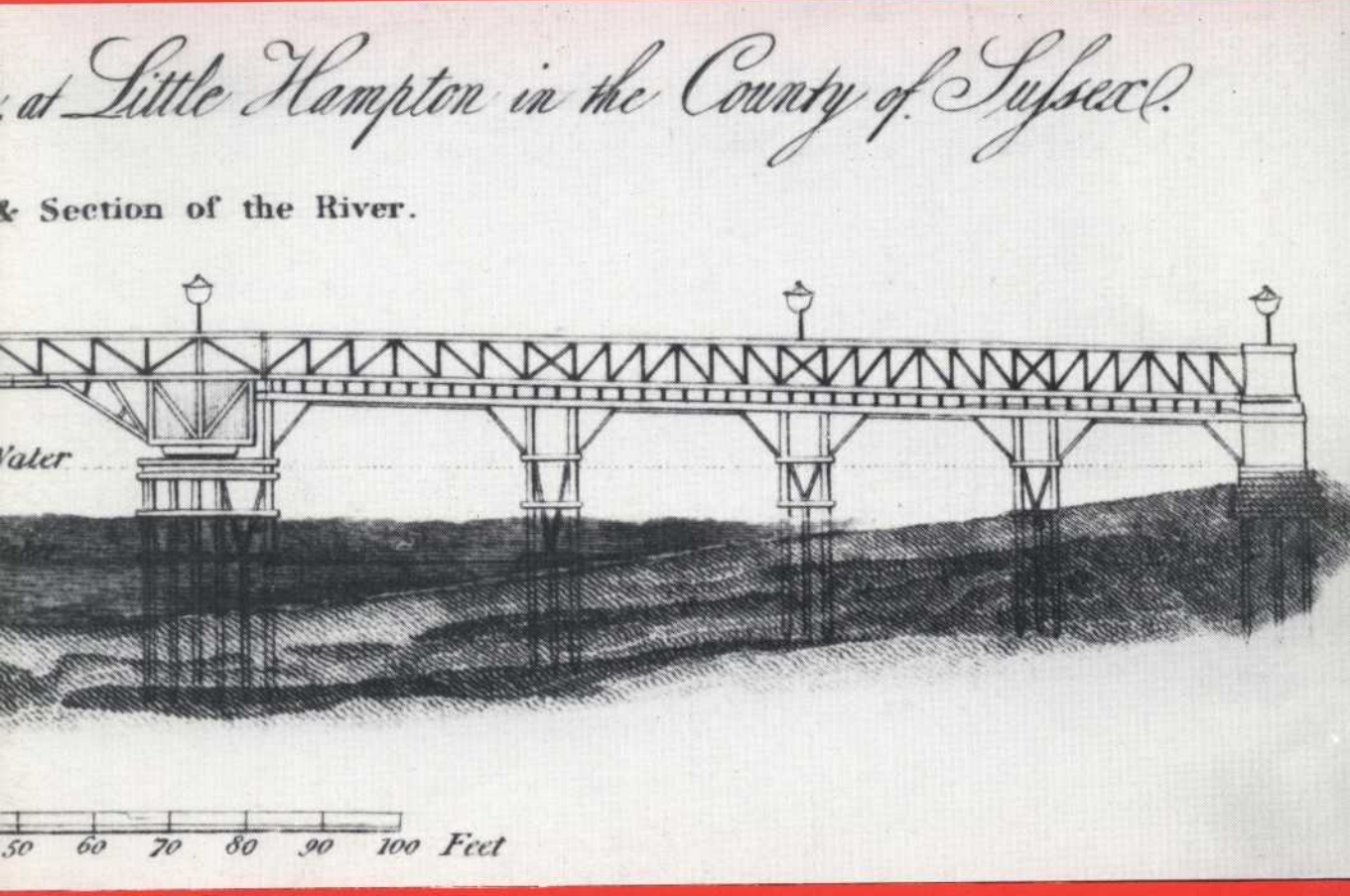
SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

Winter 1972/73



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SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

Journal of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Study Group

FIVE **WINTER 1972/73**

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Edited by John Farrant, 26 Bloomsbury Place, Brighton, BN2 1DB. *Sussex Industrial History* has as a principal objective the publication of the results of recording, surveying and preservation of industrial monuments and processes done under the aegis of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Study Group. But its field is not narrowly defined, for it aims to integrate the findings of industrial archaeology into general historical thinking and writing, by studying the impact of industrial change, principally during the past two centuries, on a rural county. The Editor is very interested to hear from prospective contributors of articles of any length, and to receive items for the 'Notes and News' section on work in progress, requests for information and assistance, recent publications, forthcoming conferences and meetings.

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BRIAN AUSTIN AND JOHN UPTON

East Sussex Milestones—A Survey

INTRODUCTION

THESE INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS apply equally to East and West Sussex, as we hope to publish a survey of West Sussex milestones in a future issue of *Sussex Industrial History*.

No doubt the earliest Sussex milestones were erected during the Roman occupation of Britain but none from the county have come to light, though the probable locations of the 61 milestones flanking Stane Street have been calculated by S.E. Winbolt.[1] Direction posts and milestones were again in use by the 16th and 17th centuries in the adjoining county of Kent, and authority was given in 1697 to the County Justices in Special Highway Session to direct highway surveyors to erect direction posts or stones at cross roads.[2]

Most existing milestones however owe their existence to turnpike trusts. The setting up of milestones was not made mandatory on all trusts until the General Turnpike Act of 1766[3] but most individual turnpike acts from the early 1740s required the trustees to measure their roads and set up posts, stones or marks every mile beside the road 'denoting the Distance of any one Town or Place from any other Town or Place'.[4] Initially turnpike trusts must have been at considerable expense to place the highway in a satisfactory state of repair and the erection of mileposts was probably looked upon as an unwelcome charge on their funds. Some trusts may have attempted to economise by erecting painted wooden posts. Amongst papers relating to the Flimwell and Hastings trust (1762) there is an estimate dated 13 April 1761 for such wooden posts to cost 12s. each.[5]

Some milestones were erected within towns by municipal authorities where roads were not under the control of turnpike trustees, and private individuals might also be responsible for their erection.

By the last quarter of the 19th century milestones must have been virtually universal on the turnpike roads in Sussex, and the 1st edition of the 6 in. Ordnance Survey maps issued for the county in the late 1870s show this to be so. There were however even at this date a few surprising omissions. No milestones are marked on the line of the Newchapel and Brighton trust (1770) which did not finally expire until 1 November 1884, while the Hodges (Mayfield) to Cuckfield trust (1771) shows a similar lack.[6] With the gradual demise of the turnpike trusts, mostly in the 1870s and 1880s, the maintenance of the roads, and hence the milestones, passed briefly to local highway authorities and then from 1888 to the newly established County Councils. There is evidence that initially some attempt was made to maintain the sequence of milestones in good order and even supply replacements where necessary. It is clear however that this phase was short-lived and the milestones came to be regarded as obsolete in the age of motor vehicles. By the early 1930s the number still existing had become sadly depleted and 6 in. Ordnance Survey maps of this period for Sussex show former turnpike roads with no milestones existing, while on others isolated stones only still remained.[7] On the Flimwell to Hastings

road, which had shown a continuous sequence of milestones on the 1st edition O.S. map, the number had been reduced by the early 1930s to two. Some milestones still existing were marked as defaced. By the end of 1940 fear of invasion had resulted in the removal of all direction signs including milestones. Many of these were taken into store but it is clear that they were not in all cases carefully protected. Defective ones were probably destroyed, and iron posts or plates may well have been used to assist the war effort. In the case of two stones from the Midhurst and Sheet Bridge trust, they were erected flanking the entrance to the stable block at Petworth House, to protect the archway from damage by the army lorries entering the store depot established here. After their 'war service' they were never returned and are still at Petworth. Thus the number of milestones which could be returned in 1945 was even further depleted. Some of these have disappeared in the years since the war. Heavy road traffic, road improvement schemes and the laying of pipes and cables along road verges have all taken their toll and are threatening the few milestones that remain.

EAST SUSSEX MILESTONES

There are three series of milestones in East Sussex that still show a continuous sequence. These are:

1 the 'Bow bells' series which flank the A22 London to Eastbourne road and also the A26 Lewes to Uckfield road;
2 along the B2026 from Ashdown Forest northwards over the Kent border to Westerham;
3 along the A268 from Flimwell to Rye.

These all make use of cast iron plates.

1 The 'Bow bells' milestones

There are two basic variants of milestone in this series. Both show five bells decreasing in size, surmounted by a bow, and, above, numerals indicating distance to London. All the milestones on the Lewes to Uckfield road and on the A22 from Uckfield to just south of Godstone (Surrey), where the series ends, have a raised stop above the number (Type 1) (Fig. 1). Those from Uckfield along the A22 towards Eastbourne have this dot replaced by the Pelham buckle (Type 2) (Fig. 2). This was no doubt intended as a tribute to the Pelham family who were large landowners in the parishes through which this particular road passed. One of the main seats of the Pelham family was Halland Park. The family were well represented among the trustees for this road – the Uckfield, Union Point to Langney Bridge turnpike (1752).[8] The last milestone existing in the 'Bow bells' series is that at Horsebridge indicating 54 miles to London, though the turnpike trust continued to Langney Bridge in the parish of Westham and from 1823 was extended to Eastbourne.[9] A small cast iron plate bearing the number 56 in the bank outside Hailsham cemetery is clearly a continuation of the 'Bow bells' series along the B2104 towards Langney and deserves to be included in this sequence of milestones (Type 3) (Fig. 3). Milestones 47 and 52 along the A22 are replacements cast by Messrs. H.E. Lintott Ltd., of Horsham in September 1957. A mould was made using an original milestone for the bells, but the figures of mileage differ in style from the original and the Pelham buckle is replaced by a shield with an infilling of three lines (Type 2A) (Fig. 4).

