

# HOW LOAMPITS ESCAPED LISTING

The original Loampits Farm before demolition



Mary Balchin of Loampit, Woking, spinster, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1789.

To Edmund Vincent of Loampit, gentleman, owes me by note of 1<sup>st</sup> May 1789 £130, which to my executors; to my brother Thomas Balchin all money paying to Aylwin of Guildford, victualler £50 and to his wife Mary Alwin my gold ring; to James Stevens, late of the Bird in Hand, Woking, victualler, deceased £10; to my brother Harry Balchin of Shalford, farmer 1s; to my brother Thomas Balchin £150 and to his wife all my clothes and all furniture; brother Thomas, executor.

Witnesses: John Stedman and John Richards of Guildford.

Proved 6<sup>th</sup> March 1798.

The 1841 Tithe Apportionment shows George Ellis as the occupier of 878 Loampits Homestead with the Rev. William Roberts as the owner.



Mayford Grange retirement village now on the site of Loampits Farm

The original 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed Loampits Farm at Westfield (left) was owned by the Lee family, whose name and that of their farm can be found in local records going back to at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

In July 1610 a Richard Lee, a yeoman of Sutton, made his will noting both Richard Lee senior and junior of 'Loampit' as overseers – presumably an uncle and cousin, or at least some not too distant relatives. One of these undoubtedly also acted as overseer for the will of William Lee of Bisley in 1638, although I must assume that by 1679 when 'Richard Lee the elder of Loampits, yeoman' made his will we are not talking of the 'senior' or even probably the 'junior' recorded at the start of the century!

That will was proved on the 11<sup>th</sup> September, four days after he is recorded as being buried at St Peter's in Old Woking. His son, also called Richard then took over the farm, being recorded at 'Lome Pitt' in the list of copyholders of the Manor of Woking in 1691-3, and Loam Pitts in the baptism registers for his three daughters (Anne, Elizabeth and Mary) and one son (unimaginatively named Richard), over a five year period from March 1693 to March 1698.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century it appears as though others took over the farm. Richard Sawyer (or Sayer on John Remnant's Map of 1719) is recorded as a yeoman of Loam Pitts in 1726; Mary, 'daughter of Richard Vincent of Loampit' was buried on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 1733; and James Stevens of Loampits is recorded as an executor in the will of John Slaughter, a licenced victualler of Woking in December 1791.

One interesting will (see left) from a couple of years earlier, seems to indicate that at that time the Vincent family (who owned nearby Beech Hill in Mayford and also farmed Cross Lanes Farm in Guildford Road, Woking), were the owners, but letting it to others, such as Mary Balchin.

