

# The Fishers Hill Story



[doug@glading.com](mailto:doug@glading.com) 5/24

Last update 18/4/2024

Hopefully the FINAL version

# The Fishers Hill Story

**We all know Fishers Hill, which today leads up from the River Meon to the village of Catisfield, starting opposite Titchfield Abbey (aka Place House).**

- But it has also been known as Stoney Bridge Hill and Catisfield Hill.**
- And hasn't always gone to Catisfield !**

**The route across Stoney Bridge and on to Catisfield - the first historic crossing point of the River Meon - has been traversed for centuries...**

**Monks** from Titchfield Abbey crossed the Meon on foot or horseback as they 'perambulated' across England as far as Kent and Yorkshire.

- **Drovers** herded their sheep and cattle up the hill en route to the Royal Navy victualling facilities at Gosport
- **Supplies** stored in the Great Barn at Titchfield Abbey went up the hill to Gosport and Portsmouth.
- **Residents** went over the bridge as they went to and from Titchfield for their supplies

## **The route across Stoney Bridge and on to Catisfield - the first historic crossing point of the River Meon - has been traversed for centuries...**

**Henry VI** – in 1445 Henry VI & Margaret of Anjou are said to have gone up Fishers Hill, from Titchfield Abbey towards Southwick, after reconfirmation there of their marriage in France

So although the bridge is known as 'Anjou Bridge - this crossing was **way before** the current bridge was actually built.

' (Bridge even has been called 'Iron Duke Bridge' in some reports !!)

- **William Shakespeare** – c. 1592 - As a tutor at Place House the playwright must have walked around pondering his plots

- April 1662 -- **Samuel Pepys** went from Portsmouth to Southampton and back (so probably traversed Fishers Hill)

..

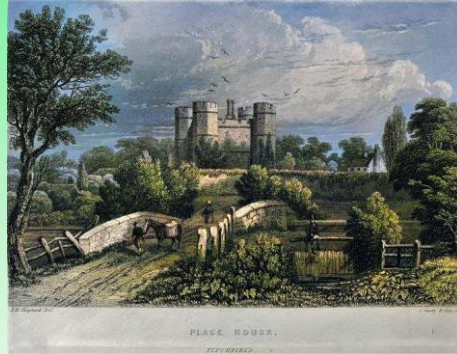
called 'Iron Duke Bridge' - say it quickly.....

# STONEY BRIDGE (aka Anjou Bridge)

The **Stony or Stoney** Bridge we know today replaces a bridge built by the monks during the 14th century.

The antiquary, John Leland reports that the bridge was made of **wood** when he crossed it in **1542**.

Stony Bridge was rebuilt in **stone** during the 17th century under Henry, the 3rd Earl of Southampton, whose grandfather had acquired the Abbey, from then on known as Place House, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries.



CLICK for second part - a view you don't see

Also called Latera Bridge (no idea why)

# STONY BRIDGE (aka Anjou Bridge)

Henry commissioned a survey of the estate, on which he had undertaken major works, and the 1610 map produced as a result shows 'Stoney Bridge'.

Local knowledge was said to suggest that the date '1625' was inscribed on the bridge, but this is no longer visible.

So 2025 = 400th Anniversary.....

It is a Scheduled Monument, Listed Grade II

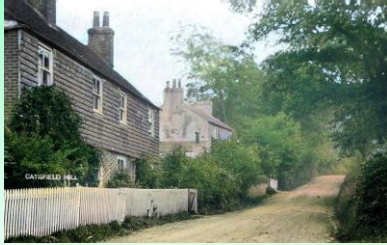


Need care to drive a large bus over the bridge, maybe late at night in the dark, without damage. But bus drivers managed.

*Excluded from the scheduling are the parapets above the level of the road surface, although the bridge fabric below them is included.*

# CATISFIELD HILL

## (aka STONEY /STONY BRIDGE Hill , later FISHERS Hill)



**The ‘Gateway to the West’** - At one time All the Traffic East and West. Went up and down Fishers Hill.

(Imagine that today: all the traffic of the M27 plus Rail plus A27 .....)

