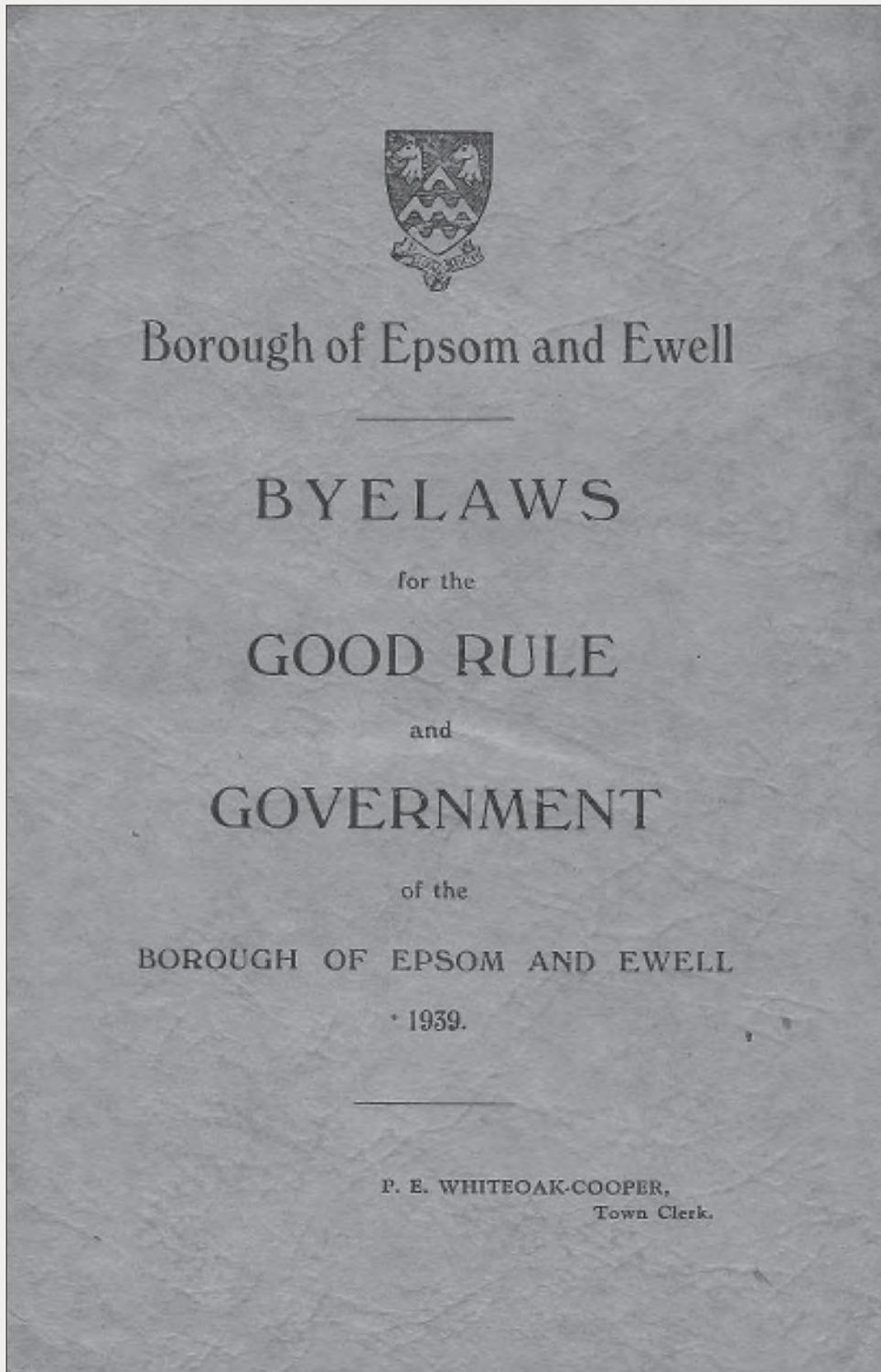
3. Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, retrieved 24/11/2025: <https://eehe.org.uk/33389/preraphaelites>

4. The Life and Letters of John Everett Millais, by his son, John Guille Millais

## ARE YOU ON THE NAUGHTY STEP?

*Residents and Councillors - how many of these 1939 byelaws have you violated?*

*Let me have your confessions! This document was passed to Councillor Phil Neale while he was in our local park (where he works as a volunteer). The gentleman, Mr Lelliott, who passed it to him, has given me a window into the early days of our wonderful little borough.*



## BYELAWS

for the good rule and government of the Borough of Epsom and Ewell and for the prevention of nuisances, made by the Council of the Borough in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1933, at a meeting of the Council held on the 17th day of January, 1939.

1. **Interpretation.**—Throughout these Byelaws the following words and expressions shall have the meanings hereafter respectively assigned to them, unless such meanings be inconsistent with the context, namely:—

- (1) "Street" includes any highway, including a highway over any bridge, and any road, lane, footway, square, court, alley or passage, whether a thoroughfare or not.
- (2) "Public place" includes any common, public park, garden, or walk, pleasure or recreation ground, roadside waste, churchyard, chapel-yard, cemetery, market (whether established under Charter or otherwise), and any unenclosed ground to which the public have unrestricted access.

\*\* 2. **Music near Houses.**—No person shall sound or play upon any musical or noisy instrument or sing in any street or public place within 100 yards of any dwelling-house or office, after being requested to desist by any inmate or occupant thereof, either personally or through a servant, or through a constable, on account of the interruption of the ordinary occupations or pursuits of any such inmate or occupant or for other reasonable and sufficient cause: Provided that this Byelaw shall not apply to properly conducted religious services, except where the request to desist is made on the ground of the serious illness of any inmate of the house.

3. **Music near Churches.**—No person shall sound or play upon any musical or noisy instrument or sing in any street or public place within 100 yards of any place of public worship or public

3

entertainment or other place of public assembly in which persons are for the time being assembled, to the annoyance or disturbance of any person or persons so assembled, after being requested to desist by any constable, or by any person so annoyed or disturbed, or by any person acting on his behalf: Provided that this Byelaw shall not apply to any band playing in an appointed place with the sanction of the Council.

\*\* 4. **Music near Hospitals.**—No person shall sound or play upon any musical or noisy instrument or sing in any street or public place within 100 yards of any hospital, infirmary, convalescent home, or other place used for the reception or treatment of the sick, after being requested to desist by any constable, or by any inmate or officer of such hospital or other place, or by any person acting on his behalf.