A further unique milestone in the 'Bow bells' series is the duplicate 35 milestone near Wych Cross. In the second decade of the 19th century a major improvement was effected to the London to Lewes and Eastbourne route when a new road was built to avoid Tilburstow Hill, Godstone.[10] This resulted in the addition of above half a mile in distance and as a consequence the milestones from Wych Cross to Godstone were moved north by this distance. The Wych Cross to Lewes trustees declined to move their milestones, obliging the Godstone to Highgate trustees to have a new plate cast. It must be assumed that the mould from which the existing posts had been cast was not available, for an entirely different design was used. This consists of bold sans-serif numbers denoting the distance to London surmounted by an anthemion (classical stylised honeysuckle design) with a foliated patera beneath (Type 4) (Fig. 5). Its presence as an addition to the sequence suggests a date prior to c.1810 for the 'Bow bell' milestones. The Gardner and Gream map of 1795 marks milestones for these roads. The turnpike trusts responsible for the London to Lewes and Eastbourne roads along which these milestones extend were:

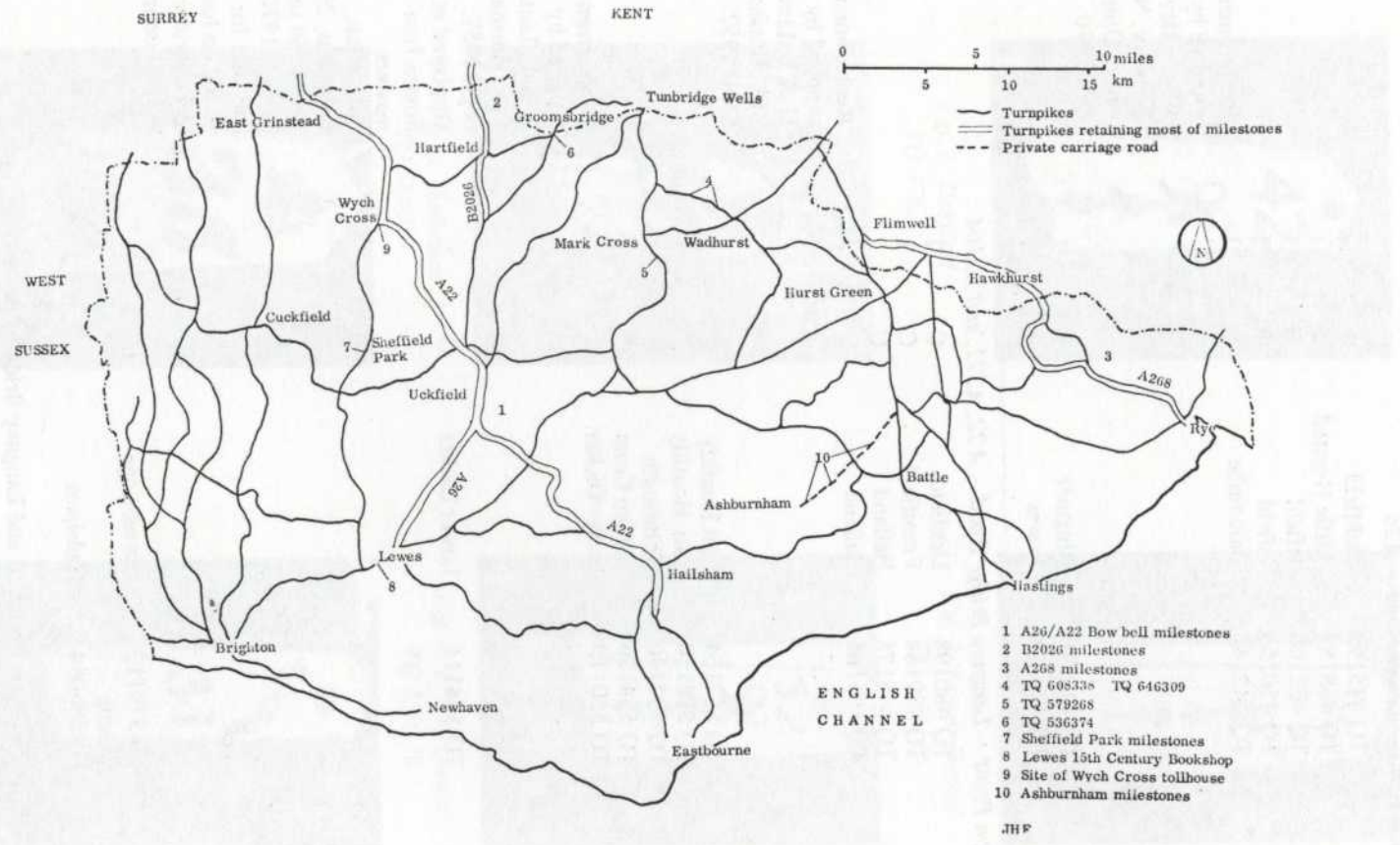
A City of London – East Grinstead Trust (1711) 4 Geo. I c.4, extended to Highgate (Forest Row) (1724) and Wych Cross (1785);

B Malling St. (Lewes) to Wych Cross via Uckfield, and Offham to Wych Cross via Chailey (1752) 25 Geo. II c.50;

C Union Point, Uckfield to Langney Bridge (1754) 27 Geo. II c.24.

Table 1 'Bow bells' series

Distance to London	*Map reference*	*Parish/Township*	*Turnpike Trust*	*Type of Milestone*	*Remarks*
26	TQ 364432	Lingfield (Surrey)	A	1	
27	Missing				
28	TQ 371402	Felbridge (Surrey)	A	1	
29	TQ 381391	East Grinstead	A	1	
30	TQ 395382	East Grinstead	A	1	
31	TQ 406377	East Grinstead	A	1	
32	TQ 419364	Ashurstwood	A	1	
33	TQ 426353	Forest Row	A	1	Replacement supplied by H. & E. Lintott Ltd., Horsham, Sept. 1957.
34	TQ 421339	Forest Row	A	1	
35	TQ 419325	Wych Cross	A	4	
35	TQ 422316	Wych Cross	B	1	
36	TQ 434305	Chelwood Gate	B	1	
37	TQ 441291	Chelwood Gate	B	1	
38	TQ 442277	Nutley	B	1	
39	TQ 451262	Fairwarp	B	1	
40	TQ 460254	Maresfield	B	1	
41	TQ 466241	Maresfield	B	1	
42	TQ 476227	Uckfield	B	1	
43	TQ 472210	Uckfield	B	1	



East Sussex Milestones

Union Point – Lewes Road – A26

44	TQ 475193	Uckfield	B	1	
45	TQ 468182	Little Horsted	B	1	
46	TQ 462168	Isfield	B	1	
47	TQ 450156	Isfield	B	1	
48	TQ 442141	Barcombe	B	1	Replacement supplied by Messrs. Haven Foundry, Newhaven. Ordered Oct. 1970.
49	TQ 434128	Ringmer	B	1	
50	TQ 425116	Lewes	B	1	

Union Point – Langney Bridge Road – A22, A271, and B2104

44	TQ 480198	Uckfield	C	2	
45	TQ 489184	Framfield	C	2	
46	TQ 495175	Halland	C	2	
47	TQ 505165	Halland	C	2A	Replacement supplied by H. & E. Lintott Ltd., Horsham, Sept. 1957.
48	TQ 522164	East Hoathly	C	2	
49	TQ 518150	East Hoathly	C	2	
50	TQ 527140	Whitesmith	C	2	
51	TQ 534126	Golden Cross	C	2	
52	TQ 550119	Lower Dicker	C	2A	Replacement supplied by H. & E. Lintott Ltd., Horsham, Sept. 1957.
53*	TQ 564114	Lower Dicker	C	2	Displayed at Sussex Ironmasters Exhibition, Batemans, 29 Apr. 1969 to 31 Oct. 1970 and later for a period on loan to Tunbridge Wells Museum.
54	TQ 579113	Horsebridge	C	2	
55†	Missing				
56	TQ 586084	Hailsham	C	3	

All mileposts between this point and Langney Bridge missing.

Fig. 1: Uckfield
TQ 476227

Fig. 2: Lower Dicker
TQ 534126

Fig. 3: Hailsham
TQ 586084

Fig. 4: Lower Dicker
TQ 550119

Fig. 5: Ashdown Forest
TQ 419325

Fig. 7: Hartfield
TQ 474399

* A replica 'Bow bells' milestone is on display at Tunbridge Wells Museum on loan from the Surveyor's Department, East Sussex County Council. It bears the number 53 but is of type 1 (with dot instead of Pelham Buckle). It was ordered from Messrs. Haven Foundry of Newhaven in October 1970.

† Information received following an appeal in *Sussex Express & County Herald*, 23 June 1972, indicated the approximate former position of no. 55 in the High Street, Hailsham, and that it was of the 'Bow bells' type. It is hoped that it may be possible to erect a replica in the near future.

Another milestone that merits recording under this heading is at Wych Cross in the triangle of land between the A275 and A22 roads (TQ 419317) where the toll-house formerly stood. When the tollhouse was demolished in 1965 the milestone which was set in the wall was preserved on the site in a brick frame. The sandstone panel measures 43 in. by 18 in. and bears the inscription 'To Maresfield 6 Miles/ from Maresfield To Uckfield 1 Mile half/from Uckfield to Lewes 7 Miles half/ And this is the Toll Road to Lewes' (Fig. 6). The tollhouse and stone may well date from the founding of the trust in 1752. No evidence exists of a companion stone for the road via Danehill and Chailey which was controlled by the same trust and is a more direct road to Lewes.

2 B2026 Ashdown Forest – Westerham (Kent)

Iron posts with distances to London were erected by the Westerham and Edenbridge Trust (1767)[11] which extended from Bromley (Kent) to the intersection of the B2026 and B2188 on Ashdown Forest (Fig. 7). The posts on the East Sussex side of the county border are well maintained and present a strong contrast to the dilapidated state of the few remaining in Kent.