*The route from Fareham came past Blackbrook, over ‘Catisfield Common’ and bore slightly right at the Peak Lane junction (by Heathfield Manor – today’s ‘Oast & Squire’) onto Catisfield Road. Then into or just past Catisfield, down Fishers Hill, left at the Abbey, past Titchfield Mill and into the village with a right turn by The Wheatsheaf.*



Note the road sign says ‘Catisfield Hill’ **Date** of this colourised image unknown

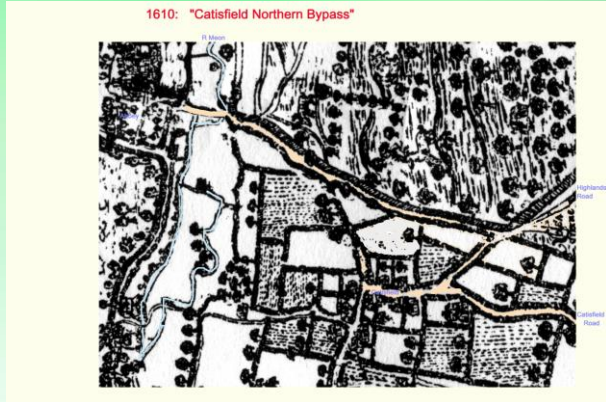
\*\*\*\*\*CLICK\*\*\*\*\* for bottom part



# HIGHLANDS ROAD LINK ('CATISFIELD NORTHERN BYPASS')

- There was a period, depicted in some old maps, when Catisfield was actually bypassed **to the North**.

Although Catisfield Lane is shown on them turning north by the PostOffice for a short way, it does **not appear at this time to have joined with Fishers Hill**.



Instead Fishers Hill continued up almost in a **straight line**, across the rear of Anjou cottages, **to join Highlands Road** opposite Place House Close (*location of the Catisfield Pound – a staging post for the animals being driven to RN butchers at Gosport*).

\*\*\* CLICK \*\*\* for second part



# HIGHLANDS ROAD LINK ('CATISFIELD NORTHERN BYPASS')

- **The top part of Fishers Hill (the cutting above Orchards Cottage)** appears on the maps of 1832, 1841 etc. This cutting could have been delayed due to funding, manpower and/or land ownership issues.
- *The Conservation Area Assessment says “ it is not clear when this later link became established but it is likely to have been much earlier than 1810. This northern route, possibly a drover’s track which bypassed the village, had disappeared by the mid C19 and is not marked on subsequent maps.”*
- *So unfortunately Henry VI didn’t actually go through Catisfield, - he just went by it.*



Just above Orchard Cottage the cutting bank is reinforced with some old stones probably from 'Place House', which was mostly torn down 1781

Not just my theory - *Conservation Area Assessment* says so

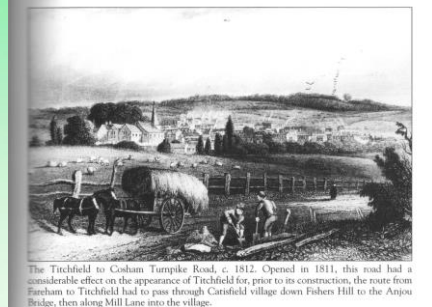
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# CATISFIELD HILL and The AVENUE

**1811** - On first of June 1811 the direct road from Heathfield /Peak Lane junction into Titchfield, entering past the tanneries and the Wheatsheaf, is said to have been opened. *(This road down from the Catisfield Lane / Ranvilles Lane junction into Titchfield starts to appear on maps as 'Catisfield Hill'.)*

This became part of the Titchfield and Cosham **Turnpike** Trust (Act was published in 1810 for a distance of 7miles 2 furlongs and 180 yards), with Toll Houses at Blackbrook, East Cams and Wymering. Opened in 1826.

**So Catisfield was bypassed - to the South.**  
Fishers Hill stayed open as a country lane (not yet the convenient short-cut / 'rat run' of later years...)



\*\*\*\*\*CLICK\*\*\*\*\* for bottom part

# 'ANJOU COTTAGES' (aka Stoneybridge Cottages )

- Halfway up Fishers Hill we find a small collection of homes – an old small terrace of cottages plus Orchard Cottage (c. 1837) just above, and the slightly newer Merrill Cottage at the start of the (now vanished) Highlands Road link.
- The terrace is a listed Grade II Historic Building.
- The terrace and its individual cottages have had various names
- The **1901 census** calls it **Stoneybridge Cottages** and lists **5 homes** in it (plus 2 actually in Orchard Cottage)