5. **Organs.**—No person shall, in connection with any roundabout, show, exhibition, or performance, placed or held in any street or on any vacant ground adjoining or near to any street, make or cause to be made any loud and continuous or repeated noise by means of any organ or other similar instrument to the annoyance of residents or passengers: Provided that this Byelaw shall not apply to any fair lawfully held.

6. **Wireless Loudspeakers, Gramophones, &c.**—No person shall:—

- (a) in any street or public place or in or in connection with any shop, business premises or other place which adjoins any street or public place and to which the public are admitted, or
- (b) upon any other premises, by operating or causing or suffering to be operated any wireless loudspeaker, gramophone, amplifier or similar instrument make or cause or suffer to be made any noise which shall be so loud and so continuous or repeated as to cause a nuisance to occupants or inmates of any premises in the neighbourhood.

4

\*\* NUMBER 2, LEFT: Guilty, but not ALWAYS in Epsom - so I guess I'm in the clear.

As a student, I often cruised Ashley Road in a beaten up Citroen, playing the famous Led Zeppelin tape. (This was a frequent occurrence; a pencil was kept in the glove box for when the useless radio tape player ritually disembowelled Robert Plant). I once stopped by the side of the road to wind the tape back into the cassette with my trusty "B" pencil (kept in the car for sketching) when somebody rapped on the window: "Who do you think you are, parking there in heavy traffic?" he thundered.

Provided that no proceedings shall be taken against any person for any offence against this Byelaw in respect of premises referred to in paragraph (b) thereof, unless the nuisance be continued after the expiration of a fortnight from the date of the service on such person of a notice alleging a nuisance, signed by not less than three householders residing within the hearing of the instrument as aforesaid.

7. **Noisy Hawking.**—No person shall, for the purpose of hawking, selling, distributing, or advertising any article, shout in any street or public place so as to cause annoyance to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

8. **Touting.**—No person shall in any street or public place for the purpose of selling or advertising any article or obtaining custom tout or importune to the annoyance or obstruction of passengers.

9. **Shooting Galleries, &c.**—No person shall in any street or public place, or on any land adjoining or near to any street or public place, keep or manage, or cause to be kept or managed, a shooting gallery, swing-boat, roundabout, or any other construction of a like character, so as to cause obstruction or danger to the traffic in such street or public place.

\*\* 10. **Indecent Language, &c.**—No person shall in any street or public place, or in any place within view or hearing of any street or public place, use any indecent language or gesture, or commit or solicit, incite or provoke any other person to commit any indecent act to the annoyance of residents or passengers.

\*\* 11. **Violent Behaviour, &c., on School Premises.**—Any person other than a teacher, child, manager, or other duly authorised person, being in or on the buildings, playground or other premises of any public elementary school, who after being requested to depart therefrom by the headteacher or the teacher acting as the headteacher of such school, refuses to depart therefrom and makes use of any violent, abusive, profane, indecent or obscene language or otherwise behaves in a disorderly manner, shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on conviction to the penalty hereinafter provided.

5

NUMBER 10, ABOVE: \*\* This is what I call an "occupational hazard"; stricken by a deer fly in the Hogsmill, which drew blood on my cheek and turned me into a waders-cald fishwife. 11: \*\* Self defence. I changed schools after that. Anyway - it was in Kingston Upon Thames so doesn't count.



NUMBER 4, ABOVE: I did hear some weekend carousing outside Epsom Hospital A & E when I was there for treatment; if this was you, please refrain from doing this sort of thing in the future.

12. **Fighting.**—No person shall in any street or public place fight or provoke or incite any person or animal to fight.

13. **Indecent Bathing.**—No person shall within 220 yards of any street or public place, unless effectually screened from view, bathe from the bank or strand of any water, or from any boat thereon, without wearing a dress or covering sufficient to prevent indecent exposure of the person.

14. **Indecent Shows.**—No person shall exhibit any indecent show in any street or public place, or in any place to which persons are admitted with or without the payment of money.

\*\* 15. **Wilful Jostling.**—If two or more persons assembled together wilfully obstruct the free use of any street, or wilfully jostle or annoy any foot passengers, and continue such obstruction, jostling, or annoyance after being required by a constable to desist, each such person shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on conviction to the penalty hereinafter provided.

\*\* 16. **Loitering at Church Doors.**—No person shall wilfully and persistently loiter at or near the entrance of any church, chapel, or other place of public worship to the annoyance or obstruction of any persons going to, attending at, or returning from divine service in such church, chapel, or other place of public worship.

17. **Advertising Vehicles.**—No person shall in any street draw, wheel or drive any vehicle used solely or chiefly for the purpose of exhibiting advertisements so as to cause obstruction or danger to the traffic in such street.

18. **Flags.**—No person shall place or suspend any flag containing any advertisement relating to any trade or business in, over or across any street to the annoyance of residents or passengers or to the alarm of horses.

\*\* 19. **Defacing Pavements, &c.**—No person shall for the purpose of advertising or of disseminating news, propaganda or the like deface the footway or roadway of any street by writing or other marks.

6



\*\* NUMBER 15, LEFT: During the recession I did tour Waitrose branches for red ticketed items. There was jostling involved.

\*\* NUMBER 16: I do this quite a lot. My first loiter was at St Martin of Tours for my very first heritage project.

\*\* NUMBER 19: When I organise Urban Wildflower Walks in the borough, I chalk the name of interesting weeds on the pavement where they are growing.

20. **Advertising Bills.**—No person shall for the purpose of advertising throw about or deposit in any street or public place any bill, placard, or other paper.

21. **Waste Paper, Refuse, &c.**—No person shall (1) sweep or otherwise remove from any shop or house into any street any waste paper, shavings, or other refuse, or being a costermonger, news-vendor, or other street trader throw down and leave in any street any waste paper, shavings, or other refuse; (2) throw down and leave in any street any bill, placard, or other paper which shall have been torn off or removed from any bill-posting station.

22. **Deposit of Litter to the Detriment of Public Amenities.**—No person shall (except by permission of the owner or occupier, or of the person or authority having control thereof, or unless authorised by law so to do) place or deposit and leave on or in :—

- (a) any highway or any roadside waste,
- (b) any common, village green, park, recreation ground or other open space to which the public have access for the time being, or
- (c) any stream, pond, or other water in or abutting on any such highway, roadside waste or other place aforementioned,

any glass, china, earthenware, tin, carton, paper or other refuse or litter so as to affect or tend to affect injuriously the public amenities of such highway, roadside waste, common, village green, park, recreation ground, open space or water.

