

# TIMES REMEMBERED TIMES PAST

A History of Beddington and Bandon

By  
Beverley Shew

‘Love thou thy land with love far brought  
From out the storied past....’  
Tennyson

Carshalton & District History & Archaeology Society

Cover picture from a painting of the Old Post Office, Beddington, by  
Thomas Coleman Dibden (1810-93) in a private collection.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the past so much has been written about Beddington and the notable families who lived here that these notes are an attempt to bring together many of those otherwise scattered references along with additional research. A village or an area is created by its people, the rich or poor, so I have tried to include as many of these individuals and families as I can. Nor have I tried to be too formal in style for it is me; the purists will have to bear with me.

I have begun by setting out the manorial history of both Beddington and Bandon but thereafter have listed the headings in alphabetical order. Nor have I strictly stuck to the modern parish of Beddington and frequently stray across the boundaries into Croydon, Mitcham, Purley and Wallington when the occasion demands, much of which was originally within the old parish of Beddington.

When I directly quote the year that entries first appear in Directories it must be kept in mind that the information contained within was usually gathered around the October of the previous year, likewise with Electoral Registers. To those who are a little less familiar with the term c. (circa) before a date denotes ‘about’ and it is not a definitive date.

As memory is fallible, wherever possible I have endeavoured to check as much as I can when it comes to reminiscences, but of course, this is not always possible. The thoughts and memories of those to whom I have spoken must always be regarded as personal to them and for which I thank them. Any omissions or errors are entirely down to me.

History is forever evolving; that which is today is soon tomorrow and already a part of the past, and as more ancient documents are found and read and new discoveries come to light, the more we learn, the more that far distant horizon broadens – history is forever on-going.

Full sized copies of photographs used in this publication are available via the Local Studies & Archives Centre at Central Library, Sutton.

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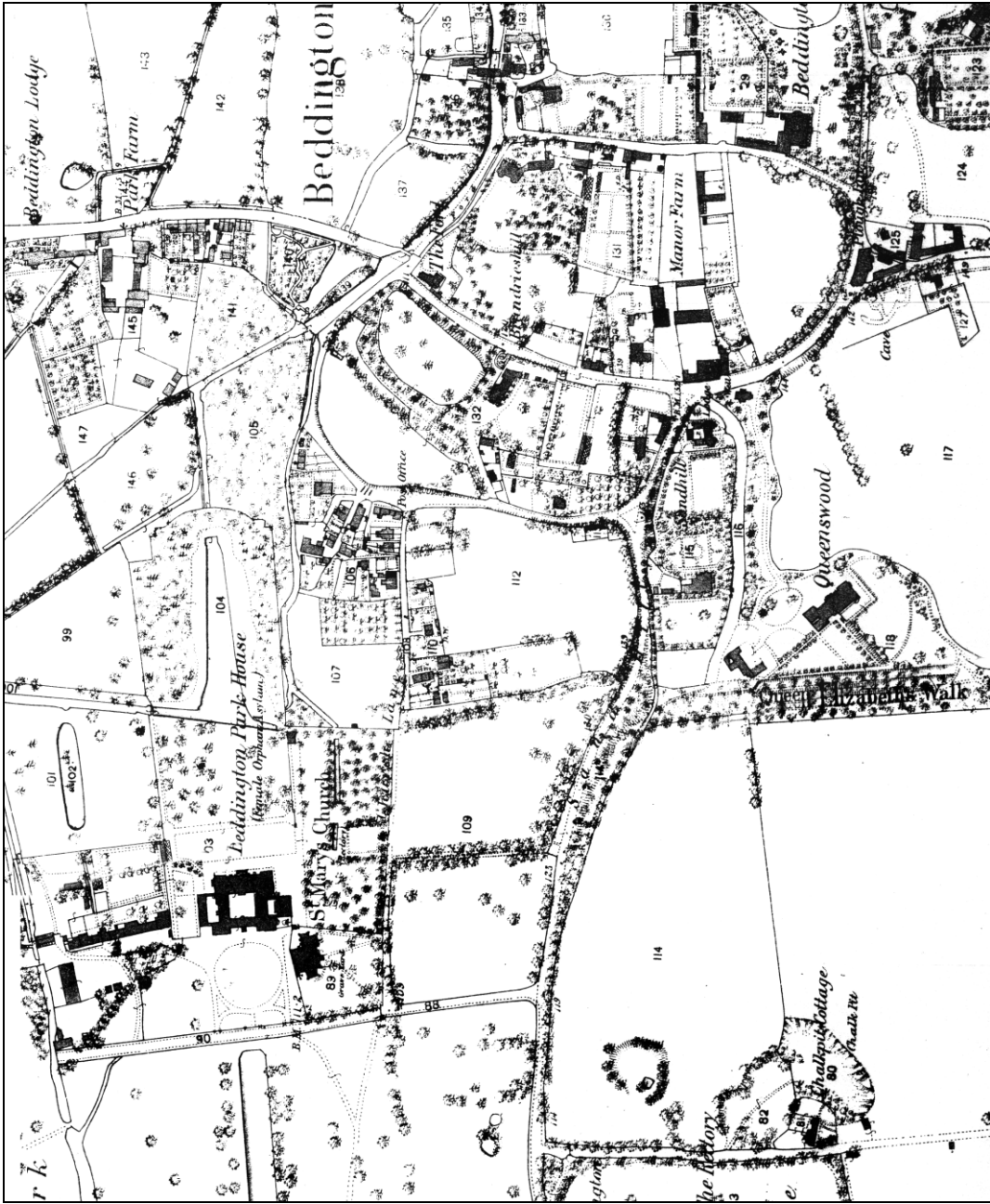
To John Phillips, former Heritage Projects Manager (who along with the late Heritage Officer Doug Cluett, Nick Burnett, Barry Weston and myself spent many happy hours investigating Carew Manor and Beddington's past), a big "thank you" for his enthusiasm, his comments and his effort in bringing this book to publication,

And finally but not least,

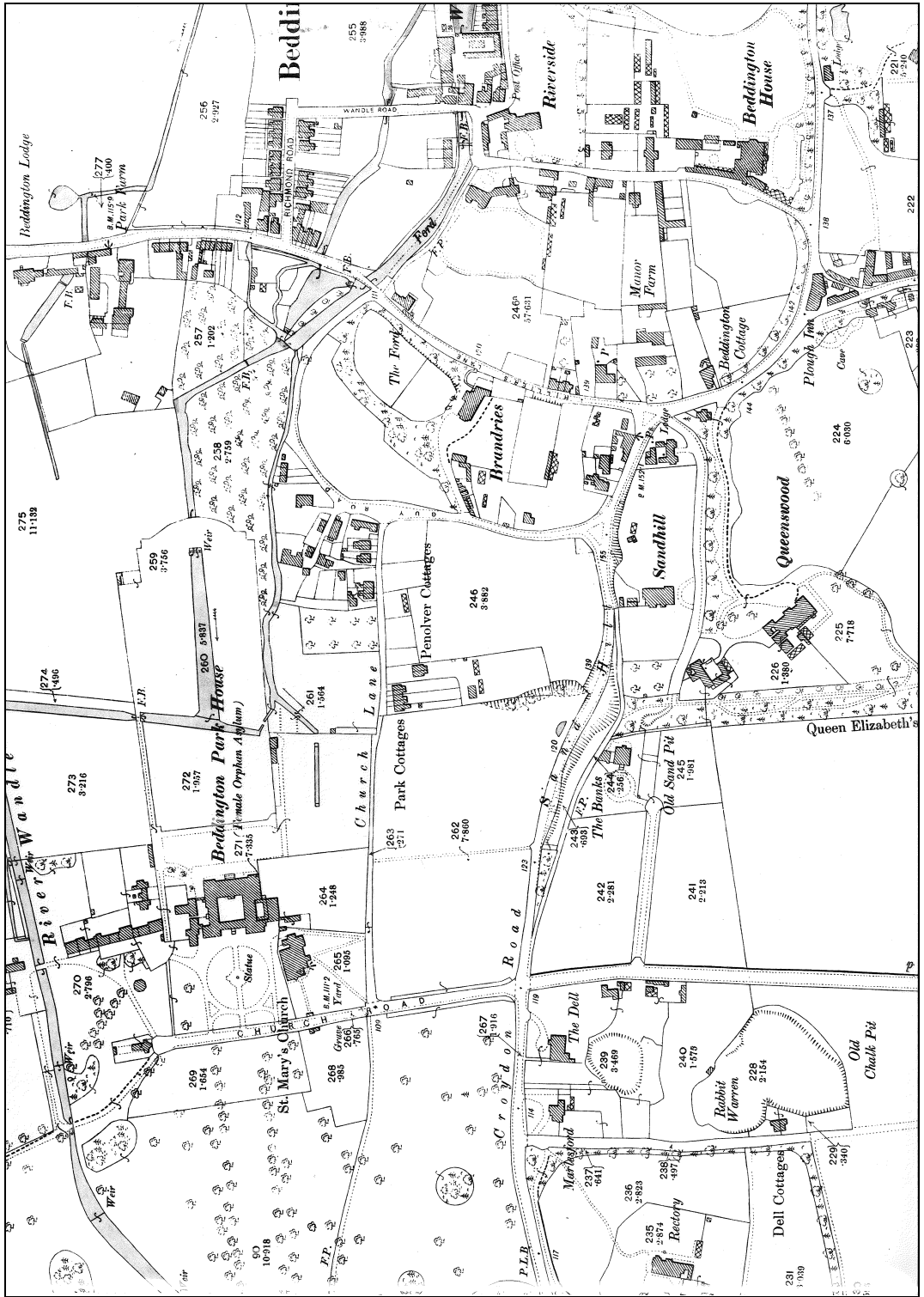
To my dear husband George Shew, for all those lost hours while I have kept my computer company and in the hope that some day he may read this.

Thank you all.





1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of Beddington 1868



The second edition Ordnance Survey Map of Beddington 1896



# HISTORY

## Pre-history

**Beddington Lane.** In 1912, evidence of early habitation was uncovered off Beddington Lane on the south side of the corner with Therapia Lane. Excavations on land known as the Hog Croft (presumably where in the past pigs had been kept) led to the uncovering of a Neolithic tranche flint axe in the north-eastern corner of the site, and in the south-central part, a Neolithic bowl which was considered may have been Peterborough ware of late Neolithic dating. A 6½in. diameter portion of the tusk of a mammoth deposited in the South Kensington Natural History Museum also came from the gravel pits.

**The Bridle Path.** Evidence of early habitation dating from 50 B.C. to 50 A.D. was uncovered at Waddon in both 1902 and October 1953. That the path is also on the line of an ancient track is borne out by there having been traces of a prehistoric village on a spur of land overlooking the river at the end of Aldwick Road excavated during the 1920s. The geology and relief of the area was such that the earliest settlements were located on the spring line where there was a plentiful supply of fresh water. In the river a supply of fish was assured, wildfowl inhabited the marshes and a degree of protection was afforded both by marsh, river and the spur of higher ground upon which the settlement was located. Potentially arable fields stretched away behind. In general, it was only after the arrival of water mains that villages came into being further away from the spring line.

It was on the rising ground of the Bridle Path just within the Borough boundary that early in 1923 Mrs. Richardson, a member of the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society noticed indications of prehistoric activity. This was when sand was being excavated and builders were constructing north-south roads on what was then known as the Cedars Estate, now Cedars Road. With the assistance of her son she set about a limited archaeological excavation at which time she uncovered a bronze square-sided awl, much pottery and an unmistakable hearth resting on the sand. In May of the same year further excavations were carried out at which time fragments of a pot and a chipped, steep-ended flake implement were discovered. Soon after, fragments of a skull said by experts to be that of a boy some five years of age dated as being pre-Roman, perhaps 100 B.C. were also found though no other bones of the skeleton were located.

Stories of buried treasure resulted in a good deal of scraping around being done by local children but very little solid archaeological examination was undertaken until September 1925 when excavation of an undisturbed section of the eastern escarpment was begun. A circular hearth some four feet across was found along with calcined flints, charcoal, sand burnt to a reddish tint, flints and clumps of burnt clay intermingled with numerous pieces of pottery, flint implements, flakes, bones and teeth. Some of the pottery was unquestionably Roman but other pieces were of late La Tène, a European Iron Age culture. The archaeologists had uncovered the site of a settlement dating from the transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age around 500 B.C., while the finds of

worked flint some of it Mesolithic in character, showed that even earlier peoples had occupied this sandy bluff.

**Croydon Road.** In 1866 while preparing the ground for the foundations of a house at today's 312 Croydon Road opposite the National School, a hoard of bronze implements dating from about 1800 B.C. to 550 B.C. were uncovered. These included three ingots or lumps of bronze, a gouge, two broken spearheads, six celts (or axes) and one half of a mould for casting bronze axes. The pieces may have formed part of the stock in trade of some manufacturer of such implements as from the battered and broken condition of the finds it would appear that they, as well as the ingots were intended for the melting pot. A fascinating discovery and one that surely confirms people had indeed passed this way before the secrets of iron smelting were unlocked and long before any of our written records began.

**The Merebank.** (the name of which is reflected in the nearby Merebank Lane) runs for three miles south from the Wandle to a junction of ancient tracks at Russell Hill in Purley. Along with The Ridgeway, it derives its name from the Saxon *hrycaweg* meaning *war road* or *boundary bank* of which some traces can still be found. It was a substantial bank some thirty feet wide and four feet high (or more in places). It began at Purley Corner, ran directly north to Waddon mill and extended across for another mile tending slightly more to the west to near Mitcham Road cemetery. These ancient paths were usually major routes for the transport of raw materials, animals and armies. Following excavations in 1925, on a site within the aerodrome it was thought that this bank may have once represented the agger or embankment of a secondary Roman road of about fourteen feet in width, but no positive conclusions could be drawn from the evidence available. More recently questions have been raised as to the antiquity of the Merebank (which has now almost entirely vanished) suggesting it may have been no more than a boundary bank between the parishes of Beddington and Croydon.

This pronounced ridge under the grass on the main landing area of the old Croydon Airport caused many an early aircraft to sustain damage to its undercarriage or tail-skid as it landed. The camber of mould and gravel was removed in levelling the aerodrome that accounted for the top level. Below this lay a stratum of rammed chalk on a bed of flints six to eight inches deep. There was a Roman villa and evidence of even earlier settlement some half mile west of this line on the site of the sewage farm.

**The Brandries.** In 2004 a limited archaeological watching brief prior to re-development on the site of a new house now numbered 4A The Brandries revealed the presence of prehistoric, Early Saxon and Medieval pottery and two possible Early Saxon features.

## **Roman Beddington**

**Beddington Farmlands.** The early spring of 1981 saw the beginning of an extensive archaeological dig on the former Beddington Farmlands on the west side of Beddington Lane. This was to relocate a known Roman bathhouse and villa and to examine the surrounding area to determine its history prior to the excavation of gravel. According to Addy (1874), the two buildings were found in 1871 standing immediately adjacent to each



other when workmen were laying conduits on land then being developed for an extension to the existing sewage works. The finds included *pilae* and flue tiles, floors of tile set in mortar and wall plaster, coins dating from the second to fourth centuries A.D. and one Saxon coin. In conversation with Mr. Bert Appleby whose father and grandfather before him were also employed on the farm, he told of what his grandfather (one of the original workmen) described as a Roman kitchen with mosaic flooring discovered near the bathhouse when the land was being ploughed. It was located slightly north-west of and a short distance from the bathhouse beneath an almost adjoining sludge bed, an area not excavated during 1981. A number of Roman coins were also said to have been unearthed during ploughing further to the west in what was known as the 'Bushy Field'.

Arising from the 1981 dig, evidence in the form of quite a considerable amount of hand-made pottery and two bronze awls for use in leather working were found indicated there having been a settlement on this land from at least the end of the late Bronze Age, from about 800 B.C. A stone hammer-head of the Early Bronze Age and an even earlier Neolithic (New Stone Age) ground flint axe head made about 5000 years ago were also uncovered, artefacts that may possibly have been picked up locally and kept as a curiosity that in themselves were not direct evidence of earlier occupation of the site. The introduction of iron working techniques in about 700 B.C. heralded the dawn of the Iron Age and evidence of occupation at this time was also found in traces of a circular timber hut, a possible boundary ditch, pottery and an Iron Age brooch made of bronze.

Virtually nothing is known about the earliest Roman settlement in the area, but as the dig progressed it was found that by about 180 A.D. a courtyard and the first masonry foundations had been laid of a building thought to have probably been timber framed and of some kind of wattle and daub construction. The original tiled building had been extended and improved, and by about 280 A.D. was thought to have had glazed windows with plastered and painted inner walls. An amount of colourfully painted plaster was found having fallen in upon itself. The floors were of fairly plain tessellated paved surfaces. From the evidence available it would appear that the building, thought to have been a farm house, consisted of a long corridor with rooms opening off it and may possibly have been rectangular in plan though much of this part had been destroyed without record probably earlier in the twentieth century.

The bathhouse, the discovery of which had set archaeologists in search of the nearby villa, was detached from the house and probably constructed completely of masonry. It had also been extended during its lifetime ultimately consisting of a single strip of rooms ranging from cold, through the warm to the hot room as you moved through the building towards the furnace.

Interpretation of the site concluded that the villa complex with its outlying barns and remarkably preserved well was part a farming estate the produce from which would probably have found its way into the markets of Roman London. It would appear that sometime early in the fifth century around the period of the end of Roman rule in Britain the villa was abandoned, the house demolished and the materials it was built of robbed and taken elsewhere. The site became wasteland or reverted entirely to farmland and people never lived there again.

Apart from locating the villa and bath-house, over 3½ tons of Roman roof and flu tiles were recovered some marked with the fingerprints of the tile-maker, some with signature marks, a leaf and the paw print of a dog. The headless skeleton of a dog was uncovered by the author during the course of the first season of the dig, cobbled yard surfaces, ditches and gullies and the remains of what was formerly a timber structure were noted. At least eight square metres of painted wall plaster was found in situ, shards of Samian pottery, a human skeleton and a cremation urn. A spindle whorl, Iron Age loom-weights, the Early Bronze Age hammer head already referred to and a Bronze Age pot were also found. A unique type of olive oil fuelled clay lamp probably made at Ashted, Surrey and a pot of burnished black ware that was found to contain traces of milk were also uncovered among the finds during the course of the dig.

**Attis Lamp.** While investigating spoil thrown up by a mechanical digger at an undisclosed location in the vicinity of the then sewage works on the east side of Beddington Lane, in 1951 a local man Fred Nye unearthed an extremely ornate and rare Roman clay lamp. This lamp of about 6” in diameter, described as being “by far the finest example of a Roman pottery lamp ever found in Britain” depicts the God Attis, the consort of Mother Earth seated upon a chariot drawn by four horned rams. A devotee of the god is shown behind. Thought to have been made in central Italy, thermoluminescence tests indicated an age range of 1,660 to 2,350 years, that is between 314 A.D. and 376 B.C. Bronze ‘scale armour’ and an enamelled bronze fibula (brooch) were also found at the site, the armour by Mr. Nye who did not keep it and the brooch by his companion whose wife subsequently disposed of it. The lamp, donated to the British Museum is to be found today on display in Room 69, the English Galleries of the Department of Roman Antiquities.

**Bandon Hill Cemetery.** An archaeological excavation undertaken in 1978 arose from when some four years previously during the digging of a new grave in the northern part of the cemetery, a Romano-British cinerary urn dating from the third century A.D. was found. It contained the remains of a cremated body, bones, teeth and ash. The urn had been hand-made rather than being wheel thrown with the exterior roughly smoothed and decorated with overlapping arcs. A small beaker and a flagon were also found. Indications of similar burials had been found in 1976 under similar circumstances, indicating that the land that had become a late Victorian cemetery had been a burial ground some sixteen centuries or more before. Unfortunately, nothing of any note was uncovered during the 1978 dig.

## **Domesday Survey**

In 1085 some nineteen years after the Norman Conquest, in order to discover the true and potential wealth of England and in whose ownership the land was held so that taxes could be assessed; a national survey was undertaken and named ‘Domesday’ as it was not possible to contradict its findings. Officials travelled throughout the country quickly and efficiently, only omitting London and those areas of the far north that had not yet come under Norman control. Within a year the information had been gathered, the returns were submitted for individual ‘hundreds’ (sub-divisions of counties) and recorded in two volumes.

Beddington was divided into two estates within Waletton (Wallington) Hundred hence two separate entries in the Survey the first of which appears to correspond with that afterwards known as Home Beddington or West Court and the other, Huscarles Manor. The first entry was amongst the land of Richard, son of Count Gilbert.

Robert de Watteville holds of Richard [de Tonbridge] Beddington, which Azor held from King Edward [The Confessor]. It was then assessed at 25 hides [a unit of tax assessment - a measure of land enough to support a family and its dependants, usually between 60 and 120 acres], now at 3 hides. The arable land consists of 6 carucates [as much land as could be tilled with one plough (and 8 oxen) in a year]. One carucate is in demesne [pronounced “demain”, land farmed by the Lord of the Manor for his own benefit] and there are sixteen villains [freemen i.e. households not individual people] and fourteen cottars [peasants or poorer villagers] with 5 carucate. There is a church; and five bondmen [slaves]; and two mills at [worth] 40 shillings [12 pence = one shilling, 20 shillings = one pound] and 24 acres of meadow. The wood yields five swine. Fifteen houses in London [belonging to] this manor, pay 12 shillings and 3 pence. In the time of King Edward it was valued at £10, and the same at present; but when acquired £6. There were churches in five of Azor’s six Surrey manors worth more than £5 that suggests he had systematically founded churches. Beddington may well have been one of these.

Richard held a vast amount of land in Kent, East Anglia and Surrey where he held forty-eight manors. He was among the richest and most powerful barons in early medieval England with his seat at Tonbridge in Kent. Robert de Watteville, Richard’s tenant at Beddington had several other Surrey manors and must also have been a moderately wealthy man.

The second Beddington entry (Huscarles) was among the lands of Miles Crispin. Milo Crispin holds Beddington and William the son of Tuold from him. Ulf held it from King Edward at which time it was assessed at 25 hides; now at 3 only. There are 6 carucates of arable land. One is in demesne; and thirteen villains and thirteen cottars have 6 carucates. There is one bondman, and two mills at 35 shillings, and 20 acres of meadow. The wood yields five hogs. In the time of King Edward the manor was valued at £10; afterwards at £6; and now at £9.10s. Twenty-one houses, (13 in London, and 8 in Sudwerche [Southwark]) belonging to this manor, which paid 12 shillings, have been taken from this manor and are held by Earl Roger [de Montgomery]. Miles Crispin only had one other Surrey manor, Chessington but most of his extensive property lay in the area of the Chilterns in Berkshire. Of his sub-tenant William, the son of Tuold, nothing is known.

## **The Village**

The present Beddington “village” may indeed be the lost village of Bandon, near to Bandon Hill and today’s Beddington Lane, formerly Bandon Way. If this were indeed so, the original Beddington then becomes a “lost” village. It has been suggested that when the Carews or one of the earlier lords of the manor came to the area and wished to extend their parkland, the inhabitants of Beddington may have been removed to Bandon (compared to Henry VIII’s removal of Cuddington), the village destroyed and the name transferred.

## Manorial Background

The earliest authenticated reference yet found to Beddington is a letter from Denewulf, Bishop of Winchester to King Edward written at some time between 878 and 908 A.D. The King had evidently given Beddington to Old Minster, Winchester, and was now trying to get the church to lease it back to him. The Bishop, while reluctantly agreeing to this, asked the king to make no further similar demands for the sake of his soul. The letter gives an outline description of Beddington and of how in the recent past the estate and farm stock had been plundered by “heathen men” the – the Vikings, and had been stripped bare. At the time of writing Beddington amounted to 70 hides (as above, as much land as would support one free family and dependents) and had been completely restocked. The previous winter had probably been severe with only nine full-grown oxen having survived, 114 full-grown pigs and 50 wethers (castrated rams) in addition to the sheep and pigs that the herdsmen have a right to have, twenty of which were full-grown. There were 110 full-grown sheep, 7 bondsmen and 20 fitches (salted and cured sides of hog) along with 90 acres sown with corn. The Bishop thereafter begged that the King should seek no more land, as to them it was an unwelcome demand. Winchester did however manage to recover the estate as a later charter issued between 973 and 975 confirmed their possession of it.

**Home Beddington or West Court.** In the later Middle Ages there were three manors in Beddington as opposed to the two recorded in the Domesday Survey. Home Beddington lay on the west side of the parish and included the church and part of the village. At that time, the De Watteville family held the manor of Richard de Tonbridge an ancestor of the Clares. At some time in the reign of King Henry II (who succeeded to the throne in 1154), the right of mefne or intermediate lord was probably either purchased by, or granted to the De Watteville family. Their successors held the manor immediately of the king by the service of rendering annually a wooden crossbow. At some time in the mid-twelfth century Sibyl de Watteville married Ingelram de Funteneyns and Beddington appears to have passed to him presumably as part of a marriage settlement. It would appear that Ingelram died without heirs as his estate was forfeit to his overlord, the King.

Richard I ‘The Lionheart’ the absentee Crusader King who came to the throne in 1189, awarded Lordship of the manor to William de Es or de Eys and his heirs. On September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1245 during the reign of Henry III, the manor, late of Hugh de Eys, was awarded to Reymund de Luk to be held by the annual presentation of a wooden crossbow (balistam) at Pentecost. On the death of Reymund’s grandson (who died without an heir), it reverted to the crown. In June 1276, Geoffrey Gascelyn acknowledged that he owed the Kings sergeant at arms 30 marks, in full payment of 60 marks owed by him for the custody of the manor of Bedinton.

The manor was subsequently granted to John de Roges who was killed at Tornbir again, without an heir. His cousin Thomas Corbet, Groom of the Chamber, petitioned the King and in acknowledgement “for the grateful and long service which our beloved valet Thomas Corbett hath faithfully bestowed upon us”, in April 1302 he and his heirs were granted the Manor of Beddington forever, again rendering annually one crossbow of the price of 12d. He died on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1300. The manor passed from father to son, to the

second Thomas Corbet then aged 30 who in October 1344 released all of his right and claim in the manor of Bedyngton to Sir Richard de Wylughby (or Willoughby) and his wife Elizabeth, formally witnessed by Sir Thomas Huscarl, Master William de Careu, clerk, and others, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1345. Owing to the transfer of ownership having been made without his consent, the King seized the manor though re-granted it to the Willoughbys two years later. They had to pay a fine of one hundred shillings for having taken possession of the manor without royal permission.

At some point before 1348 Sir Richard and Lady Elizabeth's daughter, Lucy de Willoughby married Sir Thomas Huscarle who already held a large area of Beddington north of the river; Huscarles Manor (or Beddington Huscarles). Her husband was from another family of long standing service to royalty. In 1348, Bishop Edindon granted a licence to Sir Thomas and Lucy to have a private chapel in their manor house at Beddington. Lucy and Thomas had a son also called Thomas and a daughter Joanna who became a nun. Sir Thomas was dead by the end of 1353.

In May 1352, it is recorded that a licence of five marks was paid to the King by Master William de Carreu, portioner in the church of Beddington and Nicholas Carew, for Richard de Willughby, the elder and his wife to grant to them for life the manor, held in chief for a yearly rent of 20 marks. On the June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1359, the Patent Rolls record a licence for 100s was paid to the King by Nicholas Carew for Richard de Wylughby 'chivaler', the elder, to release to Nicholas Carew and his heirs all right and claim in the manor of Bedyngton ... and for Nicholas to grant a rent of 20 marks of rent.

Thomas Huscal's lands were a small part of a large collection of property called the Honour of Wallingford which belonged to the King's eldest son Edward the Black Prince. On the February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1354, Lucy 'late wife of Thomas Huscarl' did homage to the Black Prince represented by the keeper of his privy seal Sir John de Hale in the chapel of Westminster. In 1357 Lucy married Nicholas Carew who had already leased the Manor of Beddington from her parents in May 1352. He bought the manor outright in 1359. He had a right to Huscarls through Lucy but she only had a life interest and on her death it was to go to her son Thomas Huscarl. Thomas died in 1369 following which his stepfather Nicholas Carew in 1372 and again in 1381 had to pay out compensation to various Huscarle relatives before his possession of Beddington was fully established.

**Beddington Huscarl** was known as such from its long-standing owners. Milo de Crispin the son-in-law and heir of Wigod of Wallingford held the second manor when the Domesday Survey was completed. His lands were incorporated into a group of estates known as the Honour of Wallingford centred on Wallingford Castle, Berkshire. At some time, the Crispin manor appears to have been divided into two parts one of which was known as the manor of Bandon and the other as Huscarle.

Though the Huscarle family, (by service of paying a rose yearly at Midsummer) held property in Beddington as early as the reign of King John in the early twelfth century, little is known of the history relating to this manor. In 1259, the King granted William Huscarle's lands in Beddington to Dionysius his chaplain. In 1305, during the reign of Edward I it was the property of John de Syndlesham and in 1321, of his former widow

who having re-married was then Lady Beatrice Huscarl probably the first wife of Sir Thomas Huscarle. Sir Thomas was later to marry Lucy de Willoughby. In February 1354 “Lucy late wife of Thomas Huscarle” did fealty for which was held with Purle[y]e and Brightwell of the Honour of Wallingford. In 1357 Lucy became the wife of Nicholas Carew at which time her husband acquired her life interest. Subsequent entries in the Patent Rolls show that he bought out the reversionary interests in the manor. Both manors were therefore united.

Huscarles was a compact block of land on the west side of Beddington Lane to the north of the Wandle within the Tudor and early modern deer park. It had a total area of about two hundred acres, the western boundary of which lay along Freron Lane (now lost) while the north side abutted on Mitcham Common until 1535 when the southern edge of the common was enclosed. The tithes relating to this land were payable to a cleric called the Portioner as opposed to the rector that was to become the subject of a long drawn-out lawsuit in the late eighteenth century. Huscarls probably ceased to be farmed as a distinct agricultural unit in the thirteenth century when the Carews incorporated it into Beddington Park though they do appear to have administered Beddington Huscarles as one unit and Bandon as another.

**Bandon alias Foresters manor** formed part of the land that Willaim Fitz Tuold held of Miles Crispin at the time of Domesday, for the manor appears subsequently to have been held in the honour of Wallingford. The honour had no other properties in Surrey apart from that of Chessington.

The earliest known reference to the name comes in 1204 when Roger of Bandon was one of the recipients of a royal grant of land at Beddington that had formerly been held by the de Eys or Eyers family. Various references to Bandon appear in documents throughout the thirteenth century and reference is made to the “villata de Bandon” when the Surrey Taxation Returns of 1332 listed Richard Tymberdene as being the largest landowner. In the taxation returns there were three villages Beddington, Bandon and Woodcote.

In 1349 Edward III granted or rather confirmed the Royal Manor of Bandon to Reginald Forester who in 1347 had a licence for an oratory in his manor house, as did the Huscarles in their manor the following year. The last known member of the Forester family at Bandon was Edmund who was involved in a land grant in 1379. The family connection over the previous years however was enough to give Bandon the alternative name of Foresters Manor. It subsequently came into the hands of William Bys who was in possession of it in 1393. In that year he sold it to Thomas Remys who in 1410 alienated to John Brymmesgrove, Thomas Hayton and John Cornwaleys who were probably trustees for Nicholas Carew who was in possession by 1431. In 1493, the Manor of Bandon worth 10 marks was held of the Prince as of the Honour of Walyngford; service unknown. Bandon remained a separate manor until well into the middle years of the sixteenth century, by 1612 had become known as “Bandon in Beddington” which would suggest that the old medieval division was then on its way out.

Where was the Manor of Bandon? Hedley Gowans, who translated part of the court rolls argued that it was on the east side of Beddington parish and subsequent research has

supported this. Bandon village may be on the site of the present Beddington Village while Beddington was near the church and largely removed by the Carews to clear the land around their house. It is known that Bandon Mill stood beside a pond upstream i.e. east of Carew Manor, probably on the site we know of today as Wallis's Mill.

**The Manor of Freres and other holdings.** The parish of Beddington was a labyrinth of manorial holdings many of which are poorly understood. There was a manor of Freres which in the north west part between Huscarls and Wallington.

There is also a list of rents paid by tenants both in Beddington and Bandon to Simon Rote a pelter in the City of London which is believed to be from around 1333 and is the oldest document held in Sutton Borough Archives. Rote seems to have been a substantial landowner but his property seems to have been a collection of lands in other manors rather than a manor itself. There was also a holding called Chamberlains about which almost nothing is known.

## **Later History of Beddington**

From a valuation of the rectory in 1454 we gain a picture of the rural nature of the area with its corn mill, arable crops of wheat, barley, oats, peas and tares (the latter a type of vetch of the pea family grown as fodder for animals), hay, straw, chaff and hemp. There were apple trees and livestock; lambs (and therefore wool), pigs, cattle, geese, rabbits and doves owned by the Carews.

Though no doubt the rural aspect of the area had changed little, arising from the Bishop's Visitation to the parish in 1725 we are given a picture of Beddington as it was in the early eighteenth century. The area was of eleven miles, but if Mitcham Common was to be included to which parishioners of Beddington lay equal claim to with the parishioners of Mitcham, it could then be taken at seventeen. Apart from a few lodgers that came in the summer time, the resident population stood at about four hundred with about four marriages, approximately eight births and about as many burials expected annually. The Patron of the church was Sir Nicholas Carew Bart., Representative of the County. Apart from the parish church dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin there was a chapel at Wallington, then a hamlet within the parish, and there were ruins of an ancient chapel (Our Lady of the Moor) that from time immemorial had been turned into a barn in the possession of Thomas Scawen Esq. of Carshalton. Samuel Ley was the curate, and John [Leng] Bishop of Norwich (1723-1727) rector between 1708 and 1727. There were no papists, non-conformist lecturers nor meetings of protestant dissenters in the parish at the time the report was written but there were two or three families that absented themselves from parochial church and met with the Presbyterian congregation at Croydon.

There were no publically funded schools but two or three people who taught children to read and write, sew etc. and to whom the vestry sent the poor of the parish, paid for out of the offertory money. There were no hospitals and only two charities to be distributed. One was ten houses with a little land given by a maiden lady towards the support of the church and the poor valued at £10 per annum, the other the sum of £2 per annum given by one Mr. Smyth who was a benefactor to the poor of most parishes in the county.

In 1727 the gentry included Lord Viscount Falmouth and Sir Nicholas Carew; Mme. Bridges, Mr. Page and Mr. Maddocke described as church-people, Mr. Garland, Mrs. Pettits and Mrs. Edwards dissenters. Croydon was the next post-town to Beddington.

Following a Visitation in 1788 the then rector the Rev. John Bromfield Ferrers (1783-1841) was a little less informative when it came to imparting information, giving no indication of the population living in an area of about ten miles (no longer claiming part of Mitcham Common) but including the hamlet of Wallington. The average number of marriages stood at eleven or twelve, births at twenty-four, burials at fourteen, that over the previous three years would indicate an increase in population. William Pellatt as Trustee of the Carew Estates was acting Patron to the church. The rector undertook the duty of lecturer. The Rev. Ferrers had heard there were Methodists but there was no Meeting House of any kind or any schools. Mr. Smyth's Charity for the clothing of one or more poor of the parish was the only charity recorded.

Three months after the proclamation of the French Republic in September 1792, on December 17<sup>th</sup> a number of local worthies including Wm. Pellatt (who Chaired the meeting); Francis Creuze; Francis Baring; Wm. Bristow; Geo. Charrington and others, gathered in the Vestry room of Beddington church to form an 'Association against Republicans and Levellers'. They met to address the very real concerns arising from the civil disturbance across the channel in what became known as the Terror; the French Revolution.

Determined to preserve this country's parliamentary constitution it was unanimously resolved to discover and to assist in bringing to justice anyone involved in seditious activity by publishing or distributing leaflets or pamphlets, and to assist the Civil Magistrates to maintain general stability and to keep the peace by supressing any riots or disturbances should they arise. The Association also recommended that within their establishments, publicans should prevent the meeting of any club or society of persons disaffected to the Government and to give notice to the nearest Magistrate if they learn of the circulation of seditious papers or rumours, or learn of any such assembly.

Five hundred copies of their joint resolution was printed, distributed and pasted up throughout the parish and hamlet and in neighbouring areas.

The Enclosure Map of 1820 shows us that Beddington was made up of a rather scattered group of houses. There were houses described as mansions, a limited number of more modest dwellings, and the remainder, small groups of cottages and farms. It would suggest that the Carews who were the dominant land owners from the late fourteenth century until 1859 along with the other influential land owning residents used their influence to effectively close the village by excluding the poor who may become a charge on the parish rate. On March 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 1821, John Brown and John Cookson did a count of the population of Beddington recording 238 females and 242 males, a total population of 480. In 1859, the Carew estates were broken up and sold and though some development, including the mansions 'Queenswood' and 'Sandhills' and those on a more modest scale (as the large houses in Croydon Road) had taken place, overall development of the area was still remarkably slow.



Robson's Commercial Directory lists the principal business people in Beddington in 1839 at the time of publication: Charles Lambert of Beddington Snuff Mills; William Prior, Grocer and Post Office; Edward Isted, Smith; Joseph Rowe of the Plough Inn and R. Shepherd a Retailer of Beer.

In 1860 however the parish of Beddington was in good order with clothing and coal clubs, a dispensary, Sunday and day schools and district visiting societies through which aid and care was given to the poor and needy. Mr. Price, head of the boy's school had been "an admirable master for many years" and the girl's school was cared for by his wife. Miss Barlee ran an institution for the employment of needlewomen composed mainly of poor women from the parish. It was at about this time the area was described as being "embowered amidst chestnuts, walnuts and grand old elms and bright with the Wandle. Until lately there could not be found in all the depths of Surrey more absolute seclusion; and except on that riotous day in early summer when the town rushed through to the Epsom races, it slumbered through the tranquil year all unconscious of its noisy neighbour".

By October 1889 in an article published in the illustrated London News, Beddington was already being described as a "semi-suburban village though still an old-world spot, almost untouched by the hand of the spoiler. Between the older village and the raw new settlement that has sprung up round the railway station, [the houses on the west side of Beddington Lane] lie thick screens of trees which effectually shut out all that is modern and hideous. The village itself straggles irregularly along a blind road in width little more than a lane, [today Church Lane] at the end of which a quiet footpath leads us on through pleasant meadows and on past the red-brick wall of what were once the gardens of the "great house", an old wall bulging from age and upheld only by mighty buttresses, to the village church. Beyond the glory of the place, the many-gabled post office, the road [Guy Road] bends round with a rather sudden dip, descending which we pass a typical forge, to where the highway runs side by side with an unfenced stream. A foot-bridge is flung across the river at the village ford ... near here the main path becomes a kind of raised causeway with a jealously high wall on the right and the river of the left ... a little higher up the water emerges from two cool, dark tunnels where an old timbered mill is built across the brook".

In the sixty years between 1801 and 1861 the population of Beddington only rose by two hundred and twenty to five hundred and seventy-three reflecting the exclusivity of the area, how the railway was kept at a distance and of how incoming settlement was restricted. In the ten years 1861 to 1871 however the population more than doubled reflecting the opening up of the area following the Carew land sale. It almost doubled again in the following ten years as more houses were built. Thereafter as the population steadily increased and much of the open land off Beddington Lane was utilised for the disposal of Croydon's sewage, equally the exclusivity of Beddington was lost as the wealthy moved elsewhere. The growth of the area therefore began remarkably late in the nineteenth century. Rapid development took place in the Edwardian period and accelerated in the 1930s when the land upon which a number of the large houses had been built and the land of Manor Farm became available for re-development.

## ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

### **The Enclosure of Beddington**

A private Act of Parliament, under the provisions of the Inclosure (Consolidation) Act of 1801 for the enclosure of the manors of Beddington and Bandon received royal assent on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1812. The preamble of the private act gives as reasons for enclosure the inconvenience of cultivation of very much intermixed and small plots, and the more economic use of consolidated properties. The following provisions are of interest:

Special allotments were to be made for the poor (not to exceed an annual value of £20), to be vested in the Lord of the Manor and the Rector and Churchwardens.

Under the Consolidating Act it was required that prior to any division of lands public roads of at least thirty feet width, as required, must be set out over these lands. Surveyors were to be appointed to make the roads and to complete them within two years from the award. The cost of making such roads was to be met out of the expenses of the award and thereafter to be maintained as other public roads within the parish. Carriage roads authorised were four in number viz.

Beddington Lane from Beddington Gate to Mitcham Parish border.

Croydon Road from The Plough Inn to Croydon boundary.

Plough Lane, from Plough Inn to Foxley Hatch Gate, i.e. the fountain at Purley. (This included the portion formerly occupied by the aerodrome, now the Roundshaw estate.)

Sandy Lane North and Sandy Lane South, from Plough Lane Close to Woodcote Green.

Earlier maps seem to indicate the presence of roads on the lines of the above so the effect of the award would appear to legalise existing tracks, to make provision for their being put in suitable condition and for their subsequent upkeep. The 1801 Act stipulated that public carriageways had to have a width of at least thirty feet but private roads, twelve feet. The only roads existing when the railway came in 1847 and which required crossings at the expense of the railway company were the public carriage roads at Plough Lane and Sandy Lane North and the private carriage road at what is now Demesne Road: public carriage roads had to be twenty feet wide; private roads only twelve feet.

Though still in existence, named as such, the extension of Sandy Lane North where it met with Plough Lane has disappeared but the twelve-foot width still persists at Demesne Road, and probably owing to the costly nature of construction no further crossings were made subsequent to the coming of the railway. A map showing the final enclosure was published in 1820.

## Local Government

The Anglo-Saxons introduced the shire division of the country during the early tenth century and though ruled by the King, for purposes of administration and in common with many other English counties or shires, Surrey was divided into 'hundreds' one hundred hides, a hide being an area of land considered large enough to support a family. Freemen within the hundreds were further divided into 'tithings', groups of ten men who undertook corporate responsibility for the good behaviour of those in their group roughly equating to the same area as that of a parish or manor.

Beddington (or Beddintone the name thought to be derived from the Saxon Beada's Tun, Beada's farm or settlement) for reasons that are still unclear was included in the Hundred of Wallington (Waleton as in the Domesday Survey, the element 'Wal' meaning stranger, probably indicating a Celtic settlement in an area populated predominately by Saxons settlers). It is not known whether Wallington, a Royal Manor was the more important centre when Hundreds were created or the more central point of an area thus divided. The administrative district of Wallington Hundred extended in a slightly irregular shape and included the area from Mitcham, to Banstead and Chaldon in the south, Cheam to Croydon and Addington to the east. Certainly within the limits of present knowledge, until the growth brought by the coming of the railway Wallington was no more than a hamlet, a small village without a parish church of its own with the settlement itself being within the larger area of the parish of Beddington. John Speed's map of 1610 indicates that the area formerly known as Wallington Hundred had become part of Croydon Hundred, which may indicate that by then Croydon had become the more important centre of the two.

Until the fourteenth century the manor was the unit of local government in this country. The King granted land to nobles in return for military support; these lords in turn granted parts of their land in return for some service. At the bottom of the scale were the serfs. The break up of this form of organisation started in the thirteenth century and accelerated in the fourteenth by events such as the Black Death and the consequent enclosure of land for sheep farming. The beginning of the fourteenth century saw legislation for the institution of the office of Justice of the Peace, an officer selected from the gentry and appointed by the King among whose duties were the carrying out of what local government functions there were in the rural districts as well as supervising in urban areas. The power of the J.P. in local government lasted until 1888, when the modern pattern of local government was instituted.

After disagreements between the King and the Barons, others were called in to help govern the country, representatives of the counties and towns. There were two M.Ps for the county called 'Knights of the Shire' while the towns sent their own representatives. The Carews who at one time also held the manor of Wallington became one of the most influential families whose tasks in reality were in assisting to run the country. These local landowners maintained their hold until the middle of the nineteenth century, and though still exercising great influence by nominating various officers, (for example Constable or Overseers of the Poor) from among their numbers the administrative functions and effectively local government had devolved upon the vestry, the room in the church where business was carried out. It was to remain so for nearly three-quarters of the nineteenth

century. Until this time, with the addition of the office of Constable to keep order and maintenance of the highways, the principal function of the vestry had been since Elizabethan times the relief of the poor. Resulting from the Poor Law Act of 1834 parishes were grouped into unions for more economic administration at which time Beddington was included in the Croydon Union for poor law relief.

It was observed that ill health was one of the chief factors contributing to the poverty problem and the conclusion was reached that inadequate sanitation in the towns and bad accommodation was the primary cause as contained in the 1842 Chadwick Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population. Legislation followed piecemeal but in increasing volume until the Public Health Act was passed in 1875. In addition to purely public health measures it made provision for the whole of the country to be formed into Sanitary Districts to correspond with the existing Poor Law Union areas. In 1875, the parishes of Beddington and Wallington therefore became part of the Croydon Rural Sanitary District as well as the Croydon Union for poor law purposes.

By the end of the nineteenth century the time was ripe for the setting up of multi-purpose authorities and this was done by an Act of 1888 that authorised the forming of County Councils and the London County Council. The Local Government Act of 1894 that in 1895 transformed Sanitary Districts into Rural or Urban Districts authorised the election of parish councils who had various powers conferred upon them by the Croydon Rural District. This area included Merton, Morden, Addington, Beddington and Carshalton, Coulsdon, Mitcham, Sanderstead, Woodmansterne and Wallington. Rural Districts were composed of representatives from the constituent parish councils to whom it delegated some administrative responsibility who in turn submitted some functions to the county. From 1894 therefore, the parishes of Beddington and Wallington (Wallington having become an ecclesiastical parish in 1867) were separately administered as integral parts of the Croydon Rural District that had charge of its roads and sanitary matters, both sending representatives to the Rural District Council. The county boroughs, towns with populations large enough to maintain local government functions unaided were given complete autonomy. The London Government Act of 1902 set up the present system of Metropolitan Boroughs and in the course of twenty years, the ad hoc sanitary authorities had become the local authorities we know today. By this time members were elected and officers no longer nominated.

By 1915 the population of the combined parishes of Beddington and Wallington was by then about 15,000. That year application was made for the administrative status of an Urban District the increased population earning increased status but at the expense of decreased size. Despite strong opposition to the surrendering of any portion of Beddington Parish it was felt that in the interests of local government, a council located on the northern side could not conveniently administer the southern slope or that south of a line called 'the approximate watershed line'. Along with the practically unanimous wish of the inhabitants of the southern slope that they should be in an area of their own, it resulted in 1915 separation from the Croydon Rural District, the one becoming the 'Coulsdon and Purley Urban District', the other the 'Urban District of Beddington and Wallington'.

Chairman of the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council			
1915-16	W. Brown	1926-27	F. Wood
1916-17	R.J. Meller	1927-28	G.I. Hitchins
1917-18	F. le M. Mellows	1928-29	H.C. Maynard
1918-19	W.T. Willcocks	1929-30	A.E. Bennetts
1919-20	W.G. Storer	1930-31	E.C.T. Landon
1920-21	W.H.E. Godolphin	1931-32	J. Vale
1921-22	A. Daw	1932-33	O.E. Wiltshear
1922-23	J. Noble	1933-34	W.M. Mellows
1923-24	W.C. Clifford-Smith	1934-35	H.D. Banks
1924-25	Barbara Whiteway Thomas	1935-36	G. Purser
1925-26	A.E. Bennetts	1936-37	W.H. Lewis

Council offices were successively sited in Danbury Terrace, 37 Manor Road; at 147 Stafford Road near 'The Windmill' Public House, and finally at 19 Belmont Road in Wallington. When the offices in a private house at this last address became increasingly inadequate with the growth of the Urban District and the increase of statutory duties imposed by Parliament on local authorities, it was decided to build a central Town Hall in Wallington as the nucleus of a Civic Centre. This building was opened in 1935 and the public library as part of the overall scheme, in 1936.

After the turn of the twentieth century legislation became more and more complex and a greater number of functions devolved upon local authorities. In addition to legislation that compelled local authorities to take specific action, a number were permissive an example of which was for the provision of libraries. To deal with this complex situation, in 1933 a consolidating act was passed which granted the Privy Council power to grant a charter of incorporation as a municipal borough in the case of a district grown to maturity administratively and able to govern itself efficiently. Apart from status, the main difference was that the borough had the dignity of a Mayor and Aldermen - the effect of these being to give greater continuity to policy since aldermen were elected for a period of six years as opposed to the three years of a councillor. Mayor and aldermen are chosen by the members of the council but need not be from their number.

The Urban District of Beddington and Wallington having met the criteria and applied was granted Municipal Borough status on Wednesday September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1937 when the ceremony of Presentation of the Charter of Incorporation took place in Beddington Park. Heralded by a fanfare of trumpets Lord Ashcombe (Lord Lieutenant of Surrey) handed the scroll to the Charter Mayor Sir Richard Meller after which the Charter Town Clerk, Mr. Thomas Booth read extracts. The Earl Marshal granted the armorial bearings of the borough of Beddington and Wallington in the same year.

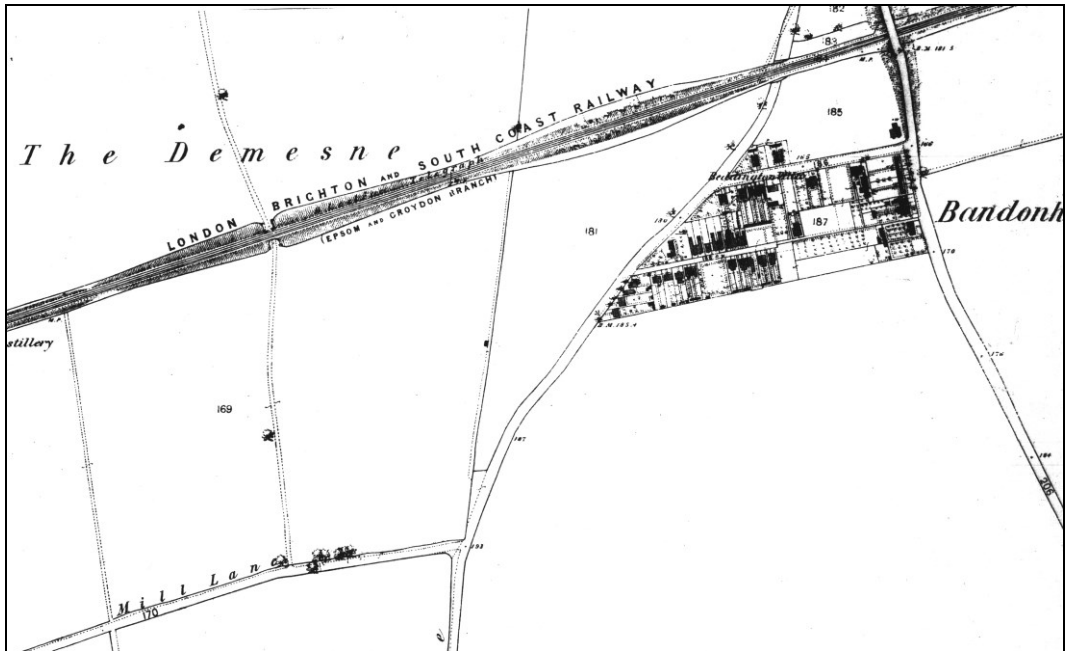
**Borough Arms.** The following is the formal description of the Arms - Argent a Fesse embattled between three Roses. Gules each charged with another Argent barbed and seeded proper over allan Inescutcheon. Azure in chief on Aeroplane proper and in base a Sun rising. Or the whole within a Bordure Gobony of the last and Azure. And the Crest - On a Wreath of the Colours A dexter Ann embowed in armour the hand grasping a Gauntlet by the fingers proper. The border of the shield of blue and gold chequers was

taken from the Arms of the De Warenne family who were Earls of Surrey during Norman and Plantagenet times, thus showing an association with the County of Surrey. The Tudor roses indicate the connection Beddington had with the Tudor monarchs; the Embattled Fesse indicates a possible derivation of the name Wallington, a town by a rampart or camp. The inner shield is superimposed over these symbols of the past indicating the present within which is an aircraft placed over the rising sun illustrating the connection with Croydon aerodrome that in its early days was solely within the Borough of Beddington and Wallington. The Helm represents a helmet which is believed to have belonged to the Carew family which was then in the possession of the Orphanage, and the Crest the arm of an armoured knight holding a gauntlet associates Wallington with the Dymoke family who were Lords of the Manor from 1394-1594 and whose family held the title of 'King's Champion'. The Motto "Per ardua ad summa" translates as "through difficulties to the heights".

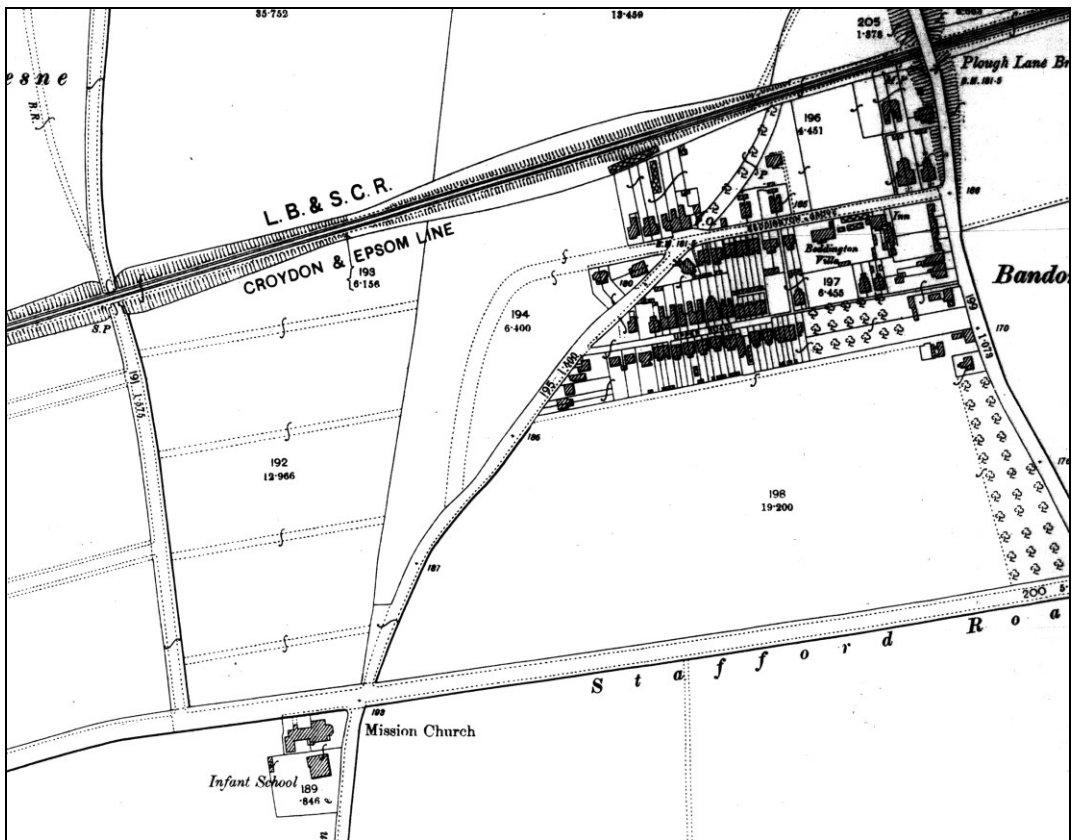
An Act of 1958 set up a Royal Commission to examine the local administration of the Greater London area. Two years later it published a report in which, applied locally, recommended the amalgamation of the Borough of Beddington and Wallington (incorporated in 1937) with that of Sutton and Cheam (1934) and the Urban District of Carshalton (1894). Sutton whose growth since the coming of the railway in 1847 was to outstrip that of its neighbours, in 1965 therefore gave its name to the new local government unit, the London Borough of Sutton. Sutton therefore became the main seat of administration that along with the whole of the north-eastern portion of the country (owing to the spread of suburban London) was incorporated into Greater London.

From 1885 to 1918 Beddington and Wallington were in the north-east or Wimbledon Parliamentary Division of Surrey. From 1918 to 1965 it was in the Mitcham Constituency of Surrey and from 1965 the Mitcham Constituency of the London Borough of Sutton.

Mayors of Beddington and Wallington Borough Council			
1937	Sir Richard James Meller. J.P. Charter Mayor		
1937-38	Charles Derry	1951-52	Percy S. Stoby
1938-39	Horace B. Smalley	1952-53	Donald H. deVoil
1939-40	Frederick W. Backes J.P.	1953-54	Harold Rennison
1940-41	William W. Binnie J.P.	1954-55	Francis G. Bryant
1941-42	Francis G. Bryant	1955-56	Stanley W. Sprunt
1942-43	Frederick C. Elwood	1956-57	Frederick G. Lee
1943-44	Harold H. Best	1957-58	Thomas G. Wakley
1944-45	Herbert D. Banks (Alderman)	1958-59	Dennis H.T. Salari
1945-46	John Vale	1959-60	Francis G.H. Sivyer
1946-47	Violet M. Boyce (Mrs.)	1960-61	Eric W. Harding
1947-48	Agustus C. Martin	1961-62	Ernest P. Vaughan
1948-49	Agustus C. Martin	1962-63	Stanley W.C. Sprunt J.P.
1949-50	Archibald H. Prior	1963-64	Henry Haydon (Major)
1950-51	William W. Binnie J.P.	1964-65	Donald H. de Voil J.P.



Bandon Hill from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1868 (above) and 1896 (below).



## BANDON HILL

In 1868 when the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map was published Bandon Hill was a small, rather haphazard isolated hamlet that lay south of the railway within a triangle formed by two roads, Plough Lane to the east and Sandy Lane to the west (the latter in 1514 referred to as Green Street or Greenway) bounded on the northern side by the railway and to the wider south by open fields. Some nine years earlier, in 1859 this small enclave was completely surrounded by farmland owned by the Carew family.

When in 1812 the Enclosure Award was made the greater part of the northern area or apex of the triangle was allotted to a spinster Mary Williamson in lieu of her common field land; that on the south side belonged to John Michael. In 1853 Grace Michael's heirs sold much of the land as potential building blocks upon which the houses of Upper Road were subsequently to be built. Among those who purchased plots were John Williamson who owned other areas of land both at Bandon and in Beddington, James Roffey of Beddington, George Bott of Wallington and James West a builder also of Wallington who almost immediately set about erecting a group of cottages on his land on the south side of what was to become the western end of Upper Road.

Five years later, in September 1858, a total of five plots comprising almost half the area upon which the eastern part of Bandon Hill is now built came onto the market offered for sale following the death of John Williamson. The land had a frontage to Plough Lane of some 203ft. upon which the 'Hamilton Model Cottages' were to be built, and extended some 320ft. in from the corner on the south side of Sandy Lane North. 'The Harrow' Public House and 'Beddington Villa' the latter that once stood on the site of the pub car park (both now a modern housing development) were built on this ground along with two groups of semi-detached cottages known as 'Ethel' and 'Cecil Cottages' in Upper Road. On the south side these plots adjoined land that had passed into the ownership of Mr. August (in 1874 of 'Rose Cottage') and on the west, areas owned by Messrs. Baker and Burgess. The sale was made subject to the tenant, Mr. Baker's right to remove the lavender and other crops belonging to him growing at or prior to the completion of his tenancy in the December of 1858.

A modern housing development built in about 1980-81 on the east side of what is now Spooner Walk (formerly Sandy Lane) was once the site of a double-fronted detached brick and cement rendered, four bedroom house set in a garden of about half an acre, the water for which was obtained from a deep spring well. For many years until his death in 1904 John Baker occupied the house. Built c.1876 it was still standing about 1990. A small barn-like brick structure and two semi-detached cottages known as 'Baker's Cottages' stood on the land in front of the villa, fronting Lower Road, now Sandy Lane North. These, along with numbers 1 and 2 'Bandon Hill Villas' (pre-1868 only the latter of which still stands), were the earliest buildings on that north side of the road. 'Baina Villas' though of similar style to its neighbour was built slightly later.

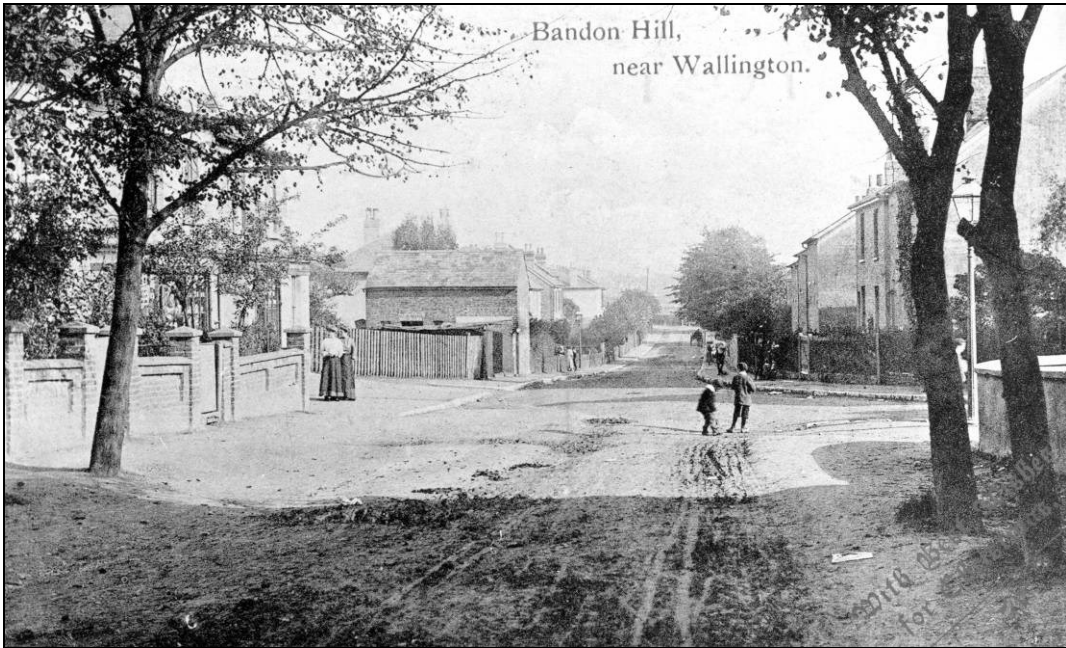


During the mid-nineteenth century part of Bandon Hill was known as 'New Zealand'. One of the residents who had lived there for many years, on his return to this country purchased land and built a cottage he named after his former place of residence. It would appear however that many of the earliest buildings in the area are still standing; some have been modernised and in many cases the name of the house has been lost but with the aid of directories and maps it is still possible to pinpoint a number of the older buildings. By 1868 however, a number of houses had already appeared on the south side of Sandy Lane North including 'Beddington Villa' a large double fronted house with colonnades in front, coach house alongside and glass houses behind where in later years fruit and vegetables could be purchased and from where, as was then the fashion, gentlemen could purchase their floral buttonholes. The house was demolished post war. Nearby stood 'Lavender Cottage' in 1876 occupied by John Lloyd a market gardener and next to it 'Pansy Cottages' that appear to be of contemporary dating, and further along No. 36 'Rose Cottage' with its cryptic initials J. & A.S. and the date 1868. Referring to both census records and rate books it would appear that the initials stand for a clerk, John Sutton and his wife Ann who also owned five other cottages at Bandon Hill.

A semi-detached Victorian house located behind 'Blaina Villas' on the north side of Sandy Lane North as well as an Electrical Works (there in 1941) that formerly occupied the site of the entrance to today's Clouston Close, were demolished to make way for the development (c.1980-81) we see there today.

A number of the older houses to either side of Upper Road (in 1876 referred to as Back Road), survive among them on the north side 'Carew Cottage' (in 1874 occupied by Xavier Bornèque) and 'Lady Gee Villas'. A small cottage that stood on the corner in the triangle by Sandy Lane (that had retained its well and water pump in the front garden) of similar date to those standing opposite, was demolished c.1986 to make way for a modern development of four houses numbered 2, 2A, B, and C, Upper Road. On the opposite side of Sandy Lane stood what was Mr. Mellows Wheelwright shop later the Mission Hall, built between 1898 and 1904 to which an extension had been added at the back. A housing development now stands on the site.

On the south side of Upper Road, at the east end behind the houses in Plough Lane, an old orchard existed for many years after the surrounding area had been built up. Two terraces of houses numbered 51-73 now occupy the site. It was in this area that in 1955 a building named 'Fruiterers Hall' once stood. The building that housed 'The New Inn' and 1 and 2 Taunton Place still survive numbered 29, 31 and 31A Upper Road, as do 'West's Cottages' numbered 1, 3 and 5. The latter, a Victorian Gothic Revival style cottage dated 1854 (the year following the land sale of the previous June) is one of, if not the first to have been built there. No. 3 is known in part to have been constructed of re-used timber bringing to mind that James West was a builder. Another cluster of three attractive small cottages numbered 40, 42 and 'Well House', 44 Sandy Lane North of similar style, stand next to semi-detached two-storey cottages numbered 46 and 48 that also appear to be of the mid-nineteenth century.



*Sandy Lane North, Bandon Hill c.1900. This view from Beddington Grove looks east towards its junction with Plough Lane.*



*Seemingly little changed, Upper Road, Bandon Hill as it was in 1970.*

Though settlement of Bandon Hill as we see it today only began in the 1850s in an area of orchards, market-gardens and fields of lavender and peppermint, by 1872 it had formed its own nucleus centred on the north side of the corner where Beddington Grove meets with Sandy Lane North. Then owned by the wealthy brothers Edward, Maurice and Hyam Beddington, on Christmas Day 1871 they leased the land to John Crouch for a period of ninety-seven years. Three shops and the houses adjoining on the west side (that bear the same architectural decoration) were built on this land, all of which were offered for sale in September 1872. The former Access Alarms Services Ltd. numbered 2-4, Beddington Grove were at what was originally a baker's shop on the corner with accommodation above then occupied by Mr. C. Tribe, and the central building by Alfred Lambert, a grocer and general dealer. The third shop then numbered 6, was leased to Mr. King a florist and seedsman who had a large glasshouse in the garden and no doubt occupied a similar, though larger structure that lay on railway property between the rear boundary fence and the railway line. The two adjacent buildings numbered 8, 10 and 12 Beddington Grove, in the same architectural style and provenance were auctioned at the same time. The site of Access Alarms is now (2011) the site of 12 and 14 Beddington Grove, two semi-detached houses. The delightful Tharp Road was built-up between 1899 and 1903.

On the September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1868 a wall post-box cleared twice daily was erected, and in October 1883 a Postal Receiving Office established. In 1885, F.C. Turner a grocer in Beddington Grove was Receiver and by 1900 H. Tigg, a baker. By October 1903 Augustus W. Andrews was appointed Sub-Postmaster. Certainly by 1913 the central shop of the above terrace had become a General Store and Post Office, the pillar-box of which was removed to its present position only in relatively recent years. The Sub-Post Office closed on the September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1972.

## **BUSINESSES**

### **Beddington Lane Service Station, Beddington Lane**

The refurbished, extended and re-named Shell Service Station we see today at the corner of Derry Road and Beddington Lane is built on the site of an earlier garage located in what had been the stables of 'Beddington Lodge', a house that stood on adjoining land immediately to the north. In 1929, W. H. Matthews opened a garage in the stable block and in 1933 Reginald and Elsie Crosse of 15 Hilliers Lane purchased the business from him. They ran the garage and a hire car service for almost thirty years before retiring in 1962 after which they left the district. The stable block itself had remained little changed during both the Matthews and the Crosse's ownership.

The former stables were housed in a low weather boarded and tile roofed building with a central hay loft incorporating what may have been a cottage or rooms at the northern end that had small sash windows to either side of a wooden door. The existing 6ft. high brick wall with solid wooden gate piers was either replaced or lowered and pebble-dashed during the Crosse's ownership and the building re-tiled and an additional detached workshop added. After their retirement the old buildings were demolished and a more modern purpose-built garage and workshop erected in their place.

In early 1994, during refurbishment and modernisation of the buildings and forecourt, a brick culvert that appeared to be of eighteenth or early nineteenth century dating was uncovered. It lay on a slight angle across the garage forecourt beneath the former stable block on the line of a no longer existent stream. The culvert had a double layer of brick on the sides and a single layer on the arch. The excavation on the forecourt was quickly filled in with no time for more detailed examination to be undertaken.

### **Brickworks, Croydon Road**

A feature of the landscape during the early years of the twentieth century was the Beddington Brickworks on a site off Croydon Road. Occupying the greater part of the field formerly known as 'Live and Repent', the sandpit itself and the buildings associated with the business were enclosed along the line of the present Streeters Lane to the west, the properties bordering Guy Road east, those of Church Lane to the north and Croydon Road to the south. The site was a natural outcrop of Thanet sand quarried up to a depth of fifty feet. In 1904 the main factory buildings were erected within the excavation and a new wing and machinery added some three years later to manufacture the Beddington white bricks.

A small brick and cement cottage occupied by the night watchman was located to the left of the main entrance by Croydon Road, the back wall of which formed part of a retaining wall that extended north for a short distance before an iron fence enclosed the remainder of that boundary from The Warren. A second entrance giving access to the stables was located between the houses 37 and 39 Guy Road.



*In 1929, W.H. Matthews opened a garage in what were the stables attached to Beddington Lodge. Mr. & Mrs. Crosse purchased the business in 1933. This photograph is dated 1958, four years before the Crosse's retired.*

Jesse Clack (b.1857) the owner and developer of the brickworks came to the Croydon district from Oxfordshire as a young man of twenty-three. For a number of years he lived and worked in Croydon as the manager of a brewery before moving to Beddington where in about 1896 he set up business as a contractor after which in 1904, he began the manufacture of bricks. He is described as a self-made man, stocky of build and somewhat outspoken in his manner but one who took a very great deal of interest in the affairs of the parish. Parish and District Councillor's were very often the recipients of his somewhat outspoken criticism. Though on three occasions he was nominated for a seat on the Beddington Parish Council he never succeeded in becoming a member of a local body. One of those was when he came out in opposition to F. le M. Mellows in the 1908 Rural Council election. It was on the night of the poll (April 7<sup>th</sup>) while going around the ward he was contesting the business suffered an almost disastrous setback; fanned by a strong wind fire had broken out at the works.

The men had ceased work an hour when Messrs. Arnold and Skipp returning from taking voters to the Croydon Rural District poll noticed smoke rising from the lower central part of the main building. The heat of the ensuing blaze became so intense that two trees on the opposite side of Croydon Road caught alight and some of the spectators were injured in the rush to escape when it was thought the boilers were about to burst. The works comprised the main three-storied building of brick, wood, corrugated iron and felt, 100ft. long by 80ft. wide; the other buildings were smaller but joined to the main factory and had lean-to roofs. All were filled with the most up to date machinery. In the basement of the main building were the two large high pressure boilers that at the time of the outbreak

were at high pressure. Above them, supported on steel girders and timber baulks was other costly machinery. It was thought that a collapsing wall burst open the safety valves on the steam pipes allowing the steam to escape alleviating the very real fear of an explosion. The office books and papers were saved but everything else was completely destroyed. Mr. Clack privately saw the incident as an act of sabotage.

The official cost of the damage estimated at £8,000 was partly but not entirely covered by insurance. Mr. Clack was quick to grasp the moment however and point out the durability of their bricks for though becoming white hot they had withstood the extreme heat whereas those of clay had crumbled. Following on this setback, with the works rebuilt and a large brick chimney replacing the old, the family resumed business manufacturing white bricks, examples of which are held in Sutton's museum collection, though they also produced a limited number of pink bricks, an example of which is held in the Natural History Museum in London.

Jesse Clack is credited with having devised the composition used in the manufacturing process. Simplified, the lime (obtained from the numerous kilns on the North Downs and elsewhere) was powdered before the blend of sand and lime was thoroughly mixed with water, crushed, screened and pressed into shape on a revolving table. The bricks issuing from the press were placed on small hand pushed steel trolleys and on lines run into the boilers within which live steam was admitted and the pressure raised to 120lb per square inch. They were kept at this pressure for ten to twelve hours. The silica from the sand and calcium oxide in the mix formed silicate of lime, or artificial stone.

The late Mr. Klaas, Jesse Clack's grandson related how, owing to the lack of space within the pit, the lime used in the manufacture of the bricks was brought into the works via the Guy Road entrance, off-loaded at the stables and carted down the slope to the works as it was required. Later, wooden steps were installed and a chute put in to transport the lime from the upper level to the works deep in the sandpit. No doubt shortly after the fire, but by 1919 a modern kiln had been installed in the excavation enabling them to make their own lime from the chalk upon which the sand lay. In 1920 legal proceedings were to be instituted against them to abate the nuisance caused by dust. Noise was another concern and local folk recall watching their traction engine as it hauled one laden truck after another (very often three in all) out onto Croydon Road. The trucks would then be coupled together and hauled away to the site for which the bricks were required. It is said you could hear the engine from as far away as Wallington Green.

With rebuilding of the brickworks completed, Jesse Clack assisted by his son David carried on with the business until he suffered a fall from a ladder leading to the higher level of the terraced sides of the sandpit. Some time after while at the works he collapsed, was taken to his home 8 'Hollybank Villas' (now 19 Church Lane) where he died of a stroke on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1910 at the age of fifty-three. Some five days later his body was carried in procession to the Bandon Hill Cemetery by relays of workmen in his employ. Eliza, his wife (buried on the anniversary of her husband's death in December 1939, aged eighty) survived him along with a family of four sons and three daughters. Leonard, the youngest son was killed in France in 1917.



*Messrs Jesse Clack & Sons brickworks after the fire in April 1908. The works stood enclosed within a deep sand excavation, now site of Sherwood Park School. Croydon Road lies behind the wooden fence in the background while high on the skyline to the right amid the trees stands 'The Banks'.*

There are conflicting reports as to the durability of the bricks but whether it was because of this, or because it would appear they had exhausted the supply of sand available locally, at some time after his father's death David Clack (who had carried on the business) stopped producing bricks and began the manufacture of scouring blocks. Production ceased and the business closed down altogether in the mid-1920s.

Mrs. Clack lived in the family home (where she had opened a grocery business) for a number of years after the death of her husband before she moved into 'Brandries Hill House' with her son David. She subsequently moved into the newly built 'The Firs' in Hilliers Lane with her daughter and son-in-law where she lived until her death in 1939. In about 1924-25 David Clack moved away from Beddington to a house in Clarence Road, Wallington. He died in 1945.

Contemporary photographs of the brickworks show the entrance to a tunnel in the sand some height above the lowest level of the pit, opposite Queen Elizabeth's Walk. In 1940 members of the London Speleological Group made a search of what they described as an abandoned heading twenty feet up the face of what was by then, the disused sandpit. They

found that the tunnel went in for a short distance and ended by a “draw well” twenty feet deep, at the bottom of which the heading continued for some 60 ft. Their conclusion was that it might have been a sand-mine that had since been largely destroyed by open cast methods.

Though Clack’s obtained the sand by open-cast methods they probably carried out a good deal of the excavating as in 1919, to get from one part of the site to another one had to go through a tunnel cut out of the sand for a distance of about eighty feet. A number of local folk who were children at the time report a tunnel extending south from the brickworks site. Entered at what was then ground level it had been followed to emerge from the bank of sand opposite the entrance to Guy Road on the far side of Croydon Road. This is probably the same tunnel, both sides of which were exposed when the road was lowered some years later.

An ancient well located in the southeast corner of the brickworks site thought to be Roman was re-discovered in October 1990 when outbuildings of the new Sherwood Park School were being built. Originally uncovered by Jesse Clack some years prior to 1908 at a depth of approximately 8ft. below ground level, it was described as a circular shaft 3ft.9ins. in width, lined with courses of chalk cut into sets and laid very evenly but uncemented. Forty-eight feet down at the base of the Thanet sand the width of the shaft increased to 4ft. 6ins., still lined with cut chalk but below this the walls rested upon the natural chalk. The shaft opened out into a chamber that was filled with earth and bones to a further depth of possibly twenty feet, the total depth from the surface being over seventy feet. Within the debris were bones described as that of wolf (probably a dog), horse, ox, goat or horned sheep, pigs, dogs, a cat and two deer skulls. A few fragments of very rough tiles were found; a small portion of a pot with a handle; a piece of iron which may have been a horse or ox shoe, and a fragment of ornamental glass that an expert from the British Museum considered to be a portion of a vase, probably Italian fifteenth century. Though at the time of redevelopment the wellhead was damaged it was retained, capped and today is to be found within a cupboard housed in a garage. In 1912, what have been described as Romano-British votive pots were also found on the brickworks and held in the possession of William Goldsworthy a foreman at the works though they are presumed lost following his murder in the early 1970s. A cock pit was also found there.

**Later history of the brickworks site.** The brickworks site along with the land of Queen Elizabeth’s Walk were subsequently offered for sale. About 1931, F. later becoming R.W. and F. Streeter moved onto the site and began to use the excavation as a tip though contemporary newspaper reports during March 1935 comment that twice recently buildings have been set alight on the disused brickworks. Streeters occupied two sites: Clack’s pit upon which they had a wooden horse drawn type caravan with rubber tyres, occupied into the 1940s by a caretaker/night-watchman, and a second by what was to become Royston Avenue on land high upon the opposite side of Croydon Road at that time being developed for housing. Clack’s pit was gradually infilled mainly with the debris of war during the 1940s. Though the chimney was demolished at the outbreak of war in fear of it being a landmark to enemy aircraft, the stable buildings behind the houses in Guy Road remained for a number of years. By the 1950s, Streeter’s had moved to Croydon and still exist as Henry Streeter (Transport) Ltd, Sand and Gravel Merchants of Purley Way.



By 1931 Mr. Pattenden (a former partner of Wallwork and Pattenden, Mineral Water Manufacturers of Westmead Road, Sutton) had taken over the stable block from where as the Beddington Mineral Water Co. he manufactured brewed ginger beer. The upper storey of the building was used as a Gentlemen's Social Club. In business Mr. Pattenden had been extremely unfortunate in that prior to the First World War he ran a bakery that folded owing to the difficulties in obtaining flour. He then began the manufacture of mineral water that closed during the Second World War owing to the difficulty in obtaining sugar, two ventures that no doubt would have prospered at any other time. The entire premises were subsequently taken over by the Tizer Drink Manufacturing Company where during the war they extended the building and used it for the manufacture of their own products. When hostilities ceased they moved elsewhere but retained the former stable block as a bottle repository until the 1960s when it was brought into use as a second-hand building material supply depot. By 1975 the building, in a bad state of repair, was condemned and subsequently demolished. Part of the wall was retained dividing the garden of a number of houses in Guy Road from the former brickworks site.

On the western part behind the houses in Church Lane, a prefabricated building was later erected where for a time breeze blocks were manufactured with access to the works via Church Lane. Following a serious accident when owing to negligence one of the employees was badly injured, the premises was closed down and eventually removed.

In the autumn of 1989 Streeters Lane was constructed along the line of the brickworks boundary giving direct access to the then Orchard Works in Church Lane. Sherwood Park School was built on the site of the pit nearest Croydon Road. A housing development, Gisbourne Close developed by the Bourne Housing Society during 1994-5 now occupies the greater part of the remainder.

## **The Double Shop, Beddington Lane**

Mrs Florence Bown who along with her husband moved into 2 'Fern Cottages' Beddington Lane in about 1895, began what later became known as the 'Double Shop' a confectionary/newsagent cum grocery business from small beginnings with just four jars of sweets. She also made her own ice-cream; her husband having the task of stirring the mixture while it was being kept cold in a container of crushed ice delivered to them in blocks from the Croydon Ice Works. This industrious lady also made her own custard and fruit for sale and a little later became the first to sell newspapers in the village, opening the shop at 6am and closing at 11pm.

It was their daughter, Florence Bown and Harold Coole (a former Croydon butcher who also did some chauffeuring for Crosse's), who opened the grocery and greengrocery part of the business in the centre cottage of the three prior to their marriage in 1931. They gathered tomatoes and cauliflowers growing wild on the sewage farm and went to the auction at Horsham market of a Wednesday to buy chickens, rabbits (at six pence each) and eggs (at one penny a dozen) for resale in the shop. At Christmas they also sold holly and mistletoe. Their own fruit trees growing in the garden behind the shop supplied them with seasonal fresh fruit for sale; they also had their own chickens and ducks and sold the litters of their pig housed in a sty at the bottom of the garden. At first the groceries were

delivered by bicycle but after their marriage Florence and her husband purchased a Belgian Minerva car to provide a hire car service and though for local deliveries they generally used the bicycle, the larger or more distant orders they delivered by car. Apart from emergencies, the hire car part of the business closed when Harold became terminally ill.

A regular visitor was the unique and locally well liked character 'Paper Jack' who would call to collect any out of date newspapers which he used as clothing though he would leave the shop if a customer should come in, to return after they had left. Gypsies in their horse drawn wagons would also call offering items such as lace, ribbons, shoelaces, buttons and lavender for sale. Pushing his mobile workbench a man also called to sharpen knives and scissors, the grinding wheel of which he would work with his foot. Mr. Goldsmith of Mitcham was another who regularly delivered paraffin by horse and cart.

A short time after Harold's death in 1941, Flossie's brother Ben Bown and sister-in-law Ivy took over running the business and ultimately their son Don and his wife Kit who remained there until about 1980. Compulsorily purchased by the council for road widening, the two shops were later run by Ted Musgrove and family members and after a period of standing empty in the 1990s both were opened as part of the Beddington Warehouse antique and restoration business. Throughout this time Florence continued to live in the accommodation above while the council utilised Carew Cottage as "half-way" accommodation. Sold by the council in 1997, the buildings are now privately owned.

### **Ebdon's Joinery, Beddington Lane**

The joinery company Thomas J. Ebdon formerly of London Road, Hackbridge had the interior of their house 'Oak Lodge', Beddington Lane fitted with high quality panelling as an example of their wood working expertise. The Company won the contract for the fitting out the Wallington reference library from its inception in 1936 and re-ordered it in 1962-63 to house the Mallinson Reference Library when the upper floor was added and the reference books were moved upstairs. Mallinson's supplied the timber. The site of 'Oak Lodge' was until recently buildings associated with Severnside Waste Paper Co. Ltd., 156 Beddington Lane.

### **W. Ede & Co. Ltd., Transport and Removal Firm, Guy Road**

Development of the housing estate known as 'Archway Close' begun in the early 1990s, took place on the site of Ede's transport and removal firm's repository buildings that were set back from the road behind the houses in Guy Road. Previously excavated as a sandpit, the land had at one time been a meadow, part of the 'Brandries Hill House' estate.

Established in 1869, William Ede founded the family business as market gardeners with a retail shop (later to become their transport business headquarters) at 33 Manor Road, Wallington opposite the Duke's Head, Wallington Green. They also occupied a shop in Croydon Road and another in The Parade, Carshalton. The Wallington address remained as their registered office until the company moved to 9 Bath House Road in 1987.

As part of their market garden concern Ede's constructed two ranges of greenhouses on an east-west alignment within the sandpit off Guy Road. These were later to be replaced by an early repository building, a lorry maintenance workshop and refuelling facilities. A second and much larger repository was constructed in the late 1950s at which time an old two-storied building thought to be a relic of the former sand pit operation (the stables with accommodation and/or office space) were demolished.

During the peak of their operations in 1969-70, the company was operating some thirty vehicles between Europe and the United Kingdom at which time domestic moving and overseas packing and shipping was the main part of their business. This continued into the early 1980s until the European moving market took a dramatic downturn and the company suffered accordingly. At home, problems associated with heavy lorries of ever increasing length accessing the Guy Road site were, in 1987, to be alleviated by the removal of the main centre of operations to Bath House Road. The buildings were cleared in 1989 to make way for the building of the Archway Close housing development that now stands there. In December 1991 W. Ede & Co. was purchased by Mr. Tony Smith at which time he retained the old and well respected name but directed operations into an office and commercial relocation company trading from Restmoor Way off London Road, Hackbridge.

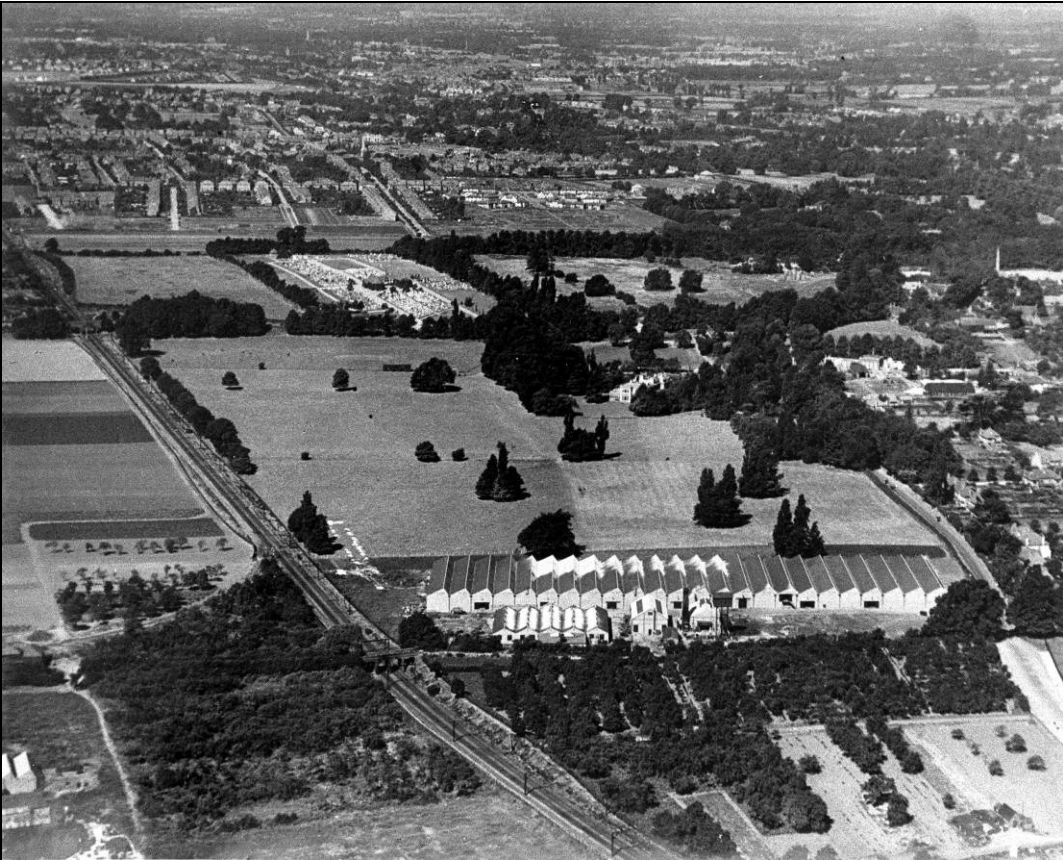
### **French Intensive Gardens, Plough Lane**

The land upon which the gardens came into being was originally offered for sale as part of the Carew Estates in 1859, and being unsold was again offered for sale in 1912, at which time (along with the plots to the east as far as the Croydon boundary), it was again unsold. At this latter date the field, along with other land was leased to Robert Bacon.

The Gardens (in 1925-26, into the mid-1930s run by the Frenchman F.J. Freyburg) were located at 64 Plough Lane to the south of Garden Close (the latter of which had only two houses, 1 and 3 occupied in 1927). Three blocks of flats named 'Melrose Tudor' dated 1938 now stand on the site though the rear block was still only a shell for some time post World War II.

### **George Payne & Co., Ltd., Croydon Road**

On the April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1896, George Payne founded his tea and coffee blending business in the Minories area of the City of London. Such was the success of this retail venture that in 1898 a larger premises was purchased and in 1901, a factory was opened at Tower Bridge. Within the first ten years the company expanded into Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool and overseas to South Africa, Colombo and Calcutta. J. Sainsbury became a major customer in 1903 and decades later still purchased their tea and coffee from them. In 1904 the Registered Offices were transferred to a building opposite the tea factory in Queen Elizabeth Street, S.E.1; it was the following year they ventured into the manufacture of cocoa powder that almost as a natural progression in 1910 led to chocolate making. The company survived the difficult periods during the two world wars and such was its growth and progress that prior to the Second World War they had a staff of over one thousand in branches scattered throughout the country and abroad.



*This 1921 aerial photograph of Payne's chocolate factory shows Beddington almost untouched by the developer. In the centre of the open fields almost surrounded by trees stands Beddington Place with Bandon Hill Cemetery behind to the left. Almost opposite on the right-hand side of Croydon Road stands Beddington House with its flagpole; almost directly above in the distance is Queenswood and to the right, the tall chimney of the Brickworks. The then defunct spur rail-line that served the National Aircraft Factory curves away to the left.*

In 1919, the Beddington Place estate along with its award winning short-horned dairy herd came onto the market prior to the collapse of the then owners Farrow's Bank. The property was purchased and the factory, built principally for the manufacture of chocolate confectionery, was completed in 1921, the eastern boundary being that of the former Merebank Lane the borough boundary with Croydon at Waddon. The 650ft. long by 150ft. wide 'Factory in a Surrey Orchard' with separate Machine Shop and Boiler House opened complete with an area for staff recreation; an eight-acre field for football, cricket and tennis. The company sunk their own 400 ft. deep well, the water from which they used for cooling equipment. The dairy herd that supplied milk for the chocolate grazed in the adjacent fields. Though a modern factory for its time much of the chocolate was applied by hand dipping, and even up until the early 1950s some Easter eggs were still being covered by this method. Before more advanced systems of air conditioning were

introduced, during periods of particularly hot weather chocolate making had to be suspended and staff put off. Fancy chocolate boxes were also produced by hand on site. At the new factory during lunch breaks the employees were strictly segregated by sex with the women being seated on benches whereas the men had individual chairs. It was not until the early 1950s that a partition between the two mess halls was removed.

The founder, first Managing Director and Chairman George Payne died in 1927 and was succeeded as Managing Director by his son Henry Payne C.B.E., M.C. (d.1946) and as Chairman by the then Chairman of James Finlay and Co., Ltd. with whom the company had long been associated. Payne's continued to flourish, manufacturing new lines of chocolate confectionery including in 1937 the introduction of 'Poppets' that arose from dragees, a sweet coating (in this case chocolate) for a variety of centres including mint, raisins, chocolate (both plain and flavoured), coconut, toffee and peanuts. Brazil nuts were imported from Bolivia or Brazil and peanuts from Argentina with 300 tonnes of each passing through the factory annually. Payne's chocolate coated 'Just Brazils' justifiably became another of their best selling products.

The company had a clean modern factory and offices, a peaceful accessible location away from the congestion of central Croydon, a large car park and sports ground, garden, canteen and factory shop. The popular sports and social club was formed in 1921, the highlight of which was the annual sports day held on the field adjacent to the factory with some twenty-eight events taking place. The day ended with a dance held in the factory canteen the last of which was held in June 1939. In later years the club had to diversify its activities especially the outdoor ones and local residents were invited to join the Social Club to increase membership. The field was sold for housing development c.1970.

During the Second World War, a number of incendiary devices and an oil bomb (that failed to explode) hit the works and a large high explosive bomb for a time put the boiler house out of action. In 1941 with the expansion of the company, part of their tea production moved to Disley in Cheshire and in 1963 a new block of modern offices was built along Croydon Road that became the Administrative Centre and Head Office. It was during 1963-64 that coffee production began at Beddington with the delicious aroma of roasting coffee beans permeating the air but these operations transferred to South Elmsall, Yorkshire in 1992-93. In 1973 a start was made on a two-year capital expenditure programme costing over £1,000,000 that included the installation of modern plant at Beddington, the introduction of computerisation and the building of a modern warehouse at the factory. It was in about 1980-81 the office block was extended to the west along Croydon Road, the award winning extension being identified by tall narrow windows inserted into an existing wall.

In 1976 the Company strengthened its ties with James Finlay and Co., Ltd. of Glasgow when it became a wholly owned subsidiary within the Finlay Group that have wide interests in tea plantations, merchant banking, managing agents and the production of confectionery. 1996 was the centenary year of George Payne & Co. Ltd., and though both coffee and tea blending and packing had moved elsewhere and in the summer of 1999 the confectionery division had been bought out by Northern Foods Ltd., Payne's still remained one of the leading chocolate and sweet manufacturers in the country.

The association of George Payne & Co. Ltd. with Beddington came to an end in the summer of 2002. After the loss of nearly one hundred and sixty jobs the company moved its centre of operation to Northern Foods more modern premises in Leicester. Demolition of the site was completed in December 2005 and sold for £8.2 million in November 2007. Cooper Croydon BMW re-located to its multi-million pound state-of-the-art dealership in December 2008 as part of the proposed overall development of twenty-nine small industrial warehouse units at 57-57A Croydon Road. Two years later, in December 2010 Boyden Tiles opened on the opposite side of the Croydon Road entrance to the site.

## **Hall & Co., and British Portland Cement Manufacturing Ltd., Therapia Lane**

Hall and Co. was founded in 1824 when George Valentine Hall became lessee of the stone quarries at Merstham. He first set up business off Therapia Lane in 1900 extracting gravel from local pits one of which closed in 1905, the second in 1922. The excavation of gravel indirectly led the company into the manufacture of cement when having removed the gravel, a valuable bed of clay was uncovered that was found suitable for making a product the company sold in very large quantities at its various depots. Having previously imported it from the continent, in 1903 the directors made a decision to erect a works for the manufacture of Portland cement by the most up to date methods, employing many hundreds of labourers on the site during the winter of 1904 and into 1905. Initially German technicians were engaged as it was thought they alone understood its proper management but British staff quickly superseded them as they learned the techniques involved in the manufacture of the product. The twelve 'Portland Cottages' near the entrance to Therapia Lane built in 1905 by Hall & Co. as accommodation for their employees still stand.

The day the first cement was made at Beddington is not recorded but it was between July and the end of September 1905. The chalk used in the manufacturing process was brought by rail from Coulsdon with the raw material entering the factory on a spur line on the one side and leaving it as the finished product on the other, during which time it was not touched by hand until it was deposited as finished cement in the store. About a half mile in from the road one could see two tall chimneys the one inscribed HALL & CO., CROYDON LTD., and the other CEMENT WORKS. At its height, output of the factory was some 24,000 tons per annum; some years the works made a profit but there was usually a loss for as soon as they went into production the building trade went into a period of depression from which it had not fully recovered when war broke out in 1914. Sale of the freehold to Portland Cement Manufacturing Ltd. was agreed in February 1912 and transfer of the works in June of that year. Hall's continued to supply the chalk for the Beddington works until about 1928 when for economic reasons the manufacture of Portland cement ceased.

During the mid-1950s a Transport Repair Depot, established during the Second World War occupied the greater area of the cement manufacturing works on the southern part of the site though buildings connected with the factory still stood to the north of the branch railway line. Other war work had also been undertaken at the works including the manufacture of ammunition boxes. The rails of the branch line were taken up in the late

1980s-early 1990s when the site was being redeveloped. Hall & Co. did not immediately sever their connection with the area however for they retained land at 50 Beddington Lane to the north of Therapia Lane upon which their main Croydon area Showrooms and Distribution Centre, now the Build Centre is located.

## **Lacey-Hulbert & Co., Motor Engineers, Richmond Road**

Lacey-Hulbert and Co., a family run business, for many years occupied land on the south side of Richmond Road, east of Wandle Road. Access both along the line of today's Kingston Gardens and directly in off Richmond Road (later from Richmond Road only) led to a north facing administrative building that appeared more like a large house with a central clock in front, set back a short distance in from and facing Richmond Road.

Founded in 1901, the firm developed from an obscure group of craftsmen working in a railway arch at Battersea into a world respected organisation employing a workforce of some fifty-three by the end of the First World War. In 1906 the company removed to Beddington to a well-equipped factory from where they manufactured pneumatic equipment; vacuum pumps, air compressors, power plants and auxiliary equipment marketed under the Boreas trademark.<sup>1</sup> Founded by C.E.L. Lacy-Hulbert a mechanical engineer, his was a familiar face at the works until his death in 1934 after which his son Edward took over as Managing Director. In 1986 eighty years after first coming to Beddington the company moved their centre of operations to Manchester. The buildings were taken over by a firm that closed shortly after. The site was cleared in the summer of 1987 and the building of the Kingston Gardens estate began the following year and into the winter months of 1989. A footpath and vehicular access along the line of the millstream was created as part of the Wandle Trail when the estate was built.

## **Beddington Mill, Wandle Road**

Upstream of Beddington mill the Bridle Path leaves the Wandle near to where the river divides. The one stream, now culverted beneath the yard and buildings was utilised to drive the wheel of the former mill, the other as the overflow or millstream.

The tall mill building we see today is on the site of one of the four mills listed in the Domesday survey of which there were two in each manor. In the later Middle Ages one of the Beddington mills belonged to Banstead. A will dated 1559 refers to a house and close "on the other side of the water lately called John Cook's, a little by where the old mill stood and an orchard late called Kenrycks, adjoining". This is believed to be a reference to another of the lost mills. We find however in a lease dated 1613 that the building known as Bandon Mill was upstream of Sir Francis Carew's Tudor garden, and there is a reference to an "Oulde Mill Bridge and Howse" in Bandon in another document of 1612. The only ancient bridge known between the boundary of Croydon and Beddington was at the site of the mill building we know of today, above the culverted river in Wandle Road. Arising from his translation of the 'Court Rolls of the Manors of Beddington and Bandon 1498-1552', Hedley Gowans suggests (and it is generally agreed), that taken in relation to the site of the land in the Manor of Bandon, and of these leases, that the Beddington corn

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<sup>1</sup> Greek God of the north wind

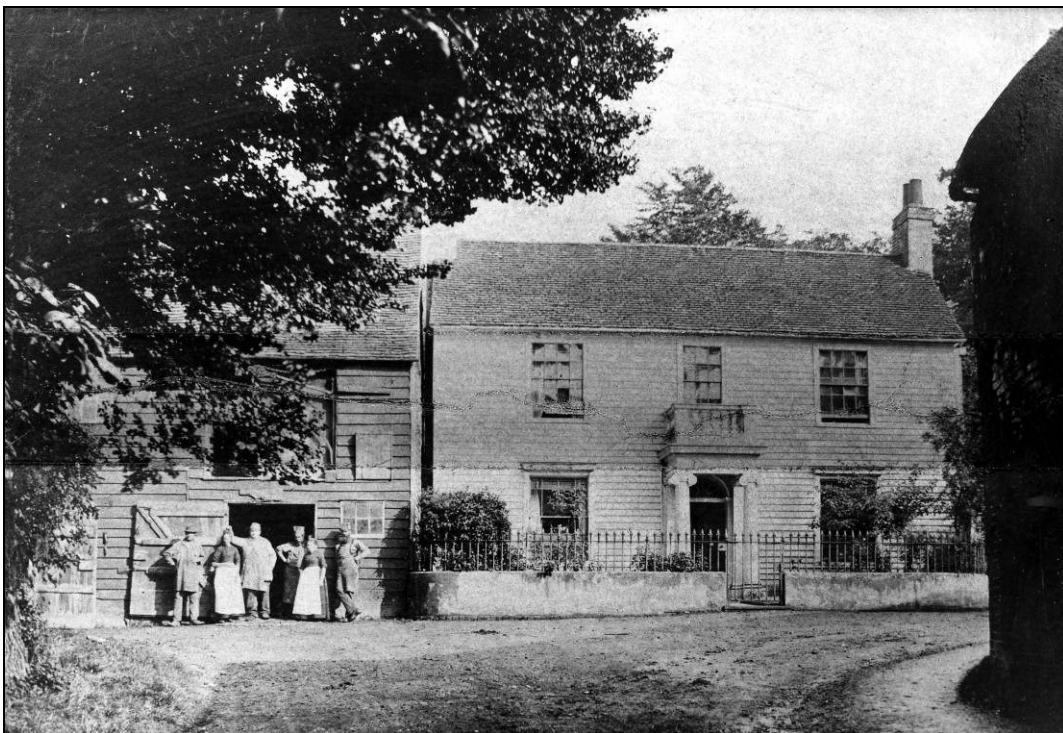
and snuff mill in Wandle Road does in fact mark the site of the building in 1612 known as Bandon Mill. Bandon itself does not feature at least in directly identifiable form in Domesday - it is however thought to be one of the four enumerated under Beddington. Such are the complexities of local history!

All the early mills were for the grinding of corn though many were converted to other uses during their lifetime. There is a reference to a Beddington mill in the Parish Registers as early as 1580 when on the August 18<sup>th</sup>, John the son of Will: Plow miller, servant to William Phillips of Beddington mill was baptised. In November 1593, William Phillips the Miller was buried. In the mid-1670s, parish registers record the baptisms of the children of Margaret and Bartholomew Tegg the latter noted as being a Miller and in 1668, Overseer of the Poor. Records indicate that in 1780 James Hodgkins was the tenant.

**Snuff production.** The mill buildings were to be rebuilt and about this time converted to the grinding of snuff after which John Williamson occupied it. It is probably then the millstream was re-routed to where we see it today. In the 1841 census Samuel Bance then aged 75, Henry Ashby 50, James Green 40, and Samuel Stedman aged 30 are listed as either “snuff man”, or the latter as “snuff manufacturer”. ‘The Times’ obituary column of the March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1852 records the death, some four days earlier, of Charles Newdigate Webb aged eighty-three, of Beddington Snuff Mills.

The mill lay across what is today the front entrance to the yard, its use described as such on the Enclosure Award of 1812. The building was at one time popularly known as Sir Walter Raleigh’s snuff mill though it is doubtful that the tobacco he introduced to England in the seventeenth century was brought to the mill and ground here albeit the buildings, then grinding flour, belonged to his relations the Carew family. Ten years after the death of Elizabeth I there were at least seven hundred shops in the City of London that sold tobacco. In the eighteenth century as snuff taking increased and larger quantities were required, being relatively close to London the fast flowing Wandle was ideal for providing the power to drive mills for the grinding of tobacco into snuff. By 1805 there were five such mills on the river. The Carew Estate Sale Particulars of 1859 describes the mill building as being brick built and pantiled, working two breast wheels (i.e. where the water strikes the wheel about two-thirds of the way up), equal to 25h.p. There were four separate mills for grinding snuff, working sixty-one mullers and a pair of edge stones. Before tobacco could be ground into snuff powder (that was not only for snuff-takers but had farming applications such as its use in sheep-dip and hog-wash) the leaves had to be dried in a brick oven or kiln, heated from beneath to just the right colour and moisture content before being ground. The outbuildings therefore consisted of two kilns and two drying places with adjoining sorting sheds together with a millwright’s shop, all of which were then in the occupancy of Robert Lambert who paid a yearly rental of £275. The mill remained in his tenancy following the Carew property sale in 1859 though Henry Tritton who lived nearby at ‘Wandle Court’ had purchased it along with adjacent land north of the river for £4,500.





*Members of the Lambert family and employees standing in front of the old snuff mill c.1880. The mill house, dating from about 1780-83, though altered, still stands.*



*The view upstream to Wallis's flour mill and bakery. The tall mill building was erected in about 1891 and a shop/Post Office later opened in the front of the building. The mill house has been re-fronted, modernised and extended into the roof space.*

The main method of milling was by a large shallow bowl usually built of elm and lined with copper. The waterwheel revolved the bowl within which ran a stone wheel using a serrated edge for grinding. The dried leaf was fed into the bowl and ground into a fine powder that was sifted, weighed and then packed. Working conditions inside the old mills although quaint and picturesque, were far from ideal. The air was thick with tobacco dust and millers wore paper hats and cloths over their noses. During very hot weather the mills were closed as the smell of the snuff became overpowering. Although now badly weathered and almost unrecognisable, part of an old mill stone still exists in the garden of a house nearby.

An extract from 'Golden Hours' of February 1868 describes the old building and how, when turning the corner of the [Bridle] path we come upon an old snuff mill built athwart the stream through whose dark arches the innocent waters are compelled to work their way keeping up a perpetual roar as they fall over its wheel. The brown rafters of the mill lie hidden in a mass of foliage, while from the bank a large chestnut casts its deep shadow over a pool dark but lustrous, and corruscated with sparkling sand which comes eddying from where the waters fall in white foam. Only a little over a decade later however, in May 1878 the quaint old mill is described as being silent now and in 1890 now a ruin. "In 1889, through a piece of lattice-work we can look in at the huge millwheels which revolve with a slow, stately motion ... suggesting a delicious coolness by their shower of sparkling water drops. The walls of the wheel chamber are damp and tagged with moss..."

The mill-head was not described in such enchanting terms some time previously, for in 1853 it was described as being full of mud and at times, the water did not exceed four inches in depth. The stench is only kept in check by a low temperature the chief cause of which is the filth from Croydon, which finds its way through the wheel at Waddon. When this was noted it had been seven years since the mill head had been cleared.

A Provisional Order dated August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1849 applied the Public Health Act of 1848 to Croydon, and though some attempt had been made to improve the state of sanitary arrangements following that date conditions were still appalling. "A most offensive odour is emitted from the stream, especially in the evening, and so disgusting has this been at times, that the workmen employed at Mr. Lambert's snuff mill have been seized with nausea, sickness, and pain in the bowels; that the cottagers complain of the water, after having been boiled and allowed to stand, becomes offensive, so that they cannot use it; that individuals have attributed attacks of diarrhoea (of late prevalent) to the use of water, and that the gravel of the river bed has been covered with dark deposit, the weeds have become coated with feculent deposit, and a scum has been formed on the surface of the stream". It was to be some time before improvements arising from the creation of the Beddington Sewage Farm were to be seen.

Piles Directory of 1878-79 lists M. Brand, Snuff mill. In October 1889, it was written that "the old mill is partially in ruins, and what remains of it is used for sawing timber". Photographs taken at the end of May 1890 probably before rebuilding was about to begin, shows us the fire blackened shell of the old mill, its outbuildings still intact with no sign of rebuilding having yet begun. The weatherboard mill that stood hard by the wall of the miller's house was demolished to give access to the yard and the buildings we see there today.

**Wallis's flour mill and bakery.** The former 'Wandle Mills', Wallis's Flour mill, a typically Victorian building stands where a succession of small water-wheel driven mills had stood. The present building of yellow stock brick with red banding standing some four stories high, dates from 1891. An illustration of the mill in an early directory shows a building of the same height extending along Wandle Road some four times its present width. Flanged brickwork and a line of decorative brick banding would indicate that at some time in the future it was intended to extend the building.

James Wallis came to Beddington in about 1881 at which time he took occupancy of the mill house 'Riverdale'. Ten years later it is his 28-year-old brother Thomas, his wife Minnie 20, two daughters and two servants living there. Though greatly altered, this house still stands today known as 'Mill House'. The bakery was established in December 1883 before the mill we see there today was built. The purpose-built bake house still stands behind. Two ten bushel ovens held two hundred and fifty loaves each and were heated by furnaces to either side, until having reached a temperature of something over 450° the fire was withdrawn, the regulators closed, and the loaves put in for a baking period of three-quarters of an hour. At first a single barrow was used to transport the bread required by his customers but the business grew to the extent that at one time there were no less than one hundred and fifty delivery vans on the road that set out at 7am and returned in the evening only when the round was completed. When the business was initially set up, a separate set of four vans were used for the delivery of flour and unless specially requested, the baker never left flour at a house that he supplied with bread. To distinguish the various kinds of flour such as best white, household wheat-meal, self-raising and the like, they used a system of different coloured ties to the sacks. Wallis's also produced potted meat, and though advertised of 'Beddington' is not thought to have been produced here. The partnership of the brothers J. and T. H. Wallis was indicated in directories as such from 1886.

Much of the grain was transported to the mill by rail via the Waddon Marsh spur line that ran from the cross-roads near the Croydon Fever Hospital across Figgs Marsh to Waddon mill where at one time it was loaded onto an iron barge and transported downstream, the water at the mill inlet being about 6ft. in depth. At the time the river was considerably deeper overall. It was not until about 1929 when a group of unemployed Durham miners were brought in to widen it that the river became too shallow for the draft of the barge that was then drawn up onto the bank where children played upon it as it gradually rusted away. A number of years later the remains of an old barge were found beside the stream at the back of the mill. The river then flowed beneath a metal grill across the yard. Over the years much needed flood alleviation work has been undertaken on the Wandle including that most recently during 1990-91 when Thames Water Authority carried out an extensive programme at which time in some areas sections of the riverbank were lowered to form a more natural area of wildlife habitat.

Wagons also delivered grain to the mill from farms throughout the district and memories were of these, and of Wallis's own four wheeled white painted horse drawn delivery vans with their curved canopies coming down Hilliers Lane turning into the river ford and making their way upstream to emerge in front of the mill at the foot of Bridges Lane. Perhaps it may have been frowned upon had these commercial vehicles used Bridges

Lane, passing in front of the three mansions that stood there - use of the ford had the added advantage in that the radiating spokes and wooden wheels of their vehicles would have been wetted sufficient to keep them from drying out and no longer fitting snugly within the metal rim of the wheel. The stables were sited on an north-south alignment across the yard. Wallis's later had a Foden Steam Wagon to assist with the heavy carting.

Transported in sacks, the grain was taken into the yard from where it was hauled in through opening doors high up on the south side of the mill building, the winch being housed in an extension protruding from the roof towards the rear. The mill wheel is remembered as being located on the north side, which confirms a further report that "there was an outfall at the mill head on the north side, as well as the waste sluice at the top of the garden". In 1890 the millstream was a shallow flow forded by a plank bridge set on wooden stilts, enclosed within the perimeter of the property the gates to which lay across the line of what is today Wandle Road. By 1894-95 the millstream was already culverted beneath Wandle Road though in 1896 a letter recommending that the bridge near Wandle Mills be widened was deferred to the district council. An overflow was diverted at an angle immediately upstream of the millstream bridge and emerged in front of the Mt. Pleasant cottages. The river itself had been culverted in at least two phases, presumably at the time the original mill or a successor was built and again post October 1901 at which time the culvert was extended beneath what was to become the garden of the house later numbered 27 Wandle Road. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1900 Wallis's installed a new turbine that presented some problems of deposited mud downstream when they opened the sluice gates to allow the work to take place.

The Wandle Flour Mills, 'Family Millers and Bakers', delivered as far distant as Hornsey in north London, Hounslow in Middlesex and Redhill, Caterham and Oxted in Surrey. 'J. and T.H. WALLIS - PURE BREAD - BEDDINGTON AND LEWISHAM' was emblazoned on the back of their delivery vans. That they were family bakers was confirmed by Flossie Coole born in 1895 who recalled when a child crossing the yard at about 6am to purchase freshly baked loaves hot from the oven. At that time there was no shop attached to the bakery though by about 1930 Wallis's opened a pastry cook and bakery outlet that doubled as a Post Office in the front of the tall mill building. They later moved the shop cum Post Office to the top of Guy Road to a house numbered 266 Croydon Road (later known as 'The Creameries') then to The Broadway which many will recall for many years as Coughlans. In the early days however in order to purchase bread, access to the bakery was across the gas lit yard to the bake-house. A row of stables, harness rooms and subsidiary buildings were located in the yard and along the wall adjacent to the Bridle Path. One of the old gateposts can be seen partially embedded in the wall of the mill building on the north side entrance; another reminder is a plaque sited on a wall behind No.1 Bridle Path marking the boundary of the property.

James, the eldest of the two brothers is remembered when an elderly man who predeceased his brother. Upon his death the firm was converted into a limited company with Thomas Wallis as Managing Director. In 1916 the latter's sight began to fail and he soon became totally blind and had to be assisted whenever he ventured away from the office. There was another brother John connected with the Roller Flour Mills in Sutton.

When he first came to Beddington James Wallis lived in 'Riverdale' the mill house (later renamed 'Wandle Hyrst') before he moved to 'The Banks' in 1895. He remained there until about 1915. His public life included that of being appointed Chairman of the Beddington Parish Council in February 1911. Thomas also lived in Riverdale for a time before c.1902 he moved into 'Marlesford' in Croydon Road where he lived until about 1914. He had been a keen rider with the Old Surrey Fox Hounds and the West Surrey Stag Hounds and kept hunters stabled at Marlesford. He subsequently returned to the mill house and died there after a long illness in May 1926. His son Don, a former pilot with the Royal Flying Corps, having returned from the First World War took over his father's duties as General Manager. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1927 a large fire damaged the outbuildings at which time a hay store and an adjacent two-storey grain cleaning shed that adjoined the main building were destroyed. It did not affect the forty or fifty horses stabled on the premises though provision had been made to evacuate them if necessary. It was however reputedly a combination of bad management and racing debts that are said to have ultimately rendered the firm bankrupt. The company had been in the hands of the receiver in October 1913 but a rescue package must have been agreed for the business eventually closed in about 1939.

During the Second World War an Auxiliary Fire Service engine was stationed in the yard (one of about fifteen in the Beddington and Wallington area) and an A.R.P. post housed in one of the offices. In the mid-1950s the buildings were being used for storage and baling of waste paper. Precision Clutch Components and a company producing lampshades were some of the more recent occupants but the building that was the scene of so much activity in the past, today stands with the main entrance boarded and broken windows, all but silent, a sad reminder of the heart of a bustling community in times not so long past.

## **Pullen Pumps, Beddington Lane**

In the 1970s buildings associated with Pullen Pumps were sited in close proximity to one another at 54, 58 and 60 Beddington Lane and to the north of the railway on the Beddington Industrial Estate. Subsequently, and up until 2003 the company occupied a more compact 0.9-hectare manufacturing site at 158 and 160 Beddington Lane that accommodated testing facilities, the machine shop, welding and pipe-fabricating facility along with the control-panel and pump assembly shops.

Formed as Frederick A. Pullen & Co. Ltd., the business was established in 1868 as a Private Limited Company by Frederick Pullen the twenty-seven year old son of an Isle of Wight schoolmaster. He started the family business in the City of London as an import and export agent working from an office in St. Martin's Lane importing pumps from the Dutch Company Begaman, products dealing mainly with pumping equipment for water suppliers. This arrangement was to last until the Second World War intervened. In 1900 his twin sons George and William, both qualified marine engineers joined their father producing steam and vacuum pumps during which time the company was also exporting Sheffield steels and tools for Dutch shipyards. As a sideline the brothers also dealt in kapok lifejackets and made acetylene flares. Frederick Pullen died in 1908 after which his sons formed a new family partnership.

During the First World War the company won a contract to supply the French Government with material for army uniforms and canvas buckets for the cavalry while over forty women were employed in the manufacture of equipment for the artillery and other munitions work. During this time (1916) the expanding company moved from the premises they then occupied at 43 King William Street, to 58 Harleyford Road, Vauxhall. After the war the brothers began manufacturing a new range of centrifugal pumps to supplement the existing line that resulted in a close connection with the heating and ventilating industries, a connection maintained ever since.

It was during the Second World War Mr. Percy Jones, who in 1925 had joined the company as a junior draughtsman, designed and produced a machine known as the Wobbly Wheel Roller and Stamplicker which was used for compacting ground in readiness for the laying of bituminous felt used in the construction of emergency airfields as the allied advance swept across Europe. The machine was still in production into the 1960s. Land lighting was another of Pullen's wartime projects with mobile acetylene gas plants providing emergency lighting where no local power source existed. With the invasion of Holland and the difficulty of importing goods from continental Europe, the designer Charles Millington and Percy Jones together produced a range of pumps that enabled the company to carry on manufacturing these products during a difficult period. By his having had great input in building up the company, in 1950 following the death of both Frederick Pullen's sons the business passed into the hands of Percy Jones who became Managing Director and in 1952 its Chairman. He subsequently became the sole owner but retained the Pullen family name. His son Peter Jones also was to become Managing Director, a post that in 1985 was to be filled by David Harrup who some years before had also joined the company as a draughtsman.

In 1965, the company moved from the works at Vauxhall to a purpose built two-storey works and office block at 58 (now 158) Beddington Lane on the site of Gumbril's Engineering Works, manufacturers of bakery plant. In 1968, their one-hundredth year they purchased the premises of another centenarian firm H. Hendra and Sons, Iron Founders and Pattern Makers who had set up business at 60 Beddington Lane in 1931. It was then Pullen Foundries Ltd was formed. The building was at one time also known as that of the Townmead Iron Foundry.

The 1960s, '70s and into the 1980s were particularly productive decades for Pullen's with their expanding business and the boom particularly in the provision of Pullen Launderette Pumps that were to be found installed in businesses country-wide. In 1971 an additional floor was added to the Beddington Lane office block and in 1975 Pullen Foundries Ltd. opened Factory No. 2 on the west side of Beddington Lane north of the railway. In the same year the inventive designer David Potter formed Pullen Product Developments, a company located on the Isle of Wight to carry out extensive research and development work. 1977 saw the opening of an office in Paris and 1979 Factory No. 3 and Technical Block was opened at 54 Beddington Lane.

In 1982 a major project undertaken by Pullen Foundries Ltd. for the new Surrey Docks Development was an exceptionally fine commemorative compass 3.6 metres in diameter cast in four segments that can be seen at the former Russian Dock in the east end of

London. The company also diversified into street furniture including decorative ironwork, tree grilles, manhole covers, litter bins and bollards, examples of the latter that could be seen in front of the former offices at 158 Beddington Lane. The centrepiece of Morden roundabout was also cast in Pullen Foundries.

Pullens remained a family named firm until 1988 when Percy Jones retired to Guernsey at which time a Swedish firm Scanpump acquired the company, who in order to condense the scale of operations, during 1988 closed the No.2 factory building on the west side of the lane and renovated the Hendra foundry site that became the machine shop.

Pullen Pumps who employed about eighty personnel at Beddington exported specialist-pumping equipment worldwide including the Middle East and African States. Within the United Kingdom they had products installed in many well-known landmark buildings including the Hilton Hotel, Millbank Tower and the Natural History Museum in London as well as the Grand Hotel in Brighton. Pullen Pumps became a Division of Howard Anderson Ltd. a British-owned engineering group, working in partnership with the German companies Homa Pumpen and Kessel Gmbh who between them generated a comprehensive portfolio of specialist drainage products that complimented Pullen's own core business within the building services industry. It is now part of Armstrong Holden Brooke Pullen Ltd. based at Redhill, Surrey. The Beddington Lane works and offices closed in September 2003.

## **White Posts Tea Rooms, Croydon Road**

At the top of the hill on the west side of Guy Road at its junction with Croydon Road on part of what was once 'Live and Repent' field a building known as the 'White Posts Tea Rooms' stood empty for a number of years until damaged by fire. In the early 1970s it was demolished.

The earliest record of the building in contemporary street directories is 1900 and recollections from the early years of the century were of a scene virtually unchanged up until about the late 1920s when the adjacent triangular green and its shrubbery began to be reduced in the interests of motorised traffic. With the house and dairy owned by Hobden and Carter and managed by Mrs. J. Walford, in the early years of the twentieth century the White Posts became a popular resort of the then very numerous cycling fraternity who would call in for refreshments while cycling in what was then still basically rural areas free of all but the lightest horse-drawn traffic.