Table 2 Ashdown Forest – Westerham

Miles to London	*Map Reference*	*Town/Parish*
24	TQ 442503	Crockham Hill (Kent)
25	Missing	
26	Missing	
27	TQ 445455	Edenbridge
28	Missing	
29	TQ 462429	Hever (Kent)
30	Missing	
31	TQ 474399	Cowden
32	TQ 481386	Cowden
33	Missing	
34	TQ 477353	Hartfield
35	TQ 478338	Hartfield
36	TQ 471324	Hartfield
37	TQ 469310	Duddleswell

3 A268 Flimwell – Rye

This series consists of cast iron plates with a semi-circular arched top listing the distance to both London and Rye. Milestones with distances of 49 and 51 miles to London would appear to be replacements of a more recent date and differ in the style of lettering and frame. Letters and numerals are at present painted in black on a white background in the case of those milestones within the county of Kent, and white on a black background in the case of the Sussex ones (Fig. 8). All the iron plates were bolted to uniform stone blocks and in a number of cases the stone blocks remain but the metal plates are missing. The milestones extend along the route of the Flimwell Vent to Rye turnpike of 1762. Iron plates of a similar design exist along the routes of:

the Kippings Cross (Pembury) to Flimwell trust A21,
the Tonbridge trust (Sevenoaks - Kipplings Cross and Tonbridge - Tunbridge Wells) A21 and A26, and
the Wrotham Heath trust (Wrotham-Godstone) A25.

Table 3 Flimwell – Rye

Miles to London	*Miles to Rye*	*Map Reference*	*Parish/Township*	*Remarks*
45	17½	TQ 722310	Flimwell (Kent)	Metal plate missing
46	16½	TQ 737308	Hawkhurst (Kent)	
47	15½	TQ 753308	Hawkhurst (Kent)	Metal plate missing
48	14½	TQ 765304	Hawkhurst (Kent)	
49	13½	TQ 782298	Hawkhurst (Kent)	Replacement metal plate
50	12½	TQ 794288	Sandhurst (Kent)	
51	11½	TQ 808281	Sandhurst (Kent)	Replacement metal plate
52	10½	TQ 826278	Newenden (Kent)	
53	9½	TQ 836270	Northiam	
54	8½	TQ 829256	Northiam	Metal plate missing
55	7½	TQ 830243	Northiam	
56	6½	TQ 843237	Beckley	
57	5½	TQ 857241	Beckley	
58	4½	TQ 869235	Beckley	
59	3½	TQ 884230	Peasmarsh	
60	2½	TQ 896225	Peasmarsh	
61	1½	TQ 912226	Playden	
62	½	TQ 921214	Rye	

4 Other Turnpike Trust Milestones

The remaining stones attributable to turnpike trusts present a sad picture of isolated, defaced and decaying fragments and are summarised in Table 4.

Fig. 8: Beckley
TQ 857241

Fig. 9: Ticehurst
TQ 608338

Fig. 10: Ticehurst
TQ 646309

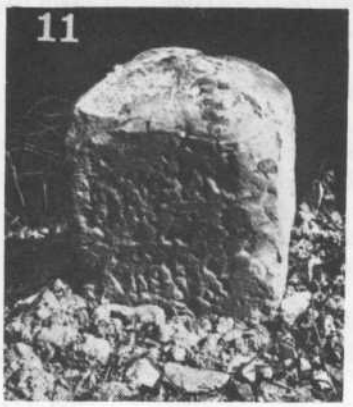


Fig. 11: Mark Cross
TQ 579296

Fig. 12: Groombridge
TQ 530374

Fig. 14: Sheffield Park

Table 4

Fig.	*Map Reference*	*Road*	*Parish/Township*	*Turnpike Trust*	*Inscription*
9	TQ 608338	A266	Wadhurst	Tunbridge Wells, Wadhurst and Mayfield (1767)	Not decipherable
10	TQ 646309	A266	Wadhurst	Tunbridge Wells, Wadhurst and Mayfield (1767)	'7/MILES/ TO/WELLS'
11	TQ 579296	A267	Mark Cross	Tunbridge Wells, Wadhurst and Mayfield (1767)	East & West faces: 'TO/ WELLS/6/ MILES' North face: 'TO/LEWES/ 19/MILES'
12	TQ 530374	A264	Groombridge	Tunbridge Wells – Maresfield (1766)	'IV' (i.e. 4 miles to Tunbridge Wells)

All the above stones are of local sandstone.

5 Stones erected other than by Turnpike Trusts

Municipal Authorities

Set in the front wall of the timber-framed Fifteenth Century Bookshop in Lewes High Street (TQ 411100) is a rectangular stone inscribed '50 MILES/FROM THE STANDARD/IN CORNHILL/49 TO WESTMINSTER BRIDGE/8 MILES TO BRIGHTELMSTONE' (Fig. 13). The style of lettering and the nature of the inscription might suggest a late 18th-century date. The section of road which the building faces was within the borough boundary and not controlled by any turnpike trust. Its maintenance would have been the responsibility of the Corporation which probably arranged for the erection of the stone.

Private Benefactors

Sheffield Park (Fig.14)

Outside the main entrance to Sheffield Park on the A275 road stands the most impressive of all Sussex milestones. A tapering sandstone shaft with a domed and fluted cap stands 9 ft. 3 in. tall. The following inscriptions are carved below the cap:

South Face	'X TO/EAST GRINSTEAD'	
East Face		MILES
	'WESTMINSTER BRIDGE	39
	EAST GRINSTEAD	10
	LEWES	10
	BRIGHTELMSTONE	17'
North Face	'X TO/LEWES'.	

No inscription on the West face.

The first edition of the 6 in. O.S. map marks the milestone in addition to the normal sequence of mileposts indicating distances of 38, 39 and 40 miles to London and obviously erected by the turnpike trustees.[12] Its appearance suggests a date

Above: Fig. 6
Above right: Fig. 15, Lord Ashburnhams TQ 794171
Below right: Fig. 13

about 1780, and Sheffield Park house was completed for John Baker Holroyd, 1st Earl of Sheffield, in 1779: facts which, coupled with its siting and elaborate form, clearly point to Holroyd as the man responsible for its erection.[13]

Ashburnham

A series of three milestones are to be found along the course of a former private carriage road from Ashburnham Place. This road is clearly marked on the Gardner and Gream map of 1795 extending towards the line of the Flimwell and Hastings turnpike road. It can be easily traced today as a bridle way through private property. It is unlikely that the road was used generally by the public, though the 1826 edition of Patterson's *Roads* lists a cross road from Tunbridge Wells to Eastbourne and indicates that Battle may be reached from Ashburnham 'through the Park by the house', clearly another private carriage road.[14]

The milestones (Fig. 15) consist of rectangular sandstone blocks with distances indicated to Ashburnham Place and London:

Miles to London	*Miles to Ashburnham Place*	*Map Reference*
57	–	TQ 704148
56	1	TQ 716157
55	2	TQ 724171

6 Milestone Suppliers

Those responsible for the making of East Sussex milestones are not known. In the case of the sandstone milestones used in the Tunbridge Wells/Wadhurst/Mayfield areas it is clear that these were quarried locally and the inscriptions carved by local craftsmen. Of the makers of the cast iron series nothing appears to be known. It is an attractive thought that they may have been cast from Sussex iron but only a careful analysis of the material from which they are made will answer this question. None of the cast iron plates bears the name or mark of the producer. One Lewes foundry is however known to have produced cast iron milestones. At Chart in Surrey are two cast iron milestones along the B269 at TQ 429518 and TQ 415521, listing distances of 12 and 11 miles respectively to Croydon (Limpsfield turnpike trust). In a cartouche at the foot of each post is the inscription 'E MORRIS/LEWES/ FOUNDRY' (Fig. 16). This foundry which was behind Cliffe High Street is remembered in the names Foundry Lane and Morris Street. It was established by Nathaniel Polhill in 1784 and taken over by Ebenezer Morris in 1823. The foundry and ironmongers' shops at 41-2 Cliffe High Street, with a branch at Eastbourne, continued in business to the end of the century under the direction of father and son (also christened Ebenezer). At the same period two other iron foundries were in operation in the Cliffe area of Lewes (Every's and Thompson's) both no doubt capable of producing mileposts.[15]

REFERENCES

1 S.E. Winbolt, 'Milestones on Stane Street', *Sussex County Magazine*, x (1936), 554-8.

2 S. & B. Webb, *The Story of the King's Highway* (1913), 156. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, 1633*, 56, 69.

3 7 Geo. III, c.40.

4 25 Geo. II c.50.

5 East Sussex Record Office, RF 15/19.

6 The Newchapel and Brightelmstone mileposts are clearly marked on the Gardner and Gream map of Sussex (1795), but those for the Hodges and Cuckfield are not.

7 The evidence on this point is not entirely clear. A survey dated 30 January 1934 in the Surveyor's Department, East Sussex County Council, lists a number of milestones on the A267, Tunbridge Wells to Cross-in-Hand, and A266, Frant to Boarsell, roads which are not marked on the 6 in. O.S. map. It is clear however that in a number of cases the inscriptions were illegible or the stones nearly buried.

8 27 Geo. II c.24. The trustees included the Rt. Hon. Henry Pelham (Chancellor of the Exchequer and younger brother of the Duke of Newcastle), Thomas Pelham of Lewes, James Pelham of Crowhurst, Thomas Pelham of Stanmer (created Earl of Chichester in 1801), John Pelham of Lewes and Henry Pelham of Lewes.

9 4 Geo. IV c. xii.

10 Ivan D. Margary, 'Alterations to the London-Lewes Road in the Coaching Era', *Sussex Notes & Queries*, viii (1940), 65.

11 7 Geo. III c.86.

12 Possibly of the 'Bow bells' type as this road was administered under the same Act of Parliament as the Wych Cross to Lewes via Uckfield road. But separate accounts were kept and returns made for the two roads.

13 The stone is not, however, marked on Gardner and Gream's map of 1795, though it may have existed but had been omitted to save the confusion of two milestones at half a mile's distance from each other, both indicating 39 miles to London.

14 Edward Mogg, *Patterson's Road*, 18th ed. (1826), 587.

15 E.S.R.O., QDE/2, Land Tax Assessments, St. Thomas-at-Cliffe, 1823. *Kelly's Directory of Sussex* (1895), 481. Anon., 'John Every of Lewes', *Sussex County Magazine*, ix (1935), 722-4. L.S. Davey, *The Street Names of Lewes*, 2nd ed. (Lewes, 1970), 28.

WILLIAM F. PICKERING

The West Brighton Estate: Hove
A Study in Victorian Urban Development

THAT PART OF HOVE which was known as the West Brighton Estate lies between Church Road and the sea, from First Avenue to Fourth Avenue. Today, it is a comfortably dull district of architectural mediocrities in unco-ordinated styles. It is hard to recapture the enthusiasm of contemporaries for this 'Belgravia-sur-mer',[1] praised for its 'magnificent avenues after the style of those in Berlin'[2] and called the 'finest suburb in the parliamentary borough'.[3] Yet this area set the pattern for the later development of Hove and was a symbol of civic pride in the period of Hove's most boastful self-awareness. It was a monument to status, respectability and quiet ostentation.

