

Effingham's 'Oldest Cottage' – Demolished for a Hall and Car Park

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In 1955 members of the Catholic Church in Effingham, Our Lady of Sorrows, wished to demolish an old cottage on its land in Lower Road in order to build a new Parish Hall and a car park. For reasons of potential historical and archaeological interest, local historians and others hoped the cottage might be preserved. This article presents what is known about the history of the cottage and its occupants and then describes how the campaign to save it was ultimately lost.

Early glimpses of the cottage

The attention of Effingham Local History Group was first drawn to the cottage of interest by the reminiscences of the late Mary Alfreda (née Bridger) Rice-Oxley and her mother Lena (née Keeling). Mary had made a tape-recording in about 1970-71 of the two of them discussing Lena's recollections of Effingham since their family had taken over the village shop (the old bakery) in The Street in 1932 (although they had already been in the village for three or so years before that date). That recording and a transcript of it are accessible on the ELHG website. This is how the conversation went concerning the cottage:

- Lena:* 'Along Lower Road, where the Roman Catholic church car park is, was a very old cottage set amongst old fruit trees, now pulled down.'
- Mary:* 'It had a lovely big garden.'
- Lena:* 'It was beautiful.'
- Mary:* 'I'm afraid it got tumbledown and derelict.'
- Lena:* 'Well people lived there. Miss Stack [?] lived there for a time didn't she, and Mr and Mrs ... [?] inaudible]. The house was alright but I suppose the Roman Catholics wanted it for their enlargement.'

Mary had also produced a number of typed summaries of what she knew, or had been told, of Effingham's history and the following two extracts about the cottage come from those:

'Along Lower Road where Roman Catholic church car park [is], was very old cottage set amongst old fruit trees, pulled down.'

'The Red House (Lutyens) was turned into Convent for R. C. Nuns and Tyrrel [sic] & Ranger added chapel over the years. There was a cottage C17 between that & R. C. Churchyard which was demolished when their car park was built.'

None of the remarks above offered any definite information about the period in which the demolition had taken place. The extension to the convent was built by Tyrell and Ranger in 1955. The Catholic Church itself had been built in 1912-13 and might be presumed not to have needed a car park until the 1950s at the earliest. Nor did Mary's remarks provide any detail of what the cottage had looked like. In a conversation with Mary at the time she was donating all her Effingham-related archives to ELHG, during 2010-11, she mentioned that she thought she had once seen a photograph of the cottage but could no longer say where she had seen it. This was a very tantalising statement but ELHG was not afterwards able, through its own efforts, to discover any such photograph until a further decade had passed.

That the cottage had existed, at least in the mid-19th century, was, however, confirmable from the 1842 Tithe Map which showed it clearly in Plot 241. It stood to the east of a set of three other cottages in Plots 242-244. These other three must have been demolished by the early 1890s as their site is today occupied by The Red House, built in 1893. They are yet more examples of old Effingham dwellings long since vanished whose detailed features are wholly unknown to us. The associated 1843 schedule of Tithe Apportionments for Effingham shows Plots 242-244 in the possession of the 1st Earl of Lovelace but Plot 241 – our cottage of interest – in the possession of the Rev George Pollen Boileau-Pollen, Rector at Little Bookham; it was occupied by one John Harket [sic – Harkett] whom the 1841 Census described as a shepherd.

Thirty years later little had changed in this part of Effingham, as is evident from the segment of the 1870 Ordnance Survey map shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 reveals more landscaping details but the buildings remain much the same as in 1842, except that the National School has been added. This had been opened in 1857, having been constructed on land given by the Earl of Lovelace from Plot 245.



Figure 1 Segment of the 1842 Tithe Map; the cottage is indicated by the blue arrow.

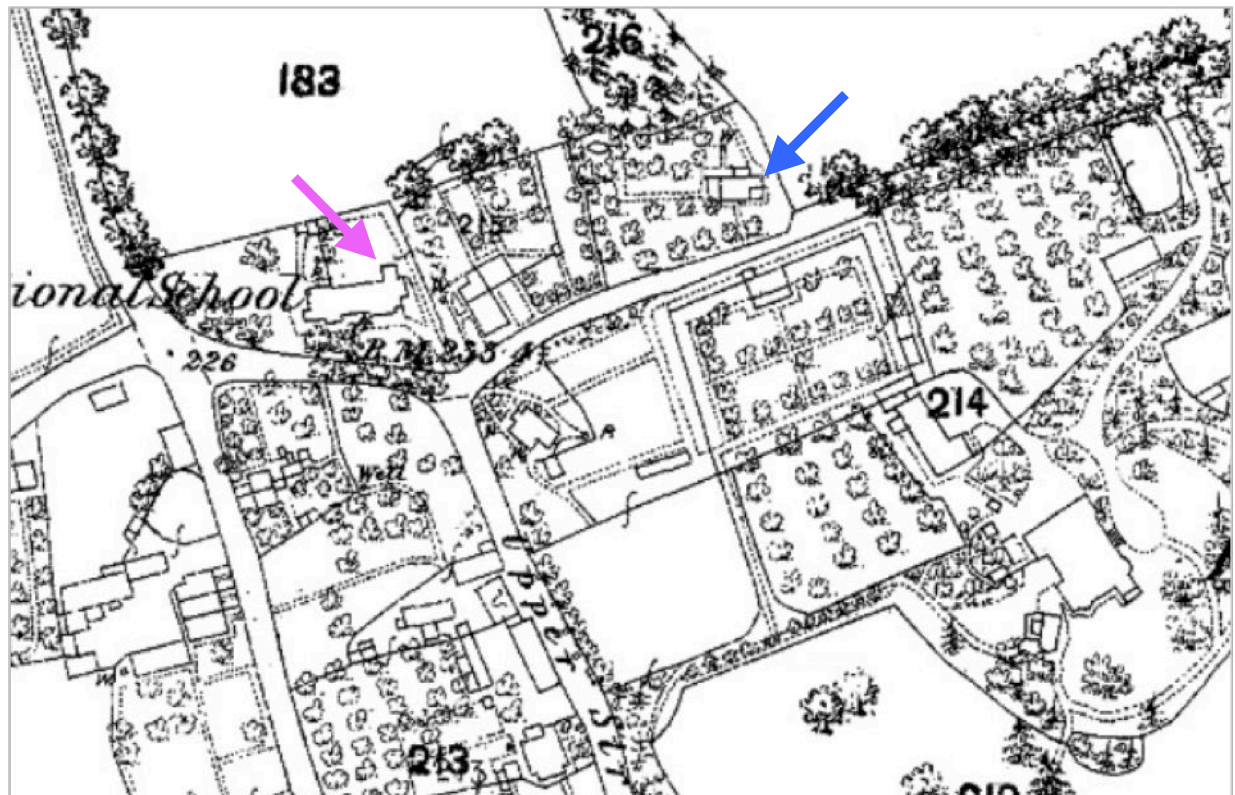


Figure 2 Segment of the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1870; the cottage is indicated by the blue arrow and the National School by the pink arrow.

In 2013 ELHG was lent a framed aerial photograph, showing most of central Effingham, to scan at high resolution. The photograph was a modern reproduction with a computer generated caption 'Effingham 1924' and the frame bore on its reverse an 'Air Pic' company label. On zooming up the scan it was possible to obtain a first impression of what the cottage had looked like.



Figure 3 Segment of the aerial photograph allegedly dated 1924; the cottage is indicated by the blue arrow and the top of the tower of Our Lady of Sorrows is indicated by the white arrow.

The cottage was set back a few tens of feet from the northern side of Lower Road, standing opposite the long glasshouses in the gardens of The Lodge. Near the centre of the top of Figure 3 can be seen, behind the trees, the tower of the Roman Catholic church, Our Lady of Sorrows. Figure 4 shows a close-up of the cottage from the aerial photograph.



Figure 4 Close-up of the cottage from the aerial photograph.

Rev Boileau-Pollen died in 1847 and left a quite long and intricate Will. We do not know whether at the time of his death he still owned Plot 241 but if he did then the Will does not help us to ascertain who inherited it. What is apparent, however, is that by 1907 that plot had entered the ownership of the Lovelace family, as indicated by a map within the documents for the sale by auction on 24 May of that year of a substantial part of the Pollen family's Little Bookham Estate. Figure 5 presents a segment of this map on which an outline of Plot 241 in red has been superimposed to show that it lay within land labelled on the sale map as belonging to the 3rd Earl of Lovelace, Lionel King.

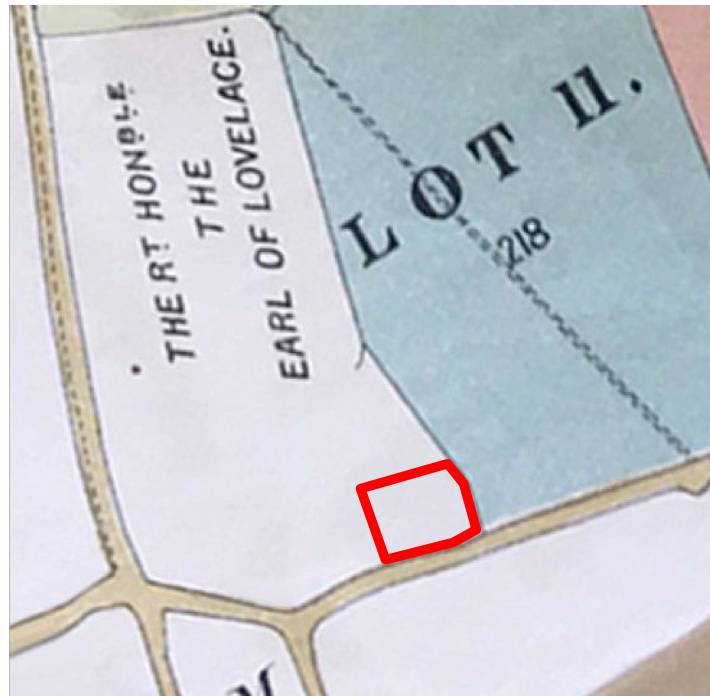


Figure 5 The Lower Road cottage plot (red outline) lying in the Lovelace estate in 1907.

The large area of land to the east of the cottage – Plot 222 on the Tithe Map – was also owned in 1843 by Rev Boileau-Pollen. By 1870 part of it had been renumbered as Plot 218 and it was still so numbered in 1907. It was here that Our Lady of Sorrows would be built in 1912-13 at the entire expense of George Craig Saunders Pauling of The Lodge. All these plots, together with much other land within Effingham extending northwards from Lower Road, lay within the Manor of Little Bookham; the Lord of that Manor had been Rev Boileau-Pollen.

It might be supposed that Pauling had for some time owned the land on which Our Lady of Sorrows would eventually be built, but this is uncertain. Like all Catholic churches it would have entered into the ownership of a diocese, administered by its bishop; in the case of Our Lady of Sorrows the diocese would have been that of Southwark. The Church was formally opened on 15 October 1913 and an article about this [*Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser*, 18 October 1913] stated ambiguously that:

‘the site has been acquired, and the church built, furnished and endowed by a great benefactor to the Roman Catholic Church, Mr George Pauling of The Lodge, Effingham ...’

The wording ‘has been’ suggests that the site had been *recently* acquired, but by whom – the diocese or Pauling? Our knowledge of what Pauling had owned in Effingham, and when he had acquired it, and how, is very incomplete. In late 1933 a further slice of Plot 218 would be sold by the trustees of Pauling's estate to the trustees of the Effingham branch of the Royal British Legion for the building of their hall.