Compiled of two wings with a large porch between them, the building overlooked a raised green enclosed by the white posts from which it took its name. A tea garden and function hall (or Club Room) owned by F.G. Walford lay behind on a slightly higher-level access to which was gained via outside steps from Guy Road. Mrs. Walford also catered for functions and wedding receptions specialising in cake making not only for the tea rooms but also for local delivery. A Debating, Billiard and Social Club was held in the Club Rooms presided over by Staff Sgt. Major H. Skipp A.S.C., of Wandle Road. The group consisted of about forty-eight members very much concerned not only with national





*The 'White Posts Tea Room' at the top of Guy Road was a popular meeting place for the numerous cycling fraternity.*

issues, but those relating to Beddington and its environment. In 1908, they began an annual children's Christmas party.

The late Mrs. Margaret Morris who worked in the White Posts for a number of years recalled the tea rooms when she first came to Beddington in 1934 as a confectioner's and tea shop-cum-café then under the proprietorship of Mr. and Mrs. Moss. The windows of the porch were kept for display purposes while those of the tea room overlooked the steep incline of Croydon Road. In the summer jugs of tea were served in the garden. After the Second World War the White Posts became a confectionery/newspaper business where one could also purchase stamps the nearest post box to which was built into the front garden wall of 'Cleeve Cottage' standing nearby in Croydon Road.

In later years the building was acquired by the Ministry of Transport and left unoccupied, blighted as was so much else by the proposed extension to the M23 motorway that cast an unwelcome cloud over Beddington until the mid 1970s. Early in the 70s it was severely damaged by fire, demolished and the site left to return to nature behind high advertising hoardings. Owing no doubt to the difficulty of access, the narrowness of Croydon Road at this point and the certainty of eventual road widening the area was left undeveloped. Following road improvements, in 1993 a compact block of three houses numbered 1, 3 and 5 Guy Road were built on the remaining land. Houses numbered 7 to 11 Guy Road occupy the site of the club room and garden.



## **Zotefoams P.L.C., Mitcham Road**

At 675 Mitcham Road, within the extreme northeast of the borough is the multi-national plastics firm, Zotefoams P.L.C. manufacturers of polyolefin foams and specialist engineering foams manufactured from advanced polymers. On the October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2000 workers at the factory and nearby residents were evacuated as firefighters spent six hours tackling a disastrous 50ft high blaze at the plant during which time major damage was caused. Though most of the factory's production areas escaped the effects of the fire the dispatch, technical, maintenance and engineering projects departments as well as raw materials and finished products were destroyed. Damage was repaired and ten months after the blaze the company posted a £2.1m profit.

## BEDDINGTON CAVES

The caves opposite the Plough Inn have always attracted attention, but since having been closed it is generally only those who played in them as youngsters and others who have gained access via sand falls in later years who have first-hand knowledge of them. The two main entrances were located opposite The Plough in the face of a high bank of Thanet sand formed by cutting through the sandy slope when in time out of memory the lane (today's Plough Lane) leading to Woodcote and beyond was made. A third entrance was sited a little further to the north in the direction of Sandhills.

The question of why they were originally dug is one that may never be resolved as there has been no archaeological investigation undertaken on the site. About a half mile from the Plough, in 1902 caves of proven prehistoric origin cut in the Thanet sand were discovered during house building at Alton Road, Waddon but the likelihood of these origins is generally not accepted for those at Beddington. It is thought that possibly during the Middle Ages they may have been excavated as sand mines, extracting the sand for use in scouring floors, furniture, pewter and other metal objects and were dug out in the form of underground passageways to preserve the surface for pasturage. Alternatively, as has been suggested more recently, they may have been excavated to remove sand for the making of glass along the lines of that manufactured from similar sand at Greenwich, though there was no known glass manufacturing works in this area.

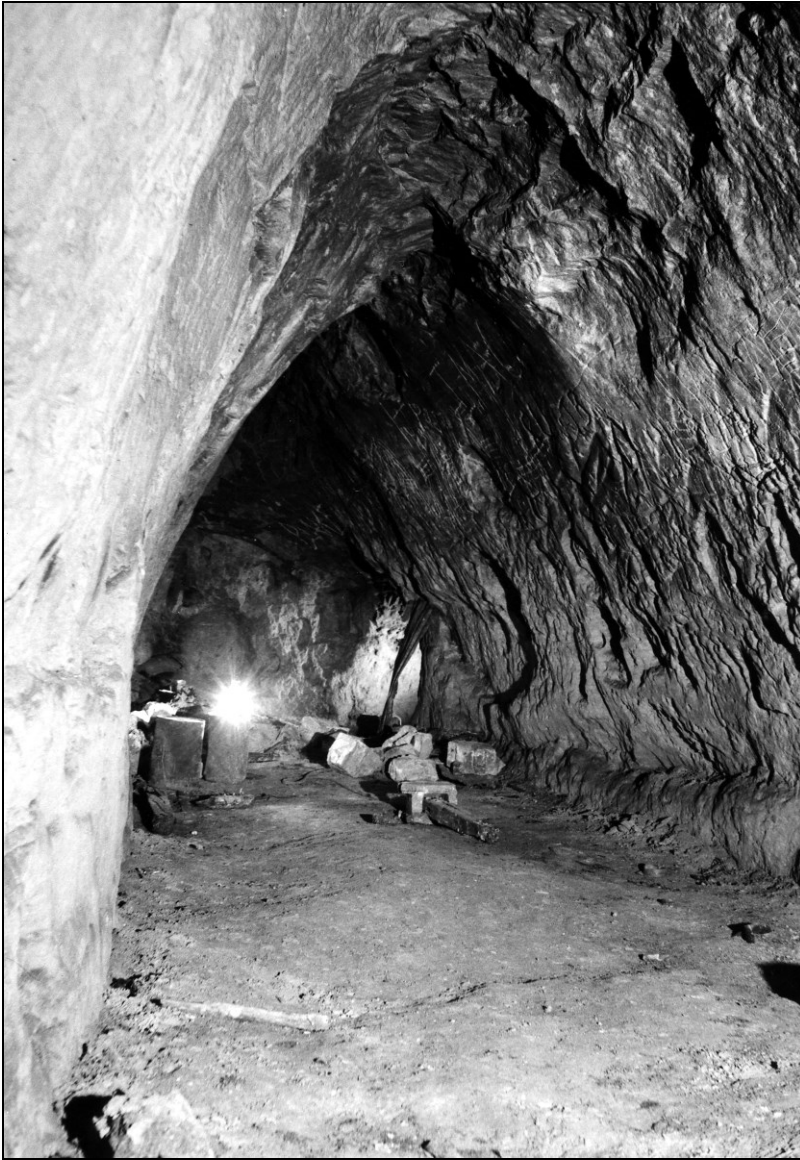
The caves however were impressive, though not as extensive as local tradition (with tales of passageways extending to Carew Manor, to Reigate, Beddington Lodge, Croydon Old Palace and beyond) would have us believe. As for one, Carew Manor was moated and Croydon's Old Palace was set on what was effectively an island surrounded by water. A passage did extend in a southerly direction for some distance from the Plough towards Bandon. It is said that during digging for the railway in the 1840s it was cut through and in about 1928 there was subsidence in the road on the west side of the cemetery chapel, but these reports are unsubstantiated.

The sand from which the passages and galleries were hollowed out is of a firm texture and in some places reach within a few feet of the surface. In many places there have been sand falls, as when the hapless householder of 20 Iberian Avenue found a gaping hole had appeared in his back garden. There have been subsequent reports of a similar nature.

The tunnel lying parallel to the road south towards Bandon Hill brick lined for at least part of its length, was broken into when a footpath was cut into the bank and the retaining wall built in the autumn of 1993 into the winter of 1994. An entrance to the caves (today marked by a wrought iron screen and bricked recess set into the wall) was also uncovered at this time. Members of the Wealdon Cave and Mine Society visited the site but owing to the degree of sand collapse and the potential danger, did not penetrate the main cave system any further than what was visible and readily accessible from the entrance, a distance of about 25 to 30ft.



*One of the three entrances to the Beddington caves opposite  
The Plough public house.*



*A gallery within the caves carved out of the sand.*

In the mid-1970s the late Mr. Pat Howard speaking of the caves described a brick lined gallery to which access was gained by descending a number of stairs to the entrance. It curved about 15ft. into the hill where it met with a similar tunnel leading in from the second entrance on street level from where there had been a gradual descent. Within the caves, from this junction a tunnel of similar, approximately 8ft. width led directly into the hill for a distance of some 50 ft. where it came to a T-junction. As confirmed by the writer, this was surely the most impressive part of the caves with a gothic arched gallery some 10 ft to 12ft. in height carved directly out of the sand. Small niches had been hollowed out of the walls to house a candle or lantern, the smoke from which could still

be seen staining the sand immediately above, while in places, modern graffiti now adorns the walls as does rubbish on the floor indicating that the tunnels were well known to local youth of more recent years.

The tunnel that led to the right of the T-junction (also blocked by sand falls) was the passage that once led to a third entrance sited a short distance further north along Croydon Road from the Plough towards Sandhills. A newspaper report tells us that in about 1930 the eminent Dr. Latham of Croydon in the company of Mr. Campbell-Bayard using sounding instruments on the surface, followed what he believed to be this latter tunnel to the high bank near The Warren but this would be unlikely as both the 1868 and 1897 editions of the Ordnance Survey map do not indicate any tunnel extending from the main cave complex any further than the third entrance referred to above.

Independent of this, there has also been reports of an entrance to a tunnel to the left of the existing sub-station opposite Guy Road. If indeed this was so it may well have been that which was entered from the brickworks site as opposed to the main system. In 1940 however members of the London Speliological group located a manhole cover on Queen Elizabeth's Walk that opened not as expected onto a sewer, but to what appeared to be an underground passage in the sand, though they were unable to gain permission to enter. Whether these latter two were anything to do with The Plough complex or another series of excavations is not known. An underground air-raid shelter dating from the 1930s is known to exist towards the north end on the west side of Queen Elizabeth's Walk formerly accessed by a narrow high-sided concreted entrance but any trace of this has now been lost.

For many years the caves were in the occupation of the licensee of The Plough who used them for a cellar and who is said to have been responsible for the brickwork within. It was from him that permission to explore had to be obtained. The local tradition that during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it was the secret haunt of smugglers plying the lonely Downs between the Sussex coast and London seems vaguely possible. Public speculation was also rife when a new "cave" or more likely a long forgotten cellar, said to be some 15ft. long with a vaulted roof was re-discovered when farm buildings and the old cottages formerly on the Beddington Place estate (on the opposite side of the Plough to the caves) were being demolished for the building of the shopping parade in about 1934-35.

'Paper Jack' a local eccentric, had for many years made use of the caves as his shelter during the winter and children played in the dark recesses until having become unsafe they were closed up early in May 1932 by order of the Estate Agents. All three entrances were blocked including the airshaft, and it is only at the time of the occasional roof fall that the existence of, and the questions surrounding the caves come to mind once again.

## CEMETERIES AND BURIAL GROUNDS

### Anglo-Saxon Cemetery

In April 1871, while excavating gravel on a low ridge of land behind Park Farm house off Beddington Lane, at a depth of about 18ins. below the surface workmen discovered the remains of a human skeleton beside which lay a knife, an iron spearhead together with fragments of thin iron thought to be the boss of a shield. On the same day, a further skeleton was uncovered nearby to which lay a sepulchral urn of patterned dark ware of about 9ins. in height and diameter containing fragments of bone mixed with earth. Two others that fell to pieces upon removal and a fourth smaller urn of about 7ins. height ornamented with encircling lines and impressed ornaments were also found. These were to be the first of a number of similar discoveries found during the course of a week.

Some four years later in the spring of 1875 when it became necessary to excavate additional gravel to repair roads on the farm, three further burials were found less than 3ft. from the surface each with a spear, shield boss, knife and arrowhead. One seemed more important than the rest having a sword 40ins. long, the rim of a bronze helmet of some type on the skull and a bronze ornament, a kind of fibula or brooch.

What workmen had inadvertently uncovered was a small area of what had been an Anglo-Saxon burial ground. Dating from the fifth to sixth centuries A.D., it extended for approximately half an acre from what is now the west end of the Beddington Park Primary School grounds to the back gardens of the houses on the corner of Mallinson Road and Crispin Crescent. In all, a number of burials were subsequently uncovered with weapons, spearheads, daggers, and the umbo (or boss) of several shields of typical Anglo-Saxon form. Along with the burials were cremated remains contained in urns one of which seemed to show Romano-British influence. A small blue glass bead, a bronze bracelet that was devoid of any ornament and some pieces of bronze were also found.

Being that some of them had been cremated and their ashes placed in urns while others were buried with their heads lying towards the west it was felt that the cemetery may have been commenced in pre-Christian times and was continued in use after the people were converted to Christianity. It has been suggested that the burial later uncovered on the opposite side of Beddington Lane may have been an outlying interment from the same cemetery. When last heard of, the finds from the cemetery were on loan to the Guildford Museum from the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society and that the brooches were in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Another, a saucer brooch was in Cambridge Museum.

### Bandon Hill Cemetery

At a time when the burial ground opposite St. Mary's church was rapidly becoming full, the necessity for the establishment of a cemetery became apparent. Proposals for the acquisition of land were set in motion though considerable difficulty was experienced in

finding a suitable area as a large portion of the district is on chalk with the risk of contamination to the water supply. Bore holes were dug across the site, and that ultimately chosen has a bed of Thanet sand in some places 45ft. deep overlying the chalk affording ample protection to the water-bearing strata. It was found that interments could range from a depth of 6ft. to 34ft. Despite representations by objectors as to the unsuitability of the site the application was granted and a loan sanctioned. In March 1899 tenders were obtained and the works commenced in April of that year.

Of the nineteen acres originally purchased, eleven were enclosed, and of those eleven eight were originally laid out for interments leaving three acres free for future extension. The ornamental front fence of clinker and stock brick surmounted by open paling, set back to allow the widening of Plough Lane enclosed this area; the remainder was enclosed with a plain oak park pale fence. A metal bell pull attached to the left of the pedestrian entrance gate still remains in situ.

The buildings consisted of an entrance lodge (dated 1900 within which a room was once used as the office), a small mortuary and two chapels, the one on the right as approached from the main entrance for non-conformist denominations and that on the left for adherents of the established church. It was connected by a porte-cochère surmounted by a flèche and weather vane. Both are of red brick with stone dressings in the early English style with an open timber hammer-beam roof and seating for fifty persons. The architects were R.M. Chart and Son of Croydon and the builders W. Smith and Sons also of Croydon at a total cost (including that of the land) of £17,697.

Provided by the Croydon Rural District Council for the parishes of Beddington, Wallington, Coulsdon, Kenley and Purley, the Bishop of Rochester consecrated the Bandon Hill Cemetery on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1900. Led by District Councillors and followed by the choirs of Beddington and Wallington churches, the Bishop and Clergy, a procession wound its way round the cemetery before the service of consecration of that portion of ground and the chapel reserved for the Church of England took place, though it was stressed by the Bishop during the service that the area he had just consecrated was held to be in no way different from that which remained un-consecrated. The war memorial known as “the cross of sacrifice” seen as one enters the main gates, is a classically simple oft-repeated design by Sir Reginald Blomfield R.A. another example of which stands in Sloane Square SW3.

On the September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1916 the Bishop of Woolwich consecrated a further portion of the cemetery and in 1923 a further section was incorporated. The area of burials was extended on three subsequent occasions. In 1978, the field located between the cottage and the railway that for some years previously had been cultivated as allotments was also brought into use prior to which an archaeological investigation of the site was undertaken.

Though Elizabeth Annie Luck who died on the March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1900 had the dubious honour of being the first to be buried in the cemetery, notable among others was Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, (1875-1912) Holborn-born but brought up in Croydon who became Britain's first black classical composer. The illegitimate child of an English mother and a doctor from Sierra Leone (who abandoned them both in 1876), he achieved fame in his early twenties

with his composition 'Hiawatha's Wedding Feast' based on Longfellow's poem. It was highly acclaimed and at one time said to have been as popular as Handel's 'Messiah'. He married a white woman Jessie Walmisley of Wallington and overcame racial prejudice and ignorance to become an international celebrity. He championed black people and their music and particularly loved negro folk music. In 1904 he visited the United States where he was lionised, giving workshops and lecturing and was one of the few black people to be received by President Roosevelt. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor died of pneumonia at the age of 37 in August 1912.

The sombre pageantry of a full military funeral was seen at Bandon Hill on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918 for Captain Leonard Barlow who died while testing an aircraft at Martlesham Heath in East Anglia. He was a Wallington boy, brought up in Onslow Gardens and educated at Bandon Hill School who had joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1917 flying with No. 56 Squadron in France during which time he was awarded two M.C.s (the military cross, a high service honour) and bar. On his return to England before landing at Beddington to visit his parents he would fly low over the house to announce his eminent arrival. Officers from Martlesham Heath and Beddington aerodromes acted as pall-bearers and a detachment from the Royal Flying Corps accompanied the procession. He was only nineteen.

Another young life dramatically cut short was that of Raymond Lord formerly of Guy Road. Along with about twenty other spectators, he was killed while on a visit to the Farnborough Air Show on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1952 when a jet aircraft having just broken the sound barrier crumpled and disintegrated in mid-air sending wreckage ploughing into the crowd amongst whom he was standing. His parents though injured, survived the incident.

A more recent burial was that of Thomas Burke (1890-1969) though it is yet unknown as to his connection with the district. He was a famous Lancashire-born tenor who was descended from an impoverished Irish background. He was thirteen when he began his working life in a local silk mill followed by the coal mines. He was however a musical prodigy by whom Enrico Caruso was particularly impressed. Tom was twenty-nine when he first sang at Covent Garden at the start of a successful music career that was to lead to appearances in Opera productions all over the world. His career was only to last for about twelve years however for he could not handle fame. His eccentricity, his sensitivity and the anger he felt about the poverty he had experienced as a child along with his fighting spirit helped ruin his career. This famous international tenor died on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1969 in his eightieth year.

A Committee now manages the Bandon Hill cemetery, since 1965 having come under the joint control of the London Borough's of Sutton and Croydon. The former non-conformist chapel has been converted for use as an office and storeroom and the mortuary (that had been fitted with a patent revolving autopsy table and a floor covered with Italian tiles) that went out of use at some time around the 1950s-60s, is now used as a store. Records held at the cemetery date from the time of its opening.



## Church Road Burials

That human activity in the immediate vicinity of the church is one of great antiquity was emphasised quite dramatically with the finding of two burials whilst work was being undertaken in Church Road.

The first, uncovered between about 1865-70 was a Roman lead coffin that dated to the early third century A.D. As it was not adequately documented when found, its exact location is difficult to ascertain, but is believed to have been on the east side of Church Road (right side when approaching from Croydon Road) by the western border of the churchyard.

The coffin base was approximately 4ft. 4ins. in length made of one piece of lead with the sides bent up to form a rectangular box. It had a separate lid decorated with a central Y shaped design and seven large scallop shells. From its size, it is thought to have contained the body of a child. Though the scallop shell is generally connected with those who have made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint James of Compostella in Spain, it is thought this was probably a pagan burial as scallop shells on Roman lead coffins are known and have no Christian significance.

A second burial, that of a stone coffin was found on the opposite side of the road about thirty yards south of the corner of the burial ground opposite the church, about half way across the footpath. This massive stone coffin was found on the March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1930 when men were working in Church Road digging a trench for a new surface water drain to the Wandle. Late in the afternoon one of the workmen struck a hard object about 4ft. from the surface. The soil was removed to reveal a huge stone coffin in perfect condition, approximately 7ft. 3ins. long and 2ft. 6ins. wide. That something of exceptional antiquity had been unearthed was quickly apparent and Mr. S. Carter, Surveyor to the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council decided nothing further should be done until advice had been sought. The following afternoon the Coroner accompanied by police and a police surgeon visited the site at which time the coffin was opened. Crowbars had to be used to force the lid and though great care was taken while being lifted it broke in two places. It was found that it had been hewn from the one block of oolitic limestone (within which tooling marks can still be seen) that had been brought from either France or northern England and was found to contain an earthy substance described as a dust that seemed to possess a large quantity of lime. On removing this several parts of a human skeleton in excellent condition were found including the almost complete skull from which it was said only one tooth was missing. The body may have been buried in a preservative and might well have been an example of a 'plaster burial', possibly of early fourth century A.D. Found laying in a north to south alignment (that does not preclude it from being Christian) it is thought likely to have been pagan.

The grave goods found near the feet were fragments of three very thin and beautiful cloudy rainbow coloured glass vessels, the colour almost certainly because of chemical changes in the surface of the glass. They were described as two small drinking cups, in size and shape like eggcups, and a small oil or water bottle. These may possibly have been unguent (ointment or lubricant) bottles and an oil flask. Mortimer Wheeler of the Museum

of London who described the artefacts as “Roman” took the glass vessels for report but they now appear to be unfortunately lost. The bones were removed and interred in the Bandon Hill Cemetery.

The skeleton described as being that of a woman estimated as being some 5ft. 9½ins. in height (one of the more outrageous newspaper reports suggested she was 6ft.7ins.) and wondrous tales of it being Boadicea’s final resting place splashed across local newspapers. Mortimer Wheeler quickly repudiated these wilder suppositions when he voiced his opinion that though the woman was of high social standing the coffin was not created in a hurry or in a time of turmoil. It was well constructed and would have taken considerable time to make. Nor were the two ladies contemporary.

For many years the stone coffin was stored in the Dovecote in Beddington Park before being removed to an outhouse at the back of Carshalton Library where it remained for some years. In 1990 it was returned to Beddington where it can be seen today. The lead coffin was originally housed in the church choir vestry where it reputedly received rough treatment from the choirboys before being removed and re-housed in a specially constructed cupboard placed in the north aisle of the church. Both burials may have been associated with the nearby Roman villa to the north of the river, equally they may not. That these would be lone burials however seems unlikely - they may have been citizens of a community as yet undiscovered living south of the river.

## **Churchyard of St. Mary’s Church**

An ancient yew tree still grows between the path and a now no longer existing pathway that lay parallel to the southeast wall of St. Mary’s churchyard once known as ‘Raleigh’s Walk’ that local tradition would have been haunted by his ghost. The fact that in March 1791, five men were paid £1 2s 6d to grub up roots for making the walk by the churchyard wall (some 173 years after Sir Walter Raleigh’s death) seems to have been overlooked. On Sunday February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1910, the old yew tree (as long ago as 1880 said to be three hundred and sixty years old) was badly damaged in an exceptional storm which brought down a large elm, damaging both the boundary wall, a number of tombstones and breaking away nearly half the branches of the yew as it fell. In June 1985 the tree was further damaged by high winds at which time two large boughs broke away, and again in the storm of 1987. Close beside the yew is an ornate chest-tomb decorated with a Coat of Arms and angels on the sides, a memorial to the Hillar family dating from the late seventeenth century. The Hillars were an influential family in the parish, also being Churchwardens and Overseers to the Poor.

At one time almost entirely hidden by the low sweeping boughs of another yew standing adjacent to the north wall is a low walled flint structure that upon going down a short flight of steps reveals itself to have been suitable offices, a now long abandoned toilet.

Though in an illustration of 1840 memorial stones are shown on the north side of the church as well as on the south and west, in old churchyards the earliest graves are usually to be found on the south side, and here in Beddington is no exception with probably the oldest being that to the Rector Joannes (John) Cox a contemporary of King Charles II,

who died on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1669, aged 49. On the south side of the church nearest the west door we find the burial place in December 1671 of Charles Berryman alias Brandon, the successor to John Cox, who became Rector of Beddington under the Patronage of Sir Nicholas Carew on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1669. With him lies the body of his twelve-year-old son who died the following year, in September 1672. Another rector, the Rev. James Hamilton and his wife lie by the path in the central part of the churchyard their burial place marked by a decorated but now badly weathered cross. To the west of the church on the north side of the path is one of the most unobtrusive of all among a group of stones marking the resting place of a number of former rectors. It is where Alexander Henry Bridges of Beddington House, Rector of Beddington from 1864 to 1891 and Honorary Canon of Winchester, along with his wife Caroline are buried beside their only daughter Mary Ann. Her memorial cross is decorated with a single snowdrop.

Near the west door hard beside the path is the substantial chest-tomb of Honest Robin Betterton who died aged fifty-seven on the September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1724, a fishmonger by trade who resided in the parish of St. Botolph, Billingsgate and afterwards at Croydon. (One who we trust lived up to his name — Honest by name, honest by nature!) In his will among other small bequests he left the sum of £5 to Mrs. Prudence Snow “wherewith she is to make one treat for the Wednesday Club at her house”. This club in all probability would have been made up of a number of old friends with whom he was in the habit of associating in her house of a Wednesday at least during the latter years of his life. The Rev Thomas Bentham in his ‘History of Beddington’ published in 1923 tells us that there were rumours that his body after burial had been “resurrected” and sold to some hospital. It is said that later Canon Bridges had the tomb opened and found nothing in the brick grave but newts and frogs. The body would have been interred underground however. Old Mr. Roffey had told Bentham that such was the dread of the Resurrectionists who made their living by stealing newly buried bodies and selling them to the medical profession, that a regular watch used to be kept in the churchyard at night.

The burial place of Miss Frances Ferrers, the eldest daughter of the rector of such long standing who lived in ‘The Cottage’ in Guy Road, lies beneath the new Centre on the north-east side of the church as does that of the 2nd Baronet, Charles Henry Rich of Wallington and his wife Frances who died in 1857 and 1852 respectively. They had a large family including twin daughters one of whom, Eva married Edward Trollope and another daughter Louisa who married Joseph Laurence. The Rich family’s memorial slab was re-located to the northeast corner of the churchyard but the others were irretrievably damaged when the ground was being cleared for the building of the new extension. Two sets of decorative wrought iron railings that divided the area of ground enclosing these burial sites from the path at the northeast corner of the church were removed and re-used.

To the east of the south porch beneath an impressive tomb upon which is carved the family Coat of Arms lays Charles Hallowell Hallowell Carew the last of the Carew Lords of the Manor who died in 1872, along with his brother Benjamin Francis Hallowell Carew (d.1879). Had a villager been in the vicinity of the churchyard in the early afternoon at the end of April 1879, he well may have paused to look at an ornate hearse drawn by black horses bedecked with plumes, and watched as it pulled up before the lych gate where it was met by the Rev. Bridges. He would possibly have seen a polished oak coffin “of great

size” with its impressive brass ornaments otherwise concealed by a magnificent pall of purple velvet with the Arms of the Carew family emblazoned thereon being borne into the church. The coffin was carried to the churchyard at the conclusion of the service. One of his sons, a little lad from the abode of the living then moved into that of the dead when he descended into the vault where one by one he laid ten wreaths upon the casket within which lay the body of his father. A mass of white camellias and other flowers covered it, their perfume lingering on in the darkness long after the vault was sealed and the mourners had departed. With the sad rituals over, relatives and friends then withdrew to The Plough where lunch had been provided, leaving us today with a glimpse of a day in the spring of 1879, of the Victorian attitude to death and what might have been the beginning of a recurring nightmare of a young and impressionable child.

Almost opposite the Carew vault is a stone erected in memory of Thomas Lawrence, who lost his life by a fall from a horse on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1799 at the age of eighteen — O Death, that to me no warning gave. In the immediate vicinity is a headstone to the memory of Mary, the wife of George Hickson. She died on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1830 in her 79<sup>th</sup> year some eighteen years before her husband. Somewhere nearby, a stone commemorated her husband — “Here lieth the body of George Hickson, Huntsman to the Carews of Beddington, died September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1848 in the 102<sup>nd</sup> year of his age in the service of the family he had entered as a boy”. He was born in Beddington in 1746 to parents who were servants in the household of Nicholas Carew; he lived in the building known to us as the ‘Old Post Office’ and remained in the service of the family for almost ninety years until his death leaving a grandson in the same service. He was familiarly known as the man who ate his horse. It would seem the hounds had been out for several days without killing, and the old man vowed one morning that if they were not more successful that day he would eat his horse. During the course of the day, the horse he was riding, a young and valuable animal, fell and broke its leg and it was found necessary to shoot it. Some of the men who had heard the old man’s rash vow cut a slice out of the rump of the animal and sent it to his cottage. His housekeeper thinking it was a beef steak, cooked it for his dinner. On his return home, he sat down to eat vowing he had never tasted a better steak in his life. It was only later he learned from whence the steak had been cut. The joke was remembered against him until the day of his death. When he first found out he was mightily annoyed, by the time he died he had learned to laugh at the whole episode. A commemorative plaque to George Hickson was placed within the church near the entrance to the Carew chapel, but this too appears to have been lost.

Somewhere too lays the body of William Stuart commonly known as “Old Scott” buried on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1705, remarkable in that he lived to the age of 110 years and 2 months, thus having lived in three centuries. Here too lies Wood the mole catcher who in March 1852 was paid 7/6 for catching moles in the churchyard and somewhere too is the burial place of the cholera victims of 1832. Labourers, lawyers, farmers, merchants, bankers, wives and children, but a few lie in the churchyard: the rich and the poor, as one in death.

## The 'New' Burial Ground, Church Road

In 1863 it was recognised that an additional churchyard would be required, but it was not until 1873 the subject was again revived. At this time, Beddington and Wallington were still small relatively isolated hamlets and St. Mary's churchyard that served both communities was rapidly becoming full.

The project was begun when the rector, the Rev. Bridges donated an acre ('God's Acre') of land opposite the church for an extension to the existing burial ground. Work commenced in April 1874. Having donated the land, the rector's plans were to raise the level of the ground, to build a wall fence faced with napped flint some three feet thick and to provide a lych gate the cost of which was intended to be met by public subscription among the residents of both Beddington and Wallington. Later in 1874 however, it was found that the burial ground had been set out incorrectly and that the land within this substantial wall enclosed less than an acre, which necessitated seventy or eighty yards of the newly built wall being demolished and the additional land added. This probably accounts for the somewhat irregular shape of the whole as we see it today.

In the spring of 1875 the builders Messrs. L. H. and R. Roberts (who had built the lych gate) were paid £250 on account of the churchyard gate and bier house opposite, working to the design of the architect Joseph Clarke under Thomas Booth, Clerk of Works. The metal latches, locks, hinges, handles and the copper finial were supplied by Skidmore's Art Constructive Iron Company of Coventry to whom £29 7s. 6d. was paid, and much of the decorative work was undertaken by J. Broomfield of Lambeth, Architectural Modeller and Figure Carver in Wood and Stone. A frieze inscribed on the stone pediment on the east side of the entrance facing the road, reads All: that: are: in: the: graves: shall: hear: the: voice: of: the: son: of: God: and: shall: come: forth. The burial ground was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, Edward Harold of Winton (Winchester) on the Feast of St. Matthias (February 24-25<sup>th</sup>) 1875 which is commemorated by a further carved inscription upon the inner (west) side of the entrance. The rector planted a commemorative yew tree to mark the opening and a little over a week later March 5<sup>th</sup> saw the first interment. Having been badly vandalised over recent years, the lych gate was restored in 2008.

Photographs taken at the turn of the twentieth century show a veritable forest of memorials but as the years progressed and there were no families left to maintain the graves the burial ground became neglected and overgrown. In January 1960 the Beddington and Wallington Council accepted responsibility for maintenance of the surrounding wall and a Faculty having been obtained, in the spring of 1963 the ground was cleared with some of the memorial stones laid flat while the inscriptions of many others were incorporated in two separate walls of remembrance. Of these, one of particular interest incorporated in the larger of the two walls is the plinth of the white marble Celtic cross that marked the burial place in 1877 of Alfred Smee F.R.S. and of his wife Elizabeth. A few were left in situ including a handsome medieval styled pink marble sarcophagus designed by William Butterfield that marks the burial place of the Tritton family of 'Wandle Court'. A Celtic cross that still stands nearby is to the mill owner James McRae (d.1908), his wife Georgiana and their daughter. Another Celtic cross that

remains in situ though now greatly obscured by shrubbery, marks the burial place of another eminent Beddington family, the Trollope's of 'Queenswood'. Miss Charlotte Ferrers daughter of the former rector who died in her 90th year in January 1891 also lies in the "new" burial ground.

Another memorial stone of interest is one placed there by the friends and colleagues of John Hallen Abbott M.Inst. C.E., of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, Bombay. Described as one of the finest engineers from first to last on the railway, he was born in February 1831 in the City of London. Early in 1850 he was articled to Sir Charles Fox M. Inst. C.E. and afterwards was for a few months in 1851, engaged in the preparation of the drawings for the first Exhibition Building in Hyde Park. In 1852 he was sent to Denmark to assist in the construction of the Zealand Railway where he remained until completion of the line in 1856.

In 1857 he was appointed a Third-Class Assistant Engineer in the service of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and although the initial period of engagement was only for three years he remained there upwards of twenty-seven. During this time he was made up to Chief-Engineer of the North-East Division of the company's system and on two occasions; in 1871 and again in 1881, for a period of twelve months on each occasion he acted as Chief Resident Engineer of the whole railway. On his arrival in Bombay only about 100 miles of line were completed and there was probably not a mile of the 1,350 subsequently constructed in which he had not a hand, either in the way of making surveys, superintending construction, or in maintaining after opening. He was said to possess unusual personal attractions and genial manners and of all the engineers engaged on the railway he was most generally popular. He was always foremost to assist the destitute and needy; his generosity keeping him a comparatively poor man to the day of his death.

He had been in failing health for some time and on suddenly becoming worse, in June 1884 he was ordered home. It was thought he wouldn't survive the journey but died on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1884, a few weeks after his arrival. It was his friends in India who arranged for the monument to be erected above his burial place. It would appear that while in India he married Emmie Willis who, by deduction was probably a widow with two children who were born in India. John and Emmie had a daughter Emmie born in Bombay c.1871, and a son, John H. born in Sutton in about 1873. They set up home at 'Abbotsford' on the south side of Park Road, Wallington adjacent to what is now the doctor's surgery where Emmie and the children were living in 1881 and where he returned to die.

A rough hewn granite memorial stone by the north-western boundary wall records the names of twenty-one children both boys and girls, three members of staff, the Head Master James Garnett (d.1877) and his two sons, of the Warehousemen Clerks' and Drapers' Schools of Purley and Addington who died between 1867 and 1937. The school stood at Russell Hill, Purley then within the parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Beddington.

A memorial in the north-western part of the burial ground dated 1879, that represented a mourning figure embracing a cross, owing to vandalism is now non-existent. It was to the memory of seventeen year old Juliette Bornèque the daughter of Xavier Bornèque a Wine Merchant and Swiss national who lived in 'Carew Villas', Upper Road, Bandon Hill.

Nearby is surely the most poignant of all; a stone erected in 1910 to the collective memory of the girls from the nearby Orphanage who had died after the removal of the Institute from Lambeth to Beddington in 1868. They occupy plots 770-778.

In January 1960 the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council decided to accept responsibility for maintenance of the surrounding wall and carried out necessary repairs. On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1966 the disused burial ground in its entirety was conveyed to the London Borough of Sutton by the then rector Rev. J.H. Read to be used as a garden and open space for use of the public. Extensive repair to the wall which had again become necessary was carried out in late 2010 into 2011.

# CHURCHES

## **Bandon Hill Methodist Church**

The first Bandon Hill Mission met in 1895 at the home of Mr. Dyas at 16 Upper Road, Bandon Hill where two rooms were occupied on the ground floor and where meetings with an average attendance of about thirty-three people regularly took place. In 1904 the Mission moved from Upper Road to the property of William Mellows Snr. in Sandy Lane North, a former wheelwright's shop the floor of which was of compacted earth later covered with coconut matting and lit by oil lamps. Apart from services, popular Saturday concerts were also held there admission to which was one penny. This building stood for many years being replaced by the houses numbered 59 and 59A Sandy Lane North.

In 1912 land was purchased at the corner of Beddington Grove and Sandy Lane North for £325. This became the site of the Bandon Hill Wesleyan Hall, the stone-laying ceremony of which took place in June 1913. In the hope it would be possible to erect a church sometime in the future, the building was opened four months later at a total cost £2,018.13.5 including the land. It was registered as a place of public worship for Sunday services and there was a thriving Sunday school, a 'Band of Hope' and a Women's Meeting. The Bandon Hill Day School was also opened within the building.

Though a great number of the congregation were away during the First World War and numbers attending services had therefore fallen, the Sunday morning service continued. The building (the windows of which were painted dark green to prevent the lights showing through during air raids) also served the Armed Forces as a Pay Station and on other days for lectures. In 1918 for use every other Tuesday the hall was given to the council as a Child Welfare Centre.

In 1925 the Trustees gave conditional permission to the 4th Wallington Scout Group to erect a hut on the unused land attached to the church at a nominal rent of one shilling per annum, a building that was to remain there for more than thirty years. 1926 saw the church registered for marriages in the presence of a Registrar; the Guild was still active as was an extremely successful Junior Guild. The following year a tennis court was constructed on the spare land adjoining the church and a Tennis Club formed though after courts had been established in Mellows Park the club attendance gradually fell and it eventually closed down.

In 1933 the Trustees sanctioned the erection of a new hall to be attached to the church at an approximate cost of £600 to meet the demand for increased accommodation for Sunday school scholars. It opened the following year. The next year electric light was installed in the church replacing the gas lamps. During the Second World War the hall was registered as a reserve mortuary station and fitted up accordingly but fortunately was never used for the purpose though the buildings overall did suffer some damage.



In 1954 it was proposed to build a new schoolroom with the intention that at some time in the future it could be enlarged into a church, but the proposal was overturned in favour of building the church itself. With the Scouts by this time having found alternative accommodation, in the spring of 1959 building commenced and the new church opened on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1960 at a total cost of £8,531. Additions in the form of a kitchen and toilet block were added some time later. In January 1965 members voted in favour of the scheme of Unity between the Methodist and Anglican churches.



*The old mission church of St. Michael and All Angels dedicated in 1872, stood on the corner of Stafford Road and Sandy Lane South until about 1907. For a number of years the Beddington South National School occupied rooms at the back of the church until their own building was completed in 1895.*

## **Bandon Hill Mission Church**

Established by Canon Bridges the then Rector of Beddington during 1871-72, the 'Mission Church', also known as Bandon Hill Temporary Church and later St. Michael and All Angels, was built on an isolated site on the corner of Sandy Lane South and Stafford Road in the parish of South Beddington. It was dedicated by Bishop Wilberforce on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1872. The church was a tall slate roofed wooden building with a small tower and spire housing a single bell mounted on a wooden bell frame cast by Mears and Stainbank in 1870. From 1878 until June 1895 adjoining rooms within the building were used as the Beddington South National School until the school building itself (1895), and

the later Junior School (1910) both in Sandy Lane South were built. The original rooms remained in use as the vestry. The rent was paid on the old site of the mission church until January 1908 but it had probably been demolished during 1907. The foundation stone for the present St. Michael and All Angels church built in Milton Road was laid on the June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1906, a parish was assigned to it in 1907 and the building was finally completed in 1929.

## **Sacred Heart Hall, Malthouse Row**

The hall was built to serve the Roman Catholic population whom since 1954 had been using the farm buildings north of the river in Beddington Park as a Mass Centre. Designed, and a table model having been made by a Sutton architect Mr. Fahy, it was built as the first part of an overall church by Tomei and Maxwell and opened in August 1964. The brick built Sacred Heart Hall, the sacristy of the planned church, was used for Sunday Masses and doubled as a Youth Club. It lay at right angles across the line of access where the houses numbered 13 and 14 Whelan Way now stand. On the front wall was the representation of a pelican with wings outstretched; a statue of Christ stood within the building. By December 1966 the total debt on the hall of some £17,000 had been cleared and such was the popularity of the Centre that in April 1967 a second mass was started when on the first occasion it is recorded sixty attended. It was however decided that with the development of the Roundshaw estate a more centrally situated church would better serve the Catholic population resulting in the building of the new St. Elphege Church in Stafford Road, opened in July 1972. The Centre in Malthouse Row was sold and demolished about two years later.

## **St. Mary the Virgin, the Parish Church**

As seen from across the park, the parish church of napped flint and dressed stone with a tower at the west end must surely be in one of the loveliest settings of any in Surrey, a church that has stood at the heart of the community on this same site, or very near to it for centuries. The building dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin in what was Robert de Watteville's Home Beddington estate, today consists of a chancel off which is a monumental chapel for the Carew family former lords of the manor now a Lady Chapel, the nave, two north aisles, a south aisle, south porch and bell tower along with clergy and choir vestries. A new Church Centre was a further addition to the building in 1994-5. Historically the church was in the Diocese of Winchester; it became part of Rochester between 1878 and 1905 and is now in the Diocese of Southwark.

The Domesday Survey of 1086 listing the Manor of Home Beddington gives the first direct reference to a church though by inference there almost certainly would have been a church and probably a house or rectory here in the tenth century. On the August 1<sup>st</sup>, 984AD, Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester died at Beddington described then as an old Minster estate. He was probably in the area whilst on one of his visitations. His body was removed to Winchester two days later.

It seems likely that there would have been a small Saxon church here built beside a spring, probably of wood, by Domesday having been rebuilt in stone consisting of nothing more than an oblong nave and a chancel. In about 1180 it is thought to have been enlarged and

rebuilt with the aisles added perhaps to the older nave with arches formed between the two on the foundations of which the present church stands. Some of the stones seen built into the inside walls of the tower are seen to have been axed and not chiselled possibly indicating they are Norman work of the twelfth century or earlier rebuilt in their present position within the chequer work of flint and stone, the latter indicating a date of about the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Norman stonework is however represented by the late twelfth or early thirteenth century font that is still in use, a piece of an earlier font, the aisle plan and a few pieces of Norman stonework found when the church was restored in the nineteenth century. Later stone tracery in the windows shown in two undated but early illustrations of the church before the Rev. Hamilton's northern aisle was added in 1852, indicate a date of about c.1320-50 for the original north aisle with, at the west end, a door and pathway giving direct access to the manor grounds. A coin found under the foundations of the north-west pillar of the original north aisle in July 1850 was dated to Edward II (1307-1327).

As opposed to being rebuilt in its entirety therefore, more recent thinking would suggest that the church was dramatically altered in the late fourteenth century with additions in the early fifteenth century. A bequest of the first Nicholas Carew (d.1390, Lord of the Manor) directed that the sum of £20 be set aside "to the building of the church", not necessarily the rebuilding. The chancel and the bell tower are thought to have been built at about this time with the Carew Chapel and the south porch added shortly after in the early fifteenth century. Though there had been burials within the church a question remains as to the dating of the vault beneath the Carew chapel as family vaults generally did not begin appearing until about the seventeenth century. Reference is made to a new gallery over the then north aisle being erected in 1822. The only additions to the fabric since that time (apart from the recent extension) were undertaken in 1851-52 today's most northerly aisle, that according to illustrations was built over part of the former burial ground, and in 1868-69 when further alterations, additions and re-decoration took place for Canon Bridges. Though by 1903 the church was already lit by gas supplied by the Croydon Commercial Gas and Coke Co., the cost of improved lighting was met by Howard W. Trollope shortly after. Arising from complaints of poor ventilation and to relieve the darkness of the nave, a Faculty granted in August 1907 led to dormer windows being installed in the roof by local contractor's Dawson's under the direction of H. P. Burke-Downing F.R.I.B.A., a pupil of the architect Joseph Clarke. In 1933 electric lighting was installed.

The most recent alterations were during 1994-95 when the new Centre was added on the northeast side of the church that also extended over part of the burial ground. Total rewiring of the church and the installation of a sophisticated new computerised up-and-down lighting system took place during the winter of 2003-04 aided by a grant of £2,500 from Marshall's Charity. It was dedicated by Bishop Nick Baines of Croydon on the February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004.

Aubrey mentions the decay of the church in 1723, and there is reference to the necessity of supporting the (then) north side of the church in March 1798. It is not until 1829 during the Rev. Ferrers incumbency that the 80ft. high bell tower with its strong spreading buttresses was rebuilt. Throughout years of neglect it had deteriorated to the extent of its having become dangerous. As an indication of its ruinous condition, Bentham tells us that

at the time it was a favourite amusement of the local boys to climb up after jackdaw's nests and drop stones down the pipes of the organ which at that time was located in a gallery at the west end of the church. In 1839 further restoration of the roof and interior of the church was undertaken. In the same year £227 was subscribed for a new organ erected in place of the old under the high pointed arch on a gallery that opened from the tower at the west end.

During the period 1850-52 major restoration and alterations were undertaken by Joseph Clarke for the Rev. Hamilton some eighteen years before he was again commissioned by Canon Bridges to undertake a further programme of restoration and beautification of the church. In 1850 it was discovered that the roof was in a dangerous state. A new roof was scarcely in place when it was found that the pillars on the north side were giving way and sinking beneath the weight. For a while it was thought that the old church must come down for it was found that at some former period the pillars had been weakened by being cut away underground. The problem was rectified by propping and shoring the roof whilst new walls and pillars were raised, at which time the close and cumbrous pews were replaced by oak sittings and an entire new (north) aisle was added. These alterations were carried out by the contractor George Myers who was acknowledged as being one of the leading builders of the day. Myers was also involved in the building of All Saints, Margaret Street, W1 of which William Butterfield was the designer and Henry Tritton of Beddington one of the major benefactor's.

It was during this period of restoration that the remains of three fine mural paintings of The Passion were discovered above the chancel arch having been lime washed probably during the Reformation. They showed three subjects — the scourging, the bearing of the cross (only a fragment of which remained) and Christ's crucifixion. In the last and best preserved, a valuable example of fourteenth century art, an unusual feature was of the small figure of a Jew hammering a nail into the feet of Christ who is seen hanging on the cross. Tracings of these scenes were made by Joseph Clarke and deposited by him with the Royal Archaeological Institute. During this rebuild the paintings were destroyed. A number of fragments of masonry notably a foliated capital and shaft dating from the early thirteenth century were also found in the north wall in what was said to have been part of the original clerestory. It was at this time the galleries to either side of the nave and the high square box pews were removed with new oak sittings replacing the old; a new oak roof was placed above the nave, the organ was restored and the font and pulpit re-sited. The north wall was also pierced at this time (1850-52) and the present north aisle (that arising from a faculty of 1950 is known today as the St. Nicholas Chapel), with its "modern" piers and lower arches were added. In total, expenditure on this restoration amounted to £2,810 13s 5½d. The church was closed from February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1850 for the repairs to be undertaken and re-opened later in the year. In the meantime services took place in the schoolrooms (the former National School in Croydon Road, now site of the Beddington Infants School) and the Beddington Corner School then standing on Mill Green.

The next major transformation was undertaken for Canon Bridges with the support of several other wealthy residents under the direction of Joseph Clarke during 1868-69. With the co-operation of the Orphanage committee, the ground outside the church was drained



*An undated pencil drawing of St. Mary's church before the north aisle and the later vestries were added.*

and a new clergy vestry added across the west end of the north aisle with a delightful singing room built above. The latter, wood panelled with a low double vaulted ceiling, is highly decorated in a somewhat secular style. The old organ previously sited in the gallery under the tower was removed and a new organ chamber with an organ by Lewis, installed at the east end. An oak roof was added to the tower that was covered with lead, new floors were laid within it, a decorated ringing chamber was created and beams placed in the tower loft from which the bells were hung. The roof, rebuilt during the restoration of 1852 was also covered in lead. According to Morgan's 'History' of 1868 the rector though asking for contributions of his parishioners pledged his responsibility for the costs of the alterations. The tower clock dated 1896 and manufactured by Gillett and Johnson of Croydon has been wound mechanically since 1963, the electric motor for which is located within the Ringing Room.

The exterior stonework was extensively restored in the 1868 period and again in 1926-27, when owing to the ravages of time and centuries of atmospheric pollution it was found to be in a particularly bad state of decay. Again, major work was executed in 1974-75 when the tower was re-pointed and much of the stonework repaired at a cost of over £5,000.

For some thirty-seven years successive Parochial Church Councils had sought to provide accommodation in, or around the church to serve the Junior Church and parish activities. The Memorial Church Hall in Rectory Lane (that served as a meeting place for the Junior Church), to enable the new church centre to be commenced, was sold and for eleven years

from 1984 the children “made do” with the vestries and a temporary building located opposite the vestry at the west end of the church. It was removed in 1995 before the new Centre could be opened. Before building began, a small triangle of land on the northeast side of the church was obtained from the London Borough of Sutton and the existing memorial stones behind the church were re-sited or broken during removal. The pump chamber for the organ (that incorporated a very badly weathered quatrefoil window, apparently mediaeval said to have been found walled up in the church), having fallen into disuse when the organ was electrified was also demolished along with part of the adjacent mediaeval wall that became unstable. This section of the wall was rebuilt although few of the original bricks were re-usable. In order to preserve the integrity of the organ chamber, the north wall was reproduced on the face of the extension re-using features such as stained glass windows, stone plinths and mouldings. All the work designed by the architect Brian Drury and built by Ceraf Ltd. was carried out so as not to be irreversible. The Bishop of Southwark, the Rt. Rev’d. Robert Williamson dedicated the new Church Centre on Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1995.

The exterior view of the church as we see it today with the vestry on the north-west side along with the interior decoration is effectively that commissioned by Canon Bridges during the period 1868-69, though the reputedly beautiful stained glass window by Clayton and Bell placed in the tower in 1868 and much other of the decorative glass was lost during the Second World War. A memorial plaque to parishioners who died in the First World War, designed by H.P. Burke-Downing FSA, dedicated on the April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1921 and unveiled by Dr. Cato Worsfold is located on the south wall of the tower while that to the nineteen who died in the later conflict, having been removed from the Memorial Hall has been re-sited in the new church centre.

For many years an early clock stood beneath the tower against the west wall. In the same area stood an oak chest dated 1629 with the name Richard Iewell carved upon it. The chest was stolen from the church in the mid-1970s after having the documents stored within it removed and placed along the back pew of the north aisle. The clock with the date 1718 and the Royal Arms G.R. upon it was of the type known as an “Act of Parliament” clock brought into use as a result of William Pitt’s clock tax of 1797. It is thought therefore that the painted date was probably as inaccurate as the Royal Arms on it. Before being removed (it is thought in the mid-1950s), the case was worm-ridden and the clock had parts missing which it was felt at the time would have cost too much to repair, and though of interest was thought to have no rarity value.

**The Bells.** High above the west door are the bells that have summoned the faithful to worship, rejoiced with them in moments of gladness and tolled their passing. The St. Mary’s Society of Change Ringers with its splendid record for change ringing was formed in 1869.

Though there would probably have been the one bell on the earliest church and there is a reference for expenditure on bell ropes in 1454 when a valuation of the rectorship was made, little is known of any bells previous to the peal now in existence. It is recorded in an Edwardian Inventory dated 1552 that there were five bells and a Sanctus bell within the

tower. In 1568 John Middleton bequeathed £1 'to repair of bells'. In 1723 the five bells were removed and re-hung, the three heaviest needing their wooden headstock replaced.

According to the Rev. Bentham in his 'History' published in 1923 referring to reminiscences of an old resident, "local tradition" would have that at some time in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century the bells were re-cast locally in a sandpit on the Warren. By 1830 however, two of the five bells needed re-casting. The five were assayed and then sold to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry for scrap and replaced by three new bells from the same foundry. In 1869 as part of the restoration of the church the lighter two of the three bells were sold back to the Whitechapel foundry while the third was re-cast and seven new bells were purchased at a cost of £629 18s 9d, giving a ring of eight bells installed in a frame designed to hold ten. These were at first chimed for services, and rung properly only on special occasions such as weddings and major church festivals. In 1877, two lighter treble bells were added to give us the peal of ten we know today. Canon Bridges personally paid for these two bells as he had the previous eight. All ten bells are therefore "modern" rung from a chamber above the west door with the earliest dated 1831 and the latest 1877 – the earliest being by T. Mears of London, the remainder by Mears and Stainbank of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. In 1890, they were removed and re-hung and again in 1928 when they were re-tuned; the wooden headstocks were replaced by fixed iron headstocks at which time the bearings were also replaced. In the latter part of 2004, the bells were again removed and repairs to damage caused by vibration were undertaken. At this time, the buttresses supporting the tower were also re-pinned. When transported to the Loughborough Bell Foundry it was found the bells did not need to be re-tuned; they were returned and re-hung in January 2005 following which the Dedication was undertaken by Bishop Tom, the Rt. Rev. Thomas Butler, Bishop of Southwark, on Sunday March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the Eucharist service.

Most English bells have a text or motto cast around the rim and those at Beddington are no exception. Eight have the words "Te Deum Laudamus" (To the Glory of God), one with the initials A.B. (the Rector, Alexander Bridges); one has the inscription "Sit Nomen Domini. Benedictum", (In the name of God - Blessings), while another "Vivos Voco Mortui Plango" (I call the living; I lament the dead). The restoration of the church was commemorated by the inclusion of the date 1868 in the weather vane on top of the tower.

In the ringing chamber is a marble plaque commemorating Dr. Alfred Carpenter, the first Ring Master at St. Mary's. Though of Croydon he was well known within the district; an authority on hygiene; in 1875 Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Sewage Farm and owner of considerable areas of land in Beddington including that upon which the village hall was built. Stewart Kimber, a journalist who became sub-editor of the Financial Times in 1988 is another late lamented among the congregation and bell ringers of St. Mary's. Though born in Carshalton, at the age of eight he joined St. Mary's choir and at thirteen joined the ringing team. He was Master of St. Mary's Tower in the 1970s and again from 1981 until his death at the age of sixty-six in March 2004.

**The entrance by the west door.** Entering the church by the west door beneath the bell tower on looking up one notices the unplastered walls with primitive chequer-work pattern of flint alternating with stone. Beneath our feet are memorial slabs, one of which

bore a brass tablet to the memory of Margaret Huntley (1638) and a worn memorial slab to Elizabeth Walton decorated with the family Coat of Arms enclosed within a lozenge. On the left is a doorway leading to the vestries, the second low doorway being the original entrance to the belfry.

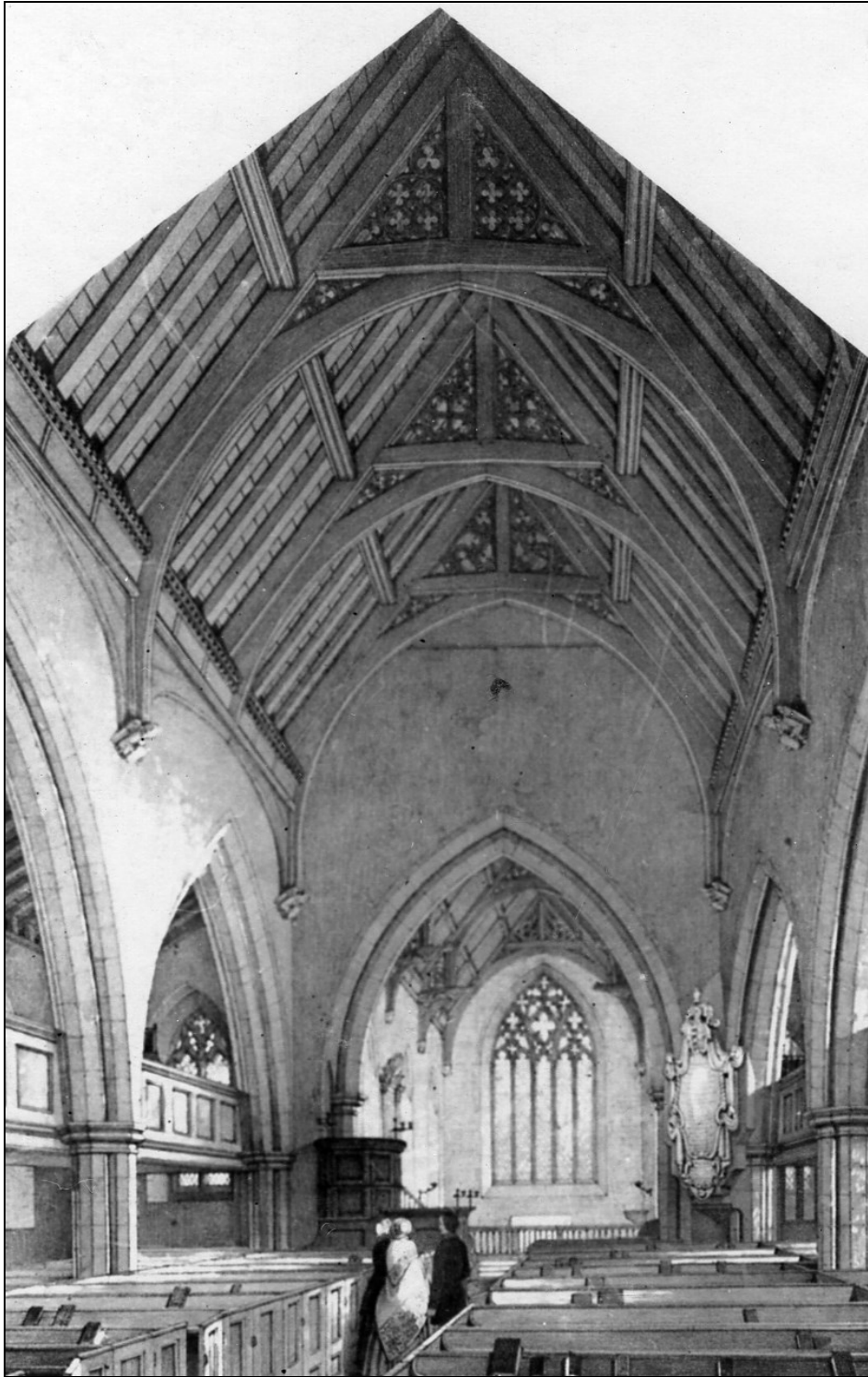
**The Nave.** On entering the nave one is struck by the decorative interior and the tracery pattern of the chancel screen against the glowing colours of the east window. The picture that unfolds is one that has evolved over the centuries, though the decoration of the church as we see it today must be accredited to Canon Bridges and the workmen he employed. One immediately notices the, at the time much criticised, stencilled decoration on the roof and arches of the nave in polychrome and diaper, carried out by the firm Bell and Almond in 1869 at a cost of £109.08.00. Minton Hollis & Co. laid the original red and black coloured floor tiles over a bed of concrete.

**The Font.** On the right as one passes along the nave is the late twelfth century baptismal font standing on a low plinth, of a square form, decorated on the four sides by a series of Norman arches in shallow relief with a circular basin supported by a central and four smaller columns. Made of unpolished Purbeck (Dorset) marble, a pre-Reformation font can be identified by the presence of plugged staple-holes in the top surface. As the water with Holy Oils was prepared at Easter for use during the remainder of the year and stored in the font, it had to be locked to secure it from wizards, witches and potion makers — hence the staple holes that indicate a canopy was once attached. Illustrations of the font with its canopy exist. The water drained away through the bottom of the font (in respect for its having been blessed during the service) from where it runs into the consecrated ground beneath. The polished wood cover is held together with square pegs that have been forced into round holes. It has no nails or screws used in its construction; is probably Jacobean c.1623-25 and of a circular shape, formed of small pieces of wood radiating from the centre ornamented with a lion's head holding a ring in its mouth. According to an early nineteenth century illustration by Hassell, the font complete with its earlier canopy was once located at the west end of the church below the organ gallery.

**The Pews.** To either side of the nave are fine decorated oak pews also provided during the 1868-69 restoration the ends of which have been ornately carved. They, as do the side arches lead the eye forward to the carved wooden chancel screen (said to have been created for the Great Exhibition of 1851) replacing one removed at the Reformation.

**The Aisles.** There are two northern aisles within the church, the nearest on the left being narrow for the Perpendicular style of the church itself indicating that the pillars stand on older foundations. The window at the eastern end is of decorated gothic style, probably of the first half of the fourteenth century. As already noted, the most northerly aisle (known as the St. Nicholas chapel) that has less elaborate pews was built during the 1850-52 period of the Rev. Hamilton. As shown in a lithograph of the interior dated 1840 there were galleries above the nearer aisle but these were removed in 1852 at which time the stonework of the arches and the pillars were drastically repaired in Bath stone. The window behind the altar in the St. Nicholas chapel is dedicated to the Rev. Edward Vines Bond, Rector between 1925 and 1944 who married into the Bridges family. The scene





*The interior of St. Mary's church showing the balcony above the then north aisle, removed when the outer north aisle was added c.1850.*

depicted in the window shows the church and houses in Croydon Road at the time the window was commissioned. The right-hand light shows St. Nicholas passing a purse of gold through a window to a needy family, the children of which laying in bed, are seen wearing cloth caps as were those worn by the girls of the nearby Orphanage. Beside this window is the entrance to the new (1994-95) church centre.

**Stone Fragments.** Along a window ledge of the north aisle are displayed some ancient fragments of worked stone believed to be from the earlier Norman church, dating variously from c.1140-60, c.1202, through to the fourteenth century, and nearby a fragment of a moulded grave-slab apparently of the fifteenth century.

**Roman Coffin.** At the west end of the St. Nicholas chapel stands a chest designed by P.M. Johnston and made in 1933 by a local craftsman F.W. Clarke to house the Roman lead coffin found in Church Road. The coffin had at one time been kept under an iron grille in the choir vestry.

**Stained Glass Windows.** Sited in the north wall is a memorial window by Clayton and Bell installed by Canon Bridges in memory of his parents Sir Henry (d.1861), Lady Frances (d.1859) and Mary Ann Bridges his only daughter who died at the age of eighteen in 1869 and in whose memory most of the art work in the church is dedicated. The subject of the window depicts St. Prudentia, St. Polycarp and St. Mary of Bethany the distinctive face and blonde hair of the latter to have been depicted after the likeness of Mary Ann Bridges. Adjacent to the window is a black marble and bronze tablet to the memory of Sir Henry Bridges and his wife, recording their residence in Beddington of almost fifty years and their being buried in the family tomb in the old churchyard at Ewell.

A nearby window also by Clayton and Bell is to Marianne (née Pigott) the second wife of the Rev. James Hamilton dedicated by his surviving children, Captain Branston Hamilton and Mrs. Kirby. His second son James, a Lieutenant in the navy had met his death in February 1861 while leading a storming party against a stockade manned by natives in Gambia. Next, a window to Henry Tritton, d.1877 dedicated by his sons, and finally to Mary and William Pott of Riverside who died in 1870 and 1878 respectively.

**Memorial Tablets North aisle, the St. Nicholas Chapel.** Several memorial tablets removed from both the chancel and the original north wall have been relocated on the wall of the outer northern aisle. Among others there are those to John Walton of Wandle Court (1802) his wife and his sister, William Bridges of Wallington Manor (1805), John Tritton who died in his 44th year (1832), and his wife Elizabeth who died aged 39 (1834), both of whom were buried in the vault.

Perhaps the most curious of all is a pewter tablet to Thomas Greenhill who died on seventeenth September 1633, the Steward of Sir Nicholas (Throckmorton) Carew. Its punning epitaph signed W.G. (his brother William Greenhill) surrounded by skeletons, hour glass, scull and cross-bones is typical of the time but a rare survival.

**Gothic Screen.** A feature of the western wall of the outer north aisle, is a remarkable painting based on the design of a continental (German or Flemish) possibly late Gothic

fifteenth century altarpiece, provided by the firm Clayton and Bell and placed there to cover the gap left by a window removed when the vestry was built. It is divided into panels bearing lurid pictures of the Last Judgement that may be compared with the ancient "Dooms" that remain in a number of English churches. It has recently been cleaned at which time the colour and quality of the artwork has been revealed in all its splendour.

**By the Chancel.** On the left by the chancel before the carved oak screen stands a brass lectern in the form of an eagle donated by the Collyer-Bristow family in 1869. To the left of this is an early window probably in the oldest surviving part of the church. Canon Bridges placed the stained glass there in July 1853 in memory of his brother James Henry Bridges a Commander in the Royal Navy who died in 1852 at Calcutta where he is buried. The curved decorated gothic tracery of this window indicates it was erected in the first half of the fourteenth century that makes it, along with the north chancel window, the oldest visible part of the church still in situ. Its contemporary at the west end nearest the tower was deprived of its tracery and blocked when the vestries were added in 1868-69. Beside this window is the entrance into the church Centre through an existing though enlarged doorway. The votive candle stand designed and constructed by the artist Heather Burrell was installed in the church for All Souls Night, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002.

**The Pulpit.** Before the chancel screen on the right is an oak pulpit reputedly one of the best and earliest in Surrey. In 1812 a request that the pulpit and reading desk then located in darkest part of the church behind a pillar be removed from their present situation to the west end of the church was concurred with. Now at the east end by the chancel, it formerly stood on the opposite, liturgically correct northern side of the nave. It was moved to its present location when the outer northern aisle was added so that the preacher could look across to address the whole congregation. The early Tudor linenfold panelling on the sides believed to be of the sixteenth century is of the same style as that formerly in the great hall of the manor house. It is older than the Jacobean strapping in which it is mounted, that would indicate the panels well might have been re-used and the whole erected later. On the July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1791 the Churchwarden's accounts lists the entry of one shilling having been paid for beer for the carpenter whilst putting up the pulpit stairs. It was repaired, re-fixed and the oak stairs provided when the changes of the 1860s were being undertaken. There were also two ancient benches from the same period but these, riddled with woodworm were destroyed during the later incumbency of the Rev. Read.

**The Chancel.** Probably of early fourteenth dating, the chancel, decorated with mosaic and wall paintings, was extensively restored by Edward Whitehead, Stone Mason and Master Builder at a cost of £1,238.12.10 during the 1868-69 period of restoration. This was undertaken along with the ornamental stonework in the chancel, church and organ chamber. The sedilia (the seats to the right of the altar) though possibly of earlier origin, were entirely reconstructed. The clergy would have occupied these during the longer parts of the medieval mass. At the same time the piscina (the small stone basin for carrying away water used to rinse the chalice) was also reconstructed in mosaic and marble. The traceried east window designed and constructed by Nuttgens, surrounded in mosaic by figures of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, cherubim, seraphim and archangels, depicts the words of the Te Deum and shows Christ with his mother and John the Baptist. This is a post-war replacement of a similar "modern" window by Clayton and Bell (1868) of

fourteenth century style that was lost (along with the windows on the east, the south, and the stained west window provided by the same company) when in June 1944 a bomb exploded high in the trees at the west end of Church Lane. The blast carried unimpeded across to the church destroying the ancient glass including some fifteenth century pieces recorded as having once existed. The broken glass had to be swept up before the morning service could begin. One of those lost was a memorial window to the memory of the Rev. Hamilton and his son James. A replacement window on the north side of the chancel was a gift of St. Mary's Youth Fellowship in 1951, the upper part of which shows a priest offering communion and in the lower some of their activities including hiking and the playing of gramophone records. Messrs. Campbell and Smith further restored the chancel in 1973. On the floor is a group of historic brasses.

**The Altar.** In 1710 when resident at Beddington House, Admiral Leake presented the church with an altarpiece of wainscot, ornamented with the figures of Moses and Aaron in stone colour, together with tables of the Decalogue and Creed. The present oak altar table that replaced the above was provided at the time of the 1869 restoration though widened in 1960. The former reredos representing Our Lord in Glory with ministering angels and on either side, the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, the Flight into Egypt and Christ disputing with the Doctors, was also provided by Canon Bridges but has since been removed. Mosaics representing the twelve apostles that decorate the sides of the east window remain.

**Altar Cross.** The altar cross replaces one of about twenty-five inches in height, of silver gilt, the centre of which was set with five fine amethysts. Rubies also enhanced the centre of flowers decorating the cross which was stolen in October 1876. The gems had formerly belonged to Mary Ann, Canon Bridges' daughter. Her father had them placed in the cross at the time of her early death. Though at the time bills were posted offering a £20 reward for the recovery of the jewelled cross it was never recovered, nor was there any prosecution brought.

**Altar Rails.** Intricate wrought iron communion rails (1869) replace what must have been a handsome wooden balustrade of the Queen Anne period also given to the church in 1710 by Admiral Leake.

**Choir Stalls and Misericords.** Of the choir stalls to either side of the chancel, the boy's in front, both to left and right, are modern with delicately carved animals on the end of each stall. Of the men's that lie behind, nine are said to be ancient (seven on the south and two on the north side) with carved misericords, hinged seats that are thought to be c.1410. These were made to lift up; they have a ledge on the underside upon which during the long services of the past (many of which were mass for the souls of the dead) the standing occupants half sat, resting with partial support giving the impression they were standing. Below the ledges are carvings each one different, with foliage and shields, one a female head in a basket headdress and another, a mitred male head.

**Organ, Screen and Panels.** On the north side of the chancel is the organ chamber sited there in 1869. The organist's space was encased with a lattice-work screen like a minstrel's gallery above six decorated panels depicting angels playing various musical

instruments. Beneath this screen are eight panels painted with sprays of roses, pomegranates and oranges designed and made at the workshop of Morris & Co. at Merton for £260. The artist, designer and social reformer William Morris in collaboration with his friend Philip Webb (whom he met when both were employed by George Edmund Street, the architect who designed the Law Courts in The Strand) is recorded as having painted part of the screen. Four of these panels are on a door giving access to an area beneath the organ chamber. It has been removed on only two occasions in the past for exhibition by Morris & Co. Behind the screen was the organ built in 1869 and provided by Thomas C. Lewis & Co., a costly item at £926 1s 6d, the church having been allowed £80 'trade in' on their existing organ. A water pump powered it with feeders bringing water from the Wandle to the pump house at the east side of the churchyard. This building later housed an air pump and tool shed before it became redundant and has since been demolished. The organ was extensively restored by Henry Willis the Master Voicer and his team of the same company in 1992 at which time the console was moved to the Carew chapel and the sound chests and pipes that remain in situ, re-arranged to allow easier access for the organ to be maintained and tuned in the future. Re-hallowing of the pipe organ took place on Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1993.

**Chancel Roof.** The chancel roof is of hammer-beam construction. The timbers projecting from the sides took the place of beams right across and helped to distribute the weight of the roof further down the wall. Originally said to have been kings, they are now transformed into angels. The present roof is almost entirely a modern replacement.

**Parclose Screen.** Between the chancel and the Carew (or Lady) Chapel, is what H.V. Molesworth Roberts (d.1978) describes as "one of the most delightful features of the church" - the twin arcade, a wooden screen which like the chapel, is an addition to the church and is original work of fifteenth century date. The arches, an example of the perpendicular style, are beautifully proportioned and are supported by graceful shafts so admired by the famous Victorian artist Pugin who illustrated the arcade in the first volume of his "Examples of Gothic Architecture" 1831. Beneath the arches and the arch to the south nave aisle are wooden parclose screens thought to be contemporary with the chapel and thus a valuable survival of mediaeval woodwork.

**Carew Chapel.** Referred to in Richard Carew's will (d.1520) as an 'old parsonage chapel', it is therefore believed to pre-date his burial, the earliest in the chapel. The family were subsequently to use it as a mortuary chapel until the mid-nineteenth century. The west window, said to have been reset from another part of the church, is of decorated gothic style of the first half of the fourteenth century. The chapel is attached to the chancel with access to both the chancel and the south aisle. It had a fireplace and its own outside door on the south side and was freehold. Prior to being built, members of the family were interred within the precincts of the church itself.

Arising from the break up of the Carew Estates the freehold of the chapel was purchased by Henry Tritton who restored it and had a beautiful stained glass window installed that was destroyed by a bomb blast in 1944. He commissioned William Butterfield architect of All Saints, Margaret Street, W1 (of which the Tritton family were benefactors) to carry out some minor re-organisation of the chapel on his behalf. In November 1871, the iron

railings around the tomb of an infant at the east end of the chapel were removed. Sittings in the chapel were used by Henry Tritton and his family and household and were part of his estate upon his death in 1877; it passed to his wife that along with other properties was sold in 1901 following her death. The freehold was purchased by their son-in-law John Henry Bridges who in January 1905 conveyed the rights of the chapel (excluding the Carew family vault) and the footway leading to it from the churchyard, to the church. They in turn converted it into a Lady Chapel. The present window installed in 1951 represents St. Gabriel, St. Michael, and St. Raphael. Beneath the window is an altar with a marble reredos designed by Mr. Burke-Downing.

Within the chapel, possibly the most immediately noticeable memorial is the Jacobean wall monument made mainly of alabaster in the south-east corner erected to the memory of Sir Francis Carew (died May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1611), son of the beheaded Sir Nicholas, who regained the estates after Henry VIII's confiscation of Carew lands. Erected by his nephew and heir Sir Nicholas Throckmorton (who adopted the name of Carew) it is inscribed to "a deare and well deserving unckle" and in 1850 was enclosed by iron railings that have since been removed. The tomb bears a life sized effigy of Sir Francis in armour wearing a scull-cap, his hands folded as if in prayer above which in the recesses are, on the left a Latin, and on the right an English inscription, and beneath the effigy another recording the building of the monument itself. In the front of the tomb on a low plinth and kneeling upon cushions are a number of figures representing his nephew, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Carew and his wife Mary wearing a ruff and long cloak, and behind them the smaller figures of their five sons and two daughters the latter of which are dressed in ruffs and farthingales. On the cornice are a number of armorial shields.

The earliest memorial is located on the south wall; a canopied altar-tomb (Tudor temp. Henry VIII) of Sir Richard Carew, Knight Banneret and Lieutenant of Calais Castle (who was probably responsible for the building of the magnificent roof of the hall in Carew Manor) who died in 1520 and that of his wife Malyn (d.1544) the daughter of Sir Robert Oxenbridge of Ford, Sussex. The colouring probably represents the original decoration. The brass that had been lost was replaced by Henry Tritton who restored the tomb in the nineteenth century. It was made from etchings held in the British museum so carefully executed that it fitted exactly into the space left by the original. The brass represents Sir Richard dressed in plate armour wearing a tabard charged with his arms, lying beside his wife wearing a cloak bearing the arms of a lion-rampant, within a border of roundels. The inscription with the date never filled in, has also been renewed. There is no monument in the chapel to his son Sir Nicholas Carew, beheaded for treason in 1539 who was buried in the church of St. Botolph, Aldersgate where there is a small wall monument inscribed with his name and those of his family who were interred there with him.

Within the chapel among other tablets relating to the family is one said to have been removed from elsewhere in the church, to Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell-Carew G.C.B. who died on the September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1834. It is decorated with a classical sarcophagus, a flag (the staff broken), naval sword, a branch of laurel and the word 'NILE' in which battle he fought under Nelson, the bravery and talents of Sir Benjamin were of particular note. There is also a tablet commemorating the Gee's upon whom the manor devolved.

A more recent plaque is that to Captain William Arnold Jacomb (First Battalion Essex Regiment) of 'The Holt' the younger son of Charles Jacomb, who died at Newlands House, Tooting Bec in his 37<sup>th</sup> year on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1914. The memorial tablet was erected by his brother officers. The organ console now stands in the chapel having been removed from the organ chamber during the 1992 restoration of the instrument. It is in a case built by Henry Willis using wood removed from the existing chamber.

**The Vault.** It seems likely it would have been at the time of Henry Tritton's re-organising of the chapel that the vault beneath was closed, the last Carew interment having been in 1848. Prior to this being done Bentham tells us that on occasions the vault (access to which was by a trap door in the floor) became flooded and, we are told there was nothing but atmosphere between the coffins and the floorboards of the chapel. James West of 'Laurel Bank', Wallington, builder and undertaker (d.1873), for many years a churchwarden at St. Mary's and one who used to do much of the repair work in the church, filled in the vault. The infill was reputedly of poured concrete but when work was being undertaken to install a new central heating system during the incumbency of the Rev. Richardson, it was found to be of rubble with only a thin layer of concrete on top. It was in the autumn of 1988, the contractors D. and P. Slegg, having lifted the floorboards of the chapel and accompanied by the rector, gained limited access to the vault. Photographs were taken before the floor was re-laid without any further investigation being made. A number of steps led down into a central chamber that today is partially infilled, off which a number of bricked up arches gave access to what are thought to be the burial chambers. The later Carews, Charles Hallowell (d.1872) and his brother Benjamin (d.1879) were buried in the churchyard.

**Memorial Tablets and Brasses – The Chancel.** Apart from the beauty of the building and the richness of the decoration, there are a number of particularly notable memorial brasses. Those dated 1414, 1432, 1437 and 1521 were originally placed elsewhere in the church but were gathered into the chancel when the heating was installed in the nineteenth century. Of these, most have been covered by the boarding under the choir stalls and are unfortunately not readily on view. Notable among them however is a small brass to two sisters "Kat'yn Berecroft (1507) the late wyf of Robert Berecroft Gentilman and Elizabeth Barton wydowe ... syster of the seyde Kateryn" both of whom are represented, their hands clasped in prayer. The arms at the head are charged with bears; the prayer at the end of the inscription has been erased.

Lying to the right of the Berecroft brass and partly covered by choir stalls, set in a Victorian cement slab lay a fifteenth century brass to Roger Elmebrygge. In March 2004 it was cleaned, reset into a new slab of Portland stone and, protected by felt and carpet, was relocated to a site immediately in front of the high altar. Little is known of him except that he was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1437 in the reign of Henry VI and died, as the inscription says, a young man on St. Clement's Day (November 23<sup>rd</sup>) only sixteen days after having been appointed. He is in complete armour with spurs and sword, his feet rest on a dog. There are four coats of arms at the angles. Other brasses to members of this family are at Carshalton and at Merstham but where, or if he lived at Beddington or Wallington is still a mystery.

Also hidden beneath the choir stalls is not only the oldest but what has been described as the most remarkable brass in the church. Dated 1414 it is to Phillipa Carew, daughter of the second Nicholas Carew and his wife Mercy who is buried in the church along with thirteen of her brothers and sisters. Phillipa is shown standing in the upper part of the brass; coats of arms occupy the lower with the heads and shoulders of the thirteen children arranged along the dividing line: Guy, John, John, John, John, William, William, Eleanor, Lucy, Agnes, Agnes, Margaret and Anne. It is said that this brass is unique in England. Nearby is another to Margaret Oliver (1425) with a floriated cross instead of an effigy, of a type then common. Margaret Oliver was a nurse to Nicholas II's family and no doubt these children, Phillipa, her brothers and sisters, were her small charges. It is very touching to see such a brass, to a servant who must have been a very much-loved member of the family.

In the pavement of the chancel in front of the altar protected by the carpet and therefore not readily on view, is a slab of black marble 9ft.4ins. long and 4ft. in breadth inlaid with full length brasses to the second Nicholas Carew (d.1432), Isabella his first wife and their son Thomas. This brass was one of those removed from elsewhere in the church when the heating was installed in the past. To the right of the Nicholas brass is another c.1430 believed to be Thomas Carew and his sister Isabel Harsick. There are other more modern brasses in the chancel including that to a former rector the Rev. J.B. Ferrers and to the Walton family of 'Wandle Court'.

**South aisle and west end.** A number of memorial tablets adorn the south aisle wall, including a lead plate to Elizabeth Boys a servant to Francis Carew who died on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1599, another to Andrew Collyer-Bristow (d.1861) and other members of the Collyer-Bristow family. To the east of the south porch is another monument to the Carew family, formerly located high on the wall on the south side in the angle of the chancel arch. It is of white marble and consists of a large inscribed tablet in Latin surrounded by pendant drapery and crowned by a helmet and shield or arms of the Carew and Lennard families. It is to Nicholas Carew the second son of the Baronet Sir Nicholas (there was a Nicholas in every generation) who died on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1721-22 aged fifty-three and of his wife Ann, the daughter of Sir Stephen Lennard Bart., of Wickham Court in Kent. A further plaque commemorates the generosity of Mary Whitehall (d.1859) in her will a benefactor to the poor of the parish.

Another tablet of particular interest, inscribed in Latin is to the memory of Elizabeth, the daughter of Commander Charles Proby the late Commissioner of the Chatham Dockyards "the most beloved wife" of Paul Tchitchagoff, Superintendent of Naval Affairs in Russia at the time of Tzar Alexander I. The tablet that is in classical Grecian style is the work of the noted Henry Westmacott. The formality of its wording tells us little of what was surely a most remarkable love story. Its connection with Beddington is that Elizabeth was the sister of both Sarah Pigott the wife of Admiral Pigott of Beddington Lodge and Charlotte, the second wife of the Rev. J.B. Ferrers and further, that Elizabeth married in St. Mary's on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1799. Prior to her marriage she met with opposition from her father who was opposed to the union on the professed grounds that her husband to be was not only "a foreigner of a different religion ... but also a free thinker". In letters that passed between the two, her father threatened that upon her marriage her allowance of £100 per



annum would be revoked and that she would be disinherited as “(two years apparently, after she had given the point up) is determined at all events to marry the Russian Captain Chichagoff”. Loathe to leave her ailing father to whom she was devoted, such was the position in which he placed her that Elizabeth left Chatham on the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1799 no doubt at some time to visit her sister in Beddington before, by March living in Gower Street, London. In a letter advising her father of her intent she reminded him of her solemn promise to her betrothed and of how his income was such as to allow them to live comfortably without her allowance. Commander Proby died some three months later in April 1799. After a six-month period of mourning and having left London for Beddington, on Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1799, the marriage took place in St. Mary’s two days later, witnessed among others by her sister Sarah and brother-in-law James Pigott. This was followed by a second ceremony in the Russian Embassy chapel in London. The young couple lived in Russia among the elite of society at the court of the Tzar, and in Paris where in 1811 at the age of thirty-six Elizabeth died following the birth of a stillborn child. Pavel, her grieving husband took her embalmed body and that of her child and placed them in an elaborate mausoleum erected to her memory in the Lutheran cemetery on Vasilevskii Island, St. Petersburg. In 1814 he followed his three surviving daughters to England and had a memorial erected in the church where he and his wife had been married fifteen years previously. In 1836 Pavel became a naturalised British subject but died in Paris in 1849 at which time the drapes formerly covering his wife’s coffin were placed over his own.

In the south wall, we also find a modern stained glass window, the St. George window that replaces one destroyed by enemy action in 1944. It was given to the church by parents as a thanks offering for their own deliverance and for the safety of their four children during the war of 1939-45. The parents were F.G. Bryant and his wife who lived at 247 Croydon Road. Their home ‘Anam’ was damaged (along with about six other houses in Croydon Road) when a bomb fell by ARP Warden’s hut in the park on the east side of ‘Tudor House’ that formerly stood on the site of the flats 1-15 Bloxworth Close. Their lives were said to have been saved by their small dog which distracted their attention from the front of the house to the back, possibly saving their lives when the explosion occurred to the front killing an unfortunate schoolboy who was passing-by. Convinced that their pet had saved their lives, the window depicts their dog (a corgi) by the feet of an angel. Their daughter who was a nurse is shown on the left of the lower part of the window with the insignia of the Royal Nursing Corps and a son, a member of the Royal Corps of Signals on the right.

Here too we see a plaque to the Rev. Thomas Wetherhead Sharpe M.A., C.B. (d.1905) former Inspector of Schools (1857-90) and Senior Chief Inspector of Schools (1890-97) and his wife Blandina (d.1901) who for thirty-five years worshipped in the church. Nearby is a memorial brass to Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester (in whose Diocese Beddington originally belonged and understood to be a close friend of Canon Bridges) who was killed by being thrown from his horse near Wotton, Surrey in 1873.

Admiral of the Red, James Pigott (d.1822) and his wife Sarah (d.1841) are commemorated by a brass plaque on the west wall as does a small square brass commemorate Francis Strickland Esq. who according to the parish registers was buried on

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1702 in his thirty-second year, buried in “woollen”. A small lead tablet is to be found nearby thought to be in memory of Isabella Leigh who died on a January 1<sup>st</sup> in the eighteenth century (the date is unclear). Admiral Whitaker is also commemorated in the church.

**The Church Plate.** The Communion plate includes a sixteenth century pre-reformation silver communion chalice inscribed on the bowl “Beddington”, hallmarked 1551, and a silver paten of the same date. Communion cups of this date are very scarce and not many have been noted as probably not many were made. A special interest attaches to the cup and paten in that they were formed from two pre-reformation chalices and recorded as a “communion cup of silver made of ij chalices”. A graceful silver flagon of 1639 inscribed “The guift of Joane Madox Widdow, to the parish church of Beddington” is also recorded along with a large silver stand paten inscribed “The gift of Mary Reddall to the church of Beddington 1707” and two further High Victorian chalices of 1864 and 1866. There is a further silver-gilt paten of 1866 and some modern work of mediaeval design but on a larger scale. The Bryants, who donated a stained glass window also gave a wafer box as a thank offering for the deliverance of their family during the Second World War.

**The Parish Accounts** date from 1660; the Vestry Book, which contains a record of poor law and highway surveys dates from 1766. All are now deposited in Sutton Archives.

**Parish Registers.** That which give us a most fascinating glimpse into the past and the lives of those who lived in Beddington are the Parish Registers that date with some interruptions, marriages and burials from 1538, baptisms from 1561, and bans of marriages from 1754.

The keeping of parish registers owe their origin to Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII’s Vicar-General who first suggested the scheme in 1535. Initially it met with popular resentment owing to suspicions as to its purpose, but in 1538 there came an injunction to the clergy to record weekly all baptisms, marriages and burials taking place in the parish, and it is from this date marriages and burials have been recorded, though baptisms were only recorded from 1561, shortly before parliamentary action made these records compulsory.

The disturbance to administration caused by periods of plague, by the Civil War (1642-1648) and Commonwealth (1649-1660) form breaks in the sequence as do a number of measures affecting parish registers reveal themselves, statutes largely sought to use registration as a source of revenue. In 1680 an Act designed to maintain the demand for wool, ordered that all deceased persons must be wrapped in woollen cloth when buried and affidavits were required to this effect. We find an entry in the register therefore (one of many similar entries) relating to the burial in – “1683 James Henly, Servant to Bartholomew Tegg [a miller] being accidentally drowned in a millpond”, was buried in woollen the October 21<sup>st</sup>, and on the January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1704 William Stuart, “Old Scott” was also buried “in woollen”. This form of burial was abandoned gradually from about 1710 but remained on the Statute Book until 1813. The reign of William III (1689-1702) produced several registration acts whose real purpose was to assist the Exchequer to carry

on the war with France. The Stamp Act of 1783 imposed a duty of 3d on each entry in the register, a sum which weighed very heavily on the poor and which was removed in 1794.

Another interesting subject demonstrated is the change from the Old Style (Julian) to the New Style (Gregorian) Calendar that took place in 1752. Before then the year commenced on March 25<sup>th</sup> but from 1752 onwards January 1<sup>st</sup> became New Year's Day. It is said that there was considerable opposition to the change, but there is no evidence here of reluctance to put it into effect. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1837 the system of civil registration now in force began, and though marriages, baptisms and burials still continued to be recorded in churches, the parish register thenceforth was subordinated in importance as a source of information to the General Register Office.

Commercialism is not an entirely new phenomenon. In the register dated 1817 is a list of charges. To be married by licence was ten shillings and six pence; by banns five shillings and six pence. The list includes charges for a parishioner or inhabitant to be buried ... in the churchyard one shilling, but if you were a pauper to be buried at the parish expense the charge rose to five shillings. To be buried in the chancel a parishioner paid twenty-one pounds; a non-parishioner forty-two. A brick vault for one parishioner in the churchyard was five guineas (five pounds five shillings) whereas a non-parishioner paid ten guineas... and so on. There was also a note that every burial in the chancel must be in a lead coffin with an extra charge for the burial of one guinea.

Throughout history however, the most feared and perhaps greatest scourge was the periodic appearance of the bubonic plague "The Black Death" carried by the flea infested black rat. Though in the early centuries leprosy was a greater problem and cholera and smallpox regularly took its toll (at the beginning of the eighteenth century smallpox was responsible for one in five deaths), it was the bubonic plague "the grete pestilence" which struck like a recurring nightmare, sometimes compounded by famine and at times accompanied by the "sweating sickness". More recent thinking however suggests that some of the deaths may indeed have been caused by anthrax not bubonic plague, a symptom of which was "black" clotted blood and the similar colour of the victim in death.

We have no burial registers earlier than 1538 and those give little indication of what was happening during periods of high mortality. As an example, in 1543 twenty-four deaths are recorded overall in the parish with only five the following year. In 1545 there were nineteen; 1546 nine and in 1547 fourteen – a total of seventy-one parishioners buried over a period of five years. In the following ten years 1548 to 1557 there were only thirty-six deaths overall though in 1559 twenty-two were buried. The first epidemic recorded in the parish registers specifically as 'plague' reached this secluded hamlet in the late spring of 1594 when what are thought to be three members of the same family Dorothy, John and Amie Elmer died and were buried between May 12<sup>th</sup>, and the June 1<sup>st</sup>. Three members of the Batte family, Alice, Judith and Nicholas were buried within three weeks of each other between June 24<sup>th</sup> and July 13<sup>th</sup>, Joane Freeman was buried on the June 19<sup>th</sup>, and finally on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1594 when it was recorded that Joane Wallis having died of the plague was also laid to rest - eight deaths within a period of three months in a very small, on the whole sparsely settled community.

Beddington was fortunate in escaping an outbreak in 1603 the year of James I's accession during which time he visited Beddington to meet with Sir Walter Raleigh. In September-October 1609 however the dreaded scourge struck once again, heralded by the simple entry in the registers – "September 2nd Mary, a nurse child died of the plague. Pd. mortu 2s 6d", the latter the fee payable upon burial. Whether Mary had any connection with the Newe family will probably never be known for within a little over a month four of that family thought to be the only members of the local community died of the illness, Thomas (buried September 15<sup>th</sup>), Catherine (September 27<sup>th</sup>), Richard (October 6<sup>th</sup>) and finally John buried the following day, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1609.

The next outbreak recorded in the registers was when Agnes Gallery seemingly brought the pestilence with her from London in 1636. She was buried on August seventeenth and in just over a month seven others had followed her including probably her daughter Mary, "a maden of London". Edmond Norman, his son Thomas; Alice Borrodell and her two daughters were buried on September 6<sup>th</sup> the same day as Joane Mitchell a woman of London. One can appreciate why those with the means to do so fled from the cities; one can also appreciate why those who did, were not well received in the country.

London was struck by a new strain of fever in the years 1638-43 the last major epidemic before the Great Plague after which the Great Fire of 1666 did much to destroy the conditions in which it had thrived. On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1645 there is only the one entry relating to the illness - Eliz. Pigott of Croydon who had died of the plague was buried at Beddington. The Rev. Clement Sharpe in his 'History', (1890), probably quoting Walford, tells us that eleven parishioners died of the plague in 1665 but the initial source of this information has not been found, nor is there any entry in the parish registers to confirm this. It is unlikely therefore we will ever know what really happened here during that period for there are no entries at all recorded in the burial registers from January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1661 until March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1668, but no doubt the cry "Bring out your dead!" and the cross crudely painted on the door of homes afflicted by the sickness would have been, even in this relatively isolated locality, an all too familiar sight. Nor do we know where the victims were buried, whether individually or in a common grave, a plague pit. Apart from these entries we have one other legacy of the plague, a Victorian nursery rhyme chanted by children the length and breadth of the country. "Ring-a-ring o' rose's ..."

**Lych-gate.** The churchyard is entered from the west by a fine lych-gate, the word 'lych' being derived from the Old English meaning 'corpse', a roofed gateway where the coffin was sheltered awaiting the arrival of the clergy and under which the bearers could rest before the coffin passed through to the church and its final resting place. Built c.1868 under the direction of Joseph Clarke who did such fine work for Canon Bridges, it was modelled on the mediaeval gateway at St. George's, Beckenham, Kent and erected by R.C. Roberts for £131 5s 9d. Almost unbelievably, over the night of the May 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 1981 mindless vandalism reduced the gateway to a heap of rubble with the whole structure having collapsed in upon itself. Aided by donations from the church community in the sum of £1,500, £100 as a grant from the Local Authority and the remainder from insurance, reconstruction took place. In 1983 contractors D. and P. Slegg of Reigate, using English oak and hand made tiles rebuilt the lych-gate to the plans of 1868 that were fortuitously still in existence. The replacement gates beneath the roof were stolen in 2002.

## **The Rectors and Advowson of St Mary's**

In 1159, the advowson or right to appoint a new rector when a vacancy occurred was granted by Sibyl de Watteville and Ingelram de Funteneys to the Abbey of Bermondsey. In 1291 the Beddington rectory was taxed at forty marks out of which one hundred shillings was paid to the Prior. After the Dissolution of Bermondsey in 1538, the advowson remained for a time in the hands of the King before being acquired by the Carews. It remained annexed to the estate until in 1859 when the advowson along with the family chapel and Carew Estates was offered for sale. It eventually passed to the Bridges family and their descendents and more recently to Southwark Diocese.

The following is a list of rectors from the earliest recorded who, when the church was a focal point in the lives of the community, not only spiritually but also in lay terms wielded a great deal of influence. As the years have passed their influence has become less so in what is today a modern multi-cultural, multi-faith society.

**William Fitz.** Date of institution unknown.

A witness to land grants at Beddington in the reign of Henry III (1216-1272).

**John Harvest of Andevere [Andover].** Date of institution unknown.

**Adam de Stratton.** Date of institution unknown.

Died before 1295.

**William de Karleton.** Instituted August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1294.

Was probably born at East Carleton, Norfolk c.1250. He was appointed bailiff of a number of different Norfolk hundreds and under-constable of Norwich by 1274. By the autumn of 1285, he had entered the King's service; by 1288 had become a King's Councillor, served the council of Lyons and in 1290-91 was appointed chief baron of the exchequer. He was involved in making the property arrangements for the marriage of Edward I's daughter Margaret to the son of the Duke of Brabant. In August 1294 was instituted to the living of Beddington following that of Northbrek and Banham in the Diocese of Norwich. In 1297 he travelled to Antwerp to negotiate a loan for Edward I, and in 1303 was involved in planning access roads to the King's new town of Hull. In 1306 he was canon and prebendary of Wells who held by dispensation the churches of Beddington, Chalk, Creck, Barham and another Cave(?) in the Diocese of York. He went into partial retirement in October 1308 and was dead by 1311. He is known to have had one child, a daughter, who is mentioned in 1290 and was then married.

**Thomas de Kynynham.** Instituted October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1307.

**William de Alingo, or Halling.** Instituted May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1318.

Patron: King Edward II.

**John de Wyndesore.** Date of institution unknown.

Rector in 1329.

King's Clerk. Exchanged in 1332 for Witham Diocese, Canterbury.

**Richard de Novo Castro [Newcastle].** Instituted in 1332.

Exchanged Wychem church for Beddington and in 1335 exchanged for Whaddon in the diocese of Ely.

**Nicholas de Ramberti.** Instituted October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1335.

Resigned.

**John de Sancetio.** Instituted July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1341.

Patron: The Prior and Convent of Bermondsey.

Exchanged 1342 for Cheshunt Diocese, London.

**Almaric de Ponte Lucco (or Pontaliaco).** Instituted July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1342.

In 1350 dispensation was granted for one year for study without obligation of residence provided that divine service and the cure of souls was maintained by a suitable person and to lease the church to a suitable person.

**Richard de Hampton.** Instituted 1352.

Authorisation was given by the bishop for an exchange of benefices between Almaric then rector of Beddington and Richard de Hampton then rector of Baughurst after their respective resignations.

**William Aubrey.** Instituted 1361 (or early 1362).

**William de Wotton.** Instituted March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1370.

Patron: The King.

Work done under the will of Nicholas Carew. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1380, a pardon of outlawry was granted to William Wotton for not appearing, to answer William de Sleaford, Clerk, Robert de Martell and Roger de Saperton, Warden of the King's Palace and the prison of Flete, relating to a debt.

**William Dionys (or Denys).** Instituted January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1405.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

**Thomas Redlyngton.** Instituted August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1407.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

Died soon after.

**John Chaundeler.** Instituted October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1407

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

**John Walsh.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: The Prior and Convent. Exchanged 1448 for Snave Diocese, Canterbury.

**John Byrkyn.** Instituted December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1448.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

Resigned 1450.

**Richard Tannere.** Instituted November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1450.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

Resigned and again instituted July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1457. Was living in 1472.

**Christopher Lytton.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

Resigned in 1502.

**William Sampson.** Instituted July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1502.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

**Simon Green, alias Foderby.** Instituted June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1507.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

**Robert Barret.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: The Prior and Convent.

Resigned 1529.

**Charles Carew.** Instituted March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1529.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Carew.

Was hung for robbing his grandmother in August despite her plea for mercy.

**George Birkeham.** Instituted February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1542

Patron: King Henry VIII.

**Richard Ashby.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: Queen Mary.

Died 1558.

**Randolph Wright.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: Sir Francis Carew.

Born at Wychemalbanke, Cheshire.

Died 1578.

**Richard Worde.** Instituted December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1578.

Patron: Sir Francis Carew.

Richard Worde was probably a young man when he arrived in Beddington. He and his wife had sixteen children, nine of whom died before adulthood. The youngest, Thomasine was left £100 by Sir Francis Carew in his will though she encountered some difficulty in recovering her legacy from his successor. Richard Worde died January 1624.

**Thomas Pope.** Date of institution unknown.

Patron: Sir Francis Carew.

Died 1649.

**John Cox.** Date of institution unknown.

Died 1669. His memorial slab, the earliest now visible in the churchyard is on the south side of the church near the porch reads:

JOHANNES COX RECTOR HVIVS ECCLESIAE DE BEDINGTON  
DE DECESSIT OCTOBRIS XXVII DMDCLXIX AETATIS SUAE 49

**Charles Berryman alias Brandon.** Instituted November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1669.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Carew.

Resigned same year. He was of Ratley, Warwickshire and died December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1671, aged 49. There is in existence a probate inventory of 'goods and chattells' of Charles Berryman (dec'd), Clerke undertaken on the February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1672. Included in the inventory of household items the most valuable were the number of books in the study valued at £20. There were also five cows and five pigs along with wheate, rye, pease, tares and barley in the barn.

**William Durham.** Instituted March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1672.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Carew.

Resigned same year.

**Thomas Parker.** Instituted March 4<sup>th</sup> (?) 1672.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Carew.

**John Nelme.** Instituted December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1684.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Carew.

John Nelme was also Rector of Carshalton. He was instituted there on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1690 under the Patronage of Henry Byrne Esq., and may have resided in Carshalton. M.A. Magdalen Hall, Oxford; published a sermon on Psalm XVIII in 1660. Archdeacon. Died March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1736-7.

**Richard Reddall.** Instituted November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1703.

Patron: Sir J. Isham, Sir J. Spencer and Anthony Spencer, trustees of Nicholas Carew Jnr.

**John Leng.** Instituted November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1708.

Patron: Nicholas Carew Jnr.

John Leng, a Latin scholar was born at Thornton-le-Dale near Pickering, Yorkshire in 1665. He was educated at St. Paul's School, London and St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he was elected Fellow in September 1688 and subsequently a Tutor. He lectured, published a number of sermons and edited other literary works. He became Chaplain-in-Ordinary to George I, and in 1708 he was presented by his old pupil, Sir Nicholas Carew to the rectory of Beddington which he held in commendam until his death, though he was appointed Bishop of Norwich in 1723. Described as a good and learned man, he was twice married. Three years after being appointed Bishop, on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1727 he died in London of the smallpox he contracted at the coronation of George III. He was aged 62 and buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster.

**John Herbert.** Instituted May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1727.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew.

He surrendered the living of Bideford for Beddington.



**Nicholas Penny.** Instituted April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1730.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew.

**John Price.** Instituted May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1745.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew.

**John Bromfield Ferrers.** Instituted January 1783.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew.

The Rev. Ferrers could be described as a typical eighteenth century parson, a likeable some-what eccentric character who held the living longest of any; a period of fifty-seven years until his death. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1799 at St. Mary's he was married to Charlotte Pitcairn neé Proby by the Rev. Edmund Ferrers the Rector of Cheriton, Devon with Thomas Ferrers, Sarah Pigott, Eliza Ferrers, Isabella Maxwell and Elizabeth Proby as witnesses. They had a family of at least six children born between February 1801 and September 1813. John Ferrers was the first of the later known rectors to undertake any major repair of the church and it was he who became a thorn in the flesh of the Carew's for a number of years with a dispute over the building known as the 'Portioners House' then used as the rectory and the income on land belonging to the portion; effectively, a mansion and 20 acres of land near the church and the tithes of 200 acres to the north of the river known as Huscarls Fee. The court was to effectively remove the thorn; the Carews won the case and in about 1801 the rector was evicted. After a short period of residence in Wallington Manor and a change in the inheritance of the Carew estates we find him resident at 'Riverside' in Bridges Lane, one of the Carew estate houses. He died on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1841 aged 83 and was buried six days later. The Curate, the Rev. A.H. Bridges officiated. To mark his long period of service a memorial brass was laid in the chancel of the church.

**James Hamilton.** Instituted June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1841.

Patron: Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew.

James Hamilton born in London on the November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1811 was another of those dedicated pastors mourned by all at his untimely death. Born the son of a well-known and influential publisher, William Hamilton of the firm of Hamilton and Adams of Paternoster Row, his thoughts were initially towards following his father into the literary world but he ultimately went up to Oxford where he studied divinity. Ordained Deacon in 1837, his first ministry was Great Baddow near Chelmsford in Essex as Curate. James Hamilton was presented to the Vicarage of Great Baddow in July 1840 on the incumbent's move to Witham, but it was a living he held for only a short time before resigning it for Beddington to which he was presented on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1841. His moving into the newly built rectory in July 1844 was without his wife Mary who having previously borne him two sons, had died in May the previous year a few weeks after having given birth to their only daughter. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1846 the Rev. Hamilton was to re-marry; to Marianne the daughter of the late Admiral Pigott of 'Beddington Lodge' after which time the rectory was reported to have become not only his home and that of his family and staff of five, but also a delightful resort to his friends.

When he came to the district Beddington and the hamlet of Wallington were united; the parish at the time having a population, chiefly rural of some 1,453 inhabitants. For some

years he was assisted in his parochial work by the Rev. James Aitken M.A., later Curate of Woodmansterne. For purposes of visitation the parish was divided into ten districts of which the rector took five, the curate the remainder, changing them from time to time. Notwithstanding his numerous lay-helpers, he became virtual accountant-general of the parochial charities; he took charge of the school accounts, of rectory accounts and it is not known how many more. Despite his parochial duties he conducted classes to extend knowledge and literary appreciation; he also organised and became Treasurer of the Beddington Book Club that was financed by donations (as in January 1849), of five shillings each from local landowners, the titles of which were distributed to the one hundred and fifty members. Never having been of a robust constitution and having contracted a cold, his condition worsened and he died unexpectedly on Easter Eve, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1860.

### **William Marsh D.D. Instituted July 1860**

Patron: Sir Henry Bridges.

Dr. William Marsh (1775-1864) undertook the charge of Beddington on the death of Rev. James Hamilton, a parish that was a large and important living. He was to remain in office for only four years until his death in September 1864 aged 89. One would question why such an elderly man, already in failing health was appointed to the parish, but it would appear that his period of occupancy was more in the manner of an interregnum and would have spent little of his time living in Beddington. Following the Carew sale in 1859, H. D. Raincock of 'Woodcote' purchased the rectorship from whom it was acquired by Sir Henry Bridges at some time prior to 1861. Whether this was because of the living unexpectedly becoming vacant on the death of the Rev. Hamilton we will not know, but in 1864 on the death of Dr. Marsh the living was bestowed on Sir Henry's son, Alexander Henry Bridges who was to hold it for the next 27 years until his death in 1891.

William Marsh, Honorary Canon of Worcester was born in Reading in 1775 the son of a retired Indian officer. He entered St. Edmunds Hall, Oxford to study for the ministry and upon graduation in 1804 was appointed to a living in Berkshire after which his career took him for a short time to Brighton then Colchester for fifteen years, Birmingham from 1829 and later Leamington Spa.

Physically he was a tall, delicately featured, particularly handsome man who along with an attractive personality had a remarkable gift of platform speaking. In 1851 increasing infirmities led him to share the home of his daughter and son-in-law at Beckenham Rectory. Why then some nine years later, if it wasn't as a personal favour to his patron, at the age of 85 he accepted the living at Beddington. It was a large and important parish at above £1,000 a year but this considerable income he employed for the good of the parish. His brief ministry at Beddington was almost entirely through extraneous help, his own ministrations being confined to occasional sermons and addresses and even his residence to the finer summer months. Two young clergymen were appointed as curates, Rev. Henry O'Rorke and Rev. Henry Willes Southey; in 1863, the Rev. George Gordon and Rev. French, the latter recently returned from working in India. Dr. Marsh was welcomed to Beddington by Mr. and Mrs. Laurence who gave generous help in the parish and the schools and provided the salary for a Bible-woman to work with the poor. The parishioners included relatives of Joseph John Gurney an old friend of his, and the late

Elizabeth Fry's eldest son and his family. Wishing to meet as many of his parishioners as possible (many of whom worked in the leather, snuff and paper mills), having obtained permission from the absent owner he invited four hundred men to a tea party in the hall of the old deserted house in Beddington park whilst refreshments for other parishioners and friends from London were laid in an adjoining room. He later instigated a fete for the wives and single women.

During 1863 Dr. Marsh suffered a serious illness and after recuperating at Beckenham rectory returned to Beddington. He died on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1866 in his 90th year and is buried in the churchyard at Beddington. His wife Louisa Horatia died in August 1871. Their grave is beside that of a former rector John Cox. Their un-married daughter Catherine was well known for her benevolent work amongst the railway navvies and for conducting a religious service of a Sunday evening in the National School that drew large attendances from the surrounding parishes. Catherine felt that Derby Day was the cause of much temptation and resolved to make a counter-attraction. She sent an invitation to the mill-workers to have an afternoon game of cricket in Beddington park followed by tea and to spend the evening in the rectory grounds. As long as she lived in Beddington she kept up her "rival Derby Day party".

**Alexander Henry Bridges.** Instituted November 1864

Patron: Mrs Bridges.

See the Bridges family of Beddington and Ewell.

**Hugh Alexander Hodgson.** Instituted 1891

Patron: Mrs Bridges.

It must have been particularly difficult for the Rev. Hodgson to step into the shoes vacated by the Rev. Bridges but he and his assistants carried on the work of the church with great zeal, including the building of the new church of All Saints at Beddington Corner. Physically, the Rev. Hodgson was inclined to be tall, of sturdy build, bald and clean-shaven; somewhat stern, rural and old fashioned. He was educated at Clair College, Cambridge obtaining a B.A. in 1878 and an M.A four years later. He studied at Wells Theological College; became deacon in 1879 and priest a year later. He was at Great Malvern church from 1879-1884 thence to Hertingfordbury until he became rector of Beddington in 1891.

During his incumbency dormer windows were added to the roof of the nave admitting more light, improving ventilation and making other features of the church more visible. He was also responsible for the conversion of what was the Carew Chapel into a Lady Chapel. A keen gardener and great visitor in the parish, every morning he took the hour-long scripture lesson in the Croydon Road National School; he was also a cricket player of some ability and held the Captaincy for some nine years from 1893. In this capacity he as described as a genial and splendid cricketer and even after his retirement would still watch the matches, riding to the ground on a motorcycle though well into his seventies. The Rev. Hodgson retired in 1925.

**Edward Vines Bond.** Instituted 1925

Patron: Dorothy Mary Bridges.

The Rev. Bond has been described as a shy but accomplished preacher, slight of build and

short in height and with sandy coloured hair. He was born on the May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1870 to the former Rose Edith Bridges, eldest daughter of John Henry Bridges and grand-daughter of Canon A.H. Bridges. Shortly after coming to Beddington from Hampshire the family removed to a rented detached house in Maldon Road, Wallington while the rectory was rebuilt in a grand, more imposing style. During his incumbency, apart from the building of a new rectory, a portion of the glebe was made over to the church council for the site of a permanent church hall. The Rev. Bond remained at Beddington for almost nineteen years including the greater part of the war years before, at the age of 74 in May 1944 retiring to the Bognor Regis area. He died on the December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1950 and is buried on the north side of the path leading to the west door of St. Mary's.

**Guy Milson Jukes.** Instituted May 1944

Patron: Dorothy Mary Bridges.

Guy Jukes, born in 1894 came from All Saints, West Ewell and was rector for seventeen years between 1944 and 1961. He left the parish for Outwood from where after two years, owing to failing health he retired to Charlton Kings near Cheltenham, where he died in 1963 aged 69. Sited beneath the bell tower within the church a plaque commemorates his incumbency at St. Mary's.

**John Hanson Read M.A.** Instituted 1961

Patron: Kenneth Bond (1908-2003), great-grandson of Canon Bridges.

John Read was rector until June 1978. He died on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004 following which a memorial service was held at Beddington.

**David Richardson.** Instituted 1978

Patron: Kenneth Bond.

David Richardson was described as "a somewhat controversial figure" who, after a fourteen-year ministry at St. Mary's, left Beddington for Dormansland, Surrey in 1992. The Rev. Richardson was born in Cheshire (having been evacuated from Liverpool); was educated at Southampton and went to Kelham in 1957 to train as a priest from where he qualified in 1966. He was ordained in Bradford to the parish of Tong to work in a large housing estate, two and a half years later moving to the parish church in Richmond, Surrey. After another two years he transferred to Sanderstead where he was both priest-in-charge and for the last four years, team vicar. His interests included squash, cricket and gardening. He and his wife Mary, a former qualified nursery nurse mainly working with partially or profoundly deaf children, have two children of their own. He remained at Beddington until 1992.

**Selwyn Tillett.** Instituted 1993.

Patron: Kenneth Bond and Lady Nairne (cousin of the then late Mr. Bond).

Selwyn Tillett came to Beddington having been curate at All Saints, West Dulwich and looking after three parishes in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Described as a "liberal catholic" he studied at Peterhouse, Cambridge for six years gaining a B.A. in Egyptology in 1975, then undertook research for a further period (a précis of his work has been published by the British Museum). He has led cruises on the Nile as a tour lecturer.

Selwyn studied at a theological college at Mirfield, attending Leeds University where he obtained a B.A. in Theology and has a talent for music. He is a singer, accompanist and choir director; is involved with the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society, and sees music and drama as particular vehicles for community growth. He also gained experience in maintaining and rebuilding ancient buildings, working with architects, planners and conservationists and has helped raise large sums of money that was invaluable experience when it came to the building of the new church centre, for which the mortgage work was paid in September 2004. He worked to forge links with local churches of other denominations; is past chairman of the local Council of Churches and has worked on the Diocesan Council for mission and unity. He supported the ordination of women to the priesthood and actively encourages lay people to discover the full potential of their ministry all the week, not only on Sunday's and sees the position of rector as a priest to the whole community. He was married to Cassie (néé Nicholson) in St. Mary's on Easter Monday April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1995. Having been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Wensum Group, a team of small rural parish's north-west of Norwich, Easter Sunday 2005 was his last Sunday at Beddington.

**Justine Middlemiss.** Instituted January 2006

Patron: Lady Nairne.

St. Mary's first woman Rector, came to Beddington from a Curacy at St. Margaret's Church, Lee in the Lewisham area. She was born in Ayr in the south-west of Scotland from where, aged eighteen, she went to Aston University in Birmingham gaining a B.Sc. in Managerial and Administrative Studies. Justine grew to recognise her vocation while working in the City and being an active member of the congregation of Holy Cross Church in Motspur Park. She was selected for ordination training and attended Ripon College, Cuddesdon. Mrs. Middlemiss was licensed as Priest-inCharge at St. Mary's on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006. She is married to Guy Middlemiss. He is a librarian at the B.B.C., is a talented pianist and musical director.

## **St. Paul's Church, Roundshaw**

The original brick-built church dedicated to St. Paul was dedicated on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1981, the tower of which was decorated with a cross made from a four-bladed propeller; an appropriate reminder of the historic past of the Roundshaw area. Known as 'The Propellor Church' it was used by both the Church of England and the Free Churches, that prior to its being built collaborated in a churchless religious venture known as the 'Roundshaw Experiment'. Owing to redevelopment of the area and rebuilt nearby, the second St. Paul's church (designed by the architect K.C. White) was opened on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003 by the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt. Rev. Tom Butler. The propeller cross from the former church was re-sited on the new church building.

## **Wallington Christian Centre**

On the corner of Garden Close and Plough Lane is the Wallington Christian Centre, built in 1929 following an application by F.J. Freyburg (of the French Intensive Gardens) for a Mission Hall. By 1933 it was listed as the Pentecostal Church but by 1935 had become known as the Beulah Gospel Mission.

## **CLUBS, GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS**

### **Beddington Farm Bird Group**

The Beddington farmlands that have historically been a favoured site for bird watchers, today incorporates the Beddington Sewage Farm and Viridor waste management site that covers an area of about 400 acres. The Group consists of a number of people dedicated to raising the profile of the farmlands to the general public; to encourage and promote the development of a major urban nature reserve and to record and document the bird and other wildlife at the former farm. Conservation and preservation is an important aspect including the creation of disturbance-free areas in the final restoration scheme.

Incorporating an area of a number of different habitats, the land is home not only to native species, but to migratory birds. It has nationally important populations of key species such as the tree sparrow, yellow wagtail, green sandpiper and shoveler. Foxes and rabbits are inevitably encountered. Weasels are occasionally seen but field vole and common shrew are often sighted. Bats are also well represented in this particularly important area for wildlife conservation.

### **Friends of Beddington and Grange Parks**

The Friends group was founded by Chair, Dee Hyatt in 2002 arising from concern following closure of the footbridge which crossed the lake in Beddington Park. From that first meeting with fourteen other similar-minded locals, the group (now incorporating the Friends of Old Wallington Hamlet who were responsible for the restoration of the lake and fountain by London Road), has grown to over a hundred members, thirty to forty of whom meet at The Grange every three months.

Apart from the success in lobbying to have the bridge restored the Friends have been very much involved in the £130,000 restoration of the lych gate completed in 2008 after four years of lobbying and fundraising and most recently, the restoration of the flint wall surrounding the burial ground opposite the church. Involvement with other groups; the restoration and repainting of the decorative wrought-iron on the patio overlooking the pond in front of the restaurant; the replacement of trees and bulb planting; the erection of bird boxes; facilities for barbeque's; clearing of the river and fund-raising for other good causes including the Riverside Animal Centre, are among projects of this very active group.

### **Beddington Masonic Lodge No. 5492**

Was consecrated at Freemason's Hall, London on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1934, the first meeting of which was held exactly one month later at the Masonic Hall in Grove Road, Sutton under the guidance of W.M. Bro. T.W. Relfe. During the war years, the hall at Sutton was requisitioned by the Surrey County Council and though a number were by necessity cancelled, meetings were held in premises owned by Riddington's bakeries in Sutton and Wallington. Beddington Masonic Lodge later became a Chapter within the Province of Surrey.

## **May Queen Celebrations**

The church in the Middle Ages tolerated May Day celebrations but the protestant reformation of the seventeenth century soon put a stop to them as the Puritans were outraged at the immorality that often accompanied the celebration such as drinking and dancing. Parliament banned maypoles altogether in 1644 but when Charles II was restored to the throne a few years later, people all over the country put up maypoles as a celebration and sign of loyalty to the crown. May Day had a boost in popularity again in the nineteenth century when Victorians seized on it as a “rustic delight”. It became associated with innocence “Merry England”; girls wore white and carried posies of flowers. The triangular garden by the river in Beddington Lane was to become the venue for the re-established crowning of the Beddington May Queen after which there would be dancing around a maypole especially erected for the occasion.

Though it would not have been on this site in 1898, reference is made to “a few of the old customs of ‘Merrie England’ that still linger about these parts”. In his ‘Rambles by Rivers’ (1844) Mr. J. Thorne recorded on May Day having seen little companies of village children about Beddington and Carshalton carrying garlands of cowslips and other flowers woven round hoops set on the tops of poles. “Certainly, [he adds] there is no other relic of May Day near London of anything like so graceful a form”.

Evoking the Victorian sentimental longing for the past, the writer John Ruskin introduced a May Queen Ceremony to trainee teachers at Whitelands Training College in 1888. He was keen to revive May Day as a national festival and saw the blossoming network of schools as a way of achieving this. After a period of lapse the May Queen tradition was therefore revived locally in 1905 by a Mr. Deede a follower of Ruskin and teacher at the Modern School, the Whitelands College for young ladies annexe at Wallington, later to become Wallington Girls School in Stanley Park Road. Flossie Bown as she was then was the first of the latter day Beddington May Queens. There was no band to lead the procession but there was a maypole and dancing. As part of the overall celebrations, a Children’s Service has been ongoing ever since held annually in St. Mary’s on the first Saturday in July. It has been known variously as the Merry England and Children’s Flower Service, and the London May Queens Flower Festival. Groups of children from London, Bromley and Shortlands in Kent each carrying their own colourful banners and dressed in their area colours form a procession to the church for the service; a gathering of which Mr. Thorne certainly would have approved.

## **Beddington Provident Fund, Slate Clubs and Beddington Village Loan Club**

Established by the Rev. James Hamilton in 1841, the Beddington Provident Fund had as its object, to “assist the industrious and deserving poor in the formation of provident [or thrifty] habits”. Members would in turn benefit from funds returned to them during the winter with an addition of coals, food or clothing, or if needed in medical or other assistance during the course of the year. The parish was divided up into ten districts, with a visitor for each area (all women who came from the wealthier families) to whom applicants could apply. By 1878-79, the committee that managed the fund was a roll call of local notables, among them the Rector who apart from being President also acted as

Treasurer. Richard Yates was the Secretary, while other administrators were Simpson Rostron, Robert Pott, John Shaw, George Simons and the Churchwardens. For many years, the provident fund was administered by Mr. Collyer Bristow.

Benefits of the later named Slate Clubs that were run on the same lines also offered a form of insurance for those who had perhaps become ill and unable to work during which time they were paid a weekly benefit. There would be little left to pay out at the end of the year however. In 1911 there were two such clubs in Beddington, the larger one of which was run by Albert Saw as Secretary with one hundred and thirty members and a share-out of £1 3s 10d; sick benefits paid out was £30. Another known as the White Posts Slate Club, the Treasurer of which was F.G. Walford, had a smaller membership of forty-two; the share out was slightly higher at £1 5s 10d, sick benefit paid out was £5 18s 4d and there had been one death during the year, that of 'Levy'.

In 1959, Gordon Potter started the modern-day equivalent to the Beddington Village Loan Club in the Snooker Club building adjacent to the village hall. His father ran a similar club in the past. With its meeting place now in the hall itself and still run by its latter day founder, it functions on the same principles of regular weekly contributions with benefits available from funds should the need arise. The pay out is made annually in the first week of December.

## **T.S. Puma**

The gated entrance at the western end of the old wall by the churchyard gives access to both T.S. Puma and the building used by 350 Air Training Corps. The Carshalton and Wallington Sea Cadet Corps, T.S. Puma, was formed during the Second World War when about two hundred boys met at a hall in West Street, Carshalton. After the war interest declined somewhat, but in the mid-1950s Puma was properly re-organised and meetings held at Tweedale Junior School in Green Wrythe Lane, Carshalton. It was decided to build their own purpose-built headquarters at Beddington, half the approximate £10,000 cost of which was provided by the government and a quarter by the new London Borough of Sutton. To cut costs the cadets decorated the interior of the building themselves and concreted a parade ground. They moved into their new premises in October 1967. The building that accommodates a Play Group also serves as the meeting-place of a local branch of the British Legion.