Hove is not part of Brighton, nor has it ever been. For long they were physically separated, and when the towns eventually grew together to form a single urban area, they remained apart in other ways. Throughout the 19th century, even after it had become an ordinary seaside resort town, Brighton retained something of its air of Regency rakishness. From the beginning, Hove saw itself as a contrast to Brighton, and cultivated the image of solid middle-class respectability it retains today.

Before 1850, Hove was a country village surrounding the Manor House in Old Hove Street, near the Parish Church of St. Andrew (Fig. 1). The 125 houses of the village were linked to Brighton, a mile away, by a road along the sea front and a footpath to the north across the open fields. The eastern section of Hove parish was quite different, and was virtually a western extension of Brighton.[4] The fact that Brunswick Town and Adelaide Crescent were technically in the Parish of Hove was irrelevant to their role as fashionable Brighton residential areas. Both of these developments were administered by the Brunswick Town commissioners while the old village had its own West Hove commissioners.

Brunswick Square and Terrace, one of Brighton's famed 'Regency' areas, had been developed in the same period as Kemp Town to the east of Brighton (1823-5). The magnificent scale of Brunswick Town and C.A. Bushby's elegant elevations were typical of residential quarters for the wealthy in Bath, Edinburgh and the West End of London, in the reign of George IV. Adelaide Crescent, just west of Brunswick Town, was begun a few years later in 1832, but after 10 houses and the park had been built it was left unfinished for 30 years. Neither Brunswick Town nor Adelaide Crescent had anything in common with any Victorian style in town planning, but were late examples of the Georgian concept of the symmetrical residential development centred on its own private park.

In the 1850s, Old Hove began to change, largely due to the efforts of one man, George Gallard, a local brewer and speculator turned real estate developer.[5] Gallard, along with several smaller speculators whom he later bought out, set out to enrich himself by speculative building in the classical way, starting with a few villas on a small plot, then a few more, until the development acquired momentum and spread piecemeal, street by street. Starting from the nucleus of Old Hove Village, Gallard's new development, now called Cliftonville, grew north and east in such streets as St. Aubyn's, George Street and the five Villas – Osborne, Medina, Albany, Ventnor and Hova. The area grew with astonishing speed, but it was never

planned – it simply grew. The streets lacked the splendid width that later came to characterise Hove, and the local gas works and a brewery sat in the midst of it. It did, however, have a character. As the *Illustrated Times* said mockingly, it was 'awfully genteel'. The houses were moderately impressive and attracted tenants of a comfortable, but not wealthy, sort. With Cliftonville, Hove acquired its reputation for 'an atmosphere of depressing suburban respectability'.[6]

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, a tension existed between Brighton and Hove over the issue of amalgamation. Brighton tried to force Hove into amalgamation on at least four occasions – 1853, 1872, 1875 and 1897. Hove defended its virtue vigorously each time, and of course each attack served to spur the citizens to ever louder protestations of Hove's merits. Whether such protests were prompted more by fear of higher rates or from honest civic pride is a moot point. In any case, as Hove grew, so did its feelings of uniqueness, until it came to consider itself as a totally different community from Brighton, which it saw as 'overbearing, overcrowded and overgrown'. Not for Hove the piers, the theatres, the day-trippers and the riff-raff of the Brighton beaches.

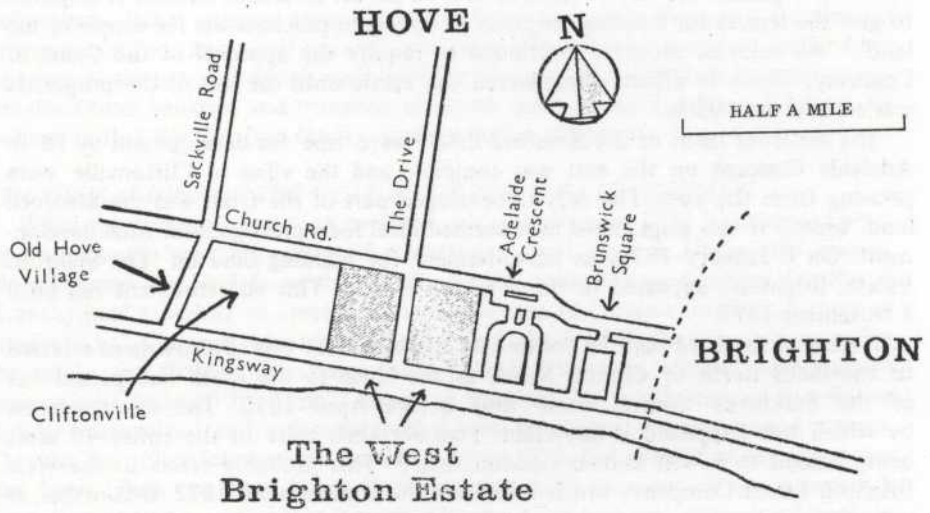


Fig.1 West Brighton Estate

Hove was developing unnaturally, with large settlements of totally different characters at either end and nothing in the middle. Between the elegance of Brunswick Town and the stolidity of Cliftonville lay a quarter mile of open country. This was the site of the West Brighton Estate.

THE BACKGROUND TO DEVELOPMENT

The West Brighton Estate was developed on a part of the lands belonging to the Stanford family of Preston Manor, Brighton. These were not ancient family lands, but had been acquired by the elder William Stanford early in the 19th century. Where the Stanford estate touched the sea south of what is now Church Road in Hove, the lands lay awkwardly between the two populated districts of western

Brighton and old Hove village, and was therefore not ripe for development until these two established districts grew closer together. William Stanford had considered developing this portion of his estate as early as 1825, in the same period as Kemp Town and Brunswick Town. Sir Charles Barry prepared a plan for the area featuring a shallow square facing the sea, with a Regency terrace as its centrepiece, backed by four further squares, a market, stabling and the usual mixture of house sizes.[7] However, nothing was done about it. Had it been built in 1825, it would have been isolated from Brighton by considerable open space to the east, since Adelaide Crescent was not yet built. Stanford's unwillingness to proceed at the time was probably wise, as the future difficulties faced by Adelaide Square confirm.

William Stanford the elder died in 1841, to be succeeded by his son William who controlled the estates until his death in 1853. This was a period of stagnation in local building and no attempt was made to develop the sea-front lands in his lifetime. On his death, his real estate passed to his five-year-old daughter Ellen, with control vested in three trustees. After Ellen's marriage in 1867 to Vere Fane Benett of Tisbury, Wiltshire, the financial affairs were re-arranged and in 1871 a private Act of Parliament (Stanford's Estate Act) was obtained to allow the estate to be broken up for building purposes. In William Stanford's will, no authority had been granted for the sale of land, only for letting it on building leases. One purpose of the Act was to permit the sale of land, as 'it is an almost invariable custom at Brighton to give the lessees for building purposes an option to purchase the fee simple of the land'.[8] All sales of property continued to require the approval of the Court of Chancery, which in effect administered the estate until the last of the properties was sold in the 1930s.

The sea-front lands of the Stanford Estate were 'ripe' for development by 1870. Adelaide Crescent on the east was complete and the villas of Cliftonville were pressing from the west. The only undeveloped part of the front was the Stanford land, which, at this stage, must have seemed ideal for a prestige residential development. On 8 January 1870, an advertisement for building land on 'The Stanford Estate, Brighton', appeared in the *Brighton Herald*. This advertisement ran until 8 November 1875.

It must be assumed that the continuing appearance of this advertisement referred to the lands north of Church Road, as the lands to the south had passed out of the Stanfords' control some time before April 1872. The exact process by which this happened is uncertain. Two accounts refer to the entire 40 acres being 'leased to a well known London firm'.[9] This probably refers to the West Brighton Estate Company, which took over the land in April 1872. Before this, at least three men were engaged in developing the land. One was a Mr. Leon, who erected four large terrace houses known as Adelaide Mansions in the south-east corner of the estate, immediately adjoining Adelaide Crescent.[10] The other two were William Morris (a London contractor) and 'Baron' Albert Grant.

Little is known about Morris. On one occasion he identified himself simply as 'A Gentleman', and on another as a 'contractor'[11] with a different London address each time. He was also owner of the West Brighton Waterworks. On 12 May 1871, he made an agreement with Ellen Stanford to lease a part of the estate[12] and by the spring of 1872 had erected the two terraces of Queen's Gardens. The actual construction was not done by Morris but by J.T. Chappell, a London builder.

In the background was 'Baron' Albert Grant (the title was Italian). Grant was an M.P., a promoter and a 'public character'.[13] He had long lists of widows and clergymen from whom he solicited funds for his ventures, most of which were abroad, such as railways in South America or waterworks in Turkey. Many of his promotions were

dubious and uninvestigated, by 1874 his affairs were in a perilous state and he was bankrupt by 1877.

The company was incorporated on 13 April 1872, 'To take over the interest of William Morris in certain lands in the parish of Hove and to improve and manage them'.[14] It was to issue shares to the value of £200,000 with the largest block held by William Morris. The other six original members of the company were small businessmen (a timber merchant, an accountant, etc.), each of whom held a small number of shares. There would appear to have been some kind of close connection between the company and its solicitors, Ashurst & Morris, as John Morris of the solicitors soon became an important company director, and the company's offices were located in the next building to the solicitors' in London. The logical explanation would be a family connection between William Morris and John Morris, but I have found no proof for this. Nor have I found evidence of a link between Ashurst & Morris and the Stanfords.[15]

Where did the company's capital come from? Much of it seems to have been from William Morris, to whom the company owed £89,000 at one point.[16] Baron Grant bought the company's debentures on at least three occasions – twice for £10,000 and once for £15,000. In the early years, every decision. such as names of streets, plans of buildings and so on, had to be approved personally by Grant, making it seem that he had a substantial interest in the development besides just buying debentures. Other money came from the Land Securities Company Limited as mortgages at four and a half per cent, and from a Mr. Charles Morrison, in the form of loans at six per cent which were used for advances to builders. Some money was obtained from bankers, and company directors made occasional loans. There is no indication that the Stanford family invested in the company.