Household No.	Name	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Occupation	Place of Birth	Religion	Education	Other
1	Mr. J. H. Smith	45	M	Married	Labourer	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
2	Mrs. J. H. Smith	42	F	Married	Housewife	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
3	Mr. J. H. Smith	15	M	Single	Schoolboy	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
4	Mrs. J. H. Smith	12	F	Single	Schoolgirl	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
5	Mr. J. H. Smith	10	M	Single	Schoolboy	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
6	Mrs. J. H. Smith	8	F	Single	Schoolgirl	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
7	Mr. J. H. Smith	6	M	Single	Schoolboy	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
8	Mrs. J. H. Smith	4	F	Single	Schoolgirl	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
9	Mr. J. H. Smith	3	M	Single	Schoolboy	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	
10	Mrs. J. H. Smith	2	F	Single	Schoolgirl	Stoneybridge	Anglican	None	

15 persons in 'Anjou cottages', 8 in orchard cottages

[illegible]

12

# ‘ANJOU COTTAGES’ (aka Stoneybridge Cottages )

- The 1911 census calls it **Mount Pleasant** and lists **4 homes** (and 2 in the nearby Orchard Cottage).
- More recently the terrace was **three homes**: Huntsman, Broadheath and Anjou, and now is just **two** dwellings: Huntsman, and Anjou Cottages
- The two dwellings in Orchard Cottage are now just **one**.

1

Civil Parish		Ecclesiastical Parish		Borough or Union District					
Farnham		Holy Trinity		Farnham					
Ward of Borough or Urban District		Parish District		Polling District or Division					
				Jackson's Trenchard of Heath					
No. of Inhabitants	Address	Kind of Building, (For Enumerators of Place and Number of separate Flats or Tenements must be stated.)	Name of Occupier	Dwellings or Tenements			Population		
				In hab. flat	Occ. rent free	Build. not rent free	Male	Female	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
97	107	Private Home	Mrs. L. White	1			1	1	2
98	"	"	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	4	5
99	"	"	Mrs. L. White	1			1	2	3
100	"	"	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	1	2
101	"	"	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7
102	"	"	Mrs. L. White	1			1	1	2
103	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	1	2
104	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	1	2
105	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	1	2
106	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			1	1	2
107	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7
108	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7
109	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7
110	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7
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200	107	Private Home	Mrs. B. B. B.	1			3	4	7

17 persons in ‘Anjou cottages’, 5 in orchard cottages

# MEON HOLT & Kingfishers

- in 1955 and 1958: Surgeon Captain G. Woodhouse, of Meon Holt, Fisher's Hill, Catisfield, appealed against a planning decision re the development of one acre adjacent to his house for only one dwelling. He proposes to build three houses on the plot.
- The counsel for the planning authority said: *"Fisher's Hill, a pretty country lane leading down to the old Anjou Bridge over the Meon, was a favourite local walk" .....*
- Permission was given for the erection of one house only.





## POST OFFICE

- Listed Building Grade 2 - thought to have been built about 1720.
- Relatively little is known about it. The building was part of the Catisfield House Estate.

It was opened as a **sub-postoffice** in **July 1900**.

In 1909 it was decided to limit the opening hours to 9.00am to 8.30pm(!)

Address: 2 Fishers Hill

Hampshire Telegraph - Friday 11 May 1923

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Southampton.  
**WEDNESDAY 30th MAY 1923**  
**CATISFIELD, Near FAREHAM.**  
**WILSON AND CO.**  
 In conjunction with  
**RICHARD AUSTIN AND WYATT**  
 will OFFER for SALE by AUCTION (unless previously disposed of privately), at the RED LION HOTEL, FAREHAM, on the above date at THREE O'CLOCK in the afternoon, the VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTY, known as the  
**CATISFIELD HOUSE ESTATE**, including the CHARMING OLD GEORGIAN HOUSE, containing four reception rooms, twelve bedrooms, offices, etc., standing in small park.  
**VALUABLE ACCOMMODATION PASTURES & WATER MEADOWS & STRAWBERRY LAND**, with important frontages to main roads.  
**"ELM COTTAGE," CATISFIELD POST OFFICE & FIVE COTTAGES**, in all about 61 acres.  
**VACANT POSSESSION OF THE HOUSE ON COMPLETION.**  
 Solicitors: Messrs. HUNTERS, 8, New Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C. 2.  
 Auctioneers: Wilson and Co., 14, Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, W. 1; Richard Austin and Wyatt, 70, High Street, Fareham, and at Baboon's Walkham.

