

# WHERE, OH WHERE, WAS WANDLE ROAD?

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In 1871 what was later called 'West Street' was called 'Ellen Street'.

A few months ago I came across the name Wandle Road whilst writing about the 1878 Post Office Directory. In it I discovered that John Brake and a Mrs Cane were listed at numbers 1 and 2 Wandle Road, with John Thomas Jumpsen at Wandle Cottage (presumably in or very near to the road). But the question was – where exactly was 'Wandle Road' and why does it no longer exist?

Moving on to the 1882 Directory I found along with Jumpsen that a Mrs Willgoss had taken over from Mrs Cane at No 2 (although who was then at number one I do not know). And in 1888 William Mitchell was a blacksmith in the road and George Frederick Stokes a baker. The latter entries were from Arthur Althorp's Directory, featured a few weeks ago in this column, when I also mentioned James Woodham a chimney sweeper in the road and hinted that this had given me a clue as to the real identity of the mysterious road's location.

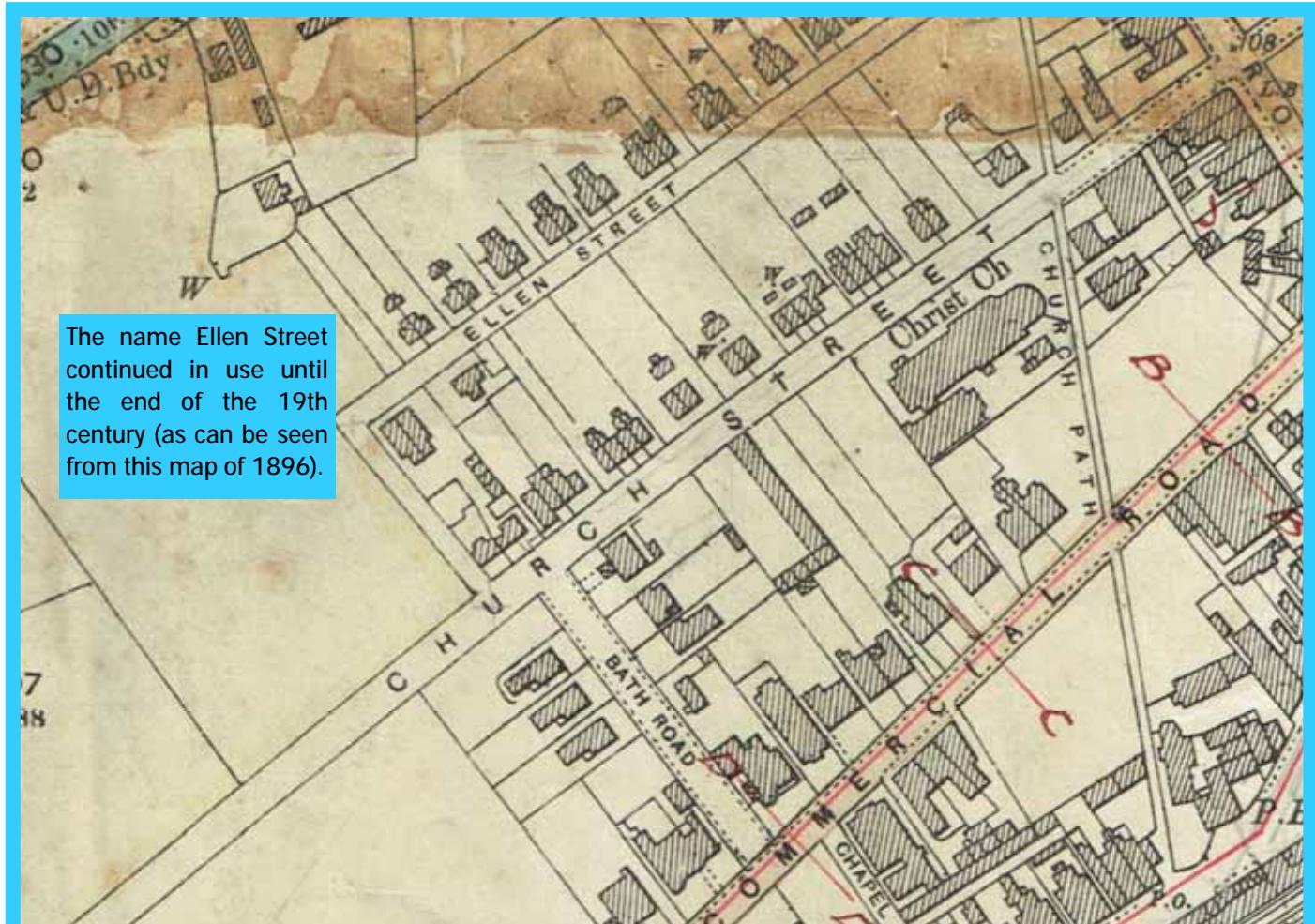
My next directory after 1888 is the Kelly's Directory of 1891 and it was in there that I found James Woodham, William Mitchell (and a James Thomas Jumpsen) all listed in Church Street, with a Joseph Stokes listed as a baker in the road (presumably taking over from his father or grandfather, George). Was this the answer - was Church Street the new name for Wandle Road?