Probably the simplest scenario is that a substantial area of land to the north of Lower Road had been sold in the 19th century by Rev Boileau-Pollen's heirs to some purchaser of The Lodge before being purchased in turn by Pauling in 1897, he then conveying Plots 241 and 222 from that land to the Diocese of Southwark in 1912-13.

Details of the ownerships and transfers of title of the various plots on the northern side of Lower Road may be contained in the archives formerly held by the Southwark diocese. In 1965 part of this diocese

became a component of the new Arundel and Brighton diocese. ELHG has been advised (in October 2024) that the property records from the former Southwark diocese, including those relating to Effingham, have recently been transferred to the solicitors acting for Arundel and Brighton, and we hope that in due course the Effingham documents, or copies thereof, will become available for our scrutiny.

Figure 6 shows the sites in 1934. There are now new plot numbers; 218a has the church and 218b the Legion's hall, both formerly within 222. From planning applications made in 1956 and 1965 (see Appendix IV) it is evident that the structure shown in blue in Figure 6 was a hut used as a meeting hall by the Catholic church; it also incorporated a small garage.

The cottage is now in 215a, a small part of the former 241. Currently it is not possible to say who owned the freehold at this point, for instance who occupied it or leased it out.

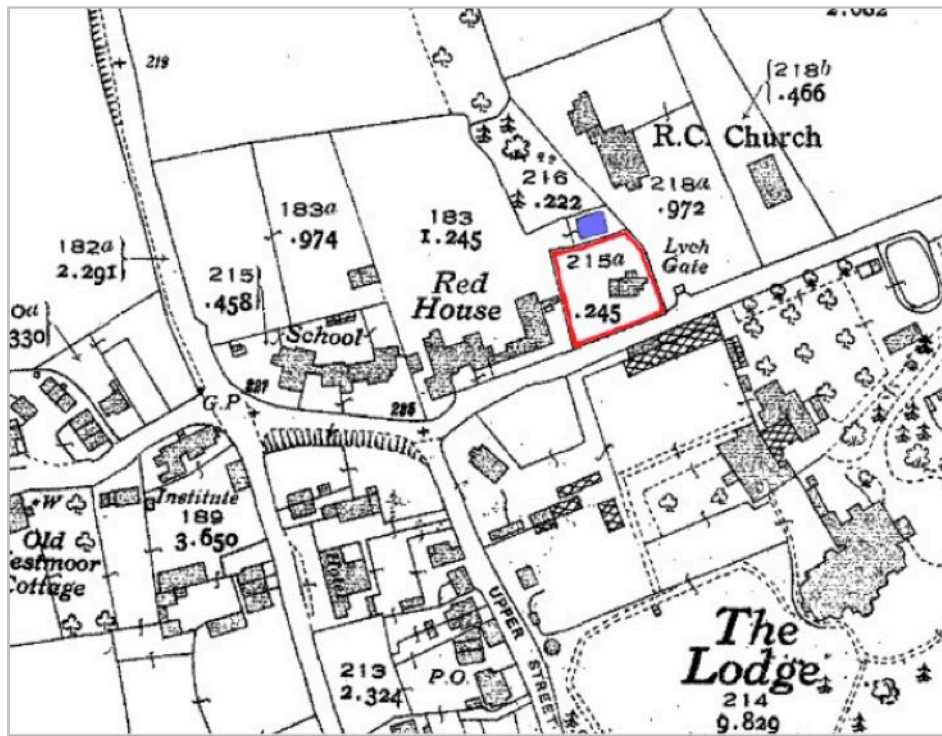


Figure 6 From the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1934; the cottage plot is outlined in red and the church's meeting hut is shaded in blue.

Occupants of the cottage

It is convenient from this point onwards to denote our cottage of interest by the initials LRC (Lower Road Cottage).

It has not yet proved possible to identify the former occupant(s) mentioned by Lena in the above recording, the audibility of which is imperfect. She appears to recall at least one such occupant named Miss Stack or Miss Tagg but Effingham seems not to have had any such resident in the relevant period (1930s to 1950s) or, at least, none listed in the Electoral Registers. What does appear almost certain is that from about 1936 to about 1952 the LRC had been occupied, perhaps only intermittently, by two ladies named Edith Gladys (née Marshall) Daunt and Theodora Leslie (née) Adams.

Edith was born in Camberley, Surrey in 1875 to Liverpool-born Edith (née Mason) and Austria-born Lieutenant Lionel Marshall who was then serving in the 20th Regiment of Foot (Lancashire Fusiliers). She was baptised at St Michael, Camberley on 25 August 1875, her parents giving their abode as the Yorktown district of Camberley. The 1891 Census finds the family living at 28, Nightingale Road in Portsea, Lionel now described as a Lt-Colonel on half pay. Edith and her five siblings had between them five significantly different birthplaces, so Lionel's army career must have entailed moving the family around a good deal.

On 8 July 1897 Edith married at St Jude's in Kensington to Lieutenant Walter Dickens Daunt, the son of Colonel John Charles Campbell Daunt VC. Walter, serving in the 39th Central Indian Horse cavalry regiment, was promoted a fortnight later, on 25 July, to the rank of Captain [*The London Gazette*, 22 October 1897, p5801]; he would later rise to Lt-Colonel. Edith and Walter have not been found in the 1901 Census

and nor has her father Lionel – he was possibly abroad, as he died in Frankfurt, Germany on 27 May 1902. Lionel had been an extremely wealthy man, his effects valued at £81,600 in the Probate Register.

The 1911 Census finds Walter aboard the troopship HMT *Rema* in Southampton, but Edith's whereabouts are unknown. In 1920 he was given permission to retire from service with effect from 1 August [*Civil & Military Gazette (Lahore)*, 17 October 1920]. He has not been found in the 1921 Census and may have still been in India. He eventually returned to Britain and settled in Winchester, at 6 St James Terrace, where he remained until his death on 8 January 1943. He was buried on 12 January in the Magdalen Hill Cemetery. Probate was granted to a solicitor and his effects were valued at nearly £27,400.

The 1921 Census finds Edith, with several dozen other persons, as a 'resident boarder' at 64, Gloucester Gardens in Paddington, described as married and with no occupation. She may by that time have separated from Walter. From 1929 onwards she certainly lived apart from him, but did not divorce him. The Electoral Registers for 1929 and 1930 find her living in one of the apartments of an elegant 3-storey property known as Rowe House, 111-115 Cambridge Gardens in North Kensington. The 1931 Electoral Register, however, finds her living with a few other persons at 105 St George's Road (today's St George's Drive) in Pimlico, a very select and expensive residence. One of those with her was Theodora Leslie (née) Adams and it is useful now to discuss her background too, as in due course the two ladies would together have an enduring interest in the LRC.

Theodora, familiarly 'Dora', was born in about 1876 to parents William Adams and Eliza Anne (née Holloway) who, according to one *Ancestry* tree, had married in Bengal in 1860 [LDS Film: FHL 49900]. There appears to be no entry for Theodora in the GRO birth index. She was baptised as 'Theodora Leslie Adams' on 18 October 1876 at St John's, Deptford, the baptism register giving her date of birth as 3 January 1876, her parents' abode as Bombay and William's occupation as Deputy Registrar of the High Court of Judicature.

The Adams family has not been found in the 1881 Census and was probably abroad. William had lived a remarkable life while in India but in late December 1882 he had gone to Australia (perhaps taking Eliza and the children with him) for health reasons, returning to India in February 1883. Still unfit for work he retired shortly afterwards and came back to England where he died in Lewisham, aged 56, on 31 May [GRO Ref: Greenwich 1d 550, 1883 (Q2)]. A more detailed account of the life and death of this fascinating man is given in Appendix I. The 1891 Census finds Eliza, widowed with four children including Theodora (entered as 'Dora'), living at 91, Malpas Road in St Paul's, Deptford. The birthplace of Theodora was here given as St Mary's in Surrey, probably referring to St Mary's in Lewisham (actually then in Kent). The 1901 Census finds Eliza and Theodora as visitors, living on their own means, in the household of a spinster Rosalie Ada Marsack James at 27 Lansdowne Road in East Croydon. Eliza's birthplace was given as Dinapore, India. She died aged '70' in 1907 [GRO Ref: Greenwich 1d 480, 1907 (Q3)].

The 1911 Census finds Theodora, aged 35 and with no occupation, living in the household of one of her brothers, William Edwin Hyland Adams (a mercantile clerk), at 56 Tyrwhitt Road in St John's, Brockley.

The 1921 Census finds her in residence at the Gensing Lodge Convent on Upper Maze Hill in St Leonard's on Sea, Hastings and occupied as a nurse. She gave her age as 37 rather than 44. The convent, formerly a private mansion, had been set up by Augustinian Sisters from France as a home for elderly Catholic ladies; later it became known as St Augustine's Nursing Home.

Our next sighting of Theodora is in the Electoral Register for 1931 when, as observed earlier, she had taken up residence with Edith in Pimlico. The two ladies retained their registrations at 105 St George's Road up to 1937. However, from 1936 Edith was also listed at the LRC (entered as 'The Cottage, Lower Bookham Road') in Effingham's Electoral Register. The 1939 National Register finds both Edith and Theodora there, their occupations given as unpaid domestic duties. Theodora's surname was entered as Swinburne-Adams, Swinburne being a forename found elsewhere in her family (for reasons unknown). Her birth date was given as 3 January 1884 – thus again making her seem 7-8 years younger than she truly was. Edith's birth date was given as 16 July 1875. After the War Theodora and Edith were both listed at the LRC in the Electoral Registers during 1948-52. After 1952 the cottage does not appear in the registers and was then probably uninhabited.

A number of questions arise as to the interpretation of the foregoing. Perhaps the most important is whether the property being occupied by Theodora and Edith was indeed the LRC. In the 1930s the dwellings within Effingham parish that were listed standing on or near the southern side of Lower Road were just those lying within the grounds of The Lodge. These included the Lodge Gardens bungalow at the corner of the road with Church Street; the Gardener's Lodge to the north-east of the main house; and Little Lodge at the eastern extremity of the grounds. On the northern side of Lower Road were the School House; The Red House and its small adjunct Red House Bungalow/Cottage standing at its south-western corner; the LRC; the Priest's House/The Presbytery (immediately north of Our Lady of Sorrows);

and, much further eastwards, The Vineries. In the 1939 National Register and Electoral Registers for Effingham the address of Theodora and Edith is expressed as 'The Cottage, Lower Road' or 'The Cottage, Lower Bookham Road'. In those registers all the other dwellings listed above are clearly named and have occupants familiar to us from our other studies, which seems to leave the LRC as the only possible abode for the two ladies.

It may be that they visited the cottage – or at least its reputedly beautiful garden and orchard, as hinted at by the details in the 1870 OS map – only occasionally and for the most part sub-let it to other tenants, the latter being those remembered by Lena.

A second question concerns the relationship between Theodora and Edith, in particular how they first came to know each other and on what basis they lived together. Probate entries indicate that Edith had been very well-off but Theodora not so. Perhaps Theodora had been a companion or a nurse to Edith. The telephone directories for 1940-53 provide the number Bookham 2935 for Edith at the LRC, suggesting that she had been the principal of the household there. If the LRC had a telephone, it was surely not a wreck. Might this suggest whether they owned, or rented, the cottage? And if the latter, from whom?

