



19 • Street Names

Street names would seem to be a relatively recent introduction as early maps show few. Certainly in 1894 dwellings were generally referred to by a name followed by the village - a practice which was fine at the time as there were so few houses but which can make it difficult for the modern researcher to pinpoint places.

Some street names in the parish, like Churchill Road and Montgomery Road, hold no mystery and some, like The Street, show little imagination but those which have origins of some interest are recorded below.

SAXON PLACE

The exciting discovery of an extensive Saxon burial ground during excavation for the new council housing estate in 1937 made the choice of a name for Saxon Place rather easy. Many graves were found complete with full skeletons, beads and other ornaments, utensils and weapons. The Dartford Antiquarian Society in 1938 described “wonderful treasures” from this truly remarkable work which had attracted national interest headed by the British Museum. Among the finds were “beautiful brooches and exquisite amethyst beads”.

The land was previously part of the Riseley estate (and Saxon Place is still known as Riseley to many of the older inhabitants). Speaking in 1993, the owner of Riseley Hall, Diane Gaylor, whose husband was Chairman of the Parish Council, remembered as a young girl

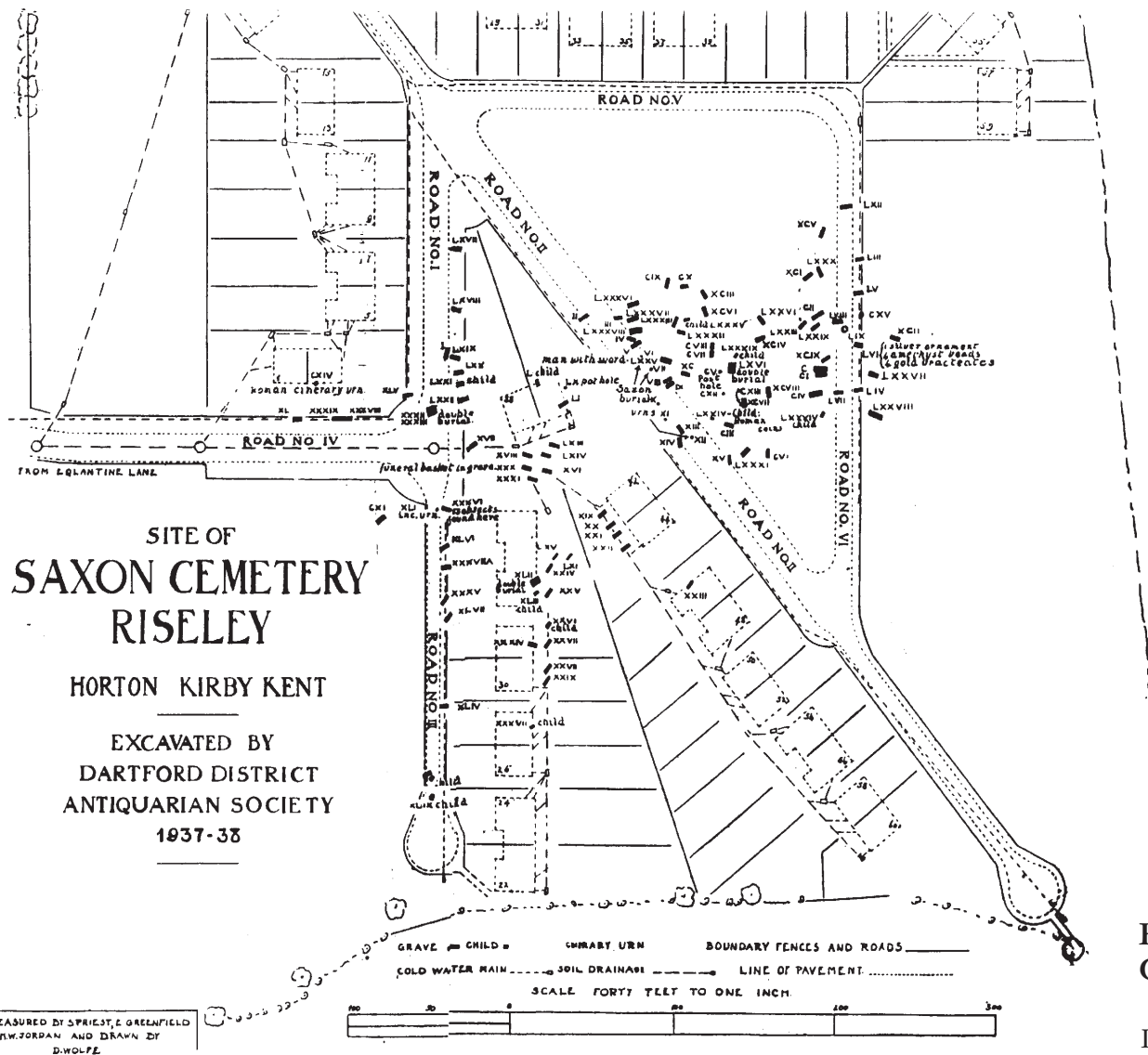
being brought from her home in Dartford by her father to see the finds. She recalled that a Dartford photographer took pictures of all the graves and offered them, in an album, to Dartford Council for



