

The Lodge – History

The Lodge was built for Issac Porter who was employed from, about 1776, to manage and ultimately dispose of James Scawen's extensive Carshalton property. Porter decided to settle in Carshalton and acquired part of the kitchen garden of a Scawen owned house called Stone Court, which stood in what is now The Grove Park. The kitchen garden, which was often called Cook's Orchard, was on the site of the present Lodge Land and Porter acquired the eastern end of it by June 1781. Porter then built a 'a genteel red brick house' on the land which is first rated in 1783. Porter died in May 1785.ⁱ

In March 1800 Benjamin Bailey bought the remaining part of Cooks orchard and, in 1802, he bought Stone Court on the other side of North Street.ⁱⁱ In 1805 he followed this up with the purchase of The Lodge where he appears to have already been living as a tenant on the understanding that it would be sold to him. This reunited the two parts of Cook's Orchard and they remain together today as The Lodge Land.ⁱⁱⁱ Bailey was an industrialist who worked textile bleaching grounds by the Wandle.

In 1811 Benjamin Bailey and his wife Fanny sold The Lodge to Joseph Estridge of Margate for £3,800. The conveyance refers to a second house and garden 'then or late in the tenure or occupation of John Smith and formerly of Clements and then lately erected & built on the east side of said piece of land ... called Cooks Orchard'. This was probably a cottage which is shown on the 1847 tithe map against the east boundary halfway between West Street Lane and the Ponds. A third house is mentioned at the southeast corner of Porter's former property. This had been built by Benjamin Bailey and was occupied by James Peck. Its position suggests that it is the predecessor of the entrance lodge by the ponds.^{iv}

Joseph Estridge died on 24 May 1814 leaving a wife Ann and a son Charles aged 11. His will dated 29 May 1812 appointed trustees who were to sell the house. This took place in June 1815 and John Ross of Great Coram Street, London paid £2,800 to become the new owner. The following year he paid a lump sum to end the land tax on the property which was described as:

A Dwelling house with the Coach house stable garden and orchard thereto belonging in his (said John Ross) own occupation. A cottage and garden in the occupon of Tho^s Dawson A cottage and garden in the occupon of John Short

John Ross died on or about 20 October 1827 and by his will of 9 Sept 1826 he directed his trustee to sell The Lodge. It fetched £2750 in July 1828 and Thomas Bonton of York Street, Southwark, hop and seed factor became the new owner.^v

Bonton's ownership was as short as predecessor's as he died on 18 August 1835.^{vi} His will of 22 July 1833 directed that his personal property should be sold and government bonds bought to give his wife Lehha Maria an income of £100 a year so long as she remained a widow.^{vii} The house was to go to his natural son and business partner Charles.^{viii} If the personal property would not produce £100 a year then the balance was

to be obtained from the real estate. It appears that the personal property was inadequate and the house was sold in June 1836. It fetched £3,150 and was bought by Robert Thomas Wallace of Wilton Place, Belgrave Square, Middlesex Esquire.^{ix}

Wallace was born about 1783 and served in India as a surgeon. It is likely that he was a member of the Wallace family of doctors who owned a house on the south side of Pound Street from the late eighteenth century.^x He would have been about 53 when he bought Honeywood. In 1841 his sister Elizabeth was living in The Lodge with Elizabeth Capel, a servant. In 1851 and 1861 Robert and his sister were living there with Elizabeth Capel and another servant. Robert Thomas Wallace died on 26 December 1864. By his will of 15 December 1858 his real estate was left to his sons Robert and John and his friend William Eastwick of the East India House. The property was to be sold. William Eastwick renounced his rights under the will. The sons Robert Wallace 'formerly of Carshalton, afterwards of Basoda, Bombay a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army and then of 115 Blackfriars Road Surrey' and the Reverend John Wallace of the Magdalen, Blackfriars Road, Surrey sold The Lodge to Richard Gunter on 30 June 1866 for £6,200.^{xi}

Gunter's money came from a tea room at 7-8 Berkeley Square, London. The shop was founded by an Italian pastry-cook, Domenico Negri. He took James Gunter into partnership in 1777 and by 1779 he owned the whole business. It became a very fashionable rendezvous as an unescorted lady could meet a gentleman there without compromising her reputation. The ladies remained in their carriages while the gentlemen leaned on the door and talked through the window: Gunter's waiters supplied the refreshments.^{xii} The business seems to have been very profitable and James was able to acquire a fine house in Earls Court. He also brought property in the area and some of his descendents came to own a large estate there.^{xiii}

Richard Gunter's relationship to James has not yet been traced. He was born about 1805 and is therefore more likely to be James's grandson rather than son.^{xiv} He was certainly involved in the business. In 1841 census he was described as a confectioner and living at 23 Motcombe Street in fashionable Belgravia with his wife Frances who was eleven years younger. There were four servants. He was still there in 1851 although, curiously the household was also listed at 15 Lowndes Street, Chelsea. By 1861 the family had moved to 58 East Hill, Wandsworth. A son Richard, age 23, appears and there was a house maid, a house servant, a coachman and his wife.