It was not unheard of at that time for roads to be re-named in Woking – we know from the 1871 census that what was later called 'West

Street' was then called 'Ellen Street'. But the problem is that from that census we also know that Church Street used to be called Providence Street. It would be odd, to say the least, if that road should have been re-named 'Wandle Road' by the late 1870's and then renamed again as Church Street just a few years later.

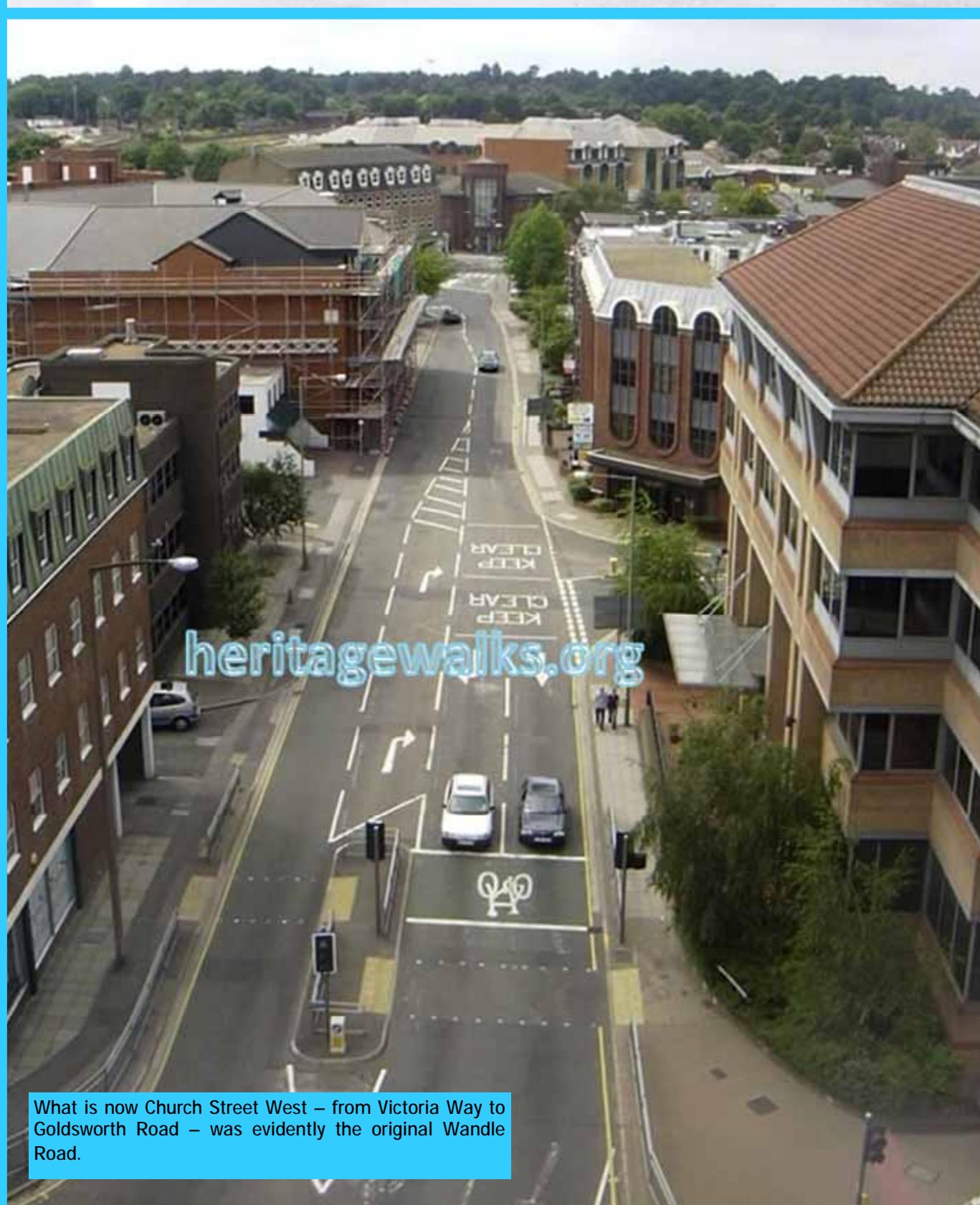
The fact that a Mrs Esther Walker, a dressmaker, was also listed in Arthur Althorp's Directory in 1888 as being in Church Street seemed to confirm that Church Street could not be Wandle Road – or did it?

