

Hoe Place



To understand the history of the house, it is necessary to appreciate two concepts, on the one hand the ancient parish of St Peter's and on the other the Royal Manor of Woking.

St Peter's was originally a minister church, one of the original churches built following the coming of Christianity to England and the parish once covered a much greater area than was the case at the beginning of the 19th century when the parish was bounded by the ancient parishes of Send, Worplesdon, Pirbright, Bisley, Horsell and Pyrford. This was before the creation of additional parishes to cope with the growth of Woking all carved out of the ancient parish of St Peter's.

The Royal Manor of Woking was the property of the Crown or its appointees and more or less co-terminus with the ancient parish of St Peter's but excluded the Manor of Sutton and the minor Manor of Bridley or Crastock.

The main house is listed Grade II* indicating it is a particularly important building, the date is given as early 18th century . DBRG carried out a survey of the main building (and the outbuildings and icehouse) in 1994 and suggested late 17th century. Surrey County Council's *List of Antiquities and Conservation Areas in the Administrative County of Surrey* of 1976 gave a specific date of 1708. The building appears in Woking Borough Council's Compendium *The Heritage of Woking*. Pevsner says *Lumpish half-H-shaped house built by James Zouch d1708*

The house is probably 74 on the John Remnant map of the Manor of 1719 with the occupier given as Heirs of Zouch. The 1841 Tithe Map piece number is 357 with the Owner and Occupier shown as Alexander Robertson. Hoe Place is mentioned in the Post Office Directory of 1855. The Electoral Register of 1892 shows Harriett Wainwright and William Lee as electors from the main house and Joseph Stoppe from *The Lodge*. Frank E. Taylor's Local West Surrey Directory of 1913 has the occupier as F.A. Booth.

The history of Hoe Place is inextricably bound up with that of Woking Palace and the Royal Manor of Woking. The Palace stood in a park the boundaries of which were roughly the present day Old Woking Road, Pyrford Common Road, Church Hill and Newark Lane with the River Wey as its southern boundary. The Manor itself was held by Edward the Confessor and continued from that time to be held by the Crown or an appointee. In 1189, the site of the Palace had been established. It was Henry VIII when he came into possession of the Manor who was responsible for turning the manor house into a Palace.

After Henry's death, the Palace ceased to be frequented by its Royal owners and in 1620 the Manor was granted by James I to Sir Edward Zouch, it is said for favours granted. Sir Edward abandoned the Palace and built himself a new manor house on the site of the present Hoe Place. There is some evidence that some of the material from the Palace were reused in the construction of the new house. The process of robbery of material from the Palace continued up to the acquisition of the Palace site by Woking Borough Council in 1988. With the abandonment of the Palace, the park was turned over to farming and a number of farmhouses built, some say partly with bricks from the Palace. Round Hill Farm and the Old House are possibly two of these farmhouses.

Sir James Lloyd appears in the 1664 Hearth Tax return residing at a house with 25 hearths in Heathside tything together with *The Lodge House* in the same tything. This large house must have been that built by Sir Edward Zouch and the precursor of the present Hoe Place. Sir James succeeded his father Sir John Lloyd, buried in St Peter's and who had married the widow of James Zouch, the son of Sir Edward Zouch.

Manning and Bray say that the present house was built by James Zouch, grandson of Sir Edward and last male heir of the family on whose death in 1708 without issue, the property descended to Sophia his niece (*see below*), daughter of his sister Sophia and heir by law. They also say that the original house put up on the site by Sir Edward Zouch was pulled down by John Walter. Since that gentleman did not purchase the property until 1730, *see below*, it follows that, if Manning and Bray are correct, both old and new houses existed on the same site until that date.

The parish registers record the birth of Elizabeth and Anne in February and November 1706 daughters of Mr Charles Abel of *Ho-bridge*, the marriage of Richard Bird, yeoman and Katherine Wood at *Ho-bridge* in 1709 and the birth and burial of their daughters, Katherine, Martha, Anne, Elizabeth, Mary and Sarah all of *Ho-bridge*. It is likely that this family was living at Hoe Place rather than at the adjacent Hoe Bridge Farm since the father, is described as *Mr Richard*, and James Zouch had left the Zouch family property of the Hermitage to the said Katherine Wood. One of the surviving daughters, Katherine married Thomas Lambourn, yeoman of Woking in 1732 and the other, Sarah married, as her second husband, Alleyne Walter in 1754, *see below*, almost certainly he who purchased Hoe Place in 1761.