350 Air Training Corps formed in February 1941, a merger of 448 Squadron with 350, occupies a newly rebuilt (c.2008-9) building in the same southwest corner of the former Orphanage playground.

## **1st Beddington Scout Group**

The 1st Beddington Scout Group, the Headquarters of which are in Guy Road, began in 1911 four years after the first scout camp on Brownsea Island and just three years after Baden Powell published his 'Scouting for Boys' that popularised the newly founded Scout movement. Officially registered on the May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1920, the 1st Beddington therefore held the laurels as being the oldest Scout Group in the District.



When the group first met they held their meetings in the ex-army hut known as the Beddington Social Club that stands beside the Village Hall. For a time they also met in the Rectory Lane Parish Hall. They had no equipment or means of storing any though money was raised and tents purchased enabling the boys to go to their first camp. The problem of storage was subsequently overcome by obtaining permission from the Urban District Council to use the vacant public air-raid shelter in Queen Elizabeth's Walk. The situation was not ideal however and a decision was made to raise funds and obtain a hall for their own use. Enquiries were made with the council and negotiations conducted through Mrs. Banks (who later became their first President) at which time the piece of ground in Guy Road was offered to them for £40 provided they fenced it in and kept the ground in good order pending the building of the hall.

The site had been excavated as a sandpit and infilled with waste products from local factories and wartime debris. During the 1920s graphite from the British Pencil Co. in Mill Lane, Carshalton was brought to the site and dumped often steaming hot from the manufacturing process, much of which remains just beneath the surface. It was because of this dumping that at the time the ground could not be used for building houses and why the hall had to be built on a twelve-inch concrete raft.

The land was acquired in 1954 but it was not until some years later that sufficient funds were available to start building. In view of the financial situation of the Group it was decided to build an 'at cost' structure similar to an open barn with the sides being bricked in as funds became available. At that time no kitchen or toilets were included neither were there any extensions for storage. In 1957 the boys took over their new hall with no heating or lighting and only a rough concrete floor with bare brick walls but it was their own headquarters. Within the first couple of years one of the Senior Scouts (then called Rovers) professionally installed lighting and heat; the toilets were added in 1959 with the aid of £150 as a grant from the Surrey County Council towards the total cost of £600. To enable this work to be done a mortgage was raised on the land and buildings in the sum of £900.

Part of the area acquired at the outset was that upon which the two chalet-like semi-detached houses numbered 22A and 24A Guy Road were later built. As it was not being fully used by the boys, in 1961 it was decided to sell this land to a developer and with the proceeds redeem the mortgage, pay for the laying of the parquet wood floor and add gas heaters. In addition there was a surplus of £1,000 to be held in Trust by the Group. In 1963 the wooded strip of land by The Brandries was donated to them enabling them to completely fence their boundaries though Dutch elm disease struck the mature trees along this strip of land that led to their being felled in 1972.

The internal walls of the hall formerly of painted brickwork were subsequently panelled and a garage built next to the hall to house a van purchased in 1969. In 1998 owing to problems with the floor, for a period the building became untenable during which time the group met in the Village Hall. During the years however the scout hall has not only been used by members of the scouting movement, but at various times by the Baptist Church, Baby Clinic, Luncheon Club, the Christadelphians, a Senior Citizens Club, Slimming Group and a Karate Club, a building very much at the heart of the wider community. The

1st Beddington that recently merged with the Sutton District have, for many years run an active group of Beavers and Cub Scouts.

The Guide Movement came into being following when, on the first Saturday in September 1909, a few groups of determined girls ‘gatecrashed’ the first Boy Scout Rally at Crystal Palace and demanded “something for the girls”. Just months later the movement was formed. At the time of going to press no further information relating to the formation of local groups has come to hand.

### **Beddington Sixty Plus Club**

It was shortly after the Village Hall passed from the church to a local management committee in 1993 that this Club was formed to provide facilities for recreation and leisure time activities in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Members meet in the hall of a Thursday afternoon.

### **Beddington Social Club**

In response to the increasing demand for use of the Village Hall and its amenities, members of the Beddington Social Club (formerly the Beddington Working Men’s Club, formed in 1919), having sought Parochial Church Council permission, purchased and erected an ex-army hut between the village hall and the mill stream. Owing to the rector being indisposed, it was opened by the curate the Rev. Fred. Bowyer on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1922. The timber clad building that had cost members £227 6s 7d. to purchase and erect was later extended by the addition of a second hut in front of the old, though the earlier part having fallen into disuse and damaged by fire was demolished during the summer of 2002. The Social Club, now a long established snooker club (because of limited facilities with a restricted membership) have been playing in the Croydon Services League since 1926.

There were however two other men’s clubs in the village during the earlier years of the twentieth century. One met in the hall adjacent to the ‘White Posts’ Tea Rooms presided over by Major H. Skipp, and another on the upper floor of what was formerly the old stable and storage building attached to the brickworks behind the houses in Guy Road.

### **Beddington Evening Townswomen’s Guild**

The Townswomen’s Guild had its roots in the suffragette movement in 1865 when a group of women joined together to press for equal franchise. When in 1928 after a second Act of Parliament was passed that gave all men and women over the age of 21 the vote, the movement was formed to educate women in the principles of good citizenship and to broaden their knowledge and experience of life. Townswomen is still committed to achieving equal status for women and fights nationally on many issues which affect women and men alike. Each group meets regularly regardless of politics, race, age, religion or circumstance to exchange ideas, develop new skills and interests, lobby on various issues and, above all, have fun.

The Beddington Evening Townswomen's Guild was formed in November 1953 in St. Mary's Memorial Church Hall, Rectory Lane. When the building was sold to a developer, after a very short period of meeting at Holy Trinity Church Hall, the Guild moved to the Guide Hall on Wallington Green where they continue to meet on the second Tuesday evening of each month. The Guild have a number of sub-sections including Rambling; Scrabble; Lunch Club and Outings, Tea and Chat and a very active Drama and Entertainment Group led by Shirley Ruthen.

An Afternoon Townswomen's Guild group, a separate entity whose members preferred to meet during the day at the Memorial Hall, for a time met in the Guide Hall but later moved to St. Mary's Church Centre. They disbanded in December 2010.



*Members of St. Mary's Youth Fellowship gather for a ramble in typically British summer weather on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 1956.*

## **St. Mary's Youth Fellowship**

St. Mary's Youth Fellowship (founded in 1942) met three times a week in the evenings in the Memorial Church Hall, Rectory Lane. Members of the Fellowship arranged their own activities and once a month would meet at a private house for a Musical Evening when LP records would be played and classical music discussed - meetings that took place regardless of Second World War air raids. Other popular activities were rambles, cycle-rides and collecting jumble for various good causes. After some thirty years or so of its existence the Fellowship ceased to exist during the 1970s.

## Wandle Fishery Association

The Association was founded in 1890. From December 1897, on their behalf the Rev. Thomas Bentham hired the fishing rights in the stream flowing through the Orphanage grounds. Having already hired the right to fish in the park, as there were then effectively no trout remaining in the river, the fishing club re-stocked the water. They created a door in the wall near where the water flowed out of the garden into the Bridges property (the area known as The Wilderness, later the hockey pitches) to gain access while preserving the privacy of the girls. This may well be the bricked-up doorway that can still be seen adjacent to Mallinson Road. In 1902 they also had a 40ft. long by 2ft. wide ditch dug for the purpose of allowing the fish to shelter from the floodwater on the understanding that both would be reinstated at the end of the tenancy. This was relinquished on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1907.



*The Wandle looking east from The Grange towards St. Mary's Church from Alfred Smee's My Garden, 1872.*

## FAMILIES AND PERSONALITIES

### **The Baring Family of ‘Brandries Hill House’**

The Baring family originated as low churchmen in northern Germany. It was Francis Baring's father John, a wool merchant who founded the family fortunes when in 1717 he came to England and settled in Exeter, the then centre of the wool industry. He and his English wife Elizabeth Vowler, the daughter of a merchant (who brought with her a £20,000 dowry, a considerable sum in the first half of the eighteenth century) had five children, four sons and a daughter one of whom was Francis (b.1740). On her husband's death though technically the two eldest boys John (b.1730) and Thomas (b.1733) were in charge of the business, they were yet too young to take over responsibility so Elizabeth assumed that mantle with such success that by the time she died in 1766 the family fortunes had almost doubled to £70,000.

It was in 1762 Francis Baring, heralded by Lord Erskine as the first merchant of Europe, established Baring's Bank. The oldest merchant bank in the City of London, it was originally a merchant house dealing chiefly with the wool trade. Banking for overseas customers emerged as a major part of the business sometime before 1800. No doubt, much of this overseas business came by way of the East India Company of which Baring was Chairman and his son-in-law Charles Wall a Director. So formidable was the reputation of the Barings by the early nineteenth century that Louis XVIII's prime minister was reputed to have exclaimed, "there are six great powers in Europe: England, France, Prussia, Austria, Russia and Baring Brothers".

Sir Francis (1740-1810) described as serious and as one who commanded respect... with thoughts that were clear and their exposition invariably lucid was physically small and sharp-featured and a little deaf. He was a loving and conscientious father who never ceased to concern himself with his children's welfare... with patently sincere affection. He married Harriet Herring (d.1804), daughter and co-heir of William Herring of Croydon who brought a £12,000 fortune with her. Harriet on the other hand had a sociable nature and never missed a party if she could help it. She was also described as being a vain and worldly, fine woman whose life was devoted to fashionable society. Her own receptions were said to be the most brilliant in town though her husband was seldom among those present, preferring the more tranquil enjoyment of a domestic circle to those gay but promiscuous assemblies.

In the years after their marriage in 1767 Francis and Harriet had ten children, five sons and five daughters for the most part (until 1793) brought up above the offices of the bank in Mincing Lane in the City of London. Of their five sons Thomas, the eldest (b.1772), served in the East India Company until 1801 and Alexander (b.1774) an assiduous young man began his career at Hope and Co., Amsterdam before subsequently removing to America. Henry (b.1776) became a passionate but also successful gambler, a popular figure prominent in all the London clubs; William (b.1779) who did not keep good health and died in 1820, and finally George, the youngest son (b.1781), who as did Henry for a

time worked in the East. He was described as “a raffish figure that became a ranting preacher of a wild sect” and who in 1827, was declared bankrupt.

Francis Baring (1740-1810) became a Baronet on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1793 whilst living at ‘Brandries Hill House’ in Beddington. His coming here in 1790 was also the year of a particularly happy family occasion, the marriage of two of his daughters at St. Mary’s on the September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1790. Harriet married Charles Wall (d.1815, of the Parish of All Hallows, London Wall) a partner in Baring’s Bank, and Maria married Richard Stainforth, also of London. In 1796 another daughter, Dorothy married Peter Labouchère a Frenchman who was a Partner of Hope & Co, also at Beddington. He is described as “one of the most talented bankers of his generation”. Francis Baring left the district for the Manor House, Lee near Blackheath, Kent a property he had acquired by auction in the August of that same year. A notebook in the Baring Archive housed in their former home now the Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre, shows Baring spent some £2,400 on rooms at Beddington. Unfortunately no other details are given. The Baring connection with the village was not entirely severed for their daughter Harriet and son-in-law Charles Wall lived in the house for another twelve years until 1809. Their five-month-old nephew Charles Labouchère was also buried at Beddington on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1800 following the adverse reaction to a smallpox inoculation. It would appear that the Baring family retained a particular affection for the area, as another daughter Frances was married here in 1806 to Thomas Kemp of Kempton, Brighton.

During his lifetime, Sir Francis is said to have made £7m. fortune. One can only speculate therefore as to whether the stress arising from his association with the wealthy banker Abraham Goldsmid of ‘Morden Lodge’ and the failure of the massive financial governmental transaction in which they were both involved contributed to his death in 1810. Later that same year Goldsmid, having crossed the bridge from his gardens into that part of Morden Hall known as ‘The Wilderness’, shot himself. Sir Francis Baring left an estate valued at £625,000.

## **Elizabeth Belville**

Known as the ‘Greenwich Time Lady’, Elizabeth Ruth Naomi Belville was described as “a businesswoman from London” who from about 1933 until her death aged 89 in December 1943, lived at 115 Plough Lane, Beddington. She, her mother and father, John Henry Belville, sold people the time. Her father created the business for 200 clients in 1836. Each morning he went to Greenwich Observatory and set his watch to Greenwich Mean Time. He would then set off in his buggy and would set the clocks correctly for clients subscribed to the service and sold the time to others by letting them look at his watch.

Her father continued this service until his death in 1856. His widow, Maria, was granted the privilege of carrying on the work as a means of livelihood and continued the business until her retirement in 1892 after which Elizabeth took over. She continued the business up until 1940, by which time the Second World War had started. She was in her eighties when she retired and at the age of 86 was still able to journey to the Observatory by 9am. On her death, the watch the family used was left to the London Clockmakers Company.

## **Rev. Thomas Bentham**

Rev. Thomas Bentham then of Whitgift Grammar School, formerly Assistant Curate of St. Mary's 1890-1904, was the author of a 'History of Beddington' in 1923. He died in 1937 aged 81 and is buried in St. Mary's churchyard.

## **The Bridges Family of Beddington House and Ewell**

In 1754, Alexander Bridges of Ewell House, Ewell (whose descendants came from Lindfield in Sussex) was granted a licence for the manufacture of gunpowder utilising the water of the Hogsmill stream as a source of power. When he died in 1781 the property passed to his son (the fifth Alexander Bridges) but when the son unexpectedly died in 1798 the mills devolved upon the young Henry Bridges (later Sir Henry of Beddington) then a twelve year old boy, held in trust until his coming of age by his two uncles Robert and John Bridges.

In view of the times in which they lived the manufacture of gunpowder proved to be an extremely lucrative business. The family fortune was greatly enhanced when (according to family tradition), powder made in their mills ran the blockade at great risk (but with much profit) during the American War of Independence (1775-81), the American Civil War (1861-65) as well as the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). Though worked by a tenant during which time the quality of the gunpowder is said to have deteriorated, the mills remained in Bridges ownership until about 1875.

**Sir Henry Bridges (1786-1861)** the heir to his father's fortune married Frances the daughter of General William Tomlies Dalrymple of 'Chessington Hall' at Ewell in 1808. Probably upon marriage they lived at 'Woodcote House' in Epsom where their third son Alexander Henry was born. They had five children - twins born in 1810 (William Henry who died in 1849 and Charles Henry who died at or soon after birth), Alexander (1811), a daughter Fanny (1815) who married John Duff Dingwall at Hanover Square in 1837, and James Henry (1816) who following a career in the navy died at Calcutta, India in 1852 where he was buried.

In 1813-14, Sir Henry and family moved to Beddington where they were to reside for the next forty-eight years. Almost as soon as they acquired Beddington House work of improvement and decoration with Coade stone under the direction of the architect and surveyor James Medland began.

Knighted by George III in 1813, Sir Henry and Lady Frances enjoyed a long and happy association with Beddington. During this period they also spent a considerable amount of time at their Scottish estate 'Federate' at Bonnykelly, Aberdeenshire and would often drive from Beddington to their estate 'Langshott Manor' (a sixteenth century timber framed Elizabethan manor house near Horley) for the shooting. Sir Henry Bridges was well known in Surrey and appointed Deputy-Lieutenant for the county. Although the family were no longer involved in the production of gunpowder the house and adjoining land at Ewell was retained for their use. In 1878, the Rev. W. Bridges was living in Avenue House until it was enlarged and re-named 'Ewell Court' to receive Sir Henry's

grandson, John Henry Bridges and his bride the former Miss Edith Tritton following their marriage at Beddington in 1879.

Lady Frances died at Beddington House on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1859 aged seventy-three and Sir Henry on the October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1861 at the age of seventy-five. A bronze plaque in the church commemorates their residence of almost fifty years in Beddington and of their subsequent burial in the family tomb in the old parish churchyard in Ewell. The estates passed to their only surviving son, Alexander Henry.

**Rev. Alexander Henry Bridges (1811-1891)** was born at Epsom on the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1811 and with his parents came to Beddington in his infancy. His early education was at home under the guidance of a private tutor but in 1824, at about the age of twelve he went to Winchester to further his education. Aged eighteen he went up to Oriel College Oxford from where in 1835 he graduated with a Classics B.A. Hons. Degree. Whilst there he met with members of a group known as the Oxford School of Churchmen (or the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement); Keble, Wilberforce, Newman, Hugh James, Rose and others) who advocated the restoration of the mediaeval form of worship placing greater emphasis on spirituality centred on Holy Communion.

In 1836 he was ordained into the Ministry by the Bishop of London and worked for about two years as a Curate at Spitalfields before in 1838 being appointed as Curate to Beddington under the then rector the Rev. Dr. Ferrers. In 1841 at the age of thirty he was appointed Vicar of St. Mary's, Horsham, Sussex where he was to minister for the next seventeen years. While at Horsham he was responsible for improving and enlarging the church including at his own expense the addition of a spire, a gift to his former parish upon his being appointed Perpetual Curate of Southwater (near Horsham) an office he held for some six years. Whilst there his father Sir Henry Bridges purchased the right of the next presentation to the living at Beddington previously held by a Mr. Raincock who had purchased it from the Carew's for £8,700 during the lifetime of the Rev. Hamilton. It was shortly after James Hamilton died that the advowson was sold to Sir Henry for £17,000. Alexander became Rector of Beddington in November 1864 three years after the death of his father and upon the death of the then incumbent Dr. William Marsh. The living was worth £1,400 per annum. In 1873 he was made Honorary Canon of Winchester and that same year, (until 1889), appointed Rural Dean of Beddington.

Alexander Henry Bridges married Caroline Hodgson at All Saints Church, Norwood on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1848. She was the daughter of Sir Christopher Hodgson a retired solicitor who had held various administrative posts within the Church of England. Alexander has been described as "a dignified man of above middle height, slightly built, balding, and with a grave almost grim intellectual face though he exhibited a dry sense of humour". He and Caroline had two children, Mary Anne born in 1851 (who died in July 1869) and John Henry born a year after his sister at Horsham in March 1852. Mrs. Bridges "a simple, kindly soul and in later life of a matronly figure", died in January 1896 at the age of eighty-two having survived her husband by some five years.

The Rev. Bridges was a major employer in Beddington both of domestic, outdoor staff and of the artisans he employed to beautify the church. He brought with him a period of



change to St. Mary's, and under his influence Beddington was to become a focal point of interest. He raised the standard of the services and personally employed Mr. G.C. Burry, a Professor of Music of Park Road, Wallington as organist and choirmaster likewise to raise the standard of music. People reputedly flocked to the church to attend the services. Though he had diverse interests, he remained primarily a clergyman who with the assistance of a team of curates officiated at services, visited the sick and afflicted while in turn taking the services at Beddington Corner and Bandon Hill churches. He also provided a Workingman's Club as a place of recreation for those working in the numerous industries that thrived by the Wandle at Beddington Corner.

Though he was reputedly a good employer, he did not enjoy general popularity possibly because of the combination of the power of his great wealth and his somewhat autocratic nature. He overcame whatever obstacles presented themselves, especially when it came to the controversial beautification of the church at which time to pay for the work undertaken he reputedly mortgaged the church rate without a faculty allowing him to do so. This earned him a great amount of unpopularity among many of his parishioners. It would be difficult however to calculate the amount of his own fortune he spent on the church and its surroundings. He acquired the parkland around Carew Manor from the property speculator who had purchased it at the time of the Carew sale and donated an acre for an extension to the church burial ground. Following the death of his elder brother and that of his father, he became Lord of the Manor and reputedly a millionaire, and though he kept up great state at Beddington House and entertained many church dignitaries, he reputedly remained accessible to all. The children of both the Sunday and Day (National) schools enjoyed his hospitality having their annual treat in the grounds of 'Beddington House' and he did much for the elderly living in the St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses. He also provided sustenance to the passer-by should they be in need.

As a young man he was an able cricketer, for three years representing Winchester in their Eleven at Lords, and had an ongoing interest in the sport. He provided the land and pavilion for the Beddington Cricket and Archery Club of which he was President and to whom he gave the field at the side of the new ground when in 1871 a new private ground was laid out; in 1880 he supported the establishment of a Lawn Tennis Club. The park he placed at the disposal of the Oddfellow's, the Forester's and others for summer Galas, and he was Patron of the Archery Club of which his son John Henry Bridges was secretary.

Canon Bridges took great pleasure in his extensive library as well as in music, and played the cello, owning the celebrated instrument 'The King' by Amati who was an acknowledged master in the art of instrument making, the master of Stradivarius. On several occasions he took part in concerts conducted by his organist Mr. Burry. The last in which he performed in the orchestra was 'The Messiah' given in the dining hall at 'Carshalton House' when his friend Dr. W.H. Stone played the clarinet. Kenneth Bond Canon Bridges great-grandson speaking in 1989, recalled the cello (originally made for the Royal Chapel at Versailles) as having a coat-of-arms on the back but of its being unplayable and in great need of restoration. As to what was its ultimate fate he did not know; the last he knew of it was that for a long time it lay in a warehouse in Aberdeen.

Though domiciled at Beddington, he retained a great interest not only in the Scottish estate 'Federate' to which they were regular visitors, but also to 'Langshott Manor' (the family connection with which commenced in 1671 and ended in the early twentieth century) and greatly enlarged the latter by purchases from Christ's Hospital and others. He restored and beautified that ancient house, erected Home Farm buildings, made roads and a good many other improvements to the property. He would go there for the pheasant shooting and the relaxation a break away from Beddington would afford. He also owned the Manor of Horn in the parish of Fetcham, three properties in London, Inworth Hall, farmlands etc. in the parishes of Kelvedon and Inworth and elsewhere in Essex, property at Ewell, Horsham, Leatherhead, Reigate, Redhill and Guildford, and a steam flour mill in the city of Rosario de Santa, Argentina.

He travelled widely in Europe, had a particular affection for Italy where he acquired statuary for his conservatories and the garden at 'Beddington House'. Towards the end of his life, though not enjoying good health (at which time his regular attendance at services were curtailed), in mid-August 1891 he was well enough to enjoy the hospitality of Alfred and Mrs. Smee in the gardens of 'The Grange'. The following day he attended church but two days later whilst at home he suffered a stroke from which he never fully recovered. Two months later in his 80<sup>th</sup> year, on the October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1891 he died.

Rev. Bridges coffin was borne from his home on an open Washington car drawn by four horses, followed by a number of coaches and carriages and about forty of his workmen on foot. Though he lived midst great opulence at his home, he was buried in a simple grave in the northwest part of the churchyard beside that of his daughter Mary. Such was the interest occasioned by his burial a barrier had been placed on the south side of the church behind which some two to three hundred people were gathered to pay their respects, among them some forty of the children from the Female Orphanage of which the rector was chaplain. His long and fulfilled lifetime all but paralleled that of Queen Victoria - he lived during the greatest years of her reign and saw Britain as a world power almost unequalled. His personal estate at the time of his death was £342,098.15.4.

**John Henry Bridges M.A., J.P. (1852-1925)** as the only surviving child inherited the Beddington House estate and the other family holdings on the death of his father in 1891. Possessed of a considerable fortune in his own right and in that of his wife (the daughter of Henry Tritton an extremely wealthy banker), upon the death of his parents he became "enormously rich" but is said to have somehow managed to dispose of much of that fortune during his lifetime.

As his father, he too was educated at Winchester (1865-71) and Oriel College, Oxford (1871-75) where he gained a Master of Arts degree. He was a sportsman of considerable ability; as a footballer, he captained the Oxford University Association team in 1874; he represented both Winchester and Oriel and the Surrey County Eleven playing cricket, and Beddington with his own Eleven. Before his marriage and departure for Ewell, throughout the summer matches were played regularly and some of the best cricketers of the time were seen on the private ground laid out by his father in Beddington Park. He was also a fine bowman and won the Archery Open Championship in 1905.

Festivity was the order of the day when two great Beddington houses, that of the Tritton's and the Bridges were united with the marriage of John Henry to Edith Isabella Tritton, the youngest child of the late Henry Tritton, Banker of 54 Lombard Street and of 'Wandle Court', Beddington. Garden parties, archery meetings and cricket matches particularly the latter, succeeded each other with great regularity for some time prior to the event. As the day itself Wednesday January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1879 drew near, as so many of the village folk were connected with one or other of the families, triumphal arches were erected along the bridal route and groups of well-wishers gathered to watch them pass. Canon Bridges performed the ceremony assisted by Canon Hodgson, Vicar of Horsham and a family friend the Rev. Fox-Lambert read the Homily.

While about fifty guests were enjoying the wedding reception held at Wandle Court, the church bell ringers and friends dined at the Duke's Head and throughout the day the organist entertained the choir at his residence. The celebrations were enjoyed by the employees in the garden of Beddington House who sat down to a dinner presided over by Mr. Penfold; the labourers in the park had dinner served in the cricket pavilion while the residents of the almshouses were given a special tea. In the evening, the servants, after no doubt an exhausting day held their own celebratory dance. The young couple left on their honeymoon tour of the continent and on their return went to live at 'Ewell Court'; change must have come over Beddington House with an all-pervading quietness now in the long passageways.

Though in 1879 John Henry Bridges and his wife had moved away from Beddington, such was their ongoing close connection with the area that even having left the district some twenty-two years previously, annually he was re-elected President of both the Archery and Lawn Tennis Society and the Beddington Cricket Club. On the death of his father in 1891 he succeeded to the title 'Lord of the Manor' and Patron of the Living of St. Mary's. He was also Vice-President of the Royal Female Orphanage. He held a Commission in the Middlesex Yeomanry Cavalry and was a member of the Royal Company of Archers, King's Bodyguard for Scotland.

As did his parents, his family (of six sons and three daughters) also spent a good deal of their time between their home in Ewell and the Aberdeenshire estate. He was "passionately interested" in his herd of pedigree Aberdeen Angus cattle that he founded at Langshott in 1876 being the first to introduce the breed into England and which he exported all over the world. Of all the Bridges' who have owned Langshott, he probably resided there the most, and though he disposed of Beddington House at some time between about 1898 and 1901 Langshott remained in his possession until sold in 1921.

Edith Bridges died on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1907 aged of fifty-two and was buried at Ewell. In 1909, her husband married for a second time, to Dorothy Mary Jacobs. John Henry Bridges died at Eastbourne (where he was then resident) on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1925 aged seventy-two and was buried at Ewell beside his first wife.

## **Bristow / Collyer-Bristow Family of Beddington Place**

**The Bristow family.** The first of the Bristow family to come to Beddington was William (baptised at Farnham in November 1733). By 1780, he was the owner/occupier of a large, as yet unidentified house probably that which stood to the east of The Plough in Croydon Road, in 1840 occupied by Ann, the widow of John Williams Bristow. He owned a smaller dwelling occupied by George Priest and was tenant of one of the lesser Carew farms (rent £68 p.a.) and other land in Beddington. From 1788 William also leased land formerly tenanted by John Durand (rent £340 p.a.) the largest of the farms administered for the Carew Estates by William Pellatt. William Bristow married Catherine Priest (b.1738) the daughter of John and Jane Priest of Beddington. William Bristow Jnr. (1761-1858) and John Williams Bristow (1759-1831) subsequently joined him, both of whom became tenant farmers and in time were to acquire land in their own right to become among the most influential in Beddington.

By 1820, John Williams Bristow had become one of the major landowners in Beddington. He owned the land and buildings in the triangle formed by Guy Road, Whelan Way and the river. He also owned the nearby Harrow Beer House off Church Passage located between Church Lane and Malthouse Row (now Whelan Way), Pit House by the river in Hilliers Lane the site now occupied by the 'Old Ford House' flats, and the area known today as Manatee Place at the Croydon Road/Hilliers Lane junction. Other property included 'Beddington Cottage' a house that stood in Croydon Road opposite Sandhills, a mansion, farm houses and buildings along with a great swathe of land between The Plough and Payne's on the south side of Croydon Road, the fields of which were later to be dissected by the railway.

In 1840 described by the Tithe Commissioners as a mansion then owned by Ann, the widow of John Williams Bristow, the original house [Beddington Place?] stood immediately on the south side of, and facing Croydon Road, shown on both Rocque's map of 1763 and the Enclosure map of 1820. It stood to the front of what would appear to have been a long narrow strip of buildings taken to be the stables and coach-house that lay behind a garden area. What is thought might well have been a rectangular fishpond, lay slightly to the east (or Croydon) side of the mansion. At some time, probably after her death in 1846, the building was demolished and 'Beddington Place' of which there are photographs was built at some distance in from the road on an angle to the former house. The stables were retained and the outline of the pond softened.

**Collyer-Bristow family.** On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1909, the Wallington and Carshalton Advertiser announced the death on the 16<sup>th</sup> at the age of eighty-three of Andrew Alfred Collyer-Bristow. After a period of considerably in excess of fifty years residence in the area, he was described as one of Beddington's "elder statesmen" and almost the last of a generation that knew Beddington before its natural beauty was touched by the speculative builder. His death and that of his sister Emily Anne in 1923 all but severed a family link with Beddington that had begun at least during the mid-eighteenth century.

Andrew Alfred was the eldest son of Andrew Collyer-Bristow described as "a gentleman and fund holder" who had been born at Farnham on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1794. At Christmas

1842, the father took a twenty-one year lease on 'Riverside' in Bridges Lane, a house he subsequently purchased. He died there in December 1861. His son Andrew Alfred Collyer-Bristow, born in Farnham in 1826, having at first lived at Riverside acquired 'Beddington Place' described as being a fine old house that stood in an estate of about 53 acres at some time after the death of Ann Bristow in 1846. He was a solicitor by profession and was the senior partner in the firm of Collyer-Bristow, Curtis, Booth, Birks and Langley that had been in existence for one hundred and sixty years. Admitted as a solicitor in 1848 he became the senior partner in 1871. He was married to Elizabeth Farquar Crowe of Epsom in 1858. She died 1872 aged thirty-four and the following year he married for a second time, to Augusta Grace Lake (b.1850). When he died in 1909 Andrew Alfred Collyer-Bristow left the then considerable estate valued at £103,255 gross.

The Collyer and Bristow families both originated in the Farnham area of Surrey. The Bristow's at least were diverse in their occupations ranging from gentleman to glovers and bankers, brewers, inn-keepers, barbers, drapers, wool merchants and coach proprietors. The family and its immediate connections illustrate well the custom of naming children with the surnames of others, often Godparents. Within a few decades we come across Andrew Collyer, Henry Bradley, Andrew Bristow, Collyer Bristow, Bristow Bradley, Bristow Collyer, Andrew Collyer-Bristow and Andrew Alfred Collyer-Bristow. Some of these had sons of the same name. Links in the chain were no doubt the result too of such marriages as that of William Bristow to Catherine Priest at Beddington in June 1756 and of Elizabeth Collyer to William Bristow of Beddington in 1789. In 1849 their son Bristow Collyer formed a partnership with Francis Nalder (d.1857) and took over the Croydon Brewery in the name of Nalder and Collyer. Bristow Collyer died in 1870 after which the Nalder family became the sole owners of the brewery.

### **Francis G. Bryant of Anam**

A house located at 247 Croydon Road was for many years the home of Francis G. Bryant and his wife. Until his retirement on his 70th birthday in 1957 he was Chairman and Managing Director of A. R. Mowbray and Co. Ltd., Church Booksellers and Ecclesiastical Publishers. Born in Croydon and educated at Whitgift Middle School, Mr. Bryant qualified as an Incorporated Accountant with Honours in 1913 two years after his marriage. From 1932 until 1945 he was a member of Church Assembly and Canterbury Diocesan Conference and a Churchwarden at St. Mary's for a great many years from 1945. In 1934 he was elected to the Beddington and Wallington local council; was an Alderman from 1946 to 1956 and Mayor in 1941-42 and again in 1954-55. He became a member of Surrey County Council in 1955. Upon his retirement he acquired a plot of land adjacent to Dudley House where he had the bungalow (formerly No. 300A Croydon Road) built. This house was demolished when the second phase of Bloxworth Close was implemented.

### **The Carew Family of Beddington Park**

One of the many branches of the Carew family origins owned the Beddington Park estate for about five hundred years from the mid-fourteenth until the mid-nineteenth century. The Carews descended from Walter son of Other a Saxon lord who served both Edward the Confessor and William I Constable of Windsor Castle and Keeper of the Forest, and

held estates in Surrey and a mansion at Stanwell in Middlesex. One of the family married a South Wales Princess and through her inherited Caereu Castle a fortress in Pembrokeshire at the landward end of Milford Haven. By the early twelfth century, the family had become marcher lords in the county.

The first of the Carew family to be associated with Beddington was a priest named William de Carreu the third son of Sir Nicholas, Baron Carreu of Moulsoford in Wales. William came to Beddington as chaplain to the Free Portion of Beddington Parish in 1333, appointed by Sir Thomas Huscarle, Lord of the Manor who along with his wife Lucy had a licence for an oratory in their manor-house at Beddington. Although a priest, William was also a fugitive. Arising from a family dispute, he and his elder brother Thomas were reputedly involved in a raid at Manobier Castle at which time a servant was killed. Both were outlawed when in 1331 they failed to present themselves at court for trial. Two years later William took the Beddington appointment. He is buried in St. Mary's though the location of his grave is unknown.

**Nicholas de Carreu (I) (-1390)** the founder of the Beddington line is of ambiguous ancestry but thought to be the son of Sir Nicholas of Moulsoford, Oxfordshire. His father was a younger son descended from the Pembrokeshire Carews. Nicholas is first recorded as working with William Carew in 1348 and it is thought he perhaps came to Beddington at around this time. According to a document of the mid-fifteenth century prepared later for the Iwardby claim, in 1350 Nicholas appears to have acquired part of Huscarles manor and on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1352, William and Nicholas Carew paid five marks to King Edward III for a licence to lease the manor of Home Beddington for their lifetime from Lucy Huscarle's parents, Lord and Lady Willoughby at an annual rent of twenty marks.

Nicholas as a younger son inherited little or no property, and though of a family of note (his grandfather was Baron Carreu of Moulsoford) he had to make his own fortune. He had survived the Black Death in 1349 at which time a third of the population died and was probably taking advantage of the economic depression that ensued. It is thought that his first marriage was to the heiress of Thomas Malmaynes to whom at some time prior to 1350 his son Nicholas was born. In 1357, Nicholas married for a second time in what would appear to have been more a marriage of convenience as were many medieval upper class marriages, nearly always for money. His second wife Lucy was the widow of Sir Thomas Huscarle (his former patron). She had a life interest in Huscarl's manor and was also heiress to her father Sir Richard Willoughby (or Wyloughby). It was not until 1380-81 that the final legal rights and claims of the other heirs of Sir Thomas Huscarle were completely relinquished to Nicholas. In their entirety, the two Beddington manors then became united under a single owner.

In 1379 Freres Manor in Beddington and Wallington, formerly held by the Hospital of St. Thomas the Martyr at Southwark came to Nicholas Carew in exchange for land and buildings at Lambeth and Bermondsey. In time Nicholas I so consolidated and expanded his land holdings that when he died in 1390 he held not only the manors of Home Beddington, Huscarle, Carshalton and Norbury outright, he also had a life interest in the royal manor of Banstead. In Beddington, he listed a manor house, four watermills and fourteen acres of meadow along with one hundred acres of great wood along with other

property. He also had three hundred acres of arable and the same amount of pasture, a dove-house and rents bringing in £4 per annum. Norbury also had a manor house perhaps of little value, but one hundred acres of arable, three hundred of pasture and ten acres of meadow, and incoming rents. He also had interests in Woodmansterne, Nutfield and Chelsham in Surrey along with properties in Berkshire and Kent.

Nicholas Carew was Member of Parliament for Surrey in 1362. Since 1358 he had been in the King's service, and his friendship with the famous prince, John of Gaunt, helped with his advancement at court. He was Keeper of the Privy Seal from 1371 until 1377 (one of the major administrative offices in the mediaeval state) and became the King's esquire in 1371. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1375, Edward III granted him and his heirs the free-warren of his lands in Croydon, Beddington, Carshalton, Mitcham and Woodmansterne, and at Purle and Mullesford in Berkshire. The King also appointed him as one of the executors of his will, and he carried out this duty in 1377.

Wealthy in his own right, having made his own will only three years previously, Nicholas died on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1390 after having spent over fifty years in Beddington. He requested that upon his death thirteen poor men were to be clothed in black at his expense and were to hold thirteen torches at his burying. Five wax candles each weighing six pounds were to be placed on the altar of St. Mary's church. Sums of money were also to be given to various monastic houses so that masses might be said for his soul, while in the church at Beddington four fit chaplains, one of whom for ever, and the others for five years should pray for his and all other Christian souls there. He bequeathed forty shillings and twenty shillings to the rector and parish priest respectively, asked that his servants should be rewarded, made bequests to his two daughters and to his stepdaughter as well as leaving what was then a considerable sum of £20 to the building of the church. He likewise requested that he be buried between his brother John and the south door of the church but no memorial marks the grave of either. The Carew family however would dominate Beddington for the next four centuries.

**Sir Nicholas Carew (II) (c.1362-1432).** On the death of his father the second Nicholas became the new Lord of the Manor and was almost at once appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex for the year 1391. He served as Knight of the Shire in most of the Parliaments during the latter years of Richard II's reign and in 1400, under Henry IV he again became Sheriff at which time he was responsible for law and order and the administration of justice within the county; one of the oldest offices of government. He presided over the Shire Courts held twice a year at Guildford and Lewes, hearing criminal cases in his own court and supervised the election of Knights of the Shire to represent the counties in Parliament. He consolidated the estate from the profits of this royal service and acquired the manor of Bandon.

As did his father, Nicholas married twice, firstly to Isabella Delamare and later to Mercia Heyme (whose second husband Henry Sever, D.D., in his will of 1471 ordered that a memorial service for her to be observed for ever in Merton College, Oxford). Now located in the chancel of St. Mary's church are full-length brasses to this second Nicholas and Isabella his first wife (who died many years before him) and their son Thomas. Nicholas and Isabella are seen in secular costume, he in a high-collared tunic his feet resting on a

greyhound and his wife in a long gown wearing a horned headdress covered by a veil with a small dog at her feet. A traceried canopy surmounts both figures and at the corners are symbols of the four evangelists, the lion, eagle, calf and man.

In the church is a brass dated 1414, to Philippa Carew daughter of this same Nicholas and his second wife Mercia, who died while yet a young girl. She is depicted along with thirteen of her brothers and sisters all of whom seem to have died in infancy. Sir Nicholas Carew himself died at the age of seventy in 1432, "an old man and full of days". His son Nicholas who was born to Isabella his first wife succeeded him.

**Nicholas Carew (III) (c.1405-1458)** Born in about 1405, the third Nicholas married Margaret the daughter of Sir Roger Fiennes who bore him two sons, Nicholas and James. He was a Member of Parliament in 1439 and was three times Sheriff of the county; in 1440, 1444, and 1448. Living through years of national upheaval during the Wars of the Roses, he was pardoned on two occasions for his activities during that time, in 1446 and again in 1455 on the latter date when he well may have led a Surrey contingent to fight for the King at the first battle of St. Albans. Nicholas died in April 1458, at about the age of fifty-three, was buried at Beddington and succeeded by his eldest son.

**Nicholas Carew (IV) (1435-1466)** the fourth Nicholas Carew inherited the estates on the death of his father in 1458 at the age twenty-two. He had followed the family tradition of service to the crown as King's Sergeant, and in 1457 was made Constable of Southampton on a salary of £10 per year. During the course of his career, he was involved in litigation and was accused of treason by Edward IV but survived the accusation. He died in August 1466 aged only thirty leaving a widow Margaret, three young daughters, and a three-year-old son who inherited the estates.

**Nicholas Carew (V) (1463-)** little more than a baby when his father died, his mother Margaret was allowed to enjoy the profits of the estates on behalf of her son provided she would not re-marry without the consent of the King. In 1474 when Nicholas was aged eleven she did re-marry and though it is not known when her son died he did not live long enough to come into his inheritance.

At some time after 1474 therefore, the estates were taken over by the Crown and administered by Hugh Fenne and William Essex (both of whom were attorneys) pending an investigation as to who was the rightful heir when Nicholas's sisters laid claims to the estates, the eldest of whom, Sanctia, was married to Sir John Iwardby, Ann was then unmarried, and Elizabeth was the wife of Edward Iwardby. It would appear that the Iwardbys hoped to gain some of the Carews' estates through their wives. Arguments continued for about seven years but subsequently the court granted the estates to his uncle James, brother of the fourth Nicholas.

**James Carew (-1492)** It is not known when James Carew was named as his nephew's heir, if in fact it was during his lifetime. James laid the foundations of the family fortunes in the Tudor period by his marriage to Eleanor who was related through her mother to the Welles family; staunch Lancastrians and early supporters of Henry VII. She was also the



co-heiress of Lord Hoo and Lord Welles and was therefore of considerable fortune. James acquired a substantial amount of property property mainly in Lincolnshire.

James is referred to as having been a Sussex gentleman and seems to have preferred to live on his own estate in Sussex and not at the manor house at Beddington during his short period of ownership of it, perhaps because of the continuing dispute with the Iwardbys. It was also a turbulent period during the intrigues surrounding the Wars of the Roses, open conflict of which lasted between 1455 and 1485. He died on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1492 and his son Richard who was aged “twenty-three or more” succeeded to the estates.

**Sir Richard Carew (c.1469-1520)** In the year when on his first voyage of discovery Columbus visited the Americas, Richard inherited the estates, that were for a time still subject to claim by the Iwardby’s. In due course the decision was found to be in his favour and in 1483 his claim upheld. As a reward for his service in Henry VII’s army which in 1497 confronted a crowd of 15,000 angry Cornish rebels who had marched upon London to make protest about taxation, having met at Blackheath, and having distinguished himself during the ensuing battle, the King personally knighted Richard on the field. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1501, he was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex and later Governor of Calais. He was married to Malyn a daughter of Sir Robert Oxenbridge and widow of William Cheyney.

By now, the manor house at Beddington had probably fallen into disrepair. Since the death of the fourth Nicholas in 1466, the manor had been mostly in the Escheator of Surrey’s hands, and is unlikely that James Carew had any interest in it because of the dispute with the Iwardbys. Therefore in around 1500 Sir Richard commenced major rebuilding work on his home at Beddington. In March 1508 accounts submitted by his steward John Watte records a substantial building programme and the enlargement of the deer park at which time he is known to have spent £188 2s. 5d. – a fortune at the time. It is thought likely that he was responsible for the building of the great hall and its magnificent hammer-beam roof. The manor house would have no doubt remained largely unaltered until the ninth Nicholas again rebuilt it in about 1709.

Sir Richard died in 1520 and was the first of the family buried in the Carew Chapel. An impressive table tomb placed against the south wall is his memorial and that to his wife Dame Malyn who died in 1544 having survived both her husband and their only son.

**Sir Nicholas Carew (VI) (1490-1539)** at the age of twenty-five inherited the estates. Prior to his death Sir Richard had already settled Beddington, Wallington, Carshalton, Woodcote, Woodmansterne and Mitcham upon his son at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth the daughter of Sir Francis Bryan in 1514.

Although his father occupied only a modest position at court, Nicholas became one of a group of young men who became friends and part of Henry VIII’s intimate circle, all of whom were knighted and became Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber. His friendship with the King however was volatile. He was named as Joint Lieutenant of Calais with his father in 1509 the year Henry became King and he was knighted in 1517. He was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in November 1518 and again in 1528 and the

following year was sent on a six-month mission to Emperor Charles V at Bologna. Among the many honours bestowed upon him, Nicholas attended the King when Henry and Francis I the King of France met amid the pageantry and festivities on the Field of the Cloth of Gold set up not only to impress with its magnificence but with the serious intent of allying England and France. This meeting was held in the Val D'Oree, Guisnes on the borders of Calais (then under English control) in June 1520. Nicholas, (a star performer in the tournament) was appointed Master of the Horse in 1522, a post of great importance involving among other responsibilities the organising of transport whenever the court was transferring from one place to another.

Sir Nicholas and his wife entertained Henry VIII for a week at Beddington in February 1519 and again in February 1531, the latter date when Anne Boleyn a distant cousin of Nicholas well may have accompanied him. They would no doubt have passed some of their time hunting across the vast park that extended over a hundred acres; the 'common park' which ran continuous to Mitcham Common and Thornton Heath, all of which Nicholas owned; all of which Henry would have liked to have owned. By this time, Nicholas controlled much of the land from Streatham to Bletchingly in Surrey and with the later closure of Chertsey Abbey the manors of Sutton, Epsom, Coulsdon and Horley.

It was probably in the early 1530s that a superb iron lock Daniel Lysons describes as being attached to the main door of the great hall of 'Beddington Place' (one of the names by which the property was known over the centuries), was made. This extremely large and ornate lock measuring approximately  $8\frac{3}{4}$ ins. (22.5 cm.) in height, and about  $13\frac{1}{2}$ ins. (34.4cm) wide, shows the Tudor royal arms above two Tudor roses, and at the sides of the recess in which it slides appear the greyhound and dragon, supporters used by all the Tudor monarchs but especially by Henry VII and Henry VIII. Above, under a cabled arch is the knob of the keyhole cover catch in the form of a man's face. The gold leaf surface was applied later. The lock was almost certainly made by Henry Romaine of London the King's master locksmith who held a virtual monopoly of the supply of locks and other blacksmith's work to royal buildings until his death in 1533. The original lock is currently on display in the English Primary Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum and a replica can be seen on the door of the great hall at Hever Castle, Kent.

Anne Boleyn was crowned Queen in Westminster Abbey on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1533 at which time Nicholas Carew of Beddington was appointed her champion to ride fully armed at her coronation feast offering to give battle on her behalf to any who dared challenge her title. In 1536, he was admitted to the Order of the Garter. While Ann was in the Tower awaiting trial, Jane Seymour the future queen, 3<sup>rd</sup> consort of Henry VIII stayed with Sir Nicholas at Beddington before moving on to Hampton to be nearer the king. In 1537 along with three others, he took charge of the font when Prince Edward the long awaited male heir to the throne was christened. When Henry broke with the Catholic Church Nicholas appeared to have accepted the reformation but was ill at ease with the development. He was to become associated with a group of religiously conservative courtiers who supported Henry's first Queen Catherine and her daughter Mary, and was a key figure in plotting the downfall and execution of the one he had championed, the protestant Ann Boleyn.

Great was Nicholas's rise, and equally heavy his fall. Family tradition holds that it was an incautious, witty exchange of words during a game of bowls between Nicholas and Henry to which the latter took exception, but it went much deeper. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1538 Nicholas was arrested and charged with high treason as being an accomplice of the Marquis of Exeter and others in an alleged plot to dethrone Henry and place the catholic Cardinal Reginald Pole (Princess Mary's cousin) on the throne. Apart from becoming caught up with the intrigue and faction fighting at court however, there was an additional fact that was to seal his fate. In 1538 having purchased the manor of Cuddington near Cheam and having destroyed both the church and village, Henry had begun building the palace of Nonsuch. Being forfeit to the crown, by adding the Carew lands to those he already controlled, Henry could indulge his passion for hunting across vast tracts of countryside.

Nicholas at the age of about forty-nine, was beheaded on Tower Hill on the morning of March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1539 and was buried in the church of St. Botolph, Aldgate in the same tomb as Thomas Lord Darcy and others of his family who were related by marriage. A memorial tablet to Nicholas and his wife Elizabeth can be found in the church. Along with the children (four daughters and nine-year-old Francis), she was allowed to retain Wallington along with a group of Sussex manors. She died in 1546 not living long enough to see the estates subsequently restored to their son Francis. In 1539, after the execution of Sir Nicholas the house was put in the charge of Edmund Harvey and his wife Margaret. Their daughter Isabel (or Elizabeth) married Sir Humphrey Radcliffe (d.1566) who was knighted at the marriage of Henry VIII to Jane Seymour; was present at the baptism of Prince Edward and acted as a pallbearer at Queen Jane's funeral. After his marriage, Radcliffe settled in his wife's home here at Beddington before moving to the manor of Elstow, Bedfordshire made over to him by his father-in-law in 1553.

Three months after the execution of Sir Nicholas, in June 1539 the king stopped at Beddington while on his way to Hampton Court probably to survey his new acquisition and in 1541 held council here. The estates in Surrey were incorporated with Nonsuch, Oatlands and Hampton Court into the Honour of Hampton Court, each managed by a king's officer who acted as steward or bailiff. A clause inserted into the Act of Annexation gave some safeguard to holders of adjacent manors that were not incorporated. Though Elizabeth and the family had moved into Wallington, Lady Malyn, Nicholas's mother had continued to live in Beddington though it is not known where, probably in the building we refer to as 'The Portioner's House' located in what is now Beddington Park. Her grandson Charles Carew, an illegitimate son of Nicholas received the tithes due to the Portioner. She died in 1544 five years after the execution of her son Nicholas.

It appears to be little known that Princess Mary, later Queen Mary Tudor visited Beddington in June 1543 some years before the celebrated visits of her half-sister Queen Elizabeth I. She knew the area well having visited Croydon Palace on numerous well-documented occasions, the home of her mother Queen Catherine of Aragon following her divorce from Henry VIII in 1533. At the time of her visit, Mary was a young woman of twenty-seven; her place in succession to the throne had been restored and her father Henry VIII was to reign until his death in January 1547 some three and a half years later.

Princess Mary was probably then en-route to Richmond and would surely not have visited Beddington without seeing her supporter Nicholas's wife Elizabeth who was living nearby in Wallington. In August 1544 she again visited Beddington during a royal progress.

By 1547, the house was in the keeping of Sir Michael Stanhoppe. His Inventory of that year (the year of Henry VIII's death), describes the house as the "Guarderobe at the mann'r of Beddington" possibly by that time in use as a furniture store.

**Sir Francis Carew (I) (1530-1611)** Francis's mother died in or before 1546 when he was still a minor and legally impaired by his father's treason. Francis was restored legally in 1548 by private Act of Parliament. Five years after she succeeded to the throne in 1553 on the death of her half-brother Edward VI, seemingly repaying the debt for his father's catholic sympathies and support, with one insignificant exception Mary restored Beddington and the greater part of the estates to Francis. To consolidate and ensure his undisputed rights of repossession however he also went through a form of purchase from the Lord Chamberlain, Lord Darcy to whom Edward VI had granted the estates.

Sir Francis, knighted at some time prior to 1587 wisely avoided open involvement in the political intrigues of the times. Nor did he marry. From the summer of 1561, accompanied by his sister Ann he spent a year in France during which time his brother-in-law, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was English Ambassador in Paris. Whilst there, Francis, a dedicated horticulturist, probably studied gardens and garden lay out and was buying trees for his garden at Beddington along with plants for Elizabeth's minister William Cecil. By 1570 he was employing French gardeners and seems to have constructed various garden features at this time, creating at Beddington one of the finest gardens in Elizabethan England.

As a major Surrey landowner, Francis was also expected to play a full part in local government and was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in November 1567. Administration under the Tudors worked on the basis of local responsibilities, therefore the greater the possessions and the social standing the more was expected of the individual. Many significant landowners were appointed Justice of the Peace. Whereas an annual six days statute labour upon the roads of his parish was expected of the peasant, a Justice was expected to sit in judgement of and sentence wrong doers (apart from those committing a capital offence) and were completely responsible for the law and order within their own areas for which Sir Francis appointed an unpaid parish constable. His responsibilities also included the inspection and licensing of inns and innkeepers, they controlled local wages and market prices and if necessary issued 'licences to beg' whenever they thought the case merited such leniency. They were however empowered to order the flogging of masterless men and sturdy beggars who were capable of work. As a magistrate, Sir Francis was also responsible for maintaining roads and riverbanks and preparing the muster rolls of those eligible to serve in the county militia. In 1579 his park was kept (managed) by Elton and his birds by his fawkenor Thos. Chyney.

On August 4-5<sup>th</sup>, 1559 when nearing the end of a three week progress in Kent and Surrey, the first summer progress of her reign, en route from Eltham Palace to Nonsuch Queen Elizabeth I had dinner (a midday meal) at Beddington, the first of at least fifteen known

visits. She came from Nonsuch for a three day visit at which time the thirty-five rooms known to have been in the house (in 1562) would have been meticulously prepared, and the gardens seen to be at their best. There is an oft-repeated account of how Francis delayed the ripening of the fruit of a cherry tree for her coming, in 1599, by erecting a tent or a cover of canvas over the whole tree that was continually dampened with water and the sunlight excluded. Just prior to the visit, the cover was removed and the fruit allowed to ripen providing the queen with a dish of cherries a full month after all the other trees in England had ceased to bear. She came from Nonsuch for a further three-day visit in the same month almost to the day twelve months later. She stayed with Sir Francis Carew during the second half of September 1598 and again in mid-August 1600 that might well have been her last visit.

Though nothing now remains visible above ground, the garden Sir Francis created was unique in this country and one of the great gardens of the age that would appear to have been divided into several areas, as was usual in Tudor gardens. Accounts record three such divisions; the privy garden, the great garden and the orchard. Utilising the Wandle and its springs it had the most remarkable water features as well as fountains, the pressure for which was supplied by a pump driven by the river as opposed to the gravity driven fountains known of in other country estate gardens. Within the fountain were neatly made fishes, frogs etc. that with the movement of the water gave the impression they were alive. Other features included an oval fish-pond enclosed by trim hedges, a fig house, a training house, a dragon house within which was an animal with many heads with jets of water issuing forth, a mount house or summer house (thought to be a type of gazebo on a vantage point decorated with a painting of the Armada of 1588 containing a red and white marble table) under which was a grotto, a little house by the mount house, a bird house (probably an aviary) and a vinery, an orchard and the citrus grove.

The marriage of his niece Elizabeth (Bess) Throckmorton to Sir Walter Raleigh the great Elizabethan explorer and coloniser brought Francis in contact with a number of plants from the New World. There is a long-standing local tradition that the potato, tomatoes and tobacco were introduced into England by Raleigh and first grown at Beddington but this is thought to be unlikely as both the potato and tobacco were already known through the Spanish.

Most notable however was the grove of orange trees, along with some lemon and pomegranate trees he had planted in the open ground. Each autumn they were covered by a temporary wooden shed or sheds and heated with portable stoves over the winter months. Though oranges were known in the Middle Ages, his was probably the earliest structure of its type in England and no doubt the largest. Though John Aubrey tells us they were transplanted from Italy, Francis is known to have purchased trees during his 1561-62 visit to France. Perhaps he planted these orange trees at Beddington. The first known reference to the Orangery is January 1608 when a man was paid to sweep snow from off it. In 1690, the grove reputedly produced over ten thousand oranges from trees said to be over 13ft. high. Lysons tells us that the trees were destroyed by the hard frost of 1739-40 at which time the Thames, impeded in its flow by the design of its bridges froze over and frost fairs were held on the ice.

The southern wall of the orange house had been demolished by 1820 leaving only the existing wall. This later feature of the garden, the Orangery wall as we see it today is Grade II listed. Bentham in his 'History of Beddington' in a statement thought to be based only on tradition, states that the wall "some three feet thick ... has as its interior, a network of flues by which the orangery was heated". Heated walls did exist, though the likelihood of this 195ft. (59.43m.) wall being one is low. It is recorded in household accounts that in 1652, a carpenter was paid £60 for a new orange house, and that stoves, serviced, and enlarged for the purpose were provided for heating the grove during the colder months. There is no documentary evidence of the existing wall contemporary with Sir Francis Carew. It is however a wall of two distinct building types, though there is little difference in the size or colour of the bricks from which it is built. It probably dates from between 1707 and 1727 when Sir Nicholas the First Baronet (d.1727) carried out extensive alterations to the garden. The northern (or garden) side of the wall is faced with ornate and fine brickwork in Flemish bond; the southern internal wall is of English bond and not as finely finished. As seen at the beginning of the twentieth century the door at the east end of the existing wall opened into a lean-to built against the south side. This had been adapted from an earlier arrangement to provide stabling for the Orphanage horse and for drying and storing earth for use in the earth (as opposed to water) closets. The remains of the badly vandalised fireplace and chimney can still be seen on the south side of this wall that may have given rise to the theory of it being a heated wall throughout.

Sir Francis who owned Beddington for fifty-seven years died childless in May 1611 aged eighty-one. His lifetime is commemorated in the family chapel of the nearby St. Mary's church by an impressive altar tomb that carries a reclining life-sized effigy of him for which £100 had been set aside in his will. The memorial not only depicts Sir Francis but also his successor and family; the kneeling figures of Nicholas Throckmorton Carew, his wife Mary and their family of five sons and two daughters.

The will provided for his nephew Sir Frauncys Darcy, Kt., "in whose company and conversation I have taken comfort and great pleasure" to inherit his manor at Walton. Provision was made for Robert Rogers "my ancient servant and keeper of Beddington Parke" who was to continue his keepership during his lifetime, and other remembrances were bequeathed to friends and neighbours including his then falconer William Grimsdicke "one bay hawking nag". The greater part of the estates he left to his nephew Nicholas Throckmorton the son of his youngest sister Ann, and brother-in-law of Sir Walter Raleigh.

**Sir Nicholas (VII) Throckmorton Carew (1562?-1644)** The death of his uncle in 1611 and his inheritance of the greater part of the estates placed Nicholas Throckmorton (who assumed the name of Carew) on a sound financial basis allowing him to settle his many outstanding debts. Little is known of his early lifetime; he was the fifth son in the family who along with his brothers was brought up under a tutor Francis Goldsmith. In 1588 (a year after his mother Ann's death), Nicholas went to Italy where in 1590 he obtained a certificate of matriculation at the University of Padua. He spent some years travelling abroad before returning to England where on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1597-98 he married Mary the daughter of Sir William More of Loseley (the fellow Deputy Lieutenant of his late uncle), who bore him seven, possibly eight children. It is unknown when she died and no

memorial exists to mark her burial place. On August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1616, Nicholas married for a second time, to a widow Susan Bright in St. Mary Woolnoth, London who after bearing him an additional two children died in 1633.

Nicholas Throckmorton Carew was knighted in January 1613 two years after inheriting the estates and was appointed Chamberlain of the Exchequer a post formerly held by his father. He also served as a Knight of the Shire in the parliament of 1621, and from 1623 onwards as Deputy Lieutenant of the county. He was eighty when the Civil War began, and though he supported the Royalist cause, he understandably took no part in the conflict. He died in 1644 before the war ended. Such was his concern as to his son and heir's outstanding bad debts he wisely bequeathed the estates to his nine year old grandson though the boy's father, the second Sir Francis was to have use of them until his son attained the age of twenty-one.

**Sir Francis Carew (II) (c.1603-1649)** named after his great-uncle and family benefactor. Francis was educated at Oxford. He married Susan the daughter of Sir William Romney and was usually described as “of Reigate”, though he seems to have been active in various parts of the county. He sat as a member for Haslemere in the Parliament of 1624 and was a Member for Guildford in 1627.

Because of his “unthrifty and careless courses”, in about 1630 Francis fled to France to avoid his creditors and the debtor's prison. His debts must have been cleared however for he was able to unsuccessfully contest the 1640 election at Bletchingly. He was knighted some time before 1639 and was a sworn servant of King Charles I, whom it is said he joined in Oxford in 1642. Although he never appears to have served in the Royalist army during the turbulent years of the Civil War his estate was sequestered by parliament and he was subjected to a heavy fine for its return.

His lifestyle had been of such great concern to his father Sir Nicholas Trockmorton Carew (who had “payed at several tymes farre above one thousand pounds” towards the repayment of his son's debts), that to protect the estates his father had bequeathed them to his grandson, Francis's son, Nicholas. Fearing that if he should make his son his executor the whole estate might well be dissipated, he wisely appointed his brother-in-law sole executor. Apart from his outstanding debts, the Commissioners also fined Sir Francis £2,000 for supporting the losing Royalist cause in the Civil War, payment for half of which it is thought that some of the estates were mortgaged. The full debt was never repaid.

Daniel Defoe, in his ‘Tour through the whole of Britain’ was referring to the second Sir Francis when he wrote of him as being otherwise an honest gentleman but so addicted to gambling and so unfortunately over-matched in his play that he lost his noble seat and parks and all the fine addenda that were then about it at one night's play, some say at one cast of the dice. Mr. Harvey of Coombe (near Kingston) was not to receive his winnings however as the estate was entailed upon the heir.

Sir Francis died in 1649 (the year as Charles I was executed) only five years after the death of his father. His son, the later Sir Nicholas (VIII) then aged fourteen inherited the estates under the provision of his grandfather's will.

**Sir Nicholas Carew (VIII) (1635-1687)** on the death of his father Nicholas, heir to the still extensive estates and an accumulation of extensive debts, was left in the care of his great-uncle Carew Raleigh. In order to meet with outstanding obligations including the regular assessments ordered by Parliament upon landowners to pay for the Civil War, it was decided to lease the property, the tenancy of which was granted to Robert Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick during whose occupancy an accumulation of years of neglect necessitated a great number of costly repairs. Extensive maintenance had to be undertaken on the moat and drawbridge and to various parts of the house and outbuildings, the accounts for which still exist.

In the meantime, Lady Carew and the family lived elsewhere in a substantial house that in 1663, having eight chimneys was the largest in the village after the manor house. A likely contender might well be the 'Portioner's House' that stood nearby. Warwick's tenancy ceased in 1653. It was he who made an extension to the famous orangery, providing two new iron stoves for the heating of the enlarged area. Three years later in 1656, Nicholas then aged twenty-one officially came into his inheritance.

The restoration of the monarchy brought a knighthood to Nicholas Carew, Chertsey Abbey lands and "a fair house" built from the ruins, granted to him by Charles II. As a Justice of the Peace for Surrey during 1659-1661 he sat in three sessions in the sphere of his jurisdiction that included Beddington, Carshalton, Croydon and Mitcham. He also sat in parliament, representing Gatton from 1661 to 1685 and was nominated as one of the Fire Commissioners for the borough of Southwark but does not seem to have spent a great deal of time involved with the latter. This appointment arose from a devastating fire which took place there in 1676 ten years after the great fire of London.

Sir Nicholas married Susanna Isham and with his family of seven children (three sons and four daughters) probably spent their time between Beddington and the house in Chertsey. Daniel Defoe commented that the estate was preserved in the family, and that the present gentleman had not only recovered the disaster (brought about by his father), but has exceedingly improved it all. Sir Nicholas died in 1687 at the age of fifty-two. One of his daughters Philippa married Richard Gee whose descendants were to appear as later beneficiaries of the Carew estates.

**Sir Francis Carew (III) (1663-1689)** Francis Carew, the eldest son of Nicholas and Susanna was born in 1663 and died as a young man only seventeen days after his twenty-sixth birthday in September 1689. Nicholas his surviving two-year-old son became heir to the estates. There was surely one of the most star-crossed of the Carew families, as Ann (née Boteler) Francis's wife, having already borne two children and again pregnant at the time of her husband's death, died presumably from complications arising from childbirth only a month later. Their newborn infant son died on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1689; three in the same year within three months of one another. Three other family members also died that same year including Sir Francis's brother Richard and his sister Jane.

**Sir Nicholas Carew (IX) 1st Baronet (1686-1727)** Nicholas Carew (according to the registers) was born on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1686 at Covent Garden and baptised the same day, as was often the practice if the infant was not expected to survive. It would appear that his mother suffered difficult pregnancies.



Their paternal grandmother Susanna Carew brought Nicholas and his sister Elizabeth up following the death of their parents, though William Boteler their maternal grandfather held that he was their guardian and claimed management of the estates. This dispute brought in a third party, Charles Bynes of Carshalton who was appointed as an official receiver. Such was the acrimony between the parties that the lands were split between them, and though Bynes was punctilious in rendering his financial accounts he did little to maintain the properties. In September 1700 it was noted by John Evelyn that in 1691 the garden was in the hands of the Duke of Norfolk. Evelyn also noted that the house and its contents were decaying only kept from utter dilapidation by a servant or two. The estate, park and gardens were in a similar state as were the “large and goodly” orange trees though laden with fruit, were then in a state of decay.

While a young man Nicholas studied as an undergraduate at Catherine Hall, Cambridge. On the November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1705 aged nineteen, he departed for London setting up house possibly in Dover Street that lies between Piccadilly and Berkley Square. Even prior to his leaving Cambridge he diligently kept a note of his expenses that gives us an insight into the life of a young man about town. He noted the cost of the furniture he purchased for his house in London, how much he spent on business and on pleasure. He enjoyed both listening to music, to “fiddlers, drummers” and to “ringers” and himself played the violin. He visited the theatre quite often but from the accounts one forms the impression of a very exact young man who was probably on a limited income and who always kept a very careful check of his expenditure. In 1707 he came into his full inheritance and on June 26<sup>th</sup> left London and came to Beddington.

No doubt despairing of the state of neglect into which the estate had been allowed to slide, between about 1715 and 1720 he set about repairing, rebuilding and modernising the house, and created a classical facade. Across the fourth side of the square he placed a decorative wrought iron screen surmounted by the arms and crest of the family. Within the great hall decorative wood panelling lined the walls which survived in the house into the nineteenth century. Black and white stone flooring in a chequerboard design was also laid which also survived until the floor was re-laid in wood in the 1920s. The purely ornamental Trophy of Arms and the Achievement of Arms at opposite ends of the hall (both of moulded plaster) also date from the 1st Baronet. The initials NC and EH on the strap of the powder pouch of the trophy celebrates the marriage of Nicholas to Elizabeth Hackett in 1709. The Achievement of Arms has the family motto *Non Conscrire Sibi* that translates to be conscious of no guilt. For many years the helmet from the sixth Nicholas Carew’s coat of armour hung from a lofty perch on a projecting spear on the trophy of arms high on the north end of the hall. The Orphanage administrators took down the helmet that has now been lost.

He made extensive alterations to Sir Francis’s garden which by then was in a state of neglect and considered to be old fashioned; he re-structured the garden and its watercourses creating an elongated lake at the back of the house and a long canal-like sheet of water and an ornamental planting of trees in the park to the front. It may have been Nicholas IX who planted the Cedar of Lebanon tree we see today growing on the mound at the back of the house, then enclosed within the garden. In the 1720s Daniel Defoe made comment that the court before them is extremely fine, and the canal in the

park before “the court is so well, that nothing could be better, having a river running thro' it; the gardens are exceedingly enlarged, they take up all the flat part of the park for two to three miles”.

Nicholas decided to replace the wooden orange house with a more fashionable structure. He built a brick wall around the original trees of which the northern side still survives. Two iron stoves provided heating and during the winter a temporary wooden roof was erected for added protection. Sir Nicholas was also responsible for rebuilding the Dovecote we see there today, a remarkable building dedicated to breeding pigeons for food on a considerable, possibly commercial scale.

Shortly after having come to Beddington, in 1708 Nicholas married an heiress Elizabeth Hacket though it would appear from his account book that the year previously he had what would appear to have been a major illness. He had paid Dr. John Radcliffe the most eminent physician of the day (and who was shortly to become a near neighbour at Carshalton), a total of £11 for his treatment. In 1710, he was again ill though he was well on the road to recovery by the spring. In the September of that year perhaps following a miscarriage, his wife went to Bath to take the waters and to enjoy the pleasures this particularly fashionable resort could offer.

As befitting a gentleman of his station for a number of years Nicholas had been involved in politics and by now was firmly established as one of the Surrey gentry. In 1714 he was elected Member of Parliament for Haslemere presumably for the Whigs since he was rewarded with a baronetcy on August 11<sup>th</sup>, 1714 in the first honours list issued by the Hanoverian dynasty. He became Colonel of the Surrey Militia and in 1720 was elected as a Member for Surrey.

Along with thousands of others, Sir Nicholas succumbed to the speculative craze of the notorious South Sea Company (1720-21). Archaeologist and historian Andrew Skelton has recently discovered a document showing that he mortgaged all his unentailed Surrey property to William Scawen of Carshalton, debts that were still outstanding when he died. He appears to have been close to bankruptcy by this time. The Sub-Governor of the South Sea Company was Sir John Fellowes of Carshalton House.

It would appear that death came unexpectedly to Sir Nicholas, as for one who had been so careful over his finances he died in 1727 without making a will leaving his seven-year-old son as heir to the estates. Of the four children born to Nicholas and Elizabeth only two survived, a son baptised Nicholas Hacket Carew and Ann his younger sister. In due course Lady Elizabeth re-married, to William Chetwynd (who appears to have been her steward) and together they managed the estates on behalf of her son. In land, Beddington and Bandon (still listed separately) with Norbury and Walton on the Hill formed the principal block of territory, while Elizabeth held Banstead and the Wealden manors of Horne and Burstow for life probably as part of her marriage settlement. The family also owned farms and houses in Croydon, Mitcham, Streatham, Carshalton, Morden and Merton and probably by that time slave-worked plantations and iron works in the New World. Lady Elizabeth died in 1740 a year before her son Nicholas Hacket Carew reached the age of

twenty-one. The death of his father Sir Nicholas, the 1st Baronet, saw the family fortunes thereafter in decline.

**Sir Nicholas (X) Hacket Carew, 2nd Baronet (1720-1762)** having come into his estates, Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew married Catherine Martin of Overbury in Worcestershire. The following year, on the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1742 their daughter Catherine was born and three years later a second daughter Elizabeth but no more children are known.

Though it would appear that he was in constant financial difficulty Sir Nicholas the 2nd Baronet was responsible for some rebuilding of the ancestral home. He probably was responsible for doubling the width of the wings of the building though criticism was that the two wings were too deep for the body of the house and should have been built wider. The north wing was almost at once devastated by fire and left unfurnished and not repaired, and apart from a billiard room remained as such until the break up of the estates in 1859. The windows of this wing were left uncurtained and without blinds; no one was ever seen at the windows and, apart from the one room, no light ever gleamed from them during the hours of darkness. The south wing (that nearest the church) contained the dining and drawing rooms and other large apartments together with a long gallery that extended its entire length.

As his father, Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew was Colonel of the Surrey Militia though at this time, with a war being fought in India and in Canada as well as on the continent of Europe, the fear of a French invasion made the post less of an empty honour than it had been for his father. There were difficulties in enlisting men for the militia with threatened disorder when it came to the ballot; discipline was almost impossible, and it was not until June 1759 he was able to report his regiment ready for action. They were embodied into the regular army and were ordered to take up stations by the Thames Estuary. In the meantime, management of the estates was left in the hands of a steward. With the prospect of discipline breaking down however, the unit was split into two battalions, but that under Nicholas Carew had to be taken over by his second in command when he was afflicted with gout and had to withdraw.

In the meantime their only surviving daughter Catherine, then in her mid teens (her sister Elizabeth died aged seven in 1752) fell ill with a malady that was deemed to be incurable and for which her mother took her to Malvern Spa to take the waters. These seemed to have a beneficial effect for Catherine survived though in her father's will was added an intriguing passage: "Whereas my daughter through the visitation of God is become very infirm in Body and if she should marry it will bring dishonour to her family. Now for the prevention of which I do hereby direct that in any case she ... shall marry ... is such case she shall ... immediately lose the said annuity and benefits given to her ... and be as if she was naturally dead". By her father's will, Catherine was to be allowed to occupy but not inherit the estates. He settled £10,000 upon his daughter and dictated that his many debts should be paid off by the sale of some of his English and American properties.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1762 Lady Carew died; she was forty-one. All the concerns related to the properties, the militia, his daughter's health, and the loss of his wife proved too much for Nicholas Hacket Carew's constitution and he died five months after his wife at the age of only forty-two.

**Catherine Carew (1742-1769).** The ailing Catherine daughter of Sir Nicholas Hacket Carew, the last of the direct line, survived her parents by some seven years. She died of smallpox in her twenty-seventh year on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1769.

After her father's death at the beginning of August 1762, William Pellatt (who at the time leased Woodcote Lodge and Little Woodcote), a gentleman of Morden who had been employed by Sir Nicholas as an attorney, administered the estates on Catherine's behalf and was appointed her sole executor. She died unmarried, the secret of her affliction dying with her, and while the estates were being settled William Pellatt was to carry on administering the estates, a total of about thirty-one years, until 1793-94.

Catherine's only had a life interest in the estate and when she died it was to pass to the eldest son of her cousin, (the Rev. Dr. Fountain, Dean of York), but not until he was twenty-five. As was so often the case the heir died (in 1780) without reaching the age of inheritance in which case the estates were to evolve upon the nearest surviving male Carew relative. In the meantime, while the necessary Acts of Parliament were passed to unscramble the confusion surrounding the estates, William Pellatt (who also became Patron of the parish church) continued to oversee the administration of the Carew properties.

**Richard Gee Carew (-1816).** The nearest surviving Carew relative was a descendent of Philippa Carew, daughter of the eighth Sir Nicholas (d.1687). She had married Richard Gee and it was her grandson Richard, the eldest son of Richard Gee of Orphington, Kent who in order to inherit was to assume the name and arms of Carew. He was appointed Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in 1793.

According to the Rev. Thomas Bentham's informant when writing his 'History' in 1923, Richard Carew was of miserly habits. He tells us that there was an old coat he always persisted in wearing which at his death was lined with bank notes, and he was also in the habit of hiding money in various parts of the house. Bentham was told (bearing in mind that to the date of publication this would have been one hundred and seven years after Richard Carew's death) that Richard, who was never accepted at Beddington was the character of a story written by Farjeon in the Illustrated London News entitled 'Miser Farebrother' - the scene being laid at Beddington. Richard Carew was also said to have had an interest in history and published a selection of his family correspondence in 'Archaeologia'. Dying in December 1816 while yet still a bachelor, he bequeathed the estates to the widow of his brother William, Mrs. Anne Paston Gee. This writer would however question as to whether Bentham's description of Richard Gee was indeed a description of that gentleman or of his brother William, Anne's husband. According to Land Tax records, though Richard Carew owned the estates Anne and her husband William lived at Beddington from 1794-95 until his death in August 1815, after which she occupied the house herself. William Gee certainly paid the rates in 1808. Richard died in December 1816. We would question therefore as to whether Bentham has left us with a description of the wrong brother!

**Mrs. Anne Paston Gee (-1828) and 'The Adopted Son'.** When Anne Paston Gee inherited the Carew estates from her brother-in-law in December 1816 she had been a

widow a little over a year. The estates would not have been new to her, as it would appear that along with her husband she had lived in the house for some twenty-two years before they were bequeathed to her. Memories of this particular lady were relayed to Bentham by old Mr. Lambert who had died aged eighty-two some years prior to 1923. As a child he remembered Mrs. Gee as being a little dark woman with ruddy cheeks and a pleasant expression who used to come to church on Sundays in a sedan chair carried by four of her labourers dressed in clean white smocks.

The bequest of the estates to Mrs. Anne Paston Gee disappointed the hopes of one, Mr. Pritchard, an illegitimate son of her husband William Gee who had been educated by him and sent to Cambridge following which he took holy orders. He had been brought up with great expectations that when his father died there would be a substantial legacy for him. On the strength of his expectations he married, but when his father died at Brighton in August 1815 he found no such legacy was forthcoming and that he had been disinherited. In 1818 he wrote a pamphlet entitled 'The Adopted Son or, Twenty Years at Beddington', in which in self-justification, he published his complaint as the only means he felt he had left for the protection of his character. "At an early age I was taken from the protection of a mother, whom I fondly loved, to be placed under the care of Mrs. Gee, who not having any family, had herself urged her husband (whose natural son I was), to allow her to bring me up as her own". Seventy-four pages later he concluded: "I have now only to hope that Mrs. Gee's eyes may be opened to the injustice and unfeeling nature of her conduct ere she quits her splendid possessions for that narrow house which, ere long, contains alike the monarch and the meanest of mankind". His plea met with no realisation of his hopes.

Mrs. Gee also undertook a certain amount of restoration to the manor when in 1818 she commissioned the renowned architect Daniel Asher Alexander (1768-1846) to undertake undisclosed work in the house at Beddington. He worked with the remarkable artificial stone developed by Mrs. Coade at Lambeth south London in the 1720s. The work was done with his son Daniel Alexander (1795-1843) who designed the library located in the south wing of the house. Anne Paston Gee died in March 1828 at the age of seventy-one bequeathing the estates to her cousin Sir Benjamin Hallowell who adopted the name and arms of Carew.

**Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell Carew K.C.B. (1760-1834)** although having no known blood link with the Carews, Sir Benjamin Hallowell adopted the arms and name of the family when he inherited the estates from his cousin. There is some dispute as to his birthplace whether in Canada or in Boston, Massachusetts on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1761. He was however already a man of sixty-eight when he inherited; he retired as Admiral with the Home fleet two years later in 1830 and retired to Beddington which he was only to have six years to enjoy.

He too would have known Beddington well even before inheriting the estate, for apart from the family relationship between Mrs. Gee and himself, he was also resident at 'Brickwood House' off the Addiscombe Road, Croydon. He led a distinguished career in the British navy entering the service at the age of twenty-one serving chiefly in the Mediterranean. In 1798, he served with Nelson at the Battle of the Nile commanding the Swiftsure at the battles of St. Vincent and Aboukir Bay. It was his ship, along with

another, the Alexander, that brought about the destruction of the French Flagship L'Orient. Sir Benjamin had his carpenters make a coffin certified to be entirely made of wood and iron from L'Orient's mainmast that he sent to Nelson as a present, to remind him of our common mortality and with the hope that though he might not need it for many years he could now rest within one of his own trophies. The gift was accepted in the spirit it was given, and it is written that Nelson called at Mr. Peddison's in Brewer Street where the coffin was stored desiring that its history might be engraved upon the lid saying that it was highly probable that he might want it ere long. He sailed on his last, fatal expedition upon the Victory and met his death at the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805. Having been returned to England in a barrel of brandy the following January, Nelson was buried in the coffin enclosed within a black marble sarcophagus. He lies within St. Paul's Cathedral.

Sir Benjamin, a man of impressive build, presence and of great physical strength was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1811 and in June 1815 was created Knight Commander of the Bath. On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1830 he attained the rank of Admiral and in June the following year was made up to G.C.B. (Knight Grand Cross of the Bath). He was forty when in February 1800 he married a daughter of Captain John Nicholson Inglefield R.N. who was for many years Commissioner of the Naval Dockyard at Gibraltar. Their first son Charles Hallowell Carew was born two years later.

Sir Benjamin also commissioned work within the mansion house at Beddington when in 1832, Coade stone was again used for possible restoration/decoration within the great hall, work undertaken on behalf of the Coade company by G. Russell French. There is an illustration of the hall dating from 1839 by Joseph Nash that shows lozenge shaped black slate and white marble flooring, family and other portraits hung on the lower part of the walls while above, the windows are decorated with paintings of naval and military trophies executed in imitation of bronze. The shield with armorial bearings was above a great door at the south end and the trophy of arms at the north end of the hall above a fireplace. Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell Carew died at Beddington Park on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1834 bequeathing the estates to his eldest son.

**Captain Charles Hallowell Carew (1801-1848).** At least Charles Hallowell Carew was only thirty-three when he inherited the estates on the death of his father with the prospect of enjoying the benefits (and the concerns) of the properties for a little longer than did his father. In 1828 he married Mary, daughter of the late Captain Sir Murray Maxwell R.N. It would appear however, that though his inheritance brought with it prestige and a certain social standing as Lord of the Manor, it probably brought little ready finance. It was the year following his father's death, Charles sanctioned the cutting of the mature timber along Queen Elizabeth's Walk that at the time caused great consternation in the village at the loss of such a stately grove of trees.

Pigot's Directory of 1839 lists Dingwall, Esq. as occupying 'Beddington Park' (a relative of the Bridges family of Beddington House), but the census enumerated over the night of the June 13-14<sup>th</sup>, 1841 gives us a picture of the estate and its occupants on that particular evening. Charles Hallowell Carew, a Captain in the Royal Navy, aged forty was at home, as was his son Robert aged twenty who was in the army, with in total nine servants

including the coachman who lived in outbuildings on the property with his wife and five children. Whether or not the house was periodically let as an extra source of income is not known. In the 1840s however the house was described as “a rarely tenanted mansion”.

Perhaps the stress associated with such a responsibility may have been a contributory factor, for Charles Hallowell Carew died in 1848, aged only forty-seven, fifteen years after inheriting the estates. He was the last to be buried in the Carew family vault within the parish church.

“Old Baldwin” who was an old man of eighty-two when he died some years previous to Bentham writing his ‘History’ in 1923 and who must have been a mine of local information, told him of his recollection of the last burial in the Carew family vault before it was finally closed. It was a snowy day in January and he had been working in the wilderness when he was summoned to help the undertaker’s men to find space for its final occupant. He told of how with difficulty they managed to clear a space by piling up the coffins anyhow, which he recalled as being a very unpleasant task indeed. The Carew vault was subsequently closed.

Two years prior to Charles Hallowell Carew’s being interred in the family vault, another was buried there, a thirteen year old boy Patrick Maxwell Shaw Stewart, R.N., the youngest son of Captain Houston Stewart, R.N.C.B., accidentally shot and killed by a “fowling piece” at Beddington Park on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1846 and buried in the church five days later. As to what were the circumstances surrounding his death we do not know. Constance Hallowell Carew had a memorial stone erected in ‘The Wilderness’ behind Mr. Thirlby’s farm house (now the Beddington Park Cottages) on the place where he met his death, and a memorial plaque placed in the Carew chapel within the church. In July 1872 at the behest of the Orphanage committee the memorial stone was tidied and restored by Mr. Hay of Carshalton but has been lost track of since. It is thought it may have stood enclosed within the high metal railing enclosure by the river though this was of recent years investigated and found to have enclosed a possibly late Victorian sheet metal water gauge. It is known that in 1877 following problems with Canon Bridges in relation to water levels the Orphanage committee directed that means were to be taken to mark the water level, but it is not known how, or where. A gated enclosure such as it was by the river that would have measured approximately 10ft. square with railings of about 4ft. 6ins. in height would surely not have been placed there solely to house a water gauge! In 1990 the railings were removed as part of the flood alleviation scheme and replaced by the copse of silver birch and hazel trees nearest the bridge.

The Wilderness may have been quite the opposite to what we think of today as being a wild and overgrown area as the sale of 1859 describes the area as a shrubbery and lake. The area was bounded on the east by a wall which still stands beyond the river behind the houses of Crispin Crescent, to the south by a wall the greater part of which was blown down in 1977, the west by the farm cottages and the north by a now non-existent wall (once lined with espaliered fruit trees) across the river bordering the sewage farm. In 1875 having purchased the field (of more recent years known as the hockey pitches) it was probably Canon Bridges whom in-filled the oval lake that had probably been in use as a fishpond.

**Charles Hallowell Hallowell Carew (1829-1872)** did not possess the estates for very long either though he was only nineteen in 1849 when his father died leaving them to him. Nor when he died at the relatively young age of forty-three, having dissipated what remained of the family fortune, did he leave anything to an heir. Estates that had survived for over five hundred years through times of royal patronage and intrigue, through times of war and peace, loss and gain, through generations of family joys and sorrows were lost.

Described as being well known, open hearted and generous to a fault and combining lavish expenditure with un-business like habits, he lacked what was referred to as common prudence. Charles entered the army at an early age and after a year or two in an infantry regiment transferred into the 2nd Life Guards. In 1849, he commenced a ruinous turf career owning a number of horses for both flat racing and steeple chasing and this, along with the expenses of running a stud, of hunting and shooting, contributed to his downfall. Bentham tells us that in his youth he had fallen into the hands of money lenders, a euphemism for bookmakers from whom he was never able to disentangle himself. At the end of 1851, the whole of his extensive racing stable went under the hammer at Messrs. Tattersalls though his steeplechasers had already found new homes. We learn how he endeavoured to recoup his fortunes on Yellow Jack a horse he had purchased along with another for 12,000 guineas but in 1856 Yellow Jack ran second to Ellington in the Epsom Derby. We know nothing of the circumstances surrounding this final blow to the Carew fortunes. Surely his betting must have become a form of madness borne of desperation.

By 1852 the deer herd had already been sold, long before bankruptcy proceedings were instituted in 1857 at which time it required an Act of Parliament to execute the disentangling of the estate and its mortgages. The estates were subject to much litigation with debts amounting to what was thought to be £180,000. In 1857 it was deemed advisable to sell the estates with a clear title; the Act of Parliament was obtained vesting the estates in Trustees upon trust to sell and pay off the debts. By 1864 the greater part of the estates were sold off and by November of that year all the debts by then amounting to £350,000 were paid off.

An elderly gentleman Tom Holloway, writing in 1923 and recalling memories from the mid-1850s, remembered “Charlie’s sister who was said to be insane, and who had a man keeper to look after her”. He tells of a visit he made to the manor. He had just gone up the steps of the right wing when a large red flat tile thrown from above landed at his feet. Looking up, he saw “mad Carew” looking from the parapet above and, as he was soon through to the door and told them of it, they went up and got her down. He felt that if that large heavy tile had come on his head he would not be relating the incident.

As there was no room for further burials in the family vault within the church, the last of the Carews to be associated with Beddington as though banished for his betrayal, lies in a vault in the churchyard close by the south porch beneath an impressive tomb upon which is carved the family Coat of Arms. Charles Hallowell Hallowell Carew retained the Manor of Walton for ten years after the sale of the Beddington estates before it too was auctioned off. He died at Boulogne, France on the September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1872 “with scarcely a sixpence in his pocket to call his own” His brother Benjamin who died in 1879 lies with him.



## **Madame Cavalier of ‘The Grange’**

Princess Zuluka Langrana Cavalier was one of only four private occupiers of ‘The Grange’ during its lifetime. Almost every day she travelled by car (hired from a firm in Sutton) to her town house at 37 Carlyle Square, Chelsea where she practised faith healing under the title of Madame Langrana Cavalier, of the ‘Guild of the Daughters of the Empire’. She returned to The Grange each day at about 4pm. At other times “Madame” (as she was addressed by her staff), a handsome woman who dressed in exotic saris, was seen about the district being driven in an open carriage and pair.

Mrs Eve, her former Carlyle Square housekeeper, tells us that Madame often kept foreign servants and recalled two such, a Swiss kitchen boy and a German waiter, but also employed gardeners, a charlady and a nurse/companion. She entertained extensively as on an occasion in December 1915 when both Queen Mary and the Princess Royal visited The Grange, and often hosted lavish tea parties attended by other titled ladies. Crystal-clear table water was from a spring that still flows known as the champagne pool and peacocks strutted on the lawns where in summer the tea parties were usually held.

Mme. Cavalier was apparently well liked and had the reputation for generosity and kindness. When her housekeeper Mrs. Eve (who met her future husband by coming to Wallington at weekends) was married Mme. provided the wedding dress, trousseau and the wedding breakfast. She frequently presented prizes to local children on school presentation days, arranged musical evenings and gave lectures both at The Grange and in public halls to raise money for charities, particular among them the nearby Orphanage of which she was made Life Guardian. Madame was also involved with one of the early Wallington scout groups, a further indication of her obvious concern for the welfare of children though she had none of her own. Just prior to the Second World War, she was believed to be very ill and in a home.

## **Viscount Falmouth of Beddington House**

In 1723 Viscount Falmouth (c.1680-1734) purchased the Beddington House estate from the previous owner Sir John Leake’s heir for the sum of £3,500. Viscount Falmouth and Admiral Leake’s connection with Beddington are both seemingly interwoven. They were contemporaries in that both were born in the mid-1600s; both had influence in the corridors of power, the one being a member of the Privy Council in 1714 and the other, Admiral Leake, being a Member of Parliament. Both no doubt would have known Sir Nicholas Carew, created First Baronet in 1714, Member of Parliament for Haslemere and later of Surrey and both had a mutual connection with the navy in that, apart from Admiral Sir John Leake’s own career, both had sons in the service.

As a personality we know little of Viscount Falmouth, a man of influence at the court of Queen Anne (1702-1714) and her successor King George I. He became Warden of the Stanneries, made Comptroller of the Household, appointed to and sworn as one of the sovereign’s personal advisors, and a member of the Privy Council in 1714. Six years later on the June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1720 in the reign of George I, he was created Baron of Boscawen-Rose and Viscount Falmouth of Cornwall. As to the frequency of his visits to Beddington we know nothing, though it is written that he used the house as a shooting box.

## **The Isted Family**

The Isted family came via East Grinstead and Mitcham to Beddington in about 1810-11. Edward Isted and his wife Ann (who was later to be recorded as a blacksmith in her own right), his brother John (in partnership as blacksmith's and farriers) and his family that included a daughter Sarah, lived in the Post Office cottage. In 1833 the partnership was dissolved and the business passed into the hands of Edward Isted.

William (Edward's son) at one time occupied the fourth 'Old Post Office' cottage a later addition to the original building; that nearest the smithy and Malthouse Row (now Whelan Way). Though not immediately sold in July 1859 when the Carew Estates sale took place, the Isted family purchased the land upon which the blacksmiths business was built, for on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1902 they offered the forge for sale by auction. At that time and until about 1914 members of the family were living in 2 and 3 'Elm Cottages' in nearby Church Lane built on the garden of the post office building that also indicates at some time their ownership of the whole.

Miss Sarah A. Isted, for many years the village Postmistress, who in later years lived with her mother and sister, gained a degree of notoriety by refusing to wait on those who called for letters until she had finished any work she had in hand. Described as being quite a character holding strong views on many subjects, she liked progress but always held supreme contempt "for new-fangled ways". She was always industrious though greatly preferring outdoor to indoor work, and up to the very last lived much in the open air. Miss Sarah (better known as Sally) was the youngest daughter of John Isted (a John Isted was listed as parish constable in 1812) and she was born in the centre house of the then three cottages on Chatt's Hill in Guy Road. In the past, at one time two of the cottages were occupied by brothers John and Edward Isted and the third, that with the projecting chimney on the corner of Chatt's Hill and Church Lane, by George Hickson, huntsman to the Carew's.

When she retired as Postmistress, a fund was raised for her to whom many of those who knew her generously contributed. Miss Isted passed away peacefully after a short illness on the December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1914 in her 90th year.

## **Arthur Kirby**

The local Advertiser dated January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1947 featured an article on the above gentleman, at the time a household name in the theatrical and film world.

Arthur Kirby of 121 Croydon Road, proprietor and director of Eugene's Flying Ballet, was along with a cousin (who operated elsewhere in the country) the only exponents of an art that had been in the family for a half a century. Influenced by childhood performances on the stage and by his father who developed the technique of aerial or flying ballet that originated in France with M. Didelot in 1796, he perfected the technique that enabled performers to seemingly "fly" across the stage though supported by a number of unseen steel cables, wires and pulleys. The equipment was installed in eighteen theatres including The Grand Theatre, Croydon and the operators personally instructed in its use. His techniques were particularly called upon in the pantomime season when among them,

dancers, fairies and witches all seemingly flew or danced in the air much to the amazement and delight of all who beheld them.

## **The Lambert Family of Beddington Mill**

The Lamberts were one of a number of signatories in opposition to a proposal set forth in 1610 to divert one tenth of the river Wandle's flow (between Croydon and Waddon) to supply the City of London with water. The name is therefore one of long association with the district. At least by 1819, possibly earlier they had become associated with the Beddington snuff mill. The census of 1841, enumerates Charles and Susan Lambert as aged 50 and 55 respectively along with sons Robert and Allen, involved in the manufacture of snuff. The Lambert family however were to remain in Beddington until around the mid-1870s at which time they moved to a mill downstream at Hackbridge where in 1900 they are said to have been manufacturing five tons of snuff a week. Alexander Lambert died in 1915 and the production of snuff locally ended with his death. He was born in Beddington and had worked in the mill that had been leased by his father and his grandfather before him. His father was the founder of the well-known tobacco firm of Lambert and Butler, Mr. Butler being a relative. Alexander's uncle, Alan Lambert had a snuff and tobacco factory in High Street Croydon and was one of the original Directors of the Croydon Gas Company. "Many a time I passed the old mill on a summer evening, fifty years ago and seen, with pleasure, the worthy, hospitable and respected owner enjoying his pipe, and watching his youthful family and their friends romping in the hay-field, playing at cricket, or boating on the river".

"Can I er'e forget the valley,  
Or the gentle rippling rill,  
Whose unwearied waters wandered  
Through my good old father's mill...A.J.L".

## **The Laurence Family of Brandries Hill House**

By 1841 Joseph Laurence (1791-1878) a Stock Broker, his wife, seven daughters and two sons, six female servants and a gardener had become the occupants of 'Brandries Hill House'. Joseph Laurence born Joseph Levy in Venice May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1791 was the son of Zaccaria Levy and his wife Simcha Anna Montefiores whose family was to become one of the most prominent Jewish families in Britain. When in 1813 Joseph Levy married Penelope Jackson, he married into an equally wealthy family, her ancestors having accrued fabulous riches merchandising spices, silks and tea from the East. Her grandmother felt that the only way for them to make their mark in the established money making professions during a period of anti-Semitism would be to shake off their Jewish roots and conform to the expectations of the British ruling classes. She requested therefore, that beneficiaries of her will and their descendants should change their name from Levy to her family name of Lawrence. In December 1826, by that time an up and coming Commodity Broker, Joseph and his wife complied with her grandmother's request and changed their name by Royal Licence to that of Laurence (a spelling mistake) thus ensuring that their legacy would be protected and their grandmother's express wishes met. Joseph Laurence obtained a Grant of Arms depicting a merchant ship and beehives denoting industry, with the motto: 'If God be with us, who can be against us'. By 1824

Laurence had become a member of the Stock Exchange an Under-writing member of Lloyds, and founded the stock broking firm of Laurence Keen Ltd. that to this day is a respected company in the City of London.

The Laurence family moved from Blackheath to Beddington then a highly desirable area presumably sometime in 1840 after the death of the previous occupant. He is first recorded in archives in 1841 when he appears as a Churchwarden who along with the Rector, the Rev. James Hamilton and two or three other local notables was a founding member of the Provident Fund set up to assist the deserving poor. He was likewise a founding member of the Beddington and Wallington National School built in 1843. Tragedy was not to escape the family however for not long after moving to Beddington, on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1841, his wife Penelope then aged fifty-five died just six months after the Rev. James Hamilton had become Rector. Only eighteen months later, in May 1843 the Rector was also to lose his wife, and no doubt the two men gave each other mutual support in their respective times of grief.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1845 Laurence married for a second time to a lady seventeen years his junior, Louisa Anne the second daughter of Sir Charles Henry Rich 2nd Bart., both described as “of this parish”. Laurence died on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1878 aged eighty-seven and was buried in the churchyard five days later. His wife Louisa later moved to a smaller property ‘Sandhills’ and lived there until her death in her 79<sup>th</sup> year in 1887. The Laurence family are commemorated by a tomb beneath a yew tree in the south part of the churchyard. It was Joseph and Penelope’s Great-Great Grandson, Timothy James Hamilton Laurence (presumably a family name after the Rector, James Hamilton) who married H.R.H. Princess Anne, The Princess Royal in the autumn of 1992.

## **James Lloyd of Rectory Lane**

The Wallington and Carshalton Times dated June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1937 reported the death of 87 year-old James Lloyd, then of Bernard Road, Wallington, as “Beddington’s oldest Market Gardener”. His father and grandfather were market gardeners chiefly growing lavender and peppermint who farmed land from Bute Road to Queen Elizabeth’s Walk and helped make the district famous for its lavender. They also grew all kinds of herbs and large quantities of wallflowers.

Though born in Croydon, he came to Beddington when his father returned to his grandfather’s farm. They lived in what is now called Rectory Lane, but was then known as Demesne Lane, popularly called “The Mains” and the road now known as Demesne Road was merely a cart track without a name. He went to Beddington School in Croydon Road. As well as in other areas, he later worked land off Beddington Lane and at one time had his own stall in Covent Garden Market.

## **Admiral Sir John Leake of Beddington House**

Came to Beddington House as often as his business would permit where he was visited by his neighbours without distinction of Party, being generally esteemed by all for his open, generous, humane disposition. He was presumably resident in 1710 when he presented the church with an altarpiece and wooden communion rails, and it was in St. Mary’s on June

27<sup>th</sup>, 1714 his black servant William Johnson was baptised. At about the same time Sir John also employed a servant Daniel Bury who remained in his employ some four years being paid five pounds ten shillings per annum. Leake also owned land at Oxted, Surrey, a house at Mile End and another at Greenwich.

He had come from a naval background, the second and only surviving son of Richard Leake, naval captain and Master Gunner of England. His own eminent career of naval command began at the age of thirty-two in September 1688 when he was promoted to captain of the 'Firedrake'. Knighted in 1703-4, the pinnacle of his career came in 1709 when on May 20<sup>th</sup> he was appointed by patent Rear-Admiral of Great Britain, and in November that same year when he was named one of the Lords of the Admiralty under Queen Anne. Throughout this time he was actively involved in politics and was returned to parliament as Member for Rochester for a third time in 1713. Admiral Leake's patent and in 1710 his appointment as Chairman of the Board of the Admiralty ended with the death of the Queen in August 1714. His appointment was not renewed by her successor George I, and he was obliged to retire, granted a pension and moved to the house he had built by the Thames at Greenwich.

Arising from the death of his son Richard (a naval captain who died just five months before his father), Sir John Leake adopted his nephew Stephen Martin as his son and heir. His wife's sister Elizabeth had married a close friend, Stephen Martin who had served with Leake throughout the early years of his service in the navy and as captain during the greater part of his career as Admiral. Theirs was a close-knit family circle and as he had no surviving children, Stephen took his uncle's name by licence in 1721. It is he, (from a biography he wrote of his uncle) who leaves us with this picture of Sir John Leake — "of middle stature, well set and strong, and a little inclined to corpulence. He had a florid complexion, an open countenance, and sharp piercing eyes ... though he took his bottle freely as was the custom in his time in the fleet, yet he was never disguised, or impaired his health by it ... a virtuous, humane, generous and gallant man". Sir John (born 1656) died in August 1720 and was buried in the parish church at Stepney under a monument erected there on the death of his wife Lady Christian in 1709. The churches of Greenwich, Stepney and Beddington were all hung in mourning.

### **Major (later Sir) William James Mallinson J.P. of The Grange**

In 1936 William James Mallinson inherited the title Second Baronet on the death of his father, Sir William Mallinson of Walthamstow, Essex. As Managing Director of a firm of timber merchants and importers established in about 1869 by his father, Major Mallinson decorated the interior of his home, 'The Grange' with many fine and rare timbers, enhancing an already fine building. He too was a man of wealth and generosity and became a significant benefactor to the district. In 1936 Sir William presented a Reference Library to the people of Beddington and Wallington within the library building in Shotfield. He provided the wooden panelling, financed the work and stocked it with books. He also had a Nurses Home built at the Carshalton War Memorial Hospital at a cost to him of some £5,000. As a tribute to his father during the latter's lifetime he also financed the building of the Carshalton Methodist Church in Ruskin Road. The church, dedicated in September 1926 was built at a cost of around £37,000.

Appointed as High Sheriff of Surrey in 1933, he held many impressive social gatherings within the house and its grounds. Not only the influential or wealthy visited the estate however. In July 1919 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of William Mallinson and Sons, the company of which he was Managing Director, staff from Hackney, the yards and wharves associated with the business were invited to The Grange to take part in the various sports and entertainments provided to mark the occasion.

## **Eliza Minami**

Re-erected under the canopy of the lych gate opposite the church but now vandalised and destroyed, was a memorial stone the inscription upon which was surely unique. In Memory of Eliza Teiske Minami, who departed this life July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1902, aged 53 years. It told us that The marriage in 1872 of the above Eliza Teiske Minami an Englishwoman with Teiske Minami a Japanese was the first known union between subjects of the two countries. Eliza Minami, née Pittman born in Brixton in May 1849, married the 24 year-old Bank Director, later to become Japanese Consul to Hong Kong, at the Kensington Register Office on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1872 followed by a ceremony at the Japanese Consulate. She lived in Japan between 1873 and 1883 but suffered the breakdown of her marriage, a subsequent divorce and return to England. This was possibly contributed to by her mental health at which time her husband complained of having been the victim of bodily violence on one occasion receiving injuries to his face, hands and legs from an alleged attack with a sword. She died of what was reported as apoplexy at 5 Wandle Terrace, Wandle Road on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1902 in a house occupied by a Miss H. Hill. How Eliza came to be there after the breakdown of her marriage and her return to England is unknown. Perhaps she was lodging with Miss Hill. Eliza's elderly father, a gardener Charles Pittman lived at 'Cecil Cottages', Bandon Hill in the 1880s and into the 1890s. Her brother James Pittman of Battersea who was probably the person responsible for having the tombstone placed above her grave reported her death.

## **The Moses or Beddington Family**

When the Carew Estates were offered for sale in 1859 Edward Henry Moses of Clapham Park was one who purchased extensive areas of land in Beddington. The land was acquired on his behalf and that of his brothers, Maurice a J.P. also of Clapham Park, and Hyam Moses of Finsbury Circus who were joint principals of a well known wholesale drapery house trading as 'The Monkswell Street Warehouse Company'. It was probably in 1866 when the Culvers Estate was offered for sale that one of the brothers Maurice, purchased 'The Limes' a substantial house near the Wandle just off what is now Culvers Avenue, Hackbridge. The brothers were a branch of the prolific Moses family who had settled in England after Cromwell lifted the Edict of Expulsion against Jews in 1656. The families concerned were mainly Ashkenazim - Jews of Dutch or German origin. Having established a connection with the district, in 1868 the five brothers changed their surname by deed poll to Beddington. This piece of affectation was said to have caused a good deal of merriment in the parish at the time, however Mr. Beddington (and here he was referring to Mr. Maurice of 'The Limes' as it is not thought that either Edward or Hyam ever lived in Beddington) despite the ridicule eventually won the respect of the neighbourhood. Beddington was a wealthy parish and at the time had at least three millionaire landowners, one of whom was Mr. Moses.

## Paper Jack

At the end of January 1935 in the darkness of early evening, an accident took place involving an elderly man and a car in Benson Road, Waddon. He was taken to the Croydon General Hospital but having suffered multiple injuries was found to be dead on arrival. Thus passed surely the most unique of all characters remembered by many not by his real name of Alfred Preece, but as the kindly, eccentric "Paper Jack". For upwards of fifteen years he had been known in the district, a slightly bowed, sun-bronzed shaggy looking man with long reddish hair and a thick beard, dressed only in brown paper or newspapers tied around his body in overlapping layers so that apart from keeping him warm they also shed the rain rather like roofing tiles. He walked either bare footed or wore portions cut from the inner tubes of car tyres on his feet.

Paper Jack was born at Holloway, north London in August 1875 and brought up in Wallington. He was the youngest son of a Cheam businessman, and the family of four sons and several daughters lived during the 1870s and '80s in a large house not far from the green in Manor Road, Wallington, a house later known as 'St. Kilda's'. At first the children were educated at Patmore's Collegiate School in a house known as 'Eaglehurst' that stood opposite the Duke's Head public house, Wallington Green. During that time Mr. Coates, formerly master of the old Beddington National School opened an establishment on the site of the former Gas Company's offices and showrooms on the corner of Stanley Park Road, so at sometime in the 1880s the boys transferred to Coates' school. The family was to move away from the district and little more is known of his youth though he lived in Croydon between 1899 and 1906 or thereabouts.

Alfred became an architect and land surveyor of some ability; was employed by his father for a time and subsequently worked as a surveyor on the Oxted section of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. During the First World War he worked in the War Office as an assistant censor decoding telegrams. When he first appeared in Croydon after the war he was wearing army surplus khaki. He married and at one time lived in Biggin Hill but his increasing eccentricity (including for a time that of living in the garden) brought about an end to the marriage. They had no children. He is reported to have said that he had taken to his unusual mode of existence when he was found to be suffering from rheumatism at which time he maintained Dr. Cressy of Wallington had advised him to live an open-air life. Being as he was also a convinced Darwinist, this may also have coloured his desire to live out of doors. He was a teetotaler and a non-smoker and the tins he used instead of plates (as he considered the latter to be unhygienic) dangled from his waist.

Despite what to most people would be the life of a strangely garbed tramp, his accent was that of a cultured man who loved to spend hours talking about literature, mathematics and history. Though strange in his ways, nonetheless he remained as described by many, a thorough gentleman, a kind and gentle man who possessed a natural reserve and dignity. He was well respected by adults and much loved by the children to whom he would chat telling them about the birds, where they nested and the wonders of nature around them. At other times, he would create roses from crepe paper or make paper balloons and would



*The eccentric Paper Jack who lived in and around the area for about fifteen years before being killed by a car in January 1935.*



often be seen taking the hands of the smaller children to see them safely across the road. On many occasions, he would produce a sweet for them from the depths of his strange garb. Every Sunday he held a school telling his young audience stories from the bible.

Referred to by all as "Paper Jack", he was provided with many a meal by kind-hearted folk in the area. The former Flossie Bown of Beddington Lane remembered her mother providing him with whatever food she had available when he called as well as giving him out of date placards from their newspaper business. She remembered his coming into the shop but would always leave if any customers were to come in, to return after they had left. Mr. and Mrs. W. Davis who at that time lived at 'Farm Cottage' opposite The Plough (part of the former Collyer-Bristow estate where the shops of The Broadway now stand) also knew him well. He visited their cottage almost daily for about eleven years and had any mail addressed to him there in the name of Preece.

Until being closed in 1932, Paper Jack dwelt alternatively in the caves opposite Plough, in the old stables on the Sandhills or in the vicinity of Swan Neck Lane that adjoined Payne's factory and the Southern Foundry. When in Waddon he slept in a shed owned by Donald Skinner a china and glass dealer of Croydon and often changed his clothing there. It was said that he regularly went to the Croydon Baths and would often be seen to wash in the Wandle though there are conflicting reports as to his state of cleanliness. He knew of the tales that spread around the district relating to him and was particularly amused about those that spoke of his being wealthy or of his having influential contacts.

The accident at about 8pm on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1935 brought about the end of a local legend. Paper Jack's body was identified by Mr. Skinner and his brother Arthur though the latter had not seen him nor been in contact for the past fifteen years. The question was to be asked - why was it that the relatives went to extraordinary lengths to keep the time and place of his burial a secret - was it just their wish for privacy? The undertakers were bound to secrecy as to the arrangements and only two relatives followed the wreath-covered coffin to the graveside. Paper Jack was interred in a common grave in the Streatham Park Cemetery although an anonymous donor had sent £15 to the Croydon Times to defray the funeral expenses with a promise to meet any further expenses should they have arisen. This offer was not accepted by his relatives and the money dispersed elsewhere. Local residents set up a memorial fund in his name and it was decided that the proceeds should be given to Croydon General Hospital to pay for a cot in the children's ward.

## **Admiral James Pigott of Beddington Lodge**

In 1791 James Pigott, then a Captain in the Royal Navy, married Sarah Proby the eldest daughter of Commander Charles Proby, Commissioner of the Royal Dockyards at Chatham. The young couple came to reside in 'Beddington Lodge' where they effectively lived the remainder of their lives notwithstanding his, no doubt, long periods away at sea. They had four children the first two of whom were twin boys, Charles the eldest who became a Lieutenant in the 77th Regiment of Foot, and William Henry who was blind from childhood. Admiral Pigott paid £950 "in the purchase of a company" for Charles in July 1819 but his son died in Jamaica in September 1825 only six years after obtaining his

commission. They also had two daughters, Frances (who married Dr. Morgan Culhane) in whose memory one of the St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses were built, and Marianne who became the second wife of the widowed Rev. James Hamilton Rector of St. Mary's.

James Pigott's distinguished naval career was such that in July 1794 he was promoted to Rear Admiral of the Blue and rose to Admiral of the Red, a promotion gained in July 1810. Referred to as "a man of gentlemanly manners and honourable mind", Admiral Pigott died on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1822 after a period of great suffering. He was buried at Beddington some eight days later. His wife Sarah outlived her husband by some nineteen years and died in June 1841. A ledger stone in the floor of the porch that is now illegible recorded the burial of both he and his wife. After her death, an Inventory was made of her possessions that gives us a glimpse within the walls of a household such as theirs in the early nineteenth century. The bedding on the four-poster beds was warm and comfortable with wool mattresses, goose feather quilts, pillows and bolsters. In the one bedroom was a Japanned dressing table, and in another a 3ft. crib bed with sliding doors, and what was described as "dignity furniture". A good supply of Sunday newspapers and the 'John Bull' dating from 1822 to 1840 were there to be read, while in another bedroom was probably her husband's sword, a leather trunk and portmanteau, linen and wearing apparel. Mrs. Pigott's jewellery and personal possessions included a coral necklace, bracelet and earrings (a remembrance from far off shores?), watch, gold seals, her diamond rings, earrings and a diamond shirt pin all of which indicate a family in comfortable circumstances.

Among other possessions in the drawing room, there were over two hundred books and a carved ivory puzzle. A large blue and drab Venetian carpet in the front sitting room provided a degree of comfort and in the dining room an 8ft. 6in. mahogany table, chairs and a 5ft. sideboard stood on a further thirty yards of Kidderminster fitted carpet. The plate and glass was also listed along with the well-stocked cellar of in total one hundred and sixty-nine bottles of sherry, port, gin and brandy and some seven-dozen bottles of homemade wine.

### **Sir Christopher Robinson of Brandries Hill House**

Sir Christopher Robinson P.C., LL.D (1766-1833) a graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford succeeded the Wall family's occupancy of 'Brandries Hill House'. Knighted on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1809, he became an Admiralty Lawyer appointed King's Advocate-General (1809), Tory Member of Parliament for Callington, Cornwall (1818-1820), Chancellor of the Diocese of London and in 1821, Judge of the Consistory Court. In 1828, he was appointed a Judge of the High Court of Admiralty and Privy Councillor, and published legal writings. His tenure of the house lasted from 1811 to 1821 though two years after coming to Beddington he purchased the property outright. Robinson also had a connection with the Baring's for when his parliamentary representation for Callington was in doubt he was supported by the Baring family.

### **Simpson Rostron of Woodlands and Riverside**

Simpson Rostron (1833-1907) a former Barrister in Practice and one who, as a Justice of the Peace sat in the Epsom and Croydon Police Courts for seventeen years, for some time

lived in 'Woodlands' a house on the west side of Beddington Lane opposite Therapia Lane before moving to 'Riverside' in Bridges Lane. He was also a Churchwarden, a member of the Beddington Parish Council and Chairman of the local Conservative Party.

He was called to the Bar in 1855, and at the time of his death was a Director of the South Metropolitan Gas Company and involved with the City of Buenos Ayres Tramway Company Ltd. He married Christina Riley, who apart from raising the family at home also ministered to the poor. They had a family of eight children one of whom, their third child Beatrix (b.1873 at their home in Beddington Lane) was created Dame in 1924. The honour was awarded for her untiring work not only in politics, but her involvement in the Mothers' Union, social work and high public profile during both the First and Second World Wars. Simpson Rostron died after a brief illness on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1907, aged 74 and was buried beneath a celtic cross in the churchyard at Beddington along with members of his family.

### **Albert Saw of Richmond Road**

At the age of fourteen, in 1878 Albert Saw came to work at the Beddington Sewage Farm along with the manager Mr. Parrott. He was to remain working there for fifty years despite at the age of eleven having lost his arm in a pulping machine accident while working on a farm at Ash, near Guildford. He first lived in Beddington Lane before moving to 3 Richmond Road. Very much a public-spirited man he was involved in having started Croydon Co-operative Society's store in a small shop opposite the parish church. He was a member of the Labour party very much concerned with the welfare of his fellow workers and became a councillor with the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council. For nearly fifty years he was an umpire of real merit for the Beddington Cricket Team; was a founding member of the Beddington Social Club and had been Honorary Secretary of the Beddington Slate Club for thirty-four years. For a very long time he was a sidesman at Beddington church having regularly attended there in the time of Canon Bridges through to the rectorship of the Rev. A. H. Hodgson who was likewise a keen cricketer. Albert Saw died at the age of seventy-two in 1936.

### **John Shaw of Beddington Lodge**

Croydon born John Shaw, his wife Dorothy and their family lived in 'Beddington Lodge', Beddington Lane, for over fifty years until his death in June 1900 at the great age of ninety-four. He must have been a sprightly gentleman as Bentham tells us he hunted regularly until the age of eighty-six. In 1868, a John Shaw was Secretary to the South Eastern Railway Company but it is not known if they were one and the same.

He was however solicitor to the extremely wealthy and reclusive 5th Duke of Portland whose eccentricities included the erection of a ground glass and cast-iron wall some 80ft. high and 200ft. long that enclosed the garden of 'Harcourt House' his Cavendish Square, London home to exclude the possibility of his being glimpsed by any other than his household. Mr Shaw's employer's personal foibles also included the wearing of a topper, a hat about two feet high, of tying his trousers at the knee navy-fashion and of wearing a long, heavy overcoat whatever the weather. Posthumously the Duke (who died a childless bachelor in 1879) was to become the central figure in the celebrated 'Druce-Portland' case

involving a fraudulent claim to the Portland fortunes that was to intrigue London society some seventeen years after his death. As to whether Mr. Shaw would have been called to give evidence is not known. Then an old man, if capable of doing so, he would no doubt have followed proceedings with great interest but he was not to live long enough to learn the ultimate outcome of the case.

## **Alfred Smee and his garden at The Grange**

Alfred Smee (1818-1877) was born at Camberwell the second son of William Smee then Accountant General to the Bank of England. He became a student at St. Paul's school from where at the age of sixteen he entered King's College, London to study medicine later entering St. Bartholomew's Hospital where he specialised in surgery treating diseases of the eye long before the days of accepted specialists.

In June 1840 aged twenty-two he married Elizabeth Hutchison who became the mother of their two children, a son Alfred Hutchison Smee and a daughter Elizabeth Odling. It was Elizabeth who described her father as being "a sober man, singularly handsome with curly hair that had become grey by the age of eighteen and with the most remarkable eyes, his most striking feature". She further described him as being "as careless about his papers as he was indifferent about his dress".

His was a distinguished career. In January 1841 he was appointed a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and when only twenty-three, Surgeon to the Bank of England. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society in his twenties; was made a Fellow of the Hunterian Society; in 1842 appointed Surgeon to the Royal General Dispensary and a Fellow of the Chemical Society. He was also an inventor of note including photographic and electrical devices and patented a storage battery. His interest in electrical science and electro-metallurgy led to other inventions including that of electro-typing put to use in the printing of cheques and notes for the Bank of England. He became a well-known and prolific author of some twelve books on such diverse subjects as 'Electro-Metallurgy', the 'Potato and Plant Health', 'The Eye in Health and Disease' and 'A Fairy Legend'. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society and a member of their Scientific and Fruit Committee, interests he directly applied to the creation of his garden in the area of what we know of today as The Grange.

Smee first came to Wallington in about 1857-8 to rent the trout fishing on the Wandle and shortly after obtained a narrow strip of land upon which he set about creating an experimental garden where he grew various kinds of vegetables to supply his London home. The land known today as Grange Park was a barren field (a former bleaching ground in which stood a small factory built by a Mr. Grubb) over which it was impossible to walk without sinking above your knees in water. Tall elms marked the boundary with the road, a few willows divided it almost mid-way and a little thicket of trees in Beddington Park enclosed it on another side.

In 1771 the area was owned by John Filby but by 1870 it was in the ownership of three people; William Bridges of Wallington Manor, land that included "buildings" (the mill) "and fishing"; Edward Beynon, "a stack yard and barn"; and Joseph Borsley, "land".

Smee's dream became a reality as the eight acres of marsh and water gradually became available, initially to lease and later to purchase. One part, buildings (Wallington Mill, assorted cottages, outbuildings) and fishing initially leased from the Wallington Manor estate he purchased in October 1874. A further portion abutting on London Road that had been subject of a three hundred year lease from September 1866, assigned to him in October 1874 was purchased in February 1875 and finally, "the greater part" purchased in July 1878 a year after his father's death by his son Alfred Hutchinson Smee. On 1st August 1872 he had also rented land from Nathaniel Bridges; an area known as 'Bumkins Field' (being part of a plot of meadow land formerly known as 'Park Field') to the south of the millpond.

From about 1858 the creation of his garden gained momentum that was, according to his daughter, "to become the largest collection of fruit-trees and other species of plants of any private collection in Europe". His medical practice was in Finsbury Circus, London but he employed a team of gardeners who worked on the site all week. On most Saturday mornings he took the children to the garden to be joined by their mother in the afternoon; on other occasions he stayed at accommodation he had taken at 'The Greyhound' in Carshalton.

He planned the garden so that it could not be seen overall, that it would only be fully revealed to those willing to explore. Visitors would have to walk around the whole garden to appreciate its many beauties and hidden surprises, and while doing so gained the impression that it was larger than indeed it was. Flowers, fruit, vegetables and exotic trees were blended together; fruit and vegetable plots would alternate with shrubs and flower beds all planted in such a way as to harmonise with one another and to complement not only each other but other garden features such as the croquet lawn nearby to which stood a summer house covered in roses. A spring fed stream not only drained the area but also marked the boundary with Beddington Park close to which he created a Pear Tree Walk, a ceiling of white blossom in the spring, shade in the summer and a harvest of fruit in the autumn. Likewise the Apple Tree Walk, with different varieties of apples. In the centre of his garden by another stream was the Alpinerly with over three hundred plants many of which he collected while on a family holiday in the valley of Zermatt, Switzerland in the summer of 1859.

The millpond was utilised to form another stream that, as it does today, tumbled over rocks to create the cool atmosphere and beauty of a wild fern valley. The seemingly endless delights however were not only created to give pleasure and to show how those of very moderate means might enjoy a garden, a greenhouse or whatever, but all had a firm basis in science. In 1872 he published the highly prized book entitled 'My Garden' within which he gives a description of the locality, the river, the geology of the area, the natural flora and fauna of the district, the flowers, shrubs, trees, the fruit and vegetables he grew, even to the tools he used. He described the experiments he undertook and his delight in the creation of, and the rewards his garden gave him.

Apart from the fruit, vegetables and flowers he grew for his London home he also caught fish (mainly trout and eels) in the Wandle and confined young swans in a pen in the watercress brook to be fattened and killed for eating. Smee provided a wide fish ladder (a

stepped-like feature by the millpond in Grange Park) to allow the upstream migration of fish bypassing the weir allowing the elvas to complete their journey upstream during May to July. Those eels returning to the sea during July to September were not always as fortunate for a wooden-barred trap was placed below the floodgates on the weir to capture them for the table.

From May 1<sup>st</sup>, the first day of trout fishing, and during the summer months Smee and his wife entertained their guests in a simple rustic summer house as there was no overnight accommodation within the garden. Family and guests played croquet on the lawns, walked along the pathways and visited the glasshouses. A few weeks after publication of 'My Garden' in August 1872, he gave a fête on the occasion of the marriage of their daughter Elizabeth. As there was no residence attached to The Grange and as it was during a period of vacancy he hired Wallington Manor House to accommodate guests who were attending this "very grand affair". To mark the occasion Smee invited local school children to gather and exhibit wild flowers found growing in the neighbourhood so as "to develop them in intelligence, observation, emulation and the sense of the beautiful". He gave books as prizes to those who exhibited the most beautiful and varied collections and to those thought to be arranged with the best taste, perhaps something conservationists would frown upon today. The greatest number was a collection of ninety-three different varieties of wildflower. The event proved a great success and contributed much to the interest and excitement of the day.

