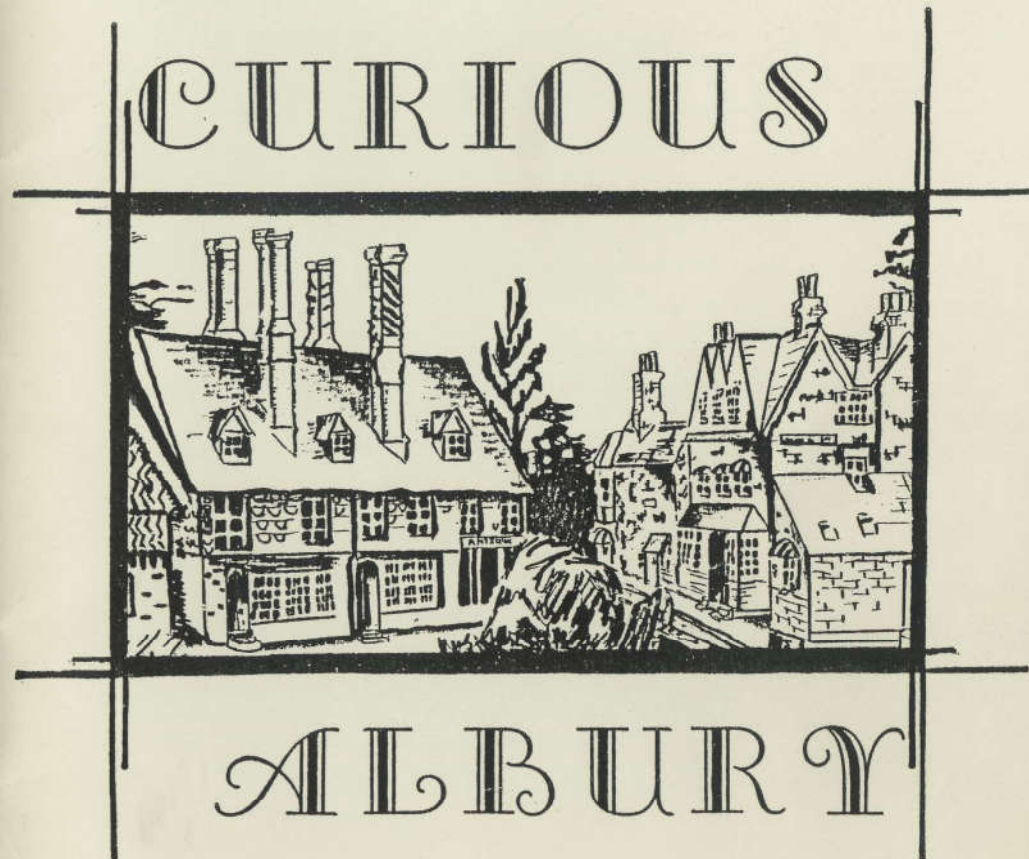


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Curious Albury
by Eric H Rideout and Karin A Brown



CURIOUS ALBURY

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Eric H. Rideout

and

Karin A. Brown

1980

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, we wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the rector, who produced, and allowed me to copy the Tithe Map and its schedule. He has been of continual help during the work. Our thanks are due to Miss Val Francis who inserted legibly all the place and fields names into the plan. Thanks are due to Miss M. Gollanez, the County Archivist, and Miss G.M. Beck, her Senior Archivist at Guildford who have cheerfully borne ceaseless inquiries. Add the late Mr. G.H. Underwood at the Surrey Archaeological Society, who spread so willingly the riches of the research material before us. That material contains a mass of detail relating to Albury painstakingly garnered by Miss O.M. Heath.

Thanks are due to all the local people who so willingly gave their knowledge of the parish.

For the rest, the book has been entirely written by Karin Brown from my notes collected over the last few years and from references I had to hand.

Eric Rideout.

To Eric Rideout and Robert Harrison who supplied the support and encouragement without which this booklet would never have been written.

Karin Brown.

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CURIOUS ALBURY

Albury is a curious place. Besides the presence of a Tudor Pidgeon House at Weston House there is an octagonal cottage at the corner of Blackheath Lane and Church Street of which we know nothing. Curiouser and curiouser over the centuries the village of Albury has been moved at least once, maybe twice, before reaching its present location which was once the hamlet of Weston Street owned by the manor of Weston Gomshalve. Still more curious, Albury Parish boasts not one, but three churches.



ALBURY PARISH

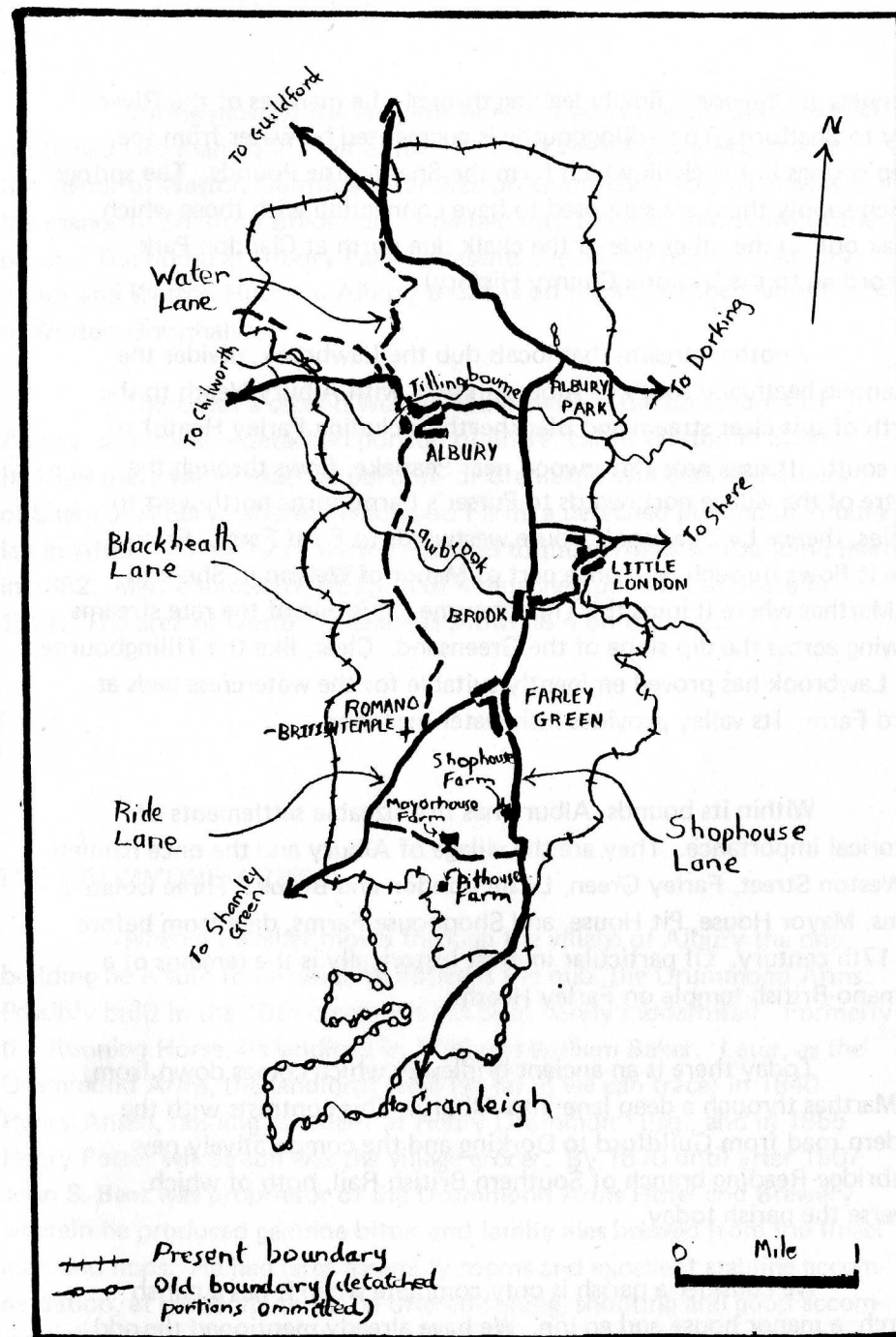
WHERE IS THE PARISH OF ALBURY?