Provided that where an offence is committed against this Byelaw and against any byelaw with respect to any pleasure ground, public walk, recreation ground, park, roadside waste, common, village green or open space, or any limitation or condition imposed by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries under section 193 of the Law of Property Act, 1925, a person shall not be liable to more than one penalty in respect of the same offence.

\*\* 23. **Orange Peel, &c.**—No person shall in any street or public place throw or leave any orange peel, banana skin, or other dangerous substance on any footway.

7



\*\* NUMBER 23, LEFT: Student days again - I dropped some orange peel in Ashley Road. I had no idea it was dangerous but since my hands full of books/equipment, I kicked it into a street drain. The lady who saw me however was extremely dangerous and chased me up the street.

ALL LITTERING IS WRONG. You live and learn.

24. **Broken Glass, &c.**—No person shall throw, place or leave any bottle or any broken glass or other sharp substance (not being road material) on or in any street or public place in such a position as to be likely to cause injury to passengers or damage to property.

25. **Dogs Fouling Footways.**—No person being in charge of a dog in any street or public place and having the dog on a lead shall allow or permit such dog to deposit its excrement upon the public footway.

✱✱ 26. **Carrying Soot, &c.**—No person shall in any street or public place, to the inconvenience or danger of passengers, carry or convey along any footpath any bag of soot, lime, or other offensive substance, or any pointed or edged tools or implements not properly protected.

27. **Carrying Carcases, &c.**—No person shall carry or convey along or through any street or public place the undressed carcase of any animal, or any offensive offal, unless the same be properly covered.

✱✱ 28. **Dangerous Games near Streets.**—No person shall on any land adjoining a street play any offensive or dangerous game in such a manner as to cause obstruction to the traffic or danger to any person in such street.

29. **Posting Placards without Permission.**—No person shall affix, or cause to be affixed, any placard upon any gate, door, pillar, tree or post in or abutting on any street or public place without the permission of the owner or occupier or person having the charge thereof, or unless authorised so to do by law, nor shall any person, unless authorised by law or with such permission as aforesaid, deface by writing or other marks any such gate, door, pillar, tree or post, as aforesaid.

30. **Spitting.**—No person shall spit on the floor, side, or wall of any public carriage or of any public hall, public waiting-room or place of public entertainment, whether admission thereto be obtained upon payment or not.

8



✱✱ NUMBER 26, LEFT: it did look that way but eye make up at the time made us look like we had been up a chimney - boys too.

✱✱ NUMBER 28: One of the big kids got tipsy at his graduation drink-up in the Rising Sun. On the way back, he threw a frisbee at our little fresher girl gang. We ducked and it went straight into Ashley Road and bounced off a postman's van. We got the blame! So that doesn't count either.

✱✱ 31. **Bulls.**—No person shall drive or lead, or cause to be driven or led, in any street or public place, any bull exceeding the age of twelve months, unless it be properly secured and kept under proper control; or, being the occupier of any field or enclosure through which there is a public path, permit any such bull to be at large in such field or enclosure.

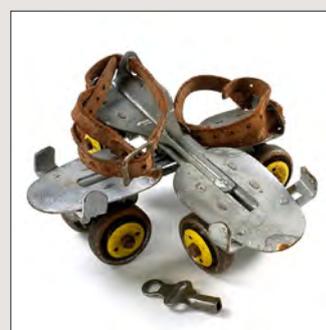
32. **Noisy Animals and Birds.**—No person shall keep within any house, building, or premises any noisy animal or bird which shall be or cause a nuisance to residents in the neighbourhood: Provided that no proceedings shall be taken against any person for an offence against this Byelaw unless the nuisance be continued after the expiration of a fortnight from the date of the service on such person of a notice alleging a nuisance, signed by not less than three householders residing within hearing of the animal or bird.

✱✱ 33. **Skating &c., on Footways.**—No person shall on any public carriageway or footway in the Borough skate or rink on rollers, wheels or other mechanical contrivances to the danger of any person lawfully using such carriageway or footway.

34. **Penalty Clause.**—Any person offending against any of the foregoing Byelaws shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

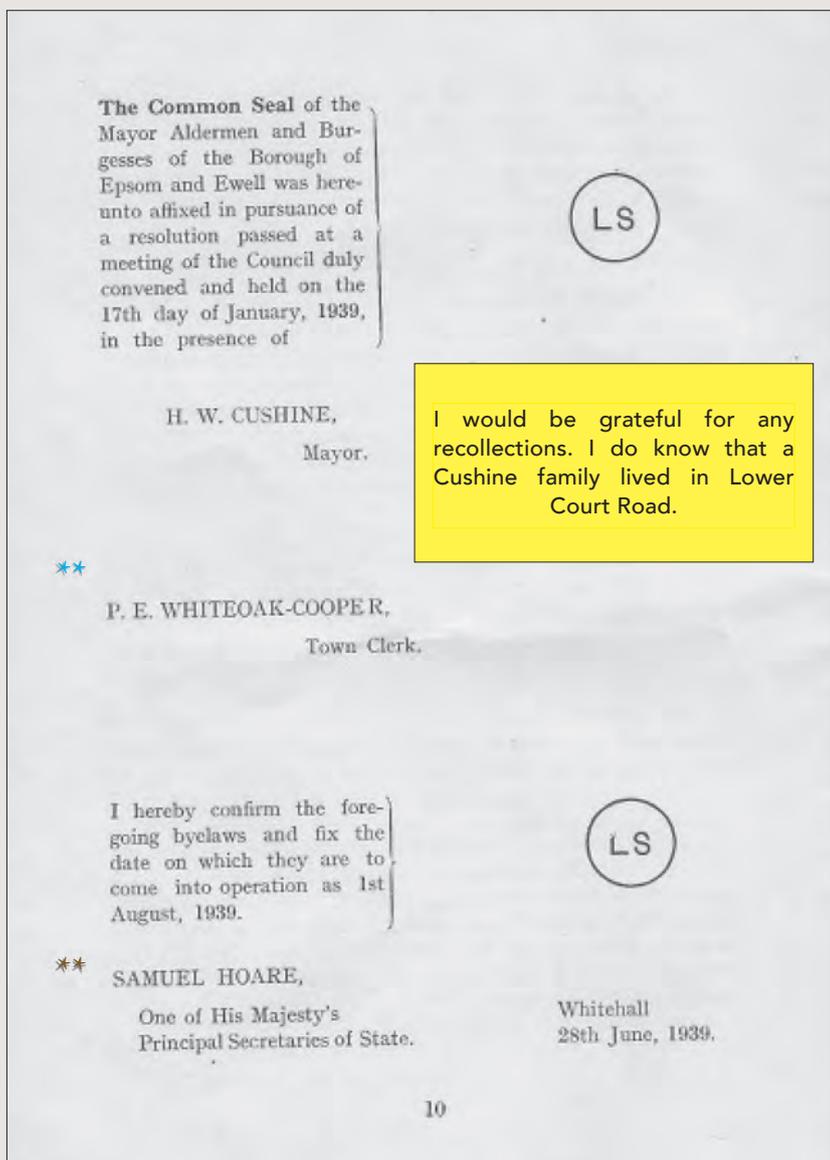
35. **Repeal.**—From and after the date on which these Byelaws come into operation, any Byelaws made by the Surrey County Council under section 23 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, and section 16 of the Local Government Act, 1888, or under section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1933, which immediately before that date are in force in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, shall cease to apply to the Borough.

