

SURREY AND SOUTHWARK

Stephen Humphrey

Uses of the county's name within the boundaries of the present London Borough of Southwark, and other Surrey connections.

SUTHRINGA GEWEORC(HE) was the original name of Southwark, given in the document called the *Burghal Hidage*. This was a list of burhs or fortified places, which is traditionally thought to date from the early 10th century in the reign of King Edward the Elder. The inclusion of Southwark reflects the fact that King Alfred had taken London from the Vikings in 886 and that he must have fortified the river crossing. The name means *defensive work (or fort) of the people of the southern province*; in other words, of **SURREY**.

The districts of the present London Borough of Southwark, comprising the old town, including Horselydown and the Clink, and the parishes of Christ Church, Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, Newington and Camberwell, all fell within the historic **COUNTY OF SURREY** until 1889.

GREAT SURREY STREET was the original name of the present Blackfriars Road from its opening in 1769 until its renaming in 1829.

SURREY ROW still runs off Blackfriars Road.

Christ Church, Blackfriars Road, was for long known as **CHRIST CHURCH, SURREY**. This was sufficient to indicate that the church was on the south side of the Thames, to distinguish it from Christ Church, London, which stood in Newgate Street and therefore fell within the City of London, and Christ Church, Middlesex, which stood at Spitalfields within that county. During the 19th century, the number of new churches with the dedication became too great to maintain so simple a title.

SURREY CHAPEL, in Blackfriars Road, was opened in 1783 as an Independent chapel under Rowland Hill. The building then housed a Primitive Methodist congregation from 1876 to 1881. The Primitive Methodists removed to new premises nearby in 1881, known as **NEW SURREY CHAPEL**, which was closed permanently in 1946. The original Independent congregation took a new site at the junction of Westminster Bridge Road and Kennington Road in 1876, opposite the site of the later Lambeth North Station. It was then re-named Christ Church. For many years after the Second World War, following a merger with Upton Chapel in Lambeth Road, the church was known as Christ Church and Upton Chapel. In very recent years, it has been called the Oasis Church.

The **SURREY DISPENSARY** was founded in 1777. Its former building of about 1840 may be seen in Falmouth Road.

The **SURREY TABERNACLE**, a Strict Baptist Church, was founded in Borough Road in 1814. It was removed to Wansey Street, Walworth, in 1865, under James Wells, where it was closed in about 1920.

The **SURREY THEATRE** existed in Blackfriars Road, near St. George's Circus, between 1782 and 1934. It was also known as the **ROYAL SURREY THEATRE**, the **SURREY VAUDEVILLE THEATRE** and the **SURREY THEATRE OF VARITEIES**.

The **ROYAL SURREY ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS** were opened by Edward Cross in the grounds of Walworth Manor House, Manor Place, in 1831. The zoo was in existence until 1855. In the same grounds the **SURREY MUSIC HALL** was opened in 1856 (also known as the **ROYAL SURREY**

GARDENS MUSIC HALL and as the **SURREY GARDENS THEATRE**). The gardens were built over from 1878.

The **SURREY INSTITUTION** was opened in Blackfriars Road, just south of Blackfriars Bridge, in a building known as the Rotunda, in 1807.

The **SURREY COUNTY CRICKET CLUB** was the successor at Kennington Oval, in the present London Borough of Lambeth, of the Montpelier Club, which had been founded in 1796 in Walworth, in the present London Borough of Southwark. The earlier club played in the Montpelier Tea Gardens and then in the grounds of the Beehive Public House (which still stands in Penrose Street). It was removed to the Oval in 1844.

The **SURREY CANAL** and the **SURREY DOCKS** were constructed over many years from 1801. The canal (also called the **GRAND SURREY CANAL**) ran from Rotherhithe, roughly across the middle of the peninsula, to Camberwell Road by 1811 and then with a branch to the centre of Peckham by 1826. The docks grew out of the canal. In 1865, they were merged with the adjoining Commercial Docks to form the **SURREY COMMERCIAL DOCKS**. This system eventually covered most of the Rotherhithe peninsula between the Lower Pool and Limehouse Reach. It remained in operation until 1970.

At Rotherhithe, the mill that stood on the western side of the parish near West Lane, was called the **SURREY MILL**.

SURREY QUARTER SESSIONS met at various times in both Southwark and Newington. The Southwark meeting-places included the so-called Town Hall in Borough High Street, and Union Hall, which was opened in Union Street in 1782. Under an Act of 1791, a new Sessions House in Newington Causeway was built by late 1793 alongside the site of the new **SURREY COUNTY PRISON** (opened in 1798) in Horsemonger Lane. These two buildings replaced premises in Borough High Street, which had served the same purposes since the Tudor period. The Newington Sessions House was a forerunner of the Surrey Record Office at Kingston, for Surrey Quarter Sessions records were held there.

SURREY SQUARE off the Old Kent Road was designed by Michael Searles and was built in the 1790s. It was a single long terrace rather than a formal square.

SURREY PLACE was the name of a long terrace on the west side of the Old Kent Road, north of Shorncliffe Road. This was also designed by Michael Searles.

In 1859-60, when there was a scare that the French Emperor, Napoleon III, might order an invasion of England, Volunteer units were formed. Camberwell founded a unit which was initially named the First Corps of the Surrey Rifle Volunteers, and was then for long known as the **FIRST SURREY RIFLES**. From 1882, when regiments received territorial designations, the First Surrey Rifles became a volunteer battalion of the East Surrey Regiment. The equivalent volunteer units for Bermondsey and for Walworth became the 3rd and 4th Volunteer Battalions of the Royal West Surrey Regiment, 'The Queen's'. During the First World War, a new unit was formed in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe only for its duration and became the 12th Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, popularly known as the **12th EAST SURREYS**. Its colours may be seen in St. Mary's Church at Rotherhithe.

And last, but certainly not least, the first meeting of the **SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY** took place in the Bridge House Hotel at the foot of London Bridge in 1854.