*Saxon burial ground, Riseley
1937
Photograph courtesy
of KAL, Dartford
Group*

£1. Amazingly the offer was declined at the time, though it is now a prized possession of Dartford Museum.

Ron Ludlow, the Co-op milkman at the time, also vividly remembered delivering milk to the first houses as they were completed. As the occupied houses were interspersed with those still being completed he had to walk up the front paths past rows of open graves.



SITE OF
SAXON CEMETERY
RISELEY

HORTON KIRBY KENT

EXCAVATED BY
DARTFORD DISTRICT
ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
1937-38



Saxon grave
Photograph courtesy of KAL, Dartford Group

**RASHLEIGH WAY AND
CARLETON PLACE**

It is very fitting that a road in Horton Kirby should be named after the Rashleighs as members of the family held several high positions in community life in the village.

RAYS HILL

The Rays were farmers who came from Devon in the 17th Century. A Richard Ray bought Reynolds Place in 1775 and descendants also variously farmed Mussenden Farm and Franks (one Ray stored hay in the ballroom and kept livestock inside Franks Hall!). The Rays also married into the Russell family of Court Lodge Farm so they were well and truly part of the farming scene in Horton Kirby.

Three generations were vicars of St Mary's between 1818 and 1927 starting with George Rashleigh, followed by his son Henry Burvill Rashleigh and then his son William Rashleigh. Also, George Burvill Rashleigh was the first Chairman and (unpaid) clerk of the Parish Council for 22 years. The Rev Carleton Rashleigh was a curate



*Rev H B Rashleigh with Mrs Rashleigh
Photograph courtesy of Horton Kirby School*

during the first part of the 1900s and was very much involved with the school. The middle lancet in the north wall of St Mary's church has a roundel of glass to the memory of Rev Carleton Rashleigh.

Many of the Rashleigh family are buried in the north-west corner of St Mary's churchyard and, thanks to the recent efforts of the Horton Kirby Village Society in clearing the overgrown areas, the monuments are now easily seen.

SCHOOL LANE

References to this road in the Parish Council Minutes of the 1920s and 1930s call it School Hill. Much earlier it was called Brockhole Lane because of the many badgers. Presumably the name changed in 1857 with the building of the National School.

JACOBS LANE AND JACOBS CORNER

It is said that at Jacobs Corner (the Horton Road end of Jacobs Lane), there was once a school run by a Miss Jacob and Ann Parker English told us that the Jacobs family lived at this corner for several generations. The name has now been extended to the whole of the lane by common usage.

