The Origin of Listed Buildings

by

JOHN H. HARVEY

The official listing of historic buildings is commonly supposed to go back only to the post-war Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, and the 'Provisional Lists' then compiled are the basis of all subsequent revision. Those lists, however, were very largely what had been produced as an emergency measure in 1940–2, and already incorporated in the Act of 1944. In turn, the wartime lists, made to identify monuments worthy of special care if damaged by enemy action, had been based on still earlier lists made by the enterprise of private societies and of local authorities since the closing years of the nineteenth century.

THE BASIC LISTS (1941-2)

The legal concept of 'Listed Buildings' takes its rise from the Town and Country Planning Acts of 1944 and 1947, but the actual lists go back several years. What became official policy had been a *de facto* product of wartime circumstances. The first serious air raids in 1940 produced an awareness of the threat to historic monuments in Britain and thus raised the query as to precisely what these monuments were. ¹

Listing of historic buildings had in fact been in progress for a generation or so before the war of 1939-45. The London Survey Committee, a private enterprise, had begun its regional survey before 1896, and joined in the official listing of London's historic buildings resolved by the London County Council on 27 July 1897. In the rest of England, priority seems to belong to Manchester, where the Manchester Society of Architects in 1904 published a List of some old buildings in an area 70 miles square round Manchester. This list referred to published plans, sketches and photographs. The Victoria and Albert Museum in 1908 published the important Topographical Index to Measured Drawings of Architecture which have appeared in the principal British Architectural Publications. which was indirectly a guide to the major monuments of the country. In 1913 was published the work of the Surrey Archaeological Society under the editorship of P.M. Johnston: A Schedule of Antiquities in the County of Surrey. This dealt with churches, houses and early remains within the whole ancient county. The Surrey County Council also produced a List of Antiquities in the Administrative County of Surrey which excluded churches and all those parishes within the modern County of London. This list had reached its third edition in 1939, published shortly before the outbreak of war. Urban lists of notable importance had been produced by Walter H. Godfrey (Founder Director of the National Buildings Record) in the Official Guide to Lewes (1933), and by Thomas Dinham Atkinson in his Survey of the Street Architecture of Winchester (1934).

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EGHAM U.D. **EGHAM**

Nos. 20-28, THE HYTHE



Nos. 20-22, FROM NORTH-WEST

EXTENT OF GROUP: This group consists of a continuous range of houses running eastwards from the corner along the south side of the cul-de-sac section of The Hythe.

CONSTRUCTION: Of Nos. 20-22, old dark red brick ground floor, the upper floor reindered and cream-washed, with plain tile roof and sash windows. In the roof are dormers with casements. Of Nos. 23-28, old red brick, with plain tile or slate roofs, and 18th century sash windows, except for No. 24, which has modern casements of 17th century type.



Nos. 23-28. FROM NORTH-WEST

Fig. 1 20-28 The Hythe, Egham

EGHAM U.D. THORPE

THE OLD MILL, MILL LANE.



VIEW FROM SOUTH

CONSTRUCTION: The mill is timber-framed and weatherboarded, of three stories. Brick two storey houses have been built against it to East and West. The western wing (17th century), has a pantiled roof and casement windows; the eastern wing (early 18th century), has two low parallel roofs of plain tiles, sash windows, and latticed porch.

FITTINGS, Ec. There are remains of the mill-wheels above the stream, and a white-painted latticed bridge.

The whole group is most picturesque, and forms one of the beauties of the neighbourhood.

Fig. 2
The Old Mill, Mill Lane, Thorpe

A system of listing, national in scope, was brought forward by the war along with the National Buildings Record. As a member of staff of the Ancient Monuments Branch of H.M. Office of Works, I was involved in the opening phase of this listing and, at later dates, was also concerned with expansion of the initial lists and, as a

temporary investigator, in part of the post-war official process.

Outhoused at Rhyl in North Wales from the outbreak of war was part of the Ancient Monuments Branch, and after the first heavy raids of 1940 we were involved in setting up the system devised by the Ministry of Works and Buildings (successor to H.M.O.W.) in consultation with the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. The National Buildings Record was closely involved from the start. The late Dr F.J.E. Raby was the Assistant Secretary in charge of the scheme, and also senior officer of the outhoused section of the Branch, including part of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments and part of the Architects Division in which I worked.