Depositions made in 1716 in connection with an inquiry into whether certain estate of James Zouch, deceased, was part of the Royal Manor of Woking and held from the Crown or his own personal property (*PRO E134/5George2/Mich1-9*) show that the wife of Charles Abel (*see previous paragraph*) was in fact, the sister of Mrs Katherine Wood (housekeeper to James Zouch *SHC 1499/2*) who married Richard Bird at Hoe Place in 1709 and to whom James Zouch left the Zouch family property of the Hermitage.

Two of the depositions, by Henry Attfield, yeoman of Windlesham and a servant at Hoe Place for three years prior to the death of James Zouch and John Freeland, husbandman of Woking, appear to disclose underhand dealings by Mr and Mrs Abel immediately following the death of James Zouch. Mrs Abel is said to have come down from London to Hoe Place, where James Zouch had died, in a great hurry and taken back certain “writings” to London and Mr Abel was observed by Henry Attfield and John Freeland burning “writings and papers” in the kitchen at Hoe Place.

According to Manning and Bray, the sequence in which ownership of Hoe Place changed following the death of James Zouch in 1708 was as follows:

Sophia Zouch and her husband conveyed the premises to James Field of Odiham in 1718
 purchased by John Walter in 1730 *buried St Peter's 5th May 1736*, at that time Lord of the Manor
 acquired by Lucy Walter, *buried St Peter's 9th December 1743*, from her husband John in 1735
 in the hands of her two sons Abel and Henry in 1738 *Henry had children baptised and buried at St Peter's between 1743 and 1747*
 purchased by another son Alleyne in 1761. *Alleyne had children baptised and buried at St Peter's between 1755 and 1763*

Marchant Tubbs became the owner in 1763
 acquired by Duncan Davidson in March 1770
 sold to James Forster, Sergeant at Law in July 1770
 passed to his three daughters, Susanna, Harriott and Elizabeth on his
 death in 1781
 purchased by Thomas Colbourn
 sold to William Cornwallis
 purchased by Henry Grant in 1789.

Although Manning and Bray say the house was inherited by his niece Sophia, (*see above*) the daughter of his sister Sophia and that this niece was the wife of John or James Bayes of London, dyer, this account is complicated by the burial of a Sophia Zouch at St Peter's on 7th of May 1780. This lady left a will dated 12th April 1774 in which she described herself as a spinster. Sophia refers to two of the grandchildren of Richard and Katherine Bird as being her nephew and niece and it is difficult to determine her Zouch ancestry.

In 1823, C & S Greenwood wrote in their 'Surrey Described, being an enumeration of the seats and residences of the nobility, clergy etc', *A spacious, handsome, ancient mansion, with beautiful gardens and pleasure gardens in which is erected a very high tower for prospect, where died the Countess of Richmond, mother to Henry VII, the last of the family of Plantagenet, now the residence of Henry Grant!*

According to Edward Ryde, whose diaries are in the care of the Surrey History Centre and who lived in Poundfield House, now demolished, opposite the Grange in Old Woking, Hoe Place was one of only three houses in the parish in the early 19th century which were *removed from the category of farm house* the other two being the Hermitage, long since replaced by the housing estate of that name, and Beech Hill in Mayford. He also notes in his diary on 24th May 1870 that Hoebridge Place has been bought by William Wainwright for £11,500.

There is a memorial in St Peter's to Alexander Robertson who died on 17th December 1856 aged 77 having lived at Hoe Place for 33 years. He is said to have built Weylea next to the church.

The report in the Collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society of a visit by members of the Society in 1874 to Woking and Pyrford mentions a reception at Hoe Place as follows:

Having fully explored Pyrford House, the company returned to Hoe place, Woking. Here the visitors inspected the fine painted staircase and painted chamber. The work is after the style of that at Hampton Court, and is

supposed to be the work of Verrio, the artist, who executed the former. The subjects are taken chiefly from the Greek mythology, and the grouping shows considerable skill and effect. The painting of the figures is, however, in some points at fault, and the colouring is rather high in many cases. The painting is executed on panelling, and must have been a work of no small labour and time. In the painted chamber Mr. James Wainwright briefly described the work, and gave its history as far as known.