The old Saxon parish of Albury lies five miles east of Guildford and seven miles west of Dorking in the ancient hundred of Blackheath, and in the present day county of Surrey. If you look at map 1 you will see that Albury is a rectangle approximately one and a half miles at its widest point by six miles long. The northern boundary runs from Newlands Corner in the west following the line of the chalk escarpment of the North Downs to the boundary of Shere in the east. This is also the line of the North Downs Trackway or Driftway, a reputed ancient trackway which ran from the Kent coast to Stone Henge in the Salisbury Plains. From the North Downs the Albury boundary marches with that of the Parish of Shere following Chantry Lane, crossing the Tillingbourne by a ford and footbridge, thence climbing out of the valley up Dark Lane, on the Greensand, along Little London Lane, past Shere and Albury Heaths then opposite the Little London pub of the William IV, it continues to travel south to meet the boundary of Ewhurst. Here it turns west for about a mile following the boundaries of that parish and of Cranleigh. It turns again to the north passing Wonersh and St. Martha parishes back to Newlands Corner.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PARISH

The soils and form are typical of the parishes south of the common land of the chalk hills. The high ridge of Greensand, south of these hills, traverses most of the parish. On this ridge lies the extensive heaths of Blackheath and Farley Heath. In the south it falls away into the valley through which the Guildford — Horsham railway once ran. Here the Greensand overlays the Wealden clay for a short distance and part of Smithwood Common which grows here was in Albury Parish until quite recently.

The Tillingbourne, the wee burn of Tilla's people, flows through the parish from east to west. It rises to the south of Albury from the soaking sponge of the Leith Hill Greensand and trickles along the narrow valley it has made to Wotton. After passing through the fancy fish ponds constructed by John Evelyn (of whom we will have more to say later) the river turns west through Abinger, Gomshall, the now vanished village of Albury, Weston Street then through a bewildering maze of ponds and



MAP 1 ALBURY PARISH

channels at Chilworth finally leaking through the marshes of the River Wey to Shalford. The Tillingbourne is augmented by water from the deep springs in the chalk which form the Sherbourne Pounds. The springs which supply them are supposed to have connection with those which break out on the other side of the chalk due north at Clandon Park (according to the Victoria County History).

Another stream, that locals dub the Lawbrook, divides the extensive heathland south of Albury in two, with Albury Heath to the north of this clear stream and Blackheath (including Farley Heath) to the south. It rises near Coverwood near Peaslake, flows through the centre of the village northwards to Purser's Farm, turns north-west to Jessies, thence by Lawbrook House westwards to Ford Farm. From here it flows through land once part of Manor of Weston in Shere to St. Marthas where it joins the Tillingbourne. It is one of the rare streams flowing across the dip slope of the Greensand. Clear, like the Tillingbourne, the Lawbrook has proved eminently suitable for the watercress beds at Ford Farm. Its valley provides lush water meadows.

Within its bounds, Albury has five sizeable settlements of historical importance. They are the village of Albury and the once hamlets of Weston Street, Farley Green, Little London and Brook. Three isolated farms, Mayor House, Pit House, and Shophouse Farms, date from before the 17th century. Of particular interest historically is the remains of a Romano-British temple on Farley Heath.

Today there is an ancient bridleway which comes down from St. Marthas through a deep lane into Albury. This contrasts with the modern road from Guildford to Dorking and the comparatively new Tonbridge-Reading branch of Southern British Rail, both of which traverse the parish today.

We consider a parish is only complete when it has a parish church, a manor house and an inn. We have already mentioned the odd existence of three churches in the parish, so we will move on to talk about the manors in Albury.

During most of the last nine hundred years the old Saxon parish contained two manors in their entirety — these were Albury Manor and the manor of Weston Gomshalve (or Weston Gomshall). Part of another, the manor of Shalford Bradestan, extended into the west and south of the parish. The house at Albury Park represents the manor house of Albury Manor and Weston House in Albury today is on the site of the manor house of Weston Gomshalve.

There was a second Weston Manor within the boundaries of Albury, but it was a detached portion of Shere, called Weston in Shere. In 1839 there were detached portions of Cranleigh, Wonerh and others of Shere in Albury, whereas Wildwood Farm, a detached portion of Albury, lay in Alfold. These lands were transferred to the parishes surrounding them in 1882. Map 2 shows the position of 4 detached portions of Shere in 1871. The area of Weston in Shere is shown as 4 on the map.

THE DRUMMOND ARMS

When a traveller moves through the village of Albury the one building he is sure to be quick to notice is the pub, the Drummond Arms. Possibly built in the 18th century it has been barely modernised. Formerly the Running Horse, its landlord in 1788 was William Baker. Later, as the Drummond Arms, the landlords were (so far as we can trace) in 1840 Henry Ansell, holding as tenant of Henry Drummond Esq., and in 1855 Henry Potter whose son was the village grocer. By 1870 until after 1907 John S. Beet was proprietor of the Drummond Arms Hotel and Brewery wherein he produced genuine bitter and family ales brewed from the finest malt and hops. He had large assembly rooms and excellent stabling accommodation, at moderate terms he offered fishing, shooting and good accommodation for cyclists. During the hunting season there was promised a view of the "Surrey Union Hounds who meet at the Hotel" as shown in the

advertisement from a local directory. 1910 saw the premises tenanted by The Surrey Public House Trust. After a brief interval George and Mary Lugg, the then tenants, transformed a dreary dining room into the "Pugin Restaurant" with its fascinating photo-murals of Weston Street and its striking Pugin chimneys. They restored, yet preserved, the genuine country pub atmosphere. Their successors, the Ransons, happily retain it. The building is still strictly an inn as it has four rooms for bed and breakfast.

Drummond Arms ALBURY.

Genuine Bitter and Family Ales,
Brewed from finest Malt and Hops.

J. S. BEET,
... Proprietor.

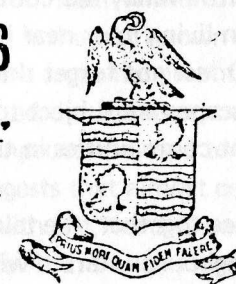
LARGE ASSEMBLY ROOMS. EXCELLENT STABLING ACCOMMODATION.

Surrey Union Hounds Meet at the Hotel in the Season.

Fishing, Shooting.

Good Accommodation for Cyclists.

Terms Moderate.

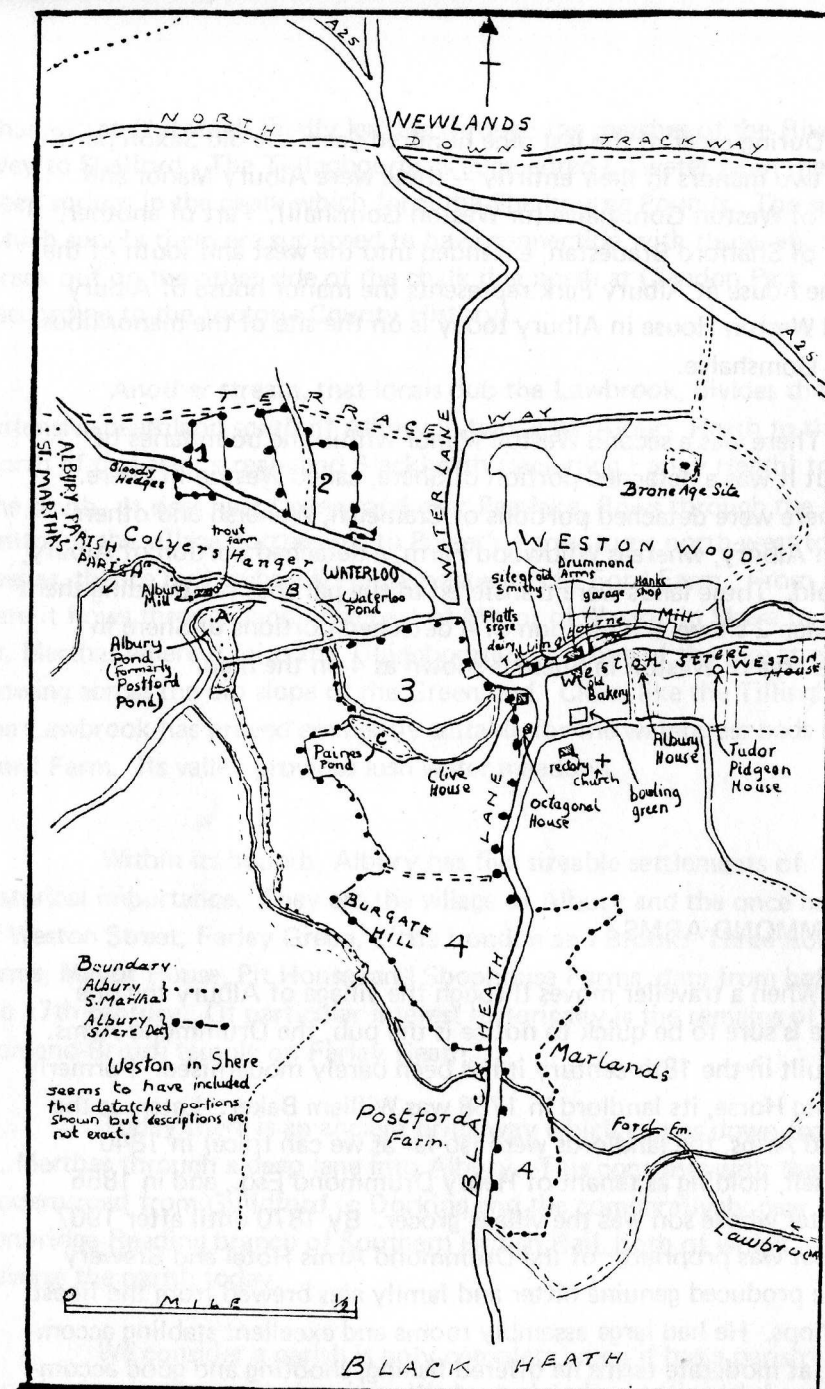


Hotel & Brewery, SURREY.