SKINNEY LANE

Skinney Lane was the most controversial name for a road certainly in recent times. When the new name plates went up in November

1992, those who had lived in the parish for a long time were amazed and horrified. Rumour had it that petitions would be organised and the new signs uprooted in protest!

The reason for this was that this road, running from Forge Lane, Horton Kirby to Rabbits Road, South Darent had been known as The Homes Road. It was the road from Horton Kirby to the Homes for Little Boys and as such was very much part of the history of the parish.

To put the record straight, it had always been known as The Homes Road by word of mouth but when the Parish Council asked Sevenoaks District Council as statutory authority to make the name official, the Post Office objected. It was, they said, too much like Holmesdale Road. As there are no houses in The Homes Road (sorry, Skinney Lane) and the sheep grazing by the side of the road hardly ever get any mail, it is hard to see how the poor postman could become confused. However, Skinney Lane was the name by which this road was known to the Post Office and the Parish Council, rightly or wrongly, thought it an appropriate one and accepted it.

In defence of the name Skinney Lane, it is undoubtedly narrow but it has also been suggested that the name derives from a Mrs Skinner who lived in a cottage along the road many years ago. The cottage apparently burned down and she along with it. This story seems unlikely as nothing has been seen on old maps and John Spink, who ploughed the land on both sides of the lane when employed on Rogers Farm, never found any evidence of buildings.

*Albert Peacock, William Rogers
and Will Skinner (farm foreman
for over 50 years) in party hats -
Christmas 1927
Photograph courtesy of
Ralph Rogers*



Ray Knowler had also been told an (unsubstantiated) story that a number of turkeys escaped from an enclosure at Horton Kirby on Rogers Farm while under the care of Mr Skinner the foreman. They made their way along the lane to South Darenth, chased by Mr Skinner, and the lane was known afterwards by some as Skinners Lane.

Whether or not any action is taken by long-standing residents to revert to their preferred name remains to be seen but one thing is sure, it will be referred to as The Homes Road by a lot of people for many years to come.

GORRINGE AVENUE

Gorringe's was a well-known London drapers and Frederick Gorringe was one of the many benefactors of the Homes for Little Boys. The main thoroughfare of the Homes and now the main road in Southdowns was named after him in grateful recognition.

WILSON LANE

This lane between Rabbits Road and Gills Road has only recently received its name plates from Sevenoaks District Council and was previously thought to be unnamed. A Mr Wilson built Wilson's Cottages in that road and the two cottages on the corner of Rabbits Road. He called them Swing Cottages as he was a fairground owner.

EAST HILL

East Hill is a comparatively new name. Edward Cresy in the 1850s referred to it as Rabbits Road and the Parish Council Minutes in May 1928 call it the Old Road. At this time also, Horton Road at the bottom of the "Old" and the "New" Road was called the Main Road. Lillie Dalton (nee Parker) remembered that during the early part of the century it was known locally as Jolly Millers Lane.

East Lane is even newer, having been given the name by the Parish Council in 1992. Postally it was part of East Hill and this was thought to be rather confusing. Since this name has been given, and during the preparation of this book, it has been found that it was known variously as Harters Alley or Bakers Alley.

TOWERS WOOD AND HOLMESDALE ROAD/HILL

Towers Wood is named after the building called The Towers which stood in extensive wooded grounds to the south of Holmesdale Hill. The Towers was built by Edward Cresy, the local historian and diarist, in 1828 as a home for himself. The original name of the house was Holmesdale, hence the names Holmesdale Road and Holmesdale Hill.

From 1935 to the early 1960s, The Towers was home to Mr and Mrs David Salmon, owners of the Paper Mill.

In 1963, The Towers became home to the Richmond Fellowship, a religious organisation providing a residential rehabilitation centre for men and women suffering from nervous disorders or mental disturbance. These people were not regarded as being ill enough to be in hospital but still needed attention and counsel in comfortable and restful surroundings.