After the early 1950s both ladies evidently left Effingham and we know nothing more of them until their deaths. They both died in 1960 but in counties far apart. Edith died on 28 May and had been living at 3 St James Square in Boscombe near Bournemouth in Dorset. Theodora died – as 'Theodora Swinburne-Adams' – on 21 December at the Lister Hospital in Hertfordshire and had been living at The Convent of Our Lady of Peace (established in the 17th C Roxley Manor) in Roxley Court, Letchworth. Edith's effects were valued at £22,269 and Theodora's at £270. Theodora's Will made on 30 December 1955 was very simple – she left everything to 'my friend Edith Gladys Daunt', requesting only that her clothes be given by Edith to some organisation assisting destitute or displaced persons in Europe. Edith's Will made on 14 July 1955 was more extensive but uncomplicated; she left various cash legacies amounting to £2,200, some specific legacies of jewellery and other valuables to relatives, some jewellery, carpets and clothes to Theodora, an annuity of £500 to Theodora and all remaining estate, after conversion to money, in 21 equal parts to relatives.

We do not know the condition of the LRC when the two ladies finally departed from it. Perhaps a lease ran out. Perhaps it was already deteriorating and getting beyond them to maintain; or perhaps it fell into neglect through a failure to attract new occupants. However this may be, the history of Theodora and Edith in Effingham is not really germane to the central story in this article, namely the subsequent attempt by others to save the cottage from demolition. A final unresolved question is why the ladies do not appear to be the occupants recalled by Lena Bridger.

The first intimation of threatened demolition

Our knowledge of the fate of the LRC after its last occupants had vacated it comes entirely from a file of correspondence, spread over about 65 pages, held at the Surrey History Centre [SHC Ref: CC512/19]. Samples from it are presented in Appendix II. The file begins with a letter dated 19 April 1955 written by the distinguished architect, archivist and historian John Hooper Harvey.

Harvey, born on 25 May 1911, was at this time living in Little Bookham in the Grade II-listed Half Moon Cottage standing at the southern end of Little Bookham Street. An account of his varied and highly influential career, through which he gained the reputation of being Britain's greatest historian of Gothic architecture besides being highly regarded in many other fields of historical and antiquarian expertise, was given in his obituary published in *The Independent* on 25 November 1997. That article discreetly omitted to mention that Harvey had also been for many years a fervent and proactive fascist and hardline anti-semitic. Some scholarly re-evaluations of his extensive corpus of published work have supported the view expressed by art historian Paul Crossley that 'his nationalism continued to distort his judgement'. Be that as it may, Harvey's interjection into the matter of a derelict cottage in Effingham in the hands of the Catholic Church seems not to have been coloured by his political views, although he was certainly no friend of the latter institution which, after the Second World War, had attempted to make him withdraw passages in his book *The Plantagenets* in which he sought to persuade his readers of the truth of the 'Blood Libel'. During the War, during which he was investigated by MI5, he had declared that

'If Britain defeat Hitler it is a victory for Jews all over the world, if Britain is defeated by Hitler it is a defeat for the Jews and Britain would have a chance to put herself on the map again.'

It is unfortunate that such views were nurtured by the man whom Monica Mercy O'Connor later described as 'the cornerstone' of the Women's Institute publication *The History of Effingham in Surrey*, 1973. He had provided her, and other contributors to that work, with much relevant material from his own notes and

archives. During his years living in Fetcham and Bookham – spanning at least the 1930s through to the 1950s – he had put much effort into the local history, including that of Effingham. However, by the time O'Connor was interacting with him he was living and working in York, having moved there in 1963.

In 1955 it would have been natural for him to have taken a keen interest in what was clearly a very old cottage not far from his own home and he would have had a powerful instinct to secure its preservation. His letter of 19 April was written to his friend and esteemed archaeologist Capt Anthony William George Lowther, then living at The Old Quarry in Ashted. Lowther had excavated Ashted's Roman Villa in the 1920s and been a founding member and chairman of the Leatherhead and District Local History Society (L&DLHS) from the 1940s. Harvey explained to Lowther that he 'had just picked up a rumour' that the LRC was on the point of being demolished, noting that the building was listed in the (then most recent) 4th edition of the *List of Antiquities in Surrey* maintained by Surrey County Council (SCC) published in 1951. This listing under the auspices of Surrey's County Records and Ancient Monuments Committee (CRAMC) should have provided the cottage with some protection. The remit of the CRAMC, so-named since 1924 but evolved from the Ancient Monuments Committee established in 1911, is described in the Surrey History Centre's collections catalogue thus [SHC Ref: CC1101]:

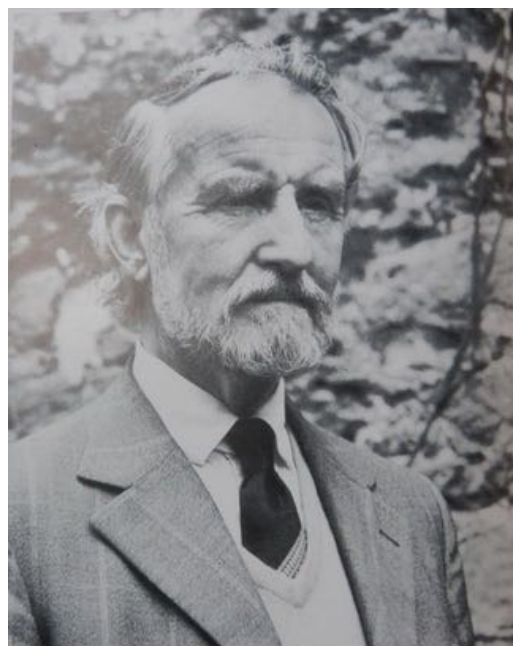


Figure 7 John Hooper Harvey; 1978.

'Its main function was the preservation of the county's archives and ancient monuments and buildings of architectural or historic interest and the committee was tasked with the compilation of a "list of ancient monuments within the Administrative County and that on completion thereof a copy of such list be supplied to H.M. Office of Works". Any building identified under the Ancient Monuments Acts, 1913-1953, and those listed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, as worthy of permanent preservation, could not be demolished or altered without two months notice to the Local Planning Authority. The County and District Planning committee and the Records, Historic Buildings and Antiquities committee (from 1958) liaised closely before any decision as to demolition, alteration or extension was taken.'

This *local* list however is different from the *national* 'Statutory List' of Ancient Monuments, those candidates seen to be of greater significance nationally. Many people are familiar with this and the Grade I, Grade II etc listings given to the properties. Depressingly, however, in Surrey's list the cottage was wrongly described as being in 'Lower Street' – denoting the lower, northern, section of The Street – instead of Lower Road. This confusion over the location / address was later to help contribute to its demise. If postcodes had existed then, some of what follows might have been different.

In his letter to Lowther, Harvey thought the cottage appeared to date from the 17th century but had been told by those who had seen its interior

'that it is really much older and has the reputation of being the oldest house in the three parishes (Great and Little Bookham and Effingham)'.

Any claim that a particular property in a village like Effingham is its 'oldest' may need to be taken with a pinch of salt, especially when based on no more than an unattributed 'reputation'. One document donated by L&DLHS to Effingham Local History Group (ELHG) suggests that Crosslands (formerly The Prince Blücher public house) may have been Effingham's oldest house whilst the album created in 1949 by Effingham Women's Institute stated that a house on The Street (The Laurels) then functioning as Effingham's Post Office 'is reputed to be the oldest house in the village'. The fact is that no one knew which house was the oldest. Such an epithet had no clear meaning anyway, as it might pertain to an entire current house or only to some internal walls of a precursive house or merely to a few roof beams that may well have been salvaged from some other dwelling. Still, the LRC was clearly an 'old' house and Harvey emphasized the need 'for a fully measured and detailed record [of it] in addition to photographs'.

Harvey ended his letter by noting that the LRC lay within Guildford Rural District Council (GRDC) as the relevant local authority and suggested to Lowther that SCC 'might be able to make discreet enquiries'.

Wheels begin turning

Harvey did not rely upon Lowther to take up the challenge of stirring SCC into action, but instead forwarded a copy of his letter direct to the Clerk to the Council (henceforth denoted CC), Mr William Willis Ruff (who in 1973 would be awarded the CBE). Many experts in different disciplines and authorities would be drawn into this issue as it evolved over the next few years, and for the aid of readers a *Dramatis Personae* is presented in Appendix III.

On 22 April the CC wrote a reply to Harvey, copied to Lowther, to say that he had contacted GRDC to enquire if they were aware of any intent to demolish the cottage and that 'Mr Strange is visiting it today'. Frederick William Strange, a civil servant, was the Technical Advisor to Surrey's County Records and Ancient Monuments Committee (CRAMC) chaired by Miss Daphne Weeding. He was living at 122 Lexham Gardens near Earls Court, London W8 and, like Harvey and Lowther, was a Fellow of various antiquarian societies.

The CC's reply also stated that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government had asked what action SCC proposed to take, expressing the opinion that it was 'quite likely' that the Ministry would include the cottage in the Statutory List and, if absolutely necessary, would 'Spot List' it to bring into operation the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947.

Mr Strange did indeed visit the LRC on 22 April and wrote a short report three days later. He gave it to the CC who forwarded it to Miss Weeding; she noted receiving it on 27 April. It read as follows:

'The Cottage, Lower Street [sic]. (L/A 2639)

I inspected the exterior of this cottage on April 22nd. It is of 17th century date, timber-framed, with 19th century brick facing, except the upper part of rear elevation, where timber-framing with brick infilling is exposed. Tiled roof. Large outbuilt chimney (mostly rebuilt) with oven at E. end. Late brick lean-to at W. end. Some timber beams could be seen in ceilings of ground floor rooms.

While I was on the site the Rev. H. W. Loader appeared and from him I obtained the facts. The cottage and land surrounding it – approximately one acre – now belongs to the Roman Catholic Church (Diocese of Southwark) and it is intended, when circumstances permit, to build a Church Hall on the site. Mr. Loader obtained the key of the cottage, but was unable to open the door. He stated that the interior is in a bad state, owing to dry-rot and other defects. Arrangements will be made for me to inspect the interior in the near future, for which purpose I gave him my telephone number.'

Whereas Harvey was the leading proponent for saving the cottage, Rev Herbert William Loader, priest at Our Lady of Sorrows since 1939, was the leading proponent for demolishing it. He lived in the Priest's House behind the church and had lived there for at least a decade, so he would surely have known Theodora and Edith well. Loader's expressed reason for wishing the cottage to be gone was that he wanted to have a church hall built on the site. There had already been – and still was – some kind of 'hut' on the church premises and at least one local newspaper reported in 1932 'a meeting of the Effingham and District branch of the British Legion at the Catholic Hut' [*The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 6 February 1932]. As it later turned out, the hall that would eventually be built after the cottage's demolition would occupy only a small part of the cottage site, almost all of which would be turned into a tarmacked car park. It would have been entirely feasible in principle, if slightly less convenient, to construct the hall and a sufficient car park within the curtilage of the cottage without needing to demolish the latter.



Figure 8 Rev Loader; 1955.

Besides conveying Strange's report to Miss Weeding, the CC had on 26 April also sent copies of it to a Miss N K Baker in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, to Lowther and to GRDC's Engineer and Surveyor, Major Jack Woolley Snape. He informed Snape that the Ministry had said that the cottage would probably be placed in Grade II of their List when it was issued, and that it would 'Spot' list the property if that were felt essential to prevent its demolition.

Making the case for Listing

On 28 July the CC wrote to a Miss M Gent at the Ministry sending her (belatedly) a copy of Strange's report, mentioning Strange's view that the building of a new church hall was not imminent and saying that he would write to Loader to ask whether the Church Authority intended to preserve the cottage.