PRIVATE ROOMS. LUNCHEONS.

WINES AND SPIRITS
OF THE BEST QUALITY.

Behind the inn spreads a garden and at its foot, the Tillingbourne. On the stream are greedy, happy ducks, and over the bridge the sunny slopes of Preston Hill. This delightful little river was of great significance to the siting and development of Weston Street and Albury.



MAP 2 FOUR DETACHED PORTIONS OF SHERE IN ALBURY PARISH IN 1871, AND POINTS OF INTEREST IN ALBURY VILLAGE TODAY

INFLUENCE OF THE TILLINGBOURNE

TILLINGBOURNE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF ALBURY PARISH

If you look on an Ordnance Survey map of the whole Tillingbourne valley you will see an example of the influence of a landscape on man, and of man's puny, vague and piecemeal alterations on the landscape. This great little valley has controlled and continues to control the activities of man living in or near it or struggling to pass through or across it. Also we must not forget that human communities who occupy and modify landscapes are subject to all the natural laws which control animal and plant communities in their growth and decay.

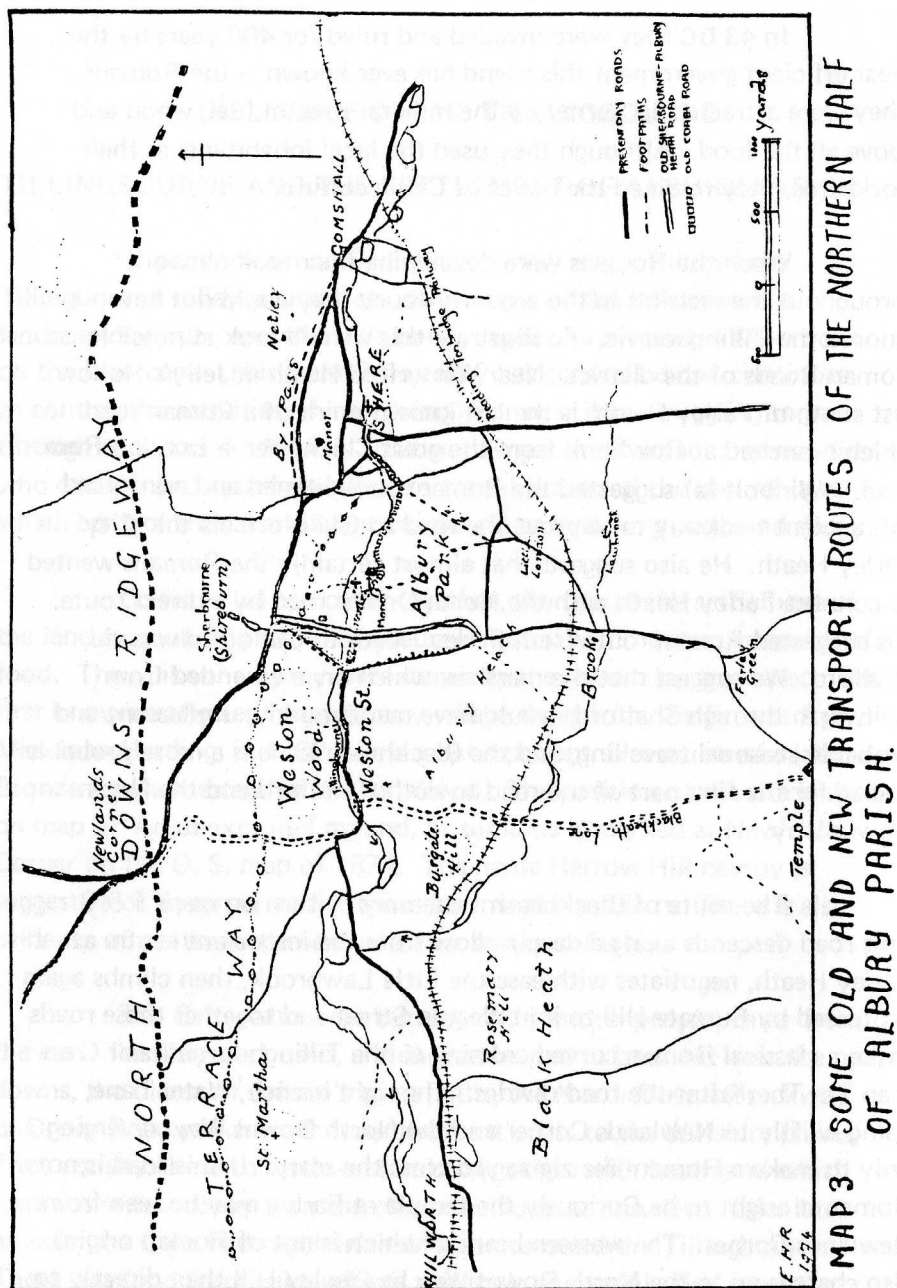
So far as we can piece together, the tale of the settlement of the land surrounding the Tillingbourne started with hunters in search of food. They, like their prey were drawn to the stream by the water. The first known settlement near Albury village dates from the Bronze Age. Miss Joan Harding, in 1962, carried out a patient excavation of a late Bronze Age homestead in Weston Wood. The position of the site is shown on map 2. An unexplored mound, or tumulus is marked at Newlands Corner on the O. S. map of 1874. The name Harrow Hill nearby is suggestive of Saxon or earlier times but may be modern. There is also evidence of a later settlement of Celtic origin at Farley.

The Celts, who were hunting and pastoral people, came from the east. Possibly they used, and indeed helped to beat out over the open downs, the oldest of Britain's great paths, the North Downs Trackway or Drove Road which leads from the Kent coast to the Wiltshire plains. They usually chose to settle on sandstone ridges with heathland which were easier to occupy than the clay soils closer to the river. Like later arrivals, the Celts had much in their favour around the Tillingbourne. There was food from wild animals and their own stock, fish from the stream, and ample wood, brush and gorse for fuel and shelter.

In 43 BC they were invaded and ruled for 400 years by the most efficient government this island has ever known — the Romans. They were attracted to Surrey by the mineral wealth, fuel, wood and above all the food. Although they used the local inhabitants as their workforce, they retained the basics of Celtic culture.

When the Romans were developing their road network throughout the districts in the around Albury they could not have ignored the Tillingbourne. To illustrate this we will look at possible Roman Roads of the district. Near Winterfold Heath at Jelly's Hollow, just south of Farley Heath, is the last known point of a Roman road which branched at Rowhook from the great Chichester — London Roman road. Winbolt (a) suggested the Romans straightened and reinforced this ancient trackway to improve the road to Guildford via the 'City' on Farley Heath. He also suggests that almost certainly the Romans wanted to connect Farley Heath with the North Downs road by a direct route. His suggested Roman route from Farley Heath to Guildford was via Shalford. We suggest that the marshes, which once extended from Chilworth through Shalford, would have made muddy, unpleasant and probably seasonal travelling, and the Blackheath Lane is a more probable course for the first part of the road to both Guildford and the North Downs Way.

The route of Blackheath Lane may be seen on maps 1 & 3. This road descends along a deep hollow from the important centre at Farley Heath, negotiates with ease the little Lawbrook, then climbs again protected by Burgate Hill to join Weston Street and together these roads make a classical Roman curved crossing to the Tillingbourne (near C on map 2). Thereafter the road divides. The right branch, Water Lane, rising swiftly to Newlands Corner and the North Downs Way, diverging only to make a Roman-like zig-zag to cross the scarp. If this road is not Roman it ought to be. Curiously the temple at Farley may be seen from Newlands Corner. The western branch (which is not of Roman origin) also charges up to the North Downs Way by Pewley Hill then directly to Guildford. To suit more delicate Victorian tastes this road is now called



Guildford Lane rather than its earlier Saxon name of Bloody Hedges Lane. Possibly the Romans used this ancient bridleway or other roads already in existence to travel to Guildford. The traversing of the Tillingbourne is the lowest point where the river may be crossed without a long and costly causeway across the marshy ground (later to become ponds), down river. Also being a crossroad it is not surprising that a settlement developed at the site of present day Albury and previous to this the hamlet of Weston Gomshalve Manor.