Though he was very much involved in his family, his career, scientific experiments along with the creation of his garden, Alfred Smee remained a concerned and public-spirited man. He took local issues in hand including that arising in the 1860s when the Croydon Board of Health had allowed the continued sewage pollution of the river. The water had become so foul at a time when diphtheria was also rife within the village that it became a question of whether he should abandon the fishery and the garden altogether. Determined to make a stand to stop this pollution he commenced agitation that, with intervals, lasted two years. Along with two other landowners their efforts were so successful that on one Christmas Day members of the Croydon Local Board were so very near being sent to prison in default it was reputedly only Smee's influence prevented this from happening. Subsequently greater measures were to be introduced to safeguard the health of the local people with the opening of the first sewage treatment works in 1871. Smee also found time to contest the parliamentary seat of Rochester as a Conservative in 1865, in 1868 and again in 1874, but on each occasion without success.

Some five days after his death on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1877 at his London residence 7 Finsbury Circus, Alfred Smee then in his 60th year was interred in the new burial ground opposite the church in Beddington. Two years later, in 1879 his wife Elizabeth then aged sixty-one, died and was buried beside her husband. When in 1963 the burial ground was effectively cleared, the memorial inscription on the plinth of their grave was incorporated in the Wall of Remembrance.

Formerly sited within one of the larger greenhouses, now on the same site but in the open beside a sunken path near to lavender beds is Smee's dedication stone of polished grey marble, surrounded by ferns and greenery behind a small spring fed pool. Outlining the

aims of the garden, in Latin it reads '*Lucem Lucrum Ludum*' which loosely translated means in the Light (of Knowledge?) for Profit or Gain, Recreation or Pleasure.

## **Alfred Hutchison Smee of The Grange**

Alfred Hutchison Smee (1841-1901) J.P., C.C., lived a life that in many respects mirrored that of his father. Born at Finsbury Circus in 1841, he too was educated at St. Paul's School before going on to Christ Church College, Oxford where he also studied medicine. The obituary published following his death in November 1901 outlined the many activities, interests and pursuits in which he was involved ranging from being a Fellow of the Chemical Society, to the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society. As his father, he also campaigned to preserve the beauty, purity and flow of the river Wandle. Likewise, politically he was a staunch Conservative and was elected as representative for the Wallington Division at the formation of the Surrey County Council. One particularly memorable social event over which he presided in August 1885 was that described as "probably the event of the year", a garden party held at The Grange to which over a thousand guests had been invited. The rain poured down all day almost without a break necessitating all the conservatories being opened to the guests along with the large marquee that had been erected for the dispensing of refreshments. A political meeting followed in the marquee during the evening.

## **The Sprules Family of Holmwood**

In the 1850s, Carew land located on the west side of Beddington Lane; fields that stretched from the lane as far across as the Carshalton/Mitcham Road were let to the lavender and herb grower William Sprules. This area included land known as the 158 acre Lower Homestead and adjoining Mitcham New Inclosure, the latter of which, owing to administrative boundary changes though south of the railway were then in Mitcham

Born in Mitcham in 1811, by 1842 William Sprules was leasing a house known as 'The Limes' located by the Wandle in Carshalton about a quarter of a mile from Hackbridge Station on part of the Culvers estate. It consisted of a farm of about 18 acres that had among the outbuildings, a mill and still house. By 1851 he was employing twenty labourers on fields in Cheam, North Cheam, Sutton Common and Beddington Lane where by 1859 "he had lately pulled down two cottages" and built a house named 'Holmwood' that stood immediately south of the railway. Built on Carew land, by agreement he would remain as tenant until 1864 on condition that at the expiration of this term he was to be allowed a fair valuation for the property.

At the break up of the Carew estates the land William Sprules farmed was purchased in part by both Edward Henry Moses of Clapham Park and William Goad of Hackbridge who also bought other land in the area. At some time, presumably around 1864 when his agreement had expired he and his family moved to 40 Melbourne Road, Wallington where he built a distillery to process the lavender and herbs he grew on fields that are then said to have stretched from Boundary Road to Manor Road and to the south of Wallington railway station.

In their father's declining years a daughter Sarah along with two of her sisters ran the business overseeing the growing and distilling of herbs and when he died in 1893 at the age of eighty-two she took over full responsibility and carried on the business for another nineteen years. Though she did not then cultivate any land herself, until her death in 1912 Miss Sprules had many clients who grew lavender, roses, camomile and peppermint sending their crops to her for distillation. She also employed a number of women to sell her essences and wares on a commission basis.

Miss Sarah Sprules is described as being "a charming busy old lady" who was granted a patent to use the royal Coat of Arms when she became by Special Appointment, 'Purveyor of Lavender Essence to the Queen'. She also walked with Queen Victoria when the latter came to Wallington to view the beauty of the lavender fields for herself. By the turn of the century with the decline of Mitcham, Wallington had become known as the main centre of lavender growing, the fields of flowers there and in Carshalton, Beddington, Waddon and Sutton making the train journey from West Croydon a particularly memorable experience. The distillery near the east end of Melbourne Road was demolished in about 1936-1937.

### **Steadman Family of Church Lane**

The Steadman family were of long residence in Church Lane. In 1905 reference is made to William Steadman then aged 58 (who "comes from a family long in the service of the Carew family and was born in Beddington..."), who entered the service of Mr. Tritton when about sixteen years old. He was afterwards a cowman and remained in the service of the Tritton family until about 1877. Reference is also made to James Steadman (also of Church Lane) who went as a garden lad to Mrs. Tritton about 1880 and was in her employ for nineteen years, the latter part of the time as head gardener and factotum. In 1893 Mrs. E. Steadman occupied one of the 'Elm Cottages'.

### **Bess Throckmorton and Sir Walter Raleigh**

Nicholas Throckmorton Carew's youngest sister Elizabeth (Bess) also had close ties with Beddington as she was probably born at the manor. She was baptised in St. Mary's church on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1565. Their mother Anne Throckmorton, Nicholas Carew VI's sister no doubt spent much time in the company of her brother as her husband (who was in the foreign service) spent much of his time in France. Bess who for some seven years had been a Gentlewoman of the Queen's Chamber (a lady-in-waiting) to Queen Elizabeth I met Sir Walter Raleigh (the celebrated Elizabethan coloniser and explorer) who had formed the Queen's innermost circle of courtiers and had soon become one of her favourites.

The Queen granted Raleigh several administrative posts along with, in June 1592, confirmation of the transfer of 'Sherborne' in Dorset. An adventurer at heart, he mounted several expeditions of exploration and after Sir Humphrey Gilbert was lost at sea in 1583, he took over his leading roll in the attempt to found an English colony in America. The result was 'Virginia' that he named after the 'Virgin Queen' who bestowed a knighthood upon him. In about 1591 however Raleigh enraged the Queen when she belatedly discovered he had also been playing court to Bess Throckmorton, inspiration and heroine



of Sir Edward German's light opera 'Merrie England'. At about the age of twenty-six she had become pregnant and around November 1591 had secretly married him.

In August 1592, while resident at Nonsuch Palace the Queen signed a warrant for Bess's arrest and imprisonment. Raleigh had already set out on yet another expedition when the Queen heard of the marriage. Such was her wrath that she sent a ship to intercept him off the coast of Spain and ordered him to return. Both he and Bess were sent to The Tower as prisoners and held in custody apart from one another. In mid-September 1592 after only five weeks imprisonment Raleigh was called upon to do the Queen's service and released though Bess was to remain in prison for six months. She was released only after the death of her son Damerei; she neither was forgiven nor saw the Queen again.

Unlike her husband, Bess remained publicly unrepentant demonstrating the pride and strength of character she inherited from her mother. She celebrated the fact of her marriage never showing anything other than a completely loyal and devoted front. Showing an inexcusable weakness in his quest for power and position, Raleigh at first did not even refer to her (as there is a complete silence about her in his correspondence) for he clearly believed that she had ruined his political career. It was in a letter nearly three years after their marriage that he at last acknowledged her existence but he championed her thereafter. Excluded from court, the couple began a new life centred in Sherbourne. Their second son Wat (Walter) named after his father was born in 1594. Raleigh had been a rising star of the court in the 1580s and despite his marriage remained relatively high in the Queen's favour. Having been thus reconciled with the ageing Queen there was no place for him under a new dynasty when in 1603 Elizabeth died and James I arrived in England.

In their correspondence with James I even before the Queen's death, the Lords Cecil and Howard in order to ingratiate themselves with the prospective king had persuaded him that Raleigh was an atheist, a republican, a warmonger and a rake. They maligned him to the degree that at the accession Raleigh was dismissed from all his offices. Late in 1603, he was accused of a totally unfounded charge of treason, of a conspiracy with the Spaniards to place Lady Arabella Stuart (the great-granddaughter of Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and a cousin of James I) on the throne. Though the case against him was unproven, on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1603 he was sentenced to death. On the very morning he was to die he was granted a stay of execution and conveyed to The Tower where he was to languish for thirteen years though living as unrestricted a life as was possible in such circumstances. Bess and their son were allowed to visit and stay with him, dividing their time between her husband's quarters in the Tower of London and a rented house in London (probably on Tower Hill), her house at Mitcham and their estate at Sherborne. During this time a third son was born, in 1605, christened Carew Raleigh (after his godfather Richard Carew) in St. Peter's Chapel within the walls of the Tower. It was while imprisoned Raleigh wrote his 'History of the World' and both he and Bess became well known for their skills in the making of remedies.

By 1616 King James was in such desperate need of money that on March 19<sup>th</sup> Raleigh was conditionally released from prison to make what would be his last voyage, to search for fabled gold 'El Dorado' in the area of the Orinoco River in Guiana, South America. To

finance this venture Raleigh sold a manor in Mitcham that was his wife's dowry and he sailed with a Commission under the Great Seal giving him the belief he had been implicitly pardoned. The expedition of 1617 was a series of failures however and ended in tragedy. Though he had assured James that he could avoid conflict with Spain who was then allied with Britain there was a hostile meeting with the Spaniards, a battle ensued at which time his son Wat who had accompanied his father on the expedition was killed. In 1618 Raleigh returned home, aged in his early 60s with no rewards, bereft of a son, weakened by years of imprisonment and the harsh conditions of an expedition such as this; a broken anguished man. James, furious at the risk to cordial Anglo-Spanish relations arrested him and offered to hand him over to Philip III for execution in Spain though the offer was not taken up. The death sentence imposed some fifteen years previously that had been suspended but never reprieved was re-imposed and Raleigh was imprisoned in the gatehouse of the Old Palace, Westminster.

In view of his then popularity with those who regarded Raleigh as one of the last great Elizabethan's there had been no further trial; Bess had been excluded from sharing her husband's final days and had been placed under house arrest during that time. She was however very much a lady of spirit. She fought hard for a reprieve by writing letters and arranging petitions but only came away with permission to arrange for the burial of her husband's body. Despite the years he had spent in prison Raleigh was executed in the seclusion of the Old Palace Yard in the morning of October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1618. He was sixty-four. The authorities were so anxious to prevent an outburst of popular resentment on his behalf that they arranged counter interests elsewhere. It was considered politic to remove his body from the scene as quickly and as discreetly as possible and not to impale his head on a spike on London Bridge as was usual with those who were held to be traitors. It was equally certain his body could not be allowed to be conveyed through day-lit streets. His body therefore was taken to the nearest parish church, St. Margaret's, Westminster where it lay at least for a short interval at which time an entry was made upon one line in the parish registers: "Sr. Walter Rawleigh Knight October 1618".

As she was not to know the outcome of her appeals until late the evening before and though she had no doubt spoken with her brother as to the possibility of her failure, following her husband's execution Lady Raleigh sent a letter in haste to Sir Nicholas. It read —

"To my best brother, Sir Nicholas Carew at Beddington. I desair, good brother, that you will be pleased to let me berri the worthy boddi of my nobell hosbar Sir Walter Raleigh in your Church at Beddington - wher I desair to be berrid. The lordes have given me his ded boddi, though they denyed me his life. This nit [night] hee shall be brought to you with two or three of my men. Let her [hear] presently. E.R. God holde me in my Wites [wits]."

Meanwhile, after decapitation, his head was reputedly placed in a red leathern bagge over which his velvet nightgown was thrown and the whole conveyed away in a mourning coach provided by Lady Raleigh. The head was embalmed and she is said to have preserved this macabre and sad momento during her entire widowhood. The year of her death has been given as 1647, at the advanced age of eighty-two but this has yet to be confirmed. Their son Carew, who inherited West Horsley Place, on her death reputedly

had the head put to rest in the Nicholas chapel of St. Mary's Church at West Horsley near Guildford, Surrey where he and two of his grandchildren (who all died during an epidemic in 1660) are also buried.

Bess Throckmorton, Lady Raleigh, the woman who secretly married the man she loved despite what she knew would be the consequences, who endured periods of imprisonment both alone and beside her husband; the woman who conducted endless law suits to regain their property that she felt had been unlawfully confiscated; who never remarried — this was not the kind of woman who, since she wanted her husband buried at Beddington would settle for anything less. There is no entry in the Beddington Registers as to his possible burial here but this well may be accounted for by the need of discretion with Raleigh having been deemed a traitor. Sir Nicholas would wish to carry out his sister's request but he would also wish to keep the matter as quiet as possible to avoid the risk the displeasure of James I and of jeopardising his own position.

There are many who feel that those who visit St. Margaret's are paying homage to him in the wrong church. A brass put up at St. Margaret's in 1845 claiming the church as his place of burial was a copy of a wooden tablet set up in 1818 on no greater evidence than the one line in the parish register; even the spelling of his name Rawleigh was inaccurate in so far that none of Sir Walter's recognised signatures bears that spelling. Some day we may know the answer and the church at Beddington will receive the recognition and greater distinction than it already deserves. Nor do we know where Bess was buried following her death. Though during the mid-seventeenth century the Beddington parish registers were very poorly kept might she have been quietly and secretly buried beside her husband, as she had so desired? Though widely researched, no entry of her burial has ever been found.

## **The Tritton Family of the Portioner's House and Wandle Court**

**John Henton Tritton** whose descendents were later to become synonymous with 'Wandle Court', on coming to Beddington in 1797 took up residence in the 'Portioner's House', a south facing building off what became the later Church Road. At the same time he rented a field, probably that known as 'Sharp[e]s' that lay to the front and east of the house. Access was either by Freron Lane or via a circular drive across Sharp[e]s the latter of which the Rev. Ferrers was the proprietor. In 1823, the house was referred to as the 'Parsonage' and was also the home of the Rev. Tritton. John Henton Tritton lived there for at least the next thirty-six years until his death in his 79th year on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1833.

John Henton Tritton (1755-1833) was the eldest child of an eminent Quaker businessman Thomas Tritton and his wife Ann. Thomas Tritton owned the Ashford Brewery and in 1763 purchased the Wandsworth Brewery both of which upon his death in 1786 passed to the second surviving son, George. John Henton Tritton their eldest child born at Ashford on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1755 two years after coming of age became a partner with a share in the business of a bank his maternal grandfather Henton Brown had founded that had subsequently become known as Brown, Collinson and Tritton. Instructions in his grandfather's will had nominated J.H.T. to be a partner after his having received instruction by apprenticeship and on coming of age, and furthermore directed that he

should have a quarter share in the business then carried on by his son James Brown and his son-in-law Thomas Collinson. Arising from the failure of this bank, essentially not of their making, at Christmas 1782 John Henton Tritton made a new start by joining Barclay and Co. and generated enough new business that by June 1783 he became a partner with a quarter-share. The style of the firm then became Barclay, Bevan, Barclay and Tritton. Two months later he married Mary Barclay (the eldest daughter of John Barclay) and they were to have four children, three sons and a daughter. He was subsequently to become the Principal Partner in the business. For a number of years the family lived at various addresses in London and held property there; he is described as being of Gloucester Place, Portman Square and of Lombard Street, London. For a short time the family occupied a house in Bromley (from 1795) before in 1797 coming to Beddington.

John Henton Tritton, described “as never relaxing his attention to business ... a most deliberate and exact man” was said to be particularly fond of good horses and must have found his frequent journeys to London, though attended by some small risk from footpads, was not without its pleasures. Upon his death, his nephew Robert Barclay wrote of him as “a man of extreme caution, inflexible integrity, firmness in business, and one of calmness of mind, sound judgement and experience, [and] kindness of heart”. He had occupied the post of Honorary Secretary of the London Clearing Bankers, was one of the Principal Proprietors of Battersea Bridge, one of the first Directors of the Imperial Insurance Company, and was one who lost a good deal of money in the Surrey Iron Railway venture. His wife Mary who had become blind in her later years died in her 71st year in February 1827 and was buried in a vault within the church. Her husband who survived her by some six years (d.1833) also lies within the church, interred within the same vault along with their daughter Mary, who died in September 1852 aged 56.

**Henry Tritton (1815-1877)** When he purchased ‘Wandle Court’ on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1845 it would not have been his first introduction to Beddington as his grandfather John Henton Tritton had lived in the mansion referred to as ‘The Portioner’s House’ in Beddington Park for some thirty-six years. Henry Tritton, both of Portland Place and Beddington who came from a family of bankers and brewers was born on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1815 while his parents Henry (the second son of John Henton Tritton) and Amelia were living in a house “near The Plough in Clapham”. Though not trained for banking (he was a shareholder in a foundry) Henry Snr. had succeeded to the Tritton share of the banking business on the death of his elder brother John. Burdened with ill health however, he died in 1838, when aged only forty-eight.

Barring unforeseen circumstances therefore Henry Tritton Jnr’s future seemed to have been mapped out at an early age. At the age of thirteen in 1828 he went to Charterhouse School then to the Bank in Lombard Street where he became a Partner at the age of twenty-three on the death of his father. He married Elizabeth Maxwell (d.1901), daughter of the Rev. Patrick Maxwell at Marylebone in April 1839 and their family numbered ten, three sons and seven daughters. He is described as being a loving family man and was devoted to the Church of England. He contributed largely to the building of All Saints Church, Margaret Street in London designed by the renowned architect William Butterfield. It was only when the church was consecrated in May 1859 and the list of donors published it was disclosed that about half the cost of the building was contributed

by Henry Tritton such was his personal fortune and generosity. During the years they lived at Beddington the family also became major benefactors not only to the church but also to local institutions. Henry Tritton purchased the freehold of the Carew chapel involving his architect William Butterfield in its re-decoration and minor re-organisation. It was at this time he paid for the restoration of the brasses on the tomb of Sir Richard Carew from etchings held at the British Museum.

Following the auction of Carew lands in the summer of 1859 Henry Tritton became one of the major landowners in Beddington. His last illness was an attack of scarlet fever, an unusual complaint at the age of sixty-two. He died at Beddington on the morning of January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1877 following what had been described as one of the notable gales of the century. He had arisen from his sick bed to view the damage caused by the wind the previous evening, collapsed and died shortly after. He was buried beneath an impressive mediaeval style pink marble sarcophagus in the new burial ground opposite the church.

At the time of his death in 1877, his holdings in the Beddington area (excluding Wandle Court and the cottages uphill in Hilliers Lane) included the freehold of the Carew chapel; the ancient Carew garden boundary wall along Church Path along with a parallel strip of land 3ft. within the Orphanage grounds held under a covenant with the Guardians of the Female Orphan Asylum. Apart from the Bridge Meadow area he also owned the land opposite the Orphanage known today as The Paddock along with The Warren; land at the northern end of today's Streeters Lane (in 1859 known as Hodges Field now the site of the Church Paddock estate of houses) and the adjoining land that of later years became an orchard upon which the eight houses numbered 18 to 32 Church Lane were built. He also owned land uphill on the west side of Guy Road known as 'Live and Repent Field' along with that which was later to become watercress beds now park land on the north side of the river opposite the lower part of Guy Road. His executors sanctioned two sales of land and buildings, one in 1888 and a second in 1901 following the death of Mrs. Tritton.

The Tritton family continued to use the Carew chapel as a family and household place of worship until the death of Mrs. Tritton in June 1901 twenty-four years after the death of her husband. The chapel was sold and purchased by their son-in-law John Henry Bridges who had married Edith Isabella, Henry and Elizabeth's youngest child, both of whom are buried in Ewell. Another daughter Catherine married the Rev. C. R. Sharpe, Canon Bridges' Senior Curate. Sisters, Mary Eleanor (1852-1927) and Elizabeth Ann (d.1917) and an older brother Wilfred Francis (1849-1930) never married and are all buried at Beddington beneath the leger vault in the churchyard extension.

**Henry John Tritton (1842-1922)** the eldest son who had been born in Beddington was admitted as a junior partner to the family firm of Messrs. Barclay, Bevan, Tritton & Co. in June 1866. He was the one upon whom the whole of the Tritton interest in the bank devolved upon the death of his father in 1877, and though retiring from the banking firm in 1878, under an arrangement he retained an interest in the profits. Whilst living at Ewell, in 1881 he purchased Tadworth Court and one hundred and forty-three acres of land from Lord Aveland for the sum of £25,000 but owned the house for only four years, from 1881 until 1885. In 1888 he was living at Down Cottage, Epsom. Although he had retired from the bank he retained a particular interest in the Militia in which he held the positions of

Captain of the King's Own Light Infantry and later of Major of the Middlesex Yeomanry. By 1888, his personal finances were in the hands of the official receiver and appearing before a bankruptcy court.

## **Joseph Harvey Trollope of Queenswood**

At the time he purchased the 'Queenswood' estate at Beddington in 1885, Joseph Trollope was a partner in the company of Messrs. George Trollope and Sons who were well known building developers involved in some of the largest building contracts ever undertaken in the UK. Joseph was born on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1828 at Westminster, the son of George Trollope, and he married Madalina Woollright of Liverpool in April 1856 at St. Margaret's church, Edgware. For a time they lived in Pimlico before moving to the newly built 'Barham House' in Streatham, where at least the two youngest of their five children were born.

Having settled into life at Beddington, Joseph Trollope soon became a Churchwarden and in 1886 his wife (of some thirty years) Madalina, agreed to serve as a Lady Visitor to the girls at the Female Orphanage. She was to remain in this capacity until her death on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1900.

When he was a young man the late Bert Appleby of Beddington Lane worked as an under-gardener on the Queenswood estate. His memories were of Mr. Trollope then an elderly man in retirement, small but solid in stature, who as with other members of the family had little direct contact with the estate employees. Joseph and Madalina had a family of two sons and three daughters. It was one of the daughters Mr. Appleby recalled as frequently seeing in the grounds riding side-saddle, a lady seemingly then of about middle age, slimly built and of very upright stature though she too was totally detached from those in their employ; at least from the outdoor employees. The family regularly worshipped at St Mary's and in fine weather walked across to the church via the wooded Queen Elizabeth's Walk (at that time enclosed within their property) and out through a gateway onto the high footpath. Mr. Appleby recalled the only time he had occasion to enter the house was when after Mr. Trollope had died (on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1914), they were shown into his bedroom to view and pay their last respects to their eighty-six year old former employer. Early the following morning, Mr. Trollope was conveyed to the church on a wheeled bier and that afternoon buried in the ground opposite the church. The family had resided at Queenswood for a total of some twenty-nine years.

## **Frederick Walker A.R.A., O.W.S. (1840-1875)**

From the mid-1860s it might not have been unusual to see a short (no more than 5ft. 1½in. or 5ft. 2in.) earnest looking, very thoughtful and silent young man with a sketchbook or possibly with an easel and canvas under his arm around and about in the locality. The young man would probably have been Frederick Walker, born in Marylebone May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1840, on an excursion whilst visiting his twin sister Sarah and her husband, Sherry Shipper John George Marks who, having moved from Croydon in midsummer 1863 lived in the 'Thatched Cottage' off Therapia Lane. Standing by itself in the fields the cottage and its occupants, outbuildings and garden along with scenes in the immediate area were

depicted by Frederick Walker in a number of paintings undertaken during the period his sister and family lived both in Croydon and at Beddington.

It was from here Sarah's brother then in his early twenties would wander on his solitary walks gaining inspiration from what he saw about him. He painted the river, the churchyard with gravediggers at work, the old wall along Church Path and the springtime beauty of the nearby Primrose Wood also referred to on maps as Thornton Shaw that marked the boundary with Croydon south of the Fever Hospital. Gypsies on the common off Beddington Lane were the inspiration for 'The Vagrants' but by then having moved off, his sister posed as the principal figure. Steadman's violet fields (where he often "suffered the grins and probably the company of his hands" i.e. the owner's employees) were another location. He painted members of his sister's family in their own domestic surroundings, in the poultry yard and by the blossom-laden tree in the garden. At least twenty of his works in part or in whole are known to have been painted in the district.

In 1863 he began exhibiting at the Royal Academy; recognised as one of the finest Victorian Romantic painters whose highly prized and much sought after paintings feature in galleries and private collections throughout the world. He died of consumption on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1875 whilst in Scotland shortly after his 35th birthday; he was returned to England and lies buried in Cookham churchyard.

'Thatched Cottage' was also a meeting place of Henry Stacey Marks R.A., R.W.S., R.E. (1829-1898), Sarah's brother-in-law. Henry, described as "a brilliant pen-and-ink draughtsman, a realistic animal painter and one of the best bird painters this country has ever seen", was commissioned by Canon Bridges to design decorative plaques for the billiard room at Beddington House. He and Frederick Walker had become friends when they studied art together at Leigh's Academy and the Royal Academy Schools, some time before they were to have a family connection.

John and Sarah's third son Geoffrey Marks C.B.E. (1864-1938), born at Beddington and educated at Whitgift Grammar School, Croydon, became an actuary and insurance company general manager. He married Alys Mary Bridges who died in 1930.

## FARMS, FIELDS AND ALLOTMENTS

### Church Mead

Awarded to benefit the poor by the Enclosure Commissioners in 1812, Church Mead was a strip of land that lay on the north side of the river near to the mill. In February 1786 it was let to the snuff miller John Williamson for 6d. per annum and in October 1881 sold by the then Trustees of Charity Lands (Churchwardens Robert Pott and George Simonds) to Gideon Smith local landowner and builder for £132 18s. The Kingston Gardens estate of houses and part of Petersham Terrace now occupy the site.

### Goose Green Allotments

The Goose Green allotments today administered by the London Borough of Sutton, formerly by the parish, was one of the allotments of freehold wasteland consolidated by the Enclosure Award of December 1812.

For almost a century prior to the award however Goose Green had been set aside for the benefit of the poor and it is noted that on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1802 an agreement was reached between Richard Carew of Orpington, Lord of the Manor on behalf of the Parish and Charles Wall, that the latter rent Goose Green (as it was even then known) described as being “of little use or value” for £9 10s. per annum for a period of twenty-one years. It was thought far more beneficial to the poor to enclose and let the land and to apply the rent to benefit the poor rates of the parish. In August 1830, James Baker occupied the land. [Goose Green lay not far from another field known as Church Mead (in 1786 let to John Williamson), both areas being described as “with a foundation before 1725”.]

In 1820 referred to as waste land Goose Green was probably then a marshy area where geese roamed freely to feed and water. Less than a century earlier, it would appear that as it does today, the Wandle branched upstream of the mill but with the northern stream then flowing diagonally across the end of Goose Green to its north-west corner, thence beneath the outbuildings of Beddington Lodge and along the northern boundary of the Carew mansion garden.

The Goose Green allotments were undoubtedly well watered as in later years the brook that flowed from the springs that fed the watercress beds on what is now Richmond Green, by then having been diverted to the east and northern boundaries of the field, was again diverted to the front of the plots to enclose the allotments on three sides. Along the northern boundary lined with pollarded willows, a penstock (or sluice) checked its flow, and on the west side by Beddington Lane were two douse holes one to either side of the gate into which the gardeners could lower their buckets to water their plots before mains water was laid on. The stream was then enclosed within a drain beneath Beddington Lane but in times of heavy rainfall water flooded across the road where children would paddle in the bubbling waters before the flow receded into its channel. A further relief conduit to aid drainage in the waterlogged southwest corner of the allotments was authorised in



February 1920. Of recent years a dry watercourse, the line of the stream was taken out when a cycle-way was created along the northern boundary of the allotments in 2001.

## **Manor Farm**

The name 'Manor Farm' would suggest it being the principal farm relating to a manor. It may have been the Carew's home farm but probably a farm attached to the manor of Bandon that later became incorporated with Home Beddington. The greater part of the farm land lay on the west (or Wallington) side of Plough Lane, south of what was to become Stafford Road. As part of the Carew estates, it was offered for sale when they were dispersed in 1859 at which time it was tenanted by Thomas Griffin whose lease was due to expire three months after the June sale. He occupied the farmhouse in Hilliers Lane and overall about 303 acres of arable and woodland for which he paid an annual rental of £475. Along with about another seventy-five acres in the same area for which he paid an additional £4,000, in June 1859 James Watney, the brewer and landowner, purchased Manor Farm for £16,100.

By November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1860, Thomas Griffin had vacated and the farm let to John Guy of Chatham, Kent who in 1871 was employing fifteen men, seven women and six boys working in total some 618 acres. By 1876 the tenancy had passed to Gideon Smith and probably at Michaelmas 1892 to Philip Mighell (1867-1940) who had previously farmed land in the Mitcham Road area. He too lived in the Manor Farm House in Hilliers Lane. In the meantime, at some time prior to June 1912, ownership had passed to Claude Watney. In December 1915 when owned by G. Harrison and his brothers, the Air Ministry acquired the freehold site, an area approximately 600 by 500 yards of Manor Farm as a training ground for night flying and in 1916 the land was officially requisitioned under the Defence of the Realm Act. It was subsequently to become part of the first commercial airport of London.

In a watercolour by Gideon Yates painted in 1825 the Manor Farm house is shown as a building of the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, built of red brick with a tiled roof and diamond paned leaded windows though possibly incorporating part of an earlier Elizabethan building. An unsubstantiated date of rebuilding is given as 1696 during the reign of William and Mary. In a later illustration it would appear that by the end of the nineteenth century the house had been updated; the casement windows were replaced by sashes, dormer windows had appeared, a porch added and the brickwork covered by cement rendering. An extension had been added on the north side at which time the wing seen at the rear of the building in the Yates painting was probably demolished.

The farmhouse stood slightly back from the road where today the houses numbered 1 and 2 Hilliers Lane now stand with a lawn divided by a central path in front. The entrance to the farmyard lay along the line of the present Hallowell Avenue, to the south (or uphill) of which stood a large barn set "more or less in behind Beddington Cottage". The house is described as having been spacious with a hall and two large parlours (one of which during the Mighell's occupancy was used as a dining room) and with the usual utility rooms on the ground floor. There were four principal bedrooms and a dressing room upstairs and a



*Manor Farm house stood uphill in Hilliers Lane until demolished in 1935.*

further three rooms in the attic, the latter usually occupied by live-in staff. Large cellars lay beneath the house with two great stanchions supporting the building. At this time one part of the cellars was used as a dairy where the milk was separated and the cream made into butter, the other used for the storage of vegetables and coal, the latter of which there was always about twenty tons in hand.

Philip Mighell worked a number of other properties, employing about twelve men on New Barn Farm rented from the British Land Company pre-aerodrome days, six to eight on Hill Farm (later to become part of the St. Helier housing estate) and about six on Manor Farm itself. When Hill Farm was claimed for development, he became tenant of Nonsuch Park Farm and for a time farmed land on Russell Hill, Purley. The second field of Bandon Hill cemetery was also leased upon which potatoes; corn, oats and barley were grown though no cultivation was done on the farm itself. Fields were also rented on the former Collyer-Bristow estate near Payne's on which fat cattle (those destined for slaughter) were grazed. Cows (that in the 1920s supplied milk to the dairy off Nonsuch Park) fed on the field that was later to become part of the Broadway shopping parade. This field (on the north side of Croydon Road) was offered for auction following the collapse of the then owners Farrows Bank in December 1920. Though expected to make £1,000, an employee Mr. Orton Snr. purchased the land for £850 on behalf of Philip Mighell bringing the total the latter owned in the village area to ten acres including the land near today's Richmond Green he had purchased in 1895.

During the First World War Philip Mighell dealt in horses by supplying them to the army. Every month he would present thirty or forty animals for selection on Manor Farm of which the army would usually purchase about two-thirds. He employed buyers all around the United Kingdom and Ireland and the horses were railed to either Liverpool Street or East Croydon, six or seven at a time from where they would be collected and stabled

locally. The former Collyer-Bristow stables were hired; Walter Cole in Beddington Lane stabled some at 'The Willows' and others were placed at The Plough public house stables. Those purchased by the army were delivered to Redhill with one-man leading two horses for which the army paid 15s. to each workman for delivery.

The Mighells had a family of six children, three daughters and three sons, one of whom, Philip in whose memory an engraved wooden cross and at one time part of an aircraft propeller stood abutting the churchyard wall beside the family grave. He was a member of the 9th East Surrey's attached to the Royal Flying Corps and died of wounds received at Agnez-les-Duisans, France on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

Philip Mighell, politically a staunch Liberal (who always sported a large gold rosette on election day), physically of shortish stature who always wore a bowler hat and carried a walking cane when out, has been described as "a hard, outspoken man" by a number of those who remembered him personally. The farm employees were paid their wages at 6pm on a Saturday evening if Mr. Mighell was at home - if he wasn't he would make no alternative arrangements, the men just had to wait until he was. Mr. William Orton Snr. was paid 18s. (90p.) a week and lived in one of the tied cottages valued at 3s. (15p.) that brought his income effectively up to one guinea, (£1.05p.) per week. In 1912 described as modern cottages the two semi-detached cottages are today numbers 28 and 30 Bridges Lane.

Number 30 became the home of Mr. Frederick Orton, a courteous elderly gentleman, of later years almost blind who, along with his father was employed upon Manor Farm. Mr. Orton recalled when as a young lad for some seven or eight years, morning and evening, seven days a week it was his job to bring the coal up from the cellars to the various fireplaces throughout the house for which he was paid 2s. 6d. (12½p.) a week.

It was following the recession of the 1920s when demand for and the subsequent value of property was beginning to rise that, without giving any indication whatsoever of his intentions, in 1935 Philip Mighell accepted an offer of £27,000 made by Ideal Homesteads for the 10 acres of buildings and land he owned in the village and hereabouts. A notice to quit was handed to each employee though arrangements were made with the new owners for the Orton family to stay in the house they occupied in Bridges Lane. Mr. Orton Snr. was given a pension of 10s. (50p.) a week that after two years was reduced to 5s. His former employer wanted to wipe out the pension entirely but the youngest of the three daughters, Madge, kept the pension on and paid it herself at 5s. per week. Both she and her mother Martha have been independently described as being lovely people.

The Mighells moved to a large house in Purley and rented grazing land at Merstham upon which they ran about one hundred and fifty head of cattle that were sold to the Co-op every month. Mr. Orton Snr. travelled to Purley from Beddington to look after the garden and for a short while his son Frederick Jnr. travelled to Merstham. On the morning of September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1940 following an air raid, when the senior Mr. Orton was about to take a police officer to the site of an unexploded bomb that had fallen beside the Mighell's home in Purley, Philip Mighell appeared and took the officer to the site himself. While there it exploded killing both men. Mrs. Mighell survived her husband by a number of years until

1953 when at the age of ninety-two she was buried in the family grave at Beddington by the southeast churchyard wall. Nearby, attached to the churchyard wall is a wooden cross to the memory of Lieut. Philip Mighell.

Manor Farm house and outbuildings were demolished during August-September 1935, the only vestige of which remains being a wall that once enclosed part of the property.

## **Market Gardening**

North of the extensive sewage works on the east (or right side from the village) of Beddington Lane, much of the land (at least during the 1930s known as the Waddon Smallholdings) was owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and rented to tenants. Market gardening and the growing of lavender, roses, violets and herbs was the main livelihood in the area. Cultivated for essential oils that have important medical uses, peppermint was the more widely grown, the higher oil-yielding black mint in general grown locally in preference to the more delicately flavoured white mint. The distilleries were mostly sited close to the fields where the herb was grown on account of the deleterious effect of heat and travelling upon the oil-producing properties of the herbs as well as the time consuming journeys in the days of predominantly horse drawn transport. Much of the produce grown locally was transported along Therapia Lane, through padlocked crossing gates of the Croydon to Wimbledon railway line to which the market gardeners and carters held keys, to Croydon or to the French owned John Jakson & Co. Peppermint and Lavender Distillery in Mitcham Road that adjoined the south-west boundary of the Mitcham Road cemetery.

Jakson's was established in 1884 by Philippe Auguste Lelasseur (1838-1921) who initially leased the old peppermint distillery of Piésse and Lubin in Mitcham Road, rebuilt it as a steam-powered operation and began distilling the following year. Messrs. John Jakson and Co. of London and Paris (one of a number of local growers and distillers) had farms at Mitcham, Beddington, Carshalton and Wallington to supply the distillery with peppermint, lavender, camomile, roses and other aromatic herbs. The land the company originally had under cultivation was increased year by year until by 1900 they were the largest producers of peppermint and lavender oils in the district, grown on some six hundred acres of land. On their Wallington farm alone was one area of lavender fifty-eight acres in extent that when in bloom must have been a sight of breathtaking beauty. The company also had a distillery at the back of Highland Cottages, off Bute Road, Wallington. Such was their reputation of excellence for the strength and purity of their gold medal winning oils and essences they exported to all parts of the globe. Up to 90% of their products were exported. Referred to locally as "the Frenchy", the proprietor M. Lelasseur was the butt of many barbed jokes arising from his having a massive high-sided French country cart used for carting crops to the distillery. A sign on one of their buildings bore the legend:

Centre des Cultures  
de lavande et de menthe poivrée  
John Jakson & Co.

Following Incorporation in 1921, the company was known as 'John Jakson and Co. (Mitcham Road 1921) Ltd'. The Distillery continued in operation until 1949.

## **Marsh Farm**

North of the Goose Green allotments was Marsh Farm owned by the Carew family; in 1839 occupied by Charles Pimm and from 1847 leased by George Atherfold. The fields extended with some small exceptions almost as far north as the railway and east to the boundary with Croydon. The small field by the lane immediately north of the allotments known today as the Anchor Business Centre, 102 Beddington Lane was one of the exceptions.

In 1859, the farm extended to some 230 acres for which the tenant was paying an extremely low rent of £255, from which a deduction of £42 per annum had been allowed him for house rent as there was no appropriate farmhouse on the property. During this time George Atherfold (in the 1850s) farmed in total some 319 acres employing twelve labourers. He lived in 'Charrington's Cottage' later known as the Thatched Cottage off Therapia Lane. There were however buildings associated with the farm – 'Tylers' Cottage' and garden seen on a map dating from the mid-eighteenth century, a barn, three cattle sheds, two pale-in yards and one other yard. A large barn with double floor, stabling for six horses and harness room with loft over, a granary on stone piers and caps and a stack yard comprised the remainder of the property. In 1860 George Atherfold is recorded as the owner or occupier of a reduced area of Marsh Farm then known as Tyler's Farm that included the fields known as Middle Stones and Great Stones by Beddington Lane.

## **New Barn Farm**

Occupied the greater part of the land to the south of today's Stafford Road on the east (or Croydon) side of Plough Lane. The farm extended to the south beyond Beggars Bush to Foxley Hatch Gate a short distance from the Brighton Road (Purley) and the railway. A raised strip of land known as the Merebank not only marked the eastern boundary but, also lined with posts, marked the boundary between Beddington and Croydon. In 1840, William Holmden farmed the two hundred and seventy-six acres of New Barn Farm, later to be followed by James Brown who from Michaelmas 1853 leased out the land but occupied the farmhouse and outbuildings.

At the time of the Carew land sale in June 1859 the sixty-seven acres known as Beggars Bush (part of the New Barn Farm lands) was sold to Edward Moses for £2,360, and a four-acre plot purchased by Samuel Gurney for £500. The farmhouse and immediate area was not sold. It shortly after came into the possession of James Watney and the tenancy let to John Guy. Soon after 1880, the tenancy passed to Gideon Smith and finally to Philip Mighell who by 1912 was working not only the reduced area (approximately 192 acres) of New Barn Farm but also Manor Farm on the opposite side of Plough Lane. By then both properties belonged to James Watney. On New Barn Farm during Philip Mighell's occupancy wheat, barley and oats were grown and a small amount of rye, cabbages, marrows, potatoes and cauliflowers. They also grew mangel wurzels a type of beet or turnip, nine or ten cart loads of which was supplied to Mr. Thirlby, the dairy farmer of Beddington Park, to supplement the feed of his herd during the winter.

The farmhouse was a south facing, four bedroomed brick-built and tiled homestead that stood off Plough Lane (now Mollison Drive), along with (in 1859) two pairs of cottages, stabling for sixteen horses, a sturdy and flint-built two storied barn, granary, loose boxes and cattle sheds. When in June 1912 it came onto the market for the asking price of £22,400, again it was not sold. In 1921, the Air Ministry purchased New Barn Farm from the Watney executors. By then it had already been in use as Waddon aerodrome. For many years, the farmhouse and outbuildings stood surrounded by the first Customs Air Port until demolished when the airport was extended. There was however, some marginal development at the extreme south end of the farmland in the early years of the twentieth century when two new roads, Lowfield and Highfield, were constructed (shown partly laid out on the 1913 edition of the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map). The name Lowfield Road was later changed to Hillcrest Road. There has also been some limited re-development of house plots within Hillcrest Road. The land of the Roundshaw Downs has not essentially been developed apart from the area of Wilson's School, St. Elphege Junior School and the Roundshaw estate.

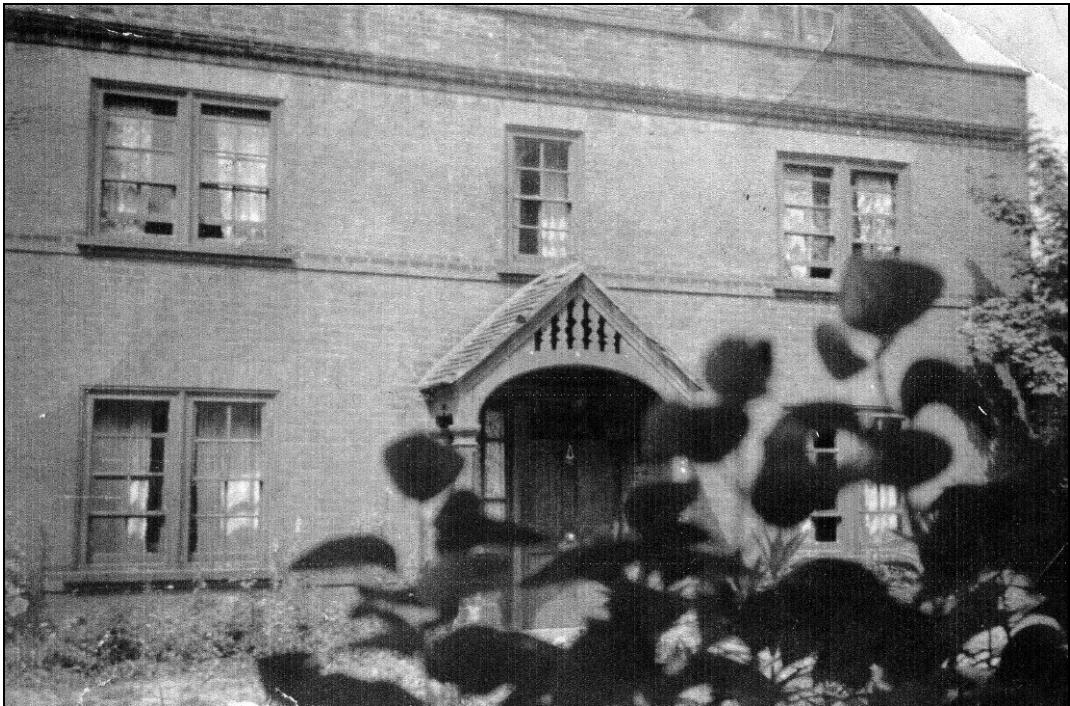
## **Park Farm**

An old yew tree that once grew in front of 'Park Farm' house, for many years stood in front of the bungalows numbered 33 and 33A Beddington Lane until removed probably as an obstruction to the footpath in the late 1990s. These two homes in part stand on the site of a farmhouse referred to as a "gentleman's residence" and described as of eighteenth century style built of aged soft red brick.

In 1812 John Ashby was a tenant of land leased from Richard Carew and in 1822 there was an agreement between John Robert Ashby described as a yeoman and Ann Paston Gee, the Carew heiress, to lease farmland within the manors of Beddington and Bandon. The Beddington Poor Rate of 1839-41 and the census confirm this as Park Farm. Along with in-total 171 acres of land the farmhouse was sold as part of the break up of the Carew Estates in 1859. Historically the land included the greater part of what had been the Huscarl Manor.

Thought not to be as old as and slightly smaller than Manor Farm house (located almost at the top of Hilliers Lane on the opposite side of the road), Park Farm house stood about 30ft. back from the footpath facing east overlooking Beddington Lane. Sheltered by a central porch, the front door gave access to an entrance hall off which were the lounge and dining rooms, to either side of the front door each lit by sash windows. There was an additional entrance on the south side of the building. A kitchen lay in behind and a scullery at the back. On the first floor were four large bedrooms one of which was later converted into a bathroom, and upstairs, two attics. A dairy, pantry, washhouse with a storeroom over, two water closets, a brew-house along with wine and beer cellars made up the remainder of the accommodation.

On the north side of the house was the farm entrance that was destined to become Derry Road though when it functioned as a farm the gated access was very much narrower than the road we see there today. To the right of the farm entrance parallel to Beddington Lane



*Park Farm house stood on the south side of the entrance to what is now Derry Road. It was demolished in mid-1948.*

stood a brick-built west-facing barn. In later years at right angles to the barn stood a south-facing cottage also built of brick beside the open-fronted machinery shed beyond which was the pigsty. Behind these buildings was an orchard that at one time boasted the only quince tree growing in the district.

In 1859, Edward Henry Moses purchased Park Farm for £12,550 as well as buying other extensive areas of land in Beddington. At that time the Home Close, buildings and yard were occupied as a tenant of the Carew's by William Smith who had an agreement for which he was paying £350 per annum rent due to expire at Michaelmas 1864. In 1860 however, William Sprules the lavender and herb grower leased part of the land as did George Hoarsley in 1874. In 1901 when owned by the Croydon Corporation, Jas. and Thos. Wallis leased the land and Mervyn Peters the farmhouse.

By April 1921, the farm was occupied by Percy Druitt and later in the 1920s, by Captain H. C. Stacey at which time it was worked on the lines of a model farm. From about 1932 when owned by S. B. Snell the property was managed by Edward Wilmot who specialised in the breeding of chickens and pigs. At this time one of the buildings that lay behind the farmhouse housed chickens of one to four weeks of age, the second, chickens of four to eight weeks with the older birds having free range of the remaining area as far west as the Orphanage boundary. A further building had machinery installed for the plucking and cleaning of those birds killed for market, many of whom were delivered direct to Sainsbury's in Croydon. The feathers were burnt. During this period, although the farm

itself was prosperous, owing to other unfortunate investments Mr. Snell was declared bankrupt resulting in the property again being placed on the market.

By 1938 ownership of Park Farm house had changed to that of Eleanor and Bertram Newman, the latter of whom was shortly after killed in an accident involving an army truck. In January 1942, Mrs. Newman offered the livestock for sale by auction: ten head of cattle, twelve breeding sows, three hundred pullets and hens, and about one hundred breeding and young rabbits along with two brooder-heated houses some 60ft. by 15ft. and 80ft. by 15ft., along with subsidiary equipment. By 1945, Mrs Newman was joined in co-occupancy of the house by Blanche and Samuel Fitzwalter and family. Both families were to remain at Park Farm house until it was demolished.

The design of the housing estate was finalised by March 1946, and building began shortly after and through 1947. Between sixty and one hundred prisoners of war had worked on preparation of the site by the laying on of essential services. The Home Close and gardens became the site of Mallinson Road and the Park Farm County Primary School while part of the Great Meadow and Nightingale Grove became the area of Crispin Crescent. Park Farm house (by then in a state of dilapidation) was demolished in mid-1948 and the first two houses on the left in Derry Road that could not be built until the farm house was demolished, were constructed shortly after.

## **Sewage Irrigation Farm**

In 1849, the newly instituted Local Board of Health for Croydon had the task not only to find a pure supply of water for the populace, but to find some way to satisfactorily dispose of the town's sewage that was then being drained into the Wandle, effectively reducing the river to an open sewer. In 1872 Alfred Smee of The Grange commented that the effluvia was noxious, the fish died and foul mud was being deposited in the riverbed. It was seemingly no better than in 1853 when Braithwaite commented on the pollution being carried downstream from Croydon the stench of which "is only being kept in check by a low temperature".

Concerned both to the effect upon public health in the district and the immediate effect upon his garden, Smee an eminent London surgeon began agitation to stop the pollution. Representations were made as high as the Privy Council; three separate landowners almost simultaneously filed a series of Bills in Chancery and injunctions obtained restraining the local Board of Health from polluting the stream. The Board resisted until in May 1859 a committal was signed for contempt of court; for not having carried out an order imposed in June the previous year, sending the members to prison in default. An agreement was arrived at however - the Board had to submit, the law prevailed and Croydon ratepayers were thereafter involved in great cost. Beddington has been paying the price ever since.

Fortuitously for Croydon, in 1859 large tracts of suitable land become available within the Beddington area with the break up of the Carew Estates. In April 1860 the Croydon Board of Health leased then later purchased fifty-six acres of land on Marsh Farm, the east (or Croydon) side of Beddington Lane for the purpose of sewage disposal that has been



continuous in the area ever since. On land that overlies the Woolwich and Reading beds with subsoil chiefly of gravel and sand, the area was formerly wooded; the trees mainly elms were cut down and the terrain cleared.

Mr. Baldwin Latham engineer to the Croydon Board of Works was in charge of the project. He was responsible for the construction of a new drainage system taking the sewage to Beddington. The system he devised separated all the coarse solid particles by way of his 'Patent Extractor' located at Brimstone Barn, near where the railway then met the parish boundary, 127ft. above sea level. The Extractor was a large revolving wheel or drum that acted as a type of sieve to deliver the solid matter into a trough at the side from where it was removed by the man on duty. It was used or sold as manure, leaving the filthy turbid aqueous matter to be carried from the Extractor by means of a covered, and then by open sewer to fifty-six acres of land on the east side of Beddington Lane. They leased and subsequently purchased a further thirty-nine acres of adjoining land from Dr. Joseph Shorthouse for £250 per acre. The effluent was then carried by means of culverts and open carriers, the flow being regulated by sluices. The sewage from Upper Norwood came through a second inlet via Norbury down the line of Mitcham Road and under the railway to the Extractor from whence it was distributed in the same manner.

The system then in use to cleanse the effluent was by means of 'Broad Surface Irrigation'. It was first passed on to one field which was flooded, from where, partially purified it flowed to a second then to a third field by which time the sewage matters had become absorbed and the water had attained a certain amount of purity. "When the law turned the sewage fairly out of the river it was placed upon the land (Smee writes) but the irrigation scheme was so badly carried out that a pestilential marsh was created, much admired by snipes, but so little adapted for human beings that fever, especially scarlet fever raged throughout the district". He had often seen the irrigation carried to the very verge of the high road, or beside the property of neighbouring landowners whereas his daughter later confirmed of seeing places where sewage had overflowed into Beddington Park for fifty or sixty yards from the neighbouring ground.

In view of the difficulties, the Board initially leased with an agreement to purchase further land on the west of Beddington Lane (left side from the village), by then one hundred and ninety-seven acres of which were owned by Mr. Quilter and one hundred and seventy-three by Messrs. Beddington that were to be compulsorily purchased. A ninety-nine year lease was also taken on land owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. To reach the western side sewage ran in pipes constructed under Beddington Lane along conduits and onto the fields to be flooded.

In late October or early November 1866, the Croydon Board of Health purchased land of the Culver's estate in the area of Mill Green, Beddington Corner for £33,790 in order to secure the outfalls and river frontage rather than for irrigation. About two-thirds of the property then consisted of three water mills (of which the tenants paid a greater rental because of having purified sewage turned into the mill heads) and house property. It had also been agreed that a further seventy-five acres of land owned by Mr. Goad was to be purchased and added to the total area, of which sixty-five acres would be suitable for irrigation. This land had a natural outfall in the brook running to Beddington Corner. It

was in 1871 during the construction of the extension to the irrigation system that the Roman Bath House was discovered in a field on the west side of Beddington Lane.

In June 1881 it was reported that one hundred acres of the farm was shortly to be laid out to what was called 'Downward Filtration' to be used in conjunction with surface irrigation. The sewage was to be run onto a table of land where, by a series of banks and ridges it was prevented from passing off the surface but passed down through the soil and gravel to drains buried from 4ft. to 9ft. deep with the earth acting as a filter. The drains varying in diameter from 4ins. to 2ft. were to run the sewage off on to a lower table of land where it was again treated in a similar way. It was then regarded as being perfectly purified. By 1897 deducting those areas of ground unsuitable for irrigation in that the land was of high ground or the site of buildings, yards, cottages etc., and areas that lay by the side of Beddington Lane, the Board had four hundred and thirty-five acres under irrigation.

The two systems were to be used in conjunction with the growing of Italian rye grass the most powerful absorbent of sewage, subject to a process of rotation. Some two hundred and forty acres of rye grass sown in 1862 received the whole of the sewage from Croydon that was flooded over the land. Having been diverted into furrows about 16½ yards apart it gradually poured out over the intervening lands over a period of about three hours after which it was claimed, two out of every three gallons of sewage passed off the farm as pure water. This system begun in 1860 was to continue until 1902.

The growth of grass was therefore prolific, "as high as a walking stick and as thick upon the ground as it could grow". This presented a problem however — rye grass grown in these circumstances could stand five to seven cuttings a year producing thirty to fifty tons of grass per acre. It had to be cut this frequently to maintain the absorbency of the roots. Having such moisture content it did not keep or transport well over long distances, nor under ordinary circumstances could it be made into hay. It was sold for milk cow fodder, much of which was sold locally but from six to thirty tons of which was sent to London. The polluted fodder affected the milk. According to Smee, at Beddington School when supplied with milk from the sewage farm, sixty cases of typhoid fever occurred resulting in three deaths. As late as the 1880s before the introduction of 'Railway milk' drove them out of business there were still about seven hundred licensed cow-houses in London.

In 1875 there were three so called "evil's" the Board sought to avoid on the lines put forward by Dr. Carpenter, Chairman of the Committee of Management; to avoid all market gardening operations; to avoid hay making and thirdly; all un-necessary jobbing in cattle. It was not so straightforward however. At first, in order to dispose of the rye grass the Board engaged extensively in the business of stock keeping and dairy-farming but subsequently brought in a tenant. Buildings were erected within which about two hundred cows were kept, consuming large quantities of the sewage grown fodder. The first farm Manager, Mr. Appleby could recall, was Mr. Parrott who came to Beddington from a farm at Ash in 1878; Mr. Alexander Marriage was appointed Manager on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1880 employing forth-eight men, six boys and six women. Mr. Grimwood, assisted by a Clerk and Foreman who succeeded him on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1894 (to about 1929) saw the farm



*Mr. Grimwood, Manager of the Beddington Sewage Farm with his niece in front of the farm house in Beddington Lane. Dated 1896, the building was demolished in January 2003.*

not only into a new century but also into a new phase of development. He lived in what the men called the "Governor's House" (85 Beddington Lane) built in 1895 that for a time stood unoccupied and damaged by fire before being demolished in 2003. Peacocks once roamed freely in the garden.

The pace of life changed very little in what was for the majority a farming community, essentially governed by the seasons, rotating crops and regular flooding of the fields. Mr. Bert. (Herbert) Appleby (d.1984) began work on the farm in 1912 aged of seventeen. The house to which his grandfather came and in which he was born, 75 Beddington Lane is the central of three cottages built in the late 1860s on land formerly the Long Shaw (Wood) to house workmen employed on the farmlands. The cottages were but one group of a number of homes built over the years, many of which were known as 'Corporation Cottages'.

The cattle, generally Welsh Runts were railed from Wales to East Croydon station from where they were unloaded and driven through Croydon to the farm. Any that were for slaughtering were sold and driven to the cattle market in the Old Town, Croydon. Cattle were also railed in via Hackbridge. Cows that grazed on the farm supplied Queen's Road Hospital, Croydon General, the Mayday and Fever Hospitals as well as the Smallpox Hospital in Cheam with milk.

As ryegrass exhausts itself in about three years, the land was ploughed and replaced by crops that included corn, wheat and oats. Potatoes, cauliflowers, cabbages, swedes and rhubarb were also grown and sold in the Borough Market. Mangel-wurzel, a type of turnip was also widely grown and sold as cattle feed. This system of crop rotation, grazing and flooding kept the soil in top condition. When it came time to harvest the mangel-wurzel they were lifted and thrown into heaps, the clamps (as they were known) then being covered with soil to protect them from the frost until they were required. Everything was transported by wagon, the horses for which were harnessed in tandem (one behind the other) pulling lever operated tipcarts into which the produce was thrown from the clamps on either side. The produce would then be taken into the market in Croydon or distributed to farms in the district.

Earlier, when proposals were set out to extend the area of irrigation there was inevitable concern expressed and local opposition to the scheme. In April 1906 this concern had been expressed at a meeting when experts met with the public to explain exactly what the proposed further extension to the system, to include Tyler's Fields on the east side of Beddington Lane and Home Mead (the latter adjoining the Orphanage grounds) would amount to. Camp Field, immediately to the north of the Orphanage (and one would wonder as to the origins of this field name) at that time was being irrigated by crude sewage. The proposals were that in future, in dry weather no crude sewage would be put on the land but only sprinkler effluent that would contain practically no suspended matter and will have undergone purification of 50% to 60% of the dissolved organic constituents. Of the total farm area of then some six hundred and ninety acres, about five hundred were to be used for irrigation, a figure subsequently reduced to four hundred acres.

Between 1902 and 1912 sedimentation tanks and percolating filters were constructed on the east side of Beddington Lane (or right side from the village) adjoining the Croydon boundary. An engine house and sewage works laboratory was also built. It was while the land was being excavated for the bacterial beds in September 1900 that extensive fossil beds were found. Accessed by an approach road from Beddington Lane, the tanks on the north-east side were the Norbury Works with twenty-nine filter beds, each of 56ft. diameter and those to the south-east of the approach road, the Croydon Works with twenty-eight each of 80 ft. diameter. By 1914 the area of the sewage works amounted to six hundred and ninety acres. The effluent from the filters was passed on to the land for final polishing before being discharged into the Wandle. In about 1915 a brick lodge was built beside Beddington Lane on the north side of the approach road occupied by the Assistant Manager and later the Farm Supervisor. After the works became redundant the house was vacated, vandalised and burnt out in the late 1960s-early 1970s.

With such an area under irrigation, a not altogether minor nuisance were the thick swarms of gnats and other flying insects that infested the area, a problem that was not alleviated until in the late 1960s when the present sewage treatment works were completed. At certain periods during the summer particularly during hot weather there were literally clouds of flies for which Beddington Lane gained a certain unwelcome notoriety. During what has been described as 'The Great Days' of Croydon Airport (1928-1939) an oft told tale we repeat yet again was when a pilot, Wally Rogers, is reported to have reassured a passenger concerned about finding their way back to Croydon in the fog. He told her in all

seriousness that he invariably stuck his head out of the cockpit and took a good sniff, and when he smelt the Beddington Sewage Works he knew he was almost home.

From the village along the eastern boundary of the lane trees, hedges and shrubs of all varieties were planted to screen the farmland. Veronica and laurel, monkey-puzzle trees and pines were planted and the ground between cultivated by the farm labourers for their own use provided they kept the area tidy and free from undergrowth. The workforce usually supplemented their income in this way by growing their own fruit and vegetables and by keeping hens. Once a year a banquet was given for the staff at the 'Skinners Arms' in Hackbridge.

The hours of work were generally from 6am to 6pm but seasonal work carried on late into the evening. During the harvest up to one hundred men, the majority of who were Irish were employed on piece-work. During the winter they worked for the Croydon Gas Company. If you worked a full day you were paid one sovereign a week, the equivalent of one pound. The Manager was paid £3 per week. On payday the men were lined up, their names called out and an envelope handed to each one. If you had worked a full week your envelope was light as it contained the one coin, but if you had any time out your pay packet was that much heavier as it contained silver and copper. The men received an extra halfpenny for every rat they killed. George Clark (Mr. Appleby's father-in-law who worked on the farm as a cowman) drove the Clerk into Croydon to collect the wages that were carried in a Gladstone bag with only the two of them to see it safely delivered. Once a fortnight the Farm Committee would visit to review the farm routine and inspect the property. It was also one of Mr. Clark's duties to collect the members, taking them back to Croydon at the conclusion of the visit. He would also meet any illustrious people from the railway station should they have occasion to visit the property.

Each year people regarded as being of high status, as for example the Goads of Hackbridge, were given permission to conduct shoots on the farm but at restricted times of the year. There was plenty of game including partridges, ducks, pheasants, snipes etc. In 1933 the shooting was let at £16 per annum. Opposite 'The Goat' pub, Hackbridge was a large pond on land leased by the sewage authority. In the past it had been excavated for gravel and because of the land irrigation and natural seepage the pit had filled with water that was stocked with fish. Local poachers took the fish so consistently that the Board had to put on a shift of workmen to keep watch and discourage the would-be anglers. In later years the Corporation filled the former pit with rubbish and it has since grassed over.

In 1894 the farm accommodation consisted of four farmsteads, the Manager's house and fourteen cottages scattered throughout. In about 1929 the row of twelve white painted houses numbered 49 to 71 Beddington Lane built upon the extreme southern end of the Long Shaw were added to that number to house Corporation staff, each of whom had the equivalent of an allotment garden behind. It was opposite the southern group of these cottages that the gatehouse associated with the works on the east side of the lane was located. By 1932 the population served had increased, more filters were constructed on the existing site and an activated sludge plant to treat part of the flow. As methods of treating sewage improved, in 1935 the Farm Committee initially leased forty, increasing

to two hundred acres of the farmlands to the French lavender and herb grower Jakson & Co. for £8 per acre annually for the growing of peppermint.

During the Second World War the fortunately sparsely populated area received a number of bomb hits both on the east and west side of the lane at which time some damage was caused to nearby houses and filter beds but did not interfere with disposal of sewage since irrigation of surrounding land of the farm could be substituted. There were in total five recorded incidents, two in October 1940 and one each in July 1941, July 1942 and again in July 1944 at which time seventeen heifers were killed. A land mine dropped by parachute exploded near Tyler's Fields, and another slightly to the north of the old works in the former settlement tanks. The latter dropped into the centre of one of the funnel-like concrete tanks and because of the iron girders placed across the top and of the shape of the tank itself, the blast was such that one steel girder was deposited in a field to the north, about one hundred yards from the Appleby's cottage while another was blown in the opposite direction through the roof of Tyler's Cottage about a quarter of a mile to the south. These derelict tanks and old workings were removed during the 1970s.

During the post-war years sewage flows continued to increase until in 1962 it was decided to construct an entirely new treatment works. Construction of the Beddington Treatment Works began on the west side of Beddington Lane in July 1966. It was while excavations were taking place for the construction of these new works that a mechanical digger scooped up an unexploded bomb that had been in the earth since the war. Army bomb disposal experts exploded the device in the fields off the Mile Road. The new plant was commissioned on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1969 with the exception of new £1,000,000 digestion tanks (a supposed "cure for the smell") on which construction started in May 1972 and completed in November 1974. Beddington was the last sewage treatment works in London to be fully automated. Extensive ongoing work of modernising (2010) has been carried out subsequently. Seven acres of land fronting Beddington Lane and an administrative or laboratory building were offered for sale in late 2009; foundations were laid and the area is currently being used as a construction materials and equipment storage area for F.M. Conway Ltd.

Sewage now arrives at the inlet works via three main sewers; a low-level sewer from North Croydon carrying sewage that is pumped into the inlet; the South Croydon sewer, carrying sewage to the works by gravity, and the Carshalton sewer bringing effluent to the works from the Buckhurst Avenue Pumping Station. These three sewers produce a combined flow of approximately 103,000 cubic metres daily in 1996, probably considerably more now.

Responsibility for the works passed from the London Borough of Croydon to the Greater London Council in April 1970 and to the Thames Water Authority in April 1974, later Thames Water Utilities. The total area served by the Treatment Works comprises the greater part of the Borough of Croydon and parts of the London Borough of Sutton and the Districts of Reigate, Banstead and Tandridge.

The quality of effluent entering the river has improved as new methods have been introduced including the installation of fine mesh screens to prevent non-biodegradable

objects (plastics) from entering the Wandle since the end of 1999. Razz pumps have also been installed to prevent solids in the final effluent. Thames Water Utilities was taken over by a German company the R. W. E. Group but the name Thames Water remained unchanged. This company has a 20% interest in Germany's water industry and is mainly interested in T.W.U's interests overseas.

Apart from the extensive dig carried out on the site of the Roman Villa from 1981 through to 1985 an archaeological evaluation was carried out over the autumn and winter of 1988-89 prior to the excavation of Thames Water Authority's flood alleviation storage ponds south of the villa site. A wide range of finds was recovered during a preliminary exercise of surface collection that indicated a long period of human activity ranging from Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) to the relatively recent past. These included fragments of tile/brick, pottery and struck or burnt flint of prehistoric date and field features pre-dating the herringbone pattern of field drains arising from the sewage treatment operations. As operations for the removal of gravel are undertaken prior to land fill in the future, further evidence of long lost habitation may yet still emerge.

The majority of farm buildings including the barns and one of the two grain silos were demolished during the summer of 2000 by Country Skips who now occupy the site which is directly north of the former mile Road. The second silo remained for some time before it too was demolished. The farm manager's house at 85 Beddington Lane having been vacant for some time and later damaged by fire was demolished at the end of January 2003. The mess hall in the yard partly behind the remaining house at 83 Beddington Lane was demolished shortly after.

Planning permission was allowed on appeal for mineral extraction and waste disposal at the Beddington Farmlands site in May 1995. Work commenced in 1998 and all operations were required by planning condition to cease in 2015 though an application has been made by Viridor (who now manage the site) to extend activities for a further eight years. The overall area that includes all the other non-landfill related aspects of the site is 120 hectares bounded by the Sutton-Victoria railway line to the west; Beddington Park to the south; the Beddington Sewage Treatment Works to the southeast; the Beddington Industrial Area and Beddington Lane to the east; and Mitcham Common, the former Maurice Stacey Allotments, a rifle range and the industrial area around Jessops Way to the north.

The site receives about 220-230,000 tonnes of domestic and commercial waste per year (2010), of which 200,000 tonnes is domestic waste from the South London Waste Partnership Boroughs of Croydon, Kingston, Merton and Sutton, the remainder coming from Industrial and Commercial (shops and other non-domestic) sources. Six cells of landfill have been completed with a further four partially filled, and another four yet to be excavated. A date of 2023 for the cessation of landfill activity is being worked towards after which a period of restoration and aftercare will begin. A controversial application has recently been made to erect a waste-burning incinerator on the site.

## Tyler's Farm

Tyler's Farm (formerly part of Marsh Farm) which on its northern boundary adjoined what became Croydon Corporation land, and land to the east owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, was offered for sale by auction on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1892. Tyler's Cottage and outbuildings had by then disappeared and the farm, an area of a little over forty-nine acres was described as "several enclosures of beautifully timbered pasture land" let on a yearly tenancy basis to Stephen West at a yearly rental of £152. It was not sold however and the following year once again came up for auction (July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1893). It is unknown as to the purchaser though into the early years of the new century this land was always referred to as 'West's Fields'. Stephen West was a Croydon butcher who grazed his livestock there before transferring them to a slaughterhouse in Surrey Street, Croydon. The name Tylers was to live again however, for in the mid-1950s two semi-detached cottages known as 'Tylersfields Cottages' were standing on land belonging to the sewage works to the west by the boundary with Croydon.

## Watercress Beds

The production of watercress requires a good regular supply of clean, preferably hard running water containing lime. It is grown along chalk streams especially in the southern half of England, a number of which were at one time located along the Wandle. Production reached a peak in the early 1930s when about nine beds were cultivated in the locality. Two of those areas were in Beddington; in beds adjacent to Guy Road and on that now known as Richmond Green.

**Guy Road.** Until the early 1970s the site of watercress beds that for many years had been disused, occupied what is now the green open space between Guy Road and the boundary of the Beddington Park Primary School. On land formerly known as Alders Shaws, the alder woods, this low lying marshy area was described by the Rev. Williams in his 'History of Wallington' (1873) as "a veritable cloth of gold spread by the rich broad blossoms of the marsh marygold..."

Where today the mill-stream and river meet at the footbridge by the side of the Village Hall, the stream that fed the Richmond Green watercress beds and the allotments was supplemented by water from an artesian well, the water of which, independent of the river, flowed on a north-west angle across the field behind the village hall to feed the watercress beds. The water flowed away through a culvert beneath the tall cedar located on the bank at the far end.

The main entrance to the Guy Road beds was located near to the modern footbridges. They were enclosed by a high fence along their entire length and by a large gate. A pump, the sound of which could be clearly heard from the road was enclosed within at the site of the artesian well. What culverted water there is now flows directly into the Wandle. Originally offered for sale in 1859 as part of the Carew estates, the land again came onto the market in 1901 following the death of Mrs Tritton the then owner. In 1915, the occupier of the by then well-established bed was John Moody though owned by N. Moody, subsequently by a Mrs. Fleet. E. James of Covent Garden is known to have been operating them in 1938. Mizens who in the main owned watercress beds in Beddington



North at some time also worked the Guy Road beds that were in full production post-1952 though it is uncertain when production ceased; probably in the late 1950s.

At first there were earth divisions between each bed, later built up with concrete upon which were laid narrow gauge rails for tip-up trolleys known as skips that were hand pushed the length of the lines. The rails of 1in. width and of some 2ft. gauge ran parallel to Guy Road and where the road veered away uphill, they continued along the south bank of the river. Now buried beneath years of natural accumulation a section still exists beside the river at the northern end of the Whelan Way cul-de-sac and beneath the garden of 77 Guy Road. Wooden planks were laid across each division from which workmen tended the beds thus protecting the plants from trampling and pollution. The watercress was cut using a hand scythe and at one time tied into bundles with willow twigs. It was sold for one penny a bunch. Some of the local ladies also supplemented their income making small baskets or punnets within which it was sent to market.

In December 1962, a local enquiry upheld the council's view that the area should not be developed for residential purposes and in 1963 work was undertaken to alleviate the problem of flooding that occurred on average about three times annually. Rubbish was deposited by the receding water, plants were killed off by the residue of oil and complaints were lodged about the smell of stagnant water. It was not until the late 1960s-early 1970s the beds were finally filled in. In 1972 trees were planted and a footpath was laid and lit by electric lamp standards along its entire length but the latter were vandalised, removed and never replaced. The pathway led to an arched gateway in the wall giving access to Mallinson Road, but the arch was also vandalised and that part of the wall demolished. More recently lighting was introduced to the footpath on a line parallel with the Derry Road flats.

**Richmond Green.** The watercress beds on Richmond Green were the earliest, established at some time prior to 1897 on land in 1859 referred to as a moor. By October 1901 the land was owned by Gideon Smith and the beds worked by Charles Skelton. By 1928, ownership had passed to Philip Mighell of Manor Farm. In 1913, Walter Bridger (a former employee of the market gardeners and watercress growers Fred. and George Mizen) rented the five acres of land and in 1914, the family moved into 7 Pembury Villas now 59 Richmond Road. The Bridger family cultivated watercress and created a market garden, the produce of which was grown on organic principles, chemical free. They also grew mushrooms in wooden sheds that stood on land between the beds and the river. A private road along the line of today's Richmond Green gave access.

The beds were watered by two springs independent of the river and therefore totally free of pollution. They ran at a depth of four inches and a constant 52°F temperature summer and winter. The stream then flowed away in a northerly direction beside the boundary of the industrial firm Lacey Hulbert, beneath Richmond Road, and having watered the Goose Green allotments were diverted to the Guy Road watercress beds behind the village hall before eventually joining the river.

Fear occasioned by the typhoid outbreak at Croydon between early October and November 1937 (at which time of the two hundred and ninety-seven reported cases forty-

three people died) dramatically effected sales of watercress to the extent of bringing them to a virtual standstill. The source of the contamination was traced to the water supply and the 205ft deep Addington well sited some three-quarters of a mile south of Addington and the rare coincidence of three contributing factors. As opposed to sensational stories that circulated of their being a dead body found in the well, at the end of September and during October 1937, men, (one of whom unknowingly was an active carrier of the typhoid bacillus, a legacy of the First World War) were working in the well carrying out essential maintenance (about 150 ft. down from the top, tunnels some 6ft. high and 4½ft wide were bored into the chalk to hold in all, about 502,000 gallons). During large parts of that time the water, unfiltered and unchlorinated was being pumped directly into the water supply. A latrine trench had been dug that, contrary to orders, had not been connected to the sewer resulting in human excrement seeping into the surrounding soil and contaminated the well water.

Despite tests being undertaken that proved the independent springs feeding the beds were uncontaminated, as the typhoid outbreak had been reported nationally on BBC radio watercress became un-saleable throughout London and sales did not recover as they otherwise might have done. The financial loss and stress rested heavily upon the shoulders of Walter Bridger though in the mid-1930s the family also owned land at Loxwood in West Sussex. According to a family member the final straw was when Electricity Board workmen were laying a cable across the Bridle Path, over the river and thence by a deep trench across the watercress beds. Whatever happened, the springs could not be reinstated along their usual flow; at midday the water was there but by 5pm it had gone and effectively the watercress beds with it. Walter Bridger died in July 1949 and the market garden closed the following year. The beds were removed by the mid 1950s.

## GRAVEL AND SAND EXTRACTION

The extraction of gravel currently taking place on the former sewage farmlands on the west side of Beddington Lane is not a new phenomenon. In the 1890s gravel was being extracted from a field on the west side at the southern tip of the 'Long Shaw' opposite the present-day ASDA store and filled in prior to 1914. On land to either side of Therapia Lane a series of gravel pits were excavated during the early years of the twentieth century as well as to the north of the railway within the borough boundary. In 1899 Hall & Co. became involved in the area, by 1900 extracting gravel, and though their activities in later years locally changed to that of builder's merchants they retained a presence in Beddington Lane in the form of a commercial outlet (now the Build Centre) until about the late 1990s.

In 1912 the name R. J. Kenning, Gravel Pits, Beddington Lane, (members of the Kenning family lived in 'Homesdale Cottage, Beddington Lane), is listed in local directories until some time after 1916, for by 1919 the East Surrey Gravel Pits had taken over excavating and were to remain there until about 1931 after which the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council began infill. Large lakes that had formed when the gravel and clay was extracted were filled with refuse and when tipping finally ceased in about 1964 and the area was grassed over and left to grazing horses. Today the site of the Hog Croft pit is the Prologis development, part of the Therapia Trading Estate. In July 2001 when excavating the perimeter of the site prior to development, mechanical diggers uncovered a brick-built former Second World War ARP post located by the corner of Beddington and Therapia Lanes. A spring that rises on the Valley Point Trading Estate (built in 2004) on the far side of Beddington Farm Road to the southeast of the Prologis development, though in part now enclosed within pipes, still flows in a ditch by the side of Therapia Lane marking the northern boundary of this land.

Off Guy Road, the area that was to become Ede's repository (now the Archway Close development of houses) was a further area of sand excavation. In 1910 it was listed in local directories as the Beddington Sandpits Office with the names R. J. Manser, B. Monk and T. Martin as proprietors. Memories were of horse-drawn cart loads of sand being hauled away from the site. Smith Wilkinson Ltd. was listed for the sandpits in 1920 but nothing thereafter though operations were to continue until June 1928. A second gated hollow-way into the sand pit lay uphill beside 30 Guy Road. A semi-detached house built across this entrance was destroyed when a flying bomb landed on the opposite side of Guy Road in 1944.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1897 also indicates an area shown as the 'old sand pit' to the south of 'The Banks' at the south-eastern end of what is now Evelyn Way. In later years (pre-1930s), a further extensive area of gravel excavation north of Richmond Road was also filled with domestic refuse by Croydon Council but not before a 15 year-old boy had drowned in the gravel pit in July 1907.

## HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

### Beddington Lane

The tranquillity of Beddington Lane when, as its name implies, it was no more than a rural thoroughfare dividing the fields is almost beyond imagination when one looks at the volume of traffic that uses its in part still narrow carriageway and the acres of land covered with warehousing and industrial units it serves today.

In about 1896, the Rev. H.G. Dodd compiled much information relating to the history of Beddington for a collection today known as 'The Dodd Papers' held in Sutton Archives. He relates how from earliest times there was a lane along the line of the present road (the east boundary of Huscarles Manor) through to Sandy Lane and beyond, an ancient route referred to in a document of 1473 as 'Via Regis' i.e. the King's Road. The document to which he was referring would probably have been one produced as evidence during the 1473 enquiry into the Beddington Portion.

Today, part of that so grandly titled is more humbly known as Beddington Lane, which makes its way uphill as Hilliers Lane. Named as such it extends from the river in a northerly direction following the ancient field boundaries frequently bending in its approximate two-mile length to its junction with Mitcham Road. In the early nineteenth century these roads were nothing more than a series of track-ways and paths worn into being by the movement of animals and the feet of passers-by across the common lands. The 1812 Beddington Enclosure Award set out a number of carriage-ways over common fields and common. The Award stipulated a 30ft. road beginning at Beddington Gate (possibly a gate to the common land or an ancient access to Carew lands though not thought to be a tollgate) by Therapia Lane leading north over what was then Beddington Common, along the line of the present road.

Pre-1616 however, there is evidence of the lane being known as Bandon Way and in 1830 referred to as Bandon Lane. As the majority of the old field names survived into the mid-1850s, it means that both ancient and modern road and field names can be equated with some degree of accuracy even to this day. One such is 'Great Stones' referred to in proceedings of 1616 in the reign of James I and certified by the then rector as lying between Bandon Way, west, and the lands of Waddon, east. Great Stones is the field identified by the Carew sale particulars as today being the site of the Beddington Trading Estate and Bath House Road on the east side of the lane. It was probably the same field where, in September 1900 an extensive deposit of fossils were uncovered when foundations for the sedimentation tanks and percolating filters were being laid for the sewage works to be built there.

Earlier in the 'Portionary Papers' referred to above and researched by the late Keith Pryer, this same holding is described in an extract from a Survey Book of 1514, 5th Henry VIII, as "in Great Stones, between Bandon and Waddon". From these extracts it appears that the ancient name of Beddington Lane, that in whole or in part may at one time have been

known as Via Regis, was also known as Bandon Way and that an area west of that road north of the river, land formerly held by the Huscarle's was indeed Bandon. According to these documents it could be shown that Bandon Way continued under that name south to Bandon Hill and beyond, but whether this earliest road extended up the present line of Hilliers Lane is a matter of conjecture.

Until the mid-twentieth century however the road was very much a narrow gravelled country lane dividing the fields to either side, bordered with hedges, later with a footpath only on the east side for much of its length from the sewage farm south to the village. A substantial water-filled ditch a possible remnant of the ancient Carew park-pale lay on a line parallel with the road for some distance on the west side. The majority of roads leading off the lane could be described as being relatively modern. As shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868, Guy Road and the former Mile Road are the only roads indicated on the west side, as is the later named Therapia Lane on the east, then giving access only to Pimm's Cottage. Richmond Road appeared in about 1877 and Wandle Bank c.1908-09.

With some small exceptions, the land bordering the entire length of Beddington Lane as far north as the railway belonged to the Carew family. In 1859 at the break up of the estates, fields on the west (or left side when travelling north towards Mitcham) were acquired by only three bidders. Part of Park Farm, including on the north side, the separate lot known as Admiral's Meadow was purchased for in total some £13,750 by the millionaire Edward Henry Moses of Clapham. The adjoining land described as capital arable and woodland, part of the Lower Homestead, later to become part of the sewage farm was purchased by the speculator William Quilter of Coleman Street, London for £2,550. William Goad of Hackbridge acquired the remaining part of the Lower Homestead (lying further north) for £5,400. Edward Moses also purchased the large field immediately south of the railway known as 'The Mitcham New Inclosure' for which he paid an additional £7,050.

The land on the east (or right side), the greater part of which comprised the Marsh Farm, overall offered in smaller lots, was in the main not immediately sold. Charles Henman of Bedford Row, London purchased the Beddington Marsh Allotments along with the Hog Croft and pond for a total of £4,000, the latter where the extensive Prologis warehousing development took place during 2001-02. George Simons bought a small plot south of the railway for £210 and Francis Stokes of Brompton Terrace, land immediately north of the line for which he paid £2,000.

**West side from the river to Derry Road, an area referred to as "the Village".** In the main, this area of Beddington Lane referred to as "the Village" is dealt with under separate headings. The large pond that lay between the river and the Village Hall is now the Triangular Green; the 'Village Hall' itself; a later (c.1900-1901) 'Wandle Cottage'; 'Fern Cottages' later known as the 'Double Shop'; 'Ineson's Cottages'; the 'Harvest Home' and 'Hazel Cottages' and finally 'Park Farm'. Only a few of the cottages now remain, the three that comprised 'Fern Cottages'. Apart from the later builds all else has now gone.



*Burchall's Tea Rooms, Beddington Lane, occupy the former 'Ineson's Cottages' while 'Fern Cottages', more recently known as 'The Double Shop' stand beyond with the relative newcomer 'Wandle Cottage' in the background. Photographed in May 1938.*

**West side beyond the village, north to the railway.** The Carew property sale in the summer of 1859 and again in June 1919 opened up large tracts of land to the potential developer. Prior to the 1859 sale, the only buildings on the west side north of 'Park Farm' (Derry Road) and 'Beddington Lodge' (the large house immediately beyond), was 'Shepherd's Cottage' (to the north of what was to become Mile Road) and hard by the railway, 'Holmwood'. The Long Shaw (or long wood) extended for about a third of the length of the lane on the west side, the remainder of which was also tree lined.

Nearer the village, beyond the modern development of Harrington Close (c.1976-77) opposite today's ASDA supermarket, once stood a group of twelve pre-fabricated houses named 'Lancaster Close' an east-west turning first listed in Electoral Registers in June 1948, the last entry being for two homes in October 1970. Further to the north stand three terraces of four houses numbered 49-71 Beddington Lane built in the late 1920s, formerly known as 18-29 'Corporation Cottages'. A semi-detached house and farm buildings further north by the entrance to Mile Road were demolished in the summer of 2002.

A house that on the front was dated 1896 (85 Beddington Lane) built by the Croydon Corporation to house the manager of the sewage farm and his family (for some time having been left derelict and damaged by fire) along with the greater part of the farm

buildings were demolished in the early part of 2003. This house was located a little further north of that known as 'Grasmere', 83 Beddington Lane built on the site of Shepherd's Cottage, also for employees of the sewage farm. Apart from Grasmere, of the older houses beyond the village only a tight little cluster of three cottages on the bend numbered 73-77 Beddington Lane, also built to house workmen brought in to develop the farm, still stand.

Within the area still referred to as "the village", the pavements were lit by gas lamps that extended no further north than 'Beddington Lodge' (a group of six houses immediately north of the garage) beyond which was nothing but the total darkness of the country at night. The gas lighting began again when one reached the first of a group of houses on the left side, all now demolished, that stood beyond what is now Country Skips. From here, the dim gas lighting led on as far as the railway. The lights were lit each evening and extinguished each morning manually by a lamplighter who moved along the line with a long pole and with a hook pulled a short chain hanging from the lamp in order to either light or extinguish it. The first electric lights were introduced along the length of the lane in June 1959.

Opposite to, but a little to the south of where Therapia Lane meets with Beddington Lane on land no doubt purchased speculatively with an eye to accessibility of the railway, five of the subsequent seven "gentleman's residences" already referred to, were erected on what had been known as the Barn Field, part of the 'Lower Homestead'. In 1871, two of the original houses were occupied by practising barristers (Simpson Rostron of 'Woodlands' who later moved into the village, and Arthur Sherry). Two houses were occupied by stockbrokers (William Quilter, in 1880 the owner of all the properties, and Walter Murton of 'Lorendon Lodge' at that time the only house named in directories), and finally one other house occupied by Mary Winstanley and her family, in the census enumerated as a widow of independent means. By 1900, the majority were owner occupied.

'Wandleholme' (87 Beddington Lane) the southern most house was by 1900 the home of Brough Maltby, who for nineteen years until his retirement in June 1911, was Secretary of the Female Orphanage. In later years, this building was re-named 'Aldwick House' one example of a number of name changes taking place to the majority of these houses over the years. During the Second World War, an area beside this house was used as standing for camouflaged army vehicles. Wandleholme was later to become the first site to see industrial encroachment on that side of the road. 'Fieldside' the next house, afterwards used by Reliance Plant Ltd. was demolished in 1986 with the travelling cranes of Aggreko Generation taking its place.

'Woodcroft' (91 Beddington Lane) the last of this group of houses was demolished in 2001 after having stood derelict for a number of years. These latter two houses at least were of similar architectural style, brick built and slate roofed of two storeys with an arched door recess and shuttered three-bay window on the one side and flush window on the other, one the reverse of the other. In 1900, Woodcroft was the home of Herbert Winstanley an architect and surveyor and his family. More recently, for a number of years Suzuki occupied the building. Beyond Woodcroft stood 'Lorendon Lodge' (No.93) another of the original five homes, in 1900 occupied by Mrs. Christina Murton whose

husband the Stock Broker Walter Murton (one of the original tenants) had also been on the Orphanage Committee. In 1908, Col. Sir J. Buckingham was occupying Lorendon Lodge and by 1915 another military man, Lt. Col. George Waters who lived there at least for the next twenty years.

‘The Hern’ (95 Beddington Lane), a double fronted house consisting of three reception rooms and six bedrooms stood to the north of ‘Lorendon Lodge’, in 1901 owned by C. W. Cater who also owned Ford Terrace in the village. This house is recalled in later years as being dark painted with dense shrubbery in front of it, standing next door to ‘Woodlands’, number 97. During the war a flying bomb landing in the back garden of Woodlands destroyed both it and The Hern, though the latter stood for a number of years badly damaged before being demolished post war.

‘Powis Lodge’ that apart from its stables and coach house was the most northerly of the seven houses (numbered 99 and 99A) stood almost opposite Therapia Lane. The house has been described as unique in that it had a tower above the entrance, certainly unlike any other in the vicinity. From about 1899 to around 1904 it was the home of John and Clara Eg[g]ington among whose children Walter (27), Ernest (19) and their sister Clara (14) enumerated in 1901 as Music Hall Artists were trick cyclists who performed under the professional name of ‘The Malotto’s’ (or similar) at the Croydon Empire and other venues. The passer-by could often see the family practising their act in the back garden. The former coach house to Powis Lodge at some time converted into a cottage outlived the larger house and was demolished in October 1987. The adjoining field on the north side at least in the 1950s and into the 1970s was used as a sports ground.

About 150 yards south of the railway was a large metal plate, beside the footpath indicating the boundary of Beddington with Mitcham, removed when the boundary was re-aligned further north to the station. The Croydon Rifle and Pistol Club off Jessops Way having been formed from the Croydon Home Guard shortly after the beginning of the Second World War transferred to Beddington in about 1960-61 from the Fairfield area of Croydon when the theatres were about to be built. The basis of the earth bunds enclosing the firing range on three sides is said to be of rubble from the anti-aircraft gun site on Mitcham Common at Beddington Corner when it was being demolished. The former Maurice Stacey Allotments at the west end of Jessops Way more recently used for the growing of turf is now the site of a go-kart racing circuit laid out during 2001.

Between the site of ‘Holmwood’, now in part the Brookmead Industrial Estate, and the former railway, a public footpath still leads to the west across the common land. This was once described as “tamed and somewhat dreary countryside” but an area at one time known as the best place in south London for anyone intent upon bird watching.

**West side north of the railway.** Within Beddington North Ward immediately beyond the Tramlink crossing before the open land of Mitcham Common and the golf course, is a triangle of a little over five acres of land. In 1812, under the Enclosure Award this area was allocated to the Beddington Poor, part of which the Vestry sold to the railway company who built a Station House adjacent to the line.



Bordering what they referred to as Windmill Road (Beddington Lane), in March 1906 Trustees of the Beddington Poor Lands offered the remaining land (a triangular area of a little over four acres) for sale. In the early 1930s, by this time an industrial area, it had a spur rail line serving a scattered site later identified as being tar works. At one time Pullen Foundries Ltd. No.2 Works occupied buildings that now have a number of different tenants, known overall as the Beddington Industrial Estate.

**East side from the river to the railway.** Beddington was surely unique in that it had two fords in close proximity to one another; along the river bed between Bridges Lane and Beddington Lane and across the river where today we see the road bridge. Historically there may have been a third further north in the proximity of the now Jet Service Station that had been culverted at an early date. Might this latter have been the elusive Craneford as referred to by Bentham in his 'History of Beddington' published in 1923.

In the area of what was to become known as the village, on Rocque's map published c.1762 there is shown an unidentified building, probably a house or cottage standing by Beddington Lane that disappeared at some time between 1820 and 1840. Ford Terrace now occupies the site. This house stood on part of what was originally a larger field, the northern boundary of which was marked by the stream that crossed the lane near where the garage stands today. By the 1820s the mill stream had been re-aligned and flows where we see it today, on the south side of the terrace.

Apart from the house referred to above and the buildings of the Marsh Farm further to the north, there were none other on the east side of the lane apart from a small group in a brick field south-west of what is now the Lombard Roundabout. These brick works were still in existence in 1898 but had disappeared by 1914. Even by 1868, there were no dwellings on the east side of Beddington Lane from the river as far north as 'Tyler's Cottage' (the only buildings of the Marsh Farm) and very few beyond. 'Pimm's Cottage' (later known as the 'Thatched Cottage') off Therapia Lane, 'Mulberry Cottages' (a cluster of three cottages on the north side of the corner with Therapia Lane) and a little beyond them two houses, 'The Poplars' and nearer the railway 'The Lindens' were the only other buildings shown on the 1868 map.

Though by the 1930s some industrial development and gravel extraction had taken place at the northern end, discounting the growth of the sewage farm and that related to the Croydon B Power Station on the east side, the major development of Beddington Lane began in the 1960s and '70s changing so much of recent years as to be almost unrecognisable. The overall skyline too has dramatically altered. Gone are the massive cooling towers connected with the Power Station a landmark for so many years, as have the concrete settling tanks and gullies of the sewage works on the east side of the lane, all replaced by light industrial and warehousing developments. Gone too are the scattered Victorian buildings of the Croydon Isolation (Fever) Hospital (opened in June 1896) that adjoined the parish boundary in Croydon on an eight acre site set in a triangular area of land formed by the boundary on the west side and the railway to the north and east.

Built on Waddon Marsh, modern buildings of the Valley Park Estate replace the massive coal powered Croydon B Power Station that, having been built between 1939 and 1950

and brought into use in 1947, already obsolete, was never completed. Intended as a showpiece, it was designed by Robert Atkinson O.B.E., F.R.I.B.A. (1883-1952) whose work also included the Town Hall in Wallington and Wallington Library before the more recent alterations. The building featured a dramatic interior of polished marble, the design emphasised by triangular vertical ribs, tall vertical windows and a steel lattice girder roof. It was faced with brickwork of an extremely high standard and had a separate high curtain wall on the eastern side built to screen the coal handling equipment. Having ceased operation in 1984 and later demolished, only the two 300ft. chimneys of the power station were left standing, today marking the site of the Swedish firm IKEA that opened there in 1992.

A major phased development that took place off Beddington Lane during the latter part of twentieth century and into the new millennium was the Beddington Cross Industrial Estate. A metal obelisk on a roundabout on the east side near the site of a footbridge that once crossed the railway, was erected in 2001. The Tramlink Depot (built at a cost £2.75m), the building of which was approved by an Act of Parliament and given Royal Assent in 1994 stands nearby. A link road (Coomber Way) giving access to the Tramlink Depot and areas beyond, after many years of delay (phase 1 opened in 1999, accessed from Beddington Farm Road only), today meets with Beddington Lane at a roundabout built during the spring and summer of 2002. The 750-metre second phase building of the road was in the main financed by Thames Water, then proprietors of the gravel extraction and landfill site at Beddington Farmlands. The whole was opened to traffic in November 2002 though officially opened by the mayor Cllr. John Dodwell the following January.

A further major project, the massive ProLogis development of the Therapia Trading Estate effectively began in 2001, the buildings of which are dissected by Greenland Way (named in 2003). Nearer the village, the ASDA supermarket built on a field once known as 'Middle Stones' was opened in February 1988. A wood and metal obelisk was erected at either end of the Beddington Industrial area in May 1999.

**East side between the river and Richmond Road.** "A very desirable and attractive meadow, pleasantly situated, sloping to, and adjoining a very picturesque part of the river Wandle" is how Bridge Meadow, sold as Lot 5 at the disbursement of the Carew Estates was described in 1859. This is where the terrace of six houses numbered 2-12 Beddington Lane and the houses of Wandle Bank were to be built. Immediately prior to the sale of Carew properties, the meadow was let to Henry Tritton of nearby Wandle Court for the annual payment of five guineas. For £260, Bridge Meadow became his as of right and part of his estate upon his death in 1877.

The land to the north of the Mill Stream upon which the earlier of the two groups of houses 14-24 Beddington Lane, 'Ford Terrace' (dated 1884) is built, was once part of a larger field that extended to the north as far as the Goose Green allotments. In 1859 described as the 'Five Acre Meadow', along with a second field the 'Sixteen Acre Mead' (that lay to the east as far as the boundary with Croydon), both were offered for sale along with the mill listed as the Beddington Snuff Mill, Lot 4. Also purchased by Henry Tritton, the £4,500 he paid for it reflected the greater area of land and the value of the mill buildings. In an Indenture dated September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1877 the land upon which Ford Terrace

was to be built passed from Henry Tritton's beneficiaries (Joseph Gurney Barclay, Joseph Tritton and the Rev. William Tritton) to Gideon Smith, who with the assistance of his nephew began building on the land. It would appear that around this time the field was sub-divided, for a group of houses on the north side of Richmond Road had begun to appear shortly after 1877.

With handkerchief-like wrought iron lace edging decorating the eaves, 'Ford Terrace' was built as five houses with the sixth, that on the corner of Richmond Road, as a shop with residence above. When in 1894, 6 Ford Terrace came onto the market independently of the other five it was occupied by H.A. Rutley, Butcher and Grocer as tenant who paid £22 yearly rental. Upstairs were two bedrooms and a sitting room; the 15ft. by 14ft. shop with nests of drawers and two counters, the kitchen and scullery occupied the ground floor. One wonders as to what was the "dwarf cupboard", described as such in the sale particulars. At some time prior to 1900, the shop became known as 'Cowperthwaite's Grocers' and by October 1901 was owned by William Webb. By that time the adjoining houses, numbered 1-5 Ford Terrace had been purchased by C.W.H. Cater who also owned 'The Hern' further north in Beddington Lane. The corner shop became a Sub-Post Office in January 1937. H. and W.J. Goldsmith occupied the building for a number of years during this period; it ultimately passed to a Mr. Wood who in turn sold it to Mr. B.R. Patel in 1977. Mr. Patel ran the business as a Sub-Post Office cum Corner Shop until 1983 when he ceased business following two armed robberies, and no doubt as a casualty of then government policy of closing many of the smaller Sub-Post Offices.

In about 1904, having already built Ford Terrace, Gideon and Sid Smith (uncle and nephew) built their second terrace of houses 2-12 Beddington Lane between the millstream and the river. Although in perfect proportion to the other houses of the terrace, that nearest the river is slightly larger than its neighbours. It became the home of Sid Smith and his family until having built the houses of Wandle Bank for himself, the family moved in there.

**East side, north of Richmond Road.** On the north side of the corner of Richmond Road and Beddington Lane stands a house the entrance to which is numbered 1 Richmond Road, semi-detached from a shop and dwelling numbered 26 Beddington Lane, 'P.M.S. Beddington News'. This c.1884 building was attached to A. and D. Wood's Wheelright business, later to become Wagstaff's, the workshop to which was located in Richmond Road. The paper shop, off-licence and general provision store was formerly a betting shop, a confectioners and even earlier, in the late 1920s and into the next decade, Andrew's dairy. Beside it stands 'The Willows' and beyond, what were the outbuildings and yard attached to the house, we come to the Goose Green allotments.

The site of Capitol Carpets, 104 Beddington Lane was formerly that of a sizeable pond in-filled at some time between 1898 and 1919. It was part of a complex pattern of ponds and watercourses always being altered but which over the years drained this marshy area. The stream that in the early years formed the pond by 1820 had already been culverted beneath the lane. In April 1860, the Croydon Board of Health initially leased and subsequently purchased this land to develop as a sewage farm.

The late Florence Coole (née Bown) recalled celebrations held on the field north of the allotments to mark the end of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) at which time soldiers in scarlet tunics and pill-box hats marched along the lane en-route to where a huge bonfire was lit to mark the occasion. At the conclusion of a later conflict, another party was held on this same field to celebrate Victory against Japan signifying the end of the Second World War. A little further across stood a clump of very large trees a favourite courting and picnic place, destroyed when the electricity sub-station was built. This was the area used by the Croydon Volunteers, the "Red Coats" as they were known locally, who carried out field manoeuvres on land subsequently incorporated into the sewage works located on the east side of Beddington Lane. In March 1898, an existing 595-yard footpath leading across Corporation land, across the spur railway line leading to Waddon Mill and through another field to Waddon, was diverted to the east along the southern boundary.

At the conclusion of the First World War along with other by then redundant equipment, thousands of heavy guns were brought back from France to a dump off Beddington Lane near Waddon Marsh Station. Three cranes were set up manned by army personnel for loading the wagons to disperse the ordnance all over the country, to parks, universities etc., about twenty-five of which were dispatched daily. The cement works and gravel pit traffic used the same spur line.

**East side, later development.** In 1964 when the Tyler's [Marsh] Farm area was being developed and a service road being constructed for the building of the Ariston Alloys factory on the site of the orchard by the former cottage, parts of a human skeleton was unearthed. It was hurriedly removed so as not to delay the building operations. Though little is known about this particular burial, the coroner found it to be an old one. It is thought the skull and other bones may possibly have been an outlying burial of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery the greater part of which was located on the west side of the lane. Ariston Alloys a foundry manufacturing aluminium castings for the motor industry, and from domestic and electrical appliances through to garden furniture; having become financially insecure and in receivership, at the end of January 1986 suffered one of a number of fires leading to closure of the works shortly after. In 1988-89, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken when the site was being re-developed for the building of the Orion Centre, 108 Beddington Lane (Fulmar Colour Printing and The White Quill Press) but no further evidence of ancient habitation was found.

In September 1960, building of the Electricity Grid Converter Station in Beddington Lane began. It was of some 72ft. in height and the complex itself was built at a final cost of £5342.19.11. It was to convert high voltage electricity transported via overhead lines from power stations as Direct Current (DC) into Alternating Current (AC) to enable suppliers to meet the commercial and domestic needs of the area. It came into use in 1964. Superseded by modern equipment, the building stood redundant for some seven years before being demolished during March and into April 1997. Royle Print Ltd. and Book Marque built during the late summer and into the autumn of 1997 by Marbank Construction now stand where this architecturally uninspired building formerly stood. When the original scheme was in use the Sub-Station occupied a 27.7-acre site that extended from Richmond Road to the north behind the buildings of the later Orion Centre. The complex of the National

Grid Electricity Switching Station is still operational though with newer administrative and operational buildings and now being computerised is maintained by less staff.

In mid-2000 engineers completed an £80m tunnel designed to meet the growing electricity demand for London and the South East. They completed the 10km Croydon to London tunnel after breaking through at Beddington sub-station which will house a new 400,000 volt cable between existing sub-stations at Beddington and Rowdown. The tunnel is part of the National Grid's investment programme to reinforce electricity transmission in the South-East. Within the protective fencing enclosing the complex, an open area of grass provides a helicopter-landing pad. A web of tall pylons leads away from the site.

Further along Beddington Lane a brick-built and in part rendered lodge attached to the former sewage works was built in about 1915. This house having been left vacant was vandalised, damaged by fire and demolished at some time in the early 1970s. Immediately on the north side of what was the Superdrug depot is the covered sewage channel leading to the intake from Croydon, beyond which is the Ashworth Trading Estate. Almost opposite the old cottages on the bend (numbered 73-77), stood six massive 242 ft. tall reinforced concrete cooling towers erected as part of the Croydon B Power Station complex on Waddon Marsh off Beddington Farm Road. The cooling towers were demolished in a series of controlled explosions between August and October 1985 much to the delight of the many spectators who arose early on a series of Sunday mornings to view the spectacle.

**Therapia Lane, north to the railway.** Although the Carew family held the greater area of land off Beddington Lane, in 1812 there was however small strips of land on the east side within the triangle formed by the railway and the lane in the possession of others. From north to south these were John Williamson, W. Williamson, Sir Christopher Robinson (of 'Brandries Hill House'), an area of Glebe and the southernmost, land owned by William Meeke of 'Wandle Court'.

Apart from 'Mulberry Cottages' standing immediately on the north side of the junction of Therapia Lane, it would appear that the earliest house to be built was 'The Lindens' at the northern end, built for the gold and silver refiner (or laceman) George Simons (born c.1815), his wife Eliza and family. He had purchased the land from the Carew Estates in 1859 for £210 and lived in the house at least between 1861 and about 1893. In September 1858 being already in possession of the adjoining land, he also purchased the 1r 36p immediately in the point of the triangle to the south of railway for £150. The sale was subject to the long established market gardeners, Messrs. Rollison (who also owned a cottage and nursery grounds immediately north of the line) right to remove the shrubs, evergreens and plants belonging to them that were growing on the land. The Lindens changed ownership to that of W. H. Cole at some time in the mid-1890s. 'Linden Lodge' is also noted in directories from about 1885 then occupied by S. Maycock.

A little to the south of The Lindens, by 1874 another house had been built, originally known as 'The Poplars' but which by 1878-9 during the occupancy of Thomas Fairer, a Farmer, Silk Manufacturer and Warehouseman, had become known as 'Oak Lodge'. By 1898 another house, 'The Cottage' had been built immediately to the south, at which time

Oak Lodge was occupied by J.W. Falkner and The Cottage by the owner of both properties William Simons. The Cottage survived into the latter part of the 1930s, but only Oak Lodge stood at least into the 1960s at 56 Beddington Lane (by that time known as Ebdon's), to either side (at 54 and 58 Beddington Lane) of which stood buildings associated with Pullen Pumps. Mr Pullen at one time also occupied Oak Lodge. Only two cryptic date stones remain today on buildings associated with Severnside, 'G. F. W. S. 1854' and 'T.J.E. 1961', presumably T.J. Ebdon, but the former - George Simons of The Lindens, perhaps.

Beyond the former Pullen's (now 777 Demolition and Recycling), immediately south of Tramlink are two groups of terraced houses to either side of Elberon Avenue numbered 162-180 Beddington Lane. One of these houses that numbered 162-164, once belonged to Hendra's and subsequently Pullen's. The six houses in Elberon Avenue were built in about 1934-35; first recorded in Electoral Registers in 1936.

**East side, north of the railway.** North of the line is the Meads Estate beyond which is Mitcham Common from where in the past the parish of Beddington extracted gravel for the maintenance of the roads in the area. Arising from an Enquiry in 1890, Simpson Rostron (who had lived in Beddington Lane for some eighteen years) stated that it was particularly during the period of about 1880-82 that the common was much broken. He reported that the railway branch had taken large quantities of gravel for Mitcham Junction with as far as he was aware, no legal authority. This testimony was supported by that of Walter Cole described as a Waywarden of Beddington Parish, who gave evidence that the parish had always enjoyed the Right of obtaining gravel for repair of the highways from Mitcham Common. The land between Croydon Road and the railway (except the north-east corner) was too broken and wet to walk or ride across and no-one went there for amusement except when the ponds were frozen over, only the one of which remains today on the common due north of Brookmead Road. The remaining area of the common in front of the houses has been in-filled with waste and landscaped into undulating hillocks the periphery of which, in the early 1980s was extensively planted with trees and shrubs.

From the former railway, Beddington Lane continues across Mitcham Common to the crossroads and Windmill Lane.

## **The Brandries**

Is the name of a cul-de-sac entered from Guy Road along the line of the former carriage drive to the 'Brandries Hill House' estate and the eighteenth century mansion that still stands, today named 'Camden House'.

The majority of homes in The Brandries (along with the terrace of houses fronting Hilliers Lane) were erected by the building firm of Hunt's during the latter part of the 1920s early 1930s. The turning is first noted in the Electoral Register dated 1931 as Brandries Gardens with six entries for 'Brandries House' only. Piles directory published the following year (1932), indicates that there were twenty-two homes (nine of which were unoccupied the previous October) lining an un-made street. By this time, the bungalow 'After All' had also been built on part of the former kitchen garden off a private section of road that also

gives access to the garages of the houses fronting Hilliers Lane. William Hunt was listed as occupier of Brandries Hill House that at the time was being used for the storage of building materials. The Brandries was adopted by the council in about 1937.

Originally built for sale, in many cases the houses proved too expensive to purchase resulting in a number being let. In July 1944, blast from the flying bomb in Guy Road carried across to The Brandries. Though no critical structural damage was incurred, in many of the houses both internal and external doors were blown in as were ceilings and windows lost. The pitched roofs behind the parapet of the former mansion, after which the road was named were also damaged. The two houses 'Brambledown' and 'Fernlea' were built during 1986 and the new house on the corner (4A) during 2004.

## **Bridges Lane**

Though the history of Bridges Lane before the mid-eighteenth century is somewhat obscure, arising from its north-south alignment and that at its northern end the river was bridged directly in front of the mill, the lane has no doubt been in use for centuries. The building of such houses as 'Riverside' and 'Wandle Court' that once stood by Bridges Lane probably date from the early eighteenth century with 'Beddington House' earlier; but it is subsequent to their having been built that the history of the lane can more accurately be recorded.

On the west side of the lane by the river stood Wandle Court in grounds totalling over six acres (1901), immediately to the south of which was land attached to the Manor Farm. Opposite, with outbuildings curving around the corner by the mill was Riverside set in its own extensive garden, on the same side as Beddington House further uphill towards what became The Broadway. Following the sale of these distinguished houses when the heirs had departed to other by then more desirable areas, at a time when there was great pressure for and profit to be made from selling land for suburban housing, it was then the Beddington we see today began to take shape. Bridges Lane first named as such c.1917-18, formerly incorporated in directories as part of Beddington Road (today's Croydon Road) perpetuates the memory of the family who owned Beddington House for the greater part of the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century.

The flats, 19 Bridges Lane built c.1974-75 replace an earlier house known as 'Kingsley'. Apart from two semi-detached homes numbered 28 and 30 that stand almost opposite, the remaining buildings we see today in the main date from the mid to late 1920s and early 1930s. It was in April 1926 planning permission was obtained by T.E. McColloch and Kingslake of 'Riverside Works', Bridges Lane, for the building of ten houses in pairs now numbered 29 to 47 to be erected on the site of Beddington House and its grounds. An area was set aside for the provision of three tennis courts on the far side of a private road that led in behind the houses. Offered for sale in October 1928 while they were yet being built, these three bedroom semi-detached houses were sold for £950, five of which were occupied by 1931. The houses numbered 7 to 17 are thought to be slightly earlier.

It was during the lifetime of the original Wandle Court (by that time converted into four flats) that development of the grounds was to take place and in about 1928, the houses of

Wandle Court Gardens came into being. The architect Ernest Gladstone Allen of Wandle Court designed the houses on the west side of Bridges Lane numbered 8 to 26 on what was formerly part of the mansion grounds including the house known today as ‘The Cottage’ that stands on the north side of the corner of Wandle Court Gardens. This house with its shuttered windows, distinctive tiled roof and magnificent front door was originally similar in style to those uphill; houses built in the second half of the 1920s. Number 18 was the first to be occupied. It is said these homes were of re-used brick and tiles salvaged from Beddington House, and indeed incorporated into the house numbered 26 are two bricks dated 1778 and 1890.

Two substantial semi-detached houses numbered 28, ‘The White Cottage’ and the more recently named ‘Port Cottage’, 30 Bridges Lane, were built as tied accommodation to the Manor Farm. A large field extended from beside these two houses beyond the line of the present Hallowell Avenue, encompassing the land upon which the northern parade of The Broadway shops were built. Hallowell Avenue was built up in about 1934-35 after the land had been sold and opened up by developers building what was known as the St. George’s Park estate.

On part of this field at number 38A Bridges Lane, in 1932 a large barn-like brick building was erected as a Transforming Sub-Station for the County of London Electricity Supply Co. Ltd. During 1986-87, the then vacant building underwent a remarkable metamorphosis from which it emerged as the not unattractive dwelling we see there today. A modern sub-station was built in the grounds of the original building.

## **The Bridle Path**

“Thence we can cross the bridge over Waddon millpond” (directs an undated ‘Riverside Ramble’), “and follow the winding slopes of a delightful shady bridle path by the side of our river which has reached a respectable width since reinforced from the springs of Waddon backwater. Above and around us are hillside copses, on the further bank a wide stretch of marsh”, Waddon marsh, an area of land that is flat, heavy and which was once saturated with springs.

Above this southern bank of the river, the land rises to form a terrace upon which is located the pathway known today as ‘The Bridle Path’. Our ramble continues – “in this sweet rural spot, we can see how all life grows richest around the river which is Nature's great highway. No better place around London do I know of to study that marvellous round that begins when the blackthorn and willow flower, and where the thrushes start building in the leafless hedgerows”. We enter the borough from Croydon, marked until the late 1980s by two Victorian iron posts across the footpath, the boundary having been drawn between Brandy Bottle Hill and the line of the Merebank.

This same area was at one time known as Brandy Bottle Hill, first noted as such on the Ordnance Survey map dated 1868. There are theories that the name derived from the use of this path by eighteenth century smugglers or so called ‘fair traders’ with brandy bottles literally clinking at the belt as they went about their clandestine business. That there were people engaged in the distribution of contraband is known and that the quiet trackways



between the south coast and the metropolis would no doubt have seen their passing. In 1923, the Rev. Thomas Bentham relates how the late Mr. Roffey could remember hearing tales of teams of donkeys being seen by night traversing the Downs in the direction of Beddington but one feels that the frequency of such activities would not have justified the hill being named as such. Once common in the waters of the Wandle as in other streams and ponds mostly in the south and east of England was a wild yellow water lily *Nuphar Lutea* that bears its flowers from June to August. It is commonly known as the Brandy Bottle because its flowers smell like stale brandy and the seed-head that develops after the petals fall is like a green glazed carafe. It would seem more likely therefore that the hill derived its name from the existence of the water lily in the river below as opposed to the more romantic version of “four and twenty ponies”.

As their most direct route when public transport was not readily available, local people made use of the Bridle Path to walk into Croydon. Just after the turn of the twentieth century when George Clark was returning home, he passed a man leading a large brown bear the latter of which he was somewhat apprehensive. At the time performing animals were by no means unique but Croydon was the home of two dancing bears that with their keepers lived in the town in a yard and stables behind a lodging house for tinkers. Each morning traversing the streets of the locality, the bears performed for any offerings that might be placed in the tins they bore around their necks. This was likely to have been one of the bears photographed in Melbourne Road, Wallington in 1903.

When our pathway beside the pollarded willows officially became known as the Bridle Path is not clear. It was shown as an un-named pathway on the Carew Estate sale map in 1859, un-named as such in Directories dated 1882, but by 1884 is shown and named no doubt because of the homes being built along it in 1880. In May 1881, when ‘Riverside Cottages’ now numbered 1 to 11 Bridle Path (built on ground attached to the former snuff mill) were offered for sale they were described as having been “recently built”. Mr. Phillips living in number one was paying rent of twenty-six shillings per month (£1.30) whereas the remainder were let on a weekly basis of six shillings and six pence (32½p.) per week. On the same day, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1881, the auctioneers also offered a further eleven plots for sale, two of which were slightly separated from the remainder and nearer Waddon mill. Gradually the Bridle Path was built up with the houses on the opposite side of the road being built during the late 1920s on the Further (Cedars Road end), Middle and Home Paddocks attached to the ‘Riverside’ property. In 1932, the houses were re-numbered and the path upgraded.

A building at one time used as a post office and shop then known as ‘London House’ stands on the corner of the Bridle Path and Wandle Road. Built in about 1881, (it has the date 1877 on a modern plaque), the house was from c.1885 the home of Mr. T.W. Taylor, Grocer, Provision Dealer and Sub-Postmaster, open 8am to 8pm for Postal, Money Order and Savings Bank business. His immediate predecessor C. Edwards, noted in directories from 1882, had succeeded Miss Isted who for many years had been Postmistress in the building known as the ‘Old Post Office’ in Guy Road. Thomas Webb Taylor was almost Dickensian in appearance perched up on a high stool behind the counter. He was small, bearded and bent over, and invariably wore a black cap and steel-rimmed glasses. He was well known not only in his capacity as Postmaster but for the state in which he kept the

shop. The smell of mice was almost overpowering; his hands were recalled as being like a grave digger's with long dirty fingernails he would dip down into the jar when the children would go in to buy two penny-worth of pickles. Despite the fact of his being the subject of a number of prosecutions under the Public Health Act, the bacon he sold was reputedly delicious! Though owned by Miss G. Smith, Mr. Taylor remained there until about 1929 when, according to directories Mrs. Wheeler and Mrs. Moore took over the Post Office. A gentleman lived in the 'Post Office Cottage'. The shop with its accommodation above and the house, at some time became separate entities with the latter retaining the name 'London House' while today the former shop cum post office is known as 'Bridle House'. A blocked doorway however survives as evidence of a former link between the two. The corner shop, in 1996 converted for use as a dental technician's had remained little altered for many years with its wood panelling, shelving and the pigeon holes relating to its former use. The Post Office moved to a shop within the nearby mill building, then to The Broadway. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1937, a Sub-Post Office registered as 'Croydon 24' was established in the shop on the corner of Richmond Road and Beddington Lane under the proprietorship of W. Goldsmith and Son where it remained though under different management until closing on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1983.

## **The Broadway**

In December 1920 the collapse of Farrow's, known as the "Penny Bank" inadvertently brought about a complete change in the face of Beddington as areas of land in which the bank had invested were released onto the market. It was at a time when developers were ready to step in and capitalise on the gradual recovery beginning to take place in the wake of the Great Depression.

Thomas Farrow had established the bank that bore his name in May 1904 under the Friendly Societies Act with the chief object of enabling individuals and small traders to obtain credit at other than exorbitant rates of interest. At its height, it was said to have had assets of over £4½ million. The bank was particularly attractive to the small investor with "a safe and desirable 5-6% investment, approved" (so the advertisement ran) "by Clerics, Parliamentarians, Economists and Reformers". In order to attract as many customers as possible Farrow's were the first to establish a Home Savings Bank; they formed a special women's branch and equipped motorcars as mobile banks that travelled to the more outlying country areas. There was a branch in every county and for a time three in Croydon.

The bank invested heavily in land, including that in Beddington, much of which was in the area of what was to become The Broadway. It also extended to operations outside normal banking business that in the end proved to be unsound. Five days before Christmas 1920, the bank failed along with the savings (17s. lost in every £1) of the money local people had invested in it. Had they known the background, people may not have been as trusting to the vivacity of the enterprise. Along with other pursuits, Thomas Farrow had been a one-time editor and shareholder in a local Croydon newspaper that had also failed within eight days of which one of the greatest fires the area had ever seen reduced the building and its contents to ashes. No doubt, it was well insured! Within days of the



*The Broadway 1962 when at the heart of local shopping.*

bank going under Thomas Farrow was arrested and along with others, charged with falsifying accounts. He was subsequently sentenced to four years jail. Having ended his days in comparative poverty he died at his home near Chichester some fourteen years later in 1934.

The land comprising the southern parade of shops was the earliest to be developed on land formerly part of the Collyer-Bristow 'Beddington Place' estate. At first only eleven shops with accommodation above were constructed and completed by 1934. The continuation of this parade (that includes the former post office and library) came slightly later, built in about 1934-35 identified by the different style of architecture marking the two building periods. Having been established in Wallis's bakers shop, on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1936 the Post Office moved to the Broadway at which time Mr. Clare was Postmaster to be followed as Postmistress by his daughter Mrs. Janice Kerr. By the early 1980s, Mr. Dilip Solanki operated the Post Office within Spencer's Newsagents 19 and 20, The Broadway. The Beddington Post Office closed in January 2005.

As we see it today, The Plough public house is situated on an island formed by Croydon Road and the one-way sections of roadway leading to and from Plough Lane. Before the Broadway was developed, between the pub wall and the outbuildings on the former Beddington Place estate there was only a narrow passageway that led through to two farmhouses facing Plough Lane. When the barn and outbuildings were being demolished for the building of the southern parade of shops an arch-roofed brick structure that was

partly above ground was discovered. Thought possibly to have been a long lost cellar it was hurriedly in-filled by the developers without the opportunity for further investigation. Rumours as to the origin of this feature were rife with tales of smugglers fuelled by the writings of the Rev. Williams of Wallington who in 1873, told us that another hiding place for contraband had to be found once the location of the caves, sited in the bank of sand opposite had become known. We have no knowledge as to the source of his information apart from the oft times questionable local tradition.

The land upon which the northern parade (the left side when facing the direction of Croydon) is built was once a field where cows were grazed to supply the needs of the Beddington House estate. A small dairy or milking shed was also located there. The land passed from the Bridges family to the Collyer-Bristow's from whom it was purchased by Farrow's Bank. When the 6¾ acres again came on the market following the collapse of the bank, William Orton on behalf of Philip Mighell of Manor Farm purchased the land for £850. At first Manor Farm ran only two or three cows on the field for household use but soon after extended the herd and sold milk to Andrew's Dairy in Beddington Lane and to their successors Sutton Creameries. In 1935, Philip Mighell sold his holdings in Beddington and moved to Purley after which the shops were built. Those on the northern side of the Broadway therefore are of a slightly later date than those opposite.

With the outbreak of war in September 1939, the local authority used shops that were without tenants to store the possessions of those who had lost their homes in the bombing. The public library in the southern parade was one such unit. The Mayor Alderman John Vale J.P. opened the latter as a library on Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1946, the book stock for which having already served the residents for more than twenty years had been transferred from the voluntary run library in the Village Hall. Beddington Library is currently (2011) under threat of closure. The Broadway with its Wallis's cake shop, Mac Fisheries, Mayles and of later years the long established Coughlans, two butchers, two greengrocery businesses, Goodies (Jan's) Newsagents at 214 Croydon Road and other small shops therefore became the commercial nucleus of Beddington, superseding "the village" with its few scattered shops.