The scheme was designed to provide First Aid repairs to Buildings of Historic Interest damaged by enemy action. England and Wales were divided into twelve Regions and each region into a number of Areas, over a hundred in all. For every area a panel of architects was appointed from lists initially drawn up by the R.I.B.A. for the localities. Mapping of the regions and areas was done at Rhyl, as each area was defined, and the system was already in operation by March 1941.

The primary duty of each Panel Architect was to prepare a list of buildings for each of his civil parishes, with sufficient particulars to enable them to be identified by the (Air Raid) Wardens. The criteria for inclusion, as set out in February 1941,

were:

1. Roman buildings in built-up areas;

2. Ecclesiastical buildings;3. Other religious buildings;

4. Public buildings such as Town or Market Halls;

5. Institutions, e.g., Schools, Almshouses;

6. Domestic buildings, including small ones when fine examples;

7. Miscellanea, e.g., Barns, Dovecotes, Mills, Bridges—in all instances only when of exceptional architectural or historic interest. Any building containing fittings or fragments from elsewhere which would be worth salving.

Finally, the architects were to list buildings forming essential parts of valuable and characteristic *groups*, even though not individually of great merit—such as the historic streets of Canterbury, York, Sandwich, Rye, Kings Lynn, Ludlow and many other places. Earthworks, camps, and the like were to be excluded from the lists.

The dating criteria were to include all medieval buildings; all good examples of any category down to 1750; and from 1750 to 1850 only buildings outstanding in their class. In this last division, selection was to be made sparingly and with great care. It was, however, stressed that buildings important for their national or historical association, such as Shakespeare's Birthplace; Carlyle House, Chelsea; Dr Johnson's house in Gough Square, should be included in the lists even if of limited architectural merit.

It can be seen that practically all the features of the post-war listing (except for the contentious matter of grading) were already present in the principles enunciated

SURREY LEATHERHEAD UD.

Nº 7, THE STREET



VIEW FROM SOUTH

CONSTRUCTION: Timber-framed and weatherboarded, with wooden cornice and frant doorway of 18th century classic design; the chimney-stacks are of brick and the roofs of plain tiles. The house is a fine example of an unusual type, and has been kept in extremely good condition.

SURROUNDINGS: The house is slightly set back from the street, with a yard and outbuildings on the west side, now in use as a garage and motor-hire agency.

Fig. 3 7 The Street, Ashtead

a good deal earlier. Furthermore, the necessity for revision was soon recognized. Official checking of the preliminary lists sent in revealed that some were obviously inadequate, and had to be supplemented by search of such sources as the Little Guides to each county, and the R.A.C. County Road Map and Gazetteer of England and Wales in twenty-four parts, of which I happened to possess a complete set. By the end of 1942 the basic lists for the whole country had been issued, and the Panel Architects were then asked to bring them up to date by submitting suggested additions for consideration, with a brief description and a sketch or photograph if possible.

The problem of photography had proved an unexpectedly awkward one. Every Panel Architect on appointment was issued with a permit which purported to authorize photography, but within a few months it was pointed out that in the circumstances of the time (mid-1941) these permits might not be accepted by the police. In fact, shortage of photographic materials soon made it impossible for the Panel Architects to provide adequate photographic coverage. When photographic records were essential they were left to the National Buildings Record. Close liaison between the Ancient Monuments Branch (at Rhyl and in Whitehall), the Panel Architects, and the N.B.R. became a normal activity.