THE OPERATIONS OF THE WEST BRIGHTON ESTATE COMPANY

When the company first took over Morris's operations in 1872 it continued what had apparently been his policy of maintaining total control. Under this system, Morris leased the land from the Stanfords, and using his own capital (or Baron Grant's) paid a builder to erect houses. In the case of Queen's Gardens, a contract was let to J.C. Chappell, who supplied plant and labour while the company provided the bricks and fittings. On completion of the buildings, he offered the houses to tenants on a lease of 7, 14 or 21 years, or freehold. No middleman or speculative builder was involved, and, unless the freehold was purchased, Morris retained control. This was the policy followed by the company in 1873, but as most of the properties had been taken on short leases it meant that large amounts of the company's capital were tied up in rented houses. The company was also committed to large capital expenditure for laying out the estate as a prestige area, which meant private gardens, wide roads, groynes along the sea front and so on. It has been suggested that the cost of this reached half a million pounds, which seems exaggerated. By 1873, the company had spent £11,481 on roads and sewers and £5,316 on gardens, and further expenses of this nature came up each year.

In January 1873 the company faced a crisis. The large terraces such as Queen's Gardens were not all let, and although the materials for the third and fourth terraces on the front were on hand, nothing was built, and discussions were going on about changing the design from terraces to flats. The company's minute books stop at this point until November 1873, when it appears that the company was re-organised. One director had gone bankrupt, and resigned along with several others, and a new company architect had been hired. £20,000 was raised from William Morris, and £25,000 from Baron Grant, and new agreements were signed

with both men. In a report to the shareholders a few months later (March 1874) Mr. Morris outlined the company's position in 1873 and his suggestions for making it more effective.

He expressed concern at the company having so much capital tied up in the terraces, and suggested that they sell at 12 houses freehold, at a loss of £1,000 each. The difficulty was that all but one of the houses were then occupied on seven-year agreements, so the freehold could not be sold with possession. Morris felt that there was a 'great prejudice in Brighton against leasehold houses' and that every effort should be made to sell them freehold at the first opportunity and that the existing agreements not be renewed. At the time, the company was letting eight of the houses unfurnished at £270 per annum and three furnished at £470.

Morris proposed three ways of carrying on the further development of the estate. One was for the company to act simply as freeholders, having nothing whatever to do with building. Another was to sell large sections at a medium price to substantial builders, without giving advances or other assistance. The third was to sell land piecemeal at a retail price to small builders, giving them advances and encouragement. He favoured the second course, and 'having as little as possible to do with bricks and mortar'. He realised, though, 'that it would be difficult to find another builder like Chappell [the builder of Queen's Gardens] prepared to take so large a quantity, as most of the builders in Brighton are men in a small way'. This meant that the company might be forced to take the third course and get involved in financing small builders. Morris felt this could be avoided by organising and subsidising a combination of small Brighton builders, called the West Brighton Villas Company, and letting them develop an entire road at a time. This was never done.

The subsequent history of building on the estate is really two stories. On the one hand, J.T. Chappell worked methodically ahead building up lot after lot until ill health finally made him drop out in 1893, after 22 successful years on the estate. He took property in large sections (all of First Avenue and all of the front) and raised almost all of his own capital. On the other hand was a group of small builders, in and out of bankruptcy, getting huge advances and causing the company no end of concern. The company, naturally, preferred to deal with Chappell, and when another large London construction firm offered to take over the entire estate in March 1875, the directors accepted eagerly, but the offer was withdrawn.

The company built nothing of its own between 1873 and the mid-1890s, so its role was confined to raising capital for small builders, completing the roads and gardens, and approving lands uses and suitability of construction. The main concern was to keep up the tone of the estate. On its other lands north of Church Road, the company was having great success with cheaper houses, but it felt that south of Church Road, 'a larger class of house than usual is suitable to the surroundings'. To achieve this, the directors hoped that important churches would be built on the estate in order to add prestige. Two projects almost succeeded. One for a new Anglican church was rejected by the Vicar of Hove in 1873. In 1875, all the land on Church Road between Third and Fourth Avenues was sold for a large Roman Catholic church, but the project was abandoned. In 1877, the company supported a proposal for a circular pier in front of the lawns, but turned against it when the residents objected. In the long run, the success of the estate depended less on the company than on the competence and financial stability of the builders, and the fluctuations in the business cycle.

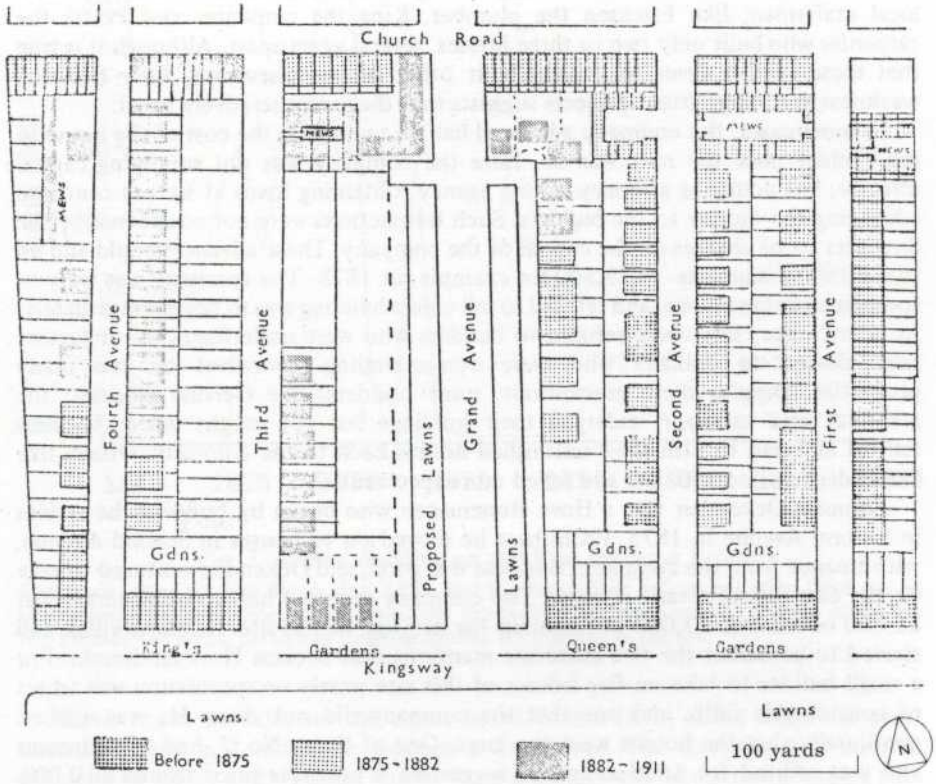


Fig. 2 Sketch plan of the West Brighton Estate
Showing building up to 1911

THE BUILDERS

A common belief about 19th-century building is that large firms, such as Thomas Cubitt's, had come to dominate the industry by the last quarter of the century. H.J. Dyos has argued that this may be an overstatement, and that small builders and groups of craftsmen continued to play an important part all through this period, particularly in suburban house building.[17] The history at the West Brighton estate confirms the latter view.

J.T. Chappell built at least 120 of the 269 units on the estate. Of these, 24 were built directly for the estate company, while the remainder were financed, built and sold by Chappell on speculation. Chappell qualifies as a large scale builder – at least by Brighton standards. His willingness to take on whole streets at a time, to raise

his own capital and to continue building when business was poor, puts him in quite a different category from the others.

Almost all of the other houses on the estate, about 150 units, were put up by small or medium sized speculative builders. The estate plans show 37 different buyers for these 150 units. Using the company's minute books and Hove directories it is possible to identify 14 of these buyers as builders. Some of them were well known local firms, such as Jabez Reynolds, who built most of Cliftonville, and others were small firms who went on to bigger things later, such as Willett's. Others were local craftsmen, like Ericksen the plumber, King the carpenter and Peters the carpenter who built only two or three houses, several years apart. Although it is true that these smaller firms may have built other houses elsewhere, their financial weakness and intermittent projects suggests that they were relatively small.

In most cases, the company advanced half to two-thirds the cost of the house to the builder once the roof was on. Here the company was not supplying capital directly, but acting as a money-raising agency, obtaining loans at six per cent and advancing the money to the builders. Such transactions were not considered by the directors to be charges on the capital of the company. These advances could add up to substantial amounts – £73,500 for example, in 1878. The company was wary of speculators in land alone, and refused to sell unless building was to begin immediately. In many cases, sales were refused to builders who were underfinanced, or further sales denied to builders who were over-extending themselves on too many properties. Despite these precautions, some builders, like Gervase Wheeler, the architect and surveyor, enlarged their holdings but got caught when business fell off and had to turn their unfinished houses back to the company. Others, like Ockenden, started with less and failed more spectacularly.

Edmund Ockenden was a Hove stonemason who began by building the stables in Second Avenue in 1875. From here he moved on to houses in Second Avenue, with finance from the company. Business was good, and Ockenden ventured to take on the east side of Grand Avenue. The company required him to build terraces at £2,000 or villas at £3,000 to maintain the prestige of this site. He chose villas, and started to construct the five elaborate mansions that became Hove landmarks. For a small builder to take on five houses of this size purely on speculation was an act of considerable faith, and one that the company did not share. He was warned continually that the houses were too large. One of them, No. 2, had 17 bedrooms and was offered for £600 annually, suggesting a purchase price around £10,000. In 1878 the company limited his advances and expressed the fear that his project 'might involve a lock up until times improve and people can be found to occupy such expensive mansions'. By 1880 Ockenden had not been able to let any of them, and in 1881 was bankrupt. The company took over the houses but did not find tenants for all five until 1897.

After the 1880s, fewer small builders returned to the estate. The most ambitious small builders – Wheeler, Dyne and Ockenden – had been ruined. Those who had survived and grown, such as Willett, took on more land than before, and Chappell of course carried on. In the 1890s, smaller houses were being built, and the company's reports refer to their being constructed by 'our local builder'. The term is never explained, but it seems to mean either that the company had finally been able to get one firm to carry on the bulk of the work, or that the company had again turned to building houses on its own.