The 1881 Census also lists both Church Street and Wandle Road – the latter being part of the



It appears that Providence Street was renamed 'Church Street' about 1877 when the first Christ Church was built.

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What is now Church Street West – from Victoria Way to Goldsworth Road – was evidently the original Wandle Road.

Goldsworth area (District 3) with the former listed in the Station area (District 2). The dividing line between the two districts appears to be what we would now call Victoria Way, or Percy Street for those residents old enough to remember its old name (although it was not named as such in 1881). The description of the boundary of District 3 states that it is bounded on the north east 'by the Parish of Horsell as far as the road opposite the railway arch and leading to W. Lambert'. William Lambert (a grocer and master baker) is then the first person to be listed in Wandle Road.

This is significant as I believe it gives us the long awaited answer – Providence Street (heading east from Percy Street) was renamed Church Street sometime between 1871 and 1881 (probably when the first tin Christ Church was constructed in 1877), with Church Street west of Percy Street still being known as Wandle Road until at least 1888. This would explain how both roads could be listed in the 1880's, but how three people who were in Wandle Road in 1888 could suddenly transfer to Church Street just three years later.

The 1891 census confirms this with William Mitchell, James Jumpsen and Joseph Stokes all listed in what we would now call Church Street West.

Sadly by the time the census was compiled our chimney sweep, James Woodham, was no longer around to be listed, as he was buried at St Johns on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1891, three days before the census was taken (but obviously after the Kelly's Directory was compiled). But thanks to him (and Messrs Mitchell, Jumpsen and Stokes) I think we can finally confirm where Wandle Road was.