**DE & SON, CHESTER.**  
**CATTLE MARKET.**  
 MAY 16th, at 12.30.  
 PRING SALE OF  
 ONE SHEEP & LAMBS.  
 TITLE OF ALL CLASSES  
 COWS & HEIFERS,  
 AT CATTLE  
 used free of charge.



Catisfield Post Office, c. 1906. Unlike so many other sub-post offices, it has escaped the postal axe and still serves within the village general stores.

In 1923 sold with The House & cottages



## POST OFFICE

- In the 1970s and 80s the Post Office was the hub and meeting place of Catisfield. If you wanted to know anything you popped along there.
- The very active shop part sold pretty well everything, including newspapers.



*11/87 The Pecovers replace  
Mr & Mrs Burch, who had run  
the Post Office for 24 years  
8/88 Richard and Sandra  
Frankland replace the  
Pecovers.*

# The Future of The Hill ???

- The trial closure (Sep 20 - July 21) was very popular with pedestrians – but not with motorists in their hurry.
- A Consultation Report published May 23.

As of November 2023 a decision has been made to close the hill to vehicles to allow it to be used as a healthy and peaceful and safe walk. Implementation is 'being planned'



# Thank You



Amanda Moof Stather

.  
[Last thought: if Fishers Hill was still a nice straight road from Highlands Road down to the bridge , think what speeds kamikasi cyclists could reach.....]

See also the Website:

Search engines for the website, and links from other websites

[www.catisfield.com](http://www.catisfield.com) **CATISFIELD...Ancient and Modern**

Map of 1932 showing the 'big' houses and the 'small' terrace/ cottages for the workers.

The centre of Catisfield, from an old aerial c. 1920, compared to today. Many more houses -- and much more greenery!

"The Cottage" (now known as "Winks Cottage") and "The Terrace" still stand, on what is now named Catisfield Lane.

Click on a photo to see enlargement and view individual pages have the last update date at the bottom - and pages may have more information about a topic, for example in The Times. Photos 2011 etc.

**You can explore this History of Catisfield in a number of ways..**

**PAPERS - Reports, Papers, Tabulations of things Catisfield.**

Demolished Buildings of Catisfield  
No Longer There - The Demolished Buildings of Catisfield last update 4/23

The End of Colonel FRANCIS EDWARD BRACE - His rather rapid SUICIDE, DISCREET & FUNERAL (and What it at Catisfield Lodge - or Catisfield House?) last update 1/2022

CATISFIELD - Heathfield Farm and its Estate last update 2/2019

CATISFIELD CRICKET CLUB -- an active, well-regarded club, in the 1860s, 1870s, 1880s... last update 5/1/2018

CATISFIELD LODGE - Its Residents and Events through the years - 2021

Schools: Schools in Catisfield Through the Years 1871 - 2020 - refreshed 2/2024

Catisfield (Hampshire) ROADS and their evolution - 2020

Information Summaries about each of the people named on the dedication labels/plaques for WW1 and WW2

Catisfield St Columba WW1 World War 1 Dedication Details amplifying the Plaque at St Columba 11/2018

Catisfield Memorial Hall WW2 World War 2 Dedication Details amplifying the Plaque at The Memorial Hall - 8/2018

**KEY ITEMS**

-- The most important works about Catisfield.

**The BIG OR OLD HOUSES of CATISFIELD - And Who Lived Where**  
-- a 'catalogue' and tabulations - last update 11/2/2017

**FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN CATISFIELD - And Who Lived Where - a list**  
a collection of biographies - last update 11/2/2017

**CATISFIELD HOUSE- ITS OCCUPANCY THROUGH THE YEARS**  
a comprehensive 'TIMELINE' for The House == Who might have lived there, when, with evidence... - last update 1/2022

Several hundred PRESS REPORTS about Catisfield:  
-- A collection - last update 1/23

**MAPS**

-- a sequence of Maps from 1611 to 1961 that will give you an insight into how Catisfield has grown and changed  
- last update 27/2/2017

click here to go to: MAPS

Example Maps:

Catisfield in 1836 (before The Avenue)

1909

**LOCATIONS**

# The Name Has Gone

- (old street name plate on the Limes wall across from Post Office)
- Worth restoring ?