9



✱✱ NUMBER 31, LEFT: This really really makes me want to take a bull for a walk one day.

✱✱ NUMBER 33: Yes, but in Kingston Upon Thames, where that sort of sordid degeneracy is encouraged. I was known as the gobby kid on wheels.



\*\* Mr Whiteoak-Cooper had also served as Clerk to the Burial Board in the borough

\*\* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel\\_Hoare,\\_1st\\_Viscount\\_Templewood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Hoare,_1st_Viscount_Templewood)

I wonder if he has been judged harshly, factually or fairly in this Wiki - I have found a couple of articles to read including a thesis "The Political Career of Sir Samuel Hoare during the National Government 1931-40" by Dean-Coutts, Leicester University.

I asked some of my colleagues about this. All anonymous of course...

“ No mention of balaclavas? ”

“ Nice that the Assembly Rooms have kept the tradition of “wilful jostling” on a Saturday night. ”

“ It all makes me wonder if they were relieved when war broke out a few months later, to give everyone something better to do! ”

“ Thanks for sharing Kim. ”

“ I have played the piano in a street, and once played a harmonium outside my house. ”

“ I do have a wind-up gramophone but only played it indoors.. ”

“ No bull riding or bear baiting! ”

We have experienced a trend of balaclava clad young gentlemen in the borough. It is rather blowy in these parts so perhaps they are worried about getting cold ears. Why don't they grow their hair long like we did instead of having these “fade” haircuts? You didn't have all this short hair in my day! All this jostling in the Assembly Rooms; what has society come to?

The comment about the war... at least we would have had very posh buskers with harmoniums, pianos and wind up gramophones to keep our spirits up. Imagine having to pack that lot up during an air raid.



Tim: "Councillor Spickett, you cannot bring  
your bull into full council"  
Kim: "I couldn't get a babysitter"

**BLANK BACK COVER? WICKED WASTE!  
HERE'S MINE!**

## BRINGING JOY TO NONSUCH

I want everybody to know that we have a group of astronomers in the borough. Also, in nearby Holmbury St Mary, Dorking, we have University College London's Mullard Space Science Laboratory.

UCL Professor of Physics Andrew Coates is Patron of EAS - the Ewell Astronomical Society.

EAS worked with Nonsuch Joint Management Committee (Epsom and Ewell and London Borough of Sutton), WhistleStop Arts and Nonsuch Voles to create a Solar System Walk through the delightful grounds of Nonsuch Park. What a great way to keep fit and inspire the youngsters in your clan.

You may not have associated our borough with space exploration before; think again!



Before I lead you away down one of my meandering paths there are some important details to share.

[whistlestoparts.org/solarwalk](http://whistlestoparts.org/solarwalk)  
[ewellastronomy.org/solarwalk](http://ewellastronomy.org/solarwalk)

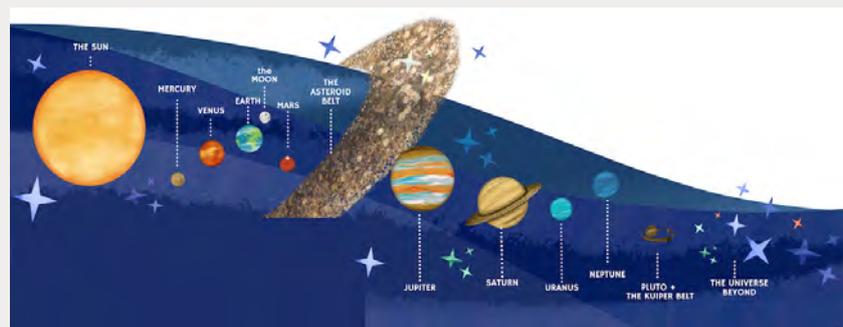
The opening ceremony was held on a beautiful Saturday in Autumn 2025. I had the pleasure of meeting with Professor Coates, members of EAS and the Nonsuch Voles. Our Voles look after the beautiful grounds of the "Little Park" of Nonsuch on a volunteer basis; don't they do a wonderful job!

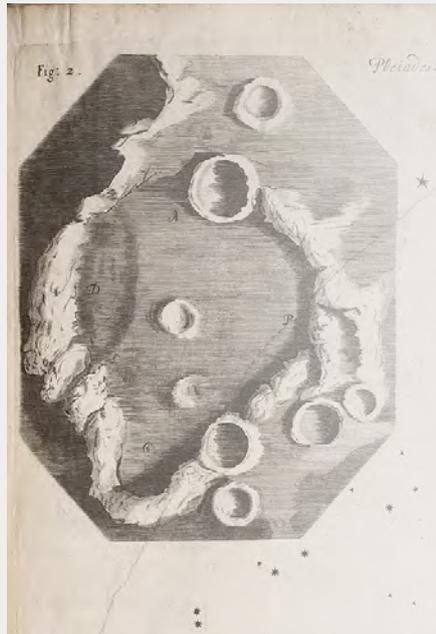
My childhood interest in everything outer space started with newspaper pictures of Yuri Gagarin, American Astronauts and a song about a telecommunications satellite being blasted into orbit around the Earth - "Telstar" by the Tornados. The sound effects, rhythm and melody distortion helped me to imagine the whole adventure.

Clem Cattini, the Tornado's drummer, was in the same session circle as one of Epsom's

famous sons, Jimmy Page). In 1968, music manager Peter Grant asked Clem to join a new band (and he said "no" to Led Zeppelin).