ADDITIONS TO THE BASIC LISTS (1943-5)

By 1943, when the submission of additional buildings began, I had moved from Rhyl to become the sole assistant to my father, William Harvey (1883–1962), Panel Architect for a group of parishes strung across north-central Surrey. The area stretched from Egham to Reigate, and the basic lists for the fifteen parishes concerned were mainly those of the 1939 *Antiquities of Surrey*, with the addition of the ancient parish churches and of a few old houses close to my father's home and office.²

A letter from Dr Raby, dated 1 January 1943, sent to all Panel Architects, asked for suggested additions, to be accompanied by brief descriptions and a sketch or photograph of each. Between bouts of dealing with the outcome of raids, it became my main task to search the parishes of my father's district (Region 12, Area 17) for worthy ancient buildings that fell within the categories and dates laid down. This involved contacts with the Surrey County Council and eventually the listing (for the whole of the County Council area) of their collection of Photographs of Antiquities other than Earthworks, as it was in 1943–4. Copies of this list were sent to the N.B.R. and to the Surrey Archaeological Society. There were also personal contacts, through the N.B.R., with the noted photographers Herbert Felton and John Yerbury.

Through the late Dr Wilfrid Hooper (then Honorary Secretary of the Surrey Archaeological Society), with whom my father was already in touch, we were made aware of that Society's publication in 1931 of a facsimile of the *Map of Surrey* by John Rocque, of c. 1768. That map proved to be of remarkable accuracy in marking individual buildings outside the built-up areas, and we prepared a tracing from sheets of the one-inch to the mile Ordnance Survey maps to which these sites could be transferred. Parish by parish the relevant areas were examined, and all the surviving buildings within our fifteen parishes noted. Whenever superficial examination suggested that a given monument satisfied the official criteria, a sketch and a brief description were made on the spot. This process formed a considerable part of my own work and had to be carried out by lengthy bicycle rides. A good deal of delay

SURREY LEATHERHEAD U.D. GREAT BOOKHAM

CORNER HOUSE, CHURCH ROAD (SOLDIERS' CLUB)



VIEW FROM NORTH

CONSTRUCTION: Brick, and in block fronting Lower Road, partly brick and flint. The front of the main block in Church Road is rendered and the whole block whitewashed except for tile-hung portions at the rear. The roofs are of plain tiles. There is a wooden porch of classic design to the main block. The block along Lower Road is partly of 17th century date, but has been much restored and rebuilt; the main block is 18th century.

GARDEN: The house stands in a pleasant garden, but it is not now in good condition.

GENERAL: The house is an important amenity, as it stands at the main cross-roads opposite to the Church.

Fig. 4 Corner House, Church Road, Great Bookham was caused by police checks and at times by intervention by members of the public. We had, of course, no official permission to do more than inspect exteriors from the road, but in fact many owners and occupiers became interested and extremely helpful. In the absence of any local means of photocopying, each sketch with description was re-drawn in ink, and a second copy traced (See Appendix I and Figs 1-10).

The total of buildings included in the basic list for the area was eighty-six; the additions proposed numbered about 115, but in many instances these comprised groups of several distinct messuages. The final First Aid List for our area was complete by 20 June 1944. Though a few of the submissions were officially rejected, virtually all of them appeared after the war in the Provisional Lists prepared under the Act of 1947 and/or in the County Council's *List* in its 4th edition of 1951, compiled independently.

IRON RAILINGS AND GATES

Before the end of 1941 an official scheme had been drawn up to commandeer 'unnecessary railings' as scrap-metal for military purposes. Provision was made for individual appeals by owners, and the existing Panel Architects were asked to report on the subject of each appeal, providing an illustration and a recommendation for or against retention. My father had to deal with over fifty appeals and recommended to the Headquarters Appeal Panel the retention of about half of them. Sketches or drawings of more than twenty examples survive (see Appendix II).

POST-WAR LISTING (1946-9)

In preparation for the lists envisaged under Section 42 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1944, my friend and former colleague the late S.J. ('Richard') Garton, with whom I had worked at Rhyl, was seconded to the new Ministry of Town and Country Planning and in 1946 became the first Chief Investigator of Historic Buildings. A small staff of permanent and temporary investigators was appointed, and was considerably enlarged on the passing of the Planning Act of 1947, to produce the Provisional Lists under Section 30 of that Act. In 1949 I was myself employed as a part-time investigator, and so took part in the third stage of listing. Though mostly engaged on parts of Surrey, I was also sent to check some of the tentative lists prepared elsewhere in the interim period before the operation of the 1947 Act. In these cases my brief was, after studying the detailed official criteria for listing and grading, to formalize and standardize drafts of variable quality. The necessity to maintain uniformity in method and results led to extremely strict scrutiny of every building, and in all marginal cases (whether of inclusion or of grading) to site visits with the Chief Investigator. Work at that time was seriously hampered by the very strict rule prohibiting any request to examine interiors. This naturally led to subsequent discovery of concealed ancient work, often too late to save from destruction a worthy and important building.