## THE HOLROYD'S OF BYFLEET MILL

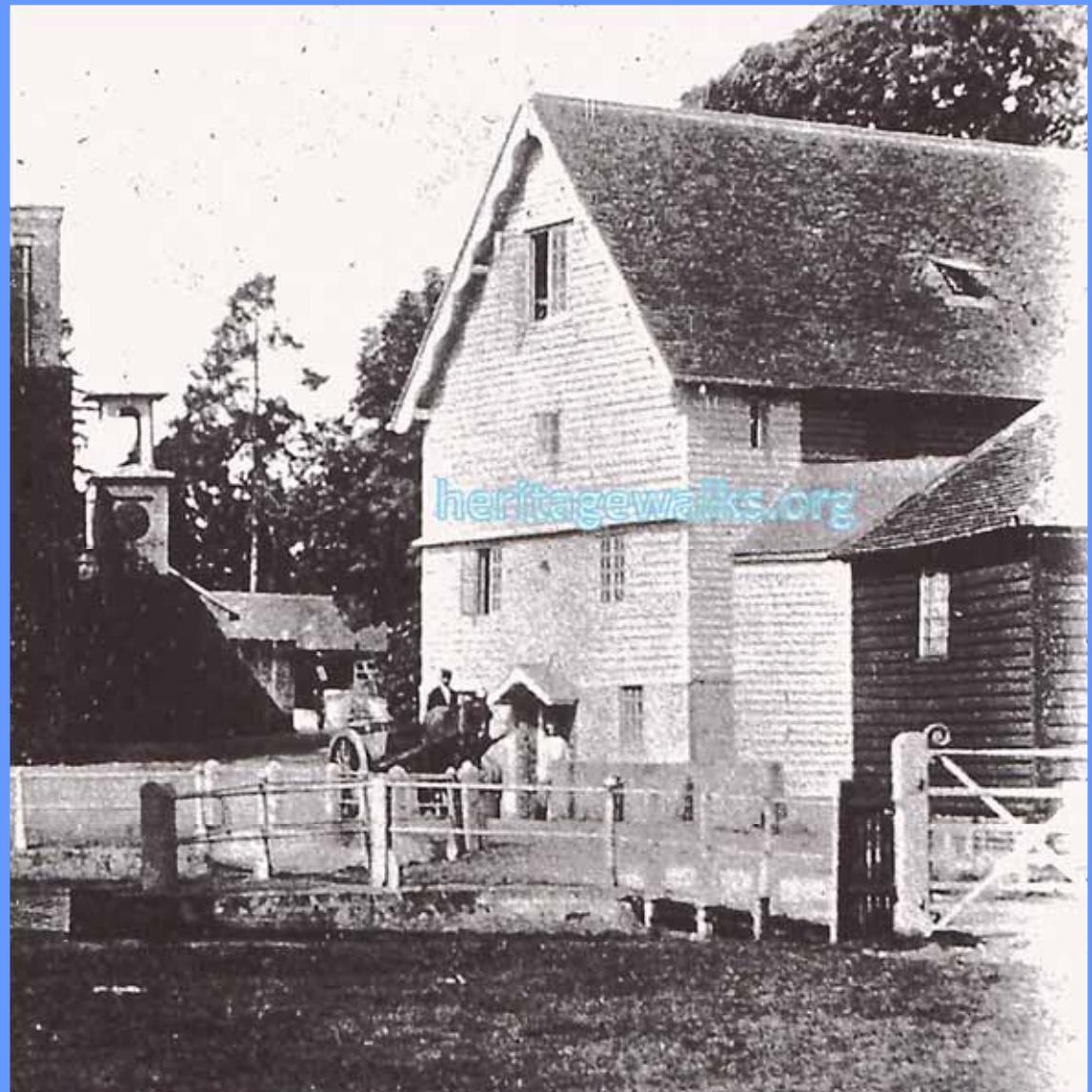
In Derek Stidder's book on *The Watermills of Surrey*, he notes that in April 1890 there was a tragic accident at Byfleet Mill 'when William Holroyd, the eldest son of George Holroyd, caught his foot in a revolving belt and was crushed to death'.

The poor lad was only eighteen and it must have been a tremendous blow to the family, who according to Leonard Stevens in his book on Byfleet – A Village of England had already experienced more than their fair share of drama over the years.

In 1800 whilst at a royal performance at the Drury Lane Theatre, John Holroyd had prevented the assassination of King George III by a madman called James Hatfield, when he raised his arm and diverted the pistol as he shot; whilst in 1846 another of George Holroyd's ancestors, William Stephen Holroyd, had foiled an armed robbery at Byfleet Mill when up to eight men stormed the building demanding money.

Back in 1890 it seems that George Holroyd never recovered from the loss of his son. Derek Stidder speculates that 'it may well be that this accident persuaded George Holroyd to vacate the mill, for in the same year the well-known firm of Hall & Davidson took control, and ran it in conjunction with their other concerns at Ewell'.

Having said that, the Holroyd family continued to play an important part in the business life of the village – as we shall no doubt see in the coming weeks and months.



## THE STOOP'S OF WEST HALL

Meanwhile on the other side of Byfleet the mansion that was known as West Hall was being improved following the purchase by Frederick Cornelius Stoop, a Dutch oil tycoon whose family fortune appears to have been made in the oil fields of Indonesia (or the Dutch East Indies as they were then known), in particular on the island of Java. There the Stoop family had previously been involved in growing rice, sugar and tobacco, before Frederick and his brothers, Adriaan and Jan set up their oil company.

Later the Stoop Brother's, and another little oil company known as the Royal Dutch, were to merge with the Samuel Brother's 'Shell Transport and Trading Company', but in 1890 that was way in the future and whilst Frederick's brothers were busy looking after the Indonesian end of the business, he was busy remodelling his new 'country seat' at Byfleet and looking after the European end of the business.

In later life he was to become a great benefactor to the village (and Pyrford and West Byfleet), but in 1890 no doubt the gossip in the village was of their new neighbour and the building work that was taking place on the old mansion. I wonder what those villagers would make of the site now?