## **Bute Road**

This road along the line of the Beddington-Wallington parish boundary was originally one of many similar footpaths or field paths beneath the shots or strips of land in what were the old Wallington common fields. Bute Road named as such first appears in directories in 1878 though very little development had taken place by the turn of the twentieth century. In Piles Directory of 1901, there were no buildings listed either side of the 'Wallington Schools' (Holy Trinity School). On the opposite (or west side) were the almshouses, three houses listed before the turning of Highland Cottages, then the one house that stood between Maldon Road and Park Road named 'The Limes' occupied by Alexander Lambert the snuff mill proprietor, with only four houses beyond. The remaining roads began to be built up shortly after.

Today, immediately beyond Holy Trinity School on the east or Beddington side of the parish boundary stands a development Stannet Way dating from 1995, built on what were

formerly Wallington Parish Council allotments beside which c.1919 stood 'Depot Cottage' and the Croydon Rural District Council Depot. By 1937, the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council had taken over the site that became a large Central Depot with a number of offices, workshops, storage areas and yard.

Opposite, (in the parish of Holy Trinity, Wallington) are long established allotment gardens with a footpath leading to Wallington. Beyond 'St. Mary's Court' is a small open area known as St. Mary's Field after the church to which it belonged, St. Mary's, Beddington. Approached by the Beddington and Wallington Playing Fields Association, the then rector the Rev. Bond readily agreed with the proposal of preserving the area as a playground and asked a very low figure for the land. Including fees, in total the cost to the association amounted to £550 for the 1¼ acres. The deeds passed to the Urban District Council in April 1929 after they had fenced the land and undertaken to level the rough ground to prepare it for use. The playground that during the Second World War had a large underground air-raid shelter built upon it opened to the public in April 1931. Opposite St. Mary's Field is Eastway part of a large well-designed estate of council houses in the main built into the early 1920s.

Though Bute Road was built-up piecemeal from the early 1920s, many houses were developed c.1927 under the Addison and Wheatley Housing Scheme of affordable council housing. On 'Miller's Orchard' much of the earlier development was undertaken by the Wallington builder Duncan Stewart, hence the names Bute Road, Arran Close and another Scottish link, the nearby mews-style terrace known as 'Highland Cottages'. These latter homes had been built by 1888 but a number of which were unoccupied at that date (Jakson's of Mitcham for a time had a distillery at the back of these cottages). In 1881, Duncan Stewart was employing sixty-five men on various building projects within the district. At the very south end of Bute Gardens is St. Christopher's Mews (1988-9) on what were at least in the 1930s and into the 1940s known as the Bute Road Tennis Club Courts. These were at one time a United Dairies Milk Depot and were to become an area of warehouse and allotment gardens prior to the estate being built.

Had it not ended where it does today at Belmont Road and not been cut off by the building of Bute Gardens West (an extension of Bute Gardens built in about 1931-32 to link Demesne Road and Melbourne Road), a natural extension to Bute Road would have brought one to the railway by Spring Gardens. This was formerly Spring Field (1898) and the site of 'Spring Cottage' the home of William Sprules and his family who moved there from Beddington Lane in about 1864. The daughters carried on distilling herbs there until the death of Miss Sarah Sprules in 1912.

## **Church Lane**

"Pursuing the roadway [in 1868], we come to Chat's Hill [Guy Road] and turning into a lane to the right, we pass through the village, a few peaceable homes, and on through a swing gate into the Warren". Sited on the rising hillside above the river along a route that probably dates back to the Middle Ages perhaps earlier, only a few of those homes on the north side remain from when this was written, at which time the lane was little more than a very narrow, muddy, rutted street.

**North side from Guy Road.** Between what was the garden of the building known as the Old Post Office and number 12 Church Lane lay a footpath, in 1871 referred to as 'Church Passage' giving access downhill into Malthouse Row, today's Whelan Way. The four 'Elm Cottages', built on the garden of the Post Office at some time between 1860 and 1868 now stand on the corner. Beside this former pathway stands an old house known today as 'Dorset Cottage', 10 Church Lane. Adjacent is the site of 'The Harrow' beer house.

Other old cottages are those today numbered 12 and 14, a semi-detached building that has also been extended over the years. In 1820, both were owned by Mrs. Ann Paston Gee of the Carew estates, but by 1840 the eastern half (No.12) had become part of the estate of the late William Charrington. Probably dating from the early eighteenth century, the cottages are brick built, have a double mansard tiled roof and flush windows. In 1874 when the east (or right side facing) half of the building was sold it was described as having two bedrooms, two sitting rooms, kitchen with cellar in the basement and a lean-to wash house in the yard. The occupant was Thomas Stanfield who paid 5s. (25p.) per week rent. The family obtained their water from a well shared jointly with their next-door neighbour.

The west side of this cottage (No.14) that remained as part of the Carew estates throughout was made up of similar accommodation but with two cellars. It was rented by Thomas Chater for 16s. (80p.) per month. At the time of the land sale in 1859, Elizabeth Thornton purchased the cottage and adjoining land for £215. An extension identifiable by its architectural style and different coloured bricks was built on to the west side with Mrs. Thornton occupying what had then become the central part and the Chater family the remainder. For a time therefore the overall building was utilised as three households, no doubt until 'Sunnyside Lodge' was built in the grounds after which it would appear No. 14 reverted to single occupancy known then as 'Sunnyside' (in 1920 known as 'Hillside'). In the spring-summer of 2002 work was undertaken to convert this side of the house into two, the central cottage remaining as No. 14 Church Lane and that on the west side becoming 14A. The interior was stripped back to expose the brickwork and the lower floor of the central part temporarily removed exposing the cellars that have now become two rooms. Interior doorways were blocked, walls inserted, the building extended and a new entrance made on the west side where a fireplace had previously been located.

As for number 16 Church Lane, 'Sunnyside Lodge' (now known as 'Sunnyside', a tall house standing a little to the west of and partly in behind the older building), the initials T and C carved on either side of the wooden arch of the front porch would surely indicate the initials of Thomas Chater for whom the house was built at some time prior to 1868. Built of stock brick with slate roof and steep eaves it appears higher at the back owing to the slope of the hillside upon which it stands. In 1871 Thomas Chater whose occupation is given as Club Secretary then aged 48 was living in Sunnyside Lodge with his wife Mary and their five children. Ten years later his eldest son Frank, a Bank Clerk, then aged 30 was living in the house, enumerated as head of the household.

The area of land to the west of Sunnyside Lodge across to the eastern boundary wall of the Carew estate was one large field with a garden or orchard adjacent to Sunnyside

Lodge. The whole area was at one time known as Hodges Field though how it gained the name has yet to be ascertained. Following the release of the Carew estates in 1859, the developer Joseph Borsley purchased much of the land near the manor and eventually this field. By a conveyance dated September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1864 however the land became the property of Henry Tritton of Wandle Court. Cows grazed on The Warren were taken across to Hodges Field where the milking shed was located. When Henry Tritton died in January 1877, the land passed to his wife as a tenant until her death (in 1901) after which it again came onto the market. In December 1901, the field was conveyed to Edwin Charles Moody from whom in 1905 it was purchased by Jesse Clack (of the brickworks), whose intention was to build houses upon the land.

Jesse Clack died in 1910, the houses were never built and some time after 1915 when an aborted plan was put forward by the Surrey Education Committee for the building of a school there, the western part of Hodges Field became the Orchard Industrial Estate of mixed businesses. The east side of the field (upon which the town houses numbered 18-32 Church Lane were built in 1989 at the time of the Baron's Court development of Whelan Way), is still recalled by many when it was a smallholding attached to Sunnyside Lodge. This was a small local provider from whom freshly laid eggs, chickens, pork, fruit and milk could be purchased. The goat milk they produced was supplied directly to Queen Mary's Hospital for Children. The orchard was probably that part of the field in 1859 outlined as being a garden. When a pigsty was being built downhill, a number of Roman finds are said to have been uncovered that were passed to a museum, but of which no more details are known. Prior to the houses being built it had become a somewhat derelict area of open ground with the land downhill becoming an unoccupied caravan parking lot and the part nearest Church Lane an area of parking for the adjoining industrial estate.

Shortly after the First World War, (Oliver) Harper's Automatic Vending Company set up business in what became known as the Orchard Industrial Estate, Church Lane. Their slot machines and weighing scales were once a familiar sight on railway station platforms. They also manufactured tin toys. Their venture does not appear to have succeeded here as in 1924, Fell and Briant label printers occupied the site. They extended the existing building to the front in 1929. The printing works established in 1847 printed lithographic labels for the food and drinks industry and were reputedly the largest suppliers of beer labels in Britain in 1969 holding some 40% of the market producing eighty-million labels a week. Though access was difficult via Guy Road and Church Lane, they remained on the Orchard Estate until the spring of 1970 when the then ever-present threat of the proposed M23 Motorway extension (that was finally killed off in September 1981) and the difficulty of access prompted their removal to the old Croydon Airport Industrial Estate. During the Second World War, the building was set alight by incendiary bombs but was not extensively damaged. The area of this small industrial site became the 'Church Paddock Court' housing estate accessed via Streeters Lane, built during the latter part of the 1990s; first occupied in 2000.

Within the field upon which these homes were built, at the bottom of the hill by the high red brick wall that bounded the Carew gardens was a shallow stream of about 6ft. wide, in the 1930s crossed by a small footbridge. The water flowed to the west along the boundary where its direct line was cut off and diverted slightly southwest before flowing beneath

the wall of the manor grounds where it entered what had formerly been Sir Francis Carew's sixteenth century garden. Within the triangle of the walls and stream lay what in 1840 was indicated as being the Carew household rubbish dump with a gateway in the wall giving access. This way into the later Orphanage grounds was bricked up at the request of Mr. Tritton in 1874. When the watercress beds further upstream were filled in, the combined flow of the two streams were diverted in their entirety to enter the grounds of the former manor and orphanage where we see it today.

**South side from Guy Road.** On the south side of Church Lane memories were of a ditch by the roadside with blackberry bushes and a small brook, access to the houses being gained by way of railway sleepers laid across the stream.

The plot of ground on the corner of Guy Road (opposite the Old Post Office) upon which the bungalow 51 Guy Road now stands, was at one time site of a garden. In 1820, it was owned by the parish, but by 1840 had passed into the ownership of Charles Hallowell Carew following an earlier exchange between Mrs. Gee and the parish for land on Cat's Brain Hill. In 1840, this garden plot was cultivated by John Cookson the Parish Clerk, who was then living in what is now Dorset Cottage. In 1859, it was worked by James Baker. The site of the house 'Uplands', 1 Church Lane (built c.1899) was also the site of a garden owned throughout by the Carew estates and subsequently sold, as was the plot on the corner when the estates were disbursed in 1859. This area of ground (as far as what is now 33 Church Lane) was purchased by the Quaker Merchant Banker Samuel Gurney of Carshalton.

In 1820, it is recorded that Sir Christopher Robinson of Brandries Hill House owned the adjoining field on the west side of these gardens, though a single dwelling set back on a small plot owned by the Carew's lay tucked into the north-western corner of the field about where the houses 17 and 19 Church Lane ('Hollybank Villas') now stand. In 1840 this small boarded and tiled cottage that consisted of two bedrooms, a kitchen, washhouse and wood house was occupied by Widow (Jessie) Payne who was paying £5 a year rent and was still living there nineteen years later in 1859 when the Carew sale took place. The cottage was still standing in 1868 but replaced by a glasshouse at some time prior to 1886 and later the terrace of houses.

Opposite the orchard adjacent to Sunnyside Lodge, likewise set back from the lane, there stood another boarded and tiled cottage comprising two tenements also owned by the Carews. Each cottage consisting of a kitchen, two bedrooms and a wash-house in 1859 occupied by Thomas Eldridge a tenant paying 3/- (15p.) per week and Samuel Stedman, 2s 6d (12½p.) per week rent. Sited about where today's 27 and 29 Church Lane ('Ivybank Villas') now stand, these cottages were still there in 1886 when they again came onto the market with the land already divided into building plots. By then the sewer had been constructed and water mains lain on. The land upon which these two tenements stood had a frontage of 20ft. to Church Lane and 100ft. to the proposed new road.

It would appear that as the nineteenth century drew towards its close, the new face of Church Lane was being prepared in readiness to greet the twentieth. In July 1877 Henry Tritton purchased land amounting to forty building blocks in Guy Road and Church Lane



that by November 1896 were again offered for sale. Upon almost its entire length building work was being undertaken with two major projects; the houses of 'Hollybank Villas' today numbered 3 to 19 and those of 'Ivybank Villas', 21 to 33. Both terraces were occupied by around 1898-99. In 1901, four of the seven freehold houses then numbered 9 to 12 Church Lane (part of the Ivybank Villas terrace) then let at 8s. 6d. (42½p.) per week, were offered for sale by the Croydon Auctioneers, Blake and Carpenter.

Between the two late Victorian terraces is an access that appears may have been a road, now blocked. In 1900, on a map outlining its proposed route it is named 'Leonard Road' presumably after the youngest son of the then owner of the land Jesse Clack. The father's intent was to develop the land on the opposite side of Church Lane so this may well have been part of the overall scheme of access. Whatever the reason the road was never constructed and development never took place. In later years however, during the 1950s and 60s Church Lane became the access to a breeze block manufacturing company the buildings of which were located behind the houses to the west (or right-hand side) of the entrance. The houses of Gisbourne Close now stand on the site. The entrance was blocked off in the 1970s to stop gypsies encroaching on what had by then become unoccupied wasteland.

Today's end of terrace house 19 Church Lane on the left side (facing) of the intended road was the Clack family home within which, in about 1899 shortly after having come to Beddington, Mrs Clack opened a grocery shop. In the early 1930s, the business was taken over by J.W. Meadows listed as beer retailer, though he also sold a wide range of goods. This shop is later remembered as being 'Unwins Off Licence' that closed in the early 1970s.

The building opposite, 21 Church Lane immediately prior to becoming the private dwelling we see there today was formerly in use as a drawing office. In the late 1930s it was a Butcher Shop (that later transferred to Petchey's shop in Richmond Road) and later again in use as a fish and chip shop under the proprietorship of David and Edward Wakefield. It closed in about 1966-7.

The Enclosure map of 1820 indicates there were separate buildings in the area of Church Lane between what was later to become the terrace Ivybank Villas and The Warren (pre-Streeters Lane), land and buildings owned by William Charrington of the Brewing and Coal Merchant family. By 1800, he was a substantial landowner of some eleven houses, none of which he occupied himself but one of which was occupied by George Charrington. The earliest connection with the Charrington's and Beddington yet found was in February 1760 when a George Charrington of Streatham married the widow Mary Hasell in St. Mary's church. He was tenant of the Carew's largest area of land (probably the Home Farm) and was the owner of seven houses let to tenants. He was also a land tax accessor and collector and his name appears in Rate Books of 1788 as an Overseer to the Poor. The Times records that "on the 24th April 1851 at his son's residence Doughty Street Mr. Charrington formerly of Beddington died in his 91st year".

In this same area the map indicates two groups of two tenements occupying the northern part of a deeper plot, one, a large building centrally sited hard by the lane and the second,

set back by the boundary with The Warren, both seemingly on a north-south alignment. A third building described as a house lay south of the other two by the east boundary. By the time of the Tithe Award (1840), the larger building had been divided into three tenements, each with a very small garden. These were probably the buildings described as “small but ancient brick cottages that only a few years back stood there” as recalled at the end of the nineteenth century. The tenements by The Warren appear to have been rebuilt facing Church Lane with their own long front gardens; that to the rear is noted as being a house with garden leased to William Asgill. The first edition Ordnance Survey map (1868) indicates Asgill’s house had been rebuilt or at least converted and extended into two homes named ‘Penolver Cottages’.

Between 1868 and 1896 the other buildings on the site were cleared away and a terrace of five ‘Park Cottages’ owned by John Drage had been constructed forward of Penolver Cottages. The terrace and Penolver Cottages were extensively damaged (one house of which was totally demolished) when a flying bomb exploded in a grove of elm trees that stood opposite the end of Church Lane adjacent to No. 47 at 4.50 on the morning of June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1944. There was also extensive blast damage to roofs, glass and plaster over a wide area. Temporary housing in the form of six pre-fabricated houses numbered 35 to 45 Church Lane were later erected on the site until they in turn were demolished in the 1960s after which the ground lay vacant. In 1989 Streeters Lane was created along the west boundary of the site over the foundations of the destroyed terrace and the western part of Charrington’s landholding. A row of three houses built during the summer of 1997 facing the new road at the northern end of Streeters Lane now occupy part of the site. A copper beech that stood by the front of one of the Church Lane cottages though once pollarded continues to thrive. Beside these homes, a swing gate formerly gave access to the footpath beside The Warren and the old Carew garden wall.

Numbering originally began at the west (or Church) end moving towards Guy Road; the whole was re-numbered and the numbering reversed in 1932. Today, even though recent development has taken place and many of the late Victorian/Edwardian buildings have been subject to alteration, Church Lane retains an attractive lane-like quality.

## **Church Path and the ‘Elizabethan’ wall**

Sadly vandalised and restored over the years, the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century buttressed wall to the Carew Manor garden still stands beside Church Path, a long established footpath that probably originated as a medieval lane running from Croydon via Beddington to Wallington and beyond.

The wall bordering the footpath is believed to be Elizabethan and may well be contemporary with the magnificent ornamental gardens and orangery created by Sir Francis Carew (d.1611). Of those that remain, the original hand made bricks are of this date being narrow, of no more than about two inches in width held together with relatively soft thick mortar that helped disguise the unevenness of the bricks. In 1870, the banker and philanthropist Henry Tritton of ‘Wandle Court’ purchased the wall along with a strip of land three feet within the then Orphanage grounds at which time he covenanted not only to keep it in good repair but also to rebuild it if at any time this became necessary. In

1871, he restored the wall and the now non-existent gateway (with its Gothic arch and stout wooden door) that led from the Orphanage grounds out to the lower Queen Elizabeth's walk. At the same time as this restoration work was being undertaken he had a stone plaque with the letters F.O.A. (Female Orphan Asylum) and H.T. (his own initials) with the date 1871 set in the wall by the churchyard now the entrance to the Air Training Corps and T.S. Puma buildings. Henry Tritton was also involved with the north-south aligned wall at the east end of the grounds abutting Hodges Field now bordering the Church Paddock Court housing estate. The former gateway in this wall at the north end close by the orangery wall was bricked up at his request but it is not known if he was responsible for stabilising that wall with a series of buttresses similar to those along Church Path.

A conveyance dated September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1864, confirms Henry Tritton's purchase of land adjacent to the footpath at the end of Church Lane after which he enclosed The Warren field with an iron fence, many of the posts of which were set into carved blocks of stone the provenance of which has yet to be ascertained. He gravelled the footpath and maintained it. After his death, maintenance of the path was not kept up and it was eventually handed over to the parish council to repair. Next to Hodges Field where the footpath begins, until "quite lately" (1905) there were two foot-gates and a swing gate across the path, the latter of which was kept locked except for when opened for funerals to pass through. There were similar gates near the church.

The field known today as 'The Paddock' or 'Church Field' (that nearest the church) formed part of the land associated with a holding (the Portionary) which historically was not part of the Carew estates. Following litigation in the late eighteenth century however, the land was granted to them. Prior to this the estate had to have access to their own land The Warren that commenced at a point about half way along the path, cart access being of greater width than that of a pathway. Arising from the necessity of access, though not immediately noticeable in later years, the footpath was wider at the west (or church) end. In the spring of 2005, Church Path was widened throughout its length and re-sealed to allow for the provision of a footpath and cycle track.

It was during the 1860s the notable Victorian artist Frederick Walker (who regularly visited his twin sister Sarah and her husband John Marks at their home off Beddington Lane) was approached to do a series of drawings to illustrate Charlotte Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre*. One of the illustrations he made was of the scene where Jane meets the blind Mr. Rochester who is seated in his garden. As a backdrop to the bench upon which Rochester is seated Walker depicted this same ancient wall.

After the death of Mrs. Tritton in June 1901 the freehold properties belonging to her late husband, several plots of which adjoined the Orphanage (including then both Church Field and The Warren) were offered for sale by auction on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, that same year. The covenant on the Orphanage wall was included in the sale. Both fields were purchased by John Henry Bridges and for £100 under an Award of Arbitration he purchased the wall, agreeing to abide by the terms of the existing covenant. At the time of completion Mr. Bridges was handed the keys to the locked gateways across the fenced Church Path. In 1904, the Beddington Parish Council purchased The Warren from him for

use as a recreation ground. During the Second World War this area, including The Paddock and Church Field, was dug up and planted as allotments, part of the Dig for Victory campaign.

During the years 1979-80 and particularly during 1981 the wall was savagely vandalised; the old gateway (described as such in 1876) with its gothic arch was demolished and in 1980 was bricked up by the council. The whole of the eastern end of approximately 25ft. to 30ft. was at first, brick by brick then totally demolished by vandals in 1981. The remaining wall is still subject to vandalism!

## **Church Road**

The scene in nature is forever changing. Woodland is forever renewing itself whereas ornamental plantings come, reach the magnificence of full maturity and if not constantly replaced are lost. As it was with the magnificent avenue of beech trees planted in about 1884 to either side of Church Road, none of which now remain. Successive re-plantings have met with little success until instigated by and in the main financed by the Beddington Society an avenue of beech trees was replanted in the autumn of 1996.

On the Carew Estates sale map of 1859 Church Road is shown in a much-reduced form only giving access to the church and to the south side of the churchyard. It is not shown on the Tithe Map dated November 1839, giving rise to the theory of the road being created shortly before the 1857 Carew Estate Act was passed and disbursement of the estates begun. Prior to the creation of Church Road, access to the church was by way of Freron Lane that lay to the west of but parallel to the present road, opposite the later Rectory Lane. It met with the east-west footpath about opposite the west end of the present burial ground, before making an almost right-angled turn to the east and the church.

Gas lighting was introduced to Church Road in December 1878 when the Rector Alexander Henry Bridges (who owned what is now Beddington Park and had extended the road further to the north) agreed with the gas company that a lamp should be placed opposite the Orphanage though the road beyond the church remained gated. After the death of the Rev. Bridges upkeep appeared to become something of a problem and correspondence was to pass back and forth between Albert Pulling, Agent to John Henry Bridges (heir to his father's estate), and the Orphanage authorities in relation to the expense of its maintenance. On more than one occasion removal of access was threatened.

A focal point at the north end of Church Road by a former entrance to the park is an attractive lodge dated 1877 built for Canon Bridges and decorated in the popular Arts and Crafts style by Joseph Clarke.

## **Crispin Crescent**

Is one of the roads created when Park Farm was being developed as a housing estate during the years 1946-47. The name commemorates Milo de Crispin, a Norman knight to whom William the Conqueror awarded the land of one of the two Beddington manors (later identified as Huscarles Manor) that lay in the area of Beddington Lane. As Milo de

Crispin also held extensive lands elsewhere, it is unlikely he actually lived in Beddington as William, the son of Tuold held the manor of him. Occupancy of Crispin Crescent is first noted in Electoral Registers dated June 1948 with entries for numbers 2 to 22 and 27 only.



*In July 1958 youngsters enjoying the water as they paddle and ride their bicycles through flood waters in Crispin Crescent. The horizontal line in the centre and vertical line on the left are marks on the original print.*

## **Croydon Road**

It seems likely that the ‘Croydon Way’ of 1789 as referred to in the Portionary Papers is the road we know of today as Croydon Road. That interpreted by A.W.G. Lowther (then Secretary of Surrey Archaeological Society) as being an Iron Age track (a ditch some 15ft wide at the top narrowing to 4ft. 6ins. at the bottom at a depth of some 5ft.) about forty-five yards north of the present road, is thought may possibly have been a field boundary or possibly but less likely, the pale that marked the boundary of Carew park lands.

From the middle of the nineteenth century until the late 1890s, listed in directories as Beddington Road, whatever its origin it would undoubtedly be correct to say that man has passed this way for centuries whether on foot, on horseback or on wheels those of today moving so much faster than those of yesterday. It was only after the 1859 sale of the Carew estates that the Croydon Road as we know it with houses to either side began to take shape.

The plan accompanying the sale particulars of 1859, shows that apart from the Rectory and the National School, between Bute Road and The Plough public house, there was only one other building, a small cottage of two tenements known as ‘Chalk Pit Cottage’. It stood adjacent to a large chalk pit now located immediately behind the houses on the east side of Rectory Lane. Nor were there any buildings immediately on the opposite side of

Croydon Road from the parish boundary as far as Guy Road. The Carew lands were sold, broken up into smaller lots and by 1868 when the first edition Ordnance Survey map was published a number of large houses on the north (or park) side had already been built.

The road can effectively be divided into four parts - from the parish boundary to The Broadway and The Broadway to the Croydon boundary and again, into the north and south sides of the road within those divisions. Opposite Bute Road is Bunkers Field path. This footpath marks the line of the parish boundary (created in 1867 with the formation of Wallington parish) to the left of which is Wallington County Grammar School (opened in 1937 on land formerly of Wallington manor). To the right of the footpath we see today two 'Grange Cottages', 332 and 334 Croydon Road to either side of the entrance to the park, built post World War II to house park employees.

**North (or left side) from Bunkers Field path east towards The Broadway.** At some time between the Carew sale of land in 1859 and 1865 two large houses were built to the east (or right side facing) of the present Croydon Road entrance to Beddington Park. The first, in 1919 was known as 'Breakhurst', the only vestige of which remains being the picturesque coach house/stables at 330 Croydon Road converted in late 1932 by E.H. Mitchell of High Street, Carshalton. In 1999-2000, this building was in part demolished, modernised and extended. On its east side stood 'Cambridge House' also long since demolished though its coach house still stands at number 322 Croydon Road. Though Breakhurst stood on a quarter of an acre more than its neighbour, both houses are described as being somewhat similar when offered for sale in June 1919 as part of Canon Bridges' estate, both meriting the description — "a very attractive Elizabethan style modern residence", brick built, half timbered and tiled. On the upper floor of both houses were three bedrooms, another smaller bedroom and landing with store cupboards; on the first floor two large front bedrooms, one measuring 21ft. by 14ft. 6in. each with a communicating dressing room, a 15ft. square back bedroom, large bathroom and WC. On the ground floor were three reception rooms; a 24ft. by 18ft. drawing room, the dining and morning rooms, a gentlemen's W.C. as well as the domestic arrangements. Stabling, coach-houses, green house or conservatory, lawns, flowerbeds and gravelled walks completed the picture. By 1881 Breakhurst was known as 'Clarence Lodge' occupied then by Joseph Morris a leather manufacturer employing twenty-five men. In 1932 the house was empty but by 1934 in multiple occupancy. In 1935 it was confirmed as having been converted into four flats.

In 1881 the second building 'Cambridge House' was occupied by Thomas Sharpe, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools. It was in about 1935 that 'Cambridge Garden Flats' were first occupied, built in the grounds between Cambridge House and its former stables and though the stables/coach house still stands (albeit converted into a cottage in about 1930-31) the house itself was demolished in the mid-1960s. A small group of houses 'Berkeley Court' built during the spring and summer months of 1993 now occupy the site of both houses.

During 1865-66 four other imposing houses were in the process of being built, all of similar style with the same interior accommodation, only two of which remain today at 308 and 302 Croydon Road. They give us some idea of the impressive buildings that once



*The entrance to Beddington Park with 'Breakhurst' in the background. Although altered its coach house still stands as 330 Croydon Road.*

stood there at the beginning of the twentieth century. To the east of Cambridge House stood 'Bampfylde', after which Bampfylde Close built on the site pre-war, is named. It appears likely that the first occupier of the original house was Judge Herbert Riversdale Mansel-Jones to whom from Michaelmas 1866 it was let for a period of twenty-one years. It was his youngest son Conwyn, born in Beddington in June 1871, who was awarded the Victoria Cross in February 1900 during the Anglo-Boer War. Though very severely wounded and their advance checked on a hill north of Tugela, Natal, he led his men to capture a heavily defended and strategically important ridge. Conwyn survived the war and followed a distinguished career initially in the army but was later called to the Bar of Lincoln's Inn. He died at Brockenhurst, Hampshire in May 1942. By 1928, his former home Bampfylde had been converted into the Beddington Nursing Home and Nurses Institute under the direction of Matron, Mrs. F. Ray Alderman. The houses of Bampfylde Close, built pre-Second World War now stand on the site.

In 1866 while preparing the ground for the foundations of one of these houses 'Waltair', 312 Croydon Road the hoard of bronze implements already referred to were uncovered. In about 1931, 'Waltair' was divided into three flats at the same time as the stables were being converted and listed in directories as a cottage. A new housing development of eight homes for the South London Family Housing Association (built during the latter half of 1998 and into 1999) named Paston Close stands on the site of the house though 'Waltair Cottage' remains at number 310 Croydon Road.

House name changes are frequent and can be confusing. One of the group of four, 'The Chestnuts', 308 Croydon Road, in 1881 occupied by 45 year-old Paul Stoker a retired physician, was advertised for sale named as such in June 1882. When sold in May 1909

the name had been changed to 'Janoah'. This house (in 1989-90 extended by an additional wing on the west side) was requisitioned during the war to serve as emergency accommodation. The smaller semi-detached buildings in similar style standing between the two large houses (306 and 304 Croydon Road) are converted coach houses. In later years, referred to as 'Offington', the house at number 302 Croydon Road was also converted into flats. The bungalow 'Woodhurst', 300B Croydon Road occupies a narrow strip of land on the east side of the house.

A later addition to the group was the more modest 'Dudley House' (c.1905) at 300 Croydon Road, occupied by a Miss Oakley until about 1913. Coming to Beddington from Norbury, by 1919, Dr. J.G. Fitzgerald, who for many years had been a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party, was living there. Dr. Fitzgerald represented one of the divisions of Longford in the House of Commons and had figured in many of the memorable scenes in the House at the time a policy of obstruction was being followed. He was a practising Consultant Surgeon and Member of the Royal College, was very much in demand as a popular speaker and who, during the war was actively employed in the recruiting campaign. He was also a keen sportsman who regularly rode to the hounds. He died in May 1926. By 1927 Cllr. John Isaacs M.B.E a Civil Servant in the Admiralty had purchased and was living in the house though among other property he also owned Loraine House by Wallington Green that was by then let as flats.

Dudley House was built of cream coloured brick with a contrasting orange band with bay windows to either side of a central front door. In later years it was fronted by a verandah that extended the whole width of the building forming a porch between the bays. The house had a central passage off which at the front on the east side originally was the dining room and on the west, the drawing room with an adjoining conservatory. Upstairs were three bedrooms with fireplaces and a large bathroom. At the back a large kitchen overlooked the garden and tennis court, as did a room used as a breakfast room that well may have served as a library in the past. A second conservatory with grapevine was located at the back of the house; the stables were converted into a garage. For a time the house was used as a hostel for workers employed on war work by Messrs. Trojan Ltd. of Purley Way and later became the rectory attached to St. Mary's Church.

Next to Dudley House at 298 Croydon Road stood an attractive mock Tudor style bungalow built by the local builders Dawson's c.1921-22. Then known as 'Coolbeg', with a change of ownership in about 1924-25 the house was renamed and more affectionately remembered as 'The Tudor House'. During the Second World War this wooden framed building and a number of houses standing opposite were badly damaged by a flying bomb that landed adjacent to the house on an unoccupied A.R.P post at about 9.10am on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1944. John Lavender of Butter Hill, a fifteen-year-old schoolboy who was passing at the time was killed in the blast. Dawson's rebuilt the house on existing foundations. Tudor House was demolished for a second time in the 1950s to make way for the first phase building of Bloxworth Close.

Looking into the area of Bloxworth Close, we see a number of houses set well back from the road behind a row of three tall horse-chestnut trees. The trees formerly bordered the drive leading to a bungalow 300A Croydon Road, demolished in December 1986 to make





*Although some of the large houses still stand, the smaller 'Tudor House' at 298 Croydon Road was demolished in the 1950s.*

way for the second phase of the housing development. Nearer Croydon Road, Dudley House then in use as the rectory was left standing while the new rectory was built on the garden directly behind the old. After demolition of the house in 1988 two blocks of flats were erected on the site. The two blocks of flats nearest the park, each with hung tile decoration and occupied in spring 1980 were the first phase of the development.

Beyond Bloxworth Close the open area of the park leads the eye across to the church and Church Road. Moving to the east along Croydon Road almost immediately (opposite Rectory Lane) we pass the site of Freron Lane that led in on the left and the site of the Portioner's House further over in the park, and move on past Church Road and Church Field (or The Paddock). Ascending the Sandhills, we bypass The Warren then Streeter's Lane the latter of which was aligned along the former boundary and entrance to the brickworks. On what is now a playground attached to Sherwood Park School, towards the top of the hill there once stood a terrace of three houses 'Alexandra Villas' (after King Edward VII's consort Queen Alexandra, crowned August 1902). The houses built c.1902 high upon the sand bank were accessed both by a ramp and a number of steps. Next to these houses on the corner of Guy Road stood the 'White Posts' Tea Rooms, a building that took its name from the adjacent triangular green and the white posts placed there to enclose it.

In 1898-99 when this corner was being developed and the shop-cum-tearooms were being built, the Croydon Rural District Council (who then administered the Beddington area) accepted a tender of £17 for the providing, fixing and painting of oak posts and wrought

iron rails to form fences to enclose the triangular piece of ground. It was at this time the green at the top of Guy Road became known as the White Posts. The tender also included the enclosing of a smaller triangular green at the junction of Croydon Road and Hilliers Lane.

**From Guy Road to Hilliers Lane, north side towards The Broadway.** Until of recent years three attractive houses stood in Croydon Road at the top of Guy Road on land in 1820 owned by John Williams Bristow, later the Collyer-Bristow family. Of the two houses still standing, (one was demolished in 1997), that nearest Guy Road now numbered 268 Croydon Road, built c.1911 was originally named 'Thanet Cottage'. From about 1919 into the 1930s, it became known as 'Cleeve Cottage' within the former front boundary wall built of Clack's white bricks was set a small red painted Edwardian post box that was removed and never replaced.

Next door at number 266 is a house once known as 'Rotorua' (c.1909) that in 1931 was converted to become 'The Creameries' a dairy owned by Charles Bridger of Wandle Dairy Farm, Beddington. He also had another shop of the same name at 8 High Street (by the former Woodman's Butcher shop) in Carshalton. For a time Wallis's the millers and bakers of Wandle Road occupied the shop before they moved to The Broadway after which in about 1962 it became a café, later to be converted into a private dwelling.

The third house, in Victorian Gothic style and separated by a narrow drive from its neighbour was 'Sandy Hill House' (later numbered 264 and 262 Croydon Road) that in 1997 when almost derelict was demolished to make way for Collier Homes 'Manatee Place' development built during the latter part of 1997 and into the summer of 1998.

The earliest street directories available dated 1876 indicate Dawson and Sons, Builders (and at Carshalton) as occupying a site between Guy Road and Hilliers Lane. Their occupancy of Sandy Hill House named as such, appears at some time between the latter part of the 1880s-early 1890s. Directories from 1900 list William Dawson as occupying the house. Dawson and Son were established in 1864 as builders among whose contracts included the building of the infirmary and cottages on the north side of the Orphanage (now the Carew Manor School) along with the village hall. They also advertised as being Undertakers and Funeral Furnishers, providing Funerals to suit all classes with "modern hearses, cars and funeral broughams with either black or coloured horses" for which purpose Sandy Hill House had a small Chapel of Rest built onto the east side. William Dawson himself was well known throughout the district; he was Parish Clerk in 1884 and onetime Chair of the Beddington Parish Council and Rural District Councillor. His foreman Robert Brill took over occupancy of Sandy Hill House in about 1906.

The first Ordnance Survey map dated 1868 however, shows that the only buildings then on this site was a house (set back from the road) and a large inverted almost L shaped barn that stood to the right front (facing) of the house, immediately by the roadside along to the corner and down Hilliers Lane. In 1910 they were known as 'Sandy Hill Cottages'; in the 1920s as 'Dawson's Cottages'; at one time 'Wormwood Cottages'(after the herb) and later colloquially 'Woodworm Cottages' (perhaps indicative of the condition they were in). In 1825 they were the subject of a painting by the topographical artist Gideon



*'Wormwood' or 'Sandy Hill Cottages' stood between Guy Road and Hilliers Lane before being demolished in 1960.*



*A thatched barn once stood at the junction of Croydon Road (left) and Hilliers Lane before being demolished c.1935. Manor Farm house stood behind the wall on the right.*

Yates entitled 'Old Farm House at Beddington'. From its structure, it is thought the building may have originally been a cottage with a hall open to the roof with the upper floor and stair tower inserted later. The great oak beams as seen in the principal room of one of the cottages and latticed dormer windows from which one had to kneel down to see out of, indicated a building of great age.

Dawsons used the cottage nearest Hilliers Lane as an office and made the coffins for their more unfortunate clients within the adjacent thatched barn, originally part of the outbuildings. It was most likely here that in 1923 Tom Holloway recalled wheat being threshed with flails in about the mid-1870s, adding that it was burnt down which may account for two-thirds of the building being no longer extant when photographs were taken in the 1920s. The barn, in 1929 said to be around 300 years old was demolished about 1935.

In the early 1950s Dawson and Son advertising then as Builders, Contractor's and Sanitary Engineers had a small orange tiled, brick office and showroom built at 254 Croydon Road in part on the site of the barn within which they displayed their range of sanitary fittings. It is believed the business disbanded at some time during the later 1950s at which time the showroom was taken over by a contractor among whose contracts were numbered the demolition of The Oaks mansion at Carshalton and the old Fulham Hospital. Having stood empty for some time, the showroom was demolished in May 1989 at the time of preliminary roadwork and the creation of a temporary roundabout during junction improvements.

Between the latter part of 1934 and 1936, J. and H. Robinson's Dairy set up business in what had by then become known as Dawson's yard whilst in about 1937 Sandy Hill House was taken over by Walter L. Rust, Automobile Engineer. He expanded operations to the end cottage formerly used by Dawson's, opened a garage and likewise opened a hire car business offering "comfort, courtesy and the best service". A petrol pump stood in front by the footpath. Wormwood Cottages were demolished in 1960 under the guise of slum clearance. Sandy Hill House and the ground upon which the old cottages stood were of later years taken over as part of a three-wheel invalid carriage repair and storage business until it too was cleared for the Manatee Place housing development. It was here by these houses that in about 1941 when returning from fire watching duties at Carew Manor the late Gilbert King, formerly a resident of Old Ford House, met with and apprehended a German airman who, shocked and apprehensive but otherwise uninjured, had parachuted to safety nearby. We now make our way around the curve of Croydon Road past the site of the Manor Farm outbuildings and Beddington Cottage on our left, towards The Broadway and The Plough.

**North (or left side) beyond The Broadway to the borough boundary.** Today, the houses that line Garratt Close, and the four roads that meet with Croydon Road; Cedars Avenue, Salcott, Lavington and Aldwick Roads were built on what were the grounds of Beddington House and at the northern end, part of the Home, Middle and Further Paddocks attached to the house Riverside.

The first of a number of land sales referred to as 'The Cedars' and 'Lavington Estates' took place in a marquee on site on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1910. By then the four roads had been laid out with by 1913 four semi-detached houses already having been built, numbers 36 and 34 Salcott Road (thought to be the earliest) and those numbered 32 and 30. Occupation was not entirely new however, as excavations undertaken at the northern end of Aldwick Road in the 1920s had uncovered evidence of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age settlement by the river.

Developed piecemeal and interrupted by the First World War, by 1933 with the exception of scattered plots throughout, the building up of the area was gathering momentum and nearing completion with the exception of much of the northern part of Cedars Road, the northeast side of Lavington and sections of Aldwick Road. Nor indeed was the whole area fronting Croydon Road between Cedars Road and Salcott Road yet built upon. Garratt Close was a latecomer (1975-76) in part built on the site of a substantial detached house 144 Croydon Road and tennis courts created when housing on the east side of Bridges Lane and Tritton Avenue were built.

Between 1937 and the early 1940s Jack Byfield the well-known pianist and accompanist to the violinist Albert Sandler (of BBC Grand Hotel and Palm Court Orchestra fame) lived in 'Tudor Cottage' at number 132 Croydon Road. The house had been built in about 1931 but in June 1944 was damaged by one of the two bombs that landed on houses nearby. The house was damaged but his treasured piano was unharmed, protected by layers of mattresses. The earliest reference found to the architecturally delightful house standing next-door, 'White Lodge', 130 Croydon Road on the corner of Cedars Road, is 1928.

**South side from Bute Road (the parish boundary) east to The Broadway.** Returning to the 1867 boundary with Wallington parish, with the exception of the glebe in 1859 the greater part of land on the south side of Croydon Road (including two large fields immediately beyond the railway) as far across as Queen Elizabeth's Walk was owned by the Carew family and tenanted by William Bates. Part of the glebe was apportioned for use as allotments by the Rev. Hamilton under a scheme established in Wallington in July 1835 known as a Labourer's Friendly Society. This was later to become the Beddington and Wallington Field Gardens.

To the west (or Wallington side of the National School now Beddington Infant's School) the land was divided into two almost equal plots known as the east and west part of Rectory field. In due course part of this land was to have two houses built upon it 'The Elms', and the nearer 'Carisbrooke' later known as 'The Holt'. The Holt was for a time the home of Capt. William Jacomb of the 1st. Bn. Essex Regiment who was killed on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1914. The two blocks of flats known as 'The Elms' and 'The Oaks' now stand there. The houses in the cul-de-sac named The Holt after the latter house were built in about 1936-37 with the occupants first listed in Electoral Registers in October 1938.

In January 1926, 7½ acres, part of the Benefice of Beddington including land on the corner of Rectory Lane was alienated by the church and offered for sale as building land, three lots having a frontage to Croydon Road and the remainder the Bridle Road (Rectory

Lane) leaving access to the rectory from both roads. The conveyance of land for the building of private housing took place in July 1926, the two developers being Sydenham builder Benjamin Briggs and his son-in-law Thomas Burton. Subsequent reconveyances of smaller plots of land saw the building of the earliest houses 'Kostany', 'The Pebbles', 'Iona' and 'Casa Bueno' and provision made for road widening. Of the first seven houses that appeared on the former glebe between the school and Rectory Lane, according to directories, all barring one was occupied by 1928. The following year listings were for the houses we see there today with all but two (those on the corner of Rectory Lane) being occupied. The bomb that landed in the park by the corner of today's Bloxworth Close damaged a number of the homes nearest Rectory Lane.

When these new houses began to appear, the ultimate fate of the two remaining large houses, the only buildings between Rectory Lane and Demesne Road, 'Marlesford' and 'The Dell' were surely sealed. Though Marlesford was to remain for a number of years, The Dell would shortly disappear. Beyond them the footpath leads uphill to the top of the rise by which stood another house known as 'The Banks'.

**Sandpit Hill (Croydon Road).** Known as the Sandy Hills (1859); Beddington Road (1889); Sandpit Hill (1933) or more recently Croydon Road, illustrations of Sandpit Hill during the early years of the twentieth century show a narrow leaf embowered road passing through a deep cutting in the sand. The hill presented a problem for any laden vehicle attempting the steep uphill gradient on a road that was then considerably steeper than now. In a small lay-by where today Streeters Lane joins Croydon Road by the then entrance to Clack's brickworks, at least one sometimes two trace (or cock) horses were tethered, fed from nose-bags, watered and protected from the elements by the overhanging trees and vegetation. The horses would be attached in tandem to the front of those already drawing the horse bus, carriage or load to pull it uphill after which the boy who was responsible for them would ride them back down to await the next load. Not only horse drawn vehicles experienced difficulties with the gradient for Clacks also had problems when hauling their load of bricks uphill by steam wagon. To alleviate the problems the road was lowered by up to 5ft. at which time workmen are said to have cut through a tunnel in the sand the entrance to which was on the brickworks site. Whether this tunnel was a part of the cave system by the Plough is thought to be highly unlikely.

Derby day at Epsom was a very special annual summer holiday outing when parties or groups of people (a number of them gentlemen from local public houses) hired four-in-hand coaches or horse drawn brakes to convey them to the race track, frequently accompanied by a group of musicians. Such was the holiday atmosphere that some of the horses were bedecked in sun-hats some even with "ladies unmentionables" on their forelegs. It was also a very special day for the local children anticipating their return who would gather at the top of the Sandhills where everything had slowed to a walking pace. The shout "throw out your mouldy coppers" usually resulted in a general scramble when, either to celebrate their good fortune or to console themselves with their last pennies the race goers would usually oblige. Sometimes a child would collect as much as five shillings, saved to spend at the flower show and fete held annually in Beddington Park each August. Parents from as far afield as Croydon would bring their children to The Plough to watch the spectacle.





*Near the junction with Guy Road, an early photograph (c.1880) shows the footpath climbing steeply up to Queen Elizabeth's Walk while the road disappears downhill in the direction of Wallington.*

Between Demesne Road to a point opposite Guy Road the footpath leaves the road and leads up the side of the hill along the boundary of fields once known as White Bench Field and Brackey Close to Queen Elizabeth's Walk on the brow of the hill. This path was consolidated by the Enclosure Award of 1812, but one that had no doubt existed for centuries. In 1868 it was suggested that "should you chance to be belated, and returning after the moon is up, you might easily imagine yourself wandering through the deep shades of some gloomy forest - just the spot to awaken superstitious fancies". As if to awaken these thoughts, it was on this isolated footpath close by the steps to Lytton Gardens (Christopher Lytton was Rector of Beddington 1501) that in October 1972 a popular local man William Goldsworthy, a Verger at St. Mary's was murdered as he walked from The Plough to his home in Croydon Road. Two young Wallington men, both teenagers who admitted the killing were subsequently committed to a term of life imprisonment - their seventy-nine year old victim was killed for a penknife, four cigars and £9 cash!

Opposite the steps leading up to Lytton Gardens, a number of stone steps led down the steep bank to give access to Croydon Road and what was once the lower part Queen

Elizabeth's Walk. The steps dated to around 1931-32 when Lytton Gardens was built up. They were closed after a child having come down them, ran out into Croydon Road and was killed by a passing motor vehicle. With garden and natural debris gradually covering them they are now slowly but inexorably being lost to view.

Opposite Guy Road an excavation can be seen within which for a number of years stood a small greenhouse, now an electricity sub-station. Cut in behind and parallel to the bank, almost directly on a line with the footpath and the road, was at one time an open excavation in the sand that led for some distance back towards Queen Elizabeth's Walk. The excavation was remembered by many as a place where they played as children not knowing that in June 1926 a workman George Shepherd had been killed there, buried by a sand fall. A little over a hundred years earlier the Enclosure Map of 1820 indicates the stocks and pound as being located at the top of the hill opposite Guy Road. An Act of 1405 compelled all villages to maintain stocks (in many cases accompanied by a whipping post) for the punishment of wrong doers, a village without stocks being classed as a mere hamlet.

Might it have been here in 1821 local man Michael Wood was publicly whipped as a rogue and vagabond or at the place he had been apprehended, Wye in Kent. He was however, "now settled in Beddington where his father belonged". The treatment metered out by a whipping or a period of incarceration in the stocks was not as harsh as that met with by a labourer John Shepard of Aldenhem, Hants, after being apprehended. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1572 he broke into the close of John Wallys at Beddington and stole a bay mare valued at ten shillings. He was found guilty and hung. Another was a tailor, Richard Glover of Carshalton also indicted for grand larceny. On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1596, he burgled the house of Elizabeth Bloque, spinster at Beddington at which time he stole a cloth gown valued at fourteen shillings along with a cloth petticoat valued at six shillings. He was also hung. Though presumably sentenced by Thomas Huyatt it was during this time that according to an annotation on the document, "Jefferies is at large". What with the road sweeping away steeply downhill and the adjacent field named 'Live and Repent' the brow of the Sandhills must have presented a sobering aspect to the passer-by.

Towards the junction with Hilliers Lane many will remember the very narrow footpath by an almost perpendicular leafy bank of tree and ivy covered sand (in part buttressed by railway sleepers) overhung by ferns and encroaching greenery. Quickly forgotten are memories of when in 1983, this footpath was superseded by another when the council demolished part of the outbuildings of Sandhills Lodge and laid a broad footpath on the bank high above the old. In the late 1980s it too was replaced by the modern road junction and footpath as part of the ASDA supermarket planning agreement.

In 1873 the Rev. Williams wrote of a tale that he held to be true, involving one of the local personalities and of the road along which we have just been passing between Wallington Green (the 'Bolling Green') and The Plough past the National School long before it or the other houses came into being. He tells us that it was a blustery night at the beginning of the century that a traveller arrived at The Plough with a weary horse and heavy-laden panniers. "“Could he get on to Barrow-Hedges?” - a roadside alehouse of not



over good repute with the Excise officers. Mine host of The Plough with obliging readiness soon found the traveller a guide, and forth the traveller set - labouring through the deep sloughs of Beddington. 'Oh! Sir! It was a bad road then, and opposite to where the school is now, it was BAD!' But the guide plodded on steadily with lantern in hand, carefully warning and lighting the traveller past some slough deeper than another, till they arrived safely at the Barrow Hedges Inn some miles distant. The traveller wished to reward his guide for his trudge that stormy night. 'Can'st not see, man?' he exclaimed as he held out the coin that the guide did not take. 'Why sir, it be Dick Simpson and he be blind!'" Dick Simpson was the man who stood to mind the gate across the road at the corner of what was then Mr. Mackenzie's garden wall in Wallington. Everyone knew him well but obviously the stranger did not.

We pass by the modern road Sandhills formerly a private road with 'Sandhills Lodge' standing on the corner, and on to The Broadway.

**South side east of The Broadway to the Croydon boundary.** Development on the south side of Croydon Road began shortly after July 1934 following an application having been granted to Beddington Estates Ltd. for the building of thirty-four houses on the former Beddington Place estate. Soon after, Collyer Avenue along with Bristow Road was laid out, named after former landowners the Collyer-Bristow family.

Peter Cooksley recalled the estate being built during the mid-1930s with the use of horse and two-wheeled cart for the movement of bricks and materials, the carter walking beside the big draft animal as it hauled each heavy load. Very soon the former Beddington Place Home Park had been built upon apart from Payne's sports ground and an additional smaller ground with its pavilion, access to which was off Plough Lane. The development of the housing estates also brought about the need of facilities to serve the new community resulting in the growth of The Broadway parade of shops and the emphasis away from the village.

At one time a long line of trees flanked Croydon Road and likewise along a central reservation. In front of Payne's was a high bank of earth that extended from the wall of the factory beyond the present roadside kerb with no pavement on that side of the road. Instead, the grass-covered bank was broken by a small paved alcove with a seat to provide a bus stop for vehicles going west to Wallington and Sutton. From the 1930s, until well into the 1970s green Country Buses plied the route.

Twenty-four homes in this part of Croydon Road were destroyed within weeks of each other in two flying bomb incidents during the new enemy offensive in the summer of 1944. The first fell on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> June. The length of Croydon Road from Wallington Green became known as bomb alley from the number of explosions that occurred along its entire length. The houses destroyed in these two incidents were later rebuilt in identical style. Beyond the parish and borough boundary before the coming of the railway the line of Croydon Road extended on a line due east up Duppas Hill to Croydon Old Town.

## Demesne Road

Demesne Road that takes its name from the former demesne (or home farmland of the manor) lies on a north-south alignment off Croydon Road. The land it divides was released for potential development at the Carew sale of property; in part, White Bench Field and land adjoining on the south side nearer the railway. These latter fields were in the tenancy of William Bates and described as “being very suitable for the growth of herbs or a market garden” Lots 19 and 20 south of the railway (the Stafford Road side) also occupied by William Bates were divided by an outlined track. None of the demesne plots reached the reserve however and were not immediately sold.

That which was to become Demesne Road clearly had to make use of the existing bridge created by the coming of the railway in 1847; it was therefore aligned to meet with the new entrance to the manor and church along the line of the present Church Road. As the width of road and rail bridges were laid down by law in the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act of 1845, bridges crossing private roads were required only to give a width of twelve feet, hence the narrow bridge we see there today.

Shortly after 1885, fields on the east side of and fronting Demesne Road (on the Croydon Road side of the railway) were to become known as Miller’s Orchard, a market garden and orchard of 35 plus acres, owned by Joseph Harvey Trollope of ‘Queenswood’. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1914 this land (then on a yearly Michaelmas tenancy to William Miller at an annual rent of £94 15s.), along with the mansion ‘Queenswood’ and its neighbour ‘Sandhills’ were offered for sale by Mr. Trollope’s executors. The mid-1920s saw Miller’s Orchard developed for housing, twenty-two houses of which were occupied by the end of March 1927.

Though at the beginning of the twentieth century the line of Demesne Road was outlined across to and beyond the railway, by the early 1920s the road had been developed on the far side from Stafford Road on the east side only as far as the railway bridge. By the late 1920s, early ‘30s, it had been made up right through from Stafford Road to ‘The Banks Lodge’ (246 Demesne Road) which even into the mid-1930s was in use as an Estate Office. On the opposite side, apart from one building between Stafford Road and Carew Road on the far side of the railway, at least by 1935 Demesne Road had been built-up in its entirety from Bute Gardens through to Croydon Road.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1929 the peace of an otherwise quiet corner of Tharp and Demesne Roads was to be shattered by an unusual event; a mid-air collision in peacetime between two Royal Air Force fighter aircraft. One crashed in flames on the roof of 68 Ross Road, Wallington, the other on a shed at the rear of Mr. Honeyfield’s grocery shop at the corner of Demesne and Tharp Roads where it too burst into flames causing even further concern when the live ammunition it carried began to explode. Miraculously no one was hurt and the two pilots parachuted to safety, the one landing nearly a mile away and the other in the nearby Bandon Hill cemetery.

## **Derry Road**

Created as part of the Park Farm housing development in 1946-47 Derry Road was named after Cllr. Charles Derry J.P., First Substitute Charter Mayor when Beddington and Wallington was created a Municipal Borough in September 1937, Chairman of the Urban District Council in 1937, and Mayor 1937-38. A Chartered Architect by profession, he lived at 'Pendarren', 35 Waterer Rise in Wallington. The houses numbered 1 to 4 Derry Road were occupied by June 1948.

## **Ferrers Avenue**

Appeared in 1927-8 with J.F. Lambson in 'Chiltern' being the only resident listed in the 1928 directory. Barring one entry, the avenue was fully occupied by the following year.

## **Freron Lane**

The Tithe Apportionment map accompanying the schedule of 1840 indicates a lane on a north-south alignment lying parallel to but west of the present Church Road opposite Rectory Lane. Identified as Freron Lane, in dry summer months the outline can be seen as a dry grass mark on the park.

In an Archaeological Society Occasional Paper, the late Keith Pryer suggests that Freron Lane was once connected with Freres Manor now thought to have been located north of the river on the west side of the lane where there is a marked platform in the park. At about the time of King John (1199-1216) the manor was bequeathed by its then owner to the Hospital of St. Thomas. An undated deed relative to this bequest however indicated the site as being south of the Wandle and west of Bandon Way (Beddington Lane/Hilliers Lane) and from less specific details it might be inferred that it lay close to the river. The Carews acquired the manor from the Hospital by exchange at the time of the first Nicholas Carew in about 1380, and no more is subsequently heard of it. Though there is speculation as to the site of the manor, its exact location is as yet unknown.

Pryer concludes that there seems no good reason why Freron Lane should have made a sharp turn to the east as seen on the 1840 map (where it meets with the continuation of Church Path). It seems most likely that before its original destination ceased to exist, it once continued north of its junction with Church Path up the west side of Huscarles Manor to Mitcham Common. It probably gave access to the site of "the mansion" referred to at the time of the Portionary Enquiry, in a deposition dated July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1473 made by John Gardyner. He was at the time "a parishioner of some forty years, then being of sixty years of age and upwards, and a Freeman". That part of Freron Lane remaining in 1840 was enclosed within Carew parkland at some time between 1843 and the estate sale of 1859, and is now effectively lost.

## **Guy Road**

The greater area of land on the west side of Guy Road uphill of Church Lane (with some small exceptions) at least from the beginning of the nineteenth century was known as 'Live and Repent' field. It extended from Croydon Road downhill to the former entrance to the brickworks now 37A Guy Road, and as far west as what is now Streeters Lane. By

1840 the name of the field had been extended further to the north (downhill) to include where 49 Guy Road stands today, land exchanged by the parish for agricultural land owned by Mrs Gee. One wonders why the field was given the name 'Live and Repent'. Might it have been the site of the gallows and gibbet where the road swept away steeply downhill? Did the field derive its name from the tradition of those who survived the drop being allowed to live and repent?

The line of Guy Road is identifiable on the earliest maps of the area, the lower part of which sloped gently down to the river very much like a sandy beach. In 1859 part of Live and Repent field (upon which the houses uphill of Church Lane, on the west side were to be built) was purchased by Samuel Gurney for £610 and for a time leased to Joseph Laurence of Brandries Hill House. In July 1877, the land was purchased by Henry Tritton of Wandle Court but in 1896, it was conveyed to Jesse Clack who began excavating sand in the central part and began to sell off plots on the perimeter for housing development.

In 1878 when local street directories first appeared, as there were so few houses in Guy Road (then known as Chatts Hill, the origin of which is unknown) the listing was included in that for Church Lane. It was only after the implementation of the Local Government Act in 1894 that the newly elected Parish Council re-named the road. John Guy, after whom it was probably named, was for a number of years tenant of Manor Farm and a person very much involved in the parish and church.

By 1900, the picture had changed little from when directories were first published twenty-two years previously. The entry for Guy Road included 'Brandries Hill House', the grounds of which extended downhill to the river, the stables with accommodation above and the gardener's cottage. The four dwellings that comprised the old Post Office stood on the corner of Church Lane while downhill was Malthouse Row (now Whelan Way) on the corner of which stood 'The Cottage' home of the Misses Ferrers. By 1900 however, a terrace of three dwellings, old houses that had stood for years on an east - west alignment by the river known as 1, 2 and 3 'Wandle Cottages' had already disappeared having been demolished in about 1898. They are now in part the site of 77 Guy Road, a mock Georgian style house built during 1979.

As though ushering in the new century, in 1900, many changes began to take place and Guy Road was to begin the metamorphosis that changed a quiet almost lane-like access into the road of suburban housing we see today. In that year the 'White Posts' Tea Rooms on the west side at the top of the hill (officially listed in directories under Beddington Road) appeared though the houses on the opposite side of the road curving around into Croydon Road were already standing. New houses in Guy Road seemed to appear like mushrooms after rain in the first decades of the twentieth century.

**West side from Croydon Road.** At the top of the hill stand a cluster of three houses numbered 1, 3 and 5 Guy Road built in 1993 by Kender Properties on the site of the 'White Posts Tea Rooms'. In view of they're being an ancient well nearby and the tradition of the site, before building began an archaeological investigation of the land was undertaken at which time pieces of flint tools were found which the Museum of London

have confirmed as once belonging to nomadic hunters who lived or passed through the area 8,000 to 10,000 years ago.

The three houses immediately downhill numbered 7 to 11 were built during the winter of 1996-97 on land that for many years grew a tangle of undergrowth beneath a few gnarled and neglected fruit trees of a long abandoned orchard. Beside them stand a pair of semi-detached houses numbered 15 and 13 (built about 1914) originally on the same field, land that at one time had also been attached to the brickwork's. Next to these two houses stand a terrace 17 to 25 Guy Road named in honour of the new king to ascend the throne in 1901. Numbers 1-5 'King Edward VII Villas' built at the beginning of his reign first appear in directories in 1902.

Downhill, the next terrace of six houses 27 to 37 are the earliest of the buildings to have appeared on the west side arising from, in November 1896, the sale of forty building plots in Guy Road and around the corner into Church Lane. This came about when land owned since July 1877 by the banker Henry Tritton came onto the market. To prevent huts being erected it was stipulated that the prime cost of each private house built was to be not less than £120 or a shop less than £150. No public house, tavern or beer shop should be built nor should horse slaughtering, soap boiling or any other obnoxious trade be undertaken on the land. Built between 1897 and 1899, when offered for sale in 1901 the tenants of these houses were paying 8s. 6d. (42½p.) a week rent with the landlord paying rates and taxes. It was also noted that gas, sewer and water mains were laid and that some of the houses had gas laid on. It was probably the laying of services that directly affected the growth of housing along this and many other roads in the area. In 1901, the buildings were purchased by Jesse Clack and numbered 14 to 19, but such was the development of Guy Road the street was re-numbered in October 1929.

A house numbered 37A Guy Road (first occupied in 1995) was built across what was an entrance to the brickworks. Those immediately downhill, 39 and 41, were built by Clack's with their own manufactured white bricks for two female members of the family. Beside them are 43 and 45 Guy Road erected by the contractor (Robert) Sidney Smith of Beddington Lane in 1903, and their neighbours 47 and 49 built the following year. Sid Smith was involved in many of the housing developments in Beddington until his death in October 1938. This land is thought to have been that upon which five parish houses once stood. On the corner with Church Lane on a separate plot of land where there had previously been a garden, set back from the road stands an attractive bungalow numbered 51 Guy Road built in about 1922, designed to accommodate a lady confined to a wheelchair hence the wide doorways and ease of access.

On the north side of the corner with Church Lane is an overgrown post war brick bungalow built on the site of the earliest three cottages that comprised the Old Post Office. Beside it stands another bungalow, 63 Guy Road, built in 1955 on part of the fourth Post Office cottage, an addition to the original building. The remnant of a wall, part of the forge that was at one time located in Malthouse Row still exists in the foundations of the northern boundary wall to this property.

Beyond the junction with Whelan Way are four houses numbered 65 to 67A Guy Road built as part of the first phase building of Whelan Way. They replace an attractive brick-built bungalow of c.1950 that once stood across the corner with Malthouse Row. Beyond is a terrace of houses 69 to 75 Guy Road. These houses were re-built in similar style on original foundations to replace a terrace of four homes built in about 1935-36 and destroyed by a flying bomb that landed in the front garden of 69 on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944. Extensive damage was caused with a number of properties on the opposite side of Guy Road also destroyed. The effects of the blast were felt as far over as The Brandries and beyond where tiles were lifted off roof battens. Perhaps because of its high position 'The Firs' in Hilliers Lane was also affected when glass at the back of the house was blown in. 'The Cottage' that stood immediately uphill of the blast was demolished and the 'The Old Post Office' on the corner of Church Lane was also badly damaged in the incident.

**East side from Croydon Road.** Of the houses on the opposite (east) side of Guy Road, at the same time as the houses 'Grove Cottage', 'Cintra' and 'Myrtle Cottage' at the top of the hill, (today numbered 2, 4 and 6 Guy Road appeared c.1908-09) a major building project was taking place downhill. One rock of stability however was 'Brandries Cottage', No.8, having stood there midst all the change. Even it was to have a new house (No. 6A) built upon what had originally been part of the garden in the autumn of 1987. Immediately above the entrance to The Brandries on land formerly attached to the Brandries Hill House estate, in about 1910-11 the houses numbered 10 to 22 were being built while downhill beyond what was later to become the Scout Hall, building was also taking place. The semi-detached houses 22A and 24A were built on land sold off by the Scout Group to a developer in 1961. During the first two decades of the twentieth Century Guy Road must have resembled one gigantic building site as services were laid and new houses built; complaints about the condition of the road were therefore many.

Beyond the scout hall and its satellite homes stands a terrace of four houses numbered 24 to 30 Guy Road. Number 24, the bow window fronted house at the upper end of terrace opposite Church Lane was originally opened as a Grocer shop by E. Head and Son in about 1912 shortly after the houses were built. An elderly resident recalled the early years when a draught horse was tethered in front of Head's shop to assist laden drays uphill for the payment of one (old) penny. This was in addition to a similar arrangement in Sandpit Hill, Croydon Road. In 1934, the shop was occupied by Miss Mary Kimber, later the Misses Mary and Kate Kimber, and from about 1937 for some thirty years until the late 1960s perhaps early 1970s, when known as 'Guy Road Stores' it was run by Dorothy and Gordon Offord. Between this terrace and the house numbered 32 immediately downhill there was at one time a footpath giving access to the sand pit that lay in behind.

Built at around the same time and in similar style to those downhill with front gates at street level rising to the front doors, all the houses backing onto the sand pit were originally known as 'Penstock Cottages'. Of these, a terrace of four and two semi-detached houses were destroyed by the flying bomb that fell opposite in July 1944. After the debris was cleared temporary accommodation in the form of Nissan huts were erected on the site. These homes consisted of two bedrooms at the front with a kitchen cum living room behind. The stepped terrace of eight houses seen today as numbers 32 to 46 Guy Road (opposite the entrance to Whelan Way) subsequently replaced these homes.

At the bottom of the hill opposite the watercress beds, by about 1907, the earliest terrace of four cottages had been completed, according to directories only two of which were occupied at the end of that year. Now numbered 62 to 68 Guy Road they took their name 'Penstock Cottages' as subsequently did the others, from a penstock, a type of sluice gate in the river opposite. Beside them was the entrance to the Beddington Sandpits beyond which stood three further houses numbers 56, 58 and 60, demolished in 1989 to make way for the building of the Archway Close development. Latterly owned by Ede's and occupied by their employees these three houses were sold when the company disposed of their Guy Road site. Between the end of the terraces numbered 68 and 70, in the past, a footpath gave access to The Brandries but this was subsequently closed by the then occupier of number 68 and built over. The two terraces of four houses standing on the bank above Guy Road and the river numbered 70 to 84 were built around 1927-28 and whatever the connection, five were named after locations in the Lake District, Grasmere, Ullswater, Derwentwater, Windermere and Keswick. In spring 2005 the deep bank of sand was excavated, and in the later part of the year building eventually began of a semi-detached house on the corner of Guy Road and Hilliers Lane, completed in 2006.

## **Harrington Close**

Is an estate built on a field more recently known as 'Shaw's Meadow' the name of a later occupier of an adjacent house known as Beddington Lodge. Once known as 'Admiral's Mead' the land was the site of a garden leased from the Carew estates by Admiral Pigott who lived there during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Later used as a sports field, the building of the Close itself took place during 1976-77.

## **Hilliers Lane**

Hilliers Lane named as such only dates from 1894-5 when a certain amount of re-organisation was undertaken following the creation of the Parish Council under the provision of the new Local Government Act. At this time, a number of streets and lanes in the locality were officially named. The origin of the lane however is much older and has been in existence as a thoroughfare for centuries. As to when and why the hillside was cut away to form the deep cutting that today carries the road will no doubt remain a mystery. One questions as to whether it might have been an ancient hollow-way marking manor boundaries or perhaps (and less likely) the thoroughfare making use of what was a natural feature.

The lane that extends downhill from Croydon Road to the ford where it becomes Beddington Lane may well have been named after a certain Robert Hiller who in the seventeenth century had the right under patent to coin the Beddington Halfpenny. This was a brass token slightly smaller in size than the modern ten pence coin on the face of which was inscribed "Robert Hiller In", and on the reverse, "Beddington in Surrey, His Half penny". There is also shown on the coin the representation of a device that may be that of a flail, the letter 7, or possibly an axe that is commonly a reference to the issuer's trade or to the town that strongly encouraged their production. Trade tokens were first issued in Surrey in 1648 when only gold and silver coins were official coinage. Their use extended for a period of around twenty-four years covering the period following the death of Charles I at a time when regal copper coinage, small change that was of the greatest use

to the poorest, was particularly scarce. Tokens were generally worth a farthing (a quarter of a penny); those worth a halfpenny had the value shown on them. Only the trader who issued them was obliged to exchange them for official coinage. Charles II introduced an official copper coinage in 1672 though many tokens were issued on into the eighteenth century. An example of the Beddington Halfpenny can be seen in Guildford museum.

Carew household accounts of the early 1570s indicate there was a land holding named Hilliers somewhere near the south end of Beddington Lane at or near Park Farm. The family were obviously of some substance. In 1610, a Nicholas Hillar was witness to Sir Francis Carew's will and signatory to the probate made after his death in 1611. Between 1798 and 1801, a Nathaniel Hillier occupied Beddington House (Bridges Lane). A number of Hilliers also appear as Churchwardens and held other local offices. The name Hiller, Hillar, Hilliard and Hillier, all variations of the one surname is familiar in the locality even to this day.

Today, little remains of the scene as it would have been during the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth century apart from the wooded bank on the west side of Hilliers Lane behind which the stalwart walls of the former Brandries Hill House can still be seen. A gated entrance to this estate at one time lay across the corner of Hilliers Lane and Guy Road. This was later to become an area of bluebells and cow parsley that became a no-man's land when The Brandries was being developed in the late 1920s-early '30s and the gardens to these houses were being enclosed. The wooded bank was cut by a footpath created at this time that led from between 15 and 16 The Brandries downhill to Hilliers Lane opposite the southern end of what are now the flats known as 'Old Ford House'. The footpath was later closed as being too dangerous.

A flight of narrow steps probably contemporary with the eighteenth century house still rises up steeply to the grounds of 'Camden House' the name by which Brandries Hill House is now known. Further uphill towards Croydon Road are more recent steps, created at the time the grounds of the estate were being developed. These gave access to a high terrace of houses that according to street directories were first occupied c.1929. The steps were originally the only means of access with deliveries having to be made from Hilliers Lane. The unmade road behind these houses that later gave access to their garages was privately owned. 'Camden Cottage' standing at right angles to these houses came into being as a garage with accommodation above attached to Brandries Hill House when David Clack owned it. Concealed behind the high bank and garden at the top of a steep drive stands 'The Firs' built in 1923 for members of the Clack family of their own locally manufactured bricks. The property is divided from the terrace of houses by part of the original kitchen garden wall.

On the same (west) side of Hilliers Lane, the long retaining wall, having become unsafe was partially demolished during May 1981 and the new built in front of the old though the narrow steps up to the garden of Camden House marked 'private' remained unaltered. The continuation of this wall downhill to Guy Road that had collapsed in the early 1920s was replaced in May-June 1992. The extended footpath on the same side was created in the latter part of 2003 into 2004 by narrowing the path on the opposite side of the road.





*Tritton Cottages stood on the east side of Hilliers Lane slightly downhill from Croydon Road where the Beacon Place houses now stand.*

At some height above the road on the east side of Hilliers Lane uphill of the ‘Old Ford House’ flats stand houses numbered 8 to 17 Hilliers Lane the greater number of which were first occupied in about 1927 built on what was formerly an orchard once part of the Wandle Court estate. Uphill of these homes stood 6 Hilliers Lane ‘The Beacon’, an attractive house with hung tile decoration built for Olive Potter (née Clack) and her husband in 1927. This house was demolished to make way for the ‘Beacon Place’ estate constructed in thirty-one weeks for Holmbury Developments by John Cornell builders into mid-1999. Uphill of this development in front of the house ‘Wainwheels’ (built in 1952) once stood two groups of cottages of later years known as ‘Tritton Cottages’, and nearer the junction the Manor Farm house.

### **Mallinson Road**

Is named after Sir William Mallinson J.P., 2nd Baronet who owned ‘The Grange’ over the years 1915-1935. Occupancy of the Mallinson Road houses took place during 1947-48, first recorded in Electoral Registers dated June 1949. The site of the former garages now a small housing estate named Hailes Close was first occupied in 2009.

### **Malthouse Row and Church Passage**

“Along Church Path [now Church Lane] there was a few cottages, and at the corner of one of them was the Post Office, with a slit in the door to post letters, and round the corner up

a road [Malthouse Row] were other cottages and Mr. Isted's blacksmith shop, also Mr. Matthews lived along there, a lavender and peppermint grower whose fields were in Wallington". So wrote Tom Holloway in 1923 recalling the days of his youth in the mid-1870s. The road to which he was referring (after having rounded the corner) was Malthouse Row, a name now long since disappeared until the cul-de-sac was resurrected and re-named Whelan Way a century later.

Malthouse Row took its name from a malt house that stood at the end of the turning along with a substantial house, a cottage and land in 1780 jointly owned by Thomas Smelt and Richard Roffey. Robert Wood occupied the house and remained as tenant until 1796. The area extended to what is now the west end of Whelan Way before the road now enters the more recently built 'Barons Court' estate.

One of the early buildings probably the malthouse, survived in the form of a large thatched barn that stood downhill at right-angles at the north-west end of Whelan Way (before the newer Barons Court estate) until in 1944 it collapsed, the effect of a blast that destroyed houses then standing in Malthouse Row and others in Guy Road. If this was indeed so and the malthouse was by then listed as a barn, later owners included John Williamson the snuff manufacturer who from 1793 rented it from Thomas Smelt subsequently (from 1796) Ann Smelt before he purchased the building in about 1799. For a number of years from 1805 the Executors of John Williamson (his having died in 1804) occupied the barn and in 1808 the rate was received from James Penluze for the malthouse that was noted as being empty; ditto Matthews until in about 1813 it was let to C.N. Webb and by 1816 to John Michael.

Including the narrow lane that was Malthouse Row, downhill to the river, in 1820 the triangular piece of land and buildings were owned by J. W. Bristow. This area included the three 'Wandle Cottages' by the river; the substantial house already noted; the barn and The Harrow Beer Shop the latter of which was sited on a wedge shaped plot of land by Dorset Cottage off Church Lane. This is no doubt "the shop" referred to in 1780 in the ownership of Smelt and Roffey then occupied by John Durand, possibly tied to the malting activities going on downhill. A footpath beside The Harrow known as Church Passage led from Malthouse Row uphill by Dorset Cottage and out onto Church Lane. In 1820 Robert Shepherd, landlord of 'The Harrow' was tenant of the house, barn, yards, garden and buildings in Malthouse Row but by June 1839 James Apted was recorded as tenant of the malthouse, house and garden. Between the barn and the beer shop was another small dwelling owned by the Bristow's, by 1840 William Charrington, then occupied by Widow Stedman.

Giving us an insight into the drinking habits of the mid-eighteenth century, "The Gentleman's Magazine" on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1748 reported that after a christening in Beddington, Surrey, the nurse was so intoxicated that after she had undressed the child, instead of laying it in the cradle she placed the hapless infant behind a large fire which burnt it to death in only a few moments. Brought before a magistrate she made the statement that owing to the amount she had drunk she was quite stupid and senseless, and that she had taken the child for a log of wood. Having given this explanation, she was discharged! In 1830 Parliament issued the Beer House Act that legalised the brewing and

sale of ale through small retailers, a measure designed to lure the labouring poor away from the evils of gin, then a popular and dangerous tippie.

In June 1839, Robert Shepherd occupied what was then described as a house and bake house. This would suggest that in the interim, the former landlord of The Harrow in Church Passage had gone into the baking of bread. It is thought the beer house disappeared as such probably at around this time for we lose track of it recorded after 1841. By 1871, however the building is described as two timber-built cottages. The cottage nearest Malthouse Row was of one bedroom, living room, pantry and washhouse let to Sarah Pawley at two shillings and six pence a week and the other (that nearer Church Lane) was of two bedrooms for which the tenant Robert Vineall paid an extra shilling a week. Before water mains were laid the occupants obtained water by pump from a well to which those living nearby in Dorset Cottage also had access. The cottages were still standing in 1897.

Mr. Matthews the lavender and peppermint grower referred to by Tom Holloway was Edward Matthews who in 1860 occupied the house, barn, stabling and land in Malthouse Row. In the 1871 census he was recorded as a widower of 67 years of age, employing his three sons, a family presence that was to remain there until the early years of the twentieth century. Mr. Matthews worked fields not only near the Duke's Head, Wallington Green but also at Woodmansterne.

The Isted family, blacksmiths, were another of long association with Guy Road and Malthouse Row. W. Wagstaff the carriage builder of Richmond Road owned the forge at least from 1911 through to 1915 when it was again offered for sale. By 1919, only a tottering wall remained of the old forge.

As predecessors to the Isted's, it is interesting to note that in 1593 Richard Elmer, smith, left his son Richard Elmer "all my tools in the Smith's shop". In January 1631-32 (as recorded), Robert Ottay, blacksmith who was at the time sick bequeathed to his son John "all the tools in my shop", the witnesses being Thomas Greenehill and Richard While (the will was proven in February 1631-32), and in 1666 Ann Terryll was recorded as being the widow of her late husband Edward Terryll of Beddington, blacksmith. Apart from these wills being made at Beddington, the exact locations referred to are unknown.

Inevitably, changes were to take place. By 1840, a house remembered by many as 'The Cottage' located on the corner of Guy Road had been built but as to when the four brick houses known as 1 to 4 Malthouse Row came into being on the right (or north) side of the turning, is not known. Those numbered 1 and 2 were Victorian and 3 and 4 of an earlier date. The two nearest Guy Road are known to have been two-storied at the front and three-storied at the back as the land fell away towards the river. The windows facing Malthouse Row were distinctive as being of cast iron tracery with each pane individually set. The large north-south aligned thatched barn, thought by some to have been a tithe barn owing to a payment their parents made towards its upkeep, remained throughout.

From at least the 1820s ownership of the Malthouse Row area had remained with the Bristow family. In 1915 the houses were administered by the Executors of the late Mr.

Collyer Bristow as a complaint by the Medical Officer that numbers 3 and 4 were unfit for human habitation and that closing orders be served, was directed to them. William. J. Sartin who was a tenant of one of the houses is noted as being a subsequent owner. These four houses stood until July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944 when along with the barn, 'The Cottage' and a number of other homes in Guy Road they were destroyed or otherwise badly damaged when the flying bomb landed nearby. After the bombing, the ground left derelict quickly became overgrown with only the immediate area around Mr. Stratton (a painter and decorator's) caravan being kept clear. In the early 1950s a large attractive L shaped bungalow was built across the corner of Malthouse Row and Guy Road by Dennis Stockton on the site of The Cottage but it had very much a limited lifetime being demolished to make way for the building for the first part of the Whelan Way estate of houses in the mid 1970s.

Malthouse Row was to remain overgrown until cleared in 1964 for the building of a Roman Catholic Church that was in use for the next ten years. Having been superseded by St. Elphege Catholic Church it was demolished in 1974. In the spring of 1976 when the first tenants of the new housing development built under the auspices of the Catholic Housing Association moved in, that which in the past had been known as Malthouse Row now became Whelan Way after the Purley firm of building contractor's who developed the site. In 1989-90 Whelan Way was extended further to the west to give access to the Barons Court estate built by the contractors, McLean.

## **Meads Estate**

Though located within the London Borough of Sutton off Beddington Lane directly north of the former railway line, the Meads Estate (that includes Brookmead, Oakmead and Homemead Roads) is along with Clockhouse (that lies to the south of Wallington) one of the most geographically isolated areas of anywhere in the borough. It borders on Mitcham Common and has a Croydon post-code. With Beddington Lane forming the apex of a triangle on the west side, the estate is sandwiched between what is now the Tramlink line to the south, the boundary with the London Borough of Merton (that runs along the line of the kerb opposite the houses facing Brookmead Road) to the north, and the warehousing and/or industrial sites to the east, access to which is gained from Red House Road. Today there is no vehicular link between the two. At one time, the whole area north of Therapia Lane was classed as part of Mitcham Common that at the beginning of the nineteenth century was dissected by the "Iron Road Way", the Surrey Iron Railway.

Following the Enclosure Award of 1812 the triangle of land upon which the estate was to be built was divided between three people, Admiral Pigott (the smallest area that nearest Beddington Lane), Sir Henry Bridges and John W. Bristow, the latter of whom held the greater area of some ten acres that was later to become the industrialised area. The land formerly owned by Admiral Pigott (later by Sir Henry Bridges) became 'Rollisson's American Nursery' arising from a conveyance in January 1824 between Sir Henry, William Rollisson the elder, and George and William Rollisson of Tooting. By September 1858 not only paying Poor Rates relating to a cottage, land and nursery grounds they were also tenants of a relatively small triangle of land immediately south of the railway. The land and cottage that stood at the west end of the triangle north of the line was again offered for sale in September 1878 at which time George Buller of Croydon, purchased it

for £1,450. Ground that lay immediately south of the railway of which Rollisson's were tenants was sold to George Simons who owned adjoining land following the death of the former owner John Williamson.

The first terrace of houses facing Brookmead Road had appeared by 1914 with the remainder shortly after. The estate along with the cluster of homes in Beddington Lane south of the line at one time had the amenity of a branch library housed in the canteen of the woodworking firm of T.J. Ebdon at 56 Beddington Lane. It closed on August 21<sup>st</sup> 1958 owing to the expansion of the firm. Ebdon's was also used as the polling station for the area. Served by a Mobile Library, a bus service and Tramlink connections, the estate though still far removed from the better-known areas of Beddington is now that little less isolated.

## **Meller Close**

Built on former Carew land known at the time of the 1859 sale as 'Alders Shaws' (the Alder Wood), Meller Close was developed as part of the Park Farm estate c.1946-47. The two blocks of flats at the southern end overlooking the site of the former watercress beds were built somewhat later, c.1969-70.

The Close was named after Sir Richard James Meller (1872-1940) D.L., J.P., M.P., and Charter Mayor when in September 1937 the Urban District of Beddington and Wallington was created a Municipal Borough. Sir Richard, knighted by King George V in 1933, came to Wallington in 1889 and lived at 'Caverhill', Woodcote Road. He was a Barrister-at-Law by profession and had served the district continuously on the Parish Council, the Urban District Council and the Surrey County Council of which he had been an Alderman for many years. Among the many other posts held, he was also a member of the Croydon County Bench and Member of Parliament for the Mitcham Division for over fourteen years from 1923.

## **Mile Road**

Mile Road (in 1868 named on a map as 'New Road') that in part followed an old field boundary, came into being after the 1859 Carew sale and though designated a private road (and now closed to any public access) was for well over a century open to free passage though by law access to which was closed at least on one day of the year to maintain its private status. This east-west aligned road was accessed from Beddington Lane past the semi-detached houses that stood near the corner numbered 79 and 81 and two additional likewise semi-detached field cottages located about half-way across. In this area once known as the Furze Field, at one time stood the Carew estates Keeper's Cottage and Pheasantry. Having crossed the Mile Road railway bridge (from which looking north one could see the Irrigation Bridge and again further north on Mitcham Common the Hundred Acre Bridge), it eventually met with London Road at a point opposite Hackbridge Road.

## **Plough Lane**

This ancient thoroughfare once known as Bandon Way historically extended in a north-south alignment from The Plough public house south across farmlands to the junction of ancient cross-roads at Purley. Today, the northern part of Plough Lane ends at Stafford

Road though in part still extends further south (as Mollison Drive) where owing to expansion of Croydon Airport in 1928 it was cut off and diverted to the west to meet with a new road, Foresters Drive. At its southern end Foresters Drive again meets with the cut off spur of Plough Lane that retains its former name and alignment south until meeting with Foxley Lane.

**West (or right side) from the Broadway to the railway.** A short distance along Plough Lane from the entrance to the Bandon Hill Cemetery, the road branches. With the coming of the railway in 1847 Sandy Lane (once continuous from its junction with Plough Lane through to Woodcote Green) was cut off at what is described in the Carew Sale Particulars (1859) as an area of “freehold garden ground” ‘the Bridge Corner Close’. Purchased by James Watney for £150, this same area, in 1514 held by the Parson and in 1899 owned by Collyer-Bristow, is now known as Plough Lane Close. The Enclosure map of 1820 identifies the area as ‘Hammonds Pit’, which indicates sand extraction had already taken place that later engulfed the whole of that area of Sandy Lane cut off by the railway. The triangle was eventually filled by refuse tipping.

In Plough Lane Close on an area of land once known as ‘Five Trees’, a Scout Hall (home of the 1st North Wallington Scout Group) was completed in 1939 just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. On an adjoining piece of land, in 1972 the Carshalton Rifle Club established a range that was formally opened the following year. The club was established in 1862 as the Carshalton Detachment of the Surrey Rifle Volunteers who in 1908 became part of the Territorial Force until it was disbanded in 1916. Their Headquarters had been in a drill hall in Carshalton Square where they also established a miniature rifle range that was in use until 1968. In 1922 the club re-named itself the Wallington British Legion Rifle Club until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 at which time their premises were commandeered by the Home Guard and the name changed to the Wallington and Carshalton Home Guard Rifle Club. In 1948 a separate club was created for those who had not been regulars in the army - that was the beginning of the Carshalton Rifle Club as it is today. The houses of Plough Lane Close built c.1978 stand on the site of a group of fourteen pre-fabricated houses erected as emergency accommodation during the war that had stood there at least until the mid-1970s.

**West side south of the railway.** As part of the late Victorian development of the Bandon Hill area, a semi-detached house, in 1955 numbered 63 and 65 Plough Lane, stood at the foot of the steep embankment on the west side immediately south of the railway bridge. This house, which was below the level of Plough Lane, was accessed via a gate and steps that were so steep they seemingly “disappeared into space”. Behind number 65 was a feature described on a map as a ruin. The site of this house is now occupied by the gardens attached to 38-41 Clouston Close.

Beyond the Bandon Hill Model Cottages (see Bandon Hill) are ‘Home Cottage’ No.55, and ‘Bandon Cottages’ 53 and 51 Plough Lane, all of which, along with an old house that occupied the site of the modern house next door, were built between the land sale of 1853 and production of the first Ordnance Survey map in 1868. A few doors further along, in the northeast corner of Mellows Park at 43 Plough Lane is the former slate roofed park lodge now in private ownership. In 2004 it was extended on the south side to become a semi-detached house, the two periods of building marked by rendering and brickwork.



*Plough Lane from a card post-dated 1915. The view is towards the railway bridge with the entrance to Bandon Hill cemetery on the right.*



*Pre-fabricated houses in Plough Lane Close housed victims of the bombing during the Second World War.*

The distinctive house at 277 Stafford Road on the south-west corner of Plough Lane dated c.1914, then named 'Four Wenté Way' was for many years occupied by C. Lewin for whom it was probably built. The land was offered for sale in June 1912 as part of the property named 'Sunnyview' then numbered 27 Plough Lane, an area of in total nineteen acres fronting both Stafford Road and Plough Lane. The auction did not meet the reserve price of £4,500; it would appear therefore that the land was broken up into smaller lots, sold, and development begun shortly after.

The two sports grounds off Mollison Drive on part of the former Beddington aerodrome was first listed in directories in 1922-23 as Croydon Sports Ground and that beyond as the Croydon Gas Company's ground, the latter with F.J. Martin living in the Groundsman's Lodge. In about 1928 the nearer field became known as Southern Railway Sports Ground. The Southern Railway when affected by competition from the airlines on their cross-channel services went so far as to acquire a substantial number of shares in Imperial Airways operating from what had then become Croydon Airport, hence the name of the sports ground. Imperial Airways had their own ground nearer to Purley where Foresters Drive meets with Plough Lane South.

**East (or left side) from The Broadway to the railway.** In the early nineteenth century the land between Croydon Road and the railway including that upon which the south parade of The Broadway shops were to be built, was owned by the Bristow/Collyer-Bristow family of 'Beddington Place'. It was only after their land holdings were broken up and sold in the early twentieth century that the area as we know it today began to take shape. Only a narrow footpath then separated farm buildings and cottages of the Beddington Place estate from The Plough - it was only after they were demolished, the road on that side created and the shops built that the pub was isolated in the triangle of roads as we see it today.

The houses on the left before the cricket ground and railway appeared in the mid-1930s on what had been Collyer-Bristow land and latterly the playing fields attached to George Payne's works. It was here in September 2010 at 82 Plough Lane, whilst Mr. R. Constable was digging a fish pond he uncovered a jetton, a coin-like reckoning counter once used in the calculation of accounts. Of German origin it was produced in Nuremberg for Hans Krauwinckel 1 who was active between 1586 and 1635, one of the most important producers of counters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to medieval taste it is decorated; on the one side with his name and on the reverse with a representation of the Lion of St. Mark with the Book of Gospels held between its forepaws.

**East side, south of the railway.** Immediately south of the railway lies the High View Estate in the main built piecemeal in the late 1920s and into the early 1930s by a number of different developers. Piles Street Directory dated 1929 (i.e. compiled in about October the previous year) has listing for five houses only in The Chase. By 1938 it was almost fully built up. The parade of eight shops now known as Central Avenue first appears listed in directories in 1930.

On land once in Carew ownership but in the early twentieth century owned by John Williams Bristow, streets on the estate were given the names of Surrey towns and the



overall estate named from its location, a high viewpoint. Where Plough Lane now meets with The Chase access was gained to a cinder footpath that lay parallel to the railway line between Bandon Hill and Waddon Station. By some years pre-dating 1913, it survived until about 1917 when it was closed to enable the spur rail line to be run through what is now The Chase (then an orchard) to a level crossing over Stafford Road thence to the new war emergency factory bordering the airport. This spur line was brought into use in May 1918. Beyond Garden Close and 'Melrose Tudor' flats (1938) is 'Park Court', part of the development of Hazlemere Close in about 1937-38.

## **Raleigh Avenue**

Was built-up between about 1928 and 1930-31 with the majority of houses occupied by the latter date.

## **Rectory Lane**

Neither on the Enclosure Map of 1820 nor on the first edition of the O.S. map dated 1868 are Bute Road, Rectory Lane, the Bridleway (the continuation of Rectory Lane towards the railway) or Demesne Road yet shown. The Enclosure Map shows there was initially a line becoming an avenue of trees on the south side (of the later named) Croydon Road opposite Freron Lane along the eastern boundary of the glebe as far across as Mill Lane, the road later to become known as Stafford Road. It seems highly probable that a footpath at least followed the glebe boundary and thereafter the strip between the staggered trees of the avenue, now the Bridleway. It lay on a line slightly more diagonal than now, and extended south of Bute Gardens up to what was to become the Demesne Road railway bridge. A stumped out right-of-way of 25ft. wide along the line of what was to become Rectory Lane gave access to the demesne that lay on either side south to the railway, in 1859 farmed by William Bates.

Evolution of the pattern of roads as we know them today was gradual. Roads in existence when the railway came in 1847 had to be bridged or protected by the railway company and this once again reflected how the pattern of the old was impressed upon that which was to come. The Demesne was bisected by a track that accounts for the bridge at the south end of the Bridleway, later to be met by Demesne Road. In the early 1920s, Rectory Lane is shown on contemporary maps but not named and only extended as far as 'Chalk Pit Cottage' (now 'Dell Cottages'). A deep chalk pit known locally as "The Dell" still exists behind the houses on that same east side of the road. A footpath that led off Rectory Lane to the right along the southern boundary of the glebe behind the rectory as far across as Holy Trinity School was closed by the Urban District Council in 1921.

Beddington and Wallington U.D.C.'s well-designed estate lying between Rectory Lane and Bute Road that encompasses Northway, Southway, Eastway, etc. was built into the early 1920s, first appearing in the 1922-23 edition of Piles Street Directory. Greenway and Grassway were contemporary. Darcy Avenue first appears in the 1929 edition that would indicate it was occupied during the previous year at some time prior to October when the directory was compiled. Clifford Avenue appears c.1929-30. In October 1928, E.M. Swabey was given planning permission to build a group of eight houses and two shops in Rectory Lane not far from the District Nurses Home that stood opposite on the

north side of the corner of Rectory Lane and Montague Gardens. In May 1930 he was given approval to build a further fourteen houses in Rectory Lane. During the war, an anti-aircraft gun was sited on the green opposite the council estate.

Rectory Lane was first named as such in Directories in 1929, two years after the St. Mary's Memorial Church Hall designed by K.M. Winch, F.R.I.B.A. had been built on the west side of the road. For financial reasons the hall was of utility type but of substantial structure and of pleasing appearance, the overall measurement being 95ft. long by 32ft. wide. In the main paid for by a bequest in 1927 of the late Miss Mary Eleanor Tritton, it was largely used by the young people of St. Mary's Youth Fellowship, Townswomen's Guild, Boy's Brigade, Scout and Guide groups who also used the hall. It was rebuilt on the same site in 1951 after the original wooden building had suffered extensive bomb damage. The rebuild was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Southwark and opened by Gillie Potter Esq. on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1952. In part to finance the proposed building of the new Church Centre, the hall was sold to developers and demolished in February 1994. The houses known as 1-8 Rectory Court were built on the site.

## **Richmond Road and Richmond Green**

In 1859, part of the land upon which the houses of Richmond Road were built the 'Five Acre Mead' along with the snuff mill was purchased by Henry Tritton for £4,500. Within an indenture dated July 1881 in relation to this land between his heirs (Joseph Barclay, Joseph Tritton, Rev. William Tritton) and the property developer/builder Gideon Smith there were various terms to be agreed relating to drainage, fencing etc.

By 1883 when first listed in directories identified as such, Richmond Road in total numbered fourteen homes all of which stood on the north (or Goose Green) side, two 'Ivy Cottages' (now numbered 5-7), a terrace of six houses identified as 'Alfred Cottages' (9-19) and a further terrace of six, 'Smith's Cottages' (21-31).

**Left side from Beddington Lane.** Immediately before Ivy Cottages was a yard and buildings for many years occupied by General Fire Appliances Ltd. now part of the Beddington Warehouse complex. By 1884 this building was that of A. Wood Coach Builder Steam Carriage Works. According to an advertisement it was here Mr. Wood built carriages "of every description on the most improved principles and design". The buildings he occupied; a brick and slate-roofed two-stall stable along with a large brick and timber built, slate-roofed open shed were offered for sale in 1894 after which it became F.H. Wagstaff's and in 1907-08, F.C. Hoath's Carriage Works.

By 1897 two newly built semi-detached houses now number 33 and that known as 'Gordon Cottage' (35) had appeared on the far side of Smith's Cottages, by 1900 to be joined by two named 'Woodside Villas' (37-39), three 'New Cottages' (41-45) and 1 to 7 'Pembury Villas' (47-59 Richmond Road). Three of the latter were indicated as being unoccupied when the directory was published in 1900. Immediately beyond Pembury Villas was an area of open ground during the 1920s cultivated by Mr. E. (Teddy) Lloyd as a rhubarb field. The six council built houses standing there today were erected on this plot in mid-1933-34 after Mr. Lloyd's death earlier that year.

**Right side from Beddington Lane.** 2 Richmond Road (advertised as Lot 2 of Mr. Wood's 1894 sale referred to above), later C.W. Scott Caterer whose name can still be seen incorporated in the wrought iron gates, was until recently Westwood Folders and Printers Ltd. In the 1894 sale particulars this building was described as being a 14ft. 2ins. by 11ft. 6ins. brick and slate-roofed bakehouse with a large brick-built oven, a flour trough and with a large loft over. The latter was let to Mr. Thomas on a three-year agreement from September 1892. In about 1958-59, 2 Richmond Road both the house and outbuildings were purchased by Charles W. Scott when all but derelict. He and his wife were in the catering trade. They provided a mobile canteen at the airport for pilots and ground crew and later held the concession for the snack bars at both the airport and the nearby Purley Way Lido. They also had the kiosks in Beddington and Grange parks and were resident caterers at The Grange mansion in January 1960 when it was burnt down.

Next door stood what in 1893 was known as 'The Workingmen's Club' and 'Club Cottage', in 1898 jointly known as 'Club Cottages'. These attractive houses with hung tile decoration are today numbered 4-6 Richmond Road. The second edition Ordnance Survey map dated 1897 shows us that with the exception of three houses (14-18), on that same side development had already taken place as far as the junction with Wandle Road though the missing three were listed in directories the following year. In sales particulars the houses have been described as a "range of mainly terraced buildings built for artisan workers in a simple design with steeply pitched roofs, three light bays and double hung sash windows".

One of those houses is 28 Richmond Road on the corner of Wandle Road of more recent memory that of a butcher shop with an entrance diagonally across the corner. For some years in the late 1800s up to about 1909, the business was that of a grocer's shop run by J. and C. Cole. It subsequently passed through a number of hands until in about 1922-23 A.E. (Bert) Petchey purchased the premises and opened it as a Family Butcher shop. It was reputedly the first of its kind in Beddington prior to which local people had to buy their meat either direct from the farm, smallholding, or purchase it in Croydon. Having previously run a dairy from the outbuildings of 'The Willows' in Beddington Lane, Mr. Petchey remained there until the early 1950s. During this time he did a great deal for the community in part repaying a debt for the opportunity given to him when money from a collection taken in St Mary's was given to him to start up a milk round on his return from the First World War. He leaves memories in the minds of many children who are now adults of outings by the sea and mystery drives in the countryside in the balmy summers of their childhood. He arranged whist drives and dances to help supplement the cost of the coaches that left from Richmond Road with children being taken free and adults paying ten shillings each. Trips to see the Southend lights were also organised for the adults.

By 1901, another group of houses had appeared in directories noted as 1-4 'Wandle Cottages' (32-38 Richmond Road) beyond which was the entrance to Lacey Hulbert's Engineering Works. By 1902 number 30, a detached house built between the terrace and Wandle Road had appeared. There were two further post-1913 houses (50-52) today replaced by buildings contemporary with the Kingston Gardens estate. A stream flowed along the eastern boundary of the Five Acre Mead its course marked by a bank of



*Locals gather in front of Bert Petchey's butcher shop in Richmond Road in readiness for a day out. Mr Petchey is standing in the front left of centre.*

shrubbery along Richmond Green where it meets with Richmond Road. Owing to the development of Richmond Road, re-numbering took place in 1901.

Across what was once the east end of Richmond Road (where today the footpath bordering the allotments meets with the road) on a large meadow known as the 'Sixteen Acre Mead' extensive gravel pits were excavated (said in places to have been up to sixty feet deep) filled with rubbish by Croydon Council. The land was levelled and by the 1930s used by Croydon High School as a sports ground. A pavilion stood about half way across the field in from what was then the end of Richmond Road. During the mid to late 1970s into the early 1980s somewhat controversially and at considerable risk, bottle collectors excavated what was then an area of open ground.

As well as on the Park Farm estate, during the Second World War prisoners of war worked to prepare the site of what was to become emergency housing. Richmond Road was extended to the east towards the boundary with Croydon to join with Richmond Green and Richmond Road South giving access to eighty pre-fabricated houses built in 1944-45 to accommodate those who had lost their homes to enemy action. Those happily occupying the "pre-fabs" were re-housed at the beginning of the 1960s though the buildings were to stand empty for some time after.

In 1952 twenty-eight sheltered housing units were built overlooking Richmond Green along with a group of council houses at the far end of the site. Arising from a petition of

residents taken two years previously, in 1949 a former wartime Bailey bridge was put in place across the Wandle giving foot access to the Bridle Path and points beyond. It was replaced with the present wooden structure built on the foundations of the original bridge in late 2003. Willows line the river while in front of the bungalows are a number of trees planted by members of the Beddington Society in the autumn of 1984. A private housing estate that includes the flats and houses in Mortlake, Chiswick and Twickenham Close was built on the site of the prefabricated homes with the first part of the development being ready for occupation in March 1974; the remainder by December 1975.

At one time (post 1955) a footpath lay on a line north from Richmond Road along the eastern boundary of the Goose Green allotments and branched. One path led due west along the northern boundary of the allotments to Beddington Lane following the line of the stream, the other branched to the north-east cutting across part of the site of the former waste dump to Purley Way. During the late 1980s, the latter section of this footpath was re-routed away from the northeast corner of the allotments to where access is gained today beside number 157 at the far end of Richmond Road. The origins of the high wall beyond the 1997 entrance to the Electricity Sub-Station is not known but appears to have been part of the Central Electricity Board Transferring Station boundary.

## **Therapia Lane**

The early nineteenth century enclosure of part of Beddington set out or consolidated a number of routes over common fields and common. One such was a 16ft. carriage-way from Beddington Gate (Beddington Lane by Therapia Lane) across Beddington Marsh (known also as Waddons Marsh later referred to as the Waddon Smallholdings) by the ancient enclosures of Anne Paston Gee to the allotment and cottage of William Charrington. The carriage-way referred to, no more than a farm cart track at around the turn of the twentieth century known as 'Old John's Lane', originally led no further than William Charrington's land and cottage. The enclosure also set out the right-of-way of a footpath leading in an easterly direction from the cottage that was later to become the line of Therapia Lane as it was extended to meet with Mitcham Road via a gated crossing of the railway to which local landowners had keys. This more direct route enabled growers to transport crops of lavender and herbs (mainly black mint) to Jakson's distillery in Mitcham Road and gave direct access to the market in Croydon. The access to Mitcham Road across the rail line was later cut off.

A theory has been put forward as to the naming of Therapia Lane in that the herbs grown hereabouts had great therapeutic or healing properties. It was to become a pot-holed road of varying width and surface that meandered from Beddington Lane past cement works, dog sanatorium, quarantine kennels, sewage works, Croydon B Power station and factories to Purley Way. In 1964 Higgs and Hill Ltd. blocked the lane with swinging-bar gates across what was their own land (the remainder of which was also privately owned) and erected signs informing that it was a bridle path and of there being no through road. They stacked hundreds of tons of steel scaffolding between the gates leaving only a narrow footpath that after much controversy was re-opened to through traffic. Prior to the development of the ASDA store it was used by motorists as a short cut and an illegal fly-tipping ground. It has subsequently been closed.

That part leading in off Beddington Lane was blocked beyond the former Charrington land (that in dispute with Higgs and Hill), and stopped to through traffic, c.1996-97 extending to the east only as a footpath and cycle route to where it meets with Beddington Farm Road. The cut-off spur of Therapia Lane still exists as a street of houses beyond the former railway in Croydon on the south side of Mitcham Road. A footbridge that replaced the crossing was demolished in 1998 when the new Tramlink Depot was being built.

The cottage belonging to William Charrington is not shown on Rocque's map published c.1762 but is shown on a map of 1816 and referred to in notes accompanying the Enclosure map of 1820. In the mid-1820s Charles Pimm occupied the house. William Charrington owned the property until February 1832 and later his son and heir. At some time during the mid-nineteenth century the house had become known as 'Thatched Cottage'. From mid-summer 1863 it was occupied by John Marks and his wife Sarah (twin sister of the celebrated Victorian artist and Royal Academician Frederick Walker) and their family. In 1893 'Thatched House' was the home of Alfred J. Sewell and from about 1902 Peter Lawton who succeeded him as Manager of the Dog Sanitorium Co. Ltd., in 1935 assisted by G.C. Dunn. Quarantine Kennels run by L.P.H. Asthorpe stood next door. In 1897, it would appear there were two cottages; a brick and timber-built house with a slate roof along with a two-roomed cottage with fireplace and coach room, owned by Spratts Co. Ltd.

The kennels that existed from 1890 until 1945 were owned by Spratts Patent Co. Ltd. In January 1916 a disastrous fire broke out at which time a range of four wooden buildings each of 30ft by 15ft. with a felt tarred roof were destroyed along with several dogs that were burnt to death. Following the take-over of kennels belonging to the Battersea Dogs Home in Hackbridge Spratts became one of the largest dog kennel and quarantine concerns in the world. A further building known as 'The Bungalow' also stood in Therapia Lane. Perhaps this latter building was the two bedroom slate-roofed house occupied until 1978 and demolished about two years later.

There was also an east-west aligned footpath located slightly to the south of today's Therapia Lane (used by field workers and others as a short cut) that met with Beddington Lane at a point almost opposite Mile Road. It was along this footpath that the body of Thomas Blackman who had lived on the far side of the railway in Mt. Pleasant Cottages was borne in June 1892 on its way to Beddington churchyard. This circumstance somewhat unusually, it would appear had considerable bearing on the river being bridged at the foot of Hilliers Lane the following year. It became quite a matter of contention when the proposal was that this particular footpath should be closed. Despite many objections, Croydon Corporation barred access after which the Urban District Council of Beddington and Wallington built a large "hanger" across the footpath that became part of their refuse disposal site. The previously excavated gravel pits that lay between the path and Therapia Lane was infilled with domestic and industrial waste. Unconfirmed sources also indicate this as being the site of an early Mullards Factory. Of later years the only evidence that a footpath had ever existed was a sign erected under the Highways Act of 1959 informing that "The Croydon Corporation, as Owners do not intend to dedicate this footpath as a Public Right of Way", though this too has long since disappeared.

The 1936-37 Electoral Register of Therapia Lane, after 1-12 'Portland Cottages' records occupancy of 'The Bungalow', 'Spratts Quarantine Kennels', further 'Kennels' and finally the 'Thatched House'. Apart from Portland Cottages built in 1905 the only other building of historical interest still standing in Therapia Lane is a small, whitewashed security post on the north side, a relic of the original cement works. In 1993 the London Borough of Sutton Contract Services transferred its vehicle maintenance workshop to buildings on the north side of the lane where for a time its stationery supplies were also located. This building was formerly used as a warehouse by a later occupier of the cement works, Blue Circle Cement. Buildings of the Prologis development (completed in 2002) now dominate the south side of the lane built on the former municipal rubbish tip. A stream that rises in what were originally fields behind the new (2004) Valley Point Trading Estate (on the far side of Beddington Farm Road), in its upper reaches now enclosed within pipes, still flows in an open ditch parallel with Therapia lane.

## **Tritton Avenue**

Tritton Avenue (off Bridges Lane) the first houses of which were occupied by the autumn of 1927, was listed in local street directories in 1928 with only four entries. Offered for sale at the Greyhound Hotel, Croydon on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1926 to either side of a street that the estate plans had tentatively named Bridges Avenue, the plots on the south (or right side from Bridges Lane) were located on what had been the kitchen garden of Beddington House. Those on the north (or left side) were built on what was once part of the grounds of Riverside, later incorporated as part of the Beddington House estate. In June 1924 this land and buildings was offered for sale with vacant possession as 'Beddington House Nurseries', the title dating from May 1898. The Nurseries then comprised a small brick house with kitchen and living room, four bedrooms and bathroom, etc. set in a walled-in garden with a brick and timber-built storehouse and four ranges of glasshouses, in all amounting to about 1½ acres. The first two houses today numbered 2 and 4 are rebuilds as in 1941 the original houses were bombed and rebuilt in similar style on the same foundations.

The avenue was eventually named after the family who occupied Wandle Court and who by marriage were connected to the Bridges family. A section of the old Beddington House garden wall still stands.

## **Wandle Bank**

“In Wandle Bank the elm trees grow quite tall,  
And spread their branches far and wide  
To welcome in the warmth of summer sun...”

These lines, part of a longer poem, were written by the late Constance Hovanitz née Smith. She was born in Richmond Road, married and lived in America from where she eventually returned and died in 1982. She knew the area intimately for in her youth she lived in the house nearest to the river in Beddington Lane, a terrace of homes her father Sid Smith built for his uncle Gideon, before in 1908-09 he built the houses of Wandle Bank for himself and the family moved there. At first only eight of the Wandle Bank houses were occupied and by 1910 the remainder.

On land formerly part of the Carew estate, when sold in 1859 the field upon which the houses of Wandle Bank were to be built was described as a “very desirable and attractive meadow” in the occupation of Henry Tritton on a yearly rental basis of five guineas. Known then as ‘Bridge Meadow’ the land extended from the river as far north as the mill stream, with Beddington Lane as its western boundary, extending to the east as far as the orchard attached to the snuff mill upon which the existing Mt. Pleasant Cottages were built. Near to the river stood a byre for the cows that grazed upon the rich meadow pasture and sheltered beneath the leafy boughs of the great elms lining the riverbank. A secluded bungalow set in behind the houses of Beddington Lane (with access off Wandle Bank) was built in about 1958-59 by the present owner Leslie Parratt on land previously in use as an allotment purchased from the then owners, the Carshalton Gas Company for £1,150.

Though the elms are now gone, we see Wandle Bank as an attractive terrace of homes facing south overlooking the river with an unmade private road giving access to this quiet turning off the bustling Beddington Lane.

## **Wandle Court Gardens**

Built on the grounds of the ‘Wandle Court’ estate, the houses were designed by the well known architect Ernest Gladstone Allen (son of the Waddon mill owner) and built towards the later part of the 1920s. The first house noted as being occupied was number 18, the only entry published in Piles Directory dated 1928.

## **Wandle Road**

In 1859 Henry Tritton of nearby Wandle Court purchased the swathe of land upon which the houses of both Wandle Road and Richmond Road were to be built for £4,500. It would appear that the land was sub-divided soon after. Ordnance Survey maps of the mid-1860s show the line of Wandle Road to the south of the mill stream as being a field boundary only, and that to the north (including the area of Richmond Road) as one large field. By 1897 when the second edition of the map was published, the road as far north as its junction with Richmond Road was outlined and named but as yet not built upon.

Rebuilding of the snuff mill into a flour mill in the early 1890s and the employment it created gave fresh impetus to the growth of “the village”. At around this time a number of new roads came into existence, one of which was Wandle Road first noted in directories named as such in 1902 though the first four dwellings of ‘Wandle Terrace’ located at the north-east end of the present road in 1898 were listed under the Bridle Path. These houses were joined by an additional two built during the 1898-99 period giving the listing ‘1-6 Wandle Terrace’ in the 1901 Directory.

It was late 1905 or thereabouts when Harry A. Skipp moved from 32 Richmond Road to 12 Wandle Road from where, assisted by his brother Tom he set up business as a Farrier and Blacksmith shoeing horses “on carefully improved principles”. Harry became a Sergeant Farrier on the outbreak of the First World War. As successors to the Isted family of Malthouse Row, their forge originally stood on the site of the double garages adjacent to No.1 Wandle Road though it was later transferred to the yard behind the house and the former let as a stable. Gradually however as the way of life changed and motorised



vehicles took the place of horsepower so the emphasis of the family business changed to that of haulage contractors, coke and coal merchants a business that continued into the 1970s.

South of the millstream are the houses 13 to 27 Wandle Road. In 1901, along with the Mt. Pleasant Cottages the land upon which they were built was owned by Gideon Smith. These homes arose from the Labour Government's Wheatley Housing Act (August 1924) for the building of municipal cottages instead of tenements. Built in 1928 for the Urban District Council they were first let in about February 1929.

The millstream, at one time only bridged by narrow planks raised on wooden stilts and low to the water for the convenience of pedestrians was replaced by a permanent bridge probably when the mill was rebuilt. In October 1928 in connection with the Unemployed Relief Works however, a tender for the construction of a 36ins. diameter concrete tube conduit, 257ft. long with an overflow weir etc. in Wandle Road was awarded to Messrs Henry Hemmings Ltd. of Thornton Heath for £793 11s. 4d. The bridge in Wandle Road was strengthened and effectively rebuilt in 1990-91 when the National Rivers Authority carried out extensive work as part of their Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The houses of Blandford Close, built on what was at one time land attached to the snuff mill date from the mid-1930s with only one house occupied by about October 1936.

## NOTABLE BUILDINGS

### **Bandon Hill Model Cottages**

An attractive terrace of four cottages known as 1-4 'Model Cottages' (now 61A to 57 Plough Lane) occupy the corner site on the south side of Sandy Lane North and Plough Lane. Built on land previously owned by John Williamson it was sold as part of his estate in September 1858. Purchased for £135 by his agent on behalf of the Rev. James Hamilton it would appear that building of the cottages began almost immediately thereafter. On an external chimney at the northern end of the building is a Coat of Arms and on a similar chimney at the southern end the initials TH (those of his father Thomas Hamilton perhaps?) and the date 1859, the year after the sale. The attractive tile-roofed cottages are of stock brick with decorative red banding and herringbone style brickwork infilling the arches above the windows.

### **The Banks, Croydon Road**

"Attractive and beautiful rich pasture land with a graceful slope to the west commanding beautiful views of the much admired Beddington Park and neighbouring scenery" is how White Bench Field was described in 1859, the field upon which 'The Banks' was to be built. Located at the back of the field towards the top of the hill, of all the houses perhaps it had the most delightful setting. It stood beside the high footpath with a view north over the deep Sandhills cutting across to the manor, backed by the tall trees of Queen Elizabeth's Walk and facing the westerly view across Wallington and Carshalton to Sutton and beyond. In 1859 along with the manor and parklands opposite, the field was purchased by the property speculator Joseph Borsley.

The date 1868 and the initials M. & A.H. on an inscribed stone inset in the wall on the front of the house indicates the year and the initials of those for whom it was built. Alfred Hewitt, then aged thirty-four a merchant and manufacturer, his wife Marian and family who were to remain there for about the next nine years. The west-facing house was built of London stock brick with typically Victorian decoration of red brick banding. Built by Marian's brother Henry Wagner, the building had a double pitch roof with two large bay windows at the front to either side of the entrance. A flight of stone steps decorated with urns on the plinths to either side led up to an arch recessed front door. The house stood facing a circular drive access to which was off what was to become Evelyn Way; in front, the grounds extended downhill to Demesne Road. A tennis court was located to the south of the house, uphill by Queen Elizabeth's Walk.

Subsequent occupants included David Falconer described as a Colonial Broker who lived there from about 1878 and Arthur Winton during the early 1890s. In about 1896 James A. Wallis a partner in the Beddington flour mill acquired the property. The lodge that still stands on the corner, 246 Demesne Road, built in about 1900-1901 was occupied until 1916 or thereabouts by George Carey who was probably employed by the Wallis brothers either at the mill or at the house. In the mid-1930s the lodge was extended though the

unusual symmetry of the original design with its central chimney stack can still be seen. James Wallis lived in 'The Banks' for some nineteen years until about 1915.

During the 1930s until about the 1950s, the house was the location of Ladymount School after which it was acquired by the Ministry of Transport as part of the proposed scheme for the extension of the M23 motorway. During this period, the council utilised it as half-way accommodation. Having stood empty for some time, the house was eventually demolished at the end of November 1989. The ground was levelled during February into early March 1994 and existing houses on an adjoining area of land demolished to make way for the building of the Ladymount housing estate shortly after.



*'Beddington Cottage' stood between Hilliers Lane and The Broadway.*

## **Beddington Cottage, Croydon Road**

Beddington Cottage, a late seventeenth or early eighteenth century house remembered when it was cement rendered and enclosed by a hedge and paling fence, stood about where the houses numbered 238 and 240 Croydon Road stand today almost opposite the junction of Sandhills with Croydon Road.

For the greater part of its lifetime it was owned by the Bristow/Collyer-Bristow family of Beddington Place and is thought to be the house referred to as 'The Cottage' in Land Tax records of 1739-1841 at which time it was owned by William Bristow and occupied by Elizabeth Biggs. Another early occupier c.1841 was George Engstrom (of The Priory, Waddon) his wife Agatha (née Lloyd of Brandries Hill House) and family. In the 1851 census George Engstrom is described as being Secretary to the Australian Agricultural Company in London, a landed proprietor and of independent means. Perhaps the longest

occupancy was that of Miss Emily Ann Collyer-Bristow who died at Beddington Cottage on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1923 in her ninety-third year. Having lived in Beddington for some eighty years, she took an active part in the life and welfare of the village and its inhabitants and had been an annual subscriber to the Orphanage from the time of its being transferred to Beddington in 1866, until her death.

*The Times* of November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1800 leaves us with a description of the house when the leasehold was offered for sale by Lieut. Col. Henry Oakes who had taken a twenty-one year lease the previous Michaelmas. It had three bedrooms in the attic and five on the first floor accessed by a roomy staircase, landing and hall. On the ground floor there was a large drawing room with bow window, dining and breakfast parlour, kitchen and associated rooms. There were also wine and beer cellars. The windows were shuttered and the building had wide overhanging eaves. In the grounds were stables for five horses with a servant's room over.

Listing for the house and its final occupants Frederick, John and Kate Maskell appear in Electoral Registers for 1933 prior to the houses numbered 248-218 Croydon Road were built.

## **Beddington House, Bridges Lane**

Described as such by the Tithe Commissioners in 1840, the mansion attached to the Beddington House estate stood on the east side of Bridges Lane in extensive grounds that extended as far east as Waddon Court. As to what were the origins of the land ownership upon which the house was built, we know not. Whether it was originally owned by the Carew's and sold off to finance rebuilding of the manor or whatever may never be known. Nor is anything known of the early history of the house although it is thought to have been built or extensively enlarged at some time in the seventeenth century, but for whom and exactly when is unknown. We do know however that in 1723 when sold by Sir John Leake's heir the estate comprised the house and premises of overall about 16 acres, a cottage, two small farms and had a yearly rateable value of £75.

The early occupiers of the house included Admiral Sir John Leake (d.1720) and Viscount Falmouth (d.1734). Between 1780 and 1786 the estate was owned and occupied by John Hookham (his will was proved in February 1787) and between 1787 and 1791 by John Fre[e]re. John Hookham is described as "a rich London merchant" and John Frere "a gentleman of a good Suffolk family". John Hookham's daughter Jane ["of Beddington"], a cultured girl who wrote verse in private, married John Frere son of the aforementioned John. The two families must have known one-another at least through the Beddington House connection. Jane and John's son, John Hookham Frere (b.1769), educated at Eton and later Cambridge, became an M.P and later joined the diplomatic corps spending the years 1800-04 and 1808-09 at first in Lisbon and later, Madrid. On his retirement he devoted himself to writing. He died in Malta on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1746.

The rateable value of Beddington House rose from £97 to £140 between 1792 and 1797 during a later occupancy of Francis Creuze that would probably indicate substantial improvements or additions being made to the property between those years. Nathaniel



*One of the houses described as a mansion, 'Beddington House', Bridges Lane, was notably home to the wealthy Bridges family who occupied the house from 1813-1891.*

Hillier resided there between about 1798 and 1801 before leaving the district for Stoke Park, prior to which he held a sale by auction of some of his furniture and effects. Among these items were thirteen orange trees, a mature aloe, three hundred greenhouse plants, two milch cows, a gelding, cart, and eighty pairs of pigeons that would indicate there was also a dovecote or pigeon house on the property. John West occupied Beddington House between 1802 and 1806 and it was at least during this latter occupancy that according to the Rev. Williams the house was known as the Manor House. The Manor of Bandon perhaps?

James Daniel both owned and occupied the estate during the next six years between about 1807 and midsummer 1812. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1811 he offered it for sale giving us a contemporary picture of Beddington House and its land in the early nineteenth century. It was described as "substantial" and in "elegant order", a house of some eleven bedrooms and dressing rooms, a dining room, drawing room of some 36 ft. by 22 ft. (probably the large room overlooking the garden), a library, breakfast parlour, morning room, hall, offices of every description and dry arched cellaring. It had a large kitchen garden, a greenhouse with flourishing vines, a hot house, melon grounds, and "lofty fruit walls" with an abundance of fine fruit trees. There was also an icehouse. In the yard there was standing for three carriages, stabling for nine horses, servants' rooms, gardener's house, a farmyard, barn and granary, dove-houses, numerous outbuildings and two paddocks containing twenty-seven acres.

When in 1813 Henry Bridges (later Sir Henry) purchased the estate, Beddington House was to become the home of the Bridges family at least for the next seventy-eight years. During this time the house was modernised and extended as felt befitting the new owner's status and connections. On the east (or field side) an unidentified crest or coat-of-arms could be seen high up on the cornice of the central bay that was probably that of Sir Henry, for his was the longest occupancy of Beddington House; he was entitled to bear arms and by reputation would have been one who would have displayed them. It was between 1861 and 1891 however during the ownership of the Rev. Alexander Henry Bridges, Sir Henry's son, that the house reached the apex of its importance.