Following the demise of Roman rule England was invaded by the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Not liking sandy lands, they were more likely to have settled along the Tillingbourne using the more fertile lands from Home Farm and Sherbourne up to Newlands Corner, and in the valley defined by Shophouse Lane on the east and Ryde Lane on the west, below where the village of Farley Green now exists. The heathland south of Albury Park was used for gathering heather and brush wood for thatching and fuel, and for grazing their free-ranging sheep. Gradually they encroached on the heath, building houses, and enclosing small areas for sheep pens or cultivation (sheep were to become the main stay of Albury industry until quite recently).

The Saxons were followed by the Normans in 1066 after the Battle of Hastings. Like the Romans, the Normans moved into the Saxon settlements taking advantage of pre-existing land divisions. Also, like the Romans, they used the local inhabitants as their workforce. The Normans brought to this country the Feudal System of land ownership. In this system, all land belonged to the King who granted tracts of land to favoured collaborators on the condition that they supply men to the King should he require them. The land owner, in turn, could grant land to favoured workers on similar conditions. When the land owner died, the land was inherited by the son, or if there was no son it was divided between the daughters. If there were no children the land reverted back to the King who could grant it to another person. Over time there was a gradual change from the payment for land by service to payment by money and so manor and land ownership became less dependent on the crown.

TILLINGBOURNE AND INDUSTRY IN THE PARISH

Not only did the little river provide an obvious water supply for the settlers, but also it provided power. Whether or not some precocious prehistoric James Watt, paddling in its waters, chasing a childish bauble, was smitten with the idea of a water wheel we know not, but mills containing such wheels abounded. The Dooms day book of 1086 records that there was one at Abinger, Albury and Chilworth, while Shere had two. Possibly some of these mills, which were used as corn or flour mills, date from earlier times.

In Albury Parish today there are three mills along the Tillingbourne. Firstly, there is the remnants of the Saxon mill which may still be seen next to the laundry in the vanished village. There is a mill in present day Albury – Weston Mill – which dates from as late as the 16th century. It is now used as Research Laboratories.

The third mill is situated at the boundary of the Parish of St. Martha. Now known as Albury Mill, it was called Postford Mill last century. Originally a paper mill producing bank notes for the Royal Mint, today it is used to make flour and, more importantly cattle food. Next to the mill is an excellent trout farm where the fish are guaranteed to be fresh.

Important to the people of Albury parish was the presence of a fulling mill at Chilworth in 1589. About this time Chilworth was an important industrial centre of the Tillingbourne where two paper mills and a group of gunpowder mills were also situated. At the fulling mill wool produced in the surrounding parishes, was cleansed using fullers earth (from Nutfield) mixed with water. The wool was then spun and taken to local weavers including some in the important market town of Shere. The resulting cloth was then distributed to the local people (no doubt some at Albury) for conversion into garments.

For the last 200 years the hides of the sheep have been taken to the tannery at Gomshall, in Shere Parish. This tannery uses the waters of the Tillingbourne during the conversion of the hides to processed articles. Interestingly today sheep are rare in the district. Albury Park carrying the only flock we know of. Cattle (for dairy and meal) and horses are the major livestock of the parish today.

Thus we have seen how the Tillingbourne has played a major role in the settlement and development of industry in Albury Parish.

WHERE WAS 'PREHISTORIC' ALBURY?

According to the English Place-Name Society (EPNS), the bible of all local historians, Albury means 'the old burh' or the old bury i.e. the site of a defended settlement. We know the site of Albury in 1086 (then Eldeburie) was in what is now Albury Park. The EPNS suggests Eldeberie may originally have been the Romano-British camp on Farley Heath, though they admit it is some distance from the Albury Park site. We suggest the old bury may have been either at the Farley Heath site or at Burough Hill (now Farm Hill) behind Albury Park. These sites may be seen on map 3.

We suggest Burough Hill for the following reasons. The word burough is an Anglo-Saxon name meaning bury, castle or old village. Of course the name would not have been used until after the Roman occupation, but it may refer to a village that was already in existence. Topographically, the area is well suited to a castle or settlement because firstly, the hill is sandy; secondly, there is a river below as a source of water; thirdly, a settlement on the hill would be protected from floods; fourthly, being on a hill the settlement would be easily defended; fifthly, and tantalizingly, three large stones suggestive of a tumulus, or burial mound, were found near Home Farm, however the report in a volume of Surrey Archaeological Collection is vague about exactly where they were found and unfortunately they have now been removed. Sadly, the hill has not been studied for relics of occupation so we have no physical evidence to support our argument.

The alternative site, for the old bury, i.e. the area around the temple on Farley Heath, does have remains of occupation. Farley Heath, the fearn leah, is on a sandy fern or bracken clearing on a plain which slopes gently from the heights of Winterfold along the dip slope to Brook, in the north. The western and eastern gullies are now partly obscured by trees, and a natural spring is near the camp site. Of significance is the presence nearby of Burgate Hill (the bury gate). It is on an approximate

line from Albury and Shalford to Farley and worked flints have been found on its slope so adding weight to the idea that Farley is the old bury. Apart from the temple there are no buildings of Roman or earlier origin still standing. The story of the discovery of the temple is a fascinating one and we will start with the uncovering of finds by the eminent Victorian, Martin Tupper.

MARTIN TUPPER AND FARLEY HEATH

Martin Tupper lived a while in Albury Parish at Albury House in Weston Street. He produced a famous 'best seller'; his *Proverbial Philosophy*, and wrote a successful historical novel, *Stephan Langton*, wherein he rechristened one Sherbourne pond, *The Silent Pool*. As a young man, between 1839 and 1847, he spent many hours grubbing on Farley Heath, then locally known as 'the City'. He found what he was seeking — the Romano-Celtic temple. He was not the first to do so.

Aubrey in 1672 recorded extensive relics of Roman buildings on Farley. Even then the local stone robbers had severely reduced the 'square and circle' of the temple seen by Elias Ashmole (an antiquarian), in 1670, at which time the wall had stood a foot or more above ground. Manning and Bray, two historians of Surrey, in 1809, also left some record of it with a plan.

Tupper set about an intensive exploration employing three men digging from February to July in 1848. Besides the temple bounds he found two pottery kilns. He investigated slightly the Skemp Pond which is fed by a spring and paved with Roman tiles. He, and others, have found vast numbers of Roman, pre-Roman and post Roman coins, bits of pottery, Roman nails and other objects which indicate the site was either a very important temple or that the area was more widely settled.

Quite the most fascinating object found by Tupper was a bronze spiral on which curious symbols are crudely embossed. Goodchild (1938) describes it as being about sixteen inches long by one inch wide

and appears to have been wound about a wooden staff attached thereto by an iron collar and nail. The nail survives, bearing marks of the wood fibres of the staff long perished. He suggests one figure portrayed was the *Dieu au Maillet* with his dog. It may also represent the god of Disaster, *Silvanus Dispat*, the ancestor of all the Celts, protector of men and crops, god of riches and fertility, god of the sky and thunder. His consort is also represented by her raven. Another figure, naked with helmet and circle, suggests *Taranis* or *Jupiter*. To these powerful gods are joined, appropriately, *Vulcan* representing the fire and industries of the *Weald*, coal (charcoal), iron, pottery, tiles and glass.

Tupper published an account of his work in 1850 in a booklet called *Farley Heath: A Record of its Roman Remains* published by Andrews in Guildford, but Goodchild (1938) considers his conclusions were premature and baseless. His notebooks, one in Haverfield Library, give more details and drawings. The finds together with those of Lovell, an Albury schoolmaster, were sent to the British Museum by Henry Drummond, their owner, in 1853. A detailed description of the bronze strip by R. G. Goodchild was printed in the *Antiquaries Journal* in 1938. His explanations of the symbols are in *Sy. Arch. Col. Vol. 50. (1938)*. Many of Tupper's observations were substantiated when Miss O.M. Heath, stimulated by the sale of land to the south of the temple, initiated excavations under the supervision of S.E. Winbolt. They reported their finds in *Sy. Arch. Col. Vol. 37. (1927)*. Most of their finds are in the Guildford Museum.

The temple at Farley has a sister at Titsey. M.J.T. Lewis, in his book *The Recent Temples in Great Britain* (1966), has presented us with a valuable comparative study of forty-five known Romano-Celtic temples in Britain. He says the Titsey and Farley temples were of similar design, a central cella 20 - 24 feet square, like a tower surrounded by a roofed open-sided portico, perhaps pillared, the whole enclosed in a walled polygonal *temenos*. Both had a paved well and a Roman road nearby. Farley survived between AD 60 and 460. Titsey between AD 100 and 210.