When The Lodge was sold in 1885 the agent's particulars claimed that it 'was erected in the year 1866 from the designs and plans of a well-known architect'.^{xv} This gives the impression that Gunter demolished the earlier house and started from scratch. The date seems to be correct as Gunter rented Honeywood from September 1865 to September 1866 presumably to provide a temporary home on site while the work was in progress.^{xvi} The footprint of the house also changes between the Tithe Award map of 1847 and the first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1868. However, a comparison of the 1865 and 1885 sales particulars suggest that the two buildings had much in common.^{xvii} Both had six principal rooms on first floor and three on the ground floor were the room dimensions are strikingly similar:

| 1865 | 1885 |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Two drawing Rooms, communicating by folding doors, 31-ft by 16-ft | Drawing Room 31ft 6in by 16ft 6in |
| Dining Room, 25-ft by 15-ft | Library 25ft by 15ft |
| Study with Closet (size not given) | Dining Room 22ft by 16ft |

The Tudor exterior of the present building is clearly Victorian. This must be Gunter's work but it is likely to be a drastic remodelling of the earlier house rather than a total rebuild.

Richard Gunter did not live to enjoy his new house as he died at Carshalton on 19 March 1867. He had made his will as far back as 1849. He left all his property to his wife Frances who was also sole executrix.^{xviii} His son Richard was cut out of the will but the 1871 census shows him living in the house with his mother and three servants. He is described as a retired confectioner although he was only 33.^{xix}

Piles Street directory shows that Richard Gunter the younger was still living in The Lodge in 1876. His mother continued to own the house until August 1878 when she sold it to Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott.^{xx} The following May Truscott bought a small piece of land on the north side of the town pond 70 feet long and 11 ft 4 in wide at the widest point.^{xxi} The reason for this is not clear but it does suggest that he was making improvements.

Francis Wyatt Truscott was born in 1824 the son of James Truscott of Essex Lodge, Norwood. He married Elizabeth daughter of James Freeman of Turnham Green in 1847. He was a partner in James Truscott and Son, Stationers and printers and held numerous offices. He was one of Her Majesty's Lieutenants for the City of London, Sheriff London and Middlesex in 1871 and Lord Mayor of London 1879-80. He served on the Metropolitan Board of Works from 1875 and was a conservator of the Thames. He had a house at 123 Victoria Street, Westminster and from at least 1883 at Oakleigh, East Grinstead, Sussex.^{xxii}

The Lodge was empty when Piles 1878-9 Directory was compiled but from 1881-3 Piles lists the occupier as HH Crawford. This was Henry Homeward Crawford who had married Francis Truscott's only daughter, Louisa. Henry was a solicitor, one of Her Majesty's Lieutenants for the City of London, a commissioner of land tax for the City of London; several times Under Sheriff of London and Middlesex and City Solicitor from 1885. It appears that Truscott bought the house for his daughter and her husband. When the 1881 census was taken Louisa's brother George W Truscott was also there together with three servants.

Piles directories suggest that Crawford ceased to live in The Lodge after 1883 although Kelly's Handbook continues to give a Carshalton address to at least 1891.

In 1884 Pile lists EJ Davis in the Lodge but he did not last long. Edward John Davis died

at the Westminster Palace Hotel, Westminster on 28 February 1884.^{xxiii} His widow Nancy Davis was living in the Lodge the following year but by 1888 EG Coles had taken over. This brought some stability as he remained in occupation until 1900. It is very likely that he was responsible for the extension which had been added to the north side of the house between 1885 and 1896.^{xxiv}

EG Coles is probably Edward George Coles an India rubber manufacturer who, at the time of the 1901 census was living in a house called Pebblecombe at Walton on the Hill with his wife Elizabeth. The youngest of his four children, Ruth aged 13, had been born in Carshalton, the others in Dulwich. Coles died in October 1913, still living at Pebblecombe, and leaving effects of £173,341 14s 10d.^{xxv}

Truscott still continued to own the property until his death in March 1895 and it then passed to a life tenant under the trustees of his will. There is every sign that Truscott and his heirs wanted to sell as the house was put up for auction in 1885 and 1908 but it was still in their hands in July 1912 when it was again offered for sale.^{xxvi} The failure to find a buyer is part of wider pattern. Both Sutton and Wallington were becoming suburbanised and people rich enough to own a house as large as The Lodge generally wanted to live further out into the country. By the 1880s many large local houses had become hard to either sell or let.