I also remember "The Planets" by Gustav Holtz being played to us at infant school, as a background track to the



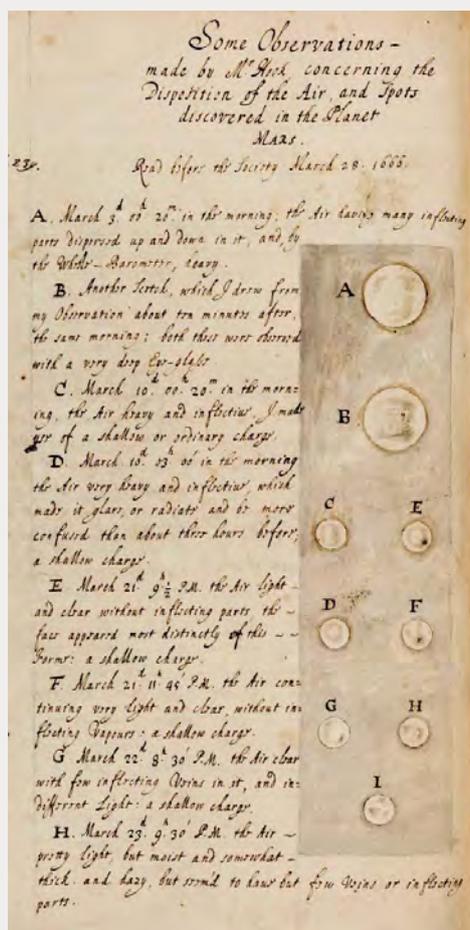


Remember our friend Robert Hooke and his colleague John Wilkins, beavering away at Durdans? Lord Berkeley was originally lodged at Nonsuch Palace - until it was needed as an HQ for the exchequer. So he settled in at Durdans and made his new home available to the Royal Society, safe from the plague in London. Hooke's fascination with creating powerful lenses is more noted for his engravings of magnified insects than those of the lunar surface. However, he made early attempts to draw the crater Hipparchus, just south of the center of the moon. He also observed comets and the spots on Jupiter, Mars and discussed Saturn's rings.

If you recall from my last report, Hooke dropped musket balls into wet clay to simulate impact, and heated alabaster to produce volcanoes. From this he deduced that there was a gravitational force, since the debris remained on the surface around the crater.

nativity play. I fell in love with Jupiter - the bringer of joy.

During the Great Plague, scientists Robert Hooke and John Wilkins invited peers for philosophical chats at the Royal Society's temporary HQ at Durdans, Epsom: Lawrence Rooke, Edmond Halley (Astronomers), Robert Boyle, John Evelyn. John Wilkins, the clergyman scientist who had first employed Hooke as an assistant, was Oliver Cromwell's brother in law. Much earlier, John, then 26, was convinced that the gravitational and magnetic force of Earth extended for 20 miles. He drew plans for a flying chariot, with feather-coated flapping wings, powered by clockwork, springs, and gunpowder charges to blast it into the sky. Wilkins believed that spacemen would not need food, since there was no gravity to pull digested matter down the alimentary canal. The science caught



up; he later agreed that gravity and magnetism were separate forces and that the vacuum of space extended further than 20 miles. The Jacobean Space Race ended there; no men were blown to feathers and smithereens.<sup>1</sup>

Hooke continued to modify his telescopes: **"...the only improvement they seem capable of, is the increasing of their length; for the Object being remote, there is no thought of giving it a greater light than it has; and therefore to augment the Aperture, the Glass must be ground of a very large sphere..."**

Hooke was on the right track and after the Durdans period, set to work with Christopher Wren, creating the London Monument

(as part of the refurbishment after the Great Fire). The idea was that it would be a giant telescope. Had the plan succeeded, how far ahead would we be today? How would the data have been interpreted by this early science? We can only guess.

1. "The Jacobean Space Race" was the subject of a lecture by Professor Allan Chapman of Oxford University.

## THE DRAMA OF DRAMATIC ARTS

How were performances in Epsom staged before the theatre came into being?

Entertainers were typically travelling groups who would perform wherever they could. Actresses were considered to be of “low virtue”; this is strange, because many wealthy gentlemen of note went out of their way to leave the capital for our borough, in order to seek out gatherings where their performances were going on.

The wealthy ladies rather enjoyed themselves too - remember good old Barbara Castlemaine and the fun she had with the rope dancer Jacob Hall? (pictured right).

Jacob was a favourite of Samuel Pepys, the Dutch King (Jacob became a Dutch citizen and lived in the Hague) and Charles II.



Please do read the histories of the Ebbisham and Myers Halls. Before we had a theatre in the town, this was, despite a small stage, a popular place for performance.

The Epsom Brotherhood was a Christian society with a membership of any man sharing their values - regardless of who they were. A popular operetta, “The Geisha” was performed around one year after the foundation stone was laid. The stage has its limitations - it was small. But the endeavours of these men paved the way for how groups in this borough band together to make everything work so beautifully. Happily, our borough is still a shining example of how we welcome others.

Epsom and Ewell History Explorer website has some lovely stories.<sup>1</sup>

The Adrian Mann Theatre, a 215-seat venue at Nescot College in Ewell, is named for its first Chairman of Governors. Adrian served until 1963 and remained a governor for years after. The theatre is used by Nescot for teaching and is also used by local amateur drama groups like Leatherhead Operatic

Society, who have performed there since the late 1970s. Other regulars are Wallington Operatic & Dramatic Society and Worcester Park Dramatic Society.

Near neighbours to Adrian Mann is the Mayfield Lavender Outdoor Theatre, also known as The Lavender Theatre, a 250-seat open-air venue surrounded by beautiful lavender fields at Mayfield Lavender Farm in Epsom. It opened in 2023 and offers West End-quality productions under the stars, complete with pre-show dining at the farm’s café and restaurant. Interestingly, theatrical and musical performances all started life in the open air - more about that later.

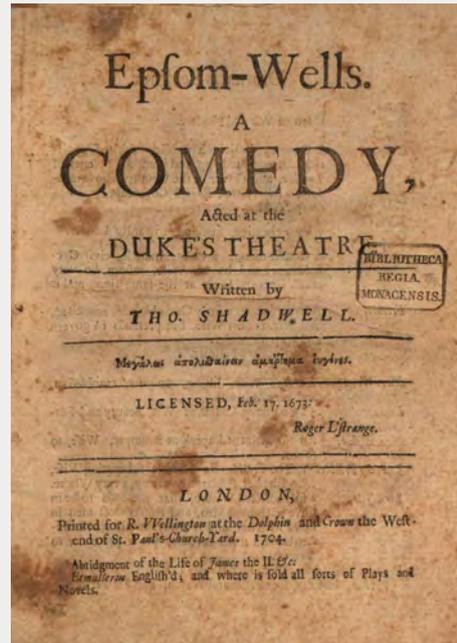
The Epsom Playhouse, now a thriving centre for the arts in Surrey, opened in 1984 at around the same time as the Ashley Centre. It is managed by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and famous for hosting top comedians (including Jack Dee, a favourite of mine) and musicians - the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Counterfeit Stones (Mick Jagger’s favourite Stones band) and later our Royal Military concerts. The theatre also features sculptures by dancer and artist Tom Merrifield.