Two months passed. Then, on 8 September Strange wrote to the CRAMC reporting that Loader had phoned him with the news that the scheme for erecting the church hall had been 'agreed', presumably by the Diocese. Strange now advised that photographs of the interior and exterior be taken as soon as possible, giving his view that the prospects of the cottage being retained were 'not very hopeful'.

On 16 September the CC wrote at length to Loader setting out the concerns and asking him if the possibility of the cottage's preservation had been 'fully considered', mentioning that the Ministry wished to know of 'any immediate threat of its demolition'. On the same date he sent Strange's latest report to Miss Gent, telling her that he had written to Loader, and wrote to Harvey updating him on what had so far been done. On 17 September he sent to Strange a copy of the letter he had written to Loader.

Another month passed. On 25 October the Ministry wrote to the CC letting him know that one of its Investigators had visited the cottage and that the Ministry, having concluded that the building was of local rather than national interest, was now 'content to leave consideration of any proposals to demolish it' to the discretion of SCC.

By 2 November Loader had not replied to the CC's letter sent over six weeks previously and so the CC now wrote to him again. He requested a reply to that earlier letter, noting that the Ministry had now proposed classifying the cottage as Grade III in its List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, following its Investigator's description of the property thus:

'A small timber framed, probably 17th Century Cottage, refaced with red bricks. Tiled roof, casement windows, chimney breast on east wall. 2 Storeys, 2 windows.'

He thoughtfully enclosed a stamped addressed envelope. On the next day he wrote to Harvey to say that he had written again to Loader, and suggested that Harvey or someone local might be able to advise Loader on the possibility of preserving the cottage.

Anxieties grow

When Harvey received this news on 5 November he wrote his own letter to Loader about the cottage, 'stressing the local interest and asking that any possible steps to preserve it should be taken'.

More than three weeks later, however, Harvey wrote to the CC on 29 November to say that he too had received no reply from Loader. He stated that with the onset of winter there was the likelihood of irreparable damage taking place and suggested that 'first-aid measures' now be taken 'to prevent the cottage getting beyond repair while the case is under discussion'. He thought it might be helpful if Strange were to pay another visit and put the preservation case to the owners. The CC replied to say he would ask Strange to do so. He accordingly made that request to Strange on 5 December, noting that

'It seems strange that the Rev Father Loader has not replied to the letter we sent to him on the 2nd November or to Mr Harvey's letter which was sent soon afterwards.'

He seems to have imagined that Loader was on the same side in this matter as all those pressing the case for preservation. The case may have been 'under discussion', but Loader was taking no part in it.

On 10 December Strange reported to the CRAMC that he had managed to talk further with Loader, who had told him that nothing of a definite nature had transpired since the report of 8 September. Loader had mooted the possibility of having an architect advise as to whether the cottage might be used in connection with the church hall project. He had also told Strange that he would write to the CC and to Harvey 'very shortly'.

But Loader did no such thing. A further nine weeks of winter passed, although SCC's officer Derrick John Yellan visited the cottage on 16 January 1956 to take two photographs of its exterior.

The threat of demolition intensifies

The surveyor Mr Snape now re-entered the frame, writing to the CC on 13 February to say that he had been informed by GRDC that demolition was 'likely to commence shortly'. He asked whether the Council or the Ministry proposed 'to take any steps to preserve the building'. On 16 February the CC, undeterred by Loader's manifest reluctance to reply to letters, now wrote to him yet again, to confirm the gist of a phone discussion that his representative Mr Rook at SCC had had with Loader earlier that day.



Figure 9 The Lower Road Cottage, looking westwards towards The Red House; at far right is the old hut; 1956.



Figure 10 The Lower Road Cottage, looking eastwards; at far left, the church and the old hut; 1956.

In this letter the CC raised the matter of Snape's news which had 'come as a great surprise', observing that back in December Loader had told Strange of the intention to engage an architect to advise on the usability of the cottage in the church hall project. He also reminded Loader that Strange had urged upon him the need to take steps against further deterioration and that Mr Rook had been assured that there was no immediate intention to demolish the cottage. It was a long letter. It concluded by asking Loader's permission for the taking of some interior photographs. The CC then copied the letter to Harvey and Strange.

Another month passed with no reply from Loader, so on 12 March the CC wrote to him again, saying that a fortnight later the CRAMC would be meeting to consider the matter and asking whether the architect had been engaged. The CC finished by saying he assumed that all necessary steps had been made to prevent further deterioration. In assuming this he was much mistaken. He copied his letter to Harvey.

Finally, on 21 March, Loader's pen stirred at last from its six months of hibernation. The letters he had received had been typed with care and earnestness, formally addressed and signed, their impeccable grammar, graceful phrasing and courteous enquiry laid out in neatly delimited paragraphs. In response to the CC, Loader's letter was a scrappy page of barely legible handwritten scrawl in which he made it clear that he had taken no action at all in respect of the architect, had allowed the site to become a dump and had a majority of parishioners unsympathetic to the case for preservation:

'Dear Sir, I have made no arrangement for an architect to come and inspect the cottage, Lower Road, Effingham. The ground in front of the cottage has become a dump for the equipment etc. connected with the work of mains drainage – and there is also a 30 foot pit. All this has the approval of the Guildford Rural. Already I have seen the necessity of under-pinning and damp coursing. Most of my parishioners cannot see the necessity of preserving it and are rather amazed at what they call the fuss that is being made about it. With all good wishes, Yours sincerely, Herbert W. Loader.'

This letter was duly reported to the CRAMC when it met on 4 April. It seems that the Committee asked the CC to make a further approach to Loader. With commendable tenacity he composed again another long letter on 20 April. He noted that the land surrounding the LRC was being used temporarily by GRDC in the course of 'sewage work' they were carrying out. Noting the views of Loader's sceptical parishioners, he enquired whether they realised ...

'... that The Cottage has the reputation of being the oldest house in the three Parishes of Great and Little Bookham and Effingham. That it is of 17th Century date and possibly parts of the interior may be even older, and this is the opinion of a qualified architect.'

He concluded by asking Loader to let him know if he would be agreeable for Harvey and Strange to inspect the cottage thoroughly 'with a view to ascertaining whether it would be an economic proposition to preserve it.' He assured Loader that this would not involve him in any expenditure and 'only a little of your valuable time'. A few days later he wrote to Harvey and Strange updating them on the situation.

A new bombshell

On 26 April a letter from Guildford arrived on the desk of SCC's County Planning Officer, Theodore Vincent Scott Durrant. It had been sent by Peter Meddows Taylor, the Chief Sanitary Inspector for GRDC, and conveyed the following bombshell:

'The Cottage, Lower Road, Effingham.

I would advise you that the above Cottage, which is situated near the Roman Catholic Church at Effingham and is unoccupied, has been included *for consideration* [italics inserted] within my Council's Slum Clearance programme.'

He followed this up by saying that GRDC wished to know whether the cottage was included in any statutory or interim list and to be told what the present position was regarding SCC's interest in its preservation.

The CC, after seeing Durrant, replied at length to Meddows Taylor on 8 May. There was a sense of exasperation in his tone. He expressed surprise at the cottage's *inclusion* in the Slum Clearance programme (technically, it was not yet formally included, only under consideration, but from here on in, some people

begin to discuss it as if it were fully designated), about which Snape had said nothing to him back in February. He detailed the various meetings and letters among the parties involved, noting that

‘So far I have not received a reply from the Rev Loader and I regret to say this is not the first time that I have found it difficult to make contact or get Rev Loader to agree to an inspection of the Cottage.’

Then, on 10 May, the CC received a second letter from Loader. Perhaps Loader had been feeling the heat from all this correspondence; or he may have thought that an inspection at this late stage in the cottage's convenient journey of decay would now quash any prospect of preserving it (if so, he would be right). He wrote as follows:

‘Dear Sir, I have asked Mr H G Clacy (architect) to inspect the cottage and give a report. I understand he is coming on Monday next in the afternoon. It may be that Mr Strange would be interested. I have been given to understand that the cottage *is included* [italics inserted] in the Guildford Council Slum Clearance programme. Yours sincerely, Herbert W. Loader.’

The inspection by Harry George Clacy duly took place, in the company of Loader and Strange. On 14 May Strange sent a short report to the CRAMC:

‘The property has deteriorated so seriously since my last visit, that I have reluctantly formed the opinion that reconditioning would not now be an economic proposition: if the necessary funds were forthcoming, the result would amount to almost complete reconstruction, except that possibly portions of exterior might be preserved. The roof is partly shorn of tiles and this, of course, has seriously increased the internal defects. Apart from the possibility (or desirability) of carrying out the work, there would still remain the question of user [sic – use?] in connection with the proposed Church Hall.’

The end game arrives

The admirably patient County Clerk Mr Ruff, having seen Strange's conclusion but not yet having seen Clacy's report, must now have sensed that it was almost time to throw in the towel. On 22 May he wrote to Loader acknowledging that if Clacy were to confirm that preservation would not be economic then ‘there would seem to be no objection to the District Council including The Cottage in their Slum Clearance Area Programme’; but he wanted to see Clacy's report first and then bring the matter to the CRAMC's next meeting on 4 July. He sent a copy of this to Harvey together with Strange's report.

On 8 June Meddows Taylor from GRDC wrote to the CC in reply to the latter's earlier communication of 8 May. He stated that the cottage ‘had been scheduled a Grade 5 property since the initial Rural Housing Survey in this area, now over ten years old’. He confirmed its recent *provisional* inclusion in the Slum Clearance programme. In May the CC had mentioned the fact that the cottage was a Surrey Listed Antiquity. Meddows Taylor now confirmed that he had indeed obtained a draft of the 4th edition of the *List of Antiquities*, but this document had listed the cottage as being in ‘Lower Street’ instead of Lower Road, the consequence being that Guildford's attention had not been formally drawn to the status of the cottage, their knowledge of which ‘was from hearsay only’. It seems that this is why it had entered the Slum Clearance programme without further ado.

Meanwhile, Clacy now reported his conclusions to Loader in a letter dated 8 June, stating that:

‘The building is constructed of timber framing filled in with brickwork and rubble stone. The timbers are in an advanced state of decay owing to dampness and to long standing attack by wood beetle. I found extensive dampness in the walls owing to the absence of a damp proof course and in the floors increased by the level being 12" below the outside ground level. A damp proof course cannot be added because of the condition of the walls and the floor level cannot be raised owing to the low pitch of the ground floor rooms, there being not more than 6' 0" head room beneath the main beams. The windows and doors are very defective and there is no sanitary arrangement or other fittings in a usable condition. The planning of the house does not lend itself to conversion to a comfortable dwelling and in my opinion the building could not be made habitable, even at a prohibitive cost. I could find no historical or artistic value to justify such expenditure.’

Loader was in no hurry to comply with the CC's request on 22 May to be sent Clacy's report when it became available. On 21 June the CC wrote to Loader repeating his request as the CRAMC was to meet shortly. On the same date he replied to Meddows Taylor, conceding that the cottage had been wrongly addressed in the *List of Antiquities*; he mentioned that he was still awaiting Clacy's report but stated that if it confirmed Strange's opinion then there would remain 'no reason why preservation of the property should be further pressed.'

At last, on 25 June, Loader sent Clacy's report to the CC, making no comment on its import, and the CC acknowledged it on 27 June and confirmed that it would be considered by the CRAMC. A summary of the matter of the cottage was duly tabled, as 'Appendix M', with the Agenda for the meeting of that Committee on 4 July. In the ensuing Minutes it was recorded that:

'After discussion the Committee decided that the Church Authorities should be requested to make available facilities for a survey and measured drawings of at least a cross section of The Cottage, Lower Road, Effingham, to be made before the property is demolished.'