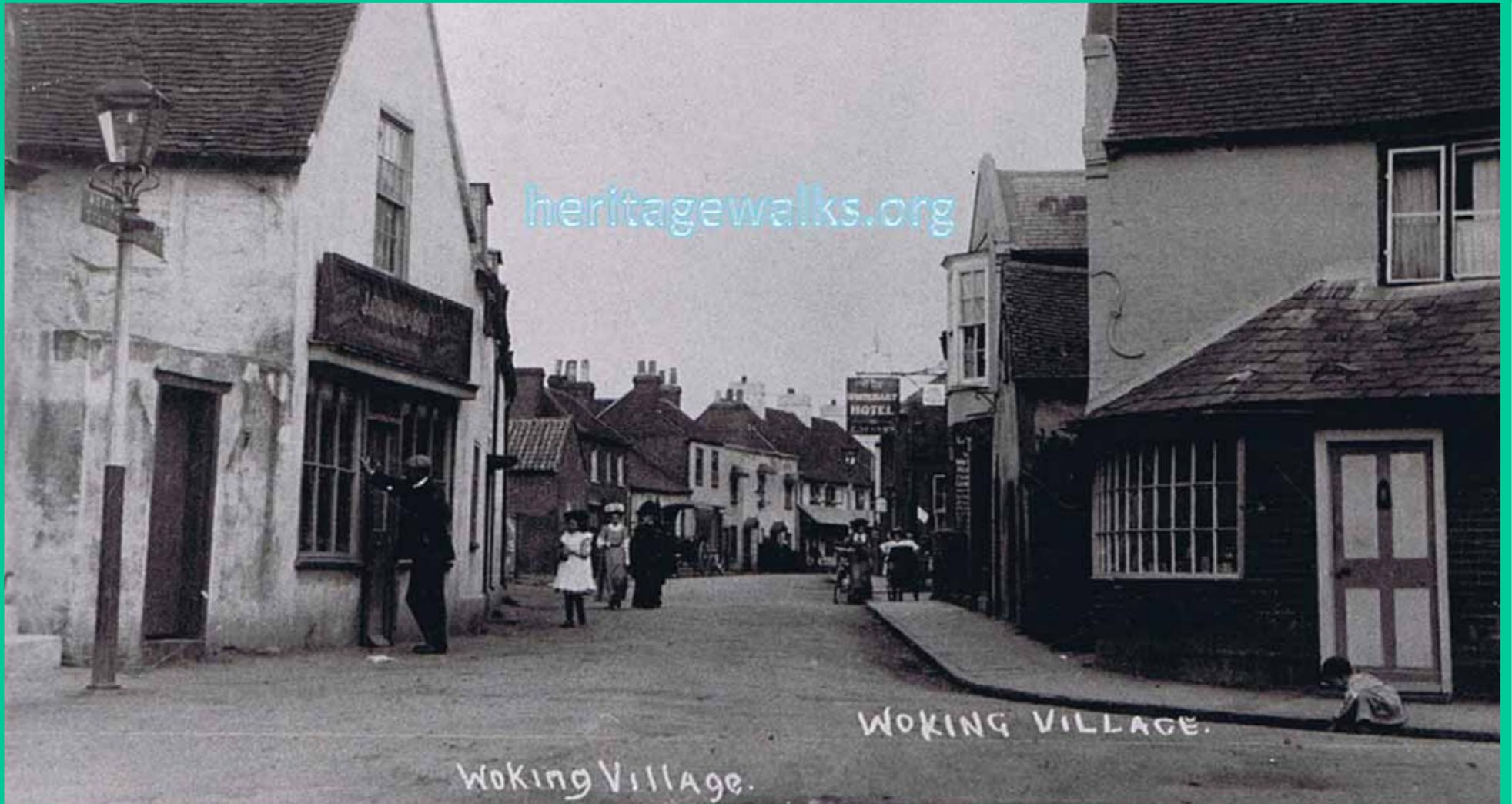
One cannot help wonder why she left her brother Harry just one shilling when the dead landlord of the Bird in Hand had £10 and £50 went to another licensee in Guildford!

Whatever the arrangement between Edmund Vincent and Mary, it is clear from the Tithe Map and Apportionment that by 1841 the farm had changed hands again, this time being owned by the Reverend William Roberts whose tenant at that time was George Ellis (hence probably Ellis Place – another of William Robert's properties). I know nothing about the good reverend, whose name unfortunately seems to be a common one for men of the church at that time – mainly in Wales – but whether any of them are our William Roberts I cannot tell.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the Lee's were back on the scene with a James Lee being recorded in the census return of 1871 together with his wife Eliza and three sons.

The old house unfortunately is no longer, having accidentally been demolished by the owner's bulldozer just before the property was about to be given Grade II listing status. A new farm house was erected on the site but that didn't last anywhere near as long as its predecessor, being demolished to make way for the Mayford Grange retirement village, pictured here on the left, now on the site