Though little could be seen apart from that facing Bridges Lane where the road was widened to allow a carriage turning area in front of the building, the house stood three storeys high, the front being of classical Renaissance style with a balustraded parapet decorated with urns. Two steps led up to a fine classical portico with four polished red granite columns that bridged the footpath giving access to imposing carved oak double doors. These in turn opened into a large entrance hall (that measured about 40ft. by 20ft.), decorated with much ornate plasterwork on both ceiling and walls. In cold weather a fire burning in the grate behind a handsome Italian marble chimneypiece warmed the air in the hall; a glass domed roof over the main entrance gave natural daylight and a wide staircase led upstairs. A number of locally produced movie films were made on location in the house during the early 1920s. There were three film production companies located in Croydon in 1909 and another that moved from Mitcham to Waddon New Road in 1910 but it is not known which company used the house.

The service quarters and kitchens were located on the left (or north) side parallel with Bridges Lane while off the entrance hall to the right, access was gained to the billiard room. This had the most remarkable decoration on the ceiling, a series of eight coloured circular mosaic plaques depicting scenes from Shakespeare's comedies, executed by the brilliant pen-and-ink draughtsman Henry Stacey Marks (1829-1898) illustrations of which were published in 'The Architect' magazine throughout July and August 1881. It is believed the plaques were sold to America in 1921 when the house was being demolished. Examples of Henry Stacey Marks work can be seen in the terracotta mosaic frieze encircling the outer dome of the Royal Albert Hall in Kensington. By strange coincidence his nephew Geoffrey Marks C.B.E. (1864-1938) married Alys Mary, Henry Bridges great-granddaughter. Nor did his connection with Beddington end there, for he was an older brother of John George Marks who in the 1860s lived in 'Thatched Cottage' off Beddington Lane, who in turn was related by marriage to the celebrated Victorian artist Frederick Walker with whom Henry had become friends.

Parallel to the lane adjoining the south side of the building was the Orangery with delicate wrought iron tracery decorating the ridge of the roof, access to which could be gained either from the house or garden within which were a number of orange trees and other foreign shrubs. The conservatory, an addition to the building sometime after 1868 was still standing with its unbroken glass roof towering above a maze of war stores like a lighthouse in 1921.

Canon Alexander Bridges, Sir Henry's son was "passionately fond" of his garden and along with the cricket ground and tennis courts located in what is now Beddington Park,

he employed a staff of about twelve men to upkeep, one of whom was James Anconst of Waddon who died suddenly in September 1863 having been upwards of fifty years a gardener at Beddington House. A high brick wall enclosed the estate along Croydon Road as far as the boundary with Waddon and with the adjoining property 'Riverside'. On a line parallel with Croydon Road and backed by tall trees, from the end of the orangery along one side of the formal garden stood a magnificent 200ft. long balustraded terrace of Portland stone. It was ornamented with alternate urns and groups of statuary representing not only the four seasons but also sowing, reaping, childhood, humility and vanity, into which seating was set within curved recesses. A female figure holding aloft a shell was the centrepiece of a nearby flowerbed and a heavy balustraded three-tier fountain was the centrepiece of another. Shown on maps dated 1897 the terrace is said to have been brought from Europe by the financier Whittaker-Wright and subsequently acquired by the Bridges family. The terrace was eventually sold by Clark's the then owners to the Town Council of Weston-Super-Mare where it was re-erected in the Italian Gardens, the High Street frontage of the Winter Gardens in November 1924. Though the terrace and seating were retained the statuary and urns have been removed owing to years of weathering and ongoing vandalism.

Direct access to the kitchens and domestic areas of Beddington House was by a side door along Bridges Lane in the lobby of which hot soup or refreshment was made available to anyone in need. Further north two large gates gave access to a cobbled courtyard and stable block, a building with a handsome central turreted clock tower that backed on to what is now Tritton Avenue. Beneath the clock tower was a store for animal foodstuffs, to the left were the stables and to the right, the coach house. The Bridges family are said to have frequently used a brougham drawn by one horse and seating four. Steps gave access to a dwelling above the stables the home of the coachman or groom, and upon the lower walls were metal rings to which the horses were tethered when being harnessed or groomed.

Beyond the stable block in what is now Tritton Avenue was an entrance to the enclosed high walled kitchen garden within which were some six or seven large greenhouses. Kenneth Bond a descendent of the Bridges family commented that the builder who bought the house is reputed to have more than repaid the price he paid for the house by selling the lead pipes that supplied all the greenhouses. A deep well within the garden provided the water supply for the house and gardens. Only sections of the wall that once enclosed the kitchen garden and the entire property remain intact. This includes the wall that divided Beddington House from Riverside behind the houses in the Bridle Path; part of the wall across the end of Tritton Avenue, also that between numbers 17 and 19 Bridges Lane that enclosed a delightful flint and brick house, 1 and 2 Beddington House Cottages ('Kingsley') a later addition to the estate. On the death of Canon Bridges in 1891, his son John Henry Bridges then resident in Ewell inherited the mansion.

By 1899, the Beddington House estate was owned and occupied by Henry Driver Holloway who died aged 78 on Easter Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1909 and was buried in Bandon Hill Cemetery shortly after. Although he died in Croydon, his address was given as of Beddington House. He was head of the firm of Thomas Holloway, the well known makers of pills and ointments. He was manager of the business at 78 New Oxford Street

some thirty-six years previously under his own name of Driver, but married the sister of the Thomas Holloway who bequeathed the entire business to him on condition that he took the name of Holloway. He took no part in local public life however and must have remained somewhat remote from the local populace.

At the end of July 1909, the house was offered for sale by auction described as “imposing and old fashioned with twenty bedrooms; imposing suite of reception rooms etc., of about thirty-six acres having an extensive frontage of about 3,650ft. to parish roads”, but the house remained unoccupied, presumably unsold. During the First World War it was requisitioned and used to billet airmen of the Royal Flying Corps stationed at the nearby Beddington aerodrome during which time the house suffered a considerable amount of damage. It served as the Officer’s Mess one of whom attained local notoriety by landing his aircraft in, and taking off from the grounds.

Probably at the time of the 1909 sale, the estate was acquired by Farrow’s Bank as part of their considerable investment in land. It subsequently passed into the hands of F. and H. Clark (later F.W. and C. Clark) Builders and Contractors who used the house as their office and storage space. Mr Clark, an Australian lived nearby in a house named ‘Yarra’, presumably named after the river at Melbourne. Clark’s erected a former aeroplane hanger in the grounds within which, prior to resale they stored timber and a maze of aeroplane engines, propellers, and a large collection of surplus War Office material they had purchased in May 1919 from the former Waddon Aircraft Factory. Gradually the stonework and the marble statuary that had graced the gardens, along with the more notable fittings within the house were disposed of. It clearly would have taken some time, but by early 1921 the house was demolished. The pillars from the entrance porch were sold and re-erected at the Christian Fellowship Church in Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon and an ornate marble chimney-piece from the entrance hall was purchased by Allders of Croydon as a decorative fitting for their tea rooms. Allders also purchased a kitchen range that for a time could be seen as a decorative fitting by the wall in their basement kitchenware department, now enclosed within a stock room.

Despite the sheds, timber stacks, saw mill, plant and 150 ft. of fencing being destroyed in a disastrous fire at the end of May 1926, Clark’s functioned from the site until about 1928.

## **Beddington Lodge, Beddington Lane**

The houses numbered 37 to 47 Beddington Lane now stand on the site of ‘Beddington Lodge’. At an estimated cost of £2,300, in 1933-34 the Croydon Corporation built these houses as accommodation for farm employees. It is thought it well may be the site of, or very close to that of the Domesday Manor held by Milo Crispin later known as Huscarle’s, and may also be the site of one of the lost Domesday mills.

Beddington Lodge was yet another large eighteenth century house, slightly set back from the lane behind a low brick wall that in later years had two raised gate piers surmounted by ball finials to either side of a central front gate. The house was brick built and tiled with basement, two main floors and attic rooms lit by dormer windows. The house had been extended at the back and again in the mid nineteenth century during the occupancy





*'Beddington Lodge' stood on the north side of what is now the Shell Service Station in Beddington Lane. The house was demolished c.1932-33.*

of John Shaw when a single storey weatherboard and slate roofed wing was added on the south side to accommodate a billiard room. A flight of twelve steps gave access to a balcony and two full-length sash windows that overlooked the garden with presumably an access to the back of the house beneath the steps. The domestic areas were in the basement with the kitchen on the south side from which rose the main chimneystack with seven pots. A second chimney rose at the northern end of the building.

The stables, coach house and harness room stood detached from, and south of the house with the whole set in extensive grounds through which ran a stream broadened to form a narrow canalised lake that lay obliquely across the back garden, at its narrowest point spanned by a footbridge. Though shown on maps at least until 1941 the stream had been culverted beneath the stable block at an early date. The Rev. Thomas Bentham (1923) passes into local history some rather curious (and very dubious) information relating to the supposed tunnels and underground passageways associated with Beddington Lodge. "There was an underground passage leading from the house [Carew Manor] to the garden of Mr. Winton's house in Beddington Lane, said to have been frequently used by a certain Admiral Pigott who lived there in the time of the Carews". What would Admiral Pigott be doing traversing underground passageways as opposed to visiting the manor above ground if he had occasion to visit is one question, and how this underground passage was not continually waterlogged with the streams and springs which once saturated the area, is another. That of which he wrote was probably no more than a brick lined sewer or perhaps this culvert over the now dry stream.

The house is shown on Rocque's map of Surrey published c.1762. The earliest known documentary information however comes from Land Tax returns when following the occupancy of Robt. Biggin in 1780, it is listed as being owned by Arthur Blake who lived there from about 1782 to 1791. During 1792-93 possibly into 1794 (for this tax return has been lost) the house was owner-occupied by Edmund Battersby Esq. who also rented additional land, probably the adjoining meadow. Beddington Lodge was offered for sale with immediate possession in September 1794.

When in around 1794-95 James Pigott came to Beddington he also rented land from the Carew family probably the same as had his predecessor; no doubt that referred to as lawn and pleasure ground that lay adjacent to on the north side of the house. By 1795, the value of Beddington Lodge had risen to twice the amount it had been without any other properties showing a similar increase in value that would indicate a major extension to the house during the previous year.

The pleasure ground known as Admiral's Mead, later Shaw's Meadow after a subsequent occupier, at the Carew sale in 1859 was purchased by Edward Henry Moses for £1,200 and in 1862 let to Joseph Laurence. When later owned by the Croydon Corporation the land was used by local lads and by men employed on the farmlands as their cricket ground. During the war, brick obstructions were built in the open fields further to the northwest to deter glider landings, but many a bloodless battle could be said to have been fought on the cricket pitch.

Leased from the Pigott family beneficiaries, (Dr. Culhane, the husband of Admiral Pigott's daughter Frances and later, 1860-61 from Morgan Culhane of the Kings Own Light Infantry then based at Curragh Camp, Ireland), the next occupant of Beddington Lodge was Rhys B. Griffiths whose son was born in the house in July 1845. He was followed by a solicitor John Shaw. Following on a period of vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. Shaw, by October 1901 the house was owned by Walter Cole and tenanted by Arthur Duckett and in 1915 owned by the Croydon Corporation. From about 1915 to 1932, it was occupied by William Winton a Churchwarden at the time the Rev. Bentham published his 'History' in 1923. Mr. Winton was recalled as being very much the congenial English gentleman who moved very much within their own circle though his wife Edith, a Sunday-School teacher and Parish Visitor was perhaps the better known of the two. He died on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1932. Their twenty-four year old only son Harold, 2nd Lieut. in the Royal Flying Corps, was killed in an aeroplane accident in France on the April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1914.

By this time, the house needed extensive repairs. The Beddington Farm Committee therefore decided upon conversion into two flats, one of six rooms and part of the basement, the other of four rooms with living room and kitchen. The intention was to house two families (with sixteen children between them), but in view of the condition of the house and expense of conversion it was decided upon demolition that took place at some time between mid-1932 and May 1933. Next door to the garage, (the site of Beddington Lodge), what has been described as "part of a large house" is recalled as being there, by then having been turned into a farm where during hostilities, prisoners of war (Italians from the P.o.W. Camp beyond the Purley Way Swimming Pool) worked.

These prisoners (dressed in an olive green uniform with a yellow diamond on the back) also built warehouses further north along Beddington Lane in the Prologis Park area. Whether part of Beddington Lodge or some of the outbuildings had been retained therefore, is not known.

## **Beddington Park Cottages, Church Road**

Of a group of late fifteenth or early sixteenth century outbuildings that once stood to the north of the manor only a few timbers in the Beddington Park Cottages, and an early eighteenth century Dovecote that stands nearby survive from earlier times.

The terrace of cottages that formerly stood on the site had been built piecemeal over the centuries making a very long and ill understood history of alterations. The cottages that remained were rebuilt in their entirety with the addition of further houses making a small estate in 1986-87 after the original buildings had been allowed to fall into disrepair and become derelict. Until 1986, a substantial part of a timber-framed building existed in No.1 and 1B (the two cottages nearest the river) at the northern end of the north-south range. Numbers 2 and 2B that stood beside them had been burnt out and demolished some years previously.

Upon investigation prior to demolition, it was found that No.1 (now 8 Beddington Park Cottages) with its crown post roof and timber frame was clearly the surviving end of a longer structure with the roof hipped and gabled at both ends. It appeared to have formed the oldest surviving structure in the area apart from the manor and the church. At that time, the roof of 1B (now 7) was noted as having been constructed largely from ancient re-used timbers, both roofs having carpenters marks upon them. It is thought that the building may originally have been a barn or a stable that would fit in well with its position in an outer or farm courtyard adjacent to the manor house and other buildings.

The first cottage was dated to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century as crown post roofs in vernacular buildings is normally thought of as being rare in east Surrey after c.1550. Sir Richard Carew who inherited the estates in 1492 is known to have spent what was a fortune at the time on the rebuilding of the manor house that probably adds to the likelihood of the early sixteenth century updating of some of the outbuildings. The remainder of the cottages that were still standing were of nineteenth century date and therefore historically less interesting.

Offered for sale in 1859 as part of the manor and its immediate surroundings, the cottages were described as being “a convenient distance from the mansion”. The buildings then included a long brick and tile-built range of stabling, coach-houses, and three neat cottages for servants adjacent; timber yard at back in which was a carpenter’s shop and deal shed. There was also a farmyard with barn, cowsheds, granaries, dog kennels and dovecote.

The Enclosure Map of 1820 shows us a substantial long T shaped range of buildings standing on an E-W alignment by the river in the same field we see the dovecote today. A bridge gave access to fields on the opposite (north side) of the river probably where the

vehicular access is today. It led to Dog Kennel Mead, site of the present cricket ground and Wildlife Hospital. The servants' cottages were overgrown by 1872.

Purchased by the Board of Guardians of the Female Orphan Asylum in 1864 at which time they acquired the manor and its grounds, on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1876, 8½ acres of land, timber and buildings (that included this row of cottages and the field behind) were sold on to the Rev'd Bridges for £4,500. The cottages were presumably occupied by workmen employed by him to maintain the park and playing fields but it was not until after his death in 1891 the land and cottages were leased to Mr. B. Thirlby who until about 1922, grazed dairy cattle on the almost 66½ acres of pasture that extended as far across as London Road. In 1903, Mr. Thirlby advertised as "waiting on families three times daily" delivering fresh milk (nursery milk being a speciality) and cream from his own pasture fed cows, "respectively inviting" customers to the park to view the stock and dairy. He also provided new laid eggs from free-range hens.

The buildings along with an area of the park and the Dovecote came onto the market again in June 1919 as part of the Rev. Bridges estate. The farmstead that also included buildings on the north side of the river was described as having a cowshed for forty-three cows, chaff house, cooling shed with loft over, implement shed, three loose boxes and blacksmiths shop with loft over, cart and wagon lodges also a range of brick and tiled buildings forming the farm residence. Of the cottages described as the 'farm residence' one contained five bedrooms, bathroom, two sitting rooms, office, kitchen, scullery, three stall stable with harness room, the second was of five rooms and the third, of six rooms. There were also two loose boxes, a harness room, coach-house and two other three-stall stables.

George Payne (of the tea, coffee and sweet manufacturing company) purchased the immediate area but it was not until 1925 when the Urban District Council bought the land and buildings from him that the cottages came into public ownership, though they were never strictly part of the park. For a number of years at least three of the houses were occupied by Parks Department staff and others used as changing and clubrooms for sporting activities taking place on the nearby playing fields.

A public enquiry as to the future of the cottages was held in February 1978 and the decision announced six months later. The cottages and the immediate area were to be re-developed though as many of the original timbers as was possible were to be retained and incorporated into the rebuild. In the event, it was not until seven years later during which time the buildings became even more derelict, one of the central cottages had collapsed and the remainder had been damaged by fire on at least three different occasions that development finally took place. Most of the old timber was destroyed during the conversion. The few fragments that did survive can still be seen preserved in the northern end of today's No.8 'Beddington Park Cottages'.

Overall, the group of houses capture the style of the original buildings. Along with five new houses that face the river and those in behind, development was undertaken by Mansell Homes to plans by Brian Drury Associates Architects of Purley, the first houses of which were offered for sale in February 1987, ranging in price from £57,500 for a



*'Beddington Place' associated with the Collyer-Bristow family stood in Croydon Road on the south side beyond The Plough.*

mews flat to £94,950 for a 3-bedroom cottage. Conversion of remaining outbuildings, more recently in use as a garage and storage area, formerly the Orphanage boiler room, was undertaken as a courtyard development by Primeplace Homes during the latter part of 2003 into 2004 and offered for sale at £330,000.

## **Beddington Place, Croydon Road**

'Beddington Place', home of the Bristow/Collyer-Bristow family stood east of The Plough off Croydon Road. With the coming of the railway in 1847, the immediate area of the estate was bounded to the south by the railway and Plough Lane to the west where stood two semi-detached cottages and a cluster of farm buildings that faced Plough Lane. Croydon Road marked the northern boundary and the line of the Merebank and the Croydon district boundary to the east.

Replacing an earlier building that stood hard by Croydon Road, Beddington Place stood at the end of a drive almost directly opposite the present Collyer Road where it meets with Collyer Avenue, the site today marked by a tall cedar that stood on the lawn near to the house. Extended and updated over the years it was a large two-storey building with a slate roof and dormer windows set into the attic space behind a stone parapet. Probably built of brick, it is remembered as being cement or stucco rendered with stone dressings with a decorative lintel above both the sash windows and French doors on the ground floor. Further decorative features were small stone or terra cotta plaques above the French doors the latter of which on the east side are seen to have opened onto steps leading down to a slightly raised path giving access to the garden. A conservatory was attached to the

southeast side at the back of the building and in later years a small wooden summerhouse. The main entrance was via a porch lit by arched windows and enclosed by a solid four-panelled front door.

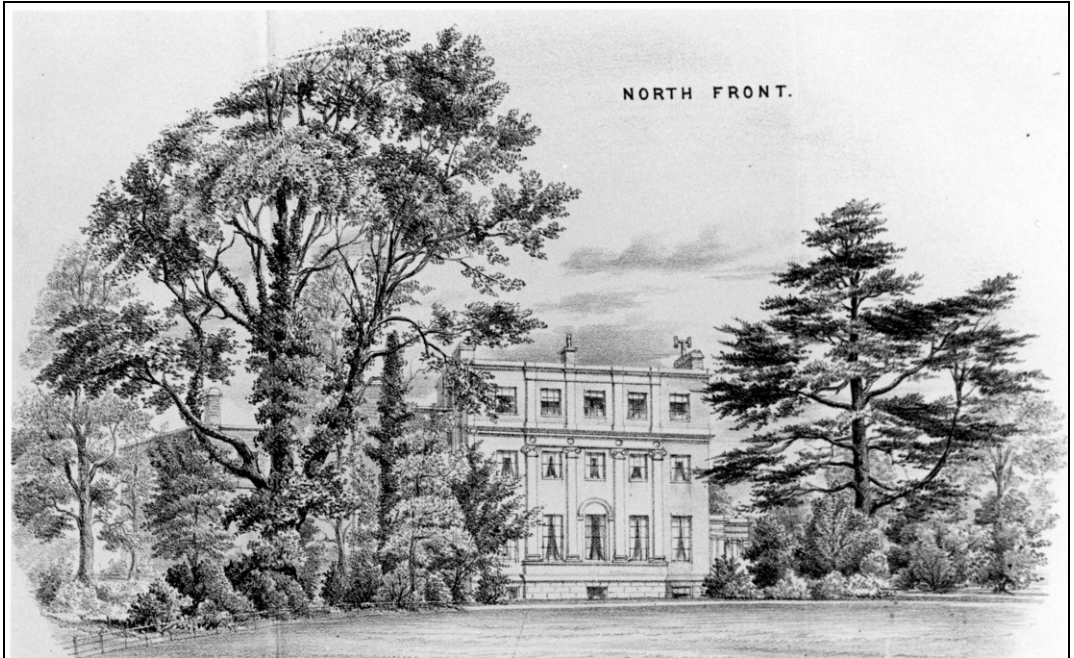
A flint dressed lodge that may have been part of the original house complex stood by Croydon Road almost due north of the mansion beside a drive that branched to give access to the farm buildings off Plough Lane. The site of a sizable pond that lay near to the original house, possibly a former fishpond can still be identified by slight subsidence in the surface of Croydon Road at Collyer Road. Ornamental trees and an orchard were planted in the grounds near a large conservatory and smaller greenhouses. A wooden fence enclosed the grounds by Croydon Road that are recalled as having been particularly beautiful in spring when masses of daffodils were in bloom.

The last of the family to occupy Beddington Place was Andrew Alfred Collyer-Bristow's second wife Augusta Grace who lived there at least until 1913. She died on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1915 and in October the estate of about fifty-four acres with a frontage of over 3,600ft. to the parish road was sold. The house and land was acquired by Farrow's Bank as part of their investment programme but sold to George Payne in 1919. Though Payne's built their factory at the eastern end and the surrounding pasture was grazed by their dairy herd, Beddington Place and the two farm cottages remained. For a time (at least from the mid-1920s, possibly earlier), the house was utilised as a nursing home run by the Matron, Mrs. L. Mason even while the Broadway shops were being built. The house itself is last recorded in street directories dated 1935.

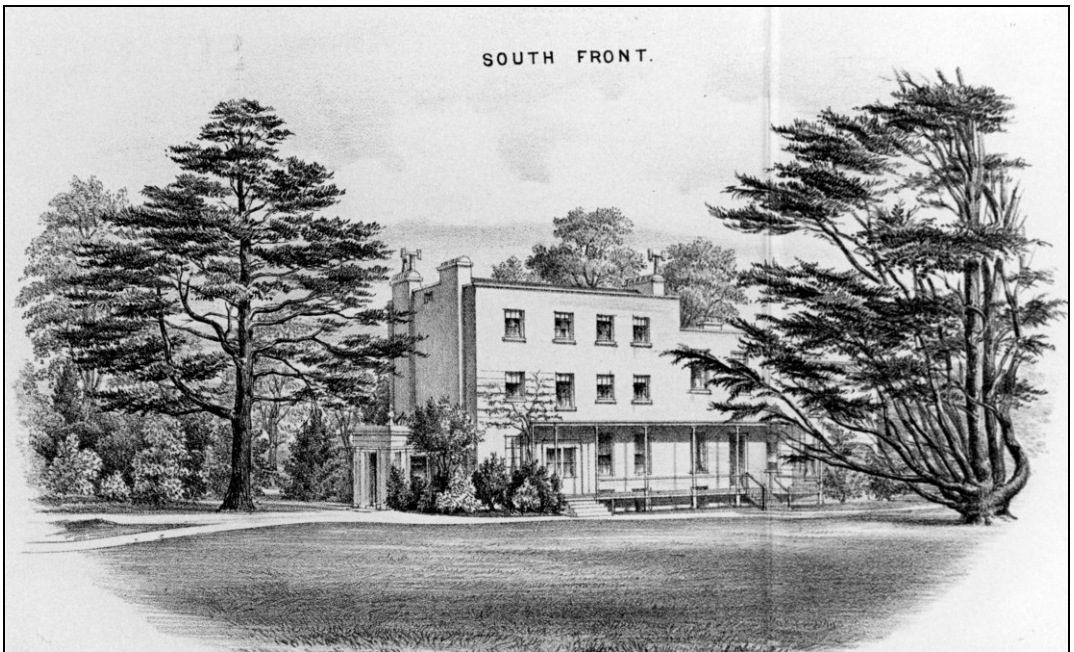
### **Brandries Hill House, later Camden House, The Brandries**

Research has revealed little of the origins of 'Brandries Hill House' one of only two of Beddington's mansion houses to survive though in the 1930s divided into flats and re-named 'Camden House'. The house appears to date from the early to mid-eighteenth century. It appears to have been one of a number of distinguished houses built in Beddington at about the same time. The land upon which the house was built was part of the extensive Carew estates at some time released for sale but subsequently gathered back into their holding by Mrs. Gee when it again came onto the market after the death of Sir Christopher Robinson in about 1821.

The estate extended to a little over seven acres consisting of house, kitchen garden, stables, yards and orchard with a terraced lawn. Built of brick, faced with cement and with a slate roof, the suggested date would seem to be confirmed by the general shape of the house particularly when seen from the north although this front was updated later in the same century. The Ionic capitals, the plinths and plaques that are of Coade stone date from the 1780s. Between 1884 and 1897, a billiard-room was built on to the northeast side from plans dated 1877. This room surmounted by an impressive lanthorn contained a richly decorated chimneypiece, removed and not replaced during refurbishment in the early 1980s. Lesser alterations have been made in succeeding years, until the building as we see it today.



*Above and below: 'Brandries Hill House', now 'Camden House' in the 1880s.*



Set back from the road in extensive grounds, the words “a Commodious Family Mansion” is how the building was described in sales particulars dated 1882. It stood in an imposing position on the side of the hill. If one approached from the gated footpath (later becoming a driveway) by the river on the corner of Guy Road and Hilliers Lane or uphill from a second access off Chatts Hill (later Guy Road), through the shrubbery walks and terraced grounds, one became aware of an elegant building of three floors in the Italian style, stuccoed and slated. The main entrance was on the west side enhanced by flowerbeds and guarded by a magnificent cedar.

The “commodious” description might well have been applied to the then fifteen bedrooms (with only one bathroom for family and guests) or possibly the stone-paved entrance hall with “enriched ceiling”, hot water pedestals for heating and heavy mahogany doors with ivory furniture. The word would have applied to the two drawing rooms separated by sliding doors within one of which remains a delightful Coade stone chimneypiece of 1789 designed by John Bacon featuring the figures of Faith, Hope and Charity. It is believed the plaster ceilings of the main reception rooms were lost to enemy action in July 1944 though the cornices remain. There was a further “lofty” dining room with French casements opening on to a stone paved veranda that extended nearly the whole length of the south side of the building with a flight of steps to the lawn. A library panelled in oak wainscot with high picture rails and bookcases was also located on the south side. The main staircase had wrought iron balustrades in Adam style featuring the honeysuckle motif.

In the basement (within which had been a pump room and a well of spring water) was the “large and lofty kitchen” together with the scullery, pantry, wine, beer and coal cellars all of which remained until the early 1980s when conversion work into apartments was undertaken. Immediately prior to this work being done the eastern side of the basement was seen to have effectively been an open area; the existing wall had been built during the Second World War with a blast wall in front of it and an emergency water tank installed that was still in situ. The outer blast wall and water tank were later removed. Much of the flagstone flooring in the kitchen, meat hooks in the ceiling, a lead draining board topped with marble and stone sink also remained until this time. Whether it was the housekeeper’s room or servant’s hall, a Victorian chimneypiece with marble surround also remained though no fire had been lit in the grate for many years. In a small room nearby was a rusted grate of simple design.

On the north side, clearly indicated in Sales Particulars of 1882 and 1884 was an icehouse that by the latter date had been adapted as a store. In earlier Particulars dated 1859 it was described as an underground beer cellar. All but forgotten, it was again seen in October 1978 when the roof partially collapsed though the site was not excavated and the ground has since been levelled. There was a small lake downhill opposite a point where today the river and mill stream meet but whether this pond was used as a source of ice collection or it was obtained from a commercial supplier in Croydon is a matter of conjecture.

The entrance to the kitchen garden once central to an enclosing wall still exists. It was by an attractive wrought iron gate with scrollwork and overthrow. Walling to the south and west remain in a complete state in this garden. Further south was a second garden also enclosed by a wall, with vineries, conservatories, hothouses and paled fruit cages.



A new build 4A The Brandries (2004) on the corner opposite the mansion was erected on the site of a row of relatively modern garages in front of what were the stables, access to which was by the gated entrance off Guy Road. In Sale Particulars of 1859, the buildings comprised a three-stall stable, loose box and the coach house. A fine blocked semi-circular headed doorway with rubbed red brick voussiors facing the house gave immediate access. The upper storey of two rooms was occupied until 1931, though closing orders had been issued by the council in May 1920. A family that included five children lived there although the water supply had long since been cut off and access to the upper rooms was by way of a wooden ladder. The upper floor was removed in the late 1960s and the lower converted into a garage. In a second yard was a cow house and another loosebox, and in a third a shed and poultry house. The tall cedar in front of the main entrance fell during the Great Storm of October 1987.

‘Brandries Cottage’ in Guy Road (that according to a modern plaque affixed to its front is dated c.1650) though of unproven dating could well pre-date the main house being incorporated as part of the estate when the mansion was built. A building of some description appears in the approximate area on a map dated 1729. In 1859, this dwelling was described as a four-bedroom coachman’s cottage and in 1882 as a gardener’s cottage. At one time, Brandries Cottage was also in use as a dairy. A well and force pump stood in the garden in front of what is now the house numbered 6A Guy Road.

The first known owner of the estate as listed in Land Tax Returns dated 1780 was James Walton of ‘Wandle Court’ buried at Beddington in February 1782, subsequently by John Walton who had East India Company connections. Though John Walton died in April 1802 at the age of sixty-six and was buried in a family vault within the chancel of the parish church, his wife Ann retained ownership of the property until about 1812. From about 1781 to 1789 Daniel Gyles a sometime Director of the Bank of England occupied the house before leaving Beddington for ‘Little Marble Hill’, Twickenham. Francis Baring and his family lived there from 1790 for some six years to be followed by his daughter Harriet and her husband Charles Wall for a further twelve years until 1809. Sir Christopher Robinson acquired the estate from Ann Walton by May 1813 though he had already occupied the house for some two years previously. He lived there until his death after which the house was acquired by Mrs Gee. It became the Dower House of the Carew estates and she died there in 1828. The meadow downhill to the corner of Guy Road (site of the workhouse until its sale in 1838) eventually also came into the possession of the Carews.

John Wedderburn was an occupier during the years 1823 to 1826; the names Lane and Hansler then appear as tenants for a short period and from 1829 the Quaker, Lloyd family. Mrs. Susanna Lloyd lived in Brandries Hill House for a number of years probably until her death in her 55<sup>th</sup> year on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1840. She was the widow of Thomas Lloyd (of Lloyds Bank) of ‘Bingley House’ near Birmingham and to whose family there is an impressive table tomb in the churchyard. By the following year, the house was occupied by the Laurence family who remained there until about 1879. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1880, Dr. Alfred Carpenter purchased the estate including the Brandries meadow, site of the workhouse.

At some time between 1893 and 1898 William Lindsay, a Silk and Clothiers Merchant and Wholesale Lace Warehouseman of St. Paul's Churchyard and his family had taken occupancy of the house, a tenancy carried through to about 1904 by Mrs. Lindsay after which Brandries Hill House is once again listed in directories as being empty. In 1906, the house came onto the market once again though by that time only the immediate garden area remained with the house. After a period of vacancies and relatively short tenancies that included J. Hextall c.1906 to 1908 and that of Gen. Alexander Scott, for a short time (1915) the house was occupied by James Wallis the local mill owner during which time it was owned by the Clack family. From 1919 to about 1921, it was occupied by the then owner David Clack though during 1916-17 the Urban District Council's Inspector of Nuisances had occasion to report on the condition of the property. During Clack's occupancy a garage now known as 'Camden Cottage' was built using their own manufactured white bricks. Brandries Hill House was being used as a Nursing Home in 1929 following which, for a short period it became 'The Brandries School' under C.A. Redfarm.

In the late 1920s the property was acquired by J. T. and W. Hunt who used part of the house as a store whilst building the houses in what was first known as Brandries Gardens and later The Brandries. Approval for conversion of the house into flats was given to W. Hunt Ltd. in September 1930. The local authority did not adopt the road until 1937 at which time the house was renamed 'Camden House'. In 1982 application was made for the conversion of the basement into three flats and the erection of a single storey rear extension.

Though looking increasingly unkempt, Brandries Hill House one of the few old houses remaining in Beddington is protected by listed building status. A London Borough of Sutton Heritage plaque giving a brief history has been affixed to the west front of the building.

## **Brookside, Beddington Lane**

Behind a now non-existent terrace of three cottages formerly numbered 19 to 23 Beddington Lane stood a two bedroomed house known as 'Brookside' number 17 (today site of the Harvest Home garden). Access was by way of a narrow path between 'Carew Cottage', 15 Beddington Lane and the most southerly cottage of the terrace.

The narrow strip of land the house was built upon was part of an area awarded to the snuff manufacturer John Williamson when the Enclosure Award was drawn up in 1812. 'Brookside', a two bedroom brick house erected at some time between 1840 and 1868, was owned by the brewers Page and Overton in 1901 and was for a time occupied by the market gardener Ed. Lloyd. It was rented out when Mrs. Ineson owned it during the early years of the twentieth century, during which time it was referred to overall as one of 'Ineson's Cottages.' Its last occupant was John Hilliard an employee of the Mizen brothers who for a time worked the Guy Road watercress beds. He lived there until about 1971 after which, having stood empty for some time (during which it became vandalised), the house was demolished.

## Carew Manor, Church Road

The building we know of today as Carew Manor School off Church Road is a Victorian Gothic rebuild around a Tudor great hall a survival of at least two, possibly three older houses that formerly occupied the site. The Carew family owned the estate for about five hundred years from the mid-fourteenth until the mid-nineteenth century. In the past known as Beddington Park, Hall, Place, or simply Beddington, of the earliest houses that stood on the site little is known, though a mediaeval origin seems likely. As the church stood in Robert de Watteviles estate, Carew Manor is generally thought to be on the site of his manor house.

By reference to surviving maps, accounts, contemporary references and information gained from patient research it is known that the house was once surrounded by a large moat, though it would appear that a substantial house had stood on the site before a moat island wall was constructed possibly in the 1370s. The main evidence for this is in a drain under the former kitchen that incorporates a stone privy that clearly predates the moat island wall. In September 1979, workmen of the Sutton District Water Company whilst cutting a trench for a new water-main broke into the moat. In part it still exists underground for a distance of about 75 yards along the south side of the building and approximately halfway across the front where evidence of the foundations of a documented drawbridge can still be seen. The culvert is about 9ft. wide internally and 4ft. deep from the crown of the arch to the heavily silted water, that in the main now only drains the churchyard. The flow has been diverted across the park into the river. The drawbridge across the moat would have been accompanied by a gatehouse in the centre of a west wing and building accounts of c.1710-12 when the house was re-modelled refer to an 'inward court' that would have existed if this was indeed so. This west wing was demolished in the early eighteenth century rebuild though another of a different design, to accommodate the Orphanage was built in the mid-nineteenth century. The river flows to the north of the house, the line of which is likely to be of considerable antiquity as it marks the southern boundary of the manor known as Huscarles that can be traced back to at least the mid-thirteenth century.

The moat on the north, north-west and east side of the building that is now infilled was fed by a second channel of the river to the north of the house the remainder of which can be seen on the Enclosure map of 1820.

Built on a massive foundation raft mainly of mortared flint, chalk and stone blocks presumably needed to counteract the marshy nature of the site, the oldest part of the building standing above ground is the Great Hall. It measures some 60ft. 8ins. long, 32ft. 4ins. wide with walls 8ft.6ins thick from the inner face to the window, and about 40ft. high. It is renowned for its most striking feature, the roof. This was always thought to be a straightforward early sixteenth or possibly late fifteenth century arch-braced hammer-beam roof as those widely used in important late mediaeval and Tudor period buildings. Barry Weston, a local historian and archaeologist who has made a study of the roof has found it to be of a more complex structure than was thought. Early decorative moulding consisting of small, carved (and therefore cheaper pieces) of wood have been applied later to the original timbers possibly to modernise its appearance. Other interesting features are

the stone corbels that appear to support the roof. The only finished one is in the northeast corner; the others become progressively less complete towards the south end of the hall that suggests the construction came to an unplanned and possibly abrupt halt and was never completed. In mediaeval halls the windows were generally set high in the wall so that tapestry could be hung below them. The existing windows date from the Victorian rebuild. We note the thickness of the walls.



*The magnificent hammer-beam roof within the great hall as depicted in 1850. Of late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century dating it is a survivor of at least two, possibly three older houses.*

The hall is thought to have been constructed for Sir Richard Carew at some time between 1492 and his death in 1520, probably during the period 1518-19. He lived during a period of change when the Lord of the Manor tended to dine in his private chambers as opposed to in the hall as had been in the past and though the changes were slow, the hall was probably built as a symbol of status rather than a room which functioned in the traditional way. In the past it would have been divided off by a screen with probably a minstrels gallery above (as seen in Hever Castle, Kent), behind which accessed by a passage would have been the buttery and pantry from which food and drink were served. The kitchen was also on this side in earlier years detached as a precaution against fire but joined to the main building before the end of the sixteenth century. The two buildings were joined before the end of the sixteenth century. At the opposite (north) end of the hall the floor was usually raised slightly to form a low dais. A large open hearth would have been in front of the dais from which the smoke drifted up until it found its way out through a louvre in the roof. The louvre is mentioned in sixteenth century accounts and two timbers that probably supported it can still be seen connecting the purlins (horizontal beams) in the second bay from the north end of the hall.

In an unused attic also at the north end of the hall in what was formerly the Great Chamber is a fireplace of Tudor dating. Within the shell of the Victorian building, the remains of a window of the mid-sixteenth century still exists as does some ornamental plaster work dating from c.1710. This decorates an enclosed arch above a former entrance to the hall at the northeast end. The Achievement of Arms and the ornamental Trophy of Arms at opposite ends of the hall also date from this time. Apart from the hall, the cellars contain the most important remains from earlier houses though much altered. One is vaulted in brick and probably dates from the eighteenth century with shelves for storing wine or barrels of beer. The worn tiles on the floor however were probably made in the Netherlands in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century and being expensive may originally have been laid in a chequered pattern in one of the better rooms of the house, perhaps the hall as they are roughly contemporary with the roof. As shown on the Enclosure Map of 1820 the house was approached by either a drive in off London Road or that from Freron Lane.

**Subsequent history of the house.** The Carew estates at Beddington were offered for sale by auction over a period of two days June 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 1859 and a further sale in June 1919. In 1851 the census records the house as being unoccupied though for a time prior to 1859, Charles Dingwall a relative of the Bridges family of Beddington House rented it before purchasing Shepley House.

During the period the house stood empty, a claimant to the estate, a labourer named John Chalkwright of Stratford, Essex forced entry and was in occupation for some time, a latter day "squatter". He is said to have held high revelry there and his guests included a lawyer from Croydon whose services he had secured to promote his claim. In order to raise funds for the venture a prospectus was offered on Chalkwright's behalf, offering for £1 and upward a life annuity in the estates whose rentals were said to exceed £200,000 each year. Fortunately there were few takers for if the claim failed every sum invested and the interest due was to become forfeit, as such was the eventual outcome. March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1861 saw the occupiers, eight men, two women and one boy ejected after the Steward and a group of labourers had gained re-possession of the house.



*The west front of 'Beddington Park House' (now Carew Manor School) as seen from the park in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This image, dating from between 1859 and 1864 is one of the earliest photographs held by the borough.*

At some time between February and November 1860 a property speculator Joseph Borsley of Esher purchased the house and grounds and the parkland immediately in front. In 1864 the house was sold on to the Guardians of the Lambeth Female Orphan Asylum. Before they were to move the girls into their new home however, restoration of the building had to be undertaken and the ruinous north wing made habitable. While this was being undertaken, in May 1865 a fire broke out in the west end of the south wing and though the flames were prevented from spreading to the great hall, where they had reached demolition of the timbers and woodwork was complete. Immense beams were lying about reduced to crumbling masses of charcoal and the walls and rafters were reeking with steam from being saturated with water. Some of the less badly charred timbers still exist beneath the floorboards at this end of the building. They were fortunate in that there was a ready supply of water available near at hand underground in the culverted moat. The arched ceiling was breached and the water obtained from this ready and copious source.

While restoration was being undertaken (and it may have been at this time Mr. Juggins of Wallington purchased the panelling from the hall and no doubt made a profit by making and selling snuff boxes out of the wood), it was also found what were thought to be solid brick walls were in-filled with rubble. It is unclear therefore as to whether the fire prompted the rebuilding of the whole or if this had already been decided upon, though the great hall was to be retained enclosed within the outer shell of the new building. The

ornate baroque appearance of the building illustrated by Colen Campbell and published in Vitruvius Britannicus in about 1715 was lost and the new red brick Victorian Gothic Revival building complete with its tall water tower was built. The wrought iron screen (or clairvoyea) that once linked both wings at the front of the house was removed and replaced by a corridor off which were a number of rooms built to enclose a courtyard and form the main entrance at the front of the building. The architects involved were Messrs. Coe and Peck, and the builders Messrs. Downes of Union Street, Borough who engaged between sixty and seventy men to undertake the work. The Duke of Cambridge officially opened the remodelled house as the Female Orphan Asylum in June 1866.

In 1875 a small culvert that still existed by the playground on the east side of the building was covered in and the greenhouse, a probable successor to the orangery was demolished. The latter was very likely that referred to in an inventory of 1874 when reference was made to a "room at the end of the greenhouse garden". A lean-to and a series of sheds were later built up against the wall. In 1899 the river in the grounds at the back of the house was narrowed and silver willows, a few of which still exist were planted on either side. Within the house the ornamental lozenge-shaped black and white stone floor in the great hall was replaced with wood in 1927, and the local contractors Dawson and Sons cut the passage beyond the wine cellar in October 1935. The Orphanage was to remain there until the outbreak of war in September 1939 at which time the girls were transferred elsewhere.

In December 1940 the Ministry of Works and Buildings requisitioned the house; its contents were removed to the Orphanage's Croydon office and the house used by the London County Council as a storage depot. In part it was also set up and fully equipped for use as a shadow hospital for Queen Mary's Hospital for Children should the need arise, but fortunately it was not called upon to fulfil this function though during the war Queen Mary's had the dubious honour of being the most frequently bombed London County Council hospital. Nor did the house suffer any material damage from enemy action for which we, and later generations must be particularly thankful.

Arising from damage caused by a V1 doodlebug-bombing incident of their own, in 1944 arrangements were made to house the second form (first year) Junior School of the Wallington County Grammar School for Boys within the building. It became their home for some years with frequent treks across the park for meals and some of the lessons. In 1954 the house also became a Special School for children with educational difficulties run by Surrey County Council and remained in their control until the inception of the London Borough of Sutton in April 1965 under whom it remains fulfilling the needs of a special school. In January 1985 owing to becoming structurally dangerous, the former gymnasium on the south side between the manor and the church was demolished to be rebuilt in the same style, as had the former Orphanage laundry on the north side, referred to today as the art room, rebuilt in 1983. While digging a foundation trench of the latter, workmen broke through an early eighteenth century brick culvert, uncovered the buried skeletons of a number of horses and a sherd of pottery found to have been part of a hanging bowl of sixteenth or early seventeenth century dating made in Antwerp. Although much has been lost, as to the history of Carew Manor much yet remains waiting to be found.

## **The Cottage, Guy Road**

On the curve of Guy Road facing uphill by the entrance to Malthouse Row, at number 67 stood a Georgian house known as 'The Cottage' that according to a former owner, the late Mr. A. (Pat) Howard, was built in 1826. Certainly there was nothing indicated as being on the site when the Enclosure Map was drawn in 1820, but a building is shown on the Tithe Map of 1839 at which time William Bristow owned the land and buildings. There was however, a house named 'The Cottage' listed in the Poor Rate between 1739 and 1841, owned (as was much other property) by William Bristow and occupied by Mrs. Elizabeth Biggs but it is thought not to be the building to which we are referring but the house later known as 'Beddington Cottage'.

The Cottage is particularly remembered as being the home of the Misses Charlotte and Frances Ferrers, spinster daughters of the Rev. Ferrers and was commonly referred to as 'Ferrers Cottage' during their lifetime and indeed for some time after. In 1841 at the time of the first census to enumerate home occupiers (also the year of their father's death) the ladies were living in the house and were to do so until the last surviving sister Miss Charlotte died on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1891 in her 90th year. Her companion during those final years had been a niece Harriet Knyvett who left the house shortly after the death of the old lady.

During a subsequent occupancy of R. Robinson c.1897-1905 the house became known as 'St. Margaret's' but by about 1906 when Richard Strachan and his wife moved in the name was restored. The house and the land it was built upon remained in the ownership of the Bristow/Collyer-Bristow family at least until 1915. For a time it became a lodging house named 'Ivy Cottage' but in 1936 the building was offered for sale and purchased for £600 by Mr. Howard "a local craftsman in wood" who renamed it 'The Cottage'.

The house was a double-fronted whitewashed brick building with windows protected by sliding shutters; it had a slate roof with tall chimneys and was surrounded by greenery. Roses clung to the arch above the central front door that gave access to a passage from which stairs led to the upper floor. At some time the building had been extended at the back by the addition of a garage with a "den" above. There were four bedrooms on the upper floor and three main rooms on the lower; to the left at the back was the kitchen. Owing to the lie of the land on the hillside there were steps down to the scullery and three or four down to the cellar where Mrs. Howard was sheltering when at about 6am on the July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944 the house was demolished by the blast of a flying bomb that landed in their neighbour's garden. Fortunately the stout walls protected her and she emerged from the ruins of their home shaken, but otherwise relatively unharmed.

In the early 1950s, an attractive L-shaped bungalow was built across the corner on the site but its life was particularly short lived. It was demolished in about 1974-75 to make way for the houses 65 to 67A Guy Road that along with the cul-de-sac built immediately behind, became part of the earliest phase development of Whelan Way.



## **The Dell, Croydon Road**

'The Dell', a house that stood on the south side of Croydon Road between Rectory Lane and Demesne Road (the central block of three located between the two roads) took its name from a large, deep excavation that lay to the back of the house. Maps confirm the existence of a pit pre-1859 that on the first Ordnance Survey map (1868) is referred to as the 'Old Chalk Pit'. The origin of the pit will probably remain unknown. From its size and location, it may have been excavated to provide materials: chalk, flints and lime possibly for local use, perhaps a rebuilding of the nearby manor. Chalk lime however was also extensively used in agriculture at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Behind the house and probably incorporated as a garden feature was a sizeable mound formed of spoil dumped from the excavation. Dell Close off Demesne Road is also named from its location. Of these houses No.1 'The Pines' (J.A. Lancaster) was the first occupied (by 1927) to be followed by six of the subsequent nine houses occupied by the following year. Some redevelopment has since taken place.

The Dell was built on what had been Carew land, formerly part of 'White Bench Field' unsold at the disbursement of the estates in 1859 and again offered for sale in smaller lots in February 1868. There is no reference to the house in the 1871 census or in the rates later that same year but by 1873 it was already in existence, occupied by and probably built for George Strode Cobham (d.1873) and his wife Emily. In July of that year land to either side of The Dell was offered for sale. To the west, on the corner of Rectory Lane upon which 'Marlesford' was to be built and to the east, a smaller plot with a frontage of 126ft. to Croydon Road and some 250ft. along the later named Demesne Road. These plots backed onto land owned by the Rev'd. Bridges. Edward Lerner purchased the land on the corner that in March 1877 he sold on to Mr. Lack for £950. It was upon this land the Dell stables (with accommodation above) and the coach house with its adjoining cottage were subsequently built. 147 and 149 Demesne Road, the former L-shaped coach house and dwelling in 1931 were converted into two houses, with 147 having been extended forward. Though the core of the building is older, the abstract of title dates from 1931. As was so often the case the lesser buildings survived whereas that which they were built to serve has gone. The land upon which the bungalow number 115A Demesne Road is built marks what was the southern boundary of the estate.

By 1878-79, Lawndy Richardson Lack (b.1838) a Member of the London Stock Exchange, a bachelor and relative of the Cobham's is known to have been occupying The Dell along with Mrs. Cobham until her death. By 1881 his seventy-one year old widowed mother Louisa, his four unmarried nieces the Misses Cobham and four servants were living in the house. Edward Baker the coachman with his wife and two children occupied the cottage adjoining the coach house. It was between 1897 and 1913 The Dell was enlarged by the addition of an extra wing.

Mr. Lack was remembered in his later years (he died in February 1914) as were two of his nieces who kept rabbits in an enclosure within the pit that in 1897 probably accounts for it also being referred to as a 'Rabbit Warren'. From February to June 1917 The Dell was

occupied as a civilian billet for trainer pilots of No.17 Reserve Squadron, Beddington Aerodrome and during the First World War the chalk pit was utilised as a rifle range and bayonet training area.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1920 ownership of the house and its cottages passed from Mr. Lack's executors to Frank Owen Bates. Five years later the property was sold on to E.M. Swabey a builder of Carshalton whose intention was to demolish the house and re-develop the land as by December 1925 he had already deposited plans with the Urban District Council for the building of three semi-detached bungalows on the site. The Dell was demolished at some time prior to 1933 as by that date we find Mr. Swabey the last occupant of the house living in 'Little Home' (215 Croydon Road) built between Marlesford and the former house. Five other houses were being built on the grounds.

The name 'The Dell' was to live on in a house standing on the corner of Demesne Road, 201 Croydon Road. This became the surgery of Dr. James Clark Cameron (later Sir James, President of the British Medical Association) and Dr. Butter, later to be joined by Dr. Petrie. An extension built on to the south side of the house was utilised as a waiting room until it closed as a surgery when the practice moved to Park Road, Wallington.

### **Dell Cottages, Rectory Lane**

A plaque with the date 1873 attached to the wall of these homes at 37-38 Rectory Lane would indicate the year they changed the name from 'Chalk Pit Cottages' to 'Dell Cottages', the date when it would appear they were re-aligned, probably rebuilt and re-named. On land once part of White Bench Field and offered for sale as part of the Carew Estates in 1859, these attractive cottages (with hung tile decoration typical of Surrey vernacular architecture) stand in front of a deep chalk pit from which they originally took their name.

The date and the change of name may also indicate the year the cottages became a part of 'The Dell' estate grounds.

### **Dorset Cottage, Church Lane**

Between what was formerly the back garden of the Old Post Office and an old cottage now 12 Church Lane, a footpath (in 1871 referred to as Church Passage) led downhill into Malthouse Row (now Whelan Way) off which stood a cluster of three cottages only one of which remains, a house known today as 'Dorset Cottage', 10 Church Lane.

Believed to have been built in 1785, the building that has stood there for more than two centuries has been extended on two known occasions, in 1973 on the west side and to the north-east in the spring of 1979. At the time of the enclosure of Beddington in 1812 Dorset Cottage was part of the Carew estates that at some time before 1840 had passed to William Charrington. By the later date John Cookson the Parish Clerk and his wife Sarah were living there after having moved out of the tenement adjoining the Workhouse following its sale in 1838.

William Charrington died in February 1832 and among those properties inherited by his son, Dorset Cottage was offered for sale in 1874 described as a substantial brick-built three bedroomed house with sitting room, kitchen and wash-house the water supply for which was obtained from a well belonging to 'The Harrow' beer house. The occupiers of Dorset Cottage were to lose access to the water unless some agreement was reached when the sale took place in August that year. At this time there was no nucleus to the village of Beddington but scattered cottages and farms near church and manor. Along with its near neighbours Dorset Cottage perhaps formed the greatest concentration of ancient cottages in Beddington.

## **The Dovecote, Beddington Park**

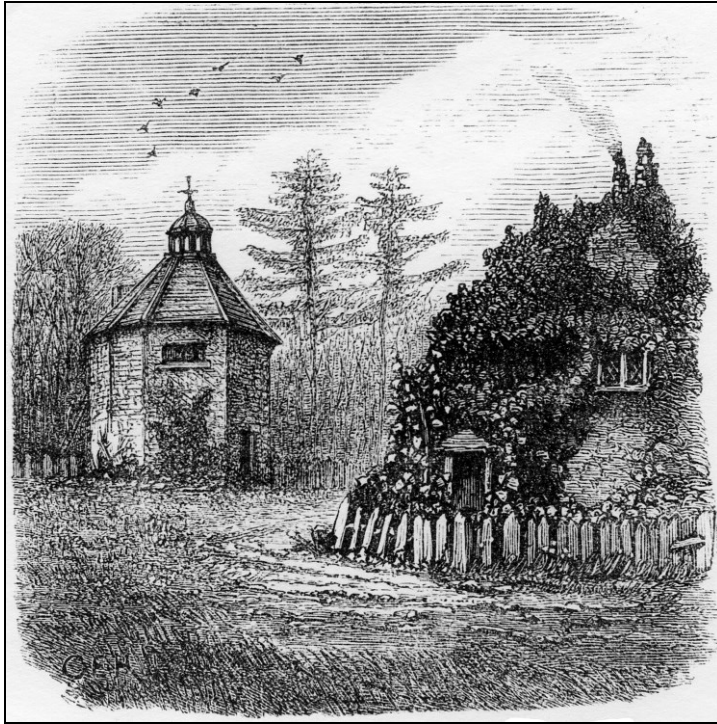
In front of Beddington Park Cottages stands a dovecote, more correctly described as a 'pigeon house'. Its predecessor was referred to in a Carew estate Household Book under the heading 'Smyeth's [Blacksmith's] Bill' of Beddington Park, dated April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1569. "Item. Paid for nayles to amende ye pigeon house gate with, ijd". It was located in the Little Dovehouse Meadow that is thought was near the present graveyard. The building we see today dates between 1707 and 1727.

The Dovecote itself survives from the days when it was great houses has their own food supplies. They would have taken fish from the river, bred birds in the pigeon house for the eggs and meat they provided, taken rabbits from the warren and maintained deer, sheep and cattle in the home park. There was also a kitchen garden with fruit, vegetables and essential herbs used for both culinary and medicinal purposes.

The Beddington example is an octagonal building of red brick, externally plain but with a horizontal projecting brick string course about twelve feet from the ground, roofed with sand-faced tiles. Surmounted by an octagonal domed lantern at its apex, it has former entry/exit openings for the pigeons on the four flanks of the roof, the louvers of which were replaced by glass windows in the early 1930s. The glass has since been removed and the louvered dormers though now blocked, were replaced. What little light there was, filtered down from the cupola.

The interior however is impressive. Originally with only an earth floor and open to the roof, it is now divided into two separate floors both of timber with access to the upper floor formerly by a ladder, today by a staircase. This upper floor was inserted within about fifty years of the building being built - the original tie beam therefore having been in place well over two hundred and fifty years. A number of nest sites, the lowest of which were about 7ft. above the ground, were blocked off when the upper floor was inserted. In the nineteenth century there was an arrangement of fodder boxes for the deer herd on the lower floor. Today this area houses a display area and the massive, possibly fourth century stone coffin found in Church Road in 1930 that for a time having been stored elsewhere, was replaced within the Dovecote in September 1990.

Built within the 2ft. 9in. thickness of the brickwork of the eight internal walls, some 1,360 L shaped nesting sites were provided each measuring some 1ft. 2ins. wide, 10 in. deep and 9ins. high, in some 23 tiers. This was reduced to 798 when the upper floor was inserted.



*The Old Pigeon House, Beddington Park from Smee's 'My Garden', 1872. The cottage has since been demolished.*

Roof tiles were inset to form landing platforms for each tier. Each nest would hold a female pigeon and young, making a potential capacity of well over 2,000 birds. The Dovecote therefore was a site for the potential commercial production of food, especially when one considers that every six weeks for nearly the whole year pigeons are capable of laying a pair of eggs, hatching them out, fattening up two squabs (young unfledged birds) and then of laying two more eggs. The droppings that accumulated on the floor also provided valuable by-products, fertiliser for the garden, and as a source of saltpetre that was extracted and used as the oxidising agent in the manufacture of gunpowder.

Access for cleaning, attention to, and for robbing the nests of both eggs and squabs (that were taken within four to eight weeks of being hatched), was made possible by a device made up of a ladder arranged parallel to the walls on supports attached to a vertical, circular, iron-bound rotating central pole or potence which today rests on the beaten earth floor. Presumably in the past it must have rested on a stone to carry the weight. This enabled a man to stand on the ladder close to the nests at any level and to pull himself right around the inside walls. The potence is original, though the revolving ladder we see there today is a modern replacement.

In the past a dovecote was a valuable monopoly of the Lord of the Manor, construction of these buildings dovecotes therefore being restricted by custom to the higher ranks of society and enforced in the manorial courts. Ultimately, restrictions on their use followed general objection by tenant farmers that the birds, sheltered in such large numbers were

depredating crops at their expense. Although advances in agricultural techniques made them largely redundant, dovecotes still survive in considerable numbers though fewer survive with the potence intact.

In 1859 when the Carew estates were disbursed the developer Joseph Borsley purchased the dovecote along with the nearby farm cottages and outbuildings. In 1864, he sold them on to the Guardians of the Lambeth Female Orphan Asylum whom in order to recoup expenses some eleven years later sold them to the Rev. A.H. Bridges. The history of the Dovecote therefore became linked with that of Beddington Park. Purchased by the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council in 1925 the building is today administered by the present borough's Museum and Heritage Service.

## **Fern Cottages, Beddington Lane**

The earliest houses still standing in Beddington Lane, certainly numbered among the oldest in Beddington, are those formerly known as 1, 2 , and 3 'Fern Cottages', today numbered 11 to 15 Beddington Lane. One and two in about 1997 were known as 'Beddington Village Antiques' once the 'The Double Shop', while the third, that on the north side (today's No.15) was for many years 'Carew Cottage'.

Within these cottages for many years lived sisters-in-law Florence Coole and Ivy Bown the latter the wife of Florence's late brother Ben. Florence (Flossie) was born in Fern Cottages on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1895 and lived there all her life until 1993 when into her late 90s she was admitted to a nursing home in Wallington where she died shortly after. Her sister-in-law Ivy had predeceased her by a number of years.

The building, was formerly part of the Carew estates and as such was offered for sale when their holdings were broken up in 1859 described then as three cottages each with its own garden. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1859 they, along with an adjacent block of land were purchased by Stephen Burgess and again offered for sale in July 1893. Brick built and tiled, these simple homes were originally said to have been a cow byre with accommodation for the herdsman above. There were a number of tethering rings set into the wall of the lower room found when plaster was dislodged by the blast of a bomb that landed on the sewage farm during the Second World War. A steep, narrow staircase accessed the upper rooms by the inner south wall of each cottage. They had been extended at the back and the hung tile decoration as seen on number 15 along with the name 'Carew Cottage' was added by Ivy and Ben Bown when they moved in at the time of their marriage.

In 1901 when the buildings were owned by Walter Cole, the first cottage (the ground floor of which for many years was the confectionery side of the Double Shop, overall a small general store) was occupied by John Cole, the centre cottage by the Bown family and the third, that on the north side, by Mrs. Plowman. Eventually Bown's purchased the three cottages and opened as a business. In about 1974-75 the council compulsorily purchased the land and buildings for the proposed widening of Beddington Lane. Florence continued to live upstairs in the combined upper floors of the first and second cottages while the

council utilised Carew Cottage as “half way” accommodation. Sold by the council in 1997, the buildings are now privately owned.

## **The Ford formerly Pit House, Hilliers Lane**

The flats known as ‘Old Ford House’ that stand beside the river footpath by Hilliers Lane was built in 1957 on the site of a picturesque, at one time wisteria embowered house named ‘The Ford’. The building had reputedly stood there from the mid-sixteenth century but whether this was indeed so is a matter of conjecture. Part of a Tudor brick dug up in the garden though not in any way conclusive might add weight to the claim of its ancient origins. Whenever it was built, it was a house of some antiquity when demolished in 1955.

Though shown on Rocque’s mid-eighteenth century map the earliest clearly identifiable record of the house is the Enclosure Map of 1820 when owned by J. W. Bristow. The census of 1841 indicates the property was then known as ‘Pit House’ a not unlikely choice of name when one reflects upon the site on which it was built. The house nestled into the hillside no doubt indicating the former use to which the land had been put; for the extraction of sand. It would appear that Pit House had at one time been part of the Wandle Court estate that passed from William Meeke to John Bristow at some time prior to 1812. John Bristow died in January 1831 when following Mr. Joliffe’s hounds. He was observed to slump forward before he fell from the saddle “quite dead”.

By 1841 the house was occupied by Ann Bristow enumerated in the census as being an elderly lady of independent means who was living there with two companions and staff of three. Ten years later, in 1851 William Bristow aged 90 described as a ‘landed proprietor’ and occupier of 60 acres (employing fourteen labourers), Elizabeth his fifty-eight year old wife and three staff were living there, but by 1868 when the first Ordnance Survey map was published the name of the house had changed to ‘The Ford’.

With no information available from the 1861 census part of which is missing, the census enumerated ten years later not only confirms the change of name but also of occupier to Richard Yates a former silk manufacturer from Bilston, Staffordshire a gentleman of 64, his wife, daughter, cook and housemaid. Richard Yates died in May 1883 after which Miss Susan Yates is indicated as carrying on the occupancy for a further fifteen years until her death in 1899. Throughout this time the house was still owned by the same family; in 1891 by A.A. Collyer-Bristow. Miss Yates also rented the ornamental water and garden, the triangular green across the river that included the site of the village hall then an open space dissected by streams, in part accessed by a footbridge.

For a time the house stood empty but thereafter over the next half century, occupancy changed a number of times. R.A. Rix an architect and surveyor lived there for a period of about two years from around 1901, Miss Collyer-Bristow during 1913-14 and the Misses Lucas of the Lucas Lamp family during the period of about 1928 to possibly 1930. By 1937 the house is again recorded as being empty. During the Second World War it was requisitioned as emergency accommodation and divided into two flats after which it had

various occupiers and uses including, on the ground floor south side, that of a launderette and at another time a printing works, the latter during the late 1940s early 1950s.

The house had been considerably extended during its lifetime with the earliest part believed to be the south side. An early eighteenth century staircase gave access to the upper rooms. That part nearest the river had attractive gothic arched panes set into triangular window frames with shutters on the upper level and was somewhat later, probably early nineteenth century. By the river stood a gas lamp to lighten the darker evenings and give safe passage to those crossing the Wandle.

Built before damp courses, moisture had badly permeated the walls thus sealing the ultimate fate of the house leading to its demolition in 1955. In part, the outer garden wall still stands along the river boundary though a former arched gateway along with part of a later wall was demolished by vandalism over the evening prior to the wedding of the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer in 1981 and has since been rebuilt with the concrete slabs we see there today. Only the end of an iron boot scraper now partly embedded in the wall remains from the earlier house.

## **The Grange Mansion, London Road**

‘The Grange’ now the site of a restaurant by the same name off London Road, technically in Wallington, was a Tudor style house built by the Wallington builder Duncan Stewart for Alfred Hutchison Smee J.P., during the years 1879 to 1881 shortly after his purchasing the land from Nathaniel Bridges in July 1878. It was timber framed on the upper and of stone and flint on the ground floor. The stables and outbuildings built of brick with a cobbled courtyard and central drain stood on the opposite side of London Road.

Built on the site of his father’s experimental garden, the son was not only responsible for the building of the mansion on part of the lawn set aside for relaxation, tennis and croquet, but maintained the tradition of the garden by exhibiting over two hundred varieties of apples grown on the estate at the Apple Show in London in 1883. He reconstructed plant houses in need of repair and made some changes as for example the part rebuilding of the old fernery to create an orchid house.

When Smee died it would appear that The Grange and its garden came into the life tenancy of either his brother-in-law (the husband of his sister Elizabeth) or their son as according to directories, in about 1901 occupancy of the mansion and its grounds transferred to G. Odling-Smee J.P., whose original surname was Odling. He was a Civil Engineer, a tenant for life who occupied the estate until 1908. As an obligation under the will of A.H. Smee as it was with the Carews, he was obliged to use the surname and arms of Smee or quarter the same with his family arms in order to benefit from the estate.

When it was offered for sale on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1908 The Grange was described as “a very comfortable and superior residence, charmingly placed overlooking well kept lawns and gardens with a lodge entrance, stabling, model farm and including a pretty piece of water”. The millpond had been recently deepened and was suitable to be stocked with fish and the fishing rights let. A heavy oak door gave access to the entrance hall of the house



*'The Grange' as seen from the garden, now Grange Park. Built between 1879-81, the house was destroyed by fire in January 1960.*



*The replacement building was completed in July 1966 and opened as a restaurant called 'Henry's Table'.*



with its wood panelled walls and mosaic-paved porch that incorporated in its design a coat of arms. On the ground floor were the reception rooms, a drawing room, dining room, library and smoke room or study, and the domestic offices - pantry, large kitchen, scullery and larder. In the basement was "ample cellarage". Six principal bed and dressing rooms, two secondary bedrooms and two large bathrooms both with a supply of hot and cold water were on the first floor. On the second, a full-sized billiard room and an anteroom, two servants' bedrooms, box and cistern room and good storage cupboards were located.

A range of outbuildings adjacent to the house included a fruit store, wood and coal storage places etc. There was an entrance lodge, coach house and stabling, a timber and tiled cottage and a model farm consisting of cow house, dairy, pig-stys and dog kennels. A meal house, store room etc. made up the remainder of the estate buildings, a number of which were sited on the opposite side of London Road. The delightful grounds included tennis and croquet lawns, ornamental lawns, flowerbeds, orchard and kitchen garden with a large peach house, fernery, vinery and four glasshouses as well as a rustic summerhouse. Wallington Mill that was part of Smee's holding was not included in the sale of 1908 as on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1916 the mill, adjacent cottage and buildings were let by George Odling-Smee then of Guildford to F.H. Turner Ltd., and on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1921 to F. Turner Esq., presumably one and the same. Arising from a conveyance dated December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1934 the Bridge Mills passed to Helm Chocolate Ltd. who remained in the area until about 1960.

Between about 1908 and 1915 the story of The Grange evolves around its next owner, a genuine Indian Princess married to a Frenchman Monsieur F.H. Cavalier. The last of the private owners of the house during the eighty-one years of its existence was Major (later Sir) William James Mallinson J.P. who purchased the property in 1915. On land purchased from Hamilton Benn some time prior to 1932 Major Mallinson created a nine-hole golf course for his own use on the field by the Dutch Dairy - he also laid out a cricket ground for his own Eleven on the field adjacent to the stables on the west side of London Road.

In 1935 a year prior to his succeeding his father as 2nd Baronet, Major Mallinson sold the forty-eight acre Grange estate including the cottages and buildings on the west side of London Road to the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council for the sum of £57,500. He gave them an option on the remainder (the area of the golf course) and moved away from the district to Reigate where he died in 1944.

In 1936 after the council had acquired the building and its grounds and opened it to the public, it was used for community purposes including a Health Clinic, Branch Library and Reception Rooms. The main Function Room let out for weddings and similar activities was of an L-shape. Next to the dining room was another small room with a counter from where teas and daintily presented sandwiches were sold to the public outside. Behind this area was the kitchen. Teas were taken outside and eaten at tables on the main terrace that spanned the length of the building.

In the early hours of a bitter snowy morning on Sunday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1960, though there had been a wedding reception within the building earlier that evening, owing to what is

thought may have been an electrical fault in the dental area upstairs, the building caught fire and was all but destroyed though the kitchen wing survived virtually intact. As they burst, oxygen cylinders caused explosions heard over a very great distance. The caretaker Bill Kaine and his family were said to have been extremely lucky to have escaped.

Little today remains of the basic layout of Alfred Smee's garden but its watercourses still survive as part of the Grange park though the house was replaced by an architecturally indifferent Grange Restaurant built on the site of the mansion and completed in July 1966. In about 1989-90 the building was leased by a northern company as their first venture into the south of England, altered and extensively refurbished as a restaurant and bar, for some years known as Henry's Table. Under new management it later reverted to the name of The Grange.

## **Hazel Cottages**

See the Harvest Home Public House.

## **Holmwood, Beddington Lane**

In the latter part of the 1850s on land in Carew ownership and at his own expense William Sprules had Holmwood built on the site of two old cottages that stood adjacent to, immediately south of the railway on the west side of Beddington Lane. The house was a substantial two-storied building with double bay windows and square porch above a central front door standing beside but slightly on an angle to Beddington Lane facing the more recently created Jessops Way. It was brick-built and slate roofed with a large entrance hall, drawing and dining rooms, four large bedrooms, a servant's bedroom, attics (that in 1859 were not complete), a kitchen and pantry, scullery, cellars and water closet (but no bathroom!). Though initially painted white, in later years for some time prior to demolition in 1981 the exterior was painted red. Presumably in around 1864 when his agreement with the Carew estates had expired, the Sprules family moved to Wallington where the father set up a distillery in Melbourne Road.

At some time during the latter part of the 1800s or early 1900s Mr. J. Towell, a wealthy London Tea Broker who also enjoyed the benefits of immediate access to the railway, leased the house. At 7.20am on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1944 during hostilities with Germany, an enemy aircraft no doubt intending to attack the station and crossing appeared from the south and dropped a bomb that landed to the south-west of the line in the vicinity of the house in a potato patch known as 'Towell's field'. Although there was blast damage to the building and nearby houses, when it exploded it left a large crater afterwards incorporated into the garden as an ornamental pond. A second bomb landed harmlessly on the common to the north of the railway.

## **Ineson's Cottages, Beddington Lane**

Between the former Fern Cottages and the Harvest Home public house, now site of the pub car park in Beddington Lane, once stood a group of three brick and slate roofed cottages known as 'Ineson's Cottages' later numbered 19, 21 and 23 Beddington Lane. The family also owned a further cottage at 17 Beddington Lane, later known as 'Brookside' that lay directly behind the terrace of three.

Opened as a Dame School by Mrs Mary Ineson c.1889 it remained as such until about 1929. Ernest Boxall, Mrs Ineson's son-in-law (the husband of her eldest daughter Ethel), later opened a chemist shop in the adjoining cottage No.1 that remained as such until the beginning of the First World War when he enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps. The Boxall's later moved into No.3 the most northerly cottage and remained there until about 1936 when the family moved to Queenswood Avenue. By 1937, Albert Burchell and his wife had taken over the shop at No.3 and opened it as a café cum tearooms.

Though demolished in the early 1970s the terrace of houses were in similar architectural style to near neighbours Hazel and Fern Cottages and probably of contemporary dating (late eighteenth-early nineteenth century).

### **Kingsley, Bridges Lane**

A high wall, part of which still stands between numbers 17 and 19 Bridges Lane marked the boundary of 'Riverside' from that of the 'Beddington House' estate on the east side of Bridges Lane. Built in about 1879 on part of the former grounds attached to Riverside, 'Kingsley' was at one time known as 1 and 2 'Beddington House Cottages' built for Canon Bridges who owned the property, to house staff employed by him.

This attractive flint and brick house decorated with hung tile decoration in the eaves and ornate red and green stained glass in the leaded windows stood on the corner of Tritton Avenue and Bridges Lane facing Tritton Avenue, set back behind a high brick wall on the site of the flats numbered 19 Bridges Lane. Beneath the eaves on the first floor were decorative jettied bay windows with plaster infill while on the ground floor above the two main windows were relieving arches with infill of cross-patched zigzag brickwork giving an overall pleasing aspect. Windows of a former conservatory at some time converted into an additional room also faced this front. It had its own small brick and tiled lean-to stable and storerooms at the back of the house abutting the eighteenth century wall dividing Riverside from Beddington House, access to which was by a gate off Bridges Lane.

From about 1924 until the mid 1930s, the two former cottages by then converted into a four bedroom house was occupied by A.E. Knight, a committed Plymouth Brethren, well known botanist, author and artist who named the house Kingsley after his former residence in Brunswick Road, Sutton. Author of at least twenty-five books from verse and historical biography through to religion, he was also well known as the collaborator and illustrator of a number of books written by the botanist Edward Steppe. He illustrated the Roman coffin (as it transpired not accurately) for Bentham's History of Beddington published in 1923. He died at home in February 1934 and buried in the Bandon Hill cemetery. The house was demolished in late 1973 or early 1974.

### **Marlesford, Croydon Road**

'Marlesford Court' the flats standing on the corner of Croydon Road and Rectory Lane were built in 1951-52 by the Beddington and Wallington Borough Council. They replace a substantial home demolished in about 1950 that had appeared following the 1859 break up of the Carew estates.

Built on land formerly known as White Bench Field unsold in 1859 and broken up into smaller lots, in July 1873 part of the field was again under the auctioneer's hammer and the original 'Marlesford' was no doubt built shortly after. The house was typically Victorian in appearance; brick built with a pitched slate roof, decorative wrought iron finials and white painted bargeboards. Rectangular sash windows within a likewise rectangular bay extended for two storeys left of the front door with rooms immediately to either side featuring arched windows. There was likewise a smaller arched window above the bay. The house had a white painted open fronted wooden porch the tiled floor of which led to the front door that in turn met with a passageway off which were four large reception rooms, one of which had French windows leading to the extensive area of garden. The hall led directly through to a half imperial staircase that gave access to the upper floor and the back entrance to the house. A large kitchen lay on the east side of the house overlooking the garden, behind which stood a range of greenhouses. The coach house also stood on the east side between Marlesford and the house next door, Mr. Cobham's property 'The Dell'.

The first of Marlesford's occupants of whom we have any knowledge and for whom the house was probably built is Edward Larnier in 1875 described as a Ceylon Merchant, his wife and family. By 1885 J. Hardcastle occupied the house. It was owned by Lawndy Lack of The Dell in the 1890s during which time it was occupied by a Captain W.H. Pain and E.T. Janson and from about 1902 to c.1914 Thomas Wallis a partner in the flour mill lived there. Perhaps the longest occupant was Dr. J. Stoker from about 1919 at least into the late 1930s.

Marlesford stood for a number of years after The Dell had been demolished and houses had been built on the land extending to the corner of Demesne Road. During the Second World War it was requisitioned and fortuitously screened by trees and shrubbery in front, the building escaped the worst effects of the blast from a bomb that landed nearby in the corner of the park by Croydon Road in July 1944. The house was demolished in about 1950 after which the flats were built on the site.

## **Mill House, Bridle Path**

Although there has no doubt been a house standing on the site or nearby for centuries, the mill house we see today was probably built when the earlier flour mill was rebuilt as a snuff mill c.1780-81. Of typical eighteenth century style, timber framed, tiled and weather boarded with ionic style pilasters supporting a balustraded porch, the whole has since been enclosed in brick and the front entirely rebuilt. Dormer and bay windows were added probably when in the late nineteenth century Wallis's took over the former snuff mill, rebuilt in brick and set up business as flour millers. The porch has again been rebuilt and the balustrades removed.

The Carew Estates Sale Catalogue of 1859 describes the house as comfortable with a dining room, a 19ft. by 14ft. drawing room, small sitting room and with four good bedrooms upstairs. The kitchen and one of the two sculleries were detached. Even in the late 1940s, early 1950s the cellar was frequently under water as the water table was so

much higher than now. The 1859 outbuildings included a chaise house, stable and loose box, a cow house and shed, cart lodge and granary.

## **Mount Pleasant Cottages, Bridle Path**

“Embowered cottages, a tempting fastness and retreat, accessible only by a wooden bridge across the stream” is how the Mount Pleasant cottages were described at around the beginning of the twentieth century.

These attractive clapboard cottages with slate roofs still stand on the north bank of the river facing Bridges Lane though the river no longer emerges as it did upstream by the mill. Between 1897 and 1933 (though probably when the houses numbered 13 to 27 Wandle Road were being built c.1928), the river was culverted in its entirety beneath the garden of 27 to reappear as it does today beside the footbridge and the gardens of the Mount Pleasant Cottages.

Built on land formerly described as an orchard attached to the snuff mill, it was thought they were built as tied cottages for workmen employed in the building of Wallis’s mill. Subsequent findings however indicate that at least in 1901 the cottages (first occupied in about 1883) and the land as far west as Beddington Lane, having been effectively separated from the snuff mill property were owned and probably speculatively built by the local builder Gideon Smith. In the early 1900s when the Rostron family were resident at nearby Riverside, their butler, coachman and another member of staff occupied the cottages.



*The delightful ‘Mt. Pleasant Cottages’ overlook the river at the foot of Bridges Lane.*

In 1966 the cottage nearest the footbridge was purchased by Angela Douglas, actress wife of the then well known stage and screen actor Kenneth More, as a home for her mother Mrs. Ethel McDonagh. In 1978 this cottage was purchased by Gilbert (Joe) Rumary who in the September of that year with the assistance of his son John replaced an existing bridge that has since been rebuilt.

When work was being undertaken to raise the banks, concrete the riverbed in front of the cottages and fill a relatively deep hole the river had created where it emerges from beneath the bridge, Mr. Rumary recalled a freshwater crayfish about eight ins. in length and laden with eggs being caught in the river at the outlet of the culvert. Kingfishers regularly perch on the bridge. As recently as 1996 a brown trout and eels have been seen from the vantage point of the footbridge bringing to mind when both were regular sightings in the waters of the Wandle. It was opposite the Mount Pleasant Cottages the riverbank gently sloped down into the ford.

### **Mulberry Cottages and adjoining buildings, Beddington Lane**

Sales particulars dated August 1874 describe two semi-detached brick and timber built freehold cottages that were part of a small cluster of houses that stood on the northern side of the corner of Beddington Lane and Therapia Lane. The smaller of the two, that nearest Therapia Lane had two bedrooms, two living rooms, kitchen and wash-house and the cottage next door with four bedrooms but otherwise similar accommodation. Both were let at 4s. per week or £10 8s. per annum.

On the north side of these houses stood another building, a one-storey brick built cottage of two rooms and a lean-to shed let at 2s. 6d. per week on the far side of which lay a plot of garden ground. This area of land and cottages that in March 1823 had been let by the owner William Charrington to Mrs. Anne Paston Gee on a 21 year lease, were offered by his son and beneficiary, the father having died intestate on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1832.

Of late eighteenth-early nineteenth century dating and shown on a map of 1816, at least during the 1930s this group of buildings were known under the collective name of 'Mulberry Cottages' after an ancient mulberry tree standing in the garden of one of the three. That nearest Therapia Lane named 'Rose Cottage' was at one time used as a shop. The centre cottage was known as 'Calshott', and the northernmost 'Mulberry Cottage' the latter of which in 1931 was occupied by Mr. T. Grice who ran a piggery on the adjoining yard that backed on to the garden of the first of the Portland Cottages. He also owned a number of pigsty's off Therapia Lane in an area of market garden and orchard worked by Austin and Lathwell, access to which was off Beddington Farm Road. Mulberry Cottages were lost to enemy bombing during the Second World War.

'Victoria House' numbered 144 and 146 Beddington Lane was built on the corner block and beside it a petrol station for many years known as the Mulberry Filling Station, later Anglo's Mulberry Service Station. The service station site is today in use as a car wash business.



*On the corner of Guy Road and Church Lane stood the Old Post Office that was badly damaged by a flying bomb in 1944. 'The Cottage' seen downhill was demolished in the same incident.*

## **Old Post Office, Guy Road**

The cottages known collectively as the 'Old Post Office' stood on the north side of the corner of Church Lane and Chatts Hill (later Guy Road).

In June 1859 when the Carew estates were offered for sale, the building was described as follows – “a freehold cottage (in three tenements), Blacksmith’s Shop and gardens, viz.- Cottage, containing Sitting room, three Bed rooms, Pantry and Wash-house, Blacksmith’s shop and garden ... in the occupation of William Isted, at the yearly rent of £20”. The second, central dwelling was a “Cottage, containing Kitchen, Wash-house, Parlour (used as the Post Office room), three Bedrooms, and garden ... in the occupation of John Isted, at the yearly rate of £10”. Finally, that nearest Church Lane – “a cottage containing Kitchen, Wash-house and three Bed rooms, with garden ... in the occupation of Mary Hickson, at the estimated rent of £6”. A fourth cottage, an extension to the original building stood nearest the smithy and Malthouse Row.

In 1889 it was written: “Here, too, is the old village post-office ... a group of whitewashed gables, with a queer little trap-door in one of the windows, to which you reach up, standing on a rude wooden bench, to buy ginger-beer or penny stamps”.

For whom the original house was built or exactly when is unknown, but the date c.1440 given by the Croydon Historian J. Corbett Anderson was based on its outline with projecting upper-storey bays at either end that were typical of a late medieval hall house of that date. Later opinion however suggests a possible seventeenth century date as from photographs of war damage there is no evidence of a crown post roof that would be typical of a medieval building if it were indeed so. It is felt it would not be large enough to be a manor house but would more likely have been a large farmhouse.

The upper three cottages that stood on the site of a bungalow now numbered 61 Guy Road originally formed part of the timber-framed house of a type as typical of the Weald to be called Wealden or Yeoman's House. The central portion would have been the hall open to the roof timbers through which smoke from a central hearth found its exit. The open hall was to have an upper floor inserted and the building divided into three cottages. Later the ground floor of the central section was floored with bricks of some 2 in. thickness and it was from beneath the staircase that access was gained to a cellar that extended across the central section of the building. To judge by the size of the smoke stack the kitchen was sited at the south end with a cross-wing above, probably used as bedchambers. A parallel wing lay across the opposite end with, in 1768 a timber built lean-to attached to the north side. What appeared to be a large barn lay partly in behind and adjacent to the outhouse on the downhill, or north side at this time. The lean-to was demolished and a further cross-wing added to the lower cottage that by the early 1860s was converted into a separate dwelling thus creating the fourth cottage that is today in part on the site of 63 Guy Road. This was shown by two built-up door openings in the party wall between the two cottages and the difference in the footings of the two building periods.

In its time it was obviously a building of some importance and a number of theories have been put forward as to its origin. Though part of the Carew estates, it is thought unlikely to have been used by a member of the family though it may have been the residence of one of the more important or valued retainers. There is a school of thought that suggests it may have been a building originally connected with Huscarles or with Bandon (alias Forester's) manors that came to the Carew's. On some old maps the building is referred to as the 'Manor House'; it may or may not have been but is something that will possibly be revealed in the fullness of time.

The 1839 edition of Robson's Commercial Directory lists William Prior as being Postmaster at Beddington and in 1827 John Hancock, at which time letters were dispatched to London at 8.30am and 4.30pm, but where they operated from is not known. An earlier Pigot's Directory of 1823 indicates John Bates at the Hare and Hounds Public House and Livery Stables, Waddon as Postmaster for Waddon, Beddington and Wallington. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1854 Miss Sarah Ann Isted who lived in the building was appointed Official Receiver. She had taken over from James E. Costick who had been in receipt of a salary of £1 10s. In 1878 an entry in a local Street Directory reads; "Beddington Receiving House (Croydon Post Office). Receiver Miss Isted. Box Cleared at 8.15am and 3.45pm on week-days only". Letters could be posted through a slit in the door until the building ceased functioning as a post office in about 1890. Post Office services removed to a shop on the corner of the Bridle Path.



In later years the Churcher family occupied the Post Office cottage. Mrs. Churcher herself the mother of a large family was the local midwife who assisted at the birth, or brought many a local baby into the world herself otherwise unaided.

Many older residents recall the building when the corner cottage was a shop, the entrance to which was by way of a door at the side of the building by the chimneystack in Church Lane. Within was a large fireplace and flagstone floor where tea, sweets and soft drinks were available. It is from around the turn of the twentieth century many of the photographs date. By the time it was damaged by a flying bomb during the Second World War, the front had already been weather boarded. Subsequently there was less to remind one of the romantic cottages painted by the Croydon artist Thomas Dibdin R.A. in 1858 a now valuable painting purchased for £14 in 1948 by the Beddington and Wallington Borough Council. The painting is retained in the present Borough's art collection.

For a fleeting moment, the building was also captured by Croydon's Clarendon Film Studio sometime between 1909 and 1917 when many films were made at the studio or on location nearby. It was the setting of high drama when used as the backdrop in the recreation of an episode in *The Tottenham Outrage* a film loosely depicting a true-life event when in 1909 two Latvian immigrant "anarchist" armed robbers stole the wages from a factory in Tottenham at which time a police officer and a ten year-old boy were murdered. During an almost farcical pursuit during which time over four hundred shots were fired the fugitives commandeered a tram; the police did likewise though travelled on a parallel line in reverse (in the film, across Mitcham Common) before the robbers took over a parked milk van. When they wrecked that by cornering too fast, they stole a greengrocers van but could not force the horse into more than a ramble as they had forgotten to release the brake! When it came to "High Noon", they were sheltering behind a barricade across a lane beside an ancient building, Church Lane and the Old Post Office where there was an exchange of gunfire — such is the unreal world of the film maker! In reality, both fugitives ended up by shooting themselves elsewhere.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944 the death knell tolled for this ancient building when a flying bomb demolished the houses immediately downhill along with a number of houses opposite in Guy Road. The lower cottages of the Post Office building were badly damaged but the one on the corner of Church Lane was much less so and for a time was covered with waterproof sheeting to protect it from further damage by the weather. It proved to be of particular interest to S.R. Turner F.R.I.B.A. an architect on the committee of the Beddington, Wallington and Carshalton Archaeological Society who prepared plans handed to the National Buildings Record. Internally the building had not been greatly altered. The majority of the original timbers were worm eaten and showed considerable signs of repair at different times; the lower timbers had been removed and replaced by a brick base that did not appear to be of earlier date than the eighteenth century. A secret cupboard was also discovered which was described as a "priest's hole". In later years the chimney-stack had also been rebuilt in brick as seen at the time of demolition.

Mr. Turner made measured drawings and sketched plans for restoration and adding to the cottages to incorporate the best-preserved ancient part in order to save them for posterity. In June 1945 the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works declared in

favour of preserving them and advised the War Damage Commission to make a 'Cost of Works payment' for this purpose as the owner at the time who lived in Croydon was also willing to restore the building for re-occupation if financially assisted. In the meantime the struggle to preserve the cottages continued. The Archaeological Society approached the Council asking if it could be purchased, restored and converted for communal purposes but both the War Damage Committee and the Council refused on the grounds that they had no power to do so and of their being an absence of any demand for the facilities. Chairman of the War Damage Committee Cllr. H.H. Best felt there was nothing inside of value except a staircase. He did feel however that there was a small attractive Regency fire grate in an upper room of the middle section worthy of preservation. Ultimately, the War Damage Commission were willing to make a 'value payment' only which would not pay the cost of restoration; the battle had been fought and lost and the building was demolished at the end of January, beginning of February in 1948.

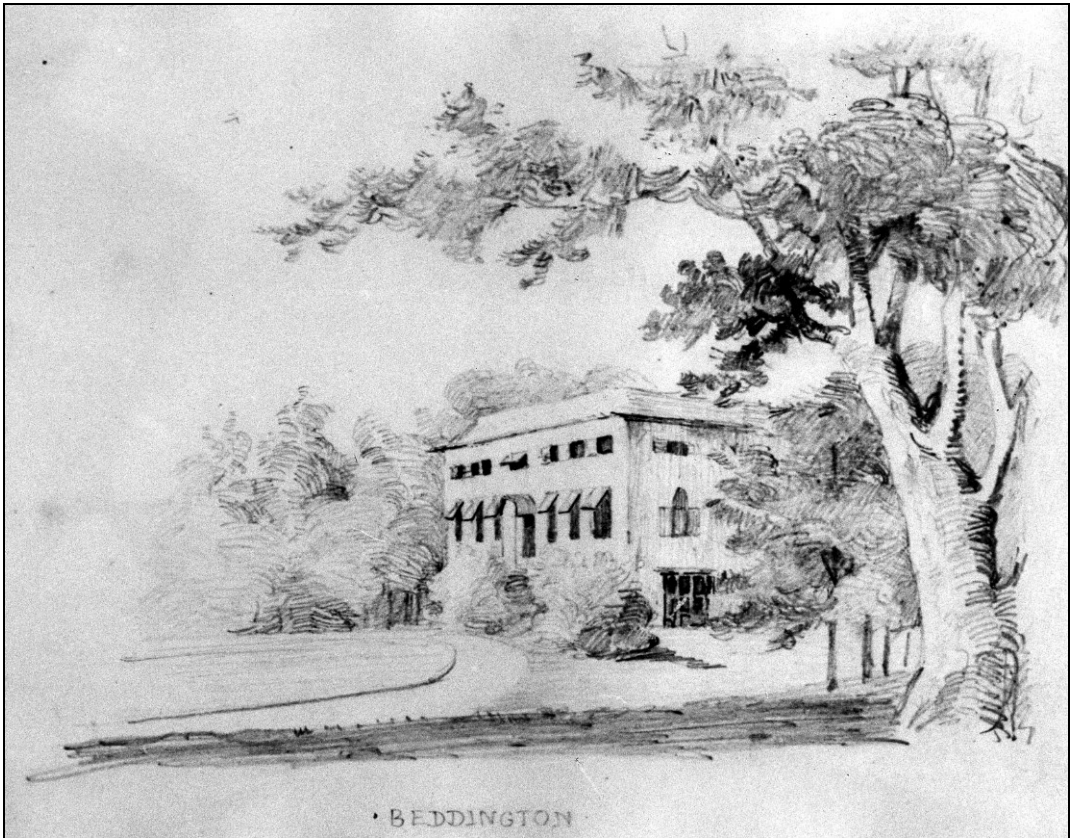
### **The Portioner's House or Haffenden's, Beddington Park**

Within Beddington park at what had been the junction of Freron Lane and Church Path in the field on the south side of the burial ground opposite the church, there once stood a large house known variously as the 'Portioner's House' or 'Haffenden's' (1840). The merchant John Haffenden and his family were probably the last occupiers of the house before it was demolished and the site, along with that of the adjacent Freron Lane were absorbed into Carew park lands. This ancient dwelling, one of the oldest then standing in Beddington, was almost certainly in a poor state of repair when demolished at some time between mid-October 1843 and 1859, probably nearer the earlier date.

As indicated by the Enclosure map of 1820 and illustrations only recently identified, the house was a large rectangular building, described then as a mansion that stood facing south towards Croydon Way (now Croydon Road) with a circular drive in front. A long narrow building (the four stall stable?) stood on the west side of the house abutting at its west end onto Freron Lane. A further building (possibly the brick built coach house) stood behind the house beside the western extension of Church Path while a further smaller building, (the second stable of two stalls?) stood to the east of the latter also abutting Church Path.

The field that historically was a part of the land attached to the house extended unbroken across the site of what is now Church Road to the east, incorporating the field we know today as The Paddock or Church Field. On the Tithe Map (1840) this large field was recorded as 'Sharpys', a pre Black Death holding that retained its identity long enough to be recorded as such in 1841. On the Beddington Taxation Returns of 1332, there were two men with the surname Sharpys (i.e. Sharps) one of whom was known as Walter. On precedents in the Gowans Bandon Rolls translation, fixation of these personal names for holdings seems to indicate extinction of a family in the Black Death. This holding was to be bisected by the creation of Church Road in the mid-nineteenth century.

The house, (according to maps dated prior to 1859), crop marks in the field that appear during the drier months of summer, an Inventory Valuation of fixtures added to the house during the occupancy of John Haffenden and the illustration confirms the description of a



*'The Portioner's House', later 'Haffenden's', once stood on the south side of the later burial ground opposite the church. The house was demolished in the mid-1840s.*

mansion. The Lower Hall was located on semi-basement level heated by a square pedestal stove (formerly a cast hall stove) with at least eight further rooms including a Study and Library (the latter of which had two windows with eighteen small guard bars) and the domestic wing. In front of the house a number of steps led up to a canopied entrance giving access to a vestibule on the first (or principal floor level) off which there were at least five rooms with fittings added during Haffenden's occupancy. Amongst them were a dining room and a room on the south-east side with a small balcony overlooking the walled garden that may possibly have been the drawing room. Reference is made to a water closet room on this level. On the upper floors were a number of rooms presumably bedrooms, one of which with its dressing room overlooked the south and east side of the house.

For nearly two hundred years during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the house had been used as the Rectory to the nearby parish church, and after so long an occupation and their being none other it was thought that this indeed was the Rectory. The old Parson's house, the former rectory had disappeared from maps by 1820 probably demolished by the Carew's during the course of one of their many park improvements. Perhaps an early parson lived elsewhere or had been persuaded to take up residence in the Portioner's house as an alternative. The late Keith Pryer suggests it may have been at the

time of the Rev. John Nelme, Instituted Rector in December 1684 until his death in 1703 who was from December 1690 also Rector of Carshalton.

When the Rev. John Ferrers was instituted as Rector of St.Mary's in 1783 it would appear that at least for three years he shared the occupancy of the house with a previous tenant variously recorded as Mr. Blackburn or Blackman. While living there, on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1789 he brought a legal action in the Exchequer (Court) at Westminster Hall relating to the tithes from land formerly payable to another cleric called 'The Portionist' a former occupant of the house. Before 1291 the tithes (or a tenth of the income) on certain lands in Beddington that in the past had some connection with the Huscarl family were diverted from the Rector and church of Beddington to upkeep the cleric variously known as the Portioner or Portionist. This cleric was also provided with a house and land. Ever since the Reformation as there was no Portionist to support, the tithes on two hundred acres of land north of the river (that it was contended should have reverted to the rector) had been diverted to the Lord of the Manor. When the Rev. Ferrers came to the parish he found while living in the former Portionists house that he was expected to pay rent of £2 3s. 4d. per annum and surrender all the tithe straw of wheat and rye arising in the parish, specified amounts of wheat, rye and barley and all the tithe of oats growing in the parish except on glebe lands.

Earlier rectors had disputed the validity of the payment and a compromise situation had been arrived at until the Rev. Ferrers refused to pay, contending the tenancy of the house and the income from the disputed land was the rector's as of right. The ensuing court case of Pellatt v Ferrers (William Pellatt being the administrator of the Carew estates) took place six years after the Rev. Ferrers had taken up his post. It was discovered that the matter had been fully investigated in 1473 when the then Rector and the Portionist had been in dispute over tithes from these same lands. It consisted then of a mansion and twenty acres of land on the south side of the church and tithes of two hundred acres of land on the north side. The witness called at the enquiry also said that the Portion was worth 50s and that it had been worth more as there was once a water mill with a mansion adjoining from which the Portioner took tithes. At this time the portion was a sinecure (an honour without duties attached) and that he did not know its origin. It was known as Huscarles Fewd, and again even earlier in 1309 when the Abbott of Bermondsey was in dispute with the Portionist at which time the case had been heard before the Archdeacon of Surrey.

The court of 1789 decided that judgement should be given in favour of the rector as the earlier enquiries had only established that the institution of Portionist was an ancient one without finding evidence of its foundation. William Pellatt was to appeal and the counter petition that he lodged on behalf of the Carew estates was heard in 1801. It concerned the ancient house with its gardens and orchard that now appeared had been the subject of various exchanges with Sir Richard Carew, and confirmed it was beyond doubt the one-time dwelling of the Beddington Portionist. Further, it had been granted by Queen Elizabeth I to Sir Francis Carew. From 1797 John Henton Tritton as a tenant of Richard Carew occupied the house so it is unclear exactly as to when the Rev. Ferrers surrendered his claim to occupancy of the house and moved out.

During the later tenancy of the Portioner's House by the merchant John Haffenden, his wife Ann and (in 1841) two teenage children and staff of six (a tenancy that terminated in the autumn of 1843), a number of essential repairs had to be undertaken and heating facilities renewed. At his own expense therefore he removed all the antiquated or damaged heaters and had new stoves placed in a number of the rooms, installed a new 4'6" range with oven and back boiler in the kitchen and had other essential plumbing work carried out including the installation of waste pipes from both the bath and water closet cistern. He also added shelving and rails about the house and installed a 7ft. long form fixed under the kitchen window for draining the milk pails, all for which he was recompensed at the end of his tenancy. One noted that most of the summoning bells were out of order and presumably the majority at least were to remain so, though he did repair "a spring bell with counter pull and cranks with a pipe running underground from the entrance gate northward towards what was described as the rough enclosure formerly the Pigeon house and the mansion". One also notes there being three old glazed lights of frame on the brick melon pit in the garden.

Was this was the house in which Lady Malyn (d.1544) mother of the executed Sir Nicholas Carew (d.1539) lived in after her son's death, a house from which her grandson the Rev. Charles Carew (Nicholas's illegitimate son) was entitled to receive the tithes due to the Portioner? The Rev. Charles, instituted as Rector of St. Mary's in 1529 was hung for robbery the year after his father.

During the eighteenth century the church itself had been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair and the years had dealt none too kindly with the old house. The one survived however; the other did not.

## **Queenswood**

By far the larger of the two estates later to be built on the tract of land in 1859 known as Brackey Close was 'Queenswood', the grounds of which enclosed the grove of trees known today as Queen Elizabeth's Walk and extended to the south as far as what is now Queenswood Avenue. Described in Carew sale particulars then as part of the Sandy Hills, until Michaelmas 1859 Thomas Griffin leased the land. In June of that year Edward Henry Moses of Clapham Park (d.1872) purchased it for £7,750 on his own behalf and that of two of his brothers probably as an investment in land.

Both 'Queenswood' and 'Sandhills' therefore have a common beginning in that they were built upon the same field and though as separate entities, were sold as part of the overall Queenswood Estate when in 1914 they came onto the market following the death of the then owner of both houses Joseph Trollope. Although it is not known the year in which Queenswood was built and for whom (though such were its dimensions it must have taken some time to build), it is thought the house was probably contemporary with its neighbour Sandhills the lodge to which is dated 1863. It backed on to and was built within a short distance of Queen Elizabeth's Walk facing northeast and from this high elevation overlooked the then open view towards distant Croydon and the wooded hills beyond.



*With the estate once backing onto Queen Elizabeth's Walk, this impressive house known as 'Queenswood', built in the 1860s, had a relatively short life span of around sixty years.*

There were three cottages attached to the property one of which was an attractive lodge of four rooms that stood beside the main entrance a few yards south of the present road (Sandhills) opposite 238 Croydon Road. The foundations of the lodge were uncovered during re-alignment of the footpath and road widening in the late 1980s. A winding carriage drive bordered with shrubs, forest and ornamental timber led up to the front of the house. A second access off the then private road that gave access to both the Queenswood and Sandhills estates, aligned between the two (the line of the present road Sandhills) also gave access to the mansion and grounds. The coachman's and laundry cottages, the stables and coach house ranged around an enclosed yard, stood nearby.

'Queenswood' was a large, in part three-storied mansion with a wide balustraded roof terrace overlooked by a similarly decorated viewing tower the views from which must have been exceptional. The house, built of cement rendered brick with a slate roof has been described as being "like a fortress, solid and old-fashioned" its heavy lines however softened by the greenery that in part clothed the building. The interior was equally as spacious as the exterior would suggest with on the ground floor a tiled entrance lobby leading to an almost 24ft. 6ins. square saloon and hall that had an open tiled fireplace with basket grate and marble surround with settle seats on either side; the ceiling was panelled. Adjoining was a second hall accessed by two open arches with heavy drapes to either side. This hall led not only to the main staircase but also to a garden entrance that opened onto a tiled verandah and heated conservatory or winter garden. Apart from this imposing introduction to the interior of the house, on the ground floor were three large reception/dining rooms, a spacious billiard room with stove, tiled hearth and marble mantelpiece and the domestic offices sited above a larder, wine and beer cellars in the

basement. The first floor had nine bedrooms one of which was about 18ft. by 26ft. 6ins. measured into a bay with its own lobby and dressing room adjoining. On the second floor were four maidservants' bedrooms each fitted with cupboards and a fireplace. Above was the roof terrace.

The estate also included tennis and croquet lawns, flower beds, a summer house, fernery and a kitchen garden with herbaceous borders and fruit trees, a lean-to peach house, greenhouses, sheds, cart lodge, poultry-house and a photographic dark room. A range of wood-built and tiled farm buildings including cattle sheds, cow house and calf pens were located at the edge of the property opposite what was to become part of The Broadway parade of shops by the corner of Plough Lane and Queenswood Avenue. Prior to the First World War as a young man, the late Bert Appleby of Beddington Lane worked as an under-gardener on the estate. Apart from assisting with the upkeep of the grounds one of his duties was to pump water from the well beside the Croydon Road lodge to supply the mansion with soft water although mains water and gas were both laid on. A further task was to shoe the pony that drew the mower. Cows were grazed to supply the household with milk and dairy produce with a cowman employed to see to their welfare.

The census of 1871 is the first record we have of the house and its occupiers and for whom it may well have been built, Norman Watney, Brewer and Landowner. His father James (1800-1884) who resided at Haling Park, Croydon and Beddington was from a family who were the main partners in the Stag Brewery of Pimlico for much of the nineteenth century. In 1837, James Watney became a partner in the brewery, as did his sons James and Norman in 1856. On his death in 1884, the brewery became a public limited company and in 1898 acquired Messrs. Coombe Delafield and Co. and Messrs. Reid and Co. It was thereafter Messrs. Watney, Combe and Reid. The company is still extant, known today as Messrs. Watney & Co. of The Stag Brewery, Pimlico. Norman's brother, also known as James (b.1832 of Beddington and of Kensington) was the Conservative MP for East Surrey from 1871-1885 and Master of the Mercers' Company in 1879. He also played cricket for Surrey (1851) and Middlesex (1851-1852).

Over the night of the census, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1871 Norman Watney ( born in Wandsworth in 1834), was living at Queenswood with his wife Matilda 29, and their three children ranging in ages from one to four years old. Seven members of staff were also resident. The coachman and his family occupied the gatehouse cottage. Ten years later, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1881 Norman and Matilda with three of the younger children (all born in the intervening years) were at home on the night the census was taken, but the family had left Beddington by August 1885. Educated at Harrow, Norman Watney served as Master of the Mercers' Company in 1880, was a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant for Kent, later of Westerham, Kent. He died in 1911.

In August 1885, ownership of Queenswood passed to Joseph Harvey Trollope then in partnership with his father and two older brothers as Builder's Merchants. He retired in 1890. The Queenswood estate that included both houses, Sandhills and Queenswood and a field of about thirty-six acres with a frontage to Demesne Road known as 'Miller's Orchard' were jointly offered for sale by auction on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1914 as part of Mr. Trollope's estate. Messrs. Trollope and Winkworth of Queen Anne's Gate were the

Solicitors dealing with the sale and Messrs. Trollope of 29 Mount Street, London were the Land Agents, Surveyors and Auctioneers; very much a family affair.

In 1915 directories record the house as being empty though during the First World War it was requisitioned and occupied for a time by men of the Royal Flying Corps. In April 1921 both houses are again recorded as being unoccupied though at that time owned by Trustees of a “Convent per Elizabeth Adamson”. For a period it would also appear that Kathleen Seale the wife of Henry William Seale, Dealer of Orchard Farm, Lewis Road, Mitcham (who for a period of less than two months owned part of Beddington Park) also owned Queenswood as evidenced by a conveyance dated March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1926 by her to Percy Newbound for the sum of £12,000. In that conveyance Mr. Newbound sub-sold the property to Beddington Brickwork Ltd. for £14,250. After a relatively short life-span therefore Queenswood disappears from the directories although at least until 1925 the lodge (as opposed to Sandhills Lodge that still stands by Croydon Road) remained occupied, to disappear shortly after.

In May 1929 a suggested layout of new roads on the Queenswood estate was rejected by the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council but a compromise was agreed as in April 1930 subject to modifications, planning permission was granted to Messrs. H. Streeter Ltd., for the building of two hundred and five semi-detached residences. By 1933, therefore the estate of houses had begun to take its present form. The former private road known today as Sandhills was in existence with some houses on either side. Royston Avenue had already been built and part of Iberian Avenue though the cottages and stable block of the house remained probably as accommodation for night watch and storage space for materials. In 1935 further development was curtailed but by 1941 the greater part of the estate was complete with the exception of the most northerly houses facing Queen Elizabeth’s Walk along with those at the western end on the north side of Sandhills. Part of the early development of the estate was undertaken by “old man Streeter” of the partnership R. W. and F. Streeter who had moved onto the brickworks site in 1932 and had a horse drawn type caravan sited at the western end of Sandhills. He came to an untimely end; allegedly murdered by his son.

## **The Rectory**

As yet we do not know the location of the mediaeval parson’s house though it would no doubt have stood in relative close proximity to the church. The first Ordnance Survey map (1868) marks an intriguing rectangular open area outlined in dots in the former Carew garden adjoining the church, marked as (Rectory). Might this have been the site of the old parson’s house? A now lost gateway in the old Carew garden wall formerly gave access to Church Path at this point. However, we do know the location of the Portioner’s House in Beddington Park later used as the rectory for at least two hundred years.

We also know of a building for the want of clarity we shall call the ‘Hamilton Rectory’ built on land referred to on the 1820 Enclosure Map as glebe where ‘The Cedars’ (the later ‘Bond Rectory’, now sheltered accommodation for the elderly) now stands in Bond Gardens. This was land assigned to the rector as an important part of his living or endowment, the income from which was his as of right.



When he came to Beddington in 1841, owing to the rift between the former incumbent and his patron there was no rectory for the Rev. Hamilton and his family to move into. As a temporary measure therefore he took up residence (as for a time had his predecessor) in Wallington's Old Manor House until such time as a rectory could be built. With the opening of the National School in October 1843 and having seen to what he felt were the more pressing educational needs of his young parishioners, such was his popularity and patronage he was able to move into a newly built rectory the following year, in July 1844.

The Hamilton rectory was built during the period 1842-3, designed by the architect and surveyor John Brown of Norwich (d.1876) the county Surveyor of Norfolk who included the design in an exhibition held in the Royal Academy in 1844. He was probably known to the Rev. Hamilton through family connections or in his previous incumbency Great Baddow in Essex. Landscaping of the grounds was undertaken during 1842 by the prolific designer and architect John Buonarotti Papworth (1775-1847) who had been extensively employed in the alteration, decoration and landscaping of many notable country houses.

The rectory was typically early Victorian in style built of brick and stone dressing with a pitched and slated roof. The late Mrs. Phyllis Waldon whose mother, widowed during the First World War, held the post of cook/housekeeper to a later incumbent the Rev. Hodgson and his family, particularly remembered the building. Mrs. Chaplin and her two daughters lived out but stayed at the rectory when the Hodgson family were away. Mrs. Waldon recalled a central front door above which was a coat-of-arms (probably that of the Rev. Hamilton) giving access to a wide hall that led through to the back of the house. An impressive half imperial staircase on the right with dark wood panelling on the walls gave access to the upper floors. The newel post at the foot of the stairs was decorated with a heraldic wood-carved lion holding a shield bearing a coat-of-arms similar to that above the front door. This woodcarving was for many years in the possession of Kenneth Bond of Bungay, Suffolk then Patron of the church. By the time of the Rev. Hodgson's occupancy (1891-1925) the house had been enlarged by the addition of a domestic wing.

To the left on entering the front door was the drawing room with a large rectangular shuttered bay window and a view over the lawn. Behind this was the dining room. By the foot of the stairs a door led into a wood panelled study beside which a corridor led off to the right. This corridor gave access to a morning room on the right and a second door to the study on the left. Across the end, a green baize covered door shut off both the domestic area of the house and deadened any noise from behind it. Beyond this door was a small hall, or lobby off which a staircase led up to the servant's quarters beside which was a locked door to the wine cellar to which the Rev. Hodgson only held the key. Off this alcove, another door gave access to the kitchen with its stone flagged floor, copper pans on the walls and a huge coal range that almost took up the whole of one side of the kitchen. A panel with summoning bells for the different rooms within the house was also within the room. Also located in the kitchen were large bins into which the contents of sacks of flour would be emptied when Wallis's, the flour millers made their delivery. Mrs. Waldon also recalled an oak press that had to be screwed down to apply the pressure necessary to prepare meat loaves. Beyond the cellar, another door led into the parlour maid's pantry with floor to ceiling cupboards where the silver was stored as well as a large table upon which it was cleaned. A door opened into a cupboard where polishes,

paraffin and suchlike were kept, and beyond the parlour maid's pantry another gave access to the garden. At the time two gardeners were employed who left the vegetables they had gathered in an old stone sink in the scullery to be washed.

A water heater was located at the top of the main staircase from where the bedrooms, day nursery and a "quaint" layout of rooms were to be found. Another small corridor gave access to further rooms including the night nursery, a room for the nanny and stairs to the attic. Upon their father's re-marriage, his two unmarried daughters had the night nursery converted into their own private sitting room while the second Mrs. Hodgson occupied a room over the domestic wing as her own boudoir.

The grounds, stables and greenhouses were enclosed by a brick wall with (in 1868) the main carriage drive being off Rectory Lane at the Croydon Road end whereas the tradesman's drive led in on the line of the present Bond Gardens. An informal footpath led across the meadow to Rectory Lane.

The Rev. Hodgson retired in 1925 to be succeeded by the Rev. Bond (1925-1944). The Bond family knew the area intimately before they ever took up residence as Rose Edith the wife of the Rector was the eldest daughter of John Henry Bridges of Ewell Court, formerly of Beddington, and the grand-daughter of the late Canon Bridges of Beddington House.

Whether it was the size, the age, or the inconvenience of the by then eighty-three year old building, for whatever reason, in July 1926 the land adjacent to the rectory fronting Croydon Road was sold by the Church for the building of private housing. The Hamilton rectory was demolished and a larger, new brick building, the 'Bond Rectory', later known as 'The Cedars' was in part built on the site of the old. Some features of the former rectory were retained however, including the original staircase, much of the wood panelling and some very fine mahogany doors. In the meantime the Bond family lived in the clergy house 'Knighton' in Maldon Road, Wallington whilst rebuilding was taking place. At the conclusion of the official opening of Beddington Park on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1927 the Bishop of Woolwich then visited the new rectory and held a short ceremony of blessing.

It was during the incumbency of the Rev. Jukes (1944-1961) that probably owing to the cost of maintenance of such a large building a decision was made to sell. The rector moved into 'Dudley House' in Croydon Road almost opposite the entrance to Rectory Lane; the rectory was sold to the contractor's Waites and the grounds developed for housing. During 1956 and into the spring of 1957, with the assistance of the borough council the former Bond rectory was purchased from the developers for £4,000 and converted into sheltered accommodation for the elderly at which time an annexe of a further three units was built under the direction of a local charitable organisation the Beddington and Wallington Housing Society. The purchase and conversion of the building was at a total cost of £9,000. F. H. Claridge and Sons Ltd., of Danbury Terrace, Wallington (a company established in 1885) undertook the conversion and thirteen elderly folk moved into their own flats known today as 'The Cedars' in mid-July 1957. A further annexe was added later. It was at this time Bond Gardens came into being with the houses built c.1956.

Dudley House, 300 Croydon Road now became the rectory. This house was eventually sold and the phase two development of Bloxworth Close begun. In spring 1988 the Rev. David Richardson and his family moved into a new rectory (18 Bloxworth Close) built on the back garden of Dudley House, immediately after which over a two week period either side of Easter the old house was demolished. The Bloxworth Close flats that now stand on the site were built shortly after.

## **Riverside, Bridges Lane**

At the north end of Bridges Lane directly opposite the Mt. Pleasant Cottages and the river stands an ancient composite wall built with bricks from several centuries, the oldest part (of chalk blocks and struck flint) being of probable mediaeval dating. It would appear that perhaps one of a number of repairs was undertaken in 1824 as high above the reach of the passer-by the date 1824, the name I. Turner and the initials HxB are scratched into the brickwork. Enclosed within and built against this wall were a number of buildings that included the coach house and a cottage occupied by domestic staff attached to the house 'Riverside', practically all of which were demolished early in 1994 for the creation of a small housing estate 1-8 'Riverside Mews', developed into 1995. Of two options, that of total demolition or an extra housing unit, local residents supported the plan that retained the boundary wall and the buildings as being an intrinsic part of old Beddington. Apart from the skeleton of the cottage now in use as covered parking and the most ancient part of the wall, everything else was demolished during redevelopment.

With a frontage to Bridges lane and thought to be of early eighteenth century dating, a building is indicated on Rocque's map published in the early 1760s though the first identifiable recorded ownership of 'Riverside' yet found is that of Ann Paston Gee when the parish was enclosed in 1820. At that time the house was occupied by the Rev. Ferrers after his being evicted from the Portioner's House and his short tenancy of Wallington Manor. He died there in June 1841, aged 83.

Andrew Collyer Esq. became the tenant from Christmas 1842 on a twenty-one year lease paying £30 per annum rent, but by this time the property needed a great number of repairs and this comparatively low amount was reached by way of a premium on his agreement to undertake a considerable amount of restoration at his own expense. Described as "a delightful freehold residence", Riverside was placed on the market in 1859 as part of the Carew estates. The house was described as brick built and tiled and was large certainly by today's standards but modest when compared to its immediate neighbour Beddington House. It appeared to be similar in appearance to, and probably of contemporary date to another neighbour Wandle Court.

The building was entered via a hall on the ground floor off which were three large rooms, a drawing room, dining room and breakfast room and the domestic offices, servant's hall, kitchen, scullery, wine, beer and coal cellars and two water closets. Upstairs were four bedrooms, one dressing room and three attics. Other buildings associated with the estate were a coach house, harness room, three stall stables, a second stable for two horses, a tool house and cow house, the whole amounting to a little over nine acres. A kitchen garden, pleasure gardens "tastefully dispersed and studded with ornamental timber trees

and exuberant shrubs” along with “capital meadow land” extending to the east of the house on the south side of the Bridle Path. The land and buildings were purchased by its tenant for £2,400.

Between 1868 and 1870 Riverside was substantially extended as reference is made to the old and new parts of the house, when following his early death at the age of forty-two in July 1870, an Inventory of the furniture and effects of Andrew Collyer’s son, Bristow Collyer was made for probate. That the house had been considerably extended is also confirmed by later maps that show an additional L shaped wing and further ancillary buildings. The Inventory gives us a picture of the house at that time with leading from the hall, a spacious lounge and a 23ft. 7ins. by 18ft. 3ins. billiard room opening to a cloak room, a gentleman’s lavatory and a store closet. Other rooms were a 29ft. 9ins. by 16ft. 6ins. dining room that gave access to a back corridor, a morning room, library and pantry. There were seven bedrooms on lower and half landings on the first floor, along with five secondary and three servant’s bedrooms in what was previously described as three attics. Domestic offices included an ante-room, butler’s pantry, kitchen, scullery pantry, butler’s bedroom and housekeeper’s room, a servant’s hall measuring some 20ft. 6ins. by 13ft., a washhouse and tradesman’s entrance. In the coach house was a waggonette, a double Brougham and a Stanhope Phaeton while housed in the stables were Flora a chestnut; a brown horse named Volligen; a black named The Moor and another un-named brown mare.

According to the Church Rate of February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1871 it would appear that the Rev. Bridges purchased Riverside and let the house to Dora Rich (probably of the same family of whom married into both the Laurence and Trollope families). In April 1871 the census describes this sixty-three year old unmarried lady as an “Annuitant” and “Head of Household” who was occupying the property along with a servant, a boarder, her coachman and his family. The housekeeper was living in the cottage built on to the boundary wall the entrance to which was off ‘Riverside Path’ the later Bridle Path. By 1872 William Pott a prominent vinegar merchant of London who in the 1850s and 60s had lived in Wallington Old Manor House was living there and in 1879 his son Major Robert Pott. In about 1879 Canon Bridges enclosed part of the grounds that lay adjacent to the corner of today’s Tritton Avenue for the building of a house later known as Kingsley. The ownership of Riverside passed to John Henry Bridges on the death of his father in 1891.

In 1886 Riverside was occupied by Simpson Rostron who died in November 1907 survived by his wife Christina, two sons and five daughters. His wife remained at Riverside until about 1909. She died in the 1920s and was buried with her husband at Beddington. Mrs. Jessie Moon is recorded as being tenant of the house in 1915.

In 1922 we note from directories the name F.H. (Frank) Christmas as occupant until about 1928. In October of that year an agreement was reached between the then owner T.E. McColloch and the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council that they take a 17ft. strip of land along a frontage of about 418ft. in order to widen the Bridle Path up to what is now Cedars Road. The agreement was provisional that surface water drains were laid, sewers were constructed and connections made to any houses built there in the future. In December of 1928 the application made by Messrs. McColloch and Kingslake

to built sixteen semi-detached houses on this land was given approval. As we have no record of Riverside subsequently one must assume it was demolished at about this time. Six houses numbered 7-17 on the east side of Bridges Lane built on the former grounds (one of which was to be named 'Riverside') appeared during the 1929-1930 period. They were first noted in directories published in 1931 (probably compiled the October previously); two were yet unoccupied.

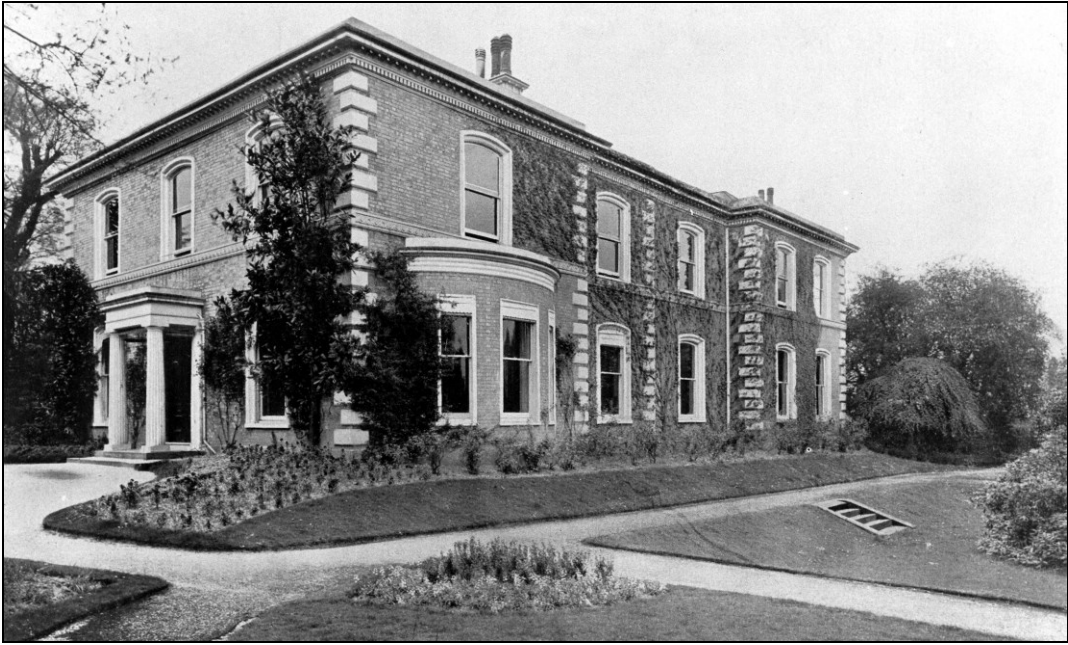
By 1926 until about 1931 the firm of McColloch and Kingslake who developed the Beddington House Estate along with that of Riverside, occupied 'Riverside Works' the former outbuildings. For a number of years in the 1980s they were occupied by the Industrial Metal firm of A.H. Boyes & Co. and subsequently, after sundry other tenants the buildings stood unoccupied becoming increasingly derelict until in 1994 the area was cleared prior to redevelopment. An archaeological dig on the site revealed little of interest apart from some foundations of the old house and a clay pipe bowl (one of the earliest yet found in the borough) dating from c.1640s to the 1680s.