Checkmate to the church

On 10 July the CC wrote to Loader saying that the CRAMC, in view of the cottage's condition, had decided that 'no further objection could be raised to its demolition'. He requested Loader's consent for two measured drawings of sections through the cottage to be made.

He annotated his copy of the letter to the effect that a Mr Francis Smith (an architect acting on behalf of the National Buildings Record) had seen Loader and arranged for measured drawings but thought it might be necessary to cut a small hole in the ceiling to see the roof trusses; Loader had been asked to let Smith know when the drawings could be done. The CC also wrote to Meddows Taylor on 10 July updating him on the CRAMC's decision and the intention to obtain drawings.

Almost three months then passed. On 4 October Mr Rook at SCC received a letter from Robert William McDowall (later CBE) of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) offering to make a record of the cottage 'if it is still standing'. He said he could visit Effingham next week if required. On 9 October the CC replied to McDowall, explaining how it had been intended that Francis Smith would do the drawings. He related that Smith had duly obtained the key from Loader, but on arriving at the cottage on 20 September he had found that the roof had already been stripped and the cottage partly demolished and that 'there was nothing left worth surveying'. Loader had been contacted by phone and said he had understood that the survey had been already done and so had allowed the demolition to proceed. The CC concluded by stating that this outcome had been 'most unfortunate but seems to have been a case of misunderstanding' but 'fortunately we did obtain a few photographs of the cottage before demolition although no interior shots were taken.' He then copied McDowall's letter and his reply to it to Harvey. McDowall replied on 15 October conveying his regret at what had happened.

The last page in the correspondence file contains just this handwritten note, written on GRDC notepaper:

'Demolished sometime 1957 see letter from Guildford RDC dated 15/6/64 in 5th Edition L/A file.'

Aftermath

The decision makers at Our Lady of Sorrows and/or the Southwark Diocese had got the demolition outcome they had wanted whilst Harvey's campaign to prevent it had been routed. All that typing and licking of envelopes by numerous people over a period of eighteen months had in the end come to nothing save a couple of photographs of a ruin standing amidst an acre of detritus.

In fairness to Rev Loader and his parishioners, one can understand that, even had the cottage been amenable early on to preservation or some kind of integration within the Church Hall project, the result would probably have been a rather peculiar hybrid arrangement and quite possibly a long-term financial liability that they could have well done without. It appears, in any case, that there had not remained much, if anything, about the cottage worth preserving and no important new knowledge to be extracted from it, although it *had* been judged to have some local value. It would have been nice for our local historians had it been possible to obtain some internal drawings and photographs, just as a record, and we may regret that Loader did not make any real effort to enable that.

In November 1956 Loader's architect Mr Clacy submitted to GRDC an application for permission to develop a 'parish hall' and car park on the site. The accompanying plan showed that the intention was to demolish the old hut and erect the new hall close to the western boundary of the plot in which the cottage

had stood. No structural or internal details of the proposed new hall were shown. Although permission was granted a month later it appears that this plan was not implemented. We do not know why this was so – perhaps the necessary funding had not been forthcoming. A newspaper article published in 1962 reported that a talk on handicapped children was ‘given to Effingham Catholic Women's League at their meeting at the church hut on Thursday last week ...’ [*The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 10 March 1962]. The use of the term ‘hut’ indicates that meetings were still taking place in the old hut.

A second, and more detailed, application to GRDC was submitted by Clacy nearly nine years after the first one, in 1965. The accompanying plans indicated that the original intention to place the new hall on the site of the old hut had been withdrawn and that it would be placed instead along the plot's eastern side, leaving the old hut in place. A significant amount of detail was shown for the new hall. It was described as a ‘temporary’ building, meaning that it would not be bonded to ground foundations but instead would be free-standing on a concrete plinth. Both the 1956 and the 1965 applications are discussed further in Appendix IV. *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times* reported on 2 October 1965 that GRDC had approved ‘the revised plans for the erection of a new Roman Catholic Parish Hall at Effingham ... to replace the existing building ... [with] provision for off-street parking of 28 private cars’. The same newspaper reported on 11 June 1966 the holding of an exhibition at ‘Effingham Catholic Church hall’.

The new hall was a dark brown, long wooden-boarded structure having the appearance of an outsize garden shed and by no means a thing of beauty. A photograph of it taken in May 2014 is shown at the end of Appendix IV. It served its purpose well for many years until superseded by the far superior St Alphege Hall built much nearer to the church and opened in 2015, planning permission for that having been sought in 2011.

We may wonder whether the experience of trying to save the cottage alerted people to the risk of losing other historic fabric in Effingham. Incredibly, in 1955 when the above story began, only one site in Effingham was nationally Listed: the ‘Medieval moated site and fishpond at Greatlee Wood’. Even St Lawrence Church was not Listed until 1967, one of five properties so designated in a batch that year. The majority of the ones currently Listed were designated in a group of 12 in 1985.

The 4th edition of Surrey's List of Antiquities (1951) recorded five items in ‘general’ Effingham, five on the Common, two on Upper Street (today's Church Street) and four on Lower Street (today's The Street). Apart from the mistaken inclusion of the Lower Road Cottage in the latter group all the items were assigned their correct locations.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: detail from the Tithe Map of Effingham reproduced by kind permission of the Surrey History Centre

Figure 2: detail from the Ordnance Survey 25" map – Surrey XXV.5 1870; National Library of Scotland

Figures 3, 4: details from the scan of an Air Pic photograph kindly lent to ELHG by Keith Cornwell

Figure 5: sale particulars of Little Bookham Estate 1907, Surrey History Centre, SHC Ref: 209/16/2

Figure 6: detail from the Ordnance Survey 25" map – Surrey XXV.5 1934; National Library of Scotland

Figure 7: from *Wikipedia*: original source <https://stainedglassattitudes.wordpress.com/tag/john-harvey/>

Figure 8: detail from a photograph of 1955 donated to ELHG by James Louis Nicholls

Figures 9-10: from the Surrey History Centre, SHC Ref: CC1101/3/55/13-14

Figures 11-16: from the Surrey History Centre, SHC Ref: CC512/19

Figures 17-18: from the archives of Guildford Rural District Council, GRDC Ref: GU/R/5816

Figures 19-22: from the archives of Guildford Rural District Council, GRDC Ref: GU/R/13768

Figure 23: from *Wikimedia* under Creative Commons licence CC0 1.0 (universal public domain)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Susan Morris for conveying scans of the 1907 sale of the Little Bookham Estate and for obtaining the planning applications submitted to GRDC in 1956 and 1965; we are grateful also to the staff of Guildford Borough Council for making those applications available. We express our appreciation to the staff of the Surrey History Centre for facilitating the photographing of the correspondence file regarding the Lower Road Cottage. We thank the staff of Our Lady of Sorrows in Effingham, Jenny Delves of the Southwark Diocesan Archives and Amy Mostert of the Arundel and Brighton Diocesan Archives for advice on the location of property documents bearing on this article.

APPENDIX I

William Adams – early experimenter in solar energy

William Adams was the father of Theodora, one of the two ladies who lived (perhaps only intermittently) in The Cottage, Lower Road in the late 1930s through to the early 1950s. He died aged about 56 in Brockley, south London, on 31 May 1883 when Theodora was just 7 years old and the following obituary was published in *The Times of India* on 19 June 1883:

‘We regret to announce the death of Mr William Adams, late Second Deputy Registrar of the Bombay High Court. The deceased gentleman was born on the 7th January 1827; joined the army as a private soldier; was promoted to the post of sergeant-major in one of the battalions of the Rifle Brigade then serving in Southern India; and eventually took his discharge on being disappointed of a commission. He was a man of scientific attainments, and will be remembered as the inventor of an apparatus for the cooking of food by means of solar heat. On the 1st May, 1865, Mr. Adams was appointed to a judge's clerkship in the High Court; and a month subsequently he became in addition a commissioner for taking affidavits. From February, 1871, to January, 1873, he was *pro tem* head assistant to the Prothonotary; and in November, 1873, he was promoted to an acting deputy registrarship. On the 1st July, 1876, he was confirmed in the appointment. Owing to failing health he proceeded to Australia on the 4th December last, and returned on the 24th February; but being unable to continue his duties, he retired on a pension and left for England on the 13th April. He died on the 31st ultimo of abscess on the liver.’

Further detail about William's solar cooker invention is given in the working paper [“Power from Sunshine”: *A Business History of Solar Energy*, by Geoffrey Jones and Loubna Bouamane, Working Paper 12-105, Harvard Business School, 25 May 2012]. This states that, before taking up his appointment in India, William had been working in the British patent office in London. There he had acquired extensive knowledge of various means of generating energy, especially from the sun. He had been especially impressed by earlier work on solar-powered steam engines undertaken by the French inventor Augustin Mouchot. Once settled in Bombay he published there in 1878 a book of about 112 pages entitled *Solar Heat: A Substitute Fuel in Tropical Countries for Heating Steam Boilers, and Other Purposes*. He had formed the belief that solar energy could revolutionise the powering of industrial machinery such as stationary steam engines. In the compound of his bungalow in the Coloba district of Bombay he experimented with a spherical reflector 12m in diameter consisting of separate sheets of mirror, this used to concentrate sunlight on a 60-litre boiler; this was sufficient to drive a steam pump of 2.5 horsepower. He was unsuccessful in persuading the colonial government of the merits of such a technology, however, as it became evident that his prototype would not operate well in insufficient sunshine and required a long time to start up.

Despite his failure in these ambitions Adams came nearer to success with his idea of using the sun to power solar cookers, as explained in a paper by Elizabeth Chatterjee [*The poor woman's energy: Low-modernist solar technologies and international development, 1878–1966*, *Journal of Global History* (2023), 1-22, *publ* Cambridge University Press]. She writes of Adams:

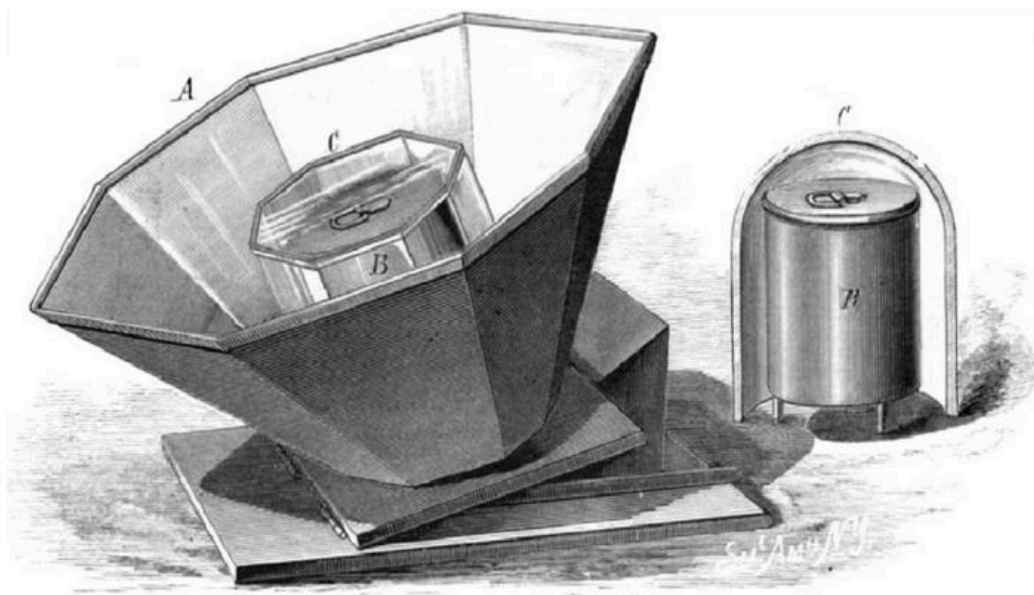
His 1878 monograph *Solar Heat* declared that tropical countries ‘possess, in their clear skies, a gratuitous and inexhaustible source of wealth, equal to that which Western nations have to dig, with infinite labour and toil, from the bowels of the earth’. As the demand for firewood and railway sleepers left the subcontinent’s hills ‘bald as a billiard ball’ and its people stricken by famine, he called upon the colonial government to invest in this promising substitute for expensive imported coal. In Bombay, the bureaucrat displayed his solar-powered innovations before newspaper reporters and army chiefs. *Solar Heat* sketched out plans to concentrate the sun’s energy for everything from desalination to cotton gins and Hindu crematoria. After much experimentation, Adams recommended using a set of adjustable flat mirrors to concentrate the sun’s rays—an early ancestor of the ‘power tower’ for generating industrial heat and driving steam turbines.