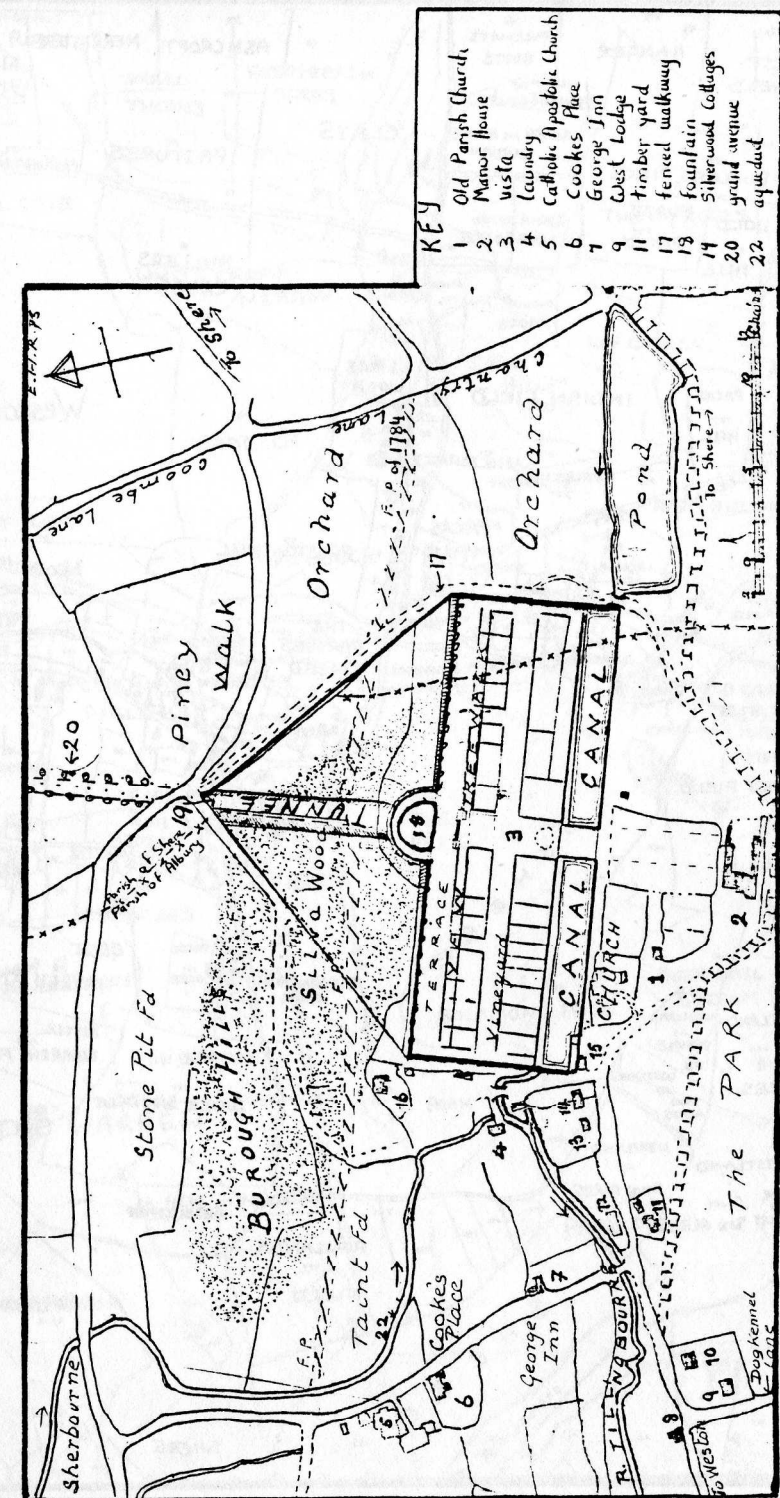
SAXON INVASION

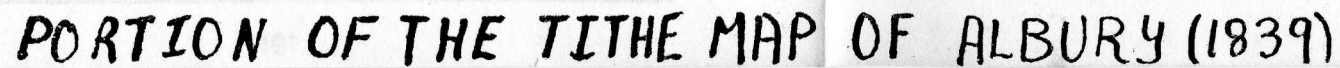
After the demise of Roman rule and with the subsequent invasion by the Saxons it is likely the Romano-Celtic peoples of the 'City' of Farley abandoned the settlement, to move westward destroying part of it or letting it fall down. If the buildings were mainly of wooden construction, the Saxons may have used the wood or set fire to it. The stonework was left standing from the period 460 AD onwards, but later was used probably to build houses at Farley Green around the Green, at Brook and at Le North Worth (more about this puzzling place later). It is quite possible some stone made its way down to Albury to be used in the building of the Saxon church.

ALBURY AT ALBURY PARK

By the time the Normans arrived in 1066 we know there was a well established village near the Saxon manor house of Albury (then Eldeberie) owned by Azor. William I gave Robert de Tonbridge lands including Albury. In the district the Feudal open field system of the textbooks was not used. Here, each farm was a separate entity and had large fields that were more suitable for livestock agriculture. They were either held as copy hold of the manor or were freehold owned.

Today all that remains from Saxon times and Norman times is the old mill already mentioned and part of the old parish church. This magnificent little church was the focus of worship not only during Saxon times but also after the Norman invasion until the 19th century when the village had been moved to its present site.





THE REMOVAL OF ALBURY TO WESTON STREET

What caused the village to be moved from Albury Park to Weston Street? Locals are very fond of saying it was Mr. Henry Drummond who took the village away, but when he bought the estate in 1819 most of the village had already gone. Perhaps the removal of the village was started during the 1600s when Henry Howard, the then owner of Albury Estate, employed John Evelyn to plan and develop a landscaped garden for the manor.

While abroad, Evelyn was known to have seen and liked gardens where, to build them, villages had been removed. William Bray, who was an editor of the History of Surrey of 1801 and wrote Evelyn's Memoirs, says that Evelyn admired the gardens of President Maison's palace in 1649. "He pulled down a whole village to make room for his pleasure about it" Evelyn noted in his diary.

Unfortunately, we have no record of Evelyn's design at present, but by combining a plan of the manor by Walter made about 1701, another plan of about 1790 and the Tithe Map of 1839, all reduced to the scale of the 25 inch to 1 mile O.S. map, we have extracted map 4. With this map and with the all too scanty entries in Evelyn's Diary, plus, above all, by frequent visits to the site, we can envisage Evelyn's original plan, its execution and subsequent decay. It is an object lesson worthy of preservation. The story begins with the sale of Albury Park.

THE EVELYNS AND ALBURY MANOR

In the mid 1600s John Evelyn, in competition with the Arundel family, had attempted to obtain Albury Park. He was very interested in the wood for his Naval concerns. With some difficulty the Arundel family finally purchased The Park when Henry Howard, the grandson of the Earl of Arundel, paid for it in 1655. George Evelyn (an architect) was working on the house and grounds of the manor for many years before he called upon the aid of his brother, John, in 1667. John is known to have said of George

"He had a large mind but over-built everything". Also we suspect Henry Howard had already begun to build and alter the grounds by 1655 so that it was already too late for John, 12 years later, to control developments.

The situation presented to Evelyn was of a muddled Tudor or Elizabethan block, with George Evelyn's even more muddled additions of the past 20 years. As you can see on map 4, it stood, its main entrance facing west on a shelf above the Tillingbourne. Around and behind the manor house ran the road from Weston Street to Lower Street in Shere. To the north and to the south of the house, lay two 'hooks' or hoes of Greensand, one was Burough Hill and the dip slope of the other rose another one hundred feet or more to Albury Heath (the southern boundary of the park). To the west, the park was separated from Weston House by Dog Kennel Lane which led from the Heath to the village of Albury. Turning east along Albury Street, a branch road to the north passed the Georges Inn to Cookes Place, crossed the ancient trackway connecting Weston Wood with Burough Hill and so to Sherbourne. The eastern boundary was defined as Chantry Lane in Shere and by Coombe Lane to the North Downs Trackway. It is doubtful if John Evelyn had much to do with the whole park.

EVELYN'S GARDEN

Evelyn laid out his geometric plan clearly derived from his French and Roman travels. Here the true amateur landscape gardener was revealed. Firstly, he had to obtain a water supply. Evelyn widened and straightened into a canal part of the Tillingbourne which ran in front of the manor house.

'Through the South Hill his Lordship hath cut a streight Passage quite through the Bottom of the Hill, thirty Perches long, very broad and high, which is very pleasant to behold. Here his Lordship hath a Canal about a quarter of a Mile long, and sixty Foot broad; and above that, a

Vineyard of twelve Acres, of the same length with the Canal, upon the Ascent of the Hill, which faceth the South; a good Part of the Hill is digg'd down to make the Elevation easie. The River (or Rivulet) runneth thorough the Garden, which is now bringing into the Canal, and the old Course of the River to be fill'd up. I cannot omit here to let you know, that an old Country Fellow seeing them dig the Channel for the new River, (I think that which comes to Hampton Court) said, that he could save them £2,000 that is, he would turn up the Earth with a Plough; and had strong Ploughs and Harness made purposely, which was drawn by 17 Horses, and sav'd a vast deal of Expence'. (Aubrey 1743).