Piles Directory for 1901 shows The Lodge empty. By 1902 a Mrs Moon had moved in and she remained until 1908. The house was offered for sale by auction on 11 June 1908 but failed to find a buyer. It was auctioned again on 30 July 1912 probably without success. It remained empty until about 1920-1 when it was bought by the church and became the Southwark Diocesan House. The Old Rectory was acquired about the same time and Piles Directory names it as the College of St Saviour from 1932.

The Lodge and the Old Rectory were bought by Carshalton Council in 1944 and were turned into offices. The decision to buy the property was part of a policy with roots in the 1920s. In 1923 Sir Samuel Barrow decided to leave the area and put the Grove estate – including the Lower Pond – up for auction. It failed to reach its reserve price and the following year the Council decided to buy it. Their motives were clear:

... the suggestion to acquire and control the property has arisen in connection with the preparation of the Council's Town Planning Scheme, and the desire to preserve it as an open space for ever, in the heart of what is becoming a large and closely populated District, and also to obtain control of the beautiful ornamental waters which form such an attractive centre to the area. They feel convinced that this view is a correct one, and that the opportunity should be taken to purchase and control the property while the bulk of it is vacant and not cumbered with tenancies. They feel strongly that by so doing a great benefit will be conferred on the District in the future, and if the opportunity is lost it will be greatly regretted.^{xxvii}

The policy of protecting the environment of the Ponds by the purchase of the surrounding

land seems to have continued into the 1930s although no action was taken as none of the surrounding properties came onto the market. Then in the late 1930s three key properties came up in quick succession. The first was Queen's Well which stood on the south side of Upper Pond between the Church Hill and the Greyhound. The owner, Mrs Piers, died and the Council bought it in 1938.^{xxviii} At about the same time the Council was concerned about securing the Lodge, the Old Rectory and their grounds if the church should decide to sell them. Their motive was simple:

The question of the preservation of the picturesque scenery in the centre of the Urban District is one which has at all times during the history of the Council been regarded as of vital importance, and the subject has naturally received much prominence in the work of the Town Planning Committee with respect to the provisions to be included in the Town Planning Scheme No.1, the situation which would arise in the event of the Church Trustees deciding to vacate the above named properties and to offer the same for sale came under review. Being satisfied that the Council would desire every possible step taken to ensure that the present delightful surroundings of the Upper Pool should remain unchanged, the Committee carefully considered what action ought to be taken by them in the formulation of the Scheme to ensure that any future use of the land would not be prejudicial to the amenities.^{xxix}

The Council first asked the Diocesan Trustees to consent to the land being designated as a 'Private Open Space' in the planning scheme they were developing. The Trustees would not accept this so the Council made a tentative offer to buy the site. The Trustees were not interested in selling but did promise the Council first refusal. Soon after the Trustees changed their mind and the Council's General Purposes Committee presented a report which stated that:

They have no hesitation in urging upon the Council the desirability of obtaining control of the property for the purpose of securing the amenities of Upper Pond from any form of spoliation.^{xxx}

The report was adopted by the Council on 20 July 1938 and the purchase was set in motion. The Council applied to the Minister of Health for permission to take out a loan to cover the cost but were told that they could not do this unless they had got a specific use for the property. So, in October 1938, they came up with the following:

1. A public swimming bath on about 1½ (acres?) at the corner of North Street and West Street Lane.
2. A car park adjacent to the swimming bath on the West Street frontage.
3. Public pleasure grounds 'The Sub-Committee believe that it would be the general wish that no buildings should be erected on the remainder of the North Street frontage (i.e., from Honeywood Walk to the site of the swimming bath), but that this land, together with the surrounding of the College of St Saviour [The Old Rectory], should be preserved for all time as public pleasure grounds'.

4. Offices. After alteration the Diocesan House could be used temporarily for office accommodation. If the Council should decide to erect new offices the best site would be 'adjoining the proposed car park on the north and the properties in West Street on the west'.
5. A museum in the College of St Saviour [the Old Rectory].
6. Land should be reserved to widen West Street, North Street and West Street Lane at some future point.^{xxxii}

At this distance in time it is impossible to say how far this list reflected the Council's real intentions or was put together to satisfy the minister and his civil servants and get the loan they wanted. It turned out to be irrelevant as the Second World War broke out before the loan was approved. The Diocesan Trustees had already committed themselves to move so the Council agreed to rent the Lodge and the Old Rectory until the purchase could be completed.^{xxxiii} The Public Health Department and the Accountants Department were then moved into the building.^{xxxiiii}

This arrangement sufficed until 1943 when the Church was given an ultimatum to buy the building in Warlingham that they were renting and urgently needed the money from the sale of the Lodge and Old Rectory. The Council agreed to buy the two buildings. They realised there was no hope of raising a loan so they used £3,500 which had come from capital receipts and £10,500 from the general rate fund which covered the £13,500 purchase and £500 stamp duty and costs.^{xxxv}

The Diocesan Trust had erected a chapel on the west side of the Lodge in memory of William Hough, Bishop of Woolwich, who had died in 1935. The trustees wanted to remove the chapel to their new house when the war had ended and things were easier. The Council agreed to this but after the war the Trust thought better of it and in 1945 it was agreed that they would remove the existing windows, and the old timbers which formed the framework for hanging the chapel bell as soon as convenient after 1st April, 1946. The Council was to keep the rest of building and pay £200 for it.^{xxxvi} The chapel is still standing.