In early 2025 two new murals were completed at Epsom Playhouse. They celebrate the 40-year history of the Playhouse. The main mural in the theatre’s foyer is an homage to creative people who have contributed to the

1. Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, retrieved 19/01/2026: <https://eehe.org.uk/65821/ebbisham-hall-the-epsom-brotherhood>

Epsom Wells<sup>2</sup>, a 1672 Restoration comedy by Thomas Shadwell, sends up the fashionable characters of the age. It contrasts country visitors, seeking better health with bawdy adventures, wise cracks and social faux pas. The characters are London stereotypes: rakes with delusions of country squire status, health-water zealots... throw in some naive country girls - you get the picture. The London lads, desperate for what most are at "that age" try to chat up the girls, leading to mistaken identities and amorous pursuits, all set against the backdrop of the spa's social scene: inns and assembly rooms: "Carry on Epsom". Perhaps we should stage a cleaned-up version, just for tourism purposes.

The play includes satire of medical/health-kick fads (these continue to be a fad today); it also pokes fun at social climbers (Margot and Gerry in "The Good Life") and the contrast between "sophisticates" and "regulars".



history of the theatre.

The second mural in the downstairs bar celebrates British Jazz singer Evelyn Dove. It depicts beautifully the Art Deco period of the 1920s.

These artworks involved you, the residents, as far as possible: Positive Arts, responsible for the design and direction of the project, consulted with residents during the Christmas lights switch on in the Ashley Centre in

Epsom, at Bourne Hall in Ewell and our Girlguiding Division.

Both murals were funded via the Arts, Culture and Heritage UKSPF 2024/25 allocation. The council's overall vision is "curating art projects that build pride with local community stakeholders, nurture creative talent and raise the profile of our borough's rich heritage".

The way that we celebrate gifts, talents and the contribution of ordinary people is a million miles away



from Restoration Epsom, which seems to be famous for involving the residents in all the wrong things for all the wrong reasons. However, there was money to be made from these wealthy incomers, who saw our town as nothing but a holiday in the country with certain benefits. Aside from the spa waters<sup>2</sup> there were inns, street entertainment, horse riding and wagering on the Downs - you get the picture.

During the Commonwealth period, Cromwell closed theatres and banned "performance" for 23



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The actress Alex Kingston and sisters Susie and Nicola (also an actress) were born and raised in Epsom. Her father Anthony was a butcher and his German wife was Margarethe (née Renneisen). Her uncle is actor Walter Renneisen.

Kingston was inspired to get into acting by her teacher (Rosebery School). Kingston auditioned and performed in the Surrey County Youth Theatre production of **Tom Jones** as Mrs. Fitzpatrick, alongside Sean Pertwee as Captain Fitzpatrick, and Thwackum played by Tom Davison.

Her TV and film greats include **Who Do You Think You Are, Dr Who, The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover** and the popular US medical drama **ER**.

years. Inns were closed. Imagine the delight when we could spend and make money again. Inevitably, things got out of hand.

One notorious group of men, named the “Merry Gang”, were titled people who gave the young King Charles II great amusement; not that they needed a Royal Warrant or anybody’s permission. Two of their crowd, Lord Buckhurst and Sir Thomas Ogle, were openly blasphemous and obscene.

Merry Gangsters Rochester and Etherege (Etherege was an English Dramatist who wrote some intriguing and amusing Restoration Comedies) were involved in a brawl with the watch in Epsom. After tossing in a blanket certain fiddlers who refused to play or find girls for them, Rochester, Etherege and others “skirmished the watch” violently before absconding; they left one of their gang thrust through with a pike. The deceased, a Captain Downs, had merely tried to break up the fight.<sup>1</sup>

Etherege married into money; apparently, for reasons unknown, he was knighted - having

never answered for the death of poor Captain Downs.

Samuel Pepys encountered one of the Merry Gang entourage in London:<sup>2</sup>

*(Sedley) “showed his nakedness – and abusing of scripture and as it were from thence preaching a mountebank sermon from the pulpit, saying that there he had to sell such a powder as should make all the (expletive) in town run after him, 1000 people standing underneath to see and hear him, and that being done he took a glass of wine and washed his (!) in it and then drank it off, and then took another and drank the King’s health.”*

A riot followed.

The Lord Chief Justice opined “it was because of wretches like him that God’s anger and judgement hang over us”.

Unsurprisingly, Sedley was later elected member of parliament for New Romney in Kent.

Around that time, the actress and Royal Mistress Nell Gwyn made a match with Merry Gang member Lord Buckhurst. They left London for a country break in Epsom, accompanied by Sir Charles Sedley. Pepys reports, on the 13th of July: “Lord Buckhurst hath got



Nell away from the King's house, lies with her, and gives her £100 a year, so she hath sent her parts to the house, and will act no more.”

Gwyn acted again in the autumn of that year. Her brief affair with Buckhurst had ended. She was bored with riding drunk across the Downs and entertaining Sedley and Buckhurst, with all their over-the-top jokery. Also - theatre work had picked up again; it had stalled as a result of war with the Dutch. She had complained that the Barbara Castlemaine set had abandoned her; Barbara guarded the King jealously.

As for the King, he was unhappy to have lost Nell and was keen to rekindle what had been a happy relationship.

All too easy to dismiss Nell as “just another girl”; she was the King's friend. She taught him how to fish<sup>3</sup>. Later, she bore him two sons: Charles - and the youngest, James, who died when he was only a child.

As for the King - my goodness our spa water must have had something in it...he had more kids than a frog.

Every year, I take my seat for the Pantomime in Epsom. The dialogue is clever, the slapstick so excellently timed, our Dame calls the shots, the baddie goads the children, who goad him back.

The story always incorporates good old fashioned variety acts - dancers, singers, acrobatic moves. Yes, there are some crafty double-entendres and near the knuckle jokes - but they are so expertly done! It goes over the heads of our tiny audience and has Mum and Dad in fits of laughter. There is no cruelty, exclusion or jokes that punch down. All this is a fine-tuned set of traditional performance skills, handed down through many generations.

All panto scripts are expertly customised to the audience by Spillers Pantomimes. They can be contacted at...wait for it...