Unlike the centuries-old practice of producing salt through solar evaporation, these were grand visions of fossil-fuel replacement. Solar energy, Adams informed the *Times of India*, was ‘destined to make India the seat of the principal manufacturing industries of the world’. It was not an outlandish view. ‘The time will come when Europe must stop her mills for want of coal’, declaimed the celebrated Swedish-American inventor John Ericsson; industry would

shift to the tropics where the 'excess of solar heat' promised an unimaginable abundance of motive power. Other pioneers were similarly active within imperial contexts. In the expanding United States, boosters argued that solar-powered engines and irrigation pumps were the surest way to claim the West. Under the watchful eye of the British Consul-General, in 1913 the Philadelphian inventor Frank Shuman installed solar-powered steam engines to pump Nile waters for irrigating Egyptian cotton. Even as Adams's near-namesake in London published a seminal paper in the history of solar photovoltaics, an alternative lineage of solar research was emerging in the arid colonial peripheries.

It was for a rather more modest invention that Adams of Bombay would be best remembered, however—his solar cooker. His was far from the earliest solar oven: that honour is typically attributed to the Swiss scientist Horace-Bénédict de Saussure in 1767, though his experimental 'hot box' was primarily for measurement rather than cooking, informing Joseph Fourier's discovery of the greenhouse effect. Nonetheless, Adams innovated in abandoning the simple hot box for an octagonal design that concentrated the sun's rays upon a cooking utensil. One obliging corporal used a prototype to bake a Christmas cake; Adams boasted that the stove could even perform on the march atop a coolie's head.

Others were less impressed. A Bombay official adjudged the scheme wholly impractical: factories could not give their workers a holiday when the sky clouded over. Even a friend complained, 'Your cook ... goes to bed at six, and civilized people dine at 7-30 or 8 P.M.' In any case, 'man cannot live on one dish alone', making the contraption perhaps best suited to relief camps. A bruised Adams said that he should have added partitions for 'making ice-puddings, and cooling champagne'.



ADAMS' SOLAR COOKING APPARATUS.

'Can be constructed by native artizans in any Indian village': William Adams's design for a portable solar cookstove, Bombay, 1878. Source: Engraving from W. Adams, 'Cooking by Solar Heat', *Scientific American*, June 15, 1878.

A charming and entertaining article about William's work and the recent publication of his book was published on page 4 of *The Civil and Military Gazette* on 1 August 1878. It is too long to reproduce here but is worth reading by anyone interested in the reception given to William's ideas.

APPENDIX II

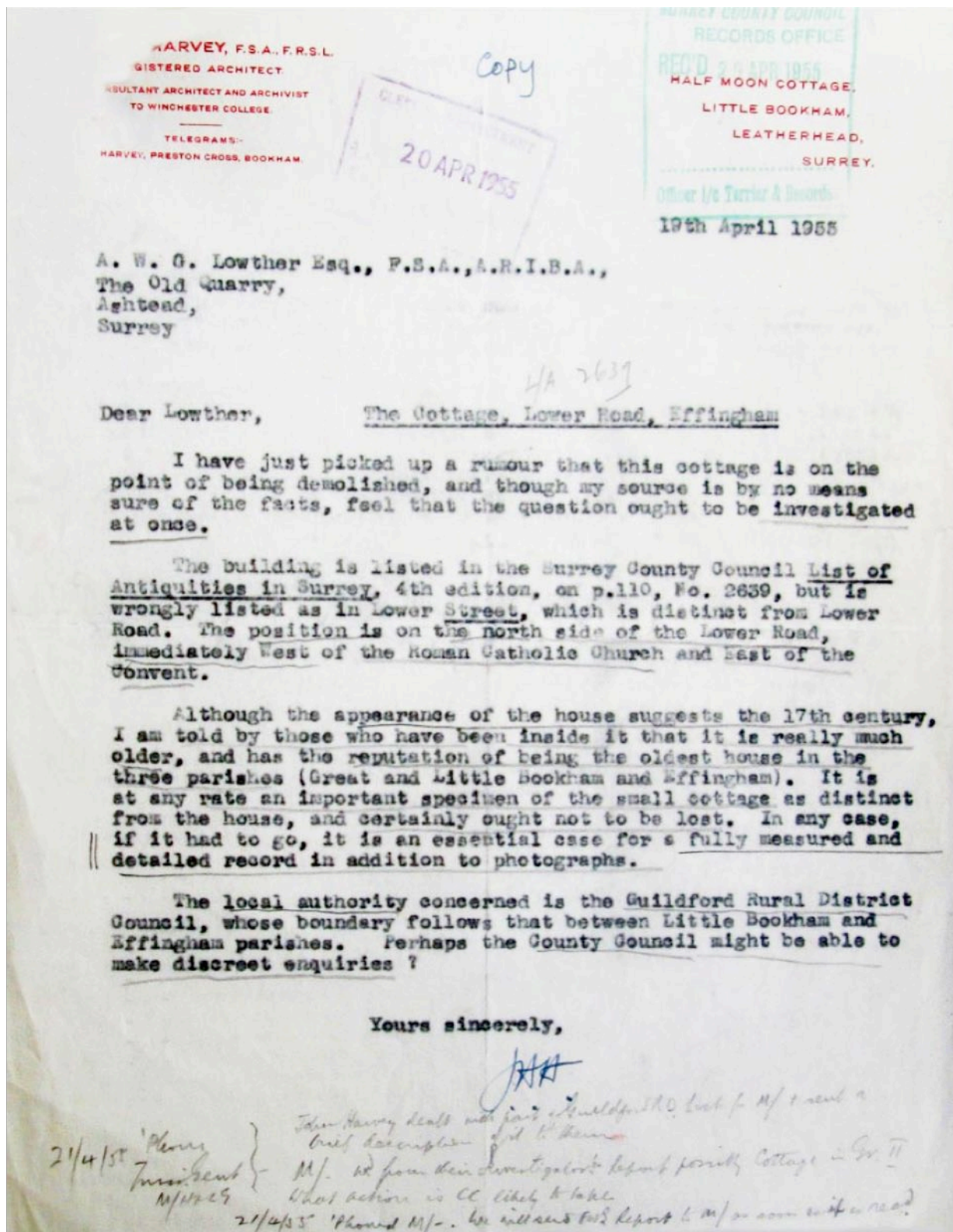
Samples of correspondence about the attempt to preserve The Cottage

Figure 11 Harvey's letter to Lowther, setting the preservation campaign in motion; 19 April 1955.

CLERK'S
(COUNTY RECORD OFFICE)

26th April, 1955.
CLR/G.200/WH

Dear Captain Lowther,

The Cottage, Lower Road, Effingham.
(L/A 2639)

Further to my letter of the 22nd April I attach copy of report from Mr. Strange dated 26th April which will give you the present position. Mr. Harvey has also been informed.

Yours sincerely,

Clerk of the Council.

Capt. A.W.G. Lowther, F.S.A., A.R.I.B.A.,
The Old Quarry,
Ashted,
Surrey.

Figure 12 The Clerk's letter to Lowther, accompanied by Strange's report; 26 April 1955.

Ext. 34

CLERK'S
(COUNTY RECORD OFFICE)

CLR/G. 200/PM.

16th September, 55

Dear Sir,

Guildford R.D.
The Cottage, Lower Road, Effingham
(L/A 2639)

The above-mentioned Cottage is, as I believe you are aware, included in the County Council's List of Antiquities and described as a 17th Century building. I am given to understand, however, that some of the interior is possibly earlier than this date and in May last you will remember that Mr. F. W. Strange, F.R.S.A.I., F.S.A.Scot., on behalf of the County Records & Ancient Monuments Committee, with your consent inspected the Cottage and for your information I attach hereto a copy of his report.

I understand that you recently telephoned Mr. Strange informing him that your Church Authority has a scheme for the erection of a church hall on the site which would involve the demolition of the Cottage.

I should be obliged if you would kindly let me know at your earliest convenience whether the possibility of preserving the Cottage and including it in the proposed scheme has been fully considered.

I would mention that a local historian considers the Cottage to be an important specimen of its type as distinct from a 17th Century house and has the reputation of being the oldest house in the three Parishes of Great and Little Bookham and Effingham.

As you may know the Ministry of Housing & Local Government have not yet completed their survey of the Guildford Rural District but they have asked to be informed if there is any immediate threat

- 1 - /or

of its demolition.

Yours faithfully,

Clerk of the Council.

Rev. H. W. Loder,
Church of Our Lady of Sorrows,
Lower Road,
Effingham,
Surrey.

Figure 13 The Clerk's letter to Loader, exploring the idea of preservation; 16 September 1955.