Also, an aqueduct. (22) was constructed which ran from the Sherbourne ponds, crossed under the Albury — Shere Road, and ran through Borough Meadow to the Home Farm. The channel, now dry, can still be traced to the east of Cookes Place. To obtain the new supply of water for the aqueduct Henry Howard had to obtain a lease from the Risbridgers as they owned the land the water naturally flowed through before it reached the Tillingbourne and the Weston Mill opposite Albury House. The lease was granted for eleven years only. An elementary experience of neighbourly love would suggest such an arrangement was asking for trouble. It came. Miss Heath has probably extracted the gist of many volumes of legal documents. We gather battle raged between the Risbridgers and Lord Aylesford Families until, in 1749, the Risbridgers sold all their freehold lands to the Aylesfords and gave back about thirty acres held as a copyhold tenant of the manor. The drawnout proceedings nearly sent both families bankrupt. Walmsley has presented extracts from this interesting battle in his booklet called the Risbridger Story.

In the garden above the canal Evelyn built terraces; the lower, a vineyard and presumably a fruit and vegetable garden, and the upper, a long sandy walk defined by yew trees and next to a long stretch of green turf. In 1679 Evelyn constructed an ornamental fountain with Roman Bath under the upper terrace, which used freshwater from the aqueduct. The terraces were built of sand cut from the side of the hill and were held up by an immense retaining wall made of brick.

The amateur, truly inspired, cut through the 'mountain' of Borough Hill a mighty tunnel, wide enough to drive through, to the site of the present Silverwood Cottages (19) and thence a grand avenue to Coombe Lane. To flush the sand out of the tunnel, Evelyn used the water from the Sherbourne ponds. Evelyn, in his diaries, says that this was the first time such a method of tunnel construction had been used in Great Britain.

'The taking down of this Hill, and the piercing of it through, was done with great Expedition and Cheapness, by an ingenious Invention of Mr. Charles Howard, his Lordship's Brother; which is thus (as well as I can describe it:) They have the Command of a Spring in this Park, which they bring in a Channel to the Place where they would have the Sand taken away; then they under-dig a convenient Part of the Sand under which the Water is to come, and there the Water (as it were) dissolves the Sand, as you see Sugar dissolv'd in Wine. In a little Time after, down tumbles 3, 4, or 5 loads; as soon as it is down, a Fellow or two falls a-stirring of the Sand in the Water, to make the Water, together with the Sand, run the faster

. The whole Plot of the Garden at Albury was made and given by me [J.A.] to Mr. Henry Howard (since Duke of Norfolk) deceas'd as also the Design of the Canale, and Crypte, since dug through the Mountain. They have wooden Troughs open at both Ends, which they do set in Train, one after another, for this washing away of the Sand; and the Sand and Water will wear them out as thin as Paper. It is admirable to see how fast by this Means they do convey away their Sand. The Passage made thorough the Hill here did cost but 70 l. and 3 men did it in half a Year by the Method aforesaid, which otherwise would have cost Nemo scit: So it is clear, that in any sandy Place, where one may have the command of a little Fall of Water, one may do great Things in this Kind, for levelling, making of Hills, etc.' (Aubrey 1743).

At its entrance of the tunnel Evelyn put a semi-circular crypta, with a great retaining wall sweeping round into the hill lined with niches estined, no doubt, for classical figures. This is strongly reminiscent of similar vacancies in the garden walls at Lee Place, Walkamstead. Was Evelyn responsible for them? the delicious Aubrey does not mention them.

So Howard got his plan with a great canal, two grand terraces, a fountain and grandest of all — the crypta or tunnel through the mountain, and we might add, some none too happy neighbours.

Evelyn's grand design survives in the main although Nature has now taken charge. To carry out the plan there was no need to move the village. However, it is probable that by bringing the garden so close to the village Evelyn unwittingly started a slide in relations between the subsequent manor owners and the villagers. The crime of the removal of Albury to Weston Street was shared by two later owners of Albury Park, Mr. W.C. Finch and Mr. C. Wall.

ALBURY AFTER EVELYN

Albury Park was put up for sale in 1680 and sold, after a visit lasting a few hours, to Heneage Finch, Solicitor General to Charles II. He does not appear to have lived at Albury. After he died in 1719, the Dowager Countess of Aylesford took residence and eventually, after her death in 1743, the property fell to the brother of the 4th Earl of Aylesford — Captain Clement Finch R.N. in the year 1783. This bright young man of 30 was used to command and, probably because of this, was not popular in Albury. During his time there he started a succession of road changes that were to last a good hundred years. He closed the old highway and diverted further west the road that ran past the inn and Cookes Place, then on to Sherbourne. Finch had to leave the road to the church, but he enclosed the green. Much to the annoyance of the locals, he closed the ancient road which ran directly behind the Park House to the town of Shere. He replaced it with a footpath over Silver Wood (Sylva Wood, Fern Hill and now Farm Hill, previously Burrough Hill) which meant the villagers now had to travel longer distances by both foot and wagon to get to Shere. After a busy eleven years he died in 1794, not unduly lamented in the Albury Parish. His continual harrassment had caused most of the Albury villagers to move to Weston Street.

With the sale in 1800 of Albury Manor to Samuel Thornton, Governor of the Bank of England, the pendulum swung to the other side. He appears to have been popular. At least he built a decent road to Newlands Corner, now part of the A25.

During the latter part of William Finch's stay at Albury Park, and the first half of Samuel Thornton's residence there, the notable Robert Malthus lived in the parish. He, and his parents, moved from the Rookery, at Wotton, to Albury in 1787. In 1798, while curate of Okewood, he wrote his famous essay on Population. This essay later influenced the eminent Charles Darwin while he was formulating his classic theory of Evolution (incidentally, Darwin was to spend some time in 1877 in the Tillingbourne region around the Roman villa at Abinger gathering information for his book on humus and earthworms). In 1804 Robert married, and a year later moved to take up a professorship of History and Political Economy at the newly founded college of Haileybury. Curiously, his sister, Mary Anne Catherine, married Edward Bray, son of William Bray (previously mentioned for his historical records about the temple at Farley and John Evelyn) the lord of the manors of Shere and Gomshall.

1811 saw the pendulum of manor owner popularity swing again with the arrival, by purchase, of Charles Wall. According to Miss Heath, and Walmsley (1977), he pulled down most of the remaining cottages in the Park, after moving their occupiers to new cottages he built at Weston Street. He also put an iron fence around the churchyard to deny access to the south door; used part of the churchyard for his garden; erected another gate at the west end and, we are told gleefully, was the first to be carried through it — dead — in 1819.

BUT WAS WESTON STREET THE ONLY PLACE ALBURY VILLAGERS MOVED TO?

We know there were permanent settlements on the heaths of Albury Parish by the 13th century. Certainly Brook dates from 1241 when Richard de la Broke lived there. The Little London area may have been settled as far back as 1332. According to the taxation assessment of that year, an Henrica and an Alicia lived at Le Noute (the north) in Albury. Was this Le Northe Worthe of 1584 that the E.P.N.S. says was grouped with Little London in 1647. Curiously Le Northe Worthe means the north small enclosure — may we suggest a Saxon small enclosure?. We have traced Farley Heath, the other large settlement on the heath, back in the documents to 1593 when it appeared in the Lay Subsidy Assessments.

About 1600 Brook, Little London and Farley Green appear to have been part of the eastern boundary of the manor of Shalford Bradestan. The court papers of Albury Manor and the Syon papers show that in this region there was a gradual transfer of properties to the Manor of Albury, particularly while the Finches were in occupation. However, it was not until 1839 with the sale of John Whitbourne's great Brook Farm together with Rooke's Land, Davis Field and Le Boure to Henry Drummond, that Albury Manor owned the whole area from Albury Park across the heath to Little London and down to and including Brook. But what has this to do with the removal of Albury Village from Albury Park?

It is quite probable that during the times of William C. Finch and Charles Wall that disgruntled villagers of Albury moved to Little London to be away from the direct influence of the manor or because Weston Street was fully occupied. Some may even have gone as far away as Farley Green. According to law they were supposed to resettle within the parish. These newcomers would have augmented an already rapidly expanding population which comprised of wealthy people, then others, coming south to escape the pressures of big city life of London.

In 1819 Albury Park was sold to Henry Drummond who founded the professorship of political economy at Oxford. He was known as a generous landlord. He altered the road from Albury Heath to Sherbourne to its present site (the New Road) in 1824, at the same time closing Dog Kennel Lane and the road past Cooke's Place to Sherbourne. By shifting these roads Drummond had removed the last intrusions of road traffic past the Manor house.

The final episode in the story of the removal of the village of Albury from Albury Park and the curious existence of 3 churches in Albury parish (noted at the very beginning of this booklet), is explained by the changes of religious loyalties of Henry Drummond. Originally of the Church of England faith, he was attracted to the teachings of the Catholic Apostolic Church which developed out of annual conferences of clergymen and laymen at Albury Park between 1826 and 1830.

