

Account of Purley on Thames

A Bit of a Tell

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This is one of a series of short articles written by Rita Denman for the Purley Parish News June 2016

If you are in no hurry, we could stand by Purley Lodge entrance for a moment and imagine what the village would have looked like in the past. There was a working village here long before the Normans arrived. There are two manors listed for Purley in the Norman census of 1086 usually known as The Domesday Book. The bridle path was part of the lane that ran from the Manor of Purley Parva (Westbury) through the village, on to the Manor of Purley Magna which in early times was on the site of the marina and then up the hill to emerge onto what is now the main road.

There were farm workers cottages facing onto the narrow lane sometimes known as The Street. On the left hand side down to Pond Field there was a row of thatched cottages some wattle and daub, some brick faced and of varying dates of construction.

Now, are you ready for a few dates? We are fortunate to have records of some of the people who have lived in this part of Purley. A Lease dated 1380 was renewed for the lives of John and Lucy Carpenter and their son Reymund for a cottage and land surrounding it called Poneyslond lying in the Manor of Purley Parva. It was signed and dated 'at Purle, Monday after Pentecost. 3 Richard 111 '. Neighbours were named as Katherine Ylberd, Thomas Hoket and John Page. It is interesting to note that this lease was renewed within the two year reign of Richard 111 which was from 1483 -1485.

We learn later that this same piece of land was held in Copyhold by John Henwood and dated 1629. The next known date is from the Court Baron dated July 19th 1708 when it was renewed for the lives of Samuel Elmes and his children. The Copyhold then passed through various hands until it reached the Sherwoods for the first half of the 19th century. Subsequently it reverted to the owners of the Manor of Purley Parva who by that time were the the Lybb Powis family of Hardwick. The Mimosas and The Cottage now stand on this site.

In the 1970s the postal address was part of Purley Lane but the villagers of the time, foresaw the building explosion in Purley and wanted to preserve the name of the village and successfully petitioned the Parish Council to rename the stretch from the bend in the Lane to Mapledurham Drive (formerly Marsh Lane) as Purley Village. After hundreds of years it is still recognisable as part of the original Purley and is a priceless heritage in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Much of this research was done by Jean Debney a founder member of Project Purley.

I hope to meet you again for another tell. Now mind how you go.