

Rev. R.J.Hills, 19 Church Way, Iffley, Oxford, (Tel. 771059)
8th March 1979.

To The Chairman,
The Friends of Iffley.
Dear Dr. Banks,

Naming new Developments in Iffley

I regret my wife and I will be in Wales on March 13th, so will you please make our apologies for absence from the The Friends' A.G.M.

Here is a summary of the consultation we had with Mr. W.H. Tighe [pronounced 'Tye'] of the City Engineer's Department when he kindly met us here yesterday: –

- (1) Mr Tighe reported that several names had been sent in to the City Council by individual, and it was mistakenly supposed that they were official proposals of the Friends' Committee. Other names had been supplied by Mr M. Graham of the Oxford Public Library Local History department. Names from both sources were allocated to the new Iffley Development Roads and Sites, to be confirmed by the appropriate City committee at its meeting on Monday 26 February. I heard about these names on Friday Feb. 23rd from Councillors John Parker and Ann Spokes. Through representations made by you as Chairman of the Friends to Mr Fred Kane, Chairman of the City Committee, confirmation of the names was postponed for a month, to give time for further consideration.
- (2) I reported that I had visited Mr Graham at the City Library, and found that some names were taken from the 1830 "Enclosure (or Inclosure) Award Map" (which registered private and common land during the troubled times before the 1832 Reform Act). Mr Graham said he knew nothing whatever about the people named on the map except that they owned pieces of land in Iffley.
- (3) We discussed the names on the City list, and suggested some alternative for approval or revision by the Friends' A.G.M.; the Friends' official agreed proposals to be forwarded to the City without delay for the March meeting.

| <u>Site</u> | <u>Names : City Council List</u> | <u>Alternative Suggestions for Names. See Notes</u> |
|--|--|---|
| <u>Wootton/West View Development</u> | | |
| <u>New Spine Road</u> | Woodhouse Way | Woodhouse Road |
| <u>Site A. West of Road, old Woodhouse Meadow.</u> | Aubrey Court | Aubrey Court – agreed |
| <u>B. East of Road, on new drive to Wootton House</u> | Wootton House | Wootton Drive – agreed |
| <u>C. No development</u> | Wootton House | Wootton House – no change |
| <u>D. West of road</u> | Open Space | (no name) |
| <u>E. East of Road, approx: site of old Woodhouse</u> | Bay Tree Close | <u>John Stainer's Garden</u> |
| <u>E.1 Old Allotment field adjoining Tree Lane</u> | Barker Close | <u>Sheepway – one word</u> |
| <u>E.2 Allotments, backing on 31 Abberbury Rd. garden</u> | Merriman Close | <u>Bears Hedge</u> |
| <u>G. Barltrop property</u> | (no name) | (no name) |
| <u>H. North of Tree Lane between Barltrop & Phipps</u> | Richard Blay Close (Old Peoples Bungalows) | <u>Azor's Field. Court or Meadow</u> |
| <u>I. Lane behind West View gardens leading to back of Hunsdon Rd.</u> | Sheep Way Court | <u>Stone Quarry Lane</u> |
| <u>J. Morris, & Phipps' Nursery</u> | (no development) | (no development) |
| <u>Tree Hotel corner site</u> | Cordrey Close | <u>Cordrey Green</u> |

Notes, with reasons for Alternative Suggestions and references, on separate sheet

A list of Alternative Names for use in Iffley (derived from the Victoria Country History, the Church Archives, and other sources), has been prepared and some suggested Principles to be observed in choosing new Place Names.

Friends of Iffley. Notes on 1979 New Development Place Names, by R.J.Hills

Wootton/West View

The new Spine Road follows approximately the line of the old Woodhouse drive.

Site A. 'Aubrey Court' is named after the Norman Earl Aubrey. Domesday Book (1086, 'Oxenfordshire' chapter XVIII) says "Count Aubrey (Latin 'Comes Albericus') held Iffley (Givetelei) from the King", i.e. William the Conqueror gave it to him as a feudal tenant, expropriating the former Saxon free-holder, Azor, Lord of Iffley. See Site H. 'Azor's Field'.

Site E. 'John Stainer's Garden' is strongly proposed because soon after Woodhouse was bought from the Allens of Hawkwell in 1948 by Mr J.B. Mayall, Lady Stainer visited the house and said that her late husband, Sir John Stainer, Oxford Professor of Music etc. had written his oratorio 'The Crucifixion' sitting under the fir-tree (= Cretan Pine) in the garden". 'John Stainer's Garden' avoids any confusion with 'Stainer Place' in the City's 'Musicians Corner' in New Marston. (Woodhouse had several distinguished residents, including King Edward VII, who when he was Prince of Wales at Christ Church in 1859 had it for his retinue of servants and horses. Dr L.J. Witts, Professor of Clinical Medicine, rented it from 1938 to 1948)

Comment [c1]: Editor's note: No evidence can be found that Stainer owned or visited this property. Lady Stainer died in 1916.

Site F.1. 'Sheepway' was the old name for Tree Lane – the beginning of the ancient sheep track from Iffley, over Wallingford Way (now Rose Hill), past Cowley Church, along The Grates and up Hollow Way to Shotover where Iffley farmers had rights of hill grazing. See Victoria County History ('V.C.H.'). Oxford vol. 5, page 198 – 'Sketch Map of Cowley, Iffley and Littlemore before the Inclosure'.