Building activity on the West Brighton Estate was cyclical in nature and the rise and fall in construction bears some relationship to E.W. Cooney's long waves in the British building industry.[18] Fig. 3 gives an estimate of units built annually on the estate.

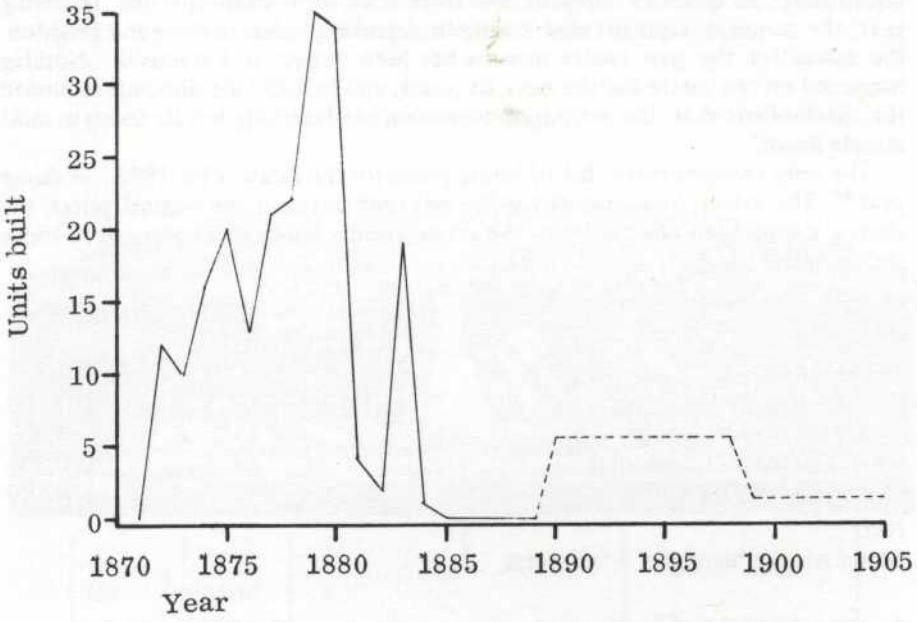


Fig. 3 Annual Building on the West Brighton Estate

The estate plans are not dated after 1889, but the totals built before and after 1898 can be ascertained from Ordnance Survey maps, and the broken line represents the average within the two periods; the actual pattern of building activity is suggested in the text.

Morris began to build on the estate in 1871 and 1872, about when the cycle turned upward in London, or perhaps a bit before. The company had internal problems in 1873, and business was far from good. As will be discussed later, a part of this was the result of the unfortunate insistence on building terrace housing after it was out of fashion. Nonetheless, building was going on at a reasonable rate and did not actually decline until 1875 and 1876, a slump which was not noticed in London but did occur elsewhere in the country.[19]

One of the best gauges of building on the estate is the amount of money the Company advanced to contractors each year. In 1875 the directors expressed rare satisfaction with business, declaring that the Company was stable and 'all the builders on the estate have done remarkably well'. Yet the amounts advanced to builders in that year were small. The builders were probably selling houses constructed in 1873 and 1874 and were encouraged to take more land as a result. The real increase in building on the estate came in 1877, and continued to rise to a peak in 1879. Increasing amounts were advanced to builders in each of these years – over £70,000 in both 1878 and 1879. Yet throughout, the directors were uniformly gloomy. They felt that although building was going on, there was (in 1878) 'an undoubted check in letting and selling of houses on the estate in sympathy with the general depression in the country'. They expressed hope that the new railway to Hove, opening in

1879, would be a 'stimulus' to the district, but had to report that no land had been let in that year. It was, however, the best year for building on the estate.

In 1880, building was still going on at a high level (£63,000 advanced) but houses were just not being let or sold. Builders were missing payments, one went bankrupt, and only Chappell refused to drop his prices. In 1881, building dropped disastrously, no dividend was paid, and three firms went bankrupt. The following year, the company reported that 'owing to depressing times in Hove and Brighton, the estate for the past twelve months has been almost at a standstill'. Nothing happened on the estate for the next six years, and in 1887 the directors reminded the shareholders that 'the prolonged depression has especially left its traces in most seaside towns'.

The only comprehensive list of house prices for the estate is for 1883 – a slump year.[20] The prices shown below are five per cent less than the original prices, the change having been penciled into the estate agent's books in an attempt to move the completed houses.

	Annual Rental	*Freehold*
Terrace Houses		
First Avenue, 11 bedrooms	£325	£ 7,600
First Avenue, 7 bedrooms	£190	£ 4,000
King's Gardens, 11 bedrooms	£425	£10,000
King's Gardens, not facing sea	£275	£ 6,500
Flats		
Grand Avenue Mansions, 5 bedrooms	£230 (average)	
Stabling and Coachmen's Quarters		
Victoria Mews	£ 75	£ 1,500
St. John's Mews	£ 70	£ 1,200
Villas		
First Avenue, semi, 7 bedrooms	£240	£ 4,600
Second Avenue, detached, 8 bedrooms	———	£ 5,000
Second Avenue, semi, 8 bedrooms	£230	£ 5,000
Third Avenue, detached, 12 bedrooms	£300	£ 6,500
Third Avenue, semi, 14 bedrooms	£400	£ 7,500
Fourth Avenue, semi, 11 bedrooms	£180	———
Fourth Avenue, semi	£200	£ 5,000
Grand Avenue, detached, 17 bedrooms	£600	———

In 1889, the company noted a 'gradual upward tendency in the rents and prices of property in Hove' and attributed it to the increasing population. Chappell was the first to build again, and started the five magnificent detached houses of King's Gardens. 1890 saw further improvement and the company announced in 1891 that all houses but one had been let. In 1894, the formula was found that finally finished the estate – cheaper, modern semi-detached houses. These were 'not costly for the accommodation provided and are of an attractive style'. They rented for £120 to £160, and were let before they were completed. Although annual figures are not available for the remaining years, it appears that the upward trend continued to around the turn of the century, with most of the building taking place around 1898 to 1900.

THE ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING OF THE WEST BRIGHTON ESTATE

Even though the West Brighton Estate always seems to have had considerable prestige, it is clear that it did not really 'go' in the way that some areas did – for example Cliftonville, or Brunswick Square, which were highly successful from the beginning. It developed in fits and starts, with the western half almost empty for 20 years. Aside from the general economic conditions of the period, there were features of the estate planning which made it a dubious undertaking.

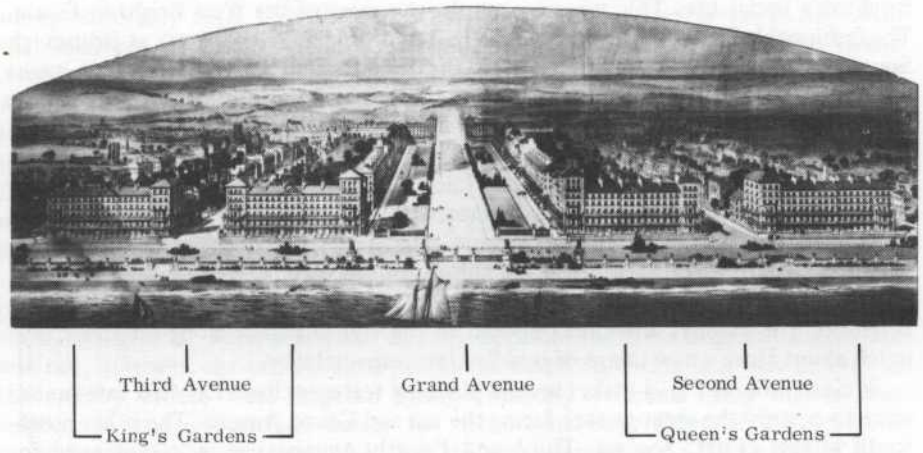


Fig. 4 Perspective sketch of 'A part of the Stanford Estate'
Presumably by James T. Knowles, jnr. This large lithograph is in, and is reproduced by kind permission of, Preston Manor (Thomas-Stanford Collection), Brighton.

It appears to have been an attempt to impose certain Regency planning features, which had been fashionable on the Brighton front, on the different tastes and economic considerations of the Victorian period. The proposal had definite links with Regency and Georgian planning, as it features a central landscaped square, bordered by symmetrical terraces, which turn to close off the view to the north and to present a uniform facade to the sea, are a continuation of those in front of Adelaide Crescent and Brunswick Square, and the great terraces facing the square and the sea were to be in symmetrical, uniform blocks (Fig. 4). This was not typical of upper income Victorian estates, and certainly quite unlike the villas of Cliftonville which were built 20 years earlier. The planner was clearly aware that the West Brighton Estate had to have some relationship with the great Georgian estates to the east.

But if one ignores the Georgian overtones, the lay-out of the estate seems Victorian, e.g. in its rectangular grid street plan (Fig. 2). This was not a 19th-century innovation, but achieved particular popularity then (especially in North America), because it facilitated the division of an estate into building lots. The use of numbers rather than names for the Avenues was an American practice, suggesting an awareness of the type of estate development going on there. On a Georgian estate,

the streets might be in a grid pattern, but the development would still have a central feature, such as a landscaped square or a crescent facing a garden. On the West Brighton Estate, the central garden was not to be a true square, but a pair of lawns flanking an avenue.

These Avenues were huge, quite unlike the cramped carriageways of Georgian estates. Grand Avenue measures 70 feet from kerb to kerb. Lewis Mumford points out that the broad street was seen as a peculiar symbol of progress, the symbol of potential traffic, even when its original amplitude bore no functional relationship to its use. This was certainly true in Hove, and the local guide books of the 1890s pointed out the wide streets of the West Brighton Estate as though they were civic monuments.

Important streets also had a social function, such as the role of the front in Brighton's social life. This was true of the Avenues of the West Brighton Estate. The fashionable Brighton carriage parade had traditionally turned back at Brunswick Square or Adelaide Crescent, but now the broad sweep of the Kingsway might tempt if further. More significantly, Grand Avenue, the centrepiece of the estate, ignored the front and struck north to the Downs, with the object of creating a new fashionable drive. It was finished by 1877, when the Drive, now in part renamed as the Upper Drive and Highcroft Villas, joined the northern end of Grand Avenue to Dyke Road Drive and thence to Preston Road (the main road to London), Preston Park Road and Stanford Avenue. The new route, a series of wide roads, which passed through Stanford lands almost all the way, suggests a feeling of self identity for this part of Hove, a desire to insure its separateness from fashionable Brighton. The country drive, as opposed to the stylish parade along the front, says much about Hove's new image of middle class respectability.