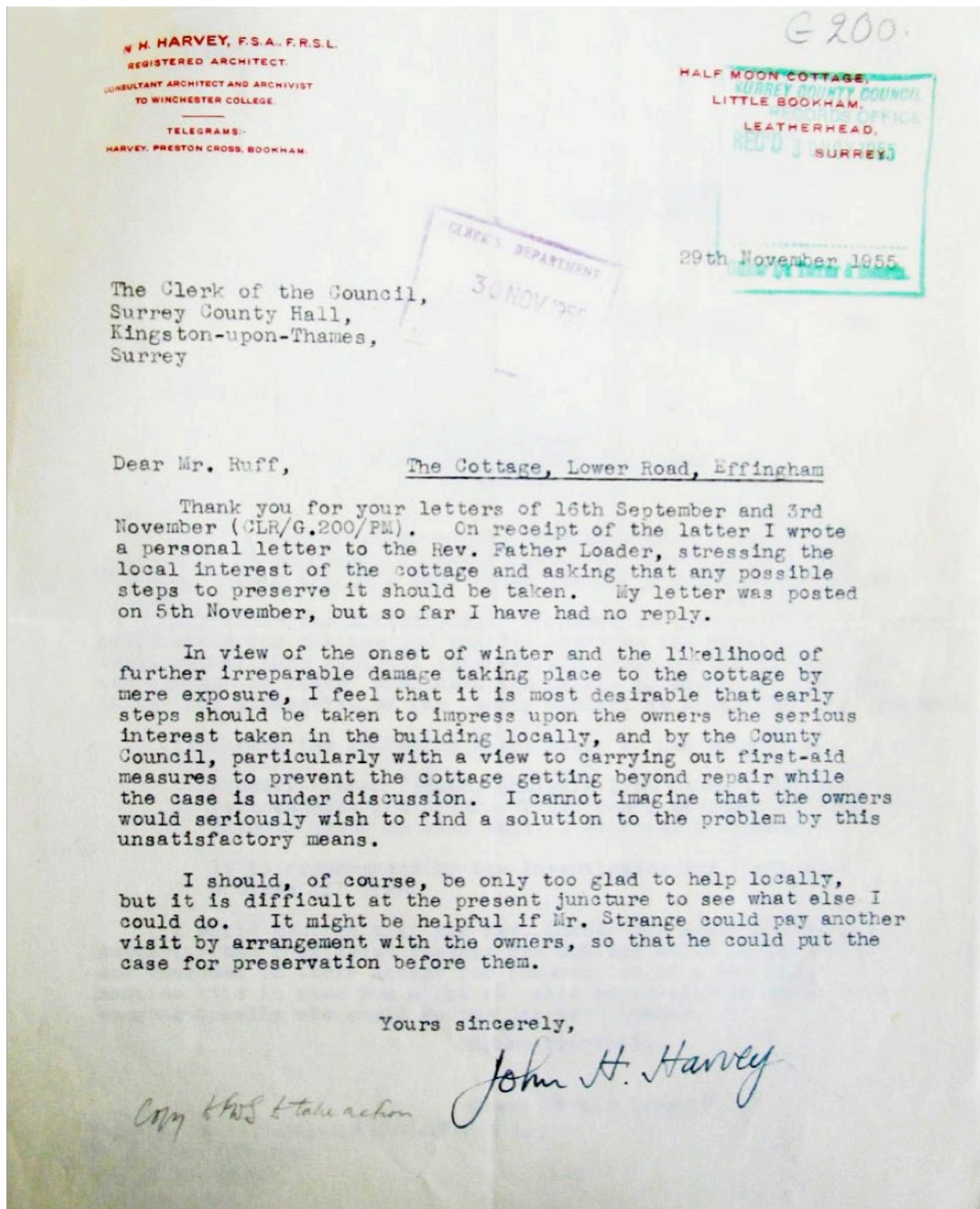


Figure 14 Harvey's letter to the Clerk, expressing anxiety about the winter; 29 November 1955.

PRIEST'S HOUSE,
LOWER ROAD, EFFINGHAM,
LEATHERHEAD, SURREY.

JERREY COUNTY COUNCIL
RECORDS OFFICE
REC'D 22 MAR 1956

March 21. '56

Dear Sir

20/4/56
HROC Eyr
Works only temporary
Not intended to affect
Stability of bldg. copy
of letter to RDC

I have made no arrangement
for an architect to come and inspect
the cottage, Lower Rd, Effingham.
The ground in front of the cottage
has become a dump for the equipment
etc connected with the work of main
drainage - and there is also a 30 foot
pit. All this has the approval
of the Guildford Rural. Already I
have seen the necessity of under-
pinning and clearing courses.
Most of my parishioners cannot
see the necessity of preserving it
and are rather annoyed at
what they call the fuss that is
being made about it.
With all good wishes
Yours sincerely
Herbert W. Loader

Figure 15 Loader's letter to the Clerk, expressing no enthusiasm for preservation; 21 March 1956.

Ext.34

CLERK'S
(COUNTY RECORD OFFICE)

CLR/PM.

22nd November, 1956

Dear Sir,

I regret not acknowledging your letter of the 15th October last earlier. I will in due course inform you of any buildings threatened with demolition where it is considered measured drawings would be preferable and in this respect I will keep in touch with the National Buildings Record.

I would mention that the Lion Hotel at the bottom on the right hand side of Guildford High Street is to be demolished. The County Council have their own photographer and the property has already been recorded by him. The late Mr. C. D. Hawley, F.R.I.B.A., who was a member of and one of the technical advisers of the County Records & Ancient Monuments Committee, informed that Committee in November 1955 that he did not consider the building contained any outstanding architectural features.

The Guildford Borough Council tried to preserve the property but on an Appeal the Minister had no objection to its demolition. When you are next in the area you might like to look at the property and see whether it is necessary to prepare any measured drawings of the property.

Yours faithfully,

Clerk of the Council.

R. W. McDowall Esq.,
Principal Investigator,
Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England),
The Old Granary,
Great Eversden,
CAMBRIDGE.

Figure 16 The Clerk's letter to McDowall, confirming that preservation will not happen; 22 November 1956.

APPENDIX III
Dramatis Personae

The principal organisations and individuals involved in determining the fate of the Lower Road Cottage are shown below.

Ministry of Housing and Local Government

Miss M GENT
Miss N K BAKER

Surrey County Council

Clerk to the Council: William Willis RUFF
County Planning Officer: Theodore Vincent Scott DURRANT
County Planning Officer: Derrick John YELLAN

County Records and Ancient Monuments Committee

Chairman: Daphne WEEDING
Technical Advisor: Frederick William STRANGE

Guildford Rural District Council

Engineer and Surveyor: Jack Woolley SNAPE
Chief Sanitary Inspector: Peter MEDDOWS TAYLOR

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)

Secretary: Robert William MCDOWALL

Our Lady of Sorrows (Southwark Diocese)

Roman Catholic Priest: Reverend Herbert William LOADER

Individual actors

Historian and Archivist: John Hooper HARVEY
Architect: Harry George CLACY

APPENDIX IV

Applications to Guildford Rural District Council for planning consent for the new hall and car park

The first application [GRDC Ref: GU/R/5816] was submitted on 27 November 1956 by the architect Harry George Clacy on behalf of Rev Loader. Figure 17 shows the accompanying plan in facsimile, as the original is in too poor a condition to display adequately here. It indicates that the hut was to be removed but it is not clear whether this applied also to the area marked as a garage. The hut was quite large, at least 30 feet by 20 feet. Figure 18 shows GRDC's response dated 31 December 1956 granting permission upon certain conditions. For reasons unknown, the proposal was apparently not put into effect.

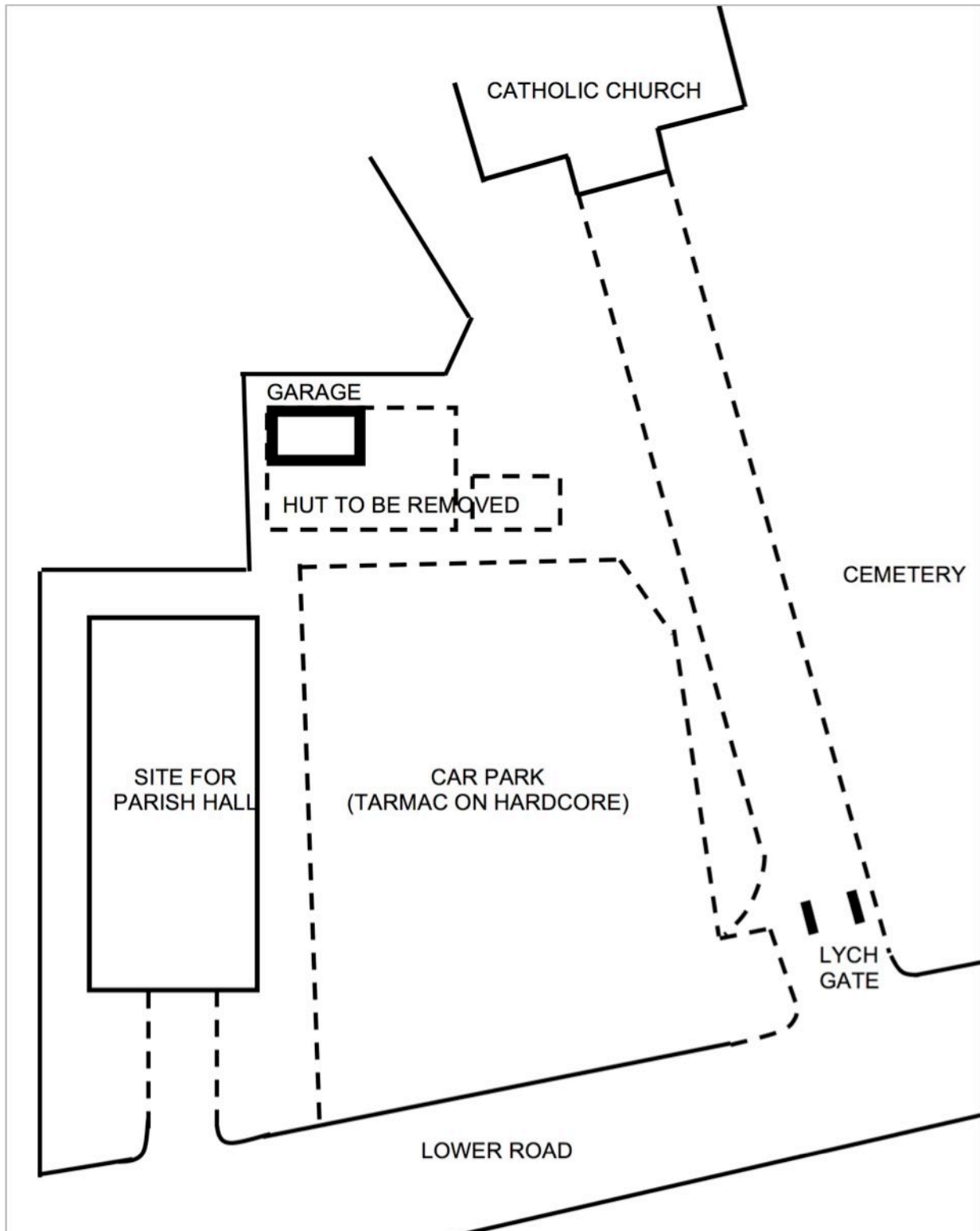


Figure 17 Facsimile of the plan submitted with the 1956 application.

GU/R 5816
Ref. T.P.3/No.....

COUNTY OF SURREY

GUILDFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1947

To **Mr. H.G. Clacy, on behalf of the Rev. H.W. Loader.**
36, Waterlow Road,
Reigate.

The Guildford Rural District Council acting on behalf of the Surrey County Council as Local Planning Authority under and in pursuance of delegated functions and of the provisions of Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, DO HEREBY signify in writing their APPROVAL, subject to the conditions (if any) specified in the Second Schedule hereto, of the application for permission for the development specified in the First Schedule hereto deposited by you on the **27th November, 1956** being an outline application under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, etc., 1950.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

The erection of a parish hall and construction of a car park on land at Lower Road, Effingham, shown on deposited plan No. AY.181.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

1. The submission to and approval by the Local Planning Authority in due course of detailed plans and drawings of the building(s) to be erected on the premises showing the siting, design, drainage and external appearance thereof and the means of access thereto.
2. Upon the application for approval referred to in Article 5(3) of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, etc., 1950, the Local Planning Authority may impose any further conditions rendered necessary or desirable as a result of consultation by them with the Authorities or persons referred to in Article 9 of the said Order.
3. **Two access ways to the highway from the land, the subject of the application, shall be sited, designed so that the western access can also be used as a pedestrian access to the Hall, provided with adequate sight lines and constructed in all respects to the reasonable satisfaction of the Highway Authority.**
4. **Details of the above highway requirements shall be obtained from the County Divisional Surveyor, Surrey County Council, Highways and Bridges Department, Millmead, Guildford, to whom the applicant shall give seven days notice in writing of the intention to proceed to construct the access ways to Lower Road.**

The reasons for the decision of the Council to grant permission for development subject to compliance with the conditions specified in the Second Schedule hereto are:

- 1 and 2. These conditions are imposed to ensure the details of the proposed development will be satisfactory.
3. **This condition is imposed in the interests of public safety.**

Dated this 31st day of December, 1956.

Millmead House,
Guildford.


 Clerk of the Council.

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Figure 18 Granting of permission for the 1956 application.