By 1835 Albury was the spiritual centre of this faith. Drummond was called to be an apostle and in 1840 he paid for and had erected a church for the Faith at Albury Park. Perched arrogantly at the end of Burough Hill, a few hundred yards from the old parish church, it is seen today as a supreme example of English Gothic architecture at its worst and it appropriately matches the ostentation of the present Albury Park Manor house.

Drummond, with the approval of the Rural Dean, erected a new parish church above Weston Street, much to the disapproval of many local parishioners including Martin Tupper. But for the vigilance and action of Martin Tupper and other in Albury, this magnificent little church would have been demolished. (More detailed accounts of the histories of the three churches may be found in Walmsley's booklets.) Thus the old (and out-of-repair) church on Albury Park became redundant. The closing of the church represented the last intrusion of the Albury villagers upon the Park.

To complete the story of Albury Park: upon the death of Henry Drummond in 1860 Albury Park passed to his daughter Louisa who had married Lord Lovaine, later the 6th Duke of Northumberland. When Louisa died in 1890 Albury passed to the Percy family in whose hands it is held today.

THE VANISHED VILLAGE TODAY

All that remains of the old village is the Manor House (in a much altered form), the old church, the George Inn, the laundry of Albury Park (now Bridges House), Cookes Place and the Grange Cottages of which we know nothing.

ALBURY MANOR HOUSE: In 1969 the Manor house (but not the grounds) was purchased by the Mutual Householders Association Limited. This historically minded, non-profit organisation still owns it today and maintains it as apartments for retired or semi-retired people. The much altered Albury Park house has been adequately described by Ian Naim and N. Pevsner (1972) and more respectfully as becomes a resident, by R.C. Walmesley (1977). His admirably produced booklet saves us the task of repeating most of the well-worn quotations. Also, the VCH provides a concise detailed listing of the owners of the manor from the Norman Conquest to 1911.

THE OLD PARISH CHURCH: This most precious church, dating from Saxon times, is now in the care of the Redundant Churches Fund. The Saxon chancel is now in ruins, but the remainder has been beautifully restored, through the efforts of the parish rector and some inhabitants of the parish.

The little church has had many alterations and additions. When the Normans added the tower in about 1140 they used the walls of the small Saxon chancel as its ground storey. They also retained a small Saxon window in the northern wall of the tower and another window opening in its southern wall. Of note is the 14th century northern porch which is more than two centuries older than the north doorway it encloses. The unique dome on the tower today only dates from about 1820. The tapered, shingled spire which sat on the tower previously was taken down, or accidentally destroyed. Was this spire the work of John Evelyn asks P.M. Johnston (1921).

Inside the church are many items of interest. When visiting the delightful building one should not miss seeing the memorial brass to John Weston of Weston, and the relics of what was a wall painting of St. Christopher inside the southern wall of the nave. One should not neglect the truly magnificent baroque Drummond Mortuary Chapel which is nestled within the walls of a 13th century transept. It was designed by Augustus Pugin who also designed the curious chimneys of Albury and many of the unfortunate alterations to Albury Manor house. Curiouser and curiouser the chapel was built after the church's closure and while Drummond was involved with the Catholic Apostolic Church.

GEORGE INN: George Inn, which stands by the village green, was probably occupied by Thomas Baylie, a victualler in 1663 and used as a common Alehouse. In 1708 it was owned by the publican, Edward Shephard, and in 1743 by James Homes. Five years later it was known as The White Hart, then in 1790, for some unknown reason, it was the George Victualling House tenanted by one Tartlett. In 1794 The Society of Good Fellowship was formed and they held their meetings at the George. Robert Malthus may even have attended meetings there. 1830 saw the inn become the baliffs house. Today the building is used as a cottage.

COOKES PLACE: Cookes Place was occupied by a Robert Cook in 1255 and the family appear to have occupied the property until the 15th century. Their lands were reputed to stretch from the North Downs to the Tillingbourne. Certainly the lands included the inn, the cottages, the land across the river, and farmlands from Sherbourne along the Western boundary of Albury Park. Late in the 15th century a John Risbridger married Christine Cook and thus this freehold estate passed into the hands of the Risbridger family. The house, still standing at Albury Park, dates from about this time.

ALBURY VILLAGE TODAY

Albury village today has joined the commuter belt, like so many other Surrey villages. Unlike so many of these it has not become suburban but has retained its 19th century atmosphere. Points of interest in the village are shown on Map 2.

Despite its old world charm it still has some thriving businesses. The 16th century **ALBURY MILL** houses the Albury Research Laboratories who are an independent testing service. **ALBURY HOUSE** which dates from the Regency period, is used as the quarter of the Consultancy Engineers, Livesey and Henderson. A small vehicle **GARAGE** operates from premises well positioned close to the Drummond Arms. There is a general store, **PRATTS STORE**, where any manner of small goods may be purchased, and next door is a depot of the **WONHAM DAIRY**. Mr. Myer, who runs Hunter Stamp Dealers, lives in the 19th century house which stands opposite **CLIVE HOUSE** (a Georgian house used by the Dowager Duchess of Northumberland until her death recently).

As you pass through the village you may notice a curious sign which states 'THIS IS NOT THE OLD PHARMACY' and below it you see an antique shop. The humorous story of this sign is worth repeating. It starts with 'Hank' buying the property and converting it from an old pharmacy into an antique shop. Wanting to retain the historical link he called the shop, the Old Pharmacy. The Pharmaceutical Society took objection and so Hank was obliged to change the name. He did this by putting up the aforementioned sign and, much to the consternation of the Pharmaceutical Society and Hanks amusement, he placed old chemists bottles in the window.

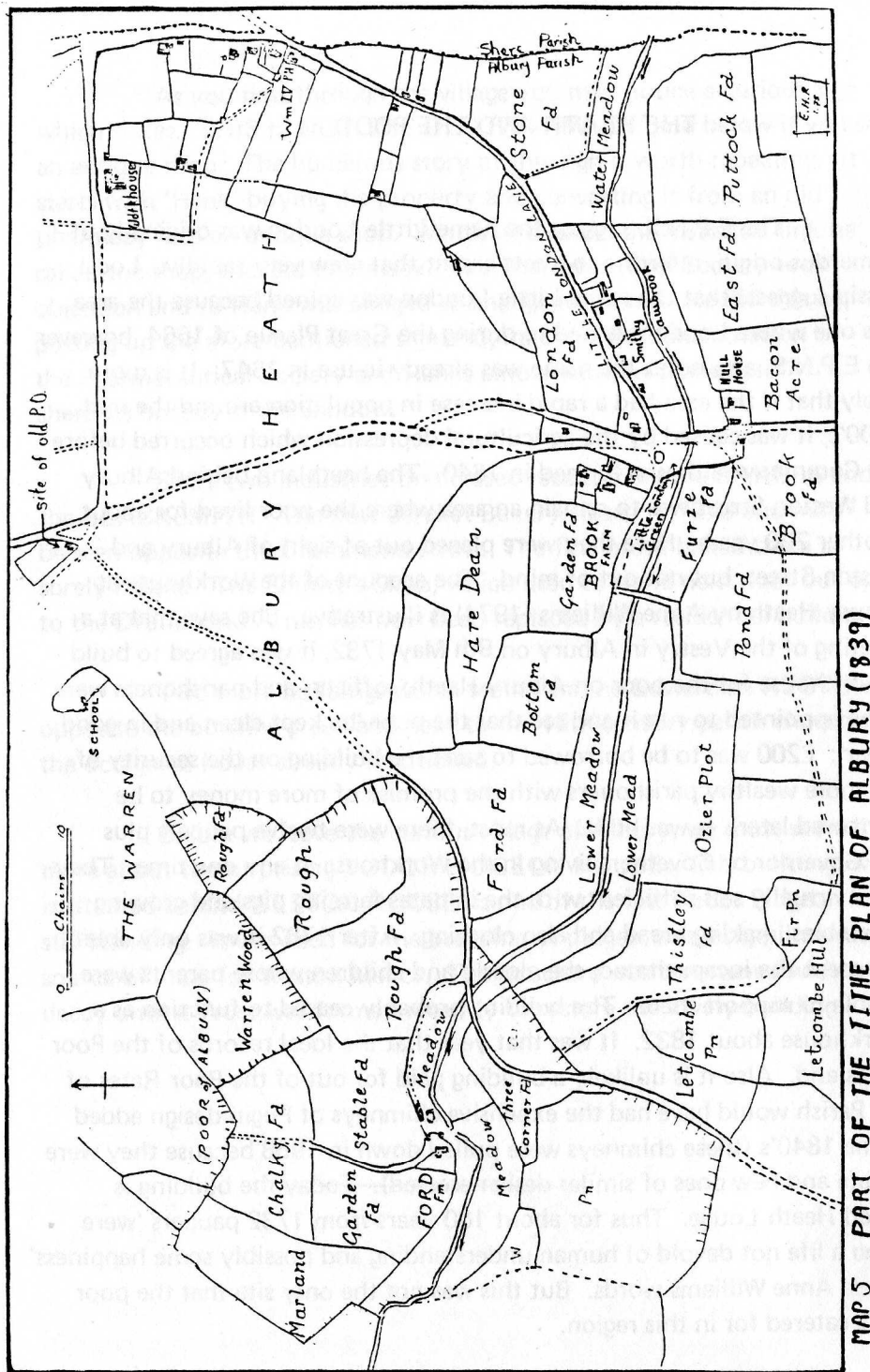
Sadly two industries that closed recently are the BAKERS and the BLACKSMITH. The now derelict Bakery closed in 1979 and may be seen opposite the Drummond Arms. The fine bread baked there is sorely missed. The Smithy's Shop, which used to stand next door but one to the Drummond Arms, has now been replaced by a residential building.