A close look at Fig. 4 makes several planning features clear. The first rate houses were to occupy the great terrace facing the sea and Grand Avenue. The other north-south streets (First, Second, Third and Fourth Avenues) were not planned for continuous terrace development, for the architect's sketch suggests individual houses, some villas and some grouped in short terraces, and interspersed with these are what appear to be churches. The architecture of these structures appears to vary (note the gabled roofs on Third Avenue) and I would conclude that this part of the drawing was not meant to be taken as a serious proposal. Instead, the land behind the great terraces was probably to be developed as an ordinary speculative venture with builders running up whatever would sell – terraces, detached, or semi-detached villas. The repetition of the Italianate towers throughout suggests a desire for some overall architectural style, but how this was to be achieved is unclear.

The plan also provided for separation of land use.[21] The large terraces were conceived as private dwellings, although there was a likelihood that they would become hotels. To ensure that these did not spread at random throughout the estate, the restrictive covenants in the deeds specified that hotels could be built only on the front or on a side street within 250 feet of the sea. No other businesses (except doctors' consulting rooms) were permitted on the front or the Avenues, and advertising was limited to a brass plate 12 in. by 8 in. Stabling was not permitted at the back of the houses but was confined to the mews at the north end of each avenue, where there was also accommodation for grooms and coachmen. General businesses could be established only on Church Road and were carefully restricted there. The West Brighton Estate never suffered from the uncontrolled land use and spot business development that plagued many Victorian areas, and in this respect it carried on a part of the English planning tradition. Architecturally, it was less successful.

Had the 10 major terraces been built, marching firmly along the front and up Grand Avenue, the effect would have been overwhelming. Not attractive, perhaps but mightily impressive. The sheer bulk of the one which remains today (Fig. 5) is startling, and 10 of them would have been memorable indeed. Their Italian towers were to be the leitmotiv of the design, along with the tiny pediments at the centre of each terrace. Viewed along the seafront from Adelaide Crescent, the first terrace on the West Brighton Estate (now the Lawns Hotel east of First Avenue) has no towers or pediment but a roof top balustrade. As this is at the same level as the roof of Adelaide Crescent, the two are linked to a degree. Looking farther west, the first block of Queen's Gardens (now demolished) had no east tower but did have a pediment, and a low tower at the west end. Finally, the west block of Queen's Gardens (the one standing today) has two towers and a pediment, with the west tower noticeably taller than the east. The same pattern in reverse was to follow on the west side of Grand Avenue. The effect was to lead the eye towards Grand Avenue by the increasing height of the towers, which were then repeated up Grand Avenue to the final pair of towers which would close off the view to the north. In fact, the West Brighton Estate, as it was eventually built, bore little relation to this proposed scheme. With the exception of the street plan and Queen's Gardens, the area never looked anything like Fig. 4. Which architect was responsible for the elaborate planning – and on whom can we place the blame for the ultimate results? Several men were involved and their roles are still not completely clear.

The first architect to appear was Henry Jones Lanchester.[22] Lanchester had practised mainly around Greenwich since 1856, and took up residence in Hove in 1870, living in St. John's Terrace, directly opposite the West Brighton Estate. He was not, however, the official surveyor to the Stanford Estate, nor was he ever in the employ of the West Brighton Estate Company. It seems likely that he was responsible to the Stanford family for the original supervision of the sea-front properties until the company took over the management in 1872. As one of Lanchester's principal interests was traffic movement, it is possible that he planned the roads, but the only building he could have designed before the arrival of Morris, was Adelaide Gardens. Subsequently, he acted as architect for several private builders on the estate.

James T. Knowles junior (later Sir James) arrived on the estate in conjunction with William Morris, Baron Grant and J.T. Chappell. This was in 1871, at which time, it would appear, the perspective drawing, Fig. 4, was prepared by him as a proposal to the Stanfords.[23] The two terraces of Queen's Gardens were up by the spring of 1872 and when the West Brighton Estate Company was formed to take over Morris's interests in April 1872, Knowles was architect to the company. He held this position until mid-1873. Up to that time, he was in complete control of the development, planning, ordering materials, calling for tenders, interviewing prospective buyers, etc. Very little actually got built in this period, and except for some houses in Second Avenue, it is unlikely that any of his projects were completed. The company was going through a troubled spell, and was re-organised in 1873. When the directors' meetings began again, Knowles was gone.

His place as company architect was taken by E. W. Hudson, who remained in the post for many years. Knowles's original plans were referred to from time to time, but condemned as too costly, and Mr. Hudson was asked to draw up alternate proposals. Thus, Hudson was likely the architect responsible for the general standard of design on the estate in the 1870s. He was not the only one, though, and after the departure of Knowles, it became more common for outside architects to plan buildings on the estate for specific clients. Among these architects were H.J. Lanchester, Gervase Wheeler, a Mr. Walker and a Mr. Eldridge.

Fig. 5 Queen's Gardens
Designed by James T. Knowles, jnr., and built by J.T. Chappell for William Morris in 1872, is the only portion of the original design for the estate which still exists.

Fig. 6 Nos. 18 to 26 First Avenue
Built by J.T. Chappell in 1874 and were the only section of the estate built entirely as terraces.

Fig. 7 Triplex at 18, 19 and 20 Second Avenue
Built in 1877 by Jabez Reynolds. An identical house occurs elsewhere on the estate.

Fig. 8 13 and 15 Third Avenue
Built about 1894.

After the building of Queen's Gardens, which were an aspect of the original grandiose plan, the West Brighton Estate developed pragmatically. The original conception was probably obsolete when construction began, and the changing styles of building on the estate suggest a continuing effort to keep up with the changing preferences of buyers. The area was built up roughly chronologically from east to west, and as one walks from First Avenue to Fourth Avenue, one can see the progression from uniform terraces to mixed detached and semi-detached villas, to the final conglomeration of Philip Webb styles interspersed with mock Italian. No single individual or company took control of the design of the estate or financed its building, and one result was piecemeal development over a period more than 40 years. In those 40 years, tastes in domestic architecture and types of housing changed remarkably.

CHANGING TASTES IN HOUSING

Before 1875

In the period before 1875, 38 units were constructed, 32 of them in terraces (Fig. 2). 18 of these were in the major blocks facing the sea, and 14 in the terraces on First Avenue. First Avenue is the only street on the estate which contains almost entirely terraces, and these were all built in one six-year period (1874-1880) and by one firm – John T. Chappell (Fig. 6). Most of the houses on First Avenue, although differing slightly in interior details, are basically similar. Their freedom from fussy surface detail seems to link them more closely with Queen's Gardens than with the later villas.

In an advertising brochure, the builder (Chappell) describes them thus:

> Substantially built, well finished, and of attractive elevation. Principal fronts faced with white brick and moulded reveals, strings and other decorations and pointed in cement. Principal entrances, window heads, cornices, parapets, dormers, etc. in stone and brick, with stone balconies and ornamental iron railings. Artistic tile paving to entrances and handsome iron railings to walls of planted forecourt. Gardens at back. Width of street from houses to houses about ninety-five feet.

The standard town house floor plan was followed: domestic offices in the basement; entrance hall, dining room and study on the ground floor; two drawing rooms on the first; two bedrooms and maids' rooms on the third and attic space for servants on the fourth. All residents were to have the right of entrance to the ornamental lawns facing the sea, and received a 20 per cent reduction on the cost of season rail tickets to London.

1875-1882

In the period 1875 to 1882, 120 units were constructed, most of them before 1880. It was in this period that the decline in the popularity of terraced housing became evident. Of the 120 units built, only 38 were terrace houses, and all of these were built by J.T. Chappell. I do not believe there is a single example on the estate of a series of small contractors undertaking to build houses in terrace form, a practice which was common in many earlier developments.

Most of the 38 terrace houses built in this period were in First Avenue, and were simply a continuation of the structures described earlier. The exception was King's Gardens, a prestige project on the front between Third Avenue and the estate's western limit. (The west block of this is today Hamilton Mansions.)

Between 1875 and 1882, more terraced shops were built (all of them in Church Road) than any other type of structure. Except for the shop fronts themselves, these were uniform buildings, and with their white brick and repeated upper storey

bay windows, are quite similar to the terraces of First Avenue. No large contractor such as Chappell was involved in Church Road, but a number of small builders, so I assume that the shops were constructed from standard estate plans, probably supplied by Hudson. The exception to this is the row of shops between Third and Fourth Avenue, built in 1889 in red brick to harmonise with the new Town Hall.

The remaining buildings of the 1875-1882 period were 41 villas – 16 detached and 25 semi-detached. These range from modest triplexes on First and Second Avenue to the mansions of Grand Avenue (Fig. 7). Every one of them is unmistakably Victorian – heavy, serious and self-important. There is not a shred of that exuberance of fretwork porches and gay gables which make many less pretentious Victorian streets so delightful. If these houses have a style, it is something vaguely Italian, the style which an 1865 building manual called 'our so-called Italian; in reality the vernacular English style of modern house building'. This had, it said, 'A refined and subdued character, pleasing to the usual sentiments of Englishmen'. But there are touches in individual houses that belie their serious aspects – Regency balconies, ornamental brickwork, Gothic details (Fig. 6 & 7). All the houses had front walks and entrance halls in brightly patterned tiles, still in fine condition today. The smaller houses were more successful. The larger double fronted houses such as the mansions of Grand Avenue *are* serious and rather dull, with their self-conscious classical porticoes and pedimented first floor windows. Nonetheless, I am quite willing to believe that all of the houses, with their abundant light and high ceilinged rooms, were comfortable and pleasant.

Why did the popularity of terrace housing decline and the demand for villas increase? This was a national trend, which perhaps stemmed from the idea that a move to the suburbs was originally seen as a move up the social scale, and this involved emulation of some attributes of upper class life. One aspect of this was the country villas, and the detached or semi-detached villa was the suburban version.