Site F.2. 'Bears Hedge', heard of by Vicar Hills from some of our oldest inhabitants, was the name of the stone wall or hedge continuing the parish boundary up from the Denton and Iffley House wall (with Beech Nut Lane alongside) across the top of Tree Lane and roughly along the back of the Courtland Road gardens and across Hunsdon Road and out to Oxford Road Littlemore. Several small, broken-down, sections of the wall can still be seen in various places in this area. 'Bear hedge' links up with Edward Cordrey's childhood memories of The Travelling Bear in his "Bygone Days at Iffley" page 47. See also 'The Star' parish magazine for July 1974 'Parish Boundaries', and January 1975 Cover Picture of the Bear and his Master drawn for Mr Cordrey by H.M.Brock.

Site H. 'Azor's Field' commemorates the Saxon Lord of Iffley for 1066. He was dispossessed of his freehold Manor of Iffley (Givetelei), which Domesday says he held "freely" in the time of Edward the Confessor – "Azor libere tenuit tempore Regis Edvardi"; a fine old man, not owing dues to anyone, ruthlessly turned out by the Conqueror – a good patron for Senior Citizens in the Bungalows to be built on 'Azor's Field'.

Site I. 'Our ancient 'Stone Quarry' is at the end of the Lane behind West View, on the left below the back fences of Hunsdon Road. Stone quarried here was used for Iffley Church in the 12th century. Merton College accounts, started in 1274, show payments for stone from Iffley ferried up the Thames and Cherwell from 1290 onwards to build the Old Library side of Mob Quad. By end of the 14th century Iffley Quarry was worked out, and the softer Headington stone was widely used. (See W.J.Arkeell: 'Geology of Oxford' page 94, and his 'Oxford Stone'). Our Quarry, now a dense thicket of trees and scrub, used as a rubbish tip now and for centuries past, was discovered by Vicar Hills when he explored the parish.

Tree Hotel Corner Site. 'Cordrey Green' commemorates Edward Cordrey, born 18 January 1884 at 87 Church Way, one of what were then known as 'Hawkwell Farm Cottages'. He wrote and printed "Bygone Days at Iffley" (originally lectures to the Women's Institute) in 1956, and recollections of his Iffley Schooldays in "The Star" of 1962. His photo and Obituary is in "The Star" for June 1972. Before he died, assisted by his daughter Jean, he marked on plans of the village all the names of fields and houses and their inhabitants as he remembered them from his youth. This valuable historical document is now in the Church archives, but copies have been given to the Friends of Iffley and Oxford Public Library.

Note: Alternative suggestions for Names have been made, not to disparage those previously proposed that because it is thought that our alternatives have a greater claim to fame or preservation.

Some Principles for choosing Names in the Parish – Iffley, Rose Hill & Donnington

- (1) Names should be simple, interesting, imaginative, attractive-sounding; not complicated, difficult to spell, or to hear on the Telephone.
- (2) Choose names of persons, places, things, or events, with real parish connections, which merit commemoration – “Lest we forget”. Many can be found in V.C.H. Oxford vol 5, Iffley, page 191, and elsewhere. (Some noted below.)
- (3) Avoid duplication and risk of confusing postman, police, fire and ambulance men in any emergency.
- (4) Go for brevity, strip off unnecessary additions, e.g. ‘Sheepway’ one word (as of old) rather than ‘Sheep Way Close’– three words. Eliminate tedious repetition of such words as ‘Close’ and ‘Way’ with which Oxford is becoming more and more plastered, e.g. ‘Tudor Close’ in Iffley, and ‘Williamson Way’ in Rose Hill (the latter immortalizing a former Chairman of the Housing Committee).
- (5) Holding of property or office is not in itself sufficient reason for eponymous commemoration, without other claim to fame – or notoriety.
- (6) Use of names of persons still living is of dubious propriety, and can lead to embarrassment. The Greek Lawgiver Solon said “Count no man happy till his dead”, and the Philosopher Aristotle in his ‘Ethics’ held that a man were must be assessed on his entire life (“Bios teleios”), and not on incidental success or failure. In France many “Maréchal Pétain” nameplates were both put up and taken down in the lifetime of the “Père de Victoire”.

Some suggestions for Names for Iffley parochial development

V.C.H. Oxford vol 5, Iffley, pages 189 to 206.

Juliana (de St. Remi) lady of the Manor responsible for building the Church, etc.

The Pulker family, see V.C.H. Wm Pulker died April 72.

Archbishop Phelps, who with his family lived in Malt House and Wootton

Edward Marshall, who restored the Rectory to the parish, and bought the Barn in Church Way & converted it into the Parochial School

Charles Reade, author of ‘The Cloister and the Hearth’

Owen Clarendon, Vicar for 36 years (c.f. Beauchamp Lane, Cowley, named after a former Vicar)

Sir Alan Gardiner, Egyptologist who deciphered inscriptions on Tomb of Tu-tank-amun, and lived at Court Place

Sir Hans Krebs, Nobel Prizewinner & our most celebrated resident for centuries.

Miss Evelyn Banks, many years secretary of Woman’s Institute, editor of the prize-winning ‘Iffley Scrap Book’, widely active in parish life