## **Sandhills**

Though the smaller of the two, 'Sandhills' as the nearby 'Queenswood' were houses that no doubt owing to the ever spiralling value of land and cost of upkeep came and disappeared within a century leaving little trace of their existence. The name however remains in the road of modern homes rising uphill from Croydon Road near its junction with Hilliers Lane. On the right of the corner the attractive lodge to the house (bearing the date 1863 and a yet unidentified Coat of Arms) still stands.

On land known as Brackey Close, along with that upon which the house Queenswood was also built, the field was described as "fine arable and pasture-land commanding most magnificent views of the surrounding country for many miles which renders it most desirable for the erection of a mansion". On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1859 Brackey Close was purchased by Edward Henry Moses, the field was sub-divided and the building of both houses begun shortly after.' Sandhills' stood on the high ground opposite to and half way between what is now Streeters Lane and Guy Road with the land it was built upon extending to an area of about three acres backing onto Queen Elizabeth's Walk.

The main entrance was via a private road that served both houses, access to Sandhills being uphill on the right. A curved drive swept around to the front of the house while the coach house and stable buildings were accessed via the arched entrance of the lodge. Lawns, one of which was used for tennis, flower beds and pathways lay between the house and lodge. Although substantial it was certainly not as imposing as its neighbour. Access was via a porch supported by fluted columns; off the entrance hall were two large rooms used as a drawing room and dining room, a study, schoolroom, and a 25ft. by 18ft. 6ins. billiard room. Upstairs were six bedrooms and two bathrooms. Two large servant's rooms and a housemaid's cupboard were also on the first floor of a wing approached by a separate staircase below which would have been the large kitchen and domestic areas. In the basement was the wine cellar. Fronting the stables on either side of the arched entrance to the yard were two lodge cottages each of three bedrooms with fireplaces, a sitting room, living room with range and sink, a wash-house and the usual outbuildings.



*'Sandhills' had a short life span but the attractive entrance lodge dated 1863 (below) still stands on the corner of Sandhills and Croydon Road.*



The earliest census record available (April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1871) enumerates only the gardener George Outram with his wife and family as living on the property. The first available street directories dating from 1876 name F.H. Kay as being the then occupant and in 1878, a Mrs. Horncastle though it is felt this may be a printers error as in a will we have reference to a Susan Hardcastle of Sandhills, a spinster who died in 1879 leaving her mother then resident in the house. Bequeathed to her as part of her husband's estate following his death in November 1878, a later occupant was Mrs. Joseph Laurence formerly of Brandries Hill House who moved to Sandhills and lived there from about 1881 until around the time of her own death in 1885. From c.1886 an insurance broker, widower William Symondson and members of his family lived there until c.1902. Thereafter, apart from the occupancy of A. Sherran-Thompson for the next six years or thereabouts, the house was to stand empty or with short occupancies until both Sandhills and Queenswood were offered for sale in October 1914 as part of the estate of the late owner of both properties Joseph Trollope, after which Sandhills is again noted as being unoccupied. In 1921 both properties (Sandhills and Queenswood) are recorded as being owned by the Trustees of a Convent in the name of Elizabeth Adamson. Listing for the empty house disappears from directories in 1924 indicating it was probably demolished at some time during the previous year.

### **Shepherd's Cottage site of the later Grasmere, Beddington Lane**

This building part of the farm known as the 'Lower Homestead', stood on the west side of Beddington Lane a short distance north of what was later to become Mile Road.

'Shepherd's Cottage' was indeed two cottages under the same roof with the usual outbuildings associated with old farm cottages, a barn, yard, stables, cattle sheds, blacksmith's forge and granary. It had stood on the site from at least the mid-1700s though probably for a long time before that, the name giving a possible clue as to the livelihood of an early occupant. The cottages disappeared at some time between the 1859 sale of Carew lands and 1868 though a number of the farm buildings are thought may have initially survived in the outbuildings of the later 'Grasmere', 83 Beddington Lane. The latter house was built as part of the development of the sewage farm when it was expanded to land on the west side of the lane. Grasmere still stands behind a high fence used as an administrative building to Country Skips, the business of which almost overwhelms it in an unsightly area of skips, dust, mud and rubbish.

### **Tritton Cottages, Hilliers Lane**

By the then narrower roadside in front of 'Beacon Place', once stood five small terraced cottages in 1820 owned by the Meeke family of Wandle Court, demolished at some time before 1868. Between 1897 and 1913 a semi-detached house was built uphill to and forward of these old cottages, but this in turn was to have a relatively short life-span being demolished post war. At this point the footpath narrowed dramatically until being widened at the time of the Hilliers Lane/Croydon Road junction improvements in 1989. This is where, (opposite the Brandries steps), in front of the present house 'Wainwheels', there stood a second group of three ancient cottages that were probably contemporary with the five. A high napped flint wall led from beside the end cottage uphill to the gates of Manor Farm.

These cement rendered houses known as 1, 2 and 3 'Tritton Cottages' (the centre one of which retained a boarded exterior) were offered for sale in October 1901 as part of the estate of the late Henry Tritton. Each cottage of four rooms with a wash-house and an outside toilet was let to a tenant who paid a nominal ten shillings a week rent. Water was laid-on and by then the buildings were connected to the sewer. The land upon which the cottages were built had been a field of a little over five acres that lay directly uphill of the house known as 'The Ford' that stood by the river. The land was purchased by the local builder and developer Gideon Smith who demolished the old cottages and built the houses seen in Hilliers Lane today.

## **The Village Hall, Beddington Lane**

A plaque within the Village Hall reads: "To the honour and glory of God and in loving memory of Madalina Trollope (of "Queenswood" in this Parish). This hall was erected by her husband and family and dedicated by The Right Reverend, the Lord Bishop of Rochester November 23rd 1901".

When the land came on to the market in about May 1900, with the help of the Rochester Diocesan Society and parishioners at Beddington, the Rector the Rev. H.A. Hodgson was able to acquire the site of the hall and the adjoining lake. It was purchased for £450 from the estate of the late Dr. Alfred Carpenter. Joseph Trollope of Queenswood having heard of the proposed purchase, subject to agreement of the plans, offered to bear the cost of the building as a memorial to his late wife Madalina who had died on March 31<sup>st</sup> earlier that year. The land (in use in the 1880s as an ornamental garden with a summer house, streams and footbridges) was conveyed to the Church Trust on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1900, held by the Southwark and Rochester Diocesan Church Trust, for ecclesiastical and charitable purposes.

By public subscription and various other fund raising activities such as buying a brick, the local residents raised part of the cost of the land as well as paying for the caretaker's house and the many incidental expenses. In June 1901 in ideal weather, a bazaar and garden fete was held over two days to raise money jointly for the hall project and for the reconstruction of the organ in the parish church. The two-day event was such a success that the hall was opened practically free from debt.

Influenced by the Arts and Crafts style, the plans were drawn up by the architect Campbell Jones and the hall constructed by the local building contractors Dawson and Son under the superintendence of Mr. Brill. It was built of brick with red Kentish plain tiles and had a stage with a fireplace at the west end. The stage, if necessary, could be divided by a set of revolving shutters. The floor of pitch-pine was laid on floated cement, each block being bedded in bitumen and the building was lit by four Coronna pendant gaslights. The floor was re-laid and the stage removed as part of the refurbishment of the hall in about 1995. The Lord Bishop of Rochester (within whose Diocese the parish lay) opened the building in the presence of a great number of dignitaries and local people on Saturday afternoon November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1901.



The Village Hall was not only to be used as a mission hall for additional services and religious study but for “every good, profitable and wholesome purpose”. Initially Thursday evenings were set aside for lectures and similar activities for which there was a metal cover in the centre of the parquet wood floor leading to the gas supply for the magic lantern. On these evenings slides of a religious nature or on travel were usually shown. On the stage another metal cover gave access to the gas power supply for the floodlights. The Church Lads’ Brigade, Young Men’s Friendly Society, Mothers’ Meeting, the Band of Hope and a very active amateur dramatic group also met in the hall. Three-day bazaars, fetes and concerts, often with military bands were held there while gramophone recitals were always packed and warmly received.

As early as January 1902 a gymnastic class was begun under the guidance of Sgt. Gully at 3d. (1p.) per session that was still running in the 1930s supervised by Fred. Mighell. In January 1915 a lending library was also opened under the superintendence of Mrs. Vale. The books stored in cabinets on the stage and moved about on castors, were transferred to Wallington and the circulating library closed in 1936 when the new library, built by the Urban District Council, was opened.

Throughout the years the village hall has been the scene of all manner of community activities. During the First World War, in December 1917, the 363rd Reserve Employment Company was set up. It was comprised of men, 75% of whom had seen service at the front and some of whom had been wounded on more than the one occasion. To accommodate the Company the hall was opened as a Recreation Room between 6pm and 9pm each week day where magazines, newspapers, games etc. and a canteen was provided under the management of a committee of local ladies. Reputedly one of the best-organised groups in Eastern Command, the Company was disbanded just a year later in December 1918 shortly after the end of the war.

By the late 1980s although still used by a few groups the hall was badly in need of renovation and desperately needed a great deal of investment to save it from further decay. When the church was unable to undertake the necessary repairs and upgrade the building there was a very strong possibility the building would have been lost to Beddington. Under the guidance of the then local councillor Daphne Gvozdenovic however, in November 1993 management passed to a committee of local people and representatives of user groups and a programme of fund raising for refurbishment of the building began. The car park was upgraded and landscaped in 2000.

As originally intended the building is used for secular as well as religious purposes and is in constant use with social occasions, meetings, exercise and pre-school play groups, Sixty Plus Club, 1st and 5th Beddington Guides, 3rd Beddington Brownies, 4th Beddington Rainbows, Taekwondo, Shotokan karate, dancing, thrift club, even to dog obedience classes - a building over a century later still very much at the heart of the community.

## **Wandle Cottage, Beddington Lane**

It was after the death of her mother in 1901 that Miss Mary Eleanor Tritton formerly of Wandle Court moved into the smaller, newly built 'Wandle Cottage' where she was to reside until her own death in March 1927. Commonly referred to as 'Tritton Cottage' this double-fronted stock brick, slate roofed house that still stands at 9 Beddington Lane had been built for and was owned by Walter Cole who lived almost opposite in The Willows.

Wandle Cottage was at one time divided from the village hall by a small stream that, having watered the Goose Green allotments had been channelled beneath the lane and flowed away the length of the garden before meeting with another that fed the Guy Road watercress beds behind the house. Today however 7A Beddington Lane built during the summer and into the winter of 1994-95 stands between the two buildings on part of the ground belonging to Wandle Cottage. The greater part of the small front garden had been compulsory purchased for road widening some years previously.

## **Wandle Court, Bridges Lane**

As with other notable houses of similar dating that once stood in Beddington, little is known of the history of Wandle Court. It would appear that a building with enclosing walls stood on the site in the mid-1700s and again, one would question whether the land (all in relatively small plots) had been sold off by the Carew family to finance repair or rebuilding of the manor house earlier in the eighteenth century.

Described as a "mansion" by the Tithe Commissioners in 1840, 'Wandle Court' was a fine brick house that stood adjacent to the river path facing Bridges Lane until being demolished in about 1935. Built at a time when there was no shortage of labour to staff such homes, it was one of a number of large houses to be found in close proximity to one another in and around "the village". Though situated far enough away from the capital to claim the benefits of country living, these houses were reasonably accessible to London in an area of much natural beauty and one already favoured by the gentry.

The house was of three storeys with a double mansard slate roof, set back from the lane built in Queen Anne style with five steps leading up to a portico supported by four elegant white columns above a central front door. Overlooking the garden and orchard at the back of the house, as opposed to the austere straight lines of the front were two large semi-circular bay windows, each bay having three tall windows extending from floor to ceiling. It is of interest to note that the drawing room overlooking the garden (entrance to which was gained from an ante-room off the entrance hall) had a fireplace fitted with a revolving/disappearing fireguard that when drawn, entirely enclosed the fireplace opening. It was provided not only to arrest any sparks but to protect the ladies from fire when voluminous gowns were worn in an age possibly not so much of freedom and comfort but of undoubted elegance. On the south side (a possibly later addition on an east-west alignment) stood a large wing housing the service quarters.

To date, the earliest reference we have to Wandle Court and its occupiers are the Land Tax Records of 1780 from where we learn that James Walton owned two substantial houses and land, the one we know to have been Wandle Court, the other Brandries Hill



*'Wandle Court' the country home of the Tritton family. The front above and below, as seen from the garden. This 18<sup>th</sup> century house enclosed by high brick walls stood in Bridges Lane opposite the Mt. Pleasant Cottages.*



House. He died in 1782. Of he and his successors little is known apart from their obvious wealth. Members of the family were buried within the chancel of the parish church. An inscribed slab in the chancel records the burial in December 1756 of Elizabeth Walton the youngest daughter of William Walton and his wife Phillipa, who was the daughter and co-heiress of John Bouchier of Essex. Another, Bouchier Walton, a London merchant, son of William and Phillipa who died on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1779 at the age of seventy was buried beneath an inscribed slab under the tower near the west door.

By 1788 however, John Walton a Director and sometime Chairman of the Bank of England was listed as the owner of both properties until his death in April 1802. He was buried in a vault in the chancel at which time the Rev. Ferrers noted in the register that there was room left for three more though for admission in future ten guineas was to be paid for each coffin. Although his wife Ann died at the Rectory House, St. Paul's Cray, Kent in August 1816, she was also buried at Beddington as was Ann, their unmarried daughter described as "the last of her father's family", who died in her 72<sup>nd</sup> year in July 1823.

In about 1807 James Penluze Esq. appears to have come into possession of the estate after a period of it being unoccupied. By 1809 Wandle Court had become the property of James Bensen and two years later is noted as being occupied by a tenant John Pyne. By 1819 ownership of the property had already passed to William Meek(e) until his death in about 1830 after which his widow Mary continued occupancy of the house. In 1845, Henry Tritton purchased Wandle Court that was to become the family home until the death of his wife in 1901. The estate originally extended two-thirds of the way up Bridges Lane and as far across as Hilliers Lane. It included that which is now the site of Old Ford House and a group of cottages latterly known as Tritton Cottages that stood facing Hilliers Lane uphill towards the junction with Croydon Road.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1901 following the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Tritton the previous June, Daniel Watney and Sons conducted the sale of the remaining freehold properties formerly belonging to her late husband at which time Wandle Court was offered for sale. The house was described as an "excellent, comfortable old-fashioned family residence" with stone paved entrance hall, eight bedrooms on the upper floor; on the first floor three other large bedrooms with bay windows each having its own dressing room, and one bathroom. On the ground floor a large dining room of 24ft. 6ins. by 18ft. 4ins. with three French windows opened onto the lawn. A drawing room of similar dimensions and outlook, library and ante-room and the domestic offices made up the remainder of the accommodation. In the basement were extensive cellars and the furnace.

Apart from a detached stable for five horses, loose-box, coach house and outbuildings with loft over, two ranges of vineries, greenhouses, brew house etc. there was a detached timber and slate bath house described as such in 1887. By 1901 this building was described as "formerly being used as a swimming bath but recently utilised as a mushroom house", the brew house was then in use as storage space for the garden.

Alfred Henry Allen the owner of Waddon Flour Mills and a bakery at St. James Road, Croydon purchased the house c.1905-06 and was to live there until about 1925 as the

following year directories indicate Wandle Court as being unoccupied. In 1926 the house was converted into four flats by W. Braxton Sinclair, the south (or domestic) wing was demolished and two garages built on the site but otherwise outwardly the building remained basically unaltered. Each main floor was converted into one flat while the attic was converted into two with glass doors leading from the sitting room of the two upper flats out onto the leads above the bays that were utilised as roof gardens.

Although some of the “fine old timber” still stands including a cedar and yew trees, the greater part of the expansive lawns and rose gardens once seen from the garden front have gone. The only other vestige of the original house is the one Coade stone vermiculated gate pier surmounted by a vase finial that still stands by the Bridges Lane entrance to the property. The converted mansion was demolished probably in the latter part of 1935 to be replaced by the block of eighteen flats we see there today that were first occupied in 1937. The row of eight homes known as ‘Wandle Lodge’ some with original Crittall windows were built in the grounds c.1937, first listed in Electoral Registers in 1938.

## **The Willows, Beddington Lane**

At 28A Beddington Lane stands a double-fronted whitewashed brick house with until recently the name ‘The Willows’ still visible on the glass above the front door. Today it houses an Aquarium Centre. The former stables and outbuildings at the back, were until recently part of The Beddington Warehouse, carpet and furnishings business. A strip of land adjoining the northern boundary, between the grounds of house and the allotments, once the site of an oil delivery depot, was incorporated into the property in 1987, where later garden ornaments were displayed for sale.

It unclear as to exactly when The Willows was built, on land that had been a meadow, part of the snuff mill Five Acre Mead. It would appear that Walter Cole the owner and for whom it was probably built came onto the scene in the early 1870s, for by May 1871 until about 1880 he occupied the nearby beer house, the Harvest Home. By 1881 though the beer house had passed to the management of another Walter Cole was listed as the owner of an unidentified house and stables (probably The Willows). By December 1882 he also owned two further cottages in Richmond Road. Cole was also a tenant of land at Russell Hill, Purley owned by Norman Watney of Queenswood. The first reference to a house named ‘The Willows’ is in the rate of 1891. Walter Cole also owned a number of other properties in Beddington Lane including houses that stood opposite - Fern Cottages and Wandle Cottage, Beddington Lodge and The Lindens further north nearer the railway.

Obviously a man of enterprise, at some time he also ran a dairy business from The Willows delivering milk to local households until A.E. (Bert) Petchey (who lived opposite in Hazel Cottages) became tenant of some of the outbuildings and subsequently took over the business from him. From the Beddington Lane depot, Petchy’s ‘Wandle Dairies’ provided a service of two deliveries each day, once before breakfast and the second mid-morning, using a hand pushed milk float to deliver locally. Customer’s jugs and billycans were filled by a ladle dipped into the churn carried on the float. “Nursery milk” was a speciality. H.L. Robinson was to take over from Bert Petchy who in turn sold out to George Andrews a former roundsman employed by them at which time he had a large

glazed porcelain swan displayed in the window. On the death of Walter Cole at the age of eighty-four in February 1926, The Willows came into the hands of Mr. Andrews who for the previous nine years or thereabouts had also been the proprietor of the confectionery business next door. The name 'Andrews Yard' arose from this period of occupancy.

It is said that at some time there was a foundry of some description housed within the outbuildings and in 1932 we find Aldous Brothers, The Bridge Garage in directories immediately before the entry for the Goose Green allotments. In 1937 there was an additional entry at number 30, A. Aldous advertised as being a "High Class Shoe Repairer" the business of which was established in 1924, though Mr. Andrews still occupied the house itself. At one time part of The Willows or its outbuildings was occupied by a Dry Cleaning business known as Radiant Cleaners.

When the Lawman family, father and three sons acquired the house and outbuildings in about 1975 the floor of their small office was cobbled and the mangers were still attached to the walls. The buildings were semi-derelict but have been sympathetically restored and retain much of their rural charm.



*Walter Cole in front of his home 'The Willows' in Beddington Lane.*

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

### Beddington Park

The park as we see it today is a fragment of what was a large deer park attached to the Carew mansion which at the end of the sixteenth century extended north to the edge of Mitcham Common covering an area of about 575 acres of woodland and open grassy areas. It is not known who created the deer park - it may have been Nicholas Carew (d.1390) following his marriage to the heiress Lucy Huscarle although it may well have preceded his coming to Beddington. It is known that a later member of the family, Richard Carew extended the deer park during the period 1492-1520, but at some time in the seventeenth or eighteenth century the northern part was divided into fields, possibly at a time of rebuilding when the family was particularly short of finance.

In the south-west corner on part of the playing fields of the then Wallington High (now County Grammar) School and in the field lying due north in the park itself, during excavations undertaken by Mrs. Janet Birch of the local Archaeological Society between 1921 and 1923, evidence of an Iron Age village was found. It took the form of earthworks, a large circular depression some 72ft. in diameter that showed a well defined bank towards the Wandle. There was a projection interpreted as being a dipping place with some large bedded flints forming a stance. Within the enclosure below the surface tip, a small amount of mediaeval glazed ware and some early black and red coarse pottery, a few pot-boilers and worked flint (one of which was pronounced Neolithic) along with bones and one much used bone implement were found. Traces of iron and a small, forked bronze terminal of a leather strap with a sheath, said to be mediaeval were also found. In all eight sections were opened producing finds of the same mixed character; a flint factory, a spindle whorl, a piece of a Roman bracelet made of bronze, fragments of Roman tile and fragments of pottery both pre-Roman and Saxon.

In 1923 a feature interpreted as being section of a Roman road composed of a layer of flint and gravel, some ten inches thick and about thirteen feet across, bedded on sand was found seemingly leading in the direction of the church. Probing over a large area disclosed the presence of a hard sub-stratum, apparently similar in character that appeared in places to be a continuation of the feature. A long linear crop mark that shows on an aerial photograph along this line is now thought to be a medieval track. Owing to her death in a road accident however, Mrs. Birch's investigations were never fully followed up. The finds suggested that the area was occupied during the period prior to the Roman conquest and it is thought that here may have been the original 'Wealhton' or British settlement, the original Wallington.

Unevenness of the ground in adjacent fields such as Park Close (known as such in 1771), to the left of the present entrance to the park off Croydon Road, and more so the field to the right Break Hill (1840), and other areas where mysterious crop marks appear both to the north and the south of the river, pose additional questions. Those to the north of the Wandle may well be signs of past settlement or possibly a water flow and mill site.

Alternatively, they might only be attributed to an industry carried out at the beginning of the nineteenth century when otherwise wasteland was used for the bleaching of cloth as part of the establishment of William Kilburn who occupied Wallington mill in 1805. Calico required bleaching for the home market, a lengthy process when Bleachers (then called Whitsters i.e. whiteners) covered any available ground in a suitable area with lengths of material so that it was often mistaken for snow. The bleaching process was described in the Victoria County History “the cloth was washed in ley made from wood ashes, then rinsed and afterwards spread on the grass and the men walking along the edge of the ditches, by means of scoops, skilfully drenched the calico. The action of the sun caused the calico to become white in about a month’s time if the weather were favourable”. With new methods of bleaching being introduced the industry in its ancient form declined as did the popularity of calico following the end of the Napoleonic wars when silks and satins became more readily available. Some of the long channel-like marks seen during the summer may therefore either have been the ditches used in the calico bleaching process or part of what had been a natural watercourse.

Crop marks nearer the church however have been identified as the site of a house at one time used as a rectory, the Portioner’s house that stood on the field between the burial ground opposite the church and Croydon Road. Less easily identified is the line of Freron Lane a “lost” north-south thoroughfare aligned west of the house that gave access to the church before Church Road came into being.

If one had been in the area of the park on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1824 you would have seen a most unusual, and as it transpired tragic event as it was about to happen. A hot air balloon piloted by aeronaut James Harris, having first touched down at Duppas Hill carried on to Beddington where it came crashing to earth killing him and seriously injuring the young lady accompanying him. In 1824 this would still have been an unusual sight especially in this rural area for ballooning at this time was still a relatively new activity. Mr. Harris, resplendent in a blue naval uniform richly embroidered with gold, ascended from the City Road, London E.C.1 (the same location that in 1784 Lunardi made the first balloon ascent in England) in one of the largest balloons ever constructed. He was accompanied by Miss Stocks, a lass of about nineteen years of age who had been a casual spectator in the Eagle Tavern gardens and had volunteered herself to fly with him. They set off at about 4.30 and at about 5.00pm Anthony Geary, Mrs Gee’s game-keeper who was in the park heard a “loud rumbling noise, as of thunder at a great distance” and looking up saw the balloon come crashing down from about ninety-feet up, forty or fifty yards from where he was standing. It would appear that as Mr. Harris had prepared to descend he pulled the valve line, and whatever the cause, too much gas evaporated and they came straight down. After colliding with the branch of an oak tree, the occupants were found beneath the basket with the balloon flapping in the wind. Mr. Harris had been killed instantly whereas Miss Stocks suffered from shock and complained of severe pain, though no bones were broken. Attended by local surgeon Mr. Wallace she was taken to The Plough where she soon recovered though, because of her distress and agitation, she was not told that Mr. Harris’s body lay in the next room. In an illustration of the event, deer enclosed within a high five-barred iron fence rear and bolt away in fright. In 1852 the deer were sold.





*Thirlby's Dairy Farm in the Beddington Park Cottages.*

In 1857 H. Batchelor of the 'Fruit and Potato Warehouse' in Surrey Street, Croydon advertised that he had purchased all the walnuts from Beddington and Carshalton Parks that he was willing to supply on very moderate terms, upholding a tradition commented upon by John Evelyn when in 1792 he wrote that Beddington Park is still famous for walnut-trees. There was at one time an annual St. Matthew's Day Walnut Fair (the earliest reference to which is 1644) held in Croydon on September 21<sup>st</sup> (that was to become October 2<sup>nd</sup> after the calendar change of 1752). One of the last of these old trees standing on the meadow formerly attached to the Portionary known as 'The Warren' was felled in about 1907. This field along with Break Hill is one upon which walnuts have traditionally been grown, a number of the more recently planted trees of which were lost in the Great Storm of 1987. There has been replacement plantings including a copse of some six trees planted in the area of Break Hill in the early 1990s.

In June 1859, marking the bankruptcy of the last of the Carew heirs to bear the title Lord of the Manor the land was sub-divided and offered for sale. Not immediately sold, in 1860 the greater part of the park including land to the south of the church known as 'Sharpes' or 'Church Field' (now dissected by Church Road), part of which is known as 'The Paddock' was purchased by Joseph Atkins Borsley. At some time prior to Lady Day, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1871 the land was sold on to the Rev. Bridges who in turn leased it to Mr. Thirlby resident in the terrace of cottages adjacent to the Dovecote who grazed his dairy cattle on the rich river flats of what is now the park. In 1875, for £4,500 Canon Bridges purchased the row of cottages from the Orphanage along with 8½ acres of land, buildings and timber.

Having purchased the park Canon Bridges set about a number of alterations (according to Smee, not all of them improvements). In 1872, he tells us that “within the last few years the river has been diverted from its ancient course and into a newly constructed channel at which time the waterfall and the old canal were removed”. Smee also tells us of an old oak called ‘Queen Elizabeth’s oak’ removed for the ugly new watercourse and taken to a timber yard in Croydon. And again, “at the present time workmen are employed to divert the river a second time and a stone bridge has been constructed”. Naturalists and children alike however take pleasure in the low parapet upstream of this bridge with its representations of pond and river life, and wonder as to what the badly weathered stone heads on the keystone of the arch represented, only one of which now remains. The drop in the level of the water table is clearly illustrated by how far beneath the carved parapet the water is seen when in normal flow today. Prior to the alterations the river had been in a very bad state in that it was full of weeds and had three or four different channels unified at this time.

The old canal to which Smee referred was a long narrow watercourse on an east-west alignment that lay in the park in front of the mansion, part of an ornamental layout created by Nicholas Carew (1687-1727) the First Baronet in the early eighteenth century. He extended and modernised the house and created the canal which prompted Daniel Defoe to comment: “the court [the house] ... is extremely fine and the canal in the park before the court, is so well, that nothing could be better, having a river running thro it; the gardens are exceedingly enlarged, they take up all the flat part of the park for two or three miles...”

The canal was lined to either side by a row of elms, parallel to which grew an avenue of chestnut trees. The shallow depression that marks the former line of this watercourse can still be detected, as can the worked stone bordering the edge that lies just beneath the grass. Though greatly diminished in volume, water that also drains the churchyard still flows from springs through part of the culverted moat of the former Carew mansion and is channelled via an underground pipe along the length of the former canal. At the west end of the canal a cascade that at one time allowed the flow of water back into the river has gone, but an additional outlet contemporary with the cascade still exists though modified in 1998 when the Environment Agency undertook work to naturalise the river bank.

An ornamental planting of trees, probably limes (the lime being the motto tree of William and Mary) radiated out from either side of the central canal, a common feature in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century parks. The avenue of limes we see there today is a later planting to either side of a pathway aligned on higher ground above a former course. In 1978, the “Beddington Hoard”, three and one half silver pennies, coinage of William the Conqueror were unearthed on what was formerly the rising ground of the riverbank. Produced between 1075 and 1078 the coins are thought to have been either lost, or more probably deliberately buried around that time. Silver pennies were the only coins struck at that period, half pennies (as was one of those found) and farthings being produced by cutting the pennies into halves and quarters. Of the pennies, one was minted in Canterbury the other two in Thetford, Norfolk. The cut halfpenny was minted in London. Declared Treasure Trove by a Coroner’s Inquest in Croydon, the coins have been retained by the Borough and are on display at Honeywood Museum in Carshalton. Near

the east end of this rise into the higher ground of Break Hill the river was crossed with what appeared (c.1872) to be a rustic wooden bridge that along with the river channel it crossed at this point, has long since disappeared.

Today the park has in total four lodges one being a delightful Tudor style building standing at the end of Church Road designed by the architect Joseph Clarke F.S.A. for Canon Bridges and built by Messrs. Roberts of Rhidol Terrace, Islington. This lodge (in 2003 having passed into private ownership) is half-timbered, the wood of which was originally painted black. In 1919 when the park was offered for sale as part of Canon Bridges' estate, it was described as "expensively built" in brick and flint with a tiled roof; it is decorated with ornamental plasterwork influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Above the lintel of the carved oak open porch is the date 1877. The windows were originally coloured with stained or painted glass with designs and inscriptions in various colours, a few small panes of which can still be seen. The building of the lodge no doubt prompted Canon Bridges to negotiate with the Croydon Gas Company who in 1878 agreed to place a lamp opposite the Orphanage. A long-time resident of The Lodge was Albert Pulling, Agent to John Henry Bridges. He was the eldest son of the late Rev. James Pulling, Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridgeshire and godson of H.R.H. Prince Albert, the Prince Consort. Albert Pulling died in September 1914.

The lodge on London Road is in rustic Tudor style and of an earlier date. It is of one storey, brick and cement built. Though a brook that flows in front it is shown on a mid-eighteenth century map there is no building indicated on the site. Inconsistencies in the style and evidence of the map tell us that past descriptions of its being 'Tudor' would seem to be erroneous. It had a thatched roof that was removed and not replaced in the summer of 1932 "in case of fire". A thatched out-house in the same style stood in behind but detached from the lodge. The West Lodge has subsequently passed into private ownership and in 2008 was almost totally rebuilt. For some years, an area of land on the north side of the stream behind the house was enclosed as a bird sanctuary. In 1820 the Carew mansion was approached either by a drive entering from London Road along the north side of the lake (hence this particular lodge) or by a shorter route in from Freron Lane. Two brick-built houses to either side of the Croydon Road entrance to the park are modern replacements for two earlier houses 'Grange Cottages' bombed in 1944 that stood more into the park, built in 1928 to house ground staff.

Canon Bridges also commissioned Joseph Clarke to design the rustic cricket and archery pavilion and no doubt the brick and terracotta bridge that has the initials AHB entwined upon the keystone of the arch. Having been vandalised in the past, the bridge was further damaged during the storm in October 1987 when a beech tree fell onto and demolished the west side necessitating almost complete reconstruction of the whole. The bricks used in the original construction were found to have been made by R. Allen of Ballingdon, Suffolk and the tiles produced by the Watcombe Pottery, St. Mary Church, Torquay, South Devon. The bridge was faithfully restored using tiles specially produced by the Shaw Hereford Tile Company of Darwen, Lancashire as the Watcombe Pottery had ceased production some decades previously. Nigel Cox Ltd., of Putney Bridge Road restored the stonework and the bridge re-opened in May 1990.



*The west lodge to Beddington Park.*

At one time the park was fenced off to either side along the length of Church Road and gated by the south-western end of the churchyard. The area of the park itself was let for grazing to Mr. Thirlby who in an advertisement dated 1903 “respectfully invited customers to view stock and dairy from where he provides a delivery service, waiting on families three times daily”. The footpath, an extension of Church Path probably a very ancient Right of Way was preserved enclosed by an iron deer fence from beside the ‘new’ burial ground to the exit which was by way of a kissing gate to London Road. Stands of trees were similarly railed off. A gateway giving access to The Grange estate lay off the path immediately on the far side of the flint bridge nearby to which stood an ancient elm, a massive tree that disappeared in the 1940s.

Access to the general public was limited to one day in the year, August Bank Holiday when a Horticultural Show and Fête were held, one of the highlights of the village year. On this day the Ancient Order of Foresters would form a procession that started at Wrythe Green and walk to the park with their banners stretching across the road. One of the attractions was when in competition against one another, teams from local fire stations demonstrated their expertise using fire-fighting equipment. The competition was divided into sections; for stirrup-pumps and light, medium and heavy fire pumps as well as the regular fire engines. At the starting whistle, pairs of teams had to start their pumps, run out the suction lines and hoses and aim a jet of water at a target that rang a bell when it was hit. The competition was keenly contested.

Any notable national event was also celebrated in the park, as the Jubilee celebrations of 1887 marking fifty years of Queen Victoria's reign and celebrations to mark the coronation of her successor Edward VII in 1902. On the latter occasion over five hundred children marched to the park along a route decorated with flags and streamers accompanied by the Croydon Mechanics Band. Many activities had been arranged as entertainment including races and bicycle feats until 4.30pm when tea was provided, the catering for which was done by J. and T. H. Wallis the local bakers and millers. The Rector the Rev. Hodgson gave an address after which each child was given a portrait of the King and Queen and presented with a commemorative mug given by Mr. T. Wallis before they went their respective ways. In the summer of 1919 more festivities were arranged to celebrate the restoration of peace and the victorious ending of the Great War.

In May 1935 celebrations were again arranged to mark the Silver Jubilee of King George V beginning at 9.00am with the pealing of St. Mary's church bells and a united open-air service at 10.30am on Wallington Green. During the day three cedars were planted in the park to commemorate the occasion and the celebrations ended with a bonfire and fireworks display followed by the National Anthem at 10.30pm.

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1937 saw further festivities marking the coronation of King George VI at which time each child was presented with a Royal Doulton commemorative mug with the Coat of Arms of the Borough on the reverse. Beside the path north of the river a further group of cedars were planted to mark this event. While the fun and festivities were taking place, all ten bells of the church were pealed for an unbroken three hours ringing 5,000 changes, an event commemorated by the placing of a bronze tablet on the tower within the church. Another group of cedars were planted in the park to commemorate the Incorporation of the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council as a Borough in 1937.

Canon Bridges died in 1891 after which the future of the park was uncertain, as it had been over thirty years previously. At the time of his father's death the heir John Henry Bridges was already married and living in Ewell. The Urban District Council purchased the Warren in 1904 and The Paddock in 1915. When in 1919 the remainder was offered for sale (the area in front Orphanage) bounded on the north by the Wandle, the south by the footpath and the west by the flint bridge it was purchased by the tea importer and sweet manufacturer George Payne. Though negotiations had begun as early as 1923, it was not until June 1925 the 12½ acres were purchased by the Urban District Council for £2,062 10s. plus a further £165 for the bed of the river adjoining. Acting as Agent he gave them an option on the remainder, the greater area of which lay north of the river. Cllr. A. E. Bennetts, Chairman of the Council opened this newly acquired section of the park in June 1925 but for whatever reason an offer on the remainder was not taken up.

In June 1919 one hundred acres including the entrance lodge, farm buildings (that included the dovecote then in use as a granary and a cowshed for forty-three cows), stabling, dwelling house, two cottages (most of which was let to Mr. Thirlby) and north of the river, lawn tennis, croquet and cricket grounds, each with their own thatched pavilion, along with a further small boarded and tiled pavilion (tucked in the corner of the cricket ground by the tennis and croquet grounds), was purchased for £9,000 by Sir Alexander Kaye Muir of Drummond Castle, Scotland who in February 1920 appointed George Payne

to act as his Attorney. George Payne was not involved in the transactions however when on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 1926 the initial negotiations having fallen through with the council, Henry William Seale of 'Fernside', Mitcham Road, Croydon a speculator, builder and contractor purchased the ground for £14,900 the conveyance being executed by Sir A. K. Muir in person on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1926.

Recognising the potential threat and to prevent redevelopment, wisely but almost belatedly the council scheduled the area as a public open space; negotiations were begun, and within two months of his initially having purchased the land Mr. Seale re-sold it to the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council for £21,000 at a not inconsiderable profit! The council managed to obtain £15,000 from the Air Ministry in compensation for the loss of the rateable value of part of Plough Lane acquired for the Croydon Aerodrome extension - the remaining £6,000 they raised by a loan.

The greater area of Beddington Park totalling some 97 acres was officially opened on Saturday March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1927 in a ceremony presided over by Cllr. F. F. Wood Esq. J.P. Chairman of the Council with the dedication prayers being said by the Bishop of Woolwich supported by the Rector the Rev. E. Bond. The ceremony was almost identical to that in 1925 though owing to the inclement weather it took place in a large playroom at the nearby Orphanage. The weather did clear enough to allow a procession to the entrance of the park where Mr. Wood unlocked a gate with a silver gilt key with which he had been presented for the purpose by R. J. Meller M.P.

The wrought iron gates placed at the entrance to the park in front of the lodge formerly adorned the avenue of an old mansion, 'Regent House' at Surbiton. In Tudor style and bearing inset large Tudor roses and ornamental scrollwork, the gates had been acquired by the council for £30 and erected on brick piers said to have been built of the mellowed red bricks from Wallington Manor House. A plaque to commemorate the acquisition of the park was placed on the wall adjacent to the right-hand pier but was stolen some years ago.

It is uncertain as to the exact date the council acquired the remaining area that lay behind the gardens of the houses facing Croydon Road including that known as 'Break Hill'. This part was in private use by Major W. J. Mallinson the then owner as a nine-hole golf course, indications of which can still be seen. He had acquired this land some years prior to April 1932 from Capt. Sir Ion H. Benn Bt. of London SW5. Major Mallinson had signed an agreement giving the council an option to purchase when he sold The Grange to them in 1935 and left the district to live in Reigate.

Two houses known as 'Grange Cottages' built in about 1928 stood on an angle within the precincts of the park at the Croydon Road end of the avenue of limes leading to the millpond. These cottages that were later demolished were damaged and at least one of the trees lost to a flying bomb during the Second World War. A number of other bombing incidents occurred within the park one of which resulted in the surrounding trees being covered in a white "fluffy" substance. Another that landed in the Wandle caused a deep crater filled with water that until fenced off for their own safety was used by children as a swimming pool.

This lovely area attracts many visitors, not only because of the beauty of the gardens but for the recreational opportunities both parks provide. When originally opened swings and see-saws were set out as a children's play area by the oval pond (known as the stock pond) upon which it was not unusual for people to skate when it froze over in the winter. This pond, fed by an underground pipe leading from the Wandle had been created in the second half of the nineteenth century and is today a haven for wildlife. Nearby stand a few old oak trees probably the oldest trees in the park.

New tennis courts were laid between the Dovecote and the river opposite Beddington Park Cottages. Wallington Hockey Club played on the field to the east of the walled allotment gardens (the concrete foundations of their shelters can still be seen) and for a time a Rugby Club used the same area. The long established Beddington Cricket Club played on the ground north of the river. Harriers used the old Beddington Park Cottages as their club and changing rooms. Facilities were made available for football and horse riding (the latter over the summer period), in the late 1950s by J.F. Ginnett and during the 1960s by the Sheila Shaw Riding School from farm buildings later used as a council depot, now the Wildlife Hospital north of the river. At one time the four ponies used for horse riding at six pence per ride were supplied by Kennards of Croydon. During the week they provided rides to children visiting the store arcade and were brought to the park of a Sunday.

From 1931 to 1936 the farm buildings were used by the Beddington and Wallington Unemployed Relief Committee as an Occupational Centre. This could be equated with what were generally known as Instructional Training Centres set up in 1929 by the then Labour Government under Ramsay MacDonald in an attempt to solve the problem of the long-term unemployed. A number of these centres were set up throughout Britain to which men aged between 18 and 45 who had been unemployed for twelve months or more were sent for a period of three months hard labour with the purpose of instilling discipline and to harden up men who were considered as having gone soft. If they refused, although many were married with families their benefits were stopped and they were threatened with prosecution. While at the Centre "to sustain their morale and physical well-being" the men who were subject to strict discipline had a day of hard physical labour such as tree felling, cutting logs and chopping firewood, making concrete slabs, stone breaking, ditch digging and in 1930 working on the construction of a main foul sewer from 'Goat Inn' to Wallington Corner in return for pocket money. A number were occupied de-silting the river Wandle. The Conservative Party under Stanley Baldwin carried on the Training Centres when they came into government in 1935 and were only abandoned with the outbreak of the Second World War some four years later.

Part of the farm buildings north of the river, between 1954 and 1964 were used as a Roman Catholic Mass Centre known as The Sacred Heart Chapel that was lit by trolley lamps and warmed by Sankey paraffin heaters. Mass was taken by a priest from St. Elphege at 8am of a Sunday but confession was held earlier in the morning in an area to one side of the main hall within the same building. The building of the Sacred Heart Hall (Chapel) in Malthouse Row superseded this arrangement.

At about this time ice-cream could be purchased either from the café or from a young lad Donald Scott, son of the leasee who would cycle around the park on a tricycle with the

ice-cream kept cold by blocks of dry ice. The dining rooms were superseded by a building by the re-sited children's playground. This pavilion was burnt down on the June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1989. A new building opened by the Mayor on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1993 now stands on the site, although now closed for refurbishment.

Within a then fenced enclosure on the west side of the park between The Grange and the west lodge an open-air theatre with purpose built stage (the site of which is now marked by a clump of yew trees) became a popular concert venue during the 1940s and into the 1950s. Entertainment was provided by local amateurs, itinerant professionals and ENSA groups; the Grange Singers also performed there. Programmes were held at lunch times as well as in the evening. Popular amongst these performances were stage plays, musical items of all descriptions including singalongs, military bands and dance bands and there was usually a small area set aside for dancing.

## **Grange Park**

The area of Grange Park though not immediately obvious, is a separate entity to Beddington Park and is technically in Wallington, though before the creation of Wallington parish in 1867 the area was in the parish of Beddington. According to Elizabeth Odling by 1858 her father Alfred Smee had already come to Wallington where he rented the fishing and shortly after set about creating a garden, the forerunner of what we know of today as Grange Park.

Owing to the rapid development of the area, the Urban District Council felt it imperative to acquire land for recreational purposes. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1935 therefore, no doubt with having some prior knowledge of what was to come they included the whole of the Grange Estate (at the time in private ownership) in their town Planning Scheme as a designated public open space. In November that same year for £75,500, the council purchased the estate that included the mansion and a total of 48 acres of land, 3½ acres of water and 4½ acres used as a cricket field, cottages, etc. the latter of which were detached from the main part and located on the opposite side of London Road. Grange Park was opened to the public on Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1936. It could hardly be described as a grand opening for after the appropriate speech making Cllr. George Purser J.P., Chairman of the Council assisted by Cllr. W.W. Binnie, Chairman of the Parks Committee, cut a ribbon (that appears from photographs to be a piece of twine) to declare it open and dedicate it as a public open space forever.

The lake formerly the pond for Wallington mill was utilised for boating. A small thatched summerhouse was sited on the central island, access to which was by two low rustic bridges and it was from here an attendant carrying a cash bag dispensed tickets. Later, a stone quay was built on the south side of the millpond into which the boats were drawn. Though suspended during the war boating always proved a popular passtime until in 1979 it ceased owing to operational difficulties and the condition of the water. In 1993, a programme undertaken to improve water quality led to the resumption of boating in 1994 though this facility closed in mid-September each year so as not to present a danger to the swans when they undertake their autumn fly-out. Operational difficulties resulted in boating not being resumed in the summer of 2002.



On the site of a former orchard on the north side of the lake, in 1936 two 18 hole putting greens were laid out, the three pence per person per round fee for which, along with that for hire of the boats, was paid for at the kiosk by then sited next the path by the tall poplars. This kiosk having been badly vandalised was demolished sometime during 1982-83. The large building to the south of the millpond known from its architectural style as the 'Dutch Dairy' (built by the Mallinson's as a skittle alley), was used as a cafe from which snacks, ices and teas were purchased. (The resident caterers in January 1960 when The Grange was burnt down was Charles W. Scott of Richmond Road). On that same side, in 1936 alterations were made to Major Mallinson's golf course that on May 1<sup>st</sup> was opened for play at nine pence a round of nine holes.

A bowling green, now a rose garden, on the site of former tennis courts was made available to the public for six pence per hour, four pence excluding woods and for those seeking relaxation only, there were delightful flower gardens created by the Mallinson's with a beautiful herbaceous border aligned between the mansion house and the millpond. Along the central path stood a sundial on a stone baluster and a birdbath similarly mounted. A small summerhouse also stood by the side of the lake near to the weir until being overturned and pushed into the millpond. Vandalism is not a new phenomenon! A thatched boathouse adjoining the northern bank of the lake completed a picture of almost rustic tranquillity.

Almost lost to us, it was owing to the foresight of those elected to represent the people that today we have parkland second to none, a very precious survival of what had once been a much larger area, rich in the beauty of nature and steeped in the fascination and shadows of the past.

## **Mellows Park**

In 1913, land on the corner of Plough Lane formerly known as the Stafford Road Recreation Ground was purchased by Frank le Maitre Mellows (former Chairman of the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council and Croydon Rural District Councillor) to save it from the would-be developer. He then offered it to the Parish Council at cost price provided the land was used for public recreational use. Prior to its having become a park the ground was utilised as a market garden after which there was a lapse in cultivation pending its conversion which was virtually complete early in the First World War but awaiting finishing touches until the war ended. An orchard, a relic of its former use as a market garden remained at the eastern end into the 1930s. During the Second World War an ARP Warden's Post was located on the corner of Mellows Park and public air-raid shelters underground, one in the south-east corner and the second, towards the south-west corner of the park. The park was entirely enclosed by iron railings and gates that were removed for the war effort. A formal garden area created in the south-west corner is now a community and parks department initiated orchard, the first trees of which were planted in December 1999 the phased development of which continued into December 2001. Herbs were planted there in May 2002.

The Mellows Park Bowling Green was officially opened in June 1935 and a Bowl's Club inaugurated in March 1936. The park pavilion was rebuilt in 1996 after its predecessor

was successively vandalised and finally the subject of an arson attack. The new pavilion was opened early in April 1996 by the actor Graham Coles alias P.C. Stamp of TV's popular police drama 'The Bill' (many episodes of which have been filmed locally), accompanied by the Mayor, Cllr. Robert Gleeson.

## **Queen Elizabeth's Walk**

Queen Elizabeth's Walk is today not only the name of a road upon the former Queenswood estate but that of an adjacent footpath enclosed within an area of woodland along the brow of the hill between Queenswood Avenue and the high footpath above Croydon Road. Formerly part of a private estate and not accessible to the public, the land was purchased by the Beddington and Wallington Urban District Council for £2,000 with an additional £1,000 for expenses and on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1928 opened to the public by G. Hitchins Esq. J.P., Chairman of the Council.

At one time Queen Elizabeth's Walk also included a north-south aligned iron-railinged footpath between an avenue of trees dividing into two the The Warren and the field nearer the church known today as The Paddock. These grounds, though still separate entities and having lost the railings dividing them have today all but merged with only a slight indentation and a few trees marking the line of the former pathway. They replace the grand old elms that in 1873 Henry Tritton was credited with preserving. With the indentation even as slight as we see it today, one would question as to whether the line of this pathway may have originated as a boundary cut between the two fields. It was here by the footpath among the little turfy hillocks of the Warren field that at one time could be found "the ever welcome and duly prized sweet violet" many a handful of which in the mid-1800s the Rev. Williams of Wallington recalled as having gathered there. Some were still to be seen as late as the 1940s, early 1950s.

It would appear that the pathway referred to today as Queen Elizabeth's Walk probably existed long before the road cutting was made, and with the lower part may well have been all part of the same footpath. As to what were the origins of the upper walk we do not know – as to the lower part it was probably no more than an ancient field boundary. There have been suggestions of it being on the line of a Roman road though no evidence whatsoever to support this has been forthcoming. Rocque's mid-eighteenth century map indicates a footpath or trackway leading to the south along the crest of the hill until it meets with Plough Lane which in itself was an ancient route leading to the south.

Officially named Queen Elizabeth's Walk only when first opened to the public, the woodland footpath was the place where local tradition would have (whether or not there was any basis in fact) that Queen Elizabeth I took her exercise when she visited the nearby Carew mansion. The Rev. Williams writing in 1873 also tells us that 'Ladye Walk' as it was known then, became a fashionable resort in George III's day (1760-1820) when it was frequented by all the grandes of the neighbourhood after their dinner hour - ladies in Dresden shepherdess gowns with their lap dogs accompanied by elegantly attired gentlemen. It would appear therefore that the footpath might well have been ornamentally laid out in what was a naturally wooded setting long before any other development was to take place.

When in 1835 owing to a pressing need of finance Captain Charles Hallowell Carew the then owner undertook to fell the fine beech grove that marked the line of the footpath there was much public outcry. A local lady Miss Charlotte Cookson voiced her dismay at the “unwanton vandalism” at great length (in eighty-six lines of verse).

“The village pleads in vain; the Doom is past,  
And thou, sweet Grove art sacrificed at last,  
Thy graceful line of variegated shade,  
That crowned the summit of the far-spread glade...  
...Destroying Man has levelled with the plain...  
...No vestige left...”

Time and Nature has however healed some of the wounds though of later years Dutch elm disease has also left its mark.

During the Second World War a Civil Defence ARP Warden’s Post was located at the top of the hill opposite the entrance to Queen Elizabeths Walk from where the whole of the southern approach to London could be viewed and where, each night during the bombing a mobile anti-aircraft gun was stationed. Almost directly behind the house known as ‘The Banks’ (later ‘Ladymount’ now demolished) until of recent years and now effectively “lost” were two upright parallel shafts of concrete leading into the western side of the bank of sand, blocked at its deepest point. This indicated the entrance to a former air-raid shelter constructed at the beginning of the war. One wonders too at the circumstances when in about 1946 boys from the Wallington County School in a now unknown location on Queen Elizabeth’s Walk found a sack containing about twenty swords of the 1834 Service pattern as well as a Highland Broad Sword. Before being sealed the shelter also served the 1st Beddington Scouts as a storage area.

All is peaceful today however – bird song can still be heard above the distant sound of traffic as it makes its way deep in the cutting below. In spring bluebells, along with a few mauve and white crocus’s push their way up through the sand to herald the season of new growth before the full canopy of leaves burst forth.

## **Triangular Green**

On the south side of the Village Hall, Beddington Lane, a towering poplar once grew on a narrow spit of land that divided the river from a large pond in the area referred to now as the green between the river and mill stream. One would question as to whether this broad expanse of water might at one time have been a millpond for one of the lost Domesday watermills. Referred to locally as “the mere”, it was part of an area of springs, streams and ponds that gave Beddington so much of its charm.

Offered for sale in the summer of 1859 as part of an overall area referred to in the Carew Sale Particulars as ‘Alders Shaws’, though not immediately sold and having been broken up into smaller lots it soon after came into the possession of speculator Joseph Borsley who had bought up other large tracts of land in the sale. Henry Tritton of nearby Wandle Court subsequently acquired it and along with other properties owned by him came onto

the market again in July 1887 as part of his estate. Described as about a 1¼-acre ornamental garden, the area included the lake and the land upon which the village hall was later built. It had been a marshy area drained by a number of small streams which at sometime had been turned into a privately occupied garden with paths, a summerhouse and footbridges. Purchased by Dr. Alfred Carpenter of Croydon in due course it was transferred from his estate to the Parish Church Trust. The streams were diverted and the Village Hall built upon part of the land in 1901.

It was probably shortly after, certainly by 1913 the lake was filled in with mud dredged from the riverbed before being brought under cultivation as a market garden. Some recalled the rich soil growing an impressive crop of rhubarb grown commercially by Mr. Lloyd of nearby 'Brookside', others even earlier recalled Walter Cole of 'The Willows' utilising the land to grow cabbages and a large crop of onions. The green was later converted into a public open space with beautifully kept flowerbeds, seats, a small pond and a pyramid shaped drinking fountain surmounted by a decorative urn with a boot scraper at its base.

The banks of the mill stream were re-structured and deepened as part of the National Rivers Authority flood alleviation scheme in 1990, and in 1998 the eastern part was landscaped by the council as part of the regeneration of the Beddington Lane area.

## **The Warren**

On leaving Church Lane to walk towards the church, after Streeters Lane the first area on the left is 'The Warren' today an area of wood and open field. Though there is no evidence to suggest its ever having been so, the field name would suggest that at some time in the past rabbits or hares may have been kept there to supply fresh meat to the nearby manor or been kept there for sport, either hare coursing or possibly falconry. For many years however "here is our old plum-pudding tree, and here in one corner is a deep dell, of which for many a year I loved to think as the home of the bluebell" wrote an unidentified 'Erica' in 1868 but, "when I came again, all had fled!" It would appear that the deep excavation described by Erica that may once have been an old sand pit had been in existence for many years prior to 1868.

The Rev. Thomas Bentham writing in 1923 "tells us that 'there is a curious confirmation that it long survived in Beddington in the fact that the old bells were cast in the hollow next the sandhill (now part of the recreation ground). Old Mr. Lambert who was born and lived his early life in Beddington, at the age of seventy-nine told me that, as a boy, he was told by the great-grandfather of the then leading bell-ringer who was then eighty years old, that he (the great-grandfather) had seen the casting of the bells when he was a boy. There are remains of brickwork to be seen there now. Old Mr. Lambert died at the age of eighty-two some years ago".

If Bentham saw the remains of brickwork there in 1923 one would accept this as being so whatever the origins of the brickwork. The earliest bell in the church today however, the number 8 treble, dated 1831 was made by T. Mears of London. Bentham does however refer to 'the old bells' so whether his informant was referring to an even earlier casting

may yet be. It would have been an unusual remark for the old gentleman to make if there was no foundation to the comment. Further to this, the Wallington and Carshalton Times of October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1944 carried an article referring to a devastating fire that destroyed the Grove Iron Works at Butter Hill, Carshalton, the upper level of which was used as a snuff mill, the lower housing a machine for boring canon. Mr. H. Morgan then President of the local Archaeological Society reported that some years ago Mr. Nunn the proprietor of Smith's Iron Foundry showed him an old wooden truck with solid wheels that was used for carrying the bells of Beddington church from The Warren where they were cast in a sand pit, and he (Mr. Morgan) was concerned as to whether the truck had survived the blaze. There is no report that it had.

One of the last of the old Beddington Park walnut trees (surviving from the days of the Carews) "on one of the meadows called The Warren attached to the Portionary" was felled in 1907. Nathaniel Cole at the time occupant of Beddington Park Cottage (the East Lodge), having made a walnut cup of the timber gave it to Albert Pulling (Solicitor and Agent to J.H. Bridges) to have as a keepsake. The dell of which Erica wrote still exists.

Purchased from John Henry Bridges in 1904, it was then the only recreation ground held by the Rural District Council; 4½ acres of uneven sloping ground with little scope for games. In 1915, the council purchased the adjoining field (The Paddock) that was opened to the public on June 12<sup>th</sup>. During both wars the Warren and adjoining field were dug up and brought into use as allotments as part of the 'Dig for Britain' and earlier campaigns at which time medieval pottery was found there. Today the Warren is mainly used by people exercising their dogs and by the young who ride their mountain bikes on the challenging route they have created within the excavation.

## POOR RELIEF

### Royal Female Orphanage

It was the year 1758 in the reign of George II and Britain was at war. On the continent the Seven Years' War (1756-63) in which Britain, Prussia and Russia were in conflict with France and Austria had still some years yet to run; there had been conflict in India, with the French in Senegambia and in the following year (1759) Quebec was taken from the French in Canada. The prize was not glory or prestige though there was great national pride in their achievements, nor even conquest for its own sake — it was trade.

With the numbers of men dying in the field of battle and on the seas there were inevitable repercussions to be felt at home not least of all among the dependent families of those at war. It was an age of Methodism and the public conscience had been stirred by the plight of wounded men, widowed women and orphaned children. One section of this pitiful community and surely one of the most vulnerable were largely uncared for — the female orphans.

A remarkable man John (in 1761 Sir John) Fielding, half-brother of the famous novelist and dramatist Henry Fielding was deeply concerned at the plight of these children. Blind from childhood, despite his disability he became a skilled lawyer and a famous Bow Street Magistrate. He became the inspiration behind the creation of a home, a stable environment and the education of these unfortunate youngsters.

The Duchess of Somerset began a subscription on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1758 and the first meeting of the Subscribers was held on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Arising from this meeting, the top room of the Society of Arts in the Strand under the title of the 'Asylum or House of refuge for Orphans and other deserted Girls of the Poor' was hired, furnished and the first nine children admitted on July 5<sup>th</sup>; the first establishment of its kind in the world. A Committee administered the charity and the election of children was mainly by voting, but a subscription of one hundred guineas in one sum entitled the donor to present one child if she qualified for admission.

The first home was established at St. George's Fields in Lambeth where a twenty-one year lease was taken of the old 'Hercules Pillars' Inn at the inclusive rental of £150 per year. The number of girls admitted to the Asylum rapidly increased until by September 1758 thirty girls had been accepted though twenty had been the planned total. By 1764 the number of children seeking admission had so far outgrown the capacity of the old inn that in 1824-25 an Orphanage was built to the designs of L.W. Lloyd almost opposite at the junction of Kennington and Westminster Bridge Road. It formed three sides of a quadrangle and was designed to accommodate up to two hundred children. A chapel was built in the centre of the quadrangle that was open every Sunday to the public. Christ Church, Oakey Close and the Kennington Road Police Station now occupy the site of these buildings.

The home was financed entirely by voluntary contributions though in the early years some may have been slightly less voluntary than others, by way of fines imposed on bakers and other tradesmen who had been found guilty of selling inferior or adulterated foods. On one occasion eight shillings was received as the result of the conviction of a drayman for obstructing the carriageway of the Hon. John Boscawen. Funds were also obtained through theatre benefit nights, concerts, special dinners, collections, subscriptions, legacies, and later in Beddington on one occasion in 1913 when children were invited to present a purse of no less than five guineas in person to H.R.H. The Duke of Teck who accepted them on behalf of the Orphanage.

Statesmen and clerics including Prime Ministers and Archbishops were all patrons or office holders. Royal patronage commenced in 1760 with Princess (later Queen) Charlotte the wife of King George III; other royal patrons included various Dukes of the Realm and by 1850 Queen Victoria who in February 1897 granted the Orphanage the privilege to use the title 'Royal'. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1799 Admiral (later Lord) Nelson was elected to the post of Vice-President only a few months after gaining his celebrated victory on the Nile. It is interesting to note that the most eminent naval commander perhaps of any age had an association with this district. Nelson had a residential link with nearby Merton Place on the Wandle, and his companion in arms Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell G.C.B. was in future years to reside at the estate that was to become the home of the Orphanage at Beddington. While the Institution was still at Lambeth, on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1856 the nurse Florence Nightingale also became a patron. One wonders if she would have agreed when in 1840 arising from a complaint that there was too much light in the infirmary the windows at each end were bricked up on the advice of the medical officer.

To be eligible for admittance certain criteria had to be met. The children not under seven or above ten years of age on admission must be fatherless girls or without either parent, in a very distressed condition and without sufficient means of support. She had to be mentally and physically healthy, neither diseased nor deformed nor be a Negro or Mulatto (of mixed European/Negro) blood. All had to be baptised into the Church of England and be nominated by two respectable householders who were willing to accept her if for some reason she was unable to remain within the Orphanage, or having reached the age of fourteen (later sixteen) and had not been apprenticed or placed out in a suitable household. If the parental situation changed a request could be made to withdraw a child, as on one occasion (in 1914) when the mother had re-married and the new husband, a doctor was in a position (as was noted) to keep a motor car. In view of the mother's fortuitous change in circumstances it was decided that she be asked to remove her daughter or if she preferred her to remain, to pay for her maintenance at the rate of twelve guineas (£12.60) per year.

The children came from all social backgrounds. In the 1860s, five girls whose fathers were killed in a mining accident at Hartley Colliery were admitted; two girls, daughters of one of the late Under-Butlers at Buckingham Palace whose wife was to undergo surgery for cancer were likewise admitted and in 1912, an offer made to admit two children whose fathers had been lost in the Titanic.

From the beginning care and education were equally provided and appropriately, the first two senior staff appointments were a matron and school-mistress the latter having a

particularly difficult task as probably few of her new pupils could read or write. The expressed aim of the charity included training in these subjects as well as practical instruction to fit the girls for domestic service.

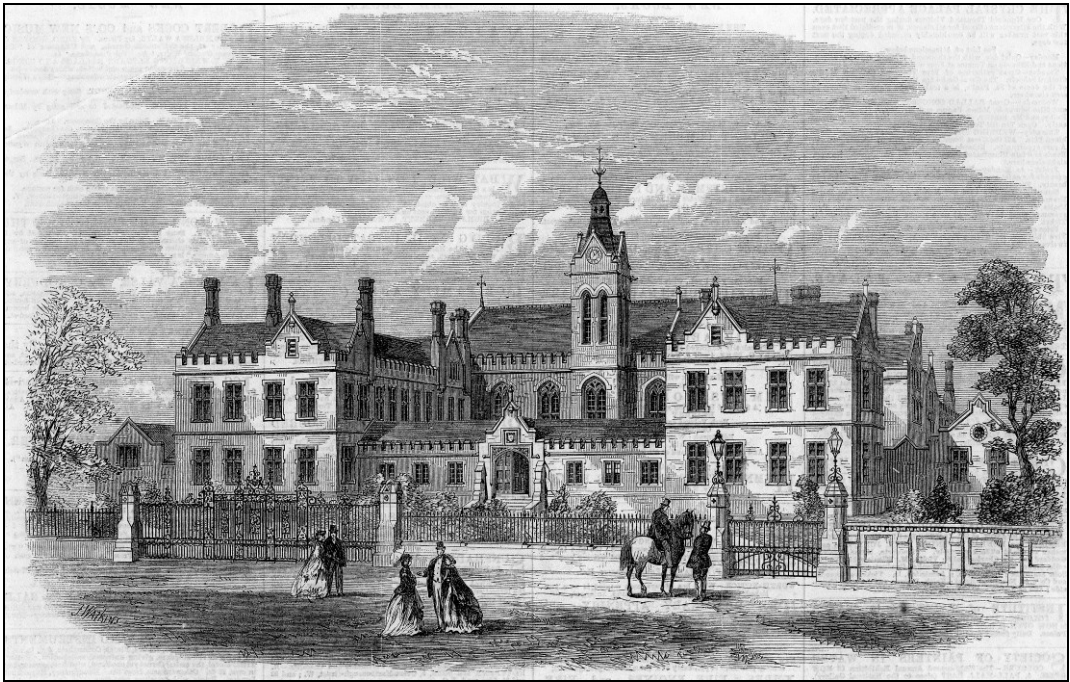
An order stated the girls clothing should be plain and of a brown colour, to consist of four caps, two collars, four handkerchiefs, two gowns, two pairs of stockings, two pairs of shoes and necessary petticoats. Their education was to be such that when they reached an age they could be placed into service, they should be capable of among other accomplishments to knit a pair of stockings, cut out, make, wash and iron a shirt, read a chapter of the Bible, write a legible hand and do simple arithmetic. Apart from this they should also be able to make all their own clothes, clean rooms, make beds and do plain cooking — no mean feat for a fourteen-year-old! They did all their own cleaning and assisted with the laundry up until the 1920s when during a period of change, the question was raised as to the legality of the long hours worked by the girls, as a result of which more staff was employed.

Great care was taken when it came to placement of the girls who were only apprenticed into respected families where other servants were kept. A girl could not be apprenticed to a single gentleman. An application from a man in the Drury Lane Theatre band for a housemaid was not approved on the grounds “that the guardians are cautious of putting children to persons of professions, which would oblige them to attend places of public diversion”. The committee were quite happy to accept funds gained by way of theatre benefit nights however and in 1912 to accept a legacy of £250 from the estate of Mr. E. Terry whose assets principally consisted of a theatre and other properties. A number of girls were placed in royal palaces and households (the Duchess of Cambridge always had seven girls in her service at St. James Palace), at the Mansion House home of the Lord Mayor of London, in the homes of clerics and other leading families. One very early placement was that of fourteen-year-old Mary Kirton who in November 1762 took her place under Indenture for a period of seven years in the household of Sir John Fielding, Founder of the Institution. On leaving the Orphanage to enter a situation each girl was given a complete outfit of clothing and after at least two years satisfactory service were suitably rewarded with a five guinea testimonial purse.

It was about 1848 when it became apparent that the buildings housing the Orphanage at Lambeth had become inadequate and the area was by then fast losing its rural character and becoming an industrial centre. Public health was bad, cholera was rampant and several deaths had taken place at the Orphanage. In the interim period the recommendation of the medical officers for the erection of a ‘dead house’ was acceded to, the object of which was to avoid “delicate and ailing children being kept in close proximity to a dead body”. Cold statistics tell us the number of deaths at the Lambeth Orphanage from 1847 to its eventual transfer to Beddington in 1866 was eighteen, but of the loss of friends, the suffering and the sadness behind those figures, who is to tell?

In 1864 Beddington Park House (today’s Carew Manor) was purchased for £14,500 from the land speculator Joseph Borsley for conversion to a new home. The cost of the new premises and their conversion (at about £24,000) was greatly subsidised by the sale in February 1872 of the Lambeth buildings to J. Oakey and Sons and the Wellington Mills,





*The Beddington Female Orphan Asylum shortly after opening.*

manufacturers of among other products emery paper and the then well known Wellington Knife Polish. In 1875 the sale, for £4,500 of about 8½ acres of land and outbuildings to Canon Bridges also helped defray the cost of the removal and rebuilding of the house in Beddington. In 1876 the Trustees of the Surrey Chapel Centenary Fund purchased the remainder of the Lambeth site to build Christ Church in memory of Rowland Hill.

Before the girls could occupy the Beddington mansion a great amount of restoration, alteration and additions had to be made. The architects employed were Messrs Coe and Peck, the builder Messrs Downes of Union Street, Borough who engaged between sixty and seventy men to bring about the transformation. With rebuilding complete however, the official opening took place a month before the girls were to take residence. Almost simultaneous with the transfer to Beddington the Committee took offices at 32 Essex Street, The Strand that in 1908 transferred to 17 Buckingham Street, before in 1920 to Croydon. The offices eventually moved to High Wycombe in March 1946.

The Duke of Cambridge, President of the Institution opened the building on Wednesday June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1866 in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London and Winchester. Other distinguished guests included all the Members of Parliament for the County of Surrey; the Archdeacon of Surrey; the Chancellor of the Diocese of Winchester; the Member of Parliament for Lambeth and the Editors of 'The Times'; 'The Morning Post'; 'The Illustrated London News' and 'The Surrey Standard'. Local dignitaries and a number of the more senior girls were also present.

Maybe not as dignified or as grand but without doubt the more exciting day of the two would have been that on which the girls transferred to their new home nearly a month later, Monday July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1866. They left Waterloo at 11.15am and reached Beddington about dinnertime. What meal awaited them on their arrival is not on record but no doubt staff had gone ahead and had a meal awaiting them. In January 1877 however, following a report from the Medical Officer that the girls were more or less generally anaemic, with “irritable circulation and several with a tendency to goitre”, a new diet table was submitted and approved though it would seem by today’s standards to be somewhat frugal, especially during the cold winter months when breakfast was at 7am, later delayed to 7.30am because the hall was not sufficiently warm.

This new improved diet read as follows: Breakfast and Supper — 6ozs. bread, ½oz. butter and a ½ pint of milk. Dinner was to consist of 6ozs. meat (weighed uncooked), 2ozs. bread (approximately one slice) and potatoes or salad or green vegetables as an alternative. A sweet of either rice or suet pudding with apple, rhubarb or gooseberry (all of which were grown in the garden) was provided on a Sunday and Wednesday only, and when no pudding was available 4ozs of bread was to be provided in its place. Under this new diet (again substantially amended in 1895), the home brewed beer they had been making since 1766, and which no doubt had been more pure than either the milk or water previously available, was substituted by a full pint of milk, though beer was also to remain for the girls but only under medical order.

In 1866 the first tradesmen to supply the Orphanage were — Mr. West of Croydon, meat at an all-round price of nine pence per pound; Mr. West, Park Farm, Beddington, milk at eleven pence a gallon; Mr. Batchelor, Croydon, bread at seven pence a 4lb. loaf; Mr. Walton, Croydon, butter at 1s. 3d. per pound and 1s. 4d. for twenty newly-laid eggs. Whether the contract for milk remained long with Mr. West of Park Farm or whether by this time he had already been superseded by another supplier would be interesting to know, for milk supplied on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1869 contained a tadpole. A tadpole lives in water, so how did the transfer into the milk take place if it was not watered down! This incident brings to mind a previous occasion at Lambeth on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1862 when owing to complaints the Committee had the milk analysed to reveal it was thirty-three per cent water. Their remedy was to deduct thirty-three per cent of the cost of the (so called) milk. They no doubt overcame that by rapidly replacing the purveyor. Later, in the early 1900s Mr. Thirlby of Beddington Park Cottages supplied the Orphanage with milk from cows grazed on the meadow adjacent to their home, now Beddington Park. In later years the food has been described as good though rather repetitive. When visiting once a month, parents or guardians were allowed (and probably encouraged) to bring groceries such as eggs, ham and cake which the lucky recipient could enjoy after they had left. It was felt that on the whole however the girls were very well looked after.

Of the building itself, little is seen to remain of the mansion as it was when purchased in 1864 as the exterior and the greater part of the interior was rebuilt to meet the needs of the Orphanage. As opposed to the fine Baroque façade, we see today a building in an architectural style favoured in the mid-Victorian era. Retaining the quadrangular plan of the former mansion however, a single storied extension was built between the two wings at the front of the house in the centre of which steps led up to the entrance beneath a high water tower, the clock of which was restored as a project by Rotary in 2000. The Porter’s

room, Waiting room, Surgery, the Visitor rooms and Matron's office were in this new wing behind which, as indeed we see it today was a corridor, to the right communicating with the Boardroom and the Secretary's room. Passing along the south wing (that opposite the church) and by following an adjoining passageway known to the girl's as "The Ages", was a schoolroom that doubled as a gymnasium with its open timbered roof. Owing to structural difficulties this room was rebuilt in the same style in 1985. Returning to the main corridor one came to further classrooms, the governesses' dining and sitting rooms and on the south side of the hall, the spacious playroom for two hundred children. The walls of the playroom on the south side of the hall and the bedroom over are contemporary with the hall and have retained their original roof trusses, now covered. The Great Hall of the Carews retained from the earlier building was used as a dining hall.

To the left of the main entrance, the corridor led to the northern wing. While still in Carew ownership in the early 1740s immediately after having been rebuilt, this wing had also been damaged by fire to the extent that apart from one room restored and used by the family as a Billiard room, the remainder had remained virtually an empty shell. Having been rebuilt by the orphanage, the corridor on the northern side gave access to the Matron's rooms, Servants hall, Pantry, Larder, Bread-room, the Kitchen and Scullery (fitted with steam cooking boilers). The Basement, Laundry and Washhouse along with the Engine-house were also accessible via this northern corridor though the wall of the engine-house was put in repair and bricked up and access to the basement that way closed in 1872.

The Dormitories that were partitioned down the centre of each room and approached by stone staircases were reported as being fine, spacious rooms, though according to later photographs they were somewhat spartan, with bare floor boards, un-curtained (until 1925) and crowded, with little room between the iron bedsteads. For a time the younger girls slept two in a bed. The early rising and early to bed routine was not very popular especially on long summer evenings. The younger girls slept in two dormitories in the south wing and the seniors in three located in the north wing, all in strict age order. There was a bathroom in both wings. Their life is recalled as being one of rigid discipline.

In 1866 when the girls first came to Beddington the system of warming the building, cooking, washing and drying was described as being one "of the best description, being affected by means of one fire, sufficient" (it was recorded) "for the entire working". This proved to be totally inadequate and though improvements had been undertaken over the years, it was not until March 1911 one of the Lady Visitors reported that she "had felt the benefit of the delightful new heating apparatus... I saw a great difference in the children - no chilled hands nor any signs of suffering from the cold". The water supply from a well sunk in the basement and conveyed to water tanks in the tower above the entrance by steam-powered pumps had also proved inadequate. In 1871 a further well was bored to a depth of 200ft. on the north side of the building beside the new engine-house wall. This former engine house and associated buildings were converted into a courtyard housing development during 2003-04.

A delightful group of stone figures representing a mother and two children brought from Lambeth was placed on the lawn in front of the building on a brick pedestal level with the



*One of the Orphanage dormitories.*

top step leading into the corridor passage. In November 1926 at the request of the then President, the Duke of Portland, who had taken exception to the group, the statue was broken up and the debris placed in a rockery by the Infirmary shelter. Within the building was a memorial tablet to Prince Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, a one-time President, with a profile of the Duke and an inscription flanked by two weeping orphans. Known for his portraiture, the tablet was the work of Henry Weekes (1807-77) who was among the most successful of British sculptors of the mid-Victorian period. Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy (1868-76), a notable work readily to be seen in London today is the group representing 'Manufacturing' on the Albert Memorial, Kensington Gardens. The Orphanage also had a statue of a charity girl presented to them by Mrs. Coade made of her own patent 'stone'. It was the equivalent of a charity boy now in Lambeth's Garden Museum it having been given to a charity school in Camberwell. The figure is thought to have come to Beddington when the orphanage moved here and is said to have been buried somewhere in the grounds to protect it when the girls were moved away on the outbreak of the Second World War; certainly nothing has been heard of it since.

Though each child had to undergo a thorough medical examination and be passed fit, even as early as 1760 they had to be vaccinated before being accepted into the Institution. Inevitably with the numbers of children involved there were always problems as the headstone in the graveyard opposite the church would testify. 1869, three years after they came to Beddington was a particularly bad year for by the 17th June fifty-two cases of typhoid fever had occurred within the Orphanage and four deaths were recorded. No doubt these events acted as a catalyst for by November 1872, Mr. Higgs presented his account in the sum of £2,254 19s. 4d. for the construction of the two storied building on

the north side of the Orphanage designed for use as an infirmary with two large wards and several single rooms. Prior to their transfer to Beddington, on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1865 the Institution became an annual subscriber (of five guineas) to Margate Infirmary to secure a bed for the use of any girl requiring recuperation in the sea air. Over the years a number of girls and members of staff were sent there to convalesce and regain their strength after illness.

The main building was still cold however, especially in the winter often described as the severe season. In the summer of 1873 ten children had been admitted to the infirmary, eight of whom were suffering from whooping cough. February 1879 saw twenty-two children on the medical Officer's list, fifteen with influenza and throat infection caused he suggested by the extreme weather. This prompted the Secretary on behalf of the Committee to enquire of Matron as to whether the girls were sufficiently warm and had enough blankets.

One of the greatest problems (and that over which in the early years the Guardians received a good deal of criticism) was when in September 1874 the Medical Officer reported on their being seven children in the infirmary, four of them suffering from severe blood poisoning in the form nearest like erysipelas (which produced fever and severe inflammation of the skin) of the head and face. The Medical Officer Dr. W.E. Cressy followed on his report with a damning condemnation of the earth closets (the toilets) and the area immediately beside the playgrounds. He described what he saw as abominable and reminded them that the earth had not for some time been fire dried despite his having drawn attention to the problem on previous occasions. He reported there was the same large heap of excrement just outside the playground that had not been removed, left open to the late autumn rains and with fermentation fully going on "like a huge festering mass the surface of which was giving off noxious gasses". A second opinion of Dr. Ord endorsed these comments with some of his own. He described the "foulness of the atmosphere breathed by the girls, the stinking fluid" and when in the playground, how he had been "met by a sickening smell of which I have not been able to rid my nostrils since". A sub-committee was formed to investigate; in the meantime the girls were told to keep the younger children from staying too long in the closets. A small heavy four-wheeled trolley, later identified as a night soil trolley, was uncovered during investigation of former moat.

That which was to metaphorically put the cat further in the bag was when H.R.H. Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck wrote to her brother then President of the Orphanage setting out her observations subsequent to a visit she had made the following year in the autumn of 1875. "I must begin by frankly owning that I did not consider the appearance of the children as regards health, at all in keeping with the beautiful, airy, mansion-like country house provided for them. There was a depressed and sickly look especially about the eyes in most of the girls, very different from the bright hue and smile and the rosy hue that used to strike one so pleasantly years ago when going round the dining hall at the Lambeth Orphan Asylum. Perhaps this may be accounted for, at least as far as the sickly look is concerned, by (1st) a very decided want of proper ventilation in the large playroom, and the unpleasant smell that pervaded several of the ground floor rooms ... and (2nd), by the children not having out door exercise and being sufficiently in the open air. I

understand ... that the Schoolmistress rather shirked taking the girls out". She also commented upon what struck her as being "an air of depression in the children". The Superintendent who took her over the building informed her she was the sister of the matron and that she had been in constant attendance upon the latter, day and night for the previous twenty-two months, as matron had been prostrated by illness. She felt that possibly the constant atmosphere of the sister's sick room must tell upon the lady "and about whom there appears to me too much of the stiff Anglican Catholic element". She further commented that possibly a Matron pro-tem would be a valuable acquisition, "and infuse into it the healthy cheerful element it seems to lack. Of this I feel the more assured, because I was informed that the girls all cling with the greatest affection to good old Miss Dale who for many years presided over the needlework department and is now a pensioner, and when ever they are ill, ask for her to be allowed to nurse and look after them. A sufficient proof that there is among the children a yearning for love, which possibly the present staff are not capable of entering into and satisfying".

The matron to whom Princess Mary Adelaide was referring was Miss Mary Jones. In July 1875 when examining the quarterly bills the auditors queried the charges for champagne supplied to the asylum by Fortnum and Mason. In 1873 two years previously, Matron (to whom the query was referred) was even then diagnosed to be suffering from advanced cancer; it may have been one of the few ways she had of alleviating her suffering. With her medical expenses already being paid by the Asylum, in view of the situation it was agreed that they should in future pay half the cost of the wine only. Miss Jones died on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1876 following which she was laid to rest in the burial ground opposite the church.

With the number of children in "the family" on average between one hundred and forty and one hundred and sixty-five, outbreaks of illness were always difficult to contain. As was usual in any large enclosed community of children ringworm, mumps, and scarlet fever ran their course. In November 1885 there was such a severe local outbreak of diphtheria in the district that for a time all the girls were sent to Littlehampton after which further alterations were made to the premises for isolation, convalescence and for drainage. Attitudes could be harsh however as in 1875 when the medical officer advised that one twelve year old had "prematurely become a woman" the girl was removed and sent back to her friends. These were the early years however and some of the problems that had to be overcome, for the welfare of the children was always uppermost in the minds of the Management Committee, the Lady Visitors and their Royal Patrons. Though many of the children suffered the trauma of being separated from family, friends and familiar surroundings, many later ex-Beddington girls remember their years here with great affection.

As a practical indication of concern felt for the girls in their care, as long ago as 1759 when the Institute was at Lambeth, a system of Lady Visitors was introduced as it was felt that it was more appropriate for ladies to enquire into certain particulars than gentlemen. Ten ladies all of whom were from influential local families were appointed to visit the apartments of the women and children or indeed any other part of the house to examine whether everything was as it should be and report back to the secretary with any suggestions, recommendations and comments they may have. Though education was

never within their terms of reference as set out in the *pink book* they made suggestions as to the state of the house, of the clothing the girls were supplied with and vetted the amusements provided upon which they felt must depend to a great extent the moral training of the children. As an indication of the changing attitudes and of how women were becoming more influential in their own right, the Lady Visitors were formed into a Ladies Committee in April 1920 a number of whom were appointed to the Management Committee in December 1922 in recognition of their valued work and that of their colleagues in the past.

The children were indeed more fortunate than many in similar circumstances. In 1873 it was agreed that the girls should be allowed to go home to their mothers, guardians or friends for a holiday of no longer than three weeks during the midsummer school break and that the children should have at least one other excursion in the summer. When the Orphanage was at Beddington, for those who had no alternative but to remain within the Institution during the holiday period they were taken to the Margate Orphanage for a summer break by the coast. In later years the children were able to stay in the country with families who were willing to accept them as visitors.

Apart from the holidays and outings however, there were other particularly memorable occasions. In July 1893 the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress arrived in a state coach amid the “merry peal of the parish church bells”. During the garden party the prizes were distributed and guests mingled on the lawns entertained by the band of the 2nd Life Guards who played a selection of popular music. Following a period of mourning on the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 there were celebrations to mark the coronation of King Edward who (as had his mother) been a patron for many years. On that day the children had a special dinner, tea and entertainments were arranged during which time Percy Mortimer (who had become a subscriber in 1850 and Chairman in December 1902) presented each child with a commemorative medal and every member of staff with a badge.

Another exciting day was January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1904 when a number of the younger girls walked behind their popular matron of nine and a half years Miss Lucinda Broadbent on her wedding day. There were other special occasions as in March 1908, when they celebrated the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Orphanage. Mrs. Maltby (wife of the then secretary) presented all the children, officers and servants with commemorative brooches after which a special tea was provided and a Punch and Judy show enjoyed. That same year there were similar celebrations when the Guest of Honour, H.R.H. the Duchess of Albany distributed the prizes on a day that was always one of the highlights of the year. On that occasion after the formal proceedings had ended in the hall, exercises, marching and club drill were carried out by the older girls on the lawn in front of the east terrace after which having returned to the hall, the little girls sung their nursery rhymes and gave a display of tambourine drill. The 4th Battalion Queen’s Royal West Surrey Regiment provided the music. Over the years a number of members of the royal family honoured the Institution with their presence, including amid much pomp and circumstance Queen Mary when she visited in 1919.

In a report on the Annual Summer Festival held in July 1904 with reference to the prizegiving a comment was that "... I was sorry for one thing, eleven girls had chosen a dictionary. An epidemic of that sort at an early age is not pleasing but perhaps the dull weather of last year partly accounts for it". Rather sadly but somewhat appropriately perhaps Mrs. Hutson, formerly Frances Rickards an eighty-two year old ex-scholar was Guest of Honour and presented the prizes at the last of those occasions to be held at Beddington.

The children visited the annual Horticultural Show in Beddington Park in August; another regular outing was one to Crystal Palace and to the theatre in Croydon where a repertory company performed every year. The final rehearsal for the Royal Tournament was another. There were other excursions including those recorded in July 1911 and again in the summer of 1913 when Edwin and Frank Goad (of Hackbridge House) treated the whole school - children, staff and servants to a day out at Bognor Regis. The children also visited "a gentleman's estate" in Kent (probably Mr. Meyerstein's, vice-president and benefactor to the Orphanage) where he just seemed to enjoy seeing the children running around the gardens before they were given a "tea of goodies". Bonfire night was another cause for celebration when the children were treated to a firework display. Another notable event was in 1907, when the telephone was installed at a minimum cost of £5 10s. per annum, also when in 1931 electric light was installed commencing with the ground floor only. This was extended upstairs and the whole building completed by 1933.

At first the education of the children was undertaken solely within the institution. The girls were relatively isolated and had little contact with that other world outside the stout boundary walls. Even when attending church services they were seated in the St. Nicholas chapel, the north aisle of the church, segregated somewhat from the general congregation. The girls did not have an easy life however and in 1895 the committee introduced new arrangements as regards training them for domestic service. Hitherto the fifty eldest girls, some being only twelve years of age had been engaged by rotation for one month at a time in housework and schoolwork alternately. The new arrangements were that the twenty-five eldest would be constantly engaged in housework comprising of cookery, needlework, laundry and the duties of a housemaid with two hours a week special instruction from the school mistress, giving the younger girls uninterrupted instruction in school work. Scripture instruction was to remain unaltered.

The 1920s was a period of great change not least of all within the Orphanage. It was shortly after Miss Jeannie Ward had been appointed Matron in March 1920 that she drew attention to the long hours worked by the girls. It was only after Miss Gay the schoolmistress also prepared a report proposing so many changes in the education of the children that a special meeting was convened to consider arrangements as to the future of the school. In earlier years it was thought not desirable that any steps be taken to bring the Institution under any form of government control, but as the proposals for the necessary improvements would involve such a heavy increase in salaries it was decided upon the alternative; of employing further domestic staff and transferring the girls to the local school. At first, as there was insufficient room in the Beddington National School they were sent to Hackbridge Junior School. Later, a number of the girls attended the Croydon Road school.



How strange it must have seemed when the children took their places in their new school at the beginning of May 1920, not only for them but also for the children already there with an influx of eighty-three new faces. The girls are remembered as walking to school across the park whatever the weather, little caped figures in their regimented lines two by two in a long line. They wore long blue cloaks, thick black stockings, heavy black shoes and blue felt hats with red piping and were provided with two biscuits each (described as something akin to dog biscuits) that they were forbidden to exchange but very often did. Occasionally there was a degree of prejudice towards the girls with some parents warning their children that if they spoke to an orphan they would catch scarlet fever - such was the gulf between them. The children were placed in classes of their own age but at first were unable to compete with their peers as in the past their education had only been directed towards their going into domestic service. They were totally unacquainted with such subjects as nature study, hygiene, history, geography and drawing, and the instruction they had previously received in writing and arithmetic had been so stereotyped that at first they were far behind the standard of the ordinary school child.

With the amount of space they had available and with lessening numbers of girls being admitted, in 1920 the Institution agreed to take sixty girls from the City of London Freeman's Orphan's Schools; in May 1922, forty-nine from King Edward Schools, Southwark and in 1923 approval was given to a scheme for the amalgamation with the National Orphan Home at Ham Common. This received Royal Assent in 1924. Under the Ham endowment ten girls, not necessarily orphans but deprived through circumstances of normal life could be received at Beddington.

Financed entirely through voluntary sources, the Institution was always in dire need of finance and requests for assistance were met with acts of great generosity and benevolence. For a number of years Princess Langrana, Madame Cavalier of The Grange arranged concerts, illustrated tableaux and gave lectures to raise funds and in 1912 was made an Honorary Life Guardian for her unstinting efforts. In later years there were fund-raising fêtes held on the lawn at the back of the house with stalls, games, a steam driven merry-go-round and dance displays given by a number of local schools. In the evening there was a firework display.

An emergency appeal was launched in 1916 when it was found that the magnificent hammer-beam roof of the hall was in a dangerous condition the restoration of which involved heavy expenditure. The reinforcement of the roof went ahead under the design and supervision of Edward H. Bouchier, F.R.I.B.A., a member of the Committee acting as their Honorary Architect.

Donations provided on Pound Day when provisions donated were weighed or quoted in pounds helped supplement the income of the establishment and on more than one occasion Mr. Mizen (the market gardener and watercress grower) provided them with breeding pigs. In 1907 Brough Maltby donated a horse to replace Ruban the old gelding that for twenty-four years had served them faithfully, and Philip Mighell of the Manor Farm gave another in 1923. A rosewood piano, an eight-day clock, a flagpole and flags, tennis nets, a large marquee and in 1933 a swimming pool were recorded as gifts from well-wishers, but there was one most precious gift, that of 13s. sent by an anonymous

working man in Beddington so that every child could be given one penny each. So many people living locally also provided treats for the children especially at Christmas; boxes of oranges, apples, sweets and toys and for many years a Christmas tree donated by Mrs. Payne (of the chocolate factory). In 1913 in order to raise much needed funds a General Appeal was launched, one of a number such appeals over the years.

Apart from updating their fire precautions, life went on very much as normal during the first of the two world wars though a number of new faces joined their ranks, of children rendered fatherless by the war. It came closer to home in 1915 when it was reported that the Second Gardener Henry Solomon had been killed. In December 1915 at the invitation of Mme. Cavalier and at her expense, seven children each dressed a doll that along with others were given by the Children of the Empire Guild for a Christmas tree provided for children of men at the front. The Queen and Princess Mary inspected the handiwork on a special visit to Mme. Cavalier at The Grange. It was following this visit the Queen sent a gift to the children of the orphanage, a replica Red Cross Hospital that no doubt became a very much-prized possession.

The children formed their own choir that sung at weddings and other occasions and had their own company of Girl Guides for which on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1921 the Rector dedicated the flag. It was a flourishing group comprising about fifty members with a waiting list. Over the years the Management Committee had their normal ups and downs with the children, some of the parents and staff but on the whole the difficult years of the 1920s and '30s was survived without mishap with the girls being allowed a degree of chaperoned freedom to go shopping in Wallington. It was the threat of aerial bombing at the outbreak of the Second World War, the proximity to the Croydon aerodrome and an aircraft manufactory at Waddon that presented the greatest concern and subsequent evacuation of the children. By September 1939 most of the girls had been dispersed to surviving relatives and friends but the fifty-six who had no alternative but to remain were evacuated to 'Trevenson House' Carn Brea near Redruth, Cornwall where the Chairman Francis Allen M.B.E., J.P had lived as Manager of the nearby tin mine. The children lived there for four years until 1943 saw even this refuge requisitioned. By then the numbers had been reduced to eighteen and smaller premises had to be found.

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1943 the remaining girls moved into a new home, a house they renamed 'Beddington' at 743 London Road, High Wycombe a building purchased for £2,000 from the British Iron and Steel and Kindred Trades Association. Miss Armstrong who had been Matron since 1920 saw the girls settled in their new surroundings before retiring at the end of the month. The connection with Beddington in anything other than name therefore came to an end after seventy-three years.

**The grounds and outbuildings.** Had one walked in the grounds in the early years of the Orphanage they would have found them little changed from the later years of the Carews. "The western aspect of the mansion", read a report in the Sutton Journal of 1865, "is familiar to all who have wandered into the park from the high road, but the view of the eastern front is more imposing and the aspect even more beautiful. The richly wooded grounds, the green lawn sprinkled with bright beds of flowers, the stream spreading out into a broad sheet of water, diversify the scene and gladden the sight".



*Orphan girls in traditional costume posing for a publicity photograph in the garden of their home. The cedar tree in the background still stands.*

The river entered the eastern end of the grounds by a sparkling cascade having been culverted beneath the mound on top of which although badly vandalised over the years, a tall cedar still grows. A second watercourse ran through the adjoining Hodges Field, beneath the garden boundary wall, across the grounds south of the orangery wall, that, after having had a “further weir” placed in it about ten feet from the brickwork at the east end in 1873, was totally covered two years later in the summer of 1875. Another small watercourse known by the girls as “Raleigh’s brook” that fed the swimming pool flowed in a northerly direction between the eastern end of the orangery wall (probably diverted from the aforementioned stream) and the river where the latter now turns due north. A weir checked the flow though in later years it was devoid of water. Its existence and that of a second ditch of more recent years cut along the same alignment to the east of the brook to ease the flow at times of high water, was wiped out by the extensive flood alleviation measures undertaken in 1990-91.

When in 1899, it was reported that the river had become heavily silted and the weed was growing rapidly, an estimate of £35 submitted by James Potter was accepted to undertake the work of clearing and de-silting. He cut a channel to temporarily divert and drain the stream, cleared it of mud, reinstated but narrowed the channel and planted silver willows

along the banks, a few of which still stand. During this operation, in January 1900 it was found that further expenditure had to be made to repair the foundations at the back of the cascade that was being undermined by the constant erosion of the water.

Arising from the sale of the farm cottages to Canon Bridges in 1875 and the loss of accommodation this entailed, during 1876-77 two houses situated on the north side of the Orphanage (used later as school caretaker's cottages) were built by the local builders Dawson and Son at a cost of £920 to house the then caretaker and gardening staff. For a further £114 10s. in 1877 they altered the shed described as the "old orange house" (on the south side at the east end of the orangery wall) and added to it to provide stabling for one horse and room for drying and storing earth for the closets. It is thought the fireplace in the corner of this area was built at this time.

To the east of the infirmary a further detached building had been constructed for use as a laundry. In March 1905, we learn that for the sum of £53, Bradford and Co. of High Holborn undertook the work of re-constructing a new drying chamber in the laundry building that had become necessary owing to the existing drying chamber being in a very bad state of repair. The fitting they supplied consisted of four draw out drying horses, some 7ft. 6ins. long and 12ft. wide on runners, and a Bradford 'Reversible' stove for heating with each having seven drying rails equal to drying sheets and similar articles in about three-quarters of an hour. These fittings were removed in 1993 when owing to structural difficulties the building then being used as an art room was demolished and rebuilt.

**Ornamental gates and screen.** Always desperately short of funds, the Guardians considered selling two sets of "gates", one being the ornamental wrought iron screen that once linked both wings of the Carew house on the line of the present north-south aligned corridor at the front of the building. The other was the gate on the opposite side of the building giving access to the garden via a now no longer existing wall at the western end of the Orangery.

In October 1878 when the screen was being repaired, the old Carew Coat of Arms was removed along with a plate on the south gate in the back garden and both placed in the inner court. They were never replaced and lay there rotting away in the courtyard some eighteen years until in 1896, the fragments along with a stone Coat of Arms were given to Sir Reginald Pole-Carew (of the Devon branch of the family) who on that occasion as he had on so many previously, made it known he was anxious to purchase the screen itself.

Apart from being painted, by 1912 their condition had so far deteriorated that great expense would have been incurred in their restoration at a time when funds were at a premium. It was at this time Mr. Starkie Gardner of Kennington an authority on wrought iron and an astute business man made an offer of £700 for the screen and panels along with the two back gates, and as part of the proposed agreement for him to replace those in front with a screen of the same design and quality and the back gates with an iron railing, or allow the sum of £30 towards the building of a wall if this was preferred.

Although Brough Maltby (who had retired in 1911 after twenty years as Secretary of the Institution) queried the legality of the proposed sale and of the power of the committee indeed to sell, Mr. Gardner's offer was accepted, the money paid, and the gates were removed by the end of November 1913. They were not to remain in his possession however, for they were quickly re-sold and exported to America where the screen is to be found today at the Orlando Road entrance of the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California. When the sale generally became known, in protest many of the benefactors withdrew their annual subscription, though it was too late to take any action to rescind the decision. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1914 a Special Court of Guardians was summoned to discuss the sale of the gates and the proposed disposal of the ancient lock still in their possession.

**Ancient lock.** Having so as to speak scorched their fingers over the sale of the gates, the Committee moved warily when it came to the sale of the ancient lock from the former Carew mansion, for they were still in desperate need of funds and the lock was there and of no use to them. Made by Henry Romayne of London who supplied locks and other blacksmiths work to royal buildings pre-1528 until his death in 1553, this ancient lock of rectangular design was richly gilt and ornamented and consists of the Arms of Henry VII (1485-1509) within an arch-headed panel flanked by the King's supporters, the dragon and the greyhound. Elaborate tracery decorates the remainder. The keyhole is hidden by an escutcheon in the form of a sliding panel decorated with the Royal Coat of Arms which is revealed by turning a head set above the panel that releases a catch, thus releasing the escutcheon which slides down exposing the keyhole. In 1899 the lock was loaned to the Burlington Fine Arts Club for an exhibition of chased and embossed steel and ironwork that took place in January 1900, and in 1914 it was loaned to the Victoria and Albert Museum for exhibition, initially for a period of six months.

Having resolved to sell and an offer made to Sir Reginald Pole-Carew not having been taken up, Mr. Starkie Gardner stepped in seeking to purchase the lock on commission for a client though fortunately this transaction was also to fall through. During 1917 however he borrowed it for a time to have two copies made in anticipation of a sale, but was somewhat tardy when it came to the return of the wooden frame and the imitation locking box he said were not part of the original lock and which he wished to see kept with the facsimile he had made to present to the Orphanage when the lock was sold. The committee eventually affected the return of these pieces and returned them to the Victoria and Albert Museum who were holding the lock though the key at one time in the possession of Mrs. Bridges appears to have been lost. An offer of £350 made by the museum in July 1918 was refused but a second offer of £500 three years later in September 1921 was accepted on one condition, that the lock remained in England as it does to this day where it is on view, a prize exhibit in the Primary English Gallery of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Kensington.

**Helmet.** For many years an engraved helmet believed to have been Sir Nicholas Carew's funerary helm hung from a projecting spear on the Trophy of Arms high on the north wall of the great hall.

In 1919 following a request from Major Carew who was interested in acquiring the piece, it was taken down, dated by experts to the middle of the sixteenth century and valued at eighty guineas. It was not purchased however and for many years was kept in the Committee Room. The Orphanage also held what was believed to be a souvenir of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, a piece of the embroidered hangings that decorated the banqueting chambers and chapels when in June 1520 Henry VIII met with Francis I at Ardres near Calais. Among his entourage of some 5,800 people who enjoyed the pageantry, feasting, dancing, masques and feats of arms was Henry's Master of Horse Nicholas Carew.

As the successors to the Orphanage the helm came into the possession of the Shaftsbury Society (London) but has been lost, and probably not being aware of its intrinsic value, of the sample of cloth there is no trace.

**Stained glass window.** As there was already space available in the nearby St. Mary's church for the girls to attend services without the need of their own chapel, another of the possessions disposed of to meet the forever rising cost of running the Institution was a notable stained glass window (thought to have been removed from France after the Revolution) that had been in the chapel of the old Orphanage in Lambeth.

Purchased in May 1809 for £157 10s. the total cost of which was paid for by subscription, the window along with two figures of the Apostles for the side windows, were left behind at the time of the move to Beddington in 1866. In April 1894, Herbert Oakey whose family had purchased the former Lambeth site wrote offering to give them the stained glass along with the inscription plates that had been affixed to the foundation stone of the old asylum. Having accepted the offer, subsequent thoughts were to dispose of the window that in the meantime had lain in an outbuilding for the past twenty-seven years.

In September 1921, the committee sought the opinion of Dr. Peatling F.S.A. (of Carshalton) who described the window as being of Flemish workmanship dating c.1610. Depicting the Presentation in the Temple its shape (some 9ft.8ins. by 5ft.11ins.) corresponded to that of the windows as seen in prints of the old Lambeth Orphanage building, but (he continued) "I think there is no doubt that it is at least 100 years older than the foundation of the Institution and would have been imported from elsewhere. The artist has relied chiefly for his effect ... upon the quality of his material ... In the head-dress of the High Priest, is placed a large red jewel. A hole is made in the glass, and a piece of ruby to meet the exact size is inserted and leaded in. This is an example of the effective and most skilful craftsmanship to be found throughout". It was no longer in first class condition; some pieces were missing but fortunately nothing from the central group of figures though much of the glass was cracked and the whole in need of considerable restoration.

Despite this he considered the window to be a very good example of stained glass from the Flemish Late-Renaissance period and to be valued as such. It was not until 1934 that the window was sold for £100 to E. Amery Adams of the Sun Fire Office, Charing Cross who bought it for re-erection at Ashburton, Devon where it was placed in the

Congregational Church in North Street that was later converted into a leisure and commercial enterprise centre.

### **Memorial stones in the burial ground opposite St. Mary's Church**

'In Loving Memory of the children of the Royal Female Orphan Asylum who have died at Beddington. Suffer little children to come unto me.' (Plots 770-778)

Maria Weaver	July 13 <sup>th</sup> , 1866	Aged 13
Clara Rowland	April 19 <sup>th</sup> , 1868	9
Emily Crozier	August 24 <sup>th</sup> , 1870	16
Elizabeth Mary Kent	October 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1870	13
Annetta Maria Loney	October 16 <sup>th</sup> , 1872	11
Frances Sarah Davis	September 18 <sup>th</sup> , 1873	11
Emma Maria Wilton	November 15 <sup>th</sup> , 1875	12
Ann Adelaide Ayres	September 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1879	15
Charlotte Emma Goodwin	January 21 <sup>st</sup> , 1880	11
Emily Sarah Blizzard	April 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1869	10
Ellen Pink	March 18 <sup>th</sup> , 1880	9
Alice Jane Sherwood	March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 1880	14
Isabella Maria Whale	April 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1880	11
Maria Louisa Greenway	April 26 <sup>th</sup> , 1880	10
Edith Annie Enser	January 21 <sup>st</sup> , 1884	10
Charlotte Garrod	August 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 1884	12
Sarah Kate Birkin	November 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 1885	8
Alice Edith Hill	July 20 <sup>th</sup> , 1888	12
Agnes Winifred Rolls	January 24 <sup>th</sup> , 1892	14
Dorothy [surname illegible]		

On the ground in front of the headstone stone is another that records the death of Charlotte Dales, Mistress Superintendent (1874) on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1882. The inscription reads – “She was admitted to the Asylum at Lambeth in 1802 and afterwards became Monitor and Assistant Mistress and Schoolroom Mistress, always industriously and usefully engaged within the walls of the Institution. She was highly respected and esteemed by the managers and beloved by all connected with her especially by the girls placed under her care.” ‘Good old Miss Dales’ to whom the girls clung with the greatest of affection and for whom whenever ill, would ask for her to be allowed to nurse and look after them. How many must she have grieved over? The inscription continues — “Also in Memory of Mary Jane Eliza Denyer who died July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1903 aged 77 years for fifty years the faithful servant and friend of the Institution: Faithful unto death”. Jane (also known as Mary) Denyer entered the service of the Orphanage in 1859 as a laundress and retired after forty-four years in 1903. In appreciation of her long and valuable service she was offered a home at the institution for the remainder of her life, including board, lodging and medical attendance and a pension of £1 per month. Her home as that of Miss Dales and of the girls for whom they cared, the present Carew Manor School still stands nearby.

## **St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses**

One of the earliest buildings to appear to the south of Croydon Road following the 1859 sale of Carew lands was the Hospital of St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses on the west side of Bute Road.

In the spring of 1860, the Rector the Rev. James Hamilton (very much a popular and influential figure in this small community) unexpectedly died at the age of forty-nine. To consider a suitable memorial to him on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1860 a parish meeting was held in the schoolroom at which time it was decided to go ahead with a project dear to his heart - the provision of almshouses for the elderly poor of the old parish of Beddington-cum-Wallington. The building was to be dedicated to his memory.

Mr. A. Collyer-Bristow donated an acre of land on what was once 'Smocke Acre' (i.e. Smoke Acre) formerly part of Wallington common fields, the name suggesting there may have once been kilns or charcoal burning on the site. Thereafter things moved swiftly and within two days of the meeting £1,300 had either been pledged or collected. Two years later, the first four almshouses had been built and opened on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1862 the spiritual oversight of which was reserved for the Rector of Beddington by his special desire in the Order of Council of December 1867 when Wallington had become a separate parish.

Apart from the provision of accommodation, during the winter months the occupants received a small pension of 1s. (5p) for each dwelling, presumably to help with heating expenses and were to receive a standard three endowment dinners during the year; at Christmas, Michaelmas (when the residents were provided with the customary goose dinner) and on Ascension Day. By 1880 six meals were provided each year and charged to the almshouse account paid from an endowment of £1,000 left by Mrs. Hamilton to which in 1877 Canon Bridges added a further £1,000. Another amount of £75 had also been invested for the purpose of providing these meals. Other celebratory dinners and special teas marked auspicious occasions, not only Royal weddings and days of Thanksgiving but also to celebrate local events as when in 1879, the two foremost Beddington families were united with the marriage of John Henry Bridges and Edith Isabella Tritton.

In 1870 the accommodation was increased by two more almshouses provided by the Rev. A. H. Bridges, designed by his architect Joseph Clarke in memory of his parents Sir Henry and Lady Bridges. Another was added by Dr. P. Culhane, opened on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1871 in memory of his late wife Frances (d.1869), the eldest daughter of the late Admiral James Pigott of Beddington Lodge and a sister of Mrs. Marianne Hamilton the late rector's wife. Mrs. Hamilton was to complete the quadrangle by donating a final almshouse in memory of her husband bringing the total to eight, accommodation which though somewhat basic consisted of a living room, bedroom and scullery. There was also a common room with a heavy mullioned bay window designed to serve as a chapel the roof of which was surmounted by a small belfry in the form of a steeple that rose higher than the rest of the building. A communal kitchen stood on the left of the entrance; the remainder of the accommodation consisted of two small storerooms and toilets located at the far side of the courtyard opposite the main entrance.



As seen from (the later named) Bute Road the east front was in heavily ornamented Victorian Gothic style with stone and flint walling and with a red tiled roof. A small gable that bore an escutcheon believed to have been that of Hamilton surmounted the central arched doorway of the main entrance. Within, the accommodation was protected by a cloister or verandah around an irregular courtyard in the centre of which was a well with a large water pump, unused for many years at the time of its being infilled.

Over the years though restoration, renovation and updating of the buildings had taken place and gas, water and electricity had been installed dampness was an ongoing problem and conditions were still basically primitive. In 1944, the buildings suffered some bomb damage the cost of repair being met by the War Damage Commission, but after a report in 1963 on the serious condition of the buildings, the Trustees made a decision to demolish and rebuild. The two remaining lady residents in the meantime moved into the then vacant Curate's house at 2 Bridle Path.

The Hospital of St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses after a lifetime spanning 108 years were demolished during the spring of 1970 and the present St. Mary's Court, now 56 Bute Road was built on the site. A commemorative plaque celebrating the opening of the new building in 1971 reads – "The Hospital of St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses. The rebuilding of these dwellings was made possible through the generosity [a legacy] of Harry Swinton Lee Esq. of Wallington, 1970".

## **Workhouse and the Parish Houses for the Poor**

Traditionally it had long been the common law of England that the needy or destitute were to be looked after by the church but the Dissolution of the Monasteries meant that the dole at the abbey gate was no longer available and responsibility for relief of the poor fell on the Vestry. The Poor Law Act of 1556 (Elizabeth I) enabled charitable alms to be collected from the wealthier residents of the parish for this purpose, whereas the Act of 1597 enabled parishes to levy a poor rate. The Poor Law Act of 1601 was passed to provide an essential pattern of treatment of the poor at which time the parish found itself required among other responsibilities, to appoint overseers to operate the system of poor relief. Two churchwardens were made ex-officio overseers and had the duty of levying a poor rate sufficient for the overseers to provide all necessary relief for paupers. The General Workhouse Act of 1723 gave parishes the authority to build their own workhouse.

Assistance may have taken the form of outdoor relief, money, food or medical treatment provided while the recipients continued to live in their own or parish houses, as it was cheaper to give this type of relief than to institutionalise the needy. The boarding out of paupers was allowed by law, either as an expedient or on account of a shortage of accommodation. Alternatively the pauper may have been taken into to the workhouse, treated for illness in the workhouse infirmary or admitted to the county lunatic asylum.

**The Workhouse.** We do not know when Beddington's workhouse was first built. It stood on the east side of Chatts Hill (Guy Road) on the north (or downhill) side of the corner of what is now The Brandries. The Tithe Apportionment Map dated November 1839

indicates what was by then Brandries meadow as the site of the building that had been sold the previous year. The Enclosure Map of 1820, and Lindley and Crosleys map of 1793 both show buildings there, and the earlier Rocques map surveyed c.1745, also show a building on this meadow and another set a little further back slightly downhill. An illustration of the Old Post Office dated 1768 shows what appears to be a weatherboard building standing on the opposite side to, and uphill of the Post Office where the workhouse once stood.

With the number of gentry living in the area who needed domestic staff; coachmen and grooms, gardeners and field labourers, Beddington was surely one of the more fortunate parishes and less likely to suffer badly from the destitution of its working population. Chronic poverty was almost always due to old age, sickness, widowhood or perhaps pregnancy outside of marriage, and victims of these misfortunes who were not taken care of within the extended family were those most likely to become a charge to the parish or inmates of the workhouse. When poor relief was applied for, the applicant would probably have undergone a settlement examination to determine which parish was legally responsible for their upkeep and many were sent back to the area from which they originated so as not to be chargeable on the local rate.

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1766, the Beddington overseers agreed with Widow Baker “for the maintenance of such children that are now in the workhouse, on account of Edwd. Tyrell’s daughter now having smallpox there”; an application was also made to Croydon workhouse as to whether the Master could undertake to superintend the maintenance and care of the poor. In the meantime, consideration was to be given as to the prosecution of several persons on account of the girl “with the smallpox out upon her, being removed out of the Parish of Mitcham without any legal order or warrant to do so, having put this parish to great expense”.

The distribution of relief to the poor was forever ongoing. In 1779 Thos. Bowles was allowed three shillings a week and a greatcoat on or about Michaelmas. In 1780 Widow Bance was to be allowed five shillings a week and a half years rent was to be paid; it was also agreed to give to four of her children a “paire of shoues each”; Dianna Roberts received one gown, two petticoats, two “shiftes”, one apron and one handkerchief and Mrs. Turrel “three paire of sheats, two shiftes and one pair of stockings”.

It would appear that by 1782 the workhouse was in a state of disrepair as in November of that year it was ordered that the poor receiving “of allmes are to go to Mitcham Workhouse, thaire to be maintained by Mr. Hill, Master of Mitcham Workhouse, at three shillings per week, hee finding of clothes and all other nesessareys, and this Parish of Beddington is to allow Mr. Hill the sum of forty shillings to him for any lying inn woman belonging to the parish of Beddington. It was also ordered that the workhouse belonging to the Parish of Beddington be lett and the goodes of the saide workhouse be disposed of the parishes use”.

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1783 an agreement was signed by the snuff manufacturer John Williamson agreeing to lease the Poor House on Chatt’s Hill formerly held by William Ackere from the previous Midsummer Day. The agreement was for a term of twenty-one

years at a yearly rental of forty shillings payable half yearly, but by February that same year at a meeting in the Vestry between the Parish and Joseph Clark the elder a carpenter of Carshalton, proposals were put forward and accepted for the erecting of a new building to serve as a workhouse which entailed the demolition of the old and to erect a new house of 26ft. long and 24ft. wide of two storeys with plain tiled roof, using as much of the old material as possible. The storeys were to be 7ft. high, the lower part (from the foundations to the chamber floor) to be carried up with brickwork, the upper part of the building to be timber weather-boarded with batons. The ground floors were to be of paving bricks, the upper with inch deal, the whole being in the sum of £200, £100 of which was to be paid at Christmas 1783 and the residue of £100 to be paid at Christmas 1784. As rebuilding was to take place after demolition, it is to be expected that the new building was to be built on the site of the old; in 1837 it was stated that “there are no deeds but the Parish has been in the possession of the property of upwards of a century”.

Whether the Mitcham arrangements were only in the immediate short term, but we learn that in March 1784 it was “ordered that the Churchwardens... for the time being... are empowered to contract and agree as soon as they conveniently can with some proper person... for the keeping, maintaining and cloathing all such poor persons as now are publick charge or may at any time, hereafter during their Office, become a charge to this parish on the most reasonable terms that can be made”.

The parish registers of 1793 list the burials of ten paupers that took place within two periods; between January and the beginning of April and from September through to early November, when the overall death rate for the parish that year was nineteen. The following year 1794, seven more pauper deaths were recorded (four of whom were infants) out of a total parish mortality of fifteen.

In 1817, remedial work had been undertaken on the building; a room had been taken down at the north end of the Poor House, the bricks had been cleaned, and foundations dug out for a new room. In June 1830, James West was paid to put a lock on the door and erect a 40ft. run of arrass etc. (fencing) and to paint the workhouse. March 1833 saw a payment of £6 1s. 8d. made to the ‘Surveyors’ for two loads of stones picked by the paupers which gives some indication that it was not an easy life to be an inmate of the workhouse.

One of the most unpopular but one of the most necessary reforms passed by the Whig government in 1834 was the Poor Law Amendment Act. Under the old system following that known as the ‘Speenhamland Decision’ of 1795, it was the practise to make up the wages of workmen out of the rates if those wages were insufficient to support life, thus subsidising the wages of the lowest paid. Under the new Act, the principal was laid down that no outdoor relief should be given to able-bodied workmen; there were to be no supplementary allowances - if they wished to obtain help from the parish they must be consigned to the workhouse where conditions were to be made harsh to discourage people from wanting to receive assistance.

The new Poor Law of 1834 relieved the Vestry of one of its responsibilities. Administration of parochial funds was now in the hands of Boards of Guardians and

groups of the smaller parishes (such as ours) were brought together in 'Unions'. New boundaries were drawn; the poor of Carshalton and west of Manor Road were removed to Epsom while those on the east side of Manor Road including those of Beddington were sent to Croydon. In 1834 the Croydon workhouse was sited on Duppas Hill within the 'V' bordered by Duppas Lane and Duppas Hill. In 1865 the new Croydon Union Workhouse located in Queens Road was almost completed supported by the rates of the districts that then composed the Croydon Union, among them Beddington and Wallington. The Board of Guardians were controlled by Poor Law Commissioners, later the Poor Law Board who in 1871 became the Local Government Board. In 1919 it was to become the Ministry of Health. The infirmary attached to the new Croydon workhouse was opened in May 1885 and is known to us today as the Mayday Hospital.

The Amendment Act of 1834 therefore brought about closure of the Beddington Workhouse. In June 1837 a meeting of the Vestry agreed to the disposal of the building and in October a request was made to the Poor Law Commissioners for their consent to the sale of the building along with the adjoining tenement occupied by John Cookson the Parish Clerk and his wife Sarah. This included the gardens thereunto respectively belonging to situate on Chatts Hill all of which were freehold. The buildings were auctioned at the Ship Inn, Croydon by Messrs. Blake February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1838 and sold to William Parker of Carey Street, London for £415. When advertised, the workhouse was described as being a brick, timber and tile built building of two storeys containing nine apartments, double span roof and all that pertaining to its use as a Poor House. The adjoining tenement was of two rooms with a shed and garden. The area had an overall frontage above 100ft. to Chatt's Hill and was fenced by a high brick wall. The workhouse, the second on the site that had a life span of about fifty-six years was probably demolished soon after.

**The Parish Houses.** At one time the parish also had a group of seven thatched lathe and plaster cottages located on Chatts Hill that had been given by a maiden lady benefactor at some time prior to March 1703 "wherein the poor are maintained or kept". In 1793, the parish was also renting two cottages in Church Lane from the Carew estates only to be let for as long as they were occupied by the then tenants. On the September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1766 the vestry ordered that the fences were to be repaired "and made as to confine the poor within the same" for which an estimate of ten guineas on behalf of Samuel Springal a carpenter and bricklayer was accepted. The Vestry also had problems with collecting rents for on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1768 it was reported that several tenants were greatly in arrears of rent, were very poor and either unwilling or unable to pay. It was agreed therefore that if the tenants did not pay one years rent by Michaelmas some twenty-five days later, that William Peircey, John Cook, Robert Fry, Richard Hubbard and William Wheatley were to quit the houses at Christmas and the officers be then empowered to let them.

By 1770 problems still existed as to the collection of rents. In an effort therefore to gain a guaranteed income from parish properties, it was decided to let them to any one substantial inhabitant for the best rent that could be got for them, provided they were let to the existing tenants at the rents they were currently paying. On the basis of a seven-year term George Charrington (an Overseer for the Poor) offered an annual rental of five pounds for all the tenements and lands controlled by the vestry apart from Church Mead

let to Mr. Hodgkins. As no one offered more George Charrington's offer was accepted. The same tenants as those noted in September 1768 still occupied the houses. In 1779 however John Foster agreed to take the occupiers and parish houses on Chatts Hill for seven years from Midsummer 1780 at five pounds per annum agreeing to repair them according to estimates of Mr. [?]Tenden a bricklayer and William Stevens a carpenter.

There is reference to work undertaken on the houses in 1815 including the taking down of a chimney in the middle cottage and presumably rebuilding; also to tiling, plastering and whitewashing, the whitening of the kitchen and stopping up of a doorway in the chamber. In February 1816 the Vestry paid George Hedgecock £4 5s. for thatching the cottages then being rented and sub-let to the poor by John Brown for £20 per annum, from whom they claimed the amount. This row of houses are thought to have stood on land indicated as belonging to the church on the Enclosure Map of 1820, uphill of the garden that lay on the corner of Church Lane and Guy Road.

The Vestry meeting of August 1816 decided that the cottages had become so dilapidated it would be advantageous that they should be taken down and rebuilt on some plan that was equivalent to the present for the accommodation of all concerned, but it would appear that nothing was to come of it. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1824 the Vestry met to consider an offer by Mrs. Ann Paston Gee for the purchase of the land and "ruinous" cottages on Chatt's Hill for £100. It was decided however to exchange the 2 rods and 23 perches of land and cottages for a piece of ground to the value of the £100 adjoining existing church land on Cats Brain Hill, the extent of which was to be ascertained "by two indifferent persons".

In April 1824 rent for the cottages was received as usual with no reference to receipts thereafter. A note in the margin of the document tells us that "the cottages became ruinous and were pulled down, the ground belonging thereto being exchanged for 3½ parts of 7 acres at Cats Brains, land abutting south-east on the road leading from Beddington to Woodcote known as Sandy Lane North". In 1826 reference is made to late land at Chatts Hill two acres of which were then tenanted by Charrington, half an acre by Bristow, half acre common field and a second half acre common field.

As seen from the distance of years, some of the records relating to the poor can today be viewed with a degree of amusement. One such is that of c.1740 Richard Weat of Beddington parish and Mary Nevel of Croydon, the entry recorded as written. "She lived with her mother in a parish house at Beddington where she had one bastard child which Croydon Parish gave bond to indemnify and after the child was born they gave her a certificate to Beddington and in a little time she was with child a second time and the Churchwardens of Croydon promised Richard Weat if he would marry Mary Nevel they would give him the said Richard Weat forty shillings and a bed and sent the Beedle of the Parish of Croydon with them to London to marry them at the fleet butt on going a long Mary Nevel said she would not be married without a ring and Beedle said he bought a ring which cost him nine shillings and after they was married the Beedle gave him, the said Richard Weat no money for bed butt only a sholder of muton for supper. The said Richard Weat is a simple man not able to gett his living".

## PUBLIC HOUSES

### **Bandon Hill Public Houses**

For such a relatively small area, Bandon Hill was served by two hostelrys, 'The Harrow' located on the south side of Sandy Lane North not far from its junction with Plough Lane and the 'New Inn', Upper Road.

**The Harrow.** The land upon which The Harrow stood (that in September 1858 had passed from John Williamson to the builder John West) is further documented in a conveyance of that same year when James West sold the plot to George Stubbings who in 1860-61 is listed as occupying the pub. A conveyance of 1870 records The Harrow Inn being sold by George Stubbings to Howard Nalder and Bristow Collyer who in 1888 conveyed the property to the business of which they were partners, Nalder and Collyer's Brewery Company. James Hill is recorded as occupying The Harrow in 1874; in 1881 the licensee was Henry Dawson and in 1891 the license was held by Charles Busby. Alfred Parker was there at least between 1913 and 1918.