The second application [GRDC Ref: GU/R/13768] was submitted in 1965, again by Mr Clacy. The file contains several plans, the earliest stamped 25 May and one stamped 29 June. In their approval letter GRDC treated the application as having been submitted on 29 June. Figure 19 shows the overall plan of the site, clearly showing the hut ('old hall') apparently unaltered and the new proposed hall on the eastern side. Figure 20 shows the new hall's elevations.

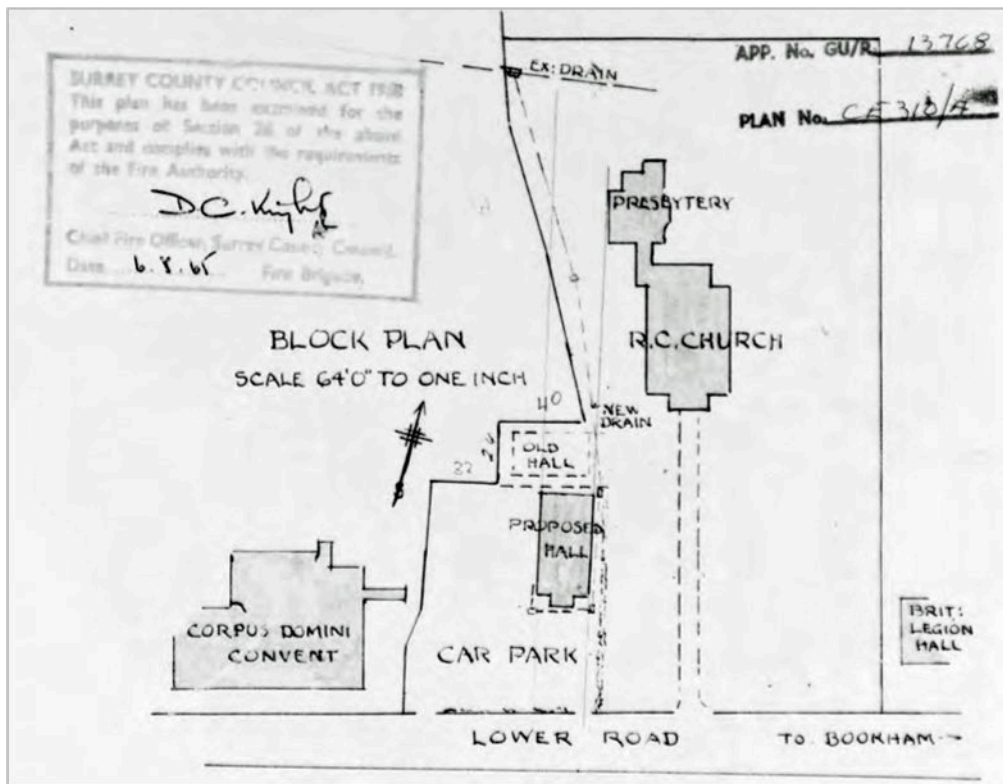


Figure 19 Overall plan of the site; the car park now covers the site of the former LRC.

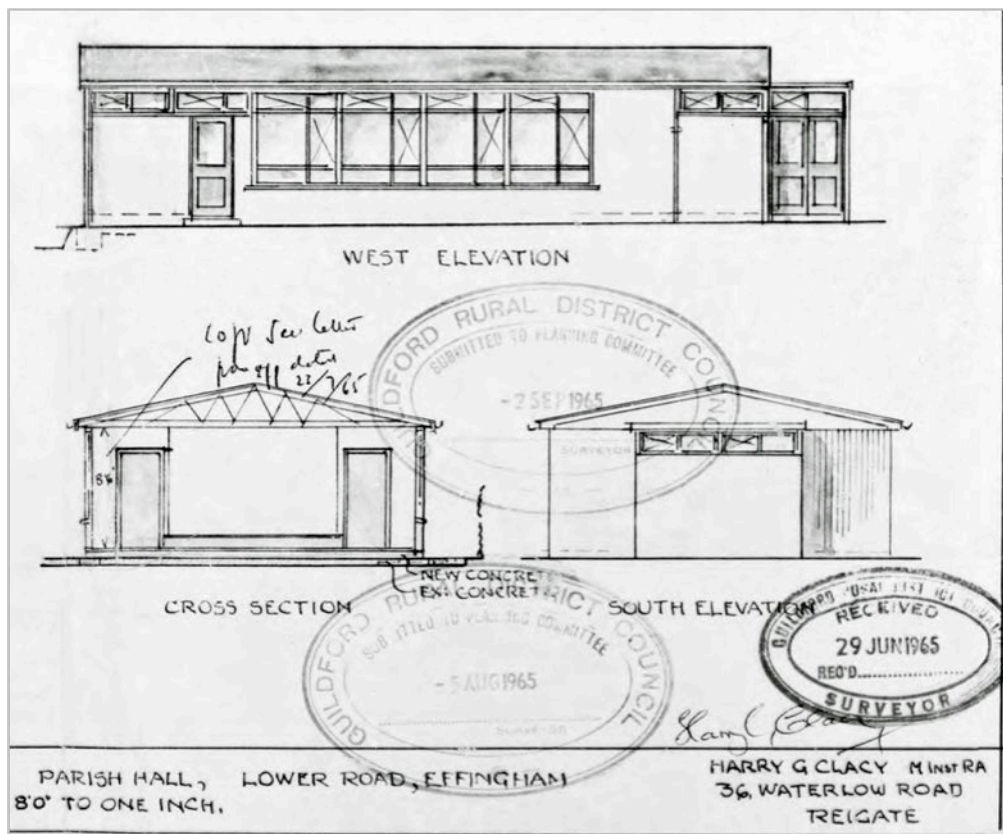


Figure 20 Elevations of the proposed new hall.

Figure 21 shows the plan of the new hall having a footprint of over 1,300 square feet. In the figure the left hand side corresponds to the front (west-facing) elevation. At the building's northern end was a stage, with storage areas either side, whilst at the southern end were two toilet cubicles.

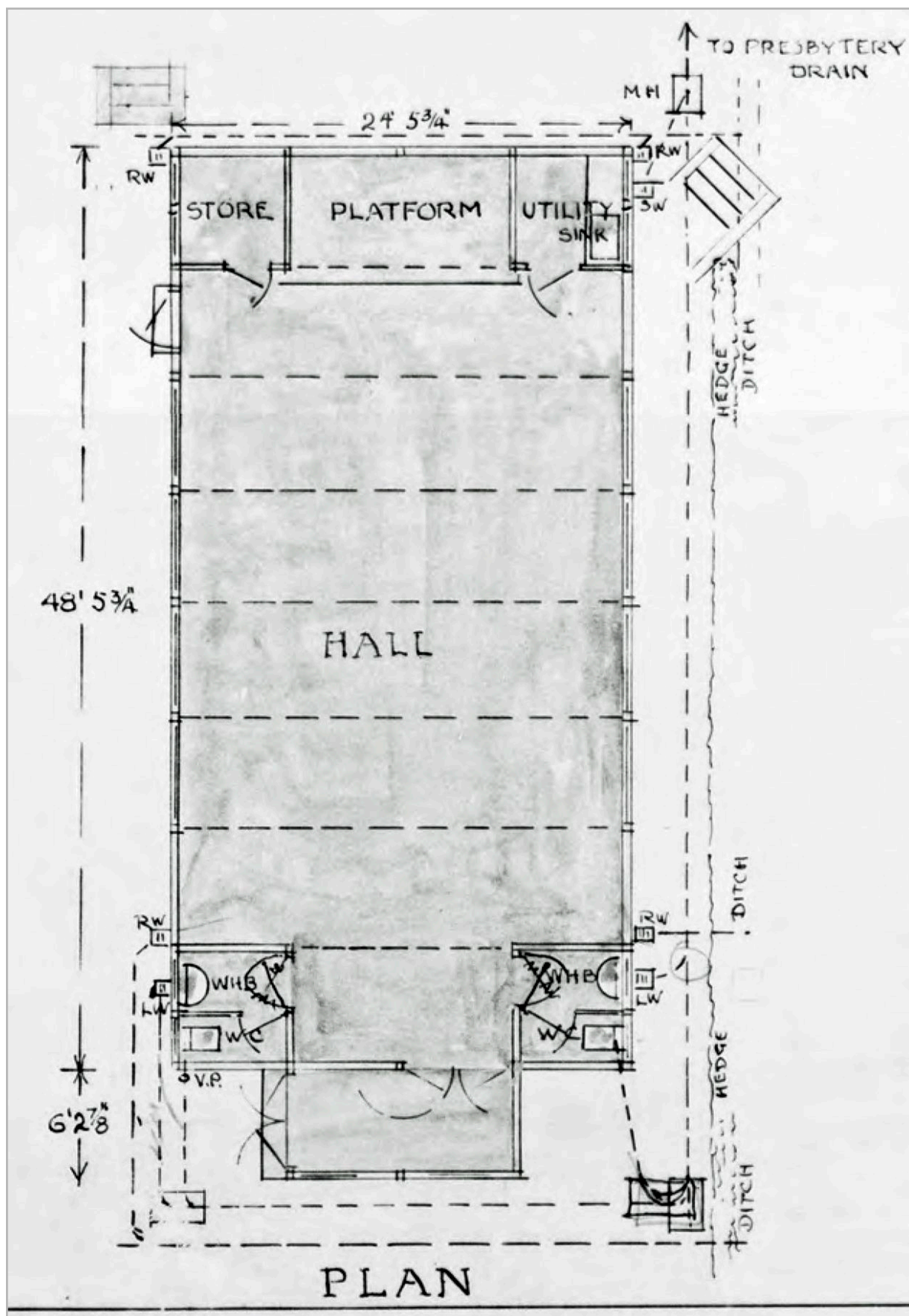


Figure 21 Detailed plan showing the dimensions and internal structure.

Ref. T.P.3/No. GU/R.....13768

COUNTY OF SURREY

GUILDFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1962

ToMr. H. C. Clacey,..... on behalf of the Rev. H. W. Loader.
36 Waterloo Road,.....
Woking,.....

The Guildford Rural District Council acting on behalf of the Surrey County Council as Local Planning Authority under and in pursuance of delegated functions and of the provisions of Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1962, DO HEREBY signify in writing their APPROVAL, subject to the conditions (if any) specified in the Second Schedule hereto, of the application for permission for the development specified in the First Schedule hereto deposited by you on the 29th June, 1965.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

Revised plans for the erection of a new parish Hall to replace the existing building, on land to the south west of the Roman Catholic Church, Lower Road, Effingham as shown on deposited Plan No. EB.310/A.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

1. The provision within the curtilage of the present car-park of off-street car parking for 28 private cars as per the Local Planning Authority's standards for off-street parking.
2. The closure of existing accesses to Lower Road and the provision of a new access 20ft. wide provided with 45° internal visibility splays from the 20ft. wide access drive.
3. The car parking and splay sight line provision shall be constructed before the Hall is occupied or used.
4. Splay sight line boundaries and front boundary to Lower Road shall be planted with hedge or 3ft. high close-boarded screen fence.

The reasons for the decision of the Council to grant permission for development subject to compliance with the conditions specified in the Second Schedule hereto are:

1. To prevent hazards to road users by parking on Lower Road.
2. To prevent hazards to lane users at this part of Lower Road.
3. To ensure that the development is satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority.
4. To preserve the visual amenities of adjoining premises.

Dated this15th..... day ofSeptember..... 1965.

Millmead House,
 Guildford.

Ed. Sellings
 Clerk of the Council.

Figure 22 Granting of permission for the 1965 application.



Figure 23 The new Effingham Catholic Church hall built in 1965-66.