

# No streets on the Suburb



Henrietta and Samuel, pondering street names? (Photo: Toynbee Hall)

MICKY WATKINS

Suburb founder Henrietta Barnett had great fun naming the streets of the Suburb. Yet there are none! The very word 'street', she thought, suggested the modern industrial city and its slum dwellings. So instead, we have Way, Road, Hill, Close, Square, Walk, Chase, Rise, Croft, Mount, Garth, Holne and Lea. All of these are Saxon words, and celebrated the medievalism of the Arts and Crafts movement and its style of architecture. Many of the Suburb roads were named after existing local fields or farms: Wellgarth Road from Well Fields, Asmunns Hill (Assmans), Temple Fortune Hill, Temple Fortune Lane, Willifield Way (from Willeyford Grove), Farm Walk, Wyldes Hatch. Some simply showed a direction or location: Hampstead Way, Heathgate, Heath Close, Northway, Middleway and Southway, Church Mount (where a church was planned), Brookland Rise and Linden Lea (lined with limes). Henrietta was herself an artist and admired English painters. So we have: Turner Drive, and Linnell, Constable, Morland, Cotman, Raeburn, Reynolds and Turner

Closes all quite near to each other. Hogarth and Creswick are further North.

She was interested in poets and writers, so Coleridge and Wordsworth Walk, Addison Way and Ruskin Close. Spencer Drive and Milton, Carlyle and Kingsley Close are in the 'new' Suburb. Browning was Henrietta's favourite poet, so it is puzzling that there is no Browning Walk.

Legal and political names appear in Erskine Hill (Lord Chancellor Thomas Erskine), Chatham Close (after the elder Pitt), and Denman Drive (Lord Chief Justice). Howard Walk was named after Ebenezer Howard, who came up with the idea of the Garden City. Ralph Neville (Neville Drive), was Chairman of the Garden City Association.

After 1918 most of the houses were built by 'Co-partnerships', and the roads were named accordingly. Holyoake (Holyoake Walk) was the author of 'The History of Cooperation in England' and was the last man in England to be convicted of atheism and sent to prison. Henry Vivian MP (Vivian Way) was Chairman of Coparts nationally, and MP for Totnes (Totnes Walk) in Devon (Devon Rise). Widcombe Way,

Blandford and Harford Closes are all places in the West country.

Sybella Gurney (Gurney Drive) was the Secretary of 'Coparts'. William Thomas Thornton (Thornton Way) was a social reformer and wrote on co-operation. Brunner Close commemorates Sir John Brunner, Chairman of the Coparts board.

Litchfield Way was named after Frederick Litchfield who held posts in the Tenants Societies. Sutcliffe Close was named for the Copartners architect, George Lister Sutcliffe.

Edmund James Cooper an architect, gave his name to Edmund's Walk. Chalton Drive was named for Chalton Hubbard, the Coparts solicitor. Greenhalgh Walk for John H Greenhalgh who was on the Committee of Hampstead Tenants. Hutchings Walk recalls William Hutchings who was Copart's Deputy Chairman.

Emmott Close was named for Lord Emmott who was Chairman of the Institute Council.

Some of the roads were named after Christian Socialists: John Ludlow (Ludlow Way) wrote many Christian Socialist tracts and was cofounder of the Working Men's College. Kingsley Way after Charles Kingsley (founder of Christian Socialism and author of The Water Babies). Kingsley was born in Holne in Devon, hence Holne Chase.

Denison Close and Maurice Walk after Frederick Denison Maurice, an adult education pioneer. Neale Close after Edward Vansittart Neale, co-author of Tom Brown's Schooldays.

Lytton Close was named for Lord Lytton, who was Chairman of the HGS Trust from 1913 to 1920, and became Governor of Bengal. Lyttleton Road is in memory of Alfred Lyttleton who was first President of the HGS Trust from 1906-1913. As he was a great cricketer, he would be delighted with Lyttleton Playing Fields.

Arthur Foley Winnington Ingram who was Bishop of London, and a member of the first Trust, has three roads named after him: Winnington Road, Bishop's Avenue and Ingram Avenue.

Abbreviated from 'What's in a Name' by Brigid Grafton Greene, First Suburb Archivist.

*Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.* MARTIN LUTHER

MARIE-CHRISTINE O'CALLAGHAN

Apples have a long association with the Suburb, Henrietta Barnett gifted an apple tree to every new householder. Apples have an even longer connection to humans. Scientists have shown that 750,000 years ago, early Paleolithic food gatherers in southern Kazakhstan were eating the fruit of a wild apple tree now called *Malus sieversii*. This tree became the ancestor of almost all of the 7,500 varieties of apples we have today. The original tree showed immense diversity in the apples it produced: they could range from large to small, sweet to sharp, and red to yellow and green. Its genome was sequenced in 2010 and was found to contain approximately 57,000 unique genes, making it the most diverse plant genome ever studied.

Humans rarely stay in one place for very long and as the food gatherers moved along nomadic and later trade routes, they took the apple with them. It reached the Middle East around 2,000 BC where it began to be farmed, and when Homer composed the Odyssey in the 8th century BC, he could describe 'a great orchard of four acres where trees grow tall and luxuriant, pears and pomegranates and apple-trees with their bright fruit'. The Ancient Greeks so valued the fruit that they considered the apple tree the sacred tree of the goddess Hera. Apples were also a favourite fruit for the Romans, the Roman armies carried apples across Europe, planting pips wherever they settled. They brought the apples with them when they conquered Britain.

Where the apple went, stories would follow. A golden apple inscribed 'To the fairest' started the Trojan war, Wilhelm Tell shot an arrow into an apple placed on his son's head, a feat which led to Switzerland's independence\*, the fall of an apple helped Newton to the theory of gravity, the evil queen offered Snow White a poisoned apple, and a new computer company was founded which took its name from this iconic fruit. Of course, there is also Eve eating an apple and being thrown out of Eden; but did she? The Bible does state that: 'God did tell Adam and Eve: 'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.'

The fruit of the tree of knowledge is not named but paintings, like the beautiful Adam and Eve of Lucas Cranach, spread the idea that the forbidden fruit was an apple, though, it probably was not.

Despite this nefarious association, apples have thrived, possibly because they are such a homely and comforting fruit. They are used to make cider, to add a subtle sweetness to main dishes and as the main ingredient in a plethora of desserts. Perhaps we should all plant an apple tree in our garden and thank our Paleolithic ancestors.

\*Legend has it that William Tell refused to salute the hat (!) of the Austrian ruler Albert Gessler who then forced Tell to shoot at an apple placed on his son's head. Tell shot the apple and later killed Gessler initiating the fight for Switzerland's independence.



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