

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MILL ROAD

- Traditionally known as Hinton Way. By 1830 Baker's map shows it was known as Mill Road after the windmill that stood at what is now the corner of Covent Garden.
- Mill Road was part of Barnwell, a village outside Cambridge near the junction of East Road and Newmarket Road.
- The only buildings shown on the map in 1830 are the windmill and Mill Road Nursery (sited between today's Romsey Terrace and Hope Street). Off Mill Road were houses in Covent Garden, Barnwell New Church and Polecat Farm (on the site of Romsey Terrace).

TIMELINE

- 1801** Population of Mill Road – 252*
- 1831** Population of Mill Road – 6,651.
- 1836** First meeting of the **Guardians of the Cambridge Union Workhouse**. The Guardians comprise two representatives from each of the 14 Cambridge parishes.
- 1838** **Cambridge Union Workhouse** complete at a cost of £4,029. It housed 256 people.
- 1840** Storm destroys windmill which gives Mill Road its name.
Romsey Cottage built, set on a farm of 60 acres. Re-built in the late 19th century as Romsey House, a red brick neo-Tudor building and home to a local solicitor.
- 1845** **Great Eastern Railway** comes to Cambridge. Development of the eastern part of the city.
- 1847** **Eagle Foundry**, run by the Headley brothers, opens. Local accountant and diarist Josiah Chater notes on 26th April 1847 '*they are getting quite a little town in that part of the world*'.
- 1861** Population of Mill Road – 11,848.
- 1867** Mill Villa (later 'The Lodge') built. Demolished in the 1930s to make way for shops of The Broadway on Mill Road.
- 1870s** Land between East Road and Mill Road acquired by local Chemist Joseph Sturton and became known as 'Sturton Town'. The previous owner of this land was a Baron Gwydir, thus the street named 'Gwydir' Street.

- 1879** Sale of land, at which Francis Thoday acquires much of the Romsey area, thus 'Thoday Street' and 'Catherine Street' (after his daughter in law).
- 1880** Romsey Town (aka 'Railway Town'), an area of Victorian working-class housing built on fields between 1880-1905. This era of high Victorian Empire is reflected in street names – Malta Road, Cyprus Road, Suez Road, Madras Road, Hobart Road, Montreal Road, Natal Road – pub names – **The Empress** – and house names – Pretoria Terrace, a reminder of one of the wars of Empire, the Boer War*.
- 1887** **Brookfields Hospital**, at the end of Mill Road in Cambridge, officially opened as the Cambridge Borough Infectious Diseases Hospital in 1887 and was also known as 'The Sanatorium'.
- 1891** Population of Mill Road – 25,091.
Salisbury Conservative Club built.
- 1893** Isolation Hospital for Infectious Diseases built (now Brookfields Hospital).
- 1916** **The Empire** becomes the 'Kinema'. It shows films until 1986.
- 1926** New female infirmary and babies' nursery opens at the Workhouse.
General Strike. Romsey known as 'Little Russia' or 'Red Romsey' after many local residents join the strike in protest to proposed cuts in wages.
- 1927** **Bath House** opens. It offers nine baths for men and nine baths for women.
- 1928** **Romsey Labour Club** opened by Ramsey McDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister.
- 1930** The 'Mill Road Institution' (Workhouse) becomes the County Infirmary.
- 1931** The Kinema installs sound equipment to show 'talkies'.
- 1938** County Infirmary becomes the County Council's Public Assistance [Office].
- 1940** Cambridge targeted by German bombers, 1940-42. Railway sidings near bridge on Mill Road bombed in 1941. Two people killed when bombs hit houses on Great Eastern Street, 1942.
- 1948** Maternity Hospital opens on site of the Cambridge Infirmary (previously the Workhouse)
- 1956** **Playhouse Cinema** closes. Supermarket opens on site.
- 1983** **Maternity Hospital** closes. Rosie Maternity unit opens on Addenbrookes Hospital site.
- 1996** Kinema demolished.

REFERENCES

* Ronald D. Gray, Derek Stubbings, Cambridge street-names: their origins and associations. Cambridge University Press, 2000.