The mansion, which is of large and handsome proportions, was greatly admired. It was erected in 1708 by the last of the Zouch family, chiefly, it is said, of the materials of the old manor house. Up to some years ago a beacon tower, of use when the district was in olden time more of forest and wild than it happily is now, stood on an eminence, but it has disappeared, like the Zouches who erected it.

and later

The company next visited the conservatory, which is rich with several Egyptian tablets in alabaster, presented by the Right Hon. A. H. Layard. The "Museum" adjoining, with its curiously planned stained windows, attracted attention. It was erected in the Tudor Gothic style by a late proprietor, and it is supposed was intended for a museum, but the idea was never carried out.

The names of those who lived in the house between 1851 and 1901 are recorded in the censuses of those years and also in *Early Woking Buildings* published by the West Surrey Family History Society and the Update to that booklet. These returns refer to *the Clock House* and *Lodge* in 1861, *Hoe Lodge* and *Hoe Tower* in 1871, *Coach-yard* and *Lodge* in 1881, *Lodge* in 1891 and *Hoe Place Farm*, *Hoe Place Garden* and *Hoe Place Lodge* in 1901. The *Lodge* may be taken to refer to the lodge at the now blocked old gateway and *Clock House*, *Hoe Tower*, *Coach-yard* and *Hoe Place Garden* as being parts of the detached outbuildings. *Hoe Place Farm* is most likely the farm across the road at Hoe Bridge House.

1901

- Frank Booth, stockbroker, his wife Florence, their children, S A W (s) undergraduate Oxford, L C S (s) undergraduate Oxford, M W (d) , H T (d), G M (d), M C (d), L E (s), J L (s), and H C (d), a visitor, R H Hooper and their servants, F Pike, nursery governess, Clara Blandford, cook, Louisa Smith, nurse, Mary Winter, housemaid, Amy Knapp, housemaid, Kate Page, parlour maid and Ellen Bond, laundress.
- George Partner, coachman, his wife Annie and their children, Edith, Ethel and Frederick.

- *Hoe Place Farm* William Tickner, stockman, his wife Sylvia, their children, Maude, Margaret and Annie and a visitor, Henry Gurney.
- *Hoe Place Garden* Herbert Scutt, gardener.
- *Hoe Place Lodge* Henry Clark, gardener, his wife Louisa and their daughter, Irene

1919-5 Frank HA Booth **1926-7** Capt W Sinker, GG Hunt **1936-39** Capt W Sinker principal **1948-57** Mrs MB Sinker principal **1964-9** Hoe Place Preparatory School for Boys

1919-6 *The Bothy* F Cox

1919-5 *The Lodge* C Tester **1926** *The Lodge* J Ottaway **1927-8** *The Lodge* AE Ottaway **1930** *The Lodge* G Jones **1931** *The Lodge* FG Sales **1948-9** *The Lodge* F Urry **1969** *The Lodge* DF Urry

Mrs Bracey-Cox remembers in the Kingfield & Westfield Women's Institute scrap book of 1949, Band of Hope meetings being held at Hoe Place and being taken by a Miss Wainwright. The scrap book, now in the care of the Surrey History Centre) goes on to mention that *the house was converted for use as a boarding school for boys from the age of six to thirteen and a half years in 1926 under Captain Sinker who was succeeded by his son Mr Philip Sinker. Two years ago, the school had a total capacity of 68 boys, though there are slightly fewer today (1949).*

Ian Simpson of Friends of Surrey cemeteries writes:

“In plot 9 of Brookwood Cemetery there is a headstone which reads:

Until the day break and shadows flee away. In loving memory of Captain William Sinker headmaster of Hoe Place Preparatory School for boys, Old Woking, Surrey. Formerly Commander of the Melanesian Mission Steam Yacht Southern Cross. Died April 15th 1940 aged 66. Peace perfect peace.

The records show that he died at the school and was buried on 17th April and a R Sinker officiated. Also in the records is a Marion Beatrice Sinker who died at Grange Nursing Home, St Anns Hill, Chertsey and was buried on 24 Aug 1960 aged 85.

I presume M B was his wife but do not know where she was buried - she could well be with him even though the headstone does not have her name on it.”

Sources as indicated plus

Woking Palace, Henry VIII's Royal Palace, a guide to the Palace.

© Phillip Arnold 2006