**Hardup Hall, Lady Lane,  
Hadleigh, Suffolk IP7 6AF  
info@spillers-pantomimes.co.uk**

I would love to pop in for refreshments (served by a butler wearing squeaky shoes - while two dames wash my car with buckets of tinsel) just to say that I had taken tea with Lord and Lady Hardup.

1. <https://www.bartleby.com/lit-hub/volume-viii-english-the-age-of-dryden/19-etherege-and-his-place-in-the-history-of-restoration-drama/#:~:text=On%20one%20occasion%2C%20at%20Epsom,his%20next%20venture%20into%20comedy.> 12/01/2026
2. <https://www.pepysdiary.com> retrieved 12/01/2026
3. <https://lyon.ecampus.com/cupid-king-five-royal-paramours-reprint/bk/9780743270861> retrieved 12/01/2026

## TOWN TWINNING: FLAGS FOR GOOD

Oh no...she's done it this time...the F-word.

I'm just trying to rehabilitate them; honest!

National flags have had a hard time of it lately. Please, in future, let us fly them for good - let's love them - and each other.

My earliest memory of flags was at the seaside. If the red flag flew on the pole next to the breakwater, no paddling for me. Never mind though! I had flags of my own. Here is my favourite; in my young mind, it was a man running in a circle and getting nowhere.

I also liked the mixed bag that Mum and Dad bought in the bucket and spade shop.



(The bucket was always inspected on the last day of the holiday because I had a habit of bringing home sea shells - complete with their occupants. The terrible smell in the understairs cupboard had my parents investigating the whole house for weeks)



Dad had an embroidered patch on the breast pocket of his best (his only) formal jacket. A maple leaf - it depicted his homeland. I knew that I was a dual national English - Canadian like my Dad. When Mum spoke about her family "from France" Dad would jump in with jokes about smelly cheese and Mum's mysterious aversion to pork. Mum would jibe back that Canadians were uncivilised because they pour maple syrup and mayonnaise over everything. She also made Irish jokes if

Dad really got going. My brother and I jibed at each other about far more cerebral things, like being sick down your jumper at school, crying at the dinner table because you hated chops, that sort of thing.

Mum and Dad's best mates were a Burmese family who lived next door. Dad would get together with the lads and they would all play guitar. I helped out in the kitchen and cultivated my chilli obsession; Mum showed my friend's Mum how to make vol-au-vents.

My friend introduced me to Joni Mitchell, Crosby Stills Nash & Young and Van Morrison. She told me that her Grandfather ate "wild food" back home. I had "stories" too - but they came from Nanny from Canada, who lived upstairs in our house. Her tales were the first hints that "Canadian" and "English" had pieces missing.

When my Dad died, I discovered that my great grandparents/uncles on Dad's side were Travellers from Cork, in Ireland - they dug canals, laboured on farms, harvested brick clay and fought in WWI. Canada was a place to go for a better life - so that's what they did - only to find that the Canadians didn't like them either. (The REAL Canadians, it turned out, were the Plains Cree who sold flower seed and beads to my grandmother) Eventually, Dad's family did extremely well for themselves in their new country.

Curious, I researched Mum's side - Jews from France. Mum's family name had been made up - it was changed/Anglicised in the 1800s. Mum showed me a picture of her grandparents, who were hat makers. Her maternal side were market gardeners. Dad's maternal side were from Suffolk - fruit farmers. The last orchards they owned, in Middlesex, are now part of Heathrow Airport. Dad went to great lengths to show me the English family tree, which went back as far as 1730.

So many of us are a mixture of many heritages; that is what the UK is all about. The greatest part of my childhood were all the stories about the characters in my family. Why do we have to fit in all the time? Fit in with what exactly? (I gave up trying in my first week of infant school; it just wasn't me) But surely it is important to always try your best to be neighbourly, polite, share food and stories, to play fair, to respect your environment and to help each other: "Teach Your Children Well".

Cats can't write down laws (having no thumbs must be really annoying), or discuss social etiquette, so they have to do things another way, hence the terrible arguments. Humans are perfectly capable of sorting things out - but shy away from confrontational subjects, rather than talking them through; some of them behave far worse than the cats.

I am proud of my flags - all of them. I am proud of yours too, in equal measure.

It is my great honour to be involved in a wonderful project that started after WW2. Yes, it involves flags... and it is full of love.



When you enter many towns and cities in the UK you are greeted by a "Twinning" sign - here is one of ours. They represent co-operation and friendship between communities. Twinning became popular in

Great Britain after WW2; an opportunity to build links "between where you live and where I live" after years of conflict. Since 1996, Epsom & Ewell has been twinned with the French town of Chantilly, one of the most beautiful and historic towns in France. Chantilly lies just north east of Paris. The original twinning ties were based largely on the two towns' common horse racing heritage. Both are world renowned horse race training centres and while Epsom is home to the 'original' Derby, Chantilly hosts the French Derby at its racecourse. Chantilly is also famed for the impressive Château de Chantilly. Since Epsom & Ewell was officially twinned with Chantilly, the Town Twinning Association, comprising councillors and volunteer residents, has been responsible for developing and running twinning activities. It has worked with Chantilly counterparts to help enrich the lives of residents on both sides of the Channel via visits to and from Chantilly by individuals and interest groups, such as Epsom Rotary, schools, musicians and choirs. The association also runs a programme of cultural, educational and social events in the borough.



My badge design! Chantilly is twinned with Watermael-Boitsfort, Belgium  
Überlingen, Germany and Epsom & Ewell, England, UK



**Please join the Town Twinning Association!**  
**You can find out more by emailing: [contact@epsomtwinning.com](mailto:contact@epsomtwinning.com)<sup>1</sup>**

Our Epsom & Ewell and Chantilly family has turned 30! The Twinning committee needed a metal badge designed for the occasion - and it was my pleasure to help.