The building was considerably renovated between 1915 and 1918 and in 1939 the Borough of Beddington and Wallington approved plans for what amounted to an almost virtual rebuilding of the premises. An extension was added in 1976 (at which time during excavation an old well was discovered) and total refurbishment undertaken in 1997. For many years a large barn stood behind the pub within which, among other activities, oyster shelling was undertaken. The yard behind is also recalled as being that of a blacksmith where horses were brought to be shod. The Harrow and car park are now the site of a modern housing development.

**The New Inn.** The building that housed the New Inn on the south side of Upper Road still stands, today numbered 31A, named 'New Inn House'. When offered for sale on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1892 it was described as a Licensed Beer house with on the first floor, three bedrooms, on the ground floor a 15ft. 8in. by 17ft. 9in. Bar, a smaller parlour with a marble mantelpiece and "dwarf cupboard", leading to a 24ft. 3in. by 8ft. 5in. billiards room, kitchen and scullery. In the basement was a large cellar and outside, the WC, various sheds, yard, garden and cart entrance. Adjoining, on the west side were two cottages known as 1 and 2 'Taunton Place' (now 29 and 31 Upper Road) one with four rooms and scullery the other with five, the larger of which (No.2) was occupied by the Licensee Mr. Waghorn as sub-tenant. The buildings, built of brick and slate roofed were leased from Midsummer 1881 to Frederick Overton at initially £60 rising to £70 per annum.

The first reference to the land upon which these buildings are sited is in a conveyance dated August 1865 made between Stephen Burgess and James Cook, with further reference to an Indenture of lease of June 1881 to which Mary Anne Bird was party. The New Inn is recalled when in its later years it was strictly run on club lines by a local family named Gale. The off-licence was the old jug and bottle type and there was a

shuttered window in the front of the building through which purchases were made. The New Inn is remembered as such at least until about the 1960s.

## **The Harvest Home and Hazel Cottages, Beddington Lane**

The Harvest Home public house began as one of four early eighteenth century terraced cottages standing in Beddington Lane opposite the Goose Green allotments, the name for which may well have been inspired by the bounty grown opposite its doors.

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1839 Messrs Blake, Auctioneers offered a two storey brick built cottage for sale at the Ship Inn, Croydon, the southernmost (on the left when facing) of the group of four, each cottage having a frontage to Beddington Lane of some 37ft. The cottage was of four rooms and a washhouse, yard with detached cow house and a large garden owned by the late John Williamson and let to James Baker a cow keeper for an annual rent of £16. James West purchased it for £325. Adjoining on the north side were two further cottages also belonging to the snuff manufacturer John Williamson. The cottage at the opposite end of the terrace of four (on the right when facing, No.4), that nearest Park Farm, awarded to the late owner Mrs. Grace Michael and her husband by the Inclosure Commissioners in 1852. Prior to the Award, she and her sister had been tenants in common. It came onto the market on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1853 at which time Henry Tritton of nearby Wandle Court purchased it for £300. It was of similar style and accommodation, brick-built with tiled roof. John Roffey occupied this cottage as a tenant paying twelve guineas annual rent due at Michaelmas (September 29<sup>th</sup>).

Five years later, on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1858 the two central cottages (2 and 3) came onto the market offered on behalf of John and Mary Williamson, beneficiaries of the estate of John Williamson. The houses shared a well located in the small front garden between the two. Number three, the cottage occupied by Richard Brown a yearly tenant paying £11 per annum rent was also purchased by Henry Tritton who had acquired the house next door (No.4) some five years previously. These two cottages were to come onto the market again in 1887 as part of the Tritton estate. The second cottage then tenanted by James Brooker was sold for £235 to Henry Overton in 1854 founder of the Royal Oak Brewery, Surrey Street, Croydon. He eventually acquired the first cottage and having adapted them (one of which already had a small shop front) by about 1860 had opened a beer shop, in 1861 managed by John Machell (whose occupation in the census was given as that of a shepherd) along with his wife Sophia and their eighteen year old son Charles. Ten years later Walter Cole enumerated as a drover and beer house keeper was the licensee until some time in 1880-early 1881 the beer house was taken over by Alfred Flexman a former bricklayer, assisted by his wife Ellen. It was the Muggerridge family however who saw the Harvest Home (known as such since the 1870s) into the twentieth century and more or less into the building we see there today. By 1891 Solomon Muggridge was publican followed by his son E. (Ted) Muggridge until Percy W. Waghorn (son of Alfred Waghorn of the New Inn, Bandon Hill), succeeded the latter as licensee in about 1913-14 remaining there at least until outbreak of the Second World War.

Upon the amalgamation in 1892 of Henry Overton with Nathaniel Page's Shirley Brewery, Page and Overton became joint owners of the property. A board advertising

their fine ale was attached to the front of the old cottages seen in a photograph of gentlemen about to leave for a summer outing, probably to the Derby in 1895. Then still simply a beer house, it was a low fronted building in line with the adjoining cottages, having a long porch across the front blocked in with trellis at either end. There were blocks of wood beneath the porch where customers could sit in fine weather and where the landlord if not engaged within, would no doubt stand to chat to the locals and encourage business from the passer-by.

The two cottages that became the Harvest Home had public and saloon bars built onto the front of the old building it is thought probably in the late 1890s, early 1900s and the roof line altered. For many years after however, upon entering one still had to take a step down into the building and in the saloon bar sit on wooden benches. It was not like the more prestigious public house The Plough, in 1859 recorded as being the only licensed house in the parish.

In 1928 planning permission was granted for the addition of a dining room and arising from a petition the Harvest Home was granted a full licence in the 1930s enabling them to sell spirits as well as beer. The pub passed to the brewers Charrington's in the late 1960s when they took over the former Page and Overton who had by then become Hoare and Co. Upon its transformation in the 1890s the main entrance to the pub was sited on the east side as was the entrance to the original building, but at least by the 1930s had been re-sited across the south-east corner of the building. Engraved glass decorated the windows by the door. An off-sales area between the public and saloon bars was turned into a lobby in 1971 and in 1982 extensive alterations undertaken to the interior at which time the Victorian embossed glass engraved with the words 'Skittle Alley' was removed from an inner door giving access to a long passage which in its time must have been the scene of many a good game of this once very popular pub entertainment. The glass was never replaced.

On the southwest side of the Harvest Home is a hall that for many years stood unused by the public owing to structural damage suffered during the war but after a long period of closure is now open for functions. Built between the First and Second World Wars, it too was the scene of many a good night out in the village. Members of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffalo's Lodge used the club room as their meeting place, members of the Boy's Brigade band practiced there on a Saturday morning, wedding receptions were held there as were dances, many run on behalf of a charity such as the Orphanage. There was always a policeman stationed on the door on New Year's Eve.

The third and fourth cottages; those at the north end nearest Park Farm that had remained throughout in private ownership stood basically unaltered until demolished. They still had their original window frames that were flush with the exterior walls though the buildings had been cement rendered and whitewashed. At the turn of the twentieth century, Edward Baldwin Snr. (possibly that same "old Baldwin" mentioned by Bentham in his 'History') was living in the third cottage, and J. Petchey and family (who had lived there for at least the previous twenty-four years) in the fourth that at one time were known as the 'Gardener's Cottages' probably because in 1901 both had come into the ownership of market gardener Walter Cole. In May 1925 Albert Edward Petchey the local butcher





*The proprietor Mr. Ted Muggeridge (on the extreme right) is pictured with regulars outside the Harvets Home beer house in 1895 before an outing, probably to The Derby. The building was modernised shortly after.*



*A later photograph dated August 1907 with Mr Muggeridge, his wife and staff. Hazel Cottages remain unaltered on the right.*

purchased their home known then as 'Hazel Cottage'. These two cottages numbered 29 and 31 Beddington Lane, acquired by the council in 1965 with a view to road widening, having been left empty had in such a short time become so badly vandalised they were demolished during the second week of June 1966. Only a faint outline on the brickwork shows where the pitched roof of the cottages met with the wall of the Harvest Home. The houses numbered 29A and 31 Beddington Lane built in 1981 replace these two cottages. A conservatory added to the south side of the pub during September-October 2004 extends the dining area of this family-run public house. Roger and Eileen Wright and daughter Kim Belton were, until recently, joint licensees.

## **The Jolly Gardeners', Mitcham Road**

Within the extreme north easterly corner of the borough facing Mitcham Road stood 'The Jolly Gardeners' public house (commonly referred to as the 'Red House') which was built c.1870 for Messrs. Nalder and Collyer Brewery Co. Ltd. of Croydon. In about 1936 it became part of Ind Coope. In 1874 William Brackenbury was the licensee and in 1881, John Orrington. In view of the agricultural nature of the surrounding countryside, market gardening and the growing of lavender and black mint, the public house was probably named after those working in the area. Apart from the agricultural labourers and those working in the nearby distillery, in about 1913, the pub also stood adjacent to a football ground, bowling green and tennis courts from which it no doubt attracted a thirsty clientele.

John Carter, a market gardener was an early leaseholder. His twenty-year lease expired in 1890 when it was offered to William Carter also a market gardener of Thornton Heath, possibly a son or brother. The lease was also for twenty years and when this expired in 1910 it was renewed to him at the same rent (£40 per annum) for a further ten years. William Carter well may have been the licensee but there is a question as to whether he indeed managed the business as in 1893 three years after his having taken over the licence, Henry Knapp is recorded as tenant at The Jolly Gardeners, the first of a number of tenants to follow the Carter family.

In 1903 during the period of William Carter's lease, the layout of the ground floor shows a simple building consisting of an entrance leading to an open bar on the right, and on the left a tap room with a "parler" directly behind. Behind the bar off a passageway was the bar parlour with access to the cellar, beyond which lay the kitchen. Inevitably changes were to be made over the years including those shown to an existing plan of 1907 with an approved new layout showing the front entrance leading directly into a public bar on the left, with a second entrance via a porch leading into a saloon bar to the right of the main entrance. The serving space was accessible to both bars. Other changes included the creation of a tearoom. Accessed via a lobby at the back of the pub, the kitchen and larder were at that time sited in former outbuildings that in turn adjoined a stable and harness room.

Until demolished in 2004, the pub stood in a relatively isolated position on the east side of Red House Road with the open spaces of Mitcham Common on two sides, enclosed on the other two by industrial and warehousing units.



*Looking west along Croydon Road towards The Plough public house c.1890.*

## **The Plough, The Broadway**

An Indenture dated 1743 is the first reference we have to a “newly built inn by the ‘Sign of the Plow’, situate and being at the Crossways at Beddington where formerly stood an inn, in the possession of Robert [Loill?] together with garden, orchard, yards and ground lying next ... all rooms, chambers, brew house, outhouses, buildings ... passages, waters”. An agreement was made at this time between Sir Nicholas Carew Bt. and John Priest, Victualler for the lease of the new building. Reference is also made to John Priest, Brewer in the will of his friend James Crowcher, Victualler made in November 1754 and proved two years later.

The Plough Inn appears in Land Tax records in 1780 (the earliest available) when the landlord was Joseph Simpson. He died at the end of December 1795 after which for two years his wife Ann held the licence. From 1798 and into the new century John Boatwright was the licensee and in 1823 Henry George. By 1825 the name Goseph (Joseph) Rowe appears (died December 1838) and subsequently that of his wife Elizabeth into the mid-1850s. By 1859 however Thomas Watkinson then aged 46 had become the licensed victualler although an Elizabeth Rowe is listed as being at The Plough on the night of the census in 1861.

An early photograph exists of The Plough; a pen and ink drawing dated 1885 and ground plans of 1890, all probably of the 1743 building. From its situation however it is likely that a hostelry has stood on the site for centuries at a junction of roads leading from farm

lands to the south and settlements further a-field, with the mill a short distance to the north and a number of large estates near to hand. It was part of the extensive Carew land holdings sold off in 1859 at which time Thomas Watkinson (who had been the yearly tenant leasing the property for £80 per annum) purchased it for £1,200. In the particulars of sale The Plough is described as having a Bar and Parlour on the ground floor with front and side parlours, two Tap Rooms, Kitchen, Dairy, and Mangle Room. Upstairs were a Club Room, six good Bedrooms and a W. C., and on the second floor two Servants Rooms and Closet. In the basement was good cellerage. The yard was convenient with double entrance gates and coach house, stabling for nine horses, three loose boxes and saddle room, all brick-built and tiled; a granary and skittle alley. It was the only licensed house then in the parish with the stables being let mainly to gentlemen for the accommodation of their hunters during the Season. Thomas Watkinson also leased a field directly opposite, land that extended in one direction some distance towards the present Sandhills and in the other, almost to the junction of Plough Lane Close including what is now part of the Bandon Hill Cemetery. His lease included a barn and yard where the corner of Plough Lane and Queenswood Avenue is now. By leasing this land he also had use of the caves, entrances to which were in the bank of sand directly opposite the pub in the cool depths of which he would no doubt have stored his casks of liquor.

In 1890 as seen from the east, the front was in Georgian style, brick-built in four bays with the ground floor windows shuttered. The roof was tiled and a number of outbuildings stretched along Croydon Road to the west. Although the public house was described as newly built in 1743, the outbuildings might well have included the remains of the earlier inn that would explain the irregular shape of the whole.

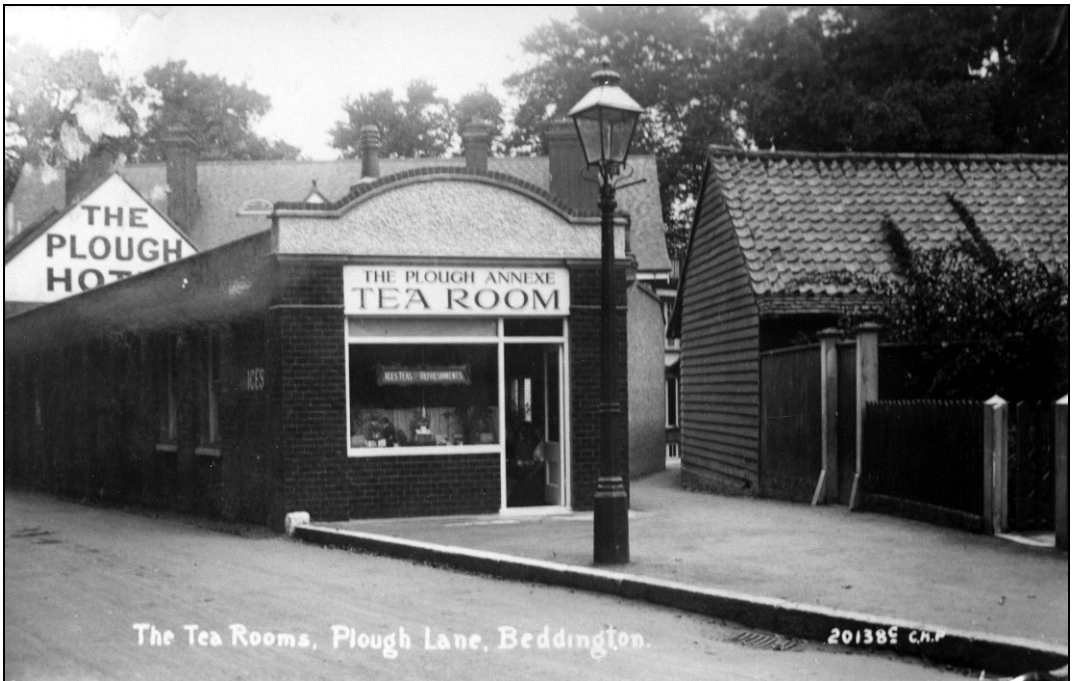
According to the ground plans dated 1890 immediately inside the front door was a passage leading on the left to the Public Parlour with a fireplace on the south wall, then a small Tap Room with a built-in corner cupboard on the opposite wall to another fireplace, the main Tap Room and finally a spacious Kitchen with a very large oven. On the right side of the passage by the front entrance was a room allocated to Bar Service with corner fireplace and serving counter, behind which were the main staircase and another parlour. An irregularly shaped store room lay beyond, behind which was a large larder; all may have been part of the earlier buildings.

In 1896 Young's Brewery of Wandsworth bought a sixty-year lease for a premium of £6,400 and an annual rent of £100, and sub-leased it to Henry Brooker for thirty years at a premium of £5,000 and an annual rent of £500, reducing to £100. Two years later he asked for alterations and rebuilding to be carried out and in consequence the rent was increased to £550 reducing to £150. In 1925 Young's bought the freehold of the premises.

The fine quality brick and woodwork with touches of English Arts and Crafts style distinguish the current building designed by the architect J.T. Barker in 1897 and built the following year for £5,516 by the firm of Edwards and Medway. It is the only inn within the borough to have open balconies as an integral part of the design though the two first floor balconies on the south side were enclosed and minor alterations undertaken on this front. There is an attractive bas-relief running all the way round the building under the eaves. The old inn sign showed horses working in the fields under which were the words



*Rebuilt in 1897-98, the pub as seen in 1916 with the main entrance to the yard beneath the 'Livery & Bait Stables' arched sign that linked the pub to the stable block.*



*The Plough Annexe in the early 1930s. Only a narrow footpath separated the pub from cottages and farm buildings associated with the Beddington Place estate.*

‘God Speed The Plough’. An ingenious new sign however was created for the pub’s centenary in 1998 based on the shape of the constellation. On one side is a field shown in daylight with the zodiac sign formed by birds flying above a plough; on the reverse the same scene at night with the sign of The Plough marked with stars.

Part of the outbuildings; a former coach house, still stands in what was once the stable yard the entrance to which was originally on the northwest side above which was an arched sign bearing the legend ‘Livery and Bait Stables’. This has been replaced by an extension to the pub housing an east facing entrance and toilet block. This entrance also gives access to the lounge. During the Second World War a public air raid shelter was located within the cellars with the entrance door on the eastern wall, access to which was removed some years later and remains a barely noticeable outline in the surrounding brickwork. An outside toilet was also located in the yard by the east wall.

An advertisement in Piles directory dated 1919 announced that H.P. Parker was the proprietor of ‘The Plough Garage’ based in the outbuildings during which time Mrs. C.E. Parker was the licensee. During the early 1930s a small tearoom ‘The Plough Annexe Tea Room’ in part built on the site of former stables was accessed from the south (or Bandon Hill) side where today there is an entrance to the yard. A covered smoking area and barbecue were added in the summer of 2008. The current (recently returned) licensee is Donald Turner, who held the license for thirteen years in the past.

## **RIVERSIDE ANIMAL CENTRE AND WILDLIFE HOSPITAL**

A registered charity and part of the London Wildcare Trust (prior to the February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 known as the Wandle Valley Wildlife Hospital), the animal hospital and rescue centre was founded in 1993 by Ted Burden at his home in north Cheam. With the co-operation of the London Borough of Sutton’s Parks Service who made former farm buildings available (more recently in use as an equipment depot), the hospital moved into its premises in Beddington Park in January 1997. The oldest part of the buildings were erected between 1868 and 1896 as part of Thirlby’s Dairy Farm which used Beddington Park for grazing.

Relying almost entirely upon voluntary contributions and the services of volunteers to staff the centre, the hospital that is manned for 24 hours, 365 days a year gradually evolved to become one of the busiest hospital and rescue centres in the U.K. caring for almost 4,000 sick, injured and orphaned native wild animals each year. It is the only major facility of its kind serving the Greater London area.

The Riverside Animal Centre, as it became known in May 2010, covering a principal area comprising the four River Wandle boroughs, arose from experience gained in providing assistance for animals in need, whether domestic or wild, and though there are many centres engaged in re-homing unwanted pets, few if any are on standby to respond to real emergencies. The rescue team is there to assist, free of charge, when an animal is injured and their owner is not present or in incidents involving lost or abandoned animals or those in life-threatening situations. The team often work alongside the emergency services.

## SCHOOLS

### **Amy Johnson Primary School, Mollison Drive**

Amy Johnson Primary School located in Mollison Drive on the edge of the Roundshaw estate on land once part of the Beddington aerodrome, takes its name from one of the most famous aviators to fly from Croydon. It was opened as a Primary School in September 1991 upon the amalgamation of the former Roundshaw Infant and Junior Schools, both of which had been opened in 1969.

### **Bandon Hill National and Bandon Hill Primary Schools**

The last of the three National Schools built in Beddington collectively known as St. Mary's National Schools administered by a committee of Managers with the Rector as Chairman, Bandon Hill Church School, founded by the Rev. A.H. Bridges was opened on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1878 in the Mission Church, South Beddington with Sarah Wells as Mistress. The small hamlet of Bandon Hill and a few scattered houses on the Windmill Fields provided the whole congregation at the chapel-of-ease and children for the school. Initially with sixty infants, the school soon began taking junior school age children. By 1885 boys who had passed Standard 1 were sent on to the Beddington Central School in Croydon Road and in November 1888 owing to the increase in numbers, the school was closed to the older children with some going to the Central School while others remained until Christmas when they were due to leave.

It soon became obvious that the church building, a wooden Mission Hut standing on the corner of Stafford Road and Sandy Lane South was unsatisfactory for the purposes of education. By 1890 there were four classes totalling one hundred and fifty children who were accommodated in two rooms. In 1893, the Education Department stated that the building failed to satisfy Government requirements.

At the Manager's meeting in October 1894 an offer of £1,227 made by the Beddington builder Messrs. Dawson and Son to erect a new brick-built school next door to the church was accepted. The Rector initiated a campaign to raise funds for the project making much of the statement (used on at least two previous occasions) that if sufficient funding was not available that a "Board [of Education] School will be forced upon us", illustrating the established church's opposition to secular education which it was held would undermine the morals of the community by neglecting religious education. By June 1895, the new National School had been built on the west side of Sandy Lane South, south of its junction with Stafford Road and officially opened on July 30<sup>th</sup>, with Frances Ingrams appointed as Mistress. The children joined the new school in September after the summer holidays. Two additional temporary corrugated iron classrooms were later built in the grounds to relieve the pressure of growing numbers. The original schoolrooms within the church building remained in use as a vestry.

It was only after a request for temporary accommodation, in 1911 a council school was opened in the Wesleyan Mission Hall and though children were still being transferred to this and other schools in the area, overcrowding and insufficient staffing was an ongoing problem. Discussions as to the building of a new council school had begun as early as 1908. Surrey County Council eventually initiated the building when in 1910 they purchased a site to the south of the existing National School for £1,550. It was not until September 1912 however, that after lengthy delays the new school built by Messrs Burgess and Sons was opened. £3,744 was paid for the main building with additional costs for furnishings, fittings, outbuildings etc. W. G. Clarke was appointed Head Master of the new Junior School. The initial intake was three hundred and fifteen children with sixteen more to come to a school that was only supposed to take three hundred and fifty.

The building itself was the first of that design in the county; one of the few in England. Instead of the classrooms opening directly off a central hall there were two corridors running from either side off which the classrooms opened thus reducing the noise and interruption caused by the old style of design. The appeal would shortly be for another block that would then give provision for boys and girls separately with the intention that the existing Bandon Hill Church School would remain as an infant's school not separate from the new but part of the overall scheme. By 1914 however with one hundred and ninety-two scholars on the roll of the latter the headmistress was refusing admission to children under five. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1915, the former National (church) school was transferred to the control of Surrey County Council.

Accommodation was an ongoing problem. In December 1938, it was noted that children were being educated in three buildings; four classes were held in the main building, two in a temporary building on the same site and two in St. Michael's Hall. The new Junior/Infant Central School then in the course of construction was intended to take over the seven classrooms and a hall then being used by the senior children. The building, to house a further three hundred and twenty children for Bandon Hill Mixed Council School was built by the Downs Estates Ltd. for £14,162 that included conversion of the existing Central Department for three hundred and eighty-four junior mixed and infant children. The Infant School then moved to its present premises becoming known as the Bandon Hill Primary School. The old National School was demolished and the new Central School for pupils over the age of eleven was opened in April 1939 enabling the older pupils to move into specially designed accommodation on May 26<sup>th</sup>. It was then possible for the two Infant classes that had been temporarily housed in St. Michael's Church (Mission) Hall in Milton Road to move into the main buildings and join the juniors.

Bandon Hill Primary School had a temporary influx of children from Foresters Primary School in Redford Avenue, Wallington in July 1984 after a disastrous maliciously-lit fire had burnt down their school. Foresters re-opened in September 1985 after a £300,000 rebuild.

In August 1995 three temporary Horsa classrooms erected after the First World War were demolished and the first stage of a two-year project; a £1.8m. extension began early the following year. In March 1998 the children returned from the half-term break to seven new classrooms, a new school hall, nursery block and administrative offices. It was the first time Juniors and Infants were under one roof.





*Bandon Hill Primary School in Sandy Lane South, a little south of Stafford Road, in 1970.*



*An undated photograph of Bandon Hill's prize winning football team.*

## **Beddington Park Primary School, Derry Road**

Built on the Home Close and gardens of the former Park Farm, the Beddington Park Primary School opened to its first pupils as Park Farm County Primary Junior, Mixed and Infants School at 9am on the September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1951 with 239 local children taught in six classes under the direction of the Headmistress Miss Marion Morgan. Built at a cost of over £47,000 and being then state of the art in design, the building was officially opened the following year on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1952 by F.G. Kerswell, Chairman of the Surrey Education Committee, only a few weeks after the Queen's accession to the throne.

## **Carew Manor School**

See Carew Manor page 249.

## **The Elms School, Croydon Road**

For a period of about, thirty years from c.1928-29 'The Elms School' at 281-289 Croydon Road (opposite the Croydon Road entrance to the Grange) provided Boarding and Day education for girls and a Preparatory school for boys under the direction of the Misses Amelia (Millie) and Edith Meadmore. Both ladies are recalled as what would be in today's terms described as obese as was a sister Mrs. Atkinson who lived upstairs in one of the houses.

The house known as 'The Elms' appeared c.1868 built as a private dwelling which until about 1879 was occupied by a Mrs. Wanklyn. Among the occupants in succeeding years were A. McDonald a 'Common Councilman' (c.1880) his daughter, her husband and family; Reuban Williamson a retired Timber Merchant (c.1891); following a period of vacancy C. Widenham Fosbery (1898) and later Miss Widenham Fosbery from about 1905 until 1920. In 1921, directories indicate the house as being unoccupied, but by about 1922-23 the Misses Meadmore had moved in and by 1928 advertised 'The Elms School'.

It was at some time after 1937 the Meadmore's acquired 'The Holt' recently occupied by Mrs Jacomb, (a likewise, Victorian house standing next door on the east side) and they extended the school. Title for this second building commenced with an Indenture dated July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1868. In 1893 'Carisbrooke' it was then known was described as being built of brick with stone dressings and slated roof consisting of ground and two upper floors set in pleasant gardens of fruit and ornamental trees with a lawn and centrally sited summer house. As its neighbour it was a substantial house with eight bedrooms, a bathroom supplied with hot and cold water and a separate toilet. On the ground floor approached by an entrance hall were three main rooms one of which led to a conservatory, the kitchen, scullery and access to the cellars. This co-educational school is seen to be two large double-fronted detached Victorian houses with a garden playground at the back. This second building was to become the senior school.

During the 1930s there were not many boarders but of those the youngest were from three to seven years of age with four sharing a somewhat spartan dormitory accessed as it is recalled, by stairs with a worn carpet. The bed linen was threadbare and the children all wore hand-me-down clothes. Breakfast consisted of porridge described as usually lumpy,



Two Croydon Road houses, 'The Holt' and 'The Elms' became jointly known as the Elms School c.1928-1959.

often cold and sometimes burnt, with two pieces of bread and butter with marmalade. Though plain, the meals were said to be generally good, many of which are recalled as being of stew with baked beans or Welsh rarebit for supper. One of the Misses Meadmore ladled the soup and there was always fish on Fridays. In the earlier years, each weekday the boarders were walked crocodile fashion up to Queen Elizabeth's Walk for exercise said to be three times daily. On Saturdays, they went for a longer walk and on Sundays likewise into Carshalton to go to church. Later the children attended St. Mary's church in Beddington after which the weekly ration of four sweets for each child were distributed. Playtime was until lunch (though no individual child was allowed to keep the toys they had been given) after which they were allowed to write [a vetted] letter home.

The boarders were given a fortnightly bath and hair-wash with two in the bath in the same water as those who had bathed before them. Every summer the Misses Meadmore took a holiday house in Exmouth to which the resident children (many of whose parents were serving or otherwise domiciled abroad, it is thought possibly as missionaries) were taken for a holiday, and it was to there the school was evacuated in 1939. It was felt overall that there was an Anglican influence in the household. Miss Milly, a Guide Commissioner and a Cub and Brownie Group Leader led a group that met at the school. The children went out on day activities or sometimes camped in the park behind the houses facing Croydon Road.

The Electoral Register of 1950 lists names of seven resident ladies including Miss Amelia and Miss Edith Meadmore all of whom were presumably either teaching or domestic staff and five years later an additional two names, one of whom Enid Nurse was the matron. A

ballet teacher and Miss Alders a local piano teacher were also employed and at one time a man for Physical Training. Subjects taught included Divinity, History, Geography, English Grammar, Composition, Dictation and Reading, French Conversation (as taught by a genuine French teacher), Nature Study, Elocution, Arithmetic, Writing, Drawing, and Singing. The children gained access to the classrooms via a side door. In the early 1930s fees payable for day students were two guineas (£2.10) per term and the school uniform was black and yellow with a badge depicting an elm tree on the blazer pocket, worn with a velour hat. No doubt a highlight of the year took place in December with the annual Prize Giving as that in 1928 when Mrs. Cressy a near neighbour and wife of the doctor distributed the prizes.

In the late 1950s there were a number of problems at the school with allegations of non-qualified teachers and cruelty to the children that reputedly made the national newspapers at the time. It was recalled as being a harsh regime. Frequent thrashings with a plimsoll on the bare bottom were the norm for the most innocuous of reasons such as vanity (for “preening and titillating”) and for scuffing her shoes through fallen leaves one child is recalled as being caned on her bare feet. Another problem at the school was (in 1946) when along with the children there were some twenty-five cats in residence. The situation worsened however, and when the school closed it is said there were between forty and forty-five. Whatever the reason, in 1960 only the two Misses Meadmore are listed as being at the house after which we find no reference to either building.

The two sisters retired to a house in Broadstairs where Edith died in 1970 and where Amelia lived until 1987 when, probably in her 90s she went into a local nursing home. The ashes of both sisters were scattered in the park opposite the site of the former school. Perhaps they were a product of their own very strict Victorian upbringing but they left behind them many a traumatised child who even today recalls their school years at The Elms as years best forgotten. By 1963 ‘The Elms’ and ‘The Oaks’ flats had appeared where these two houses once stood.

## **High View Schools, The Chase**

The first school to be built on the High View estate off Plough Lane was that listed in Piles Directory as the High View Council School. This non-demoninational mixed ‘Elementary’ (Primary) School was at first occupied by two hundred and thirty-four children at 8.50am on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1932 under the Headmaster Harry Ewart Perring. Twenty of those children had been transferred from Bandon Hill School. The following day being Empire Day, after being given appropriate lessons in the morning the children were given a half-day holiday. On June 1<sup>st</sup> however the school was closed for the day owing to what was felt to be the danger posed by Epsom Derby Day traffic. The opening hours were later modified with the children beginning Derby Day at 1.20pm and closing twenty minutes earlier than usual in the afternoon. The school that comprised three Infant classes and three Junior, was formally opened just over a month later, on June 29<sup>th</sup> by Major Leycester-Penrhyn, Chair of Surrey County Council. Their first sports day on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1932 was held at The Grange with the permission of the then owner Major Mallinson; in subsequent years however they used the senior school sports ground, Guildford Way that on the one side bordered the railway and on the other two by allotment gardens. The

school later used Mellows Park as the venue of their annual sports day. During the Second World War, Civil Defence ARP post No.23 was located by the primary school.

In April 1938 a tender of £21,277 was provisionally accepted for the building of a High School (at a slight angle to the existing primary school), a substantial red brick building on two floors which was opened by Bishop Simpson of Southwark either late that year or early the next. Additional hatted accommodation was to be added in the summer of 1956.

In the Primary School, by December 1938 there were four hundred and twenty-nine children in nine classes and by mid-1956 four hundred and forty in a school designed for three hundred and eighty-four. Classrooms, hall and staff room had to be used for teaching; consequently two additional classrooms were built. In November 1997 under the government's 'New Deal for Schools' windfall scheme, a reported grant of some £595,000 was received to replace temporary classrooms that had been in use for the previous twenty years, build a new hall, administrative area and purpose-built nursery provided work started no later than January 5<sup>th</sup> the following year. For one term during construction the three hundred and eighty-two primary school children, teachers and administration staff were moved into the by then empty High School next door to continue their studies. The newly-built extension to the primary school was opened in 1998 at which time their playground was extended to encompass the area formerly occupied by the secondary school.

Having been reprieved on a previous occasion, owing to a series of poor reports, in September 1996 councillors agreed on the closure of the High School at which time most of the children were transferred to Stanley Park High though the senior children continued to be educated at Highview until August the following year. The senior school that for some time was used as an Adult Education Centre was officially closed on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1996. Demolished in 1998, it has been replaced by a housing estate.

## **Holy Trinity Church of England Junior School, Bute Road**

Holy Trinity School is located on the east side of Bute Road in the parish of Beddington almost opposite the St. Mary and Hamilton Almshouses. Its origin however dates to earlier times and other places when in 1826 Robert Loraine (who lived at a house in Acre Lane adjacent to Wallington Green) founded a school for boys in Oxdon Place near Wright's Row and Wallington Green. Mr. Price the first schoolmaster was to remain there until 1843 when he left to become Headmaster of the new Beddington National School in Croydon Road. During the first sixteen years of this early school many of the poorer boys were clothed at Mr. Loraine's expense and who for nearly fifty years also paid the salary of the school-master. A new enlarged boys' school to accommodate one hundred pupils was built in 1874 behind the cottages in Manor Road, Wallington opposite Holy Trinity church and it was to here the boys transferred with John Smith as their Master.

In 1833 the Misses Wallace, Mr. Robert Loraine and Mr. Bridges met and decided to build a school for girls founded in two cottages by Wallington Corner next to the Rose and Crown Public House. Though the cottages were converted into one long classroom with a teacher's apartment over, the building was so soon overcrowded that six years

later, in 1839 another room was built so that the girls and infants could be taught separately. These threads were drawn together with the opening of the new Bute Road School in 1896 to accommodate about four hundred children, boys, girls and infants each with their own separate entrances.

Built for the ecclesiastical parish of Wallington, Holy Trinity Church of England School, also known as Bute Road School was founded in 1895 “for the education of children and adults or children only of the labouring, manufacturing and other poorer classes... and as a residence for the teacher or teachers of the said school”. It is located on land to which an agreement had been reached between Alfred Hutchison Smee of The Grange, John Henry Bridges, Lord of the Manor of Beddington (formerly of Beddington House then of Ewell Court), the Vicar and Churchwardens. It was (opened by the Bishop of Rochester in March 1896 one year after its foundation) and was built by Messrs D. Stewart and Sons of Wallington at a cost of £3,500 raised by voluntary funding.

Along with the usual lessons of writing and arithmetic, religious studies was always a part of school life. In about 1917 during the First World War the Vicar gave permission for the girls to dig up part of the playground and cultivate it as a garden. By the 1920s however, gardening had become an important part of the curriculum and a course of instruction was provided for the boys during which time they had a garden superintendent visit the school. The children were divided into groups each with an allotment to manage.

In 1924, an appeal was issued for essential repairs to the building and again in February 1938 when managers were faced with the task of further rebuilding and enlarging the school or of reducing numbers. The £7,000 required was raised within two years by voluntary contributions led by the Vicar the Rev. Howard Bannister who unfortunately died before rebuilding was complete. The school built by the local firm of McCulloch and Kingslake of ‘Riverside Works’, Bridges Lane was re-opened in 1940 by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Southwark. The hall was dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Bannister as recorded on a plaque within the present school building. The bell preserved in the entrance and the weather vane on the roof, are from the original school.

The school motto attributed to the Rev. Bannister, words of the hymn ‘Only with Thee O God we journey safely on’ was inscribed on the stone facade of the new building that also incorporates in its wall carved stones for many years thought to be from the old Wallington Chapel. In 1995 arising from research carried out by local archaeologist Andrew Skelton, the greater number were found to be worked stones originally prepared for the mansion planned for the Scawen family in Carshalton Park. Only one piece of stone incorporated in the wall is now thought to have come from the old chapel. At this time there was effectively three different schools; ‘infants’, ‘girls’, and ‘boys’ with different Head Teachers, within separate classrooms but all within the same building.

During the Second World War half the playground was dug up for long shelters each with a toilet at one end, and it was here the remaining children took their lessons if the air-raid warning sounded. The school received damage during this time necessitating periods of closure and some children having to take lessons in small groups, in rotation at four centres elsewhere where householders had lent rooms, sufficient work being handed out



*Excited children of St. Mary's School leaving from Wallington anticipate a great day out in June 1955.*

for them to do at home in the intervening periods. In July 1944 though many of the children were evacuated the school was kept open for registration purposes and remained so until hostilities ceased.

Following reorganisation, in September 1957 at the beginning of the new academic year the school was re-opened as a Junior Mixed and Infant School under a single Head with the roll having increased to four hundred by April 1959. In September 1961 Holy Trinity re-opened after the summer holiday again at a time of change; as a Junior Mixed school with one hundred and eighty children of a similar age having been transferred from the Croydon Road School to where Holy Trinity infants were admitted in exchange. Responsibility for the school was passed from the Surrey Education Committee to the new London Borough of Sutton on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1965. A portable classroom was erected in the playground for the academic year beginning in September 1966 and a second placed beside it in 1995.

In October 2001 when celebrating the opening of its new library a plaque was also unveiled to one of its most famous former pupils, the designer Laura Ashley who attended the school between 1930 and 1937. Laura and her parents L.S. (Stan) and Bess Mountney lived at 80 Raleigh Avenue, Beddington.

The school celebrated the centenary of its foundation in 1996 and though changes in the intervening years have been many, the principle and practice of education at Holy Trinity will continue for many years into the future.

## **Ineson's Dame School, Beddington Lane**

21 Beddington Lane, the central cottage of a group of three became a 'dame school' founded by Mrs. Mary Ineson into which she moved in about 1889-90 shortly after the death of her husband. Prior to her moving into the cottages she and her husband Henry Ineson had been Master and Mistress of a private school 'Winton House' in Manor Road, Wallington a school she is said to have founded on leaving full time education at the age of sixteen in the mid-1860s. Mrs. Ineson was born in Wallington in 1849 the daughter of James West a builder and undertaker of 'Laurel Bank' in Manor Road. Though he was born at Batley in Yorkshire, her husband's family are believed to have been snuff millers at Hackbridge.

Reputedly an exceedingly clever girl and a good musician, Mrs. Ineson was educated at a school run by Mrs. Francis in North End, Croydon. In about 1890 the family moved to Beddington where she opened her own private school, for some years assisted by her daughter Ellen who took over when her mother retired from teaching. Mrs. Ineson died in January 1927 though the Beddington Lane School remained as such until about 1929.

## **Ladymount School, off Evelyn Way**

As 'The Banks', had been periodically unoccupied, it was in about 1931 when an arched sign erected above the steps giving access to the high footpath above Croydon Road announced a new occupier. Opened by Miss N. O'Connor and renamed 'Ladymount' the house became a private fee-paying preparatory school for girls up to twelve and boys up to ten years of age, with (according to their advertisement) a well-equipped kindergarten and fully qualified staff. Between eighty to one hundred children were taught at the school in five classes; Kindergarten, Transition and Forms 1, 2 and 3. The uniform was of a bright blue blazer with a yellow badge, white shirt and navy shorts for the boys with yellow knitted tie, or for the girls blue and white or yellow and white dresses. The school used the tennis court as a dry play area; the gravel drive around a circular lawn, mulberry tree, shrubbery and kitchen garden no doubt remained from earlier times.

Miss Hepple was headmistress in the late 1930s early 40s, and at least initially the staff were all female, including Miss Boxall (of Beddington Lane) and a Miss Hadingham who had come to Ladymount from The Beeches School. To supplement income, two of the bedrooms upstairs were let to lodgers. The school remained there until some time in the 1950s though the houses of Evelyn Way (the earliest being those on the left side from Demesne Road up to Lytton Gardens dating from about 1930-31) and those of Lytton Gardens likewise the early 1930s, had appeared in the meantime.

## **The Link Schools, Croydon Road**

Established in March 1963, The Link Primary School was founded at 20 Farquarson Road, West Croydon, the home of Mrs Francois Tomlin who was the Principal and Head Teacher. A trust was formed and the school became The Link Day School, registered with the Department of Education and Science and as an Education Charity into which initially only a few pupils were admitted.





*The private fee-paying preparatory Ladymount School off Evelyn Way was formerly known as 'The Banks'. Photographed c.1938.*

Owing to planning permission constraints, in August 1966 new premises were found at 138 Croydon Road, one of the buildings formerly used by Sherborne School, now The Link Primary School. The newly formed Trust created a non-profit making company known as 'The Link Day School for Backward Children' (now The Link Primary and Secondary Schools). The school initially comprised ten children and three qualified teachers but by January 1967 it had risen to twenty pupils and four teachers. The classes were designed for children with special needs who were emotionally disturbed or high grade mentally handicapped or both, and whose difficulties render them incapable of profiting sufficiently from any of the facilities already provided by the Education or Health Authorities. The aim was to avoid a formal school environment, maintaining instead a small and friendly home-like atmosphere both in the physical surroundings and in the relations between teachers and children. These founding principles remain much the same today but within Department of Education constraints required as a registered school for children with special needs.

In September 1976 the charity purchased two semi-detached houses, 82 and 84 Croydon Road to be opened as a senior school for thirty pupils aged 11 to 16 years. Later, No. 86 was purchased and in 1997 'The Bungalow', Croydon Road was demolished to make way for a new building to meet modern Department of Education space requirements. Pupil numbers are approximately forty at each school though the new teaching block of six classrooms completed by Easter 2003 potentially increased the number of pupils to forty-eight.

In 2000, 1A Garratt Close a detached modern house adjoining the primary school was purchased and adapted for seven pupils. This facility was established to address the specialist needs of children whose language and communication skills are significantly lower than those required to access the curriculum provision of the primary school and for children who require a preparatory curriculum to ease their transition to the primary school.

In 1994 Mrs Francois Tomlin retired to France though until retirement she was Head Teacher at the Primary School and Director of both schools. In September 2002 they both became Non-Maintained Special Schools that required a separate governing body though The Link Day School Ltd., a registered charity remains as the managing body.

## **National School and Beddington Infants School, Croydon Road**

In 1811 the National Society was set up to encourage local effort in founding Church of England schools. Arising from this, Beddington and Wallington were eventually to have three National Schools collectively known as ‘St. Mary’s National Schools, Beddington’ the first built being in Croydon Road followed by those at Beddington Corner and a third at Bandon Hill.

In March 1842 the Rev. Hamilton applied to the Church of England National Society for a grant towards the erection of a school for one hundred boys and girls in two rooms 30ft. by 20ft. by 12ft., being six feet for each child and started a subscription with his own one hundred pounds. This was followed by so many donations along with contributions from the Education Committee and the Rochester Diocesan Board that by October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1843 the school was completed and opened by Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford then Archdeacon of Surrey. On November 1<sup>st</sup> that year the Rev. Hamilton conveyed part of the glebe upon which it was built. The building that cost £1,326 was designed by the notable architect John Brown of Norwich the County Surveyor of Norfolk.

Presided over by Mr. Price former Headmaster of the Boys’ School by Wallington Green, the new school replaced a number of smaller schools already established in Beddington. On the whole these had been unsuitable, described as “being so small that the health of the children is injured, and their spirits depressed by the tainted atmosphere which they were obliged to breathe”.

The Croydon Road building was of red brick with stone dressing in gothic style. It contained two residences, one at either end of the building for a master and mistress, a classroom for boys and another for girls divided by a removable wooden partition. The high ceilinged rooms described as light, airy and pleasant which they may well have been in summer were cold and draughty in winter, having only one small open fireplace in the corner of each classroom with a coal fire burning in the grate; almost totally inadequate to provide any degree of warmth. No separate provision was made for infants until during the Rev. Hamilton’s successor Dr. Marsh’s incumbency a room for infants was added giving accommodation for two hundred boys, girls and infants.



*The National School later Beddington Infants' School, Croydon Road, opened in 1843 stood until replaced by the present building in 1973.*

Beside taking special pains with their religious teaching, the Rev. Hamilton, a daily visitor, was anxious that the children should also learn something about the world outside the classroom. He encouraged them to form a small museum within which was deposited the silver penny said to be of Edward II (1307-1327) found under the northwest pillar of the nave of Beddington church in July 1850. This small collection also had examples of Roman Samian pottery reported to have been found on the site when the foundations of the school were being dug. To cultivate a sense of appreciation of the neighbourhood in which they lived, the Rev. Hamilton also taught the children something of the botany, natural history and geology of the area. Possibly more so to the children of the National School than to many others, great was the loss of the Rev. James Hamilton upon his untimely death in 1860.

In 1870 the National School officially became a Church School. To accommodate growing numbers, in 1888-89 the building was enlarged by the addition of a further classroom on the south side at which time the movable partition between the two rooms in the main building was removed, new latrines were provided and the playground enlarged. The assistant mistress's house was also refurbished. Fees were three pence (3d.) and two pence (2d) a week but a large family paid no more than a penny (1d.). Church schools were all age elementary schools which in 1890 provided the working class child with that which it was useful for him or her to know, in other words, basic skills.

1904 saw the school closed for the first time owing to an outbreak of scarlet fever. Perhaps this and the fact that it was overcrowded prompted a decision to provide further

accommodation. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1905 a temporary classroom for the infants, a large corrugated clad building at the back of the main school building was opened and except for some small alterations undertaken in September 1907 the building remained little changed. Even with the enlarged accommodation the school was closed again in 1906 owing to an outbreak of measles. With the rapid development of housing in the immediate area however it was found that it could never be large enough to meet the demands of the growing population. By April 1912 the Master reported the school as being full. There were other periodic closures; another at the outbreak of war because of the lack of shelters and in March 1940 owing to the lack of heat when coal supplies were not being delivered.

At the end of September 1939 while air-raid shelters were being dug, at a depth of about 4ft below ground level, a skeleton was uncovered that had evidently been enclosed within a coffin as four nails were also found, one at the head, one at the feet and one either side of the remains. The police were notified and the bones removed on Saturday 30th. There is nothing further known about the burial apart from it being an old one and that ancient artefacts have been found nearly opposite in Croydon Road. The shelters were located behind and to the left of the school, across the playground and through a large gate in the playground fence in what was an area of allotments.

In September 1961 following re-organisation, the school's junior pupils were transferred to the nearby Holy Trinity School and the Croydon Road School became infants only. On the last day of August 1969, responsibility for the Beddington Church of England Infants School passed from the parish to the London Borough of Sutton, and in the early 1970s a decision was made to rebuild. The old building (demolished in 1973) was left standing while the new school was built behind it. Now known as Beddington Infants School and opened in May 1974, it is an open-plan building set back from Croydon Road with an area of lawn in front. Standing centrally on this lawn on a plinth of bricks re-used from the former school is a reminder of the old building, the belfry, the bell from which was rung at the end of each term and each October to celebrate the old school's birthday.

### **St. Elphege Schools, Mollison Drive**

Located on the east side of Mollison Drive, St. Elphege Infants' and Junior Schools, built to serve the growing Catholic population and newcomers to the Roundshaw estate, opened on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1969.

### **Sherborne and Bideford Schools, Croydon Road**

The Link Schools in Croydon Road carry on a tradition of education in the immediate area. From about 1936 Sherborne School occupied both 136 and 138 Croydon Road. 'Sherborne' began as a boys' only preparatory school at 138 Croydon Road under the Principal Arthur Nunn B.A.; the younger children attended 'Bideford' a mixed school in a house two doors along in the direction of Croydon at No.136 under the direction of Mrs. Hunt. The two schools were originally set up to meet the need to provide an educational facility for children moving into the newly built housing in the area.

## **Sherwood Park School, Streeters Lane**

Formerly located in Robin Hood Lane, Sutton, Sherwood Park School (founded in 1971 for the education of severely mentally and physically disabled children) moved to a purpose built school over a two-week period at the end of October 1991. The children themselves moved in during the first week of November. The school was officially opened by the Duchess of Kent in May 1992 and the building extended by the addition of two new classrooms in 1996.

## **Warehousemen, Clerks' and Drapers' School, Russell Hill**

Pile's Directory of 1902 records an entry under Bandon Hill, namely Russell Hill with only five entries 1-4 'New Barn Cottages' and the 'Warehousemen, Clerks' and Drapers' Schools' all then part of Beddington parish, now of Purley. The overall area of Russell Hill was referred to in a charter of the Saxon King Eadgar as 'Beggares Thorn'. Later it became known as 'Beggar's Bush' and as such was offered for sale in 1859 as part of Lot 22D the south part of New Barn Farm, at the sale of the Carew estates. The name was changed to Russell Hill in honour of the first President of the school, Lord (Earl) John Russell.

The school was founded in 1853 by a group of warehousemen, clerks and drapers working in the City of London who formed a committee to support and educate, without distinction of sex or religion the children of deceased colleagues. They set up a school at Hatcham House, New Cross but moved to a Venetian Gothic style (original sections Grade II listed) building designed by the architect J.G. Bland on a terrace at the summit of Russell Hill. It was in an area described as being "at once salubrious and affording ready communication with the metropolis". The principal façade consisted of several blocks varying from two to three storeys in height, the central block of which includes the main entrance with a high-pitched roof surmounted by a turret with spur. The school was opened by the Prince of Wales on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1866 and further extended in 1897-8.

The building was to accommodate two hundred children, one hundred and forty boys and sixty girls. Spacious apartments were provided for their use with hot and cold baths. The buildings were set in twenty acres of land, seven acres of which were laid out as a playground with covered shelter-sheds for protection in bad weather. A swimming pool was also provided. The original cost of the land, building and furniture amounted to £28,000. In 1908-09 a house for the kindergarten department was erected and in 1925 a new wing for science, art, music and housecraft was opened. The school later became known as Russell Hill School until 1962 when it was taken over by Thomas More and Margaret Roper Schools. As it was originally located in the parish of Beddington, a number of children, staff and their families connected with the earlier school (twenty-six names in total) lie in the burial ground opposite St. Mary's church. (Plots 881-893.)

## **Wilson's Grammar School, Mollison Drive**

The school was founded by Edward Wilson in 1615 under Royal Charter granted by King James I to provide an education for boys in Camberwell then a village on the outskirts of London. Educated at Trinity College Cambridge the Rev. Wilson born at Cartmel,

Lancashire c.1550 was ordained Vicar of Camberwell in March 1578. His nephew Peter Danson who was later to become Vicar of Carshalton in 1615 was appointed one of the Governors of the new school, a connection with Carshalton and the school that remains to this day.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1974 the old Wilson's Grammar School ceased to exist and on 1st January 1975 Wilsons School was re-established on the outskirts of Greater London at Roundshaw. It was officially opened by Dr. H.J. (later Sir) John Habakkuk, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1975 and the chapel dedicated by the Rt. Rev'd Mervyn Stockwood, Lord Bishop of Southwark.

The land upon which the school was built at Roundshaw was purchased for the full residential value of £400,000 and the architect was Richard Sheppard Robson and Partners who had designed Churchill College, Cambridge. Two early eighteenth century stone figures of a boy and girl in contemporary green "cloathing" were transferred from the old school to a courtyard at the new. Coincidentally, Sir Alan Cobham a pioneer aviator of far eastern and other routes who flew from Croydon studied at Wilson's School when it was located at Camberwell.

## SPORT

### **Beddington Cricket Club**

It is not inconceivable in a neighbourhood such as Beddington that at least the gentry would have played cricket in a style as that depicted on the Carshalton Cricket Bowl dated 1796 which is on display in Honeywood Museum, Carshalton. Unfortunately, the opening records of the Beddington Cricket Club are lost; it is therefore taken as 1863 the year for which the earliest records are available - the year before Alexander Henry Bridges was appointed Rector of Beddington. It is therefore not known when the first cricket ground was laid out or exactly where, but having acquired the park, in 1871 Canon Bridges commissioned Sotherton's to lay out a new ground nearer the railway (on the north side of presumably what was an existing ground) to be maintained by his own Beddington House gardeners. He altered the water course that divided the two fields and built a rustic Tudor revival style pavilion marked as "private" on a map of 1897 that stood in the vicinity of where the café and children's playground is located today.

This rustic pavilion was thatched with a ground and upper floor; it was designed by the Rev. Bridges architect Joseph Clarke F.S.A. and bore the date 1873 with 'Cricket and Archery Club' and a set of stumps and bat modelled on the wall. The flagpole on top of the porch was surmounted by a wind vane in the form of a cricket bat. In front, steps led up to the verandah and a further step gave access to the dining room off which to either side were tiny dressing rooms furnished with wooden benches. The wash rooms, that amounted to three small basins filled with water hand-carried from the river, lay behind. There was no running water and the lavatory arrangements were equally as primitive. The kitchen was located directly behind the dining room and across the yard stood a covered carriage house and stabling. Perhaps the space upstairs accessed by stairs at the back of the building was used as a lounge/reception area. Though undoubtedly picturesque, facilities in the clubhouse were therefore practically non-existent and most of the gentlemen left quickly after the matches to refresh themselves at home. If they wanted a drink they had to bring their own. It was on the new ground John Henry Bridges' XI (the Rector's son) played regularly throughout the summer for some eight years until in 1879 he married and went to Ewell.

In 1875 an Archery Society was founded that used the same ground and rustic pavilion. It was a successful club that played host to meetings such as that in the summer of 1904 when archers, both ladies and gentlemen from the Southern Counties Archery Association came to Beddington to compete. The old clubhouse became known as the Archery Pavilion and was to stand though increasingly derelict into the early 1950s. In 1880 a Lawn Tennis Society was also established as a private club, the members being invited to join by a small committee at the beginning of each year.

In 1887 the church sexton did his best to solve the problem of refreshments by keeping a tub of beer in his cottage next to the ground, kept cool by covering it with wet sacks dipped into the river. In 1890, because of the increasing numbers of matches it was

decided to employ their first paid grounds man. Ted Langman was appointed to take over from the Rector's gardeners and prepare the wickets and he did so for the next thirty-four years combining it with that of umpiring the first team. The subject of a drinks licence was brought up in 1906 but the matter was dropped and it was not until the opening of the 1921 season that alcoholic refreshments were made available on the ground. Returning to cricket however, the first season in which any event of particular importance is recorded is 1876 when a match was played at Beddington against Marlborough Nomads and noteworthy because of the huge score of five hundred and ninety-six for nine made by Beddington, a score that still stands as a record for the ground.

In 1882 the annual subscription to the cricket club was set at five shillings at least but by 1889 members of the Beddington Working Men's Club who played on a ground off Beddington Lane were invited to join at a purely nominal subscription of two shillings and six pence. The cricket club however was initially very much a Gentleman's Club with almost all the players coming from a wealthy background. Within the pavilion were two toilets of delightful blue and white patterned china sanitary ware, access to one of which was marked 'Gentlemen' and the other 'Men'. Some of the best cricketers of the time were seen playing on the ground including local Beddington church choir member (from the age of ten in 1877 for over fifty years) Robert Henderson who was the club's outstanding batsman until his appearances became irregular as his County commitments grew. In First Class cricket he established himself as Surrey's opening batsman along with the more famous Bobby Abel and between 1881 and 1895 was a regular with the county during which time he scored seventy centuries.

In 1893 the Rev. H. A. Hodgson who had become Rector two years earlier, himself a keen cricketer, was appointed Captain and held the position for almost a decade. It was during the period of his captaincy in 1896 that Cricket Week, a celebration of the sport, was begun. In 1901 the legendary Dr. W. G. Grace then at the height of his cricketing fame played his first game in the park bringing with him his London County side and having no doubt heard of the problem, brought his own refreshments with him. They repeated the visit the following year. Another prominent member of about the same time was R.A. Sheppard until his departure from the club in 1903 when he joined London County Cricket Club, Captained by W. G. Grace. Sheppard also made a number of successful appearances in the Surrey XI. Another all-round sportsman was Gillie Reay who joined the cricket club in 1904 and in 1905 played alongside his brother Wilfred who was tragically killed in the First World War. Gillie was appointed Captain of Beddington Cricket Club in 1913 and made his first appearance for Surrey against Middlesex in the same season. He is credited with one of the biggest hits ever seen at Lords; one of his sixes landed in the nursery!

All games were suspended during the period of the First World War from the end of the season in 1914 and not resumed until 1919. Prior to the war that known as the back field (the ground Canon Bridges had laid out) was separated along the line of the former stream by a slatted fence and planted with turnips and other root crops.





*Photographed in 1910 this rustic cricket and archery pavilion was built for the Rev. Bridges on a ten acre field laid out for cricket by J. Southerton.*



*Kent v Surrey in an archery contest held in Beddington Park in 1908.*

Though still used rent free by the archery club, in about 1880 the old pavilion was superseded by a single storied thatched building on the north side of the front (the present) ground, which though picturesque and impressive was still somewhat cramped; the dressing rooms were small, there was no running hot water and sparrows persisted in perching on the oak beams beneath the thatch with all the disadvantages this entailed.

In time this building was itself superseded by a new pavilion built on the east side of the ground, visually very much in the same style, opened by Lady Mallinson in September 1931; built at a cost of £1,600. The pavilion was shared by the Beddington Cricket Club, Wallington Hockey Club and the long standing Carshalton Football Club (founded in 1898) who began playing at Beddington in 1904-05 on a new ground adjoining the cricket and archery grounds. It was at this time both the football and hockey clubs were made honorary members of the Beddington Cricket Club with a nominal fee of 2s. 6d. as a central fund for fixtures and fittings. This 1931 pavilion was also a long, low single-storied building made almost exclusively of timber with a number of steps leading up to the verandah that extended the full width of the front. It was of two separate parts – at the front was the main cricket pavilion with bar, tearoom, kitchen, dressing rooms and toilets; at the rear the football club pavilion consisted of a number of dressing rooms and washing facilities. The cost also included the making up of the roadway and the provision of gas and water supplies.

In 1936-37, a new pavilion was erected in conjunction with the Football Club replacing that built in 1931. This building was all but burnt out on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1966 and replaced by the clubhouse we see today, a two-tier building with, as before an external verandah. The lower level consists of three dressing rooms, a beer cellar and large equipment store all at ground level. On the upper level is one large hall, kitchen and ladies room, and roughly in the same position as before, the bar. The building was opened on Saturday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1970. In May 1974, another fire necessitated structural repairs being undertaken and replacement of the kitchen and washing areas though the bar was the first area to be renovated.

Although the Second World War had been declared the previous September, in 1940 the committee decided to carry on playing raising whatever side they could in view of so many of the players having enlisted in the forces. These matches were played until the end of August when the Battle of Britain often being fought directly overhead, forced the players to seek shelter beneath the trees. There being no future in these conditions, the club went into storage for the duration during which time the pavilion was requisitioned by the army. The then President Sir William Mallinson died during the war so his son Sir Paul Mallinson took over from him. Nine other members died during this time. The war ended and matches resumed though the club suffered serious financial difficulties.

Post-war, it was two young men who were described as being either reared or played at Beddington who made their mark in First Class cricket. Peter Loader went on to play in thirteen tests for England and the fast bowler Dave Halfyard, also a Surrey player, an outstanding fast bowler who went on to play with Kent and became one of the most reliable opening bowlers in post-war cricket. Many top cricketers at some time played as visitors, at Beddington, usually in benefit matches; names such as Barrington, Bernard

Constable, Mickey Stewart, Tony Lock, Jim Laker, Colin Cowdrey, Fred Titmus and Sir Leary Constantine of the West Indies.

Gradually extra teams were formed on both weekend days to fit in the number of playing members, teams who enjoyed playing on perfect wickets since 1930 prepared by Percy Coates who in 1955 celebrated twenty-five years with the club. Of later years John Hall, another fast bowler also played for Surrey and Sydney Cooper (a local Chartered Accountant) was long one of the best wicket-keepers in club cricket. Michael Murray, at one-time their President also played for Middlesex C.C.C., and has also captained Beddington and Middlesex II. Another was Tony Brown who had the remarkable record of scoring over 3,000 runs in a single season and D.K. Gale, undoubtedly one of the finest all-rounders that Beddington has ever had, besides being a great clubman. The club won the London Club Cricket Championship both in 1952 and ten years later in 1962.

Though war had intervened, after one hundred and ten years (2006) Cricket Week is still being held during the summer and the Club still holds matches not only on Saturdays and Sundays during the season (with occasional mid-week games) fielding four Eleven's and an active Colts section for under-ten to under-fifteen year-olds. On a Saturday the top sides play in the Surrey Championship and another in the Kookaburra Fordham League, the latter of which is designed to bridge the gap between Colts and Adult cricket with the use of coloured clothing, orange ball and blue stumps to encourage the youngsters to play.

## **Plough Lane Sports Ground and Cricket for Change**

Immediately north of the railway there was once an extensive area of fields (including that upon which the houses numbered 78 to 104 Plough Lane are located) the greater part of which had been laid out as sports grounds with tennis courts, football pitches and a cricket pitch each with their own pavilion. In about 1928 eight acres of this land was taken over by the then recently re-established Croydon Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club on a fourteen-year lease after which they laid out their own cricket ground, erected a pavilion and built both hard and grass tennis courts, access to which was off Plough Lane. The housing developments of Bedlow Way (c.1977) and the later Clayton Drive (c.1985) occupy the greater part of these former playing fields.

The field we see today, once part of this area was more recently until 1993 used as a private ground by the London Telecommunication Region Amateur Sports Association and local residents. Having become disused, the site quickly became overgrown during which time the single storey pavilion and two small stands backing onto the Plough Lane railway bridge embankment became increasingly derelict. The land was purchased by Linden Homes who in 1997 built an estate of twenty-two houses at the eastern end accessed from Bristow Road. As part of a planning agreement one fifth of the site of some four acres was passed to a charity, the London Community Cricket Association for the creation of one of the world's first special needs cricket education centres allowing disadvantaged children from across London the chance to enjoy competitive sport.

Now known as Cricket for Change accessed from Plough Lane, at the northwest corner of the ground a new pavilion was erected during the winter of 2003-04 on the site of the old

and opened in 2004 by the former England cricketer and TV personality Phil Tufnell, President, who, arising from a programme “With a Little Help from My Friends” was also physically involved in building the Centre. A new two-lane state of the art indoor cricket facility was opened in October 2009, managed in partnership with Sutton Cricket Club.

## **Swimming Pool**

A small open-air swimming pool provided by the ‘Friends’ was built on the south-east side of Carew Manor School and opened at the summer fair on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1973 by actress Patricia Hayes assisted by the then Mayor of Sutton Cllr D.H.T. Salari. It has subsequently been infilled.

There was however another 100ft. by 42ft. pool ranging in depth from 2ft. 6in. to 6ft. 6in. once sited in the north-east corner of the grounds in the right-angle of land between the river and what was part of the old east-west aligned Carew garden wall (the greater part of which collapsed after particularly wet and blustery weather in 1978). A hedge marking the immediate boundaries of the playground and the nature reserve now dissects the site.

This swimming pool opened on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1933 at a cost of £2,490 had been a gift to the children of the Orphanage by Sir Edward W. Meyerstein of ‘Morants Court’ near Sevenoaks, then Vice-Chairman of the Orphanage Committee. It was built by Friday and Sons of Erith, Kent who engaged nine unemployed men from the Occupational Centre in Beddington Park to undertake the work.

The pool was fed from the south side by a small stream named ‘Ralegh’s Brook’. The water (that was generally thought to have been cleaner than that of the river itself) was diverted through a simple form of chlorinating and filtration plant located in the northeast corner capable of changing and purifying the water on a ten-hour cycle before being diverted back into the Wandle. A toilet block was located on the opposite side of the river, the only sign of which remains today being the painted outline of the cisterns on the brick wall east of the bridge.

After the Orphanage closed at the outbreak of the Second World War members of a Civil Defence Club used the pool but its use was later extended and season tickets were issued. It was subsequently leased to the Beddington and Wallington Borough Council and opened to the general public. Further wooden changing cubicles were built around the walkway enclosing three sides, with the remaining south side (that looking across to the orangery wall) left open as an area of lawn enclosed by a fence. The public gained admission to the area through a simple gateway, and payment was made and tickets issued at a point near the filtration plant. Many are the times remembered when it came to warm summer days spent in and around the swimming pool though the water was always cold and at times so murky one could not see the bottom. Indeed, it became so popular that in the 1959 season it was used by 35,083 people. Such was its popularity and the fact that it did not comply even with minimum standards for such an amenity, that despite the outcry in the form of letters and petitions, in the interest of public health the council did not renew the lease for the 1961 season from the Surrey County Council Education Authority



*The open-air swimming pool in the grounds of the former orphanage, photographed in the summer of 1956.*

the then owner of the land and buildings. The pool remained closed and despite subsequent efforts to have it re-opened was infilled some time later.

Though the wall of the former pool was broken into and destroyed when Thames Water Authority was carrying out an extensive flood alleviation scheme during 1990-91, in the dry months of summer the ghostly outline of the walkways and the edge of the pool reappear as crop marks. The silence is now only broken by laughter of schoolchildren and the call of birds from the adjoining Carew Manor nature reserve that today occupies part of the site.

# TRANSPORT

## **Beddington Aerodrome and Croydon Airport**

**The land.** The fields that were to become the early commercial aerodrome were part of the great Carew heritage of land - the 'New Barn Farm', and on the opposite (or Wallington) side of Plough Lane the 'Manor Farm'. The later built Stafford Road formed the northern boundary of both farms and the north-south aligned Plough Lane that separated the two then extended from The Plough public house due south directly through to Purley.

**First World War.** During the First World War, owing to the lack of any effective defence from increasing Zeppelin raids upon London, Beddington's Manor Farm lands on the west side of Plough Lane became one of a number of small airfields created to ring the capital, backed up by searchlight and anti-aircraft guns in order to counteract the threat. It was almost immediately following the issue of a memo stating that the area was required as an emergency landing ground for night flying and may possibly become a R.F.C. aerodrome that on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1915, the farm then owned by G.E. Harrison and his brothers was rented and subsequently taken over on a compulsory lease under the 1916 Defence of the Realm Act. Within days, three tent-like Bessoneaux Hangers (canvas on wooden frames) were being erected as aircraft shelters. Shortly after, in January 1916 two BE2C bi-planes arrived at Beddington along with two pilots, six mechanics and a party of Royal Engineers with a searchlight. In May 1916 came a further change in policy with Beddington becoming a base for training squadrons.

Pilots manning the airfields came from various training squadrons to be brought together under a single command. The detachment at Beddington became No.39 Home Defence Squadron on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1916. Aircraft flew to intercept raiding Zeppelins on three occasions between March and April 1916 but met with little success owing to inferior equipment and the lack of training as the more experienced pilots were flying in France. The development of incendiary ammunition later in the year at last gave them an advantage over the inflammable hydrogen filled craft. As did the air attacks on London (with the Gotha, a large bomber causing considerable damage and loss of life in the capital), gradually the number and variety of aircraft flying from Beddington increased. Throughout 1916 and 1917 pilots, mechanics and ground staff were billeted locally and buildings requisitioned to house them included The Dell, Queenswood and Beddington House.

The Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service amalgamated to become the Royal Air Force on the April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918 after which Beddington continued as a training base with inevitably a number of incidents, from fatal accidents to miraculous escapes. One such was the unfortunate RAF pilot 2nd Lieut. Donaldson who was killed during his first solo flight on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918 when his aircraft suffered structural failure over the aerodrome. His safety strap failed and he fell out at 150ft. On a summer evening in 1919, Winston Churchill was lucky to escape with his life when the aircraft he was flying got

into difficulties shortly after take off and crashed. The remains of wrecked aircraft usually found their way into a huge tip by the hedge in Plough Lane – a great hunting ground for small boys! Among the many young men who learned to fly at Beddington was Prince Albert later King George VI who gained his “wings” in 1919, and though his elder brother the Prince of Wales later Edward VIII also took instruction here, owing to the risks involved, as heir to the throne his flying activities were curtailed.

In order to counteract the greater numerical numbers of the German Air Force at the beginning of the First World War (260 aircraft compared to Britain’s 63), during the latter part of 1917 into 1918 the contractors Cubitts built the National Aircraft Factory (N.A.F.) No.1. Beddington was the R.F.C. base and Waddon became the N.A.F. flying field. Completed in June at a cost of £1,500,000 it was built on land of the New Barn Farm on the opposite side of Plough Lane to the R.F.C. base. As an indication of the urgency, complete aircraft were delivered from the factory twenty-four weeks after the first turf was cut on the site. Between Plough Lane (now Mollison Drive) and the factory productive cornfields were levelled as a test flying ground, an area that was to become known as Waddon Aerodrome. The factory, sited where the industrial estate now stands along Stafford Road was served by its own branch railway line built by the developers in 1917 that branched off from the main West Croydon to Epsom line and crossed Stafford Road where level crossing gates were erected. Production began on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1918 but with the cessation of hostilities, in November of that year the manufacture of wartime aircraft no longer became a priority resulting in the cessation of production, the dismissal of 1,500 workers and the conversion of the buildings to a salvage depot. The National Aircraft Depot at Waddon was sold to Sir Frederick Handley Page’s Aircraft Disposal Co. Ltd. The newly built aircraft were dismantled and the parts including nearly 6,000 engines, sold off.

**First Customs Airport.** After the First World War there was much discussion as to whether Hounslow (appointed as London’s civil aerodrome) or Beddington (with Waddon), the latter with the advantage of being south of London and in a relatively fog free zone, should become the main aerodrome for London. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1920 the Waddon landing field and the Beddington aerodrome, (still separate entities, one the Home Defence aerodrome, the other that of the National Aircraft Factory (later Air Disposal Company) at Waddon) were to become known as Croydon Aerodrome at which time Hounslow (from which post war civil flying had resumed less than a year before) was closed. In March 1920, a Meteorological Office was established and Marconi wireless equipment installed. Civil flying began at which time the former military airfields took on a new life as the Customs Air Port of London. Though a light monoplane was photographed there in May 1911 pre-war, Waddon Airport was officially opened on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1920. The first continental route was between London and Paris beginning on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1921 and to Amsterdam on April 14<sup>th</sup>. In 1922, direction-finding equipment was installed as an aid to safer flying. By 1926 work had begun on enlarging and modernising Croydon Airport and in 1928 the enlarged site covering 330 acres could accommodate the biggest aircraft of the day.

As the wartime maintenance and hanger area was on the Wallington side of Plough Lane and flying operations were centred opposite on the Waddon aerodrome, aircraft had to

taxi to and from the hangers to the tarmac in front of the control tower by crossing the road. In the early years, a man with a red flag was employed to stop road traffic though later a level crossing was constructed across Plough Lane to facilitate the passage of aircraft from the hangers to the landing area. The entrance to the aerodrome, London's first major international airport, was off Plough Lane with a white picket fence giving access to the main thoroughfare off which were the wooden huts of the terminal and airline company offices, Handley Page, Daimler Airways and Instone Airways. The wooden control tower with its balcony stood in the centre of a range of low buildings one of which bore the legend 'H.M. Customs, Douane' although in the early days in winter the whole terminal area was apt to become a sea of mud. Immediately on the right of the entrance from Plough Lane were the single storey almost army-hut type buildings of the Trust House Aerodrome Hotel, believed to be the first of its kind catering specifically for air travellers. A second hotel opened by Trust Houses Ltd stood by the exit, to the north of the other hotel building. In 1928, the new Aerodrome Hotel in Purley Way that still flourishes replaced these buildings.

In the very early days the aircraft were two and four-seater converted light bombers that were noisy, cold and uncomfortable. From 1920 however, enclosed and relatively comfortable cabin aircraft such as the Instone Vimy and the Handley Page W8 with curtains, more comfortable seating and lavatories were operating on the airlines. Later came the introduction of in-flight meals and drinks. The first ever film to be shown in-flight was from the airport in 1925 when one of the Handley Page aircraft flew with a special party of twelve during which time a small screen was placed in the body of the plane and the lantern was fitted in the luggage compartment at the back. The film shown was "The Lost World", a film version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's book. The wealthy and the famous favoured this new form of transport but in 1922 joy riding operated by Surrey Flying Services became a popular pastime for the less well off. For five shillings on Sunday afternoons one could have a short flight in an Avro 504K open cockpit aircraft; if aerobatics were included it cost a little more. The grassed, undulating landing area consisted of two strips, one on a north-south alignment of 4,000ft and a second on a northeast-southwest alignment of 3,500ft. The signal that it was clear to take off was given to pilots by a man waving a red flag though gradually signalling and navigational aids were to become increasingly sophisticated.

Two particularly memorable days were in July 1921 when the R33 airship engaged on experimental trials was taken all over the country from her base at Pulham in East Anglia. A 140ft. high mooring mast embedded in one hundred tons of concrete was constructed on the western part of the aerodrome on a plot of land now at the top of Redford Avenue. A steam traction engine was brought in to haul the airship to the nose cone at the top of the mast and to pump water ballast up to the craft. The 633ft. long airship arrived at first only to stay for half an hour before departing, to return a day later to remain overnight. The large crowd assembled to witness the visit were to obtain an unexpected soaking when it dropped water-ballast onto the spectators beneath. A number of problems were to subsequently face the Air Ministry; it was found the mast had been built on private land without the permission of the owner; additionally it created an obstruction to other aircraft. Completed only three months previously, by September the mast had been dismantled and the scheme abandoned.





*The first Croydon Airport c.1924, built on the fields of Manor Farm (on the far side of Plough Lane) and New Barn Farm, the house to which can be seen beneath the crossing point in Plough Lane. The main entrance off the lane leads past a hotel and Air Company buildings to the Control Tower and Custom's area.*

In September 1921, the first air race was held by the Royal Aero Club and in September 1922 the first ever Kings Cup Air Race. George Young of Queenswood Avenue who retired in January 1954 after forty-two years service in aviation took part in that first Kings Cup at which time he refilled the fuel tank of an aircraft taking part in the race from a two-gallon petrol can while perched precariously on the wing in full blast of the slipstream. Might this be one of the first cases on record of in-flight refuelling? The last Kings Cup Race was held in August 1925.

**The Airport of London (Croydon).** Arising from a Civil Aviation Board report on London's aerodrome facilities recommending the retention and enlargement of Croydon, a report undertaken in 1923, it was decided to concentrate the aerodrome buildings chiefly on the east (or Purley Way) side of Plough Lane though 86% of the total area lay within Beddington and Wallington. This is reflected in the Arms of the former borough. The following year the Harrison family sold 116 acres of Beddington Aerodrome's land to the Air Ministry for £42,500 who in December 1925 designated the aerodrome to be known as, "The Air Port of London".

Expansion and reconstruction was begun in 1926; new buildings were erected along Purley Way and Plough Lane was effectively sealed off. On January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1928 it came into operation as the new Airport of London, with the administrative building being officially opened on May 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lady Maude Hoare D.B.E. London's new Air Terminal was built by the Air Ministry at a cost of £267,000. The purpose-built terminal building, the first of its kind in the world with its integral Control Tower standing some sixty feet above ground on the operational side of the building housed all the necessary functions such as Administration, Airline offices, Customs and Excise, Immigration, Freight and Passenger handling and Post Office – all under one roof.

The brick buildings and large permanent hangers of the old Service (Beddington) Aerodrome were again used as hangers and maintenance workshops. The landing strip was initially a field of rough grass though later Runway 30 was additionally laid with pierced steel plating, a wartime invention to provide a more stable platform than plain grass upon which to land. In January 1928 the hedges on either side of Plough Lane that run through the old aerodrome were removed. Later the ditches were to be filled in and the lane levelled over.

The new airport was to become the departure and arrival point for many of the early record-breaking flights. It was here, in 1925-26 Alan Cobham's five-month trip to Cape Town and back began and finished. On May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1927 a crowd estimated at over 150,000 turned out to greet Colonel Charles Lindberg on his arrival from Brussels in his 230 h.p. Ryan Monoplane 'The Spirit of St. Louis', the first person to have flown solo across the Atlantic New York to Paris after 3,610 miles and thirty-three hours in the air. It was from Croydon on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1930 almost unheralded, Amy Johnson began her solo flight to Australia to return triumphantly on August 4<sup>th</sup>, to great public acclaim. Among other famous names to fly into and from Croydon were Bert Hinkler and Charles Kingsford Smith, the latter flying 'Southern Cross' who in June 1930 became the first to reach New York from Europe. It was during this period that the centre of Plough Lane disappeared from the road maps when the original R.F.C. site was fully incorporated within the landing field area. Displayed on the centre of the airfield surface was a large white landing circle approximately 150ft. in diameter with the name of the airport painted in letters 20ft. high and 16ft. wide. A long straight white line ran across the aerodrome for the guidance of pilots taking off in fog and, close to the landing circle a wind direction indicator emitted white smoke. Boundary lights marked the confines of the landing ground in orange coloured lamps and a morse code flashing beacon identified the aerodrome at night.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1924 one of the most significant events in the history of British aviation took place with the merger of Instone Air Line Ltd., Daimler Airways Ltd., Handley Page Transport Ltd. and the British Marine Navigation Co. Ltd. of Southampton, into a new company; Imperial Airways Ltd., a semi-nationalised forerunner of BOAC now British Airways.

It had been realised for some time that Croydon was becoming increasingly unsuitable for the position of London's main airport in view of the volume of traffic using the aerodrome. Added to this was the frequency of fog, low-lying cloud, the congestion of

radio aids and the encroachment of housing development with urban expansion. In 1938 air traffic movements exceeded 100 per day with more than 100,000 visitors to the airport being recorded annually plus a further 70,000 admissions to the public enclosure. At this time, although the government were spending over £40,000 annually on its upkeep, Croydon operated at an annual loss of nearly £2,000.

**Second World War.** The Royal Air Force officially took over the airport on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1939. On September 1<sup>st</sup> it was closed to civil flying and formally established as a satellite aerodrome to Kenley, part of No.11 Group Fighter Command to which for whatever reason squadrons could be withdrawn for short periods or used as a back up if Kenley became unusable. The aircraft of Imperial Airways in the main were dispersed to Whitchurch near Bristol, there to be joined by British Airways Ltd., two companies already in the process of amalgamation.

The day before war was declared, on the morning of Saturday September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1939 the Gloster Gladiator aircraft of 615 Squadron arrived, shortly to be followed by the Hawker Hurricanes of No.17 and No.3 Squadrons. Among others were the Spitfires of 92 Squadron though because of a dip in the runway and the speed of landing of these aircraft the landing area was found to be unsuitable though Hurricanes could land safely. For a short while during August and September 1940 the Hurricanes of 85 Squadron led by Peter W. Townsend DFC were based at Croydon and it was from here, along with the other airfields in the south and east of England the Battle for Britain was fought. Overall however, during the period of hostilities the airport was used as a base for transport. Anti-aircraft posts were set up in the borough, particularly in and around the airport; barrage balloons appeared and searchlights criss-crossed the night sky. Efforts were made at camouflage though the swimming pool off Purley Way remained as a glaringly obvious point of reference.

Even though by 1940 a phantom 'road' had been painted at right-angles across Plough Lane, one of the more notorious local incidents was when on the evening of August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1940 just before 7pm with no public warning having been sounded, the airport and its installations including the Redwing Aircraft Ltd. 'C' block hanger were bombed, the greatest damage being inflicted and the greatest loss of life incurring outside the perimeter of the airport at the nearby Bourjois and British N.S.F. Ltd. factories.

From peacetime civilian flights the German Air Force knew the route to Croydon and the use of buildings in the nearby factory estate. The N.S.F. factory, ironically an offshoot of a German company that manufactured small electrical components essential to aircraft production was therefore felt to have been a selected target whereas the Bourjois scent and cosmetics factory built in 1934 was what is known today as "collateral damage". The official figure was sixty-two civilians killed though estimates as to the true number who died in the raid vary. The overwhelming scent of 'Evening in Paris' hung in the air for some time after.

**Post World War II.** At the conclusion of hostilities the government decided that Croydon and Northolt would be used as London airports in the immediate future, but with larger aircraft requiring longer paved runways even before Heathrow or Gatwick came into

operation, Croydon yielded first place to Northolt. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1946 London (Heathrow) was opened when direct services between the United Kingdom and America were begun. Club flying and smaller independent service airlines such as Olley Air Service (later Morton) and Transair continued to operate from Croydon. On New Years Day 1954 it was officially announced that Croydon was to be run down for eventual closure and five years later to the day, Club training flights were stopped to be relocated to Biggin Hill. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1959 the last commercial flight, a Morton Air Services 'Heron' flight to Rotterdam left Croydon and the airport closed on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The original airfield used by the Royal Flying Corps on the east side of Plough Lane is now partly occupied by the Roundshaw housing estate, hence many of the names of roads commemorating the early days of flight. When Plough Lane was cut off, in 1928 a new road Foresters Drive was created along what was formerly Farm Lane joining Sandy Lane South with the remaining southern part of Plough Lane.

In early 1929 the Urban District Council purchased a grove of trees known as Roundshaw Spinney from the Air Ministry along with an adjoining ten and a quarter acres of land for £4,575 including costs. A further outlay of £890 for fencing was incurred before it was opened as a public park. The grove of trees gave its name to the 2,070 houses and flats of the Roundshaw estate that took up approximately one-third of the site of the old Croydon Airport. The first tenants moved into their new homes on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1967. Dwellings on the estate, many of which were rebuilt or refurbished as part of an overall £85 million regeneration project in the latter part of the 1990s and into the new millennium were heated by a communal boiler-house and it had its own shops, library, community centre and a brick-built church, St. Paul's, dedicated on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1981. The rebuilt St. Paul's church was opened on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and the new Phoenix Library, Community and Sports Centre in September 2004. Wilson's School now occupies part of the former airport site as does Amy Johnson Primary and St. Elephege Schools.

## **Bandon Halt Station**

It is not known why, in 1847, when the London Brighton and South Coast Railway Company built the West Croydon to Epsom section of the line Beddington was bypassed. It would appear that the route chosen for the railway was the only suitable throughway that did not intrude upon the exclusivity of Beddington as it was, with its large estates, its mansions and its millionaires.

Though the hamlet of Bandon Hill began to develop in the mid-nineteenth century, perhaps as developers began to build speculatively anticipating the construction of a station, it was not until June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1906 that Bandon Halt came into being, two simple wooden platforms to either side of the line on the west (or Wallington) side of the three arched bridge carrying Plough Lane across the railway. Access to the platforms was by steps (those on the north side still exist) leading down from the roadway above. A two-coach train known as 'The Grid' that ran between West Croydon and Epsom Downs stopped at the station. (The Sutton to Epsom Downs branch opened in 1865). Nor is it known why Bandon Halt had such a short lifetime as it was closed after only eight years on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1914 though the remains of a wooden platform could be seen for many years



*Bandon Halt as seen from the railway bridge, Plough Lane, the train having come from Wallington. Opened in 1906, the halt closed in 1914 after only eight years.*

after its abandonment. Perhaps competition from the tramway constructed along Stafford Road in 1906 took so many of the passengers away from the railway it no longer warranted the stop. Rebuilding of the bridge parapet was completed in early 2004.

## **The Surrey Iron Railway and Beddington Halt Railway Station**

One would imagine that when the single track of the Wimbledon to West Croydon Railway was opened in 1855 the wonders of the railway age had only just arrived. This was indeed so in the context of steam travel, but the rail crossing in Beddington Lane had been in existence from as long ago as 1803, the year of the opening of the Wandsworth to Pitlake (near West Croydon) branch of the Surrey Iron Railway, or as it was named on a map of 1816, the Iron Roadway. It was the first public railway (i.e. publically financed) therefore anyone with a suitable wagon could have it pulled along the track by horse or donkey on payment of a toll. It was the first in this country to receive Parliamentary sanction, the Surrey Iron Railway Act of 1801. The track of L-section flanged rails mounted on stone sleepers crossed Beddington Lane, the 'modern' line and more recently Tramlink having been laid on the track-bed of the old railway. It was not intended to carry passengers - the wagons were solely used for transporting freight. Owing to the decline in business partly brought about by there being no direct link with London and by the opening of the London and Croydon Railway in 1839, traffic on the Surrey Iron Railway stopped on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1846 and the land along the line sold to adjacent landowners.

When the Wimbledon and Croydon Railway was authorised in 1853 two years before the first steam train was due to use the line, the track bed had to be bought back from the

people to whom the S. I. R. Company had sold it. According to local tradition the railway halt came into existence because one of those to whom the land had been sold would not agree to its return without there being a stop created for the convenience of those living nearby. Alternatively it might have been for the convenience of John Shaw, allegedly Secretary of the South-East Railway Company who lived at Beddington Lodge a short distance away. In 1853 a little over an acre of the former Poor Lands directly north of the line by Beddington Lane was conveyed from the Trustees (the Beddington Churchwardens) to the Wimbledon and Croydon Railway Co. for £65, the money for which with accrued interest was eventually paid some twelve years later in 1865. It would be reasonably safe to assume that the Station Master's house would have been built soon after the land was conveyed in readiness for the opening of the line.

The Wimbledon to West Croydon line began operating on Monday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1855. The opening was inauspicious however. Four days after the line began operating, at a point near to Beddington Lane where there is a slight curve in the line the engine was derailed dragging the tender and three passenger carriages after it for fifty or sixty yards before the engine fell onto its side. The first carriage (3rd Class) was "smashed to atoms" and the driver instantaneously killed when already having been scalded by steam the tender fell on his chest. Another of the Company's employees who was riding on the tender was also severely scalded and suffered a dislocated shoulder when he was thrown clear. The five passengers in the 2nd Class carriage at the back of the train escaped without injury. It appeared to be the construction of the line that was the cause of the accident. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1866 the London Brighton and South Coast Railway purchased the line outright. In 1891 the Station Master was a gentleman with the wonderful name of Stonehewer Stanynought.

The Station House, brick built and with a slate roof stood immediately north of the line until demolished in 1981. It has been described as a typical Southern Region station house and past memories were of seeing the Station Master on duty resplendent in full uniform with polished buttons and top hat. Apart from selling tickets the Booking Clerk would also accept and send telegrams. A fire in the grate warmed the weather-boarded waiting room during the winter months and gas lamps lit the platform. The waiting room was probably the building still standing in September 1991. In August 1898 Beddington had a service of thirteen down trains to Wimbledon each weekday between 7.02am and 11.13pm and on Sunday five, beginning at 9.05am until 9.01pm.

The line was electrified in 1930 and the existing signal box replaced on May 25<sup>th</sup>, the same year; for many years its successor doubled as a booking office but became a gate box only in 1980. From May 1982 closed circuit television supervised the crossing. The line closed at the beginning of June 1997 when Connex South Central stopped the West Croydon to Wimbledon service in preparation for the re-laying of the line and its conversion during 1998-99 to the new Tramlink system of transport. Trams began commercial operation on the line in May 2000.



*Beddington Lane Halt looking west from the level crossing in September 1906.*



*Beddington Lane Halt crossing and signal box with the former 'Holmwood' once home of the Sprules family in Beddington Lane.*

# THE WANDLE

## The Ford and Beddington Lane Bridge

The Tramp Guide to the Wandle Valley in 1910 tells us that “the rare beauties of the ford put all others into the shade. It is unlike most of its kind being not only across but up a long bend in the river. Here the Wandle is flanked by towering elm trees whose leafage overshadows the stream and screens from sight the road and some modern cottages [the houses of Wandle Bank] while on the other hand a footpath, guarded by a well worn handrail, gives access to some old houses seen here and there through masses of foliage above their surrounding walls”.

The destruction wrought by Dutch elm disease in the 1960s dramatically changed the face of the English countryside, no more so than in this small corner as those towering elms sickened and died. In all other respects however the footpath bordering the river has changed little with the eighteenth century brick wall bordering the Wandle Court estate still following the curve of the river with the boughs of an ancient yew tree now that much closer the stream. Though part of the wall bordering the grounds was vandalised and demolished overnight in July 1981 the intriguing dates, initials and names carved into the bricks during the mid-nineteenth century have survived though today almost overwhelmed by modern painted graffiti. Owing to concerns expressed as to the safety of the wall the local authority undertook the buttressing seen today during the latter half of 1998.

Apart from the bridge in front of the mill the ford was the only point at which vehicles could cross the stream with ease; in both directions either the marshy ground or high banks that extended for some distance prevented crossing other than by horseback. The road pattern therefore conforms to a ford at this place from very early times.

Below the mill, where today Hilliers Lane meets with Beddington Lane, before the river was spanned with anything more than a footbridge, any other than foot passengers had to ford the river through the water splash. In 1889 the footbridge was described as “a slight wooden structure with a single hand rail, and pleasant withal to linger on, for it commands tempting views up and down stream. Near here the main path becomes a kind of raised causeway.... [the footpath between Hilliers Lane and Bridges Lane] with a jealously high wall on the right, and the river on the left - the shallow bed of the latter being utilised for some hundred yards or so for the road, so that we can trace the wheel-ruts along the sandy bottom”.

It may well have been the occasion of Thomas Blackman’s funeral procession on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1892 that brought the question of bridging the river again to the fore. He had lived in one of a group of houses known as ‘Mt. Pleasant Cottages’ that, as opposed to those of the same name by the mill, were situated in the fields near to the Croydon Isolation (Fever) Hospital. Leaving his home, the funeral procession made its way on foot over the level crossing of the spur rail line serving Waddon Mill and into the footpath that once led





*Guy Road slopes gently down to meet with the Wandle at the foot of Hillier's Lane (right) and Beddington Lane (left). Looking upstream in the background through a gap in the trees can be seen 'Wandle Court' and where the houses in Beddington Lane and Wandle Bank now stand we see Bridge Meadow. Those on foot crossed the river by the footbridge whilst all else had to ford the river via the water splash.*

across the fields (opposite Mile Road) down Beddington Lane and via the ford to the churchyard. Mr. Bert Appleby late of Beddington Lane recalled his father telling him of one such procession from Mt. Pleasant, probably this particular occasion at which time Mr. Appleby Snr. was one of the attendants. He related how there had been heavy rain and the river had flooded. Those pushing the bier had to wade through the floodwaters with the difficulties this entailed and subsequent discomfort for some time afterwards. One of the attendants complained and it was from this particular incident Mr. Appleby claimed, that the river was subsequently bridged. This might have been the occasion when the coffin nearly dropped in the river.

In the early part of 1893 an effort was made to get the local inhabitants to agree to a bridge and though success attended the Vestry meeting at which it was first proposed a subsequent poll of the Parish resulted in its defeat. The matter was vigourously pursued however, with the following among the reasons put forward as to why the river should be bridged:

Because sheep and cattle will not go through.

Because six or eight old men over 60 years of age have to draw a truck of firewood through, all the year round, from Holborn Union.

Because children and perambulators should not fall or be pushed off the present dangerous bridge [a narrow footbridge].

Because invalid carriages should not be dragged through.

Because coachmen should not have to lead their horses through.

Because a funeral should pass over without the bearers dodging the present posts (coffin nearly dropped in river some time back).

What was described as “traditional opposition” was finally overcome and on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1893, the Beddington ratepayers voted for the construction of a bridge. A white painted, lattice girder bridge was built and completed on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1893. As a compromise the water splash was retained though the footbridge was removed. The water splash disappeared only when the river was bridged a second time.

Made of rolled steel joists with arches between, the original bridge was so low to the water (only 1½ft.) that to carry out maintenance inspection underneath the engineer was forced to lie flat on the river bed, and because it was built slightly at an angle to the road and only 18ft. wide, by the time it was decided to rebuild it was considered to be one of Beddington and Wallington’s worst accident black spots. By 1933, in the interest of pedestrian safety the old bridge had been widened by the addition of a footpath on the western side after which it became known locally as the Lewis-Vale bridge, so named after the two local councillors W.H. Lewis and J. Vale who in the interests of public safety were instrumental in pressing for the footpath to be added.

The summer of 1957 saw a new bridge built alongside the old, of some 22ft. in width with a pavement on either side and correctly aligned with the road. The former bridge was demolished and the new river crossing opened at a cost of nearly £8,000 that included the cost of raising the road level at the entrance of both Guy Road and Wandle Road by some 1ft.6ins. to give greater clearance beneath the bridge. The existing mill stream bridge a little further north and dated 1972 replaces an earlier arched structure upon which had been placed a large cast iron white painted Surrey County Council plaque.

## **The River Wandle**

**Geology.** The River Wandle that gives Beddington so much of its charm even today originates in the porous chalk that covers the North Downs. Simply, the North Downs absorb rainwater that percolates down through the soft limestone and fissures in the horizontal layers of flint within the chalk until it reaches a depth where the rock is saturated with water and can seep no further down owing to a layer of impervious clay. Dividing the chalk and the upper London clay of the Thames Basin is a strip of Thanet sand. It is here where the underlying Tertiary clay in the Woolwich and Reading beds rises to the surface to meet that of the Thames Basin, trapped by the layers of clay the water forces its way through the chalk and the sand to form surface drainage, the river Wandle. It breaks forth as a series of springs along a line from Croydon through Waddon, Beddington, Wallington, and Carshalton to Ewell (though the latter forms the Hogsmill river which flows independently into the Thames at Kingston), Epsom, Ashstead and beyond.



*Completed in September 1893, an iron girder bridge replaced the footbridge. A ford to give horse drawn vehicles access via the river to the mill upstream, was retained.*



*The bridge looking south with Hilliers Lane disappearing uphill. An ancient house 'The Ford' stood close by the river until demolished in 1955.*

The geology of the Wandle valley would indicate a river of very much greater volume that by erosion during the Ice Age lay down the extensive beds of sand and gravel found in the area today. When in 1900 the ground east of Beddington Lane was being excavated for the installation of sedimentation tanks and percolating filters in connection with the early sewage works, extensive fossil beds (from the underlying Woolwich and Reading beds which are of clay, full of oyster shells), were uncovered. Within silt taken from Beddington Park, peat (that originated in the gravel beds) containing wood fragments giving a radiocarbon dating of just over 8,000 years B.C., along with fossil insects of a cold climate type much of which is extinct in Britain, also confirms the Ice Age dating.

The Wandle as we see it today is a nine mile long tributary of the Thames. It rises along the spring line in two areas, Waddon Ponds just over the borough boundary with Croydon and in the area of Carshalton Ponds. The two branches of the river meet beside a footpath immediately north of the Wilderness Island Nature Reserve at Hackbridge where the combined streams plunge over a weir, further downstream to be joined by the River Graveney that flows from Norbury and Tooting before they jointly meet the Thames by Feather's Wharf to the west of Wandsworth Bridge.

**Croydon Branch.** The Croydon branch was originally made up of a number of tributary streams that originated in a series of deep, now dry valleys in the Merstham, Coulsdon, Caterham and Smitham Bottom areas that joined to form the one river near Purley railway station. Discounting the occasional bourne flow, of more recent years the river rose in South Croydon by 'The Swan and Sugarloaf' public house and though now culverted underground, it ran northwards along the west side of Brighton Road behind 'The Blue Anchor' and along Southbridge Road. It there divided into two parts flowing across the meadows and rejoined near St. Andrew's church and thence to Croydon Old Town. At one time there was a maze of ponds, streams and man-made canals in this area; indeed the parish church and Croydon Palace built to give medieval Archbishops of Canterbury a residence in close proximity to London stood on an island surrounded by water. The river then flowed into a later Wandle Park (created in 1890) still remembered as a delightful park with a boating lake, in-filled in 1964 owing to the falling level of the water table, the residual water being channelled into pipes beneath the park.

Though now essentially dry valleys, during periods of prolonged heavy rain in the autumn and winter when the water table has raised sufficiently a stream may break through the surface some distance above the usual spring line, as occasionally happens when the Coulsdon and Caterham valleys flood with temporary streams the following spring. Known as bournes they suddenly appear and may almost as quickly disappear as the water table falls. Traditionally (but incorrectly) they were said to flow every seven years and portend a period of sickness and disaster, hence the old name "woe waters".

As to what was the original course of the stream has been the subject of much research and it is generally thought that few of the watercourses we see today are natural. Within living memory from Wandle Park, Croydon the river flowed into a northern millpond at Waddon (in-filled in 1964, at the same time as the pond in the park) where it was culverted under the factory estate. A southern ornamental pond once in the grounds of Waddon Court, still fed by a number of springs remains open, today set in a small park.

During dry periods Waddon Ponds may indeed be the first point from which the springs continue to rise on this branch of the river.

Today in times of heavy rainfall irrespective of the bournes, when the water flows through the culverts beneath Croydon it becomes an immediate source of oily pollution owing to the run off from the town's streets. It meets with the spring water flowing from Waddon Ponds beneath the nearby Mill Lane industrial estate.

**Carshalton Branch.** In time out of history several small now dry valleys in the uplands behind Carshalton once fed this branch of the river. Springs still rise in the ponds that following a wet season are supplemented by water now rising in the Hogpit and Grotto in Carshalton Park. Further springs that rise in Margaret's Pool and another which joins this flow beneath the lawn of Honeywood Museum's back garden also flow into the Upper Pond. A further independent issue of water rises by the hermitage and ponds in the grounds of St. Philomena's School that in the past having served Carshalton House Watertower is carried by a watercourse running parallel to Festival Walk into the Upper Pond. A lesser amount also rises in the grounds of The Lodge and Ann Boleyn's Well, the latter of which flows via a pipe into the Lower Town Pond.

During dry periods the Carshalton branch of the Wandle is mainly supplemented by recycled water. In order to take water from bore holes in the chalk to feed the town water supply, the then Sutton District Water Company and Thames Water Authority agreed to maintain water in Carshalton ponds at a specified level. To enable them to do so they concreted the base of the ponds and laid pipes below the riverbed from above Goat Bridge, Hackbridge to Carshalton from where they pump recycled water back into the Upper pond directly in front of Honeywood.

**History.** A Saxon noble called Wendel is thought to have given his name to the Wandle; *Wendleswurth* or Wendel's settlement (of 693), the Wandsworth of today. Prior to the late medieval period the name had been steadily corrupted and was at one time known as the Ledeborne (recorded in 1230) and Lovebourn (1349) that is derived from the middle Saxon *hlidaburn* meaning either the loud (*hlyde*) or sloping (*hlid*) stream. The name 'Vandalis' certainly appears to have been in use by the sixteenth century as in 1586 Camden attempted to Latinise it.

The swiftly flowing sloping stream certainly described the river, as from its visible source at Waddon to its confluence with the Thames, in its nine miles the river falls on average about 14ft. per mile its steepest gradient being in the area of its source, thereby rendering it generally unsuitable for navigation but ideal to power water mills. Fed from catchment areas on the downs where there is no surface run off the springs have a constant flow that is not affected by short-term changes in rainfall and having filtered through the chalk the sources are pure and the river not liable to freeze. The volume of water in the early nineteenth century is estimated as being at least six times more than its present volume; the large part of the flow being derived from springs that are now either dry or largely dry. This clean flow and the number of springs independent of the river enabled the establishment of watercress beds in its upper reaches and mills upon its entire length, though the water became progressively polluted as it flowed downstream.

The earliest water mills were for the grinding of corn, and as recorded in the Domesday Book, at least thirteen were located on the Wandle including one at Waddon. The most recent of a number of successors there closed in 1928. Two were in the de Wateville Manor of Beddington and a further two in the Manor of Beddington itself. In 1610 there were twenty-four corn mills on the river. The mills that came later were dependent not only on the power the flow provided but because they also needed water for their manufacturing process. The number of mills had increased from the thirteenth century onwards by the development of the fulling mill for cloth making and then dyewood grinding mills encouraged by sixteenth century explorations. In 1715 a patent was granted to one Peter Dubuisson for a new method of printing, dyeing and staining calico, after which by the end of the eighteenth century the industry had expanded and there were many bleaching and calico printing works on the river.

Much was also owed to the Low Country and French immigrants, Huguenot entrepreneurs who were prominent not only in the printing industry but as skilled hatters and dyers. By the early eighteenth century, they had settled in the Wandsworth area. In the 1850s, however such was the decline brought about by power being limited by the flow of water, the spread and increasing efficiency of the steam engine and other technological advances, that the decline in the numbers of mills in the second half of the century was rapid. In 1889 one writer remarked on the sight of a river littered with the corpses of dead industries. With the replacement of the old by more efficient mills, several of the former river channels that had become redundant were filled in. This had reduced the river to such insignificance that by the beginning of the twentieth century it had even begun to attract the attention of humorists, one of who was disrespectful enough to suggest renaming it the Dwindle.

Different trades known to have been conducted in mills on the river included copper, iron (including canon boring and machine building), oil, leather, paper, snuff, gunpowder, and for processes in the textile industry; dye making, felt making, calico printing and cloth bleaching and dyeing though the uses of many mill sites changed sometimes several times during their lifetime.

In the early nineteenth century however the Wandle had the reputation as being one of the finest trout streams in the south of England, indeed as good as angling as anywhere in the country. This had already been recognised as such as early as 1606 when it was counted as a royal hunting and fishing reserve. There are special appointments and commissions for superintendents of game and river fish relating to the river in 1606, 1608 (to Merton) and in 1623 (extending to Croydon). The trout at Carshalton have been described, as having marble spots like a tortoise. There were huge catches recorded in the eighteenth and nineteenth century accounts and good examples of trout caught in the river subsequently. Seven different species of trout were taken from The Grange waters during Alfred Smee's occupancy (the mid-1800s), the brown (or native trout) and the rainbow trout (an introduced species) predominating, a fine example of the latter of which was caught near Robert's Mill, Beddington Corner by Mr. McRae in April 1910. The fish mounted in a display cabinet is now on view at the Honeywood Museum. Trout survived (at least in the Carshalton branch of the river) up until about the second decade of the

twentieth century. More recently as the water quality has improved there has been a number of occasions when the river has been restocked.

**Pollution** has forever been and will be an ongoing problem. The source of fresh water afforded by the springs was undoubtedly the reason for very early habitation along the entire Wandle valley. By mediaeval times, this well-watered area supported sizeable communities, villages whose waste was generally disposed of via the river. The coming of the railways (to West Croydon in 1839 and East Croydon in 1841) that enabled people to travel to their place of work and live away from the cities exacerbated the growing problem along the whole length of the river. During the course of a century for example in Croydon the population rose from 5,743 in 1801 to 134,037 by 1901. Beddington and Carshalton were slightly less affected numerically (Beddington with a population of 353 in 1801 growing to 3,844 in 1901) for part of that time protected by its large estates and its relative isolation from the railway.

Population growth during the nineteenth century far outstripped the parish and town council's ability to provide adequate waste disposal so that by the middle of the century the Wandle had become little more than an open sewer, in no small measure contributing to the cholera and typhoid outbreaks that plagued the area in the late 1840s and again in 1875. In 1849 the newly instituted Croydon Local Board of Health had as a priority the provision of a pure water supply and the disposal of the town's sewage. The one was in part overcome in 1860 with the opening of the Beddington Sewage farm, the other by the sinking of wells into the sub-strata to provide a pure water supply thus lessening the supply of water available to be released in the natural springs. When George Payne's chocolate and confectionary business was built in 1921, a 253mm diameter bore was sunk to a depth of 124.81 metres to supply the factory with water. Up until closure of the factory in 2002 it was still in use. Later, after the Second World War when the Croydon B Power Station was built, further wells were bored going deeper into the water table. The taking of underground water has been an ongoing problem and the water table has lowered dramatically as a result.

**Flow.** The flow of water in the river has been threatened on more than one occasion in the past. One notable occasion was in 1610 when a proposal was put forward to allow the King's Chaplain, William Heliar to take a tenth part of the water between Croydon and Waddon, and by means of channels or underground pipes to supply the City of London with water. The profits of the undertaking were to be applied to the maintenance of the college of Divinity at Chelsea incorporated by a charter dated May 1610. A commission was set up to look into the scheme when it met with widespread condemnation not only from Sir Francis Carew and other landowners who also gained pleasure from the river, but from all those whose livelihood depended upon it - farmers, yeomen, and millers with each outlining the quantities of wheat and rye they ground into meal of a week, the families and servants they supported on their income and the animals dependent upon them for providing fodder. Not only were the bakers and brewers in opposition but the "inhabitants of the whole of Surrey" who would in one way or another be affected including those of Middlesex, of Brentford and the market towns of Croydon, Kingston and Reigate, concerned as to the effect upon their markets. At the time the river was turning the wheels of twenty-four corn mills and supported other industries to the extent

that the whole stream did not have sufficient flow to maintain the mills without the daily (or nightly) penning of the water for six hours in twenty-four, and in the summer for eight hours. By taking away so much of the flow it would be necessary to hold back the water for longer periods with a consequence of less milling being done, less food production, and greater hardship for all. With such overwhelming opposition the commissioners obviously decided against the proposal for nothing was subsequently heard of the scheme.

The Wandle was also under threat at the end of the eighteenth century when proposals were to construct a waterway from London to Portsmouth of which the river was to form a part. In 1833 and 1843 it was again threatened. In January 1845, the Metropolitan Pure Water Company proposed measures to supply the south part of the metropolis with water from the river. In December 1849 there appears to have been another attempt to create a similar supply when it was suggested that water be conveyed at the rate of 13 cubic feet per second from a proposed reservoir on Clapham Common via a six-mile long Southern aqueduct to supply the south of London.

In 1859, a more successful attempt to take water from the river was achieved by the Croydon Board of Health. Their action led to a protracted lawsuit known historically as 'The Croydon Great Water Case' (Chasemore versus the Croydon Local Board of Health) that was fought over a two-year period ending up in the House of Lords. The judgement went against the local mill owners; that landowners also had the ownership of underground water and the right to drain it off. As more modern industry away from the river dug wells deep into the earth, the water table was lowered even more.

Today, the Wandle is but a shadow of what it once was; few of its watercourses are natural and it is the product of man's ability to exploit and manipulate nature to his own ends, and of his ability to destroy. Silt continues to accumulate. At one time landowners regularly de-silted the bed of the river where it flowed through their property but today we see no such clearances. Initiated by the then Beddington Society and taken on board by the council, in 1982 they instigated an annual 'Wandle Clear Up' that involved the local authorities through which the Wandle flows, but this initiative, along with the Society has lapsed. The area of the river by the footpath from Crispin Crescent prior to these clearances had been described as "one of the Wandle's more important breeding habitats of the lesser spotted mattress and the battered bed base". As part of the then National Rivers Authority's flood alleviation improvements undertaken in 1990, in places the river bank has been built up to provide nesting holes for kingfishers that are frequently seen along this part of the river as are the herons now commonly seen feeding in its waters.

In 1972, an official report of that year showed that due to the reorganisation of sewage treatment in 1971 the river was becoming cleaner and had been singled out as one of the six British rivers with the highest rate of improvement. These findings led to the reintroduction of trout that despite periodic setbacks (the most recent and one of the most serious of which occurred in October 1995) it has been shown that it is possible for fish to survive and breed in its waters. This was confirmed by the record catch of a 12lb barbel in the river by Mill Lane, Carshalton in November 2005.



# FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WARS

## First World War Volunteer Movement

**Defence League K Division.** In October 1914, in addition to the regular army it was decided to form a contingent of volunteers from the three parishes of Beddington, Wallington and Carshalton; men determined to repel the invader on the homeland should such a need arise.

On November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1914, approval was given to affiliate with other units formed in London and District, jointly called the Defence League of which the local group became “K” Division. At the time permission was given for council schools including those at Bandon Hill, Beddington and Bute Road to be used for the purposes of drilling. Sections were formed and drills of one hour, twice a week commenced.

**9th Battalion Surrey Volunteer Training Corps.** In early 1915 the various Divisions of the Defence League were formed into battalions and regiments though individuals had to equip themselves at their own expense with a grey-green colour uniform and a compulsory red armband with the letters “GR” in black and the insignia of the Volunteer Training Corps. By March the company evolved into “C” Company of the 9th Battalion Surrey Volunteer Training Corps, with Major G. Gallaher as Commanding Officer with Headquarters at Sutton. The Committee of the Defence League was dissolved as the Company was thereafter run on strictly military lines.

Though there was a miniature rifle range in The Square at Carshalton, arising from Major Pott and his co-trustee having given them carte blanche to do whatsoever was necessary to utilise the old chalk pit at The Dell in Beddington, it was converted into one of the finest miniature rifle ranges in the country. Opened on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1915 by General Sir Josceline Wodehouse, G.C.B., C.M.G., R.A., it was in constant use throughout the war, by 1916 having been enlarged by the addition of another twenty-five yards range with mechanically operated targets. The chalk pit was later to be used on Sunday mornings as a training ground for hand grenade and bayonet fighting.

In April 1915 the first inspection of the Volunteer Corps took place in Beddington Park and during the summer the first two weekend camps were held at Bandon Hill Schools. The position allocated to the battalion for the outer defence of London was at Woldingham where trenches and other defensive measures were undertaken and throughout the course of the war general training, lectures, route marches, camps and exercises continued there, and in various other areas of Surrey though initially equipment was practically non-existent. Until the beginning of 1916 the Company had no arms but used dummy rifles as part of their equipment. Early in the year however a considerable number of .303 Martini Henry rifles with bayonets and scabbards were purchased. Mr. C. E. Aldis permitted the use of an empty shop in Woodcote Road rent-free for the Company Headquarters.

Fuller recognition of what had been accomplished by the Volunteer Training Corps was brought about by the Volunteer Act of 1916 at which time men had to enter into an agreement to serve for the duration of the war during which time financial aid, uniform, equipment and rifles were made available.

**9th Volunteer Battalion Surrey Regiment.** On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916 the Company the 9th V.B. Surrey Regiment was sworn in as Volunteers, believed to be the first in Surrey to do so. Being better equipped therefore they would play a greater part in the defence of the country, thus releasing an even greater number for army service abroad. The years 1917-18 might be termed the last phase of the movement at which time the control of the Volunteers was exercised by a special staff in the War Office. In July 1917 they were issued with one machine gun per Company, a Hotchkiss .303 air cooled machine training for which was undertaken at Chelsea Barracks while classes were held either at Battalion HQ at Sutton or in London. In January 1918 the Company was amalgamated with the 11th V.B. Surrey Regiment and reduced to two platoons, forming the right half of "B" Company.

Names of the men of the church and parish appearing on the Roll of Honour of First World War dead in the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Beddington.

Charles F. Appleby	William Mills-Arnell
Ernest Bartholomew	Kenneth C. Oxley
Alfred C. Bentley	Reginald H. Pott
Henry Bone	Richard H. Plater
Frank G. Brown	James W. Petchey
Edwin G. Burges	Harold Plowman
Ernest F. C. Churcher	John F. Reynolds
Leonard G. S. Clack	Arthur R. Russel
George Claxton	James B. Salter-Whiter
George E. Clode-Baker	William G. Saw
Charles H. Cressy	Henry Shiell
Harold W. Franklin	George W. Smithwhite
Sydney F. Goddard	Henry Soloman
John Grey	Charles S. Soutar
Charles D. Henn	Arthur R. Turner
Christopher Hodgson	Bertie T. Tysoe
Stanley H. Humphries	Leonard S. Waghorn
Charles Humphries	Cecil J. Waghorn
Arthur E. James	Sydney H. Waghorn
George G. Johnston	Percy F. Walford
Frederick J. Jones	Alfred Warren
Edmund H. Llewellyn	Cyril R. Welsman
John Loomes	Ronald W. Williams
Frank W. Mash	Harold B. Winton
Philip Mighell	Frank M. Wright

**3rd V.B. East Surrey Regiment.** The title of the 9/11th V.B. Surrey Regiment was soon changed to the 3rd V.B. East Surrey Regiment and trench digging and defences of Reigate Hill became an important part of their activity. In March 1918 the battalion supplied its quota of men to assist in guarding the east coast and guard the searchlights. At the Armistice the Company was dissolved.

## **Second World War**

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1940 saw the formation of what was named the Local Defence Volunteers though a little over a month later following a speech by Winston Churchill, the name was changed to the Home Guard. By February 1942 compulsory Home Guard Service was introduced.

On Saturday May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1942, as his last official appearance before retirement Lieut.-General Sir Bertram Sergison-Brooke, General Officer Commanding London District opened a Home Guard Training School at the former Orphanage in Beddington Park (now Carew Manor School) under Major S.W. Mills M.C., D.C.M., as Officer Commanding. Col. J.E. Turner was in charge of the officers' wing at the school.

The school was divided into two sections, one for Officers of 'W' and five adjacent zones, the other for N.C.O's and potential N.C.O's. It was described as "probably the most up-to-date Home Guard Training School in the country" where men attending the course had to put in a very full weekend of training. Over the summer months between June and September 1942 three thousand students are estimated to have passed through at the rate of two hundred a week with training aimed towards defence and attack against parachute troops, basic procedure and organization. Aspects of the training included fire discipline and control, messengers and communication, the taking up of defensive positions and of organising the same, guerrilla warfare, the handling of prisoners etc. The programme also included searching a wood, attack against air-borne troops, the demonstration of modern Home Guard weapons and German methods of attack. Blank ammunition was used for demonstrations such as clearing enemy troops out of a building whilst the use of tank traps was demonstrated with smoke candles, thunder flashes and a "tank" made of a motor car.

The Headquarters of No.15 Platoon "D" (Wallington) Company, 60th Surrey Battalion Home Guard was located in the old Tennis Pavilion in Beddington Park; Officer Commanding - Major S.C. Walker. The Battalion Headquarters Intelligence Section commanded by Lieut. Col. G.H. Ward was located in Wellesley Road, Croydon.

Of particular concern were the open areas of the Beddington Farmlands (part of which was covered with sludge drying pans and dangerous to potential paratrooper landing) with the large acreage of Mitcham Common beyond. The area was therefore used as a training ground and turned into a mock battlefield. In order to cover this expanse of open space in the event of German parachute and glider landings, apart from the heavy gun emplacement on Mitcham Common in the vicinity of Mill Green, brick-built obstructions



*All that remained of 'The Cottage' in Guy Road after a flying bomb landed in a neighbour's garden on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944. Damaged houses stand in Guy Road (seen to the left), while those in Malthouse Row are to the right.*



*Emergency housing at no.44 Guy Road replaced houses destroyed in the incident shown above.*

were built in the open fields and four machine-gun posts were set-up at one hundred yard intervals along the whole length of the belt of trees that bordered Beddington Park and the farmlands. In addition, several slit trenches were dug to accommodate the Browning automatic rifles and Spigot Bombards, a type of mortar. All members of the Home Guard were eventually issued with the American Lease-Lend P17 .300 rifles.

Regular all night guard duties included the Electricity Sub-Station, Richmond Road; Wallington Police and Fire Stations; the Telecommunication Centre behind Wallington Town Hall and the Army Pill-Box at the entrance to Croydon Aerodrome though even by 1944 Cyril Cooper recalled his being on duty only armed with a walking stick to repel any potential invader. It was felt that any German invaders would die laughing! As did many others, on top of eight hours intensive training a week and one all-night guard duty the men often worked eighty to ninety hours a week making vital arms and equipment for the armed forces and many were involved in nightly 'off duty' street patrols during the blitz. Mobile anti-aircraft batteries also entered the district, either mounted on road vehicles or on railway trucks.

During this time amongst others, Air Raid Precaution Warden's Posts were located in Beddington Park by Croydon Road opposite Rectory Lane (refreshments for whom was provided every evening by Dr. Stoker who lived opposite); Queenswood Avenue opposite Queen Elizabeths Walk, and Cedars Road (located at the rear of No.29 abutting the wall at the east end of Tritton Avenue). What was then known as Wandle Gardens, now the triangular green at the junction of Guy Road and Hilliers Lane (near the Village Hall); at the Beddington Lane junction with Therapia Lane; next to Highview School; and at Mellows Park off Plough Lane, were further locations. A final parade attended by members of every Home Guard Battalion was held in Hyde Park on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1944, the date the movement was disbanded. The tennis pavilion however was still leased to the Beddington and Wallington Civil Defence Association at least until the mid-1950s.

It was along the Mile Road in the vicinity of the field cottages in an area then known as the Hackbridge Marshes during the war disposal experts took any unwanted munitions to be destroyed. The Bomb Disposal Unit, after having removed the fuses of unexploded bombs and A.A. shells took them to the site where they steamed out the explosive. The results were what is said to have looked like slabs of sandstone that when ignited produced "a lot of flame and crackle".

During the course of the Second World War thirty-eight flying bombs fell in the Borough of Beddington and Wallington, twenty-seven involving casualties. Twenty people were killed and one hundred and seventy-nine seriously injured. Eight thousand houses were damaged of which one hundred and forty-six were destroyed and one thousand eight hundred and fifty were seriously damaged. Of the high explosive bombs, this has yet to be researched.

Names of those who died during the Second World War as listed on the memorial plaque in St. Mary's Church Centre, it having been removed from the Memorial Hall.

George Robert Andrews	Stanley William Newson
John Edward Baker	Albert Stanley Matthews
Arthur Francis Botting	John Walter Penson
Frederick Percival Carter	Peter Albert Reeve
Philip Arthur Chapman	Frederick Rexstrew
Henry Charles Emes	Geoffrey Egerton Stansfield
Raymond Campbell Hill	Martin James Tomkins
William Arthur Howard	Raymond Wellington
Kenneth Hunt	Arthur George Frederick Wood
John Arthur Morley	

But of course it was also those at home who suffered as a result of war whether it be through privation or direct enemy action. The only statistics relating to the Second World War directly to hand are those of the Borough of Beddington and Wallington as a whole. Civilian casualties were 68 killed; 214 seriously injured and 389 slightly injured. There were 190 incidents however they categorised those; 203 high explosives; 38 flying bombs but no rockets. In relation to houses there were 242 demolished and 2,932 badly damaged. As a comparison Croydon suffered 716 killed; 1,600 seriously injured with 2,323 houses completely demolished and 95,177 damaged, so perhaps we were relatively lucky.



*Children at Bandon Hill School  
assisting the war effort.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Even such is time, which takes in trust  
Our youth, our joys, and all we have  
And pays us but with age and dust.  
Who in the dark and silent grave,  
When we have wandered all our ways  
Shuts up the story of our days ...

(Sir Walter Raleigh 1552-1618)

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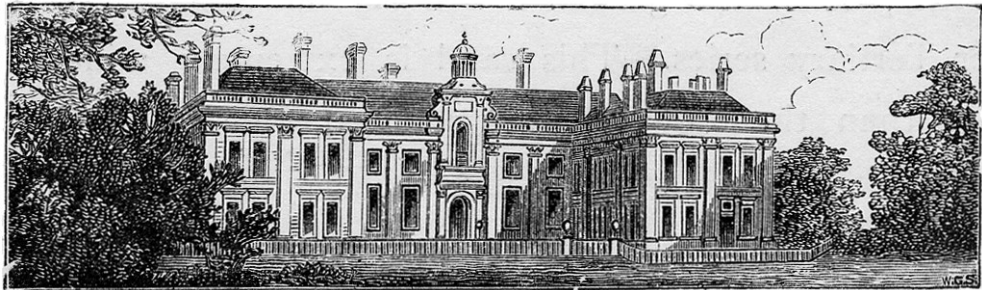
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Beddington Hall (Carew Manor) before the fire from Smee's "My Garden."

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