

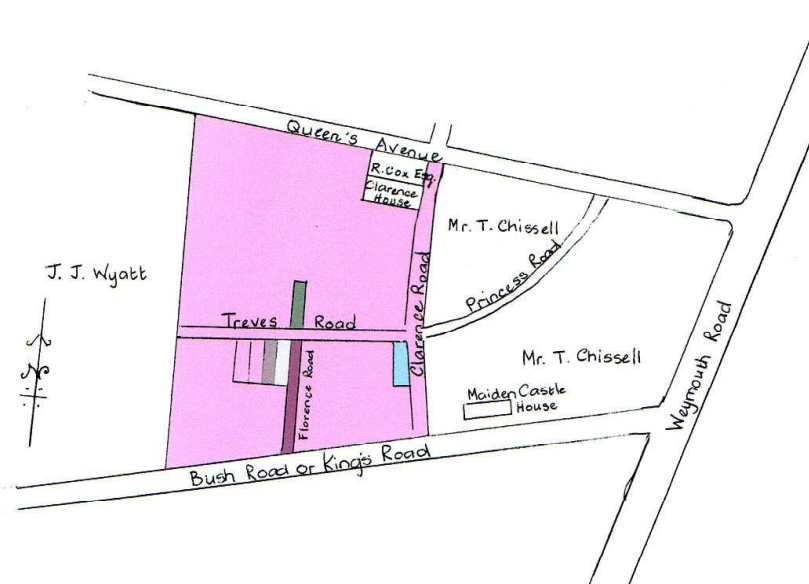
“History on the doorstep”

Ann Poole

This morsel of research started by my talking to a neighbour two or three years ago. She happened to say "You live in Sid Lear's old house and don't you?" I confessed I did but added that I had lived there for 30 years. She smiled and said, "A Johnny-come-lately them!" She had lived in her house for 60 years or more and it made me feel that I had better find out a bit more about my road and its history.

I started with our deeds and found that, in 1896, Charles Jesty had bought the land bounded by what is now Clarence Road, Queens Avenue, Bush Road (or King's Road i.e. Maiden Castle Road) and abutting on the west land owned by a John James Wyatt - 12 acres in all - from the Duchy of Cornwall, the Prince of Wales, later to become Edward VII. Charles Jesty died in a 1901 (as did the Queen of course) and his trustees sold the land to Samuel Russell Basket of Evershot for £900. The bulk of the money went to the trustees but £9 and went to Tom Chesil & James Paine (gentleman) in view of their interest as "Beneficial owners", which meant that they had certain rights of usage of the land, most likely to graze farm animals. Mr Chesil owned land on the other side of what was to become Clarence Road. At this point Clarence Road itself was not constructed, but part of the 12 acres were set aside for this purpose

In 1902, sections were sold off for building plots along Queen's Avenue to a variety of people, most of whom were Jesty's. At the corner of Queens Avenue and the proposed Clarence Road was a block of land owned by Richard Cox and next to that, a house and grounds known as Clarence house, which is still there today of course. Dr Wright lived there but in 1902 the trustees; Daniel Bartlett and Henry Robert Jesty owned it. In 1909 Samuel Basket sold the rest of the original plot to Edward Angus Scott for £1800 (at what seems like a huge profit). The land was sold again in 1925 to a consortium of three buyers. It was now only five acres bounded by Bush Road, Clarence Road, Treves Road and James Road. Clarence Road and Treves Road are by now marked and named on the map, but not yet made up. It is interesting to see that Princess Road is also marked and named on the sketch map but never materialised. James Road is also marked in on the 1925 map, but is not named. As to who named all these roads, I have not yet discovered.



The situation in 1925

Later in the same year, Richard Henry Henning, a captain in the army who lived in a Maiden Castle House bought the land and appears to have rented some of it back to the consortium, provided they undertook to erect cattle proof fencing and walls on the western and southern boundaries. The southern boundary is now described as Maiden Castle Road neither Bush Road nor King's Road as it was before. As the plot of land shrinks, things are begin to feel more personal and in 1935, the Hennings sold four plots of land for house building to Henry Edward Tite provided he erected no swings, roundabouts, taverns nor ale houses". Thank goodness! The land extended 198 ft along Treves Road with 150 ft return frontage along a proposed new road. Mr Henning undertook responsibility for laying the sewer, and Mr Tite, who lived in Alice Road, Dorchester paid £400. We are now really coming close to home! I don't know what became of the Hennings, but I feel sure that someone reading this can probably tell me. I understand that by 1939 Maiden Castle House was a school and again any more information would be very welcome. I learned from of the Almanac of my neighbour, Mr Cyril Trevis that, also in 1939, seven houses are occupied in Treves Road, one by Mrs Tilly and another by Mrs Melhuish.

In October 1946 Mr Tite sold a plot of land, 60 ft on Treves Road with 150 ft return frontage on Florence Road, to Dr Henry Steele Dewar for £300. There was a gap in the buying and selling of land, presumably because, during the war food production and farming will more important than house building. However, in 1946, Dr Dewar had his house built by Mr Ricardo and he and his wife moved in. They called the house "St Monans". The road we know as Florence Road was named but remained a un-surfaced. Sadly Dr Dewar died in 1952 and his wife moved away, renting the house to a couple called Blades. In 1957 a local wholesale butcher, Sydney Lear, bought it for £2,900. He changed the name to "Coppers" and lived there until 1970. At last we have the well-known figure of Sid Lear in residence!

And what about our neighbours? Well, Mr Bert Jewel who lives opposite paid £300 for his plot and had his house built in 1948 by Arthur Snook. Bert and Josie set up home together in Treves Road when the Prime Minister was Mr Attlee and, the National Health Service was just beginning! To the east of Bert's there were only three or four houses, to the west, the land was still grazing cattle and, of course, the road was not yet made up. Bert can clearly remember Josie trying to push a pram with their baby son in it, and constantly getting bogged down in the mud. Clarence Road was made up in 1953 and that must have been a great morale-booster. 1953 was a good ear all-round - the Coronation, Cricket and Everest, but sadly Treves Road didn't get made up until 1958 and interestingly, its south side has a wider pavement, a grass verge and a row of trees and. Apparently, all residents were expected to contribute to the cost of the tree planting but Bert tells me that there was a bit of rebellion - at the far end of the road and a group a residents on the north side refused to play. The Council financed and finished the job anyway whereupon course, the people had paid wanted their money back! All the time, Florence Road remained a un-surfaced! I'm led to believe that the residents with the largest frontages who would have had to find the most money also happened to have influence with the Borough Council and the County Council and, allegedly, had a surfacing work put on hold!

Our next-door neighbour Cyril Trevis, bought his plot for £275 and, with his wife Joan, and their house built in 1953. The builder was Cyril's uncle Mr Les Cutler. Cyril still has bills for various items and it is interesting to compare prices:

	1953	1993
300 facing bricks	£27-0-0	£950
80 yards of concrete blocks	£29-0-0	£430
£56 lbs 2.5" nails	£1-10-10	£50
17 cwt cement	£5-5-0	£49
92 ft of 2"x1"	£1-3-0	£40

Cyril contributed £2-10-0 per foot to the making up of Treves Road.

We came home from abroad in 1970 and bought 1, Florence Road, in 1971. Some years ago we received a letter from County Hall telling us that, at last, Florence Road was to be made up and that we would need to contribute a substantial sum. We checked with the neighbours and everyone was concerned but no one had heard anything - we were the only ones to have been notified! We then read the letter again and then noticed the date of the top of the page - April 1st!!

[This note was written as a contribution to a “Members’ Evening” in 1993 and has been edited for the Website]