Chantilly, like us, tells stories of sacrifice and bravery. Aside from striving to keep the racing industry going during WWII, which was resistance in itself, a secret army in France helped us to bring Nazism to an end:

#### RESISTANCE AND COMRADESHIP

*The Wehrmacht entered Chantilly on 13 September 1940. They used the Great Stables as a veterinary hospital for their horses. The military command took over the hôtel du Grand Condé. Following the assassination of a collaborator, the parish priest, Abbot Charpentier, who authored a 1943 anti-Nazi sermon, was arrested along with several French Resistance fighters he had supported. He was deported to the Mauthausen camp, where he died 7 August 1944. The town was liberated by American tanks on 31 August 1944.*

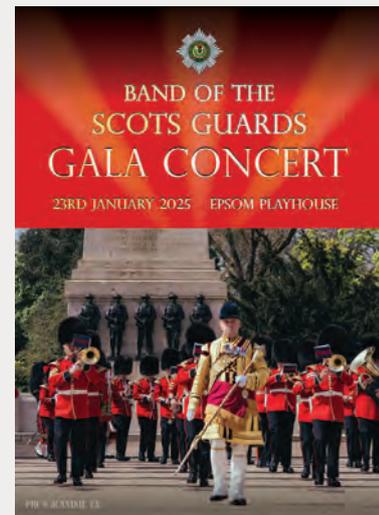
#### THE SPIDER OF CHANTILLY

*A reward was offered for the capture of a French resistor during WW2. "The Spider" climbed a telegraph pole at Rue d'Aubigny, cut the wires and swinging on them, entered a house to dispatch a Nazi colonel. With others, The Spider raided a military post at the Chantilly racecourse, overpowered the occupiers and stole arms and ammunition. Under the cover of darkness, the group eliminated the sentries and then entered the camp, where they overpowered the enemy in a similar manner.<sup>2</sup>*

1. [epsomtwinning.com](http://epsomtwinning.com) retrieved 03/02/2026

2. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/257531098> 03/02/2026

# MILITARY MUSIC FOR A GOOD CAUSE



In my last report, I covered our new “royal connection” in the borough.

Councillor Graham Jones (former Lieutenant Colonel and Director of Music for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II) has created a “new tradition” in the borough of Epsom and Ewell. Our Military Music concerts take place at the Epsom Playhouse. ***The fourth in the series, Band of the Irish Guards, takes place on Saturday, the 21st of February.***

It is fitting that the concert will benefit two of our local charities in Epsom and Ewell: Epsom and Ewell British Legion and Age Concern Epsom. Both charities have provided support for older residents in our borough (and some of them were war veterans).

If you can't make it to the concert, please do think about attending the smaller fundraising events held by the nominated charities.

During my time as a local councillor, I have had requests for advice from members of another army - unpaid carers. Epsom and Ewell British Legion and Age Concern Epsom websites are two of my go-tos when resources to help residents are needed.

Who are unpaid carers? According to carers.org: “A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness,

disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support”. 7.7 million of us do this, unsupported.

“So why not? Isn't that what any good person would do?”

Of course it is. However, it is worth bearing in mind that these carers may be children! In 2011, there were approximately 507,000 children and young people (aged up to 24 years) who were providing unpaid care across the UK.<sup>1</sup> Some of our unpaid carers are those in the older age groups, who are more likely to put in the most hours - 19% of carers aged 65 years and over and 23% of carers aged 75 years and over, provided 50 hours or more of care, compared to 15% on average across carers of all ages.<sup>2</sup>

Caring can be lonely. Our voluntary organisations are a blessing; a lifeline for carers that we cannot do without.

## GUARDSMAN TURLOUGH MÓR

***Irish Guards mascot “Séamus” is officially named Turlough Mór, after a 12th-century High King of Ireland (traditionally named after ancient Irish royalty). Séamus is based with the 1st Battalion at Hounslow Cavalry Barracks. He is a central figure in military parades, often accompanying the Regimental Band and supporting regimental ceremonial duties, including Trooping the Colour.***



1. <https://stateofchildhealth.rcpch.ac.uk/evidence/family-and-social-environment/young-carers/#page-section-5>

2. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/data-and-charts/unpaid-carers-nutshell>

## GIMME SHELTER

Before I go - a preview of something I will be examining with the help of experts.

I suppose it is correct now to speak about our dear little borough in “divisions”.

One sunny afternoon in January a family in my division invited me to view what would have been their “second home”...had we been in a state of war.

Mysteriously, research has pointed me to a single lady occupant during WW2 (according to the street directory); that is all I know at the moment.

The new owners have turned it into a shed/workshop. They treasure it and it is a feature of their lovely garden. My first impression was that it could be an air raid warden’s shelter as it is so solidly made.

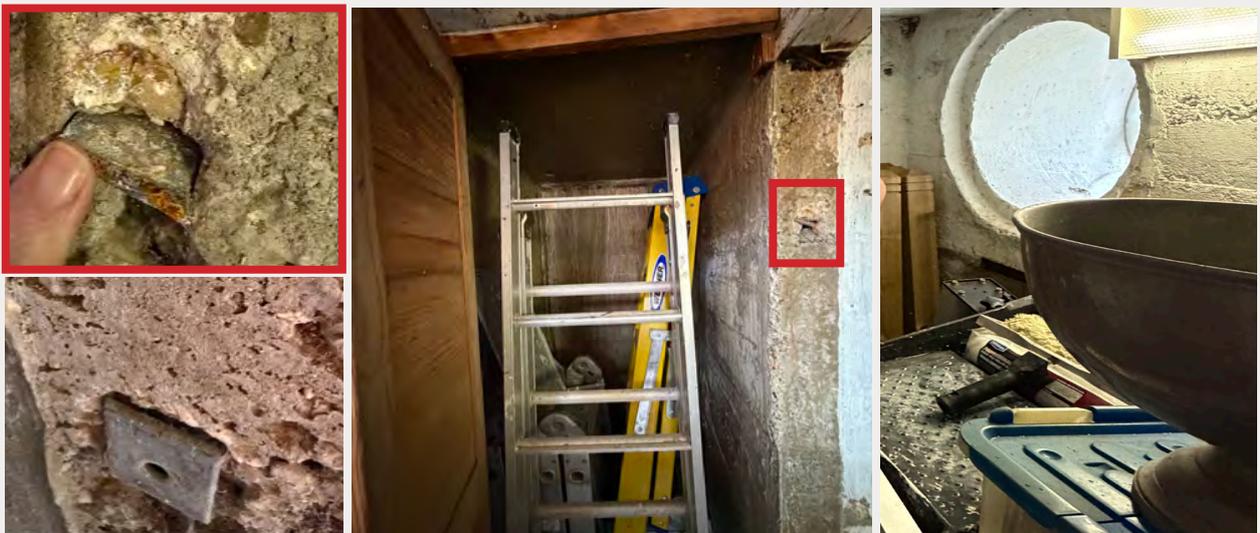
More to follow in my next report!



Welcome to the shelter! The front door (not original) opens to steps down into the shelter itself.



Left: side and back view. Centre: blockwork detail  
Right: the “porthole”. The owner added the window.



Left: hinges to what was a second door at the bottom of the steps. Centre: the loo, with the doorway to the main area on the right. Right: the “porthole”.