SURREY LEATHERHEAD UD. GREAT BOOKHAM

VINE COTTAGE, HIGH STREET



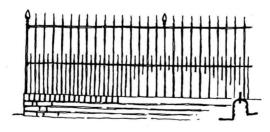
YIEW FROM WEST

CONSTRUCTION: Brick covered with colour-washed rendering. The roof is of plain tiles. The present front door and eash windows belong to the 18th century, but the house may incorporate remains of an earlier structure.

GARDEN: The house stands well back from the road, in a beautiful garden.

GENERAL: The house is opposite to Nos. 18 2 Victoria Cottages.

IRONWORK: A simple iron railing of pleasant design fronts the street. This has been reserved as of historic interest.



RAILING

Fig. 5 Vine Cottage, High Street, Great Bookham

NOTES

1. This article is based almost entirely upon records of my father's architectural practice, deposited in the Surrey Record Office, County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames. The relevant items form deposit 623/11: 623/11/1 consists of general correspondence; 11/2 and 11/3 include pencil sketches of buildings suggested as additions to the basic lists, and maps; and 11/4 copies of the final ink drawings with descriptions. Appeals for iron gates and railings are in 11/5-11/11. The final section, 11/12, includes correspondence with the N.B.R., Surrey County Council, and Surrey Archaeological Society.

Region 12, Area 17 originally included more parishes, namely Banstead, Chipstead, Cobham, Coulsdon, Epsom, Esher, Kingswood, Stoke d'Abernon, and Walton-on-the-Hill. Basic lists of buildings for these had already been drawn up when, in July 1941, they were withdrawn from Region 12 and allotted to Region 5, the London area. This was due to a decision that the whole of a local authority, of which any part was within the Metropolitan Police District, should be counted

as a part of London for First-Aid purposes.

3. It had been shown by Dr Hooper, in Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol. 40 (1932), 65-77, that the supposed date of '1762' was mistaken; but even so the map was close enough to the official 1750 to be an effective terminus.

SURREY LEATHERHEAD U.D. FETCHAM

POUND FARM, COBHAM ROAD



VIEW FROM SOUTH-EAST

CONSTRUCTION: Half-timber, probably of 16th century date, with brick nogging, now whitewashed. The roof is covered with old red plain tiles. The south-west end of the house is of brick.

OUTBUILDINGS: To the north of the house are two ranges of outbuildings of tarred weatherboard, with roofs of plain red tiles, now suffering from subsidence of some of the roof-trusses. These outbuildings are picturesque and form an attractive group with the house.



VIEW FROM WEST

Fig. 6 Pound Farm, Cobham Road, Fetcham

Appendix I

Additions to the Basic Lists (1943-4)

These lists of additions follow the order of the basic lists, by district and then by parish, alphabetically. Illustrative sketches, some of which are reproduced here as Figs. 1–10, were made only for the Urban Districts of Egham and Leatherhead, and the Municipal Borough of Reigate. The areas concerned are distinguished by an asterisk (*). Within each parish the order followed is that of the *List of Antiquities* published by the Surrey County Council, 1951, and subsequent editions.

CHERTSEY U.D.