It is curious that any terraces at all were built on the West Brighton Estate, as they had been abandoned in most middle class developments years before (Cliftonville is a good example). The explanation is likely a local one. In Brighton (and eastern Hove), fashionable living was synonymous with terrace housing in the great Georgian estates. The planners and builders of the West Brighton Estate must have concluded that if they were to attract upper class occupants, they should emulate the fashionable quarters of the town rather than middle class Cliftonville. It would seem that they evaluated the market incorrectly, and that as Brighton declined as a centre of fashion, so did the popularity of the great terraces. Rents in Adelaide Crescent and Brunswick Square dropped sharply after the development of the West Brighton Estate.[24]

1882-1911

From 1882 to 1911, a further 78 units were built on the estate, a very slow rate of growth. With one exception, all were villas, with a declining number of detached relative to semi-detached types. In the mid-1880s, these continued to be in the style we saw earlier, with a few more eccentricities creeping in. The one exception was Grand Avenue Mansions, a purpose built block of flats, the first in Hove and the only one on the estate. It sites at the north end of Grand Avenue, on the west side, occupying what would have been the north west corner of the proposed square. The building contained 10 flats, two on each of five floors; during the period of stagnation, flats were finally tried as a high-density alternative to terraces. It would appear to have been the first unit of a larger project, perhaps a series of blocks along Grand Avenue (where Chappell already owned land), substituted for the terraces which were originally conceived.

When development picked up again about 1890, things were quite different. Gone were the Italianate styles and the yellow brick. In their place on Grand Avenue and Fourth Avenue, were the typical products of the English domestic revival, all red brick with gables, white wood trim and Norman Shaw tile-hanging (Fig. 8). Styles of life had changed and so had styles in architecture. Because domestic staffs were getting smaller, basements were no longer required, and there was less need for extensive attic space. More and more garden space was being demanded. The villas of this period were so different from the original houses in colour and style that they destroyed any unity in design that the estate might have had.

Viewed as an example of town planning and urban design, the West Brighton Estate had three strikes against it. It was never truly conceived as a complete unit; the original concept was out of date before construction began, and it stayed on the market for far too long. Ultimately, the last point was the vital one. Had it been built as a whole in a span of five or ten years, it might have been dull, but would have been consistent. Instead, it became a pleasant district of comfortable houses, but without a distinctive character or focus.

By joining the two older districts, the West Brighton Estate gave Hove a central core just when it was needed. By the 1870s, Brighton was declining as a social centre for the wealthy, with the result that day-trippers and lower class holiday-makers were more and more in evidence. As Hove's only basis for its separate urban identity was that it was *not* Brighton, a lowering of Brighton's tone had to result in a raising of Hove's. The West Brighton Estate did this by giving Hove a solid basis for high class residential development well away from the Brighton boundary and distinctly unconnected with the common aspects of the seaside resort.

Thus, the West Brighton Estate preserved and strengthened Hove's role as a separate, conservative, well-to-do residential community. The estate's main street, Grand Avenue, became the axis of the community's northward growth, and the grid plan of spacious streets set the style for later developments. It was no accident that the new Town Hall, symbol of civic pride and urban identity, was built not in historic Hove, but opposite the West Brighton Estate.

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JOHN FARRANT

A Bridge for Littlehampton 1821-22

THE ARUN was the last of the rivers through the South Downs to be bridged below the natural and ancient bridging point, at the gap in the Downs. At Newhaven, on the Ouse, a drawbridge was built in 1784, while Old Shoreham bridge over the Adur was built in 1782; but it was the railway which first bridged the Arun, at Ford in 1846, and not until 1908 did Littlehampton acquire a road bridge. With the latter's replacement under construction half a mile up stream, it is particularly appropriate to recall the earliest plans for a bridge at Littlehampton, the design for which appears on the cover of this number of *S.I.H.*

In January 1821,[1] when the proposal was launched at a public meeting, Littlehampton was growing at a steady pace as a seaside resort, and since the opening of the Wey & Arun Canal in 1816 an increasing proportion of ships entering the river discharged there in preference to Arundel. Littlehampton had only a pedestrian ferry, which did not connect with a road on the west bank, and Arundel bridge was four miles away. It was possible, at least for knowledgeable locals, to drive a loaded wagon across the shingle bar at the head of the piers for about three hours around low tide, but the bar could shift, leaving deep holes and sand ridges.[2]

William Clegram was invited to make a feasibility study. He was a self-taught engineer of some standing, being resident engineer for the extensive works at Shoreham harbour, 1816-21, and for Brighton Chain Pier, 1822-3. Thomas Telford inspected Shoreham harbour for the Exchequer Loan Commissioners, and it must have been on his recommendation that Clegram was appointed the first superintendent of the Gloucester & Berkeley Canal, in 1826.[3] Clegram reported in February that a swing bridge with 45 to 50 ft. between the central piers would not cause any impediment to navigation and proposed that the opening for shipping should be 36 ft.; the site was to be that of the 1908 bridge (N.G.R. TQ 022021), three quarters of a mile from the river's mouth. A subscription for shares was then opened, and, in April, a competition for plans, specifications and estimates for the bridge, with prizes of £30, £20 and £10, was announced. Telford was to be the judge.

The winning entry was presumably that reproduced on the cover, as it appeared in the promoters' prospectus, was by a Mr. Fowler, and was estimated to cost £5-6,000. Plans for up to five other entries survive,[4] but only two carry contemporary titles, the remainder having later endorsements. All six designs are for cantilever swing bridges, with moving sections rotating through 90 degrees in the horizontal plane. In five there were to be two moving sections, each to clear half the opening for shipping; the sixth was to open in one section. In all cases the proposed material was principally timber, with iron ties, pins and opening mechanisms, except that in some designs the fixed arches towards the banks were to be in stone. The titled plans are by Thomas Taylor, architect (at least two of that name were practising then), and James Savage, architect of Walbrook, 1779-1852, whose design for London Bridge was defeated in 1823 in preference for Sir John Rennie's by the casting vote of the chairman of the House of Commons' committee.[5] The other plans do not have the same professional finish and may be the efforts of local men such as John Butt, a Littlehampton timber merchant. From his own description of his design, it is not possible to identify any of the plans as his work.[6]

Meanwhile, an opposition party was being formed. In February, a refutation of Clegram's report was printed and a committee of merchants, shipowners and others was formed. The harbour commissioners retained Jesse Hartley, surveyor of Liverpool docks, who reported that a bridge at Littlehampton would impede the influx and reflux of the tide, which would not flow so far up country, and would cause bars to accumulate at the mouth, so endangering ships entering the harbour; delays at the bridge (at least three quarters of an hour being required for a vessel to pass through) could mean that vessels bound for Arundel would miss the tide and so be detained for days and, if dependent on a spring tide, for weeks.

The promoters petitioned Parliament for an enabling Act. The plan of the approach roads deposited in September 1821 shows the intention to build a new road on the west side from the bridge to the east end of Grevatt Lane, which at its west end in Climping joined the Arundel-Bognor road, and on the east to make a proper road on the line of the Whapple, over the brooks between Littlehampton and Rustington.[7] The following January, William Holmes, clerk to the harbour commissioners, wrote that 'a Trial of Strength in Both Houses of Parliament is likely to take place at the approaching Sessions' over the Bill, which was introduced on 18 March. It was followed by an impressive array of hostile petitions, from all the corporate bodies concerned with the river, the harbour and sewer commissions, the navigation companies (Arun, Wey & Arun, Portsmouth & Arundel, and, in the person of Lord Egremont, Rother), and also the inhabitants of Arundel, Midhurst and Petworth.[8] Printed handbills and cards arguing against the Bill were distributed to M.P.s just before and during the committee stage, which began on 24 April.

What arguments were advanced in favour of the bridge are not known. The arguments against were related to the hindrance of navigation and to the absence of any positive advantage. A bridge would shorten distances between places within only eight or so miles, and they were places whose chief support came from visitors during the bathing season, which had no trade and would continue to get supplies from the same markets: it would thus be 'for mere communication and social intercourse'. Clegram's report and evidence are said, by a hostile chronicler, to have been treated with contempt, and the Bill was withdrawn in early May without the need to call either Hartley or James Walker, who had also been engaged to refute it.[9]

The opponents' counsel was authorised to offer facilities for a single-span bridge founded on the harbour piers and high enough not to impede shipping: it would afford a most attractive promenade for visitors and might be built on the principle of Captain Samuel Brown's suspension bridge over the Tweed at Norham Ford. This compromise formula may explain an extraordinary plan which in itself is 35 ft. long. On an assumed scale of 1:12, it shows a suspension bridge of 126 ft. in length, its deck 80 ft. above the river banks, approached by a ramp on each side of about 1,200 ft. horizontal length; each ramp comprises 50 arches, within each of which is a house, five storeys high at the bridge end, diminishing to one storey at the other, bottom, end. It may be by Captain F.J. Thomas (1786-1855), a half-pay naval officer resident near Southampton, who is recorded as designing a pier at Brighton (this can be dated to 1820, the year before Brown's design for the Chain Pier was adopted) and a suspension bridge over the Arun.[10]

The supporters of the Bill did not take the offer up, if it was made at all, but promoted a Bill for a horse ferry, which the bridge's opponents considered unobjectionable and sufficient for the traffic. An Act was obtained in June 1824 for ferry, approach roads as proposed in 1821, and an additional, branch, road from Littlehampton High Street, south to the Beach Houses, and then east along the seashore

to Rustington. The ferry was built by Thomas Tupper Isemonger, with the machinery from Messrs. Bramah of London, to plans by John Skirrow, civil engineer of Bedford Square, London, who was paid to visit Chester and inspect a ferry there. The first tolls were taken in about June 1825, by which time the cost of the ferry and associated works, the road on the west and the short length of road on the east to the High Street (the modern Terminus Road) had reached over £5,000. The road across the Whapple was never made, and only in 1831, on very favourable terms from the Earl of Surrey, was the branch road constructed.[11] The ferry could take two coaches each with four horses, and quickly superseded the crossing round the pier heads. It was protected from the competition of the railway by a provision in the Act for the West Coast line, opened in 1847, that the railway company should make up the receipts from tolls to the fairly generous figure of £450 per annum. The proprietors were bought out by Littlehampton Urban District Council, under the Act which authorised the swing bridge, and the ferry was discontinued when the bridge opened in 1908.[12]

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