# OLD WOKING'S COTTAGES THAT ESCAPED CONSERVATION



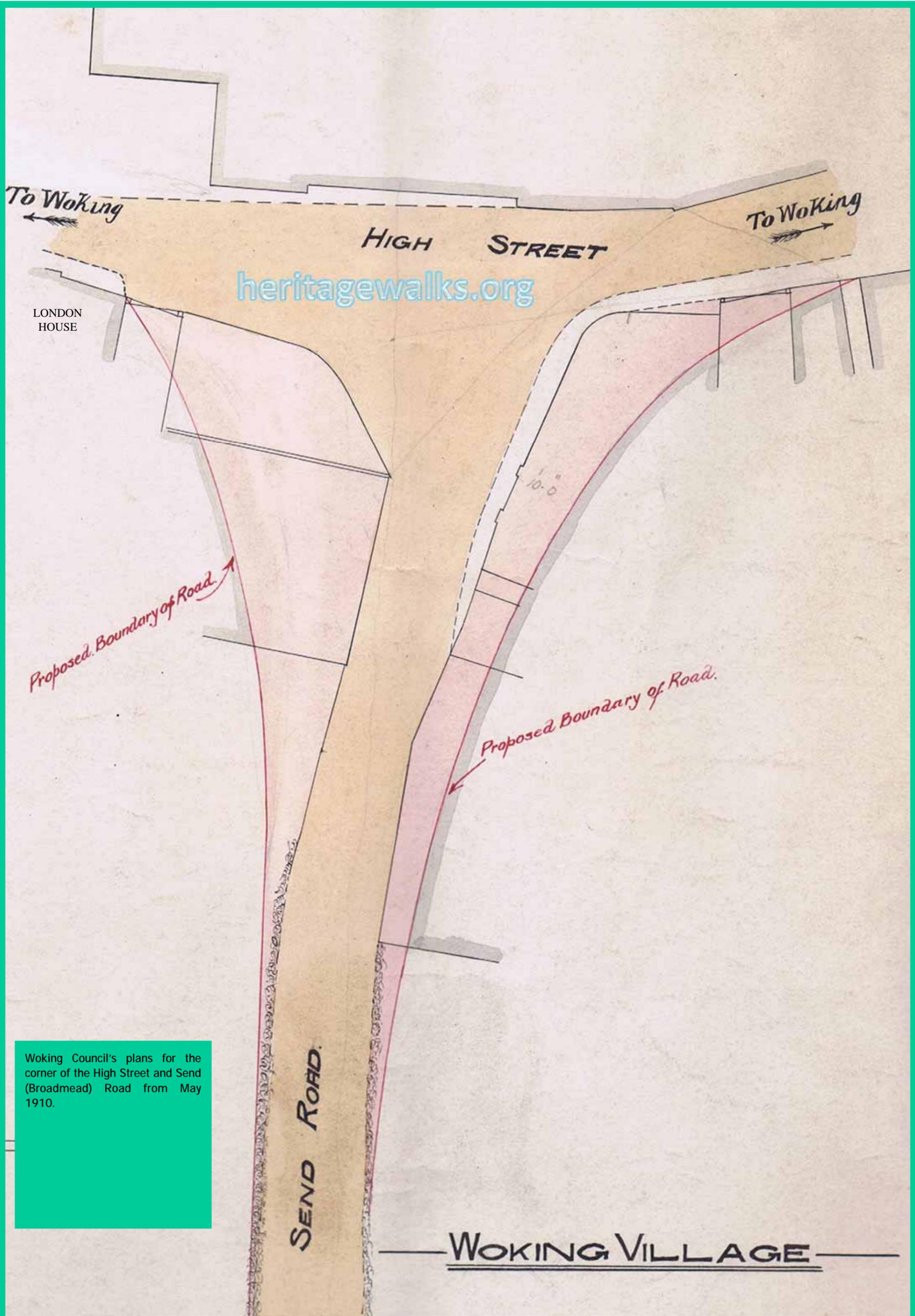
In Old Woking, long before it was granted Conservation Status in the 1970's, old houses were lost to modern development. I mentioned the White Horse Hotel and the Hand & Spear beer house last week, but in the same area a number of shops and cottages succumbed in the first few years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the council's drive for 'road improvements'. The corner turning from the High Street into Broadmead Road was decimated with Levett's greengrocers and

Miss Goldsmith's dressmakers next to London House and Hart's Butcher's and a number of cottages on the other side of the road (where the Village Sign is now) being demolished. Where the entrance to the car park is now was R Sparrow, baker and confectioners - also demolished so that charabanc's and buses could more easily get around the bend.

Further up the street Townsend Cottages replaced a number of old homes and businesses in the late 1960's, and whilst the

old Market Cottages have survived, the canopy that once adorned their frontages was pulled down to prevent it being knocked down by passing lorries. Across the road the cottage in this picture were demolished before 1908 and replaced by five terraced houses (one of which I call home), but I have always thought it a shame that the old timber-framed ones were not renovated, even though we probably wouldn't have been able to afford one if they had!





Woking Council's plans for the corner of the High Street and Send (Broadmead) Road from May 1910.