CHERTSEY

Ferry House, Laleham Ferry
Wheatsheaf Cottages, Bittams Lane, Guildford Road
Crockford Bridge Farm
The Old Farm House, Grange Road, Woodham
Brick Bridge over the Bourne, Woodham Park Road
Anningsley Park, Ottershaw (home of Thomas Day, author of Sandford and Merton)
Belsize Grange, Bridge Road

Guildford Street, East Side:

Nos. 94-108 inclusive

Nos. 118, 120

No. 126 'The Prince Regent'

Guildford House, with railings for historic and aesthetic interest

Guildford Street, West Side:

Nos. 71, 73

Nos. 83-103 (King's Head Hotel) inclusive

No. 121

London Street, North Side:

Nos. 17, 19

London Street, South Side:

Nos. 36-42

Nos. 44-48

No. 60 Dover House Nos. 62-66 (Calais Cottage)

No. 84 (corner of Pound Road)

The Golden Grove p.h., St. Ann's Road

Pyrcroft House, Pyrcroft Road

Rodwells Farm, Row Town

York House, York Place, York Corner (range of three)

SURREY LEATHERHEAD U.D. LEATHERHEAD

№ 33, CHURCH STREET



VIEW FROM SOUTH-WEST

CONSTRUCTION: Brickwork with contrasting quoins, stone coping, tile-hung gable, and tile-hung wing at south end. The front of the house is a very good example of 18th century provincial design, and has a panelled door and sash windows.

GARDEN: The house is separated from the street by a brick wall and a small well-kept garden containing fine clipped yews beside the front door.

Fig. 7 33 Church Street, Leatherhead

Windsor Street:

(the whole street as a group, from north side, the Parish Church to No. 46; and south side, Nos. 1-41 inclusive, including):

Windsor Street, North Side:

Nos. 12–16 The Sun p.h. and No. 26 Nos. 36–46

Windsor Street, South Side:

Nos. 13-17 Eldridges (Pearl Assurance Co.)

ADDLESTONE

Black Boy Farm The George Inn, Chertsey Road

*EGHAM U.D.

*EGHAM

Old House, Englefield Green
Warren Farm, Portnall Park
Constitutional Club, 159 High Street
Literary Institute, High Street
The Old House Café and The King's Arms p.h., High Street
The Red House, High Street
Prospect Place, Middle Hill
Nos. 20–22, Nos. 23–28 The Hythe (Fig. 1)
No. 29 and Ye Olde Bridge House, The Hythe
The Jolly Farmer, The Hythe

*THORPE

Eastley End Cottage, Norlands Lane The Old Mill, Mill Lane (Fig. 2) The Rose & Crown p.h., Thorpe Green The Cot, Rosemary Lane Eglantine, Rosemary Lane The Cottage, Village Green The Jolly Gardeners p.h., The Bence Homestead Cottage, Clockhouse Lane

*LEATHERHEAD U.D.

*ASHTEAD

Ashtead Park
The Old Bakery, Crampshaw Lane
The Old Cottage, Ottways Lane
Park Farm House, Farm Lane
No. 7, The Street (Fig. 3)

SURREY LEATHERHEAD U.D.

Nº 2, 4 & 6, GRAVEL HILL



VIEW FROM WEST

CONSTRUCTION: Half-timber & brick, mostly plastered and partly tile-hung. Mº 2 ("Toy Land" shop) has a later shop front added to its projecting gable-end. The three tenements probably formed one large house, and are a fine solidly built 16th century block. Nº 6 is now empty and somewhat dilapidated. The great roof, covered with old plain tiles, is very fine, and both front and back elevations are picturesque. GARDENS: The small front gardens of Nº 4 & 6 make a pleasant foreground, separated from the street by a low flint wall of some age. REMARKS: With the possible exception of the Running Horse hn, this is much the finest early secular building now remaining in Leatherhead.



VIEW FROM EAST

Fig. 8 2, 4 and 6, Gravel Hill, Leatherhead

*GREAT BOOKHAM

Corner House, Church Road (Fig. 4) Gables Cottage, Church Road Old Forge Cottage, High Street Vine Cottage, High Street (Fig. 5) Fairfield House, High Street

(The three following items had been added to the 1939 County Council List, in compiling the basic list:

Eastwick Park (Southey Hall) Anchor Inn, Eastwick Royal Oak p.h., High Street)

*FETCHAM

Roaring House Farm and Barn Pound Farm, Cobham Road (Fig. 6) Pound Cottage, Cobham Road Yew Tree Cottage and Tea Tree Cottage, The Street Home Farm, The Street

*LEATHERHEAD

Barnettwood Farm, Barnettwood Lane No. 17, Church Street Close behind No. 17, Church Street No. 33, Church Street (Fig. 7) Nos. 2, 4 and 6, Gravel Hill (Fig. 8)

*REIGATE M.B.