Two more buildings worth seeing are the Edwardian RECTORY opposite the bowling green and next to the 19th century parish church and the octagonal house already mentioned.

Before we leave the curious village of Albury, we must say a little more about the surprising TUDOR PIDGEON HOUSE. This building, which is situated behind WESTON HOUSE, is one of the few Tudor Pidgeon lofts still standing. It was used for the breeding of pidgeons as a supplementary source of meat for Weston Manor. The structure was threatened with total decay until a Trust was formed recently to restore the lovely building.

THE HEATH AND THE POOR

The E.P.N.S. suggest the name Little London was originally of numerous origin, referring to a settlement that grew very rapidly. Local gossip suggests that the name Little London was coined because the area was one where Londoners fled to during the Great Plague of 1664, however the E.P.N.S. also notes the name was already in use in 1647. It is more likely that if the area had a rapid increase in population around the mid 1600's, it was caused by the agricultural depression which occurred before the Commonwealth was formed in 1640. The heathland behind Albury and Weston Street was to remain an area where the poor lived for about another 200 years. Here they were placed out of sight of Albury and Weston Street, but not out of mind. The account of the Workhouse at Albury Heath by Anne Williams (1974) is illustrative. She says that at a meeting of the Vestry in Albury on 9th May 1732, it was agreed to build a Workhouse for the poor on Albury Heath; officers and parishoners were to be appointed to run it and see that the poor 'be kept clean and in good order'; £200 was to be borrowed to start the building on the security of the more wealthy parishoners with the promise of more money to be borrowed later. It was built. At most, there were twelve paupers plus the Governor or Governors living in the Workhouse at any one time. They were virtually self-sufficient with the inmates farming pigs and growing vegetables, making bread and also clothing. After 1782 it was only able to accept the incapacitated, the elderly and children whose parents were unable to support them. The building probably ceased to function as a Workhouse about 1832. It was that year that the local records of the Poor Rates end. Also it is unlikely a building paid for out of the Poor Rates of the Parish would have had the expensive chimneys of Pugin design added in the 1840's (these chimneys were pulled down in 1958 because they were unsafe and new ones of similar design erected). Today the building is called Heath Lodge. Thus for about 100 years from 1732 paupers 'were given a life not devoid of human understanding and possibly some happiness' to use Anne Williams words. But this was not the only site that the poor were catered for in this region.



A little way to the east of Brook is the beautiful 17th century building on the considerably older Ford Farm (Little Ford of the O.S. of 1874). In 1728 Mrs. Margaret Fenwick left money in her will for the purchase of this farm (then called Fordland) to set up a settlement for the apprenticing of poor children. The boundaries of the Farm are shown with hatching on map 5 when it belonged to the Poor of Dorking. Adjoining this farm are two fields on the poor sandy waste of the Warren and four other enclosures belonging to the Poor of Albury. Here a school has been present from before 1839. Was it the school where poor children were educated using the money that a William Risbridger had left for that purpose? The building and grounds survive today but are now a private residence. Incidentally, today, close to the school at the crossroads of Parkside and New Road, is a Post Office which is no longer in use. Perhaps this was the now closed Little London P.O. run by J. Gadd in 1933?

THE HEATH TODAY

If you visit the heath today there are at least four more buildings you must see. These are Holland House of which we know nothing, Hull House, Brook Farm and most importantly the William IV public house.

HULL HOUSE: At Brook the building called Hull House dates from the 17th century, although the site has been occupied since 1398 when it was called La Hull. In 1789 it was owned by the manor of Shalford Bradestan and was called Le Voure or Le Boure (the same Le Boure that Drummond purchased in 1839). In 1899 Mrs. Ann Charman offered furnished apartments at this house so we assume Brook had its admirers.

BROOK FARM: Also at Brook is Brook Farm. This is probably the site where Richard de la Broke lived in 1241. The house today looks like a 17th century building and is very similar to Sutton Farm in Sutton Abinger. It is a three storey, brick building designed in a Dutch style. (Opposite Brook Farm is another curiosity of Albury Parish – Little London Green complete with pond. It is a dilemma to historians. What is it doing in Brook?).

BROOK, ALBURY.

RULES OF THE READING ROOM.

RULE I.

Payments to be made by Members in advance; One Shilling a quarter of thirteen weeks, Sixpence per month of four weeks, or Twopence a week. The money to be expended in newspapers, magazines, or other expenses, as regulated by the Committee.

RULE II.

Members to be men over sixteen years of age.

RULE III.

A Committee of Management and Attendance, consisting of Twelve Members, to be chosen by the Members of the Reading Room at a General Meeting on the first Monday in January in every year. Any vacancy occurring during the year to be filled up by the Members of the Committee.

One Member of the Committee to be present each evening, or to provide a capable substitute. Such Member to take charge of the room, and enter the names of new Members in a book, and also the amount of their subscription, and pay the same to the Secretary on or before the first Monday in each month. The Secretary of the Committee to take this charge in rotation, as shall be arranged. The Committee to meet the first Monday in each month, at Eight o'clock p.m., to conduct all necessary business. Any private Member may be present but not vote.

RULE IV.

The Secretary to be chosen at the General Meeting, and he shall attend the first Monday in each month to take the subscriptions from the Committee. He shall also keep a receipt and payment book for the Committee to use each month, and he shall conduct all the financial business, and keep the minutes of each Meeting.

RULE V.

No newspaper, magazine, book, or game to be taken out of the room. No newspaper, magazine, book, or game to be brought into the room without the consent of the Committee.

RULE VI.

Games of dominos, draughts, chess, etc., allowed, but not dice. No gambling, playing for money, or betting to be allowed. Members breaking this rule to be expelled for that evening.

All games to be replaced in their boxes when done with, and not to be misused; no Member to play more than two games in succession if the game is asked for.

RULE VII.

No swearing or bad language to be allowed; any Member breaking this rule to be cautioned for the first offence, fined 1d. for the second, and to be expelled for that evening if the offence be further repeated.

RULE VIII.

No intoxicating drink of any kind to be brought on to the premises.

RULE IX.

The room to be opened by the caretaker at 8 o'clock in the morning, and closed at 10 o'clock in the evening, each working day of the week, and on Sunday from 2 to 4 o'clock p.m.

RULE X.

A Member to be allowed to bring a friend on payment of one penny per evening.

RULE XI.

All subscribers of not less than 10s. 6d. per annum shall be Honorary Members, and their names entered in the name book with their subscriptions; and they shall have the same powers as the Committee of Management.

Plaque from Brook Working Mens Club — Courtesy Dr. M. Burton

WILLIAM IV: We started this excursion through history at a country pub and that is where we will end it, at the delightful William IV at Little London. This pub has lead a checkered life. The building has stood on this site from at least the late 18th century. The Tithe Map of 1839 lists the property as a freehold house and garden and arable owned by T.D. Mercer and tenanted by Thomas Mercer. In the 1860's, according to locals, the property was a pub known as the Garibaldi, and was known by that name on the O.S. Map of 1874. No doubt this name was used in a spasm of hero worship so typically British. In 1899 a pub called the William IV was said to be at Brook — was this meant to be the Little London site? There is no evidence of a pub in Brook although there was a bottleshop and locals talk of a Working Mens club on the site of Greensward Cottage. In 1967 Margot and Doug Bolney succeeded Mr. and Mrs. Hughes as tenants of the William the IV then owned by the courage Brewery. During the early 1970's relations became strained between the Bolneys and the Brewery and much to the disappointment of locals Doug and Margot departed. A succession of managers followed until in November 1976 Michael and Linda Short bought the pub. Now it is a freehouse and the Shorts have more, than restored the popularity it had in the time of the Bolneys. When you visit this delightful country pub (affectionately known as the Willie) you may imbibe the excellent real ales and sample a traditional ploughmans lunch, or a delicious, warming meal cooked by the fair hands of Linda.

POSTSCRIPT

This booklet follows one called THE OCKLEY VISITOR written by Eric Rideout and Jill Lawrence as the second in a series about the parishes between Dorking and Guildford and in the hundreds of Blackheath and Wotton. The next booklet, now in print, will be about Ewhurst and the one following this will be about Wotton-Abinger.

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