Also during the 1960s, as Mary Martin recalled, the building was used by an American Missionary Society who were training people to be sent to Africa. Malcolm Green remembered this time, as baker's boy for the Dartford Co-op, delivering bread to the building.

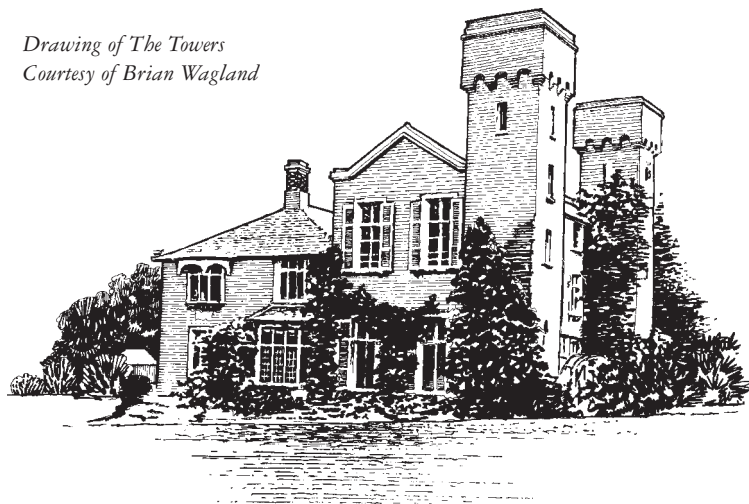
*A very narrow-looking East Hill and not a car in sight c 1964
Photograph courtesy of June Smith*



He recalled with some horror that the bread came out from Dartford stacked high on the back of a lorry and the only way to get the bread down from the top was with a stick with a rusty nail on top!

The Towers was demolished to make way for the second part of the co-ownership housing estate in the early 1970s.

*Drawing of The Towers
Courtesy of Brian Wagland*



COOPERS CLOSE

Coopers Close was named after Winifred Maud Cooper who was a pupil and teacher of the South School. According to Spencer Gentry who was at the school some 75 years ago Winnie Cooper was renowned for her perfect copybook handwriting. The School magazine, *The Hortonian*, which was started in 1924 to raise money for School funds, mentions that Miss Cooper was responsible for the Girls' Friendly Society and supervision of the School National Savings Association to "teach the habit of thrift". Elsie Kellett, the School Secretary during the period 1956-75 reminded us that Miss Cooper, a regular churchgoer, was associated with the School for the whole of her life from pupil to pupil-teacher to governor until her death in 1969 at the age of 86. Another indication that she was held in high regard is that she received Maundy Money in Rochester Cathedral in the mid 1950s.

Miss Cooper lived in 2 Elizabeth Place, New Road, and later next to the former Co-op at 6 New Road.



Winnie Cooper with youngest pupil Nancy Dobbie cutting the centenary cake made by Elsie Costley in 1957

Photograph courtesy of Horton Kirby School collection

PADDOCK CLOSE

Paddock Close was built on the site of the paddocks belonging to Giffords. It may seem strange as this is not a close but it was originally, before the second part of the estate opened it up.

In the December 1971 Minutes of the Parish Council, reference can be found to a petition from local residents objecting to an extension of the road through the new estate and onto Holmesdale Road. (At that time the road was called Paddocks Close.) The Parish Council resolved to make urgent representations to Dartford Rural District Council for pedestrian access only between the two parts of the estate.

MALLYS PLACE

The land on which the houses in Mallys Place are built belonged to Dennis Bates whose nickname was Mally. After he died in 1980 the land was sold and when the houses were built the road was named in memory of him.

DEVON ROAD

Devon Road was previously known as Frog Lane and the Mill was always known as Frog Lane Mill. The only surviving reference to this is Frog Island where Mary Martin, Parish and District Councillor, had her house built. Why it was changed to Devon Road is not clear except that some of the few original houses were called Devonshire Terrace.