*MERSTHAM

Old Cottage, South Parade Alderstead Farm, Alderstead Lane Hoath Farm, Harps Oak Lane Barn, No. 21, The Street Nos. 27-33, The Street No. 34, The Street No. 143, Quality Street Mead Cottage, Quality Street (Fig. 9) Home Farm, The Street

*REIGATE

Flanchford Farm Ricebridge Farm No. 16, Bell Street Warwick Lodge, Batts Hill Road Santon Farm (formerly Gilberts Farm) No. 8, Linkfield Lane

REIGATE M.B. MERSTHAM

MEAD COTTAGE, QUALITY STREET



VIEW FROM SOUTH-EAST

CONSTRUCTION: The main body of the house is timber-framed, with brick nogging, tiled roof, and leaded casements; at the south end is a brick addition of the 18th century, with sash windows.

GENERAL: The house stands in a beautiful garden, and is a harmonious blend of works of various periods from the 16th century onwards.

Fig. 9 Mead Cottage, Quality Street, Merstham Nos. 25, 27, High Street

Nos. 30, 32, High Street

Nos. 42-50, High Street (Fig. 10)

Nos. 55, 57, High Street

No. 65, High Street

Nos. 70-82, High Street

Windmill, Reigate Heath

Harrall's, Slipshoe Street

The Cottage, Millside, Trumpets Hill

Nos. 19, 21, West Street

Brown's Lodge, West Street

Old West Street House, etc., West Street

The Old House, Upper West Street

WALTON & WEYBRIDGE U.D.

WALTON-ON-THAMES

South Waylands Farm, Hersham
Thames Cottage, Thames Street
Park Cottage, Burhill Park
Turpin's Cottage (Laundry Cottage), Burhill Park
Cat's Hall, Burhill
Byfleet Mill House (transferred to Walton parish)

WEYBRIDGE

Brooklands Farm, Brooklands Lane School Cottage, Springfield Meadows, Baker Street Nos. 54, 56 (Portmore Cottage), Church Street Nutfield, Heath Road The Ship Hotel, Monument Green

WOKING U.D. (part only)

BYFLEET

Vanners, High Road

PYRFORD

The Old Almshouses, Byfleet Road Church Farm, Church End

REIGATE M.B.

Nº 42-50, HIGH STREET



VIEW FROM SOUTH-EAST

EXTENT OF GROUP: The group comprises houses No. 42,44,46, 48 & 50 on the north side of High Street.

CONSTRUCTION: Brick, plastered, and tile-hung fronts probably conceal timber-framing. The roofs are of plain tiles and the chimney-stacks of old red brick.

GENERAL: This is one of the finest old street frontages in Reigate, the modern alterations, shopfronts etc. having been for the most part corefully harmonised with the old work. Many early features remain.

Fig. 10 42-50 High Street, Reigate

Appendix II

Ironwork: Drawings of Railings and Gates subject to Appeals

LEATHERHEAD U.D.

ASHTEAD

Ashtead Park North Lodge (dated 1882) Merry Hall, Agates Lane Redroofs, Agates Lane Ottershaw, Greville Park Avenue Berryfields, Park Lane Inward Shaw, Park Lane No. 102, Stag Leys

GREAT BOOKHAM

Chanctonbury, Guildford Road

FETCHAM

Stonecourt, The Mount The Well House, The Street

LEATHERHEAD

No. 74, Copthorne Road Downside Catholic Church, Garlands Road Thorne's Garage, Kingston Road Tharn, Yarm Way, Reigate Road

WALTON & WEYBRIDGE U.D.

WALTON-ON-THAMES

Kingswood, Ashley Road
The River House, Esher Road
Beechcroft, Oatlands Drive
Tudor Lodge (Nos. 83, 85), Oatlands Drive
The Gatehouse, Silverdale Avenue
Hillington, Station Avenue
Shelleys, Westcarrs Lane, Hersham