The Council's decision to buy The Lodge at the height of the Second World War seems rather remarkable as does their use of general funds in the absence of a loan. The decision was however completely consistent with their previous behaviour. Through all the twists and turns they never lost sight of their desire to acquire the property to protect the Ponds. From the conservation view point the policy was a great success. The outbreak of the Second World War meant that the swimming pool and other structures were not built in the short term and eventually not at all. The Lodge and the Old Rectory continued to be used as offices and the surrounding land remained open. In the 1980s there was a plan to sell the Lodge Land for housing but it was stopped when the Liberals took control of the Council. The land was then developed as the Ecology Centre and, in effect became part of the public open space around the Ponds. Today the Ponds and their associated historic buildings remain one of the most distinctive parts of suburban London and arguably Carshalton Council's greatest gift to the future.

The above is extracted from a document produced by John Philips in 2011. Footnotes from this document are listed below.

ⁱ Andrew Skelton *Issac Porter of Carshalton, a brief history of his life and family*. Unpublished word processor document.

ⁱⁱ *Abstract of title of Frances Gunter to a freehold estate called the Lodge situate at Carshalton in the County of Surrey*. Hereinafter cited as *Gunter abstract*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Gunter abstract.

^{iv} Gunter abstract.

^v Gunter abstract.

^{vi} The abstract of title says 18 August 1836 but this cannot be correct as it also says that probate was granted on 4 February 1836 and The Lodge was sold in June 1836.

^{vii} The reading of Lehha is uncertain.

^{viii} He was baptised Charles Carter.

^{ix} Gunter abstract.

^x AE Jones *Illustrated Directory of Old Carshalton* p172-4.

^{xi} Gunter abstract.

^{xii} Georgian index <http://www.georgianindex.net/Gunters/gunters.html>.

^{xiii} http://www.barrettssolicitors.co.uk/Mews%20houses/history/gunter_estate.htm. Pevsner London north west plate 55.

^{xiv} Based on his age in the 1851 and 1861 census.

^{xv} Sutton Archives 48/22/2.

^{xvi} John Phillips. *Honeywood: the site, the building and its owners*. Word processed document.

^{xvii} Sutton Archives 48/4/44 and 48/22/2.

^{xviii} *National Probate Calendar* via Ancestry.

^{xix} The census entry states that Frances aged 60 was the wife of Richard aged 33. The ages agree with the 1861 census entry so the relationship between the two is almost certainly wrongly stated.

^{xx} Frances Gunter probably died in Wandsworth in 1878. Ancestry's *England and Wales Free BMD Death index 1837-1915* lists a death of Frances Gunter born about 1814 in the October-December quarter of 1878. The certificate has not yet been checked.

^{xxi} Particulars for sale on 30 July 1912 in the Peatling Papers in Sutton Archives.

^{xxii} Kelly's *Handbook to the titled, landed and official classes* 1883 and 1894.

^{xxiii} England and Wales National Probate Calendar via Ancestry.com.

^{xxiv} The extension is not on a photo of the house in the 1884 sales particulars but does appear on the second edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1896.

^{xxv} England and Wales National Probate Calendar via Ancestry.com.

^{xxvi} Sales particulars in the Peatling Paper in Sutton Archives.

^{xxvii} Carshalton UDC minute book 1924-5 p92-9.

^{xxviii} Carshalton UDC minutes. Finance Rating and Valuations Committee 7 June 1938 p202.

^{xxix} Carshalton UDC minutes. Special report of the General Purposes Committee adopted by the District Council at a meeting held on 20 July 1938. p318-21.

^{xxx} Carshalton UDC minutes. 20 July 1938. p318-21.

^{xxxi} Carshalton UDC minutes 18 October 1938 p493-5.

^{xxxii} Carshalton UDC minutes 11 September 1939 p358-9.

^{xxxiii} Carshalton UDC minutes 15 January 1940 p454-6.

^{xxxiv} Carshalton UDC minutes. Finance and establishment emergency committee report of meetings 28 January, 25 February and 17 March 1943 and also meeting 10 May 1943 p68.

^{xxxv} Carshalton UDC minutes 21 July 1943 p167 and 26 and 27 November 1945 p324-5.